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# Bilateral Cooperation and Bounded Sovereignty in Counter-Terrorism Efforts

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# Bilateral Cooperation and Bounded Sovereignty in Counter-Terrorism Efforts

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*The 'Global War on Terror,' led by the United States, emphasizes the role of international alliances in tackling terrorist threats. By their very nature, international counterterrorism efforts challenge state sovereignty by requiring changes to both foreign and domestic policies. This, in turn, creates complex sovereignty issues and raises some interesting questions for closer examination. How has cooperation in counterterrorism altered the perceptions and behavior of allies of the United States? Has the post-9/11 security environment constrained the sovereignty of other nations? This paper will analyze Canada's cooperation with the US in order to explore these questions. The study argues that Canada's sovereignty has been bounded, but not determined, by US demands. Examining the relationship between the US and Canada can help us understand both the limitations and the continuing relevance of the traditional concepts of power, sovereignty and interdependence in international relations.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Given the transnational nature of many contemporary terrorist groups, it follows that the United States' Global War on Terror (GWOT) emphasizes the role of international alliances in tackling terrorist threats (Sageman 2004; Asal et al. 2007; "National Strategy for Combating Terrorism" 2006). Building cooperative relations with other states in counterterrorism (CT) operations has been a challenging process. By their very nature, international CT operations confront state sovereignty by requiring changes in both foreign and domestic policies. In many cases, such operations necessitate coordination of overarching federal security issues with local functions such as law enforcement (Byman 2006b). This, in turn, creates complex sovereignty issues, involving a dynamic relation between domestic

and international variables (Jones 2006). Few studies have explored the implications of this for the theory and practice of international relations. This paper will show how both domestic and interstate factors came into play in counterterrorism cooperation between the US and Canada.

The post-9/11 environment illustrates both US power and the limits upon it. On the one hand, the problems the US has faced in Iraq and Afghanistan have exposed the boundaries of its hegemony. On the other hand, although perceptions of threat and acceptable responses to them differ widely even among the closest of allies, we see a high degree of compliance with US demands on counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations (Byman 2006a). The US and many

of its NATO allies have had differing, even conflicting, positions on domestic surveillance, interrogation and policies in Afghanistan and Iraq. Nonetheless, US ability to harness the cooperation, whether voluntary or through the threat of military or economic retaliation, of numerous countries in its so-called war on terror illustrates the presence of a distinct authority structure in the international system (Donnelly 2006).

This raises some interesting issues for closer examination. Has the post-9/11 security environment constrained the sovereignty of other nations? How has CT cooperation altered the perceptions and behavior of allies of the United States? This paper will explore Canada's cooperation with the US on post-9/11 security measures to understand the extent to which Canadian sovereignty has been limited or altered as a result. Through a realist lens, it could be argued that, because of the density of reciprocal ties, US-Canada relations do not form a typical case from which generalizations can be made. The relations between the two countries illuminate little about the international system or interstate relations in general (Keohane and Nye 2001). This paper contends that, for precisely these reasons, the interactions between the two neighbors deserve closer examination. Understanding US-Canada relations can help illuminate the ramifications of dense and asymmetrical interdependence. Some authors have argued that the security community

formed by the US and Canada is based on so many shared interests and values that reciprocity defines their relationship. Others are more skeptical, arguing that the interdependence between the two countries is so asymmetrical that Canadian autonomy has been severely impacted by American dominance (Massie 2007). The findings of this paper are that the reality lies between these two extremes. Canadian policy is bounded, but not determined, by US hegemony. The asymmetrical interdependence between the two countries limits, but does not negate, Canadian autonomy. Examining the relationship between the US and Canada, particularly in the context of the highly-securitized environment of the post-9/11 world, can help us probe both the limitations and the continuing relevance of traditional concepts of power, sovereignty, autonomy and interdependence.

