



A SAMARITAN STATE REVISITED: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CANADIAN FOREIGN AID

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A Samaritan State?, Canadian Foreign Aid, and the Challenges of Policy Coherence for Development

Stephen Brown

In 1966, when Keith Spicer's seminal book, *A Samaritan State? External Aid in Canada's Foreign Policy*, first came out, Canada had been providing foreign aid for fifteen years, with responsibility split between the Department of External Affairs and the Department of Trade and Commerce.¹ Pierre Trudeau's government created the semi-autonomous Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) only two years later, in 1968. *A Samaritan State?* was the first book ever published on Canadian foreign aid and, in fact, the only one for another one and a half decades.² Roughly fifty years on, Spicer's ground-breaking analysis is ripe for revisiting, and for comparison to current perspectives, policies, and practices.

Oddly enough, the book never answered its titular question: Was Canada a "Samaritan State"? In fact, the book never used the term, other than in its title. One can surmise that the expression was adopted after Spicer had completed the manuscript, as part of discussions with the publisher on how to market the book. Ironically, the title's undefined expression has become the book's most lasting legacy.

The term refers to the Biblical parable of the Good Samaritan, told by Jesus to his fellow Jews. In it, a half-dead naked man, presumably Jewish,

lies on the ground, after having been beaten by robbers. Two successive men, both also Jews, see him lying there but keep walking. The third person to walk by, a Samaritan, stops to help the severely injured man, nursing his wounds and putting him up at an inn at his own expense, despite the general antipathy between their respective peoples.³ A Good Samaritan has thus come to mean someone who helps a complete stranger out of the goodness of his or her own heart. Good Samaritanism corresponds to the concept of altruism or humanitarianism in the literature on foreign aid: the idea that a state, like a person, should be generous to complete strangers without any self-interested motive.

A Samaritan State? covered a wide range of topics, conducted several case studies, and provided a lot of empirical data.⁴ This chapter focuses on Spicer's views on two key overarching issues that remain extremely relevant today: (1) the goals of Canadian foreign aid; and (2) the optimal relationship between Canada's aid policy and its other international policies. It examines each of these in turn, comparing Spicer's beliefs to Canada's recent policies and practices, mainly under the Conservative government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper. It then examines the short record and current thinking of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Liberal government in these two areas. Five decades after the book's publication, there is much to retain, in Spicer's vision for foreign aid and policy coherence for development, that past and present governments seem to have forgotten.

Why Give Foreign Aid?

In his book, Spicer very clearly disapproved of Samaritanism/altruism. He was not interested in morality as a basis of public policy:

Philanthropy is plainly no more than a fickle and confused policy stimulant, derived from the personal conscience. It is not an objective of government. Love for mankind is a virtue of the human heart, an emotion which can stir only individuals—never bureaucracies or institutions. Governments exist only to promote the public good; and, as a result, they must act purely in the selfish interest of the state they serve. Altruism as foreign policy is a misnomer, even if sometimes

the fruits of policy are incidentally beneficial to foreigners. To talk of humanitarian “aims” in Canadian foreign policy is, in fact, to confuse policy with the ethics of individuals moulding it, to mix government objectives with personal motives.⁵

Though this might seem like realism at its bleakest, completely devoid of compassion, with no place for ethics, Spicer embraced many positions that would make altruists happy. For instance, he recognized the fundamental need to have a peaceful, stable world, as a prerequisite for most other policy goals. He even supported the use of humanitarian rhetoric in order to help generate public support for aid.⁶ Indeed, there is much convergence between what he recommended and what altruists advocate. The motive might be different—self-interest versus selflessness—but the result is very often the same, as long as one takes, as Spicer usually did, a long-term perspective based on “enlightened self-interest.”⁷ In this, his perspective resembled what Alexis de Tocqueville called “*l’intérêt bien entendu*,” usually translated as “self-interest rightly understood” or “self-interest properly understood.”⁸ For Spicer, helping others was good for Canada in the long run, and that was justification enough.

