

WEBVTT

00:00:03.480 --> 00:00:05.020

<v SPEAKER_1>You're all, it's recording, so you're all good to go.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Okay.

00:00:05.680 --> 00:00:11.940

<v SPEAKER_2>Hello again, and welcome to Global Exchange, part of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute's Podcast Network.

00:00:11.940 --> 00:00:14.060

<v SPEAKER_2>I'm your host, Colin Robertson.

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<v SPEAKER_2>On this episode, recorded on November the 17th, we talk with John Meehan about Chrétien and the World, Canadian foreign policy from 1993 to 2003, that John co-edited with Jack Cunningham.

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<v SPEAKER_2>John Meehan is Director of the Bill Graham Centre for Contemporary International History at the University of Toronto's Trinity College, and affiliated faculty at the Munk School, and a Senior Fellow of Massey College.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Welcome, John.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Chrétien and the World brings together events by leading scholars and former practitioners, including former foreign ministers Lloyd Axworthy and Bill Graham, revisiting the foreign policy of Chrétien's decade in office.

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<v SPEAKER_2>It is published by UBC Press as part of the CD House series in Canadian political history.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Taken together, the essays document the Chrétien era and his governments as they pursued an often ambitious activist policy to forward not only national interests but liberal ideals on the world stage.

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<v SPEAKER_2>In addition, especially in the case of the human security agenda, it had the merit of distinguishing Canada from the United States.

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<v SPEAKER_2>The collection portrays an engaged Chrétien leading a foreign policy that is coherent in its commitment to internationalism and multilateralism.

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<v SPEAKER_2>The book's contributors combine personal recollections, archival research, and interviews to re-examine key decisions, pressures, and turning points throughout the Chrétien decade.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So let's begin.

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<v SPEAKER_2>John, how did you and Jack put this collection together?

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<v SPEAKER_2>And how did you pick the topics and match the topics to the authors?

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<v SPEAKER_3>Thanks Colin, that's a great question.

00:01:59.840 --> 00:02:05.820

<v SPEAKER_3>This project was really kind of an organic project that took place over several years.

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<v SPEAKER_3>It began during COVID actually as two workshops that were held online.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And we knew that really nothing had been written, not much had been written on Chrétien's foreign policy and a major study had yet to be published.

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<v SPEAKER_3>We have studies of Harper's foreign policy, Mulroney and others, but surprisingly not John Chrétien.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And so during COVID, we put together two online workshops with academics and practitioners.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So that's kind of, as you said, I'm the director of the Bill Graham Centre for Contemporary International History at Trinity College.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And kind of the spirit of this centre is very much what the late Honourable Bill Graham wanted, which was a centre to bring together the academics of Canadian foreign policy with its practitioners.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So we had people, former cabinet ministers, people like Roy McLaren, Sheila Copps, all the players really of the Chrétien years online with historians, political scientists, economists.

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<v SPEAKER_3>It was fairly informal.

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<v SPEAKER_3>These were not formal presentations.

00:03:13.520 --> 00:03:18.040

<v SPEAKER_3>We broke up the Chrétien's foreign policy into the relevant topics.

00:03:19.640 --> 00:03:22.660

<v SPEAKER_3>And we talked about the issues and responded.

00:03:22.940 --> 00:03:26.800

<v SPEAKER_2>You must have had a pretty good grasp of the Chrétien foreign policy yourself.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Well, yeah, I mean, Jack Cunningham and I teach Canadian foreign policy here at U of T, and especially the history of foreign relations.

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<v SPEAKER_3>But these two online workshops evolved into a conference that was held at U of T in September of 2022.

00:03:44.640 --> 00:03:44.920

<v SPEAKER_3>Mr.

00:03:44.920 --> 00:03:47.980

<v SPEAKER_3>Chrétien came to the opening dinner.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And there, too, we had academics and practitioners talk about various aspects of Chrétien's foreign policy.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And it's really papers from that conference that became chapters in our book.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Okay.

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<v SPEAKER_2>You mentioned Bill Graham, who, to me, was very much scholar but politician, practitioner, who always had a full appreciation.

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<v SPEAKER_2>I remember when I was in Los Angeles and he came down and visited, and we took him around to see George Shultz.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But he, Shultz was quite engaged with him because Shultz was also kind of a scholar practitioner, but also businessman.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And you might say a few words about Bill because he really was remarkable in many ways.

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<v SPEAKER_3>You know, the book is dedicated to Bill Graham.

