

THE UTILITY OF SYMBOLS: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SYMBOLS
AND LEGITIMACY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

by

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B.A., Mount Allison University, 2008

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Political Science)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Vancouver)

August, 2009

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ABSTRACT

My thesis will demonstrate that symbols matter in international relations because of the way they can influence legitimacy. Joseph Nye has argued, “cooperation is a matter of degree” in international relations (Nye 2004, 29); legitimacy is one of the factors that determines the extent to which the international community will cooperate with a given action. Thomas Franck (1990) argues that legitimacy, too, is a matter of degree. This means that actions are not always judged to be strictly legitimate or illegitimate, but rather, they fall on a spectrum somewhere between the two extremes. The puzzle, however, is how states calculate the degree of legitimacy of an action. I argue that symbols have an important role to play in this calculation of the extent to which an action is seen as legitimate. This thesis will further explore the role and power of symbols in international relations, a role that the literature on legitimacy has not thoroughly discussed.

I will use two case studies, Canada’s refusals to endorse Operation Iraqi Freedom and Ballistic Missile Defence, to demonstrate that symbols are a source of power in international relations. The American administration went to significant lengths to try to obtain a Canadian endorsement of these initiatives because it knew that this endorsement would contribute to the perceived legitimacy of these actions. The degree to which an action is seen as legitimate can influence the extent to which the international community will cooperate with it, or at least not resist it. I conclude that this argument has implications for Canadian foreign and defence policy,

and that the literature regarding legitimacy should better reflect this power of symbols in international relations.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Nearing the end of Paul Martin's time as Prime Minister of Canada, two Canadian peace activists were taken hostage in Iraq. In an effort to rescue these Canadian citizens, Martin was asked by various Canadian personnel (RCMP and foreign affairs officials) to send Canadian Forces to Iraq to help with intelligence gathering and communications. Martin had always been opposed to Canadian involvement in the war in Iraq, and he was concerned that if he sent Canadian Forces to help with the rescue operation, their presence in the region might be interpreted as Canadian support for the war. In the end, Martin did send a number of Canadian troops, but insisted that they *not* be in uniform. He writes, "there were Canadian lives involved and we decided to deploy the small number of military personnel required, but not in uniform" (Martin 2008, 353).

Insisting that the Canadian troops not be in uniform might, to some, seem to border on an obsessive attention to detail. Considering the fact that Martin was known for his slow decision-making style, one that led to "a sclerotic, constipated decision-making process that is still the stuff of legend in Ottawa" (Gross Stein and Lang 2007, 111), unnecessary attention to detail might at first seem to be a reasonable charge. But Martin's concern about the misinterpretation of Canadian uniforms was well founded, and his attention to detail was indicative of his concern for the larger picture. Martin understood the power of symbols in international relations, and he did not want coalition forces, Canadian citizens, and Iraqis to think he was lending Canada's support and credibility to a war that Canada officially did not support.

When making his decision about whether Canada would contribute in any way to the war in Iraq, Martin's predecessor Jean Chrétien said that Canada would endorse the mission if there was a United Nations Security Council Resolution authorizing the use of force. If not, Canada would not endorse the American-led war. By withholding a Canadian endorsement of the mission and insisting that Canadian Forces troops not be marked with the maple leaf (even when they were not contributing to the war effort), Martin and Chrétien have acted as the gatekeepers of Canadian symbols. Canadian prime ministers are right to treat Canadian symbols, such as the spoken words of an endorsement or the flag, carefully, because symbols such as these are a source of power in international relations. Martin and Chrétien did not want to lend Canada's symbols, and by extension its legitimacy as an international actor, to the war in Iraq, a war that they did not believe was in accordance with Canadian values and interests.

1.1 Overview

Joseph Nye argues, "cooperation is a matter of degree" in international relations (Nye 2004, 29); legitimacy is one of the factors that will determine the extent to which the international community will cooperate with a given action. Thomas Franck (1990) argues that legitimacy, too, is a matter of degree; actions are not necessarily completely legitimate or illegitimate, but rather, they fall on a spectrum somewhere between the two extremes. The puzzle, however, is how states know where on this spectrum an action is located. I argue that symbols have an important role to play in this determination. This thesis will further explore the

role and power of symbols in international relations, a role that the literature on legitimacy has not thoroughly discussed.

This thesis has four parts. I will first explore legitimacy theory by looking at the work of Ian Hurd, Thomas Franck, and Katharina Coleman. I will also present my own understanding of legitimacy and why this concept matters in international relations. I will then discuss how symbols contribute to the degree to which actions are seen as legitimate in international relations. I will outline Franck and Hurd's work on this topic, and then I will define what I understand to be symbols and their relationship to legitimacy. Once my theoretical groundwork is established, I will introduce my two case studies: first (and primarily) Canada's refusal to endorse the war in Iraq; and second, Canada's refusal to endorse BMD. Having outlined the context and background of these decisions, I will present my analysis of both situations. In so doing, I will argue that some states, such as Canada, can contribute in important symbolic ways to the perceived legitimacy of actions in international relations. I will conclude with a brief discussion of future research, some of the implications of my work for Canadian foreign and defence policy, as well as a summary of my argument.

2 LEGITIMACY THEORY

Before presenting my own understanding of legitimacy and why it is important in discussions of international relations, I will outline some of the existing work on the topic. Ian Hurd writes that state actors may comply with rules or norms in international relations if they believe that they “ought to be obeyed” (Hurd 2007, 30). He contrasts legitimacy with self-interest and coercion, saying that the latter two concepts are more utilitarian than legitimacy. He notes that a system that results from self-interest is “thin and held together tenuously,” (Hurd 2007, 39), and one that results from coercion is often unstable because it can “generate resentment and resistance” (Hurd 2007, 37). A legitimate system is less difficult to maintain because an external force has changed a state’s sense of its own interests. Like Max Weber, Hurd argues that legitimacy and perceived legitimacy are the same; given this, he notes that there is a possibility of what he calls false consciousness¹.

Hurd does not believe that legitimacy necessarily explains why states act against their interests. Rather, “the process of legitimation has affected the actor’s own definition of its interests, not just the value of the payoffs of the different options. Legitimacy *changes* interests, and it changes them systematically in the direction of being supportive of norms” (Hurd 2007, 45) (emphasis added). This change of interest results when an actor internalizes an external standard. Finally, Hurd recognizes that some actors might not internalize rules or norms that have otherwise been widely internalized. Yet, Hurd argues, even if a particular state does not believe in the legitimacy of a rule or institution, if the majority of the international system does,

¹ For more information on this, see Hurd, 33

legitimacy can still affect that state's behaviour. As Hurd notes, "nonbelievers cannot simply ignore the rules and institutions that they do not view as legitimate" (Hurd 2007, 46).

As Hurd writes, legitimacy is based on perceptions of various actors, and for this reason it can be difficult to discuss in concrete terms. Due to its highly subjective nature, some critics have argued that the notion might be complicated to the point of inutility. Thomas Franck's response to this criticism is compelling:

there is at least the hypothetical possibility that, if one could show that there are rules which are *habitually* obeyed in international relations, then one may be able — indeed, may *only* be able — to account for that phenomenon by postulating an instrumental non-Austinian factor; one which is *not* a sovereign command, *not* enforced coercively, *not*, even, obeyed solely by reason of short-term self-interest gratification, since gratification cannot explain consistent deference to rules that are unlikely always to benefit equally all parties to interactions (Franck 1990, 21).

