

**Middle Power Continuity: Canada-US Relations and Cuba, 1961-1962**

by

Steven O'Reilly

B.A., Thompson Rivers University, 2016

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR

THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

(History)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Vancouver)

August 2018

© Steven O'Reilly, 2018

The following individuals certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for acceptance, a thesis/dissertation entitled:

MIDDLE POWER CONTINUITY: CANADA-US RELATIONS AND CUBA, 1961-1962

Submitted by STEVEN O'REILLY in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS in HISTORY

**Examining Committee:**

HEIDI J.S. TWOREK, HISTORY  
Co-Supervisor

STEVEN H. LEE, HISTORY  
Co-Supervisor

BRADLEY J. MILLER, HISTORY  
Additional Examiner

## **Abstract**

This thesis examines the work of Canada's Department of External Affairs and its Undersecretary of State for External Affairs Norman Robertson during tense relations between Canada and the United States in 1961 and 1962. More specifically, this project uses the topic of Cuba in Canada-US relations during the Diefenbaker-Kennedy years as a flash point of how the DEA developed its own Canadian policy strategy that exacerbated tensions between Canada and the United States. This essay argues that the DEA's policy formation on Cuba during the Kennedy years both reflected a broader continuity in Canadian foreign policy and exacerbated bilateral tensions during a period when tensions have often been blamed primarily on the clash of leaders. The compass guiding Canadian bureaucrats at the DEA when forming policy was often pointed towards Canada's supposed middle power role within international affairs, a position that long-predated the Diefenbaker years but nevertheless put his government on a collision course with the United States.

## Lay Summary

How has Canada's bureaucracy shaped its foreign policy during moments of international strife? How did Canada's role as a middle power in the Cold War cause tension in what was otherwise a generally amicable relationship with the United States? This thesis probes these questions by examining Canada's Department of External Affairs (DEA) and its response to an emerging foreign policy crisis between the United States and Cuba in the early 1960s. Canada's response to the Cuban crisis embodied a foreign policy strategy that emerged before the government of John Diefenbaker came to power and was informed by a belief in Canada's middle power identity on the world stage. The American approach to Cuba unveiled Canada's adherence to its middle power identity that required a semblance of independence from American policy. Ultimately, the heart of this essay is centered on the role of Canada's bureaucracy and the importance of the *process* of ideas rather than the *presentation* of ideas. That is, by focusing more on the work of Canadian bureaucrats as opposed to the differences between high-profile leaders, a different narrative emerges that explains the bilateral tension between allies at the height of the Cold War.

## **Preface**

I hereby certify that this thesis is the original and independent work of the researcher and author, Steven O'Reilly.

# Table of Contents

Abstract.....	iii
Lay Summary.....	iv
Preface.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
Acknowledgements.....	vii
Dedication.....	x
Introduction.....	1
Historiography.....	8
Norman Robertson and Canadian Nationalism.....	13
The Cuban Crisis.....	25
Conclusion.....	40
Bibliography.....	46

## Acknowledgements

This thesis is a result of the immense generosity of an amazing group of people that I have been fortunate enough to have surround me over my years in academia.

I am grateful for the generosity of the UBC History Department and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council that made this research possible. I would also like to thank kind staff at the Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa, the University Archives and Special Collections at the University of Saskatchewan, the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland, and the United Nations Archives in New York City for helping me navigate my search for primary documents.

The thesis that follows simply would not have been possible without the countless hours spent by my two supervisors, Heidi Tworek and Steve Lee, in guiding me through the world of graduate school, research, and thesis writing. I am not entirely convinced that I would have been able to put any words to paper without Heidi's tireless efforts to keep my project on track. Her seemingly endless organizational and writing tips helped me realize that completing a project of this scale was nothing to fear. Even when she found herself in faraway places, Heidi was always an email or a skype call away and I could always expect a thoughtful response within minutes to my incessant questions or an in depth edit of my latest draft. I am also indebted to Heidi for piquing my interest on the topic of Canada's "middle power" history and introducing me to other academics in the field when she invited me to a conference at Harvard University in 2016. Steve's enthusiasm and expertise in Canadian foreign relations gave me an immense advantage in navigating the field and carving out my project. His relaxed and happy demeanour

considerably reduced my stress levels throughout my graduate school experience. I am also indebted to Steve for allowing me to pick his brain on a weekly basis as I navigated the secondary literature on my topic, which gave me the grounding for approaching a field that was new to me. I was also lucky enough to be a teaching assistant for both Heidi and Steve, who both made the experience as enjoyable for me as I hope it was for them.

I want to thank Brad Miller for his willingness to be an additional reader for this thesis, despite the timing of its submission likely conflicting with his well-deserved vacation plans. Brad was also an informal advisor to me on the topic of Canadian history throughout my time at UBC, as I often found myself stopping by his office to ask a quick question that somehow always turned into a 45-minute discussion. I am also indebted to Brad and Leo Shin for reading and advising me on my grant proposals, which ultimately turned out to be a great success. Other faculty who have helped shape this thesis include Tim Brook, Coll Thrush, Tim Cheek, Bob Brain, Bill French, and Michel Ducharme. I also want to thank Jason Wu, whose titanic knowledge of the graduate program and university bureaucracy ultimately allowed me to finish this project with the belief that I will, in fact, graduate.

I am forever grateful for the contributions of my fellow classmates throughout the marathon that is graduate school. Each one of you helped shape this project in some way, and your thoughtful comments on my early drafts were immeasurably helpful. I also want to thank Jihyun Shin, Joshua Tan, and Joe Paris for their support in the classroom and friendship outside of it. A very special thanks to Claire Oliver who somehow managed to read countless pieces of my work on a near-weekly basis and gave constructive feedback every single time, despite having to deal with her own thesis work.



I also want to thank my undergraduate supervisors at Thompson Rivers University, Tina Block and Terry Kading. Your generosity and belief in my abilities is ultimately why I had the courage to embark on the graduate school experience.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the support of my friends and family. I want to especially thank Mark Ste. Marie, whose curiosity and quest for knowledge was so contagious that it ultimately fuelled me to attend university in the first place. His years of friendship and humour have been a nice little bonus. I am eternally grateful to the Stout family in Kamloops, British Columbia. They took me in and made another world possible. A special thanks to the Morrison family, particularly Bill and Lee, whose constant words of encouragement and support have made the obstacles of graduate school and living in Vancouver achievable. A million thanks to my mom for making my entire undergraduate degree feasible despite the challenges it presented, and to my dad for enthusiastically writing a cheque to pay for my first ever course at TRU 8 years ago. Finally, I could not have done any of this without the constant love and support of Katy Morrison. Her strength, unrelenting kindness, and warmth have made everything possible.

*For Katy, Val, & Noreen*

## Introduction

In his first visit to Ottawa as President of the United States, John Kennedy participated in a tree-planting ceremony outside Rideau Hall with his wife Jacqueline. While turning over the sod for what would eventually become a towering red oak on the Rideau grounds, the president severely strained his back. The pain would not subside until shortly before his assassination more than two years later.<sup>1</sup> Seemingly unaware of the injury at the time, Prime Minister John Diefenbaker reached out to Kennedy the following month to express his “distress” that he had suffered the injury during his visit and offered Canada’s “most sincere wishes for a rapid and complete recovery.”<sup>2</sup> Kennedy promptly responded via telegram from his estate in Palm Beach, Florida. In thanking the prime minister for his sentiments, Kennedy wrote, “The tree will be there long after the discomfort is gone. The visit with the Canadian people is a shining memory to both of us.”<sup>3</sup> Kennedy’s note to Diefenbaker was at least half correct. The tree stands prominently today among others planted by various world leaders at Rideau Hall, but Kennedy’s visit to Ottawa would not be a shining memory for either leader.

Canada-US relations, much like Kennedy’s back, became significantly strained after the Ottawa visit and remained so for years. The overlapping tenures of Kennedy and Diefenbaker

---

<sup>1</sup> Kenneth P. O’Donnell, David F. Powers, and Joe McCarthy, *“Johnny, We Hardly Knew Ye”*: *Memories of John Fitzgerald Kennedy* (Boston, Mass: Little, Brown and Company) 1972, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram from John G. Diefenbaker to Embassy in Washington, D.C., in Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada (hereafter LAC), NAR Files, MG 31—E83—Vol 5, File 7, June 8, 1961.

<sup>3</sup> Telegram from John F. Kennedy in Palm Beach, Florida to John G. Diefenbaker in Ottawa, Ontario, in University Archives and Special Collections, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada (hereafter UASC), Canada-US Relations, JFK Corr., MG 01/XII/A/268 Diefenbaker, John G—Correspondence—(V.I.P.) Kennedy, John F. 1960-1962, June 9, 1961.

would be one of the most fractured moments in the history of Canada-US relations.<sup>4</sup> Although historians have disagreed on whether or not Kennedy was heavy-handed in his dealing with Canada, there is broad consensus that Diefenbaker was, at best, an unpredictable partner for the United States, which precipitated considerable angst south of the border. As the US State Department was keenly aware, nationalist sentiments in Canada reached a fever pitch in the late 1950s and propelled Diefenbaker to the largest electoral majority on record. The State Department's concern over Canadian attitudes towards the United States, combined with Diefenbaker's proclivities towards galvanizing these sentiments for his own political gain, set the stage for an unstable bilateral relationship.

