

9/11: The “Perfect Opportunity” for North American Integration

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On February 12, 2008, the Canadian newspaper, the *Financial Post*, published an opinion piece by Michael Hart, of Carleton University, entitled, “Canada Blew It,” in which he blamed the “slow” approach to North American *integration* on Canada’s policies following 9/11. The article begins by stating:

“The Canadian and U.S. economies have become intertwined in response to demands by Canadians and Americans for each other’s products, services, capital, and ideas. Yet the border as presently constituted protects Canadians and Americans from each other, not from global security threats. It also presents a risk to the wealth-creating flow of people, goods, services and capital between the two countries.”^{[1](#)}

Hart states that in order to “address global security concerns”, Canada and the US need to, “develop co-operative solutions to common problems.” He stated to do this, Canada and the US should implement an, “agenda aimed at removing the border to the largest extent possible as an obstacle to Canada-U.S. interaction and integration.” He continues in outlining the steps to be taken in this agenda, the first of which is to, “re-imagine the border.” Hart explains that much of the problems with the border are a result of “regulatory compliance”, as in *having a border*, to which he proposes a solution in which, “Canada and the United States need to aggressively pursue regulatory convergence,” or in other words, *harmonization*. He continues, “It is in Canada’s interests to align as many of its regulatory requirements as possible with those of the United States.”

In discussing the security of “North America’s” economic infrastructure, Hart states, “Similar to our interdependence in ensuring the security of the North American continent, neither country can ensure the security of its economic infrastructure without the full co-operation of the other,” to which he elaborates that, “we need to build the necessary institutions and networks of co-operation that ensure that American and Canadian officials are working together toward common objectives and doing so on the basis of constructive political oversight.”^{[2](#)} Amazingly, Hart stated that it is “not a trade agenda”, but is, in fact, “an integration agenda that requires the full participation of departments and agencies on both sides of the border responsible for border administration, economic regulation, and infrastructure integrity.”

Hart continued in his critique of the *slow* process of integration, stating that, “**The crisis of Sept. 11, 2001, provided a perfect opportunity to seize the moment to re-imagine the border**, but Canada blew it [emphasis added].” This is a clear example of how important it is for those who oppose the processes of the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP), and the North American Union which it seeks to create,

must also examine the relationship between *integration* and *terror*; between the North American Union and 9/11. These are not separate elements of one another, these events are themselves deeply *integrated*, in both purpose and strategy. It is integral for those that oppose the NAU to review the attacks of September 11, 2001, to see the linkages between them and understand them as something beyond random associations and reactions to one another.

As to explaining why “Canada blew it,” Hart states that, “Rather than work with the United States to address real security and related concerns, and to build a much-better functioning, more open, and more integrated North America, Canadian authorities reacted defensively and anxiously to American security concerns.” But this is a gross misrepresentation, as shortly after 9/11, in December of 2001, “Governor Tom Ridge and Deputy Prime Minister John Manley Signed the Smart Border Declaration and Associated 30-Point Action Plan to Enhance the Security of Our Shared Border While Facilitating the Legitimate Flow of People and Goods,”³ according to the White House’s December 2002 press release on the subject. Part of the 30-Point Action plan included “Biometric Identifiers”, stating, “In the interest of having cards that could be used across different modes of travel, we have agreed to use cards that are capable of storing multiple biometrics.” Another of the 30 points was “Permanent Residence Cards”, or in other words, ID Cards. Further, the plans also stated that, “The United States and Canada have agreed to share Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Name Records (API/PNR) on high-risk travelers destined to either country.” This is hardly stepping away from integration between the two countries, as Michael Hart seems to imagine.

Hart further explains that, “**In the absence of another crisis**, only inspired leadership can overcome the narrow-minded response of special and entrenched interests and bureaucratic self-preservation.”⁴ Then, in revealing the true intent of the SPP, Hart states, “Each group [Canada and the US] is adept at exploiting the default position of incrementalism, exemplified by such initiatives as the Security and Prosperity Partnership. Progress will be made under the SPP banner, but at a snail’s pace and without the impact needed to make a perceptible difference.” This is a public admission of the SPP being an incremental approach to “deep integration”, of which then ultimate goal is to form a North American Union. Hart explains that a key source of leadership is, “a business sector prepared to speak out forcefully and convincingly about the costs and lost opportunities flowing from misdirected and overzealous border administration.”