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<v SPEAKER_3>I will read you the dedication of the front in memory of the Honourable Bill Graham, public servant, respected statesman and global citizen.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And really it's the spirit of Bill Graham in this book, again, of bringing together the practitioners and the academics, but also this idea of Canada as a responsible global citizen, a Canada that has an impact on world affairs, a Canada that makes a difference.

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<v SPEAKER_3>I mean, one of the decisions Bill was the most proud of was the Canadian decision not to go to war in Iraq, as you know, in 2003.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And so a Canada that, you know, works with its allies, particularly the United States, but also a Canada that can stand for its own and in matters where, as in the Iraq case, we decided that participation was not in our interest.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Bill Graham also contributed a chapter to the book on parliamentary committees, the role of parliamentary committees in the making of foreign policy.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And that often, he said, it often got overlooked.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So that's a really interesting chapter that I hope readers will appreciate, that takes you behind the scenes into where a lot of foreign policy priorities are hammered out in parliamentary committees.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And there too, you see the impact of Bill Graham, somebody who is able to reach out to people beyond his own party, working with people from the Conservative Party, the Bloc, NDP.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So I think you'll see the influence of Bill Graham throughout this book.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And that's one of the reasons we dedicated the book to him.

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<v SPEAKER_3>I guess that was well, within a couple of years of his death.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So, yeah, that's very much an impact of the influence behind this book.

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<v SPEAKER_2>I first got to know him when he was chair.

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<v SPEAKER_2>He was chair for quite some time of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And he was, I thought, a very good chair.

00:06:35.740 --> 00:06:38.860

<v SPEAKER_2>I'd known his predecessors, but he took a keen interest in it.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And you, I think, pointed out correctly that he wasn't terribly partisan.

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<v SPEAKER_2>He had respect for all the members.

00:06:47.160 --> 00:06:51.380

<v SPEAKER_2>And I thought he was one of those who I admired.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And then when he became a foreign minister, you know, he just took to it.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But he'd had all, certainly his appreciation of international law in particular was something that he more likely, but was, I think, a real influence on him.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Yes, I'm told this chapter that he contributed to our book was one of the last things he was working on before he passed away.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So it makes that contribution all that more meaningful.

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<v SPEAKER_2>As you pointed out, you know, the concerns about or caution about military interventionism, respect for multilateralism, belief in development and human rights, all the while giving Canada middle power status, that seemed to me came through in each of the chapters.

00:07:36.340 --> 00:07:38.880

<v SPEAKER_2>Is that a fair assessment?

00:07:38.940 --> 00:07:51.760

<v SPEAKER_3>Yes, and we did that on purpose because oftentimes, Chrétien, his foreign policy, you know, is seen as ad hoc or reactive.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And Chrétien himself prided himself on being a pragmatist.

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<v SPEAKER_3>When he came to our book launch in September, he again joked about that, kind of the public persona he cultivated of the little guy from Schueningen, that he's just reacting to things and building, you know, foreign policy based on relationships with world leaders, which he was very good at.

00:08:12.720 --> 00:08:29.140

<v SPEAKER_3>But I think when you step back, and now we've got a bit of hindsight to give us perspective, we realize actually there was that Chrétien had clear convictions about foreign policy, that there

was an overall coherent approach, that you could call this liberal internationalism.

00:08:29.800 --> 00:08:35.580

<v SPEAKER_3>Some might say the last hurrah of liberal internationalism before the Harper years.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So we assembled our chapters to show that.

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<v SPEAKER_3>That yes, he relied greatly on his ministers, particularly Lloyd Axworthy.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And we associate the human security agenda with Mr.

00:08:51.680 --> 00:08:52.780

<v SPEAKER_3>Axworthy, and rightly so.

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<v SPEAKER_3>But this fit into a larger perspective of a government that was intentional, liberal, internationalist, promoting multilateralism, and trying to make a difference in the world.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Yeah, I think that's a pretty...

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<v SPEAKER_2>I concur with that, because I do think the conventional wisdom is that he was just a little guy, and Lloyd Axworthy, who indeed had the drive and imagination and personality to take the human security agenda forward.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But as Lloyd himself will be the first to admit, he could not have done it without Chrétien behind him, and Chrétien's own relationships.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Yeah.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Certainly, I think that's something that came through in the book, which again, kind of defies that conventional wisdom, that I think particularly of Martin and Chrétien.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But as even Martin, I think, would admit that he had the liberty to be able to do so from Chrétien.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And other ministers I've talked to in the government have said that he really did give them, he expected them to actually manage their portfolios, and their deputy ministers were basically there for at least three, four, five years, which is a change from what we've seen since then.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Yes, definitely.