Coinciding with the clash between leaders was an equally—if not more—important dynamic that developed at the bureaucratic level. While conflict was ensuing at the highest levels of the bilateral relationship, Canada's Department of External Affairs (DEA) was on its own collision course with the US State Department and the Kennedy administration. Under the stewardship of Diefenbaker's Secretary of State for External Affairs Howard Green and his Undersecretary Norman Robertson, the DEA was developing a Canadian foreign policy that valued Canada's role within multilateral institutions and resisted following American Cold War policy blindly. Both hailing from Vancouver, Green and Robertson were critical to the unfolding dynamic of bilateral tensions during these years. Green, an elected member of Diefenbaker's Progressive Conservative government, was both a champion of nuclear disarmament and of Canada achieving its foreign policy aims through the United Nations.<sup>5</sup> Robertson, an important carryover from the long years of Liberal dominance that preceded Diefenbaker, subscribed to a

---

<sup>4</sup> Asa McKercher, *Camelot and Canada: Canadian-American Relations in the Kennedy Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 28.

Canadian identity that ranked middle power mediation over bilateral servitude. Given the hard-line Cold War perspective of the Kennedy Administration and Green's high ranking position within the Canadian cabinet, he proved to be a major talking point in American foreign policy circles.<sup>6</sup> American officials feared his independent tendencies and openly mocked his supposed naivety at the height of Cold War geopolitics. However, Robertson, along with other high ranking officials within the DEA, received minimal attention from Washington. Yet, these individuals were ultimately responsible for carving out Canada's foreign policy on emerging Cold War issues that, at times, put them at odds with the United States and caused considerable strain. What mattered was less the showy conflicts between prime ministers, presidents, and foreign affairs ministers. What mattered more was the role of mid-level bureaucrats in determining Canadian foreign policy. The US-Canadian conflict over Cuba shows how bureaucratic continuity plays a far greater role within post-war Canadian diplomatic history than scholars have previously acknowledged.

This thesis reassesses the role of the DEA in the deterioration of Canada's bilateral relations with the United States. From the perspective of the White House and the State Department, Howard Green represented a "willfully oblivious" figure who was both stubborn and naive on matters of foreign policy, which only further complicated the Canada-US relationship.<sup>7</sup> American policymakers ultimately saw Green as the embodiment of a Canadian

---

<sup>6</sup> In fact, Green remained a talking point within American circles even after he lost re-election and left politics. The State Department kept tabs on his retirement activities, most notably when Green would write op-eds for Canadian newspapers. US officials would critique and, in some cases, mock Green's opinions while exchanging mutual relief that he was no longer their Canadian counterpart.

<sup>7</sup> John Herd Thompson, *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2008), 202.

foreign policy that was increasingly at odds with their expectations of a NATO ally in their hemisphere at the height of Cold War tensions. However, the role of the DEA in forming policy on issues that were points of tension in bilateral relations generally went overlooked. While Green was ultimately responsible for the department as its minister, Robertson and the DEA staff was often already forming policy that was in-step with his and Diefenbaker's general perspective. This is significant because the DEA staff, all the way up to Robertson, were primarily holdovers from the Liberal dynasty that held the reins of power in Ottawa for well over two decades. Ironically, the DEA came of age during the 1950s under its larger-than-life minister Lester Pearson, Diefenbaker's chief political rival and Kennedy's preferred Canadian leader. In short, tension in bilateral relations was not simply a result of a rogue Howard Green, or even Diefenbaker, but emerged from policy decisions that were formed by a DEA largely staffed and trained under Pearson and that was gaining both confidence and expertise on the world stage.

This essay uses the topic of Cuba in Canada-US relations during the Diefenbaker-Kennedy years as a flash point of how the DEA developed its own Canadian policy strategy that exacerbated tensions between Canada and the United States. Following its revolution under Fidel Castro in 1959 and subsequent shift toward a geopolitical alignment with the Soviet Union, Cuba represented a major concern for the United States as Kennedy took the oath of office in January 1961. Following the failed CIA-orchestrated invasion at the Bay of Pigs in April of that year, the DEA was forced to rapidly develop and define its policy approach toward Cuba as it became one of the tensest fronts of the Cold War. Under the leadership of Norman Robertson, the DEA carved out a policy that called into question the efficacy of American aggression and unilateral intervention in Cuba. Furthermore, the DEA resisted American calls for Canada to impose a full-scale economic embargo and a potential cutting of diplomatic ties with Cuba. The DEA

ultimately envisaged Canada's standing within international bodies, such as the United Nations, as the primary interest of their emerging foreign policy. As with other issues that arose in the bilateral relationship during these years—the debate over Canada acquiring nuclear weapons, chief among them—the DEA advised against adopting American policies that could ultimately isolate Canada in the international community or undermine Canadian efforts at the UN in their quest to be viewed as an honest “middle power” in global affairs. In essence, the DEA prioritized Canada's position at the UN and this required Canada not appearing to blindly follow unilateral American Cold War policy. This applied to the case of Cuba, where American hostility towards Castro left the United States as an outlier in the international community.

This essay argues that the DEA's policy formation on Cuba during the Kennedy years exacerbated bilateral tensions during a period when tensions have often been blamed primarily on the clash of leaders. Perhaps more importantly, this analysis suggests that the work of the DEA, given its rapid evolution throughout the 1950s and being overwhelmingly staffed by preceding Liberal governments, often transcended political affiliations in Canada and represented an important level of continuity in the conduct of Canada's foreign affairs that was on its own trajectory irrespective of the governing party of the day.

Underlying this essay is an acknowledgement that process and bureaucracy are deeply important to the function of a state's foreign policy and its bilateral relations. This truism is often forgotten or overshadowed in the history of Canada-US relations by the idiosyncrasies of prime ministers and presidents. The *process* of idea creation, as opposed to the *presentation* of ideas, displayed far more continuity than would be visible when observing the ebb and flow of personal relationships between heads of states. Following career bureaucrats in Canadian foreign policy development during the Diefenbaker years shows that their work was fuelled by an evolving

national interest in global affairs that had begun before Diefenbaker assumed office as prime minister and continued long after his government fell. Canada's perceived standing in both the international community and its institutions, such as the UN, was at the forefront of this emerging foreign policy strategy and the government of the day, whether it be Louis St. Laurent's Liberals, Diefenbaker's Progressive Conservatives, or Lester Pearson's Liberals that followed, were more-or-less bound to this reality of Canada's emerging interests. While governing parties and leadership personalities naturally play a role in a state's foreign policy, the bureaucratic continuity shows that the role of such factors are simply not as important in determining policy as they are often made out to be.

This essay predominantly uses archival materials from the Department of External Affairs, primarily the files of Norman Robertson, housed at the Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa, Ontario. Additionally, materials from the US State Department housed at the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland provide the various perspectives of the Kennedy administration on Canadian foreign policy and the issue of Cuba. Various archived materials, such as the papers of John Diefenbaker and polling data during his tenure, housed at the University Archives and Special Collections at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon are also used throughout. The thesis is structured into three sections. First, this essay begins with a discussion of the historiography of Canadian foreign relations during this era that situates this research into the wider body of literature on Canada's bilateral relations with the United States in the early post-war period. Second, a section on the background of Norman Robertson, the DEA, and Canadian nationalism that show bureaucratic continuities. And third, the case of Cuba and the DEA's policy response to growing tensions with the United States, separated into two sub-sections for the years 1961 and 1962. The first



sub-section examines the buildup to Kennedy's visit to Ottawa in May of that year following the Bay of Pigs invasion the previous month. The second section examines the Canadian response to American efforts to influence NATO—and Canada in particular—to re-examine and ultimately heighten their restrictions towards Cuba in the international community. Ultimately, this thesis examines Norman Robertson and the process of bureaucratic continuity in Canadian foreign relations with the case of Cuba as a flashpoint in this process.

## Historiography

Works within the field of Canada's foreign relations have addressed the flashpoint of Cuba in Canada's bilateral relationship with the United States in two primary streams. The first has seen the bilateral tensions over Cuba as one of several episodes that facilitated the withering of formal bilateral relations with the United States during the tenure of John Diefenbaker. This trend fits within the wider rise-and-fall narrative that permeates the scholarship on the Diefenbaker years. After all, Diefenbaker and his Progressive Conservative Party had won the largest government majority in Canadian history following decades of Liberal rule, which was then followed by electoral defeat in 1963 and another two decades before the Conservatives would regain meaningful control in Ottawa. As such, in the context of Canadian politics, the Diefenbaker Conservatives triumphantly rose to power in 1957 only to return in 1963 to wandering the political wilderness as the Liberals entrenched themselves over two decades as the supposed natural governing party of Canada in the post-war era. Diefenbaker's political fall also coincided, and no doubt was intertwined, with a seeming collapse in relations with the United States.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> This narrative has only served to amplify the "fall" portion of the rise-and-fall narrative and has enabled two timeframes in which historians have assessed Diefenbaker's foreign policy: the long rise-and-fall narrative of his years as prime minister (1957-1963) and the short rise-and-fall years coinciding with the rise in bilateral tensions with the United States (roughly 1960-1963); For notable works fitting into the long rise-and-fall narrative that places Cuba as one of many stepping stones towards political defeat is perhaps best encapsulated by Basil Robinson's *Diefenbaker's World: A Populist in Foreign Affairs* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989). Other notable works adopting this method include Patricia McMahon's *Essence of Indecision: Diefenbaker's Nuclear Policy, 1957-1963* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2009). For works using the short rise-and-fall narrative see Asa McKercher's *Camelot and Canada: Canadian-American Relations in the Kennedy Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016) and Knowlton Nash's *Kennedy and Diefenbaker: Fear and Loathing Across the Undefended Border* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990).

