



THE HARPER RECORD

Edited by Teresa Healy



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Economy, Trade and Investment

The Conservative Tax Record: More of the same, or a turn for the worse?

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Backsliding: Manufacturing decline and resource dependency under Harper

1. Typically, an "official" recession occurs when real GDP shrinks for at least two consecutive quarters.

2. This effect was called the “Dutch disease” in reference to the experience of the Netherlands in the late 1960s, when discoveries of North Sea gas caused a currency appreciation (much less severe than the rise of the Canadian dollar since 2002) that squeezed out non-resource Dutch exports. This chain of events might today more aptly be renamed the “Canadian condition.”

3. For a broader critique of these corporate tax cuts, see “Picking Winners: The Distorting Effects of Federal Corporate Tax Cuts,” by Jim Stanford (Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, April 2008).

4. Most Asian currencies, in particular, are explicitly or implicitly linked to U.S. dollar exchange rate targets, and hence countries such as Japan, Thailand, and China have not experienced remotely the same pain from currency fluctuations as has Canada. Mexico has also managed to avoid a currency appreciation. It is empirically wrong to assume that the rise of Canada’s dollar reflects a global weakness of the U.S. dollar. Canada’s unique resource dependence, its unique openness to foreign investment, and the willingness of Canadian authorities to tolerate unrestrained appreciation, have meant that we have borne a vastly disproportionate share of the burden of adjusting to global exchange rate fluctuations.

5. The Bank of Canada also reports to Mr. Flaherty, so the Bank’s inaction in the face of the damaging overshoot of the Canadian dollar is also, ultimately, Mr. Flaherty’s responsibility—notwithstanding the official fiction that Canada’s central bank is “independent.”

6., Thomas d’Aquino, head of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives, called the Wilson report “music to our ears.” The changes proposed by the Wilson panel, if enacted, would likely have prohibited Prentice’s rejection of the MD&A takeover.

7. A detailed critique of the employment and industrial effects on Canadian manufacturing of a free trade agreement with Korea is provided in “Employment Implications of Trade Liberalization with East Asia,” by Jim Stanford and Daniel Poon (Toronto: Canadian Auto Workers, September 2006).

8. The 2008 edition of the Alternative Federal Budget proposed several concrete ideas for capturing a larger share of one-time resource super-profits, both provincially and federally. See www.policyalternatives.ca for details.

Continuity and Change: Canadian Trade and Investment Policy, 2006–08

1. This article does not necessarily reflect the views of CCIC or its members.

2. This paper does not review changes in the NAFTA paradigm, which has been another area of significant evolution with the Security Prosperity Partnership Initiative. This is covered elsewhere in this book.

3. These include the Group of 33 countries aiming to carve out specific food security and development provisions in agriculture negotiations, to the Africa group and their proposals for international regulation of commodity prices, to the C4 group of West African cotton-exporting countries, to large constellations like the Group of 120 that emerged in the middle of the 2005 WTO Hong Kong Ministerial in reaction to the intransigence of rich countries on diverse Southern demands.
4. These include analysis by the World Bank and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
5. The offering of “aid for trade” is seen by many Southern governments and civil society analysts as problematic, with descriptions ranging from being ineffective to a distraction to bribery. For a critical review from a Southern perspective see South Centre (2004). *Strengthening Developing Countries’ Capacity for Trade Negotiations: Matching Technical Assistance to Negotiating Capacity Constraints* http://www.g77.org/doha/Doha-BPo4%20-Strengthening_Southern_trade-related_negotiating_capacity.pdf
6. There have been six WTO Ministerial meetings since 2005 when the WTO was created. They are normally on a two year spacing cycle.
7. See for example the statement of the NAMAs 11 Group of developing countries on the Feb 2008 modalities text <http://www.iatp.org/tradeobservatory/library.cfm?refID=101799> Also SUNS *South-North Development Monitor*, (Feb 27 2008). “More confusion in NAMAs as Chair gives new proposals.”
8. For information on the implications to Canadian farmers of the loss of the monopoly powers of the CWB see National Farmers Union website <http://thenfu.sasktelwebhosting.com/cwb.html>
9. For a review of possibilities for a Canadian approach to agricultural trade rules that builds new North-South alliances on a shared agenda for trade justice see the report of *Sustainable Farm Livelihoods North and South*, May 2005. http://www.ccic.ca/e/docs/003_food_roundtable_report.pdf
10. A Peru investment treaty was concluded in 2007. Others launched include Mongolia, Madagascar, Indonesia and Vietnam.
11. Although now a regular part of trade parlance, this term was first coined by Jagdish Bhagwati in, “U.S. Trade Policy: The Infatuation with Free Trade Agreements”, in Jagdish Bhagwati and Anne O. Krueger, *The Dangerous Drift to Preferential Trade Agreements*, AEI Press, 1995.
12. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) warned of the developmental constraints often imposed in bilateral trade deals in its 2007 *Trade and Development Report* <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/webflyer.asp?docid=8951&intItemID=2068&lang=1>