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<v SPEAKER_3>That's something that comes, came across in the conference and comes across in the book, I think, is that you see how Chrétien trusted his ministers.

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<v SPEAKER_3>He delegated a lot of responsibility to his ministers.

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<v SPEAKER_3>If they messed up on a file, okay, there were repercussions.

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<v SPEAKER_3>But in general, he trusted his ministers.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And, you know, I don't know if we can say this about government since then, where we've seen a heavier control, let's say, of the PMO on what's now global affairs.

00:10:43.520 --> 00:10:46.740

<v SPEAKER_3>That's something that every participant said, how much Mr.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Chrétien delegated to them and trusted them with their portfolios.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So that's a really interesting point that came through in all of our papers.

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<v SPEAKER_3>I think we look back on these years, you can see several foreign policy successes.

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<v SPEAKER_3>We think of the Ottawa Antipersonnel Landmine Treaty, the International Criminal Court, the Iraq War that I mentioned, the Kyoto

Protocol.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Even, well, and this probably might be criticized today in today's context, but the Team Canada missions, notably to China, this willingness to engage China and other powers and not to isolate them.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Well, it's interesting that one of Prime Minister Carney's promises is next year to lead a Team Canada mission to India and perhaps Indonesia, and who knows, we may even get to China again.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But those were certainly successful.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And as Chrétien once told me, it was not just for what it could accomplish in terms of trade, but for what it accomplished in terms of national unity, the premiers, especially because he invited them to bring their wives along and he attributes a lot of the success of the missions to Hélène Chrétien, who was always charming and got to know the wives.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And it was pretty hard for the husbands to take a shot at the big guy if the wives got on so well.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Colin, that's right.

00:12:07.960 --> 00:12:11.460

<v SPEAKER_3>There are two points about the two team Canada missions I think that are very important.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Number one, it was ingenious how Chrétien used those to resolve, to address the national unity issue, which remained the paramount issue in those years.

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<v SPEAKER_3>That and the domestic economy and to really force Quebec to say, well, are you part of this or not?

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<v SPEAKER_3>And even the Quebec government realized the benefits of being part of a team Canada mission.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Secondly, this is a prime minister who emphasizes over

and over again, or emphasized the impact of personal relationships, relationships that were formed during these team Canada missions, but relationships in all of our bilateral and multilateral relations, particularly with the United States.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And at the book launch, Chrétien again talked about his special relationship with Bill Clinton, and how that smoothed over a lot of irritants in the relations with the United States.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And it was quite genuine, as he said, it was not as close as Mulroney with either Bush Senior or with Ronald Reagan.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But I would certainly having read the chapters, and my own perspective at the time was that it was as effective, in fact, in some ways more so, because we would never get free trade if it hadn't been for the Mulroney-Reagan relationship.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But Canadians found that sometimes a bit too close.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And there was one American ambassador, Gordon Giffin, used to say to me, it was the Goldilocks approach, you know, not too hot, not too cold.

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<v SPEAKER_2>He thought Chrétien got it right.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Yeah, I think so.

00:13:45.100 --> 00:13:52.260

<v SPEAKER_3>I mean, obviously somebody who cultivated good relations with other leaders, but not to the detriment of Canadian interests.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And as you know, Chrétien has been quite outspoken on the current US administration.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And people often wonder what would our relationship with the United States be like if we had a Chrétien-type leader in power?

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<v SPEAKER_3>So he's been quite critical of the Trump administration.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And as you point out, he was able to charm other leaders.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So the relationship with Chirac at the beginning was quite fraught.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But I think Pelletier helped there because they both been, Chirac and Pelletier had been mayors.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But Chrétien attributes some of that to the fact that Pelletier was able to act as a bridge and they became at the end.

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<v SPEAKER_2>I think Chrétien took Chirac up to the Arctic.

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<v SPEAKER_3>That's right.

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<v SPEAKER_3>We've got an excellent chapter in the book on the role of French Canada in Canadian foreign policy, where the author Brendan Kelly really gets behind the role of France in this.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And what would Canada have done in the event of a yes vote for Quebec independence?

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<v SPEAKER_3>That Ottawa, the Chrétien government, was prepared for either outcome.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So that's a fascinating chapter.

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<v SPEAKER_2>It is.

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<v SPEAKER_2>I agree.