The second dominant trend in Canada's foreign relations are more expansive studies of foreign policy that transcend single tenures of government. These works are generally not fixated around the Diefenbaker government per-se, but rather offer a broad analysis of Canada's foreign policy over the course of numerous Canadian governments regardless of political affiliation. The topic of Cuba often surfaces in these types of studies, most notably in works on Canada and Latin America, such as Peter McKenna's *Canada and the OAS: From Dilettante to Full Partner*, which places the case of Cuba and the United States in the broader history of Canada's reluctance to join the Organization of American States during the Cold War. In the case of Canadian diplomatic history, this trend is encapsulated in John Hilliker's *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume II: Coming of Age, 1946-1968*, which writes the history of the DEA as it evolved from an afterthought federal department to a major political player in Ottawa, significantly shaping Canada's global influence and being able to speak with a more prominent voice in the federal cabinet. This essay ultimately highlights the key element of this second trend: that there is a relative continuity in Canada's foreign policy irrespective of the governing party.<sup>9</sup>

The essay that follows inverts the structural trends in the scholarship of Canadian foreign policy and of the Diefenbaker years specifically. By focusing on the issue of Cuba over a brief period of the Diefenbaker years, and by placing a bureaucratic institution—in this case, the DEA—at the center of the project ahead of figures like Diefenbaker or Kennedy, this essay

---

<sup>9</sup> This is not to suggest that Canadian foreign policy was conducted through a single approach across the administrations of St. Laurent, Diefenbaker, Pearson, and Trudeau. But rather, by engaging topics such as the OAS debate and the evolution of the DEA study, these works reveal a level of continuity that exposes blind spots in the rise-and-fall narrative of the Diefenbaker years. Essentially, the works in this second trend often avoid centering their narrative around one or two national leaders, but rather on an evolving issue of foreign policy that overlaps the tenures of numerous leaders.

reveals a broader continuity in Canada's foreign relations that can be easily missed when the overriding focus is on the individual dispositions of controversial or noteworthy leaders. This is not to suggest that the proclivities of Diefenbaker and Kennedy did not greatly impact government policy. However, by focusing on DEA policy formation during points of tension in the Canada-US relationship, it becomes clear that the evolving Canadian bureaucracy was as much on a collision course with the Kennedy administration as John Diefenbaker. The question of Cuba in the early 1960s ironically reveals a level of continuity in Canadian foreign policy, shaped by the bureaucracy, that transcends party politics and contrasts the rise-and-fall narrative of the Diefenbaker years. This approach ultimately raises questions about the formation of Canadian foreign policy in the Cold War years and how far individual leaders and political parties in Canada should be put into conflict with one another over issues of foreign policy. This essay highlights Cuba as a flashpoint in the Canada-US relationship, which is often used in the rise-and-fall narrative of the Diefenbaker years, but inserts the role of an evolving government bureaucracy that exposes an uninterrupted trajectory across successive Canadian governments.

Percolating under the surface of this essay is the issue of Canada's position in international affairs as a supposed "middle power" in the post-war era and how far this orientation informed Canada's bilateral approach towards its most powerful ally during the depths of Cold War. In particular, the case of Cuba in the Canada-US relationship generally affirms the work of Edward Jordaan<sup>10</sup> on middle powers in international relations; namely that middle powers tend to exhibit a "weak and ambivalent regional orientation" while constructing

---

<sup>10</sup> See Edward Jordaan, "The Concept of a Middle Power in International Relations: Distinguishing between Emerging and Traditional Middle Powers," *South African Political Studies* 30, no. 1 (2003): 165-181.

“identities distinct from the powerful state in their region.”<sup>11</sup> This essay also ties in with Adam Chapnick’s analysis of Canada’s role in founding the United Nations and its emerging status as a middle power.<sup>12</sup> Chapnick examines how the deliberations over the founding of the UN ultimately carved out a space for countries like Canada in the new international system. As Chapnick notes, the founding of the UN cemented Canada’s role as a middle power: “a state characterized by its decency, its thoughtfulness, and its ability to get along with other countries,” whereas the Canadian people “came to view themselves as ambassadors of internationalism and leading mediators within the new world structure.”<sup>13</sup> The roots of the so-called middle power project are evident throughout the case of Cuba in 1961-62 at the DEA, as the language of mediation and the assumption that Canada’s position in world affairs could, in theory, influence a world power in a way that a smaller nation could not, were ubiquitous throughout DEA communiqués and policy papers.<sup>14</sup> Ultimately, the roots of Canada’s middle power orientation in

---

<sup>11</sup> This essay certainly corresponds with Jordaan’s assertion that middle powers—in this case, Canada—attempt to construct distinct identities from their regional power (the United States). This style of language is riddled throughout DEA documents and even by Diefenbaker himself. The idea of appearing distinct from American policy as being an asset in international affairs seemed to be lost on no one in DEA circles. However, whether or not this essay affirms Jordaan’s argument that middle powers show weak and/or ambivalent regional orientation is a bit more nuanced. On the one hand, Canada successfully resisted calls to join the Organization of American States during these years, which could be deemed as a weak and ambivalent regional orientation and therefore concur with Jordaan’s thesis. On the other hand, the DEA’s interest in Latin America and its diplomatic and economic potential was accelerating at a fever pitch during these years, particularly as figures such as Robertson and Green saw the region as a prospective recruiting ground for key votes at the United Nations for Canadian initiatives, such as nuclear disarmament and banning atmospheric testing.

<sup>12</sup> See Adam Chapnick, *The Middle Power Project: Canada and the Founding of the United Nations* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

<sup>14</sup> In fact, even some of the same figures in Chapnick’s examination were involved in the Cuba case. Ironically, Norman Robertson himself actually played a central role in the UN deliberations in the 1940s. As Canada’s Undersecretary of State for External Affairs under Liberal Prime Minister Mackenzie King at a time when the prime minister retained the foreign affairs portfolio

its foreign policy expanded and evolved well before the case of Cuba in 1961-62 and bureaucratic figures like Norman Robertson played a central role in this development.

---

for himself, Robertson was the number one ranking unelected official in the DEA during these years.

## Norman Robertson and Canadian Nationalism

Born in 1904 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Norman Robertson was educated at the University of British Columbia and then at the University of Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar. He joined the DEA in 1929 and served as the department's Under Secretary of State for External Affairs by 1941 under Prime Minister Mackenzie King. Robertson held this high-ranking position for the remainder of the Second World War and played a significant role in deliberations at the San Francisco Conference of 1945 which gave birth to the United Nations and where Canada's post-war middle power goals were first conceived.<sup>15</sup> Following the war, Robertson served as Canada's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom—under King from 1946-1949 and St. Laurent from 1952-1957. After his time in London, Robertson spent one year as Canada's Ambassador to the United States from 1957-1958.<sup>16</sup> Despite Diefenbaker's suspicions of his "politics and his past association with Pearson," Robertson was begrudgingly appointed to his old position of Undersecretary of State for External Affairs in 1958 following an enthusiastic endorsement by cabinet minister Sydney Smith.<sup>17</sup> Robertson ultimately became the embodiment of the upper echelons of the DEA during the Diefenbaker years: experienced in world affairs, trained under past Liberal governments, and keenly aware of the middle power role Canada sought out in the international system.

---

<sup>15</sup> "Norman Alexander Robertson (1904-1968)," *Behind the Diary: A King's Who's Who Biographies*, LAC, accessed March 27, 2018. <https://web.archive.org/web/20110408174012/http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/king/023011-1050.37-e.html>

<sup>16</sup> Hilliker and Barry, *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume 2: Coming of Age, 1946-1968*, 7, 10, 48, 88.

<sup>17</sup> Hilliker and Barry, 147.

Diefenbaker's suspicions of former Liberal staffers—whom he derisively called “Pearsonalities”—haunted the early years of Robertson's tenure, as Diefenbaker erected unorthodox barriers that made necessary communication between himself and Robertson more difficult and indirect. Robertson was also systematically excluded from critical meetings that, on account of his office, he otherwise would have attended. This dynamic would eventually improve after the appointment of Howard Green in 1959, who had “complete confidence” in Robertson and possessed the trust of Diefenbaker.<sup>18</sup>

The US State Department was obliquely aware of Robertson and his potential influence. Secretary of State Dean Rusk was briefed in 1961 by his embassy in Ottawa that Robertson represented a “grey eminence” behind Diefenbaker and Green that needed to be acknowledged, as his advice in international and American affairs carried “considerable weight with both ... Ministers.”<sup>19</sup> The brief went on to argue that Robertson preferred a “more independent Canadian course in international affairs” and was “prone to seek solutions that emphasize that Canada should not blindly follow” the United States.<sup>20</sup> The perceived influence of Robertson over Diefenbaker and Green, combined with his visions for a more independent approach to international affairs, led the State Department to speculate that Robertson could potentially become the cause of a “softer” approach by the Diefenbaker government towards the Soviet Bloc, which considered American efforts to only negotiate with the USSR from “a position of strength” to be “provocative.”<sup>21</sup> Despite these early warnings, Robertson and the DEA generally

---

<sup>18</sup> Hilliker and Barry, 149.

<sup>19</sup> Telegram sent from US Department of State in Ottawa, Canada to Secretary of State Dean Rusk on Norman Alexander Robertson, LAC, NAR Files, MG 31—E83—Vol 5, File 7, May 11, 1961, 4.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.



went overlooked in American circles when deciding how to approach Canadian policy, as officials preferred to focus on the personalities and statements of Diefenbaker or Green.

