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CANADA'S NORTHERN POLICY: DECADE OF CONSERVATIVE RULE

Abstract

The “Arctic sovereignty” became a key phrase in political discourse during decade of Conservative rule (2006-2015). Prime Minister Stephen Harper put forward a very ambitious plan to protect sovereignty in the North and strongly promoted it. These actions left the impression that the Northern territory was at risk but in reality the Canadian sovereignty in the North was safe.

This article reviews and assesses the decade of Harpers’ Northern policy. The author argues that the North was in fact used as an effective political communication tool to unite Canadians around the issue of sovereignty protection, whilst the initial policies announced were not implemented with the exception of some infrastructure development projects.

Key words

Canada, Arctic, Stephen Harper

Introduction

The “Arctic sovereignty” became a key phrase in the political discourse since Stephen Harper became Canada’s Prime Minister in 2006. He put the North high on his political agenda and announced a number of initiatives regarding the region. As S. Chase noticed the “«Arctic file» allowed Mr. Harper to stand up to the Americans – generally a crowd-pleaser among Canadian voters – not on ideology but over national interest”².

This article reviews and assesses the decade of Harpers’ Northern policy. The author argues that the North was in fact used as an effective political communication tool to unite Canadians around the issue of sovereignty protection, whilst the initial

¹ Iwona Wrońska, Associate Profesor, Jan Kochanowski University.

² S. Chase, *The North. Myth versus Reality in Stephen Harper’s northern strategy*, “The Globe and Mail”, 17.01.2015.

policies announced were not implemented with the exception of some infrastructure development projects.

Canada's North

Canada's North is a vast region, predominantly north of 60°, and makes up almost 40 percent of Canada's territory. The region is very sparsely populated. As of 2011, around 130 thousand people lived in the region. Indigenous people, predominantly Inuit, make up half of the population.

Politically, the North or the Arctic refers to three territories: Yukon, Northwest Territories (NTW), Nunavut and to northern parts of two provinces: Quebec (Nunavik) and Newfoundland and Labrador (Nunatsiavut). A breakdown of the population per territory is provided in Table 1.

The largest part of the North is composed of permanent ice and tundra. The region has an economic potential due to natural resources and shipment waterways. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) estimates that the Arctic comprises 30 percent of the world's remaining natural gas resources and 13 percent of untapped oil supplies. Nearly all (84 percent) of the oil and gas deposits are expected to occur offshore, and most of the projected reserves are located in waters less than 500 meters deep. It is estimated that around 12 billion barrels of oil lie beneath the Canadian North³. There are also vast deposits of nickel, diamonds and iron.

Table 1. Canada's North population and area

Territory/Province	Land Area (km ²)	Population (2011)
Nunavut	1 877 787	36 600
Northwest Territories	1 143 793	43 600
Yukon	474 712	36 500
Nunavik (Quebec)	443 684	12 090
Nunatsiavut (NF and L)*	15 800	2 200
Total	4 072 476	130 990

Source: Statistics Canada: *Population and dwelling counts for Canada, provinces and territories*, 2011;

*Newfoundland and Labrador

Latest development connected with climate change profoundly influenced the Canadian North. Even if expert's opinions differ over the cause and speed of change, there is an agreement on the fact that global climate is changing. This has been observed especially in the Arctic. Permafrost and glaciers are melting, severe storms flow across the territory and open water are eroding coastal banks. Reports prepared by the Arctic Climate Assessment (ACIA) confirm the transformation of the climate in the North. The 2004 Report highlighted that the Antarctic Peninsula experienced the greatest regional warming on earth in recent decades. The report indicated that average annual temperatures have risen by 2 to 3 C degrees Celsius since 1950s and snow cover extent has declined by about 10 percent over the past 30 years. The

³ *Assessment of Undiscovered Oil and Gas in the Arctic*, "Science", 29 May, 2009.vol. 324 no.593, p. 1175-79.

AMAP⁴ Assessment of 2015 confirmed a continuation of these large-scale trends for the Arctic with strong regional warming, about twice the size of the global rate. The environmental changes have affected the Canadian North in several ways. The melting of polar ice strongly influences not only the indigenous people and wild life, requiring environmental protection but also economic development. A more accessible North triggered competition for natural resources and shipping routes⁵.

