

## **The Diplomacy of Proximity and Specialness: Enhancing Canada's Representation in the United States\***

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### **Summary**

Diplomatic representation, both as a concept and in terms of its structures and processes, does not receive the attention that it deserves. This is surprising given that it forms a central concern for both analysts and practitioners of diplomacy, with the latter confronting multiple challenges in adapting modes of representation to changes in their international and domestic political environments. One facet of this can be identified in responses to factors that have assumed a significant place in the development of diplomacy — namely distance and proximity. To the growth of proximity in both spatial and issue-oriented terms, the challenge of the 'special relationship' is added in specific contexts. Both factors come together in the case of Canada's attempts to manage its policies towards the United States. Here, strategies have moved through distinct phases responding to domestic and international changes. The latest phase, which is associated with substantial rethinking of the role and structure of Foreign Affairs Canada, assumes the form of what has been labelled the Enhanced Representation Initiative (ERI). The ERI is interesting not only in the Canadian-US context, but because it reveals more general problems for governments seeking to manage the pressures of proximity and a growing number of relationships that assume aspects of 'specialness'.

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**Key Words**

Diplomatic representation, distance-proximity, special relationships, Canada and the United States, adapting modes of representation, Enhanced Representation Initiative (ERI)

**Introduction**

Representation is central both to the practice and study of diplomacy. In the case of practice, most diplomatic services are locked in debate as to how it is and should be done, and the need to adapt diplomatic networks to changing environments against a background of diminishing resources. In terms of the academic study of diplomacy, representation assumes a rather different, if obviously related, significance. While the role of diplomatic representation is central to attempts to evaluate the historical development and current state of diplomacy, as is frequently pointed out there is a relative paucity of reflective thought on the subject. Diplomats, rather than being objects of dispassionate evaluation, often become pawns in a game of diplomatic chess in which they are called in support of arguments concerning the health and relevance of diplomatic networks and of the study of diplomacy itself. Discussion lapses too easily into polarized positions in which arguments concerning the demise of diplomacy confront equally vehement assertions that all is well and that any change to practice is ephemeral and, by implication, not worthy of examination.<sup>1</sup>

It is not the objective here to rectify this situation in any depth, but some questions will be flagged concerning the nature of representation in a changing diplomatic milieu. This is done in a specific context, namely the management of a key variable that colours much discussion of the practice of diplomatic representation and its role and relevance in the light of technological change since the invention of the electric telegraph. This key variable is the juxtaposition of distance and proximity in the practice of diplomacy and the machinery that underpins it. In one sense, distance between communities has constituted a key element in the historical development of diplomacy — just as the growth of proximity through communications and information technology has been regarded by some as a factor hastening its decline. Over

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<sup>1</sup>) For a discussion of this debate, see D. Lee and D. Hudson, 'The Old and New Significance of Political Economy in Diplomacy', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 30, no. 1, 2004, pp. 354-356.

time, the distance-proximity issue has become more complex, assuming aspects relating to space and time but also to culture, identities and policy agendas that are often mediated through epistemic communities operating alongside traditional diplomatic channels. But associated with the interplay between distance and proximity is another concept that has implications for the way in which diplomatic representation is structured — namely, that of ‘specialness’ in international relationships.

Often used to depict dyadic relationships whose nature is assumed to be qualitatively different in some respect from the normal, the idea of the ‘special relationship’ suggests qualities relating to policy content, but also to the style and process through which policy is conducted.<sup>2</sup> In the latter context, diplomatic representation may be structured to take account of these special circumstances and qualities. Both of these factors intersect in the case under consideration here — the Canada-United States relationship. Not only has this relationship assumed significance in terms of its policy content and structure, in which proximity plays a significant role, but there has been a longstanding debate as to the appropriate methods and strategies for managing the relationship. The challenges posed by the Bush administration’s policies and the impact of events flowing from 11 September 2001 have generated renewed debate not only about policy but about how Canada should manage its most significant international relationship. This has been reinforced by change in Canada’s international policy management structures, not least the decision to split the former Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade into two separate entities: Foreign Affairs Canada (FAC); and International Trade Canada (ITC). As with many foreign services around the world, the place of FAC in the management of Canada’s external relations has come under intense scrutiny, as reflected in the 2005 *Canada’s International Policy Statement* (IPS).<sup>3</sup> Unsurprisingly, management of the relationship with the US has been given close attention, leading to restructuring within the framework

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<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the ways in which the term is used, see S. Smith, ‘The Special Relationship’, *Political Studies*, vol. 38, no. 1, 1990, pp. 126-136.

<sup>3</sup> *Canada’s International Policy Statement* (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 2005). Canadian governments have produced a series of statements on international policy over the years, based on extensive processes of consultation. The four-volume (plus overview) 2005 IPS is a comprehensive review of defence, commerce, development and diplomacy. It is available online at [www.international.gc.ca](http://www.international.gc.ca).

of the Enhanced Representation Initiative (ERI), which was formulated in 2004. This new framework is seen as an innovative approach to managing Canada's special relationship with the US and a better means of building and managing a 'strong partnership'. According to a senior FAC official closely involved with its development, the ERI is a unique approach to Canadian representation since it encompasses a 'whole-of-government approach' to the US relationship, involving fourteen government departments in the delivery and management of Canadian diplomacy across North America.<sup>4</sup> The ERI has expanded Canadian representation with a broader geographical reach of consulates and consuls across the US. Particular emphasis is given to developing Canadian representation in areas 'outside the Beltway': in the south-west, as a response to the shift in power in the US from the east coast to the south-west during the Bush presidency; as well as the north-west, driven by the need to develop better advocacy and business development in this region of notable trade disputes in lumber and wheat.

In the following pages the broader issues of structure and process in Canada's pattern of representation in its powerful southern neighbour are considered, as well as an analysis of the ERI as one example of the response to changing international and domestic demands in international policy management and their impact on the structures of diplomatic representation. The discussion is structured as follows. It begins with a brief consideration of where writing on representation fits in the contemporary literature on diplomacy. From this, some of the key issues that foreign ministries and their foreign services are confronting in adapting to change are identified, including the interaction between the management of proximity and specialness produced by structural changes within the international system. Pursuing this theme, the current debate on the management of Canadian-US relations, and in particular the changes embraced by the ERI, are examined.

