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**The Special Canadian-Cuban Relations
under Prime Minister Diefenbaker**

Master's thesis

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Year of the defence: 2019

Declaration

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on May 9, 2019

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References

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Abstract

The thesis titled “Special Canadian-Cuban Relations under Prime Minister Diefenbaker” examines the roots of the Canadian Cuban Relations set during the reign of Prime Minister Diefenbaker. Whilst Canada’s role is usually minimized during the events of the Cuban Revolution as well as the Cuban Missile Crisis, Canada will be discussed as one of the major players in the present thesis.

The relationship of the two countries will be discussed mainly through the concepts of “other diplomacies” as the means of Canadian soft power diplomacy and Canadian “othering” of the United States as a part of Canadian nationalism. Both concepts will be introduced in the theoretical framework.

The thesis is based on the assumption of Cuba’s importance for Canada’s national independence. Therefore greater focus will be paid to Canadian nationalist policies of Prime Minister Diefenbaker. The aim of the thesis is thus to discuss whether Canadian nationalism was the main factor influencing Canada’s policy towards Cuba during the set time period. We will examine whether the means used by Canada towards Cuba during the late 1959 and early 1960s period can be linked to Canada’s need to be seen as an independent country. Thanks to this approach we will be able to assess whether Cuba can be seen as a means of Canadian independent foreign policy.

Keywords

Canada, Cuba, Diefenbaker, Kennery, International relations, Cuban Revolution, Cuban Missile Crisis

Title

The Special Canadian-Cuban Relations under Prime Minister Diefenbaker

Abstrakt

Diplomová práce s názvem „Speciální kanadsko-kubánské vztahy za vlády kanadského předsedy vlády Diefenbakera“ zkoumá kořeny kanadsko-kubánských vztahů za dob kanadského předsedy vlády Diefenbakera. Přestože je většinou role Kanady během Kubánské revoluce a Kubánské raketové krize minimalizována, v této práci bude Kanada považována za jednoho z hlavních aktérů těchto událostí.

Vztah obou zemí bude zkoumán skrze koncepty: „jiných diplomacií“ jakožto nástroje kanadské „soft power“ a kanadského „odlišování se“ od Spojených států jako součást kanadského nacionalismu. Oba koncepty budou uvedeny v teoretické části práce.

Předpokladem diplomové práce je význam Kuby pro kanadskou nezávislost. Větší důraz tedy bude kladen na kanadskou národní politiku kanadského předsedy vlády Diefenbakera. Cílem práce je zhodnotit kanadskou národní politiku jako hlavní faktor ovlivňující kanadskou politiku vůči Kubě v dané době. Budeme zkoumat, zda nástroje kanadské politiky vůči Kubě na konci 50. let a na začátku 60. let odráží kanadskou národní nezávislou politiku. Díky tomuto přístupu, budeme moci zjistit, zda může na Kubu být nahlíženo jako na nástroj kanadské nezávislé zahraniční politiky.

Klíčová slova

Kanada, Kuba, Diefenbaker, Kennedy, Mezinárodní vztahy, Kubánská revoluce, Kubánská raketová krize

Název práce

Speciální kanadsko-kubánské vztahy za vlády kanadského předsedy vlády Diefenbakera

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I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my mentor, Mgr. Ing. Magdalena Fiřtová, Ph.D. for her unsurpassed patience and for helping me find the “special” in the special relationship discussed in the thesis.

ZÁVĚREČNÉ TEZE MAGISTERSKÉ PRÁCE NMTS
Závěrečné teze student odevzdává ke konci Diplomního semináře III jako součást magisterské práce a tyto teze jsou spolu s odevzdáním magisterské práce do SIS předpokladem udělení zápočtu za tento seminář.
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Název práce: The Special Canadian-Cuban Relations under Prime Minister Diefenbaker
Charakteristika tématu práce (max 10 řádek): The present thesis discusses the roots of the special Canadian-Cuban relations under Prime Minister Diefenbaker. The thesis believes that Canada's role, generally minimized during the events of Cuban Revolution and Cuban Missile Crisis, was exceptional in its importance for Canadian sovereignty as well as for forming the "special" Canadian Cuban relationship. In the broad spectre of possible elements influencing the relationship, the thesis plays greater focus to Canadian nationalism. More precisely the thesis analyses whether Canadian nationalism was the main factor influencing Canada's decisions during the Cuban Revolution and the Cuban Missile Crisis and if so, whether it is possible to assess Cuba as a means of Canadian independent foreign policy. The aim of the present thesis is thus to discuss the Canadian Cuban relationship during the events following the Cuban Revolution and consequently the events of the early 1960s.
Vývoj tématu od zadání projektu do odevzdání práce (max. 10 řádek): The thesis was originally supposed to discuss the special Canadian-Cuban relationship in the time scope of the 1950s to 1970s thus from the reign of Prime Minister Diefenbaker to Pierre Trudeau. Given that the relations of Canada and Cuba are based on a very broad set of elements, the time scope was reduced to a discussion concerned with the bilateral relations under one Prime Minister – Diefenbaker. The relationship of Canada towards Cuba set under Prime Minister Diefenbaker influenced the Canadian policy for the decades to come. The reduction of time scope also allowed to focus in greater detail to one aspect as mainly influencing the special concept of the relationship – Canadian nationalism.
Struktura práce (hlavní kapitoly obsahu): Introduction Theoretical Framework 1. Setting the Historical Scene 2. Diplomatic Ties – The Origins 3. The Origins of The "Special Relationship" Canadian "No" to Embargo

4. The Special Relationship – The Kennedy Years

Conclusion

Summary

Bibliography

Hlavní výsledky práce (max. 10 řádek):

The thesis interconnected Canadian foreign policy to Cuba to Canadian nationalism. Thanks to applying the concept of “other diplomacies” the generally accepted assumption of trade being the key aspect of Canadian Cuban relations was challenged. Due to underlining how Canada portrays itself in world politics the thesis drew a clash with how the US sees itself, which became of greatest importance within the Cuban dialogue. Whilst various unique circumstances, including the geography of the Northern hemisphere, contributed to the special Canadian Cuban relationship. The thesis demonstrated that during the special circumstances, Diefenbaker used Cuba as a tool of Canadian independent foreign policy.

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Introduction

Whilst historians generally acknowledge USA – Cuba and USSR as the main players of the Cuban revolution as well as of the Cuban Missile Crisis, we believe that Canada's role during this period of time was exceptional in its importance for Canadian sovereignty as well as for forming the “special” Canadian Cuban relationship. There is a broad spectre of possible “elements” that influenced Canada's opposing the US Cuban approach. We will discuss a number of such elements with a greater focus on Canadian nationalism being the most protruding one. More precisely we will question whether Canadian nationalism was the main factor influencing Canada's decisions during the Cuban revolution and if so, whether it is possible to assess Cuba as a means of Canadian independent foreign policy. The aim of the present thesis is thus to discuss the Canadian Cuban relationship during the events following the Cuban revolution and consequently the events of the early 1960s.

The thesis is concerned primarily with the roots of the relationship, which can be found during the reign of the Prime Minister Diefenbaker. We chose this particular time period as we believe that the relationship of Canada towards Cuba set under Prime Minister Diefenbaker influenced the Canadian policy for the decades to come. The time concept of the thesis is thus from the late 1950s, the period of the Cuban Revolution, until the end of the reign of Prime Minister Diefenbaker, 1963.

The theoretical part of the thesis will first introduce literature along with its scholars concerned with Canadian Cuban relations. The amount of literature covering first Canada's role in the Cuban Revolution, second in the Cuban Missile Crisis is modest compared to that covering US – Cuba relationship. We will however consider Canada as one of the major players of the time period. Which brings us the methodology of the work itself: it consists of an analysis of the given secondary sources from an original perspective. There is not a single complete study dedicated primarily to considering Canadian nationalism as the main factor influencing Canadian nationalism. Thus in the present thesis in our analysis of the secondary sources we will underline other than pragmatic, economic aspects of the Canadian-Cuban relations with a special focus to Canadian nationalism. Given that there are various concepts influencing the relationship of the two countries, the theoretical part of the thesis will then introduce merely the most fundamental concepts. The first being a means of Canadian soft power policy: “other diplomacies”. We have chosen the concept of other diplomacies to better understand the

peculiarities of the relationship. By “other diplomacies” we mean, similarly to authors such as Luis René Tabío, Cynthia Wright and Lana Wylie a particular conceptual lens, which emphasizes the role of numerous factors and partially challenges the generally accepted notion of trade being the sole reason for the Canadian-Cuban relations. The collection of essays concerned with the “other diplomacies” will be introduced and explained further in the text. The concept is based on the principles of communication and negotiation and allows to better mirror Canadian approach to Cuba if compared to that of the US. Given that the concept is rather broad, it will re-appear throughout the whole thesis in various forms starting already in the pre-1959 history during the Cuban wars for independence. Second key concept of the thesis is Canadian nationalism. More precisely, we will introduce Canadian need to differentiate itself, to “other” as a country from the US. Given that Canadian anti-Americanism is rather particular, this concept will be discussed. Most importantly, the importance of Canadian anti-Americanism and Canada’s need to “other” its great southern neighbour will be further in the thesis discussed as key in Canadian-Cuban relationship. Canadian “othering” of the US will thus be partially linked to Canadian anti-Americanism but primarily to Canadian nationalism and Canada’s struggle to be seen as a sovereign, independent country. As Prime Minister Diefenbaker’s reign was greatly motivated by promoting Canadian nationalism, the concept as such will be introduced too. Canadian nationalism and Diefenbaker’s will for Canada to be seen as an independent, sovereign country will be the main string throughout the present thesis.

The body of the thesis will be divided into four main section. The first section will be concerned with the earliest contacts between Canada and Cuba. The discussion around the pre-1959 history will allow to illustrate that long before the “officially recognized” policies, particular diverging tendencies of both Canada and the US towards Cuba could be observed. Similarly to most scholars concerned with the issue of Canadian-Cuban relations who underline the role of trade in the particular relation we will also, in greater detail discuss both trade and finance interests. Nevertheless, trade and finance interest will be discussed within a greater context of aspects influencing the “special” relations. Thus we will recognize the pre-1959, more precisely the different tone that both Canada and the US chose towards Cuba, as crucial for the later “special” Canadian Cuban relationship. The concept of varying perspectives of both Canadians and Americans towards Cuba will be outlined.

Second section of the thesis will be dedicated to the Origins of the Diplomatic ties between Canada and Cuba. The origins of the diplomatic relationship will be linked to the former Canadian commercial interests in Cuba. In the context of the 1950s, Canada will be introduced in the light of being a more confident country after WWII thus trying to shape independently its policies. Diplomatic despatches, obtained from secondary sources, will be used as a tool to shed an interesting insight into the Canadian-Cuban relationship.

Third section will introduce the Special Relationship. This chapter will outline Prime Minister Diefenbaker's nationalist preferences along with the Canadian interest. Starting with this section more protruding independent Canadian interests will be observed in Canada's foreign policy towards Cuba. Diefenbaker's policy will be discussed during the presidency of two American presidents: first President Dwight Eisenhower, second John Fitzgerald Kennedy. We will try to prove that personal relationship between the Prime Minister and individual American presidents played a role in Canada's policy towards Cuba. More importantly, we will focus on the fact that the degree of US "respect" of Canadian sovereignty influenced greatly Diefenbaker's stand on Cuba. Cuban Revolution will be outlined in greater detail as well as events following shortly the Revolution that set Cuba's different approach towards the US and Canada i.e. nationalisation of foreign banks in Cuba. American embargo on Cuba and Canada's "no" to it will be analysed in greater detail. We will argue that the embargo and Canada's not falling in line was crucial for both the Special Relationship as well as for Canada's self-image of an independent country. Given that the thesis is not opposing the argument of Canada constructing its relationship to Cuba on pragmatic economic interests, bilateral trade will be considered during this era. Such concepts will be discussed in their relation to the different mentalities of both Canadians and Americans. Societal connections and people-to-people approach will be one of the re-occurring themes of the thesis, falling into the category of "other diplomacies".

Fourth section of the thesis will continue in the analysis of the Special Relationship of Canada towards Cuba under the presidency of Kennedy. It will be in this very section that we will illustrate the sharpest breach between Canadian and American policy towards Cuba. It is not possible to pin point with accuracy the main reason that lead to the drift. However we will argue that all of the aforementioned aspects important for Canada's independent foreign policy towards Cuba will crystalize during the

presidency of Kennedy: the relationship between Diefenbaker and Kennedy; American disregard to Canadian sovereignty; different mentalities of both nations; trade interests. Nevertheless, we will link all of Diefenbaker's decisions regarding Cuba during this period to the Canadian interest, more precisely to the Canadian nationalism. This section of the thesis will allow to illustrate that Cuba was in Canada's perception directly linked to the question of national sovereignty and the need of independent Canadian policy towards Cuba during immense American pressures. We will simultaneously argue that it was the unique circumstances of the period as well as of the world politics that allow for such a discussion.

Theoretical Framework

State of the art

The Cuban Revolution in the year 1959 and consequently the events of the early 1960s are well covered in academic literature. It is ultimately a story of two countries – Cuba and the United States. Consequently, two most discussed characters are that of John F. Kennedy and Fidel Castro. The only third country generally discussed within this context is the USSR. Hence, based on the majority of literature regarding this topic, these are the three major players in this story. There is an abundance of book-length studies as well as documents on the US perspective of the events. Given that Canada's role is either not analysed in such material and or is merely mentioned as a footnote, the amount of literature on Canada's role in the Cuban revolution is modest compared to that covering US – Cuba in the revolutionary period. Given that the Cuban Revolution was rather exceptional itself, there seems to have been very little need to elaborate on the unique position of Canada within this context.

There are however a few authors who have dedicated their studies to the role of Canada during the period US-Cuba embargo. We would like to stress that whilst studies concerned with US-Cuba relationship discuss solely the issues of the two countries, all of the authors concerned with Canadian Cuban relationship include the position of the US in their studies. Individual authors however decide into what extent to illustrate in detail US's impact and or influence upon Canadian Cuban relationship. These scholars have all identified the late 1950s and consequently 1960s as the roots of the special Canadian Cuban relationship. There is not a great divergence of thought among these authors, nonetheless, each author chooses a “main” element of their own to explain why Canada chose an opposing approach to Cuba than the US. Majority of studies identify trade as the main motivator behind Canadian Cuban relationship.

As for the primary sources, diplomatic dispatches, they are to be found in the Archives of Canada. The present thesis did not have access to the diplomatic notes and relies therefore on the secondary sources. Majority of the secondary sources however uses diplomatic notes from the given period to support their arguments and we are therefore able to use and interpret them for our purposes.

The very first book-length study of the Canadian Cuban relationship is John M. Kirk's and Peter McKenna's *Canada-Cuba Relations: The Other Good Neighbour policy*, 1997. This book is among the very few outlining in greater detail the pre-1959 history.

Thus the very beginning of the relationship, no matter how slim, is set in the second half of the 19th century – when trading of Cuban rum for Canadian goods began. Given that the authors identify trade as the reason for the beginning of the relationship they consequently build their argument around trade as the main driver for the relationship for the next decades. In other words, Canadian-Cuban relationship is according to these authors set on pragmatic, economic and commercial considerations, which influence also the latter development of the relationship. The “Origins” of the special relationship of Canada and Cuba are set during the time of Prime Minister Diefenbaker, where Canada’s decision not to follow the American lead is discussed. Changing personalities in the office of the Canadian Prime Minister along with their changing ideologies are introduced with particular impact on the relationship, stressing the continuity of the relationship set under Prime Minister Diefenbaker. We would like to note that the primary sources of the book include archival material comprising of diplomatic notes, which provide for an authentic comprehension of the time period. These were accessed in the Department of External Affairs in Canada and its Cuban counterpart, the Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. Interestingly enough, whilst diplomatic notes are used throughout the book to support the main arguments, they are also partially left to interpretation, given that the authors recognize the diplomats and Ambassadors as people. On the one hand the book aims to illustrate the origins of the relationship, the “special” aspect of the relationship, on the other hand its ultimate goal is to “advertise” the Canadian Cuban relationship as the “good neighbour’s” policy for the United States. Thus the dedication of the book to “all those who struggle for the introduction of common sense, dignity, and justice into U.S. – Cuban relations.” For the purposes of our thesis, we believe that the values mentioned in the dedication can be used as the corner stone for the Canadian Cuba relationship.