00:15:04.560 --> 00:15:05.520

<v SPEAKER_2>One of the absolute best.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Brendan, he's seen his senior story now at the Department of Global Affairs, isn't he?

00:15:10.580 --> 00:15:11.180

<v SPEAKER_3>That's right.

00:15:11.180 --> 00:15:12.760

<v SPEAKER_3>Yes.

00:15:12.760 --> 00:15:19.980

<v SPEAKER_2>I think Chrétien has spoken since then and he's talked about, well, they would have had another plebiscite.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And I thought it was very interesting how he managed all this.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And again, your point that the priorities when it comes to the book were first of all, national unity.

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<v SPEAKER_2>You had the Bloc Québécois, the Parti Québécois and of course the 1995 referendum.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And our concern over our financial state and the rigours of program review.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So it's all the more remarkable that he was able to at the same time have an activist form policy.

00:15:48.380 --> 00:15:53.860

<v SPEAKER_2>Despite the fact that the domestic situation was really pretty serious.

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<v SPEAKER_3>It's often said that foreign policy is domestic policy writ large.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And don't forget, in many ways, Chrétien was arguably the first post-Cold War Prime Minister of Canada.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Yes, Mulroney was there just before him.

00:16:08.780 --> 00:16:15.820

<v SPEAKER_3>But really, what this new world order was going to be was anybody's guess.

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<v SPEAKER_3>We had people, as you remember, academics like Francis

Fukuyama writing about the end of history, that all countries, really what they wanted was a democratic capitalist order.

00:16:27.640 --> 00:16:29.860

<v SPEAKER_3>That's what every society wanted.

00:16:29.860 --> 00:16:38.100

<v SPEAKER_3>Well, then, of course, we've got the ethnic bloodshed in the Balkans, in Rwanda, and many other places.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And we see subsequently the paths that Russia, China, and other countries have taken, which is not towards a democratic, open society.

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<v SPEAKER_3>But back in the 90s, I think we have to, the book takes you back to a different time, I think a very different time, when Canada and many other Western countries hoped that, or worked for China to join the WTO, which it did in 2001, and hoped that Russia and others would join kind of this rules-based order.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Which, when you look at it through our current lens, we might think was kind of naïve.

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<v SPEAKER_3>But I think if you put yourself back in the time, in the 1990s, was, I would say, a well-intentioned, ambitious attempt to create a new world order.

00:17:30.280 --> 00:17:33.660

<v SPEAKER_1>Hi, I'm Dave Perry, the President and CEO of The Canadian Global Affairs Institute.

00:17:33.660 --> 00:17:38.260

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<v SPEAKER_2>So in the case of Chrétien, where do you think that, I think you'd describe it, active liberalism came from?

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<v SPEAKER_2>Because here is this little guy from Quebec, not terribly worldly, but he'd worked for Pearson for whom he had great respect.

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<v SPEAKER_2>He told Chrétien telling me that the idea of having strong ministers is part of what he'd learned from Pearson, and also working in his apprenticeship with Michel Sharp, somebody else he had great respect for, who certainly underlined the importance, as Chrétien will say, of deputy ministers.

00:18:25.880 --> 00:18:28.440

<v SPEAKER_3>It was a combination of factors.

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<v SPEAKER_3>As you say, Chrétien went back to the Pearson years.

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<v SPEAKER_3>In some ways, he inherited that mantle of Pearsonian internationalism, the so-called golden age of Canadian foreign policy, which we can debate to what extent that was true.

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<v SPEAKER_3>But certainly, the aura of Canada at the founding of the United Nations, Canada at the creation of peacekeepers during the Suez Crisis, and of course, Pearson's Nobel Peace Prize, Pierre Trudeau's attempts to promote international order and peace.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So, I mean, Chrétien was not cut from the same cloth as Pearson and Pierre Trudeau, but very much he would have been part of those discussions, those ways of thinking.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So that's the first factor.

00:19:22.720 --> 00:19:32.380

<v SPEAKER_3>Secondly, he was able to attract bright minds like Lloyd Axworthy and others around him who were able to implement a human security agenda.

00:19:32.380 --> 00:19:42.360

<v SPEAKER_3>I think thirdly is the context that, as I said earlier, in the 90s, you've got this narrow window where it seemed like anything was possible.

00:19:42.360 --> 00:19:47.320

<v SPEAKER_3>The Cold War had ended and what this new order was going to be was still taking shape.

00:19:47.320 --> 00:19:56.120

<v SPEAKER_3>And so I think the Chrétien years, 1993 to 2003, are a very unique time.

