FOLLOWING THE AMERICAN LEAD: CANADA'S DIPLOMACY TOWARDS CUBA IN THE PRE-REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD, 1939-1959

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ABSTRACT

Following the American Lead: Canada's Diplomacy Towards Cuba in the Pre-Revolutionary Period, 1939-1959

Kailey Miller

This thesis provides an original view of Canadian diplomacy towards Cuba in the post-Second World War, pre-revolutionary period by looking at previously unavailable diplomatic correspondence. The evolution of Canada's diplomacy in Cuba within the context of shifting international realities, Canada-U.S. relations, and the changing dynamics of personnel and policies at the Department of External Affairs (DEA) in Ottawa, is the central focus of this thesis. It makes the argument that Canadian diplomacy in the period largely followed the dictates of American policy.

This thesis relies heavily on despatches sent between Canadian diplomats in Havana and Ottawa. These documents were retrieved directly from the Library and Archives Canada (LAC), and haven been drawn from fifteen volumes that collectively contain over 4000 RG 25 (External Affairs) documents on Canadian-Cuban bilateral relations from 1939 until 1959.

Keywords: Canadian-Cuban relations, Pre-revolutionary Cuba, Canadian diplomacy, Cold War, Canadian-U.S. relation

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Introduction

Writing to the Canadian Ambassador to Brazil in 1947, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Lester B. Pearson, said the following: "One reason for our present high position [in Latin America] is our separation from United States attitudes and policies, sometimes unwise and sometimes unpopular, toward Latin American countries."[1] This statement is not consistent with Canada's diplomatic record in Cuba during the pre-revolutionary years. By the time Canada established diplomatic relations with Cuba in 1945, a second world war had left Europe in economic and political ruins, the United States had surpassed the British Empire as the leader of the Western world, and the beginnings of a decades-long ideological struggle between Soviet communism and liberal democracy had become the cause célèbre of Western politics. As a result, Canada's Cold War alliance with the United States ultimately superseded the desire of Canadian diplomats to pursue an independent policy in Cuba from 1945 to 1959.

The purpose of this thesis is to provide an original view of Canadian diplomacy towards Cuba in the post-Second World War, pre-revolutionary period by looking at previously unavailable diplomatic correspondence. The evolution of Canada's diplomacy in Cuba within the context of shifting international realities, Canada-U.S. relations, and the changing dynamics of personnel and policies at the Department of External Affairs (DEA) in Ottawa, is the central focus of this thesis. It makes the argument that Canadian diplomacy in the period largely followed the

[1]Lester B. Pearson to Canadian Ambassador to Brazil, "Pan-American Union," 9 January 1947, http://www.international.gc.ca/department/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=13765.

dictates of American policy. This was due to three primary factors: the preponderant necessities of the Cold War, American influence-
both on the ground in Cuba and in Washington- and a shared belief among Canadian diplomats and their American counterparts in an anti-communist approach to Cuba.

Like the United States, Canada saw Cuba as a relatively insignificant area in the Cold War from 1945 until 1959. Though Cubans were long-standing trading partners, Canadian diplomats saw them, in general, as a backward and politically immature people. Canada also recognized that Cuba's corrupt and unstable political system could provide a fertile ground for a communist uprising. As a result, senior officials at the Department of External Affairs (DEA) believed that American leadership was needed to bring stability to the island, which in turn protected Canadian and Western interests.

Although Ottawa understood the importance of American leadership in Cuba, it also wanted to be at arms length from any formal organization involving Pan-American security. As a result, Canada did not seek inclusion to the Pan-American Union (later renamed the Organization of American States [OAS]). As far as Pearson was concerned, it was Canada's "aloofness from petty Pan-American affairs" that allowed it to maintain a position of "superiority" over the United States in that particular area of foreign policy.[2]

Nonetheless, while Canada prided itself on being "aloof" from Latin American entanglements, it made no attempts to demonstrate its separation from the United States' approach to Cuba in either its policies or in the initiatives it supported

[2] Ibid.

through the United Nations. Far from taking the "high road" in its diplomacy with Cuba, Canada was more often than not in lock step with the United States.

While senior officials at the DEA figure prominently in this study, the focus will also be on Canadian diplomats in Cuba. Prior to 1959, the Canadian embassy in Havana was one of relatively little significance, both in the eyes of senior officials at the DEA and the diplomats at the more established missions in Havana, namely the American and the British. The DEA expected Canadian diplomats in Havana to perform two main duties: protect Canadian commercial interests, which were mostly banking and insurance, and increase Canada's trade opportunities in Cuba.[3] However, international political concerns also played a role in determining what the DEA expected from the diplomats it sent to Havana. The diplomats who headed the Canadian embassy from 1945 until 1959 were died-in-the-wool Cold Warriors. They understood that their role was to support American leadership in their efforts to bring stability to the island. Where they differed from their American counterparts was in their professional conduct on the island. While American diplomats in Cuba had established a reputation for being entangled in Cuban politics, Canadian diplomats refrained from making any public signs of support for the Cuban government in

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[3] As John Kirk and Peter McKenna point out on page 8 of their *Canada and Cuba Relations: The Other Good Neighbour Policy* (Gainsville: University Press of Florida, 1997) Cuba's preferential trade agreement with the United States had "handicapped" Canada's exports prior to the 1940s. However, trade between the two countries increased after both Canada and Cuba signed the 1947 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (G.A.T.T) agreement, which subsequently lowered the taxes on a variety of goods. The primary goods exported from Canada to Cuba in the nineteenth-century included salt fish and lumber, while spare parts and wheat topped the list of export products in the twentieth century; in return, Canada has always purchased sugar and rum from Cuba. See Kirk and McKenna's first Chapter, entitled "Setting the Historical Scene: Salt Fish and Lumber for Sugar and Rum," for a detailed description of the bilateral trade relationship.

power, outside of what diplomatic protocol permitted. At the embassy level, then, there was also a quiet belief that Canadian diplomats were "superior" to their U.S. counterparts in their ability to remain at arms length from Cuban affairs. Regardless of how Canadian diplomats saw themselves in relation to their American counterparts, the fact remained that they held very little power or influence on the island and, therefore, had little choice but to follow the American lead. This was due in large part to a lack of resources available to Canadian diplomats on the ground in Cuba.

This account of Canadian Cuban policy is not an examination of Canadian-Cuban bilateral relations in the pre-revolutionary period. The main focus is on Canadian diplomacy towards Cuba and the extent to which that diplomacy was informed by a desire both to support American leadership while maintaining a degree of superiority over their U.S. counterparts. As the focus will be on the formation of Canadian foreign policy, I will also examine the inner workings of the DEA, which came of age in the period in which Canada and Cuba established diplomatic relations. The ways in which Canada's diplomats, both in Ottawa and on the ground in Cuba, understood and communicated their sense of Canadian interests in Cuba will also be a central focus of this thesis.

Scholars have often referred to the heady days of the Department of External affairs from 1946 until 1956 as the "golden age" of Canadian foreign policy, which was capped by Pearson's Nobel-prize winning efforts during the Suez Crisis in 1956. The Department's policy towards Cuba, however, is less deserving of this title. While it is true that Latin America was relatively unimportant in the eyes of Canadian

policy-makers- Canada only had three legations in Latin America prior to 1945- reports from the Canadian embassy indicated that all was not well in Cuba. That Pearson overlooked these signs suggests that he, like President Eisenhower, underestimated the extent of Cubans' dissatisfaction with the status quo.

Methodological Approach

This study relies heavily on despatches sent by Canadian diplomats in Havana to Ottawa. These documents were retrieved directly from the Library and Archives Canada (LAC), and haven been drawn from fifteen volumes that collectively contain over 4000 RG 25 (External Affairs) documents on Canadian-Cuban bilateral relations from 1939 until 1959.[4] The major benefits of this approach are immediacy, in terms of the proximity to events unfolding in Cuba, and impact, specifically on senior officials at External Affairs. The dangers in using such a restricted perspective, however, both in terms of time frame and viewpoint, must be taken into consideration. To offset these limitations, I will make some reference to how others viewed the Cuban situation, including officials in Ottawa and Washington, other diplomatic missions in Cuba, and writers on Cuban history prior to 1959. I will also consult the existing literature on the Department of External Affairs in order to shed light on how the department worked and how policy decisions were made.

[4] A handful of documents used in this study were also taken from the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade website, which provides a history of the Department of External Affairs, along with a selection of documents from 1946 to 1960. See http://www.international.gc.ca/department/history-histoire/dcer/browse-en.asp for a complete list of the available volumes.

Historiography

It is important to discuss the existing literature on Canadian-Cuban relations, specifically addressing foreign policy and diplomatic relations. However, as only a handful of works exist on the relationship specifically between Canada and Cuba, it is more useful to examine three distinct, though interrelated, groups of Cold War historiography: Canadian-Cuban relations, American-Cuban relations, and, more generally, Canadian and American foreign policy from 1945 until 1960. However, the following historiography does not claim to represent all of the relevant scholarly works associated with Canadian Cold War diplomacy or American-Cuban relations. Instead, it is a survey of the more salient themes that inspired the thinking of this study.

Canadian-Cuban relations, pre-1959

The existing historiography of Canadian-Cuban relations in the pre-revolutionary period is slight in comparison to the attention given by Canadian historians and political scientists alike to Canada's relationship with Cuba under Fidel Castro. Nonetheless, a handful of core works do exist that provide a useful starting point in understanding the roots of the bilateral relationship. The first of these is John Kirk and Peter McKenna's *Canadian-Cuban relations: the Other Good Neighbour Policy* (1997). The first chapter provides a brief sketch of Canada's trade relationship during World War II, along with a short section on Canada's diplomatic reporting in the pre-revolutionary era. Kirk and McKenna argue that the reports from Canada's embassy in Havana were mostly uncritical, which ultimately contributed to "a

climate of uncertainty in Ottawa."[5] Though it was admittedly not the focus of their study, Kirk and McKenna's assessment of Canadian diplomats' perception of political and social elements in Cuba is limited by its lack of primary source material. While Kirk and McKenna used only three volumes for the basis of their analysis of the quality of Canadian diplomatic reporting in Havana, there now exist several more volumes that challenge their conclusions. As a result, Kirk and McKenna's work can now only be considered as a preliminary rather than a reliable analysis of Canadian-Cuban diplomatic relations in the pre-revolutionary period. Moreover, while they gesture to the department's desire for Canadian diplomats to work with their American counterparts toward the shared goal of political stability, they give only passing mention to political elements, such as the Cold War, in the formation of Canada's Cuba policy. Nonetheless, their argument that there was a "paternalistic attitude" towards the Cuban government, along with a "basic support of U.S. initiatives" is an accurate one that is supported by a more thorough review of the primary literature from the period.

After Kirk and McKenna's work, it was not until 2007 that the Cuba-Canada relationship was revisited by historian Robert Wright in his *Three Nights in Havana.* Though also not the focus of his study, Wright touches upon the roots of the Canadian-Cuban relationship prior to the revolutionary period in his first chapter. On the issue of diplomatic reporting, Wright agrees with Kirk and McKenna that Canadian embassy officials failed to predict the strength of Castro's forces, though he does not provide any new documentary evidence to substantiate this claim.

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[5]Kirk and McKenna 30.

Nonetheless, Wright makes a valuable contribution to any review of Canadian-Cuban pre-revolutionary relations by emphasizing that Canada and Cuba became friends "despite their differences,"[6] a statement that adequately describes both the relationship shared between Pierre Trudeau and Fidel Castro, and also, to a lesser extent, how Canadians viewed Cuba during the pre-revolutionary period.

The theme of "shared friendship" that appears in *Three Nights* is echoed in Wright's co-edited work with Lana Wylie, *Our Place in the Sun (2009)*. The contributing authors come from a variety of academic and professional backgrounds that gives the work a multidisciplinary perspective. Despite being influenced by varying methodological backgrounds, each author's work reflects a common theme: that the Canadian policy of dialogue and engagement has proven to be more productive than the American policy of isolation, though it has, admittedly, also failed to convert Cuba into a liberal democracy. This collection includes a discussion on a wide range of topics, some of which have tested the resolve of the Canadian-Cuban relationship, particularly Cuba's involvement in Angola and the pro-American policies that were adopted in the Mulroney years. Nonetheless, the final chapter of the book, written by former Canadian Ambassador Mark Entwisle, projects that the relationship between Canada and Cuba will likely continue uninterrupted as it has done for more than six decades.

While the majority of the content focuses on Canadian-Cuban relations during the revolutionary period, Don Munton and David Vogt's *Inside Castro's Cuba* focuses specifically on the role played by the Canadian embassy in shaping Canada's

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[6]Robert Wright's *Three Nights in Havana: Pierre Trudeau, Fidel Castro, and the Cold War World* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 2007) 19.

policy towards Cuba in the pre-revolutionary period. While acknowledging that the reporting was far from perfect, Munton and Vogt's assessment is more accurate than Kirk and McKenna's. According to Munton and Vogt, the embassy despatches sent from Havana to Ottawa were in fact "balanced, accurate, and perceptive, sometimes remarkably so."[7] Their variance with Kirk and McKenna's findings results from better archival sources. Unlike Kirk and McKenna, Munton and Vogt cast a wider net, focusing on nearly ten volumes of RG 25 documents, ranging in dates from the early 1950s until 1961. As a result of the breadth of primary documents on which they drew, Munton and Vogt assembled a more convincing assessment of the quality and content of the despatches between Havana and Ottawa. Their analysis of Canadian Ambassador Harry Scott, in particular, is more nuanced than the one provided by Kirk and McKenna. Whereas Kirk and McKenna argue that Scott's assessments of the strength of the Batista regime was inaccurate and biased, Munton and Vogt argue instead that Scott had an "ambivalent" view towards the Cuban political situation. According to Munton and Vogt, Scott saw both a "cautious hope" in the Batista government's ability to offer progress and stability to Cuba, although he also believed Cubans would not easily forgive Batista for taking power by force. While "ambivalence" is a more accurate word than "inaccurate" or "biased" to describe Scott's perception of the Batista government, this thesis finds that Scott was consistent rather than contradictory in his assessment of Batista. More specifically,

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[7] Don Munton and David Vogt's "Inside Castro's Cuba: The Revolution and Canada's Embassy in Cuba" in Robert Wright and Lana Wylie's *Our Place in the Sun: Canada and Cuba in the Castro Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009) 46.

Scott was consistently critical towards the Batista government from 1952 until the beginning of 1956. It was only in the final months of 1956 that Scott began to provide a more favourable assessment of Batista in his despatches back to Ottawa. In this way, Scott's ambivalent attitude manifested itself at the end or his tenure- rather than throughout-as Munton and Vogt argue. Whereas Munton and Vogt utilized a single volume of RG 25 documents to inform their assessment of Scott, this thesis has consulted two volumes with over 300 despatches between Scott and Ottawa that have not been utilized by either Kirk and McKenna or Munton and Vogt.[8] In this way, this thesis has sought to draw from a wider breadth of material in order to provide a more thorough examination of Scott's perception of the Batista government and his role as a diplomat in a nation that was dominated by American influence.

In all fairness to both Kirk and McKenna and Munton and Vogt, it is difficult to chart the trajectory of Canadian diplomats' perception of events without consulting all the available despatches from the period. As some volumes still remain closed under the Official Secrets Act, it perhaps will not be possible to gain a clearer picture of how Canadian diplomats interpreted and responded to events in pre-revolutionary Cuba until such documents become available.

That being said, there are still significant aspects of Canada's diplomacy towards Cuba in the pre-revolutionary period that have gone largely unexplored by either Kirk and McKenna or Munton and Vogt. Specifically, the activity of Canada's diplomats in Havana prior to 1952 has not been examined in detail by either set of authors. Nor has the role of the DEA in the formation and execution of Canada's

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[8] The two volumes are RG 25, Vol. 8455, File 7590-N-40 pt 2 and RG 25, Vol. 4016, File 10224-40, pt. 2.

diplomacy with Cuba been given a close analysis. This thesis, then, will attempt to fill these voids in the existing historiography in order to gain a greater understanding of Canada's Cold War diplomacy with Cuba.

Trends in the historiography of American-Cuban relations, pre-1959

To date, the majority of American historians writing on Cuba have focused their attention on the revolutionary period and the Kennedy-Castro relationship. However, like the Canadian-Cuban historiography, a handful of works exist that focus on the pre-revolutionary period of American-Cuban relations. Those who fit into this category tend to approach the relationship from a government-centric perspective, where the United States is portrayed as a dominant, paternalistic force that can be held responsible for creating the fragile economic and political environment that characterized pre-revolutionary Cuba. In addition, the United States relationship with Batista figures prominently in this branch of historiography, as scholars generally agree that his undoing can be explained by his complicity in the United States political and economic dominance of Cuba.

This theme is explored in historian Thomas Paterson's *Contesting Castro* (1994), where Batista's role as an American puppet is argued to have been the main contributor to the anti-Americanism and nationalist sentiments that ultimately led to Castro's victory.[9] Paterson leaves no rock unturned in examining the extent to which

[9] However, Paterson pays little attention to the political landscape in Cuba in the days leading up to Batista's successful coup, nor to the Santiago uprising that acted as a catalyst for Castro's impassioned assault on the Batista regime. See his *Contesting Castro: the United States and the triumph of the Cuban Revolution.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

American businesses and government personnel helped stoked the revolutionary fires. His chapter on Meyer Lanskey and Cuba's casino culture, in particular, provides an instructive portrait of the social decay that contributed to the political instability on the island. From a methodological standpoint, Paterson relies heavily on, what was then, newly declassified material from the State Department, CIA, and National Security Council. Though he touches upon Cuban political history prior to Batista's coup in 1952, his early chapters give only a cursory indication of how American policy towards Cuba evolved from a policy of isolationism under Roosevelt to one of containment under Truman's watch in the late forties. Nonetheless, Paterson's continues to be a seminal work in the historiography of American-Cuban diplomatic relations.

Though it does not focus solely on the pre-revolutionary period, Lars Schoultz's *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic* (2009) is the first study since *Contesting Castro* to thoroughly explore primary source material to uncover a clearer picture of the factors that affected the United States Cuba policy in the pre-revolutionary period. Unlike Paterson, Schoultz provides a more thorough account of the roots of American-Cuban relations. His discussion of the U.S. occupation of 1898-1901 and the subsequent establishment of the Platt Amendment sets the tone for the remainder of the study, while also providing the structure for one of his central arguments: that American belligerence is largely to blame for Cuban resentment towards perceived American encroachment. On this point, Schoultz positions his first three chapters masterfully as a means of explaining why Castro's revolution became not a change of guard at the top, but rather a groundswell of change. Eisenhower

comes off looking worse for the ware, as Schoultz reveals through primary source material the extent to which the former President neglected the obvious economic difficulties that were reported to him early in 1953 after his brother Milton's fact-finding trip.[10] Schoultz's discussion of American arms sales to Batista, despite the knowledge that they were being used to fight Castro's rebel group, is particularly instructive in gaining an understanding of the degree to which the United States did not take into consideration how such policies could later come back to haunt them. Though Schoultz provides a well-written, fast-paced text his work would have benefited from a greater focus on the Good Neighbour period as the basis for America-Cuban relations in the postwar period. Nonetheless, Schoultz's work has set the new benchmark for historians looking to add something new to the story of American-Cuban relations.

Though not as ambitious as Schoultz's work, Alex Von Tunzelmann's *Red Conspiracy* (2011) presents a fresh approach to analyzing U.S.-Latin American relations, focusing on Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Cuba in a comparative context. Unlike Paterson and Schoultz, Von Tunzelmann argues that Batista's undoing cannot be attributed to Castro or the United States, but rather to the loss of popular support.[11] According to Von Tunzelmann, Batista essentially "abandoned the island to whoever was willing to take it."[12] This effectively strips Castro of any

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[10] Schoultz's discusses this on 67 of his *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic: the United States and the Cuban Revolution.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009.

[11] Alex Von Tunzelmann's *Red Heat: Conspiracy, Murder, and the Cold War in the Caribbean* (New York: Henry Hold and Company, 2011).

[12] Quote taken from Tom Gjelten's book review "Mischief in the Caribbean," of Von Tunzulmann's book, published in the March 25, 2011 online edition of the *New York*

significant role in his ascent to power, an argument that is largely unsubstantiated by the available evidence from the archival material examined in this study. Nonetheless, she provides a string of fascinating quotes from primary source material that emphasizes the degree to which American politicians interpreted nationalist movements in the Caribbean to be synonymous with Soviet communism. In addition, while not explicitly a post-colonial interpretation, this study's comparative approach highlights a valuable theme: that Cuba was only one example of a broader effort by Washington to assert its imperialist aims through the vehicle of "anti-communism."

Though this thesis will not attempt to add any new insights into the American-Cuban diplomatic relationship in the pre-revolutionary period, it will attempt to demonstrate how Canada's Cuba policy was influenced by, and responded to, the United States actions in Cuba during the Truman and Eisenhower presidencies.

Historiography of U.S. Cold War policy, 1945-1959

A study on Canada's relationship with Cuba in the pre-revolutionary period is also, by association, an examination of United States foreign policy under President Harry Truman and his successor, Dwight D. Eisenhower. As a result, it is useful to examine the ways in which historians of American foreign policy have interpreted these two men. The main approaches used by historians to assess both Truman and Eisenhower's political legacy is orthodoxy and revisionism. Supporters of Truman writing in the 1960s often waxed eloquent that the former President overcame his inexperience to challenge the forces of the Soviet empire and reaching out to the war-

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Times, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/27/books/review/book-review-red-heat-by-alex-von-tunzelmann.html?emc=tnt&tntemail1=y.

torn countries of Europe, while continuing on the liberal path left by Roosevelt with his "Fair Deal." Similarly his major policy achievements, including the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, Point IV, and the establishment of NATO, his supporters argue, earned Truman the ranking of "near great" that was bestowed on him in Arthur Schlesinger's 1962 poll that sought to determine America's eleven greatest presidents.[13] These arguments form the basis of works such as Merle's Miller's *Plain Speaking* (1974), Alonzo Hambley's *Beyond the New Deal* (1973), and Eric Goldman's *The Crucial Decade* (1960). However, in the 1960s historians became disillusioned with historical interpretations of American power, largely as a result of the American war in Vietnam.[14] This disillusionment ultimately gave way to the rise of New Left historical interpretations defined by a call for the revision of orthodox interpretations of Truman's policies. Revisionist work such as Gar Alperovitz's *Atomic diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam: the use of the atomic bomb and the American confrontation with Soviet power* (1985) rejected orthodox claims that Truman was a victim of Soviet belligerence, arguing instead that Truman was the architect of the Cold War. According to Alperovitz, the evidence for this came even before the end of World War II when Truman decided to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The reason for this decision, Alperovitz argues, was to

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[13] Geoffry Smith's review essay, "Harry We Hardly Knew You:' Revisionism, Politics and Diplomacy, 1945-1954" *The American Political Science Review* 70.2 1976, 561.

[14] As Norman Graebner points out, it should not be assumed that historians who agreed with Cold War orthodoxy did not find fault with some American policies. However, they do agree that the American reaction to a "divided Europe," that is, "both in rejecting any agreement on spheres of influence and in creating a counterstrategy" was the proper response. See his review "Cold War Origins and the Continuing Debate" *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 13.1 (1969) 127.

ensure that Russia would not take control of Manchuria, but also to convince the Russians "to accept the American plan for a stable peace."[15]

Richard Freeland contributes to New Left interpretations of Truman's presidency in his *The Truman doctrine and the origins of McCarthyism* (1972). Like Alperovitz, Freeland argues that Truman was an active agent in laying the groundwork for the Cold War. Freeland's central argument is that Truman realized that massive economic aid to Western Europe-in the form of the Marshall plan- was necessary to advance American economic and strategic interests. In order to build sympathy for the Marshall Plan in Congress, argues Freeland, Truman had to raise fear and suspicion of the Soviet Union as inherently aggressive and expansionist, which in turn created an anti-Soviet foreign policy and inadvertently created a path for Joseph McCarthy.[16] In a similar vein, Thomas Paterson's *Soviet-American Confrontation: Postwar Reconstruction and the Origins of the Cold War* (1973) focuses his criticism of Truman's presidency on the administration's manipulation of international organizations to become "instruments of American foreign policy," such as the International Monetary Fund. According to Paterson, Truman's pronouncements early in his presidency to use economic aid as a tool of diplomacy were undermined after he cancelled economic relief to Eastern Europe United Nations Relief and Recovery administration (UNRRA) was replaced with unilateral aid programs in 1946.[17] Therefore, in Freeland, Alperovitz and Paterson's studies,

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[15] Re-quoted in Robert Griffith's review "Truman and the Historians: The Reconstruction of Postwar American history *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 59.1 (1975) 23.
[16] See Griffith's "Truman and the Historians" 44.
[17] See Griffith's "Truman and the Historians" 25.

Truman comes off as a man who was blinded to a more conciliatory approach to American Soviet policy by his desire to increase American wealth and power in Eastern Europe.

While the above studies have done much to challenge orthodox arguments of Truman's presidency, there remains little written on Truman's policies in Latin America.[18] In this way, Schoultz's work is the only recent study to provide some insight, however slight it may be, into Truman's policies in Cuba. Although there is little information to work with, that which is available helps to better understand why Canadian diplomats, both in Ottawa and on the ground in Havana, followed the dictates of American policy in Cuba during the mid to late 1940s. If one were to consider Truman as the "architect" of a hard-line approach to Soviet-styled communism, it is easier to understand why Canadian diplomats, who themselves were committed to fighting the "red menace," would have agreed to support the American-led status quo in Cuba. As this study will show, both the DEA and Canada's diplomats in Cuba, believed Truman's "give 'em hell" style of politics was what was needed to protect the Western hemisphere from Soviet expansion.

As historians of the New Left began to revise interpretations of Truman's policies, revisionist readings of Eisenhower's presidency also emerged. While historians from the orthodox tradition of American foreign policy dismissed

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[18] That said, Walter Lafeber's *Inevitable Revolutions*: the United States in Latin America (New York: Norton, 1983), makes an interesting argument that U.S. officials presumed Latin America was firmly under U.S. control, and therefore they denied it the post-war economic aid that it needed. While Lafeber's argument is directed towards Central American countries, it applies equally as well to Cuba in the post-World War II, pre-Revolutionary Period. Greg Grandin extends a similar argument in his *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006).

