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Third Edition

CANADA AND WORLD ORDER

*The Multilateralist Tradition
in Canadian Foreign Policy*

TOM KEATING



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Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries.

Published in Canada by
Oxford University Press
8 Sampson Mews, Suite 204,
Don Mills, Ontario M3C 0H5 Canada
www.oupcanada.com

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First Edition published in 1993
Second Edition published in 2002

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Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Keating, Thomas E.

Canada and world order : the multilateralist tradition in
Canadian foreign policy / Tom Keating. — 3rd ed.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-19-543768-3

1. Canada—Foreign relations—1945-. 2. Canada—Foreign
relations—1918-1945. I. Title.

FC242.K42 2012 327.71 C2012-904064-9

Cover image: Dave Blackey/All Canada Photos/Getty Images

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Printed and bound in Canada

1 2 3 4 — 16 15 14 13

CANADA

AND WORLD ORDER

Abbreviations

ABM	anti-ballistic missile
ACCT	Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation
AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ALCM	air-launched cruise missile
AMIS	African Union Mission in Sudan
ANA	Afghan National Army
APC	armoured personnel carrier
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
AU	African Union
AWPPA	Arctic Wasters Pollution Prevention Act
BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India, China
CAST	Canadian Air-Sea Transportable
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CCF	Co-operative Commonwealth Federation
CCIC	Canadian Council for International Cooperation
CCW	UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
CEGCI	Special Committee on Inter-American Summits Management
CGR	Committee of Government Representatives on the Participation of Civil Society
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIEC	Conference on International Economic Cooperation
CMAG	Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group
COP	Conference of Parties (of the UNFCCC)
CRTC	Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CSO	civil society organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Team
DEA	Department of External Affairs
DEW	Distant Early Warning
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
DND	Department of National Defence
DPA	Darfur Peace Agreement
DPSA	Defence Production Sharing Agreement
EADRCC	Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre
EC	European Community
ECM	European Common Market
ECOSOC	UN Economic and Social Council
EDC	European Defence Community
EEC	European Economic Community

EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EPTA	Expanded Program of Technical Assistance
EPU	European Payments Union
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAST	Free and Secure Trade Program
FIRA	Foreign Investment Review Agency
FOCAL	Canadian Foundation for the Americas
FTA	Canada–US Free Trade Agreement
FTAA	Free Trade Area of the Americas
G7	Group of Seven
G8	Group of Eight
G20	Group of Twenty
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	gross domestic product
GDR	East Germany (German Democratic Republic)
GHG	greenhouse gas
GNP	gross national product
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICBL	International Campaign to Ban Landmines
ICC	International Control Commission (Vietnam)
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia Since 1991
IDA	International Development Agency
IFIs	international financial institutions
IFOR	Implementation Force (Bosnia)
IGO	intergovernmental organization
IJC	International Court of Justice
ILC	International Law Commission
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INF	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (Treaty)
IR	international relations
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force (Afghanistan)
ITO	International Trade Organization
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army

L20	Leaders' Group of Twenty
LICs	low-income countries
MAI	Multilateral Agreement on Investment
MBFR	Mutual Balanced Force Reduction
MCC	Military Co-operation Committee
MDGs	Millenium Development Goals
MFA	Multifibre Agreement
MFN	Most Favoured Nation
MICIVIH	International Civilian Mission in Haiti
MNF	multinational force
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NACC	North Atlantic Co-operation Council
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDP	New Democratic Party
NGO	non-governmental organization
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NORAD	North American Aerospace (previously Air) Defence Command
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
OAS	Organization of American States
ODA	official development assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEEC	Organization for European Economic Cooperation
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
P-5	permanent five members of the UN Security Council
PHPs	post-hostilities problems
PJBD	Permanent Joint Board on Defence
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PM	Prime Minister
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PRT	provincial reconstruction team
R2P	responsibility to protect
RCAF	Royal Canadian Air Force
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RTA	Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander in Europe
SAPs	structural adjustment policies
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
SHIRBRIG	Standby High Readiness Brigade for UN Operations
START	Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (DFAIT)
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
SUNFED	Special Fund for Economic Development