## Studying the Structures of Representation

The concept of representation is central to the analysis and practice of diplomacy.<sup>5</sup> But, as with diplomacy more generally, the study of representation

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<sup>4</sup>) Interview, FAC Ottawa, 15 September 2005.

<sup>5</sup>) C. Jönsson and M. Hall, *Essence of Diplomacy* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); P. Sharp, 'For Diplomacy: Representation and the Study of International Relations', *International*

tends to be fragmentary and often lacks substance. The image coined by Jørgensen of 'floating islands of research' thus applies here, as it does to the broader context of diplomatic studies.<sup>6</sup> In part, as Jönsson and Hall argue, the problem is one of lack of theoretical insights.<sup>7</sup> But another problem relates to the dominant theoretical perspectives determining the way in which diplomatic representation is viewed. This, as is not infrequently noted, relates to the dominant discourse of diplomatic studies, which is rooted in realist and neo-realist perspectives. With its emphasis on the significance of international structures, not only has an appreciation of the role of agency in world politics been discouraged — clearly critical to an appreciation of the activities of diplomatic agents — but it has also established a set of boundaries determining the way in which we view diplomacy as an activity. It is not only that fresh perspectives are thereby discouraged, the questions they might pose are either deemed to be irrelevant to the historically determined and immutable purposes of diplomacy or are dismissed as insignificant. We thus find the argument that there is nothing new in diplomatic practice aligned with the assumption that developments in that practice — such as an increase in the commercial activities of diplomats or the increased role of non-state actors in diplomacy — are unworthy of note since historical antecedents for them in some form can always be found.<sup>8</sup> Sadly, this results in a polarized dialogue between those who argue that the adaptation of diplomatic structures and processes are inherently interesting and significant, rooted as they are in changes at both the domestic and international levels,

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*Studies Review*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1999; P. Sharp, 'Who Needs Diplomats? The Problem of Diplomatic Representation', *International Journal*, vol. 52, no. 4, 1997, pp. 609-634; and R. Wolfe, 'Still Lying Abroad? On the Institution of the Resident Ambassador', *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, vol. 9, no. 2, 1998, pp. 23-54.

<sup>6</sup> K. Jørgensen, 'Modern European Diplomacy: A Research Agenda', *DSP Discussion Papers*, no. 31 (Leicester: Centre for the Study of Diplomacy, 1997). See also L. Reyhler, *Patterns of Diplomatic Thinking: A Cross-National Study of Structural and Social-Psychological Determinants* (New York: Praeger, 1979), p. 2; and C. Jönsson, 'Bargaining, Negotiation and Diplomacy: A Research Overview', *DSP Discussion Papers*, no. 63 (Leicester: Centre for the Study of Diplomacy, 2000), p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Jönsson and Hall, *Essence of Diplomacy*, pp. 98-100.

<sup>8</sup> James, for example, dismisses change in diplomatic machinery as 'froth' that has little significance for the central role of diplomacy, namely communication. See A. James, 'Diplomacy and International Society', *International Relations*, vol. 6, no. 6, 1980, p. 932. For further discussion of this, see B. Hocking, 'Catalytic Diplomacy: Beyond "Newness" and "Decline"', in J. Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 21-42.

and those denying that such developments are worthy of discussion. And, as Lee and Hudson have noted, this debate takes place in the face of an attitude of benign indifference within wider international relations' scholarship.<sup>9</sup>

This is of particular relevance to the ongoing discussion about the role of diplomatic networks and, in particular, the place of the bilateral embassy within them. There is a temptation here to argue that the mere continued existence of the structures of bilateralism proves that all is well with them. Not only does this reduce discussion of change in representation to simplistic and distorted arguments, but it actually fails to connect with what is happening in the 'real world' of diplomacy. Here, the dominant themes of external challenge and internal adaptation underpin the proliferation of papers and reports (such as that contained in the Canadian IPS) on change in FAC and its overseas networks.<sup>10</sup> It is easy to view these reports as an indication of a renaissance of national diplomatic systems, but they can equally be viewed, rather more critically, as organizational survival strategies underpinned by bureaucratic and political inertia with regard to the mission, purpose and effectiveness of the foreign ministry and diplomatic service.<sup>11</sup>

Against this background, few students of international relations have sought to analyse the role of the representative in diplomatic networks. It is quite rare to find work such as Wolfe's, which, having decided that diplomatic networks are worth looking at, then seeks to explain why resident ambassadors still exist and why middle powers — such as Canada — maintain significant patterns of representation.<sup>12</sup> The answer to the first question, Wolfe suggests, lies in the role of multiple acts of diplomatic recognition. One such act is the representation of Canada, in the conventional sense, in the diplomatic system of states, regional and international organizations. Another is the reproduction of Canada by ambassadors, missions and consulates. This

<sup>9</sup> Lee and Hudson, 'The Old and New Significance of Political Economy in Diplomacy'.

<sup>10</sup> *Canada's International Policy Statement*. The volume entitled *A Role of Pride and Influence in the World: Diplomacy* deals with the machinery of diplomacy. See also the recent report by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *UK International Priorities: A Strategy for the FCO*, available at [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk).

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, G. Berridge, 'The Counter-Revolution in Diplomatic Practice', *Quaderni di Scienza Politica*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2005, pp. 7-24. The argument here is that the continuity of bilateral missions and a proliferation of MFA change documents constitute a rebuttal of any suggestion that things may not be well in the world of diplomacy.