Eisenhower as a "passive" president who was "strung along" by his dominant, highly intellectual Secretary of State John Foster Dulles,[19] the release of the Ann Whitman files (named after Eisenhower's personal secretary) which contained, as one historian described as a "bonanza" of personal letters, telephone transcripts, and private notes from meetings with the NSC, produced a slew of revisionist articles that sought to rehabilitate Eisenhower's image. Richard Immerman's "Eisenhower and Dulles: Who made the decisions?" (1979) is one such example. Based on his review of primary source material from the Eisenhower papers, Immerman argues that far from Dulles shouldering the bulk of foreign policy problems, he and Eisenhower worked collaboratively, always keeping each other informed of new advancements information, while not making any decisions before they consulted each other at length. In other words, "one did not dominate the other. "[20] Stephen E. Ambrose's article "The Ike Age" (1981) makes a similar argument, rebuking the claims that Eisenhower was a "part-time" president who "preferred the gold course to the Oval Office." Eisenhower, Ambrose argues, "worked an exhausting schedule," and, rather than being a mere "tool" of the "millionaires" within his cabinet, Eisenhower fought for acceptance of the New Deal.[21] Under Eisenhower's watch, no American lives were lost, nor was American ground ceded to any foreign power. Indeed, Ambrose argues that "Ike" kept the peace, signing an armistice with Korea, staying out of

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[19] Stephen E. Rabe points this out in his article in Michael Hogan's edited work *America in the World: the historiography of American foreign relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 303.
[20] Richard H. Immerman's "Eisenhower and Dulles: Who Made the Decisions?" *Political Psychology* 1.2 (1979) 32.
[21] Stephen E. Ambrose "The Ike Age: the Revisionist View of Eisenhower" *The New Republic* (1981) 31.

Vietnam, while also avoiding entering into war in spite of crises in Hungary, the Suez, and even Cuba.[22]

Robert A. Divine's "Eisenhower and the Cold War" (1981) supports both Immerman and Ambrose's interpretations of the President as an assertive, shrewd foreign policy tactician. According to Divine, "far from being the do-nothing President of legend, Ike was skillful and active in directing American foreign policy." Moreover, Eisenhower's decision to stop testing and building nuclear weapons, argues Devine, serves as further evidence of the former President's "prudence" and "moderation," which, "served as an enduring model of presidential restraint" and one that his successors "ignored to their eventual regret."[23]

However, none of these authors test their revisionist readings of Eisenhower in the context of his policy towards Latin America. As Stephen Rabe points out, historians of Inter-American relations have tended to label the American relationship with Latin America from 1945 until 1960 as "an unhappy, dull, insignificant interregnum between the Good Neighbour and Alliance for Progress."[24] The exception to this disinterest in Latin America, however, was the Guatemalan intervention in 1954, which Eisenhower boasts in his memoirs to have successfully vanquished a formidable communist threat by supporting the CIA-led overthrow of President Jacobo Arbenz. Eisenhower himself identified the defeat of Arbenz at the hands of Carlos Castillo to have been a "critical Cold War victory" and cited it as

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[22] Ibid.
[23] Robert J. McMahon quotes pages 154-155 in Robert Devine's *Eisenhower and the Cold War* in "Eisenhower and Third World Nationalism: A Critique of the Revisionists," *Political Science Quarterly* 101.3 (1986) 455.
[24] Rabe, *America in the World* 4.

evidence that he deserved a second term as President.[25] To historians of the CIA, the Guatemalan intervention served to bloat the ego of the agency into pursuing similar operations, Eisenhower revisionists cite it as further evidence of Eisenhower's military "restraint." Eisenhower's response to the Guatemalan intervention, then, sparked a new trend among Eisenhower revisionists, which saw a rise in interest in analyzing Eisenhower's policies in the Third World. Richard H. Immerman's deviates little from his assessment of Eisenhower in his article discussed above in his 1982 publication *The CIA in Guatemala: the foreign policy of intervention.*[26] In order to draw attention away from Eisenhower's intervention in Guatemalan domestic politics, Immerman argues that Eisenhower possessed a greater understanding of Latin America than did his predecessor. The difference between Truman and Eisenhower, Immerman argues, was that the latter "recognized the pitfalls" of Truman's policy of containment via "an overreliance on force." More specifically, Immerman argues that Truman's military grant-aid program, the Mutual Security Act, which was signed in 1951, and the Point IV economic assistance program were ineffectual. According to Immerman, Eisenhower, the "keen strategist," realized that openly giving arms to government would only antagonize nationalist groups, thereby creating the instability

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[25] Ibid.

[26] Other notable works on this subject are Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer's *Bitter Fruit: The Untold Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (Garden City, N.Y: Anchor, 1982) and Blanche Wiesen Cook's *The Declassified Eisenhower* (New York: Doubleday, 1981). See also Piero Gliejeses' excellent study of the Guatemala and the U.S. entitled *Shattered Hope: the Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), as well as Greg Grandin's *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), the latter of which discusses many of the major arguments regarding Eisenhower's shift to covert military operations that appears in McMahon's study (discussed below).

necessary for communist tendencies to take root. In order to avoid resentment, Eisenhower chose to use clandestine measures. His belief that covert operations were a "crucial component" of achieving American foreign policy objectives, Immerman argues, differentiated him from his predecessor, while also highlighting Eisenhower's "restraint," as he believed such tactics should be used "correctly" and "judiciously." Though Immerman succeeds in formulating a convincing argument that supports a revisionist reading of Eisenhower as a successful, assertive leader, he does not look at Eisenhower's policy towards other Latin American countries, particularly in Cuba, where he actively supported Truman's Mutual Security Act by selling arms to Batista.

Similarly, Robert McMahon challenges Eisenhower revisionists in his article "Eisenhower and Third World Nationalism: A Critique of Revisionists" (1986) by arguing that Eisenhower's policy decisions in Latin America complicates revisionist interpretations of the former President. According to McMahon, revisionists such as Divine, Ambrose and Immerman have not "appreciated the centrality of Third World Nationalism" which has led them to create a "distorted" and "oversimplified" portrait of American foreign policy under Eisenhower.[27] Based on his reading of Eisenhower's policies, McMahon posits that by promoting stability through "inherently unstable and unrepresentative regimes," the Eisenhower administration ultimately contributed to the instability of the region, thus "undermining a basic American foreign policy goal."[28]

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[27] McMahon 457. McMahon asserts that Third World nationalism was "the most significant historical development of the mid-twentieth century."

[28] McMahon 457. McMahon goes beyond the Americas to bolster his argument, using Eisenhower's approach to Asia, Africa and the Middle East as further evidence of his failure in the Third World.

Stephen G. Rabe's *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of AntiCommunism* (1988) builds on McMahon's argument that Eisenhower's third world policies undermines revisionist claims that Eisenhower advocated peace and military restraint. It should not be forgotten, Rabe argues, that during the Truman years as chief of staff, General Eisenhower consistently voted in favour of military assistance to Latin American countries "indiscriminately", while arguing to the Joint Chiefs of Staff that an inter-American military arrangement was "essential to national security." Moreover, though Rabe credits Eisenhower with recognizing that nationalism throughout the third world was "the most dynamic feature in world affairs," he argues that Eisenhower interpreted nationalism through a Cold War lens. Eisenhower's "bipolar view" of the world, then, defined his policy in Latin America, as evinced by NSC-144, which, Rabe argues, "interpreted Inter-American Affairs solely within the context of the international struggle with the Soviet Union."[29]

While Eisenhower's policies towards Latin America, and Cuba in particular, is not the focus of this thesis, his perception that Cuba was firmly under the control of his administration, and his indifference towards the rise of nationalist sentiment on the island and Cuba's economic problems, was the main source of influence for Canada's diplomacy towards Cuba in the 1950s. As Chapter 2 and 3 will discuss at length, the DEA under the guidance of Pearson, and later Diefenbaker, were also indifferent towards the political and economic problems that plagued Cuba in the 1950s. As a result, Pearson and Diefenbaker, like Eisenhower, did not appreciate the centrality of Third World nationalism in the context of Latin America.

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[29] Rabe 31-32.

While the revisionist debate on Truman and Eisenhower's presidency is helpful in explaining the behaviours of Canada's leading actors in the present study, it also influenced several Canadian historians' conception of Canada's role in the Cold War world. Canadian historians writing in the late sixties and the early seventies used the basic assumptions of American revisionists' to develop a "nationalist" interpretation of Canada's Cold War policy. Those historians that adhered to this trend agreed that Canadians were intimidated by the United States to join in the American policy of containment, even though the Soviet Union posed no threat to Canada or Canadians.[30] In *Partner to Behemoth* (1970), John Warnock argued that the source of Canada's post-World War II images of the Soviet Union was unquestionably drawn from the United States. According to Warnock, the United States' overwhelming power and influence over Canada's bureaucratic elite made it easy to convince Canada to join the American hardline. After Canada accepted that the Soviet Union was a serious threat, Warnock argues, Canadian foreign policy thereafter followed a natural course-"Canada became a junior partner in the world-wide anti-communist crusade."[31] The simplicity of Warnock's argument, however, is exposed in his scant attention to domestic factors that affected Canada's perception of the Soviet threat, particularly the Gouzenko affair. His consideration of Canadian public opinion is also absent from his discussion on the origins of Canadian foreign policy towards the Soviet Union.

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[30] Jamie Glazov provides a useful, and succinct, description of this trend on xix of his *Canadian policy towards Khrushchev's Soviet Union.*

[31] Quote taken from Page and Munton, 578-9.

Despite the deficiencies in Warnock's argument, Cuff and Granatstein draw similar conclusions in their *Canadian-American relations in wartime: From the Great War to the Cold War* (1975). The authors structure their argument around American revisionist Gabriel Kolko's call for Cold War historians to strive for "accuracy and depth."[32] However, there is very little depth in their assertion that Canadian officials swallowed whole the images of the Soviet Union put forth by the Truman administration. "It may be," argues Cuff and Granatstein, "that nothing distinguished Canada and the United States from each other at the beginning of the Cold War except that in Washington the delusions of grandeur were more pronounced."[33] The authors suggest that Canadian officials may have been "actors in a charade, a charade in which the players themselves were often deceived. Not only were American leaders like President Truman and Secretary of State Acheson exaggerating the Communist threat to Congress, but to Canada too." They go on to say that such a deception would have been carried out "so easily and so successfully" given Canada's dependence on the United States for its intelligence, the "shared value system" of the two countries, and the "pervasiveness" of American news sources.[34] As Munton and Page point out in their review of Cuff and Granatstein's work, it was also possible that Canada accepted the American viewpoint "because it corresponded with Canada's economic needs and interests, because subscribing to it brought postwar collaboration and increased influence, and because of the internationalism Canadian

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[32] See Garbriel Kolko's *The Politics of War: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1943-1945* (1968) and Joyce and Gabriel Kolko's *The Limits of Power: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954 (1972)*

[33] Ibid 579.

[34] Page and Munton 580.

diplomats favoured as a result of the interwar experience somehow made them ready to accept the kind of aggressive leadership that Truman and Acheson offered in the Cold War years.' "[35] In the case of Canada's diplomacy with Cuba during the pre-revolutionary period, Munton and Page's argument works well to explain why senior policy-makers in Ottawa chose to follow the American line in Cuba. From an economic standpoint, it made sense for Canada to support the American-led status quo in Cuba so that Canadian businesses and financial interests would be protected. Moreover, both Pearson and then-SSEA Louis St. Laurent's anti-Communist ideology was, on balance, in line with that of Truman and Acheson.

Denis Smith's *Diplomacy of Fear* (1988) positions itself as a "postrevisionist" interpretation of Canadian foreign policy, in that it focuses not on Americans as the source of Canada's "distorted" perceptions of the Soviet Union, but rather points the finger at the Liberal party, particularly Pearson and St. Laurent for building a culture of fear and hysteria towards the Soviet threat. Moreover, his opinion of Mackenzie King is similarly harsh, describing him as "pietistic, cautious, neurotic, and ignorant of international politics."[36] While historians have criticized this work for being polemical, it nonetheless raised valuable questions about the forces responsible for Canada's Cold War policy- a question that this thesis will be examining in relation to Canada's Cuba policy in the late forties. Also important to this historiographical trend is Adam Chapnick's *The Middle Power Project: Canada and the Founding of the United Nations* (2005). Like Smith, Chapnick is harsh on Mackenzie King for his

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[35] Ibid.
[36] Quote taken from C.P. Stacey's review article in *The American Historical Review* 95.1 (1990) 303.

"discomfort" with international engagement. It was because of King's ambivalent attitude towards international politics, Chapnick argues, that Canada started "two steps behind" the U.S. and Britain in coming up with a solution to the failed League of Nations.[37] However, even when presented with the opportunity at the Dumbarton Oakes Conference in 1945 to reduce the influence of the "great powers," the Canadian representatives ultimately supported the decision to expand the veto power of the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, China, and France. In this way, Chapnick argues, "Caution clearly ruled under Mackenzie King: international prestige was not worth the risk of another great power conflict."[38] While Chapnick does not look specifically at Canada's perception of Latin America in the context of the international political landscape in the early 1940s, his explanation of Canadians' ambivalence towards world politics prior to 1945 suggests why Canada abstained from joining organizations like the OAS.

The second major trend, though it is perhaps less popular among historians of Canadian Cold War policy, is a review of Canadian foreign policy from the perspectives of senior officials at the Department of External Affairs. The first study to focus primarily on the Department of External Affairs as an instrument of Canadian foreign policy is J.L. Granatstein's *The Civil Service Mandarins* (1982). From Granastein's perspective, it is little wonder that the "golden years" of Canadian foreign policy occurred under the watch of these "Ottawa Men." However, Granatstein's largely positive assessment of Canada's bureaucratic elite during this

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[37] Adam Chapnick, *The Middle Power Project: Canada and the Founding of the United Nations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005) 8.
[38] Chapnick 6.

period omits any mentioning of their policy towards Latin America. Moreover, Granatstein does not examine the connection between the policy-maker and the politician. In other words, what link, if any, is there between perception-of expectations, public opinion, etc.- and policy-making? In the context of Canada's Cuba policy in the pre-revolutionary period, Munton and Vogt argue that perceptions, reporting, and policy-making were related, although not always directly. "It is clear," they argue, "that the [Canadian] embassy's reporting influenced some views in official Ottawa and thus perhaps the foreign policies being pursued." While the focus of this thesis is not on the relationship between perception and policy-formation, based on the despatches sent between Ottawa and Havana, there is no evidence to suggest that the reports from Canadian diplomats in Cuba affected the trajectory of Canada's Cuba policy. Similarly, there is no evidence to suggest that Pearson, who ultimately had the last word when it came to policy decisions at the DEA, believed embassy despatches were a useful way of gauging the effectiveness of Canadian policy. That said, a lot more work needs to be done on the connection between perception and policy-making if historians are to understand how the despatches sent from Havana impacted policy decisions in Ottawa.

Robert Bothwell and John English's article "The View from the Inside Out: Canadian Diplomats and their Public" (1983/84) attempts to shed more light on the relationship between perception and policy-making. According to Bothwell and English, Ottawa's foreign policy "mandarins," such as Pearson and Norman Robertson, were successful because of their ability to manage public opinion so that the electorate always felt like foreign policy reflected its "general will," because it

was only then that "policy-makers could get the freedom they wanted."[39] By carefully managing and gauging public opinion through a close relationship with the media, along with thorough scrutiny of opinion polls, the authors argue that from 1946 until the mid fifties Pearson achieved the freedom he wanted "because of his skillful handling of the 'nerves' through which public opinion passed and was directed."[40] Specifically, because of his relationship with the media-some would say too close-along with a meticulous review of public opinion polls, Pearson was able to assert his foreign policy agenda free of the worry that the Canadian public would find fault in it. As the authors point out, his gamble seemed to pay off, as Canadians supported the Cold War initiatives under Pearson and St. Laurent; specifically, Canadian partnership with the United States, active participation in the Commonwealth, and a commitment to the United Nations.[41]

Though the above works did much to initiate scholarly debate on the nature and function of Canada's foreign policy apparatus, John Hilliker's *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume 2* (1995) sets itself apart based on the vast quantity of primary resources from LAC that he utilized. Like the volume that examined the history of the Department from 1909-1946, Hilliker's second volume had the enviable advantage of having the full support of the department itself in creating a comprehensive history. This however, appears to have been a double-edge sword, as Hilliker shies away from making extensive criticism of some of the department's more well-known players. Pearson's role in the policy-making process

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[39] Robert Bothwell and John English's "The View from Inside Out: Canadian Diplomats and their Public," *International Journal* 39.1 (1983/84) 63.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Bothwell and English 65.

is given extensive coverage, but Hilliker provides little insight into how the threat of Soviet communism influenced the priorities and routines at the Department, particularly under Pearson's leadership from 1958-56. What becomes increasingly clear in Hilliker's study is that the third world, and Latin America in particular, was not identified as the primary target areas for Soviet infiltration. Instead, Pearson's focus was on the ongoing struggle for control of East Berlin, and later the Suez Crisis. Therefore, though Hilliker makes no mention of this, one can infer that Pearson was indifferent towards Cuba and the rest of the Third World, which was identified as the "outer zone" of Soviet influence, and thus relatively unimportant in the context of the Cold War.

The third major trend in the historiography on Canadian foreign policy is marked by a renewed interest in Canada's policy towards the Soviet Union. The works that can be identified within this trend tend towards a postrevisionist reading of Canada's Cold War policy. In other words, these works reject the central pillars of Canadian revisionism and instead argues that Canada's Cold War policy was more nuanced, particularly given Canada's desire to be an ally and partner to the United States- as evinced by Canada joining NATO in 1949 and its participation in the Marshall Plan in the late forties- which was tempered by its desire to set limits on American power in order to protect Canadian sovereignty. Robert Bothwell's *The Big Chill: Canada and the Cold War* (1998) represents the first significant work to explore a postrevisionist reading of Canada's Cold War policy. Unlike his earlier work with Cuff, Bothwell is more explicit in his acknowledgement that there were inconsistencies and contradictions in Canada's Cold War policy. As Bothwell points

out, while St. Laurent and Pearson were by no means willing to adopt a pro-Soviet policy, they also did not want to push Canada too far into the American camp in case it compromised Canada's ability to play the role of mediator. Nonetheless, he argues, "at no point were Canadians seriously tempted to jump the fence, turn to neutrality, or abandon the Western side. Public opinion would not have stood for it."[42] For Bothwell, the nature of the Soviet threat gave the foreign policy-making elite few options when it came to deciding the main tenets of its policy. While a useful overview of the forty-five years of Canadian Cold War policy, Bothwell's work rarely delves deep into the policy-making process. His use of primary sources is scant, leaving the reader with more questions than answers, particularly in relation to political factors outside of Canadian domestic politics that affected Canadian policy decisions toward the Soviet Union. Jamie Glazov attempts to fill this void in his *Canadian policy towards Khrushchev's Soviet Union* (2002). Taking advantage of translated versions of previously declassified Russian documents from Soviet archives, Glazov is able to provide fresh perspectives on the goals and perceptions of the Soviet regime. Unlike Bothwell, Glazov makes more explicit his rejection of nationalist interpretations of Canada as an "intimidated satellite" as the basis for Canada's policy towards the Soviet Union, which is also argued by Warnock. According to Glazov, "there was little American arm-twisting to make Ottawa fear the Soviet Union."[43] Instead, "Canadians promoted containment and contributed to it because of their own perceptions of the Soviet regime, as well as their pursuit for

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[42] Robert Bothwell's *The Big Chill: Canada and the Cold War (*Toronto: Irwin Publishing Limited, 1998) xii.
[43] Jamie Glazov's *Canadian policy towards Khrushchev's Soviet Union* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002) xx.

national-self interest."[44] Though Glazov criticizes Diefenbaker for abandoning an international strategy and the Liberal policy of accommodation in 1961, he also acknowledges that the Chief's Soviet policy from 1957-59 supported the Western alliances' goals in the face of the Soviet threat.[45]

Like Glazov, in his *Cold War Canada: the making of a national (in)security state, 1945-1957* (2004) political scientist Reg Whitaker rejects nationalist readings of Canadian foreign policy in the 1940s, arguing that far from being "bullied" by the United States into backing Washington's anti-communist crusade, prior to the declaration of the Truman doctrine in 1945, Canadian policy-makers were concerned that the Americans would retreat into isolationism as it had after the First World War. Canadian policy-makers, Whitaker explains, were deeply suspicious of the Soviet Union and spent their energies encouraging officials in Washington to "take the diplomatic leadership which their military and economic power entitled them." In this way, Whitaker argues, from 1945-7, Canada was in lock step with Britain's efforts to convince the United States to take the lead in "blocking Soviet ambitions."[46] Like Glazov, Whitaker gives more significance to the Gouzenko affair than Hilliker, arguing that it was the catalyst that drove the Ottawa bureaucratic elite, particularly St. Laurent and Pearson, to adopt a tougher attitude towards Soviet communism at home and abroad. Similarly, his reading of Pearson and St. Laurent pictures the two men in a harsher light then Cuff and Granatstein. For Whitaker, Pearson and St. Laurent were far from passive actors who were "duped" by the manipulative tactics of

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[44] Glazov xx.
[45] Glazov xvii.
[46] Whitaker 114.

Truman and his Secretary of State Dean Acheson. Instead, Pearson and St. Laurent understood that in order to sell the Cold War to Canadians, they too had to "scare the hell out of them."[47]

Reg Whitaker's article in Richard Carvell's edited collection *Love, hate and fear in Canada's Cold War* (2004) takes his previous findings a step further, arguing that the thread that connects the Cold War to the post-Cold War era is that the United States remains Canada's significant, though ambiguous, "Other." Said differently, while never Canada's enemy, save for the war of 1812, the United States has always occupied a strange place in the Canadian consciousness. As Whitaker argues, Canada identified with the "Us" vs. "Them" dialogue of United States foreign policy towards the Soviet Union. The "Us" was very clearly the United States and its allies, while the "Them" was the Soviets and their attack on Western values. However, after the Soviet Union fell, there was no longer a clear enemy- a "Them," in which Canadians could justify their second-class status to the United States. As Whitaker points out, the military power of the United States made Canadians accept that the Americans were the leaders in the fight against communism, with Canadian providing a supporting role. This was non-threatening to Canadians because the fear of a Soviet nuclear attack trumped their annoyance of American bravado. However, with the Soviet corpse dead and buried, suspicion of the United States and its role as "natural" leader of the West, has reentered the Canadian consciousness, spurned on by concern among Canadians that Canada's increased reliance on the United States for its economic

[47] Whitaker 131.

wellbeing is undermining Canadian sovereignty.[48] Though Whitaker's analysis does not factor in Canada's sovereignty and independence in relation to its foreign policy with Latin America, his argument provides a useful way of conceptualizing Canada's relationship with the United States, and also its policy in Cuba, during the pre-revolutionary years.

Methodological Framework

This thesis seeks to positions itself within Canadian postrevisionist interpretations of the Cold War. While postrevisionist readings have been confined to examinations of Canada Soviet policy, I argue that some of the central tenets of this approach can also be used to explain Canada's Cuba policy in the pre-revolutionary period. Based on postrevisionist interpretations of Canadian foreign policy, specifically Reg Whitaker's *The making of an National (in)security State* (2002) two central arguments emerge: First, that, Canada was eager to be an active member in collective security arrangements with the United States, but they were also careful to maintain Canadian sovereignty; and second, that Canadians did not share the "evangelical sense of mission" held by American policy-makers, but they were suspicious of communists and recognized the need to curb Soviet expansionism.[49]

Applied to Canada's Cuba policy in the pre-revolutionary period, these "central tenets" of postrevisionism support the following arguments about the

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[48] Reg Whitaker's " 'We Know They're There:' Canada and It's Others, with or without the Cold War" in Richard Cavell's edited *Love, Hate and Fear in Canada's Cold War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) 35-36.
[49] See Chapter 3 of Whitaker's *Canada and the Making of a National Insecurity State* for a more detailed explanation.

formation of Canada's Cuba policy: Firstly, Canadian policy-makers perceived the Soviet Union as an inherently aggressive, expansionist power that could potentially target Cuba as a "fifth column." Secondly, Canada supported a pro-American, anti-communist policy in Cuba so long as it did not encroach on Canadian sovereignty. Thirdly, though Canada did not enjoy the chest-thumping triumphalism adopted by American political leaders, they trusted American leadership in Cuba and instructed Canadian diplomats to support any efforts made by the United States to maintain stability, and thereby prevent anti-communism, on the island. Lastly, although there was not always agreement among Canadian diplomats in Havana and senior officials at the DEA as to what policies Canada should follow in Cuba, after 1948, Pearson's views ultimately reined triumphant and he advocated that the "American" state of affairs should be maintained on the island.

These arguments will be discussed more thoroughly in the following three chapters, the first of which examines the roots of Canada's Cuba policy, with a particular focus on how the preponderant necessities of the Cold War influenced Canada's diplomacy towards Cuba during the 1940s. Similarly, Pearson's relationship with St. Laurent will be examined in order to gain a greater understanding of the importance both men placed on Latin America in the context of the threat of Soviet expansionism. Moreover, while there has been much written on Canada's Cuba policy under Diefenbaker, there is very little that has been written on either Mackenzie King or Louis St. Laurent's perceptions of Cuba. Therefore, this chapter will endeavour to fill in a large gap in the historiography on Canadian-Cuban affairs by providing greater insight into how these men perceived Cuba and Cubans.

Chapter two explores how Canada's Cuba policy was consolidated during the "steady" period from 1952 until 1956, under the guidance of Canadian Ambassador to Cuba Harry A. Scott. While some historians have dismissed Scott's reporting as biased and pro-American, this study presents a more complex portrait of Scott. An examination of Scott's reports throughout the entirety of his tenure as Canadian ambassador to Havana reveals that his interpretations of Cuba evolved from being initially critical of Batista and the United States' explicit support for his regime, to eventually reaching a point of acceptance, albeit grudgingly, that the status quo in Cuba would likely not change anytime soon.

Chapter 3 examines Canada's Cuba policy at a time of change in the domestic political scene, when twenty-two years of Liberal rule came to an end after John G. Diefenbaker won the federal election of 1957. Diefenbaker's suspicion of the Department of External Affairs as a policy-making apparatus changed the method in which foreign policy was perceived and implemented. How this ultimately affected the trajectory of Canada's Cuba policy will be the important question this final chapter will address. And finally, by way of conclusion, what similarities, and differences can be surmised between Canada's Cuba policy under Liberal and Conservative rule? Did the diplomatic legacy left by Pearson and other senior officials at the Department of External Affairs impact Diefenbaker's decision not to back the American embargo or cut off ties with Cuba? While these final questions can perhaps not be answered with any degree of certainty, examining the two decades of Canada's Cuba policy prior to these crucial moments in Canadian-Cuban relations

will at least give historians a larger foundation for understanding the trajectory of Canadian-Cuban relations in the revolutionary era.