UN	United Nations
UNAMID	UN Assistance Mission in Dafur
UNCLOS	UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNCTAD	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNDOF	UN Disengagement Observer Force (Golan Heights)
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNEF I	UN Emergency Force (Suez)
UNEF II	UN Emergency Force (Sinai)
UNESCO	UN Economic, Social and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGA	UN General Assembly
UNIFCYP	UN Interim Force in Cyprus
UNIFIL	UN Interim Force in Lebanon
UNPROFOR	UN Protection Force (Croatia and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
UNRRA	UN Relief and Rehabilitation Agency
UNSC	UN Security Council
UNSCOM	UN Special Commission (Iraq)
UNTCOK	UN Temporary Commission on Korea
UNTSO	UN Truce Supervision Organization (Middle East)
UPD	Unit for the Promotion of Democracy
USAF	US Air Force
WEU	Western European Union
WMDs	weapons of mass destruction
WTO	World Trade Organization

Contents

	Abbreviations	vi
Introduction	The Sources of Multilateralism in Canadian Foreign Policy	1
PART I	Creating the Post-War Multilateral Institutions	19
Chapter 1	Designing the International Order: Canadian Interests in Post-War International Organizations	20
Chapter 2	Reviving the Global Economy: Canada and the Bretton Woods System	41
Chapter 3	Confronting the Security Dilemma: Canada and the Formation of NATO	63
PART II	Working within International Institutions: The Evolution of Canadian Policy	87
Chapter 4	Coping with the Cold War: Canada's Response to the Superpower Impasse	88
Chapter 5	The Limits of Multilateralism: Canada's Responses to a Changing Global Economy	110
Chapter 6	Bridging the East–West Divide: NATO from Cold War to Détente	134
PART III	Institutions, Globalization, and Security after the Cold War	155
Chapter 7	Multilateralism in Flux: Looking for Order in the Post–Cold War World	156
Chapter 8	Globalization and Multilateralism: Canada and the Reform of Global Economic Institutions	179
Chapter 9	Searching for Security in the Post–Cold War Era	202
PART IV	Canada and Multilateralism in the Twenty-First Century	225
Chapter 10	Multilateralism in a Time of Transition	226
Chapter 11	Security in an Age of Intervention	253
Conclusion		276
Appendix	Canada's External/Foreign Affairs Ministers	285
Glossary		286
Notes		290
Index		307

Introduction

The Sources of Multilateralism in Canadian Foreign Policy

The two inescapable realities of Canadian foreign policy, based on our geographical and historical development, are: the necessity of maintaining unity at home, especially between the two founding nations; and living distinct from but in harmony with the world's most powerful and dynamic nation—the USA. These factors tend to restrict initiatives being undertaken by Canada alone, and favour the pursuit of limited international objectives through international organizations.

—George Ignatieff, 1980

We have . . . a lasting and visceral commitment to multilateralism which is ingrained, and endemic to the Canadian character.

—Stephen Lewis, 1985

Introduction

On 12 October 2010 the Canadian government withdrew its application for a seat on the UN Security Council (UNSC), in the face of what would have been a loss to Portugal in voting by the UN General Assembly (UNGA). This would mark the first time since the UN was formed that a decade would pass without Canada being represented on the UNSC. In the acrimonious political climate of the time, the Conservative government blamed the opposition Liberals for their lack of support and the Liberals blamed the government for a long period of neglect, not only of the UN, but of those UN member governments whose support in the General Assembly was necessary to get elected. This defeat was symptomatic of developments in Canadian foreign policy and the wider global community that have affected the government's commitment to multilateralism.