As David Black recently argued, too much emphasis has been placed on labelling the motives underlying Canadian aid and setting them up against each other. For instance, he discusses how the valuable work of the late Cranford Pratt, Canada’s top scholar on foreign aid throughout the 1980s and 1990s, analytically opposed “international realists” and “humane internationalists” in ways that were sometimes counterproductive.⁹ In a sense, these perspectives do not matter as much as the common ground that can be found between them on policies and practices. Accordingly, it is of lesser import whether something is the right thing to do for purely ethical reasons or because it is in the interest of global peace and prosperity and thus in Canada’s long-term interests.

Regardless of whether one agrees with Spicer’s perspective or not—and he himself might not hold today some of the views he expressed over fifty years ago—many of his observations remain valid. For instance, he was skeptical of aid’s capacity to promote democratization and stability, which have proven much more difficult to achieve than many scholars and policy

makers naively believed, for example, in places such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya. It seems to be a lesson repeatedly learnt and then forgotten. Similarly, he warned against expectations that aid would easily engender economic growth, reminding readers that domestic factors matter a lot.

Spicer believed that Canada should provide generous levels of aid spending, in large part because the contact it generates would give Canadians a greater understanding of the Global South and thus help it engage as a “middle power” able to “keep the peace.”¹⁰ Still, recognizing that there is no clear correlation between aid and peace and security, Spicer was very supportive of aid as a “*symbol* of Canada’s concern,”¹¹ and seemed less interested in the actual development that should result from aid than in the goodwill that the aid would generate for the Canadian government. He was also concerned that a lack of generosity would generate ill will, which would hamper any Canadian global leadership ambitions. While Spicer acknowledged that results can be mixed, in hindsight it is clear that he placed too much trust in the power of symbols and overestimated recipients’ degree of gratitude. For example, he praised the wisdom of the Soviet Union in obtaining Afghans’ allegiance by paving the streets of their capital, providing in his words a “paved thoroughfare for the camel-filled metropolis of Kabul.”¹² However, the nine-year war against the Soviet occupation in the 1980s demonstrated that providing infrastructure was not a lasting guarantee of Afghan loyalty, though Western countries seem to have forgotten that lesson a couple of decades later.

The book’s most interesting case study is of the Warsak dam in Pakistan near the Afghan border. This challenging project, discussed in Ryan Touhey’s chapter in this volume, provided electricity and water for irrigation for decades following its inauguration in 1961. Writing soon after its completion, Spicer lauded the project, not least for having employed, albeit only temporarily, some 10,000 Pakistani men (whom he described as “wandering Pathan tribesmen”), which the Pakistan government greatly appreciated.¹³ In his account, Pakistani gratitude to Canada was the main goal and measure of success, as documented in local press coverage. Spicer also highlighted the importance of the school and clinic that were set up alongside the dam, primarily to serve expatriate Canadians and their families. In his words, they “probably won for Canada the gratitude of more ordinary foreign nationals than any other single Canadian project. . . .



FIGURE 13.1

Like the Warsak Dam in Pakistan, the Dahla Dam was a 1950s-style Canadian signature project in Afghanistan, drawing regular visits from Ottawa. Prime Minister Stephen Harper, second from right, walks with Canadian Ambassador to Afghanistan Ron Hoffmann, right, Chief of the Defence Staff Walter Natynczyk, second from left, and Chantal Ruel, CIDA's Assistant Deputy Director of Development in Kandahar as they visit the Dahla Dam in May 2009. (Source: The Canadian Press/Sean Kilpatrick)

Through this care, the tribal folk [*sic*] obviously understood in simple human terms the message of international solidarity that the great concrete dam itself was partly intended to convey.”¹⁴

The gratitude that Spicer valued and carefully documented, however, did not last. As he himself noted in passing, Pakistan's goodwill toward Canada all but disappeared when the latter provided military support to India in 1963.¹⁵ Although Spicer obviously could not know how hated the Soviets would become in Afghanistan, he should nonetheless have drawn some conclusions from the ephemerality of Pakistani gratitude that he witnessed.

