Kim Richard Nossal

Ear candy

Canadian policy toward humanitarian intervention and atrocity crimes in Darfur

The autumn 2003 issue of this journal featured eight articles offering some uninvited suggestions on international relations and foreign policy to Paul Martin as he was making his debut as prime minister. In his overview of the challenges faced by the new Martin cabinet, Denis Stairs cautioned the new prime minister against "the tendency to indulge in inflated and self-serving rhetoric, a rhetoric clearly designed to appeal to the preferences and prejudices of a population indoctrinated by its own myths."[1] In this, Stairs was reflecting a common criticism of the foreign policy of the government of Jean Chrétien: that over the nine years that Chrétien was in power, a growing gap had emerged between rhetoric and reality. On the one hand, the efforts of the Chrétien government to bring the deficit under control had led to a dramatic diminution of Canadian capabilities on the international stage as the Canadian armed forces, the foreign service, and the development assistance budget were all slashed.[2] On the other hand, the

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1 Denis Stairs, "Challenges and opportunities for Canadian foreign policy in the Paul Martin era," *International Journal* 58 (autumn 2003): 503; See also Stairs, "Myths, morals, and reality in Canadian foreign policy," *International Journal* 58 (spring 2003): 239-56.

2 See, for example, Kim Richard Nossal, "Pinchpenny diplomacy: The decline of 'good international citizenship' in Canadian foreign policy," *International Journal* 54 (winter 1998-99): 88-105. The best overall summary of the argument is in Andrew Cohen, *While Canada Slept: How We Lost Our Place in the World* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2003).

Chrétien government sought to cover this declining capacity by turning to what Allan Gotlieb has called a "feel-good foreign policy" marked by "a tendency to moralize and proclaim superior values."[3] As Stairs put it, "grandiose and self-serving rhetoric" was crucial to this exercise: "The spinning of tales—tales not false, but certainly canted—becomes an increasingly valued and admired art as the policy establishment struggles to bridge the gap between what well-intentioned Canadians think and what the government really is doing."[4]

In short, over the course of the 1990s, the Chrétien government increasingly pursued what might be thought of as an "ear candy" approach to foreign policy: government ministers tended to speak about Canada's role in the world in terms that were so sweet-sounding to Canadians that not only did the rhetoric convince listeners that their government was actually doing something worthwhile in their name, but it also generated considerable political support for those engaging in the rhetoric. But the sugar high produced by a steady diet of ear candy tends to be no less addictive than a diet of real candy: the more that their governors fed them feel-good rhetoric about Canadian foreign policy, the more that Canadians appeared to expect such rhetorical excesses from their government—and, as importantly, to be entirely unsatisfied with more honest, realistic, or sober assessments of the options available to Canada in the real world of world politics. Moreover, the dynamic quickly became circular as government ministers themselves became addicted to telling Canadians about their role in international affairs in terms that they knew would generate political support.

Although it was hoped by some in 2003 that Martin would bring a less rhetorical and more realistic approach to the conduct of Canadian foreign policy, it can be argued that Martin himself and the government he leads have proved to be as addicted to ear candy in foreign policy as the Chrétien government had been.[5] There is no better indication of this than the Martin government's policy towards the humanitarian disaster in the western

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3 Allan Gotlieb, "Romanticism and realism in Canada's foreign policy," *Policy Options* 26 (February 2005), esp. 18.

4 Stairs, "Challenges and opportunities," 489-90.

5 For one assessment, see Andrew Cohen, "Martin's first year on foreign policy – the rhetoric of good intentions," *Policy Options* 26 (February 2005): 47-50.