### **COOPERATION, INTERDEPENDENCE AND SOVEREIGNTY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Many studies recognize the presence of cooperative relations between states (Axelrod 1984; Keohane and Nye 1977; Wendt 1999; Hoffman 2006). However, cooperation in counterterrorism (CT) operations challenges state sovereignty in particularly strong ways. CT operations blur the lines between domestic and international policy. Highly sensitive issues, such as domestic

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surveillance, intelligence gathering and sharing, coordination of immigration and assimilation policies, military cooperation and border security, are involved.

Interdependence, particularly asymmetrical interdependence, can alter the ways in which nations exercise their sovereignty. While “sovereignty” is a much-contested concept, a widely cited author argues that it has four principal components. When a state enjoys international legal sovereignty, it is recognized by other states as a legal equal. Westphalian sovereignty establishes a state’s territorial boundaries and asserts that the state has sole control over legitimate behavior within this territory. Interdependent sovereignty means that the state has the ability to control movements across its borders. Finally, domestic sovereignty or autonomy asserts that the state and its rulers have the capacity to make policy and control developments within their jurisdictional territory (Krasner 1999). Complete sovereignty implies that the state is free from any form of external control and can autonomously make policy free from the interference of other governments. In short, sovereignty refers to the idea that states are autonomous and independent from each other. While some might view that sovereignty implies a grant of unconstrained will and power to the state, sovereignty has, in fact, always been limited by international norms,

laws and the actions of other states. The degree to which a state’s sovereignty is constrained is relative to its military, economic and ideational power. For example, the US has, for much of its existence, enjoyed a considerable degree of autonomy and control; however, less powerful states have not (Krasner 2001c, 2001b).

Globalization and growing interdependence have altered the degree to which states are, in fact, autonomous. While smaller states are most often constrained in their exercise of sovereignty, even larger countries such as the US may find their autonomy limited by external forces, such as trade agreements or the demands of other governments. A state can limit another’s ability to formulate policy and control its borders in a variety of different ways. The more complex and dense the ties between two countries, the more influence they may have on each other. If one state has greater military or economic power, it can exercise a greater degree of influence over weaker countries. On the other hand, the concept of ‘defense against help’ illustrates how less powerful states, such as Canada, use a mix of unilateral and cooperative defense measurements to protect themselves while also working with the dominant state, such as the US (Barry and Brat 2008).<sup>1</sup> As will be demonstrated in this paper, interdependence, and asymmetrical interdependence in particular, can

<sup>1</sup> Barry and Brat (2008) provide a valuable, historical perspective of how Canada has worked with the US but has also taken unilateral steps to protect its own interests. This article extends the discussion of small state-large state security relations by discussing the concept of bounded sovereignty and providing a closer examination of the developments since 2001.

exercise an important constraining influence on sovereignty. While this is the case in many areas of cooperation, such as climate governance and trade, balancing security, interdependence and sovereignty is particularly challenging. This is because security-related issues, such as countering terrorism and enhancing border security, are seen as particularly germane to a nation's immediate interests.

### **COOPERATION BETWEEN THE US AND CANADA IN COUNTERTERRORISM**

The relationship between the US and Canada involves a very high degree of trust. Canada has been a steadfast political, military and economic ally of the US for several decades. The two countries have a relationship of close, albeit highly asymmetric, interdependence. Canada's economic well-being is dependent on its trade with the US, while the reverse does not hold to the same degree. Almost \$1.2 billion in trade crosses the US-Canada border every day. While about 25 percent of US trade goes to Canada, 87 percent of Canada's trade is US-bound. 40 percent of Canada's GDP is tied to exports to the US, while only 2.5 percent of US GDP is tied to exports to Canada. At the same time, while the US economy is more diversified, Canada remains a crucial partner for American business (Byman 2006b). Canada is the leading energy supplier to the US, making it a very valuable ally. In sum, the two countries

are highly interdependent; however, the power differential between them illustrates a classic case of asymmetric interdependence, with Canada as the junior partner.

The US and Canada are closely tied through collective security arrangements. Conflicts between the two countries are, and are expected to be, resolved peacefully. War is not even considered a remote possibility (Adler and Barnett 1998; Donnelly 2006; Jackson 2007). One example of the trust-based relationship between the two countries is the shared border which, historically, has had few compliance or monitoring mechanisms in place. This is not to say that border relations have been completely devoid of conflict; however, in large part, they have been harmonious and cooperative.