The sole book, which is concerned with Canadian Cuban relationship primarily outside the advantages of bilateral trade is Lana Wylie’s *Perceptions of Cuba: Canadian and American Policies in Comparative Perspective*, 2010. The goal of the book is to outline the fact that a foreign policy of a given country is constructed by our own perceptions. Wylie thus compares the reasons behind US’s continuous isolation of Cuba and Canada’s simultaneous policy of engagement. Wylie places the opposing approach, originating in the identity, to Cuba of both the US and Canada into the middle of the 19th century around the Spanish War. The book thus adapts a constructivist approach to

discussing international relations problems. Wylie outlines identities as constructed by both the domestic as well as international level. In the context of US – Canada – Cuba triangle the study notes that from the very earliest periods, Canadians and Americans had very different relationships and perceptions of Cuba. The US was from the very beginning very active in domestic Cuban politics whereas Canada's engagement was minimal. The book first discusses chronologically the US's engagement and perception of the island. This part of the book illustrates that the US started and then continued its policy of isolation towards Cuba with a goal for Cuba to adapt a model of Western-style liberal democracy. Discussion of Canada's engagement on the island follows. These chapters note the contrary of the US's approach: Canada's will to engage with Cuba regardless the island's regime. The policies adapted by both countries towards Cuba thus differ greatly in this research. Wylie believes that both countries adapted different foreign policies to Cuba because of differing perceptions of the island.

Wylie along with Kirk and McKenna also contributed to a major collection of essays titled *Other Diplomacies, Other Ties: Cuba and Canada in the Shadow of the US*, edited by Luis René Refnández Tabío, Cynthia Wright, and Lana Wylie, 2018. This most recent collection of essays is divided into three major blocks. Given that this is a collection of essays, the book seeks to cover a broad spectrum of themes that are presented as crucial for forming the relationship. As for the role of the US, a whole block of essays is under the overarching title of "Canada and Cuba in the Shadow of the US." The goal of the collection is to cover Canadian Cuban relationship in a broad scope of activities and actors such as, diplomats, activists, journalists etc. while taking into account the shifting variable of the context. While the book recognizes the pre-1959 history in forging the bilateral Canadian-Cuban trade it shifts to discussing "other diplomacies, other ties" by looking into the very nature of the relationship. Individual authors discuss "other diplomacies, other ties" crucial to the relationship and based on their expertise. Ultimately, aiming at reviewing issues outside official policies, taking into account both peoples of Canada and Cuba the book is able to discuss broader themes than any other collection or book on the given topic. All of the contributors of the collection also wrote various articles on Canadian Cuban relationship.

Another major collection of essays edited by Wylie is *Our Place in the Sun: Canada and Cuba in the Castro Era*, edited by Lana Wylie and Robert Wright, 2009. This collection similarly to *Other Diplomacies* outlines post 1959 Canadian Cuban

relations. Similarly to Kirk and McKenna it uses the declassified diplomatic notes from the era. The collection consists of 11 original essays by various authors including Mark Entwistle, a former Canadian Ambassador to Cuba. In the context of the present thesis, essay by Cynthia Wright titled “Between Nation and Empire: The Fair Play for Cuba Committees and the Making of Canada-Cuba Solidarity in the Early 1960s” stands out. This particular essay leaves “trade” as a main reason for a relationship behind and elaborates on how Canadians saw Cubans in the turmoil post-revolutionary period. What stands out is the fact that while all of the authors concerned with the Canadian Cuban relationship view the era of Prime Minister Diefenbaker as crucial for setting the special relationship, none have considered the solidarity movements, the movements coming from people, as the core for creating and consequently maintaining such relationship. Other contributions such as the essay by Don Munton and David Vogt help to better understand the position of Canadian diplomats in Cuba at the time of the revolution. These essays provide a great source for broadening the political context and factor in many aspects not discussed in great detail by other authors.

Kirk and McKenna are the most referenced authors by all the scholars interested in Canadian Cuban Relationship. Both authors also wrote individual shorter studies and have contributed shorter essays into collections on Canadian Cuba relationship. One of these include *Cuba’s Forgotten Decade: How the 1970s Shaped the Revolution* edited by Emily J. Kirk, Anna Clayfield and Isabel Story. In this particular collection of essays John M. Kirk wrote a chapter on the Canadian Cuban Relationship in the 1970s. The importance of this particular collection is in the fact that it illustrates Cuba in the 1970s in comparison to Cuba of 1960s. The latter is the Cuba seeking fundamental reassessment of the path of independence, admitting that the roots of this path were laid in the 1960s. Kirk’s contribution to this collection stands out for two reasons. Firstly, the author continues to show the mutually advantageous trade. Second, in this particular period of time, it is not possible to discuss the bilateral trade without touching upon the struggle that US saw in Western countries trading with enemy governments.

All of the above discussed books and collections share one crucial quality: not only are they all concerned with the Canadian Cuban relationship, they acknowledge that Canada’s Cuba policy simply cannot be explained solely in terms of commercial or investment considerations. Other, historical, domestic, external, people-to-people and many other variables need to be factored in. The books differ in the amount of the variable

that they take into account and into the degree of stressing trade as the main factor. Given that majority of sources covering the Canadian Cuban relationship are essays, shows that there are many factors that need to be considered when searching for the “special” in the relationship.

Despite the broad spectre of themes covered in the books there is not one single complete study with the focus on Canadian nationalism in Cuban revolution discourse even though the terms such as “Canadian nationalism” are naturally mentioned during the reign of Prime Minister Diefenbaker. This brings us to the main question of the thesis. Was Canadian nationalism the main factor influencing Canada’s decisions during the Cuban revolution? Furthermore, can all of the means used by Canada towards Cuba during the late 1959 and early 1960s period be linked to Canada’s need to be seen as an independent country? Ultimately, how did Cuba become a means of Canadian independent policy?

Based on the assumption of Cuba’s importance for Canada’s national independence the relationship of Prime Minister Diefenbaker to first president Eisenhower and second president Kennedy becomes more than consequential. We would like to note that we will not discuss in the present thesis US’s perspective on the Canadian approach. The thesis does not cover the US perspective of the events as the goal is to shift focus to Canada, which is usually not presented as the major player of the events around the Cuban Revolution and Cuban Missile crisis. While the above studies admit that one of possible driving factors for Diefenbaker during the embargo not to follow the US lead were his antipathies towards Kennedy, we also believe that this set tone for future relationship between Canadian Prime Ministers and American Presidents when discussing Cuba.

First, the different perception of Cuba both by the US and Canada during the pre-1959 history is crucial. The importance of national identities distinct to both the US and Canada will be introduced as majorly contributing to their formation of dissimilar policies towards Cuba. Thanks to acknowledging particular aspects of American and Canadian identities, it is possible to elaborate on the fact that Canada’s perception of Cuba is to see Cuba as more similar to Canada than Canada to the US. The principle of “othering” is crucial for comprehending Canadian nationalism. The concept of “othering” and “likeness” crystalizes in the context of Cuban revolution.

Second, despite the broad spectre of themes covered in the Canadian Cuban relationship within the essays, we believe that reading the special relationship through primarily “other diplomacies” allows to better understand the revolution itself. The premise of this approach is that the ways in which Cubans and Canadians interact with, relate to and understand one other has as much and perhaps even more to do with societal connections and relationships. Given that not only Canada views Cuba as similar but also Canadians view Cubans in a particular, close way. The interpretation of the relationship through other diplomacies allows for a discussion of people-to-people relations. Ultimately, we will discuss “other diplomacies” as a part of Canadian constructive engagement on Cuba in the form of negotiation and communication of not only state actors. Thanks to “other diplomacies” we can discuss the importance of solidarity movements, early pre-revolutionary meetings, people-to-people contact and the reason for Canada being a “good neighbour” to Cuba.

The importance of Canadian Cuban trade will also be challenged given that the main Canadian trading partner is after all the US. Hence generally accepted notions of Canada building a relationship with Cuba with primarily trade interests will be challenged thanks to the protruding importance of other diplomacies.

Ultimately, the Canadian Cuban relationship becomes special once we accept the unique circumstances of the era and allow to interpret them through a broad scope of other diplomacies.

Key concepts

There is not a simple explanation of how Canada was able to maintain rather solid bilateral uninterrupted relations with Cuba over the past 60 years. Historically speaking, the relationship has been emphasized by a commitment to engage. This engagement can be observed across a wide range of policies and areas regardless the given state of bilateral relations. The Canadian approach has through the course of history been underscored by the benefits and by the advantages from engaging with Cuba. This particular approach has been working for both countries and has been in direct opposition to the American policy of isolationism. We would like to introduce in general the tools of the Canadian engagement in Cuba, first, the policy of other diplomacies that will be discussed as crucial in the Canadian engagement with Cuba. Second, the theory of Canadian “othering” will be outlined and directly linked to Canadian anti-Americanism and Canadian as well as in particular Diefenbaker’s nationalism.

Other Diplomacies as a Means of Canadian Soft Power

It is generally accepted that Canada projects itself to the world as a “soft power”. The term itself was coined by Joseph S. Nye, Jr., and it refers to a country’s ability to persuade as well as to attract its world followers through such means as are its culture, political ideals and policies (Nye, 1990).¹ Nye also believes that Canada, as a middle power, was greatly positioned to project such soft power and consequently to increase its influence around the globe. Starting in the second half of the 20th century, due to growing interdependence, which resulted from an expanded multilateral system as well as advances in communications technologies and blurring lines separating international and domestic policy, countries moved from exercising hard power and focused more on “how their images and policies played out in the international public domain” (Potter, 2009, ix). Thus for many countries, exercising soft power has become an indispensable complement to hard power.

Traditionally, scholars interested in international relations were primarily concerned with state-to-state interactions. However given the above described world politics developments, greater focus to the importance of the role of non-state actors has been

¹ Even though Nye is an American, likely he has a particular appreciation of Canada’s soft power given that he spent a sabbatical term in Ottawa at Carleton University in the 1970s

paid. Nevertheless, scholars such as Andrew Cooper and Brian Hocking (2007, 361-376) believe that in International Relations scholarship:

“[s]tate and non-state actors are viewed as inhabiting different environments, working to different rule-books and occupying very different positions on the scale of importance in world politics. They exist, therefore, in two solitudes with little or no interaction between their worlds.”

However, conventional, traditional understanding of diplomacy are both evolving and broadening. Thomas Princen (1994, 31) therefore argues that even though the foreign ministries still play a crucial role in conducting the affairs of a given state “a much more complex picture of diplomacy emerges when one considers the expansion and complexity of issues, global communications, and the involvement of non-state and intergovernmental organization.” One of possible approaches to understanding foreign relations thus includes the concept of “other diplomacies”. We recognize other diplomacies as defined by Young and Henders (378, 2012) as a concept that “aims to capture analytically the everyday activities of societal non-state actors that have a diplomatic character”. The definition of the concept directly overlaps with the description of instruments of public diplomacy. Thus in other words, other diplomacies may be interpreted as one of the means of a soft power diplomacy. Potter (2009, x) for example, argues that Canada exercises its soft power through the instruments of public diplomacy such as “international cultural relations, international education, international broadcasting, and international business promotion and tourism.” All of these aspects would be characterised by authors such as Tabío, Wright and Wylie as “other diplomacies”. The concept of other diplomacies is thus directly linked to Canada being and acting as a soft power through the instruments of public diplomacy. For the purposes of the present thesis we decided to apply the term “other diplomacies”. We would like to also explain the concept in regards to Canadian foreign policy.

The first usage of the term appeared in *Canadian Foreign Policy in Critical Perspective* edited by Lana Wylie and Marshall Beier in the year 2010. The concept was then further developed within Canadian foreign policy by Mary Young and Susan Henders in “Other Diplomacies and the Making of Canada-Asia Relations,” published in the *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, 2012. This particular article aimed at exploring the very nature as well as significance of diplomatic diversity i.e. the co-existence of the diplomacies of various actors, including non-state actors. Even though the authors in the article analyse the diplomatic practices of non-state actors in relation between Canadians

and Asians, the concept of other diplomacies as characterised in the article can also be applied to the relation between Canadians and Cubans. It can be argued that the notion of other diplomacies is developing along with the development of new communication technologies as well as the expansion of global markets and more (ibid, 379). Other diplomacies as a term refers to:

“[...] a range of things that non-state actors do as they interact with each other, including across political, legal and normative borders and differences of culture, language and other identities. As with state diplomacy, other diplomacies are centrally about negotiation and communication, which involve several practices, whether consciously or unconsciously”

(Young, Henders, 378, 2012).

We will illustrate that the aspects of “negotiation and communication” are the key aspects of Canada’s policy of constructive engagement. The goal of Canada’s Cuba policy is thus to support economic exchange, mutual respect as well as diplomatic dialogue (McKenna, Kirk, 2012, 160). These principles of constructive engagement have been embraced by Prime Minister Chrétien, the very roots of the approach can however be traced to the reign of Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker. Christine Stewart, former Canadian secretary of state for Latin America and Africa has defined the Canadian Cuban relationship simply as: “Canada’s policy toward Cuba has been one of constructive engagement – we believe that political and economic advances can be encouraged by maintaining a dialogue with the Cuban people and government” (Stewart, 1995). Building and maintaining a relationship through other diplomacies is thus one of the main aspects that has differentiated Canada’s approach to Cuba from the American isolationism.

The role of trade and economic ties between Canada and Cuba is usually underlined in literature discussing the bilateral relationship. However it is possible to discuss economic Canadian Cuban connections also through other diplomacies as does Cuban economist Luis René Fernández. This approach is possible once we admit that even economic connections are facilitated by people-to-people connections. Young and Henders (2012, 383) also admit that within foreign policy, in bilateral relationships namely, asymmetries in power relationships are most telling in the economic relationships.

We believe that the framework of other diplomacies can be used to better understand Canadian-Cuban relations. Nonetheless, in order to conceptualize the relationship we are combining the political, formal diplomatic level, along with the other diplomacies concept. Diverse non-state actors including economics, education and later

on tourism, are particularly important to comprehending the special Canadian Cuban relationship. We would like to note that the official diplomacies often interact and compliment with the other diplomacies. Luis René Fernández Tabío, Cynthia Wright and Lana Wylie admit that states have acknowledged the role of other diplomacies in the form of cultural connections for example, in relationship building (Tabío, Wright, Wylie, 2018, 21). Also Canadian government has recognized the importance of other diplomacies in the Canadian Cuban relationship as in “cultural and interpersonal ties contribute to strengthening people-to-people relations between Canadians and Cubans” (Embassy of Canada to Cuba). In this particular context it is necessary to stress that Canada along with its government has adapted less hostile approach towards Cuba, particularly through other diplomacies underlying hope that these connections would foster an evolution on the island (Tabío, Wright, Wylie, 2018, 21).

“Othering the US” as a Means of Canadian Nationalism

The discussion of “what it means to be Canadian” is still current. It has been a part of the Canadian psyche to think about what it is in the Canadian values and beliefs that “makes them distinctive, that sets them apart from others” (Brooks 2009, 45). It has been a long lasting search for the cultural essence, which is ultimately about “identifying and explaining the ways in which the values and belief of Canadians are different from those of Americans” (ibid.).

Ultimately, it can be argued that rather than defying themselves in terms of their own national history and traditions, Canadians refer to what they are *not*: Americans (Lipset, 1991, 53). Thus anti-Americanism plays a central role in Canadian history. Once the Dominion of Canada was established, anti-Americanism constituted the key instrument for maintaining of the established order (Granatstein, 1996, 5). It needs to be stressed, however, that given the special proximity of both countries as well as the shared heritage Canadian anti-Americanism is rather particular. We agree with the following definition of Canadian anti-Americanism as:

“It is a distaste for and a fear of American military, political, cultural, and economic activities that, while widespread in the population, is usually benign unless and until it is exploited by business, political, or cultural groups for their own ends. Added to this is a snippet – and sometimes more – of envy at the greatness, wealth, and power of the Republic and its citizens, and a dash of discomfort at the excesses that mar American life”

(Granatstein, 1996, 4)

Canadians always “opposed” the US and could be referred to as the “world’s oldest and most continuing un-Americans” (ibid.). Lipset (1991, 52-53) links the longevity of Canadian anti-Americanism to the very establishment of both countries: whereas American Revolution ideology became a *raison d’être* for the Republic – explaining why the US came into being and what “American” stands for, Canada “arrived at freedom through evolution in allegiance and not by revolutionary compact” hence, it is a country with tradition and convention as its final governing force.