00:19:56.120 --> 00:20:01.040

<v SPEAKER_3>And you know, are there things that we could learn from that for today?

00:20:01.040 --> 00:20:03.220

<v SPEAKER_3>Or are there things that could not be applied today?

00:20:04.120 --> 00:20:11.280

<v SPEAKER_3>A case in point might be the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Landmines Treaty, which was a really innovative treaty.

00:20:11.280 --> 00:20:25.060

<v SPEAKER_3>Because there, what, this is a chapter by Dan Livermore, who you may know, was that the great powers, those who were producing landmines and using them, were not on board initially.

00:20:25.060 --> 00:20:31.360

<v SPEAKER_3>And so what Canada did was convene a meeting of like-minded states and said, look, we're going to move ahead regardless.

00:20:31.880 --> 00:20:34.520

<v SPEAKER_3>And if the great powers want to join us, fine.

00:20:34.520 --> 00:20:46.340

<v SPEAKER_3>And so that was a really interesting way to kind of bypass the rather slow, you know, international mechanisms through the UN to do this sort of thing.

00:20:46.340 --> 00:20:48.860

<v SPEAKER_3>And I think that was a Canadian success.

00:20:48.860 --> 00:20:51.620

<v SPEAKER_3>Could that be replicated in other areas?

00:20:51.620 --> 00:20:56.620

<v SPEAKER_3>That's something that a lot of experts debate and dispute.

00:20:56.620 --> 00:21:00.340

<v SPEAKER_3>But clearly, you know, I view the Chrétien years as a kind of a narrow window.

00:21:01.660 --> 00:21:18.360

<v SPEAKER_3>Where it seemed like anything was possible, whether you're talking about engagement of China, addressing climate change, or setting up some sort of, you know, right to protect things that we don't talk about much anymore.

00:21:18.360 --> 00:21:26.700

<v SPEAKER_3>You know, we're in a whole new era now that makes the Chrétien years look kind of rosy indeed.

00:21:28.020 --> 00:21:30.680

<v SPEAKER_2>Was it a high point for practical multilateralism?

00:21:30.680 --> 00:21:35.340

<v SPEAKER_2>Again, you've looking and you've taught the wide sweep of Canadian foreign policy.

00:21:35.340 --> 00:21:39.040

<v SPEAKER_2>It always struck me that I agree with what you've just described.

00:21:39.040 --> 00:21:49.860

<v SPEAKER_2>It was an era of possibility and multilateralism, especially with the United States behind it, seemed to be holding its own.

00:21:50.960 --> 00:22:04.180

<v SPEAKER_3>Yeah, I mean, not to get too pessimistic about it, but what we've seen since the Chrétien years, according to many commentators, and I tend to agree, is a relinquishing of our leadership in international affairs.

00:22:04.180 --> 00:22:21.960

<v SPEAKER_3>Whether you're talking about our role in peacekeeping or in development or environmental controls, over the last 10 years or so, it's hard to point to what our foreign policy successes have been.

00:22:22.740 --> 00:22:32.240

<v SPEAKER_3>You know, and this is something that when I teach Canadian foreign relations, I try to encourage in my students, learn the history of Canada's role in the world.

00:22:32.240 --> 00:22:37.660

<v SPEAKER_3>Not to return to the past, but to learn from examples where Canada made a difference.

00:22:39.120 --> 00:22:43.400

<v SPEAKER_3>And I hope that's where our current government is leading us today.

00:22:43.400 --> 00:22:45.160

<v SPEAKER_2>Well, that leads to my next question.

00:22:45.160 --> 00:23:05.220

<v SPEAKER_2>What would be your advice to Prime Minister Carney as he conducts his foreign policy review and comes up with what he wants to have in both a new national security policy, a new foreign policy to accompany what we're already seeing in the emerging industrial and defence industrial policies that have been spelled out already in part and through the budget?

00:23:05.220 --> 00:23:08.360

<v SPEAKER_3>Well, I think it's again, first of all, learn from history.

00:23:10.040 --> 00:23:10.300

<v SPEAKER_3>Mr.

00:23:10.300 --> 00:23:23.460

<v SPEAKER_3>Carney is addressing a lack of attention to military expenditures that's happened under many, many governments, so that we can meet our NATO commitments.

00:23:23.460 --> 00:23:34.360

<v SPEAKER_3>I hope with that will come a greater commitment to peacekeeping and peacemaking, even though that has changed quite a bit from Pearson's original vision.