Sudanese region of Darfur that had been unfolding since February 2003.[6] The atrocity crimes[7] in Darfur include the killings of tens of thousands of Sudanese citizens by the so-called Janjaweed, militias that are, by all credible accounts, armed, supported, and controlled by the government of Sudan;[8] the Janjaweed's systematic use of rape as a tool of war; and the widespread destruction of villages and crops and the theft of livestock that has led not only to the displacement of more than 1.5 million Sudanese but also to the deaths of tens of thousands more from disease and malnutrition.[9]

This article seeks to examine the evolution of Canadian policy towards Darfur. I will demonstrate that early on a significant gap appeared in Canadian policy. The prime minister's rhetoric about Canada's concern for

6 For information on the Darfur crisis, see the "Report of the Internatioanl Commission of Inquiry to the United Nations Secretary-General," Geneva, 25 January 2005, www.ohchr.org; International Crisis Group, "Darfur: The failure to protect," *Africa Report 89*, 8 March 2005, www.icg.org; see also the website of Eric Reeves, an American professor of English who has become a Sudan activist (www.sudanreeves.org) and ProtectDarfur, a British-based non-governmental organization (www.protectdarfur.co.uk).

7 This phrase has been suggested by Gareth Evans, a former Australian minister for foreign affairs and now the president of the International Crisis Group. Evans argues that the debate over Darfur has become "needlessly preoccupied with the 'g-word,' whether or not the Sudanese government's brutal campaign against its own citizens in that region constitutes genocide." "Atrocity crimes" allows one to focus on what is actually happening in Darfur: "Whether anyone had the specific intent required for genocide, 'to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such' [the wording of article 2 of the 1948 genocide convention] will only ever be properly determined once a recognised court fully investigates the issue. What matters is whether anyone at all is going to be held accountable for the atrocity crimes, whatever their legal description, that have resulted in tens of thousands dying violently." Gareth Evans, "Genocide or crime? Actions speak louder than words in Darfur," *European Voice*, 18 February 2005, www.crisisgroup.org. For a survey of the debate, see also Scott Straus, "Darfur and the genocide debate," *Foreign Affairs* 84 (January/February 2005).

8 The Sudanese government formally denies contributing to the violence in Darfur, claiming that it is the result of a local conflict between nomadic and pastoralist tribes. It also claims that while it has armed some militia, it has nothing to do with the *janjaweed*, whom it allegedly treats as outlaws. However, such claims of innocence simply do not square with the evidence.

9 There is no agreed-on figure for deaths in the Darfur conflict; many of the mortality rates are the result of extrapolations. Assessing the evidence available in February 2005, the International Crisis Group concludes that a figure of 300,000 deaths from violence, malnutrition, and disease "is certainly credible." *Failure to Protect*, fn 10.

the humanitarian crisis became so inflated that it was impossible for the government to ensure that its actions matched its rhetoric. This case thus reflects the continuation of the dynamic so clearly identified by Gotlieb, Stairs, and others: in contemporary Canadian foreign policy, rhetoric and reality operate in discrete spheres, with the rhetoric itself far more important than policy action. The manifest unwillingness of the Canadian government to go beyond token symbolism in addressing the massive killings in Darfur while engaging in inflated and self-congratulatory rhetoric demonstrates clearly that in contemporary Canadian foreign policy, what matters is not what one does, but only what one says.

CHALLENGING WESTPHALIAN SOVEREIGNTY: MARTIN ON HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

Canadian policy toward Darfur must be placed in the broader context of the attitudes of Paul Martin toward humanitarian intervention. From the outset of his prime ministership, one of Martin's persistent concerns has been humanitarian intervention and the need to change the rules of sovereignty to permit robust action in the face of human rights abuses. Indeed, in a major address on foreign policy given six months before assuming the leadership of the Liberal party, he sounded a theme that he was to develop over the following three years. Arguing that "the absence of consensus in the UN should not condemn us to inaction," Martin suggested that "in appropriate circumstances, and when consistent with our values, we should be prepared to use the means necessary to achieve our international goals [even] when full consensus on the right steps is not possible." Indeed, he reminded the audience that

> In Kosovo, when the UN could not act, we acted, challenging Westphalian sovereignty, and we were right to do so. In Rwanda, when genocide of unbelievable ferocity took place, the world did not act, to its undying shame. Let's be clear, our foreign policy should be based on our deepest values.[10]

Likewise, Martin's acceptance speech at the Liberal leadership convention in Toronto on 14 November 2003 stressed his commitment to a "politics of achievement" that promised Canadian leadership on developing

10 Paul Martin, "Canada's role in a complex world," transcript of address to Canadian Newspaper Association, Toronto, 30 April 2003.