Background: Canadian-Cuban diplomatic relations before 1945

From 1939 until 1945, Canada relied primarily on despatches from the British embassy in Havana for information on events happening on the ground in Cuba. As this section will argue, this was due in large part to Prime Minister MacKenzie King's general caution towards expanding the DEA and his sense of commitment towards the British Crown. Both of these factors were influential in shaping Canada's initial approach to its diplomacy with Cuba when the two countries finally exchanged legations in 1945.

If the roots of Canada's Cuba policy can be traced back to 1939, the historical relationship between Canada and Cuba goes back much further. As Kirk and McKenna point out, historians have often "waxed eloquent" on contact between early "Canadians," such as Samuel Champlain, who apparently visited Cuba in 1601, and Pierre Le Moyne's visit to Cuba in 1706, a visit that is still remembered today by a plaque in Old Havana in memory of the explorer who died shortly after arriving in Cuba.[50] Canadian participation in Cuba's nineteenth-century wars for its independence against the Spanish has also factored into the historical relationship. Canadian volunteers fought in both the 1868-1878 and 1895-1898 wars following the formation of "solidarity organizations" in Montreal and Halifax.[51] Canadians also travelled to Cuba in 1898 to give support to American troops after the sinking of the U.S.S. *Maine*.[52] While Canada's role in Cuba's history has been relatively modest,

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[50] According to Kirk and McKenna, to reinforce the ties of mutual friendship Canadian diplomats have often placed wreathes on the spot whenever Canadian navy vessels are in port. See Kirk and McKenna 10.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.

these historical moments are often recalled as part of the enduring ties of friendship and solidarity between the two countries. Nonetheless, as Kirk and McKenna argue, the symbolic importance of these historical ties pales in comparison to the strength of the bilateral trade relationship, dating from 1909 when Canada established its first trade office in Cuba to take advantage of the island's sugar, pineapples, and rum. For Canada, as for others, the export market in Cuba prior to World War II was complicated by the American-Cuban trade partnership. Limited by high transportation and communication costs, coupled with Cuba's trade preference with the United States, Canada offered few commodities that were not bested by American competitors. Cod was one such example, financial services was another, and only because American law prevented federally chartered banks from having foreign branches prior to the World War I. After opening its first branch in 1899, the Merchant Bank of Halifax (renamed the Royal Bank in 1902) grew to sixty-five branches across the island, boasting a client list that included some of the island's leading politicians and business leaders.[53] Similarly, Canada dominated the insurance industry with firms like Manufacture's Trust, Sun Life, and Imperial Life underwriting three-quarter's of Cuban life insurance policies by mid-century.[54]

While the trade and financial potential suggested that Canada could have established diplomatic relations with Cuba well before 1945, the main roadblock was the indifference towards the DEA under Prime Minister Mackenzie King. According to John Hilliker, after being reelected as Prime Minister in 1935, King's views on international relations "remained firmly rooted in his concern for the domestic

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[53] Statistics taken from Robert Wright's *Three Nights* 38.
[54] Ibid.

situation, especially the need to preserve national unity, which he believed would be threatened by public controversy over foreign policy."[55] King was reluctant to have Canada assume an active role in the League of Nations and was cautious about drawing attention to the department by substantially increasing its expenditures or opening new posts abroad.[56] Such an approach ultimately hindered the efficiency and growth of the department. Speaking in 1942, senior diplomat Edgar Tarr argued that Canada's "cautious approach" to foreign policy had hurt the department's reputation at home and abroad. Canada, Tarr told King, counted for little in the world because it had not "given the impression that it was interested in counting."[57] The reason for this, he went on, was primarily the "functioning or rather the lack of functioning" of the External Affairs Department. "The Service does not rank high in our thinking, and abroad Canada's apparent indifference naturally means that other countries don't assess our diplomats more seriously than we do ourselves."[58] Although, as Hilliker points out, the department's approach to foreign policy became more "vigorous" after Tarr's statement, the slowness of making diplomatic appointments remained. In the case of Cuba, King had announced in the House of Commons that a Canadian legation would be set up in Havana, but it took eighteen months before a candidate was selected to head up the post.[59] What is more, the stipends available to newly installed heads of mission (HOMs) were inadequate. Pearson, for example, would only accept the posting of Ambassador to Washington in 1944 after the department

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[55] John Hilliker's *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume 1: The Early Years, 1909-1946* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990) 176.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Hilliker, *Volume 1*, 316.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Hilliker, *Volume 1*, 317.

raised the allowances, since he did not have the private wealth of his predecessor.[60] In this way, newly appointed representatives were largely on their own when it came to preparing for their duties at their assigned missions, which did much to dissuade prospective foreign officers.

The department's inefficiency was also due to King's approach to using the information gathered by Canada's HOMs to inform policy decisions. Though he made an effort to read telegrams and despatches sent from abroad, particularly from Canada's missions in Washington, London, Paris and Geneva, King used the information only on an ad hoc basis. In this way, policy decisions were ultimately made by King and his colleagues, who, as Hilliker argues, "came to their own conclusions about the international situation."[61]

King had to take his cues from the British Foreign Office when it came to parts of the world where Canada had no representation. In the case of Cuba, King was kept informed of the political and economic activities on the island via reports from the long-serving British Ambassador to Havana, George Ogilvie-Forbes. Once World War II broke out in 1939, Cuba became of greater interest to the British because it served as an important supplier of sugar. It also held strategic importance in the interception of German U-boats.[62] Given the island's increasing significance on the world stage, the volume of reports forwarded from Ogilvie-Forbes to London and Ottawa increased substantially between 1939 and 1944. The twin themes that emerged from the reports during this period were the threat of Soviet communism and

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[60] Ibid.
[61] Hilliker makes this assertion on 204 in *Volume 1.*
[62] Schoultz 35.

the American presence on the island as a stabilizing factor. The focus on the strength of Soviet communism in Latin America can be attributed to the interest in the Soviet Union expressed by British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden. Though he was criticized in some British political circles during World War II as a "Soviet apologist," Eden was fervent in his opposition against Stalin's dictatorship. As David Carlton notes in *Antony Eden: A Biography,* Eden's opposition to Soviet imperialism dated from 1937 when he attempted to persuade the French to abandon their plans to pursue further developments of the Franco-Soviet Pact.[63] Though Russia had joined the Allied war effort in 1941, Eden was still suspicious of the Soviets' intentions, especially as the war began to enter its final stages and Eden began to contemplate a postwar partnership with Stalin's Russia. In response to his superior's pressings for detailed information, Ogilvie-Forbes sent Eden regular reports on Soviet activities in Cuba. As the cable traffic demonstrates, Ogilvie-Forbes often expressed his concern over the increased presence of Soviet propaganda on the island, which had increased since Cuba and the Soviet Union established diplomatic relations in 1942.[64] Several of Ogilvie-Forbes' reports back to Eden provided detailed descriptions of the increased presence of Russian personnel and propaganda on the island, all of which worried the British ambassador. Though suspicious of Russian activities in Cuba, Ogilvie-Forbes restricted his criticism to his despatches to Eden, while remaining neutral in his public dealings with the Cubans.

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[63] David Carlton, *Anthony Eden: A Biography* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1981) 149.

[64] See Irwin Gellman's *Roosevelt and Batista, good neighbour-diplomacy in Cuba, 1933-1945* (New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1973) for a detailed description of Cuba's role in the war effort. For Information on Cuban-Soviet diplomatic relations during this period, see 199.

Though the Cold War had not yet begun in earnest, the fear of Soviet communism was on the minds of both American and British diplomats in Havana. Communism, of course, meant the loss of private enterprise, and that had to be prevented at all costs. As Batista had worked closely with the United States during the 1930s, his electoral loss was unsettling for some diplomats who saw Grau as a bit of a wild card. Ogilivie-Forbes successor, J.L. Dodds, suspected the worst: "as long as the distribution of wealth continues to be as unequal as it is, it will no doubt form a fertile field for communists."[65] Braden, however, was optimistic, cabling to Washington in late 1944 that Grau was "determined to exercise the powers of the governments as a public trust for the good of the Cuban people" while also demonstrating "a zeal to improve the lot of the average Cuban."[66] Not wanting to be the odd man out, Dodds quickly changed his tone in a subsequent report to Eden, writing that Grau's government would bring a "fresh and better turn to relations between the Cubans and ourselves."[67] The honeymoon would be over in a matter of months, as Grau proved no different than his corrupt predecessors. Such was the nature of Cuban politics, however, according to State Department officials, given that Cubans "would fit better into a Rogue's Gallery than a roster of responsible public servants."[68]

Though the perceived inconsistency of Cuban politicians left a degree of uncertainty in the Anglo-American business community, investors were comforted that the paternalistic role of the United States was a sobering presence in an otherwise

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[65] J.L. Dodd's to Eden, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 3114, File 4471-40, pt. 1.
[66] Shoultz 38.
[67] J.L Dodds to Sir Anthony Eden, "Annual Report," 31 January 1945, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 2677, File-10224-40, pt. 1.
[68] Schoultz 38.

unpredictable market. Canada's government, too, took comfort in knowing that economic stability on the island existed because of the American presence. Though King respected American leadership in Latin America, he nonetheless was against Canada joining the Pan-American Union (OAS). In a statement in front of Parliament on August 4, 1944, King said he believed that Canadian participation in such an organization could be based "only on a wide appreciation in this country of the purposes and responsibilities of the Pan American Union," which he believed did not exist at that time.[69] King was right. According to a June 1947 Gallup poll, 70% of Canadians knew nothing of the Pan American Union or its functions.[70] Moreover, King's suspicion of organizations outside of the Commonwealth also made him hesitant to join the OAS. Still loyal to the British Empire, despite its waning power, King was not prepared to join an expanding Pax-Americana. Doing so, King believed, would weaken the Commonwealth. Norman Robertson alluded to this view to Pearson at the Canadian embassy in Washington, "it would be particularly difficult to enter into regional treaty negotiations with the other American countries at the present time when there has been no exchange of views between British Commonwealth countries regarding the post-war defense arrangements. "The question would at once be raised," continued Robertson, "both in Canada and elsewhere in the Commonwealth, why we could sign an inter-American treaty and could not do the

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[69] SSEA to Charles P. Hébert, "Letter of Instruction to Charles P. Hébert," 30 September 1948, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 2734, File 289-40, pt. 1

[70] King's stance on the Pan-American Union was mentioned in Hébert's "Letter of Instruction." Ibid.

same with a Commonwealth agreement."[71] In this way, King's reputation for being "cautious" in his foreign policy was also reflected in his approach to Inter-American affairs.

King thought it prudent to follow Braden's recommendation of remaining completely neutral in Cuban affairs. King would get an opportunity to do just that in early 1945, though the occasion was an unusual one. After touring South America in late 1944, Fulgencio Batista announced in January 1945 that he intended to visit Canada after making a scheduled trip to the United States. Born in 1901 to the son of a United Fruit Company worker, Batista first got the attention of the United States after he successfully led the Sergeant's Revolt in 1933, which helped install Ramon Grau San Martin to government. U.S. officials soon recoiled from Grau after the latter unilaterally abrogated the Platt amendment and promised to introduce economic policies that threatened U.S. interest. Boldly declaring that no Cuban President could survive without the support of the United States, American Ambassador Summer Wells enlisted the help of Batista to oust Grau.[72] After amassing personal wealth during the remainder of the 1930s through "sweetheart deals and fraud," Batista put himself up for the presidency in 1940 and won what, as Thomas Paterson asserts, was probably an honest election.[73] After serving four years, however, Batista stepped

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[71] Norman A. Robertson to Lester B. Pearson, "Pan-American Union, "7 January 1947, http://www.international.gc.ca/department/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=11564.

[72] Paterson 5.

[73] Paterson 16. From 1940-1944 Batista employed a "populist" approach that was not characteristic of his second tenure from 1952-1959. For an instructive review of the factors involved in Batista's "shift to the left," which was influenced, in part, by Lázaro Cárdenas's Mexican populism, see "The Architect of the Cuban State: Fulgencio Batista and Populism in Cuba, 1937-1940," in *Journal of Latin American*

down, making plans to reside in a mansion he had purchased in Florida. Beforehand, though, he travelled around the Western hemisphere, including Canada.[74] When asked by the Canadian media if he would return to Cuban politics, he admitted with a grin, "there are other Government posts I could go after... But for me, I don't want them. Right now I am writing a book on the social and economic life of the Americas and I am not going to return to Cuba for two months."[75] Whether Batista ever completed his book is not a matter of the public record, but his visit to Canada did manage to cause a stir at the DEA.

While Fidel Castro's visits to Canada, once in 1957 before he took power and again in 1959 after defeating Batista, have been well-documented and analyzed for their significance to Canadian-Cuban relations, Batista's first, and only, documented trip to Canada has gone unnoticed by historians of Canada and Cuba. According to despatches that circulated between Havana and Ottawa, there was a certain amount of anxiety about finding the right balance between courtesy to a former head of state and favourtism. In order to find that balance, External Affairs collaborated with the Wartime Information Board to draft an itinerary for Batista and his entourage in Montreal, which was the first stop on his tour. The goal of the itinerary was to make sure Batista felt welcomed by the Canadian government, while keeping him out of the official limelight. It was important that he not have any "official" meetings with Ottawa's upper brass, nor were any celebrations to be held in his honour. The final

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Studies 32 (2000) 435-459, or his book *State and Revolution in Cuba: Mass Mobilization and Political Change, 1920-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2001).

[74] "Batista, Cuba's Ex-Ruler, Drops Politics for History" *Montreal Star* 25 April 1945.

[75] Ibid.

itinerary appeared to have achieved the desired ends, as Batista spent a low-key day in Montebello, Quebec, before travelling to Ottawa, where he was given a tour of the Parliament buildings and welcomed as a guest of the Canadian International Paper Company at the Chateau Laurier. Future Canadian Ambassador to Cuba Allan Anderson, who was then working out of the Wartime Information Board, was assigned to meet Batista after the luncheon with the chief of the Latin American affairs F.H. Soward. While the contents of the meeting are not part of the public record, that Anderson later showed his support for Batista over Castro suggests his first meeting with the man left a positive impression.[76] For his part, Batista praised Canada during a brief interview session with local press, calling it "a country with a great future" and predicted a "great expansion" in post-war trade between Canada and Cuba.[77] After leaving Ottawa, Batista traveled by car to Kingston and then Toronto, finishing his tour in Niagara Falls.

While External Affairs reported that, from all accounts, Batista had been "generally pleased," the visit was, in part, made easier by its timing. Mackenzie King and Norman Robertson were both away at the San Francisco Conference.[78] Given that there was genuine concern that any undue attention given Batista could adversely affect Canada's envoy to Cuba Joseph Emile Vaillancourt (who arrived in Havana the

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[76] While Anderson's tenure as Canadian Ambassador to Cuba will not be explored in this study, existing analyses on Anderson argues that he was both pro-American and pro-Batista. See Munton and Vogt's chapter.

[77] "Batista, Cuba's Ex-Ruler, Drops Politics for History" *Montreal Star* 25 April 1945. RG 25, Vol. 3292, File 7194-40, pt. 1.

[78] Also called the "United Nations Conference on International Organization." See Chapter 10, entitled "Growing Up: Canada at San Francisco, April-June 1945," in Adam Chapnick's *The Middle Power Project* (2005) for an excellent description of Canada's achievements and failures at the conference.

day after Batista's plane touched down in Montreal), it was perhaps well that King and Robertson were unavailable. The Department, and King in particular, knew that Canada could not rock the political boat in Cuba on the eve of their first diplomatic appearance on the island. Doing so might jeopardize Canadian interests, which was still the main reason for Canadian representation in Cuba.

Chapter 1

Cold War Constraints: Canada's diplomacy towards Cuba from 1945-1951

While the British influenced Canada's Cuba policy from 1939 until 1945, the beginning of the Cold War brought Canada closer into the American sphere of influence in Cuba. Although some officials at the DEA believed Canada was "separate" from American attitudes and policies in Latin America, there was very little that differed between Canada and the United States' diplomacy with Cuba between 1945-1951. The purpose of this chapter is to answer some significant questions that have been largely unexplored by historians of Canadian-Cuban diplomacy in the pre-revolutionary years: what factors affected Canada's approach to Cuba after 1945? How did these factors affect the mandate of Canada's diplomats in Cuba? What role did the foreign policy mandarins at the DEA play in Canada's early Cuba policy? This chapter makes the argument that the preponderant necessities of the Cold War, specifically Canada's alliance with the United States against the threat of Soviet expansion, dictated that senior officials at the DEA, and Canadian diplomats on the ground in Havana, supported the American-led status quo in Cuba. However, far from being forced into supporting the American line, Canadian diplomats, both in Havana and Ottawa, shared the same fundamental Cold War ideology as their American counterparts.

Fighting the "Red Menace" in Cuba, 1945-47

After almost half a century of reciprocal trade, Canada and Cuba exchanged legations in the spring of 1945. Joseph Emile Vaillancourt became Canada's first official envoy to the island. While Vaillancourt was instructed to look towards the

United States for leadership, he continued to receive guidance on navigating the political and social environment in Cuba from the British embassy. Well after the Canadian legation was opened in early 1945, the British ambassador continued to send reports to Ottawa. These reports were invariably forwarded to Vaillancourt for his use in gauging the political situation on the island.[79] Evidence for this can be seen in a March 1945 report from British Ambassador Dodds who reported that the editor of the Cuban Communist newspaper, *Hoy,* was an "ardent communist" and received "material and guidance from Moscow."[80] Vaillancourt adopted a similar line in a despatch back to External Affairs, where he expressed his concern about an article published by *Hoy* that claimed to have unraveled a plot to assassinate President Grau. While Vaillancourt admitted the newspaper had likely no evidence to support their claim, he added that such an effort to foment fear and unrest among the populace suggested the Cuban communists "have some idea of staging a 'soviet revolution' in Cuba."[81]

As Von Tunzelmann argues, the idea that the Soviet Union was interested in extending its influence within Latin America was a fantasy. Stalin devoted little energy and resources to Comintern, the agency that was begun under Lenin to "preach communism to the third world," and it was eventually disbanded in 1943. Stalin was not interested in Latin America, saying in 1946 that the region was nothing

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[79] Evidence for this can be seen on department memo's that are handwritten, which verifies that copies of the British reports were distributed to all relevant departments at External Affairs, including the Canadian legation in Havana. Several examples of this can be seen in LAC's RG 25, Vol. 3114, File 4471-40, pt. 1.
[80] J.L. Dodds to Eden, 26 March 1945, RG 25, Vol. 3114, File 4471-40, pt. 1.
[81] Joseph Emile Vaillancourt to SSEA, "Memorandum for the Minister of External Affairs," 13 January 1947, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 3114, File 4471-400, pt. 1.

more than "a collection of U.S satellites," later adding that it acted as "the obedient army of the United States."[82] Vaillancourt simply accepted assumptions of his British counterparts about the strength of the PSP and its associations with the Soviets.

However, the focus was not solely on the Soviet Union as the main source of inspiration for the PSP. Archival evidence shows that the American and British embassy, and later the Canadian legation, were concerned that the leader of the Communist Party of Canada, Tim Buck, was providing support for the Cuban Communist Party. Buck wrote in November 1939 to congratulate "our brother party in Cuba" on its "great showing" in the Cuban election. "Our Party draws great inspiration from your victory."[83] His telegram was received with interest and concern by the British embassy in Havana who notified Canada's Ambassador to Washington Loring Christie. Christie then forwarded the news to USSEA O.D. Skelton in Ottawa, and Skelton then alerted the RCMP. Buck-already well-known to the Mounties- was monitored closely. Concerns were again renewed in 1945 when Vaillancourt devoted a two-page memorandum on the possible significance of an article Buck wrote that was republished by *Hoy* that discussed the differences between the United States and Canadian communist parties.[84] Vaillancourt's report was also forwarded to the American and British embassies.

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[82] Ibid. However, the newly minted CIA was not the only force at work in Cuba that was interested in containing the communist threat. The Roman Catholic Church was labeled by Vaillancourt as a "counter-communism organization," and according to his observations, "is doing much to win people away from communism or at any rate to produce an environment that is not favourable to communism."

[83] Loring C. Christie to O.D. Skelton, "Copy of Telegram to Communist Party of Cuba," 12 December 1939, LAC, RG 25 Vol. 2677 File 10224-40, pt. 1

[84] The timing of this article's appearance in Cuba coincided with the recent success of the CCF on the federal stage. The communists had won their first federal seat when

Canadian, American, and British diplomats, then, freely shared information, but there were predictable limits to this exchange. A despatch sent by Vaillancourt to External Affairs in late 1947 demonstrated that the United States kept its intelligence operations secret from the Canadian embassy. In his final report on the strength of communism in Cuba, Vaillancourt stated that two ex-FBI agents, who were posing as American military attaches, were rumoured to be spies. Moreover, according to Vaillancourt, both were "extremely reticent about their work" and that it seemed "fairly clear from their activities that they are mainly interested in communism." He added that they were "well provided with funds" and that in only a couple of months they had amassed "the most amazing widespread collection of acquaintances in Havana."[85]

MP Fred Rose was elected in his Montreal riding in 1943 and was reelected in 1945 with forty percent of the vote. Buoyed by this success, Buck optimistically predicted that the post-WII period would mark the beginning of a productive relationship between Communist and Liberals, business and labour, and Canada, the United States and the U.S.S.R. that would "speed the reconstruction of a world damaged by war." Repaying Buck for his support back in 1939, *Hoy* described him as "distinguished, popular and Anti-Fascist." According to Vaillancourt, the article clearly demonstrated that there were "sufficient parallels" between the PSP and the LPP of Canada if such an article on the revision of Marxism was of "very considerable interest to Cuban communist thinkers." Moreover, like Dodds, Vaillancourt argued that far from losing power, the activities of the PSP had increased during the war. "It has been more successful than the Labour Progressive Party of Canada in entering into de facto, if not de jure, alliances with other parties to secure the passage of legislation favourable to the Cuban working man," argued Vaillancourt. However, as Thomas Paterson points out, though the Cuban Communist Party appeared to be rising in strength, their base had been seriously undercut after Batista's departure in 1944. Autentico policies were one reason for their decline, specifically in 1947 when Minister of Labour Carlos Prio expelled the PSP from the Confederation of Cuban Workers. See Paterson's *Contesting Castro* and Vaillancourt's Memorandum to the SSEA, 6 November 1945, RG 25, Vol. 3114, File 4471-400, pt. 1. For a useful overview of the CCF see Glazov 4-5, 6.

[85] Joseph Emile Vaillancourt to SSEA, 28 December 1947, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 3114, File 4471-40, pt 1.

The timing of Vaillancourt's findings was not a coincidence. After passing the National Security Act in 1947, the wartime Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was reborn as the Central Intelligence Agency. The previous two years, however, had been a relatively stagnant period in American intelligence gathering. Determined to prove the agency's worth as a valuable source of intelligence on communist infiltration, the CIA issued a report warning that "Communist undercover penetration" of Latin America was at an "advanced stage." President Harry Truman announced the Truman doctrine in 1947, arguing that it "must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."[86] At the behest of the Truman administration, most countries in Latin America signed the Pact of Rio de Janeiro, making the Monroe Doctrine multilateral: "an attack against any one state was considered an attack against all states within the hemisphere, and they would come together to fight it."[87] In a world where political affiliation could not be left to chance, the Truman administration abandoned Roosevelt's Good Neighbour policy in favour of containment.

The Truman administration's concomitant authorization of covert intelligence operations in Cuba startled senior officials at the DEA. If the United States was employing clandestine methods in the interest of protecting American interests, should Canada not do the same? If the Americans received valuable intelligence, would they share it with their Canadian counterparts? The DEA could not be sure. As soon as Vaillancourt's successor, Charles P. Hébert, arrived in Cuba, SSEA Louis St.

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[86] Von Tunzelmann 42.
[87] Ibid.

Laurent asked the Ambassador to provide a thorough report on communist activity and, by association, American intelligence activities in Cuba. Hébert confirmed Vaillancourt's observation that American spies were operating undercover as embassy officials. "From slips in conversation we firmly believe that they belong to the organization in Washington which is popularly known as Central Intelligence," adding that, "a fair indication of their importance was signified by the fact that a staff car was provided for their sole use, an amenity that was granted only to senior service attachés.[88] Hébert also reported that the United States embassy was structured in an "elaborate" and highly compartmentalized operation. "My impression is that all of these are rather watertight compartments."[89] Though they were clearly interested in finding out what the Americans were up to in Cuba, the DEA did not attempt to compete with the American embassy in its intelligence gathering initiatives. Even if they had wanted to, the DEA lacked sufficient resources to provide for a location that was considered to be less important than those countries directly associated with the threat of Soviet expansion. Whether or not the DEA was concerned that Ottawa would be left out of the Americans' intelligence loop in Cuba is not a matter of the public record. Nonetheless, that the Canadian embassy received no further requests from Ottawa to pursue the matter suggests senior officials at the DEA felt it was better not to press for more information on what the Americans were up to behind the walls of their "elaborate" diplomatic-turned-intelligence bureau.

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[88] C.P. Hébert, "Memorandum for the Minister of External Affairs," 21 April 1948, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 3114, File 4471-40, pt. 1.
[89] C.P. Hébert, "Memorandum for the Minister of External Affairs," 10 March 1948, Ottawa, LAC, RG 25, File 4471-400, pt. 1.