The events of 9/11 altered this dynamic. In the immediate aftermath of the attack, the border was virtually sealed, adversely affecting the substantial volume of trade between the two countries. Subsequently, several prominent American lawmakers, including Senator Hillary Clinton, alleged that some of the 9/11 hijackers entered the US across the Canadian border. While the allegation proved to be untrue, overall concerns about the 'porous border' remained. The Report of the 9/11 Commission highlighted concerns about border security. It pointed out that the American

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government had failed to consider the potentially dangerous impact of Canada's immigration and refugee policies. It also noted existent terrorist group activity in Canada. Other prominent studies have discussed the activities of the Sri Lankan group, the Liberation of Tamil Tigers Eelam (LTTE), and the Canada-based Sikh militants who masterminded the bombing of an Air India flight in 1985 (Rae 2005; Lake 2007; Becker 2006). The 9/11 report faulted the American government for not having added resources on the border even after a potential terrorist had entered the US through Canada in 1999.<sup>2</sup> It called for the tightening of border controls through measures such as the introduction of biometric passports and visas. The proposal on biometrics was subsequently passed into law through the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act of 2002 ("The 9/11 Commission Report" 2004; Rudolph 2006).<sup>3</sup>

In June 2006, Canadian authorities arrested a group of suspected terrorists in Toronto, who were accused of planning attacks within Canada. This exacerbated US (and Canadian) anxiety. Some Congresspersons were critical of the allegedly lax attitude of the Canadian Prime Minister towards the possibility of Islamist terrorists being present in his country ("The Need to Implement WHTI to Protect US Homeland Security" 2006). Although the initial fear of the unprotected border

has decreased, and hard evidence about alleged terrorists "infiltrating" the US through Canada is noticeably absent, the American government has continued to implement a number of measures that restrict free passage across the US-Canada border.

## **A SECURITY PREDICAMENT BETWEEN FRIENDS**

For most of the period since the American Civil War, the open border between the two countries has not only facilitated trade and relatively open movement of people, but also symbolized a strong, trust-based relationship. The apprehension of Ahmed Ressay in December 1999 raised some, albeit limited, concerns about the shared border. Ressay, an Algerian national who had been living in Canada for five years, was arrested after attempting to enter Washington State on a ferry from Victoria, BC, with a trunk full of explosive material. This incident prompted the first set of concerns within the US Congress about the Canadian border (Andreas 2005); however, it did not have a lasting impact on border security policies.

9/11 securitized the relationship between the neighbors to an unprecedented degree. Although no one from or in Canada played any role in the attacks, the border created a deep sense of derived or perceptual insecurity for the US. The situation

<sup>2</sup> *This was a reference to Ahmed Ressay, the so-called "millennium bomber," who was apprehended while attempting to enter the US through Washington state in December 2009.*

<sup>3</sup> *The full Report of the 9/11 Commission can be found at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/pdf/fullreport.pdf>.*



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can be seen as analogous to a security dilemma. A security dilemma occurs because attempts made by one state to increase its own security may decrease the perceived security of another state. Given the anarchic structure of the international system, constant mistrust and uncertainty about the motivations of others perpetuates insecurity among states (Jervis 1978).

The concept of the security dilemma is usually employed to explain adversarial relations between states such as India and Pakistan, or the US and USSR. Yet, it can also explain why, after 9/11, the US viewed Canada, one of its most reliable allies, with such intense suspicion. While this is a departure from the traditional application of the concept, it helps us understand the perceptual mistrust that entered the relationship in response to exogenous events.<sup>4</sup> This development is particularly noteworthy because of the close cooperation between the two countries across a number of issues. At issue were Canada's domestic policies, namely what the US believed to be Canada's excessively liberal immigration laws. In the heightened crisis environment, Americans perceived these policies as threatening to their security interests. They feared that the open border between the two countries would be exploited by potential terrorists seeking to enter the US through Canada. In other words, although the Canadian state continued to be seen as a trustworthy

ally, its internal policies became a cause of US insecurity. This insecurity was predicated on the American perception that Canada was unwilling and unable to control its borders and limit the activities of potential terrorists operating within Canadian territory.

