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Introduction by Geoffrey Hale

Jonathan Paquin and Patrick James, eds. *Game Changer: The Impact of 9/11 on North American Security*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014. ISBN: 9780774827065 (hardcover, CDN\$95.00, \$99.00); 9780774827072 (CDN\$34.95; \$37.95).

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Review by Christopher Sands, Hudson Institute

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What is most striking about this volume is its comprehensiveness. Paquin and James have drawn together contributions from leading scholars to address the impact of the 11 September 2001 terror attacks in New York and Washington on extant security relations among the United States, Canada, and Mexico viewed from several important perspectives.

First and foremost, there are four strong chapters from the perspective of international relations theory. In “Was 9/11 a Watershed?” Charles F. Doran employs the power cycle theory for which he is well-known<sup>1</sup> and it proves to be a surprisingly good fit for interpreting the reactions of the three states to their relative position in the international and continental systems and asymmetric threats each was forced to confront on that day. Although the United States was relatively more powerful and capable of global conventional force projection, the asymmetric nature of the terror threat and its demonstrated capacity to exploit the open nature of western societies to attack civilians in the continental United States – something no power had managed to do since Britain during the War of 1812 – rendered the relatively less powerful Canada and Mexico strategically essential to U.S. security. Both Ottawa and Mexico City reacted to this change defensively, concerned to retain market access negotiated as part of the North American Free Trade Agreement, and failed to work together in confronting Washington in this regard. Nevertheless, Doran argues, the United States’ need for close coordination and cooperation among military and security services in all three countries prompted creative U.S. leadership that altered these relationships to align with the changed nature of the threat

In his chapter “The Homeland Security Dilemma”, Frank P. Harvey provides an effective melding of two arguments he developed to book length.<sup>2</sup> The first concerns the weakness of the multilateral security arrangements that were successfully employed by the United States during the Cold War to counter the Soviet threat when repurposed to counter terrorism. Harvey argues that unilateral responses are more appropriate to global terrorist networks, giving the United States the necessary agility and speed as well as freedom of action that alliance decision-making cannot. The second argument concerns the inherent security dilemma for the United States, whose efforts to respond to terrorism by strengthening border controls can lead other states to react to the new obstacles to U.S. market access by developing alternate markets, thereby weakening the United States position as the central state in the system. For Harvey, the United States both correctly took unilateral steps where it could in order to respond to terrorist threats and relied on

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<sup>1</sup> Charles F. Doran, *Systems in Crisis: New imperatives of high politics at century's end* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> See Frank P. Harvey, *Smoke and Mirrors: Globalized Terrorism and the Illusion of Multilateral Security* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) and *The Homeland Security Dilemma: Fear, Failure and the Future of American Insecurity* (London: Routledge, 2008).

'coalitions of the willing' rather than traditional alliance structures (although NATO was engaged for the Afghanistan theater of operations), and the United States also fueled the defensive responses from Canada, Mexico, and other countries to unilaterally-imposed border security measures.

Justin Massie's chapter, "Toward Greater Opportunism" considers the Canadian reactions to unilateral actions and proposals for bilateral cooperation from the United States after 2001 in terms of the balancing/bandwagoning behaviours identified within the realist and neorealist paradigms by Robert Gilpin, G. John Ikenberry, Stephen Walt and others.<sup>3</sup> Massie notes that balancing and bandwagoning can be undertaken in 'hard' and 'soft' ways, and that Ottawa's traditionally soft approach to both was employed by the Liberal governments of Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin at different periods in the post-2001 period resulting in a decidedly mixed record of grumbling acquiescence to U.S. security demands in North America and little recognition (or credit) for Canadian participation in Afghanistan, a soft bandwagoning step that earned little credit from the George W. Bush administration. Stephen Harper shifted Canada's policy toward hard bandwagoning in Afghanistan in an attempt to advance Canadian interests in closer security relations with the United States; strong support in overseas military operations provided greater flexibility for Canada in continental and border security, allowing for a more successful (from the perspective of reduced tensions within the bilateral relationship) mix of soft balancing and bandwagoning on particular issues.