The Iron Curtain Descends

The realities of the Cold War manifested themselves earlier than the DEA or Mackenzie King for that matter, were prepared for. When the Russian cipher clerk Igor Gouzenko took refuge at the Department of Justice with a folder stuffed full of documents that incriminated Canadians in a Russian spy ring, Ottawa was suddenly at the centre of the East-West ideological struggle. Though King had always been steadfast in his dislike of Soviet communism, his concern for peace building initiatives influenced him to take a conciliatory approach to the Soviet Union's espionage activities. After arrests were made in 1946 in connection with the Gouzenko case, King tried to maintain cordial relations with the U.S.S.R. As Jamie Glazov points out, King ultimately subverted his earlier anticommunism in order to prevent further hostilities. As a result, he attempted to dismiss the entire Gouzenko affair as a "misunderstanding" between the Soviet Union and Canada. He argued this point in the House of Commons, where he asserted that it was possible that the spies who had worked out of the Russian embassy did so unbeknownst to either the Soviet ambassador or members of his staff. What is more, King suggested that a personal visit to Stalin would likely smooth out relations because, "What I know, or have learned, of Mr. Stalin from those who have been closely associated with him in the war, cause me to believe that he would not countenance action of this kind [espionage] on the part of the officials of his country. I believe that when these facts are known to him and to others in positions of full responsibility, we shall find that a change will come that will make a vast difference indeed."[90] The King who emerged

[90] Glazov 9.

out of the Gouzenko affair, therefore, was ambivalent about justifying Canada's policy with the Soviet Union. Glazov argues a similar point: "[King] spoke of Soviet goodwill, yet he knew the evidence that confirmed the contrary; he apologized for Soviet actions, yet he simultaneously feared the aggressive nature of the Soviet regime."[91] Though King hoped the Soviet-Anglo alliance would continue, the Gouzenko case had done its damage; the weaknesses in the Western security apparatus had been exposed and the need for a revamped system of security was clear. However, it was also clear that King was not willing, or perhaps not capable, of making the necessary adjustments to Canada's foreign policy to protect against future threats.

The Gouzenko affair also highlighted the ever-increasing burden on King to juggle his duties as Prime Minister and the External Affairs portfolio. As a result, Louis St. Laurent was selected to head the DEA, while Lester Pearson was promoted from Ambassador to Washington to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs. Both men forged a working relationship that would become the model for subsequent Department leaders. Though they did not know each other well when they took up their posts, they quickly established a close working relationship, which Pearson described as "perfect."[92] St. Laurent, he said, "gave me maximum freedom in carrying out the policies that the government had agreed on, and did not interfere in details. In return, I gave him complete loyalty and the best service I could."[93]

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[91] Glazov 10.
[92] John Hilliker's *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume 2: Coming of Age, 1946-1968* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press) 8.
[93] Ibid.

The difference in King's and St. Laurent's perception of the function of foreign affairs became obvious. While King had been reluctant to engage Canada in world affairs, St. Laurent was much more prepared to see Canada assume its international responsibilities as part of the Western alliance against the threat of communist expansion.[94] On this point, St. Laurent and Pearson also agreed. Both were staunch anti-communists. St. Laurent was highly influenced by Catholic-inspired anticommunism in Quebec in the late forties. Pearson viewed communism as a perversion of Christian values.[95] The majority of Canadians also shared these perceptions of the Cold War world. In August 1947, sixty-seven percent of Canadians polled believed that Soviet communism posed a serious threat.[96] As Glazov argues, their fear was fueled not only by the perceived threat of the Soviet regime, but also social forces that had emerged in postwar Canada.[97] Encouraged by the support of the Canadian public, St. Laurent proposed on April 29, 1948 a collective effort towards thwarting Soviet communism. Canadian policy, he argued, should be "based on a recognition of the fact that totalitarian communist aggression endangers the freedom and peace of every democratic country." As a result, Canadians needed to be willing

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[94] Hilliker, *Volume 2,* 9.

[95] Glazov 14. Writing in his memoirs, Pearson asserted his conviction that a hardline approach was necessary at the time: "the fact, the indisputable fact, remains that the main and very real threat to world peace during the first years of the Cold War was the armed might, the aggressive ideology, and the totalitarian despotism of the Communist empire of the USSR...to ignore this danger, or to refuse to accept any commitments for collective action to meet it...would have been demonstrably wrong and perilously short-sighted...." That St. Laurent and Pearson advocated a hardline policy towards communist growth and influence in Latin America, then, fit into both men's conception of the Cold War world. Quote taken from Lester B. Pearson's *Mike: Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, Volume 2, 1948-1957* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973) 25.

[96] Glazov 14.

[97] Ibid.

to join with "other free states in collective security arrangements."[98] St. Laurent made it clear that Canada would not enter into any collective security arrangements unless the United States joined as well.[99] The hardening of Canadians against the U.S.S.R, then, resulted not only in closer Canadian-U.S. relations, but it also marked a shift in policy at the DEA towards the necessity of a continentalist approach to hemispheric defense.[100]

Though St. Laurent and Pearson fashioned Canada's Cold War policy in the late 1940s, contributions from junior officials were also important in the formulation of Canadian foreign policy. Canada's Ambassador to Moscow, Dana Wilgress, was one such example. After his posting in 1942, Wilgress quickly gained the respect of his superiors in Ottawa, along with officials at the U.S. State Department and British Foreign Affairs office, where his despatches were regularly circulated. His ability to speak Russian and his thorough understanding of Kremlin politics provided an invaluable glimpse into the heart of the Soviet camp. Contrary to the views of some in the West, Wilgress believed that East-West cooperation was possible in the postwar world. The key to such a relationship, Wilgress argued, was for the West to truly understand Joseph Stalin and the ways in which the Soviets perceived their place in the world. The Soviet people, asserted Wilgress, had "great pride in their system of government" and only wanted to "secure borders and neighbours who did not harbour hostile intensions towards the U.S.S.R." Thus, in Wilgress's view, the West simply needed to "see things from Stalin's perspective in order to achieve postwar

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[98] Glazov 17.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Glazov 12.

cooperation."[101] Though Wilgress would abandon his idealism in 1946, he nonetheless advocated for a policy of "firmness" combined with accommodation.[102] Influenced by Wilgress's recommendations, USSEA Escott Reid released a top-secret document for Departmental circulation in August 1947 entitled "The United States and the Soviet Union: A Study of the Possibility of War and Some of the Implications for Canadian Foreign Policy." Although Reid saw it as a first draft, calling it a "scissors and paper job," it was passed around to all senior members of External Affairs, including Mackenzie King, and ultimately became the foundation of Canada's official foreign policy at the outset of the Cold War.[103] In contrast with George Kennan's 'X' article, which advocated isolationism with containment, Reid's memorandum took a more cooperative approach to relations with the Soviets, which was based on Wilgress's recommendation for Canada to adopt a policy of engagement. According to Reid's memorandum, the Western powers needed to maintain "an overwhelming balance of force relative to that of the Soviet Union" in order to prevent further extensions of Soviet power, while also being careful not to provoke the Soviet Union into a "desperate situation."[104] Economic aid was one way to curb Soviet power. Reid saw the Marshall Plan as a way to provide financial support for countries that were vulnerable to the USSR, thus turning them into "buffer

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[101] Glazov 11.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Quote taken from Donald Page and David Munton's "Canadian Images of the Cold War 1946-7," *International Journal* 32.3, Image and Reality, (1977) 583.
[104] See Reg Whitaker's *The making of a National (in)security State* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996) 129.

countries."[105] The Truman Doctrine was consistent with Reid's suggestion that Western U.N. members could, under the U.N. charter, "create a new 'regional' security organization in which there would be no veto and each state would undertake to pool all its economic and military forces with others if any power should be found to have committed aggression against another member."[106] As a result, "containment with conciliation" became the catch phrase of Canada's Soviet policy in 1947.

Like St. Laurent, Reid advocated a "collective security" approach within the U.N. charter, while also encouraging that Canada's policy could influence the United States. However, Reid, along with both Pearson and St. Laurent, were becoming increasingly worried that American diplomacy was becoming too "assertive" and "insensitive." As Glazov asserts, though senior officials at the DEA thought force might be needed at some point to reduce the Soviet threat, they were not convinced that American leadership was wise enough to know when they had gone too far.[107] As a result, the DEA became convinced that Canada's job in the postwar world would be to moderate American belligerence.[108] From this realization was born the idea of "quiet diplomacy" which ultimately meant Canada would publically endorse the

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[105] Ibid, Canada was, therefore, an avid supporter of the Marshall Plan, but not only for its capacity to protect against soviet expansion in Europe. The Marshall Plan also provided a means to solve the foreign exchange crisis that Canada found itself in after the war. Access to Marshall Plan dollars, then, was a way for Canada to solve its own domestic financial crisis, while also supporting the internationalist measures the Liberals felt were important R.D. Cuff and J.L. Granatstain provide perhaps the best coverage of Canada's participation in the Marshall Plan in their *American dollars-Canadian prosperity: Canadian-American economic relations, 1945-50* (Toronto: Samuel-Stevens, 1978).

[106] Page and Munton 594.

[107] Glazov 14.

[108] Glazov makes this point on 14.

American line, while also keeping available every opportunity to achieve stability in East-West relations.

It was this conception of the Canadian role in the Cold War that influenced Canada's decision not to seek an invitation to the 1947 Rio Conference.[109] Canadians had never been fond of the Monroe Doctrine, and thus were skeptical of any agreement that encroached on Canada's ability to determine its own response to a perceived threat. Equally important to the Canadian decision to remain detached from the Inter-American community, however, was the way in which such membership would be viewed by Britain. According to a memorandum sent from Pearson to the Cabinet Defense Committee, Canada was ultimately against endorsing a "regional" approach to defense matters in 1947 when "there had been no exchange of views between British Commonwealth countries regarding postwar defense arrangements."[110] In this way, the DEA was aware that Canada's connection to Britain was still significant enough that it needed to be factored into its postwar partnerships. Perhaps more significantly, however, was that Canada's desire to remain at arms length from an official Inter-American apparatus suggests that senior officials at the DEA felt their exclusion from an Inter-American community would provide Canada with an opportunity to influence American-Cuban-Latin Americans relations without being influenced or controlled by the United States.

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[109] Although Canada was unilaterally included in the security zone, it carried no obligations for the Canadian government.

[110] Lester B. Pearson to the Cabinet Defense Committee, "Inter-American defense arrangements and the forthcoming Rio de Janeiro conference" 4 August 1947. http://www.international.gc.ca/department/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=13784.

Canada's desire to remain "aloof" from the Inter-American Union did not detract from its hawkish approach towards the Soviet threat. Fighting the "red menace" in Cuba required an individual who well understood the importance of keeping the communist threat at bay. Neither Pearson nor St. Laurent had to look far to find a worthy candidate in Charles P. Hébert. A former member of the Economic Division at the DEA, Hébert was among the more hard-line anti-communists at External Affairs. His Catholicism contributed to his view that the fight against communism was an "apocalyptic ideological struggle" between Western "spiritual values" and the "godless" materialism of the Soviet Union, a view that was common among Quebecers at the DEA. Hébert felt the Catholic Church should play a role in fighting the Communist threat. He even suggested that the Church in Poland and Hungary to be used as "offensive weapons" like the Soviet Union was doing with communist parties in Italy and France.[111] With a strong Catholic tradition still affecting the social mores in Cuban society, it was thought that Hébert would fit in nicely at his new posting.

Before long, Hébert's fighting words would take on new currency at the DEA. The Czech coup in February 1948 brought East-West tensions "to a head."[112] As Robert Bothwell points out, the Czech coup solidified the hardliners' views on the violent nature of Soviet communism and brought a new sense of urgency to monitoring communism in Cuba.[113] As a result, the need for a formalized continentalist measure to protect the Western hemisphere was advocated by the DEA,

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[111] Whitaker 123-4.
[112] Page and Munton 603.
[113] Robert Bothwell's *The Big Chill: Canada and the Cold War* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1998) 29.

and especially by Lester Pearson. Talks would soon begin between the North Atlantic English-speaking powers, which included the United States, Canada, and Great Britain, and Western European nations consisting of Belgium, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, and France.

With negotiations ongoing on a formalized Western alliance, monitoring communist activity at the Canadian embassy became more urgent. Hébert produced a thirty-page report on the strength of communism in Cuba in April 1948. Like Vaillaincourt, Hébert believed that there was likely a direct connection between Cuba's communist party and Moscow. For example, in response to the charges that the PSP had been targeted as a fifth column by the U.S.S.R, Hebert wrote that, "the general consensus of reliable opinion is that the Cuban [communist] party has the greatest potentiality for such a future owing to the quality of its leadership and the efficiency of its staff work, reportedly in the best tradition of the highest staff teachings in Moscow."[114] However, while he admitted that the PSP took every opportunity to attack western democracies and prop up the Soviet Union as a leading example of socialist success, Hébert saw them more as a nationalist party of the "same general style as that of Gottwald in Czechoslovakia." In this way, despite his own strident opposition to Soviet policy, Hébert had a more nuanced interpretation than his predecessor. Nonetheless, as far as Hébert was concerned, a "homegrown"

[114] C.P. Hébert, "Memorandum for the Minister of External Affairs," 21 April 1948, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 3114, File 4471-40, pt. 1.

communism was not any less evil, even if it did not constitute an "international conspiracy."[115]

Hébert believed that a concerted effort was needed both by Western diplomats and Cuban officials, to contain the communist threat- both the Cuban and Soviet varieties. Hébert did not have to wait long to see a strident anti-communist take hold in Cuba. Carlos Prío Socarras was instilled as the new Cuban President in October 1948. Previously serving as Minister of Labour, Prío had established a reputation for himself as a rabid anti-communist, particularly after expelling the Communists from the CTC in a "furious struggle" in 1947.[116] Following Prío's win, Hébert felt that the "different and younger leader" gave Cubans "a fair hope for better government in this country." Prío's promises to work more with Congress were approved by Hébert as a "complete reversal of his predecessor's method of administration." While acknowledging that Prío had a lot of work ahead of him to make his government more productive than the last, Hébert ended that it was "heartening, nevertheless, to see the possibility that a new President, now that he is in power, may break away from the curse of 'continuismo,' and, with a younger revolutionary generation at his side, strive for a strong government tempered with a respect for constitutional orthodoxy and a sense of social justice and public morality."[117]

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[115] Hébert also dismissed any notion that PSP was receiving clandestine financial support from the Soviet legation: "Only moral support and supplementary documentary material would appear to be provided to the Party by the Soviet Legation."

[116] Paterson *Contesting Castro* 27.

[117] For all quotes in this paragraph see, C.P. Hebert to SSEA, 20 October 1948, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 8518, File 6605-F-40, pt.1.1.

No such luck. Evidence soon came to light that Prío, along with several of his cabinet members, were involved in corruption and graft that misappropriated $174 million dollars from the Cuban National Treasury during the previous government.[118] Coupled with the bleak outlook for Cuban sugar sales over the next year, Prío had put himself in a tough position with the Cuban public. The arrival of Batista from his self-imposed exile in the United States prior to the election increased tensions within Cuba's government ranks. According to Canadian Charge d'Affairs R.P. Cameron, the "impressive welcome" which was accorded Batista by the people upon his arrival was "an indication of the popularity which this man still holds in Cuba."[119] In a prescient statement, Cameron added that it was worthwhile to consider the effects that an economic depression could have on Batista's chances of regaining power: "It is doubtful whether the present administration could maintain control in the event of serious economic decline and popular opinion might very easily turn to a man, who, once before led the Cuban people during a very difficult period."[120] For all of Prío's corruption, he was still an unwavering anti-communist and was therefore given the benefit of the doubt by American diplomats. This was all but confirmed in a cable to Washington by American Ambassador Robert Butler: "One thing should always be remembered regarding President Prío...whenever we have asked him anything regarding Cuban foreign policy, he has always stated that Cuba will follow United

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[118] Ibid.
[119] R.P. Cameron, "Memorandum for the Minister of External Affairs," LAC, RG 25, Vol. 4016, File 10224-40, pt2; March 18th 1949.
[120] Ibid.

States' leadership which, I feel, is very commendable. We couldn't ask for anything more in this regard."[121]

In the summer of 1948, King announced his retirement from politics. St. Laurent was elected as the new Liberal Party leader, becoming Canada's twelfth Prime Minister. Pearson was promoted to Minister of External Affairs. These changes to the senior positions at External Affairs reverberated down the chain of command to the embassies. Hébert was given the position of Ambassador to Mexico and was replaced in Havana with former Under-Secretary of state E.H. Coleman in early 1949. Having represented Canada as Under-Secretary of the State Department since 1933, Coleman had amassed significant foreign policy experience.[122] In a secret memorandum sent to Coleman in March 1949, Pearson outlined that the Canadian mission's job in Havana was to "maintain and strengthen" cordial relations with the United Kingdom and United States. More specifically, Pearson stated that the Canadian legation "should endeavour not to be a dividing force within the Anglo-American colony" but to "strive to strengthen the bonds of community which exists between both elements, insomuch as what has been termed the 'triangle' of Anglo-Canadian-United States relations must always be a major preoccupation for Canada, wherever her interests may lie."[123] Pearson reiterated the same line to Coleman as he had given to Hébert, emphasizing that Cuba, as a "focal point for communist

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[121] Schoultz 47.
[122] "E.H. Coleman Named to Cuba" *Ottawa Citizen,* 27 January 1947, LAC, RG 25, Vol. C228, File 7570-40 pt1.
[123] Pearson also commented that there was "less open or concealed rivalry" between the Anglo-community, and it would be advantageous to continue this trend. He mentions this in his "Letter of Instruction" to Coleman, LAC, RG 25, Vol. C228, File 7570-40, pt.1

infiltration," was of specific interest to Ottawa. In this way, St. Laurent's call for "collective security," remained the defining characteristic of Canada's Cuba policy in 1949.

Coleman's central mandate, however, was still to foster Canadian trade in Cuba, a task that had become increasingly difficult in the culture of corruption and graft that had come to define Prío's administration. Philip Bonsal, who was the first U.S. Ambassador to Cuba after Castro's victory, though he had already spent several years on the island during the 1920s and 1930s, wrote in his memoir, "I know of no country among those committed to Western ethic where the diversion of public treasure for private profit reached the proportions that it attained in the Cuban Republic."[124] This assessment was echoed in a 1947 memorandum produced by the U.S. embassy's second-secretary H. Bartlett Wells before the end of his four-year assignment in Cuba. Looking over a list of emerging political personalities, he argued that, "all of these young people got where they did through concerted insubordination. It would be fair to say that organized indiscipline has become... a fetish of Cuban public life."[125]

Yet to his credit, Prío chose the respected and wealthy head of the Bacardi Company, José Bosch, as the man to take up the treasury portfolio in 1949. Born in Santiago de Cuba, José "Pepin" Bosch was the son of a sugar mill owner and banker, whose fortune grew out of the booming sugar industry. After its collapse in the 1920s, Bosch took a position as a bookkeeper for the First National City Bank of New York at its Havana branch. Already a respected member of Cuban society, Bosch's star

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[124] Schoultz 54.
[125] Schoultz 44.

would rise after marrying Enriqueta Schueg Bacardi, a member of the wealthy family who founded the Bacardi Corporation in 1896.[126]

Bosch's anti-communist stance, coupled with his record as a respected, honest businessman, made him an attractive ally for Canada in Prío's otherwise corruption-infested cabinet. Coleman, in particular, developed a very amicable relationship with Bosch, who he described as a "a man of unquestioned integrity, great force of

[126] From a business standpoint, Bosch possessed the necessary instincts that would promote, and protect, the Bacardi brand. According to his obituary in the *New York Times*, Bosch saved the Bacardi Company twice from financial disaster- once staving off bankruptcy during the Great Depression in the 1930s, and also after Castro nationalized all foreign businesses in Cuba during the 1960s. Had Bosch not already established various international holding company's, along with mailing the trademark certificates to his office in New York, the Bacardi family could well have ended up like other members of the Cuban elite who become bankrupt overnight. However, while most Cuban companies and their American subsidiaries were fervent backers of Batista, such was not the case for the Bacardi family. According to Tom Gjelten's *Bacardi and the Long Fight for Cuba*, the Bacardi family withheld support for the Batista regime on the grounds of their distaste for his dictatorial style of rule. Despite pressure from Batista's "goons" to supply funds to the government, the "courageous and stubborn" head of the family, Fucundo Bacardi, turned them down. His son-in-law, Enrique Schlueg would be the first member of the family who demonstrated an adept business sense, particularly when it came to marketing the Bacardi brand. Throughout his tenure as head of the company, Bacardi rum would become synonymous with the drinking, casino-going, stage show atmosphere that attracted droves of tourists to Havana. Despite tension within the family over a non-blood relative heading the company, Bosch was well liked by his workers, while also garnering the respect of Cuban upper society for his frequent donations to social welfare and cultural causes. This concern for the wellbeing of his country is also what influenced his initial support of Castro's revolution. Eager to have his country wrenched free of Batista's iron-clad grip, Bosch personally donated a reported $32, 800 (equivalent to approximately $275,000-today) to Castro's M-26-7 movement, while also arranging meetings between the CIA and the revolutionaries in order to put the latter's concerns at ease. Yet, while Bosch could be called a nationalist or even a sideline- freedom fighter, what he could not be called was a communist sympathizer. Bred with the ideology of a hardened capitalist, Bosch was intolerant of implementing a government system that rendered impotent big businesses like the Bacardi Company.

character" and "an outstanding capacity for business."[127] Writing to then-USSEA Arnold Heeney in a memorandum dated January 9, 1950, Coleman reported that Bosch had invited him to dine at his private residence when the Canadian Ambassador visited Santiago de Cuba. What impressed Coleman was Bosch's clear understanding and appreciation of Canadian business, which apparently Bosch indicated he had had several pleasant dealings with. Although Coleman never revealed his personal feelings on the subject of Cuban communism in his despatches to Ottawa, his friendship with Bosch suggests that the subject was likely broached at some point during their private *tête-à-tête's* at Bosch's mansion in Santiago de Cuba. However, whether or not they did talk openly on the subject, Coleman understood that taking an anti-communist stance would win over Bosch, which, in turn, meant Canadian business interests would be secured.

That Coleman had found a member of the Cuban cabinet that was not the "whipping boy" of the United States, and who clearly valued the importance of Canadian business in Cuba, was encouraging to those back in Ottawa. Heeney confirmed as much in a despatch to Pearson in February 1950, "the new Minister of Finance is reported by both Dr. Coleman and the insurance companies...to be willing to adopt a more favourable attitude to our representations."

Unfortunately for the Department of External Affairs, in March 1951 Bosch announced his decision to step down as Minister of the Treasury after suffering a mild heart attack. According to Coleman's report to Ottawa, Bosch's staff felt the decline in health was due to his "overwork" and "a feeling of depression and frustration in

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[127] E.H. Coleman, "Memorandum for the Minister of External Affairs," 23 November 1949, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 4016, File 10224-40, pt 2.

connection with the operation of the Government." While Coleman described Bosch's retirement as a "heavy blow" to Prío's government, particularly in terms of business and financial issues,[128] it is fair to say that the loss of Bosch as a stalwart Canadian ally within a corrupt government also posed a significant loss for Canada. Without a bona fide ally at the centre of Cuban politics, the Department would not have the same security in knowing Canada's interests would be protected, especially by a man who was avowedly anti-communist.

After less than a year, Coleman saw his own position raised to the rank of ambassador after the Department reciprocated Cuba's decision to upgrade its mission in June 1950. The value of the Canadian embassy's role in the "collective security" of Latin America against communism was reinforced in a department memorandum: "Communism...considers Cuba to be one of its most valuable strongholds in America and the value of our mission as a listening post in this connection cannot be overestimated."[129] A year earlier, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established. Pearson had originally envisioned it as a "multilateral groups of equals," in which all member states would be responsible for the defense and protection of each other.[130] What he got instead was, to borrow Political Scientist Reg Whitaker's description, an "anti-Soviet military alliance under American domination."[131]

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[128] E.H. Coleman, "Resignation of Minister of Finance Jose Bosch," 7 March 1951, LAC, RG 25, File 10224-40, pt 2.
[129] "Memorandum for the Under-Secretary" 9 May 1950, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 2734, File 289-40, pt 1.
[130] Quote taken from Robert Bothwell's *The Big Chill* 29.
[131] Whitaker 136.

Conclusion

In light of the mass expansion that the Department of External Affairs underwent in the mid 1940s, it entered the 1950s a much stronger, more distinguished organization. As far as Pearson was concerned, he and St. Laurent had built a department that was capable of "punching above [its] weight," tackling issues concerning Canada's economic interests, while fighting the threat of international communism as impassioned but thoughtful Cold Warriors.[132]. St. Laurent struggled with pressures as the leader of a young country, still fighting to prove itself as a nation worthy of a seat at the table of post-World War II international politics. Taking on the challenge of first heading an expanding department, and later having to navigate Canada through the early Cold War years as its leader, St. Laurent chose to adopt a hawkish policy towards communist activity in Cuba, lest he seem the "weak" link in the Western alliance. With the support of Pearson in pursing a hard-line approach to communism, both at home and abroad, St. Laurent demonstrated Canada's approval for anti-communist measures in Cuba during the pre-revolutionary years.[133]

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[132] The quote by Pearson was taken from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade website, "Punching Above it's Weight, 1939-68," http://www.international.gc.ca/history-histoire/photos/punching-jouer.aspx?menu_id=39&menu=R.

[133] Writing in his memoirs, Escott Reid noted that after studying the speech made by St. Laurent and Pearson in the late 1940s, he was struck by the "constant use of such terms such as 'communist expansionism' and 'aggressive communist despotism' when what we feared was not communism but the Soviet Union." As Whitaker argues, St. Laurent and Pearson understood what the Truman administration also knew: in order to sell the Cold War to the Canadian and American public, they had to "scare the hell out of them" and make them believe communism was a threat to society. See Whitaker 131.

However, it is important to remember that St. Laurent's hardline, pro-American approach to Cuba, and also the Soviet Union, was not a product of partisan politics. Indeed, as Reg Whitaker points out, the Tory right represented a potential "soft spot" in St. Laurent's Cold War policy that never materialized.[134] As Whitaker explains, the old "emotions of empire" failed to significantly affect the opinion of right-leaning Canadians in the postwar world, at least sufficiently enough to ignite widespread anti-Americanism. This was partly because the Tories no longer saw Britain as representing traditional conservative ideals, given that the Labor party had taken over power. Even when George Drew was selected as the new Progressive Conservative leader in 1948, he too emphasized the need for Canada to protect its borders against the threat of communist invasion.[135] For Canadian politicians of all political stripes, then, nobody was immune to the communist threat-only a united front within Canada, led by the United States, would be an effective defense.

Cold War factors, then, shaped Canada's Cuba policy in the late forties. While economic interests was one reason that Ottawa established a mission in Cuba, the Canadian presence in Havana thereafter was shaped and informed through its alliance with the United States in the shared goal of fighting international communism. Canada's representatives in Cuba supported this idea. Vaillancourt, Hébert, and Coleman were died-in-the wool Cold Warriors, who viewed Cubans with a paternalistic view not unlike their American counterparts. Though they varied in the degree to which they opposed communism, they all acknowledged that a strong, united effort to stem the tide of communism in Latin America meant that Canadian

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[134] Whitaker 264.
[135] Whitaker 264-5.

interests and Western security would be maintained. St. Laurent and Pearson supported this view and encouraged them to continue to follow the American line.