The security predicament discussed here is certainly distinct from the traditional notion of a dilemma, in that the latter refers to a spiral of aggressive actions as a result of perceived threats. In this case, we did not see a breakdown in relations or cooperation, nor an escalation in aggressive posturing. What did occur was a negative US reaction to Canadian domestic politics and border policing. Canadian policies on immigration and border controls were seen to threaten US interests. Like traditional security dilemmas, however, this one was based on perception, rather than an objective understanding of Canadian policies or their possible impact. Nonstate actors, rather than the Canadian state itself, are seen as the threat. Such an approach marks an interesting shift away from a militarized perception of security and borders (Andreas and Nadelmann 2006; Andreas 2003), revealing the complex intersection between domestic and foreign policy.

<sup>4</sup> Note that the 9/11 attackers had no links whatsoever to Canada.

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## **COOPERATION AFTER 9/11: CANADIAN DEFERENCE TO US HEGEMONY**

When states are uncertain about the motivations of other states, they demand signals of reassurance (Kydd 2001). After 9/11, the US faced uncertainty about the implications of Canada's domestic policies. Canada is widely seen by the international community as having one of the world's most generous immigration and asylum-granting policies. Any person who arrives in Canada can apply for refugee status and move around the country freely while awaiting a determination. Those who are denied refugee protection are not aggressively pursued for deportation. From the perspective of American lawmakers, such policies could allow potential security threats to go unnoticed (Smick 2006). The US solution to this was fairly simple: Canada should reassure the US by modifying its domestic laws in line with American interests or face a more restrictive border (de Nevers 2007). In effect, this meant that the US sought to limit Canadian autonomy in the formulation of domestic policy and the regulation of its border.

In response, the Canadian government took a series of steps to mitigate US concerns and assure the Americans that bilateral cooperation would not endanger national security. Because the US was not directly threatened

by Canadian actions, Canada's reassurances contained no promises of self-restraint. Rather, Canada promised that it would cooperate on border security and restrain those citizens, residents or visitors who might aim to harm the US. Such reassurances, by their very nature, require changes in domestic policy and therefore constrain the exercise of national sovereignty.

Although Canadian officials often seek to give the impression to their public that they are resisting pressure from Washington and making decisions independent of US concerns, it is clear that several changes have been made to avoid punitive action by the US (Andreas, 2003).<sup>5</sup> Steps taken to address US concerns included the Canada-US Smart Border Declaration and Action Plan and Free and Secure Trade (FAST), which facilitates the cross-border flow of regular commercial traffic (Wasem et al. 2006). The declaration does not include any enforcement mechanisms. No sanctions or other punishments were stipulated in the accord; nonetheless, compliance with its provisions has been high. This is a significant display of the shared norms, as well as continuing trust-based interactions that are common between the two countries.

Domestic policies in Canada were also modified to a significant degree. For example, in December 2001, Canada passed the Anti-Terror Act. Among other measures, this Act provides for a

<sup>5</sup> *The extent to which public comments about 'autonomy' have been made has differed between the Liberal government of former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and the current Conservative government led by Stephen Harper.*

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list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations, very similar to that identified by the US Department of State.<sup>6</sup> In June 2002, Canada introduced an Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) which provided for the expedited removal of persons who pose security threats, additional screening for asylum seekers and new penalties on those providing false evidence to enter or remain in Canada (Harvey 2005). In 2003, Canada created Public Safety Canada, which was its corollary to the US Department of Homeland security, giving a centralized umbrella to departments and agencies responsible for national security. These steps were supposedly taken to protect national security; but, notwithstanding a few exceptions, there is little evidence that Canada's physical security was under direct and immediate threat. A more likely explanation is that the US's security predicament was threatening Canada's economic interests (Lennox 2007).