As the previous passage demonstrates, legitimacy is a useful concept in explaining why most states obey rules most of the time. For instance, the concept helps explain situations where there is a pull towards compliance or obedience without a reliance on coercion; Franck writes that one can identify legitimacy in a situation "where there is one or more non-coercive factors in the engendering of obedience" (Franck 1990, 16). He argues that a rule or rule-making institution will be seen as legitimate when actors believe that it has "come into being and operates in accordance with generally accepted principles of right process" (Franck 1990, 19).

Unlike Hurd, Franck believes that legitimacy can pull states to act against their interests, and he finds it intriguing that states would obey unenforceable rules when it is not in their interests to do so. Because of this lack of enforcement in the international system, Franck writes

that it is not useful to compare domestic and international law. Domestic law is enforceable and failure to comply with the rule can result in punishment, whereas most international laws are, as he argues, devoid of punishment mechanisms. To better understand this phenomenon, Franck draws insightful comparisons between international relations and the casual interactions of individuals. In both cases, failure to live up to expectations or to comply with norms is not punishable by any kind of governing sovereign — there is no state imposed punishment for not showing up to a dinner date with a friend, for example. Instead of a formal punishment or enforcement mechanism, Franck writes that there is a perceived obligation that keeps people and states from deviating from their commitments. He argues,

the social rule about keeping appointments is not a law and its ability to achieve compliance is not an either/or proposition but a matter of degree, which, in turn, depends on whether, and how much, the subjects of the rule *believe themselves obliged — despite their countervailing self-interest* — to act in accordance with the rule (Franck 1990, 37).

People keep appointments with one another not because there will be a fine if they do not, but because they understand that there are certain behaviours that must be adhered to in order to maintain an “orderly, peaceful community” (Franck 1990, 37). He continues, “it is this same perception which keeps states, most of the time, complying with most of the rules of the international system” (Franck 1990, 37). A rule is perceived to be legitimate if it is in accordance with the norms that are necessary to maintain a peaceful and orderly global system; when this is the case, state actors feel obliged to follow certain rules and norms. Finally, as mentioned above, Franck notes, “legitimacy is a matter of degree” (Franck 1990, 26).

Katharina Coleman defines legitimacy as “a social status that can adhere to an actor or an action: it involves being recognized as good, proper, commendable” (Coleman 2007, 20). She argues that this definition presumes an audience who will make a judgement and ultimately confer such a status. Her work regarding peace enforcement operations presumes four audiences; “the first is the domestic public opinion within the intervening state... the second ... is the public within the country of deployment ... the immediate neighbours of the intervening state constitute the third potential legitimacy audience... the final potential legitimacy audience is often referred to as the international community” (Coleman 2007, 24-25). She writes that much of the scholarship regarding legitimacy theory relates to “governing entities” (Coleman 2007, 21) such as states, state actors, and international organizations. An important contribution to this literature is her idea that the *actions* of legitimate entities are also subject to charges of illegitimacy or legitimacy: “the legitimacy of an action is not merely derivative of the legitimacy of the actor” (Coleman 2007, 23). The final point to emphasize from her work is that she notes that legitimacy and legality do not always coincide. Here she discusses Kosovo and how it was, by international law, an illegal intervention, but still perceived by many in the international community to be legitimate.

My definition of legitimacy builds on these perspectives. Coleman’s definition of legitimacy is useful, in part due to its simplicity. I argue that a legitimate actor or action is one that is judged to be good, commendable, and proper and, like Franck, I argue that legitimacy is a matter of degree. The extent to which an action will be judged as good, proper, or commendable will be based on its adherence to international norms, which help maintain order and security in

international relations. As I will argue in greater detail below, symbols are an important means of communicating this degree of legitimacy.

Franck's claim that a rule or rule-making institution is seen as legitimate when its audience believes that it has "come into being and operates in accordance with generally accepted principles of right process" (Franck 1990, 24) also applies to actions. For example, the endorsement of a multilateral institution for the use of force in another country generally indicates that the decision resulted from a fair process of deliberation and consideration. Though illegal, the intervention in Kosovo (to use the example again) was seen by many to be legitimate; it did not have UNSC approval, there was still a degree of multilateralism about the mission because it was NATO-led.

For Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD), I will be considering two audiences who made (and, to some degree, will still make) the legitimacy judgement: the domestic audience of the state actor in question (in both cases the United States), and a more global perspective, the opinion of the international community, which includes the opinions of elite decision makers in other countries, and in some cases, public opinion in those countries as well². If the international community views an action to be legitimate, it is more likely that other countries will volunteer to participate in (or otherwise support) the action, or at least not publicly condemn it. In the same way that legitimacy can lead to a greater degree of cooperation and success in international relations, illegitimacy can limit state actions. When an

² For OIF, future research should focus on the perceptions of the Iraqi people, as they also form an important audience, one that can significantly help or limit the success of OIF.

action is perceived to be illegitimate, the international community can, to some degree, make success more difficult and costly. Using OIF as an example, Joseph Nye explains how this can happen:

other countries can still band together to deprive the US policy of legitimacy... weaker states hoped to deter the US by making it more costly for us to use our hard power... by depriving the US of the legitimacy of a second SC resolution, they certainly made it more expensive (Nye 2004, 26-27).

Bearing in mind longer-term considerations, it is also important that the international audience see the actions of the US as legitimate so that future foreign policy and defence decisions would also be seen as credible.

The domestic audience in the US is important because, firstly, much of the decision-making process that led to OIF and BMD (and therefore the lobbying of Canada to sign on to both operations) took place during Bush's first term. He was seeking a second term and needed to convince the American people that his actions were justified and legitimate so they would re-elect him. There would also have been a longer-term concern for how the Republican Party in general would be viewed by the American public. Additionally, Bush needed Congressional support when it came to funding the projects; American public opinion manifests itself in Congress, and Bush was likely calculating that convincing his domestic audience of the legitimacy of OIF and BMD was a good way to gain Congressional support for the initiatives.

To summarize, for the purpose of my argument, a legitimate action is one that is seen by the international community and American domestic audiences as good, proper, or commendable. Actions are not strictly legitimate or illegitimate, but rather fall somewhere on a

spectrum between those two extremes. The extent to which an action is judged to be legitimate is derivative of its adherence to international norms, which help maintain order and security in international relations. Legitimacy matters because it is one of the factors that will determine the degree of cooperation from these two main audiences. For these reasons, legitimacy might not necessarily be the end goal for a given state, but rather it can be a means to an end of a greater degree of material support. My case studies will demonstrate that the American administration knew it had to convince others that its actions were legitimate in order to decrease its cost of success.

3 SYMBOLS

Having given an introduction to the importance of legitimacy in international relations, I will now outline and critique the literature concerning the roles that symbols play in the process of legitimating an action. This will largely relate to how governing entities use symbols. I will conclude this section with my own understanding of how symbols contribute to the location of actions on the legitimacy spectrum in international relations and with a short discussion of the use of symbols and endorsements as information shortcuts.