13. Canada updated its model Foreign Investment Protection Agreement template in 2004 partly in an effort to respond to the major public and political criticisms of NAFTA Chapter 11, but the new model makes few substantive changes. See Peterson (2006) *Evaluating Canada's 2004 Model Foreign Investment Protection Agreement in light of Civil Society's Concerns*. A CCIC Briefing note.
14. See for example the June 2008 testimony before the CIIT of a former analyst with the NAFTA environmental commission (CEC) who was providing advice to parliamentarians for their study on the human rights and environmental issues to be considered in the Colombia Canada trade agreement.
15. See website of NDP trade critic Peter Julian <http://www.peterjulian.ca/page/615>
16. January 2008, legal analysis undertaken by the Canadian Association of Labour Lawyers (CALL) on the U.S.-Colombia trade deal's labour provisions. Available from the Canadian Labour Congress www.canadianlabour.ca.
17. For an excellent discussion of the Strategy see Arne Ruckert and Laura Macdonald (2008), *Harper Re-Engages the Hemisphere: Canada and Post-Neoliberal Latin America*, Carleton University.
18. See Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada website for government information on the Americas Strategy <http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/geo/objectives-en.aspx>.
19. See the Prime Minister's Speech at <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=1759>
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21. See Susan Sell (2008). *The Global IP Upward Ratchet, Anti-Counterfeiting and Piracy Enforcement Efforts: The State of Play*. <http://www.ip-watch.org/files/SusanSellfinalversion.pdf>
22. Data exclusivity provisions extend the effective monopoly control of pharmaceutical companies over drug patents by preventing generic competitors from using the clinical trial data of the patented medicine to expedite approval of bioequivalent generic medicines.
23. The Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association (CGPA) estimated that had the eight-year ban been in place in the previous five years, it would have added approximately \$600-million to prescription drug costs in Canada. See CGPA press release November 14, 2006 at <http://www.twinside.org.sg/title2/FTAs/info.service/fta.info.service047.htm>
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6. Schmidt, Sarah Canwest, July 12, 2008.
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The Softwood Lumber Agreement: Snatching defeat from the jaws of victory

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Racialization and (In)Security

Conservative Colours: The Harper Conservatives and the colour-coding of Canada

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3. Ibid, Chapter 7 <http://www1.ca.nizkor.org/hweb/orgs/canadian/sirc/heritage-front/75.html>
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5. Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Tuesday, August 1, 2006 Edited evidence transcript Number 015 (Official Version) p. 22.
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16. Professor Micheal Keefer's essay, "The Harper Government and Canada's 'War-on-Terror' Immigration Policy" points out Harper counts among his formative influences the writings of the American right-wing intellectual Peter Brimelow, whose books include *Alien Nation: Common Sense About America's Immigration Disaster* (1995). In 2001 Harper gave voice to opinions that seem recognizably connected to Brimelow's alarmist vision of a country losing its cultural (read racial) identity in a swamp of ethnic otherness.
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22. CLC Immigration briefing notes for Ambassadorial delegations Norway & Sweden, November 2006 (see also CIC Facts and Figures Immigration Overview documents). While economic hothouse cities in Canada are attracting newcomers the percentage is small by comparison. The next largest locales hosting newcomers—Calgary, Ottawa, Winnipeg—are far behind attracting less than 5% vs. 40%.

23. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/v5/content/pdf/ethnicOutreach.pdf>

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26. In the case of the Chinese head tax, in June 07, Harper offered a full apology to Chinese Canadians on behalf of the Government of Canada for charging the head tax from Chinese immigrants between 1885 and 1947. The federal government also offered “symbolic individual payments of \$20,000 to living Chinese head tax payers and living spouses of deceased payers”. In addition, the government announced the establishment of a “\$24-million community historical recognition program to provide grant and contribution funding for community projects linked to wartime measures and immigration restrictions and a \$10-million national historical recognition program to fund federal initiatives, developed in partnership with other stakeholders”.

27. Library of Parliament: “Canadian Multiculturalism”: March 2006 Excerpt: In the February 2005 budget, the Liberal government announced that \$56 million would be invested over five years to implement Canada’s Action Plan Against Racism. The budget also allocated \$25 million over the next three years for an Acknowledgement, Commemoration, and Education Program that would undertake commemorative and educational initiatives to highlight the contributions of groups that have troubling memories as a result of historical events during times of war, or as a result of immigration policies of the day. In August and November 2005, as part of that program, the government announced agreements-in-principle with the Ukrainian-Canadian, Italian-Canadian, and Chinese-Canadian communities. The Program would fund proposals that acknowledge the historical experience of these ethnocultural communities.

Meanwhile, in March 2005, the Liberal government released *A Canada for All: Canada’s Action Plan Against Racism*. The Action Plan’s objectives were to strengthen social cohesion, further Canada’s human rights framework, and demonstrate federal leadership in the fight against racism and hate-motivated crime.

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34. See CLC AR&HR Department: Changing Demographics, July 2008; CLC Research Paper #34, Racial Status and Employment Outcomes, See also M. Ornstein studies on racial inequality.
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Culture and Communications

Telecommunication Picks Up Speed On the Free(Market) Way

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*The Harper Government and Federal-Provincial Issues:
Turning out the lights in the “fiscal cafeteria”*

1. The “pay for say” argument linking federal leadership with federal funding has been a recurring theme in debates over health care funding and policy in Canada ever since federal health transfers were folded into a (reduced) Canada Health and Social Transfer in the 1995 federal Budget. The sense of this issue is captured in the following excerpt from the *Report of the Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada* (2002), otherwise known as the *Romanow Report*. From page 70 of the report:

This increased investment by the federal government is not only consistent with the original medicare commitment, it is essential to protect, promote, and enhance the national dimensions of public health care in Canada. The final recommendation is also consistent with a recent proposal by Tom Kent (2002), one of the architects of medicare in the 1960s, who argued that such a reinvestment would be a prerequisite to the federal government resuming a leadership role with the provinces in shaping the future of medicare.

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