By the time Robertson was in a position to inform Canadian policy over the case of Cuba, Canada and the United States were entering one of the lowest points in their bilateral history. Indeed, the overlapping tenures of John Diefenbaker and John Kennedy, as historian Asa McKercher notes, represented one of the “most fractious periods” in the long history of bilateral relations.<sup>22</sup> Aside from their personal dislike of one another, which has been well-documented and undoubtedly contributed to bilateral tensions, numerous points of conflict in policy emerged in rapid succession during these years that ultimately strained relations to the point where Kennedy “likely” intervened in the Canadian federal election of 1963 to defeat Diefenbaker and elect the Liberals and Lester Pearson.<sup>23</sup> Historian Robert Bothwell argues that, by the late stages of the Diefenbaker government, “Canada’s role as an American ally was in question.”<sup>24</sup> Points of policy conflict that facilitated this decline in relations included American desires for Canada to join the Organization of American States, which Canada resisted as a means to avoid confronting American policy in Latin America;<sup>25</sup> Canada’s opposition to Great Britain joining the European Common Market; Canada pursuing an immense sale of wheat to then-unrecognized Communist China, which ultimately needed American petrol to transport across the Pacific; American insistence that Canada mirror its approach toward Cuba and the Castro regime in 1961 regarding

---

<sup>22</sup> McKercher, *Camelot and Canada: Canadian-American Relations in the Kennedy Era*, 3.

<sup>23</sup> McKercher, 198.

<sup>24</sup> Robert Bothwell, *Your Country, My Country: A Unified History of the United States and Canada* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 254.

<sup>25</sup> See Peter McKenna, *Canada and the OAS: From Dilettante to Full Partner* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1995).

economic sanctions, and Diefenbaker's hesitance to initially respond to the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.

Underlying these policy differences was the critical issue surrounding nuclear weapons that caused relations to break down and ultimately led to the downfall of the Diefenbaker government in 1963. The Canadian Department of National Defense (DND) had been working with its American counterparts at the Pentagon throughout the late 1950s on a strategy for Canada to acquire American nuclear weapons as part of a mutually agreed upon policy of continental defense, with the nodding approval of Diefenbaker. However, the DEA, under the leadership of Howard Green and Norman Robertson, developed a Canadian nuclear strategy that called for the banning of atmospheric testing and pursuing initiatives of nuclear disarmament at the United Nations. As this policy evolved and established itself as being in the interest of Canada's foreign policy regarding nuclear weapons, it began to generate favourable views within the Diefenbaker cabinet, the DND notwithstanding. This is significant because adopting such a strategy ultimately made it increasingly difficult for Canada to accept American nuclear weapons as it would undermine their stance on disarmament. Mindful of both the disarmament strategy and his own fears of being seen domestically as cowing to American policy, Diefenbaker delayed his final decision on acquiring nuclear weapons, much to the consternation of the Pentagon, State Department, and White House, before ultimately rejecting it in late 1962. This apparent indecisiveness came to symbolize the Diefenbaker government's foreign policy more generally and became a source of attacks from Pearson's Liberals in the 1963 election—likely the most American-focused Canadian election in modern history.<sup>26</sup> Pearson promised to accept

---

<sup>26</sup> John Hilliker and Donald Barry, *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume 2: Coming of Age, 1946-1968* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2014), 245.

nuclear weapons and restore positive relations with the United States, and the Diefenbaker government collapsed.

The context in Canada in the years preceding the bilateral conflict over Cuba were marked by considerable socio-political change. John Diefenbaker's Progressive Conservative Party came to power in 1957 after more than two decades of consecutive Liberal rule under Mackenzie King and Louis St. Laurent. Elected to a slim minority government, Diefenbaker subsequently called another election in 1959 and won the largest majority government in Canadian history. Underlying Diefenbaker's rapid ascension was a growing ethos of Canadian nationalism spurred by a perceived encroachment of the United States—both economically and culturally—onto Canada throughout the 1950s. Despite his “almost religious devotion” to the British Crown and his commitment to Canada's role in international institutions, such as NATO and the United Nations, Diefenbaker nevertheless was a populist Canadian political figure.<sup>27</sup>

By the early 1960s, the growing sentiments of nationalism within Canada had been formally acknowledged within government circles on both sides of the border. In a conversation with the Canadian Ambassador to the United States Arnold Heeney in the Summer of 1960, Diefenbaker expressed himself in the “most serious terms” on growing anti-American sentiment.<sup>28</sup> Diefenbaker warned the ambassador that in his lifetime he had never witnessed such “widespread and deep resentment against the United States.”<sup>29</sup> When pressed by Heeney on what he thought was causing so much angst toward the United States, Diefenbaker provided four

---

<sup>27</sup> Basil H Robinson, *Diefenbaker's World: A Populist in Foreign Affairs* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 4.

<sup>28</sup> United States Department of State Memorandum of conversation between ambassadors Arnold Heeney and Livingston Merchant, in National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland, USA (hereafter NARA), Box 1240, File 611.42/1-460, September 14, 1960, 1.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

contributing factors: a “widespread conviction” in Canada that the US was “pushing people around”; a popular belief that the American military was “belligerent” and moving away from civilian control; the “economic aggressiveness” of American capital pouring into the Canadian economy; and fears that have arose from the unfavourable balance of trade between the two countries.<sup>30</sup> Despite his populist campaign rhetoric in 1957 and 1959, and the fact that the adverse balance of trade between Canada and the US was one of his favourite talking points in the House of Commons during his days in opposition, Diefenbaker assured Ambassador Heeney that he himself did not hold the anti-American views that he generally attributed to most Canadians.<sup>31</sup>

The following year, the newly-minted Kennedy White House was keenly aware of potentially provocative sentiments in Canada, but they came to different conclusions on the causal factors of such feelings than Diefenbaker articulated the year before. In a brief for Kennedy prior to his visit to Ottawa in May of 1961, a White House advisor observed that the “primary problem” facing the United States with respects to Canada “lies in an evolving Canadian attitude of introspection and nationalism.”<sup>32</sup> The brief argued that the overwhelming influence of American wealth and power had engendered a “Canadian inferiority complex” that was “reflected in a sensitivity to any real or fancied slight to Canadian sovereignty” and therefore the “essential element” in dealing with problems involving Canada was “psychological.”<sup>33</sup> The White House made an important distinction between the anti-

---

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>31</sup> Robinson, *Diefenbaker’s World: A Populist in Foreign Affairs*, 4; United States Department of State Memorandum of conversation between ambassadors Arnold Heeney and Livingston Merchant, NARA, Box 1240, File 611.42/1-460, September 14, 1960, 2.

<sup>32</sup> “Scope Paper” for President Kennedy’s visit to Ottawa in May 1961, LAC, NAR Files, MG 31—E 83—Vol 5, File 8, May 2, 1961, 1.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

Americanism being warned about by Diefenbaker and Canadian “introspection and nationalism” that was not necessarily anti-American by nature. The brief did note that there were pockets of resistance to American influence among “intellectuals” in Canada, whose goals were “fuzzily connected” with potential “neutralism, anti-nuclear sentiments, and quasi-pacifism,” with their ultimate goal being Canada serving as an “independent leader” of middle power nations.<sup>34</sup> However, the brief correctly pointed out that these “negative strands of opinion” did not “predominate” Canadian society; rather, it argued that the Canadian public was “favorably disposed toward the United States” and that they were “highly susceptible to American influence in culture ... and politics.”<sup>35</sup> This assessment generally corresponds with public opinion polling conducted in Canada in 1961. In a CTV News poll from that year, Canadians overwhelmingly ranked Kennedy as the world figure they most admired (49%), far ahead of British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan (16%) and Charles de Gaulle (11%).<sup>36</sup>

Keeping in mind the perspectives of both governments over the issue of Canadian nationalism or anti-Americanism is an important tool for examining the various foreign policy spats that emerged in bilateral relations during the Diefenbaker and Kennedy years. On the one hand, the Kennedy Administration saw this as their “primary problem” in dealing with Canada. Furthermore, as Asa McKercher observes, despite the Kennedy Administration’s emphasis on nationalism in Canada, US officials ultimately felt these sentiments were “irrational” in nature.<sup>37</sup> Conversely, Diefenbaker seemed more convinced that these sentiments were marked by feelings

---

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 1-2.

<sup>36</sup> CTV Television Network Bulletin “Canadians Select J.F.K. Top World Leader,” UASC, PCP Views on US/Polls?, MG 01/XII/B/350 Telepol Survey—CTV Television Network 1961-1962, December 24, 1961, 2.

<sup>37</sup> McKercher, *Camelot and Canada: Canadian-American Relations in the Kennedy Era*, 14.

of anti-Americanism. Consider that Diefenbaker's obsession with maintaining power over the Liberals after more than two decades in opposition contributed to a distinct set of "survival instincts" that ultimately caused him to view foreign policy through a domestic lens.<sup>38</sup> In short, the American view that Canadian nationalism was irrational ultimately left the White House and State Department susceptible to being internally dismissive, if outwardly polite, towards Canadian foreign policy when it conflicted with their own. Whereas Diefenbaker's hypersensitivity to domestic opinion when he believed anti-American sentiments to be at a fever pitch ultimately led to a fear of being perceived as too cozy with American policy or, worse, having Canada's foreign policy dictated to them by the White House. This contributed to the indecisiveness that has come to symbolize his tenure as prime minister, and is often a key explanation for his government's collapse in 1963.<sup>39</sup>

The years preceding the Cuba case coincided with the rapid expansion of the Department of External Affairs. Initially operating without its own minister in the federal cabinet, the DEA found its legs on the world stage in the 1950s. Between 1948 and 1968, staffing levels at the department nearly tripled, as did the number of foreign posts abroad. In Africa alone, the number of foreign posts running out of the DEA increased by a factor of six.<sup>40</sup> The department had its coming of age moment during the Suez Crisis in 1956, which led to Canada's first ever recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize: Secretary of State for External Affairs Lester Pearson. Most importantly, by the time Diefenbaker came to power in 1957, the bureaucracy of the department had been staffed by successive Liberal governments that worked directly under the leadership of

---

<sup>38</sup> McKercher, 6.