<sup>12</sup> R. Wolfe, 'Still Lying Abroad?'. See also R. Wolfe (ed.), *Diplomatic Missions: The Ambassador on Canadian Foreign Policy* (Kingston ON: School of Policy Studies, 1998).

dual act of recognition is constitutive of an international system that is the inter-subjective creation of states. In this context, ambassadors are therefore 'central to the social reproduction of the society of states'.<sup>13</sup> In terms of the second question — the growth of diplomatic representation — Wolfe sees this as linked to familiar debates about globalization and the collapse of time and space. Drawing on the analogy of decisions made by firms regarding international investment, he suggests that ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs) reach not dissimilar conclusions as to the benefits of an international presence. Additionally, the growing density of international relationships reinforces the need to know what other actors are doing and their perceptions of their environments. This questions the familiar observation — or assumption — that globalization weakens the rationale for the structures and processes of diplomacy rather than, as Cohen has suggested, enhances the need for them.<sup>14</sup>

This resonates with the debate concerning the impact of distance on the practice of diplomacy that was generated by the invention of the electric telegraph. While posing the obvious issue of the utility of ambassadors in an age of instant communication, this suggested more far-reaching questions regarding the conduct of foreign policy, the organization of foreign ministries and the patterns of international politics.<sup>15</sup> While members of the diplomatic profession were by no means in agreement as to the consequences of the new technology, a familiar response to the reduction of distance and consequent closer proximity of centre and periphery in national diplomatic systems was symbolized by the lament of the British ambassador in Vienna, Sir Horace Rumbold, regarding 'the telegraphic demoralization of those who formerly had to act for themselves'.<sup>16</sup>

The debate concerning the impact of information and communications technology on the practice of representation is part of the broader debate on the relationship between principal and agent and the related issue of

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<sup>13</sup> Wolfe, 'Still Lying Abroad', p. 49. See also A.B. Bozeman, *Politics and Culture in International History: From the Ancient Near East to the Opening of the Modern Age* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction, 1994); B. Buzan and R. Little, *International Systems in World History: Remaking the Study of International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>14</sup> R. Cohen, 'Reflections on the New Global Diplomacy: Statecraft 2500 BC to 2000 AD', in J. Melissen (ed.), *Innovation in Diplomatic Practice* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 14–16.

<sup>15</sup> D. Nickles, 'Under the Wire: How the Telegraph Changed Diplomacy', *Harvard Historical Studies*, vol. 114 (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in T. Standage, *The Victorian Internet* (London: Phoenix, 1998), p. 148.

the extent to which the ambassador is — or should be — independent of the government that he/she represents.<sup>17</sup> Proximity is clearly a factor here, but its impact is far from obvious. On one level, the argument that the diminution of distance has demoted the significance of resident missions is countered by the enhanced complexity of information flows, the closer texture of political arenas and the engagement of a growing diversity of actors (both governmental and non-governmental) in diplomatic processes. As the Paschke Report on the role of German embassies within the European Union suggests, this can lead to counter-intuitive consequences. On the one hand, Paschke argues, the increasingly dense patterns of relations among EU member states have not reduced the need for bilateral representation: ‘proximity has not produced intimacy’ in intra-EU relations, and the belief that it has is characterized as the ‘illusion of familiarity’.<sup>18</sup> Paschke goes on to make the point that it is only the embassy on the spot that can deliver a broad overall assessment of the pattern of relations between Germany and the host EU state, and that such an awareness is critical to the management of an environment in which proximity requires blending the forms of bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. Furthermore, the erosion of space and time as a factor in diplomacy carries with it implications for how foreign ministries and their networks of posts relate to one another in terms of structures and allocation of tasks. The picture within EU foreign ministries is generally one where technological change has resulted in greater integration of the ministry and posts, with increasing reliance being placed on posts as the repository of country-related skills as geographical desks in the ministry are scaled down.<sup>19</sup>

Moreover, the changing agendas of world politics pose additional challenges to the definition and practice of representation. A consequence of the diminution of distance is growing inter-societal linkages and the desire of governments to trade knowledge and policies in a range of areas. One implication of this for diplomats — as several have explained during

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<sup>17</sup> Jönsson and Hall, *Essence of Diplomacy*, pp. 110–111.

<sup>18</sup> K. Paschke, *Report on the Special Inspection of Fourteen German Embassies in the Countries of the European Union* (Berlin: German Federal Foreign Office, September 2000), pp. 9–10. The English translation cited here is available on the DiploFoundation website at: <http://textus.diplomacy.edu/Thina/txGetXDoc.asp?Idconv=2939>.

<sup>19</sup> B. Hocking and D. Spence, *Foreign Ministries in the European Union: Integrating Diplomats* (Houndmills: Palgrave (revised edition), 2005).

interviews — is that they can become instruments of social learning in a wide range of areas from health and education reform to the management of terrorist threats. In so doing, their home ‘client’ departments lie outside the MFA, as do their interlocutors in the receiving state. In the Canadian context, a senior public official has noted how Health Canada (the federal government’s department dealing with public health issues) now expects Canadian missions to be, among other things, ‘knowledge brokers’, acting as agents whereby one government can learn from another in a wide range of policies developed within similar societies.<sup>20</sup>

The second issue — namely the factors determining choice in the pattern of overseas representation from a ‘sending’ state — has not received much systematic attention. A rare attempt to adopt a ‘scientific’ approach to the matter is provided by Webster, who examines the factors determining the decisions of five Commonwealth member states in allocating scarce resources to diplomatic representation. His conclusion is that geopolitical considerations are of significantly greater importance than any sense of common ties with fellow member states of the Commonwealth.<sup>21</sup> This poses interesting questions as to the significance for representational structures of what are deemed to be special relationships. In one sense, of course, all dyadic relationships are unique and therefore ‘special’. But the term has often been used to refer to a set of relationships of specific importance to at least one of a pair of states.<sup>22</sup> Not surprisingly, one of the states in each pair is the current hegemonic state in the international system. In differing contexts, therefore, the UK-US, Australia-US, Israel-US and Canada-US relationships are regarded as ‘special’ — at least by the non-US partner in each case. It is not the purpose here to analyse the context and content of ‘specialness’ in each situation, although the case of Canada and the US will be studied shortly. But it is relevant to note in passing that distance and proximity play

<sup>20</sup> A. Nymark, ‘Health Policy is Foreign Policy . . .’, in Wolfe, *Diplomatic Missions*, p. 176.

<sup>21</sup> C. Webster, ‘Commonwealth Diplomatic Missions: A Comparative Empirical Investigation of the Foreign Policy of Five Commonwealth Members’, *The Round Table*, 361, 2001, pp. 529-539.

