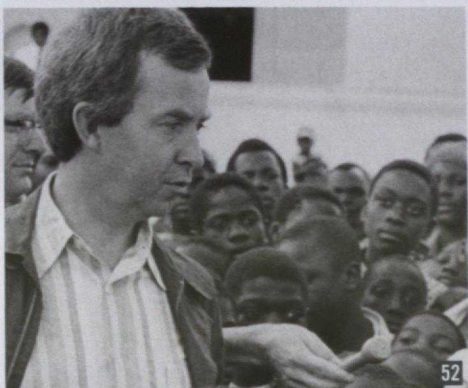


THE INTEGRATED DEPARTMENT

Elected in September 1984 with a commanding majority, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservative government took office with a foreign-policy agenda concentrated on the United States. While in opposition, Mulroney had been sharply critical of the Liberal government's handling of relations with the United States, and during the election campaign he promised "good relations—super relations" with Washington. Like prime ministers before him, Mulroney kept relations with the U.S. and its Republican president, Ronald Reagan, largely for himself, leaving other issues to the ministers responsible. In a move to bind together his Progressive Conservative party, he appointed his one-time rival, former prime minister Joe Clark, as his secretary of state for external affairs.

Clark handled the relationship with the Prime Minister well and garnered widespread praise for his work in the portfolio. Described as a "pillar of consistency and small virtues," he was inclined to bypass the formal policy-making process and focus on where Canada could, in his words, "make a difference." A progressive thinker, Clark worked to dismantle the apartheid regime in South Africa (a file he shared with the Prime Minister), promoted human rights in Central America, and actively pursued a regional role in Asia-Pacific. Conscious of the Department's poor record in promoting women, he appointed a number of women to senior positions and as heads of mission before he left the Department in 1991 to serve as Mulroney's minister for constitutional affairs.

While the Conservative government did not make substantial administrative changes to the Department, external pressures altered the Department's centre of gravity during the 1980s. The prolonged recession in 1981–82 combined with growing protectionism in Europe, Japan, and the United States to bring economic and trade policy close to the heart of Canada's foreign policy. Indeed, this had already become clear by the last years of the Trudeau government, when Derek Burney, the able assistant deputy minister in charge of Canada–U.S. relations, spearheaded a trade policy review that put the question of Canada–U.S. free trade firmly on the policy



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⁵² The elimination of apartheid in South Africa remained a priority for both Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark, who is shown here in 1987 taking a break during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Zambia. (Source: Commonwealth Secretariat)

⁵³ "Good relations—super relations" with the United States were close to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's heart, and a closer trade relationship with the United States was Mulroney's crowning achievement. Following the conclusion of the Free Trade Agreement with the United States in 1988, Mulroney signs the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1992 as Michael Wilson, international trade minister, looks on. (Source: The Canadian Press/Frank Gunn)