

Is canada a peace keeping country history essay



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Canada claims and is thought to be one of the best peace-keeping countries in the world. Actually, Canada has been one of the most important contributors to the peacekeeping missions of the world. Both in observer missions and peacekeeping forces, especially in observer missions, Canada has contributed a lot of forces to these missions.

However, the peacekeeping tradition and gentle image of Canada, which is recognized by the world people, began to change, especially under the governance of the Conservative Party. Some military events in recent years and some statements of Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper in public suggest that Canadian troops are changing from the peacekeeping role to the role of combat (Bouldin, 2003). Meanwhile, Canada is gradually losing the image of peace and neutrality in international operations. In this paper, some specific events, arguments and policies demonstrate how Canadian peacekeeping activities are starting to become less about peacekeeping and more about war-fighting. And also, the team of Canadian task is becoming “peace support operations” instead of the former team, “peacekeeping” (Dorn, 2005). “Peacekeeping” role of the Canadian forces is already a thing of the history.

2.0 Arguments about the role Canada plays in Peacekeeping

2.1 Canada’s contribution to peacekeeping missions

Canada is indeed a peacekeeping country in the world. Canada is one of the participants who create the United Nations, which has taken part in many peacekeeping missions in many years. For example, as a member of the United Nations Emergency Force, the first deployment of Canadian Forces operations promoted the satisfactory solution of the Suez Crisis, which broke

out in 1956 and Pearson was given the Nobel Peace Prize for the operation in 1957. And then in the Congo Crisis in July 1960, in order to solve the rebellion of Congolese army and police forces and restore the local peace and order, Canada's first peacekeeping force arrived in this area in August 19. And then some other signal soldiers and a large amount of food also arrived there. In 1973, Canada's main task is to provide support for the UNEF II, which has deployed to the Middle East. In this peacekeeping operation, Canada sent more than 1145 soldiers to participate in the peacekeeping operation (Chapnick, 2010). In 1957, Canada received the Nobel Peace Prize for its international peacekeeping activities. And then in the same year, a monument was claimed to be erected in the capital city, Ottawa. From 1948 to 1990, Canada has participated in 17 peacekeeping operations, including nine observer missions and eight peacekeeping forces, which is the leading one among those peacekeepers (Neack, 1995). Canada contributed over 80,000 people to take peacekeeping tasks to the appeal of the UN (Gough, 2002). In these tasks, many younger soldiers suffer from musculoskeletal diseases and 69% of these cases are sub acute and chronic (Hebert, 2007). In those years, Canada can be seen as the best peacekeeping country and the undisputed leader of the world.

2. 2 The reduction of assistant for other countries

However, Canada's peacekeeping performance is no longer so active. Instead of helping all the countries which need help, Canada just helps some of the countries selectively. In addition, the peacekeeping troop of Canada is reducing. Some data will be used to confirm it.

Early in 2002, Canada was assumed among the top 10 nations as a peacekeeper. At that time, Canada citizens were proud of their peacekeeping forces and the international image of peacekeeping angle. However, it is revealed that Canada has slipped to 38th among the peacekeepers. In the peacekeeping mission in Haiti in 2004, 726 Canadian personnel were on international peacekeeping missions. At the same time, Brazil had committed 1,351 troops, Germany 3,306, India 2,928, South Africa 2,365 and Uruguay 1,908 (Ram, 2004). It can be seen that the number of Canadian force is reducing and Canada is no longer the peacekeeping leader in the world.

2.3 More combat activities

In 2001, Canada took part in the task of Afghanistan. The word, peacekeeping, was repeatedly used to describe Canadian's participation in the mission. However, Canadian's involvement in the mission has nothing to do with peacekeeping. While those forces are flying the flag of the UN, what they have done was to occupy that country, which violated international law and the UN's principle of international missions. It can be seen clearly, Canada began to take part in aggressive combat actions.

In recent years, Canada's military operations are inconsistent with its "peacekeeping leader" role. In October 2007, 173 individuals take part in the peacekeeping operations led by the UN, of which 58 individuals are Canadian (Rudderham, 2008). And the number is Canada's lowest one in history since 1956. And also, in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in New York, there are neither police officers nor military commanders, who are Canadian. However, at the same time, as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty

Organization, Canada contributed 2774 individuals to the Afghanistan operation led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Rudderham, 2008). The operations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization have been allowed by the UN. But the military actions led by NATO and the UN are totally different. Some actions of NATO are combating and aggressive.

2. 4 Following the policy actions of the United States

What is more, in recent years, Canada is more and more following the policy actions of the United States, especially since Stephen Harper's charge. In some extent, this can be contributed to American's dominant policy toward Canada in the aftermath of the Second World War, which makes Canada's independent voice weaker gradually. In this section, some of Canada's performances will be utilized to prove the point.

In the Vietnam War of 1964, Canada began to compromise the United States. The goal of Canada's activities in International Management Committee changed from peacekeeping to negotiations (Brian, Mandell, 1996). As President Johnson gave up his presidential campaign since he didn't enjoy popular support in America for his policy toward the Vietnam War, one of the reasons for Prime Minister Pearson's stepping down is the Vietnam policy of Pearson. Even some historians said that Prime Minister Pearson was defeated by the Vietnam War.

