

American Congress. The idea of a Canada-U.S. free-trade area is a case in point. Yet another constraint is the Canadian public – or, more accurately, elements of the Canadian political culture. It is now quite clear that nationalism is still not a driving force in Canadian politics. And it is a truism that most Canadians believe this country should co-operate with the U.S. But it is an even longer-standing truism that there is a latent but powerful aversion among Canadians to actual or seeming American encroachment.

Greater conflict

There are also a number of reasons why greater conflict during the coming decade seems likely. The long-term trend in Canada-U.S. interactions during the 1960s and 1970s has been an increasing number of disputes and differences. To be sure, Canadian-American relations remain close and amicable by world standards. By comparison with the pattern of the 1950s, though, the points of friction have become more numerous.

In part greater conflict is due to the greater contact characteristic of a more interdependent world, and especially of that world's most interdependent pair of countries. In part it is also due to the decline of the Cold War, the loosening of alliance structures and the relaxation of constraints on smaller powers openly quarrelling with the super-powers. Soviet-American *détente*, increasing interdependence and scarcities of resources have also led to a change in the international agenda. Peace and security issues, – in which alliance solidarity was paramount, have given way to economic and other issues, in which national and sub-national interests preponderate. Moreover, the Canadian Government, like others, is becoming increasingly involved in what Jeanne Kirk Laux has called "the role of entrepreneur, merchant banker and trader"; to the extent that it remains more interventionist than the American Government, still other differences seem inevitable. Assuming that these trends are not reversed, the bilateral disagreements, frictions, and conflicts seem likely to increase.

Canadian-American relations will not, of course, unfold exactly as suggested by the Delphi results. There will, at the very least, be many surprises and unforeseen events. One might ask, though, whether recent events have not already outdated these forecasts, at least the one concerning increasing conflict. Certainly, one of the weaknesses of Delphi-type forecasting is that it is too much influenced by recent events and does not allow for shifts. (The same could be said of most forecasting methods, whether intuitive or quantitative.)

Is the present study a case of failing to foresee a reversing trend?

According to some observers, the coming to power of the Parti Québécois is the important factor behind the new co-operative shift in Canadian-American relations. The late 1970s "cold war" between Ottawa and Quebec City is indeed having much the same effect on at least the tone of Canada-U.S. relations as the late 1940s and 1950s Cold War between Moscow and Washington, though for different reasons. The chief role of the Department of External Affairs in the national-unity debate is clearly, and understandably, to insure as sympathetic an observer to the south as possible. There is, therefore, little place for Third Option rhetoric, let alone de-integrative action. But federal concern for national unity does not fully explain the current co-operative tone.

Even without the PQ, the current stagnant Canadian economy and deteriorating balance of payments provide a powerful disincentive to the contemplation of the Third Option. Then, too, the fact that 1976 brought an American Presidential election and 1977 a new Administration (and a Democratic one at that) also helped to cause the shift. One of the cardinal premises of Canadian diplomacy is that Canada-U.S. relations must not become an issue in American elections, and the corollary is that they must also not become one of the issues that inevitably come to disturb a new President's "honeymoon" period. Considerations of U.S. domestic politics are thus one contributing factor in what appears to be the continuation of a cyclical pattern in the state of Canadian-American relations. Another factor, perhaps, is a general acceptance among officials of the need for more or less regular "cooling-off" periods.

Whether this cyclical pattern will prevail into the early 1980s will depend a good deal on the direction of developments involving both Ottawa and Quebec. It should be clear to any observer, however, that the sources of Canadian-American conflict have not disappeared. The differences have been muted; they have not been eradicated. In fact, within weeks of the Third Option's announced interment and the supposed restoration of harmony, some odd events had begun to occur: American farmers were picketing border crossings in an attempt to stop imports of Canadian beef; the Saskatchewan government was threatening to ignore a recommendation of the International Joint Commission that further work on the controversial Poplar River power project be postponed; the Carter Administration had partly reversed itself and announced that work would resume on sections of the even more contentious Garri-

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