

# Just another U.S. State



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**M**any Canadians already consider free trade one of Ottawa's worst moves. But according to David Orchard, head of Citizens Concerned about Free Trade, it was also one of Washington's long-term plans.

Canada has long been part of the U.S. "Manifest Destiny" agenda, Orchard says. And all it took to make it happen was a little pressure from American-based multinationals on the unscrupulous Mulroney government.

And, Orchard says, Mulroney already seems to think of Canada as just another American state.

by Alex Roslin  
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**Roslin & Clibbon: Do you think Canada's sovereignty is threatened by free trade?**

David Orchard: Absolutely. Since this deal was signed, Canada has agreed with every foreign policy move of the United States. We're now as likely to contradict the U.S. on the world stage as the state of California.

For example, the Americans are saying they want to move the boundary between Alaska and British Columbia 30 miles south. They want to build a naval base for nuclear submarines in the Dixon Entrance, and are seizing Canadian fishing boats which go into the area they're claiming. The boats are impounded and the Americans sell their catch. Canadian fishers actually have to pay \$50,000 to get their boats back.

Mulroney has just abdicated all defense of our territorial integrity.

**Do you think free trade was forced onto us by American multinationals? Or, was Brian Mulroney himself the main proponent of the deal?**

Many people say Brian Mulroney was desperate for the free trade deal and went down and begged the Americans for it. We don't agree with that at all.

When Mulroney was running against Joe Clark for the leadership of the Conservative party in 1983, he said free trade was a danger to Canadian sovereignty and

we'd hear no more from him on the subject. But, eight years after he was elected prime minister, he called his first press conference — not in Canada, but in Washington at Ronald Reagan's side — and announced he was starting negotiations on free trade with the U.S.

The background to this is interesting. In 1983 the U.S. ambassador to Canada, Paul Robinson, called the head of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce to his home in Ottawa. Robinson told him that the Americans had just signed a free trade deal with Israel, and that they'd like to do one with Canada next.

But Robinson said it couldn't look like the Americans are calling the shots, or there would be a backlash among Canadians. So, Canadian companies must pick up the ball and make it look like the free trade idea is coming out of Canada.

And that's when we saw business associations pushing for free trade, like the Canadian Petroleum Association and the Canadian Manufacturers Association.

But what's funny is that they call themselves Canadian. They're about as Canadian as the Dallas Cowboys because they're made up of mostly American multinationals operating in Canada.

## Manifest Destiny

**So, the Americans were the ones who pushed for the deal.**

Yes. The idea of an economic union between Canada and the U.S. has a long history, and it used to be called "Manifest Destiny." This is the idea of incorporating Canada into the U.S. to ensure free access to Canadian resources. It goes back 200 years.

We actually have the distinction of being the first country to be invaded by the United States — in 1776, when Benjamin Franklin took over Quebec City and Montreal. They invaded again in 1812.

After that, the Americans turned to commercial means of seizing Canadian resources. When the Americans purchased Alaska from the Russians in 1867, they said it wasn't Alaska so much they wanted as everything between Alaska and the U.S.

**But if free trade is only in the interests of the Americans, why would a Canadian prime minister be so enthusiastic about the idea?**

Our position is that the Canadian government no longer represents the interests of even Canadian business. The Mulroney government simply works directly for the

American multinational corporations which control half of the Canadian economy.

There are all sorts of examples. Mulroney has started to dismantle the institutions which hold the country together — the rail links, the CBC, the social programs. There's growing animosity between the English and the French, between the Whites and Native people. Meech Lake was a further attempt to balkanize and split up the country.

A Conservative government in Saskatchewan signed a deal not long ago to build the Rafferty-Alameda dam to provide the Americans with water. But when the Canadian government and the people of Saskatchewan said there has to be an environmental study of the dam, the province said, listen, we signed a deal with Washington, and that overrides Canadian law.

## Trade Harassments

**Do you think free trade has created an economic crisis in the country?**

That's no question. Mulroney promised that free trade would give us "jobs, jobs, jobs." In 1988, he said free trade would create 250,000 new jobs.

Instead, we've lost 500,000 jobs in the first two years of this deal. Twenty per cent of our entire manufacturing capacity has pulled out of the country.

Mulroney said free trade would mean cheaper prices for consumers. Every home was supposed to get \$800 in their pockets from free trade. Instead, inflation has risen and we have a brand new tax, the GST. Prices have actually gone up.

Before the GST we had a tax on manufacturing corporations, but those companies told Mulroney: "either you eliminate the tax or we're going to leave Canada and go to the U.S." You and I can't go to the United States. So, Mulroney got rid of the manufacturing tax and imposed the Goods and Services Tax on consumers.

Mulroney also said free trade would finally give Canadian companies secure access to the richest market in the world, the United States. But in fact we now have more trade harassments by the U.S. than we did before we signed the deal. The Americans want Canada to remove subsidies on West Coast fish, lobsters, beef, meat, potatoes. There's a whole long list. Canada didn't get a thing out of the free trade deal in terms of giving Canadian

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