James and Marc Paradis co-author a chapter, "Canada, the United States and Continental Security after 9/11" that applies contemporary attribution theory from the study of political psychology to consider the motivations and thinking of leaders in Ottawa as they respond to the United States' security agenda in the period following September 2001. This chapter has an experimental feel, relying on a small number of political memoirs for evidence, and the authors stress that their conclusions are at best tentative. However, since much is made of motivations and intentions in the 'first draft of history' – namely, the journalistic record, James and Paradis offer an interesting approach to the subject that bridges what many recall of these events from media reporting and the theoretical interpretations of the other authors in the volume.

The remaining chapters in *Game Changer* delve into specific changes to the relationship among the North American countries and their governments in the post-2001 period, and in some cases argue for further changes.

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<sup>3</sup> The principal texts by these three authors cited by Massie are: Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of World Order after Major Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); and Walt, *Taming American Power; The Global Response to US Primacy* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005). The chapter also cites Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy" *World Politics* 51:1 (1998); Robert Pape, "Soft Balancing against the United States" *International Security* 30:1 (2005); Ilai Z. Saltzman, "Soft Balancing as Foreign Policy: Assessing American Strategy toward Japan in the Interwar Period" *Foreign Policy Analysis* 7:1 (2011). The footnotes and bibliography for this chapter and the volume as a whole are thorough and provide an additional resource for readers.

Paquin and Louis Bélanger in “Canada-US Security Cooperation under the Security and Prosperity Partnership” consider the rise and fall of the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP) that was initiated at the start of U.S. President George W. Bush’s second term at a trilateral summit held in Waco, Texas. The SPP institutionalized cooperation among the three federal governments through 20 standing trilateral working groups composed of senior officials, with semi-annual meetings of Cabinet members (three from each country) to review progress and generate reports for annual North American Leaders’ Summits (known as NALS). At the first NALS attended by U.S. President Barack Obama in 2009, the SPP was disbanded, although the leaders continued to meet (more or less) annually. Based on dozens of interviews with senior Canadian and American officials, Paquin and Bélanger conclude that the SPP’s security cooperation efforts faltered because of a cumbersome, nontransparent institutional design of dubious legality – complicated by the forced trilateral nature of the working groups, which served to hinder communication and progress. The authors contend that given the importance of the U.S. market for Canada, what the SPP may be said to have achieved in the area of U.S.-Canada security cooperation would have happened without the SPP. It is a very Canadian perspective: the SPP never won over Canadian officials or politicians in either the Liberal government of Prime Minister Paul Martin or the Conservative governments of Prime Minister Stephen Harper. For the United States, I think, the SPP was a greater departure from past practice and an experiment in cooperative governance that has established important precedents for ongoing efforts in these areas with both Canada and Mexico. It may be true that Canada would have agreed to the same border cooperation measures without the SPP, but the SPP tempered U.S. tendencies to unilateralism in some areas and showed that doing so could effectively advance U.S. interests – lessons that the Obama administration has taken to heart.

Stephen Clarkson notes that the steadily increasing integration of the three North American economies accelerated in turn by the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement and the North American Free Trade Agreement was slowed and in some areas reversed by the reassertion of the salience of border security by the United States following the 11 September 2001 attacks. These attacks had, in Clarkson’s view, a ‘disintegrative’ effect on North America, prompting Canada and Mexico to resume defensive postures toward the United States as the market access they had risked a great deal politically at home to attain was restricted sharply in the interests of U.S. national security. Clarkson’s prolific writing on the topic of the North American political economy, much of it critical, lends added weight to his argument here.<sup>4</sup>

One of the strengths of Clarkson’s analysis is his appreciation of the role of Mexico in the North American political economy, which makes his analysis fully-trilateral and therefore complete. This is also a strength of *Game Changer*, which includes two excellent chapters

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<sup>4</sup> See for example, Stephen Clarkson, *Does North America Exist? Governing the Continent after NAFTA and 9/11* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008); and *Uncle Sam and Us: Globalization, Neoconservatism, and the Canadian State* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

devoted to the role of Mexico – a rare and welcome thing in a book from a Canadian press, for which the editors and the publisher deserve to be applauded.