The parallel with Canada's support for the Dahla Dam across the border in Afghanistan's Kandahar Province in the late 2000s and early 2010s is inescapable. Like the Warsak Dam, the Dahla Dam was a 1950s-style

“signature project”—a stand-alone scheme closely identified with the donor. It ignored decades of learning in development assistance that strongly suggested that aid is more effective when integrated with national programs and systems, rather than carried out independently to provide visibility for the donor.

Canadian assistance to the Dahla Dam was plagued with problems from the start, including inflated security costs that drained \$10 million out of the dam’s \$50 million budget to pay for the services of a private security company with ties to an Afghan warlord, in what is best described as a protection racket.¹⁶ Although the Canadian government declared success, it had ignored local Afghan calls for the height of the dam to be raised, severely hampering its utility, and left the dam unfinished when Canadian troops left the province.¹⁷ An evaluation commissioned by the Canadian government recognized that the aid program in Kandahar, where Canadian aid was concentrated, “failed to ensure sustainable, long-term development results.” Moreover, it pointed out that Canadian assistance incorrectly assumed that the main local Afghan grievances were economic, which explains why they were not won over by building infrastructure.¹⁸

For many decades, virtually all critiques of the effectiveness of Canadian aid, including from parliamentary committees, NGOs, and scholars—and of foreign aid more generally, not just Canada’s—have emphasized the fact that aid has served many purposes other than fighting poverty, which governments have always presented as aid’s primary purpose.¹⁹ The overall confusion of purpose, the mixing of development goals with political and economic ones, is overwhelmingly seen as one of the main reasons why aid has not been more effective in achieving development goals. All too often, it is not meant primarily to serve that purpose. This chapter therefore looks more closely at the relationship between aid policy and other foreign policy objectives.

Aid’s Relations with Other Components of Foreign Policy

Spicer strongly believed in the value of a Canadian aid program. In addition to earning gratitude abroad, he believed that it encouraged contact with other countries and improved interaction between Canada and the wider world. Beyond the aid relationship, it also leads to a more enlightened

foreign policy, more effective diplomacy, and better participation in the international system. Many of the recommendations in *A Samaritan State?* have in fact been implemented, though not necessarily as a result of the book.

Though Spicer believed in linking aid and non-aid policies, he recognized the need for a dedicated aid program, separate from other areas of foreign policy. He suggested a distinct career stream for government aid officials “because aid administration demands specialized knowledge that cannot be absorbed and usefully exploited by men [*sic*] whose primary career [*is*] in trade or diplomacy.”²⁰ The government did, in fact, adopt this practice after creating the semi-autonomous aid agency CIDA in 1968. However, CIDA’s absorption into the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) in 2013 has devalued development expertise and otherwise marginalized staff who came to the department from CIDA.²¹

Although he did not frame it in these terms, much of Spicer’s vision for aid and trade was based on the concept of self-interest, provided that it was “properly understood” à la Tocqueville to pursue a long-term systemic vision rather than evanescent short-term gains. Thus, letting aid recipients exercise ownership of their development plans and aligning Canadian aid with their strategies would actually benefit Canada in the long run (articulating some of the Paris Principles on Aid Effectiveness almost forty years before they were adopted). He therefore strongly opposed tying aid to the purchase of goods and services in Canada, rather than obtaining them where they were cheapest, even if he considered the practice “inevitable.”²² Though he slightly overstated how hard it would be to eliminate tied aid, it did take until 2012 for Canada to completely phase it out. Even so, a large proportion of aid grants are still channelled through Canadian NGOs and used to hire Canadian consultants, even though there is no formal obligation to do so.

A key quandary in global development today is the appropriate role of the private sector. No other actor has the potential to unleash the trillions of dollars required to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, however controversial an actor it may be. Spicer, writing in a very different historical context, barely even discussed private investment because, he argued, “It is probably safe to assume . . . in view of Canada’s own notorious need of foreign capital, that Canadian private investment

in overseas development is now very small and is unlikely soon to become significant.”²³

Clearly, much has changed over the past fifty years. Canadian direct foreign investment in the developing world was worth \$295 billion in 2015, which is about sixty years’ worth of foreign aid at current spending levels.²⁴ Moreover, the Canadian government has, for the last few years, begun to promote quite actively the role of the private sector in development, especially the Canadian extractive industry. CIDA’s partnerships with mining companies, first announced in 2011, have elicited a fair bit of attention—and criticism.²⁵ Moreover, it is important to remember that Canadian aid and other mechanisms, such as credit insurer Export Development Canada, have long promoted the Canadian private sector’s involvement in developing countries.