Multilateralism has been an article of faith in the practice of Canadian foreign policy for decades. Since the 1940s, successive Canadian governments have actively supported a wide-ranging network of multilateral institutions and associations. Much of Canada's relations with the international community of states have been conditioned by the country's membership in institutions such as the United Nations (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Commonwealth, and the World Trade Organization (WTO), among many others. With the noteworthy exception of its relationship with the United States, multilateral contacts have generally taken precedence over bilateral ones and multilateral diplomacy has been the

preferred instrument for the pursuit of foreign policy objectives. This strong and persistent commitment to multilateralism has survived various attempts to circumscribe or replace it. It has also survived in the face of opposition from some of Canada's principal allies to the spirit of multilateral co-operation and to specific institutions. Finally, the commitment has cut across party lines and received substantial support from organized groups and the Canadian public. All this may be changing as Canadian foreign policy-makers chart a course for the twenty-first century. The change is reflected in both discourse and practice, and while it may be premature to assess its strength and principal direction, there are enough indications to warrant a closer examination. This book attempts to do so in its closing chapters where contemporary developments in Canadian involvement in and contributions to multilateralism will be examined.

Canada's active role in multilateral institutions has been discussed widely. Numerous works have reviewed Canadian policies regarding various international organizations, and countless government statements and public commentaries have identified multilateralism as one of the most prominent and persistent themes in the practice of Canadian foreign policy. While many of these have celebrated Canada's participatory activity as indicative of the country's commitment to a constructive and progressive global order, others have questioned its lack of substance, discounted it as the pursuit of narrow self-interest, or criticized it as a facade for close collaboration with the Americans in support of an imperialistic and hegemonic order. As discussed later in this introduction, there is some merit in some of these views. Indeed, one of the benefits of multilateralism from the perspective of Canadian foreign policy-makers has been its ability to fuse some very different policy objectives.

The multilateral tradition in Canadian foreign policy is the subject of this work. The central objective of this book is to demonstrate the significance and persistence of multilateralism as a guiding principle and operational strategy in the conduct of Canadian foreign policy across a spectrum of policy issues in the political, economic, and security arenas and to assess its continued relevance for foreign policy in the early years of the twenty-first century. The following chapters provide an overview of the history of Canadian involvement in multilateral associations and institutions since the 1940s. This overview reveals the vast range of Canada's multilateral activities in international institutions with particular reference to the most significant of these: the UN, the Commonwealth, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)/WTO regime, and NATO. The book also touches on Canadian involvement in other associations, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization of American States (OAS), the Francophonie, and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

What follows is not intended to be a comprehensive account of Canada's multilateral activities or of Canadian foreign policy. There are too many of these to review in a short volume. It is also not intended to be a definitive account of specific Canadian policies. In some instances, such accounts already exist. In others, the work remains to be done. Rather, the primary purpose of this work is to provide the reader with a survey of Canada's involvement in multilateral associations and to argue that, over time and across different issues, Canadian policy-makers repeatedly relied on multilateralism in the pursuit of a diverse range of foreign policy objectives. In addition to arguing that multilateralism has been one of the most important defining characteristics of Canadian foreign policy, this review will also illustrate how multilateralism has been used to meet quite distinct policy objectives, ranging from milieu goals, involving a more peaceful and stable international order, to possessive goals, intended to satisfy narrow national interests.¹ Another consideration in writing

this book is to examine how Canada's involvement in multilateral associations has changed over time and across different issues. Finally, given the significant transformations taking place in the world today and in Canadian foreign policy, and the historic opportunity for a renewal of effective multilateral co-operation in the interests of a more peaceful, stable, and inclusive international order involving a wider array of states and non-state actors, it is important to assess Canada's continued support for a multilateral order and to speculate on its potential to contribute in the future.

The book is organized to examine Canadian policy in three different but related policy spheres and in four historical periods. The three chapters in Part I review Canada's involvement in the formation of post-war multilateral institutions. The first chapter deals with the UN and its affiliated agencies; Chapter 2 addresses post-war economic institutions, principally the Bretton Woods system; and Chapter 3 concerns post-war security arrangements and the formation of NATO. These chapters discuss the active role that Canadian officials played in the late 1940s and their efforts to construct a multilateral framework that would offset the dominant and potentially domineering power of the United States and, at the same time, provide a stable structure of peace and prosperity. These chapters also review Canada's early experiences in these institutions.