"new thinking about how the international community governs itself, and how sovereign nations take action together in tackling global issues." He promised that his government's foreign policy would "always express the concerns of Canadians about the poor and underprivileged of the world; the frightened and helpless victims of battle-torn societies."[11]

At the Davos World Economic Forum in January 2004, Martin explicitly endorsed the idea of humanitarian intervention, embracing the main findings of the report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty that sovereign states had a "responsibility to protect" their citizens.[12] As Martin put it, "[w]e believe that humanitarian intervention, under compelling circumstances such as a Rwanda or a Kosovo, is warranted. We reject the argument that state sovereignty confers absolute immunity." Rather, what he called for was "open discussion about the need for interventions in situations that offend the most basic precepts of our common humanity" and "clear agreement on principles to help determine when it is appropriate to use force in support of humanitarian objectives."[13]

And in the speech from the throne in February 2004, the new Martin government promised that "[w]e want agreement on new rules governing international actions when a government fails to protect its own people from tyranny and oppression."[14] In a speech in May 2004, the prime minister went further, noting that "failed states more often than not require military intervention in order to ensure stability," arguing that military intervention was "indispensable" although not enough to provide long-term security.[15]

11 Martin's speech to the Liberal Party leadership convention, Toronto, 14 November 2003, www.cbc.ca.

12 See International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, "The responsibility to protect: Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty," Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, December 2001, www.dfait-maeci.gc.

13 "Notes for an address by prime minister Paul Martin on the occasion of a session of the World Economic Forum, 'The future of global interdependence,'" Davos, Switzerland, 23 January 2004, www.news.gc.ca.

14 Speech from the throne, 2 February 2004, www1.pm.gc.ca.

15 Paul Martin, address to CORIM, the CERIUM, the Institut d'études internationales de Montréal à l'UQAM, and the Montreal International Organization, Montreal, 10 May 2004, www1.pm.gc.ca.

"WHATEVER IS REQUIRED": MARTIN ON DARFUR

While Martin's speeches in 2003 and early 2004 reflected his enthusiastic embrace of the "responsibility to protect" (R2P) agenda, and although he frequently stressed his belief that the rules on humanitarian intervention needed to be changed, the deteriorating situation in Darfur had not featured in those speeches. In the summer of 2004, however, Darfur was thrust onto the Canadian government's agenda. First, the G8 leaders meeting at the Sea Island, Georgia summit issued a statement on Sudan that explicitly called on the government in Khartoum to disarm the Janjaweed and other militias and to negotiate a political solution.[16] In August, a UN human rights investigator issued a formal report that accused the Sudanese government of complicity in the killings in Darfur, and on 1 September Jan Pronk, the secretary general's special representative for Sudan, called on the international community to increase its monitoring force in Sudan.

Martin's first sustained discussion of Darfur came in his address to the general assembly of the United Nations on 22 September 2004. Focusing his speech on ways in which the United Nations could be strengthened and reformed, Martin outlined the Canadian government's perspective on humanitarian intervention, arguing that the international community needed to develop both the rules to allow states to intervene in those cases where a state was unwilling or unable to protect its citizens from violence. Explicitly referring to Darfur—but not mentioning the Sudanese government or Sudan by name—Martin argued that "[w]e need clear principles that will allow the international community to intervene much faster in situations like Darfur." Noting that present international law did not permit intervention on humanitarian grounds, Martin noted