Athanasios Hristoulas places some of the responsibility for the fact that Mexico has been frequently sidelined as a part of North America on the ambiguous attitude that characterizes much of Mexican foreign policy toward the United States and Canada. Unlike Canada, which often sought defensively to trade closer security cooperation with the United States for a restoration of market access for Canadian firms, Mexico after 2001 sought to barter security cooperation with the United States in exchange for migration reforms benefiting its citizens in an opportunistic (rather than defensive) way that advanced a longstanding foreign policy goal. Hristoulas argues that this conveyed ambivalence about security that did not sit well with the Bush administration in the United States, limiting the success of the strategy. The rise in violence related to narcotrafficking, particularly after Mexican President Felipe Calderon deployed the military against drug trafficking organizations, complicated matters further for Mexican foreign policy while placing security concerns and cooperation firmly on the U.S.-Mexico bilateral agenda. This brought Washington and Mexico City into closer alignment, but, notes Hristoulas, increased discomfort in Ottawa leading to further attenuation of Mexico-Canada relations and setting the stage for the dual-bilateralism of the Obama administration's North American policies.

Picking up the theme, Isabelle Vagnoux of the Aix-Marseille Université in France considers how the escalation of conflict with organized crime engaged in narcotrafficking via Mexico was compounded by the U.S. investment in security of its land borders with Canada and Mexico. The overlay of the search for terrorists and the search for illegal drugs was reinforced by the Mérida Initiative, which channeled military assistance to Mexico and facilitated intelligence sharing. Vagnoux notes that after a rough start, where the two countries acted in ways that demonstrated low levels of mutual trust, a more cooperative approach emerged and the safe and secure movement of people and goods across the U.S.-Mexican border began to improve. This was not an immediate positive consequence of the 11 September 2001 shock, but the events of that day did contribute.

Western University's Donald Abelson's work on the role of think tanks in Canada and the United States<sup>5</sup> has established him as a leading expert on the subject of their policy influence in Ottawa and Washington. Abelson notes that while many policy research institutes were founded to bridge the gulf between academic research and public policy for the educational benefit of government decision makers, the role of these organizations has gradually shifted to advocacy for policy recommendations, perspectives, and outcomes. This was important in the wake of the 11 September 2001 attacks, which surprised political leaders and led to urgent demand for ideas on how to respond. While Abelson is a bit too generous here in noting my own role as a Canada-watcher at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and later at the Hudson Institute, his more significant point is

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<sup>5</sup> See for example *American Think Tanks and Their Role in US Foreign Policy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996); and *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002 and 2009).

that the enormity of the terrorist threat led to a marginalization of specialists on Canada and Mexico as Middle East analysts, national security experts, and specialists in terrorism and illicit networks predominated in the debate and in access to senior officials. As a result, U.S. policy responses focused on the security threat and ignored the particularities and sensitivities of the U.S. relationships with its North American neighbors.<sup>6</sup> This nuanced assessment of the role of think tanks in this specific case is an important contribution to the literature on U.S. foreign policy and on research institutes more generally.

Philippe Lagassé of the University of Ottawa returns attention to the traditional security domain of military-to-military cooperation. The mature and institutionalized relationships that had developed between the armed services of the United States and Canada in the twentieth century changed in response to the 11 September 2001 attacks to better confront the new dynamics of threats to both countries. NORAD, which responded swiftly and capably to secure U.S. airspace in the days following the attacks, was expanded to oversee maritime warning and response. The United States established a new operational command structure, U.S. Northern Command (US NORTHCOM) to coordinate U.S. forces for the defense of North America, and became a new counterpart for the Canadian Forces – which had previously coordinated with the Joint Operations Command led by the U.S. military Joint Chiefs – and for the Mexican military, which had previously coordinated with the U.S. Southern Command. In response, Canada reorganized its national defenses into Canada Joint Operation Command (briefly called Canada Command) just as the logic of the new U.S. Department of Homeland Security eventually led Ottawa to reorganize a number of domestic security and inspection and enforcement functions into a new cabinet-level department, Public Safety Canada. Taking stock of all of these changes, Lagassé sees the extant bilateral model for institutionalized U.S.-Canadian military cooperation as superior to recent attempts at trilateral structures that sought to include a wary Mexican military. Still, the gradual return to U.S. dual-bilateralism in North American military cooperation could be enhanced, in Lagassé's view, by Canada's participation in ballistic missile defense through NORAD, and the asymmetric threat presented by scenarios wherein terrorists attempt attacks using portable missiles or unmanned drone aircraft provides ample justification for the reconsideration by Ottawa that Lagassé suggests here.