Part II examines the evolution of Canadian policy in each of these spheres from the 1960s through the 1980s in the midst of the Cold War. During this period, there was a transformation in the attitudes of many Canadians towards a multilateral foreign policy. By the end of the 1960s, many Canadians, including members of the Trudeau cabinet, had become more skeptical and more critical of the benefits of multilateral connections for Canada, and there were attempts to steer clear of multilateral commitments. In most instances, these attempts did not persist. Chapter 4 looks at the effects of the Cold War on Canadian activities at the UN in such areas as membership, peacekeeping, and arms control. Chapter 5, in examining international economic institutions during this period, reviews the North-South debates that dominated the global political economy at the time, the evolution of the multilateral trade regime, and the demise of the Bretton Woods financial order. Chapter 6 assesses Canadian policy at NATO during the 1960s as the North Atlantic Treaty, despite Canadian reservations, was transformed into an unequivocal military alliance with a prominent nuclear strategy. It also examines Canada's NATO policy in a period of détente and describes the government's effective diplomacy in securing participation in the CSCE. During this period, Canada's multilateral arrangements often did little to prevent more intensive bilateral arrangements with the Americans. On the other hand, Canadian officials did seek wider objectives as well. Throughout this period, Canadian policy-makers attempted on occasion and with limited success to use the UN and NATO to bridge the East-West divisions of the Cold War. Within the commercial sphere, however, and despite some pretension for reconciling the rich-poor divide between North and South, the primary concern was to protect the Canadian economy from the demands of developed and developing economies alike.

Part III looks at Canada's multilateral policies in the aftermath of the Cold War and during an accelerated phase of globalization. Chapter 7 examines the UN's role in the "new world order" and Canada's contribution to the UN's more interventionist and normative agendas. Chapter 8 reviews Canada's response to the demise of the Bretton Woods system, the globalization of the international political economy, and the gradual and inchoate multilateralization of a continental trade relationship that had become too large to ignore. It also discusses Canada's attraction to and involvement in the more selective plurilateral club, the Group of Seven (G7) leading industrialized countries that began meeting in annual summits in the

mid-1970s. Chapter 9 reviews Canada's participation in the wars against Iraq and Serbia during the 1990s and its relationship with NATO as the alliance adjusted to the loss of an enemy, the Soviet Union, which had been its principal *raison d'être* since its formation over four decades earlier. Each of these chapters addresses in a preliminary manner the profound developments of recent years that have resulted in a dramatic transformation of the associations and institutions that have served as the foundation for Canada's multilateral foreign policy for the past 40 years.

The final two chapters—Part IV—pick up the story since the turn of the millennium and consider if and how multilateralism continues to inform the conduct of Canadian foreign policy across a range of security and commercial policy concerns. This section examines Canada's response to the developments of this period, including the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001 and the rise of a host of emerging powers and attempts to indicate the direction in which Canada's multilateral tradition might carry on in the future.

Before undertaking this review, the remainder of this introduction briefly discusses the phenomenon of multilateralism, considers the sources of multilateralism in Canadian foreign policy, and reflects on the interests that this policy has served.

Multilateralism

There has been a proliferation of research and writing devoted to the theory and practice of multilateralism in global politics. The proliferation in the literature reflects the emergent patterns of global politics in that multilateralism has been used extensively by states and non-state actors to conduct their affairs in international society. Multilateralism calls attention to the foreign policy activity of states. States, in designing their foreign policy, can select from a variety of orientations, ranging from **isolationism** and economic self-sufficiency to active interaction with other states. As compared with unilateral or bilateral strategies, *multilateralism*, as used here, refers both to the practice of multilateral diplomacy and to policies supporting the establishment and maintenance of institutions and associations that facilitate and support the practice of multilateral diplomacy. Robert Keohane has defined multilateralism as "the practice of co-ordinating national policies in groups of three or more states, through ad hoc arrangements or by means of institutions."² Multilateral diplomacy involves working with coalitions of states, primarily but not exclusively within formal associations or institutions, to achieve foreign policy objectives. It also implies a willingness to maintain solidarity with these coalitions and to maintain support for these institutions. In practice, it often involves greater attention to the process by which decisions are made than to the more substantive elements of those decisions. Support for multilateral diplomacy also necessitates encouraging others to follow the same procedures.³