> The "responsibility to protect" is intended to fill this gap. It says that we should have the legal right to intervene in a country on the grounds of humanitarian emergency alone when the government of that country is unwilling or unable to protect their people from extreme harm as a result of internal war, repression or state failure.[17]

16 See "G8 statement on Sudan," Sea Island, 10 June 2004, www.g8.gc.ca.

17 Address by Prime Minister Paul Martin at the United Nations, New York, 22 September 2004, www.pm.gc.ca.

Martin's most comprehensive public statement on the situation in Darfur came on 26 September 2004, in an interview with CBC Radio.[18] This was a largely unscripted session with the host, Rex Murphy, and thus it provides an important window into how Martin was thinking about the issues around humanitarian intervention. To Murphy's opening suggestion that another Rwanda was possible, Martin agreed that such a tragedy was possible "if we don't act very, very quickly." However, he expressed his optimism that "there is an opportunity to stop it.... I think if you see African troops going in, doing the peacekeeping, then that will go a long way to stopping what happened in Rwanda."

There is little doubt from Martin's choice of words how he felt about the issue. "Why is it that the United Nations is so slow to act?" he asked Murphy rhetorically. "The answer is two-fold. Number one, some countries have economic interests and they're worried about losing them. To which my very clear response is, well, economic interests are one thing, human lives should trump that. The second is in my opinion an outmoded definition of sovereignty. Sovereignty is something that is conferred on a country by the international community and sovereignty has to have a duty, a responsibility to your own people and if you can't protect them, then the rest of the world, I think, has to take that on."

He also chafed at the response of the international community, claiming that the UN "really is very bogged down in a combination of great power politics on the one hand and really a lot of counterproductive legalisms on the other." Noting that while 50,000 people had been killed, "the United Nations is debating intervention as to whether or not this is genocide or whether or not it threatens international security. When in fact what it should be doing is saying there are humanitarian atrocities that are occurring here and that should be sufficient reason to go in and that's my basic point." Finally, Martin left in no doubt his sense of urgency. Asked what his timeline for action was, he responded that "we've got to get in there. And we'll do whatever is required. People are dying and they're dying right now. I think the time for niceties is over."

Over the next several months, Martin would declare on a number of occasions the Canadian government's readiness to commit its resources to

18 CBC Radio, Cross-Country Checkup, 26 September 2004, www.cbc.ca; for print media news coverage, see for example, "Send troops to Darfur or risk another Rwanda: PM," *National Post*, 27 September 2004.

the struggle. "We are not going to stand by and watch these massacres take place any longer," he told a news conference on 13 November.[19] On a visit to Sudan later in November, Martin declared that Canadians and Sudanese were bound by "our common humanity.... We are one as human beings, we are indivisible. If there is one human being in Africa ... who is suffering, then we are all suffering."[20]

In February, following a NATO summit in Brussels, Martin spoke out in what reporters described as an unexpected and passionate statement, claiming that "[I]t's just taking too long and people are suffering," and criticizing the African Union for not deploying troops fast enough. Martin pledged that: "We will do whatever is required, but we cannot simply sit by and watch what is happening in Darfur continue."[21] This formula was repeated in May 2005: Martin once again promised that "we'll send over whatever military advisers are required. We're not going to scrimp on this."[22]

In April 2005, speaking to the editorial board of *The Globe and Mail*, Martin implied that his government was prepared for a sizeable commitment of forces to assist the African Union:

> I think Darfur is the single biggest test that we have going ahead.... we are not going to get people going back ... to their villages unless they are convinced that they are not going to be raped or killed, and you're not going to do that unless you have troops on the ground— and that costs money. And that's why I am prepared to increase our military expenditures.[23]

When the long-awaited foreign policy review—the international policy statement—was released in April 2005, it not surprisingly reflected the various foreign policy priorities that had been expressed by the prime minister since 2003. Thus, much of the discussion was centred on achieving "a role of pride and influence in the world" and the important goal of "making a difference" in global politics—phrases that had first appeared in Martin's

19 "Martin pledges help for Sudan," *Toronto Star*, 14 November 2005.