Even so, Ottawa felt it was contributing, however modestly, to collective security. Canada's efforts to bring together the signatories of the North Atlantic Treaty buoyed the confidence of Pearson and the rest of the DEA. While Pearson would get a wake up call in the coming months about the limits of Canadian diplomacy in the face of rabid anticommunists in Washington, the confidence that the DEA had the skill and experience to shepherd the Canadian people through the Cold War storm would define the attitude of the DEA during the 1950s.

Chapter 2:

"A backwards, banana republic:" Pearson, the DEA, and the Canadian Embassy in Havana's indifference towards Cuban affairs, 1952-1956

The 1950s brought with it many changes for Cubans. The former Cuban President Fulgencio Batista overthrew the democratically elected government in a bloodless coup in 1952. The rise and fall of sugar prices exacerbated an already fragile Cuban economy, which had left the majority of Cubans living in poverty. Both factors contributed to the rise in nationalist sentiment that was being led by a young, bearded revolutionary by the name of Fidel Castro. While the din of revolutionary fervor could be heard across the island, the majority of high-ranking officials in both Washington and Ottawa were not listening. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that Canadian diplomats, both on the ground in Cuba, and in Ottawa were indifferent towards the economic and political woes that afflicted Cuba during the 1950s. Moreover, Lester B. Pearson's role in setting the tone for the DEA's general indifference towards Cuba will be the central focus of this chapter.[136]

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[136] The term "indifference," as it pertains to Lester B. Pearson's perception of Cuba, warrants clarification. There is no doubt that other factors, including a general lack of resources available to both Department officials in Ottawa and on the ground in Cuba, American influence in Cuba, and Pearson's concern with political matters in both Eastern Europe and South East Asia, all played a role in shaping Pearson's approach to Cuba, and thereby his decision not to support an economic plan for Latin America. However, at the heart of Pearson's perception of Cuba's economic situation was the idea that Cubans were responsible for their own economic hardships, which he attributed to Cubans' "laziness" and the graft and corruption of the Cuban political system. Lars Schoultz makes a similar argument on page 160 of his *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic* (2009) that the Eisenhower administration held a paternalistic, condescending view of Cuba's economic situation. Schoultz's characterization of the Eisenhower is undoubtedly one of "indifference" and given the parallel that can be

Recalling Lester B. Pearson in his memoirs, former Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs Escott Reid wrote, "the most difficult task of any Canadian government is doing our utmost to dissuade the U.S. from pursuing an unwise policy in its foreign relations." Pearson was successful at this, Reid argued, through his efforts in the U.N., NATO, and the Commonwealth.[137] However accurate in general, Reid's observations do not extend to Cuba. This chapter makes the argument that Canada's Cuba policy from 1952 until 1956 not only supported the American line in Cuba, but ignored the need for a comprehensive economic development program for Cuba, and Latin America in general, despite evidence that low standards of living were contributing to nationalist sentiments and, ultimately support for Fidel Castro's M-26-July movement. This stemmed from the perception, both at the DEA and among Canadian diplomats in Havana, that Cuban politics were corrupt and violent. In this way, Pearson and other senior officials at the DEA wrote off the economic and political woes in Cuba as the inevitable outcome of a backwards banana republic.

The beginning of the 1950s brought a sense of confidence and achievement to Pearson and the rest of the officials at the DEA. The signing of the North Atlantic Treaty had been a significant step forwards in the Western alliance's commitment to collective security, and Pearson had personally taken great pride in his role during the treaty's negotiation. Though Pearson realized that the Americans had an inordinate amount of power in dictating the terms for postwar reconstruction and collective security, he believed that Canada could help bring balance to the Western alliance

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drawn between Pearson and Eisenhower's perception of Cuba, the term "indifference" is also an appropriate way to describe Pearson's attitude.

[137] Greg Donaghy and Stephane Rousell's ed. *Escott Reid: diplomat and scholar* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004) x.

through cooperative measures with other middle powers at the United Nations. However, in practice Pearson's ability to use Canada's "mediatory" status to restrain or modify American behaviour was slight.[138] The Korean War, in particular, demonstrated that Canadian attempts to pursue independent peace initiatives only irritated the United States. U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson alludes to this in his memoirs, recalling Pearson's "forlorn" attempt in 1952 to combine with Krishna Menon from India to bring hostilities to an end in Korea.[139] As Reg Whitaker points out, Pearson was genuinely concerned that increasing hostilities in Korea as a result of the United States hardline approach would be the "trip wire" for a third world war, or at the very least, provoke war between the West and China.[140] In an attempt to obviate such a scenario, Pearson wrote a letter to Acheson suggesting that recognition be extended to China. Doing so, suggested Pearson, would make it possible for China to eventually come closer to the Western camp rather than push them more towards the U.S.S.R.

However, after Mao's victory in 1949, China was interpreted as a "loss" for the U.S. that was not to be repeated. Acheson therefore dismissed the idea, and Pearson was once again reminded that Canadian meddling was not welcomed or appreciated by Washington.[141] As a result, Pearson's initial idealism that Canada could influence American foreign policy in any significant way was thrown into question, along with any belief that the NATO alliance implied equality among its members. Both of these factors caused Pearson to become disenchanted with

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[138] Whitaker makes this argument on 388.
[139] Whitaker 389.
[140] Whitaker 390.
[141] Whitaker 394.

American leadership, leading him to assert his caution in a 1951 speech in front of the Empire and Canadian Clubs in Toronto where he stated the "days of relatively easy and automatic political relations with our neighbours is...over."[142] Though his statement brought a torrent of criticism south of the border, it also received support from some Canadians who had also begun to question American belligerence in Korea. This sudden surge of anti-American sentiment in Canada caused great concern for Pearson, which he communicated in a letter to Canadian Ambassador to Washington Hume Wrong: "In this episode, I am more worried about extravagant praise from Canadians than abuse from the Americans, because it shows how easy it would be to work up a strong anti-Americanism in this country at this time. The danger is obvious and that is one reason why, having now said my piece, I will lapse back into the traditional Canadian-American speech pattern..."[143]

Though Pearson got back onside with the Americans in relatively short order, the Korean experience raised the unsettling question of whether "our friends in Washington" actually cared deeply (or at all) about what the majority of people in Canada thought of them or their policies.[144] Both Pearson and St. Laurent felt it was best to leave that question unanswered. The most important lesson Pearson learned was that if Canada hoped to use its modest influence to constrain the powerful Cold Warriors in Washington, it had to pick its battles wisely. Quiet diplomacy had its price, and Pearson learned that it was easier to pay on issues that he deemed important, rather than issues he perceived as relatively insignificant. The Korean

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[142] Whitaker 387.
[143] Denis Stairs's "Present in Moderation: Lester Pearson and the Craft of Diplomacy" International Journal 29.1 Lester Pearson's Diplomacy (1974), 149.
[144] Whitaker 389.

experience, therefore, influenced Pearson to follow the American lead in areas of diplomacy where Canada had little chance of exercising its influence. Latin America, and Cuba in particular, was one such example.

Cuba in the 1950s: an island paradise or a country in need?

Though Cuba was perceived to be an American playground, complete with luxury hotels and a vibrant nightlife, the truth was far more sobering. According to a 1950 World Bank report, only three percent of rural toilets in Cuba were inside of homes, while the remainder had to use either an outside toilet or the bushes. With only two percent of rural homes having running water, health concerns abounded among the majority of Cubans living outside the city centers. The report also found that despite the outward signs of prosperity in Havana, Cuba's per captia income in 1950 was only half that of Mississippi, the poorest state in the U.S. at the time.[145] "Unless and until dramatic improvements are effected," the report concluded, "the Cuban people cannot hope effectively to develop their country."[146] Though no development program had been put in place by 1950, efforts were made in 1947 within the Pan-American community to acknowledge the problem. Chile initially proposed the establishment of an Economic Commission for Latin America in 1947 at the Fifth Session of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. The proposed mandate of the Commission was to establish economic cooperation among the American republics, while also studying the most pressing matters in the region, especially the "maladjustment" of Latin American countries to the postwar economy.

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[145] Schoultz 53.
[146] Schoultz 54.

Though the Commission was established in 1948 with thirteen states voting in its favour, Canada abstained from voting, on the grounds that a "regional approach to economic organization constituted a reversal of the word-wide functionalist approach" to economic development.[147] The United States took a similar line, arguing that Latin America needed to be content with developing economically "over a period of twenty or thirty years rather than overnight," adding that in light of U.S. commitments under the Marshall Plan, the United States could not provide Latin America with a "pork-barrel" for their economic development.[148] However, four months before discussion began on an Economic Commission for Latin America, the Canadian delegate to the United Nations sent an urgent despatch to Pearson, recommending that Canada support the establishment of an Economic Commission for Europe "as soon as possible," adding that, "humanitarian considerations dictate that Canada should support this effort to restore the level of economic prosperity and security of Europe."[149] A few days later, another recommendation was given that suggested Canada should support a similar Economic Commission for Asia. Though there were concerns that the Commissions would promote a "regionalist" rather than a "multilateral functionalist" approach, the DEA approved Canada's support for both commissions. This raises an important question in the context of Latin American

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[147] Mentioned in Hébert's Letter of Instruction," LAC, RG 25, Vol. 2734, File 289-40, pt. 1.

[148] Ibid.

[149] Canadian Consul General in New York to Pearson, Telegram No. 289, 4 March 1947, http://www.international.gc.ca/department/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=13594. The telegram went on to justify the reason for support of the Commission with: "In general, it seems... a strong European Commission may prove very useful in helping to solve the German problem, and perhaps to some extent in reintegrating the economies of Eastern and Western Europe."

development in the late 1940s until the early 1950s: How could the DEA argue against supporting an Economic Commission in Latin America on the grounds that it was a "regionalist" approach when both the European and Asian Commission were based on a regionalist rather than a multi-internationalist approach? Simply stated, Latin America's troubles were seen as insignificant compared to the areas with a more "acute" need of economic development. After all, the economic conditions in Latin America could wait, as, according to Director of the Economic Division R.B. Bryce, they were "somewhat exaggerated versions" of the "problems that many other countries are encountering today."[150]

Canadian participation in the economic development of Asia and Eastern Europe was not restricted to measures adopted by the United Nations. Canada also became involved in economic development as part of the Commonwealth Association, which still functioned as a major instrument of Canadian foreign policy in the early 1950s. Given that billions of dollars had been given to far wealthier countries as part of the Marshall Plan, nations of the Commonwealth acknowledged that little attention had been given to South and Southeast Asian countries, whose low standard of living and rising population had created a fragile economic and political situation.[151] Repairing this imbalance became the central goal of the Conference of Commonwealth foreign ministers that was held in Colombo in January 1950. It was there that the idea was first pitched that a Commonwealth aid program for South and

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[150]R.B Bryce to SSEA, "Economic Commission for Latin America," 25 July 1947, http://www.international.gc.ca/department/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=13567.

[151] This point is made in Antonin Basch's article "The Colombo Plan: A Case of Regional Economic Cooperation" *International Organization* 9.1 (1955) 3.

Southeastern Asia was needed to strengthen that area's capacity to resist communism.[152] Though St. Laurent was lukewarm about the idea of committing Canada to a costly, long-term plan, Pearson managed to convince the Prime Minister, and the rest of the Cabinet, to endorse the program. As Hilliker points out, Pearson was able to convince Cabinet ministers to approve the program because the Korean War had made the majority of Canadians receptive to initiatives that would help bring stability to that region.[153] As a result, on February 7, 1951, Canada set its contribution to the program at $25 million for the first year. What is more, Pearson was also able to convince U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson that the U.S. should support a Commonwealth-led initiative. The Colombo Plan, then, emphasized Pearson's belief that the countries most in need of Canadian aid were in the Eastern hemisphere, not just for their economic development, but also to stem the tide of communist expansion. Showing these countries support through economic aid and investment was also a way to generate goodwill towards the West, while simultaneously spreading the values of liberal democracy. Seen in this way, Pearson's support for aid programs was consistent with his desire to have Canada's modest influence be a factor in the easing of East-West tensions. Pearson communicated this to Minister of Finance D.C. Abbott: "We must try, I believe, to strengthen the will and the capacity of these countries to assist in the struggle against Communist imperialism; and one of the very few ways we can do so is by showing a practical interest in their economic

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[152] Hilliker, *Volume 2*, 83. As Hilliker points out, though Canada was deeply committed to its role in the Anglo-American alliance, in the early fifties the Commonwealth remained an important forum for the conduct of Canadian foreign policy. See page 82.

[153] Hilliker, *Volume 2*, 84.

welfare."[154] The problem was that Pearson's "practical interest" only applied to Europe and, in the case of the Colombo Plan, the Far East. Latin America, on the other hand, was not an area of primary importance, as far as Pearson was concerned. Evidence for this can be found in a despatch Pearson sent to Canada's Ambassador to Brazil, where he described Latin American Affairs as "petty" and emphasizing instead "our concentration on more important international matters."[155]

On this point, he was not alone, as the Eisenhower administration was also uninterested in the economic woes of Latin America. Therefore, regardless of what the report issued by the World Bank said, Cuba was a pro-American, investment-friendly society, complete with all the markings of American culture. This facade of economic stability was enough to satisfy the Americans that all was well in Cuba, or if not well, at least good enough for the time being. As far as Pearson was concerned, if it was good enough for the Americans, it was good enough for Canada.

An Ambivalent Perspective: Cuba through the eyes of Harry A. Scott

Harry Albert Scott took up his post in January 1952 as Canada's new Ambassador to Cuba in the place of E.H. Coleman. Though he had never headed a mission before, Scott's efforts in developing Canada's economic interests had impressed senior officials at the DEA enough to convince them that he could do the same in the North American-friendly Cuban business community. Although he

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[154] Lester B. Pearson to D.C. Abbott, "Consultative Committee Meeting, February 12-20, 1951," 17 January 1951, http://www.international.gc.ca/department/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefId=5921.

[155] Lester B. Pearson to Canadian Ambassador to Brazil, "Pan-American Union," 9 January 1947,http://www.international.gc.ca/department/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=13765.

would be the new kid on the diplomatic block in Cuba, Ottawa encouraged Scott to role model Canadian leadership for the "misguided" Cubans: "It is felt that the tactful presentation and publicizing of Canada's record of public stability and sound public administration... might have some slight effect in providing more balance in the policies of the Cuban Government and more efficiency in its administration."[156] In this way, as John Kirk and Peter McKenna argue, Ottawa clearly believed itself to be morally superior to the Cubans' "corrupt and inefficient public administration." Ottawa was under no illusion, however, that it should shepherd the Cubans through any political or economic turmoil. "Any efforts which the United States may make to bring more political or economic stability to Cuba should be viewed with sympathy; it is obvious that any increase in the standard of living and well-being of the Cuban population is bound to benefit that country in its trading relations with other countries, including Canada."[157] Upsetting the American boat by openly criticizing their policies towards Cuba would only threaten Canada's economic interests, not to mention strain the relationship between Ottawa and Washington. Maintaining the status quo, then, was Scott's mandate in Cuba. However, Scott initially found it difficult to hold back his criticism of Batista and his dictatorial methods.

Less than two months after Scott arrived in Cuba, Fulgencio Batista staged a coup before dawn on March 10, 1952, overthrowing Prío. Needing only a couple of hours to take full control of the Cuban government, Batista declared shortly after that his regime would be a transitory one "which will give way to fair and honest elections

[156] Kirk and McKenna 27.
[157] Kirk and McKenna 27.

at the soonest possible date."[158] Nonetheless, he suspended constitutional guarantees for a period of 45 days, a particularly poignant action as it marked the first time since the 1940 Constitution had been enacted that rights had been officially suspended. Students at the University of Havana asserted their opposition to the suspension by holding a mock funeral for the Constitution, complete with a small casket resting at the top of a long flight of stairs, surrounded by wreaths and guards of honour.[159] Batista, however, argued that his seizure of power was for the greater good: "Nobody can accuse me of revolutionary ambitions nor desire for power... it was impossible to continue to tolerate a regime of graft and crime...which was leading the government into a state of chaos."[160] The Cuban conservative newspaper the *El Diario de la Marina*, showed its support for Batista's takeover, arguing that it was "inconceivable" that Batista staged the coup because of an "appetite for power," adding that "grave emergency conditions" must have existed if such a "radical remedy" was applied.[161] The communist newspaper *Hoy*, however, lamented that the country had gone "from the frying pan to the fire," calling for the United Front to defend the constitution.[162] The reaction in the liberal American media was similar. The *New York Times* ran an article the day after coup, describing it as "deplorable" and a "typical, old-fashioned Latin American revolution." Despite the bad press, the reality was that Batista's coup went off without a hitch. While there had been threats of a general strike in the hours

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[158] Harry Scott to External Affairs, "Seizure of Power By General Batista," 12 March 1952, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 4016, File 10224-40, pt. 2.
[159] "Batista takes Oath as Cuban President" *New York Times*, 4 April 1952.
[160] Scott to External Affairs, "Seizure of Power By General Batista," 19 March 1952, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 4016, File 10224-40, pt. 2.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Ibid. According to Scott, given that Batista did not immediately shut down *Hoy* indicated how slight he regarded the danger from the communists to be. See ibid.

following Batista's takeover, by the morning of March 11, all business and stores were running as usual, suggesting the Cuban people had accepted the coup as a *fait accompli.*[163]

Top brass in Washington were not particularly concerned about the coup. As historian Lars Schoultz argues, the Americans interpreted it as one more example of the country's "immature political culture," an attitude that was expressed by the American embassy in Havana: "Cubans have got into the position of thinking that Government is an institution which deals out favors and privileges to people. Until Cubans learn that discipline and sacrifice are a necessary part of democracy, the upsets such as just occurred will be inevitable."[164] Given that Cuban's shortcomings were born of their "unsavory culture" and "diminutive size" and not their political leaders, the Truman administration had no substantial problems with Batista's seizure of power.[165] The only issue was Batista's collaboration with the Communists during his first tenure, which had given members of the PSP seats in Congress; the Americans decided to withhold their recognition while they waited for assurances from Batista that such actions would not be repeated.[166] Minister of State Miguel Angel de la Campa assured American Ambassador Willard Beaulac that the "freedom" of the communists would be "eliminated" and reinforced that Batista heartily welcomed private investment.[167] Satisfied with these promises, and no doubt bolstered by the fact that Batista had proven cooperative in the past, the U.S. extended

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[163] Ibid.
[164] Schoultz 48.
[165] Schoultz 48.
[166] Paterson 17.
[167] Paterson 17.

diplomatic recognition on March 27. British Ambassador Adrian Holman concurred with the U.S. decision, reporting to Eden that, "Beaulac feels that if this had to happen Batista was the best material for the job."[168]

Harry Scott, on the other hand, was not so sure. "Although I am a recent arrival in Cuba, I find it difficult to subscribe to the view that the Cuban people will easily forgive Batista." What struck Scott as particularly troubling was the fact that Batista's coup was a step back for Cuba: "The Cubans were proud of their new Constitution of 1940 and of the fact that it placed them above many Latin American countries where violent overthrow of the government was an accepted occurrence." In a prescient statement, Scott concluded that, "it may not happen while I am here, but it seems to me that the shock which has been administered to Cuban pride could eventually bear bitter fruit for Batista."[169] For Scott, then, undemocratic behaviour was not only distasteful but was fundamentally at odds with Canadian values. Thus, the manner in which Batista took control of Cuba turned Scott off of Batista, and ultimately influenced his reporting of the Cuban President for the majority of his tenure as HOM.

Scott's concerns appeared to hit a chord at the DEA. In a despatch to senior officials at External Affairs, head of the American and Far Easter Division, William Stark, thought it best to bring up the possible consequences of Batista's takeover in a memorandum for a departmental meeting: "Mr. Scott has formed the impression that although the Cubans may feel that General Batista will give them a better government

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[168] Schoultz 50.
[169] Scott to External Affairs, "Seizure of Power By General Batista," 12 March 1952, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 4016, File 10224-40, pt. 2.

for the time being, in the future they may find it difficult to forgive him for such a violent overthrow of the democratic government which was based on the 1940 Constitution."[170] However, despite the possibility that Batista could bring instability to Cuba, Pearson knew that Canada had little power or influence to demand any specific conditions from Batista. Thus, aside from the basic guarantees that Canadian citizens and economic interests would be protected, Pearson approved of Canada recognizing Batista's government. However, not wanting to make any moves before the Americans, he ordered Canada's recognition to be held until the United State confirmed their intention to recognize Batista. This habit of "following the leader" would ultimately prove to be the nature of Canada's approach to Cuba during Eisenhower's presidency.

Almost two decades of Democratic leadership came to an end when General Dwight D. Eisenhower became President in 1953. Though in private Eisenhower criticized the "hysterical folly" of Senator Joseph McCarthy's domestic crusade against communism, he was undoubtedly one of the United States' coldest Cold Warriors in the 1950s. Writing privately to Republican Senator William Jenner at the end of his first year in office, Eisenhower argued that "the work of the Soviet Communist Fifth Column does indeed constitute an international conspiracy," which his government was "determined to use every appropriate means to counteract it."[171] Nonetheless, Eisenhower was careful not to lead the United States into a "military-industrial complex," which, if left unchecked, he argued, could become more

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[170] Ibid.
[171] Von Tunzelmann 52.

powerful than the government itself.[172] Responsible leadership, then, was needed to shepherd the United States through the nuclear age with care and caution, while also protecting the Western hemisphere against the threat of Communist expansion. Though Eisenhower's idea of "responsibility" and military restraint would come to mean funding clandestine operations to depose alleged communist leaders, specifically the CIA-led Guatemalan coup in 1954, Eisenhower's reputation as a successful, highly decorated and admired American war hero earned him the respect and trust of the American people.

Though Americans were able to go to the polls in 1952, the prospect of Cubans getting the same opportunity seemed bleak. Since gaining power, Batista had done little to convince Cubans that he was serious about holding an honest election. Soon after taking control of the presidential palace, Batista announced that an election would be postponed until November 15, 1953. However, on February 27th, 1953, the Cabinet announced that the election would be postponed "indefinitely" and a new date would be decided upon after the next Congress took office in June 1954. In a telex sent from the Canadian Embassy in Havana, Scott relayed to officials back at External Affairs how Batista's delaying tactics were received by Cubans: "my curbstone impression is that the reaction of baseball-loving Cubans publically will be that pitcher Batista thought if he threw a straight ball to the Opposition they would hit a home run in the November elections. He has, therefore, given them a base on balls instead."[173] Metaphors aside, Scott correctly observed that Batista was trying to shore

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[172] Von Tunzelmann 52.
[173] Harry Scott to SSEA, "Cuban Elections," 28 February 1953, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 8326, File 10224-40, pt. 3.

up public support before he called an election. In order to do this, Batista turned to his Ministry of Information. On a domestic level, the Ministry's main task was to "orient and inform public opinion." In practice, however, the Ministry was just one of several tools of repression utilized by Batista, as it concentrated mostly on censoring radio and newspaper material that challenged the official government line. Also part of the Ministry was the Division of International Affairs, which became the "official" advertising firm of the Batista regime. While much has been written by historians on Castro's masterful use of the American media to sell his revolution in the U.S., Batista was also no stranger to shameless self-promotion. Despite the financial crisis in 1953 caused by a downturn in sugar prices on the world market, Batista bought half the advertising space in a *New York Times* special publication on Latin America in January 1953, while doing the same three months later for a special report on Cuba published by the *New York Herald Tribune.* In response to the publicity generated by the articles, Scott warned officials back at the DEA that some of the information contained in the articles should be read "with several grains of salt."[174]

Although Batista earned praise from American representatives in Havana, the Cuban exile community in Miami was focused on making sure Batista was disposed of as soon as possible. The man behind the attacks was former Cuban President Prío Socarrás. After being unceremoniously replaced by Batista in March 1952, Prío had fled to Miami where he set up residence and began plotting his overthrow. Though Prío would garner the attention of U.S. authorities for stockpiling weapons on American soil in 1954, he became the temporary problem of Canadian authorities in

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[174] Ibid.

early May 1953 when word reached Havana that Prío was one of several anti-Batista exiles who met in Montreal to plot Batista's demise. After being denied entrance visas from the United States, Mexico and Guatemala, fourteen members of Cuba's opposition groups entered Canada on valid Cuban passports between May 26 and 28. Comprised mostly of members of the Auténtico Party, the People's Orthodox Party and some members of the University Students' Federation Party, the group held a series of meetings at the Ritz Carleton hotel in Montreal from May 28 to June 2 1952.[175] During the four days, the group issued a declaration they dubbed the "Charter of Montreal," which called for a provisional government to oversee free elections. The declaration, however, did not rule out revolutionary activity. When the Cuban government discovered that the meeting had taken place, they accused the group of buying weapons in Canada that were to be used in a coup attempt against Batista.[176]

News of the meeting spread throughout Cuba, where it was met with both cheers and jeers. "For better or for worse, Montreal and Canada have become household words for now," Scott wrote to External Affairs in early June. As for any consequences to Canadian-Cuban relations, Scott asserted that, "so far, there has been no public criticism of the Canadian government for not preventing the meeting. What comment there has been is to the effect that Montreal now takes its place with Miami and New York among the cities where exiled Cubans have planned resistance to the government in power." Scott suggested that, "since many Cubans are sympathetic to

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[175] William G. Stark, "Memorandum for the Acting Under-Secretary of State: Meeting of Cuban Opposition Leaders in Montreal," 8 June 1953, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 8326, File 10224-40, pt. 3.
[176] Don Munton and David Vogt 46.

the aims of the leaders who met in Montreal, it is conceivable that Canada has gained some prestige in certain quarters here."[177] The reaction from the Cuban government, however, was one of indignation. Cuban Minister of State Alberto Campa criticized the Canadian government for not preventing the meeting. When told by Canadian officials that neither the DEA nor the RCMP had any prior knowledge of the meeting, or any knowledge of contraband arms shipments, Campa demanded that the Canadians investigate whether arms may have been diverted to Cuba through official Canadian sales to Costa Rica or Guatemala.