In the Canadian context, the terms “tradition” and “convention” refer to the British, which also constitutes a source of Canadian nationalism. The British connection can be explained based on a trade reasoning: i.e. that the west-east pull of trade (from prairies, down the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence, to Western Europe) provided a certain counter-thrust to the pull of continentalism (Grant 1997, 49). Notwithstanding, the British tradition directly opposed the dominant Jeffersonian liberalism of the US. Grant (1997, 50) consequently argues that Canadians of such “tradition” would not come to terms of giving their loyalty to the US. Diefenbaker was precisely of such tradition. However, whilst some may use the term anti-Americanism, it can be described also as “lack of Americanism”. For instance, due to various policies, including the Cuba policy, Prime Minister Diefenbaker was accused of Anti-Americanism in the election of 1963. Nevertheless, Diefenbaker explained that he thought of his policies as being pro-Canadian not anti-American (Grant, 1997, 50).

It can thus be argued that the common intention among Canadians, which allowed for articulating Canadians as a nation is admitting that they can be recognized only if preserved outside the US (Grant, 1997, 81). Further in the thesis, we will argue that this longing for remaining outside the US (its influence and or annexation) is a shared bond between Canadians and Cubans. In this context, it also needs to be stressed that Canada was predicated on the right of nations as well as on the rights of individuals whereas American nationalism was founded on the grounds of the rights of individuals (ibid.).

Thus the intense desire to be distinct, “other” (from the US) is an important element of the Canadian self-image, which also influences Canadian foreign policy. The need to be “other” seems to have been most crucial for Canada as with the *Statue of Westminster*, 1931, Canada began constructing its own diplomatic line rather late. We would like to note that the first “othering” crucial for Canada was that from the UK. Prior to the WWII both Canadian relationships and commercial diplomacy as well as its safety

and espionage systems had to pass through British High Commissioners abroad before arriving in Ottawa (Gutiérrez-Haces, 2017, 231-250). Fox (1985, 64-76) explains that Canada needed first to differentiate its policy from the UK, hence it promoted its North-American-ness without being American:

“Canada's search for identity led Canadians to stress their North-American-ness when they sought to differentiate themselves and their policy from the British and Britain's policy, while North-American-ness got in the way when differentiation from the United States and American policy was sought...”

Gutiérrez-Haces notes that the “Americanity” is thus an antithesis of an Americanized identity and ultimately an answer to “the continentalization of Canadian foreign policy” (2017, 231-250). Being “not American” has become an inherent part of the Canadian identity and consequently, “othering” of the US has become an element of the Canadian identity (Wylie 2010, 59). In the context of Canadian Cuban relationship, it can be thus argued that protecting Canada’s image of an independent country during the Cuban revolution i.e. not to follow the US embargo and the US lead, was an important factor in the course of the events.

Given that the thesis supports the argument of Canada promoting Canadian nationalism in its policy towards Cuba under Prime Minister Diefenbaker, we would like to elaborate on “Canadian nationalism” specifically under Diefenbaker. There is a general agreement that one of the factors that helped Diefenbaker in the general election campaign of 1957 was the sentiment of anti-Americanism. More precisely, “his stock in trade was Canadian nationalism,” which apparently contained a great dose of anti-Americanism (Granatstein, 1996, 125). This was articulated into the belief that Canada’s great future was ahead of the country and it pended on nationalism, which would create a truly independent nation (ibid.). It needs to be stressed however that Diefenbaker’s American antipathies mirrored merely the usual Canadian dislike: antipathy towards the apparently more powerful southern neighbour; the US crass style; the pop culture; the greedy business (Granatstein, 1996, 143). For the purposes of the thesis however it needs to be underlined that above all, Diefenbaker feared “Washington’s big stick, the stick that had been used against Cuba in October 1962 and against him [Diefenbaker] and his country in the press release of January 30” (ibid.). The parallel of the big stick used on both Cuba and Canada illustrates, that Canada portrayed itself as the smaller nation threatened by the powerful US – a threat common both to Cubans and Canadians.

As aforementioned, Diefenbaker belonged to the tradition of a conservatism of British origins, which whilst not philosophically explicit, shaped Canadian institutions and had penetrated into the lives of generations of Canadians (Grant, 1997, 50). United Kingdom and its crown had a certain mediatory effect on politics, for Diefenbaker, as it constituted a form of counterweight at the, at times, overpowering influence of the US (Granatstein, 1996, 123). Whilst some (Grant surely does) may criticize Diefenbaker's nationalism as "romantic" given that he wanted to follow in the steps of such Canadian nationalists as Macdonald, he saw his main "destiny" as that of revivifying the Canadian nation (Grant, 1997, 31). It is not by a chance that Diefenbaker was inspired by the vision of Macdonald. It was Macdonald who saw already during his reign that the sole greatest threat to Canadian nationalism was from the South (the US) (Grant, 1997, 25). It was already Prime Minister Macdonald who feared that those who aimed for free trade with Canada's southern neighbour were willing to see Canada absorbed (Granatstein, 1996, 2-3). During Diefenbaker's reign it is apparent that building on Canadian nationalism meant resisting the American government, which escalated during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Further in the thesis we will illustrate that one of the key breaches during this time period was that Diefenbaker believed that the US took Canada along with its leader for granted. It was especially during Kennedy's presidency that it seemed that Washington assumed that Canada would obey decisions made by Kennedy's administration (Granatstein, 1996, 141).

Ultimately, it can be argued that given Diefenbaker's and Green's refusal to accept any demands from "the present imperialism" meaning the US, their nationalism took a form of a certain new kind of neutralism (Grant, 1997, 41). Further in the thesis we will illustrate that whilst Canadian trade with Cuba was tiny, if compared to Canada's trade with the US, in the Canadian psyche, having the option to trade independently of the US's influence is crucial.

One of Diefenbaker's means of promoting Canadian nationalism was putting Canadian "national interest" first. As the term "national interest" is contested we would like to explain its particular use for the present thesis. For the purposes of the thesis we will use the term as interpreted by Steven Kendall Holloway (2006). According to Holloway there are five general principles governing state's national interest, these are:

- A state seeks survival and security from attack
- A state wants to be autonomous to the maximum
- A state needs to maintain its domestic unity and or cohesion

- A state wants to be as economically prosperous as possible
- A state seeks principled self-justification and prestige in the international system

Understandably, each state and its leader place different emphasis on these five principles. We will however argue that for Diefenbaker the principle of the promotion of Canadian autonomy and Diefenbaker's vision of Canada's national interest were the key ones, which is also reflected in his policy to Cuba. Diefenbaker's national interest in Latin America and Cuba comprise of: security, economic prosperity, domestic unity, which means a strong emphasis on the achievement of greater autonomy in Canada's foreign policy vis-à-vis the US as well as greater Canadian exports in the given region (Zorbas, 2011, 147). Thus the goal was to pursue a Canadian foreign policy, which aligns with but is not subservient to that of the US. Notably, it was the Cuban Missile Crisis, which revealed the depth of Diefenbaker's nationalism. Diefenbaker's unwillingness to accept the US's forcing of Canadian government to a particular defence policy ultimately sacrificed Diefenbaker's political advantage. Grant (1997, 49) stresses that it was during the Cuban Missile Crisis that Diefenbaker's Canadianism was bound up with the British connection i.e. the "character of Canada as British North America was in [his] flesh and bones".

1 Setting the historical scene

1.1 Early Contacts

The aim of this chapter is to illustrate some of the earliest historical links between Canada and Cuba. While they may seem distant, they do, nonetheless, serve as a historical basis for the relationship of the two countries. These historical connections are overwind with political symbolism. Also, while most historians interested in the Canada Cuba relations concentrate on the revolutionary period in Cuba, many, Wright and Wylie (2009, 3) including, admit that the pre-1959 history was crucial. It was the time when the roots of trade and finance interests were laid. Also, out of the early history, the period after 1898 is highlighted as the modalities of the Cuba-Canada encounter were forged through trade and capital investment, banking and railways, missionaries, and early diplomacy – Wright and Wylie consider these as the “other diplomacies”. While the goal of the thesis is not to compare the different relationships of the US and Canada towards Cuba, we would like to illustrate on the example of the 1898 war for Independence the opposing approaches to Cuba that both countries adapted already this early. We will also claim that the tendencies that could be observed this early outlined future relationships and approaches of both the US and Canada towards Cuba. For the purposes of the thesis we will discuss briefly the early contacts of the two countries and will recognize the pre-1959 as crucial for the later special Canadian Cuban relationship based on a mutual recognition of individual governments and uninterrupted bilateral relations. The aim of this chapter is thus to outline the very different perception of Cuba by both Canada and the US.

Both the US and Canada were present at Cuba from earlier than 1898 however they formulated very different relationships with the islands. The US was from the beginning actively involved in domestic Cuban politics whereas Canada’s original presence was somewhat minimal. The US need to be active in the Caribbean and Latin America is directly linked to the US perception of these regions as the “American backyard”.

The US Cuban relationship can be characterized in waves of extreme closeness and animosity (Wylie 2010, 12). The US was interested in having close political and strategic ties with the then Spanish colony and even attempted to purchase Cuba from Spain (*ibid.*). Thus growing American interest in Cuba and its involvement in Cuba’s war with Spain in 1898. Perez (1986, xvi) also assesses that during the years 1898 and 1902, Cuba “ceded territory for the establishment of a foreign naval station, acquiesced to

limitations of national sovereignty” and ultimately allowed future US intervention. These conditions were articulated into the Permanent Treaty of 1903, also known as the Platt Amendment. In other words, the US has used both its economic as well as military power to attempt to force the changes they desired. Hence, in the years 1895 to 1905 Cuba moved from colonial dependence on Spain to a “quasi-colonial” dependence on the US (McDowall, 1993, p.167). Wylie (2018, 22) explains that since the earliest US Cuba contacts, the US perceived Cuba as the political epitome of the ‘other,’ hence positioning itself as the guardian of freedom and democracy and the “contrasting images of Cuba helped to construct American policy” (ibid.).²

In comparison, Canadians travelled as individuals as well as in groups to Cuba in the 1868-1878 and later on in 1895-1898 to help Cubans struggling for independence from Spain (Kirk and McKenna 1997, 10). Canada’s approach did not include a strong need to overtake the island. Canada’s involvement during the war years in Cuba differs greatly from the US. Canada’s approach to Cuba can ultimately be characterized as that of the “good international citizen” (Wylie 2018, 55). In other words, given that Canadians “other” the US instead of Cuba (international component) and are able to see themselves as a good international citizen (domestic-value component) they are ultimately drawing similarities with Cuba that reinforce both the international as well as the domestic component (ibid.). These patterns are to be observed throughout Canadian policy towards Cuba.

Thus in both cases, Canadian volunteers travelled to Cuba to fight the Spanish forces following the creation of active *solidarity organizations*, particularly in Montreal and Halifax (ibid.). Kenia Serrano Puig (2014, xxi) also mentions in the preamble to Nino Paggliccia’s *Cuban Solidarity in Canada: Five Decades of People-to-People Foreign Relations* that the very roots of the relations of the two countries can be dated back to the wars of independence. The formation of solidarity organizations is of great importance in Canada-Cuba relations. Later in the thesis, in the times of the Cuban revolution we will discuss that these solidarity groups and early delegations to Cuba represent an important example of people-to-people contacts.

² Wylie elaborates in greater detail about the US and the “other”. This concept is also directly linked to the American identity. For more detail, see Wylie 2010.

1.2 Trade

1.2.1 US-Cuba

The end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century were crucial for the Cuba-US relationship and consequently for that of Canada and Cuba. The end of the dependence on Spain in the year 1898 ultimately opened up the Cuban market. McDowall (1993, 168) assesses that Cuba was however handicapped by an archaic royal land-grant system and sugar financing bore interest rates as high as 20-25%. The US arose to the situation from the position of a country that actually helped to the victory on Spain. Pérez accurately notes though that “Cubans emerged from the war victorious, but only over one metropolis. The defeat of one simply provided the opportunity for the other to expand its control over the island” (Pérez, 2007, 378). In other words, in the following three years, the US hegemony had the ideal conditions to assert claim over Cuba. It would be erroneous to claim that it was merely due to the American intervention that Cuba allowed to “succumb” to the American rule. The intervention itself was preceded by almost half a century “of growing intimacy between Cuba and the United States” (ibid.). Nonetheless, the US military intervention and consequent occupation of the island did change the history of Cuba permanently. As for the financial situation, the US envisioned that (Pérez, 2007, 345):

“Once assured of peace, [Cuba] will be magical. Millions of American money will flow into the island. Under a protectorate, such as will exist for some time, a reciprocity in trade will doubtless be sanctioned and all the riches of the most fruitful and productive bit of ground on the globe will flow into our [American] markets. Cuba will become a source of great profit to the people of the United States. This is not the motive for intervention, but it will be a very gratifying result”

(Vice Consul Joseph A. Springer, April 1898 as cited in Pérez, 2007, 345)

Hence from 1900 onwards the real Americanization of the island began. As for the financing sector, the fact that Cuban sugar was given preferential access to the American market, was of the greatest importance (McDowell, 1993, 169).

1.2. 2 Canada-Cuba

To properly understand the importance of commercial and financial relations of Canada and Cuba, it must be underlined that it was trade that laid the basis for the future bilateral relations. The vast majority of historians interested in Canada-Cuba relations recognize that it was due to Canada's interest in the commercial relationship with Cuba that the relation of the two countries was set that early (taking into account that Canada is a rather young country). The default literature for this sub-chapter is Kirk and McKenna (1997) and Boyer (1972).

Rodríguez also elaborates in greater detail the fact that “the role of economic actors and processes has been central in the Cuba-Canada relationship [and] historically, economics not only predated, but has since led the political relationship” (Wright, Wylie, 2009, 17).

The most fitting slogan to early Canada Cuba relationship would be “business is business” (Kirk and McKenna 1997, 9). Namely, they illustrate that regardless of the regime in power on the island, regardless Washington lobbying, regardless numerous other considerations, “the prime concern for Ottawa has traditionally been how to sell more Canadian products to Cuba [...]” (ibid.). Furthermore, Kirk and McKenna (1997, 9) as well as many other historians note that trade was the principal element of the Canada Cuba relationship before the World War II (the geopolitical factors became more affluent after the War) and that the bilateral ties of the two countries were the strongest when export was rising.

The very origins of the trade are directly linked to the foundation of Halifax in the 1740'. The original trade included lumber, fish and potatoes in exchange for sugar, rum and fruits (Boyer, 1972, 3). While most of the products were directed for West Indies, Boyer (1972, 3) points out that the Halifax shipping register for the given period shows that city of Santiago (Cuba) was a frequent destination port. From this point of view, it can be claimed that the relationship of Canada and Cuba is over two hundred years old.

Nevertheless, Canada's market was not of great size in the given era. In fact Canada's market was rather small and was to remain like that throughout the twentieth century (Kirk and McKenna 1997, 12). However long before the embargo, the economies of Canada, US and Cuba were intertwined (ibid.). Canada was able to find a true niche market in Cuba but had to compete with its mammoth of a neighbour – the US.

1.2.3 Canadian banking in Cuba

As we agree that the practices of diverse non-state actors especially in arenas such as economics, are particularly relevant to the development of Canada-Cuba relationship, we will discuss in greater detail these non-state actors, namely banking.