The Canadian North gained its strategic value with arrival of European fur traders. The Hudson Bay Company, established in 1670, controlled the fur trade for several centuries. In 1869 the Hudson Bay Company transferred all its land to the British Crown and then the lands were turned over to a newly formed Dominion of Canada. Since then Canada has steadily affirmed its occupation of the North. The North came under the control of federal government through territorial governments. The federal approach to the North has been slowly evolving. In the first part of the 20th century, the federal government paid little attention to the region. The North gradually gained importance during World War II and the Cold War for military and surveillance purposes. In 1947 the Canadian Ranger unit was formed to patrol the area. In the late 1950's and in the beginning of 1960's then Prime Minister John Diefenbaker (1957-1963) committed his administration to secure the Canadian position in the North by economic development. Some projects were implemented, but due to high costs the northern development was put on hold. Subsequently, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau (1968-1979; 1980-1984) made some efforts to enhance Canadian sovereignty and to promote economic development in the Arctic which sparked friction with US. Under his administration first comprehensive land claim agreements were signed. This policy was continued by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien (1993-2003) in the 1990s which resulted in the signing more agreements, one of which leading to the creation of the Nunavut-third territory in Canada. Summing up, the most important Northern legacy by Pierre Trudeau and his successors include the acknowledgement of Aboriginal rights and titles and the settlement of the comprehensive land claims agreements.

Harper's Northern Vision

Stephen Harper, a Conservative who became the Prime Minister of Canada in 2006 and served to 2015, put the North high on his agenda. He brought back the Conservative's agenda, formulated by John Diefenbaker, but in different political and environmental circumstances. It was a new appointment with a new destiny, paraphrasing Slade's book titled: *John Diefenbaker: An appointment with destiny*⁶.

At least three major factors influenced the promotion of the North by the Harper's government. First of all, the Conservative Party, despite winning the federal election in 2006, formed a minority government. Therefore Harper looked for ideas that would unite Canadians and increase support for his party in the future. His predecessor

⁴ AMAP – The Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme is a working group of the Arctic Council that evaluate the status and the trends of the Arctic ecosystem.

⁵ AMAP, *Summary for Policy-makers: Arctic Climate Issues 2015*, "Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme", Oslo, Norway, 2015.

⁶ A. Slade, *John Diefenbaker: An appointment with destiny*, Montreal: XYZ publishing, 2001.

Preston Manning⁷ had stressed that if the Alliance Party wanted to win an election it needed to be “big”. The search for larger support base was one of the reasons for the unification of the Alliance Party with the Progressive-Conservative. The North ideally fitted the idea of “big”: vast and unknown, an ideal theme to unite Conservatives around. In addition, there was Harper’s personal fascination with the North. Together these factors pushed the Conservative’s administration to the North to revive a robust and positive vision of nationalism and to create concrete set of opportunities and obligations⁸.

Secondly, from the very beginning Harper’s Arctic policy was based on the fear of external threats to Canadian sovereignty and security. To a certain extent this idea was based on the Conservative agenda dating back to the late 1950s when the Progressive Conservative Prime Minister J. Diefenbaker highlighted the importance of the North. J. Diefenbaker promoted military activities and economic development in the Arctic to protect Canadian sovereignty. Therefore his government launched a national policy of northern development that was spelled out in: “A new Vision” opening campaign speech delivered in Winnipeg in 1958⁹. For Diefenbaker the North with, all its vast resources and hidden wealth, was a source of national consciousness¹⁰.

Thirdly, climate change made the North more accessible and induced international competition to exploit mineral resources and to secure access to shipping routes. This growing interest raised the importance of the North and Harper regarded it as a potential threat to Canadian sovereignty.

Seemingly, a combination of these three factors influenced Harper’s approach to the North as a symbol of positive nationalism and proud heritage that needs to be protected and developed. Since the very beginning the Conservative’s government announced a number of initiatives to secure and enhance Canada’s position in the North. Harper declared Arctic sovereignty as a key objective of his government and strongly asserted that the Arctic is fundamental to Canada. This is reflected in official statements and documents on the North, where the issue of protecting Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic is almost always highlighted. For example, in his 2008 speech: Northern Vision in Inuvik, Harper indicated that the geopolitical importance of the Arctic and Canada’s interests in it have never been greater. This is why our government has launched an ambitious Northern Agenda based on the timeless responsibility imposed by our national anthem, to keep the True North strong and free¹¹.