20 "Martin's motorcade hits girl," *National Post*, 26 November 2004.

21 "Martin vows to ease Darfur's suffering," *Globe and Mail*, 23 February 2005.

22 "Kilgour blasts PM's Sudan aid package," *Globe and Mail*, 13 May 2005.

23 "Martin chats with Globe's editorial board," *Globe and Mail*, 26 April 2005.

leadership acceptance speech in November 2003 and repeated in the speech from the throne in February 2004.

Thus, in the foreword, Martin promised that his government was "enhancing our ability to address situations of humanitarian catastrophe in a way that will allow Canada to play a leading and lasting role in peace support operations. And lead we will." On Darfur, the prime minister noted that "the suffering continues and the tragedy escalates." But, he continued, "the international community has thus far made unacceptable progress toward initiating a multilateral intervention. Canada will work closely with the African Union to improve its ability to restore security and bring stability to the region."[24] However, the IPS did not flesh out how this priority would be met beyond the promise that "[t]he Government will mobilize the international community, including Africans, to stop the ethnic cleansing and massive abuse of human rights in the Darfur region of Sudan."[25]

"PUTTING ACTION TO WORDS": THE POLICY RESPONSE

Paul Martin's rhetoric on humanitarian intervention and the situation in Darfur from 2003 to 2005, if taken at face value, suggest that the Canadian government was taking robust steps to protect the citizens of Darfur under attack from the Janjaweed. The dismissal of sovereignty as an "outmoded" idea; the frequent embrace of the "whatever is required" formula; and the persistent promise that Canada cared about the suffering of those in Darfur—all of these might have predicted a boldness in policy towards Darfur.

The government's Sudan website boldly declares that "Canada is putting action to words."[26] But judged against the promise of the prime minister's rhetoric, the government's response appears conservative, limited, and symbolic. When the UN called for donor commitments in August 2004, the minister of national defence, Bill Graham, indicated that Canada would not be contributing troops to the mission. Instead, the Canadian contribution would consist of $250,000 in flak jackets, helmets, and other gear to the African Union troops that were to be deployed to Darfur. The limited

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24 See "Foreword from the prime minister," Government of Canada, "Canada's international policy statement: A role of pride and influence in the world," overview booklet, Ottawa, 2005, www.international.gc.ca.

25 Ibid., 13.

26 www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca.

nature of the initial Canadian commitment was criticized by David Kilgour (Lib: Edmonton-Mill Woods-Beaumont), who under the Chrétien government had been secretary of state for Africa, Caribbean, and Latin America (1997-2002) and then secretary of state (Asia-Pacific) before being dropped from cabinet after Martin became prime minister. In an open letter to the prime minister, Kilgour castigated the government for limiting its contribution to humanitarian aid. Canada, he reminded Martin, "shamefully apologized for allowing one million Rwandans to die under our watch and we promised not to do it again—but isn't that what we've done so far?"[27]

Roméo Dallaire, the Canadian lieutenant-general who had been commander of the UN peacekeeping force in Rwanda before and during the 1994 genocide, also weighed in.[28] In a wide-ranging interview with Canadian Press, Dallaire minced no words: "I am just disgusted with the lame and obtuse responses coming from Canada and the western world.... It makes me sick.... It burns inside." He also concluded that the reason for the "lame" response in Sudan was the same as it had been for the non-response in Rwanda: racism. Arguing that the Canadian response would be more vigorous if those being killed had been white, he asserted that "[r]ight now we think our [i.e., white] people are more human than theirs. We count more, so we are not going to take those risks [of casualties]."[29]

Stung by this criticism, the government immediately increased Canada's commitment; on 10 September 2005, the minister of foreign affairs, Pierre Pettigrew, and the minister of international cooperation, Aileen Carroll, announced a spending package of $1 million designed to support a variety of human rights protection initiatives in Darfur, including funding to the UN office of the high commissioner for human rights to enable it to expand its operations in western Sudan and funding for the African Union's special representative for protection of civilians in armed conflict.