McDowell (1993, 169-170) illustrates that it was Edson Pease, the Montreal manager of the Merchants' who recognized (shortly before signing the treaty of Paris 1898) that Cuba, despite the obvious damages, may be the place for an Agency. McDowell (1993, 170-173) discusses in detail what motivated Pease as well as what concerns were on his minds. Firstly, Pease recognized that if Cuba was ever to rebuilt after the damages, it would require access to capital that the Cuban banks were not able to provide (ibid.). The two largest Cuban banks of the time: Banco del Comercio and Banco Español adjourned all operations, hence there was no reliable currency in the country. Second, the special advantage that motivated Pease, was the fact that "America's myopic banking laws made it unlikely that an American competitor would materialize" (ibid). More precisely, the US banking legislation did not permit until the year 1913 to banks with federal charters to establish any foreign charters, hence if Pease was to succeed with his idea for an Agency, the Canadian Agency would have virtually no competition (Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 14). Third, the fears that came to Pease's mind were: that he did not have employees who spoke Spanish; there was very little feel for the market; primary lack of a deposit base; foreign exchange would remain problematic as long as Cuba does not have a stable currency (McDowell, 1993, 170). Last but not least, as Cuban sugar was dependent on the US market, a better working form of financial intermediation with the US would be needed (ibid.).

The Royal Bank and the Bank of Nova Scotia

The great success of the Canadian banks is directly linked to the fact that the incorporation of foreign branches of federally-incorporated banking institution in the US was prohibited by law until December 23, 1913 (Boyer, 1972, 27). This US prohibition explains why it was possible for the Canadian banking system to enter Cuba that early as well as its fast growth until the 1920s. Boyer (1972) and other historians believe that it was the rise to a prominent position within the banking system of Cuba that constitutes an integral part of the pre-revolutionary (pre-1959) Cuba and consequently Canada Cuba relationship. When discussing the fact that Canada-Cuba relationship is, above all, human

encounter, Wright and Wylie (2009, 283) point out that the Cuban people were welcoming the Canadian business on the island.

The Royal Bank, known as the Merchants' Bank of Halifax until 1902, increased in Cuba quickly. The first branch of the Royal Bank opened in 1899 in Havana, it bought its first Cuban bank in Santiago de Cuba in 1903, and consequently the next year it purchased the Banco del Comercio de Havana, having done so before moving its headquarters in Canada from Halifax to Montreal (ibid.). The branches of the bank grew swiftly: in the year 1904 there were five branches, in 1908 there were 11 already, by 1918 there were twenty seven branches and by 1920 there were astonishingly sixty-five branches (Kirk and McKenna 1997, 14-15). By the mid-1920s the Royal Bank was "the single largest bank in Cuba, with sixty five offices across the island [...]" (Wright, Wylie, 2009, 283). Not only common Cubans trusted the Royal Bank but also some members of the political and commercial elite were the customers of the Royal Bank. Other Canadian bank followed the Royal Bank in Cuba, namely the Bank of Nova Scotia entered the Cuban market in 1906. However the Bank of Nova Scotia never developed a branch system (McDowall, 1993, 177). By 1926 there were in total 114 branches of Canadian banks in Cuba and West Indies, however out of these 72 belonged to the Royal (Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 15). It is possible to claim that the growth of Canadian banks, Royal Bank especially, mirrored the growth of Cuban economy as a whole.

In conclusion, Canada was able to succeed in a sector, where the US was not as successful – banking. Thanks to a strong bank branch system, Canada created stronger people-to-people contacts on the island and possibly ensured trust among Cubans to Canada. Thus, it was already at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century that both Canada and the US chose different approaches towards Cuba. How both the US and Canada see themselves within the world politics reflects their different relations with Cuba. Given that Canadians demonstrate themselves as "good international citizen" as well as "other" from the US is greatly interwoven into foreign-policy decisions. We would like to note that these concepts do not underestimate the traditional economic explanation for Canada's Cuba policy – however they are an indisputable part of Canadian Cuban relationship and contribute greatly to the "special" aspect of the relationship. As for the trade aspect, Cuba represented an appealing trade market, nonetheless, both countries approached it differently. The fact remains that long before the 1960s, the economies of Canada, US and Cuba were intertwined. Canada found a

niche market in Cuba but could hardly compete with the US. We do believe however that it is not the size of the market that matters, nor is it the fact that the trade interest was the main motivator for Canada seeking relationship with Cuba – it was the fundamentally different approach of Canada to Cuba this early. The fact that the US considered Cuba as a possible protectorate and showed force towards the island during a time when Canada truly behaved as the “good neighbour” demonstrates the fundamentally different perceptions of the island.

2. Diplomatic Ties – the origins

In the previous chapter, we have discussed that it was trade that laid the basis for the future bilateral relations. The discussion concerned with the importance of trade between Canada and Cuba allows to better understand that commercial relations were the original interest of both countries, which consequently was the major reason for establishing bilateral relations.

We would like to note that Canada's foreign policy was long linked to that of the United Kingdom. It was not until the year 1931, the adoption of the Statute of Westminster that "the Parliament of a Dominion has full power to make laws having extra-territorial application" (Westminster statute, Ch. 4, S. 3). In other words, Canada's foreign policy was no longer subordinate to any other country. However it was until the year 1945 that all diplomatic as well as consular concerns of Canada in Cuba were being handled by the Legation of the United Kingdom in Havana (Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 11).

While traditional understanding of "diplomacy" is evolving and broadening, we would like to discuss in this sub-chapter the development of diplomatic ties between Canada and Cuba.

Havana's first emissary in Canada (namely in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia), whose main task was to "provide an effective liaison with local salt cod producers" was based as early as 1903 (Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 23). Only six years later, Canadian Department of Trade and Commerce opened its office in Havana (*ibid.*). Similarly to Havana's emissary in Nova Scotia, the main task of Canadian Department of Trade located in Havana was to encourage and develop bilateral trade (*ibid.*).

In the wake of WWII, infused with a nationwide self-confidence, Canada generally pushed ahead on the international arena. Canada selected Cuba as its first country in the Caribbean to locate a diplomatic mission as well as to establish official diplomatic relation in 1945 (GAC, Canada-Cuba Relations). Five years later, in 1950, based on the growth of the Cuban market in the post WWII boom, both countries decided to upgrade their legations in Havana as well as in Ottawa to embassy status (Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 23). The mutually beneficial trade ties of the countries made this step seem utterly logical *i.e.*

first there were trade commissioners, second the appointed consuls in the year 1945 and finally in 1950 – ambassadors³.

On May 8, 1945 Prime Minister of Canada King appointed Emile Vaillancourt (historian and writer) as the first Canadian Minister to Cuba (Beech, 2015, 477). Cuba had no reason to prolong its appointment, and appointed its own minister to Canada the very same year (ibid.). Both ministers were upgraded to the ambassadorial level in the year 1950. Thus, from the Canadian perspective, there was a continuum of ambassadorial presence in Cuba.

While we have established that Canada was motivated by commercial interests to set proper diplomatic ties with Cuba, for Canada, the fact that it arose as a more confident and more independent country after WWII was just as crucial. Thanks to a study of official correspondence, Kirk and McKenna (1997, 24-25) were able to identify that Canada was taking the initiative whereas Cuba was playing coy. The authors demonstrate Canada's will to upgrade the Canadian legations in Cuba to embassies on the case study of the correspondence of Mariano Brull, who served Cuba in Ottawa as Cuban minister in the years 1945-1949. Brull was concerned that Cuba is not responding accordingly to Canada's intentions to promote the diplomatic missions to the higher rank – to embassies (ibid.). Kirk and McKenna (1997, 24-25) tracked the correspondence between Brull and the Cuban minister of state, finally, Brull concluded that:

“In summary the balance sheet of our combine activities shows that in essence the Canadian have consistently taken the initiative. Moreover many of those initiatives have not been realized largely because of our position – with the exception of the abolition of the need for a tourist visa.”

(Brull to Carlos Hevia, 1949 as cited in Kirk, McKenna 1997, 25)

A simple explanation for Cuba's disinterest in deepening the diplomatic ties of the two countries can be provided. It can be argued that as the commercial situation between Canada and Cuba remained healthy, it caused the downplaying of political considerations (Kirk and McKenna 1997, 25). We would like to stress that Canadian Cuban diplomatic relations remained uninterrupted. Even during the Cuban revolution and US pressures around Cuban Missile crisis, these relations remained uninterrupted. It is worth noting that Canada and Mexico were the sole countries in the hemisphere not to breach relations with Cuba after the Cuban revolution of 1959. Wylie (2010, 46) notes that “Ottawa has

³ Ambassador Coleman was appointed in the year 1949, however it was in the year 1950 that the legation was upgraded to embassy status

maintained diplomatic ties and, when possible, economic, educational, and cultural connections [...].” This fact is of great importance as the Canadian approach proved to be endangering Canada’s relation with the US. Another reading of the persistent relationship to Cuba is that Canada persisted the later US dictate to isolate Cuba.

2.1 Diplomatic relations in the 1950s

It is necessary to stress that from 1933 to 1959 the power in Cuba belonged to General Batista, “who was adamantly supported by the US on account of his unwavering acquiescence to American foreign policy and economic goals” (Wylie, 2010, 12). Most authors agree that Canadian diplomatic treatment of Cuba in the 1950s did not crucially differ from that of the United States. We will similarly argue that it was not until that John G. Diefenbaker became Canada’s Prime Minister that the relationship became truly special. In this given sub-chapter we would like to discuss that partially due to following the US example and the need for a healthy financial relationship, Canada’s diplomats first underestimated the Batista regime in Cuba and consequently the persona of Fidel Castro. For the purposes of this sub-chapter we will also rely on the official correspondence, the diplomatic despatches, abstracted from Kirk and McKenna (1997) as well as Wright and Wylie (2009).

When new ambassadors are appointed to their new place of mission, they are given a letter of instructions. The letter of instruction reflects the approach of the home government to the new country. In the case of E.H. Coleman, who was appointed on March 11, 1949, the letter contained two main pieces of information:

“[S]ince Canada’s ties with Cuba are primarily commercial [his duties were twofold]: to protect Canadian commercial interests and to broaden Canadian trade opportunities in Cuba.”

(Department of External Affairs instructions to E.H. Coleman, March 11, 1949, as cited in Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 8)

Whereas the letter of instructions to Ambassador Harry Scott, who presented his credentials in Cuba on January 15, 1952 differed. Canada was no longer pushing forward solely its financial interests. Instead, it reflected that Canada was aware of the corruption in Havana as well as lack of public administration and wanted to establish a better example in Cuba:

“It is felt that the tactful presentation and publicizing of Canada’s record of public stability and sound public administration, for instance, might have some slight effect in providing more balance in the policies of the Cuban Government and more efficiency in its administration.”

(Letter of instructions to the Canadian ambassador by the secretary of state for external affairs, January 31, 1953, as cited in Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 27).

This clearly demonstrates Canada's government seeking mediation, dialogue as well as implementation of international law procedures with Cuba. The identity of "good citizen" is crucial for Canada in designing and developing of policy towards the Cuban state (Wylie 2010, 59). Ambassador Scott was also to face two crucial realities for Canada. First, as Canada was a newly independent country, it was its mission's duty to promote itself as such without showing dependency on the US and or United Kingdom. Second, the need for advancing financial relations, while less apparent, was still on Canada's mind. Both of these necessities are also to be found in the letter of instructions:

"[c]are should be taken to avoid giving colour to any belief that the Canadian embassy is unduly susceptible to the external influence to the United Kingdom, the United States, or any other country [...] it is very probable that the Cuban government and people still do not have too clear a conception of our independent national status [...]. Any efforts which the United States may make to bring more political and 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." (ibid).

When discussing the era of 1950s, the persona of Fulgencio Batista can be hardly omitted. From 1933 to 1959, power in Cuba belonged to Batista, who gained support of the United States thanks to his acquiescence to US foreign policy as well as economic goals (Wylie, 2010, 12). In fact, many authors interested in the pre-revolutionary Cuba refer to Batista as "our man in Havana" – "our" referring to the US. General Batista was able to succeed as a military leader in Cuba in 1933 due to extensive American manipulations and pressures (Wylie 2010, 12). The meddling of the US in this matter is merely one of many possible examples of the economic and political influence that the US played on the island, even if less overt.

We cannot state with certitude that Canada's underestimating Batista's regime was due to the US influence. The fact, however, remains that Canadian embassy in Havana showed ambivalent attitude towards the Batista regime. Ambassador Harry Scott provided, despite enough evidence, the Batista regime with the benefit of the doubt (Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 27). Thanks to the diplomatic despatches we know that Scott believed Batista to "[have] shown himself to be even-tempered and conciliatory" ("Current Events in Cuba for the Period December 11, 1955-January 31, 1956," as cited in Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 27). Ultimately, Scott believed Batista to be a joke of a dictator:

"The benevolence of President 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. 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.”

(Scott Review of March 28, 1956, sent to secretary of state for external affairs, March 28, 1956, as cited in Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 27).

These assessments of Batista are clearly superficial as well as reading of the situation in Cuba is rather flawed. This misreading may be due to the dependency on mostly pro-Batista sources, as we have established that the US strongly supported his rule. While this is merely a speculation, many authors, Kirk and McKenna including, believe that it may be the cause. The sole other reason behind this underestimating of the situation would be that diplomats are also just people.

2.2 1953 Meeting

We would like to discuss an interesting meeting that took place in the year 1953 in Montreal. This particular meeting deserves noting as it may be the very first occasion in which Canada was the sole country in the region where the meeting could take place. Due to growing tensions in the region there were several occasions where neutral soil was needed to provide a place for a meeting. We believe that the 1953 meeting in Montreal was the very first one (for Canada) of this kind. Default literature for this chapter is Don Munton and David Vogt's "Inside Castro's Cuba: The Revolution and Canada's Embassy in Havana" in *Our Place in the Sun* (2009, 44-75).

When the representatives of two major Cuban political parties that opposed Batista were searching for a meeting place in the year 1953 to discuss the need for a provisional government, they were prevented and well discouraged from meeting in the US, Mexico and Guatemala (Munton, Vogt, 2009, 46). Thus the meeting took place in June (not long before Castro's 26th of July Movement was created) at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Montreal (ibid.). Munton and Vogt (ibid.) consequently discuss that the produce of the meeting was the so-called Charter of Montreal, "calling for a provisional government to oversee elections free of violence [...]" while it aimed at restoring constitutional government on the island "[it] did not reject revolutionary activity." It comes as no surprise that Batista government did not support such meetings as they feared that the groups may be trying to acquire weapons for the anti-government supporters. The same applies for the Canadian government. Thanks to an US diplomatic despatch we know that K. C. Brown, Second Secretary of the Canadian Embassy, also expressed concerns about the possibility of Cubans smuggling arms out of Canada through the US to Cuba. The despatch describes the Canadian intentions of the meeting as following:

"Mr. Brown stated he expected that Prío and other[s] at the meeting would be informed they had been received by Canada in their announced status as tourists and that Canada expected them to refrain from any activity on Canadian soil that could prove awkward or embarrassing to Canada in its relations with the Government of Cuba."

(Foreign Service Despatch, from Embassy, Habana to the Department of State, Washington. REF: Embassy – D-1869, May 28 1953. Desp. No. 1880, June 1, 1953)

The Montreal meeting could not have gone by unnoticed by media and diplomatic attention (Munton, Vogt 2009, 47). Majority of Cuban newspapers focused on the possibility of a coup in their country and described possible attacks in Havana. For

example, Anibal Escalante, Director of the Cuban Communist newspaper “Hoy” criticized in his daily political commentary, June 3, 1953 the meeting as only two of the various opposition parties in Cuba were represented at the conference. Given that the newspaper is communist, Escalante did not omit to mention that both parties present at the meeting are subject “to Yankee imperialism and therefore incapable of providing any program in the Cuban interest” (Escalante, Jun 3, 1953).

Another great Cuban newspaper, Rolando Masferrer’s “Tiempo” provided a rather glorious report titled:

“Priistas and Ortodoxos agree in Montreal on Insurrection. Scheduled for the Middle of July. Pool of Eight Millions between Prío and His ‘Friend.’ Dissolution of the Army. Provisional Government Headed by Pelayo Cuevro. Radio Station to be Seized.” “Bombardments With Jellied Gasoline.”

The article stated that following the Montreal meeting the Revolutionaries agreed to accept in its entirety Prío’s plan for civil war in Cuba. This report also mentioned in greater detail the Carlos Prío as well as his friends own great amount of arms, which together with “ex-Cuban soldiers under the order of ex-Colonel Oscar Diaz,” would form a skeleton force of officers to direct the insurgents. Given the scope of the report, it repeated also the rumours about an attack to be launched some-time in July, not forgetting to paint in greater detail possible details of the attack (bombardment of military installations etc.).