In Hurd's discussion, a symbol is "vested with social power beyond its physical, material powers" (Hurd 2007, 52). For example, a UN flag is more valuable than the cloth from which it was made because of what it represents — an international organization that is committed to the ideals of international peace and security. Hurd emphasizes that it is the intersubjective understanding of the symbol that makes it so important. A UN or Canadian flag has little power if the audience to whom it is intended to communicate does not understand what it represents, or if the audience does not acknowledge the legitimacy of Canada as a country or the UN as an international institution.

Hurd argues that legitimate international organizations or states beget symbols. These symbols help an institution or state to extend its sphere of influence; "symbolism is a medium for 'lending' the power of an institution through the society, and so for extending the scope and reach of the institution itself" (Hurd 2007, 54). This is because symbols "become imbued with power because they are associated in the minds of the audience with the authority the audience perceives in a particular institution" (Hurd 2007, 53). Presuming a gatekeeper, states must agree

to some conditions in order to access the symbols and therefore the legitimacy of the institutions they represent. This can give the institution a degree of power and influence over states that wish to use its symbols.

Hurd argues that legitimate institutions beget symbols. He argues that once established as legitimate, states or international organizations will create symbols so that they might extend their influence. This is especially the case when the symbol's bestower has the capacity to withhold its symbols; if its symbol is greatly desired, the bestower can require that the state actor change its behavior or make certain concessions in order to access the power and legitimacy that the symbol represents. I would add to Hurd's discussion the argument that symbols are also important to the creation of legitimacy. Hurd discusses this constitutive role to a degree in his work, but he leaves the concept largely unexplored. Below, I will pick up where his work left off, and will expand the limits that Hurd imposes on the power of symbols.

Similar to Hurd, Franck emphasizes that symbols are effective because of their ability to communicate. Hurd calls this an intersubjective understanding. Franck refers to "an almost Pavlovian ability to reinforce by the merest signal something that is already known or believed by those addressed" (Franck 1990, 136). As is evident in the previous passage, Franck argues that symbols reinforce what is already known or believed. As he writes, symbols "do not actually bestow authority, but signal its validity by authenticating it symbolically" (Franck 1990, 91). He uses the example of Royal Assent to illustrate this point; Royal Assent does not actually confer authority to a bill, he argues, but it does validate the fact that law is legitimate. Following from his definition of legitimacy, a new law would be perceived to be legitimate if people believed

that it had resulted from an appropriate process of debate and deliberation. Royal Assent is a symbolic gesture that simply reinforces what is already known – that the law is legitimate because it was made in accordance with due process.

Because of the validating role that Franck attributes to symbols, he argues that symbols must be used within a certain sphere in order for them to maintain their credibility and influence. To a limited extent, Franck writes that symbolic validation can confer a small degree of legitimacy, but he quickly adds, “this creationist strategy has its limits” (Franck 1990, 127). Because of this, Franck argues that symbols can be tarnished if they are used improperly. Franck makes the following example to make this point:

When validating cues are generally perceived to be misapplied — if the clerk of the British House of Commons were to take the mace to a ‘strip joint,’ for example, or the Secretary-General chose to license the UN flag and symbol for use by manufacturers of commercial products — then the symbolic validation would not occur; instead, the symbol and its bestower would both suffer the erosion of their authority to confer legitimacy (Franck 1990, 134).

Franck’s theory would have been confirmed if, to allude to one of my cases, the UN Security Council (UNSC) had approved a second Resolution to explicitly authorize the use of force to invade Iraq, and if Canada had subsequently endorsed OIF. The Resolution would have confirmed that the mission was legitimate because it was in accordance with due process and with international norms and laws, ones that respects state sovereignty while allowing the Security Council to override that sovereignty in circumstances where international peace and security are threatened. Canada’s endorsement would simply have been an act confirming that the mission was in keeping with Canadian and international values. A quick glance through

history will quickly show that is not what happened, and Franck's theory of legitimacy is not as useful as it could be in understanding this situation. Absent the legitimacy of a clear UNSC resolution, the American administration nevertheless believed it was justified in its actions, but knew that it needed to convince other skeptical states that its actions were legitimate. For this reason, Bush appealed to many countries for political endorsements, which, by lending their legitimacy and commitment to international norms to his actions, had the potential to move this action closer to the legitimate (as opposed to illegitimate) side of the spectrum.

I propose that validation cues and symbols have more power to confer legitimacy than Franck and Hurd suggest that they do. Consider the following example. In 2006, Shiraz Dossa, a professor from St. Francis Xavier University (St. FX) attended a conference in Iran. In this conference, he presented an academic paper on imperialism; also attending the conference and presenting papers were Holocaust deniers, anti-Semites, and a former member of the Ku Klux Klan. There are some, such as the President of St. FX University and Dossa's colleagues, who have argued that Dossa's participation in this conference has tarnished his reputation as a professor and the reputation of the university that he represents. St. FX president Sean Riley told the *Globe and Mail* that Dossa's presence at the conference "has brought tremendous discredit to the university" (Gandhi 2006). This perspective is in keeping with Franck's argument that symbols only communicate effectively if used within a certain sphere and can be tarnished if taken out of context. In other words, an academic is only legitimate if he participates in legitimate academic projects and conferences.

But others have suggested that through attending, Dossa was in fact bringing legitimacy to the conference itself. A *Globe and Mail* editorial published in the summer of 2007 argued, “Prof. Dossa is not a Holocaust-denier... but his attendance gave comfort to those who encouraged the participation of Holocaust-deniers... Prof. Dossa made a mistake in *lending his presence, and by extension St. Francis Xavier’s reputation, to the event*” (The *Globe and Mail* 2007) (emphasis added). Ed Morgan, president of the Canadian Jewish Council, told the *National Post*, “nobody should give the conference even a modicum of credibility,” (Wattie 2006) implying that Dossa’s presence did just that — gave the conference credibility. This argument is that through attending the conference, Dossa lent his credibility as a Canadian academic and that of his university to a conference that might not otherwise have been taken seriously³. As President Riley said, “it’s an embarrassment for Canada to have lent any credibility, not matter how thin, to that particular conference with that very hurtful agenda” (Wattie 2006).

As this example demonstrates, it is possible for symbols to be tarnished if used improperly as Franck says, but it is also possible for them to confer a degree of legitimacy. Hurd and Franck underestimate the power of symbols in such situations, and they unnecessarily limit the role of symbols in international relations. My case studies will demonstrate this more thoroughly.

³ In an important response to these critics, Dossa argues that not all the presentations were by holocaust deniers, and that this was a minor portion of the conference. Furthermore, he writes that presenters who did present papers that denied the holocaust were torn apart by their audiences (Dossa 2007).