John Ruggie has written that multilateralism should be viewed as having some substantial content as well as being a process: "What is distinctive about multilateralism is not merely that it coordinates national policies in groups of three or more states, . . . but that it does so on the basis of certain principles of ordering relations among those states."⁴ These principles, in Ruggie's view, "specify appropriate conduct for a class of actions, without regard to the particularistic interests of the parties or the strategic exigencies that may exist in any specific occurrence."⁵ When viewed from this vantage point, a commitment to multilateralism involves more than a procedural strategy for conducting one's foreign policy. It suggests a subjective approach and a conscious commitment to the process and substance of the associations—more specifically, a conscious interest in the substantive content of the international order that is

supported by multilateral activity. Multilateralism, in this sense, shares certain characteristics with how international regimes have been described in the literature. Support for regimes, analysts note, derives from their ability to reduce the costs and risks to governments from co-operation. International regimes also provide a greater degree of predictability for governments because they make it easier to anticipate the response of other governments involved in the same regime. Each of these views of multilateralism emphasizes the role of states in the process of co-operation and tends to look upon international co-operation primarily as a top-down process, one organized and implemented by states in service to interests that have been defined by the states involved.

In contrast to this, some analysts have argued that for both empirical and normative reasons, multilateralism needs to be examined from the bottom up. This argument stems from the increased prevalence and participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in global politics. This **new multilateralism**, as it has been described, takes a different view from that of realist, liberal, or constructivist views of multilateralism. In these more traditional approaches, as Michael Dolan and Chris Hunt describe them, “the actions of elements of civil society serve to legitimate or delegitimize decisions made in state-centric multilateral institutions, rather than in any way transforming the terrain of political sovereignty.”⁶ In contrast, “the bottom-up element embodies the reconstitution of civil society, and is most glaringly manifest in the rise of new social movements, which are ‘no longer willing to allow governments to act as exclusive agents on [their] behalf.’”⁷ In considering this new multilateralism, Robert Cox has noted that multilateralism becomes “highly ‘schizophrenic’ in that one part is situated in the present predicaments of the state system, and another probing the social and political foundations of a future order.”⁸

Cox has also argued that world order and the multilateral activity that supports it can support different interests and ideas. He describes world order as “neutral as regards the nature of the entities that constitute power; it designates an historically specific configuration of power of whatever kind.”⁹ As a result, world order may exhibit different tendencies under different configurations of power. Multilateralism, in turn, may support more or less progressive or conservative ordering principles for global political relations. Furthermore:

Cox’s critical IR [international relations] perspective also points to the way in which discursive meanings of multilateralism become important in shaping concrete material practices. This brings in an inherently normative aspect to the new multilateralism, in that it seeks to uncover whose voices are represented (or not) in international politics as well as revealing the nature of particular sites of struggle and contestation.¹⁰

The prominence of multilateralism in Canadian foreign policy speaks to its importance as both a practice and an idea that for many years has shaped Canada’s identity both at home and abroad. It is worth making this distinction because both the idea and the practice have had important, if different, effects on those involved in foreign policy, and as the practice changes it will have an effect on how the idea of multilateralism will be viewed. On the practical side, multilateralism has often encouraged Canadian officials to pursue foreign policy objectives through institutional connections. The idea of multilateralism as a process through which international order can be organized and sustained helped to shape a Canadian identity and, in turn, encouraged policy-makers to employ it in rhetoric and in practice as a way of constructing a favourable image for Canada and Canadians abroad as a means to gain public support for foreign policy initiatives. At times, the idea has to be

reconciled with the practice. Equally important is the effect that the multilateral idea has had on the Canadian public's view of and support for foreign policy, conditioning the public not only to a particular form of engagement but also to support the principle of active engagement in world affairs.