To defuse the situation, Pearson forwarded an official statement to the Cuban government via the Canadian embassy, emphasizing that Canada "deeply deplored" the meeting of Cuban opposition leaders on Canadian soil, making sure to emphasize that "we have always maintained the friendliest of relations with the Cuban government."[178] As a further gesture of goodwill, the DEA appeased Campa by investigating whether Canadian arms sales to Latin America may have been diverted to Cuba. In a memorandum to American Division, Director of the Economic Division A.E. Ritchie reported the following: " My research has revealed that we scarcely can be thought of as having supplied weapons to those countries which could be diverted for the use of the rebels in Cuba." According to Ritchie only a few hundred dollars in civilian aircraft parts were sold to Guatemala between 1951 and 1952, in addition to 30 horses and accoutrements that were due to be sent in 1953. "You will see,

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[177] Harry Scott to External, "Activities of Ex-President Prio," 5 June 1953, RG 25, Vol. 8326, File 10224-40, pt. 3.
[178] SSEA to Canadian Ambassador to Cuba, "Meeting of Cuban Opposition Parties in Montreal," 19 June 1953, LACRG 25, Vol. 8326, File 10224-40, pt. 3.

therefore, that these are two countries where we have been quite innocent of any revolutionary blood that may have been shed."[179]

However, in a June 20 despatch, Scott was more urgent in his assessment of the possible consequences for Canada. After having a discussion with a "leading business man and newspaper owner" Scott warned his superiors at the DEA that, "Batista is unpopular with the Cubans, is becoming more so everyday, and knows it. The armed forces are dissatisfied because he is attempting to rule with too light a hand and has not given them as much power as expected. There are definite signs of defection and the situation has become so serious that Batista must purge the armed forces and set up a military dictatorship quickly if he is to remain in power." However, not wanting to overstep his bounds, Scott added: "...I certainly have no intention in star gazing on slippery ground...my purpose here is to let you know that a lot of people here think there will be trouble here of some kind in the next few months and to warn you that if trouble does develop, there may yet be public recriminations against the Canadian government for having permitted the plans for it to be laid at the meeting in Montreal."[180]

By this time, however, the patience of officials at the DEA was wearing thin, as Campa provided conflicting accounts of the degree to which the meeting had been "common knowledge" in Havana. In response to Campa's seemingly baseless allegations of Canadian involvement in contraband arms shipments, Ritchie made little effort to conceal his sarcasm in a secret memorandum to USSEA Jules Léger,

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[179] A.E. Ritchie to Economic Division, "Export of Arms to Cuba," 18 June, 1953, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 8326, File 10224-40, pt. 3.
[180] Harry Scott to SSEA, "Activities of Ex-President Prio," 5 June 1953, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 8326, File 10224-40, pt. 3.

saying that the Cubans had clearly "proven themselves to be even bigger liars than we thought they were."[181] For some at External Affairs, then, the entire event was one more example of Cuba's "immature political culture." While not surprising, it was thoroughly annoying and did much to contribute to the sense of moral superiority that was already entrenched in the minds of some senior officials at the DEA.

It was only a matter of weeks before Canada was once again in the headlines in connection with an armed rebellion. This time, the perpetrators were a band of anti-government youths under the leadership of a young Fidel Castro, who attacked the Moncada Army Barracks in Santiago de Cuba. Although *Batistianos* quickly suppressed the insurrection, leaving many of the rebels wounded or dead, the publicity generated by the event catapulted Castro into the limelight, elevating him to near folk hero status among anti-Batista Cubans.[182] The U.S. embassy, on the other hand, dismissed Castro as a "ruthless opportunist" and applauded Batista for subduing the insurrectionists.[183] Canadian chargé d'affaires Kenneth Browne was similarly dismissive, calling Castro and his followers "idealistic but very naïve and misguided people who believed that they had only to fire a shot and the whole Cuban populace would rise up in arms."[184] However, reports from the Associated Press claimed that Cuban army officials had found large quantities of ammunition found on site marked "Montreal, Canada." As a result, it seemed Canada was once again on the hot seat for

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[181] A.E. Ritchie, "Memorandum for Leger," 24 July 1953, RG 25, Vol. 8326, File 10224-40, pt 3.
[182] Paterson 18.
[183] See Schoultz 63.
[184] Kenneth Browne, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 8326, File 10224-40, pt 3.

complicity in a plot to overthrow Batista.[185] This time, however, the Cubans did not have enough evidence to mount an investigation against Canadian involvement. Given that Campa's investigation had yielded no conclusive results, it seemed imprudent to continue to prod the Canadians. The Batista government decided instead to focus its energies on using the attack to highlight the efficiency of his government and the folly of the young rebels to threaten the peace. Among the rebels who survived the attack was Fidel Castro, who was subsequently arrested and stood trial in late September. Castro himself disputed the connection between the Montreal conspirators and the Moncada attack, denying that none of the arms came from abroad, nor, he claimed, did the rebels receive help from Prio or anyone else who had attended the Montreal meeting. For his crimes, Castro was sent to prison on the Isle of Pines, where both he and his brother Raúl were sentenced to remain for fifteen years. As far as the Cuban government was concerned, then, the threat had been eliminated and they saw no reason in creating further tension between a longstanding friend and trading partner such as Canada. The reaction from chargé d'affaires Kenneth Browne was one of smugness, boasting that the story of a "master plan hatched in Montreal" had clearly been disproven, adding that the Cuban government's claims had always been "flimsy."[186]

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[185] Munton and Vogt argue that the possibility exists that Castro did go through Canadian intermediaries to secure arms for his attack. However, there is no documentation that is open to researchers that suggests such a connection existed. Castro himself disputed this notion during his trail in September 1953, denying that any of the arms came from abroad, in addition to asserting that Prio had nothing to do with the uprising, nor did anyone else who had attended the meeting in Montreal.

[186] Kenneth Browne, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 8326, File 10224-40, pt 3. Though the possibility exists that the Moncada attack and Montreal meeting were directly connected, there are no documents available for public access that suggests Canadian

What the event did highlight was the degree of ambivalence shown by some members of the DEA, including Pearson, towards Cuban politics. Compared to the "real" places of concern, namely Eastern Europe the Far East, there was little time or energy to devote to the "corrupt-as usual" Cuban republic. While Batista was definitely not a saint, he was at least a close friend to the United States and seemed to advocate a pro-business and anti-communist approach. As a result, though the tone of Scott's reports suggested instability, senior officials the DEA preferred to leave Cuban problems for the United States to deal with.

By 1954, all appearances suggested that Batista had successfully consolidated his hold on power. Though demonstrations and riots erupted around Havana from time to time, the Cuban police and the Servicio de Intelligencia Militar (SIM)- Batista's dreaded and feared secret police- had been able to easily suppress any outward signs of opposition. Batista was therefore in a celebratory mood on the eve of the second anniversary of his coup d'etat, hosting a 24-hour celebration across Havana, complete with sporting competitions, parades, and speeches. Harry Scott could not hold back his criticisms: "Batista, in typical fashion, was unable to resist the opportunity for self-glorification."[187] His description of Batista's speech at Camp Columbia during the day's festivities was similarly mocking, describing it as his

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arms were sold to non-government entities in Cuba. However, the DEA granted an export permit to a Montreal based firearms manufacturer in March 1953 for an order of 300 colt pistols and 500 corresponding magazines, for a total sale of $15, 450, that was to be delivered to the Cuban Navy in Havana. It is more likely, then that the box of ammunition found at the site of the attack had been sent to Moncada from Havana for the use of the Cuban army, and therefore was not brought by the rebels themselves.

[187] Harry Scott to SSEA, "Current Events in Cuba from February 27 to March 31, 1954," 9 April 1954, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 8455, File 7590-N-40 pt 2.

"usual routine" of deriding the Prío administration in an effort to bolster his own regime.[188] Having seen Batista's willingness to clamp down on constitutional guarantees after the Moncada attack coupled with the Cuban President's not-so-secret graft, Scott saw Batista as a buffoon rather than a valuable North American ally. As a result, he rarely missed a chance to undermine Batista in his reports back to Ottawa. In one such example, Scott described a banquet at Batista's country estate, where the Cuban President took the diplomats in attendance on a tour. One large room, according to Scott, was devoted entirely to trophies and mementos, with a great number of them relating to the life and times of Napoleon. After Batista had made a humorous remark about the amount of Napoleonic lore in his museum, Scott wryly remarked that he "nevertheless did not appear to be displeased with the implications of the gifts his admirers have seen fit to present him."[189]

Not only was Scott critical of Batista, but also of the explicit support given him by the American media. *New York Times* reporter Author Krock reported in an April 1954 article on Batista's government, citing the enthusiastic reception the Cuban President was received on several tours throughout the island. Krock also spoke of the "great popularity" that the American Ambassador Arthur Gardner enjoyed on the island.[190] Scott, however, was not convinced: "From my experience, there is considerable doubt with regard to Mr. Gardner's standing among Cubans," adding, "I have come across some very serious criticism in Cuban circles about Mr.

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[188] Ibid.
[189] Harry Scott to External "Review of Events for 1955,"12 February 1955, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 8455, File 7590-N-40 pt. 2.
[190] Harry Scott to SSEA, "Current Events in Cuba from February 27 to March 31, 1954," 9 April 1954, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 8455, File 7590-N-40 pt. 2.

Gardner's fitness to represent the United States." As for assessing Krock's article, Gardner added that it should be kept in mind that Krock and Gardner were "very old friends."[191] Scott's assessment of the American Ambassador was not far off the mark. By 1954, Gardner had developed the reputation as Batista's number one fan. As one Foreign Service officer later observed, Gardner "displayed an unnecessary florid and spectacular cordiality to Batista and his officials," while Cuban opposition leader Tony de Varona also referred to Gardner as "Batista's best publicity agent."[192] For his part, Gardner seldom failed to live up to his reputation. According to one State Department official, it was not uncommon to see pictures of the Ambassador with his arm around Batista or "doing an *abrazo* and whatnot."[193]

Batista was well positioned to win the election in 1954, but whether it would be fair was the question. True to form, Gardner gave his endorsement in a report to the State Department, asserting that Batista was "the only man qualified as a true administrator."[194] British Ambassador Sir Adrian Holman agreed with the American assessment, informing London that General Batista was the "best candidate" and the "best bet" for the upcoming presidential election. "If I were a Cuban," wrote Holman, "I would vote for him without the slightest hesitation."[195] When the election came in November 1954, however, it proved to be a one horse race. Batista garnered 87 percent of the popular vote, all of his opponents having withdrawn on the grounds

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[191] Ibid.
[192] Schoultz 60.
[193] Von Tunzelmann 89.
[194] Ibid.
[195] "Report by Sir Adrian Holman on the conclusion of his Tour of Duty as Ambassador at Havana," 14 April 1954, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 8455, File 7590-N-40, pt. 2.

that the election was fixed. The U.S. embassy tried to put a positive spin on the results, claiming the charges were "unconvincing," "flimsy" and "pure obstructionism."[196] Scott, however, disagreed: "I have held the personal view for a number of months that the army would not permit a successful opposition candidate to take over the government."[197] According to Scott, it was quite possible that the election had indeed been rigged: "it is common to have an element of coercion in urban elections...stories of voters who, if they did not happen to be chewing a straw or carrying some other symbol when they approached the polling booths, found themselves at the end of the line and unable to vote before closing time."[198] Though the American embassy continued to make excuses, the Eisenhower administration's upper brass had stopped pretending to care. As Schoultz argues, the U.S. had given up the pretense that promoting democracy mattered, a fact which Treasury Secretary George Humphrey's adequately summed up when he told the National Security Council that U.S. officials should "stop talking so much about democracy, and make it clear that we are quite willing to support dictatorships of the right if their policies are pro-American."[199]

In his post-mortem of the election, Scott conveyed to his superiors that, "there is no doubt that a revolutionary movement exists."[200] His prediction of who the leader of that movement might be, however, proved to be inaccurate. It was likely, asserted

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[196] Schoultz 55.
[197] Harry Scott to SSEA, "Report on Events in Cuba from October 21- November 13," 16 November 1954, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 8455, File 7590-N-40, pt. 2.
[198] Ibid. Yet he added that there was "no concrete evidence to show that conditions were worse this time then in previous election."
[199] Schoultz 55.
[200] Harry Scott to SSEA, "Reports on Events in Cuba from October 21 to November 13 1954," 16 November 1954, LAC, RG 25, 8455, File 7590-N-40, pt. 2.

Scott, that it would be a Cuban politician, though it would take "several years" for such an individual to develop a stature that would allow him to defeat Batista.[201] Neither Scott, nor any other diplomat, could have predicted that in a cell on the Isle of Pines Castro sat reading his beat up copy of Marx's *Das Kapital* and plotting a revolutionary movement that would one day make him President of Cuba.[202] Though Scott was unable to accurately predict the face of the revolutionary movement, his assessments in the mid-1950s of the American, British, Canada community's support for the dictator suggests that he still held to his prediction in 1952 that Batista's undemocratic ways would on day bear "bitter fruit."

Vice-President Richard Nixon travelled to Cuba during his Caribbean tour in 1955. There he voiced American support for Batista at a state dinner in Havana where he compared the Cuban leader to Abraham Lincoln:

> This month we, in the United States, are celebrating the birthday of Abraham Lincoln. As we celebrate his birthday we think of the fact that he is a man who has done much for our country and he is a symbol to every young American that regardless of his background, however, humble it may be, he may someday be the president of his country. And it seems to me that our President-elect, President Batista in Cuba, is also a symbol of that with the people of Cuba. A man of humble background, but a man who has been a

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[201] Ibid.

[202] According to Scott, the man who would have fit that position perfectly died of cancer in April 1956. Described by Scott as a "great Cuban patriot" and "a man of absolute integrity and great ability," Dr. Carlos Saladrigas y Zayas was not only respected by foreign officials but also exerted significant influence on Batista. As Scott explained in his despatch to External, the dedication to his position as Minister of State was "a tribute to his honesty," Scott asserted, "since the Ministry provides no opportunity for the holder of the portfolio to enrich himself." Scott further noted that the "almost universal cry after his death was that he would have made a great President of Cuba, and there is some reason to believe that had it not been for the cancer that struck him down President Batista would have chosen him as his successor" LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7059, File 7059-N-40 pt.3.

> leader of his country in the past and who now comes again to the Presidency to lead his country to even greater things in the future.[203]

As Lars Schoultz points out, nearly everyone agreed in a few years time that the United States had made a mistake in "cozying up to Batista." Yet it seemed like the logical thing to do at the time.[204] For Scott, however, there was nothing logical in the Americans' unwillingness to ignore the "real" problems in Cuba, which were mostly economic. Though the goodwill tour seemed to have promoted "friendlier relations," asserted Scott, it definitely "did not contribute substantially to Cuba's real problems."[205] Soon after Nixon departed the U.S. Secretary of State for Agriculture visited Cuba for the annual livestock exhibition in Havana, promising that the outstanding economic problems between Cuba and the United States would be resolved to the satisfaction of both countries with the "greatest quality and justice," a promise which Scott dryly noted could mean "anything or nothing."[206]

A big part of Cuba's socioeconomic woes stemmed from its reliance on a sugar as the basis of its economy. As the harvesting season lasted only a couple of months, many Cubans were without work for the majority of the year. By the mid-fifties, the situation became even more precarious as the demand for sugar decreased on the world market after a brief boom period as a result of the Korean War. To make matters worse, the American sugar beet and sugar cane industry began to lobby Congress to amend the Sugar Act in the hopes of earning the domestic sugar industry

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[203] Schoultz 56.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Harry Scott to SSEA, "Review of Events in Cuba from February 1 to 28, 1955," 10 March 1955, 10 March 1955, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 8466, File. 7590-N-40 pt 2.
[206] Ibid.

a larger share of the U.S. market. As Paterson argues, sugar-state members of Congress were a powerful political bloc, and were more apt to see the sugar quota as a domestic opportunity rather than in the greater context of continental security.[207] The Cubans, who were watching the situation in Washington with increasing anxiety, also began pleading their case to the State Department and the U.S. embassy that a decrease in Cuba's quota would result in a dire social and economic situation for Cuba. Ambassador Gardner echoed these pleas. "If the cut is too deep," he warned, Cuba could become "a breeding place for starvation and misery, giving the Communists a foothold they never had before."[208] Similarly, Scott alluded to the difficulties that lay ahead for Batista if the economic status quo remained: "General Batista's major guarantees of security in office...lies in his ability to avoid the difficulties of which are being encountered due to decreases in both the price and volume of sales of sugar, coupled with his ability to diversify the economic structure of the country sufficiently and in time to create employment for those likely to be left out of work through the continuation of the present trend toward reduction of crops."[209]

Motivated by the fear that they would lose a significant portion of the U.S. market, Cuban diplomats turned to Canada for help. Choosing to take an offensive approach, the Cuban contingent argued to the Economic Division that there was "disequilibrium" in the Canadian-Cuban trade relationship that was in Canada's favour. To redress the imbalance, the Cubans suggested the Canadian government

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[207] Paterson 42.
[208] Paterson 42.
[209] Harry Scott to SSEA, "Reports on Events in Cuba from October 21 to November 13 1954," 16 November 1954, LAC, RG 25, 8455, File 7590-N-40, pt 2.

influence Canadian sugar refineries to purchase more raw sugar.[210] The Cuban representative said that if Canada could not increase its imports from Cuba, Cuba would have to consider reducing imports from Canada. However, External Affairs was left unmoved. Expressing the reality of the situation in no uncertain terms, Pearson sent a memo to Scott instructing him to tell the Cubans that though Ottawa was "sympathetic" to the Cuban situation, the Canadian government would not use its influence to encourage private refineries to purchase more sugar, citing the possible illegality of such an action.[211] What is more, Pearson pointed out that Canada had run a deficit in trade with Cuba during the mid-forties, and therefore disagreed with the Cuban complaint that the balance in bilateral trade had "always" leaned in Canada's favour.[212] Though Pearson's response was not the one the Cuban contingent had hoped for, the reality was that Canada's hands were tied by the rules laid down by the 1954 International Sugar Agreement. According to the terms of the agreement, Cuban refineries had to negotiate their sales directly with Canadian businesses as opposed to using government intermediaries. Trying to use any influence the Canadian government may have had, then, would have been fairly useless under the terms of the agreement. However, Canadian refineries had agreed in 1956 to import an amount of sugar that was approximately equal to the amount Canada had purchased from Cuba under a previous bilateral trade agreement from 1951-1953, under which Canada had imported 75,000 tons of raw sugar. This was an agreement that was

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[210] Canadian Embassy in Havana to SSEA, "Canadian Cuban trade relations," 26 May 1955, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 6335, File 288-40, pt 3.1

[211] SSEA to Canadian Embassy in Havana, "Canadian Cuban Trade Relations," 10 June 1955, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 6335, File 288-40, pt 3.1.

unique only to Cuba, as there had been no similar undertaking between Canadian and Latin American refineries, such as the Dominican Republic. In this way, Canada had already made an exception for Cuba, and had felt it had done more than enough to augment the imbalance. As a result, the DEA believed Cuba was overstepping its bounds in asking Canada to make any further exceptions. "We are more than a little troubled that this request should even have been made because it seems to be based on a misunderstanding of arrangements which have been worked out on a very cordial basis between the two countries."[213] This particular incident demonstrated to senior officials at the DEA that the Cubans were not above challenging the Canadian-Cuban friendship if it meant they could get something to their advantage. The DEA, however, did not appreciate having their record of goodwill called into question. For their part, the Cubans took the hint and dropped any further attempts to secure a greater import commitment from Canada.

Although the DEA was justified in their rejection of the Cuban request, they did not fully appreciate the dire circumstances of the Cuban economy, which was demonstrated in a 1957 memorandum for Governor General Vincent Massey that was prepared by the DEA. Although the memorandum acknowledged that Cuba's monocrop economy created the potential for instability, they stated that "the economic and financial situation was extremely good in 1956 and every expectation is that 1957 will follow suit."[214] On the surface, then, the DEA believed that all was

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[213] SSEA to Canadian Embassy in Havana, "Canadian-Cuban Trade Relations," 10 June 1956, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 6335, File 288-40, pt 3.1.

[214] A. Guérin, "Memorandum to the Governor General", 21 June 1957, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7257, File. 10244-40 pt. 4.

well in Cuba. As long as Canada's interests were not in danger, the DEA cared little for Cuba.

By 1956, anti-government sentiment was reaching a fevered pitch. After Castro's release from prison in 1955 as part of a general amnesty, anti-Batista Cubans fed off his calls for revolution, taking to the streets in protest. Though not affiliated with Castro's rebels, university students were among the most active in asserting their opposition towards the Batista regime. The University of Havana, in particular, was the scene of numerous anti-government demonstrations.[215] The demonstrations ultimately led the University Council of the University of Havana to issue a warning to the University Student Federation that the academic year would come to a halt if "peace and order" were not maintained on the campus.[216] Though a temporary lull ensued, the anniversary of the birth of Jose Martí ignited student protests anew when at a student wreath-laying procession in honour of the Cuban patriot ended in a bloody confrontation with police.[217] Though the students acted independently from the rebels, the Cuban government believed they were in league with Castro. Batista's response to the demonstrations reached a particularly grim level when men, believed to be members of SIM, tortured a female university student who was known to be anti-government. "Even if the torturing of the girl student cannot be taken seriously as a matter of policy," wrote Scott to External Affairs, "it would seem obvious that the

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[215] Harry Scott to SSEA, "Current Events in Cuba for the Month of February 1956," 3 March 1956, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7059, File 7590-N-40 pt.3. Scholars now acknowledged that university students played a large role in fomenting the unrest towards Batista that ultimately allowed Castro's revolutionary message to spread.
[216] Harry Scott to SSEA, "Current Events in Cuba for the Period December 11, 1955, to January 31, 1956," 1 February 1956, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7059, File 7590-N-40 pt. 3.
[217] Ibid.

government is vitally concerned to prevent the fruition of any plot in which Castro is involved."[218] It seemed then, Scott argued, that Batista's calm façade- both personal and political- "had at last cracked."[219]

Although Scott observed that Batista was encountering difficulties, he gave Batista the benefit of the doubt: "On the whole, the President has shown himself to be even-tempered and conciliatory." The following month Scott provided a similar assessment: "The benevolence of Batista is not to be questioned. He may be lining his pockets at Cuba's expense but it is traditional for Cuban presidents to do so and it is in part made necessary by the uncertainty of political life here." However, he stopped short of offering any praise: "But as a dictator he is a failure, if the standard is Hitler or Mussolini. Public protests against the regime are possible; an opposition is in existence and is weak only because of fundamental weaknesses in the personalities of the opposition."[220]

In some ways Batista's house of cards was indeed beginning to fall. Rumours began swirling in 1956 that Batista's marriage to Martha Fernandez de Batista was heading towards divorce. His marriage had come to represent a mark of stability in an increasingly shaky government that remained in tact thanks to the support of the armed forces. Batista, however, had always felt threatened by and likely resented her popularity among the Cuban people. Referred to by Scott as the "Eva Peron of Cuba," Martha was well liked and had the support of the army.[221] Scott communicated this in

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[218] 3 March 1956, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7059, File 7590-N-40 pt. 3
[219] Ibid.
[220] Kirk and McKenna 27.
[221] Harry Scott to SSEA, "Current Events in Cuba for the Months of April and May 1956," 25 May 1956, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7059, File 7590-N-40 pt.3.

a despatch back to Ottawa: "although their value of the Primera Dama may differ from his, [Batista] must also realize that a divorce in a predominately Roman Catholic country would damage his last hopes of achieving effective public support for himself and his government."[222] Keeping up appearances, then, played a role in Batista's efforts to maintain the perception in Cuba that he remained in control.

For Castro, the autumn of 1956 also proved difficult. His marriage to a "beautiful young exile," Isabella Custodio, had ended as a result of his consuming devotion to his revolutionary movement.[223] Then in October, his father Angél died. Their relationship was far from ideal-Angél had struggled with alcoholism and his sizeable amount of land left him at political odds with Fidel who was pro-land reform. However, as Paterson suggests, his death may have unsettled Castro. While Castro's personal life was suffering setbacks, he decided to take control of his revolution's future. The revolution desperately needed money, so Castro arranged a meeting with former Cuban President Carlos Prío. After arguing his case for several hours inside a Texas hotel room, Castro managed to secure $50,000 from the former President. With the money in hand, Castro's rebels began looking for a vessel that could get them from Mexico to Cuba. After being denied a license to get a patrol torpedo boat sent to Mexico from the United States, the rebels settled for a deteriorated luxury yacht owned by a wealthy American living in Mexico. Though perhaps not the boat Castro had dreamed about sailing on to begin his revolution, he paid $20,000 for it and used the additional money to rent out a house where the rebels trained to make themselves battle ready.

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[222] Ibid.
[223] Paterson 32.

In the fall of 1956, the attention of senior officials, particularly Lester B. Pearson was on the Middle East, as the battle for the Suez Canal had erupted into an international crisis. Although a resolution was finally passed, the issue continued to be debated in Parliament and would linger in the minds of Canadians during the federal election the following year. With the DEA attention fixed on the East, little concern was paid when word came from the Canadian embassy in Havana that a beat-up yacht carrying a band of seasick rebels had run aground in Oriente province. From all accounts, Batista's forces had been able to easily subdue the insurrectionist and only had to deal with a few who managed to escape on foot. All in all, Canadian diplomats interpreted it as another failed attempt to unseat Batista. Nothing had changed in Cuba and, like always, the Canadian diplomatic community treated it with indifference.

Conclusion

From Scott's despatches, it can be concluded that the Canadian Ambassador held an ambivalent attitude towards Cuba. While he initially was critical of Batista's strong-arm tactics in consolidating his power, which he vocalized in his characterization of Batista as a buffoon in his reports back to Ottawa, he eventually altered his interpretation of Batista as a "benevolent," albeit misguided, leader. This change in attitude suggests that Scott eventually resigned to the fact that regardless of whether Batista or someone else was in power, Cuba would never be able to achieve the kind of democracy enjoyed in North America because of its inherent backwardness.

Scott demonstrated this belief in a despatch towards the end of his tenure. To describe the political unrest as manifestations of the Cuban revolutionary spirit, Scott argued, "Is to glorify a form of political activity that in Canada would be called rebellion. The populace of Cuba is saddled with a government that is not entirely of its own choosing. In opposition to that government is a full range of persons, from frustrated idealists to frustrated politicians, of which the latter, with eyes fixed upon the treasury, are probably the greater force. To justify their attitude and actions all call upon the actions of José Martí." He continued: "Because the constitution gives so much power to the executive the government is necessarily quasi-dictatorial, and, if it were not so, there would be no government." As for Batista's regime, "the dictatorship of today finds itself in a complicated position. Its power stems basically neither from elections nor public acceptance, yet it regards both as being most desirable. While based in absolutism, it attempts to be democratic. The result of this conflict is the Cuba of today."[224] Cuba, Scott believed, could not aspire to be like the United States or Canada because it was unable to let go of its primitive form of politics. The evolution of his reporting demonstrates that Scott came to believe that regardless of efforts to role model Canadian leadership, Cubans would be Cubans, and it was little use in showing them how to behave differently.