As mentioned earlier, insecurity is an inherently perceptual phenomenon. As a result, Canada launched a spirited public relations campaign to dispel the damaging perception that its domestic policies and the open border were damaging American security interests. A prominent section of the website of the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C., is devoted to assuaging US anxiety, reiterating that Canadian immigration laws are designed to screen out those who are a threat to national security.<sup>7</sup>

"CanadaAlly," another government-sponsored website, emphasizes Canada's steadfast support of the US. Reassuring American audiences that enhancing border security is a priority for Canada, it promises to streamline and tighten immigration policies and screen for potential entrants into the country.<sup>8</sup> Interestingly, the website also vigorously objects to the argument that similar methods of security and screening be applied to the northern and southern borders of the US.<sup>9</sup> This highlights Canada's interest in maintaining a "special relationship" with its neighbor, based on a mutuality of interests and identities. Because immigration policies are considered a sovereign issue, it is an unusual step in international relations for a country to assuage the security concerns of its neighbor by changing its policies.

### **CONSTRAINED SOVEREIGNTY OR CALCULATED SELF- INTEREST?**

Does this mean that Canadian sovereignty is subordinate to US demands? In fact, a closer examination shows us that Canada's actions and policies are not entirely a function of US hegemonic control. Historically, Canada has been able to obtain valuable concessions from the US that have resulted in economic benefits for Canada. In a study of interstate disputes between 1950 and 1969, Keohane and Nye (2001) find that, in at least half of

<sup>6</sup> For example, the US lists the *Shining Path of Peru* as a FTO while Canada does not. *Identification of Islamist terrorist groups, particularly in the Middle East, is virtually identical.*

<sup>7</sup> <http://geo.international.gc.ca/can-am/washington/defence/cirpaposition-en.asp>.

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.canadianally.com/ca/pdf/natsecurnat\\_e.pdf](http://www.canadianally.com/ca/pdf/natsecurnat_e.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> See <http://geo.international.gc.ca/can-am/washington/defence/misperceptions-en.asp> for more information.

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the cases, the outcomes were closer to the interests of Canada than the US. This was achieved partly through skillful bargaining, which can compensate for an unfavorable asymmetry in power structure. In addition, Canada is an important enough trade partner, both in volume of American exports and US reliance on Canada's energy imports, that the US cannot assert an entirely unilateral approach towards its northern neighbor.

Changes to Canada's immigration and refugee policies have been under active consideration by the Canadian government since at least 1997. Elements of the Anti-Terrorist Act of December 2001 and the Public Safety Act 2001 were first considered in 1998. Since 1984, Canada has been deeply concerned about the activities of terrorist groups within its territory (Massie 2007). 9/11 provided an opportunity to institutionalize some long-considered policy modifications. In sum, although deference to US demands was a major trigger for the changes to domestic policy, it was by no means the only motivating factor. Nonetheless, Canada's efforts to publicize new policies to a US audience illustrate the fact that reassuring Americans is considered pivotal to Canadian interests.

Reciprocal, rather than unilateral, trust-based interactions have long been the defining feature in bilateral

relations. Information sharing, within the bounds of national sovereignty, has underlined several cases of successful law enforcement both before and after 9/11. Joint investigation and real-time information sharing have led to successful operations against illegal immigration in both countries. Another area in which formal and informal contacts between officials have been useful to the interest of both countries is in the effort to combat drug trafficking.<sup>10</sup> Shared surveillance and tracking techniques have been used extensively in anti-narcotics operation throughout both countries. Attempts have been made to synchronize and harmonize drug importation policies and criminal justice, reflecting a reciprocity-based approach to cooperation (Andreas and Nadelmann 2006). Canadian authorities are often interested in having cross-border drug-related offences tried in the US because of more stringent incarceration laws. In addition, entities such as the Integrated Border Enforcement Teams (IBETs) and the Integrated Border Intelligence Team show examples of policy coordination based on reciprocity rather than hegemonic domination.<sup>11</sup>

### **RESISTANCE TO US HEGEMONY: IRAQ AND THE ARAR CASE**

Even in matters of security, while adopting a generally deferential policy towards its neighbor, Canada has resisted US hegemony in a few