Prior to this, in his 2007 the Speech of the Throne, Harper had addressed specific issues relating to the Arctic such as a commitment to complete a mapping of Canada’s

⁷ Preston Manning – the leader and founder of Reform Party that changed to Alliance Party.

⁸ S. Chase, *The North. Q&A with Harper: No previous government has delivered more in the North*, “The Globe and Mail”, 17.01.2015.

⁹ J. Diefenbaker, *A New Vision*, speech at the Civic Auditorium in Winnipeg in February 1958, [online:] <http://www.canadahistory.com/sections/documents/Primeministers/diefenbaker/docs-thenorthernvision.htm>, (10.10.2015).

¹⁰ A. Slade, op. cit., p.74.

¹¹ S. Harper, *Northern Vision*, speech August, 28, 2008, Inuvik, Northwest Territories, <http://www.northstrategy.gc.ca/cns/cns-eng.asp> (10.08.2015).

Arctic seabed, the creation of a world class Arctic research station and the improvement of living conditions for residents of the North. In July of 2007 Harper confirmed that: “It is not an exaggeration to say that the need to assert our sovereignty and protect our territorial integrity in the Arctic-on our terms – has never been more urgent”¹².

Northern Strategy

The government policy of the North was spelled out in the *Northern Strategy* in 2009¹³. This document provides an overview of the government’s priorities for the North and was based on four pillars: exercising sovereignty, promoting economic and social development, protecting the environmental heritage, and providing Northerners with more control over their economic and political destiny.

The first and most noted pillar of the *Northern Strategy* emphasizes that Canada exercises sovereignty over Arctic lands and waters – sovereignty that is long-standing, well-established and based on historic title, international law and the presence of Inuit and other Aboriginal peoples for thousands of years. In order to exercise this sovereignty a reinforcement of Canadians presence in the North is necessary because: “You don’t defend national sovereignty with flags, cheap election rhetoric and advertising campaign. You need on the ground ships in the sea and proper surveillance” as Harper indicated¹⁴. The government thus announced a number of flagship initiatives to strengthen the Canadian presence in the region:

- Settlement of two small international disputes: over the Danish claim of Hans Island, a 1.3-square-kilometre Canadian island, and a small part of the maritime boundary in the Lincoln Sea; and with United States over about 6,250 square nautical square miles of seabed right in the Beaufort Sea.
- Recognition for the full extent of extended continental shelf to exercise Canadian sovereign rights over the resources of the seabed and subsoil by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)¹⁵.
- Plan to acquire three Arctic icebreakers. Yet, shortly after the announcement the number of icebreakers was reduced to one which was supposed to be delivered within ten years. Sesapan Marine Corporation in Vancouver Shipyards was tasked with the construction of CCGS John G. Diefenbaker, a second highest ice class ship with a target for delivery in 2017.
- Construction of eight Arctic Off-Shore Patrol Ships with ice breaking capability with the first ship ready for delivery in 2013.

¹² L. Parsons, *Harper commits billions to build Canada and Arctic Navy*, “ICFI”, 19.07.2007, [online:] [/www.wsws.org/en/articles/2007/07/cana-j19.html](http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2007/07/cana-j19.html), (09.09.2015).

¹³ *Canada’s Northern Strategy: Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future*, [online:] <http://www.northernstrategy.gc.ca/cns/cns-eng.asp> (10.10.2015).

¹⁴ *Tories plan to bolster Arctic defence*, “CBC News”, 22.12.2005.

¹⁵ Arctic states have rights to area on their extended continental shelves beyond their exclusive economic zones. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) explicitly recognizes the rights of coastal states such as Canada over the natural resources of the seabed and subsoil beyond 200 nautical miles from their coastal baselines and sets out a process by which a state may determine the limits within which it may exercise those rights. Canada was supposed to make its submission in December 2013.

- Construction of a year-round deep water naval base Nanisivik (Baffin Island, Nunavut) for the Canadian Forces projected to operate in 2012.
- Increasing capacity to monitor surface traffic through the Northwest Passage.
- Establishing an Army Training Centre in Resolute Bay as a year-round multi-purpose facility supporting Arctic training and operations, accommodating up to 100 personnel.
- Expanding and modernizing the Canadian Rangers¹⁶.
- Undertaking regular military exercises in the North.
- Annual summer visit by the Prime Minister to the North.