Spicer advocated greater coordination of “aid, trade, defence, cultural relations, immigration and classical diplomacy,” which is the core of what is now referred to as *policy coherence*, and saw aid as “simply one of several sometimes useful techniques of pursuing national goals abroad.”²⁶ He thus favoured the instrumentalization of aid, not for short-term commercial or electoral gains, which undermine aid effectiveness, but over the long term.²⁷

Clearly, greater policy coherence is an old idea, but it has seen a surge of popularity in Ottawa since at least the mid-2000s. It was manifest first in the “3D” approach—diplomacy, defence, and development—adopted by Prime Minister Paul Martin’s Liberal government, and later in the broader “whole-of-government” approach championed by the Conservatives. In fact, Minister of International Cooperation Julian Fantino invoked the need for greater policy integration as the main reason for CIDA’s abolition and merger with DFAIT, citing twin objectives: “To enhance coordination of international assistance with broader Canadian values and objectives, and to put development on an equal footing with trade and diplomacy.”²⁸

Most foreign policy and trade analysts applauded the CIDA-DFAIT merger, but many development specialists believed that the move would facilitate the increased subservience of aid to non-development objectives. Spicer might have approved, though, as he saw aid as an instrument of Canadian policy and decried how it had become “a cause in itself, a self-justifying crusade, a powerful Messianic magnet for a generation of liberals hungry for a purpose to fit a uniting world.”²⁹ Spicer would not, however, have

endorsed the blatant commercialization of aid envisaged in the 2013 *Global Markets Action Plan*, the first policy statement after the merger, which advocated “leverag[ing] development programming to advance Canada’s trade interests.”³⁰ Spicer would have considered such a short-term approach ineffective for promoting Canada’s longer-term interests. Indeed, that part of the plan actually appears to contravene Canadian law, which mandates that the primary purpose of Canadian aid is to be poverty reduction.³¹

Advocating a form of policy coherence for development, Spicer presented some concrete steps outside the realm of aid that Canada could take to help developing countries, including ones that provide greater benefits than aid. For instance, he advocated trade concessions, which he recognized as improbable, and greater flows of immigrants, which would increase the amount sent to the developing world in the form of remittances.³²

Contemporary development-oriented scholars and activists, however, favour policy coherence that will promote the interests of developing countries and reinforce their capacity to fight poverty, which is for them the ultimate goal. Spicer advocated it because it would help developing countries achieve their objectives and thereby gain Canada international praise, as well as increase the chances of long-term peace and stability. Despite their differences, these two perspectives are compatible at the policy level. However, they are not universally shared. Many Canadian politicians and taxpayers want aid to provide clear short-term benefits at home. Conservative Bev Oda, toward the end of her five-year tenure as Minister for International Cooperation, admitted that she did not separate Canada’s trade and foreign policy interests from its development goals.³³ The OECD subsequently reminded the Canadian government that “there should be no confusion between development objectives and the promotion of commercial interests.”³⁴ Still, Oda’s successor, Julian Fantino, insisted that “Canadians are entitled to derive a benefit” from Canadian development assistance.³⁵

If Canada is unwilling to protect the aid piggy bank from being raided by non-development interests, it would be preferable to insulate the aid bureaucracy. A separate aid ministry would be the obvious institutional mechanism, though no guarantee. The United Kingdom and Germany provide good, albeit not perfect, examples of independent ministries that are better able to defend their development mandate. Canada, however, has taken the path in the opposite direction and “de-merging” CIDA does not

seem to be on anyone's agenda. Therefore, the role of development within Global Affairs Canada (GAC) is a crucial factor to monitor closely.

One of Spicer's key recommendations on aid was for periodic, independent, evidence-based policy reviews. In fact, he devoted most of the book's conclusion to that topic. This chapter therefore turns to a discussion of the International Assistance Review launched by the Liberal government in 2016 and resulting in a new policy in 2017.