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, A.B. Fox, *The Politics of Attraction: Four Middle Powers and the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977); A.F. Lowenthal and K. Burgess (eds), *Mexican-US Relations: Conflict and Convergence* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1993); R.A. Pastor ‘US Immigration Policy and Latin America: In Search of a Special Relationship’, *Latin American Research Review*, 19, 1984, pp. 35-57; B. Reich, *Securing the Covenant: United States-Israel Relations after the Cold War* (New York: Praeger, 1995); and J. Dumbrell, *Special Relationship: Anglo-American Relations in the Cold War and After* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2000).

differently in each case. Comparisons have thus been made between Canada and Australia in terms of strategies for managing proximity and specialness in a changed global environment. Burney has suggested that Australia has been more successful in dealing with Washington because it lacks 'the luxury of proximity' and thus takes nothing for granted. Canada, on the other hand, seems 'to have become peripheral by choice and despite our proximity'.<sup>23</sup>

Despite obvious differences, there are common threads woven within each of these so-called special relationships. These commonalities can be termed 'politicization', 'centralization' and 'domestication'. Politicization reflects the significance of a special relationship in the management of foreign policy, and the fact that for the 'minor' state, this will assume significant *political* importance. One consequence of this political importance may be the utilization of summit diplomacy, as in the Mulroney-Reagan phase of Canada-US relations or the Bush-Blair summitry in the run-up to the Iraq war. Another is likely to be the politicization of the head of mission post itself, as senior political figures rather than professional diplomats assume this role. The second common thread — centralization — flows from the first. The more important a relationship is deemed to be, the greater the tendency for its management to be supplemented by agencies outside the foreign ministry (such as prime ministerial or cabinet offices) — or even removed from the foreign ministry's remit. Finally, domestication has several connotations, chief among them being the centrality of a 'special relationship' to the domestic politics of each of the partners. Canadian domestic politics, for example, are often played out in the context of the importance of being different from the US in policy areas such as health and the environment. The way in which strategies for managing the relationship are developed is also important, since these may be rooted in perceptions of the special relationship as lying closer to the 'domestic' end of the foreign-domestic policy spectrum (in management terms this is reflected in Ottawa's decision to create a new secretariat in the Washington embassy in April 2004 to improve links between key domestic political actors and the US).<sup>24</sup> As is indicated below, the danger here is to misinterpret the way in which the partner state — especially a hegemonic power such as the US — perceives

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<sup>23</sup> D. Burney, 'Canada-US Relations: Are We Getting It Right?', address to the Ranchmen's Club, Calgary, 17 November 2005, p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and Canada's Washington Embassy, *News Release*, Washington DC, 29 April 2004.

the relationship and, consequently, to commit errors of judgement both in terms of policy content and process.

Before leaving the more general issues surrounding the analysis of diplomatic representation, it is worth noting that lack of theorizing is accompanied by lack of empirical data. In the Canadian case, Wolfe identifies a paucity of material and this is echoed in other countries.<sup>25</sup> Much relevant literature assumes the form of diplomatic memoirs, which tend to provide tantalizing glimpses rather than sustained discussions of the work of diplomatic missions and their staff. Hence the memoirs of the UK's ambassador in Washington DC from 1997-2003 provide some interesting shafts of light on the way in which an ambassador operates in the US capital, as well as the somewhat fraught relationship between the embassy and the staff of the British prime minister's office in London.<sup>26</sup> It is relatively rare for a former diplomat to provide a sustained discussion of the role of the contemporary diplomat as Rana has done in the course of several books.<sup>27</sup> Generally, this paucity of data is as characteristic of the Canadian diplomatic system as it is of others. But if there is one exception it is the US-Canada relationship.

## Managing the US-Canada Relationship

The very character of the Canada-US relationship, as Derek Burney, a former Canadian ambassador to Washington notes, is a 'perennial challenge' reflecting the 'Canadian conundrum', which is rooted in reconciling the perception of the United States as a friend with a frequently manifested impulse to maintain a distance from the US's policies.<sup>28</sup> This leads us back to the impact of proximity and specialness in determining both the content of Canada's US policies and the modalities through which they are managed. The perception of a special relationship implies that the rules of power and pursuit of national interest are in some sense and to some degree relaxed.

<sup>25</sup> Wolfe, 'Still Lying Abroad?', p. 26.

<sup>26</sup> C. Meyer, *DC Confidential* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005).

<sup>27</sup> K. Rana, *Bilateral Diplomacy* (Malta and Geneva: DiploFoundation, 2002); and K. Rana, *The Twenty-First Century Ambassador: Plenipotentiary to Chief Executive* (Malta and Geneva: DiploFoundation, 2004). See also S. Riordan, *The New Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Polity, 2003).

<sup>28</sup> D. Burney, 'The Perennial Challenge: Managing Canada-US Relations', in A. Cooper and D. Rowlands (eds), *Canada Among Nations: Split Images* (Kingston ON and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), p. 47.

Proximity serves to reinforce this belief. However, Susan Rice, a former US State Department official, argues that while Canada might have a presence in Washington, the degree of access that it enjoys is limited.<sup>29</sup> Put another way, proximity is not power. It can, however, be translated into influence by judicious diplomacy, as in the case of the Smart Border Action Plan that was negotiated in the wake of '9/11' and was intended to enhance cross-border security by establishing the principle that two dimensions of proximity — national security and economic security — are not competing objectives.<sup>30</sup> Successful attempts at influence, Rice concludes, can be reinforced by creating structures of specialness — such as bilateral consultative mechanisms modelled on those between the EU and the US.<sup>31</sup> In one sense, Canada is no stranger to diplomatic innovation of this kind, and the following section will consider some of the forms that this has taken.

Indeed, Canada is often regarded as a 'laboratory' in which experiments in different diplomatic styles are conducted. Notable among these is the experience provided by the Ottawa Process in dealing with the anti-personnel landmines' issue. Cooper, among other authors, has discussed the nature and merits of 'mission-oriented' diplomacy — that is, diplomacy that is issue-focused and characterized by partnerships with civil society and non-governmental organizations in particular.<sup>32</sup> This stands in contrast to 'traditional' structures of permanent representation, which are seen as lacking the flexibility, focus and responsiveness of this 'new' model of diplomacy. As is often the case, this is in fact a weaving together of long-established forms

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<sup>29</sup> S. Rice, 'Canada's Relationship with the US: Turning Proximity into Power — An American Perspective', in G. Walker, *Independence in an Age of Empire: Assessing Unilateralism and Multilateralism* (Halifax: Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University, 2004), pp. 124-133.