This analysis of Scott, then, presents a more complex picture of the Canadian Ambassador than the one provided by Kirk and McKenna, who dismissed Scott's,

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[224]Harry Scott to SSEA, "Review of Events in Cuba, March 1-27, 1956," 28 March 1956, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7059, File 7059-N-40 pt.3.

reports as "superficial" and sometimes "badly flawed."[225] However, though he was initially critical of Batista, he nonetheless did not make any explicit policy recommendations to his superiors at the DEA. In this way, Scott's reports from 1952 to 1956 was, on balance, in lock step with the United States.

The same was true for senior officials at the DEA, particularly Lester Pearson. Like the Eisenhower administration, Pearson did not recognize that nationalist stirrings in Latin America were just as crucial to the Cold War world as the Far East or Eastern Europe. This was due, in part, to his belief that Cuba and Cubans were part of an backwards political culture that was not particularly threatening as much as it was a nuisance. As his handling of the Montreal meeting and the Cuban requests for an increase in sugar demonstrated, Pearson had very little tolerance for "petty" Cuban affairs.

While Pearson diplomatic efforts at the DEA defined Canada's role as a "mediator" and strong advocate for peace, his indifference to the political, social, and economic issues that affected Latin America during the 1950s suggests that he did not fully appreciate the dynamism of Cuban nationalism. For historians to understand Pearson's response to nationalism in the Third World requires a systematic examination of all the areas of the Third World in which Canada had relations with during Pearson's tenure as SSEA. This chapter merely nudges the door open for scholars of Canadian foreign policy to move towards that ultimate goal. Before then, it is not possible to accurately assess Pearson's diplomatic legacy.

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[225] Kirk and McKenna 26. In Munton and Vogt's more recent analysis, they give very little attention to Scott's reports, which is why their assessments of Scott are not included here.

Chapter 3

Singing the Same Tune: Canada's diplomacy with Cuba under a Conservative-led DEA, 1957-1959

The 1957 Canadian federal election brought an end to the government of Louis St. Laurent, and ended twenty-two years of Liberal government. Though the face of Canadian leadership had changed, little was altered in Canada's diplomacy with Cuba from 1957-1959. The new SSEA Sidney Smith had little knowledge of Cuba and thus did not attempt to seek an alternate path for Canada. More significantly, however, was the degree to which the Department was governed not by the SSEA as it had during the Pearson years, but instead by the Prime Minister. Diefenbaker's fundamental distrust of the department pushed him to nominate a weak leader in Smith, whom he could ultimately control. As a result, Canada's diplomacy with Cuba was in equal parts administered and influenced by the department's senior officials as it was by Diefenbaker himself. What is more, Diefenbaker's personal affinity for U.S. President Eisenhower Cold War leadership ensured Canada's approach to Cuba followed the American line. The purpose of this chapter is to assess the degree to which Canada's diplomacy towards Cuba from 1957 to 1959 was affected by the change in Canadian federal leadership. Did Diefenbaker agree with the way the Liberals had handled Canada's diplomacy towards Cuba? Did Cuba become a greater priority for the senior officials at the DEA between 1957 and 1959? This chapter makes the argument that under the guidance of Diefenbaker, Canada's diplomacy towards Cuba from 1957 to 1959 followed the same approach it had under

Pearson's leadership. In fact, Diefenbaker was every bit as indifferent towards Cuba as Pearson had been.

Changing of the Guard

When Diefenbaker's Conservatives won a majority government in June 1957, it was widely considered to be a "revolution" in Canadian politics.[226] For the DEA, this revolution was felt acutely. After twenty-two years of Liberal rule, officials at the DEA had grown comfortable with the Liberal approach to foreign policy. While Pearson had become a well-respected, often idealized fixture in Canada's foreign policy apparatus, Diefenbaker brought an entire new set of expectations and attitudes that were looked opinion with suspicion by stalwarts of the Department. Whereas St. Laurent had only concerned himself with major policy questions, preferring to leave questions of smaller importance to Pearson, Diefenbaker wanted to be directly involved in the process of foreign-policy decisions. As John Hilliker notes, "not since the days of Mackenzie King had a Prime Minister been such an important factor in the conduct of Canadian external relations."[227]

Having worked independently during his time as a member of parliament and as a lawyer, Diefenbaker had relatively little experience of teamwork.[228] He was also an outsider in senior circles of the public service and thus was not predisposed to make use of the bureaucratic resources available to him. All of these factors contributed to Diefenbaker's distrust of officials at the DEA, whom he believed

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[226] Hilliker makes this point on 133 in *Volume 2*.
[227] Hilliker, *Volume 2*, 134
[228] Hilliker, *Volume 2*, 135.

would only ever be loyal to the Liberals.[229] As Diefenbaker's Special Assistant to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, H. Basil Robinson, points out in his *Diefenbaker's World: a populist in Foreign Affairs,* Diefenbaker was particularly suspicious of senior-level department officials who were long-time friends and colleagues of Pearson's. As far as Diefenbaker was concerned, these men would surely provide Pearson with information that could be used against Diefenbaker in the House. As a result, he rarely missed an opportunity to show his animosity towards the these "Pearsonalities," once writing, "they don't do enough to keep themselves warm," while also delighting in any opportunity to refer to them as "those babies down the hall."[230]

As a result of his powerful suspicions, Diefenbaker held the portfolio of External Affairs himself for the first three months. Juggling both jobs, however, had fallen out of fashion since Mackenzie King had delegated the responsibility to St. Laurent in 1946. As one Canadian newspaper argued, the two jobs were simply "too

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[229] However, Diefenbaker did not distrust everyone at the DEA. Diefenbaker recognized that USSEA Jules Léger offered valuable wisdom and experience. However, as Hilliker points out, while the two got along well, the load of Diefenbaker's other commitments prevented the two from having more than a couple of meetings during the first three months prior to Diefenbaker's selecting a minister to replace Pearson. As a result, there was very little time for Léger to significantly aid the Diefenbaker's transition into foreign affairs. See Hilliker, *Volume 2*, 139.

[230] However, if there was ever a chance that those at External Affairs might try to make nice with Diefenbaker, that hope was quashed after Diefenbaker's repeated attempts to exclude members of the Department from participating in meetings concerned with international relations. In fact, Diefenbaker only asked Norman Robertson for advice on two occasions throughout his tenure as Prime Minister. Robinson provides the best insight into Diefenbaker's perception of the DEA and its officials at the time of his taking over of the Department. See H. Basil Robinson's *Diefenbaker's World: a populist in foreign affairs* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1989) 35 for quotation.

much for one man."[231] As Robinson points out, part of Diefenbaker's delay was also because he wanted to be completely sure that he selected an appropriate candidate to be the new SSEA. Diefenbaker had to contend with criticisms from the Liberals that the Conservatives did not have a worthy candidate that could replace Pearson. Some even suggested, including members of Diefenbaker's own cabinet, that Pearson should be retained as Secretary of State, an idea that Diefenbaker flatly rejected.[232]

Though finding the right candidate who would satisfy both the Liberals and Conservatives was a significant factor in Diefenbaker's decision to hold on to the External Affairs portfolio, Diefenbaker also wanted to make sure he could, to use Robinson's words, "assert control in the department no matter who became minister."[233] As a result, any new Secretary of State had to not only possess the appropriate skill set, but also could not have a personality that was beyond Diefenbaker's ability to handle. Sidney Smith seemed to fit that bill. After serving as President of the University of Toronto, Smith had not only gained a positive reputation as a university administrator, but was also genuinely liked and respected by his colleagues and the political community.[234] Though he lacked foreign policy experience, the officials at the DEA believed Smith would get used to his role soon enough. This, however, proved to be a more difficult task than senior officials at the DEA, or even Diefenbaker, anticipated. For Smith, the challenges he faced as a university administrator paled in comparison to the amount of work that seemed to

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[231]Hilliker, *Volume 2,* 144.
[232] Hilliker, *Volume 2*, 143.
[233] Hilliker, *Volume 2*, 144.
[234] Ibid.

pile in front of him.[235] As Robinson points out, one of Smith's "biggest handicaps" was that he and Diefenbaker did not have a close relationship. While Diefenbaker was in no way indifferent to Robinson, the Prime Minister was not in the habit of scheduling individual meetings with ministers, and Smith was "diffident" about asking for Diefenbaker's time.[236] As a result, Smith was often left to his own defenses, looking to the department for help whenever possible.[237]

As a result of Smith's struggles to get acquainted with his new position during his first year at the DEA, Latin America, and Cuba in particular, received very little attention. It was not until late 1958 when Smith travelled to Latin America where he stopped in Peru, Brazil, and Mexico that he began to take note of the region. The tour seemed to have made an impression on him. He announced to his colleagues at the DEA upon his return that he felt Canada should join the OAS. After seeing the strength and force of nationalist sentiments in the region, Smith believed Canada needed to do its part to bring democracy and stability to the region. The OAS, then, was a means to such an end. What is more, after a year of falling below expectations, Smith saw his advocacy for Canadian participation in Inter-American affairs as an opportunity to prove himself as a true leader in the department. However, if Smith had any hope of making this a reality, he would have to convince Diefenbaker, a prospect that was not an easy task given Smith and Diefenbaker's imperfect working

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[235] Robinson points this out on 38. However, Smith's relative lack of knowledge on international matters was not particularly problematic for Diefenbaker. While he had hoped Smith would become more comfortable in his role, he by no means looked to Smith for guidance on foreign affairs. On this topic, Diefenbaker preferred to follow his own instincts, and consult people, either within or outside of External Affairs, when he saw fit.

[236] Robinson 37.

[237] Robinson 38.

relationship. As a result, his colleagues at the DEA recommended that Canada pursue the same line it had a year before, which was for Canada to have only an observational role in the OAS.[238] Diefenbaker would also become interested in Canada joining the OAS in 1960, after returning from his own tour of Mexico.[239] Before this point, however, Diefenbaker's main source of guidance on Cuba was first and foremost the Eisenhower administration.

Though Diefenbaker was elected on a nationalist platform, promising to bring greater balance to U.S.-Canada trade, his view of the Cold War world was perfectly in line with that of Washington. Like many Tories of his generation, Diefenbaker agreed with Winston Churchill's blunt estimation that the Soviets were intent on world domination and could not be trusted.[240] The only way to counter this threat, Diefenbaker believed, was in collective security arrangements between the member countries of the Western alliance. In this way, Diefenbaker supported Canadian participation in NATO as a means to facilitate this security. As a result, Diefenbaker signed an agreement in December 1957, along with the other NATO heads-of-state, where he agreed that Canada would stockpile nuclear weapons for its army brigade and air division in Europe.[241] Diefenbaker also worked to establish greater partnership between Canadian and American defense. Moreover, only two weeks after winning the June 1957 election, Diefenbaker gave his "tentative approval" to the North American Air Defense Agreement (NORAD), the main operations of which would be

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[238] Hilliker, *Volume 2*, 174.
[239] Hilliker, *Volume 2*, 174.
[240] Robert Wright *Three Nights* 64.
[241] Information taken from Peter C. Newman's *Renegade in Power: The Diefenbaker Years* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973) 344.

in the United States, while also attempting to find a US market for Canadian air fighters, specifically the CF-105 "Arrow," and procuring nuclear weapons for Canada.[242]

Diefenbaker's cooperation with the United States on defense issues was also influenced by his personal admiration of Eisenhower. As Robinson asserts, Diefenbaker greatly admired the President for his accomplishments in the World War II and his leadership in creating a "strong sense of unity and cooperation among friendly nations" in the Cold War world. While Eisenhower's individual accomplishments impressed Diefenbaker, sometimes referred to as "the Chief", his respect for the President also stemmed from the belief that Eisenhower genuinely cared about Canada. Diefenbaker's initial meeting with "the neighbours" left him feeling that he did not altogether "trust" the Americans. The impression he got from Secretary of State John Foster Dulles was that the White House expected Canada's "unquestioning acquiescence in a course of action favoured by the United States." Diefenbaker's first meeting with Eisenhower left a far more favourable impression. According to Robinson, Diefenbaker had felt "immediately comfortable" with Eisenhower, and conveyed to shortly thereafter that the President was "a man you could cooperate with."[243] From that meeting onwards, Diefenbaker spoke very highly of his "friendship" with Eisenhower. In this way, as Dennis Molinaro points out,

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[242] Dennis Molinaro's "Calculated Diplomacy: John Diefenbaker and the Origins of Canada's Cuba Policy" in Robert Wright and Lana Willie's ed., *Our Place in the Sun: Canada and Cuba in the Castro era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009) 80.
[243] Robinson 25.

Diefenbaker believed that during Eisenhower's tenure, there was U.S. and Canadian ''cooperation," and Canadian "subservience" was not part of this equation.[244]

Though Diefenbaker and Eisenhower were able to cooperate on issues that would benefit both the U.S. and Canada- including a decision to have the U.S. end unfair grain storage practices that hurt Canadian businesses- the one area where Diefenbaker and Eisenhower could not agree on was on the recognition of Communist China. Though Diefenbaker stated in his first official meeting with Dulles that he felt recognizing China would hurt anti-communist initiatives in Asia, in private, Diefenbaker asserted that he was partial to arguments in favour of Communist China's admission to the United Nations.[245] Moreover, according to Robinson, Diefenbaker was never comfortable with the idea that a government that controlled almost one quarter of the world population did not have representation in the UN or have official contact with Canada. For Diefenbaker, treating China as a pariah would only push them into the arms of the Soviets. In this way, Diefenbaker ultimately believed that engaging communism was a better approach to fighting the "red menace" than isolationism. Eisenhower, however, was less willing to extend a hand to a communist nation. The "loss" of China in 1949 was still fresh in American minds, as was the Korean War. To cede any ground, then, would have been unthinkable in the environment of fear and suspicion that Eisenhower had himself helped create. These competing perceptions between the two leaders came to a head in 1958 when Eisenhower made his first official visit to Ottawa. During a meeting when Sidney Smith said, half-jokingly, that Canada ought to recognize the Chinese

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[244] Molinaro 80.
[245] Robinson 16.

communist regime, Eisenhower reportedly slammed his first on the table and shouted that the day Canada recognized Peking would be the day he would "kick the United Nations out of the United States."[246] At that point, Diefenbaker understood that his desire to follow an independent policy for Canada could not threaten the Cold War alliance. Capitulating to Eisenhower's demands not to recognize China, therefore, was one such concession that had to be made. As a result, the issue was not pursued any further. Ultimately, Diefenbaker, like Eisenhower, believed the balance of power rested with the United States, and thus did not recognize the storm that was brewing in Latin America.

The extent to which the Eisenhower administration was blind to the effects of American encroachment in Latin American affairs manifested itself in 1958 when Vice-President Nixon embarked on his South American tour. After uneventful stops in Paraguay and Bolivia, his arrival in Lima was met with a group of rock-throwing protestors, one of whom, he later complained, "let fly a wad of spit which caught me full in the face."[247] He encountered a similar scene in Caracas, where five months earlier Venezuelans had ousted the dictator Colonel Marcos Perez Jimenez. As a "final symbolic slap in the face to Venezuelan democrats, the Eisenhower administration had recently opened the nation's doors to both Perez Jimenez an his detested secret police chief, Pedro Estrada," whom historian Hubert Herring has described as "as vicious a man hunter as Hitler ever employed."[248]After being spit on from below the balcony at the airport, an angry mob descended on his motorcade and

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[246] Robinson 51.
[247] Schoultz 69.
[248] Ibid.

smashed the window's of Nixon's car, where the angry mob continued to spit at him. Although Nixon claimed in his report to the National Security Council that the disturbances were the work of communists, the reality of the opposition was the sum total of the U.S. agenda in South America to prop up right wing dictators.[249]

The common denominator between anti-Americanism in South America and Cuba was American military aid. The Eisenhower administration had spent millions of dollars in the 1950s as part of the Military Defense Assistance Act to bolster military dictatorships in the name of protecting the Americas. While military assistance became synonymous with the Eisenhower administration, the roots of the program began during the Truman administration, which needed to come up with a better way of ensuring that communism was kept at bay in the "outer zones" short of direct military intervention, an option that had become unpopular after the period of "Good Neighbour" diplomacy. If the Americans could not wield the weapons themselves, the Truman administration opted for the next best thing: to train the armies throughout Latin America and furnish them with the necessary weapons to maintain the status quo. From this was born the Mutual Security Act of 1951, which was signed by thirteen countries throughout Latin America. For Cuba, however, the United States had different plans. Days prior to Batista's coup, the U.S. signed agreements with Cuba to install U.S. Army, Naval and Air force missions across the island, along with providing military supplies under the Mutual Defense Assistant Act.[250] However, after Batista's coup, he began sending lengthy orders for military hardware, including submachine guns, hand grenades, rocket launchers and armoured

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[249] Schoultz 69-70.
[250] Paterson 59.

cars. As Thomas Paterson points out, while Cuba paid cash for some of these items, the U.S. picked up the rest of the tab as part of the Military Assistant Program. Under the program, military assistance to Cuba in 1953 amounted to $400,000. By 1955, the amount increased to 1.6 million, maxing out at almost $3 million by 1958.[251] Though, as Paterson asserts, this was a relatively small amount of money by Cold War standards, it was nonetheless a large amount for a country that was considered to be in the "outer zone" of Soviet influence.[252] More significant, however, was that Batista used these weapons to silence opposition forces and publicize American support for his regime. If there was any doubt as to the depth of the connection between the U.S. military and Batista, the cat was out of the bag by the 1950s. In 1956, for example, the U.S.S. *Canberra* visited Batista in Havana where it fired a twenty-one-gun salute. Afterwards, cocktails were held at the Presidential Palace. Batista, Ambassador Gardner and a host of U.S. senior officials attended a luncheon on board the vessel. Afterwards, the U.S. embassy reported that Batista was "rendered full presidential honours on arrival and departure," in addition to being escorted on a private tour of the 16,000-ton vessel.[253] This did not prove to be an isolated incident. In one of his many reports on the Cuban situation, *New York Times* journalist Herbert Matthews noted that during his trip to Cuba in February 1957, "seven tanks were delivered in a ceremony headed by Ambassador Gardner. Every Cuban I spoke with saw the delivery as arms furnished to Batista for use in bolstering the regime and for use

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[251] Paterson 59
[252] Paterson makes this assertion on 60.
[253] Paterson 59.

'against the Cuban people.' "[254] Though American officials issued warnings to Batista that U.S. military assistance was intended solely for "hemispheric" defense, as Paterson point out, they looked the other way as Batista used those same weapons to repress his own people.[255]

Adding to the resentment felt by Cubans towards the United States was the Eisenhower administration's belief that Latin American affairs were not particularly pressing, even in the context of the threat of Soviet expansion. This was all but confirmed in late 1957 when John Foster Dulles reported that, "we see no likelihood at the present time of communism getting into control of the political institutions of the American republics."[256] As historian Lars Schoultz argues, this confirmed one former ambassador's observation that "Mr. Dulles was so preoccupied with other areas of the world that perhaps he did not recognize the tremendous importance of the Latin American area, and events there were swept under the rug."[257]

However, by 1957, it was getting harder to ignore that Batista was not using MAP weapons solely for "hemispheric defense." The Eisenhower administration finally issued a punishment for Batista's actions by halting weapon sales to Cuba. Indignant, the Cuban regime began to seek the help of other countries to fill their orders. A representative of de Havilland, a Montreal-based ammunitions factory, approached the Canadian Commercial Secretary in Havana in mid October 1957

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[254] Schoultz 65.
[255] It was not just Batista who received Washington's explicit support. Other Latin American dictators were accorded the same kind of endorsement by the Eisenhower administration. Haitian President Paul Magloire, was one such example. Nonetheless, in 1955 he was invited by the President and Mrs. Eisenhower as their official guest, and was later given a ticker-tape parade in New York. Von Tunzelmann 60.
[256] Schoultz 68.
[257] Schoultz 68.

asking if Canada could provide early delivery of a "small number of tanks" or other "light armed fighting vehicles" including armoured cars, in addition to 50-calibre and 30-calibre automatic rifles and corresponding ammunition. According to de Havilland's representative, the Cuban Chief of Staff feared the U.S. shipment would be "unduly delayed."[258] Canadian Ambassador Hector Allard sent a telegram asking whether or not this order could be filled. The Economic Division, however, smelled something funny. "On basis of information available here we think it likely that munitions requested would be intended for use against the Castro rebels." As a result, they surmised that the "Delay in delivery might well be result of USA unwillingness to deliver weapons for this purpose."[259]

The Economic Division forwarded their reply to the State Department to verify that their suspicions were correct. The State Department responded by saying that it had indeed restricted the sale of heavy equipment in light of the "embarrassment" the Department had suffered in light of Batista's use of military material against the rebels. They did, however, request Canada's utmost discretion in keeping quiet that the State Department was continuing to sell ammunition to Batista, though limited to armoured cars and light tanks. In conclusion, they thanked Canada for not selling the "heavy equipment" the U.S. was withholding, given that their

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[258] Hector Allard to SSEA, "Memorandum for the Secretary of State for External Affairs," 17 October 1957, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 4079, File 11044-AK-40 pt.1.
[259] D.H.W. Kirkwood of Economic Division to Canadian Embassy in Washington, "Munitions for Cuba," 21 October 1957, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 4079, File 11044-AK-40 pt1.

punishment would have been "nullified if Canada had offered immediate delivery of the equipment."[260]

On October 22, 1957, de Hailland requested an export permit for three DHC-2 Beaver landplanes. Writing to SSEA Sidney Smith on November 12, USSEA Jules Léger acknowledged that the situation in Cuba was a sensitive one, "but these are civil aircraft suitable at best for reconnaissance work." Smith, however, was not convinced and wanted more information. As a result, the Canadian embassy in Washington was requested by the DEA to ask officials at the State Department what they would do if they were in Canada's position. In reply, Deputy Director of the Munitions office and leading export authority Robert Mangrave answered that the Beavers would be considered to be of "little military significance" and that such a request would be given "sympathetic" and "favourable" consideration, despite the fact that it may provoke criticism from the Cuban exile community. On receiving this answer, Léger sent a subsequent memorandum to Smith on November 15 saying that though Canada did "not normally release items likely to be used in internal conflicts" the Americans clearly had no problem selling the items, and Canada was thus in danger of losing out on the sale. He therefore recommended that the sale be approved.[261] Smith highlighted these points in his memorandum to Diefenbaker, who gave his approval.[262]

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[260] Canadian Embassy in Washington to External Affairs, "Memorandum to the Secretary of State for External Affairs," 30 October 1957, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 4079, File 11044-AK-40 pt.1.

[261] Molinaro provides a well-crafted explanation on 84.

[262] Though the File folder that contains this volume does not include a written response by Diefenbaker, H. Basil Robinson annotated Smith's memo after the fact with "P.M. agreed" and the date, November 15, with his initials underneath "H.B.R."

The Canadian embassy in Washington soon notified External Affairs that the rebels had shot down two of these "civilian" planes.[263] Now that the Canadians needed to save face, they hid behind the claim that they had sold the planes as "civilian" planes and expected them to be used as such. However, though the evidence was undeniable that the Beavers had been used in the fighting, the DEA approved the sale of three more Beavers in March 1958.[264] Canadian sales of ammunition continued throughout 1958 until Diefenbaker and Smith ordered that export permits be halted in August 1958. Yet, Smith and Diefenbaker approved the sale of 96, 000 pounds of automotive parts for a light-armored vehicle in October 1958, which they justified by arguing the parts offered Batista "no new combat potential."[265] However, the possibility existed that Canadian citizens or businesses were in danger of suffering recriminations if the Diefenbaker government continued trading in military weapons. This was the reality for the British, whom after some hesitation, agreed to sell Batista 15 Comet tanks and 17 Sea Fury airplanes in late

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[263] Molinaro 84.

[264] External Affairs to the Canadian Embassy in Washington, "Sale of Aircraft to Cuba,"2 January 1957, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 4079, File 11044-AK-40 pt.1. While Leger can be held responsible, it was not simply his doing. The information from the Canadian embassy also contributed to the sense of calm. Writing to Ottawa in October 1957, Allard said that despite the press censorship, the situation in Cuba "seems to be calm," in light of the Government's arrest of 40 terrorists. As a result, Allard asserted that the calm could be interpreted as a "feather in the cap" for the Batista Government. See Hector Allard's telegram to SSEA, "Cuban Political Situation," 21 October 1957, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7257, File 10224-40 pt. 4.

[265] Canada continued to sell items through third-party intermediaries. According to Molinaro, Ottawa approved the sale of thirty-eight fighter aircraft in September to two men in New York. Afterwards, the External Affairs concluded that the planes were probably destined for Cuba, although they urged an export permit was not needed for sales to the United States.

1958.[266] After the deal was made public, the rebels announced an "anti-British" campaign in Cuba, which called for a boycott on all British products, including those that were manufactured in Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Jamaica.[267] The rebels also announced that they would destroy British property and jail British officials and citizens. More serious threats soon followed from rebel sympathizers in the United States who vowed to kidnap the British Ambassador and bomb the Bank of Nova Scotia.[268] As a result, Allard reported that armed guards had been assigned to accompany the British ambassador.[269] A Radio Rebelde broadcast of October 20 made public "Rebel Law Number 4", in which Castro announced that British products would be confiscated, and that British property in Cuba should be seized to compensate for the damage and deaths caused by British arms. The broadcast also said that unless British sales were halted in ten days, British consular and diplomatic personnel would be interned as "agents of an aggressive government."[270] Shell Canada, which was forty percent owned by British investors, became a target, largely because the general manager made no secret of his support for Batista.[271] In the end, though, the company suffered only minor losses as Havana drivers briefly boycotted Shell Gas stations. Some Canadians, who were mistaken for British citizens, were also harassed. As members of the American, British, Canadian community tended to

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[266] Paterson 188.
[267] Ibid.
[268] Allard mentions this in his despatch back to the USSEA, "Cuban Internal Situation," 24 October 1958, LAC, RG 25, vol. 7257, File 10224-40 pt. 5.
[269] Ibid.
[270] Ibid.
[271] Paterson 188.

work together and frequent the same bars and clubs, it was easy for the rebels to mistake the two.[272]

Despite the possible risks, the Diefenbaker government justified the sale of military material as simply a transaction from one legitimate government to another. The apparent lack of concern, however, for the possible consequences, not only to Canada's relationship with Cuba post-Batista, but also against Canadian citizens and businesses in Cuba, demonstrated the Diefenbaker government's overconfidence in Canada's position of "prestige" in Cuba. Moreover, it showed the degree to which Canada was in lock step with the United States that from a financial perspective, the selling of weapons to Batista had more benefits than drawbacks. In this way, the Diefenbaker government underestimated the degree to which anti-Batista sentiment had taken over the island.