Reviewing Canada's International Assistance Policy

Between May and July 2016, the Canadian government held 300 consultations in Canada and across the world as part of its International Assistance Review. It interacted with over 15,000 people and organizations in 65 countries and received over 10,000 contributions—a massive investment of time and other resources.³⁶ The consultations in Ottawa, however, were stage-managed around sectoral themes, rather than discussing how to make more fundamental improvements to Canada's aid program, including asking deeper questions on what the weaknesses of Canadian aid have been.³⁷ One of these underlying problems is the continual shifting of thematic and sectoral priorities, which is disruptive and actually harms aid effectiveness.³⁸

Despite some genuflecting before the altar of policy coherence, the review was limited to “international assistance,” i.e., aid, with the exception of some activities under the peace and security rubric. This limited approach did not augur well for the new aid policy, especially since no review of broader foreign policy seemed to be in the works, leaving aid without a larger context and the relationship between the two unexamined, *contra* Spicer's recommendations.

GAC subsequently published a web page on “What We Heard,” making available to the public a summary of the results of the consultations, an unprecedented and very welcome action.³⁹ It mentioned the need “to build greater complementarity among Canadian policies and initiatives in the fields of defence, trade, diplomacy, security and development,” a form of policy coherence Spicer firmly endorsed. It provided no indication, however, of the nature of this complementary relationship. Would development considerations have an important sway over the other fields, or would aid be subservient to short-term Canadian interests, as has all too often been the



FIGURE 13.2

With its new “feminist international assistance policy,” Canadian aid policy headed off in a direction unimagined by Keith Spicer, though its troubling shortage of funds was a familiar part of the story. Two of the policy’s leading supporters, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and International Development Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau, are shown here at the opening of the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit at UN Headquarters in September 2018. (Source: The Canadian Press/Adrian Wyld)

case in the past? In other words, was the Canadian government aspiring to policy coherence *for development* or to policy coherence for other purposes?

The government finally published its new aid policy in June 2017. Billed as “Canada’s first feminist international assistance policy,” its most notable commitment was that within five years “at least 95 per cent of Canada’s bi-lateral international development assistance investments will either target or integrate gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls,”⁴⁰ an area of focus unexamined by Spicer. The new policy was widely applauded for this emphasis, but concerns remained regarding how it would be implemented and what the impact would be on other programming.⁴¹

The policy makes some references to policy coherence, for instance: “When it comes to gender equality and the empowerment of women and

girls, a more integrated approach is needed—one that also includes diplomacy, trade and the expertise of a wide range of Canadian government departments and agencies.⁴² However, no detail was provided on how other government institutions would internalize this new priority.

A major flaw in the new aid strategy is that the government, after a decade or more of dismantling its development expertise and cutting its aid budget, is not interested in providing the financial resources required to rebuild the aid program. The Liberals' first three federal budgets (tabled in 2016, 2017, and 2018) provided only modest nominal increases in aid spending, leaving ODA as a percentage of gross national income around 0.26 per cent (see discussion in this volume's introduction). As a result, any new programming in one area will have to come at the expense of programs in others. As Spicer warned, important cutbacks to bilateral programming in certain countries actually generate ill will and can be harmful to Canada's interests.⁴³ The Conservatives' clumsy cutting of African countries of focus may have contributed to Canada losing its bid to be elected to the UN Security Council in 2010, an important fact for the Liberals to consider as they campaign for a seat in 2021.

Given its own lack of financial contributions, the government places much emphasis instead on contributions from the private sector. The new aid policy reintroduces the use of aid to provide loans (euphemistically referred to as "repayable contributions"), a practice abolished long ago by CIDA, and highlights the creation of a Canadian development finance institute (DFI) under the name FinDev Canada. The latter, originally announced by the Conservative government in 2015, has a budget of \$300 million and is housed not at GAC but—tellingly—at Export Development Canada.