<sup>39</sup> See Patricia McMahon's *Essence of Indecision: Diefenbaker's Nuclear Policy, 1957-1963* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2009).

<sup>40</sup> Hilliker and Barry, *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume 2: Coming of Age, 1946-1968*, xxxi-xxxii.

Pearson—the newly appointed leader of the Liberal Party and thus Diefenbaker’s chief rival. Consequently, Diefenbaker came to power with a deep suspicion of the DEA and its staff as being potentially loyal to their previous larger-than-life minister.<sup>41</sup> Diefenbaker’s suspicions of the DEA staff naturally led to expectations that there would be significant turnover within the department as the government changed hands, but Diefenbaker “resisted the temptation,” likely a result of the acute lack of experienced diplomats in the Progressive Conservative Party with which he could fill the department.<sup>42</sup>

After great deliberation, Diefenbaker appointed the president of the University of Toronto, Sydney Smith, to head the department. Despite being met with “highly favourable” press, and the Progressive Conservative caucus being “ecstatic” over his appointment, Smith’s lack of a personal relationship with Diefenbaker and lack of parliamentary experience led to Diefenbaker frequently intervening in departmental affairs, undermining the extent of Smith’s authority.<sup>43</sup> In 1959 Smith died suddenly from a heart attack and Diefenbaker retained the role of external affairs minister for himself until a replacement could be found. Howard Green was appointed as minister in June 1959 as a permanent replacement for Smith. A long-serving Member of Parliament from Vancouver, Green briefly served as the Minister of Public Works in the first Diefenbaker government before being posted to foreign affairs. Green’s position represented a key ally for Diefenbaker in the department: they had a close personal relationship, for years they had adjoining desks in the House of Commons, and, as Green himself would argue years later, both men represented the “left-wing” of the Progressive Conservatives and were “the

---

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Robinson, *Diefenbaker’s World: A Populist in Foreign Affairs*, ix.

<sup>43</sup> Hilliker and Barry, *Canada’s Department of External Affairs, Volume 2: Coming of Age, 1946-1968*, 144–46.

two strongest pro-Commonwealth men in the party.”<sup>44</sup> Green ultimately represented a reliable voice in a department that Diefenbaker still maintained deep suspicions over. While Diefenbaker would retain important foreign portfolios for himself, such as East-West relations and the Commonwealth, Green was left with “plenty of room” to assert “his own interests and priorities.”<sup>45</sup> As Green himself observed, “Mr. Diefenbaker was very much interested in foreign policy. But in effect he left me a free hand.”<sup>46</sup>

While Green’s interests and priorities included Latin America and the developing world, the defining issue of his career was the halting of nuclear atmospheric testing and general disarmament. As historian Daniel Heidt points out, Green’s keen awareness of the growing scientific consensus over the implications of nuclear testing in the atmosphere emboldened his anti-nuclear position in the early years of his tenure in foreign affairs.<sup>47</sup> Concerns over atmospheric testing nicely segued into his primary concern of Canada pursuing disarmament in an “independent and leading capacity” at the UN General Assembly.<sup>48</sup>

In a communiqué overviewing Canadian officials that was sent to US Secretary of State Dean Rusk, the US embassy in Ottawa noted that the resumption of disarmament negotiations was Green’s “major concern,” along with being “rigidly opposed” to nuclear testing of any

---

<sup>44</sup> Interview conducted by the Department of External Affairs between Howard Charles Green and Peter Stursberg, LAC, Howard Green Oral History, MG 31—E 83—Vol 27, File 8, October 26, 1971, 17.

<sup>45</sup> Robinson, *Diefenbaker’s World: A Populist in Foreign Affairs*, 97.

<sup>46</sup> Interview conducted by the Department of External Affairs between Howard Charles Green and Peter Stursberg, LAC, Howard Green Oral History, MG 31—E 83—Vol 27, File 8, October 26, 1971, 17.

<sup>47</sup> D. Heidt, ““I Think That Would Be the End of Canada”: Howard Green, the Nuclear Test Ban, and Interest-Based Foreign Policy, 1946–1963,” *ARCS* 42, no. 3 (2012): 343–69.

<sup>48</sup> Hilliker and Barry, *Canada’s Department of External Affairs, Volume 2: Coming of Age, 1946-1968*, 153.



kind.<sup>49</sup> The brief went on to evaluate Green and the implications for American relations with Canada, noting his “naïve and parochial approach” to international problems was an “integral part of his personality,” and identifying him as the leader of the “more nationalistic element” in the Diefenbaker government.<sup>50</sup> Embassy officials advised that Green was “extremely sensitive to any implied interference with Canada’s independence ... by the United States” and his “self-righteousness and stubbornness” made him a more difficult figure for the United States to deal with than Diefenbaker.<sup>51</sup>

By 1961 the DEA was a fully-functioning branch of the federal cabinet that would have been unrecognizable to its former self only ten years prior. While not as large as the foreign ministries of the United States or Britain, its reach had extended considerably into places that were likely never even an after-thought in Canadian foreign policy at the end of the Second World War. Fueled by the work of the DEA, Canada now had a vested interest in pursuing initiatives at the United Nations, and being perceived as independent of the United States in foreign affairs was often a prerequisite for these aims. Moreover, while headed by Diefenbaker’s friend and ally Howard Green, the department was overwhelmingly staffed by holdovers from the previous Liberal governments, most notably Norman Robertson in his undersecretary position. This was likely a result of the scarcity of experienced people within the ranks of the Progressive Conservative Party and the fact that the DEA came of age during a Liberal dynasty in Ottawa. Robertson, as the highest ranking employee and his illustrious career in foreign affairs dating back to the 1930s under Mackenzie King, was ultimately the embodiment of this reality

---

<sup>49</sup> Telegram sent from US Department of State in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada to Secretary of State Dean Rusk on Howard Charles Green, LAC, NAR Files, MG 31—E83—Vol 5, File 7, May 11, 1961, 2.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

and would represent a key figure in the deterioration of Canada-US relations over the issue of Cuba by 1961.

## The Cuban Crisis

In 1957, the Diefenbaker government ushered in a new era for Canadian foreign relations with Latin America. Generally associated as being more occupied with the North Atlantic world, the Canadian government and the DEA had relatively little diplomatic interest south of the Rio Grande prior to 1957. Canada had yet to join the Organization of American States (OAS) and the DEA only had *one* officer in charge of the entire region.<sup>52</sup> In 1958 the DEA began to show an interest in opening itself up to Latin America. Just after his appointment as head of the department, Sydney Smith expressed a personal interest in engaging with the region. Smith visited Mexico, Brazil, and Peru in 1958, where he “detected a great deal of eagerness” for Canada to join the OAS, and was reportedly willing to push for the idea of Canadian membership within the Diefenbaker cabinet.<sup>53</sup>

Following his appointment after Smith’s death in 1959, Green had also included Latin America as one of his few keen interests in foreign affairs and soon pushed for diplomatic expansion in the region on the part of the DEA. Green’s observations that Latin American countries tended to vote together at the UN, while often supporting Canadian initiatives in the General Assembly, convinced him of the benefits of expanding diplomatic ties. In April 1960, Diefenbaker became the first prime minister to visit Latin America when he travelled to Mexico City, while Green visited several countries in South America. Following the trip Green announced the creation of a new Latin American Division within the DEA to replace the lone officer in charge of the region. Throughout 1960, Diefenbaker and Green became more open to

---

<sup>52</sup> McKenna, *Canada and the OAS: From Dilettante to Full Partner*, 78.

<sup>53</sup> McKenna, 77.

the “growing consensus” in government circles for Canada to join the OAS.<sup>54</sup> However, by early 1961, due in large part to American policy towards Cuba, plans for OAS membership would be abandoned and Canada’s approach to Latin America suddenly became a point of considerable tension in their bilateral relationship with the United States.

The brief period between the US-orchestrated invasion at the Bay of Pigs on April 17, 1961 and Kennedy’s visit to Ottawa from May 16 to 18 the following month was a significant moment for the development of Canada’s Latin America policy with respect to its decline in bilateral relations with the United States. This month simultaneously saw rapid policy formation on the part of the DEA in relation to Cuba and the United States, and a flurry of preparation on both sides of the border for Kennedy’s inaugural visit to Ottawa that would address a series of bilateral issues that were turning into points of tension between both governments.