Simply put, a symbol is something that represents something else. Symbols can come in many forms: an object (a flag), an action (attendance at a controversial conference), or spoken words (a political endorsement). To narrow this definition so it is more useful to my argument, my case studies will consider the symbolic value of the words of state officials. These words, also called endorsements, represent a country's symbolic support (or withholding of support, as the case will be below), of an action. A Canadian endorsement is powerful because it has the capacity to both confer Canada's values and reputation to an action and simultaneously communicate to others that the action is in accordance with those values. If Canada is widely perceived to be a state that upholds international norms, respects international law, opposes weaponization of space or imperial wars, then Canada's endorsement will lend that reputation to the action in question. This hypothetical endorsement, in turn, can enhance the legitimacy of the action by demonstrating that the action is in accordance with international norms. Remembering that legitimacy is a matter of degree, the symbol helps to move the action closer to the legitimate side of the spectrum.

In order for symbols to communicate effectively, it is important that their audiences know what they represent. It is the responsibility of the institution or country that the symbol represents to ensure that its symbols are widely (and accurately) understood. When this is the case, symbols can be important information shortcuts for various audiences. In their work regarding citizen engagement in Canada, Elisabeth Gidengil et al. write about how Canadian citizens use information shortcuts when making decisions during elections. They write, "many citizens may be ill acquainted with the facts, but they can get by without them by drawing on a variety of

readily available cues” (Gidengil et al. 2004, 73). These cues can be trusted individuals, such as family members; ideologies; or organizations, to name a few. For some actors, Canada’s endorsement might be an information shortcut. As Robert Greenhill writes in an important report summarizing Canada’s international reputation, “many interviewees welcomed Canada as a source of engaged moral leadership and critical thinking on tough international issues” (Greenhill 2005, 34). This perception might not be accurate, and the stereotype of peace-loving, moral-leadership providing Canadians can be a problematic one⁴. Nevertheless, the endorsement of a trusted country, like Canada, might help other state actors make up their minds, particularly those who trust Canada as thinking critically about international issues.

Gidengil et al. are careful to note that information shortcuts are only useful to those who already have some background information. They write, “people can only use the cue appropriately if they possess some contextual information about politics” (Gidengil et al. 2004, 77). Presumably, in order for individuals to look to Canada as a cue, they would have to have accurate information about Canada. It is for this reason that I will discuss the important work of Evan Potter, *Branding Canada*, in my implications section. It is important that people know about Canada in order for its validation cues to communicate effectively. Because of their role as information shortcuts, the endorsement or action of one country might be enough to influence the decision-making process of another state.

⁴ For an important discussion of this, see Sherene Razack (2004) and Sandra Whitworth (2003) (In Sjolander et al.)

To summarize, it is in the interest of states to operate in a way that is perceived as legitimate because they are more likely to receive cooperation, or at least not condemnation, from other states. The extent to which an action is seen as legitimate is one of the factors that determines the degree to which the international community will cooperate with the action. Symbols are important because of their ability to help states determine the degree to which an action is legitimate. As I will argue, my two case studies illustrate how the US attempted to make its actions appear legitimate not only to an international audience, but also to its domestic audience, by seeking the symbols of various countries. The case studies will focus specifically on how Canada's endorsement was sought. The importance of symbols in this attempt at establishing legitimacy is evident in the considerable extent to which the American administration sought a Canadian endorsement of those acts. As Hurd writes, "the intensity of interest by other actors in gaining access to the symbol reveals the underlying value of the good" (Hurd 2007, 59).

Having outlined my theory of the role symbols in international relations, I will now proceed to my case studies. I will first present some background information of the invasion of Iraq, including the pressure that was applied to Chrétien by the American administration for a political endorsement. I will then give a similar introduction to ballistic missile defence and the pressure that was applied to Canada to endorse the shield. Following this section, I will apply my theory of symbols and their relationship to legitimacy to these events.

4 IRAQ CASE STUDY

Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, the American administration began Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), which resulted in an invasion of Afghanistan. In 2002, it became apparent that Bush intended to extend the war on terror to Iraq. In his State of the Union address in January of that year, Bush declared that he had reason to believe that Iraq was linked to terrorism and possessed weapons of mass destruction (Bush 2002b). Nine months later, in an address to the UN General Assembly, Bush referred to Iraq as “a grave and gathering danger” (Bush 2002a).

The UN passed Resolution 1441 in November 2002. This resolution declared that Iraq had one final chance to comply with its disarmament obligations as outlined in previous resolutions dating back to Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990⁵; failure to do so would result in “serious consequences” (United Nations Security Council 2002). After conducting a search in Iraq for weapons of mass destruction, chief weapons inspector Hans Blix reported to the UN that no such weapons were found, though, as Barry Cooper notes, “Iraq’s cooperation was less than complete” (Cooper 2005, 223).

A debate emerged about whether or not a second resolution (1441 was the first) was necessary for an invasion of Iraq. The Bush administration believed it had legal justification for invading Iraq whereas other countries, such as Canada, did not believe Resolution 1441 provided the necessary authorization. Michael Byers argues that Resolution 1441 was designed in a way that would allow for both of these very different interpretations. He argues, “Council members

⁵ See Byers 2004 and 2005 for a more thorough discussion of previous resolutions

negotiated and agreed to language that they knew could be used to support arguments on both sides” (Byers 2004a, 165). Bush believed his actions were justified and legitimate, but there were other governments in the world that believed the exact opposite⁶. To a certain extent, both sides of this debate had a legally tenable argument.

Absent an explicit UN endorsement to symbolize the just and legitimate nature of its invasion, but determined to go ahead with the mission regardless, the US began assembling a “coalition of the willing,” a group of states that supported the American invasion of Iraq, OIF, without a second resolution from the UNSC. Not all of the countries in the coalition of the willing supplied military support, but with the largest military in the world, the American administration was not seeking so much material support as political support. Interestingly, some countries that did supply material support did so with the financial backing of the US. Bush made agreements with a number of small countries — such as Nicaragua, Honduras, and El Salvador — that if they made contributions to the coalition of the willing, his government would finance them (Richter 2003). Paul Richter wrote to the *LA Times* that, “[the Bush administration] may also draw criticism that the US partners in the reshaping of Iraq are those whose support can be bought — the ‘coalition of the billing’” (Richter 2003). If the Bush administration was willing

⁶ As Ian Hurd argues, the UA wanted Security Council approval for one of two reasons: “Either the US genuinely believed that there was a legitimate norm that the Council authorization was required prior to using international force, or it did not believe this but knew that others did (124-25). He continues to conclude, “indications from the Bush administration in 2003 that it did not accept that Council approval was mandatory give strong reasons to doubt that internalization had taken place” (125). I might add to this analysis the possibility that the US did not believe it was acting contrary to international norms, but rather, that it believed its actions were most certainly justifiable.

to finance these contributions itself, it begs the question, why did Bush not just send American personnel? Perhaps the US did not have the military capacity to send these troops; with the strongest military in the world, however, and as the provider of the vast majority of the military personnel in OIF, it seems unlikely that the US would need to rely on the contributions of small Central American countries. It is more likely that the US was looking for explicit support from a diverse range of countries, such as those from Central America. The US was so eager to have more countries associated with OIF that it was willing to buy their support⁷. The Bush administration calculated that the benefit of having the support of these countries was worth the cost it took to underwrite their contributions.