A Cuban daily “El Crisol” dated June 3, 1953 contrary to the rest of the local newspapers, discussed the role of Canada in the meeting and did not concentrate on the upcoming alleged attack. The article took the position that the Cuban visitors in Montreal “surprised” a friendly country (e.g. abused the hospitality of the country). The article suggested that given the distance between Cuba and Canada, the latter country cannot be up to date on Cuban political matters. It also admitted that Cuba did not formally call the attention of the Government of Canada to the conference “because we [Cuba] greatly respect our neighbouring friend” (El Crisol, 1953). “El Crisol” was accurate in that the Canadian government was not a part of the planning and was actually caught by a surprise by the conference. However, we would like to note that thanks to US diplomatic despatch we can state that Canadian officials were made aware of such meeting taking place in Canada and believed to have no reason to prevent it. Department of State, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs informed Secretary of State on June 4, 1953 that:

“On May 29, Cuban Ministry of State informed Canadian Ambassador [that a] group of Prío supporters planned [to] meet in Montreal and suggested [it] would be friendly act if Canada would prevent such meeting. Canadian Ambassador did not accept suggestion, stating in reply Cuban Nationals could enter Canada without visa and in Canada would have same right of freedom of speech as Canadians.”

(Department of State, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, NO: 265, June 4, 4 p.m., 737.00/6-453)

The common fear of officials in Ottawa was, however, that the meeting in Montreal may imply that Canada was implicated in a foreign conspiracy and possibly damaged relations with the then existing government in Cuba. Nevertheless, Canadian embassy in Havana did not show any great concern. Namely, Ambassador Scott reported:

“There has been no public criticism of the Canadian government for not preventing the meeting. [The Cuban government] is taking it all very seriously and would, in my opinion, regard it as an unfriendly act if the Canadian Government were to permit a similar meeting again.”

(Despatch D-176, ‘Activities of Ex-President Prío Socarras,’ 20 June 1953, vol. 8326, file 4568-40, pt. 3.1. as cited in Munton, Vogt, 2009, 47)

Thanks to another diplomatic despatch, Ambassador Scott’s letter, we are also able to learn how the Cuban people viewed the meeting as well as Canada’s role in it: “[M]any Cubans are sympathetic to the aims of the leaders who met in Montreal [and] it is conceivable that Canada has gained some prestige in certain quarters here” (Despatch D-160, ‘Activities of Ex-President Prío Socarras,’ 5 June 1953, vol. 8326, file 4568-40, pt. 3.1 as cited in Munton, Vogt, 2009, 47).

While the prestige gained among Cubans is surely a positive outcome of the meeting for Canada, the results of the gathering are threefold. First, it is possible to directly link the Montreal meeting to the Castro group’s attack on 26 July (Munton, Vogt, 2009, 47). Second, the meeting enables to view Castro’s efforts to overthrow Batista in a new, broad perspective – Castro was merely one example of the broader opposition effort (ibid.). Finally, it is apparent that the intentions to overthrow Batista regime were popular among more groups – hence, Castro took use of the techniques of other rebellion groups (ibid.). It can be thus assessed that Castro’s revolution was not original and or different from that of other rebellion groups, the only difference is that his was successful.

The aim of this subchapter was to illustrate that while there are not many sources discussing Canada’s original role in the Cuban revolution, we were able to reach an interesting conclusion from the 1953 meeting. Furthermore, the Montreal meeting also

puts the persona of Fidel Castro in a new, less original perspective. Thanks to the analysis of the official despatches we were also able to shortly discuss the view of common Cubans of the events.

2.3 July 23 Movement and misreading Fidel Castro

As we have established that Ambassador Scott underestimated General Batista and consequently the political situation around him, it can be said that so did Ambassador Hector Allard. Hector Allard presented his credentials in Cuba on January 29, 1957 (Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 28). While Allard started questioning the oppression of human rights by the regime, he was not able to make a solid stand on the issue:

“A review of the political reports submitted during the last twelve months reveals this Embassy’s acceptance of the Batista Government. We have been occasionally in two minds about this since there are many manifestations of a strong-man government which are repulsive to minds raised in the atmosphere of Canadian democracy.”

(Report to the secretary of state for external affairs, “Political Situation in Cuba,” March 26, 1957, 3, as cited in Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 28)

The same report illustrates, why Allard did not make more critical comments on Batista’s account. Apparently, Allard as well as his embassy colleagues still had Canada’s commercial interests in Cuba on mind thus “from the economic point of view Batista has offered the best hope of salvation for this country” (ibid, pt. 3).

With Castro’s trial for Moncada attack, his incarceration on the Isle of Pines and student demonstration, the situation in the second half of the 1950s was hardly opaque. Munton and Vogt (2009, 47-48) argue that the Canadian embassy in Havana was trying to make sense of the situation however it was difficult as: “even for those determined to remain objective, to escape the effects of tension, rumour and excitement” (Despatch D-332, “Current Events in Cuba, November 1 – December 8, 1956,” 9 December 1956, vol. 7059-N-40, PT. 3.2. as cited in Munton, Vogt, 2009, 48).

The grossest understatement of the Embassy from the given time period is dismissing Castro’s 26th of July Movement and consequently Castro as a political leader. We would like to stress that due to the numerous hostilities towards Batista’s authoritarian tendencies, rebellions such as Castro were not perceived as extraordinary and the events leading to the revolution went underestimated. Thanks to report of chargé d’affaires G.A. Browne, from 1956, we know that the embassy believed:

“The certainty is that Fidel Castro is not a military genius and, as for his overall strategy, the only reasonable speculation is that he is either mad or that he has been badly let down by his supporters ... It seems likely that these two alternatives may be interdependent, with megalomania in the driving seat. In any event, the breakdown of the Movement has made the position of the Government virtually impregnable.”

(Browne's report: "Current Events in Cuba, Nov. 1-Dec, 8, 1956," submitted for External Affairs on December 9, 1956, as cited in Kirk, McKenna, 27)

The misreading of the situation not long before the crisis may be attributed to several factors. One of them is, as aforementioned, following the American lead. Another factor would be, careless political analysis and reporting based on few facts. It can be suggested that as both countries viewed the other as primarily a commercial partner "thus recognized the need for diplomatic niceties to reflect the importance of the recently upgraded ties" (Kirk and McKenna 1997, 31). Nonetheless, Ottawa was aware of the political polarization in Cuba. Canada recognized the role of the US in Cuba, even though the following memorandum on Cuba prepared for Governor General of Canada in 1957 by the Department of External Affairs shows truly erroneous assessment of the US' political role on the island:

"From 1925 to 1933 Cuba was under the dictatorship of Gerardo Machado. He was overthrown under discreet United States pressure ... United States policy in Cuba has frequently been regarded with suspicion and resentment by Cubans, but the record of United States dealing with Cuba, as we have seen, finally belied the charges of imperialism. The northern republic did set Cuba free in 1898, withdrew in 1902, and made the withdrawal final by abrogation of the Platt Amendment in 1934. But under the superior economic power of the United States, the inherited inequities of the island were fixed more firmly upon her."

(Department of External Affairs (American Division report, "Memorandum for the Governor General," June 21, 1957, as cited in Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 32)

While the despatches from the Canadian embassy in Havana were flawed, they do provide an interesting insight into Cuban history. The ambassadorial correspondence may have been influenced by their desire for stability on the island (Munton and Vogt 2009, 49-50). Maintaining this claim also had a functional purpose, namely it justified Canada's maintaining economic as well as diplomatic relations with Cuba (ibid.). We must bear in mind that Canada was not oblivious to the rift between revolutionary Cuba and the US. The Canadian government was aware that "we have to walk delicately [and] maintain friendly relations with the Cuban Government [and] encourage the sale of Canadian good." Furthermore, we must take into account that while Canada did not see Castro as a communist, at first, they could not effort to be associated as core friends of communist regimes i.e. as friends of "the Castro-Khrushchev-Guevara-Mikoyan syndicate" (Letter L-837, "Canadian Position in Cuba," 14 November 1960, as cited in Munton, Vogt, 2009, 63).

In conclusion, throughout the 1957 – 1958 the embassy's sources were limited and the assessment of the situation not accurate. Vogt and Munton (2009, 51-51) illustrate that Castro's coming to power was in many ways extraordinary. It is so as the first revolutionary phase was not followed by any military triumph. Thus the Batista regime merely "melted away" and was not defeated. As for the final assessment of the Canadian embassy in Havana, the diplomats were ultimately surprised by the speed of the collapse. We believe that Canada's need for continuous trade with Cuba allowed for accepting Batista as the Cuban leader. The fact is that Canadian government wished to see a stable Cuban government hence trading with the Batista regime did not impose many questions. Furthermore, the fact that Batista was supported by the US government allowed for a rather relaxed atmosphere at the hemisphere. In other words, there were many factors that allowed for misunderstanding as well as misreading the Cuban political situation. With the change within the Cuban government, from 1959 however, it will be possible to observe a sharp difference in Canadian and American approach towards Cuba.

3. The Origins of the “Special Relationship”

Most authors, Kirk and McKenna, Robert Wright, Lana Wylie including, concerned with the special relationship between Canada and Cuba agree that the merit was of the 13th Canadian Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker. Historians generally agree⁴ that it was the awful relationship between Diefenbaker and the 35th American President John Fitzgerald Kennedy that motivated the Prime Minister to take a strong stand on Cuba, however it can be claimed that Diefenbaker was also able to make good profit from his friendship with the predecessor of Kennedy, Dwight D. Eisenhower. We will argue that it was during Diefenbaker’s era that the truly special relationship was created, we also believe that it can partially be traced already to the presidency of Dwight Eisenhower. We would therefore like to start the discussion prior to the presidency of J.F. Kennedy. We will also argue that Diefenbaker put “Canadian interest” at the heart of his policy, which is greatly reflected in his Canadian policy towards Cuba.

3.1 Canadian Interest according to Diefenbaker

John G. Diefenbaker became Canada’s thirteenth Prime Minister during the second presidential term of Eisenhower in the year 1957. Diefenbaker was a staunch supporter of human rights (Library and Archives Canada – John George Diefenbaker). Firstly, it is necessary to underline that Diefenbaker and his Conservative government wanted to promote Canadian nationalism. Diefenbaker believed that the previous Liberal government was oriented too much towards “economic continentalism” and wished to return to “nation building” and follow the politics of Sir J.A. Macdonald (Molinaro, 2009, 79-80). This wish to go in the steps of one of the greatest promoters of Canada’s nationalism shows that Diefenbaker wanted a truly independent Canada in charge of its affairs. This approach was reflected once Diefenbaker was elected Prime Minister. His economic steps rectified the inequalities that he saw in the Canada – US relationship. For example, he advocated a 15% shift in trade from the US to the United Kingdom, which was to end unequal grain-storage practices of the US, which hurt Canada’s business (ibid.).

⁴ See Knowlton Nash, Kennedy and Diefenbaker: The Feud That Helped Topple a Government, who dedicated various chapters to the antipathies between Diefenbaker and Kennedy and directly factored them into their policy decision making processes

The same criterion was applied also when it came to Canada's foreign policy. Zorbas (2011, 1) notes that when Diefenbaker was considering a policy he would ask himself whether this particular policy was in Canada's national interest. Diefenbaker put great emphasis on the promotion of Canadian autonomy. The Canadian autonomy, for Diefenbaker, meant freedom of choice (Zorbas 2011, 1). However this should not be interpreted as Diefenbaker pursuing neutrality and or a position of non-alignment. As Canada was clearly aligned with the US as well as with the other member-nations of NATO (ibid.). Thus the meaning of the "promotion of Canadian autonomy" rather means Canada being free to choose which actions would serve the country the best. Thus, Diefenbaker rejected the proposition of the former Liberal government of Louis St. Laurent that suggested that Canadian interests were best served if Canada maintains a close relationship with the US, which may include mirroring the US policy on many occasions. Such approach, according to Diefenbaker would ultimately mean sacrificing Canadian freedom of action (Zorbas 2011, 2). Such respectful distance from the US was thus at the heart of the Diefenbaker's government's position towards the Latin America and especially Cuba.

3.2 Diefenbaker and Eisenhower: Recognition of Cuba

It is necessary to note that Diefenbaker viewed the Canadian-US relations under Eisenhower as friendly and most importantly that “Canadian subservience was not essential to this cooperation” (Molinaro, 2009, 80). Diefenbaker’s support and admiration for president Eisenhower is often reflected in the then Prime Minister’s memoirs. It would be wrong to assume, however, that during the presidency of Eisenhower and the tenure of Diefenbaker, there were no differences in opinion. The abundance of literature shows that the views of the two men differed on various matters, such as: defence, appropriate approach to the Cold War, bilateral trade and also Cuba (Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 37). However the conflicts were handled in a rather respectful and open manner as Diefenbaker valued that Eisenhower viewed Canada as an independent country: “Canada was not treated as a forty-ninth state composed of Mounted Police, Eskimos and summer vacationers” (Diefenbaker cited in Nash, 1991, 56).

Due to this relationship with the US president and the US, Canada’s government followed the US lead. For example, while Canada’s official position to Batista’s regime was non-intervention, it did approve, similarly to the US, the sale of Canadian military equipment to Batista’s army (Molinaro, 2009, 86.). Consequently, once Castro proved undefeated, military sales to Castro’s government were banned (as US strongly supported Batista and not Castro) (Molinaro 2009, 86). It comes thus as no surprise that once Castro created new government, Canada similarly to the White House did not wait to recognize it. When Canada decided to recognize the new Cuban regime, it did bear certain concerns as well as trade interests in mind:

“I am not fully satisfied that the new Cuban government fulfils the usual conditions for recognition and that it is in full control of all national territory; it seems however, to enjoy popular support to a reasonable degree and has undertaken to respect its international obligation, I am inclined to recommend that we should do likewise without delay, although I feel that the action taken by the other governments may have been somewhat precipitate... as Canada has a large investment in Cuba, it is highly desirable that Canada not lag in recognizing the new government.”

(Sidney Smith memo 1959, as cited in Wright, Wylie, 2009, 86)

On the one hand, it can be stated that the Canadian decision to recognize Cuba, while bearing constraints, was merely in line with the decision of its allies (e.g. the UK) even though these allies, based on Smith’s memo, acted rather rashly in their extending a diplomatic recognition. On the other hand, Diefenbaker’s government placed great importance on trading with Cuba i.e. “large investment in Cuba”. Thus recognizing new

Cuban government seemed to be worth it trade-wise, even if such trade involved Canada in Cuba's internal struggle.

It is also worth noting that it is historically enrooted in Cubans to travel to the United States as well as to Canada when searching for political and material support for their revolutionary projects (Wright and Wylie 2009, 21). Meanwhile according to US law, filibustering was perceived as a violation of the Neutrality Law of 1818 – in which the US government prevented its citizens to join filibuster expeditions to Central America and Cuba (Paterson et. al., 2014, 124). Therefore many Americans came north to Canada in order to join Canadians traveling to Cuba. However the approach of both Canada and US since the revolution and new Cuban government differed crucially in their approach to the Cuban people (Wylie (2010, 47). While the Americans now treated Cuban immigrants as 'refugees from communism,' Canada was trying to discourage disaffected Cubans from basing themselves in Canada (ibid.). The Canadian logic behind such reasoning is well explained by the Canadian Minister of Citizenship as:

“We were concerned over the fact that a number of Cubans had obtained entry into Canada for short periods of time as visitors and subsequently caused us embarrassment through the fact that they began to organize from a base in Montreal activities directed against the Castro regime in Cuba. [...]"

(Documents on Canadian External Relations, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to Prime Minister, Ottawa, 10 November 1960 as cited in Wylie, 2010, 47).