<sup>10</sup> *Interview with Canadian and American officials, 2007*

<sup>11</sup> *Interview with Canadian and American officials, 2007*

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areas. Canada's refusal to support the war in Iraq was an unusual, thought not unprecedented, case in which Canada turned down its closest allies, the UK and the US. Canadian public opinion ran strongly against the war, in particular because it was not supported by the United Nations (Vucetic 2006). While Canada is constrained in bilateral security relations, it has more flexibility in responding to international situations. Multilateral institutions such as the United Nations are a mechanism for it to try to constrain the behavior of large powers (Barry and Brat 2008). The case of Maher Arar highlighted the conflicts that can arise when interstate cooperation interferes with domestic interests. As a result of the controversy, Canadian guidelines on information-sharing for Canadian officials have changed. For example, cases involving national security concerns must now be routed through Ottawa rather than being handled at the local or provincial level.<sup>12</sup> Such centralization is an unusual development in the trust-based relations between the two countries. Such constraints may also adversely impact the US-driven interest in speedy and agile information sharing in counterterrorism operations. Interestingly, the extent to which rendition and other counterterrorism practices have been questioned by the American public and Congress highlights a significant amount of doubt within the US about the acceptability, validity and desirability of such actions.

This illustrates a common normative perspective between the two countries.<sup>13</sup>

## **ASYMMETRICAL INTERDEPENDENCE AND BOUNDED SOVEREIGNTY**

The US and Canada can be categorized as unprovokable allies, who enjoy cooperation predicated on trust. Such allies have a high density of ties and require few compliance mechanisms. At the same time, trust and suspicion are not dichotomous variables; rather, they co-exist on a continuum. Levels of trust may change with reference to specific issues among allies, as they have with regard to Canada and border security.

9/11 did not alter the fundamental nature and structure of US-Canadian relations, which is marked both by a history of reciprocal relations and clear American dominance. Nonetheless, the level of trust between the two countries did erode to some extent. This was particularly the case from the point of view of the US government. Prior to 2001, the open border between the two countries symbolized a relationship of mutual trust, requiring little enforcement and relying on localized interactions. After 9/11, many Americans viewed the border as something that could be exploited by potential terrorists. This led the US government to pursue an unprecedented level of border security and to demand changes to Canadian domestic policies. Dense ties continued, but the relationship

<sup>12</sup> *Personal interview with Canadian officials, 2007.*

<sup>13</sup> See for example, Garcia, Michael John. 2007. "Renditions: Constraints Imposed by Laws on Torture." Washington, DC: Congressional Research Services <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL32890.pdf> (June 5, 2008).

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was marked by increasing American assertion. Concerned about national economic interests, the Canadian government acceded to many American requests. This shows that, given a relationship marked by asymmetrical interdependence, Canadian policy autonomy was constrained by US demands.

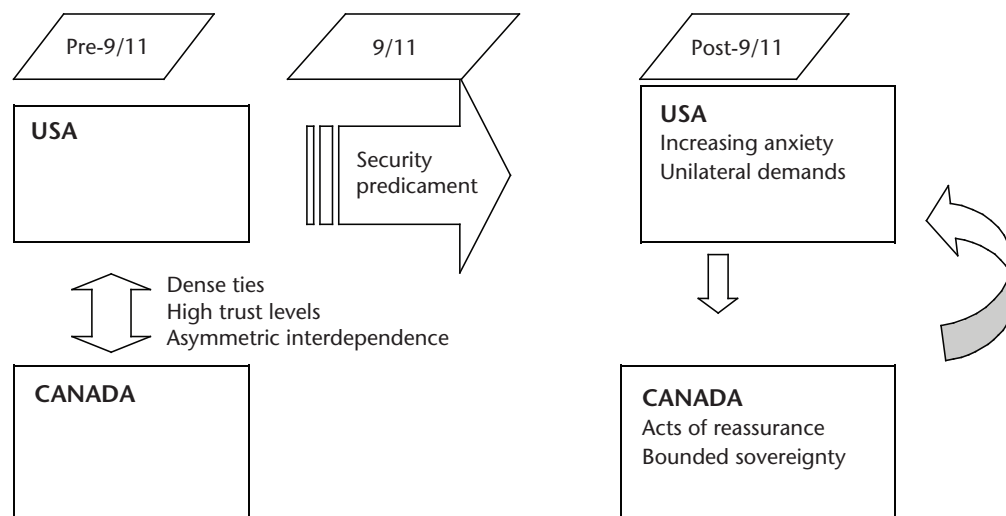
At the same time, American CT operations affected Canada's trust in the US, particularly after Mr. Arar's rendition. This case directly led Canada to solidify its own monitoring mechanisms, designed to centralize, supervise and limit information-sharing between the two countries. While Canada has complied with many US demands, it still exercises strong national sovereignty, as demonstrated by its refusal to participate in the Iraq

