

## *2011-03-12 – Comment – US Security Perimeter*

### *US Security Perimeter*

I have real concerns about the Security Perimeter accord for further discussions recently announced between the United States and Stephen Harper. For months Harper was negotiating with the U.S. in complete secrecy—even denying that he was doing so.

I am concerned that Mr. Harper is more willing to bend to U.S. security demands than to improve trade and create jobs for Canadians.

The vague yet heavily security-focused content of the proposal – and the secretive manner in which it came about – has Canadians asking serious questions about the Harper government's commitment to truly enhancing trade with the U.S., while defending our sovereignty, privacy and the rights of our citizens.

Indeed, a poll released shortly after the announcement showed that two-thirds of Canadians fear that Prime Minister Harper will compromise by giving up too much power over immigration, privacy and security to get a deal with the U.S. on border controls. A whopping 91% of respondents said negotiations should take place in public so they can see what is on the table. More than half – 51% - reported they do not trust Stephen Harper to negotiate a deal that is good for Canada. (Postmedia News, Feb. 18, 2011)

Canadian businesses, farmers, tourists all want more open trade with the U.S. Canadian jobs depend on real, effective, action against Buy American legislation and the many non-tariff trade barriers that the US has put up to trade from Canada. But Stephen Harper has failed Canadians again—the first result of his US-driven “security” deal is stiff new taxes being proposed on Canadian air travelers and businesses, which will only worsen Canada-U.S. trade.

My main concerns are (i) I do not want us to give up any sovereignty or sacrifice the privacy of Canadians; (ii) that US concerns over security will create a distraction preventing us from addressing the really problematic trade issues between our two countries; and (iii) that Mr. Harper must stop the secrecy and share his perimeter plans with Parliament and the Canadian public so that Canadians have a say in the outcome.”