It is on this point that Yan Cimon of Université Laval weighs in with a very strong chapter on military procurement to meet new challenges of the post-2001 world. Cimon starts by noting that the close military-industrial links that developed during the First and Second World Wars between Canada and the United States at a time when the automotive and aerospace industries were closely linked and played a large role in production of military equipment have been undermined by U.S. suspension of Canada's exemption from the application of U.S. International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITARs) which began before

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<sup>6</sup> For the record, Sidney Weintraub and I warned of the importance of balancing border security reinforcements with market access for trade and people flows across North American borders, as well as the enormous potential for cooperation with the governments of Canada and Mexico in the Center for Strategic and International Studies' all-hands publication issued four months after the attacks: *To Prevail: An American Strategy for the Campaign Against Terrorism* (Washington, D.C.: CSIS Press, 2001). The reaction confirms Abelson's argument: our advice was not effective in tempering the U.S. policy response.

2001, and the subsequent expansion of the export control list to include a number of “dual-use” technologies that hindered technology transfer between civilian and military industries and firms in the two countries. Given the deep post-NAFTA integration of supply chains noted by Clarkson in his chapter, Cimon’s account of the disruption these changes caused is perhaps understated here, though he notes that with significant diplomatic effort Canada has been able to regain some of its former privileged access to U.S. defense technology and procurement. This brief bit of encouraging news is immediately counterbalanced as Cimon notes the changing nature of threats to North American security, and the importance of not just restoring but greatly enhancing the collaboration of the two countries defense industrial bases to adapt to the rising threats from terrorist networks, hostile states, and new tensions in Asia.

The most original and provocative contribution to the volume may be the one provided by David Haglund of Queen’s University. Haglund considers the alliance relationships between the United States and its neighbors in turn, and concludes that Lagassé and others are right to discount the potential for trilateral defense, intelligence, and security cooperation in North America. Yet he suggests a novel solution: bringing Mexico into the Atlantic Alliance as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I have advocated this idea myself<sup>7</sup> but still found compelling new arguments in Haglund’s case for Mexico’s NATO membership, including the well-established accession process developed for central and eastern European countries, which includes benchmarks for the improvement of civil-military relations and upgrading military professionalism, equipment and training. Haglund notes that adding Mexico to NATO could strengthen NATO if it allowed European members to pursue their proposals for a ‘European Pillar’ of coordination within Europe balanced by a ‘North American Pillar’ (the United States should, of course, play a role in both). And Haglund challenges traditionalists who view the U.S.-Canada alliance as sacrosanct to acknowledge what other authors in this volume have argued throughout: that this alliance has changed, and is no longer what it was. Rather than trying to revive it by extending certain institutions, such as NORAD, to include Mexico,<sup>8</sup> Haglund argues that Mexico would make NATO more relevant to North American defense and therefore to the United States – bolstering the U.S.-Canadian alliance by adapting it to pressing threats in a way that it has not been since the age of Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles and long-range bombers.

In the final chapter, the editors Paquin and James underscore the contemporary policy relevance of the volume. This is helpful as a summary, but also because this book started with a workshop held in Quebec City to mark the tenth anniversary of the 11 September attacks in 2011 that I was fortunate to have been able to attend. The authors have updated their original presentations into the chapters included here, but new developments

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<sup>7</sup> Most recently in “Why NATO Should Accept Mexico” [Huffington Post](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/christopher-sands/nato-mexico_b_1525638.html) May 18, 2012. Available at: [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/christopher-sands/nato-mexico\\_b\\_1525638.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/christopher-sands/nato-mexico_b_1525638.html)

<sup>8</sup> This proposal was advanced in 2010 by James Carafano, Jena Baker McNeill, Ray Walser and my Hudson colleague Richard Weitz in *Expand NORAD to Improve Security in North America* (Washington, D.C.: Heritage Foundation, 2010).

inevitably occur and these are noted where pertinent and the editors provide a pointed recap of the policy recommendations that may be drawn from the book.

The breadth and diversity of this volume's chapters, which include several fresh and provocative ideas and perspectives on the multi-dimensional consequences of the events of 11 September 2001 for North America make it an essential addition to libraries everywhere (including Europe and Asia, where the peculiarities of North American relations are often reduced to the oddity of the United States, unfortunately). It is accessible and quite suitable for university course adoption as a principal or supporting textbook, particularly for graduate students. My own career in Washington D.C. university and think-tank circles includes a decade before and more than a decade after the World Trade Center towers fell, and I learned a lot from this book, and will keep it handy.