Such mechanisms risk repeating the errors of the past, focusing on commercial self-interest, supporting Canadian businesses rather than ones in developing countries, and wasting vast sums of money. Here, the experience of CIDA's long-standing Industrial Cooperation Program (known as CIDA-INC), founded in 1978, is highly relevant. It had a success rate of only 15 per cent and was shut down in 2012 amid fraud investigations.⁴⁴

DFIs in other donor countries have been severely criticized for supporting "big businesses" rather than poverty reduction.⁴⁵ Although the government has charged FinDev Canada with empowering women, mitigating climate change, and reducing poverty, it is not clear how such

endeavours will be able to generate sufficient short-term profits to make the required loan repayments.

While the “feminist” components of the new aid policy have attracted the lion’s share of public attention, the policy and subsequent government pronouncements demonstrate remarkable continuity with the previous government in promoting the role of the private sector in development.⁴⁶ Despite all the fanfare, it might be business as usual on that front. The private sector’s poor collective record in promoting women’s rights and gender equality suggests that there may be an unaddressed fundamental contradiction between the two core characteristics of the new aid policy. Moreover, the potential use of ODA funds in “innovative” mechanisms that are not truly focused on poverty reduction might even break Canadian law again. Spicer, who called for independent, evidence-based reviews, would have been disappointed with the result of Canada’s latest iteration.

An additional major limitation of the new aid strategy is that it was designed, as mentioned above, in a foreign policy vacuum. What is actually required is an overarching policy that goes beyond aid, to encompass all dimensions of international policy, and provides clear guidance on the promotion of international development and the needs of poor people in poor countries.⁴⁷ Such an integrated approach is the only way countries, not just Canada, can hope to even come close to achieving the SDGs. Canada’s aid review may prove to be a lost opportunity in that sense.

Looking Beyond Aid Policy

Spicer clearly considered aid to be part of Canada’s broader foreign policy and thought that aid policy should be designed within that context. Similarly, today’s scholars should not examine Canadian aid in isolation but rather as part of all of Canada’s activities that have an impact on developing countries. John Cameron makes this point very convincingly and reminds us of the basic ethical principle: first, do no harm.⁴⁸ For instance, the foreign operations of Canadian mining companies provide benefits to the countries where they operate, including jobs and royalties, often augmented by their corporate social responsibility activities. Yet it is important to weigh the negative effects too. The extractive industry often does a lot of harm, and has been implicated in causing environmental destruction, the

abuse of human rights, the creation of health problems, and the displacement of people and the loss of their livelihoods. According to a damning report commissioned by a Canadian extractive industry association but never publicly released, “Canadian companies are far and away the worst offenders.”⁴⁹ Still, the Canadian government provides considerable support for the mining industry’s investments abroad, including practical support through Canadian embassies and by subsidizing their philanthropic activities. As Cameron argues, scholars should therefore not limit the scope of their enquiry to the aid sector while ignoring the others as if the realms were independent of each other, rather than related manifestations of broader government support and policies.

It is not yet clear if the emphasis on Canadian business interests, and those of the extractive sector in particular, will differ considerably under the Trudeau Liberals. Minister of International Development Marie-Claude Bibeau told *Le Devoir*, “My mandate is development . . . not Canadian economic interests.”⁵⁰ This may mean that the Canadian aid program may distance itself from the promotion of mining, though she did not say that it would. On the contrary, the government specifically affirmed its continued support for the controversial Canadian International Resources and Development Institute, created by CIDA and housed at the University of British Columbia, which receives \$5 million in ODA funds annually.⁵¹

So far, under the Liberal government, one of the biggest failures of policy coherence for development, the feminist foreign policy, and the “do no harm” principle has been the sale of \$15 billion in weaponized vehicles to Saudi Arabia, despite the severe human rights abuses in the country and strong reasons to believe that the arms would be used against civilians in Saudi Arabia or in Yemen. The government’s justifications were lamentable: that it had “no choice” because the deal had been finalized by the previous government, that jobs in southern Ontario were at stake, and that if Canada did not sell them, someone else would. The first statement was a lie, and the remaining two arguments could be marshalled to justify selling weapons to any regime in the world, no matter how violent and dictatorial. In addition, the government argued that there was no “conclusive evidence” that Saudi Arabia had used Canadian vehicles for human rights violations in the past. In doing so, regardless of the credibility of the claim, the government ignored the fact that the legal criterion is actually the risk of

such violations in the future.⁵² Though the Federal Court eventually ruled that the minister had the discretionary power to approve the sale, doing so made a mockery of Canadian claims to have a robust process in place that takes into account human rights before approving such sales.⁵³