Two days after the invasion at the Bay of Pigs, memoranda were exchanged amongst the upper echelons of the DEA and between the department and Diefenbaker’s DEA liaison Basil Robinson. The DEA carefully examined what the state of Cuban affairs and Soviet involvement in the hemisphere meant for both East-West tensions and Canada’s foreign interests. Department officials began to formally separate the Castro regime and the Cuban revolution from its place in the middle of an “ideological contest” between the Soviet Union and the United States. In a memorandum written on April 19, a DEA official lamented that the situation in Cuba is “much more than a continuation of the original internal revolution” which was “an expression of the legitimate social and economic aspirations of the Cuban people.”<sup>55</sup> Rather, Robinson suggested, in overtly sympathetic terms, that Cuba was in fact a “casualty of the internationalization of its

---

<sup>54</sup> McKenna, 77.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

original revolution.” Robinson continued, “In this tragic process, the true interests of the Cuban people have become subordinated to the inter-play of outside forces beyond their control.” As the DEA clearly saw Cuba as a victim of external forces, they were highly concerned with the role of the Soviet Union and its intention to spread “international communism” in Cuba that could be used as a “bridgehead” to further penetrate into the whole of Latin America.<sup>56</sup> In short, the early days in Canada’s policy formation with respect to Cuba and the United States during the Diefenbaker years saw a tendency to sympathize with Cuba and to sound the alarm with respect to Soviet desires to expand their influence in the Western Hemisphere. Robinson’s memorandum concluded that “any threat to the peace” of the hemisphere “affects us” and the Canadian government ought to seek conditions that would allow Cuba to develop as a “constructive partner of the nations of the Western Hemisphere.”<sup>57</sup>

On April 26, Diefenbaker himself coordinated with the DEA to hone Canada’s position with Cuba and how it pertained to American policy. Diefenbaker informed Robertson that he did not want the Kennedy Administration to have the impression that Canada’s Cuba policy meant that they could “count on Canadian support for anything foolish they might do,” which was generally in-step with DEA thinking. More specifically, Diefenbaker demanded a prepared statement to make it clear that Canadian concerns over Cuba were about “the threat of subversion in other parts of Latin America” and that they “should not be constructed as meaning that the Canadian Government would automatically follow the United States in whatever it chose to do on policy towards Cuba.” Diefenbaker concluded by arguing that Canada was not going to

---

<sup>56</sup> Department of External Affairs memorandum to Henry Basil Robinson titled “CUBA,” LAC, NAR Files, MG 31—E 44—Vol 5, File 4 (April 1961), April 19, 1961, 2.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 3.

become “tied up” in any moves at the OAS over Cuba.<sup>58</sup> In fact, the Cuban scenario was used by Canadian diplomats who steadfastly opposed Canadian membership in the OAS as a case study for the perils of joining the international body.<sup>59</sup>

In a chain of events that sent shockwaves through State Department circles and formally tipped off the Kennedy Administration about evolving Canadian policy towards Latin America, Green approached Secretary Rusk at a NATO summit in Oslo on May 9. According to the State Department, Green cautioned Rusk “against U.S. intervention in Cuba” on the grounds that it would “stir up a hornet’s nest” in Latin America and cripple the ability of the UN in settling the problem. Three days later, in a media interview given in Geneva while travelling back to Canada from Norway, Green reportedly offered to “mediate” the situation between the United States and Cuba. Both instances became major talking points in the State Department’s preparation for Kennedy’s visit to Ottawa. In a brief for Kennedy’s visit, the State Department commented that such offers of mediation were “not helpful since in the public mind it tends to divert attention from the Communist threat and give credence to Cuban claims that only bilateral issues are really in question.”<sup>60</sup>

Heading into Kennedy’s formal visit to Ottawa there were two significant forces at play on both sides of the border over Cuba. On the Canadian side, early reactions within the DEA to the Bay of Pigs led to rapid policy formation that articulated both a sympathetic disposition

---

<sup>58</sup> Secret memorandum from Henry Basil Robinson on behalf of John Diefenbaker to Norman Alexander Robertson titled “CUBA,” LAC, NAR Files, MG 31—E 83—Vol 5, File 4 (April 1961), April 27, 1961, 1.

<sup>59</sup> James Rochlin, *Discovering the Americas: The Evolution of Canadian Foreign Policy towards Latin America* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1994), 58.

<sup>60</sup> Secret memorandum from US Department of State regarding President John Kennedy’s visit to Ottawa, Canada from May 16-18, 1961, titled “The Cuban Situation,” LAC, NAR Files, MG 31—E 83—Vol 5, File 8 (May 1961), May 11, 1961, 2.

towards Cuba's revolution becoming internationalized by the Soviets, and a desire to clarify that this perspective did not mean Canada would blindly adopt any future American policy in the region. Perhaps more importantly, the immediate aftermath of the Bay of Pigs seemed to present a lesson to the DEA that joining the OAS may present more problems than had originally been anticipated. Joining the OAS would ultimately force Canada to face American policy head-on—with actual votes, in an assembly—and cause Canada to be “tied up,” as Diefenbaker had suggested.<sup>61</sup> Indeed, the fear of losing an independent foreign policy towards Latin America, and therefore undermining its credibility as a middle power in global affairs, would ultimately keep Canada from entering the OAS for decades.

From the American perspective, the visit to Ottawa came at a time when concerns were rising in American government circles about Canada's Cuba policy. Green approaching Rusk in Oslo and his offers to mediate conflict between the United States and Cuba flew in the face of the rigidity that was the Kennedy world view when it came to Cold War politics. There was also a growing desire in Washington to have Canada join the OAS. In fact, the US had been keen supporters of Canadian membership following the Second World War,<sup>62</sup> primarily because it would offer them a strategic ally in the organization and another developed country to relieve some of the financial burden in funding the hemispheric body. This dynamic was still in place when Kennedy took office, but the growing concern over Cuba amplified the American

---

<sup>61</sup> Secret memorandum from Henry Basil Robinson on behalf of John Diefenbaker to Norman Alexander Robertson titled “CUBA,” LAC, NAR Files, MG 31—E 83—Vol 5, File 4 (April 1961), April 27, 1961, 1.

<sup>62</sup> Ironically, the US was steadfastly opposed to Canada joining the OAS' predecessor, the Pan-American Union, prior to the end of WWII. Peter McKenna argues that the US saw Canada as an off-shoot of Great Britain that did not have an independent foreign policy of its own. Therefore, by keeping Canada out of the PAU, the US was keeping a European power outside of hemispheric institutions.

perspective over OAS membership. In theory, Canadian membership would provide a strategic Cold War ally for the United States in dealing with Soviet influence in the hemisphere. However, the growing desire of the White House to have Canada join the OAS in the weeks leading up to their Ottawa visit led to an ill-conceived strategy that would only further entrench the position held by Diefenbaker and the DEA, setting the stage for an epic unravelling of bilateral relations over the course of the Diefenbaker and Kennedy years.

Kennedy single-handedly killed the prospect of Canada joining the OAS in his joint address to the Canadian Parliament on May 17. In his generally well-received speech, Kennedy stated to Canadian dignitaries that the Western Hemisphere is “a family into which we born” and “we cannot turn our back” on its problems. “I believe that all of the free members of the Organization of American States,” Kennedy continued, “would be both heartened and strengthened by any increase in your hemispheric role. Your skills, your resources, your judicious perception at the council table—even when it differs from our own view—are all needed throughout the inter-American Community.” Kennedy concluded his OAS plea with a simple question: “Your country and mine are partners in North American affairs—can we not now become partners in inter-American affairs?”<sup>63</sup> This part of the speech had been a miscalculation by the White House. Aside from the fact that the appeal of joining the OAS had been rapidly declining within Canadian government circles following the failed invasion at the Bay of Pigs, the speech also overlooked Diefenbaker’s own domestic fears over the perception of him being dictated to by an American president. As Howard Green observed in the House of

---

<sup>63</sup> Press release, “Address of the Honourable John F. Kennedy, 35<sup>th</sup> President of the United States of America, to Members of the Senate and of the House of Commons in the House of Commons Chamber, May 17, State Visit to Canada, May 16-18, 1961,” LAC, NAR Files, MG 31—E 83—Vol 5, File 7 (May 1961), May 17, 1961, 4.



Commons later that year about Kennedy and the OAS question, “One of the least effective ways of persuading Canada to adopt a policy is for the president or the head of state of another country to come here and tell us what we should do, no matter if it is done with the best intentions.”<sup>64</sup>

In the months following Kennedy’s visit to Ottawa and failed attempt at convincing parliament to join the OAS, Canada-US relations began to strain over a series of contentious issues. Although the Berlin Crisis in the Summer and Autumn of 1961 exhibited a “surprising symmetry” between the United States and Canada, particularly in public view, American resumption of nuclear testing following the crisis left the DEA perplexed. Canada felt that this ultimately undermined its efforts at the UN on nuclear disarmament, and Diefenbaker complained that the Kennedy administration was throwing away its “advantage in world opinion” by resuming such tests.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, Canadian officials “felt considerable frustration” that they were being “kept in the dark” in the deliberations between the four primary Western powers, despite its place within NATO.<sup>66</sup> During the same timeframe, as the finishing touches on an agreement that would see American nuclear warheads delivered to missile sites in Canada seemed imminent, an unidentified leak to the press confirming such progress sent bilateral relations into a tailspin.<sup>67</sup> Diefenbaker, incensed at the optics of the story and reverting to his survival instincts to avoid the perception that he was cowering to American pressure, retreated from the agreement and would ultimately reverse the plan later in his tenure. Kennedy was “baffled” and “unable to understand” Diefenbaker’s about face on the nuclear issue, accelerating considerable angst on the American side of the border.<sup>68</sup> Asa McKercher notes that “early

---

<sup>64</sup> House of Commons, *Debates*, September 1961, 8203.

<sup>65</sup> McKercher, *Camelot and Canada: Canadian-American Relations in the Kennedy Era*, 98.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, 99.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, 103.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, 104.