Over the next several months, the government pursued a multifaceted policy that included diplomatic efforts to pressure the government in Sudan into protecting those at risk in Darfur by withdrawing support from the militias and to pressure the members of the security council in New York

27 *Edmonton Journal*, 1 September 2004.

28 For Dallaire's own account, see Roméo Dallaire with Brent Beardsley, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda* (Toronto: Random House Canada, 2003).

29 Canadian Press; CBC News, 2 September 2004.

to take stronger action against Sudan. Some $15 million was allocated to a Canadian firm to provide 15 medium-lift helicopters to support the African Union mission in Sudan (AMIS). Initially two officers from the Canadian armed forces and an officer from the RCMP were assigned to AMIS. When the security council referred the Darfur violations to the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in March 2005, the government in Ottawa contributed $500,000 to support the ICC's activities in Darfur. In April, the government authorized Operation Safari, the deployment of 31 personnel from the Canadian armed forces to the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS).[30]

In May 2005, the Martin government ramped up its contribution to Darfur. However, this was not out of any high-minded concern for the suffering of Dafurians but as part of its efforts to preserve itself from a vote of non-confidence in the house of commons. As a result of a number of differences over policy, David Kilgour had left the Liberal caucus in April to sit as an independent.[31] With the Bloc québécois and the Conservatives promising to vote against the budget, the three independent members assumed a crucial importance in the arithmetic. Martin decided to play on Kilgour's abiding interest in Darfur, hoping to swing his vote to the Liberal/New Democratic Party side by ramping up Canada's contribution. As it turned out, this coincided with the return of Rick Hillier, the chief of defence staff, from a fact-finding trip to Africa that included a trip to Khartoum, where he had been told by the Sudanese government that it would strenuously object to any non-African troops in Darfur.

On 12 May, one week before the expected budget vote, Martin announced the enhanced Darfur package that included $170 million in support of the African Union mission in Sudan, and $28 million in aid for Darfur channelled through international agencies operating in Darfur and Chad. In addition, Martin authorized up to 100 additional officers to be deployed to Sudan to assist the African Union force. He also appointed a special "advisory team" to coordinate Canadian efforts on the Darfur file consisting of Robert Fowler, his personal representative for Africa, Senator Mobina Jaffer, Canada's special envoy for peace in Sudan, and Roméo

30 For a discussion of the prospects for this kind of cooperation, see Charles Burton, Kristiana Powell, Thomas Kwasi Tieku, with Edward Ansah Akuffo, "The African Union's standby force: Canadian foreign and defence policy options," *Canadian Foreign Policy* 11 (fall 2004): 47-80.

31 See David Kilgour, "Why I left the party," *National Post*, 19 April 2005.

Dallaire, whom Martin had appointed to the senate as a Liberal on 24 March.[32]

The package was immediately rejected by the Sudanese government. The Sudanese ambassador to Ottawa, Faiza Hassan Taha, claimed that Khartoum had not been notified in advance—a claim that the prime minister's office denied. Taha also indicated that non-African troops were not welcome in Darfur, not even troops assigned to assist the AU, prompting Canadian officials to issue a public assurance that Sudanese sovereignty would be respected and that Canadian forces in Sudan would be unarmed.[33]

David Kilgour, who had been demanding the deployment of 500 combat soldiers as a catalyst for a robust intervention force of tens of thousands troops of "Atlantic Alliance quality,"[34] also immediately rejected the package as a cynical attempt by the Liberals to avoid defeat in the house. Decrying Martin's "lack of leadership" on the Darfur file, Kilgour continued to invoke Dallaire's name and once again raised the issue of race: "If these were white families, would we even be having this debate?"[35]