4.1 Pressure on Canada

The *National Post* reported that in late 2002, Canada was officially approached by the American administration and asked to participate in OIF; “Mr. Powell sent the clearest signal yet that the Bush administration wants Canada to participate in strikes against Iraq during a three hour meeting in Ottawa with Bill Graham, the Foreign Affairs Minister” (Alberts 2002). The contribution Powell was seeking was symbolic; the Americans were asking for an endorsement of the mission. As Jack Granatstein has written, “the Americans would have been pleased merely to have a Canadian flag on the coalition’s letterhead” (Granatstein 2007, 90). Jennifer Welsh

⁷ I would argue that these countries, many of which had relatively negative relations with the US in the years leading up to OIF, would likely not have agreed to a strictly political endorsement, and were only willing to sign on to the coalition if there was something offered in return.

confirms this, noting, “there was never any question of a strong *military* contribution from Canada” (Welsh 2004, 38).

By 2003, Canada was under increasing pressure to endorse the American led invasion of Iraq. Chrétien, after voicing his skepticism about Hussein’s possession of WMDs, wrote in his memoirs that Bush was so set on convincing him to support OIF that he offered to send American intelligence experts to Canada to discuss the evidence in favour of the mission. Chrétien responded, “No, don’t do that George ... Canadians will not accept that I’ve been briefed by American officials” (Chrétien 2007, 309). In February, more pressure came from an article in *The Boston Globe* that declared, “the country that depends most upon the US for its prosperity and national security has become the dithering ally, its top politicians offering vague and often wildly contradictory statements as to whether Ottawa will back a US-led military campaign against Iraq’s Saddam Hussein” (Nickerson 2003). This article continued to note that this situation had added “another layer of frost” to the Canada-US relationship. These kinds of comments, ones that emphasized Canada’s dependence on the US for security without seemingly giving anything in return, led proponents of Canada’s involvement in OIF in Canada to fear that there might be a backlash if Chrétien did not endorse the mission.

On an international level, however, Chrétien says that he was supported in his reluctance to endorse the mission by other countries that were also under pressure from the American administration. President Lagos of Chile and President Fox of Mexico had approached Chrétien to suggest creating a coalition of their own: “we ‘other’ Americans” (Chrétien 2007, 314), as Chrétien called them, who opposed the invasion of Iraq. Representatives from those two

countries told Canadian officials that they were under pressure to support the mission, but if Canada agreed to withhold support, they would do so as well. Notably, Mexico and Chile were, at the time, non-permanent members of the Security Council; Canada was not.

On the morning of March 17, 2003, Chrétien received an official request from the American administration: “we received a note asking whether Canada was willing to ‘provide political support for military action against Iraq,’ yes or no” (Chrétien 2007, 314). Later that day, Chrétien announced his decision to the House of Commons — Canada would not endorse OIF, but he respected the American right to self-defence (Hansard 2003). Chrétien was very aware that his government was being asked for political support; though he writes that this would have been easy enough to give, he made a conscious decision to withhold Canada’s endorsement. He writes, “as a matter of principle, we didn’t approve of his actions because he hadn’t convinced the UN of the urgent need to invade Iraq” (Chrétien 2007, 314). He continues, “afterwards, in fact, both President Fox and President Lagos privately thanked me for helping them to say no” (Chrétien 2007, 314).

4.2 US response – the dog that did not bark

For some critics of Chrétien’s decision, the fact that many MPs rose to cheer his announcement was upsetting. Paul Cellucci, whose book is appropriately titled *Unquiet Diplomacy*, recalls in his memoir, “for those of us who had worked so hard to persuade Canadians on the Iraq question, it was truly bitter disappointment — particularly the sight of Liberal ministers and backbenchers standing to cheer [Chrétien’s] announcement” (Cellucci

2005, 141). In a famous speech Cellucci gave in Toronto after Chrétien's decision, he told the audience, "there is no security threat to Canada ... that the US would not be ready, willing, and able to help with. There would be no debate. There would be no hesitation. We would be there for Canada, part of our family" (Cellucci 2005, 145). The message was clear: we would help you, and we are disappointed that you have decided to not help us.

Many in Canada took note of this and were concerned about repercussions. Jennifer Welsh writes about this statement, "[p]erhaps the ambassador was just speaking off the cuff? This hope was quickly dashed when Cellucci confirmed to reporters that he had spoken to his superiors in Washington before giving the speech. The line had been vetted by no less than National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice" (Welsh 2004, 43). The business community began to worry that there would be economic retaliation not necessarily resulting from Chrétien's decision, but for the way he and his party handled the situation. As the *Post* reported, "Canadian businesses will likely be sidelined from one of the biggest development sweepstakes in history... [Powell] singled out Canada, Mexico, and Chile as disappointing friends whose phones won't be ringing any time too soon when it comes to being able to bid, much less win, lucrative and massive contracts to create a modern-day Iraq" (Francis 2003). Those fears were confirmed in late April when Powell announced that Canada and other countries that had not joined the coalition of the willing would not be eligible for reconstruction contracts in Iraq. This decision was subsequently reversed, though Canada did lose out on the first round of reconstruction contract bidding (Keehn 2006).

The fears about repercussions appear to have been misplaced. Donolo writes, “the most spectacular proof point is the one that gets the least notice: what didn’t happen to Canadian-American trade. It’s the political and economic equivalent of the dog that didn’t bark in the night-time” (Donolo 2006). The most tangible backlash, it seems, was a meeting between Chrétien and Bush that was cancelled in May 2003. Chrétien wrote in his memoirs that it was cancelled by mutual agreement, but Cellucci tells a different story:

There is no doubt that the visit would have gone ahead as planned if Canada had joined the coalition in Iraq... Australia’s prime minister, John Howard, visited the president at his ranch in Crawford on the day George Bush was supposed to have met with Jean Chrétien. The president’s thinking was that you first need to talk to the people fighting the war with you (Cellucci 2005, 150).

5 BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENCE CASE STUDY

The words spoken by Paul Cellucci following Canada's decision to stay out of Iraq ("There is no security threat to Canada that the US would not be ready, willing, and able to help with. There would be no debate. There would be no hesitation..." [Cellucci 2005, 145]) are strikingly similar to those spoken over 70 years earlier by American President Theodore Roosevelt. In 1939, at Queen's University, Roosevelt famously declared, "the US will not stand idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by any other empire" (Roosevelt 1938). Canada was not under threat at the time, but Roosevelt was declaring a commitment to protect Canada should such a situation arise in the future. Two days after Roosevelt's commitment, then-Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King responded, "we too have obligations as a good and friendly neighbour" (Canadian Studies). With these words, Canada and the US committed themselves to the protection of the North American continent and to each other's territory. What Canada's role would be in this changing partnership would be a matter of contention for years to come.

Through this commitment to the defence of North America, Canada and the US came to cooperate through NORAD (North American Air Defense Command until 1981, North American Aerospace Defense Command after 1981). From its beginning in 1958, NORAD was an instrument of the strategic defence of North America. Some renewals of the agreement (there have been nine since 1958 [Minister of National Defence]) have led to important changes to the nature of this agreement defence. In 1968, Prime Minister Lester Pearson insisted on a clause in NORAD that exempted Canada from any involvement in ballistic missile defence, known as the

ballistic missile defence reservation clause (Molot and Tomlin 1986, 86). The 1981 NORAD renewal under the leadership of Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau saw two important changes; first, the reservation clause was removed and second, the name changed — NORAD went from “North American Air Defence Command” to “North American *Aerospace* Defence Command.” Canada was no longer expressly exempted from participating in BMD, and this would open the door to Canada’s increased involvement in the strategic defence of North America.