3.3 Nationalisation

It is necessary to note that following the revolution, Cuba nationalized US businesses on the island whereas it provided the Canadian ones with preferential treatment (Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 45-46). Namely, both Canadian companies and Canadian individuals were treated diagonally different than the US's (ibid.). Furthermore, all foreign banks with the exception of the Royal Bank and the Bank of Nova Scotia were nationalized in October 1960 (ibid.). Even though the Royal Bank eventually also had to sell its interests to the Central Bank in December of the same year, it was because it was not able to compete with Che Guevara's Banco Nacional de Cuba (Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 46). Interestingly enough, the Canadian bank employees were granted employment within the Cuban banking system (ibid.). Allan Anderson, the Canadian ambassador to Cuba, noted in dispatch of October 18, 1960:

“One of these [new laws] nationalized 382 firms, mostly big ones [...]. The other law, No. 891, declared banking a state function and nationalized *all* the remaining banks *except* the two Canadian banks. Article 16 of the law read ‘this law shall not be applied to the Canadian banks established in Cuba called the Royal Bank of Canada and the Bank of Nova Scotia.’ In the TV interview Castro was asked about the Canadian banks ... He said that the two Canadian banks, through their Head Offices, were rendering *important services to the Revolution*, and therefore were excluded from nationalization, confiscation or intervention.”

(Ambassador Allan Anderson to the secretary of state for external affairs, October 18, as cited in Kirk, McKenna, 1997 46).

As for the “important services” to the Revolution, it can be interpreted in the way that the Canadian banks in Cuba provided the revolutionary Cuban government with a financial link abroad. Kirk and McKenna (1997, 46) claim, and we agree, that Cuba's decision to provide Canada with such exceptional treatment was in essence because the revolutionary Cuban government needed to retain a link with the West.

The Cuban decision to treat Canadian banks in such a way was naturally very well received in Canada as well as by Diefenbaker. Diefenbaker was not only delighted by this exceptional treatment by Cuba but it also strengthened his belief that the Canadian policy of maintaining relation (both diplomatic and economic) was correct (Zorbas 2011, 127). Despite whatever personal feelings the two men (Diefenbaker and Castro) held, Canadian economic as well as commercial interests were ensured and a political crisis was avoided (ibid.). This Cuban decision also proved notably useful in the year 1960. It was in the year 1960 that Castro agreed to release prisoners from the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion for

60 million USD (Zorbas 2011, 127). This money was funnelled through the Canada Royal Bank.

We would also like to note that the US was naturally immensely upset by Cuban decision to nationalize without compensation. Boyer (1972, 320) notes that the Cuban decision resulted in immediate US retaliation in the form of the elimination of Cuba's sugar quota on the US market (the USSR rapidly offered to purchase the full amount of the quota). Following this, Mr. Khrushchev issued the famous warning on using the Soviet missiles in the need to defend the revolution. The USSR's will to exploit US Cuban differences was followed by Canadian "moderating influences". Green's first concern was to mitigate any possible US over-reaction despite the gravity of the situation (Boyer 1972, 320). Green decided to repress the emotional elements of the situation and Canada played the role of keeping such international conflicts within the bounds of "order":

"We all know our friends across the border and how they react. They are a proud people and this is not a threat that can be easily ignored either by the US or any other country. Canadians would react pretty violently against the same kind of threat too. So, we have to try to understand the human reaction in these different countries. Canada's attitude with regard to the Cuban crisis has been to urge patience, discussion and negotiation and that heads be kept cool, having in mind the hope that in this way very serious problems can be worked out without any further damage being done."

(Debates. Session 1963. Vo. IV, January 24, 1963, pp. 3066-7. As cited in Boyer, 1972, 320).

It is apparent that given the situation in the hemisphere and the different approach the Cubans chose towards Canadians and Americans, Canada placed itself in the position of a mediator. To appease the people on the continent, Green treated Khrushchev's provocation as nothing else but threats. Canada's loyalty remained after all with the West. In this statement, Canada went on record as prepared to "use her 'diplomatic credit' in Washington to aid in the resolution of an international dispute" (Boyer 1972, 321). This ultimately aligns with Wylie's theory of Canada wanting to act as the "good neighbour" in its relation to Cuba. Canada's position of a moderator also illustrates a great example of Canadian constructive engagement in Cuba. Finally, one cannot assess with certainty why Cuba chose not to nationalize the Canadian banks on the island. However we do believe that Cuba chose this course of matters as through the trade with Canada, Cuba was ultimately able to maintain a link with the West.

3.4 Canadian “No” to Embargo

3.4.1 Canada’s self-image

US’s reaction to the radicalization of the revolution was to impose an economic embargo over Cuba. It may not be forgotten that from an international relations perspective, the US-Canada relations since the end of WWII “have evolved into a condition of complex interdependence in which non-state and transnational actors play an increasingly important role in shaping the economic, social, political, and military bilateral relation” (Rodríguez, 2008, 117). Rodríguez also argues that the extent of similarities as well as differences in both values and belief systems is crucial. They have evolved through time and were expressed in the foreign policy of both Canada and the US (ibid.). The case of Cuba is a true example of polar differences for Canada and the US. Lana Wylie argues throughout the *Perceptions of Cuba: Canadian and American Policies in Comparative Perspective*, 2010, that both the US and Canada perceive Cuba through different, almost opposing lenses. In the context of the US embargo of 1960, we would like to explain just how crucial the understanding of “not American” is for Canada.

In the chapter *The Influence of Othering: Canada as ‘Not American’ and Cuba Policy* Wylie (2010, 59-64) argues that Canadian self-image often has a significant impact on Canadian foreign policy. The country’s self-image is driven by Canada’s desire to be seen as “distinct from the United States” (2010, 59). Many authors discuss that this element is crucial for the Canadian “self”. The emphasis on not being American is actually a “core feature of Canadian history” (Philip Resnick 2012, 114). The *othering* from the US became a true part of what it means to be Canadian and Canadians are able to list numerous differences of Canada from the US. Not only can the term *othering* be used for the ordinary Canadian life but it can be found in Canada’s foreign policy towards Cuba. In the context of Cuba it becomes true since the early 1960s (Wylie 2010, 59). Furthermore: “Protecting Canada’s image as an independent country was an important factor in the country’s initial decision not to join the American embargo” (Wylie 2010, 60). Once the US imposed embargo on Cuba, it needed to ensure that other embassies will fall in line thus the Department of External Affairs requested feedback from the Canadian embassies in the region of Latin America (ibid.). The unwillingness to follow in the US’s steps was crucial for Canada’s image. A proof is to be found in a telegram from Canadian Ambassador to Argentina:

“I need not enlarge on the adverse effect which Canadian support of the United States embargo at this time would have upon our image as an independent state, or upon our influence particularly among the underdeveloped nations.”

(Master Corporal Frank Misztal, ‘I am Canadian,’ Canadian Peacekeeper’s Hope Page. As cited in Wylie, 2010, 60)

The independence in the matters of foreign policy was truly fundamental for Canada as an autonomous country. We therefore agree with Wylie (2010, 60) that “Cuba became a symbol of Canada’s independence during the Diefenbaker administration”.

While the theory of *othering* is one possible explanation for Canada’s drive to differ its politics towards Cuba since 1960s onwards, Wright and Wylie (2009, 18-19) discuss that while in the US Fidel Castro inspired “passionate emotions and distorted American politics,” Canada’s relationship to the island can be characterized by “a high degree of detachment.”

The debate, which arose in Canada concerning Cuba also matters. There are however two elements that both US and Canada comprehend differently. First, both sides of the 49th parallel are concerned with the values of democracy and human rights and do not dispute that the “Cuban society has been illiberal in the Castro era” (Wright and Wylie 2009, 18-19). However, while the US questions whether the Cuban political system needs a reform, Canadians question how to “promote reform without sabotaging the social benefits the Revolution brought the Cuban people” (ibid.). Interestingly enough, it would be erroneous to claim that either approach was correct. The US’s policy of isolating Cuba failed just as did Canada’s policy of engagement in the belief of dialogue, which would lead to Cuba’s political reforms (ibid.).

Second area of difference in perception is strategic (ibid.). Canada’s insistence to trade with Cuba “was indicative of a clear commitment to the strategic priorities of the West” (ibid.).

Thus we have showed that Canadian reading of the Cuban dialogue differs crucially from the US’s. First reading based on *othering* is more linked to the Canadian will and need for independence. Second reading of *othering* is that of trade benefits which arise from removing economic dependence on the US thanks to the diversification of international market as was shown in S. Smith’s note and will be more discussed in the following subchapter. Third reading is based on fundamentally different approach to promoting change and political reform. All of these contributed to the fact that since 1960s onwards Canada and the US diverged fundamentally in their approach to Cuba.

3.4.2 Canadian-Cuban Trade

Not long after January 1, 1959, when the Cuban government promoted the nationalist positions, the “island’s economic, political, and socio-cultural relations with the US” as well as the dynamics of Canadian-American relations were to become a challenge to bilateral relations between Canada and Cuba (Rodríguez, 2008, 116). As early as March 1959 Canada’s officials in Havana became more aware of the radicalisation of the new government. Namely, on March 19th 1959 the Canadian Embassy in Havana reported to the under-secretary of state that there is a “strong possibility that Castro’s government would exhibit communist tendencies.” (Canada, ‘Numbered Dispatch D-131: Return of the Communist Party to Cuba,’ telegram, Havana, 19 March 1959, as cited in Wright, Wylie, 2009, 87).

In the wake of the Cold War, communism was US’s main enemy. Nonetheless, as Canada was dependent on foreign trade, Diefenbaker also viewed trade with nations under communist regime (i.e. China, Cuba) offering Canada “a means of confronting international communism while strengthening Canada’s economy” (Molinaro, 2009, 86-87). Thus the decision of Canada to continue trade with Cuba can be directly linked to Canadian interest (Zorbas, 2011, 127). This also means that the true breach in the Canadian-US stand towards Cuba was to come with the embargo that the US imposed on Cuba in the year 1960. As Walter C. Soderlund, Ronald H. Wagenberg and Stuart H. Surlin point out:

“Canada was a full partner of the United States in the Cold War as evidenced by military alliances such as NATO and NORAD. Nonetheless, a desire to conduct an independent foreign policy as a middle power frequently led Canada to adopt postures different from their ally. None has turned out to be as significant as Canada’s independent policy on Cuba. [...] Indeed, as time passed, the maintenance of some degree of normalcy in relations with Cuba was viewed as a testament to a ‘made in Canada’ foreign policy.” (Soderlund, Wagenberg, Surlin, 1998, 217-231)

Diefenbaker along with his Minister of External Affairs, Howard Green, viewed that prohibition of trade with Cuba would cause more harm than good. Namely, they believed that such prohibition would drive Castro’s Cuba further into the hands of the Soviet Union (ibid.). The Prime Minister stated:

“[W]e do not minimize American concern, but it is the Government’s view that to maintain mutually beneficial economic relations with Cuba may help and contribute to the restoration of traditional relationships between Cuba and the Western world.”
(Diefenbaker, “Trade with Cuba”, 1960, as cited in Rodríguez, 2018, 47).

Rodríguez (ibid.) also points out that it was up to countries such as Canada and the United Kingdom to truly make an effort to maintain links with Cuba.⁵ This was thus a matter on which Canada was not able to follow US's example. Given the US's economic embargo over Cuba, the island needed not only to preserve but also to expand its links with Canada. Canada's primarily export-oriented economy offered a great position to fill the void created by the US (Rodríguez, 2008, 117). Already in the year 1958, Diefenbaker addressed the House of Commons during Eisenhower's visit, where he outlined the approach that Canada would follow:

“[J]oint efforts are needed to expand world trade to increase the financial base of liquid reserves necessary for such expansion and to end it where it prevails, and to help in raising the standards of people in underdeveloped countries.”

(Diefenbaker, 1958, LAC, RG 25, file 1415-E-40 as cited in McKercher, 2018, 88)

It comes however as no surprise that the US, both its people and the government, viewed unfavourably Canada's decision to continue trade with communist Cuba. Kirk and McKenna (1997, 44) illustrate that numerous US newspapers ridiculed Canada's stand. The New Orleans Times-Ticayune had for example suggested that “Canada's national anthem be changed to ‘Red Sales in the Sunset’” (as cited in Nash, 1990, 150). Finally, Canadian government articulated clearly its position regarding the free passage of Canadian exports to Cuba as:

- To maintain the kind of relation with Cuba which are usual with the recognized government of another country
- Not to exploit the situation arising from the US embargo
- Not to encourage bootlegging of US origin goods

(Kirk, McKenna 1997, 44).

Thus despite the US's pressure, Diefenbaker's stand was rather clear: “So long as our trade with Cuba was in non-strategic materials there was no reason whatever to interfere with it ... No consideration was being given to a change in policy” (as cited in Morley, 1984, 194). One of the ways Canada defended its trade with Cuba was also the fact that Canada did have a trade surplus with Cuba in the period 1959 to 1964 (Rodríguez, 2018, 47). Second, in order to deflect criticism of the US, Canada and its officials strongly promoted that rather than helping a communist regime “trade with Cuba in non-strategic goods runs heavily in favour of Canada” (The Diefenbaker Papers, as

⁵ British PM Harold Macmillan openly supported this position

cited in Rodríguez 2010, 47). The response was that “Canada’s trade was helping Cuba promote communist subversion” (ibid.). Finally, the Prime Minister expressed his opinion on the American embargo as well as on Canada’s continual trade with Cuba as followed:

“For Canada to restrict exports of non-strategic Canadian goods to Cuba in conformity with the United States embargo would be to impose a stricter control on trade with Cuba than we have with the countries of the Sino-Soviet bloc. Indeed, Cuba has been a traditional market for certain Canadian food products – notably fish and potatoes – and the United States itself is continuing to ship food and drug products to Cuba.

Embargoes and trade controls are powerful and sometimes double-edged weapons. If we use them towards Cuba we may be under pressure to use them elsewhere and unnecessary damage will be done to Canadian trade, present or prospective. As a country which lives by international trade, Canada cannot lightly resort to the weapons of a trade war.”

(Diefenbaker, December 1960, Diefenbaker Canada Centre, University of Saskatchewan, accessed online)

In this, much longer statement, the Prime Minister showed sympathy with the US embargo, however he articulated that Canada cannot effort to fall in line. The statement underlined Canada’s wish to maintain not only bilateral but also commercial relations with Cuba, “while also setting Canada’s position in relation to the United States’ commercial embargo on Cuba” (Rodríguez, 2010, 71). The speech i.e. the document has become crucial for Canadian foreign policy towards Cuba for the following decades. Rodríguez (2010, 71) elaborates on the fact that Canada proved to be able to follow its own path while simultaneously taking into account that the US was its political ally and its biggest commercial partner. The fact that Diefenbaker mentions that other NATO members did not follow the US embargo shows that the Prime Minister needed to strengthen his stance by searching support in the strength of NATO. In other words, “Canada sought multilateral action and that became the strategy that later marked Ottawa’s Cuba policy” (ibid.).

Another issue that Canada needed to face when deciding to continue its trade with Cuba was the concern about not portraying itself as taking advantage of the embargo. This dilemma can be illustrated on the example of the visit of the Cuban trade mission to Canada shortly after the US embargo was imposed (Wylie 2010, 49). While many interpreted this visit as the evidence of Canada taking profit of the US embargo on the

island, the fact is, as that according to the Canadian-US Committee⁶ as well as official documents, the Canadian government not only did not arrange the visit, it was embarrassed by it (ibid). In order to dismiss such appearance, Diefenbaker stated that:

“it is not our purpose to exploit the situation arising from the United States embargo, and we have no intention of encouraging what in effect would amount to the bootlegging of goods of United States origin.”

(Confidential interviews with senior Canadian government officials 1999, as cited in Wylie, 2010, 50)

Be it for the good relationship that the two countries maintained at the time or the fact that other NATO allies (UK, France, West Germany, Belgium, Norway) did not impose a similar embargo on Cuba, the US under Eisenhower, seemed to finally understand Canada’s stance. Although the US officials were irritated with the Canadian decision, the division on Cuba did not constitute “a major item in Canadian-American exchanges” (Bothwell, 2014, 157). Americans decided to place the given issue in the category of “Canadian nationalism,” a category, used by the Americans at the time period to explain actions taken by Washington that were considered irrational and or inexplicable (ibid.).