By this time, however, Dallaire, having been appointed to the senate and to the prime minister's advisory team on Darfur, had dutifully abandoned his critical perspective of the previous year. Not only was he no longer "disgusted" by Canada's slim commitment, he had publicly abandoned his advocacy for a robust intervention force, arguing that "If we move white combat troops in there, we're going to have to fight our way in with the Sudanese to start with...and nobody's going to join us." He had called Kilgour to explain that "we're in a different tactical scenario," even though, "[a]s I told David, I can hear the Darfurians screaming, because I heard it 10 years ago."[36]

Dallaire's abrupt about-face brought a withering attack from retired Major-General Lewis MacKenzie, who had commanded UN peacekeeping forces in Sarajevo in the early 1990s, and who was an ardent supporter of

32 "Canada creates special advisory team and expands contribution to help resolve humanitarian crisis in Darfur," news release, Ottawa, 12 May 2005, www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca.

33 "Sudan says no to PM," *National Post*, 14 May 2005; "Canada still expects to deliver aid to Sudan, official says," *Globe and Mail*, 16 May 2005.

34 See David Kilgour, "Darfur: Tears and not enough," *Toronto Star*, 15 May 2005.

35 "Kilgour blasts PM's Sudan aid package," *Globe and Mail*, 13 May 2005; "Darfur aid dismissed as political posturing," *National Post*, 13 May 2005.

36 "Keep troops out of Sudan, Dallaire says," *National Post*, 17 May 2005.

robust, armed intervention in Darfur. "It was hard to watch Mr. Dallaire standing behind the Prime Minister during a press scrum waiting for the cue to leap to the microphone—swallowing his pride and endorsing Canada's pathetic response to the genocide in Darfur as the 'best solution.' If he really believes this, I have some waterfront property by the Sydney tar ponds that I'll sell him."[37]

The dénouement came quickly. Although Kilgour gave Martin a week to improve the Darfur package, no enhancements were forthcoming and Kilgour voted against the government in the budget vote on 19 May. The government was sustained in power because in the intervening week Martin had recruited Belinda Stronach from the Conservative benches with an offer of a cabinet portfolio, and the other two independents had voted with the government.

ANALYSIS

The two-year process of responding to the atrocity crimes in Darfur revealed the substantial gap between the fine rhetoric of the prime minister and the quite limited actions of his government. To be sure, these limited actions could be readily defended as quite appropriate given the circumstances of the situation. For while critics like MacKenzie, Kilgour, and Dallaire—at least before he changed his mind after his appointment to the senate—were in essence correct to argue that a robust intervention force of several thousand well-supported combat-capable troops contributed by advanced industrial countries could have stopped the Janjaweed attacks on civilians, the likelihood of such a force materializing was zero.

First, despite the nominal endorsement of the "responsibility to protect" (R2P) agenda at the United Nations, in real terms this endorsement is entirely symbolic, since there are at least two members of the security council, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China, that do not really believe in R2P, and thus can be counted on to use their veto to block any security council approval of R2P initiatives that even marginally touch their interests. Certainly in the case of Darfur there was no willingness on the security council to take robust action against the government in Khartoum. Indeed, it would appear that most of the members of the security council were privately pleased that given its deep interests and

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37 "Lewis MacKenzie, "Roméo, Roméo, wherefore art thou partisan?" *Globe and Mail*, 19 May 2005.

investments in the oil fields in Sudan, the People's Republic of China would likely have vetoed any attempt to provide security council approval for a humanitarian intervention.

Moreover, the government in Khartoum, knowing that it was safe from any serious security council-sponsored humanitarian intervention, invoked its sovereign rights at every turn. It refused to consent to allowing non-African peacekeeping forces into Darfur. It rebuffed importunities from all quarters to rein in the Janjaweed. All the while, it allowed (or even encouraged) the militias to continue to commit atrocity crimes in Darfur.