<sup>30</sup> See 'Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada', *Keeping Canadians Safe: Smart Border Declaration and Action Plan*, Ottawa, 23 October 2005, at <http://www.psepc-sppcc.gc.ca/prg/le/bs/sbdap-en.asp>, accessed on 10 February 2006. The 30-point Action Plan rests on four pillars: secure flow of people; secure flow of goods; investing in secure infrastructure; and coordination and information-sharing.

<sup>31</sup> Rice, 'Canada's Relationship with the US', p. 128. In the wake of '9/11', a number of such consultative mechanisms were established such as the Bi-National Planning Group between the two defence departments and the Foreign Affairs-State Department Bilateral Consultative Group on Counter-Terrorism.

<sup>32</sup> A. Cooper, 'More than a Star Turn: Canadian Hybrid Diplomacy and the OAS Mission to Peru', *International Journal*, vol. 56, no. 2, 2001, pp. 279-296; A. Cooper and G. Hayes (eds), *Worthwhile Initiatives? Canadian Mission-Oriented Diplomacy* (Toronto: Irwin Press, 2000).

of diplomatic practice (diplomacy by mission) with techniques relating to the contemporary environment.<sup>33</sup> But in examining Canada's involvement in the Organization of American States' (OAS) mission to Peru, Cooper claims that this was an example of 'hybrid' diplomacy in the sense that it represented a meshing of traditional forms and newer techniques. Thus the Canadian embassy in Lima was critical to the overall process rather than sidelined by alternative channels of communication.<sup>34</sup>

In the case of Canadian-US diplomacy, a parallel debate as to the most appropriate forms for promoting Canadian objectives in the US arena has developed. The distinction here is between the rival merits of what is termed 'quiet' diplomacy — associated with the Pearson era and conducted through formal diplomatic channels — and what we would now describe as a form of public diplomacy whose style is more open and methods of working focused on a broader set of actors and interests than that of a narrow foreign policy elite.<sup>35</sup>

Understanding the significance of these two forms of diplomacy requires an appreciation of their context and, in particular, the policy content of the relationship. The logic of the ERI is underpinned by external events — the attacks on the US carried out on 11 September 2001 — and their consequences, just as an earlier change in Canada's diplomatic management strategies in Washington DC was stimulated by the 'Nixon Shock' of August 1971 involving, among other things, a 10 per cent surcharge on imports into the United States. This was regarded as marking the end of the 'special relationship' between the two countries — just as were the events following '9/11' some 30 years later. In both cases, the Canadian political and diplomatic establishments were galvanized into profound reflection on both the substance and management of the relationship. Tensions across the border were intensified by the Trudeau government's attempts to steer a more autonomous course *vis-à-vis* Washington through a diversified international policy termed the 'third option'.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> See Winham's analysis of the impact of systemic change on modes and functions of diplomacy: G. Winham, 'The Impact of System Change on International Diplomacy', paper presented to the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Carleton University, Ottawa, June 1993.

<sup>34</sup> Cooper, 'More than a Star Turn', pp. 291-294.

<sup>35</sup> A. Cooper, 'Playing by New Rules: Allan Gotlieb, Public Diplomacy and the Management of Canada-US Relations', *The Fletcher Forum*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1990, pp. 93-110.

<sup>36</sup> A general overview of the Canada-US relationship can be found in J. Granatstein and

But by the early 1980s, officials agreed that Canada needed a more coherent strategy in dealing with the US, one that recognized the growing complexity of the processes attending the conduct of the US's international policy. To a degree, this complexity was matched by a growing international voice on the part of the Canadian provinces. Against this background, a prominent Canadian public servant, Alan Gotlieb, assumed the role of ambassador to the US in 1981, holding the position beyond the Trudeau years and into the Progressive Conservative Mulroney government that was elected in 1984. Gotlieb's ambassadorial career is remarkable in two key ways. First he developed a conceptual framework and set of operational principles for the delivery of a more energetic and extensive diplomacy than previous ambassadors to the US. Second, he analysed its principles and practices.<sup>37</sup> In fact, much of what was termed 'public diplomacy' differs from current usage where the focus is literally on access to the public and civil society. Rather, Gotlieb's strategy was far more comprehensive, focusing on elites both inside and outside the Beltway as well as groups and interests whose attitudes might impact on Canada's relationship with the US in its broadest terms. Echoing the ERI proposals more than two decades later, attention was given to the network of Canadian consulates beyond their traditional roles in trade, tourism and immigration.<sup>38</sup> There were clear implications for the operation of the Canadian embassy at the centre of the network as it sought, for example, to determine the political origins of pressure for new US domestic regulations in Congress that might impact on Canada:

The embassy had to learn who wanted the new regulation, who their allies were, and what could be offered. His [Gotlieb's] task was to know first what issues mattered for Canada, then which group of American actors was engaged on the issue.<sup>39</sup>

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N. Hillmer, *For Better or for Worse: Canada and the United States to the 1990s* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1991). See also A. Smith, 'Doing the Continental: Conceptualizations of the Canada — American Relationship in the Long Twentieth Century', *Canadian-American Public Policy*, no. 44, December 2000.

<sup>37</sup> A. Gotlieb, 'Managing Canadian-US Interdependence', in E. Fried and P. Trezise (eds), *US-Canadian Economic Relations: Next Steps?* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1984); A. Gotlieb, *I'll Be With You in a Minute, Mr Ambassador: The Education of a Canadian Diplomat in Washington* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1991); and more recently A. Gotlieb, 'Foremost Partner: The Conduct of Canada-US Relations', in D. Carment, F. Osler Hampson and N. Hillmer (eds), *Canada Among Nations 2003: Coping with the American Colossus* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2003).

<sup>38</sup> Cooper, 'Playing by New Rules', p. 103.

<sup>39</sup> Wolfe, 'Still Lying Abroad?', p. 40.