The Trudeau government's aid policy states that it is "committed to strengthening our policy framework to ensure Canadian companies reflect Canadian values, respect human rights and operate responsibly."⁵⁴ However, the government will likely, as in the past, invoke human rights mainly when Canada has no other significant interests at play. Together, these practices will not win the plaudits abroad for which Spicer hoped.

Another conundrum in achieving policy coherence for development is how to reconcile the government's commitment to fighting climate change with its promotion and massive subsidization of the petroleum sector, providing over \$3.3 billion annually to oil and gas producers and promoting pipelines that will encourage the extraction from the very environmentally destructive oil sands.⁵⁵ Policy coherence, and especially policy coherence *for development*, require sacrifices in policy areas that will undermine the short-term interests of some Canadian sectors and actors. To live up to commitments for such policy coherence requires not only a clear overarching vision to provide a cogent rationale but also the political will to implement it.

Conclusion

Many lessons that Spicer drew in his study over fifty years ago are crucial to recall today. Though Spicer was misguided in his quest for gratitude from aid recipients, his Tocquevillian emphasis on self-interest in the long run, which requires a peaceful, prosperous world, is a valuable reminder not to be distracted by short-term political or economic considerations. Seeking quick gains by supporting Canadian commercial interests, for instance, a key concern of the Harper government, makes for ineffective development policy and will not be of lasting benefit to Canada or developing countries. Spicer concluded, rightly, that ambitious global goals cannot be met by aid alone but require the coordination of all of Canada's international policies and better coordination with other international actors, a fact too often forgotten when faced with the desire to fly the flag. It remains to be seen to what extent the Trudeau government will be able or even willing to adopt

a long time horizon and seek systemic benefits, such as global peace and prosperity.

Spicer's presumed rejection of the Samaritan State can be embraced to a certain extent, not, like him, out of contempt for the Good Samaritan's altruism, which can be a useful motivation, but in recognition that aid and other means of promoting development are not simply charitable activities, despite the way they are often portrayed for fundraising purposes. Rather, supporting development is part of a shared imperative to create a more equitable, peaceful, and environmentally sustainable world.

Notes

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- 1 Keith Spicer, *A Samaritan State? External Aid in Canada's Foreign Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 1966.
- 2 At which time two very different critical books appeared: Robert Carty, Virginia Smith, and the Latin American Working Group, *Perpetuating Poverty: The Political Economy of Canadian Foreign Aid* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1981); and Paul Fromm and James P. Hull, *Down the Drain? A Critical Re-examination of Canadian Foreign Aid* (Toronto: Griffin House, 1981).
- 3 Luke 10:25–37.
- 4 For a more complete overview of the book, see Stephen Brown, "Canada's Foreign Aid before and after CIDA: Not a Samaritan State," *International Journal* 68, no. 3 (2013): 501–12.
- 5 Spicer, *Samaritan State*, 11.
- 6 Spicer, *Samaritan State*, 12.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Alexis de Tocqueville, *De la démocratie en Amérique* (Paris: Pagnerre, 1850), published in English as Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York: The Century Co., 1898). Self-interest properly understood is often invoked in the McLeod Group's recommendations for Canadian development policy—see www.mcleodgroup.ca.
- 9 David R. Black, "Humane Internationalism and the Malaise of Canadian Aid Policy," in *Rethinking Canadian Aid*, 2nd ed., ed. Stephen Brown, Molly den Heyer, and David R. Black (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2016), 17–33.
- 10 Spicer, *Samaritan State*, 52.

- 11 Ibid., 21. Emphasis mine.
- 12 Ibid., 36.
- 13 Ibid., 127.
- 14 Ibid., 137.
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