Canada under Diefenbaker sought a multilateral solution to Cuba. Most importantly, when Diefenbaker made decisions regarding Cuba he questioned their implication for Canadian interest, hence immediate mirroring of US policies was not an option. The fact that Canada chose to continue its diplomatic and economic relations to Cuba was also directly linked to the way Canada decided to approach opposing regimes i.e. communist China. As for the embargo, Diefenbaker showed in his statement that while Canada understands officially the US embargo on Cuba, it will not participate in it. The Canadian government showed repeatedly ability to reject pressures from Eisenhower and was able to do so in a rather diplomatic way. This set a Canadian approach to Cuba for the future decades. In other words, “[e]very Republican and Democratic administration in the US has enforced the embargo since 1960, and every Liberal and Tory government in Canada has refused to follow suit” (Wright, Wylie, 2009, 16). We will in later chapters discuss that this “polite” manner was to end once J.F. Kennedy

⁶ Canadian-American Committee, ‘Canada’s Trade with Cuba and Canadian-American Relations’ (6 February 1961), 6. The Canadian-American Committee was a joint committee of the Private Planning Association of Canada and the National Planning Association, USA, which included leaders of big business in both countries – Found in *Perceptions of Cuba*, 49

entered the White House. It also needs to be underlined that post 1959 Cuba policy illustrates that while the US and Canada bear many similarities and “essentially converge within the Western pattern of civilization” Cuba proved to be an important point of divergence (Rodríguez, 2008, 117).

4 The Special Relationship – the Kennedy Years

4.1 Diefenbaker and Kennedy

In the previous chapter, we have repeatedly drawn attention to Diefenbaker's nationalistic visions for Canada. We have also established that the Prime Minister was able to maintain good working and possibly personal relations with the US president Eisenhower as he perceived Canada as an independent nation. The Cuban Revolution represents a divergence for the US Canada relations, and we will argue that during the Cuban Missile Crisis this divergence grew into a rift between the two countries. Before discussing the crucial changes that occurred during the crisis we would like to illustrate what contributed to Canada's unwillingness to co-operate with the US regarding Cuba in the later years.

Most historians concerned with the relationship between Diefenbaker and Kennedy discuss the personal animosity between the two men. While there is enough material to write a whole essay on the reasons for the two men to dislike each other, we would like to merely assess that Kennedy possibly represented everything that Diefenbaker despised and or was not: Kennedy was rich, handsome, young (did not experience the years of the Depression), lacked political roots, befriended Lester Pearson and most importantly – was ignorant to Canada (Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 38). One can hardly assess with certainty to what extent the personal relationship between the Prime Minister and the president influenced their views on the Cuban situation. Nonetheless, based on the reading of speeches on Cuba and interpretation of interviews on the same matter and observations of the advisors – it is possible to assume that Kennedy's "frustration" with the island did influence negatively the Prime Minister (*ibid.*). Most importantly however, the views on the international relations of the two men crucially differed. Canada's traditional principle of diplomacy is after all "that international commerce should not necessarily be impeded by ideological differences [...] and the fact that Canada had no major political axes to grind with Castro's Cuba" (*ibid.*). The situation was set in a manner for Diefenbaker to have to oppose Kennedy's strategy towards Cuba. Kirk and McKenna (1997, 38-39) summarize the reasons for the rift between Diefenbaker and Kennedy in the following points:

- Kennedy's ignorance and disinterest in Canada
- To "push" Canada into supporting the US policies in Cuba
- Kennedy's comfortable relationship with Lester Pearson

- Personal differences

We would also like to note that it was already a year prior to the Cuban Missile Crisis that Diefenbaker and Kennedy could not come to an agreement on yet another issue – nuclear weaponry. Ottawa was criticized for a collapse of a movement which was supposed to bring Canada to the acceptance of nuclear warheads (McKercher, 2016, 100). It was especially Minister Green who contended Canada’s need for warheads, much to Minister Harkness dislike (ibid.). Nevertheless, Diefenbaker’s accordance remained after all with NATO and its members first, thus:

“There are some in Canada who advocate we should withdraw from NATO in the event that nuclear weapons are made available for the possession and control of NATO. [This course would endanger NATO and thus] the survival of freedom itself.”

(Diefenbaker, August 15, 1962, as cited in McKercher, 2016, 101).

Nevertheless, before the Canadian public was properly informed about the meaning of the steps taken by Canada, *Montreal Gazette* informed on September 20, 1961 that “JFK Presses Canada on Nuclear Weapons.” For Diefenbaker, to be regarded as “pressed” on any issue by the US was not acceptable. Grant (1997, 43) notes that Diefenbaker would not budge from his principle that the US government should not be allowed to force the Canadian government to a particular defence policy. Despite Minister Harkness’ insistence, Diefenbaker made no more references to Canada’s obtaining nuclear weaponry (ibid.). The Prime Minister did however later note that the Canadian government was taking “remarkable steps” towards securing a global disarmament agreement (ibid.). Diefenbaker’s decision to cast himself (following the press leak) as a staunch supporter of disarmament allowed him “not [to] cast him as a vassal of the American president” (McKercher 2016, 104). This factor becomes crucially important as during the Cuban Missile Crisis, whilst Canada did follow the American army and security policy, it did so upon a reflection and having established its own defence policy beforehand.

4.2 The Rostow Memo

The relationship between the two men was to be cemented during Kennedy's visit to Ottawa in May 1961 (Gladman, Archambault, 2010, 16). During the presidential visit, Walt W. Rostow, policy planning director of the State Department, provided Kennedy with an aide-mémoire (ibid.). The memorandum entitled "What we want from the Ottawa trip" was not only written in a very unfortunate manner but it essentially "fanned the anti-Kennedy flames" in Diefenbaker (ibid.). The US officials forgot the memo and it ended up in Diefenbaker's hand. The memorandum reads:

1. To push the Canadians towards an increased commitment to the Alliance for Progress [...]
2. To push them towards a decision to join the O.A.S.
3. To push them towards a larger contribution for the India consortium foreign aid generally [...] Like the rest of us, they have their political problems with foreign aid, but we might be able to push them in the right decision.
4. We want their active support at Geneva and beyond for a more effective monitoring of the borders of Laos and Vietnam.

(Papers of John F. Kennedy. Presidential Papers. President's Office Files. Countries. Canada: JFK trip to Ottawa, May 1961 as cited in Muirhead, Bruce, 2007, 34)

This short piece of document became known in history as the "Rostow memo." Please note the repeated usage of the word "push" in the memo. Diefenbaker's aide, Basil Robinson, speculated that "this personified the attitude of the Americans: they thought nothing of pushing Canada around" (Robinson, 1994). From the "Rostow memo" onwards, Diefenbaker was persuaded that Kennedy's administration is attempting to bully the Prime Minister and his national policies (Lana Wylie 2010, 60). Given that Diefenbaker viewed Kennedy as a bully, he was prone to sympathize with Castro. More precisely with Castro's desire to chart a course of Cuba free of American influence (ibid.).

In order to send an implied message to the president, the Prime Minister forwent polite diplomacy and did not return the memo, which consequently infuriated the president (ibid.). Even based on the "Rostow memo" one could still hardly conclude with certainty that the policies of Diefenbaker and Kennedy diverged mostly based on personal grounds. It can be assumed however that it was the animosity between the two men that contributed to Diefenbaker's desire for an independent Canadian foreign policy, "particularly over Cuba, since Kennedy seemed focused on moving Canada on this issue" (ibid.). Now in retrospect it also seems of the greatest importance that Diefenbaker did consider Canada's membership in the O.A.S. under Eisenhower but refused it under

Kennedy (Molinaro, 2009, 90). As for the reasoning behind his change of mind: during the Eisenhower term, Diefenbaker would consider O.A.S. membership as long as it would respect Canada's Commonwealth status (ibid.). Consequently, under Kennedy, Diefenbaker abandoned this reasoning and strongly believed that O.A.S. membership "would endanger Canada's image as autonomy in Latin America" (Molinaro (2009, 90).

We wanted to outline that president Kennedy did not care for Canada's nationalist dilemma and did not treat the country as a full partner thus Diefenbaker too ignored the partnership (ibid.). In the following chapter, we would like to discuss that Cuba ultimately became one means of doing so.

4.3 The Cuban Missile Crisis

Many historians dedicated their studies to Cuban Missile Crisis. Most of them discuss that it was time when the world came to the brink of nuclear war. In the given studies, reports and films, most attention is dedicated to the role of the United States and the Soviet Union. While Cuba is understandably discussed in these studies, Canada's role seems to be minimalized. The few authors concerned with Canada's role believe that it was the most crucial time for the future trilateral relationship between Canada and Cuba as well as Canada and the US in regards to Cuba. For the purposes of the present thesis, we would like to discuss the issue of Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis as crucial for Canada's independence – we thus agree with Lana Wylie (2010, 60), who assesses that during this time, “Cuba became a public symbol of Canada's independence [...]”.

Allow us to start the discussion with the Canada-US relations. One of the contributing factors to the split of the North American countries was in fact, Diefenbaker's divergent view on how to deal with the situation and also to which extent Canada needed to be involved (Rodríguez 2008, 133-134). Both the US and Canada viewed through different lenses the nature and implications of the crisis. From the US perspective, the Cuban Missile Crisis was also a test of loyalty, which the Canadian Prime Minister failed (Kirk and McKenna 1997, 60). From the Cuban perspective, however, Diefenbaker became a true friend of Cuba and a “friendship” between the two countries was sealed (ibid.).

The American people (as well as Canadians, who did have access to CBC) learned about the Missile in Cuba from Kennedy's speech in October 1962 and so did Diefenbaker (Kirk, McKenna 1997, 60). The importance of when the Prime Minister obtained the information is possibly key to his approach to the crisis. While the British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, for example, was consulted on several occasions by Kennedy himself, the Canadian Prime Minister was considered “not particularly helpful” and was told about the intended speech and its content by Livingston Merchant (recently retired US Ambassador to Canada) two hours prior to the speech (ibid.). Despite the fact that Diefenbaker was presented with a *fait accompli*, he did agree to the president's decision to seek to prevent the installation of the missiles in Cuba, however he also feared rash actions on US's part (ibid.).

The interpretation of the Cuban Missile Crisis vary greatly. Some historians concentrate on the fact that Canada, Diefenbaker more precisely, was indecisive and that

it took him three days to react. In reality however, Diefenbaker hoped for a multilateral negotiated settlement of the crisis and shortly after Kennedy's address proposed to the House of Commons "that a UN commission visit Cuba to determine the 'facts'" (Thompson, Randall, 2002, 225). The Prime Minister was aiming for some form of official dialogue between Washington and Moscow. Even though this can hardly be interpreted as criticism of the US's steps, Washington regarded this as Canadian disbelief in US evidence (ibid.). In fact, Diefenbaker made a short statement in regard to the Cuban situation where he explained that:

"Indeed, the Soviet Union by its action has reached out across the Atlantic to challenge the right of free men to live in peace in this hemisphere. [...] I think Canadians are in general agreement that these offensive weapons, located so contiguously to our continent are a direct and immediate menace to Canada. [...] they are a serious menace to the deterrent strategic strength of the whole western alliance on which our security is founded. The result is that a threat is posed not only to this continent but to the NATO alliance as a whole. [...] [W]e intend to support the United States and our other allies in this situation."

(Extract from Hansard, October 25, 1962, Cuba – Statement by Prime Minister, Right Hon. J.G. Diefenbaker)

Diefenbaker also did not omit to mention in his statement that the Canadian government was in deed informed shortly before Kennedy's television speech and that the government was seeking possible solutions ever since (ibid.). The fact remains however that the US expected Canada to follow immediately the US lead without any delay. It took Diefenbaker three days to make any official statement regarding Canada's position, which was still not to the US's government liking. Thompson and Randall (2002, 225) note that Diefenbaker's indecision is "easier to explain than to defend." They consequently elaborate that the Prime Minister's assessment of Kennedy is nowadays closer to the historical consensus (ibid.). Given the way he was informed on the matter and Kennedy's "disrespectful" meeting with Khrushchev at Vienna, Diefenbaker feared that Kennedy "was perfectly capable of taking the world to the brink of thermonuclear destruction to prove himself the man for our times, a courageous champion of Western democracy" (Diefenbaker's letter as cited in Thompson and Randall, 2002, 210). The US was however still demanding of Canada to follow the US example and place its air defense forces on increased alert, known as Defcon 3, which was delayed in Ottawa on purpose (Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 61).

We would like to note however that prior to Canada's ordering its navy to sea, an important split between Harkness and Green re-occurred. Maloney (2007, 280) discusses

in much greater detail that the Minister of Defence, Douglas Harkness and Minister of External Affairs Howard Green could not come eye to eye on the issue to go to DEFCON 3. As aforementioned whilst Harkness showed that he prefers to side with the US on the matter of security, Green feared immediate Canadian following the US. Thus whereas Harkness was decided to immediately follow the US and bring the Canadian forces up to Ready state, he was advised to first raise the issue with the Prime Minister (ibid.). It was then the Prime Minister's decision to raise the issue with the Cabinet (Maloney, 2007, 281). To Harkness' dislike, the Prime Minister was advised by Minister Green not to take any rash action (ibid.). Minister Harkness finally made a decision without the Prime Minister's approval. He went to the Chiefs and:

“ordered them to put into effect all of the precautions we had discussed in the morning, but in as quiet and unobtrusive way as possible [...] Everything was ordered to go ahead as though we were on alert.[...] I did not tell the Prime Minister or any other members of the Cabinet of the steps I had taken, but I did keep him informed throughout the day and evening of intelligence reports which came in.”

(Harkness, October 1962, as cited in Maloney, 2007, 284).

Diefenbaker later addressed the House of Commons and pledged his alliance with a UN disarmament initiative. Even though Canada allied with the multilateral effort, Kennedy was offended as he viewed the Canadian hesitation was questioning the integrity of the US (McKercher 2016, 104). Grant (1997, 46) also notes that even though Diefenbaker stood for Canadian nationalism, he never openly criticized American world policy, the sole exception, criticism by implication, was his calling in the UN to investigate Cuba, thus the Prime Minister implied that he did not automatically accept Kennedy's account of the facts. This goes directly hand in hand with Diefenbaker's belief that Canadian defence policy should not be determined in Washington. Thus trade v. security, this was a very pragmatic and utilitarian solution.

Most importantly, even though the US criticized the Canadian approach, Cuban officials knew well who Canada allies with (McKercher 2016, 62). In order to levy the fear of Cubans about a possible nuclear fiasco, Cuban Ambassador to Ottawa, Cruz, informed his minister on October 18, 1962 that Canadian government denied permission to the USSR embassy in Canada for Soviet planes to refuel in Canada on their way to Cuba (ibid.). Cruz was overall very active in messaging to Cuba and repeatedly ensured the island that Canada forbade arms transport to Cuba through Canadian waters and demanded search of Cuban vessels in Canada (ibid.). Cruz also obtained a message of

Canada's support for Washington. It is crucial for Canadian-Cuban relations that Canada's navy was ordered to sea, integrated with the US forces under NATO maritime command (Munton 1992). Thus the Canadian navy created a part of the submarine barrier enabling the US navy to move southwards into the blockade zone (ibid.). In other terms, Canada "opted to meet its commitment with the US" (Rodríguez, 2010, 75).

GAC also informs that long before the Cuban Missile Crisis, Canada-United States alliance for the Defence of North America (CANUS) required for Canada to keep its promise under the Basic Security Agreement, which meant that the country would send its ships to sea in the event of a sudden emergency. Furthermore, the RCN was doing as much as it could prepare for a possible war (ibid.). We would like to underline that despite the fact that Prime Minister Diefenbaker did not react immediately to the US request for full support, the sole American ally to provide active military support, during the tense "thirteen days" was Canada (Military History Library). Furthermore, it was the Canadian maritime forces that actively cooperated with the US as well as helped monitor North American waters in order to ensure that USSR submarines were not close enough to impose a danger in a form of a missile attack on any major city in the area (ibid.).