As a member country of Indo-Chinese International Monitoring Committee, Canada has asked for several times to quit. But it stayed there always. In the Vietnam War, Canada's weak voice for peace plan was drowned by the roar of explosion. At that time, the United States told Canada that it would be a

heavy blow to American's hopes for peace if Canada withdraws the International Monitoring Committee. On May 25 of 1973, Henry Alfred Kissinger called to Ottawa to ask Canada to stay in the International Monitoring Committee. Although Canada has totally decided to quit, Kissinger inform the world ultimately: Canada would withdraw its delegation on July 31, instead of June 30 (Thakur, 1980).

The government of Canada and its participation in the International Monitoring Committee has been faced with a "dilemma". On the one hand, Canada has the good willing and actions to supervise the Indochina peace. On the other hand, Canada has to be utilized by the United States, which makes its hope for peacekeeping yield to benefits of the United States. As the "middleman" role, Canada often inquired the intelligence of North Vietnam. The Vietnam War developed into the directly military intervention of the United States. At that time, Canada's disagreement about the war made the relationship between Canada and the United States strained. However, due to the special relationship between the two countries, Canada showed some compassion to America while it is supervising America, which made Canada a thankless task.

Canada's behavior to participate in the International Management Committee and the International Monitoring Committee was not so active and voluntary. The reason is mainly that Canada is not willing to offend the United States and it also wants to maintain and develop its international influence and prestige. For the first time, Canada helps the United States save the Saigon regime and expand the Vietnam War. And for the second

time, Canada helps the United States withdraw from Vietnam in a decent way.

Until 1967, Canada has spent 13 years on the position of the International Management Committee. During the period, it is a pleader at the best time and an accomplice at the worst time. Whether at the best time or at the worst time, Canada's behavior has no effect on the peace (Thakur, 1980). Canada's action is not only due to the pressure from the United States, but also to self-interest factors.

Therefore, in many occasions or events, Canada can not get rid of the image of the complicity of the United States. In dealing with the issue of the Vietnam War, Canada and the United States always have frictions, which are only about the means, not the purpose. Canada hastily accepted the Domino effect of Eisenhower, which ties Canada to the global hegemony policy of the United States and makes Canada lose the opportunity to act independently in international affairs. Canada is always courteous but without sincerity while the United States repeatedly shows stubborn. In the Vietnam War, although Canada is not as hard as in the Korean War, Canada expresses resignation and even compliance towards the behaviors of the United States.

Canada is willing to be the loyal follower of America, which means that Canada is more of a fighter, not a peacekeeper. In 2006, after the Middle East conflict, the conflict between Lebanon and Israel, the newly appointed Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper claimed that Israeli soldiers should take responsibility for the increasing armed conflicts, which is in conformity with Bush's attitude.

3. 0 Recommendations on policies in Peacekeeping

The UN wants to build up a neutral military to promote the resolution of international conflict (Neack, 1995). So as a participating country in peacekeeping missions and the leader peacekeeper, Canada should take in those peacekeeping missions with relentless pursuit without concerning individual interest or other intentions. Canada should develop its tradition of loving peace and fulfill the obligations of a peacekeeping country, which is the only way to maintain Canada's international image of friendly and peaceful country.

3. 1 Domestic policy

In the aspect of domestic policy, Canada should pay more attention to livelihood issues, the security of citizens and firm its committed attitude toward peacekeeping. And also, Canada should recognize that Canadian people are continuously supporting the military forces to maintain the peace of the world, not for other intentions (Donais, 2004). If Canada forces pursuit just self-interest and short-term interest or do some combat operations in the peacekeeping missions, Canadian citizens will be disappointed and feel embarrassed about the “ peacekeeping leader” label of Canada. Canada must strengthen its attitude towards the peacekeeping program and express its firm decision to its citizens. Then Canada citizens can live in a steady and pleasant country and they can still be pride of the international image of friendly and peacekeeping country.

3. 2 Foreign policy

On the other hand, in the aspect of foreign policy, Canada should maintain its international image of peacekeeping country and take part in

peacekeeping missions actively. The benefits Canada can get from the continuous peacekeeping activities can be analyzed from two aspects. Firstly, Canada can continue its contributions to world service, especially in world peace and security, which show most Canadians' strong desire for a peace world based on law and order instead of war-fighting (Dorn, 2005). Secondly, Canada lies next to the United States, which is powerful. Since America pay much attention to military force, Canada can build up its own feature and special image by taking part in peacekeeping activities. In addition, the United States is Canada's most important neighbor and the two countries maintain a close relationship with each other in the aspects of politic, economy and other fields. Successive governments of Canada take the relationship between Canada and the United States seriously as the cornerstone of its foreign policy. In general, Canada should maintain its close relationship with the United States. At the same time, Canada should emphasize its independence. In addition, Canada should stick to its neutral position and peace principle in any peacekeeping mission.