The second pillar focused on economic and social development of the region. One initiative announced by the government was a new geo-mapping project – Geo-Mapping for Energy and Minerals (GEM) that is vital for investors. This part of the Strategy also includes investments into infrastructure and social aid.

The Environmental protection is a part of the third pillar. It includes the commitment of the government to secure the ecosystem for the future generations by investing in research, scientific international collaboration and special protection of unique lands and waters in the North. The government promised to establish a new world-class research station in the High Arctic, to continue scientific cooperation with international partners, and to create more conservation areas.

The last part of the *Northern Strategy* refers to the improvement of governance in the North. This pillar confirms that the Conservative government will continue giving more responsibilities and rights to the territorial governments and native's organizations. The process of devolution towards Northern communities was initiated by the Liberal government. First the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement allowed for creating the Nunavut Territory in 1999 and then after negotiations the Yukon government received control over lands and resource management in 2003. The Harper's administration continues this path. The devolution agreement was signed with the NWT government. His government signed several; agreement with the Native's communities on Aboriginal rights.

Implementation of the Northern Strategy

The affirmation of sovereignty protection was the main goal of the *Northern Strategy*. However, the fulfilment of the first priority was not achieved. The disputes with Denmark and the United States were not settled. In fact, the Canadian authorities increased the strain on these relationship by renaming the Northwest Passage to Canadian Northwest Passage in 2009 thus emphasizing that they are Canadian waters¹⁷. The United States and other maritime countries consider this passage as an international strait.

¹⁶ Canadian Rangers is a reserve force of the Canadian Armed Forces responsible for providing military presence and surveillance in the North. Most of them are Aboriginal. They collect data, report unusual activities and support military operations in the region.

¹⁷ In 2009 the Federal Parliament passed a bill renaming the Northwest Passage to Canadian Northwest Passage. As the bill stated these waterways are historic internal waters of Canada and are part of Inuit's land.

The recognition of the full extent of the continental shelf has not been resolved also and the Canadian case has been pending. In December 2013 Canada delivered only a partial submission to UNCLOS. Based on geological evidence the UNCLOS commission will confirm the Canadian limits of the continental shelf.

There were major delays and scaling down of the major pledges. The manufacture of the CCGS John G. Diefenbaker icebreaker was presented as an iconic symbol for Canada's presence in the Canadian Arctic. In reality it was simply a replacement for the current CCGS Louis St. Laurent launched in 1966. The cost was put at 1.3 billion in the 2013 budget, but the cost will be almost twice the initial estimate. Latest reports indicate that the new icebreaker will join the Canadian fleet 2021-2022¹⁸. Similarly, the construction of patrol ships has been delayed and the initial number was reduced to five (five vessels were already named) with incentives for the shipyard to deliver six. The contract with the Shipyard was signed. The project cost also doubled to around \$3,5 billion. The Construction commenced in September 2015 and the first vessel named Harry de Wolf is scheduled to be launched in 2018. The ships will be less used in the Arctic than their name suggests: They will only operate in the region for four to five months each year and the rest of the time they will patrol in the South¹⁹. The delay and scale back also affected the naval facility in Nanisivik. The facility is expected to be finally operational by 2018 only as a seasonal refuelling station which would cost around \$146-million²⁰. The Army Training Centre was also scaled down, but did open in Resolute Bay in 2013. The year-round facility is used a base for Arctic operations. The centre also assists the Canadian Rangers and provides emergency response and disaster assistance to civilian agencies. Although the number of the Canadian Rangers expanded to 5000 from 4000, this force is too small and ill equipped to monitor the North. The Rangers still use at least 50 years old Lee-Enfield rifles that were allocated to them in 1947. The federal government plans to replace these rifles with a new model made in Canada by 2019. The replacement cost is estimated at around \$30 million²¹. Both the military base and Rangers have supported the military exercises Nanook that have taken place annually since 2007. The annual summer visits by the Prime Minister to the North commenced in 2006 and serve a different purpose to the military operations. These visits are supposed to demonstrate the government's commitment to the isolated communities of the North and to ensure and show them that they are important part of Canada. The military presence in the Arctic's and the annual tours were effective communication tools to manifest that the North remains secure with a strong and sovereign Canada. The Prime Minister's image in military camouflage outfit, while shooting a rifle, flashed around the world.