However, such activity was only part of the story as various diplomatic structures and processes sought to underpin the relationship's 'specialness'. Having major responsibilities for the Washington-Ottawa relationship from 1983-1993, Burney was well placed to analyse the shifting trends in management style. Thus in a period marked by tensions over transnational issues such as the National Energy Policy and acid rain in the early 1980s, quarterly meetings between the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs and the US Secretary of State were introduced. With the advent of Canada's Mulroney government in 1984, these meetings were supplemented by annual summits between the Canadian prime minister and US president. Special envoys were also introduced to deal with sensitive issues. But despite this architecture of specialness, Burney argues that Canada's Washington embassy was central to the management of bilateral disputes:

The general objective for the embassy in my time was to debate forcefully with our opponents while trying to build coalitions of support wherever possible from those constituents who would suffer from US restrictions on specific Canadian products. On softwood lumber, for instance, this meant rallying the US homebuilders' associations, namely those consumers who would pay higher prices if duties were applied to Canadian imports.<sup>40</sup>

## **Managing the Post-'9/11' Relationship**

The impact of events since the attacks on the US in September 2001 have stimulated the conundrums in Canada's proximate relationship with its powerful neighbour but have done so in an even more dramatic context. The closure of the Canadian-US border after 11 September emphasized the new vulnerability that disruption of 'just-in-time' assembly lines presented to Canada in an era of sensitive global and regional supply chains. Not surprisingly, the reassertion of the centrality of the Canadian-US relationship (what Welsh terms 'foreign policy as Canada-US relations')<sup>41</sup> has become a familiar theme. One possible consequence of this situation might be the 'domestication' of foreign policy in two ways. The first, Welsh argues, is for Canada to abandon its foreign policy pretensions and model itself on Switzerland's preoccupation with improving its domestic environment.<sup>42</sup> Another, as Haynal suggests, is to integrate management of the US

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<sup>40</sup>) Burney, 'The Perennial Challenge', p. 54.

<sup>41</sup>) J. Welsh, 'Fulfilling Canada's Global Promise', *Policy Options*, February 2005, p. 56.

<sup>42</sup>) Welsh, 'Fulfilling Canada's Global Promise', p. 57.

relationship with the pre-eminent political reality within Canada, namely federal-provincial relations.<sup>43</sup> Haynal's argument here is that, first, the US relationship is becoming less diplomatic and more constitutional, and, second, that asymmetry is growing in the management of these two key relationships. While federal-provincial relations are marked by a coherence of approach, the Canadian-US relationship is quite the opposite. Haynal's suggestion is that management of these two relationships should be integrated under the minister for intergovernmental affairs. This would be accompanied by a realignment of bureaucratic responsibilities and the creation of a North American Service within FAC made up of foreign service personnel, members of domestic departments and representatives of provinces, municipalities and the private sector. This, he suggests, would separate management of the relationship from the broader spectrum of foreign policy and make it more akin to relationships among EU member states.<sup>44</sup>

Underpinning this debate lie contrasting images of the character of the relationship itself and the role of diplomacy within it. Wolfe has thus argued that pressures for the closer integration of the two countries fail to appreciate both the character of the issues at stake, the character of US political institutions and processes and how Canada might most effectively achieve its objectives in managing the relationship. Rather than seeking to bundle the relationship into a constitutional package, he suggests that a flexible and multifaceted 'Swiss Army knife' diplomacy that recognizes the reality of diffuse sites of authority and political interest would best serve Canada's interests.<sup>45</sup>

## The ERI

Against this background of sustained debate concerning the management of the Canada-US relationship, the current phase — focused on the Enhanced Representation Initiative — contains familiar as well as newer themes. In one sense, it reflects patterns of institutional learning applied to the organization

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<sup>43</sup> This is developed in a paper by a former senior Canadian diplomat, George Haynal, *Canada in North America: A Reflection on Machinery* (unpublished paper: undated).

<sup>44</sup> Haynal, *Canada in North America*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>45</sup> R. Wolfe, 'See You in Washington? A Pluralist Perspective on North American Institutions', *Choices*, vol. 9, no. 4 (Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2003).

of representation in increasingly complex environments. Thus the concept of public diplomacy that was such a feature of the Gotlieb era has come to be accepted as an inseparable component of a more holistic approach to representation in the US arena. But to this has been added recognition that there are weaknesses in the government-based structures of diplomacy. One such weakness is the level of representation in the US — seen as too limited prior to the implementation of the ERI. Key political and economic developments suggested that Canada's influence over the US was diminishing. The election of George W. Bush in 2000 and increased migration to the south and south-west highlighted the need for Canadian advocacy in these increasingly influential regions, especially since Canadians traditionally identify with Democrats more easily than with Republicans. Canada's refusal to join the US in the war against Iraq generated a growing sense of public hostility in the US towards Canada. High-profile US-Canadian trade disputes in lumber and wheat damaged trade relations and, despite NAFTA, Canada was not gaining in US markets. Moreover, the share of US investment in Canada was falling. In 2004 it looked as if proximity was more of a hindrance than a benefit to the bilateral relationship.

Perhaps not surprisingly, a key conclusion of the 2002 report from the Canadian House of Commons' Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade on Canada's relations within North America was the need to strengthen its diplomatic presence in the US — which is far weaker than that maintained by Mexico.<sup>46</sup> This touches on a much broader concern about the level and allocation of Canada's overseas representation. One of the themes in *Canada's International Policy Statement* (IPS) is the recognition that there is an imbalance in staffing in Ottawa and at overseas missions, a reflection of cost-cutting over many years, resulting in lessened capacity 'to advocate Canadian interests and to properly inform decision-making at home'.<sup>47</sup> Thus whereas the G8 average for MFA officials on overseas postings is around 50 per cent, for Canada the figure is closer to 25 per cent.

But the ERI concept has to be seen against broader concerns regarding the structures of international policy management and the role of FAC within

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<sup>46</sup> Canadian House of Commons, *Partners in North America: Advancing Canada's Relations with the United States and Mexico*, report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, December 2002, pp. 222-224.

<sup>47</sup> Canada's International Policy Statement, *A Role of Pride and Influence in the World: Diplomacy*, p. 31.

them. As with many foreign services, these concerns are rooted in familiar propositions regarding the changing nature of diplomacy, particularly the growing interconnectedness of domestic and international policy, which, according to the IPS, constitutes the roots of the 'new diplomacy'. Refining the model of diplomacy demanded by this scenario produces an image of diplomacy as a much broader networking exercise. The Canadian context presents three dimensions of diffusion in diplomatic management: bureaucratic; territorial; and societal. Although these are clearly interrelated, they reflect distinct realities in the conduct of international policy. The first form of diffusion — bureaucratic — is the growing involvement of other government departments in international policy. Not only does this present significant issues for the foreign ministry's relationship with other government departments in the domestic bureaucratic milieu, but the proportion of foreign service officers in overseas posts (23 per cent) is relatively small in terms of the overall level of personnel. Territorial diffusion derives from the federal system of government and the enhanced involvement of the provinces in international policy issues. As the IPS notes, the effectiveness of Canada's diplomacy in critical areas increasingly depends on cooperation between the two levels of government. Finally, societal diffusion moves the focus outside the governmental arena and into those of business and civil society, recognizing that both are assuming enhanced significance as players in many diplomatic environments. More generally, the impact of international events on the population at large, the result of growing international mobility, places greater pressures on the interface between the foreign service and the 'consumers' of a particular diplomatic 'product'.