September 1961 was the last time that the president and prime minister were on good terms.”<sup>69</sup> This was largely the cumulative result of the fallout over the Berlin Crisis and the Canadian retreat on nuclear weapons that accelerated an already significant tailspin in bilateral relations, which ultimately created a more tense context when the issue of Cuba was raised the following February.

While Robertson and the DEA’s initial policy formation over Cuba in the Kennedy-era was conducted in earnest following the Bay of Pigs, the general issue of Cuba vis-à-vis Canada-US relations resurfaced in DEA circles in early 1962. At this point the Kennedy administration was determined to tighten the economic noose around Cuba by expanding its embargo and severing the economic links between Cuba and other Western nations. In an address to the North Atlantic Council in February, State Department official Walt Rostow argued for NATO allies to include Cuba in their Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM) restrictions—a Cold War initiative requiring NATO allies to place an arms embargo on countries of the Eastern Bloc.<sup>70</sup> Interestingly, Canada had, in effect, already extended COCOM restrictions to Cuba, as it had banned exports of strategic goods to Cuba as well as the trans-shipment of goods to Cuba that had originated in the United States, which was more than any NATO or Latin American country had done to accommodate American policy. Nevertheless, the Kennedy Administration wanted Ottawa to rethink its approach towards Cuba to something more hostile and indistinguishable from American policy. That same month Dean Rusk met with Canadian Ambassador to the United States Arnold Heeney to emphasize the need for a shift in Canadian policy. Rusk argued that Cuba represented a threat to Latin American and Western interests, and,

---

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 101.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 153.

given Canada's place within the Western Hemisphere, Canada's responsibility in cutting off political and economic links with Cuba was greater than its NATO allies.<sup>71</sup>

The posturing by Rostow at NATO and the conversation between Heeney and Rusk—dubbed “the Rusk-Heeney talks” by Norman Robertson—prompted the DEA to prepare a thorough analysis of Canada's Cuba policy for Howard Green that he could present to his fellow cabinet ministers given that they would likely want to re-examine Canada's approach to the Cuban issue. Drafted by Robertson on March 8, the policy brief laid out four essential questions for the cabinet to re-assess its Cuba policy:

- 1) Has the government been able to implement effectively its announced policy?
- 2) What response should we make to the US approach in NATO?
- 3) Since the US clearly has in mind that Canada should go farther than what has to date been proposed in NATO, what, if any, additional measures should Canada agree to undertake in co-operation with the United States?
- 4) How can we explain and present our policy more effectively both to the public in Canada and abroad and to the United States administration?<sup>72</sup>

The most noteworthy assessments made by Robertson were in response to the second, third, and fourth questions. In response to the question of what Canada's response should be to the American approach to NATO, Robertson laid out the general demands made by Rostow to the North Atlantic Council, including denying arms to Cuba and forbidding the trans-shipment of US items; formally applying COCOM regulations to Cuba; and reporting to NATO all credit extended to Cuba.<sup>73</sup> While Robertson stated the DEA had already prepared a memorandum for

---

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Secret Memorandum from Norman Robertson to Secretary of State for External Affairs Howard Green, “Relations with Cuba,” LAC, NAR Files, MG 31—E 83—Vol 5, File 18 (February 1962), March 8, 1962, 1.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 3.

initiating the process of applying COCOM controls to Cuba if the scenario came to fruition, he also advised Green that the American stance towards NATO on the issue of Cuba would not go far. Robertson argued that the United States was likely going to concentrate its efforts on acquiring a NATO resolution that would require all members to apply COCOM regulations to Cuba and deny the country any strategic goods or arms. Observing the mood of other NATO members, Robertson argued that other governments had shown “little enthusiasm for such a decision which the United States would probably wish to make public.”<sup>74</sup> “The wisdom of NATO extending its operations to the Caribbean,” Robertson continued, “has been questioned and it is difficult to assess how much support in the last analysis the U.S. will be able to muster within NATO.”<sup>75</sup> Robertson’s analysis was ultimately accurate, as NATO would not go on to adopt such restrictions against Cuba like the United States had hoped.

In response to the second question, Robertson put forth a series of measures that the United States had suggested would be appropriate for Canada to adopt with respect to their Cuba policy. First, Canada should deny items to Cuba that were not on the COCOM list but were nevertheless seen as significant to the Cuban economy. Second, Canada should make “stronger and more critical statements” about the Castro government in public.<sup>76</sup> Third, Canada should deny landing rights for “Cuban or Bloc aircraft” travelling through Canada to Cuba.<sup>77</sup> Fourth, Canada should join the United States in stopping the export of Cuban arms to Central America by “possibly” launching Canadian destroyers to the Caribbean.<sup>78</sup> And fifth, Robertson noted that there had been “indications” that the United States would like Canada to “break diplomatic

---

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 3-4.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

relations with Cuba and thereby deprive Castro of any semblance of respectability which he might derive through his contacts with [Canada].”<sup>79</sup> Robertson noted that, with “perhaps” the exception of the first and second point, all of the American proposals were “very extreme.”<sup>80</sup>

Of primary concern to Robertson was the optics of Canada adopting either some or even all of the US proposals. Robertson argued that, if Canada adopted some of the proposals but stopped short of enacting all of them, there “undoubtedly” would be “many critics in the United States and Latin America” who would give Canada “no credit for having moved at all.”<sup>81</sup> While Robertson acknowledged that if Canada were to adopt most or all of the proposals it would have been credited with “belatedly” joining in, he nevertheless warned of the diplomatic repercussions of adopting such a policy.<sup>82</sup> “A complete disruption would,” Robertson advised, “occur in our own relations with Cuba and probably the door would be closed for any effective contact in the future for as long as the Castro Government remains in power. Such a drastic change in position would probably be represented throughout Latin America as Canada ‘knuckling under’ to U.S. pressure.”<sup>83</sup> Robertson argued that such an impression throughout Latin America would “not be in our interest nor in the interest of the United States. Such a substantial shift in our policy could make the positions of such friendly governments as those in Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico much more exposed and difficult.”<sup>84</sup>

Robertson concluded his analysis of this topic by questioning the fundamental assumptions in American policy toward Cuba and advising a foreign policy strategy that starkly

---

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 4-5.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

contrasted with American aims in the region. In questioning American assumptions, Robertson noted that, in the event that economic pressure by the US was able to create chaos in Cuba and destroy Castro's position, there was "little assurance that ... he would be replaced by a non-communist regime or one better disposed towards the United States."<sup>85</sup> And, in the event the United States intervened in Cuba with force to overthrow Castro, Robertson argued that "[the US] would probably find themselves supporting, as they have in so many parts of the world, a puppet regime which would have little appeal throughout the rest of Latin America."<sup>86</sup>

To combat American policy, Robertson argued the need for Canada to maintain all diplomatic links as a means to prevent American intervention in Cuba, while treading lightly so as not to provoke significant criticism. "As long as Canada maintains the type of contacts we now have with Cuba," Robertson argued, "the existence of such links might conceivably lessen the possibility of ... drastic action by the United States."<sup>87</sup> Robertson cautioned that Canada's position needed to be effectively communicated on both sides of the border to keep "temperatures down" and to avoid the impression that Canada was being "insensitive to any real threat of Soviet-controlled communism" in the Western Hemisphere.<sup>88</sup> "At the same time," Robertson continued, "in view of our interest in the orderly progress of Latin America, we should presumably help to keep the way clear for [Latin American] nations to achieve changes in their own social and economic order, sometimes at revolutionary pace."<sup>89</sup> Robertson's analysis that Canada ought to use its diplomatic ties to prevent American aggression, while being sure to

---

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 5-6.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

maintain its Cold War alignment within NATO, ultimately embodied the diplomatic tight rope that was being walked by Canada's supposed middle power foreign policy aims.<sup>90</sup>

In response to the fourth question—how can Canada effectively explain such positions at home and in the United States?—Robertson noted an invitation Canada received from the United States to discuss relations with Cuba would be their best opportunity. Robertson advised against commenting on mere details of various proposals that would “avoid the fundamental question which Mr. Rusk has raised,” namely, was Canada prepared to “join the United States in an effort to weaken the Castro regime and to prevent the re-export of Castro's revolution to other parts of Latin America.”<sup>91</sup> While Robertson acknowledged that the “single-mindedness” of the United States had “made it difficult” for Canada to work with them on the issue of Cuba, he nevertheless advised taking advantage of the United States' offer to discuss questions of Cuba in a “frank and co-operative manner,” as this would leave Canada “obliged to question whether it would be desirable or possible to bring Castro down through external pressure and even if this were possible, whether a subsequent regime (and the repercussions elsewhere in the hemisphere) would be an improvement.”<sup>92</sup> “In essence,” Robertson cautioned, “we would be questioning the fundamental wisdom of basic United States policies, both past and projected. This means that great skill would be required to avoid the impression that a small power was telling a major power how to run its affairs.”<sup>93</sup>

---

<sup>90</sup> See the aforementioned work by Edward Jordaan and his analysis on the weak regional orientation of middle powers versus their need to maintain independence from powerful states.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

By 1962 the DEA had neatly differentiated its policy toward Cuba from that of the United States. This is not to suggest that Canada was not fundamentally aligned with the United States in Cold War politics or that the DEA encouraged a hostile approach to American policy; as mentioned, Canada already restricted the Cuban economy more than any other NATO ally, and the DEA was always cautious in communicating its policy so as to not aggravate its southern neighbour. However, the upper echelons of the DEA had carved out a Canadian strategy that was fuelled by its middle power goals in the international community.