Hector Allard: A Loyal Supporter of the American-led Status Quo

It was not just the Diefenbaker and the DEA who were disconnected to events in Cuba. The view of Cuba from the eyes of Canadian Ambassador Hector Allard was similarly myopic. A career diplomat, Allard had served as a permanent delegate to the United Nations office in Geneva before presenting his credentials to Batista on January 29, 1957. The adjustment between the safe walls of the Palais de Nations and the unpredictability of Havana caused Allard to adopt a cautious attitude in his first few months as Ambassador. He demonstrated this within days of arriving in Cuba in reaction to the *Granma* affair. After Batista withdrew the "constitutional guarantees"

[272] Paterson 189.

from the island for 45 days and instead applied, for the third time, the Public Order law that had been drawn up following the Moncada attacks in 1952. As a result, Cuba was placed under press, TV and radio censorship. "By imposing this law," Allard asserted, "Batista has admitted both the seriousness of the reoccurring acts of terrorism that have disturbed this country since the beginning of December and the weakness of any claim that a government in Cuba is at the mercy of the ballot box." Moreover, Allard stated that chargé d'affaires George Browne's despatch of December 9 "was an estimate of political strength; its actual strength as a government, however, is measured by its ability to keep order. This it has not been able to do without taking unusual and severe powers and abrogating the constitutional freedoms of speech and assembly and movement."[273] Two month's later, Allard voiced the same concern for Batista's human rights abuses, saying that the embassy was of "two minds" about Batista's rule, "since there are many manifestations of a strongman government which are repulsive to minds raised in the atmosphere of Canadian democracy." Nonetheless, the ambassador concluded that, on balance, the dictator represented the 'best hope for the future.' "[274]

Outside of the relative calm of Havana, however, was a very different situation. Fidel Castro's ally and leader of the underground resistance, Frank País, was discovered in a Santiago safe house and was subsequently arrested, tortured, and driven to a secluded street where he was shot in the back of the head. The people of Santiago rose up in protest, declaring a general strike. Despite the uproar, new

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[273] Hector Allard to Ottawa "Current Events in Cuba December 9, 1956-January 15, 1957," 29 January 1957, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7059, File 7059-N-40 pt 3.1.
[274] Kirk and McKenna 28, Robert Wright's *Three Nights* 40.

American Ambassador Earl T. Smith made a scheduled visit to Santiago the following day. After accepting keys to the city and posing for photos, a group of demonstrators wearing black, paraded outside the municipal building shouting "Libertad (Liberty)!"[275] Police and armed guards immediately descended upon the protestors, beating and arresting anyone who had not already fled, while the police chief took it upon himself to pistol whip several women.[276] All told 30 people were arrested.[277] Later that day Ambassador Smith made the cardinal mistake that any diplomat could make by publically denouncing the government in power. Citing his abhorrence to the "excessive police action," he regretted that such violence had erupted because of his presence in Santiago.[278] While some anti-Batista Cubans thanked Smith for his remarks, his actions ultimately set off a "political firestorm" across the island. Terrorists set off bombs in schools and business, spontaneous strikes erupted throughout the island, and the rebels called for a nationwide strike in protest of País's death and the beatings at Santiago. Batista responded by suspending constitutional guarantees, while several political leaders in various parts of the country, including the Minister of Communications, rushed to the presses to print denunciations of Smith's comments.[279] Rumours also began to circulate that the Cuban government demanded Smith be recalled from duty. According to Thomas Paterson, former American Ambassador to Cuba Arthur Gardner telephoned U.S. Secretary of State Herter relaying a message he said came directly from Batista: it

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[275] Paterson 94
[276] Ibid.
[277] Ibid.
[278] Ibid.
[279] G.A. Browne mentioned this in his desptach back to SSEA, "Political Situation in Cuba," 9 August 1957, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7257, File 10224-40 pt. 4.

was very possible that Batista would declare Smith *persona non grata.*[280] Smith, however, was not about to let a momentary lapse in judgment damage the U.S-Cuban relationship. He met with Batista for more than two hours, assuring the President that relations between their two countries would continue "unimpaired." By the end of the meeting, Smith had managed to get Batista to regain his "generally highly favourable attitude" towards the United States. For his part, Smith would never again make Batista doubt his or the United States support for the Cuban leader.[281]

Smith's visit did not escape the criticism of Canadian chargé d'affaires George Browne: "So far as the public is concerned, Mr. Smith may now withdraw to... his residence to lick his sore knuckles while the Government of Cuba will return to the job of pacifying its political and revolutionary opposition."[282] "So far as this embassy is concerned, however, there are a number of questions left open for speculation, the major of which is the question of U.S. intervention in Cuba." Browne went on to say: "We cannot understand why, when Santiago is a pressure point in the war of nerves...the U.S. Ambassador proceeded to visit."[283] As far as Browne was concerned, this was not the first time the Americans had overstepped their bounds. One only had to look back to the fall of the Machado government in the early thirties, argued Browne, which had occurred because U.S. Ambassador Sumner Wells had showed support for the American, British, Canadian society and had thereby

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[280] Paterson 95
[281] Paterson 96.
[282] "Political Situation in Cuba," 9 August 1957, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7257, File 10224-40, pt. 4.
[283] Ibid.

emboldened the opposition to call for a general strike.[284] As a result, Browne concluded that, "The appearance was therefore that Mr. Smith was about to force history to repeat itself."[285]

While notable for its criticism of American history of encroaching on Cuban politics, the real significance of Browne's assessment was that he reveals a degree of disunity among the high-ranking officials at the Canadian embassy towards the United States' approach to Cuba. While Browne's memorandum suggested that the majority of Canadians officials at the embassy disagreed with the American line in Cuba, additional embassy reports suggest this did not include Allard. After media reports had surfaced in the United States that Batista remained in power largely because of Ambassador Smith's efforts to keep his army supplied with weapons, Allard rejected the idea: "I have seen my U.S. colleague in Havana on a number of occasions and I have no reason whatever to doubt his word when he says that he has remained completely neutral."[286] Despite the evidence to the contrary, Allard's comment reflected his tendency in early 1958 to accept rumour as fact.

Nowhere was this more visible than in Allard's response to Herbert Matthews' reports on the strength of Fidel Castro's forces. Since Matthews's acclaimed visit to the Sierra Maestra in February 1957, the *New York Times* journalist had become the unofficial mouthpiece of the rebel forces. After his first story broke that Castro and

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[284] Ibid.

[285] As for Castro's tactics, Browne noted that: "His obvious purpose is to create a situation of intolerable pressure upon the government." He continued that: "The lesson is that wherever the tension created becomes oppressive an event of little importance in itself may trigger a chain reaction that can only be stopped by the most vigorous representative action on the part of the Government." Ibid.

[286] Hector Allard to SSEA, "Cuban Internal Situation," 2 April 1958, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7257, File 10224-40, pt. 4.

his band of rebels were not only alive but thriving in the inhospitable conditions of the Sierra Maestra, Matthews wrote a string of subsequent reports that reinforced the brutality of the Batista regime and lauded Castro for challenging the dictator. As Robert Wright argues, this type of publicity was exactly what Castro wanted. The *Comandante* understood the value that media coverage and international sympathy could provide. There was no better way to do this than to put on a show for people by inviting them to experience the daily grind of life in the Sierra Maestra.[287] The American embassy was initially critical of Matthews, arguing that while the journalist had likely met the real Castro, he "has emphasized the negative features of the situation, appears overly impressed by the romantic nature of his experiences, exaggerates the size and importance of the Castro movement and its supporters, and uses colourful and extreme phraseology."[288] Though Matthews' reports had not persuaded American diplomats in Cuba that Castro's forces were growing in strength, they were taken more seriously by the State Department. According to Lars Schoultz, when Matthews called the State Department to discuss another matter, assistance secretary of state R. Richard Rubottom Jr. seized the opportunity to "gently criticize" the journalist for building Castro up "beyond his real proportions." Matthews responded that Rubottom would have been "amazed at his supporters among all walks of Cuba life."[289] According to Schoultz, this appears to have "turned some heads," because shortly thereafter the State Department began a "slow reappraisal of Batista's

[287] Robert Wright's *Three Nights* 41.
[288] Schoultz 64.
[289] Schoultz 65.

value to Washington."[290] Moreover, as Schoultz argues, if Matthews' reports had this effect in Washington, it was because he maintained that Castro and his rebels were not communists. "Communism has little to do with the opposition to the regime," Matthews wrote in one of his articles, "there is well-trained, hardcore of Communists that is doing as much mischief as it can and that naturally bolsters all opposition elements. But there is no communism to speak of in Fidel Castro's 26th of July Movement." As one Senator recalled years later, this reporting created a false sense of security on Capital Hill: "Matthews' stories that [Castro] was a Robin Hood helping the poor, fooled this committee, caused the State Department to disregard the reports which they had about Castro being a Communist, and accepting him in a favorable light."[291]

Although the State Department took comfort in Matthews' assurances that Castro's revolution was not communist in nature, Hector Allard was not buying it. In fact, Allard was convinced that Matthew's himself was a closet red. "It seems difficult to understand why the *New York Times*, which, as far as I know, has never been known for its Communist tendencies or sympathy, should still carry on publishing Matthews' articles."[292] Not satisfied to provide vague assertions, Allard wanted to provide hard evidence to support his belief. He managed to find some, telling Ottawa in the spring of 1958 that a he had discovered through a reliable source that the sources Matthews used for his book on Spain entitled *The Yoke and the*

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[290] Schoultz 65.
[291] Schoultz 65.
[292] Hector Allard to SSEA, "Cuban Internal Situation," 2 April 1958, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7257, File 10224-40, pt. 4.

Arrow were "Communist ones."[293] Witch-hunting aside, however, Allard was convinced that Matthew's had become too involved in Cuban affairs, conveying in a despatch back to Ottawa that there was "no doubt in my mind" that the reporter had been playing "a highly dangerous game."[294] The next month, Allard was even more scathing in his indictment of the journalist's "unprofessional" reporting, arguing that it "cannot serve the best interests of the Free World's democratic press. How is the average newspaper reader and voter to get a balanced view of events if facts are distorted and interpretation wishful?" In a concluding statement, Allard did not hold back in making a direct policy recommendation: "The point of these observations... is that policy-making officials in Ottawa should not be too ready to take at their face value some of the U.S. press reports on Cuba-even those of the *New York Times*."[295]

Determined to prove Matthews had misread Castro, Allard attempted to uncover Castro's communist tendencies in a series of despatches. Writing to Ottawa in January 1958, Allard reported that Castro had "sold out to the Communists" and they were now "paying the bills." He later reported rumours that the Soviet embassy

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[293] Hector Allard to SSEA, D-119 "Cuban Internal Situation," 31 March 1958, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7257, File 10224-40, pt. 4. As for the State Department, Allard asserted that it was "impossible from Havana to know what their thinking is" but he added that it was clear that two divergent schools of thought had emerged on events in Latin America; "one representing the intellectual liberals who are against any form of dictatorship, the other more conservatively-minded group, no doubt being hounded by pressure groups and business lobbies, who are interested in having a person who can protect their investments." He concluded that given the "strategic position" of the island and the U.S. Navel base at Guantanamo would "naturally make Defense authorities side with the latter group."

[294] Ibid.

[295] Hector Allard to SSEA, "Cuban Internal Situation," 8 May 1958, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7257, File 10224-40, pt. 4.

in Mexico had been secretly sending money to Castro's rebels.[296] Allard continued to speculate how Castro was able to finance his movement, reporting that the rebel leader had received money from prominent Cuban businesses, most notably the Bacardi Rum Company. These rumours, however, were based in truth. After serving under Prio back in 1949, Jose Pepin Bosch reasserted himself in the Cuban political scene once Castro had demonstrated his ability to defeat Batista. In an interview with a U.S. diplomat, Bosch revealed that he gave $38, 000 of his own money to Castro in support of the revolution. While Bosch and other business leaders who supported Castro would later regret their involvement, the Bacardi Chief was moved by charges that Castro was a communist. As Gjelton agues, Bosch thought there was little difference between Communism and military dictatorships. As far as Bosch was concerned, Castro represented the "best hope" for the future of Cuba, given that he advocated for sweeping economic and social reforms.

Allard, on the other hand, disagreed, and continued to dismiss the strength of Castro, arguing that his call for a general strike "did not have the support of the working people in which he was counting." His predictions were vindicated when the general strike fizzled. Pleased that his assessment had proven correct, Allard made his now infamous comment that Castro had clearly "shot his bolt." Batista, on the other hand, Allard said, "seems to be as strong, if not stronger, than ever."[297]

By mid-1958, however, it became increasingly difficult for Allard to argue that Batista was firmly in control. By July 1958, it was clear that Batista's forces had

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[296] Munton and Vogt 57.
[297] Hector Allard to SSEA, "Internal Situation in Cuba," 9 May 1958, LAC, RG 25, Vol. 7257, File 10224-40, pt. 4.

not been able to extinguish the rebel threat. By the end of August, Allard reported that the rebels controlled most of Oriente province, along with key areas in neighbouring Camagüey province.[298] As Munton and Vogt point out, Allard did voluntarily retract his "shot his bolt" comment. Allard was not alone in deciding to change his mind about the viability of Castro's offensive. American diplomats also wrote off Castro after his failed general strike, only to admit a couple of months later that it seemed it was Batista who was "expiring."[299] Allard continued to report the signs of Batista's slow loss of grip on power. By November, Allard had written to Ottawa that there were "scattered clashes in the capital." Though the rebels only had firm control of Cuba's Eastern provinces in mid-December, Allard reported that he felt that the "final crisis appears to be drawing near."[300]

Allard was right on this point, as in the early hours of the morning on January 1st, 1959, Fulgencio Batista, his family, and other high-ranking government officials boarded a plane headed for the Dominican Republic. The speed of Castro's victory surprised even the rebel leader, who was still in far away Eastern province as Batista's plane left Cuban soil. The Canadian government recognized Castro on January 8th, 1959. Sidney Smith, however, voiced his concern to Diefenbaker about the Castro government: "I am not fully satisfied that the new Cuban government fulfills the usual conditions for recognition and that it is in full control of all national territory." Nonetheless, Smith added that it was wise not to "lag behind the other

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[298] Munton and Vogt 49.
[299] Ibid.
[300] Munton and Vogt 50.

governments who have already extended recognition."[301] Therefore, as Molinaro has argued, Diefenbaker's speed in recognizing the Castro government reflected his desire to follow the lead of its allies, particularly the United States. As for Allard, he left Cuba in June 1959, later taking up a much quieter posting in Denmark where he remained as Ambassador until 1967.

Conclusion

Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs Norman Robertson requested that a review be conducted to determine the quality of the reporting from the Canadian embassy throughout 1958. According to C. Hardy of the American Division, the reporting had been "very good" and often "remarkable" considering the circumstances. However, while Munton and Vogt concur with the Department's findings, arguing that the reporting in 1958 was "reasonably accurate" considering the fact that the Canadian embassy had to deal with significantly fewer resources than both the British and American embassy, some of these were immediately written off as unreliable, particularly any story bearing Herbert Matthews name. As a result, though Allard's reporting did become more balanced by the middle of 1958, when it was apparent that Batista's power was waning, his reports during the first five months of 1958 were riddled with bias and conjecture. Why, then, did the Department's postmortem of Allard's diplomatic reporting not mention his imperfections? There is little doubt that the Department was sympathetic to the fact that it was "extremely difficult to predict accurately in the conditions that existed in Cuba during 1958."

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[301] Molinaro 86.

However, it was also true that, on balance, Allard had not strayed far from the American line in Cuba, nor had he made any embarrassing public displays of support for Batista to draw the ire of the Cubans. In short, in public Allard had performed according to diplomatic protocol, though his reports often revealed his own personal biases. While Allard had provided extensive reports on the political situation, there was very little guidance back in Ottawa as to the proper course he should follow. Put simply, the DEA did not have more than a passing interest in Cuba in 1958 until it was certain that Batista would fall, though the exact time was uncertain. The lack of concern by officials at the DEA underscores an important point about the Diefenbaker government's approach to Cuba prior to 1959: though Batista was undoubtedly a dictator of violent methods, he provided stability and a hardline approach to anticommunism. Both were good enough for Diefenbaker from 1957-1959, when it appeared that American leadership, in Cuba and in the Cold War world in general, had adopted a successful approach to subduing the communist threat. As a result, for all of his resentment towards the legacy Pearson had created at the department of external affairs, Diefenbaker did not make any significant steps to move Canada towards an independent foreign policy in Cuba prior to 1959. Instead, he, like Pearson, had been satisfied to follow the American lead.

Conclusion

An examination of Canada's diplomacy towards Cuba in the post-World War II, pre-revolutionary period has shown that Canada consistently followed the dictates of American policy towards Cuba. While some factors made it difficult for Canada to break from the American line in Cuba, especially the preponderant necessities of the Cold War, most of the time Canadian diplomats, both in Ottawa and in Havana, were content to accede to the American-led status quo in Cuba.

Chapter one examined the degree to which Canada's role as friend and ally to the United States influenced its diplomacy towards Cuba from 1945 to 1950. This chapter made the argument that Canada's Cold War alliance with the U.S. made it necessary for Canada to support American efforts to maintain stability in Cuba. This was mirrored on the embassy level in Havana, as Canadian diplomats looked towards the U.S. embassy as the primary hub of information and leadership for monitoring the threat of Soviet communism. Canadian diplomats sent to represent Canada in the 1940s were died-in-the-wool Cold Warriors who believed as passionately as senior officials at the DEA that a hardline approach needed to be taken in Cuba to prevent the spread of communist ideology.

While Canada had very little choice but to support their close friend and ally in Cuba, chapter one also made the argument that senior officials were not strong-armed into following the American lead in Cuba. Instead, senior officials at the DEA shared the same fundamental Cold War ideology as Washington's upper brass. Both Lester B. Pearson and Louis. St Laurent believed Soviet communism was diametrically opposed to the "Christian" values of the Western world; a "collective

security" approach was therefore needed to counter this threat. Although Pearson and St. Laurent did not embrace the Cold War East-West struggle with the same zeal as the Truman administration, they nonetheless understood that Canada's role was to fall in line behind the United States as part of a united Western front against the "red menace."

Not much changed in Canada's approach to Cuba at the beginning of the 1950s. As chapter two has shown, although the Korean War disillusioned Pearson for a time with American Cold War leadership, he did not attempt to move Canada's Cuba policy away from that of the United States. As chapter two has argued, this was due in large part to Pearson's indifference to Cuba, and to Latin America in general. Compared to other areas of the world, particularly Eastern Europe and Far East Asia, Pearson believed Cuba was relatively insignificant in the context of the Cold War. He demonstrated this belief in his support for U.N. Economic Commissions for Europe and the Far East, while declining to support a similar Economic Commission for Latin America.[302] Pearson, like the Eisenhower administration, did not believe Cuba was in need of large-scale aid given that it was under the control of a pro-American, investment-friendly dictator. For his part, Batista assuaged any concerns that either Ottawa or Washington may have had by committing himself to an anti-communist agenda in Cuba. It turned out to be enough to satisfy both Washington and Ottawa.

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[302] It is important to note that Pearson, and other officials at the DEA, did not have to "build sympathy" for economic aid programs in Europe and the Far East. Pearson did not have to create an image of the Soviet Union as inherently aggressive and expansionist, because Canadians already believed that. This was demonstrated in the public opinion polls of the day, which is mentioned in Chapter 1.

Chapter two also made the point that senior officials at the DEA were indifferent to Cuba because they perceived it as a backwards, immature political culture. The corruption and graft that was common among Cuba's political elite left Pearson and other senior officials at the DEA with very little sympathy for the chronic instability that persisted in Cuba. Even Canadian Ambassador Harry Scott- who was initially critical of the American-led status quo on the island- became disillusioned with Cuban politics by the end of his tenure. In this way, Canada's indifference towards Cuba can be described as systemic, with all members of External Affairs and Canada's diplomats in Havana subscribing more or less to the same view.

Chapter two also makes the argument that Pearson's indifference to Cuba challenges his record as a "successful" SSEA. As this chapter has shown, Pearson's efforts to gain the support of both the Commonwealth Committee and the United States for the Colombo plan contributed to his reputation as a diplomat who passionately advocated for non-military solutions to conflicts. These achievements aside, this chapter made the argument that Pearson ignored information coming out of Cuba that suggested political unrest and nationalist sentiment was creating instability on the island. Just as revisionist historians have pointed towards Eisenhower's indifference towards Third World nationalism as evidence that he did not practice the kind of "restraint" and "judicious use of force" that his defenders usually credit him for, a similar case can be made for Pearson in regards to his approach to Cuba: can one really argue that Pearson used his influence in the U.N. and NATO, to bring about peace in the Third World if one takes into consideration his indifference towards Latin American, and Cuba in particular? This thesis suggests not and argues

that scholars of Canadian Cold War diplomacy need to reexamine Pearson's diplomatic record in Latin America to gain a more accurate understanding of his legacy as SSEA.

While Pearson is responsible for shaping the lion's share of Canada's diplomacy towards Cuba in the pre-revolutionary period, the approach he used was continued even after he left the DEA in 1957. Chapter three discussed the degree to which the DEA, and Canada's diplomacy with Cuba, was affected by the change in federal leadership, after the elected victory of Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker and the Conservatives. This chapter argued that Diefenbaker was initially distrustful towards the DEA because he believed senior officials would only ever be loyal to Pearson. This ultimately led Diefenbaker to select an inexperienced SSEA in Sidney Smith, whom Diefenbaker believed he could control from the sidelines. However, Diefenbaker's plans to rid the DEA of any vestiges of the Liberal legacy amounted to little. Because Diefenbaker had very little experience in issues concerning Latin America, and Cuba in particular, he ultimately followed Pearson's lead in supporting the American line in Cuba. As chapter three points out, this did not prove to be a problem for Diefenbaker given his personal affinity for U.S. President Eisenhower.[303] Diefenbaker's trust and admiration for Eisenhower's Cold War leadership ultimately dissuaded Diefenbaker from seeking any significant changes in policy where Cuba

[303] The documentation used for this study does not provide any insight into Diefenbaker's train of thought, nor does Basil Robinson's account provide more than vague mentions of Diefenbaker's dissatisfaction with the American approach to Cuba after 1959. As Diefenbaker also does not provide any insight into this question in his memoirs, it remains difficult for historians to determine the specific factors that affected Diefenbaker's decision.

was concerned. Even when Batista was clearly showing signs of weakness in late 1958, Diefenbaker was comforted by Washington's belief that Batista had the situation under control. This train of thought ultimately influenced Diefenbaker to approve Canadian arms shipments to Batista's forces, even though he had received confirmation that they were being used against Castro's forces.

As for Canada's Ambassador to Cuba from 1957-1959, Hector Allard, he too supported the American-led status quo in Cuba. Unlike Scott, Allard was easily persuaded that the American-led status quo in Cuba should be maintained. In fact, Allard admitted in one of his despatches to External Affairs that he believed the U.S. presence on the island was not only benign but also necessary in maintaining stability in Cuba. Allard's inability to recognize the true nature of the political situation in Cuba led him to write a series of inaccurate, biased reports, that only muddled the feeling of indifference and disillusionment towards Cuba that already existed at the DEA. In this way, the failure of Canadian diplomats to accurately assess the Cuban situation rested with the entire chain of command, from senior officials at the DEA who chose to ignore the rising hostility between Batista and Castro's forces, and Canadian diplomats on the ground in Cuba who functioned in a state of denial until it was impossible to ignore any longer that Batista's time as President was at an end.

While this thesis has pointed out the deficiencies in Canada's approach towards Cuba in the pre-revolutionary period, a significant question remains: did Canada benefit in any way from pursuing the diplomatic approach it took towards Cuba from 1945 until 1959? As this thesis has shown, Canada suffered very few consequences by following the American line in Cuba. While the United States were

demonized by anti-government forces for selling weapons to the Batista government, Canada did not suffer any lasting damage to its image as a close friend and trading partner with the Cuban people. Even after the Montreal Meeting in 1953 left the Batista government questioning whether Canada had authorized the sale of illegal arms to anti-Batista forces, the Cubans dropped the issue in a matter of weeks.[304] This underscores another point. The bilateral relationship did not matter any more to Cuba than it did to Canada. Both countries were interested mainly in the trade relationship, and had very little interest in any unnecessary displays of anger or arrogance. In this way, Canada suffered few consequences during the pre-revolutionary period with Cuba because it had invested little in the relationship. The United States, on the other hand, had overplayed its hand during the period, making it all but certain that there presence would be unwanted after Batista left office.

While Canadian diplomats in Havana and Ottawa misread the situation on the ground in Cuba, they succeeded in realizing the importance of staying at arms length from Cuban entanglements. This ultimately made it possible for Diefenbaker to diverge his Cuba policy from that of the United States after 1959, which he demonstrated in his decision not to follow the Americans in imposing an economic embargo on Cuba in 1960, and his decision not to cut off diplomatic ties with Castro's Cuba in 1961. That Diefenbaker changed his approach to Cuba after 1959 is difficult to understand, given his pro-American record from 1957-1959. This question deserves a thesis unto itself, and thus cannot be answered with any certainty here. However, given that Canada seemed to suffer no ill effects from 1945 until 1959 by

[304] Refer to Chapter 2 of this thesis for more on this incident.

letting Cubans take care of their own problems, it may have struck Diefenbaker as prudent to continue to utilize such an approach to deal with Castro's revolution. Similarly, it is likely because of Canada's stable relationship with Cuba from 1945-1959 that the bilateral relationship survived after Fidel Castro came to power. Had Canada chosen to join the OAS, or if Canadian diplomats had been explicit in their support for Batista, than perhaps Castro would have been cooler towards Canada after he consolidated his revolution.

The decision of Canadian diplomats to support the American line in Cuba, while remaining indifferent to Cuban affairs, ultimately left Canada in a strong position to separate itself from American policies and attitudes after 1959. Although this was definitely not premeditated, it turned out to be an effective policy. Canada has been able to maintain relations with Cuba for over half a century, whereas the United States has not. In this way, it was only after 1959 that Canada was able to truly separate itself from American attitudes and policies in Cuba. Before then, such claims were merely rhetoric.

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