All of these developments reinforce a concern that is common to foreign ministries, that of coordination and speaking with a 'single voice' in international policy arenas. Whereas this is seen as a significant challenge, it can also provide a rationale for the MFA as the main locus of coordination. In the case of FAC, this is defined as the 'integrator' role encompassing both the framing of the international policy agenda and its projection abroad.<sup>48</sup> Yet as several officials have commented, this integrator role can only be effective if FAC is seen by other government departments as adding value to their work, and the evidence for this is mixed. There has been little resistance to FAC's coordination on issues such as the avian flu pandemic, but on issues

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<sup>48</sup>) Canada's IPS, *A Role of Pride and Influence in the World*, p. 30.

such as security, trade and science policy, other government departments question whether FAC has a mandate or sufficient expertise to play the integrating function. There is a tendency for departments to resent FAC's coordinating role, and in these areas the 'whole-of-government' approach is sometimes replaced by what has been described by some FAC officials as a 'silo approach'. In the absence of a 'habit of cooperation', as one official put it, FAC is above all dependent on the political will and ambition of ministers to push the 'whole-of-government' agenda as much as any bureaucratic logic of policy coordination.

The structures and processes of representation are key dimensions of the integrator logic and this can be seen in the case of the ERI. As indicated above, this was stimulated in part by the events following '9/11', but also by recognition that there was a need to strengthen what has been identified as the knowledge-broker role of missions and a series of conflicts over issues on the social policy agenda, such as guns, abortion and decriminalizing drugs.<sup>49</sup> In one sense, therefore, it has been an exercise in improving advocacy through more effective public diplomacy. In the words of one FAC official, 'the ERI reflected a need to be closer to the ground — in our relations with Congress, for example — but also with the media. The aim has been, on the one hand, to develop an evergreen stock of responses to the US media and a capacity to deliver real-time responses to key issues as they arise'.<sup>50</sup>

But the ERI also recognizes that the management of proximity and special relationships presents other problems, not least the overseas equivalents of the coordination problem. 'Stronger' representation has thus partly meant enhancing the diplomatic network in the US. At the time of launching the ERI in September 2003, the aim was to increase significantly the level of Canadian representation through opening new consulates (six by December 2005) together with a new consulate-general in Denver, thereby increasing the overall network to 22 offices.<sup>51</sup> These have been supplemented by appointing thirteen honorary consuls, with more appointments planned.

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<sup>49</sup>) Much of the following discussion is based on interviews conducted in Foreign Affairs Canada in September 2005.

<sup>50</sup>) Interview, FAC, Ottawa, 16 September 2005.

<sup>51</sup>) Two existing consulates (Miami and San Francisco) have been upgraded to consulates-general. The consulates-general and consulates report directly to the Assistant Deputy Minister in Canada's North American Bureau and not to the Canadian embassy in Washington DC.

Canada's current ambassador to Washington, Frank McKenna, has explained the rationale for this in the following terms:

Why the emphasis on getting outside the Beltway? Because we know where the action is. It's on the ground, in the states. Because we know where key decision-makers are and where they come from — the states. Because we know where the market opportunities are for Canadian and US businesses alike — whether it is biotech in Phoenix, or Silicon Valley South in Houston. Because we know it is a whole lot easier to resolve issues at the retail level before they become gridlocked by Washington politics.<sup>52</sup>

This particular institutional choice of representation raises interesting questions. While some feel that consuls can be effective in what they do — mainly trade and investment promotion — others feel that effective representation beyond business and trade advocacy requires an ambassador. One official has remarked that 'the title gives you the impact'. Thus the higher the rank, the higher the level and greater the extent of influence. Given that most of the new posts under the ERI are honorary consuls who report to FAC and not the Canadian ambassador, this may well put institutional and symbolic limits on the representation boost in many areas. Related to this issue is the current recruitment problem within the ERI. Several of the consular posts remain unfilled despite recruitment drives. This is as much to do with the endemic problem in foreign ministries that consular work is perceived as a 'backwater activity'. But many of the ERI's posts are — by choice — remote and far removed from the centre, making them particularly unattractive to officials seeking the next career move. If the posts cannot be filled, Canadian representation is then not being extended into what FAC sees as crucial avenues for Canadian advocacy and business development.

The Initiative also recognizes the linkage between coordination at the centre and effective representation. A central feature has thus been the establishment of a partnership between key departments and agencies (eight in mid-2005), which intends to provide an integrated approach to managing advocacy, trade, business development, science and technology and investment interests in the US.<sup>53</sup> One aim of the Initiative is to deal with a characteristic problem of overseas networks comprising an ever-greater range

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<sup>52</sup> F. McKenna, 'Notes for an Address to the Council of State Governments', in Canadian Embassy, Washington DC, *Speeches and Statements*, Wilmington DE, 4 December 2005, p. 5.

<sup>53</sup> Treasury Board of Canada, US Enhanced Representation Initiative, available at <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca>, accessed on 8 November 2005.

of non-MFA officials — namely, who sets priorities for a mission? As the IPS notes, Canada's missions abroad host fifteen government departments, six agencies and three provinces.<sup>54</sup> In such a situation, 'tasking the network' becomes a critical issue, spanning activity at the centre and throughout the structure of a complex network of representation such as Canada's in the US. By establishing a partnership, strategic priorities can be established and a governance structure created to oversee the work of the posts. It is claimed that a voice in setting priorities enhances the incentive for other government departments to become involved in the partnership. A positive view from the ground is provided by the consul at one of the new posts, located in Anchorage. She notes that the Initiative, which includes Industry Canada and Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, is very much a partnership: 'It's about getting rid of "stovepipes" and having greater coordination in our efforts.'<sup>55</sup> Under a restructuring of the geographic branches, management of relations within North America has been concentrated in FAC within a new North America Branch that oversees the ERI.