00:23:34.360 --> 00:23:38.800

<v SPEAKER_3>Development assistance, environmental, all those areas, human rights.

00:23:41.140 --> 00:23:44.600

<v SPEAKER_3>Everything that I'm hearing from Mr.

00:23:44.600 --> 00:23:59.040

<v SPEAKER_3>Carney, and he's got many challenges, especially with the increasingly wayward United States, seems to be pointing to a bolder assertion of Canadian interests.

00:23:59.040 --> 00:24:07.940

<v SPEAKER_3>We might even look at his overtures towards India and China as a repeat of Pierre Trudeau's third option, for those of you who are in those days.

00:24:08.760 --> 00:24:15.440

<v SPEAKER_3>The third option by many historians is seen as quite a failure in some sense.

00:24:15.440 --> 00:24:28.560

<v SPEAKER_3>But I think this time around, what we're dealing with is

much, the challenge from the south of the border is much more serious than the Nixon surcharge that we had.

00:24:29.120 --> 00:24:33.980

<v SPEAKER_3>We might be witnessing the end of the Autopact, possibly the end of NAFTA, KUSMA.

00:24:35.480 --> 00:24:42.580

<v SPEAKER_3>If that's true, then we really do need a very bold assertion of national interests.

00:24:43.840 --> 00:24:46.940

<v SPEAKER_2>That comes back to, as you say, study the history.

00:24:46.940 --> 00:24:48.000

<v SPEAKER_3>Yes.

00:24:48.000 --> 00:24:49.820

<v SPEAKER_3>We have been here before in a sense.

00:24:49.820 --> 00:24:59.260

<v SPEAKER_3>I mean, these questions of free trade, reciprocity, protectionism, this has plagued the Confederation and even before Confederation.

00:25:02.500 --> 00:25:12.380

<v SPEAKER_2>That's the famous reciprocity agreement which was before Confederation and died when the Brits were seen to favour the South.

00:25:12.380 --> 00:25:20.100

<v SPEAKER_3>We have a great chapter by Dmitri Anastakis and Ryan Hamilton on NAFTA and free trade.

00:25:20.140 --> 00:25:29.020

<v SPEAKER_3>But what historian Jack Granesteyn called the issue that wouldn't go away, that perennial issue in Canadian history of free trade with the United States.

00:25:29.020 --> 00:25:35.180

<v SPEAKER_3>They concluded, well, look, it's resolved by the Chrétien years that no Canadian government will undo it now.

00:25:35.180 --> 00:25:38.320

<v SPEAKER_3>But of course, we've had Trump since then.

00:25:40.560 --> 00:25:50.620

<v SPEAKER_3>Again, I think studying the Chrétien years helps us understand some of these longer term dynamics in Canadian foreign policy.

00:25:50.620 --> 00:25:56.660

<v SPEAKER_3>The things that don't change, the importance of our bilateral relations with the United States and with China.

00:25:56.660 --> 00:25:58.760

<v SPEAKER_3>We've got a chapter on China as well.

00:25:58.760 --> 00:26:03.020

<v SPEAKER_3>The importance of national unity, the importance of multilateralism.

00:26:03.020 --> 00:26:09.260

<v SPEAKER_3>And my big question that I wrestle with is multilateralism is not dead.

00:26:09.260 --> 00:26:15.640

<v SPEAKER_3>But how is Canada going to promote it in a world in which the United States seems to have opted out in so many ways?

00:26:16.660 --> 00:26:29.320

<v SPEAKER_3>Does this mean I knew that Canada takes leadership in some sort of new arrangement of a coalition of countries that still abides by the rule of law and rules based order?

00:26:29.320 --> 00:26:30.800

<v SPEAKER_3>I don't know.

00:26:30.800 --> 00:26:35.220

<v SPEAKER_3>But I don't think Canada can really abandon multilateralism.

00:26:35.220 --> 00:26:38.280

<v SPEAKER_3>You'll have to promote it in a new way.

00:26:38.280 --> 00:26:45.960

<v SPEAKER_2>It always seemed to me it was the way it was how we balanced the preponderant bilateral correlation with the United States, but it was also because it was rules based.

00:26:45.960 --> 00:26:56.560

<v SPEAKER_2>It's how middle and small powers has since leveled the playing field against the big guys, or we were back to where we were for centuries with the Thucydian big dictating to small.

00:26:56.560 --> 00:26:57.140

<v SPEAKER_3>That's right.

00:26:57.140 --> 00:26:59.300

<v SPEAKER_3>That's been a constant in our history.