The government presented several initiatives in the area of economic development with the majority being rather long term objectives except for geo-mapping (GEM). GEM provides the location of resources and geological characteristics and the primary

¹⁸ L. Berthiaume, *Coast guard's new icebreaker to cost twice as much as originally estimated*, "Ottawa Citizen". 13.11.2013.

¹⁹ *Arctic/ Off-Shore Patrol Ships*, "Royal Canadian Navy", [online:] <http://www.navy-marine.forces.gc.ca/en/fleet-units/aops-home.page> (10.08.2015).

²⁰ M. Bird, *Making waves: The Navy's Arctic ambition revealed*, "Globe and Mail", 04.03.2015.

²¹ J. Porter, *Canadian Rangers test new top-tear weapon*, "CBC News", 10.07.2015.

goal of GEM is to locate areas of high natural resources potential. The GEM program has received an additional \$100 million over seven years to advance geological knowledge in the North²². The geo-mapping is also an important element to support Canada's claim to its northern continental shelf.

Hopes for rapid economic development generated by climate change will not be fulfilled in near future. Although climate change made natural resources more reachable, access is still very costly, especially when the shipment access is limited. The use of Arctic waters as a shipment route for tankers or bulk carriers is dangerous. These waters are difficult to navigate with unmarked shallow areas, icebergs and unpredictable weather. Nevertheless, since the 1980's voyages through the passage have become more common. The number of transits grew from four to around twenty per years but mostly by small vessels. Only one cargo vessel made full transit of the Northwest Passage in 2013 and in 2014. So it is hard to predict an increase in shipping for commercial use. Similarly, the access to natural resources is very costly. The unpredictable climate makes an investment in the North a high risk. That is one of the reasons why the economic development in the North is a long term objective.

The Harper government only initiated two major infrastructure projects to enhance economic opportunities in the region, much fewer in comparison with Diefenbaker. One project is the extension of the Dempster Highway. The construction of the all-season highway linking Inuvik with Tuktoyaktuk is underway. By 2018 the 137 kilometres long highway is expected to connect the Arctic Ocean coast with the rest of Canada's road network. This \$300 million infrastructure extension project is financed by the federal and NTW government²³. The second shorter-term project concerns the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) in Cambridge Bay. The construction of this \$142.4 million project begun in the summer of 2014 and is expected to be completed in 2017. The Station will provide support logistics and maintenance and accommodations for visiting researchers. There will be a research labs, research centres and training facilities²⁴.

The federal government together with territorial governments and Aboriginal communities undertook several smaller projects to protect the environment. Additional terrestrial and marine protected areas in the Arctic were established. Changes to the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act (AWPPA) made the enforcement of anti-pollution and shipping safety laws to a larger area of Arctic waters. The Canadian government also signed agreements with other Arctic nations to collect and share data on population status and trends for Arctic species and ecosystems.

The last pillar of the Strategy has been gradually implemented. The process of devolution of power towards Northern communities was initiated by the Liberal government in 1970. The comprehensive land claims agreements provided indigenous people with rights and responsibilities over the Northern land. One of the agreements

²² GEM, *Geo-Mapping for Energy and Minerals*, [online:] <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/earth-sciences/resources/federal-programs/geomapping-energy-minerals/10904>, (10.01.2016).

²³ D. Thurton, *Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway construction to resume in January*, "CBC News", 10.12.2015.

²⁴ *High Arctic Research Station*, The Municipality of Cambridge Bay, [online:] <http://www.cambridgebay.ca/canadian-high-arctic-research-station/high-arctic-research-station>, (10.01.2016).

allowed for the creation of the Nunavut territory in 1999. Additionally, the federal government transferred more responsibilities to territories including land and resource management. The Yukon government received control over lands and resource management in 2003. The Harper administration followed this path by signing the devolution agreement with NWT and continuing negotiation with the Nunavut government. The devolution process had a great impact on decision making processes in the North. The Northern governments and indigenous organisations are important players shaping the decisions regarding the North.