So who is Michael Hart? He is the Simon Reisman Chair in Trade Policy at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University.⁵ He is the first person to hold this position, which is named after Simon Reisman, “Canada’s Chief Negotiator during the free trade talks with the United States, he also participated in a series of important international trade negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.”⁶ Reisman was recently quoted by CTV regarding the 1988 Canada US Free Trade Agreement, saying, “We got it, we didn’t get it all. We left a little for posterity.”⁷ Further, Michael Hart “was a senior official in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade specializing in trade policy and trade negotiations.”⁸ He was also the author of a document entitled, “Free Trade in Free Fall? Assessing the Impact of Nontariff Barriers on Canada-U.S. Trade,” published by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.⁹ From 2004 to 2005, Hart was a visiting scholar at the Center for North American Studies at American University,¹⁰ of which the Director is Robert Pastor.¹¹

Robert Pastor is infamously referred to as the “father” of the North American Union, and arguably its chief public spokesperson and champion, and was the Co-Chair of the Independent Task Force on the Future of North America, a joint task force between the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) in the United States and the Canadian Council of Chief Executives (CCCE) in Canada, as well as the Mexican Council on Foreign Relations, which produced the document “Building a North American Community.”¹² This document is the blueprint for the Security and Prosperity Agreement of North America, which outlines the overall objectives of the agreement in its goals of “integrating” North America.

Robert Pastor is also on the Board of Directors of the North American Forum on Integration, or NAFI, alongside the Chairman, Stephen Black, who is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.¹³ NAFI, “aims to address the issues raised by North American integration as well as identify new ideas and strategies to reinforce the North American region,”¹⁴ which every year, since 2005, holds what it calls a “Triumvirate”, which their website describes as, “an annual North American mock parliament,” which, “allows a hundred Canadian, American and Mexican university students to better understand the North American dynamic as well as the challenges faced by NAFTA partners.”¹⁵ Among the participating Universities in NAFI, is the American University, (of course), Simon Fraser University, of which an economics professor emeritus recently wrote an article for the *Financial Post* in which he mentioned the *amero* currency as a goal in North America [See: North American Monetary Integration: Here Comes the Amero, Global Research¹⁶], and another notable university is Carleton University.¹⁷ It just so happens that the author of *Canada Blew It*, Michael Hart, works at Carleton.

The process towards a North American Union is embedded in our societal institutions, from the corporate world, to media, government and education. These are individuals connected through joint membership in think tanks and interest groups of those who share ideological beliefs in internationalism and globalization. So, too, must those who oppose the SPP and the NAU be embedded in all the institutions of our societies, working not for personal gain and profit, but for country and freedom, preserving our rights, liberties and identity, and exposing those who seek to challenge our inherent human rights.

Notes

1 Michael Hart, *Canada Blew It*. The Financial Post: February 12, 2008:
<http://www.nationalpost.com/opinion/story.html?id=302151>

2 *Ibid*.

3 Office of the Press Secretary, U.S. – Canada Smart Border/30 Point Action Plan Update. The White House: December 6, 2002:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/12/20021206-1.html>

4 Michael Hart, *Ibid*.

5 About NPSIA, *Simon Reisman Chair in Trade Policy*. Carleton University:
http://www.carleton.ca/npsia/school/simon_reisman.html

6 *Ibid*.

7 CTV.ca news staff, *Poll says most North Americans support free trade*. CTV News: September 30, 2007:

http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20070930/free_trade_070930/20070930?hub=Canada

8 About NPSIA, *Simon Reisman Chair in Trade Policy*. Carleton University:
http://www.carleton.ca/npsia/school/simon_reisman.html

9 Events at the Center, *Free Trade in Free Fall? Assessing the Impact of Nontariff Barriers on Canada-U.S. Trade*. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars: February 8, 2008:
http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=events.event&event_id=372221

10 Past Senior Fellows, *Michael Hart*. Center for North American Studies at American University:
<http://www.american.edu/ia/cnas/ed/fellows/hart.cfm>

11 Center for North American Studies, *Robert A. Pastor*. Center for North American Studies at American University:
<http://www.american.edu/ia/cnas/staff/rpastor.cfm>

12 CFR.org, *Building a North American Community*. Council on Foreign Relations Press: May 2005: <http://www.cfr.org/publication/8102/>

13 NAFI, *Our Board of Directors*. NAFINA:
<http://www.fina-nafi.org/eng/fina/conseil.asp?langue=eng&menu=fina>

14 NAFI, *The North American Forum on Integration*.
<http://www.fina-nafi.org/eng/finapresentation.asp?langue=eng&menu=fina>

15 *Ibid.*

16 Andrew G. Marshall, *North American Monetary Integration: Here Comes the Amero*. Global Research: January 20, 2008:
<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=7854>

17 NAFI, *Triumvirate 2006*.
<http://www.fina-nafi.org/eng/triumvirat06/default.asplangue=eng&menu=triumvirat06>

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