In the years preceding 1962, the DEA had established a keen interest in an independent foreign policy that would facilitate support for its initiatives at bodies such as the UN. Canadian initiatives at the UN often required support from key voting-blocs, such as Latin America or Africa, as figures like Howard Green and Norman Robertson, who had been keenly aware of this reality, worked to open and expand Canada's diplomatic ties to these regions. Much like the debate over Canada acquiring nuclear weapons from the United States, the DEA cautioned against an approach that could hurt Canada's efforts at the UN or resembled Canada being dictated to by the United States. In the case of nuclear weapons, the DEA argued that allowing such weapons on Canadian soil would undermine its nuclear disarmament initiatives at the UN. In the case of Cuba, the DEA viewed American policy as potentially undermining Canada's emerging relationship with Latin America, and the unilateral approach employed by the US towards Cuba as being diametrically opposed to the multilateral spirit of the UN that gave Canada its crowning foreign policy achievement during the Suez Crisis only a few years before. In essence, while Canada was unquestionably aligned with the United States at the height of the Cold War, the DEA viewed its standing at the UN, and within the developing world more specifically, as a primary concern of Canada's foreign policy, which ultimately led to a differing



policy perspective than the United States, particularly when the American approach was far outside the norms of the international community, such as the case of Cuba.

## Conclusion

The Cuban crisis in 1961-62 highlights how far Canadian foreign policy was ultimately being guided by a bureaucratic institution that was acting in defence of evolving Canadian interests in global affairs. The importance of being a middle power in the international community led Canadian policymakers to articulate a policy which differed from that of the US insofar as it accepted the legitimacy of the Cuban revolution and rejected unilateral efforts to overthrow the Castro regime. This is not to suggest Canada was somehow drifting towards neutralism in Cold War politics or in Latin American affairs. On the contrary, and perhaps ironically, although Canadian deviation from American policy in Cuba was of considerable importance to maintaining its credibility at the UN and in Latin America, Canada was *more* aggressive during these years towards Cuba than any developed country not named the United States. While NATO debated and ultimately rejected the idea of adopting COCOM restrictions against Cuba, the Canadian government essentially adopted and implemented such restrictions anyway. The Canadian government had already placed an embargo on “strategic goods” and banned the transshipment of American goods through Canada to Cuba. Despite Canada’s Cuba policy deviating from the ideal imagined by the US State Department, Canada was still overwhelmingly aligned with the United States in the Cold War, including in the case of Cuba. This may ultimately say more about the unreasonable expectations the United States had of its Canadian allies—particularly in contrast to other NATO allies—than it does about Canada adopting provocative policies that potentially undermined the United States at the height of the Cold War.

The conflicting interest between the US State Department and the DEA over Cuba was one of numerous episodes during these years that precipitated a decline in bilateral relations.

However, the American government was more likely to place the blame for this conflict on the personalities of high ranking figures like John Diefenbaker and Howard Green, as opposed to an already-in-motion shift within the Canadian bureaucracy toward a foreign policy agenda that emphasised the appearance of mediation in international affairs and independence from its regional power. To the Kennedy administration, Diefenbaker seemed to be the embodiment of Canada's supposed "psychological" problem consisting of "introspection and nationalism" with an "inferiority complex," that aides warned Kennedy about in 1961.<sup>94</sup> Diefenbaker was prone to outbursts toward ambassadors, seeming about-faces on matters of policy, and left a legacy of indecisiveness that ultimately dominated the American perspective on how to interpret Canadian policy.<sup>95</sup> US officials thought of Green as a rogue, yet naïve individual in the Canadian government who damaged relations with their most important ally through his perceived neutralist manoeuvring in a hyper-Cold War geopolitical landscape.<sup>96</sup>

Despite this fixation with Diefenbaker and Green as impediments to what would otherwise be normal bilateral relations, little attention has been paid in American circles to figures like Norman Robertson, or the origins and trajectory of the policy formation within the DEA more generally. While Diefenbaker and Green no doubt wielded significant power in Canadian foreign affairs, the more contentious policies pursued by the Diefenbaker government vis-à-vis relations with the United States were often conceived by career bureaucrats like Robertson and a DEA that had been on its own distinct policy evolution since the early 1950s,

---

<sup>94</sup> "Scope Paper" for President Kennedy's visit to Ottawa in May 1961, LAC, NAR Files, MG 31—E 83—Vol 5, File 8, May 2, 1961, 1

<sup>95</sup> For Diefenbaker's outburst towards an ambassador, see letter to George Ball from Livingston Merchant on John Diefenbaker's "tirade" in official meeting on May 4, 1962, NARA, B: 1241: F: 611.42/4-461, May 5, 1962, 1-7.

<sup>96</sup> McKercher, *Camelot and Canada: Canadian-American Relations in the Kennedy Era*, 28.

primarily under Diefenbaker's chief rival Lester Pearson. While the DEA ultimately needed approval from like-minded ministers such as Green, they were nevertheless on their own course of policy-formation that transcended party politics and their policy creation has often been overlooked on account of a fixation with the highest levels of governance. This brings into question the structures that were responsible for Canada's foreign policy, often accredited to high-profile leaders and ministers (like Diefenbaker and Green) but were largely played out at the bureaucratic level whose policy framework seemed to be indifferent to governing parties or personality spats between leaders. This reality suggests a significant level of continuity across Canadian governments during these years—Liberal or Progressive Conservative—concerning Canada's foreign interests, despite visible differences between the governing and opposition party at any given time.

This continuity within the DEA emphasizes the importance of understanding process and idea creation in the formulation of Canada's foreign policy during these years versus simply observing the presentation of ideas through leaders and public statements. By overemphasizing leaders, the role of bureaucracy in developing Canadian foreign policy is often missed or at least overlooked. In the case of Cuba, it is not that the Kennedy administration's Cold War policy was on an inevitable collision course with an unpredictable John Diefenbaker and naïve foreign minister, but rather it was on a collision course with a Canadian bureaucracy that was committed to its middle power project that was initiated in the 1940s, came of age in the 1950s, and had ultimately become incompatible with American Cold War orthodoxy by the 1960s. This reality makes Kennedy's well-documented preference for Lester Pearson and the Liberals over Diefenbaker's Progressive Conservatives in the 1963 election all the more unusual given that the DEA was staffed overwhelmingly by "Pearsonalities" and holdovers from recent Liberal

governments. It also shows that American thinkers were not as conscious of the continuity that existed in the Canadian bureaucracy, particularly when it came to its development as a middle power in world affairs. Consequently, when one looks to understand the nature of Canada's foreign affairs during these years, greater attention needs to be paid to the functions and aims of its evolving bureaucracy, which was simultaneously the place of idea and policy creation, and tended to transcend monumental shifts often associated with changes in leadership, revealing considerable continuity in the goals of Canadian foreign policy.

## Bibliography

Archival Sources:

**Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.**

**National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland.**

**University of Saskatchewan Archives and Special Collections, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.**

Primary Sources:

### LAC

MG 31—E 83—Vol 5 File 4 (April 1961)

MG 31—E 83—Vol 5 File 7 (May 1961)

MG 31—E 83—Vol 5 File 8 (May 1961)

MG 31—E 83—Vol 27 File 8 (Oral History Interview of Howard Green—1971)

MG 31—E 83—Vol 27 File 10 (Oral History Interview of Howard Green—1971-1975)

MG 31—E 83—Vol 27 File 11 (Oral History Interview of Howard Green—1972-1980)

MG 32—B 13—Vol 7 File 12 (Canada—United States Relations. 1960-1963)

MG 32—B 13—Vol 8 file 14 External Affairs Debate — memoranda, notes. April 1961

### NARA

Box: 1240 File: 611.42/1-460

Box: 1241 File: 611.42/1-1061

Box: 1241 File: 6.11.42/4-461

### USAC

MG 01/VII/1/269.4 Canada-United States Relations 1961

MG 01/XII/A/268 Diefenbaker, John G — Correspondence — (V.I.P.) Kennedy, John F. 1960-1962

MG 01/XII/B/350 Telepol Survey — CTV Television Network 1961-1962

Secondary Sources:

Bothwell, Robert. *Your Country, My Country: A Unified History of the United States and Canada*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Chapnick, Adam. *The Middle Power Project: Canada and the Founding of the United Nations*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005.

Heidt, D. ““I Think That Would Be the End of Canada”: Howard Green, the Nuclear Test Ban, and Interest-Based Foreign Policy, 1946–1963.” *ARCS* 42, no. 3 (2012): 343–69.

Hilliker, John, and Donald Barry. *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume 2: Coming of Age, 1946-1968*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2014.

Jordaan, Edward. “The Concept of a Middle Power in International Relations: Distinguishing between Emerging and Traditional Middle Powers,” *South African Political Studies* 30, no. 1 (2003): 165-181.

McKenna, Peter. *Canada and the OAS: From Dilettante to Full Partner*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1995.

McKercher, Asa. *Camelot and Canada: Canadian-American Relations in the Kennedy Era*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

McMahon, Patricia. *Essence of Indecision: Diefenbaker's Nuclear Policy, 1957-1963*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2009.

“Norman Alexander Robertson (1904-1968),” *Behind the Diary: A King's Who's Who Biographies*, LAC, accessed March 27, 2018.  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20110408174012/http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/king/023011-1050.37-e.html>

Robinson, Basil H. *Diefenbaker's World: A Populist in Foreign Affairs*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989.

Rochlin, James. *Discovering the Americas: The Evolution of Canadian Foreign Policy towards Latin America*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1994.

Spooner, Kevin. *Canada, the Congo Crisis, and UN Peacekeeping, 1960-64*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009.

Thompson, John Herd. *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2008.