Conclusion

The “Arctic sovereignty” became a key phrase in political discourse during Harper’s decade. Prime Minister Stephen Harper put forward a very ambitious plan to protect sovereignty in the North and strongly promoted it. These actions left the impression that the Northern territory was at risk but in reality the Canadian sovereignty in the North was safe. Small disputes with Denmark and, the United States did not pose any serious threats. On the contrary, the Canadian authorities put more strains on these relationships by renaming the Northwest Passage. The United States and other maritime countries still consider the Passage an international strait. An ulterior motive may be behind the renaming and the mapping process, namely the desire by the Canadian government to strengthen its position during negotiations on the continental shelf with UNCLOS. Although the government admitted that Canada’s sovereignty was not in danger the government formulated an agenda of what Harper has called a “positive nationalism”²⁵. As J. Brooke indicates the emphasis on military occupation of the North to protect Canadian sovereignty is in fact a logical outcome of the national myth that Harper’s Conservatives have attempted to lay down, namely the existence of patriotism militarism²⁶. It seems that Harper used the North as a political means to unite Canadians around threatened sovereignty to induce a positive sense of nationalism. These efforts were strengthened by his staging of his Northern trips and the military exercises, all of which were very well covered by the media.

The government maintained that renewed emphasis on the North was rooted in Diefenbaker and Harper’s personal fascination with the North, but forgot to mention that many of the so called new initiatives were introduced by previous governments. Liberals implemented many projects especially in the field of environmental protection and devolution of power. M. Gabrys suggests that Harper’s Northern focus also was shaped by the Conservative agenda of the Politics of Memory and by the desire to leave a political legacy²⁷.

Although the government strongly emphasized sovereignty protection in its strategic vision, in reality the security in the region has not been significantly improved during last decade. Widely publicised announcements of the procurement

²⁵ S. Chase, *The North. Q&A with Harper*, op. cit.

²⁶ J. Brooke, *Dismantling Canada. Stephen Harper’s New Conservative Agenda*, McGill-Queens’s University Press, Montreal 2015, p. 338.

²⁷ M. Gabrys, *Arktyczna strategia rządu Stephena Harpera-próba oceny*, [in:] *Północ w międzynarodowej przestrzeni politycznej i gospodarczej*, M. Tomala. M. Łuszczuk, (ed.) Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego, Kielce 2015, p. 59.

of eight Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships and icebreakers as symbols to safe guard the North were reduced and delayed. The same problems plagued the naval facility in Nanisivik. The increase in numbers of Canadian Rangers has not made a difference, especially since the outdated firearms will not be replaced until 2019. Apart from the military exercises the only project that was delivered to enhance security in the region is the scaled back Arctic Training Facility in Resolute Bay. When we look into other initiatives only two major infrastructure projects went ahead. The Inuvik-Tuktotakyuk highway and CHARS constructions have begun.

Seemingly, the discussion about the North focused primarily on security protection and long term objectives related to natural resources and shipping routes potential. Both themes were widely publicised although security was in fact not threatened and the programme of economic development was put on hold. Climate change made the North more accessible but not necessarily navigable. Many specialists suggest that Arctic sea routes will not be able to carry major container shipping lines within the next 15 to 20 years. The review shows that from the 4 pillars as set out in the *Northern Strategy* very little of substance remains. On the top Harper did not address the plight of the Northern people. Their daily needs were not appropriately addressed. However, the communities are challenged by high cost of living, poor infrastructure, job shortage, and poor access to education. The Northern communities would benefit the most from upgrading infrastructure and business development.

There is no doubt about that after 10 years of advertising the Conservative Myth on the North: at very least, Mr Harper has put God's frozen people in the North back on the political map as National Post indicated²⁸.

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²⁸ J. Ivison, *Harper's legacy may lie in Arctic*, "National Post", 16.02.2010.

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Streszczenie

Suwerenność Arktyki stała się kluczową frazą dyskursu politycznego w okresie dziesięcioletnich rządów Partii Konserwatywnej w Kanadzie. Premier Stephen Harper przedstawił bardzo ambitny plan ochrony suwerenności na północy i zdecydowanie go promował. Te działania mogły wywołać wrażenie, iż suwerenność Kanady jest zagrożona. Kanada jednak była bezpieczna.

Niniejszy artykuł zawiera przegląd i ocenę polityki północnej w dekadzie rządów Partii Konserwatywnej (2006-2015). Autor przyjął, że polityka ta była jedynie

narzędziem komunikacji politycznej, dla zjednoczenia Kanadyjczyków wokół kwestii ochrony suwerenności. W praktyce niewiele elementów tej polityki zostało wdrożonych.

Kanadyjska Północ w dekadzie rządów Partii Konserwatywnej

Słowa kluczowe

Kanada, Arktyka, Stephen Harper

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