The idea of multilateralism also represents, often implicitly but sometimes explicitly, a set of normative values. These are often positive values juxtaposing the more favourable image of multilateralism with the less constructive option of **unilateralism**, or in Canada's specific circumstances, of a bilateral foreign policy attached to dominant and domineering powers—formerly Great Britain and more persistently the United States. This favourable image and the attached values do not always correspond to practice.¹¹ Nor does it overtly acknowledge the specific national interests of Canada that have been well served by multilateral practices. Yet the positive values that have been attached to multilateralism and the favourable image generated from Canadian support for multilateralism have helped to define Canadian identity. As a result, it has been an important source of popular support for foreign policy-makers. Consistently high levels of public support for the United Nations and UN-sponsored peacekeeping, for instance, provide some evidence for this.¹²

Bruno Charbonneau provides a valuable critical perspective on multilateralism's normative bias:

As an ideological construction, multilateralism is more than a process for good governance: it also entails notions and visions of peace, liberty, human rights, security, democracy, and . . . the discursive uses of the concept convey normative assumptions about the nature of multilateral practices, about the characteristics of the global order it implicitly promotes, and about the boundaries and limits of political possibilities.¹³

He further explains that:

Within such an intellectual framework, it seems easy to appreciate how multilateralism presents a narrative of solutions to the problems of international politics . . . resulting from patterns of particularism, fragmentation, and confrontation that can lead to conflict . . . for which multilateralism offers solutions by substituting configurations of universalism, consensus, and compromise.¹⁴

The mythical status of some representations of multilateralism such as peacekeeping is quite evident, and this is one way to interpret how multilateralism has been sold or presented to the public. There may also be an implicit bias at times for the value of multilateral approaches, but multilateral approaches can also be viewed as ways of securing and articulating particularisms in the face of potential universalisms. Canadian officials, for example, sought to employ multilateral agencies to secure a greater degree of autonomy from the US, and at one time looked upon institutions such as the UN and the Commonwealth as places where states of different political and economic orientations could interact. In pursuing such options they may or may not have served intentionally to reinforce a collective hegemony, but there are too many instances where such efforts were resisted to suggest that this was not the original or overriding intent.

This normative dimension of multilateralism is an interesting area worthy of further exploration, but it cannot detain us here. We should, however, recognize the potential role that such a view could play in legitimating and reinforcing multilateral practices on the part

of the Canadian government. "Discourses of multilateralism are imbued with normative assumptions about the benign and selfless nature of Canadian policies, procedures, processes, and mechanisms characterized as multilateral."¹⁵ Yet, as Charbonneau implies, this has not always been the intent, let alone the outcome, of multilateral practices. It is also not the intent of this particular volume. A good deal of Canadian support for multilateralism has been rooted in the pursuit of very specific interests such as national security and prosperity. While these might be good for Canada they cannot and should not be seen as good in any broader normative sense; after all, the pursuit of these multilateralist objectives has been done at the expense of other activities.

One reason why the idea of multilateralism has had such an influence on publics, policy officials, and politicians in Canada is that it has served so many different objectives. These objectives are worth distinguishing because they have affected the manner in which policy-makers have promoted multilateralism and the form that multilateralism has taken. They also have repercussions for how officials and the public assess the benefits of multilateralism and thus the prospects for continuing commitment and support. These distinctions are not mutually exclusive; indeed, in many instances they have overlapped and/or reinforced one another.

First, and perhaps foremost, multilateralism has been used to promote Canadian interests. Such interests include substantive ones such as protecting Canadian security, advancing Canadian economic interests, and securing Canadian sovereignty to less tangible interests such as promoting Canada's status or recognition in the international community. From this vantage point, multilateralism has served to enhance Canada's influence, or at least its ability to secure what have been defined as its principal interests and/or values over time. In addition, multilateralism has been used to deflect, corral, or temper the imperial pressure of close allies—Great Britain in the past, the United States at present. Examples of such multilateral practices include Canada's involvement in the Imperial War Councils through to its active participation in NATO. Some would question the effectiveness of such practices, while others view these multilateral associations as an opportunity for dominant powers to discipline other states and garner support for their hegemonic position.¹⁶ Finally, multilateralism has been used to promote international order. This has been interpreted from both idealist and realist viewpoints. In its idealist version multilateralism promotes a radical transformation of global governance using international institutions and international law as the foundation for a cosmopolitan global order. Against this more idealist conception stands a more limited view that considers multilateralism to be rooted in mutual recognition, peaceful co-operation through diplomacy, and the sort of generalized principles of conduct highlighted by Ruggie as the basis for an international order composed of a society of states.