In a report written for Congress in 2007, Steven Hildreth writes, “since the mid-1980s, many decision makers and others have demonstrated serious interest in deploying BMD systems capable of defending the US from missile attack” (Hildreth 2007, 1). Such a system would be designed to protect against a ballistic missile, possibly carrying a nuclear weapon, which was targeting North American territory. Some have referred to technology, stopping a ballistic missile with an anti-ballistic missile, as akin to stopping a bullet with a bullet (Byers 2007, 68). The technology behind such a defence system is hugely complicated and expensive to develop, and American Presidents have varied in the extent to which they have supported the program. When attempting to pass the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) in the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan had difficulty getting support from Congress for his program, which was the most ambitious defence shield to be proposed. Hildreth writes about Reagan’s efforts, “although Congress largely supported BMD research and development, it generally opposed plans for significant BMD deployments at the time” (Hildreth 2007, 3). There was a general sense of

skepticism that the system would be effective and that it would warrant the huge amount of funding required in order to develop it.

Reagan's defensive system, also referred to as "Star Wars" because of the possibility of including space-based sensors, was scaled back by Presidents George H W Bush and Bill Clinton. Clinton, in particular, was uneasy about BMD; "Bill Clinton had once spoke critically about BMD to the prime minister [Martin], lamenting the fact that the Americans were spending billions of dollars on a system that he thought would never work" (Gross Stein and Lang 2007, 122). In 2002, George W Bush made it clear that he was planning on developing a system that would protect against long-range attacks from enemies (such as North Korea), as well as accidental launches from China or Russia (Staples 2006, 10). He also announced his intention to withdraw the United States from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM), a treaty that was signed in 1972 between the US and Russia. ABM "specifically forbids testing and deployment of a ballistic missile defense system" (Perez-Rivas 2001); Bush argued that the treaty was no longer relevant and that the BMD system had become necessary to protect the US from new security threats.

5.1 Requests to join (George W Bush era) – not bullying, just a discussion

As Steven Staples writes, "by virtue of our position between the lower 48 states and Russia, Canada has always been involved in America's BMD schemes, and there have been many bouts of missile defence debates in Canada" (Staples 2006, 9). This section will discuss

and subsequently analyze the “bout” that occurred under the Bush administration in the early 2000s.

In 2002, senior civilian and military officials informed Minister of Defence John McCallum that, as was the case with OIF, the US was looking for a Canadian endorsement of BMD. Gross Stein and Lang write, “all the US really wanted from Canada was political support for BMD — not money, not technology, not territory” (Gross Stein and Lang 2007, 123). In 2003, Chrétien agreed to enter into negotiations with the American administration regarding the system and what Canada’s involvement in it might be, but he did make any commitments or decisions. While this was happening, Paul Martin, Chrétien’s Finance Minister and well-known rival, was beginning his plans to take over the leadership of the Liberal Party. During these preparations, Martin declared his commitment to improving Canada’s relationship with the US, a relationship that Martin believed had soured under Chrétien. It soon became apparent that Martin was a supporter of BMD; “during the Liberal leadership race, Martin had publicly committed Canada to BMD” (Gross Stein and Lang 2007, 121).

By the time the 2003 federal election came, Martin appeared to have changed his position on BMD. It was unpopular in Quebec and British Columbia, and Liberals from those provinces were reluctant to be support the plan. Martin began to distance himself from BMD, though he was not prepared to completely give it up; as Gross Stein and Lang write, “he punted the issue to [Minister of Foreign Affairs] Graham” (Gross Stein and Lang 2007, 161). Many have criticized Martin for the way he handled BMD, saying that his personal leadership to support the issue

would have ensured the plan's success in Canada; this is probably correct, especially given the fact that Martin was very well liked when he took over the leadership of the Liberal party.

In August 2004 Martin agreed to an important amendment to NORAD. This amendment allowed for NORAD to share information regarding Canadian air and aerospace, such as that collected by the Northern Warning System, with the BMD operators. As Joel Sokolsky argues, "this was the concession that the Pentagon most wanted to secure from Canada and it means that Canadians will be working very closely with the missile defence system" (Sokolsky 2006, 31). Byers calls Martin's decision a "major victory" for those opposed to BMD, noting that "this concession to public opinion opens the door to a rigorous debate about the true extent, costs, and benefits of Canada's involvement, as well as the conditions that should be attached" (Byers 2004b).

In the fall of 2004, President Bush visited Canada for the first time since he took office. It was agreed that he and Prime Minister Martin would not discuss BMD; Martin's support of the program seemed to be wavering, largely because of public opinion. Paul Cellucci notes his frustration with this; "to my great disappointment, we couldn't even get the issue onto the formal agenda for the talks between the president and the prime minister" (Cellucci 2005, 166). Nevertheless, President Bush agreed to not bring up the topic in public (Martin 2008, 388); it was therefore a tremendous surprise to the Canadian prime minister when Bush, in a press conference in Halifax, publicly requested Canadian support for BMD. Gross Stein and Lang write, "the president was well aware that his Canadian hosts did not want public discussion of this issue, but he very much did" (Gross Stein and Lang 2007, 163).

Liberal MPs from BC and Quebec were under a great deal of pressure from their constituents to oppose Canada's endorsement of BMD, and Bush's direct appeal was an attempt reducing that pressure. Like in the US, Canadian public opinion manifests itself in the House of Commons, and Bush knew that to secure Canada's endorsement, Canadian public opinion needed to change. This appeal for support of BMD in Halifax demonstrated the extent to which a Canadian endorsement was desired by the American administration. There is a degree of irony here; it is likely that Bush's appeal accomplished the exact opposite, given his remarkably low popularity in Canada at that time⁸.

In early January, there were concerns that the American administration was trying to bully Canada into supporting BMD. A rumour was going around that Bush had suggested that a future president might question "why American taxpayers were funding Canadian defence if Ottawa wasn't supporting its missile shield" (Duff-Brown 2005a). Granatstein (2007) also mentions this rumour, saying that a Canadian official remarked that Bush had made a comment to that effect. Cellucci denied this and told reporters, "it was not bullying. It was just a discussion" (Duff-Brown 2005a).

Despite these pressures, on February 24, 2005, Minister of Foreign Affairs Pierre Pettigrew announced to the House of Commons that Canada would not endorse BMD. Martin also told reporters that day that his government had decided to opt out of missile defence (CBC 2006). Cellucci's reaction to this decision seemed to be one of confusion more than anything

⁸ A poll taken by The Associated Press in December 2004 found that approximately 65 per cent of Canadians had an unfavourable view of Bush (The Province 2004). By November 2005, that number had risen to 73 per cent (Humphreys 2005).

else; the chapter in his memoirs dedicated to the topic of missile defence is entitled “Perplexed.” Though he clearly thought the decision was the wrong one, Cellucci told Gross Stein and Lang, “it did no damage to Canada-US relations. We just threw our hands up and said these people don’t know what they are doing” (Gross Stein and Lang 2007, 177). This reaction was perhaps understated, given the extent to which the American administration had sought Canadian approval of the missile shield in the first place, but he nevertheless seemed to accept Canada’s decision.