So any intervention would have had to be one that did not have security council approval. Moreover, such an intervention would have had to confront the global political consequences of invading an Arab Muslim state. Needless to say, given these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that there was no interest at all among Canada's friends and allies for mounting a non-UN intervention, not even from the United States, which had declared Darfur to be a genocide, but which was fully engaged in trying to deal with the consequences of its March 2003 invasion of another Arab Muslim state.

And given the diminished capacities of the Canadian armed forces—ironically the consequence of the budget cuts visited on the Department of National Defence by Martin himself as finance minister in the 1990s—there was no way that Canada could mount an intervention on its own.

In short, the Darfur policy adopted by the Canadian government—respect for the sovereignty of Sudan, lots of cash for humanitarian relief efforts in the camps, minor contributions to the African Union mission in Sudan, token deployments of personnel from the Canadian armed forces and the RCMP, diplomatic activity at the United Nations in New York—was quite understandable given the circumstances.

But such a conservative, status quo, and risk-averse approach—the very approach that had been taken during the Rwandan genocide 10 years beforehand—was entirely at odds with Martin's lofty rhetoric that claimed that sovereignty was outmoded, that humanitarian intervention was both possible and necessary, that Canada would refuse to stand by and watch the massacres in Darfur, that Canada would do whatever was required, and that all Canadians suffer when one Sudanese suffers.

CONCLUSION
Students of politics understand—and indeed expect—that there are always going to be gaps between the fine rhetoric of political leaders and

the realities of the policies they eventually embrace. But in contemporary Canadian foreign policy, as Stairs, Gotlieb, and other critics have noted, that gap became quite pronounced during the Chrétien era; it has continued under Paul Martin. One can point to numerous indications of Martin's own addiction to ear candy, such as the first speech from the throne in February 2004, which pledged to "restore Canada's place of pride and influence in the world" and embraced self-congratulatory rhetoric directly from the Chrétien era: "We can play a distinctive role based on our values—the rule of law, liberty, democracy, equality of opportunity, and fairness." It embraced the Indigo Books slogan, "[t]he world needs more Canada," and added what would become a Martinesque leitmotif that "Canada can make a difference."[38] Likewise, the heavy use of platitudes in the IPS confirms Allan Gotlieb's observation that foreign policy reviews tend to "blow stale air into old clichés and encourage self-congratulation and self-deception about our role in the world."[39] The self-flattering title, "A role of pride and influence in the world," gives away much of the message within. Throughout the IPS, Canadians are constantly reminded how important Canada is in the world, how Canada has led the way, or will lead the way in the future, how much good Canada has done or will do, how much "difference" Canada will make in the world.

Indeed, so persistent and entrenched is this self-referential and self-congratulatory frame of mind that at times it emerges almost unselfconsciously. For example, after his government narrowly avoided defeat on the budget by a single vote on 19 May 2005, Martin gave a largely unscripted "victory speech" to his caucus afterwards, in the course of which he breathlessly assured them that they were not just voting for a budget. "What we voted for was a vision of a Canada dynamic and leading the world. We will set the standard by which other nations judge themselves."[40]

Well might Robert Fulford scoff that with such rhetoric Martin "takes Canada-flattering to new levels of absurdity."[41] But such rhetorical excesses suggest an important lesson about contemporary Canadian foreign policy. The fact that a Canadian prime minister could, in public and with a straight

38 Speech from the throne, 2 February 2004, www1.pm.gc.ca.

39 Gotlieb, "Romanticism and realism," 24.

40 *Calgary Herald*, 20 May 2005.

41 Robert Fulford, "The party that can accommodate everyone," *National Post*, 21 May 2005.

face, utter such feel-good ear-candy sentiments—sentiments that are so entirely divorced from reality that they can only have been spoken in order to generate political support—and be applauded wildly for it, goes a considerable distance to explain the considerable gap between Martin's expansive rhetoric about what Canada was going to do to end the suffering in Sudan and the token measures actually taken by his government to stop the atrocity crimes in Darfur.