Multilateralism has also taken different forms, with implications for the manner in which multilateral diplomacy is practised and received. The most common form of multilateral practice is that which takes place in and around formal institutions with inclusive membership such as the UN and including various regional and special-purpose institutions. A second form of multilateral practice, sometimes referred to as plurilateral, involves a limited and exclusive collection of states in more formalized settings such as the G8 and now the G20. Finally, a third and seemingly more common form of ad hoc multilateralism takes place outside of formal institutions in coalitions organized for very specific and often highly specialized purposes. These are the so-called coalitions of the willing, about which Andrew Cooper has usefully distinguished between those that take a more top-down approach and those that take a bottom-up approach.¹⁷ These coalitions may involve various non-state

parties—businesses, NGOs, or epistemic communities. Such variations in practice take on significance in determining how multilateralism will be received and adopted, both by participating states and by those states and non-state actors left on the outside. In turn, the particular form and forum of multilateralism have implications for the authority and legitimacy of decisions taken, not to mention the efficacy of such decisions. The decision about how to participate in these different forms may also be indicative of the idea of multilateralism that motivates a government's foreign policy.

Perspectives on Canada's involvement in multilateral practices range across a number of themes. For example, Denis Stairs has taken the view that multilateral diplomacy, especially in the immediate post-World War II period, reflected a realist approach to international order. "Canadians contributed to the construction of the postwar international order—to the creation, that is, of institutions of global governance—with clearly defined interests in view and on the basis of a 'realist' calculus of power from which they derived relatively clear notions of what they could get away with and what they could not."¹⁸

Among the more common critical views is that multilateralism has been used to create and reinforce an unjust global order that serves the interests of hegemonic powers and a dominant capitalist class. Mark Neufeld has argued that Canada's interest in multilateralism or middle power diplomacy serves the interests of a hegemonic and unequal world order that reinforces and legitimates the interests of dominant capitalist powers such as the United States.¹⁹ David Black and Claire Turenne Sjolander concur: "The norms and principles associated with [multilateralism] have been central to the construction and preservation of hegemony, at the levels of both world order and the Canadian social formation."²⁰ This more critical reading of multilateralism and of Canada's contribution to it in the post-1945 world suggests that the rhetoric or assumption of multilateralism as a benign, pacifying, equalizing approach to global order has seldom been matched by the actual practice or results.

Another source of criticism comes from those who argue that support for multilateralism has been at the expense of Canada's real national interests, which would be much better served through close alignment with the United States. Far from seeing multilateralism as a support for a US-dominated hegemonic order, this view looks upon multilateralism as an abandonment of the United States and believes national interest is best served with closer integration with the United States. Michael Hart is among those who take the view that, too often, the government has given too much time and attention to the UN or other multilateral commitments at the expense of working in close concert with the US.²¹

Robert Bothwell offers a different critique, claiming that multilateralism has been exaggerated and does not represent anything particularly distinctive or significant for Canadian foreign policy: "It is entirely possible that Canadians confused multilateralism, a small power's logical policy, with a higher status. Canada was multilateral by inclination even if, much of the time, the fruits of multilateralism were difficult to imagine, let alone seize."²² A final perspective, raised by Jennifer Welsh among others, concerns the current state of international institutions, their capacity, credibility, and legitimacy, and questions the value of a multilateral foreign policy when the institutional framework on which it relies is so grossly inadequate and performing so poorly.²³

These perspectives are worth considering as we review Canada's multilateral activities. One should not assume that support for multilateral processes and institutions is inherently enlightened and reflects an abnegation of national interests, nor that there is an inconsistency between the pursuit of milieu goals and serving national objectives. On the contrary, as will become clear in examining Canada's policies and practices, multilateralism has