As was the case after Chrétien said no to Iraq, there were few tangible backlashes to Martin’s BMD decision. One item worth noting is that after Martin’s decision, Condoleezza Rice postponed a visit, originally planned for April, to Canada. The CBC reported in 2006 that the US State Department denies that this was done because of Martin’s decision (CBC 2006). Others, such as Nelson Wiseman, argue the contrary. Duff Brown reported to the Associated Press,

Ottawa and Washington both insist that Rice’s no-show has nothing to do with Canada’s decision to leave ballistic missile defense to the Americans. “It has everything to do with it,” countered Nelson Wiseman... He notes the same wording – a scheduling conflict – was used when Bush canceled a state visit to Ottawa in May 2003. “There’s a remarkable parallel with what happened right after Canada made its decision not to participate in Iraq... The White House is ticked off. But it’s symbolic” (Duff-Brown 2005b).

6 ANALYSIS

In this section, I will explain why a Canadian endorsement of OIF and BMD was so important to the American administration. With both these cases, the American administration went to significant lengths to try to secure a Canadian endorsement of its actions, ranging from lengthy meetings between Canadian and American senior officials, pressure from the American ambassador to Canada (bordering on bullying, according to some), to a personal appeal from the President himself. A Canadian endorsement was sought because it would have made these actions appear more legitimate in the eyes of two important audiences: the American public and the international community. The opinion of these two audiences was important to OIF and BMD because if the American administration could secure a greater degree of support from both, it would make its interests less costly to pursue.

6.1 Audience 1: International opinion

The international community was divided on both BMD and OIF. With respect to Iraq, divisions within the UN indicate that the international community was not of one mind on the legitimacy of the invasion of Iraq. For BMD, there were concerns that the withdrawal from ABM and the development of a defence shield could provoke a new arms race or could result in space-based interceptors⁹. This resistance would increase the American costs of success by lowering the degree of cooperation the Bush administration could count on from the international community.

⁹ For example, the BBC reported in 2001, “Sweden criticised the US decision to withdraw [from the ABM treaty]. A foreign ministry statement warned of possibly ‘serious consequences for the future of international disarmament’” (BBC 2001).

As Greenhill writes, “[Canada’s] international personality is clear, at least to others. We are seen as an internationally engaged, economically and socially successful, increasingly multi-ethnic country... Canada is admired by some, liked by many, disliked by almost no one” (Greenhill 2005, 33). Within the international community, Canada has a reputation for being committed to international norms, such as multilateralism, human rights, and a history of positive involvement in the Middle East. Although it is difficult to find polling data relating to how the world viewed Canada in the early 2000s, recent international polls indicate that Canada is widely perceived to have a positive influence in the world (MacQueen 2006). Greenhill continues in his report to note, “many interviewees welcomed Canada as a source of engaged moral leadership and critical thinking on tough international issues” (Greenhill 2005, 34). The Canadian endorsement was sought in part because it would lend some of this credibility to that which it was endorsing. The fact that some countries see Canada as a source of critical thinking also confirms Canada’s important role as an information shortcut.

The American administration acknowledges that Canada has a positive reputation internationally. Cellucci writes that his government believes Canada can act as a “diplomatic pipeline to countries whose relations with the US were hostile” (Cellucci 2005, 95-96). For example, Canada was asked to engage in direct “pipeline diplomacy,” as I have come to think of it, when Rumsfeld approached his Canadian counterpart Bill Graham to ask his help in convincing NATO members to support the mission in Afghanistan. Gross Stein and Lang write,

“Rumsfeld asked for Graham’s help to persuade other NATO states to remove their caveats¹⁰ because, he argued, Canada had credibility in the alliance. The secretary implied that his credibility was wearing thin. And it clearly was” (Gross Stein and Lang 2007, 204). In other words, Canada can reach certain audiences that the US cannot. If the US could get Canada onside, Canadian efforts on behalf of the US could lead to a reduction in the costs associated with the program in question by increasing the degree to which it is perceived to be legitimate and, by extension, increasing the degree of cooperation from the international community.

Canada has not always lived up to its positive reputation. The behaviour of several Canadian peacekeepers in Somalia is an important example of how this reputation may no longer be warranted, and Greenhill writes, “it is difficult to exaggerate the extent to which Canada is seen to have dropped the ball on its international security obligations, peacekeeping in particular” (Greenhill 2005, 17). When looking at Canada’s contributions to international relations, it is important to discuss these events. However, these two examples do speak to the resilience and power of the Canadian symbol. Despite Canada’s decreasing international presence (especially, as Greenhill notes, with respect to peacekeeping and international security) and demonstrations of what some might think of as un-Canadian behaviour in Somalia, the Canadian symbol still inspires a positive response from the international system. If Franck were correct, the Canadian symbol should have been tarnished long ago; the fact that Canadian symbols still inspire a positive reaction from the international audience despite increasing

¹⁰ For more information on national caveats, see www.heritage.org/research/europe/bg1985.cfm

evidence that this reputation is no longer warranted is indicative of the strength and power of symbols in international relations.

6.2 Audience 2: US opinion

Canada's endorsement was also pursued because of a second audience to whom Canada would speak effectively — the American public. Polling data show that American public opinion was very supportive of OIF in 2003, with 71 per cent of Americans saying that it the use of force in Iraq was the right decision and 90 per cent saying that the war was going well (Keeter 2007). Though Bush's popularity steadily declined from 2001 when it was at its highest, the above data suggests that public opinion was in support of his actions; Canada's endorsement of OIF was therefore not as important to the domestic audience as it was to the international one. For BMD, however, public opinion was only narrowly in favour of missile defence; a Pew Research poll notes that in 2001 approximately 51 per cent of Americans supported the shield. The same poll showed that Americans were more familiar with the arguments against the shield than they were with the arguments in favour of the shield (Council on Foreign Relations 2001).

Like public opinion, many in Congress were reluctant to support this shield and were uneasy about Bush's plans to withdraw from the ABM treaty. CNN reported that much of this resistance came from Democrats;

Congressional Democrats greeted the news with skepticism. Some called Bush's plan [to withdraw from ABM] a misguided and poorly timed decision. "We don't know what effect this will have yet. We do know that it poses some serious questions regarding our relations with our allies, with Russia, and with China, that we're going to have to consider very, very carefully," Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, D-South Dakota, said Thursday (Perez-Rivas 2001).

In order for Bush to garner the Congressional support needed to pass his ambitious missile shield, he knew he needed to convince the American people that it was a good idea. The Bush administration calculated that Canada's endorsement was one way to speak to this audience. As a senior US official told *The Boston Globe*:

A high-ranking US official said that Ottawa's support matters very much to the White House both because of Canada's international stature and because of its 'name recognition' among Americans who care about world opinion. 'Americans see Canadians as a people who share common values, democratic traditions, and way of life,' he said on condition of anonymity. 'So Canadian support possesses much more symbolic significance than, say, support from Turkey or Spain' (Nickerson 2003).