The territorial dimension of diffusion has been addressed at the level of the Canadian embassy's structure in Washington. In April 2004 the establishment of a secretariat was announced, whose aim, according to then Prime Minister, Paul Martin, is 'to improve the management and coherence of our relations with the US'.<sup>56</sup> This is directed specifically towards the provinces and Canadian parliament, providing for co-location of provincial and territorial representatives at the embassy as well as supporting visiting parliamentarians and the activities of the Canada-US Inter-Parliamentary Group. At the same time, it was announced that provinces and territories had been invited to assign staff to any one of the consulates 'to add their expertise and influence to Canada's message'.<sup>57</sup>

It is clear that the ERI is a bold and in some ways unique attempt to develop and manage a special relationship with Canada's hegemonic neighbour, in which new forms of representation are now emerging. As highlighted above, the ERI faces many institutional and cultural challenges. As an experiment in

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<sup>54</sup>) Canada's IPS, *A Role of Pride and Influence in the World*, p. 29.

<sup>55</sup>) Foreign Affairs Canada, 'Model Neighbours', *World View*, vol. 24, winter 2005, p. 3. The term 'stovepipes' refers to lack of coordination between government departments.

<sup>56</sup>) 'Prime Minister Announces Details of Secretariat at Washington Embassy', News Release, Canadian Embassy, Washington DC, 29 April 2004.

<sup>57</sup>) 'Prime Minister Announces Details of Secretariat at Washington Embassy'.

developing new forms of representation, the ERI offers an interesting model that some officials in Canada believe can be applied to other key bilateral relationships, such as Mexico, China and the EU.

## Conclusion

This discussion began with some general points concerning the study of representation in the literature on diplomacy. It was suggested that understanding the development of structure and process in diplomatic representation has been hindered by two factors. The first lies in how diplomacy has been approached in much academic literature and the consequent treatment of representation. Too often there has been a tendency to focus on arguments relating to the relative importance or unimportance of the machinery of representation in world politics, with much of this attention being given to the respective roles of bilateral and multilateral representation. One consequence has been to overlook the ways in which the roles are adapting to change and intersecting with each other in increasingly complex processes, as evident in multi-layered diplomatic arenas such as the EU.

Even less attention is given to the machinery of diplomacy and the ways in which it is evolving in response to domestic and international demands. This is because of lack of good information, which is often the fault of foreign ministries themselves as well as the inclination of diplomatic memoirs to explain *what* was done while being silent on *how* it was done. And yet it is quite obvious that important changes are occurring in the patterns and strategies of representation, not least in the sphere of consular work, which, according to some diplomats, is now a major preoccupation of foreign services rather than being the poor relation of yesteryear.

A central assumption that underlies the foregoing discussion is that patterns and forms of representation are significant indicators of change in the international order and the way that its constituent elements respond to this change. One feature of change in a world order marked by the twin forces of globalization and regionalization is the interplay of ideas that have long underpinned debates concerning the significance of representation and how representation should respond to developments in information and communications technology, for example.

The collapse of distance and enhancement of proximity have traditionally been regarded as lessening representation's importance. Such a conclusion may be reinforced by the development of special relationships that are deemed to lie beyond the pale of diplomacy and to represent an alternative post-diplomatic order. This suggests that examining how the diplomacy of proximity and specialness actually functions can reveal interesting sidelights on the nature of a transitional international order, the character of which is far from certain. But whereas the interplay of distance and proximity is a well-understood theme in writings on diplomacy and has certainly loomed large in an era of dramatic change in communications beginning with the electric telegraph, this has become a far more complex variable as proximity assumes additional dimensions to the purely spatial. While the current post-'9/11' preoccupation within foreign ministries is with public diplomacy in its various manifestations, there are other stories to be told about the impact of proximity on diplomacy's tasks. First, the proximity of societies, identities and social values is increasing the role of the mission as a node in knowledge networks, whether these are concerned with tackling international terrorism or dealing with the threat of global pandemics. In some of its forms, this may have little resonance for traditional notions of foreign policy, and poses significant issues about the character of national diplomatic networks, their function and whose interests they serve. Second, diplomatic services now have to come to terms with diplomacy being viewed as a consumer good. Rather than being associated solely with the distant processes of negotiation on issues far removed from the everyday concerns of the general public, a combination of mass tourism and a rising culture of expectations as to what governments can and should do for their citizens abroad is transforming the approach to managing crises and disaster situations and enhancing the role of consular services.

The case of managing Canada's relationship with the US casts light on the interplay of proximity and specialness, which resonates with the dilemmas of representation that are confronting governments in other arenas. The Canadian experience indicates that balancing the advantages and disadvantages of proximity and specialness is no small task. Strategies have to be selected and the outcomes of these strategies evaluated. Each phase in representational management has had its strengths and weaknesses. While the era of 'quiet diplomacy' was deemed inappropriate in an era marked by

profound international and domestic political change, the public diplomacy of the Gotlieb era carried with it the seeds of its own problems, in the shape of generating expectations regarding policy influence in the US that it was not always able to deliver. What is interesting about the ERI is not that it is simply an exercise in public diplomacy for the troubled post-'9/11' global environment, but that it also builds on a recognition of other issues that are seizing foreign ministries' attention. Among these is the centrality of the coordination imperative, which is both a real problem in the articulation and management of international policy but also provides a rationale for the continued existence of foreign ministries in a world of internationalized sectoral ministries. In this light, the concept of partnership among government departments and agencies, combined with Canada's objective of aligning federal foreign policy responsibilities with provincial international policy interests and ambitions, strikes a chord in the broader debates on how representation is delivered, not least in terms of how missions are tasked. What Canada has produced in the current — that is, ERI — phase in the long-running history of managing its relationship with its powerful southern neighbour is a hybridized form of representation that is rooted in the realities — and delusions — of proximity and specialness. This hybrid seeks to recognize the elements of foreignness and domesticity in the relationship and to produce a mode of representational strategy that can accommodate both. Although by definition unique, it carries with it lessons that resonate with debates in other foreign services.

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