00:26:59.300 --> 00:27:04.140

<v SPEAKER_3>It's something that Chrétien end up with as well, and that it's not going away.

00:27:06.340 --> 00:27:07.400

<v SPEAKER_2>No, please.

00:27:07.440 --> 00:27:08.280

<v SPEAKER_3>Laura, go ahead.

00:27:08.400 --> 00:27:12.600

<v SPEAKER_2>It leads me to my last question before I ask you what you're reading.

00:27:12.600 --> 00:27:16.140

<v SPEAKER_2>How should Canada position itself in the changing world?

00:27:16.140 --> 00:27:23.880

<v SPEAKER_2>The past we had roles that were described as helpful fixer, linchpin, a bridge builder, useful nation.

00:27:23.880 --> 00:27:27.200

<v SPEAKER_2>In this era of rupture, as Mr.

00:27:27.200 --> 00:27:40.080

<v SPEAKER_2>Carney puts it, or variable geometry to use another of his expressions, you've underlined multilateralism, which makes sense to me, but are we looking at sort of mini-multilateralism?

00:27:40.080 --> 00:27:50.060

<v SPEAKER_2>It may be more difficult to do than the large scale through things like the WTO or the UN.

00:27:50.060 --> 00:27:53.620

<v SPEAKER_3>I think we're living in extremely challenging times.

00:27:53.620 --> 00:28:05.580

<v SPEAKER_3>There are some who look at this as kind of a resurgence of great power, a type of 19th-century imperialism in a sense.

00:28:05.580 --> 00:28:11.120

<v SPEAKER_3>When we look at the actions of countries like Russia, China, the United States, Mr.

00:28:11.120 --> 00:28:21.020

<v SPEAKER_3>Trump's overtures degree, comments about Greenland, Panama, of course, the 51st state, and his citing of President McKinley in his inauguration address.

00:28:24.740 --> 00:28:36.040

<v SPEAKER_3>It leads us to wonder, you know, this period from 1945 to, let's say, 2014, Russia's first war invasion of Crimea, this was rule of law.

00:28:36.040 --> 00:28:46.840

<v SPEAKER_3>All the post-war institutions that you mentioned, the United Nations, WTO, later on, World Bank, IMF.

00:28:48.680 --> 00:28:52.820

<v SPEAKER_3>With the United States, what happens to these?

00:28:52.820 --> 00:29:01.540

<v SPEAKER_3>And I think Canada has to rigorously defend them and reach out and build alliances and coalitions with countries that still believe in a rules-based system.

00:29:03.300 --> 00:29:06.740

<v SPEAKER_3>Because the alternative is really too bleak to consider.

00:29:06.740 --> 00:29:17.240

<v SPEAKER_3>If we go back to some sort of pre-1945 great power imperialism, Canada could really get lost in the shuffle of that, right?

00:29:18.320 --> 00:29:22.900

<v SPEAKER_3>So anyway, I think a lot depends on what happens south of the border.

00:29:25.000 --> 00:29:28.980

<v SPEAKER_3>We're all hoping for different results in the midterm elections.

00:29:29.160 --> 00:29:33.960

<v SPEAKER_3>We start to see now some dissatisfaction with tariffs in the United States.

00:29:33.960 --> 00:29:39.060

<v SPEAKER_3>So, but we're in a world with much more aggressive powers.

00:29:40.100 --> 00:29:47.360

<v SPEAKER_3>United States being one of them, but we can't forget China, India, you know, and many other countries as well.

00:29:48.280 --> 00:30:04.180

<v SPEAKER_3>So, I think it calls for strong assertion of our own national interests with a strong military, strong economy, diversifying our trade relations and not putting all our eggs in one basket.

00:30:04.180 --> 00:30:07.680

<v SPEAKER_3>I think we've realized the folly of that.

00:30:08.760 --> 00:30:09.560

<v SPEAKER_2>I think that's right.

00:30:09.560 --> 00:30:15.140

<v SPEAKER_2>I think so there's still a place for the helpful fixer and the bridge builder because we need it probably more than ever.

00:30:15.140 --> 00:30:15.600

<v SPEAKER_3>I think so.

00:30:15.660 --> 00:30:22.240

<v SPEAKER_3>I think Canada is going to continue to cultivate good relations with those countries that share similar values.

00:30:22.240 --> 00:30:26.240

<v SPEAKER_3>For those that don't, we still have to find ways of dealing with them.