war and its responses to Mr. Arar's rendition (Hillmer 2003; Cooper 2005; Sands 2006).

Figure 1 illustrates some of the changes in relations between the two countries since 2001. Prior to the 9/11 attacks, close ties and high trust levels underlined US-Canada exchanges. After 9/11, a security predicament arose among American audiences as a result of heightened anxiety about Canadian policies towards immigrants. In response, Canada offered several acts of reassurance which constrained its sovereignty but protected its economic interests. Close, reciprocal ties have continued, but within an altered dynamic.

The relationship between the US and Canada illustrates the contradictory

**Figure 1: Impact of 9/11 on Bilateral Relations**



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pulls of sovereignty and asymmetrical interdependence. The US extends its hegemony over both interstate interactions and Canadian domestic policy. Canada, while relinquishing significant amounts of its sovereignty, gains from the benefits of the political and economic order provided by the dominant state. The legitimacy of the hierarchical relationship rests on the ability of the US to provide a stable economic and political order which helps maintain Canada's prosperity and security (Lake 2007).

This does not, however, mean that Canada's sovereignty is lost; rather, it is bounded by the US-led hierarchy. If we view sovereignty as territorial integrity and political independence (Sinclair and Byers 2007), we can conclude that Canada does enjoy both.<sup>14</sup> However; its political independence is bounded by its interdependent relation with the US. For Canada, both its military and economic security are closely, even inextricably, linked to the US. From this perspective, deference to the demands of the US is not so much an outcome of limited sovereignty, as it is a conscious choice. The choice is based both on rational self-interest (protect Canada's trade and military alliance with the US) as well as ideational factors (shared norms under the collective security arrangement with the US). Interests and identities are not static concepts; rather actors acquire them by participating in collective actions

and meanings (Wendt, 1999). Canada has relinquished some of its autonomy to its collective arrangements with the US, but it has done so in order to protect its own interests. A parallel can be found in the European Union, where members make voluntary arrangements which restrict policy autonomy but optimize outcomes in other issue areas, such as trade or collective security (Krasner 2001a). Such a development highlights a fascinating phenomenon; that of states choosing to constrain their autonomy in highly sensitive issues (such as immigration) in order to strengthen bilateral (or multilateral) interdependence.

Despite its hierarchical nature, the relationship between the two countries is one of interdependence. It is not entirely defined by American demands and Canadian compliance. The large shared border between the two countries makes Canada perennially significant for American security, both from an economic and a military point of view. A cooperative, rather than recalcitrant, Canada is certainly more beneficial for the US. The controversy surrounding the Arar case shows the pitfalls of excessive unilateral action. In addition, Canada's considerable economic clout and its international 'peacekeeper' image can make it a valuable partner in influencing state sponsors of terrorism (Byman 2006b; Ignatieff 2003). An understanding of the layers of complexity in relations of bilateral

<sup>14</sup> *More nuanced conceptions of sovereignty also exist, such as discussions about 'peoples' sovereignty' or the right of citizens to be protected from human rights abuses committed by their government.*

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and multilateral interdependence constitutes a valuable contribution to the study and practice of international relations.



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