Polling data indicate that Canada is seen very positively within the US. In the early 2000s, Canada ranked very highly in terms of overall American opinion towards their northern neighbour. In 2001, 90 per cent of Americans polled by Gallup said they viewed Canada either mostly favourably or very favourably (Gallup 2001). In 2002, the number rose to 92 per cent (Gallup 2002). Following Chrétien's announcement, Canada was seen less favourably in the US (Trickey 2003), but this year's Gallup poll reports that for the past four years, Canada has topped country rankings (Saad 2009).

To summarize, Bush was confronted with domestic and international resistance to his BMD plan and international resistance to OIF. His administration was determined to continue with both operations in spite of this opposition, and it was still interested in reducing the costs associated with pursuing these goals. The Canadian endorsement was sought in large part because of its ability to signal to these two audiences that these operations were legitimate, and to therefore induce them to cooperate with the Bush administration. The Canadian endorsement

is not powerful enough to completely legitimize or illegitimize either OIF or BMD, but it was pursued because of its ability to increase the degree of legitimacy of the operations.

7 FUTURE RESEARCH AND IMPLICATIONS

The United States has had close and at times difficult relationships with many countries in Latin America, such as Chile, Nicaragua, Mexico, and Costa Rica. As I mentioned about, these countries have behaved in interesting ways with respect to OIF. Costa Rica, for example, originally endorsed OIF, even though it abolished its army in 1949. In 2004, however, Costa Rica removed its name from the coalition of the willing because of domestic pressure. (ABC news 2004). The *LA Times* reported, “the Constitutional Court ruled that inclusion on the list violated the country’s pacifist principles” (LA Times 2004). Nicaragua sent a number of personnel, but they were funded by the American administration. To what degree were these involvements symbolic of genuine support? Would Nicaragua have joined the coalition of the willing if it was not getting something in return from the US? Would Costa Rica have joined the coalition if it had had an army and had to make material military contributions? Future research should focus on the ways countries in Latin America have responded to the war, the extent to which their support was sought, and why these countries chose to support the war in material and symbolic ways.

The study of symbols and their relationship to legitimacy should also explore two important international initiatives (ones that benefited significantly from Canadian leadership) that failed to get American endorsements: the coalition to ban landmines (or the Ottawa Treaty) and the International Criminal Court. How has the lack of US political support affect the perceived legitimacy of these international issues? Would they have benefited from US support?

Has its refusal to endorse the Ottawa Treaty and the ICC, which are otherwise widely seen to be legitimate, had a negative affect on American symbols and soft power?

Jack Granatstien has argued “Canada matters only in the minds of its own people” (Granatstein 2007, 204). This is simply not true as polling data from American and international audiences have shown. Canada’s endorsements were sought because of Canada’s positive reputation and ability to communicate to the American public and the broader, international community. Given the power of symbols in international relations, and given Canada’s unique position (close to but distinct from) the US, I conclude that Canada is, in fact, still able to punch above its weight because of its international reputation and “soft power” capabilities. As Greenhill’s report concludes, however, this capacity is weakening.

Joseph Nye’s concept of soft power has been tremendously influential in foreign policy circles, especially in the US. His argument is relatively simple; “if you believe that my objectives are legitimate, I may be able to persuade you to do something for me without using threats or inducements” (Nye 2004, 2). He believes that it is possible to achieve ones objective through making others “admire your ideals and want what you want” (Nye 2004, x). Soft power relies less on military strength and more on the power of ideas, values, and cultures to win others over. Force can breed resentment and is costly to maintain because it requires a continuous expenditure of military strength; soft power is more sustainable and less costly because it works to change people’s opinions and interests. Nye’s work has been tremendously important for suggesting that military strength alone is insufficient to the successful pursuit of foreign policy and defence interests.

There are important ways that Canada has proven itself capable of exercising hard power, such as our current presence in Afghanistan or our contributions during the Second World War, which should not be underestimated. However, as this thesis has demonstrated, Canada also has an important role to play internationally though exercising different foreign policy tools, such as soft power. Legitimacy ties in well here; when actions are seen as legitimate, force may still be needed to achieve the desired outcome, but it will not be the only foreign policy tool at the disposal of decision-makers. I have argued that symbols are important because of their ability to affect and communicate the degree to which an action is perceived to be legitimate. Given the symbolic importance of a Canadian endorsement of these two important American foreign policy acts, I conclude that Canada has an important symbolic role to play internationally.

In terms of Canada's soft and symbolic power, important insights into Canada's future contributions to international relations can be drawn from Evan Potter's work, *Branding Canada*. Potter demonstrates that Canada has a warm but fuzzy international image; the country is generally well liked abroad (warm...), but not much is known about Canada other than a few stereotypes (but fuzzy). Potter says that Canada needs to share its values and story with the world for, as he writes, "if a country fails to tell its own story, its image will be shaped exclusively by the perceptions of others" (Potter 2009, x). Rather than trying to re-brand Canada, Potter instead suggests that "the challenge will be to leverage the benefits of the existing brand – prosperous, open, diverse, trustworthy, law-abiding, and free of corruption – to promote Canada as an innovative nation" (Potter 2009, 281). When it comes to this, he notes that Canada's relatively "boring" (Potter 2009, 284) nature might be a strength in that it is non-threatening.

Symbols are important because of their ability to communicate. What do Canadian symbols communicate? In the cases above, I have demonstrated that Canada's endorsement was sought because of Canada's positive reputation abroad. Yet Potter's conclusion, that Canada is seen as warm but fuzzy, is comfortable but somewhat uninspiring. In order for Canada to extend its influence through the use of its symbols, the world needs to know what its symbols represent. Potter suggests developing a brand that shows Canada's best side to the world and using public diplomacy to boost this image. The image we should attempt to share is not only a good global citizen but also of a tolerant and diverse country, and one that is similar in important ways to our southern neighbour, but also different. If this can be done, if the Canadian symbol can become more powerful because of what it communicates, Canadians will find that their country does have an important role to play, and that it can, in fact, punch above its weight.

These symbolic contributions to international relations should not be viewed as another example of "pinch-penny diplomacy." To the contrary, in order for Canada to be effective in this role, resources must be invested in developing soft power capacities. Branding Canada so that its symbols would be more recognizable and powerful will require effort and financial support, but once this capacity is developed, it will become a powerful tool in Canadian foreign policy. Finally, if Canada can develop this soft power capacity, it will free up hard power resources to engage in interventions that are suited to Canada's interests and strengths.

7 CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has explored the concept of symbols in international relations and has concluded that they matter because of the way they can influence the degree to which an action is seen as legitimate. This degree of legitimacy is important because of its role in influencing the degree to which others will cooperate with the action. The American administration knew that if its actions were widely seen as legitimate it could count on more support (or at least less resistance) from its domestic and international audiences. Canada's endorsement was sought because of its ability to address both audiences with which the Bush administration was concerned. The literature regarding symbols and legitimacy currently underestimates the power of symbols to affect the degree to which an action is seen as legitimate; this literature should be expanded so that it better reflects the importance of symbols in international relations.

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