00:30:26.240 --> 00:30:29.960

<v SPEAKER_3>We can't just isolate them and ostracize them.

00:30:29.960 --> 00:30:41.640

<v SPEAKER_3>I'm beginning to wonder what's going to become of our Indo-Pacific strategy, which really isolates China and promotes good relations with India.

00:30:41.640 --> 00:30:42.300

<v SPEAKER_3>Based on Mr.

00:30:42.300 --> 00:30:55.160

<v SPEAKER_3>Carney's recent remarks, it seems we're heading towards some sort of a rapprochement with both major Asian powers, largely because of what's happening from south of the border.

00:30:55.160 --> 00:30:57.460

<v SPEAKER_2>It strikes me as pretty pragmatic.

00:30:57.460 --> 00:30:57.840

<v SPEAKER_2>Yeah.

00:30:57.840 --> 00:31:02.480

<v SPEAKER_2>It's also a definition in many ways of our earlier foreign policy.

00:31:03.080 --> 00:31:03.780

<v SPEAKER_3>Yeah.

00:31:09.180 --> 00:31:11.300

<v SPEAKER_3>You asked me earlier what I'm reading now.

00:31:11.300 --> 00:31:11.580

<v SPEAKER_2>Yes.

00:31:12.680 --> 00:31:19.220

<v SPEAKER_3>Actually, one of the books is on the first topic I mentioned there, Canadian-Canada-China Relations.

00:31:19.220 --> 00:31:30.500

<v SPEAKER_3>There's a new book out by Charles Burton, which you may have seen, just come out called The Beaver and The Dragon, How China outmaneuvered Canada's diplomacy, security, and sovereignty.

00:31:30.500 --> 00:31:46.240

<v SPEAKER_3>It's a collection of his writings really since the Harper years, and it's fascinating with Burton because he chronicles the changes in the relationship since 2012 and the rise of Xi Jinping.

00:31:46.240 --> 00:31:48.800

<v SPEAKER_3>So that one I'm finding very interesting.

00:31:48.800 --> 00:31:55.660

<v SPEAKER_3>And the other book that I'm reading is something we launched at Trinity last month, The Coutts Diaries.

00:31:55.660 --> 00:32:02.180

<v SPEAKER_3>So the diaries of Jim Coutts, one of the most influential advisors to Pierre Trudeau.

00:32:02.180 --> 00:32:15.060

<v SPEAKER_3>And these diaries take you inside the Pierre Trudeau years, of what was happening in the back rooms, the strategy, in a sense, really humanizes that period.

00:32:15.060 --> 00:32:19.140

<v SPEAKER_3>So I'm finding those two to be really fascinating reading.

00:32:19.140 --> 00:32:20.020

<v SPEAKER_2>Excellent.

00:32:20.020 --> 00:32:24.980

<v SPEAKER_2>Charles Burton and Jim Coutts, suggestions for reading.

00:32:24.980 --> 00:32:26.220

<v SPEAKER_3>Yes.

00:32:26.220 --> 00:32:27.100

<v SPEAKER_2>Excellent.

00:32:27.380 --> 00:32:28.180

<v SPEAKER_2>Well, thank you, John.

00:32:28.180 --> 00:32:31.060

<v SPEAKER_2>And thanks for listening to this episode of The Global Exchange.

00:32:31.060 --> 00:32:42.440

<v SPEAKER_2>We were joined today by John Meehan in a discussion of Chrétien and the World, Canada's foreign, Canadian foreign policy from 1993 to 2003, available through UBC Press.

00:32:42.440 --> 00:32:44.960

<v SPEAKER_2>And I encourage you to pick up a copy of the book.

00:32:44.960 --> 00:32:46.360

<v SPEAKER_2>You'll learn a lot.

00:32:46.360 --> 00:32:49.220

<v SPEAKER_2>We'll link to the book in the program notes.

00:32:49.220 --> 00:32:53.160

<v SPEAKER_2>You can find the Canadian Global Affairs Institute on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

00:32:53.160 --> 00:32:56.740

<v SPEAKER_2>The Global Exchange is brought to you by our team at the Canadian Global Affairs Institute.

00:32:56.740 --> 00:33:01.700

<v SPEAKER_2>And as always, my thanks go to our producer, Jordyn Carroll and to Drew Phillips for providing our music.

00:33:02.440 --> 00:33:03.900

<v SPEAKER_2>I'm Colin Robertson.

00:33:03.900 --> 00:33:05.840

<v SPEAKER_2>Thanks for joining us today on The Global Exchange.