As aforementioned, Canada's role in the Cuban Missile Crisis is generally crucially minimalized, even though it was Canadian embassy officials "who reported the initial preparations for the installation of missiles in Cuba in October 1962" (Munton, 2018, 78). It is worth noting that Canada lacked a spy agency at that time thus it was up to Canadian diplomats to collect intelligence on military installations and other material in Cuba important for the US (ibid.). The intelligence gathering in Cuba could not rely merely on government sources a diplomatic observations, instead the intelligence efforts of the Canadian embassy involved "much contact with individual citizens and groups" (Munton 2018, 76). Thus, the Canadian embassy was able to gather information about the arrival of Soviet troops to Cuba in mid-1962 from the Cubans themselves (ibid.). There is another advantage to the intelligence efforts and decade-long information collection in Cuba. Namely, all of the secret activities along with the sharing program "fostered the intelligence liaison relationship among Canada, the US and the UK, and was a critical of secret reality of Canada's Cuba diplomacy" (Munton, 2018, 78).

Finally, the intense events, the unique circumstances and the diverse challenges for the governments of both Canada and Cuba made the period 1959-1962 a key point in bilateral relationship. Furthermore, one of the contributing factors for Canada to maintain

diplomatic relations with Cuba under Castro's revolutionary regime was the then US president Kennedy. Finally, it was during the Diefenbaker administration that Cuba became a public symbol of Canada's independence. Given that Canada viewed Cuba as a "symbol of Canadian independence" (upon the US) in foreign affairs, every consecutive Prime Minister since Diefenbaker was concerned in that matter not to appear too American. If Diefenbaker used Cuba as an example of determination to properly chart an independent foreign policy for Canada – the consecutive Prime Ministers followed in line, while not compromising on security risk and NATO solidarity. Canada and Cuba ultimately sealed a true special relationship driven by similar goals – independent foreign policy on the US. Cuba became ultimately "an indispensable instrument in the [Canadian] sovereignty tool-kit" (Mark Entwistle, former Canadian Ambassador to Cuba, as cited in Wylie, 2018, 63). It can finally be assessed that the reversion of the special relationship between Canada and Cuba would represent a major adjustment in Canadian thinking about the Canadian-US relationship. In other words, Canadian policy towards Cuba since 1960' can be characterized as properly "not American".

4.4 Canadian Interest

The course of matters taken by Canada during the Cuban Missile Crisis needs to be discussed not only in the context of the Cold War i.e. the “days when the world came to the brim of the nuclear war” history but also in the context of Canadian sovereignty. In other words, Wylie (2010, 61) notes that the matter of Cuba was in Canada’s perception directly linked to the question of national sovereignty and the “looming presence of the US,” which influenced Diefenbaker not to follow the US and ultimately to refuse to put Canadian forces on full alert. Similarly, Gladman and Archmabault (2015, 15) argue that Diefenbaker’s lengthy decision reflects the Prime Minister’s desire to preserve the independence of Canadian foreign policy as well as to maintain a balanced posture in crisis conditions. Diefenbaker as well as his advisors were greatly determined to uphold Canadian sovereignty and did not want to be seen as “being too close to the American position” (ibid.). It was thus during the Cuban Missile Crisis that Diefenbaker became fully frustrated with the Kennedy’s disrespect for Canada: “that young man has got to learn that he is not running the Canadian government” (as cited in Nash, 1990, 190).

As aforementioned, Diefenbaker was known for his nationalism and the Cuban Missile Crisis proved that he tended to react rather strongly against the US pressures. Ultimately, protecting Canada’s image of an independent country was a major factor in Canada’s decision not to join the US embargo. A rather lengthy message from Charles Ritchie, the Canadian Ambassador to Washington during Diefenbaker, supports this argument:

“Do we consider what has happened in Cuba as a popular social revolution and not a Russian-inspired Communist take-over? ... It is unthinkable that anything similar to the developments in Cuba should occur in Canada, but if it did, should we not regard this as our own business and resent intervention? In general in our dealing with Communist countries we have tended to be against the policies of economic strangulation (even more against military intervention) [...] presumably this is the philosophy behind our trade China. Of course, our economic interests are the concrete reasons for the policy, but in the background is a philosophical difference as to how best to deal with Communist countries, and our position, through obscurely defined, is basically different from that of the United States. ”

(as cited in Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 41)

The Prime Minister followed the approach, described in the quote also during October 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis. Canada persisted in its stance of recognizing countries

despite differing ideologies.⁷ Nonetheless, given the events of 1961, it was rather apparent that a pursuit of “economic interests” cannot be the main reason to maintain relations with Cuba, given that the Cuban government was simply unable to expand its imports from Canada (Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 41). Diefenbaker’s stance on Cuba always went beyond representing just an avenue for increased trade: it was during this particular period that Diefenbaker’s stance was not only influenced by his personal antipathies to Kennedy but mostly by his desire to enhance his nationalistic domestic policy (Kirk and McKenna 1997, 42).

Despite any trade interests there was also a strong psychological element to Diefenbaker’s decision – “a psychological identification with the ‘little guy’”(Kirk, McKenna, 1997, 42). This theory directly correlates with Wylie’s (2010, 64) theory of “othering” and “likeness”. More precisely, not only is Canadian (independent) policy constructed on the process of othering – othering the US by drawing clear contrasts between the two countries, it is also constructed on the theory of “likeness”. This is particularly visible in Canada’s approach to Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis. By stressing the similarities between the Cuban and Canadian societies, a more “sympathetic renderings of the Cuba narrative, reproduces the Canadian identity as a good international citizen and as ‘not American,’ and leads to the construction of a policy based on engagement” (ibid.). It was thus during this very period, 1959 – 1963 that Diefenbaker maintained this as the official Canadian policy and simultaneously laid the foundation of future “special” bilateral relationship.

⁷ Kirk and McKenna discuss that in some aspects, primarily because of the communist régime, Canada’s relationship with Cuba can be compared to Canada’s relationship to communist China – both were also criticized by the US.

4.5 Alternative Interpretations

As aforementioned, the interpretations of the events of the Cuban Missile crisis vary greatly. This also applies to the reaction of both Canadians and Americans. Given that both governments took very different approaches to Cuba, opposing reactions of both nations were to be expected. Hence a disagreement between governments soon spilled into rather popular and politicized fora.

Firstly, we would like to note that most Canadians and Americans constructed their opinions on the Cuban Missile Crisis and the American “quarantine” based on the information they received from the press. It is also necessary to stress that a shift in Canadian press occurred already in the context of the Canadian government’s decision not to follow the United States in imposing an embargo on Cuba, as well as Canada’s decision not to end diplomatic relations with Cuba (Wright, 2009, 100) in the year 1960. Thus already a year prior to the Cuban Missile Crisis, in the year 1961, articles on both sides of the US-Canadian border, worried about ‘anti-Americanism’ among Canadians and vice versa, ‘anti-Canadianism’ among Americans as well as about the growing possibility of an open breach between Canada and the US over Cuba and “the dangers of political identification between Cuba and Canada over the question of US power” (ibid.).

The fact remains that most Canadians as well as Americans relied on press and television for any information on the developments in Cuba. Accordingly, President Kennedy’s speech was televised to both Northern American nations. One of the swiftest reactions in Canada included a statement to the press written by the Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC). The statement refused President Kennedy’s approach to Cuba and linked it directly to series of hostilities of the US towards Cuba:

“No fair-minded Canadian can accept as good coin, the charges by President John F. Kennedy that ‘surveillance’ of the Island Republic of Cuba has discovered the existence of missiles with nuclear potential on Cuban soil. This charge by the President of the United States must be seen for what it is: the next logical step in a long series of aggressions against the sovereign state of Cuba.”

(Fair Play for Cuba Committee Records as cited in Wright and Wylie, 2009, 96).

As for Canadian press media, the *Vancouver Sun*’s front page of October 1962 detailed the start of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The newspaper shrewdly commented on the speedy action taken by the US government: “When Russian missile sites were discovered in Cuba in October 1962, the American government was quick to react.” (The Sun, 1962). The *Vancouver Sun* dedicated several pages to the Cuban Missile Crisis. The newspaper also

provided a map showing the 3.900 kilometre range of the Soviet missiles. The story accompanying the map headlined: “Only B.C., Alberta Safe from Red Cuba’s Missiles” (ibid.). The article also commented on the military blockade as: “America’s first serious violation of the United Nations charter ... A blockade such as Kennedy announced is clearly an act of aggression when enforced against a sovereign state which is at peace” (ibid.). The American quarantine over Cuba strongly resonated in the Canadian context as: “Canadians see isolation as an inherently hostile policy, likely to lead to instability and international disorder” (Wylie 2010, 119). On such occasions it is rather natural that once one state challenges another state’s self-image, be it directly and or indirectly, tensions are to be expected (ibid.). This applies especially in Northern America, where the US is the country to challenge another state’s self-image – for both Canada and Cuba.

Furthermore, the newspaper covered a protest put together by FPCC in front of the US consulate in Vancouver (ibid.). The slogans that were to be seen at this protest included: “Hands Off Cuba,” “No More Koreas,” and “Try Kennedy for War Crimes” (ibid.). This was but only the first of many protests that took place in Canada. The FPCC was continuously joined by students, members of other Cuba solidarity groups as well as by advocates for disarmament (Wright, Wylie, 2009, 96-120).

The course of matters advertised by Kennedy during October 1962 stroke a similar note as the embargo of the year 1961. Kenneth McNaught, a liberal historian addressed the crisis in Canadian-US relationship over Cuba. According to McNaught it was necessary to shift the terms of the debate. More precisely, he believed that the split between the two nations over Cuba was mostly between those who opposed “betraying an American ally, and those that approved the show of Canadian independence” (as cited in Wright, 2009, 101). This applied in the year 1961 when Canada did not follow the US embargo as well as when Canada refused to immediately follow the request for full support in 1962.

Conclusion

The goal of the present thesis was to discuss the roots of the Special Canadian Cuban relationship. More precisely, the thesis wanted to illustrate whether it is possible to interconnect Canadian foreign policy to Cuba to Canadian nationalism. For the purposes of our thesis we have decided to analyse the relationship under Prime Minister Diefenbaker. Whilst there is an abundance of literature covering Canadian Cuban relationship under Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, given that the Canadian Cuban relationship during his reign was considered as warmest, we argued that the special relationship was set for both future Conservative as well as Liberal governments under Prime Minister Diefenbaker.

We have raised the issue of most literature covering the US Cuban relationship, especially around the Cuban Revolution and minimizing the role of Canada. Furthermore, majority of authors, Kirk and McKenna including, interested in Canadian Cuban relationship identify trade as the key aspect of the relationship. Whilst trade was one of the reasons for Canada to establish a relationship with Cuba, given the size of it, it cannot be argued that economic interests were instrumental in Canada's decision to maintain an uninterrupted relationship with Cuba throughout the course of history. We have not dismissed it as one of the aspects for Canada to build a relationship with Cuba, we have merely shifted the optics to a different factor that we have considered being as key in Canadian Cuban history – Canadian independent foreign policy. We thus agree with scholars such as Wylie that thanks to underlining how Canada portrays itself in world politics clashes directly with how the US sees itself, which becomes of greatest importance within the Cuban dialogue. Most importantly, stressing Canadian nationalism in the given era truly helps to better understand what makes the Canadian Cuban relationship special. We are not claiming that it is solely Canadian nationalism that created the Canadian approach to Cuba nevertheless it proved to be the major decision making factor. Not only is Canada and Cuba interwoven by their need to “other” the US, their relationship becomes special if we consider their similar core goals i.e. to have an independent policy in general but ultimately an independent foreign policy on the US. This “likeness” is of the greatest importance given that it is directly linked to a sovereignty of a state.

It was already as early as in the pre-revolution history that we were able to demonstrate Canadian othering the US and feeling “likeness” to Cuba. This could be

observed long before Canada started properly building its independent foreign policy. The fact that Canada felt a special bond with Cuba (due to the US's omnipresence in the hemisphere) plays a great role in the present discussion. Both Canada and Cuba are no strangers to having its state's self-image threatened by the US. Thus starting prior to 1959, Canada chose to build its relationship with Cuba first on pragmatic economic reasons, then on dialogue and communication. Starting the discussion prior to 1959 events allowed to acknowledge that the opposite approaches of both Canada and the US to Cuba are to be traced at the end of the 19th century and need to be linked to the mentalities of all nations under consideration. The US policy of taking Cuba over thus clashed with how Canada envisions world politics. Through the course of history, Canada never portrayed itself as a threat to Cuba (contrary to the US) and it has been the good neighbour to the island. As aforementioned, given that Canadians "other" the US instead of Cuba and see themselves as a good international citizen they are ultimately drawing similarities with Cuba that reinforce both the international as well as the domestic component.

Furthermore, discussion concerned with the early 1950s allowed to illustrate that it would be erroneous to claim that Cuba has always been a means of Canadian independent policy. Nevertheless, Canada chose Cuba as its first country in the Caribbean to locate a diplomatic mission and mirrored the American policy towards Cuba i.e. supported Batista. The fact remains that Canadian government wished for a stable Cuban government hence trading with the Batista regime did not impose many questions.

Interestingly enough, a great deal of the special relationship between Canada and Cuba can be attributed to the then US presidents. Whilst majority of literature recognizes the awful relationship between Diefenbaker and Kennedy, we were also able to assess that Diefenbaker's relationship to Eisenhower played a similarly important role in Canada's forging its policy to Cuba. Given that we have directly linked Diefenbaker's Cuba policy to Canadian interest, we believe that president Eisenhower's accepting of Canada as a sovereign country was greatly important for Diefenbaker as well as his constructing of Canadian foreign policy. It was during Eisenhower's presidency that we were able to assess that the American acknowledgement of Canada's independent foreign policy and Canadian sovereignty were a contributing factor to Diefenbaker's policy towards Cuba. The mutual respect of the Prime Minister and the US President allows to consider that it was not only President Kennedy who influenced Canadian Cuba policy. Both the US presidents regarded Canadian nationalism differently. Nevertheless, throughout the reign

of Diefenbaker Canadian nationalism and independency was pushed forward regardless who was the head of the US at the time.

The US embargo of the 1960s proved that Canadian nationalism was the main factor influencing Canadian Cuba policy. Immediate following of the US embargo, would have meant Canadian succumbing to the US lead. Canada defended its stand to continue trading with Cuba despite the embargo. Diefenbaker did so by explaining first that Canada is a country dependent on foreign trade, second that Canada does not believe in isolationism in foreign policy. Canada is after all a country dependent on bilateral trade, thus isolation is seen as inherently hostile policy by Canada. The US's approach to Cuba could not have resonated well in Canada. Thus Canada also played the role of a "mediator" during this crucial period, which resonated with the Cuban people and brought an interesting aspect to the special relationship. All of these aspects contributed to forging a special Canadian policy towards Cuba, which was well received by Cuba.

It was thus during the 1960 embargo that Canada proved to be the good neighbour to Cuba. By not following the US embargo Diefenbaker was able to offer Cuba an "open door to the West" and link it to Canadian approach to communism, which consist of the fact that trading with communist regimes would not drift them further to the Soviet bloc. The Canadian approach differed greatly from the US policy of isolationism. Not isolating these regimes and maintaining trade with them is after all greatly important for a country dependent on trade and becomes ultimately "made in Canada" foreign policy.

Given that Canada upheld both its diplomatic and economic relations with Cuba, it gave its relation with Cuba a certain degree of normalcy, which becomes special in the Northern hemisphere if one is to consider the waves of US hostility towards Cuba. Thus, Canadian "no" to Eisenhower's embargo is an excellent example of Canadian nationalism driving Canada's foreign policy. These were the moments when Cuba truly started becoming a means of Canadian independent foreign policy, however there was not such a sharp breach with the US, mainly thanks to the relationship of the Prime Minister and the US President. Canada under Prime Minister Diefenbaker proved to be able to follow its own path in foreign policy while simultaneously respecting the US as its biggest commercial partner.

Thus during the Cuban Missile Crisis, Canada approached the conflict with respect to its sovereignty but also stressing the need for multilateral action. The personal dislike between the Prime Minister and the US president, while seemingly an attributing factor,

can be observed in a different light, given that most of the antipathies arose from Kennedy's disregard of Canadian nationalist tendencies. Diefenbaker's lengthy decision to Kennedy's request reflected the desire to preserve the independence of Canadian foreign policy as well as to maintain a balanced posture in crisis conditions. The Prime Minister was consequently criticized for being anti-American, whereas he believed to be pro Canadian. Hence the events of the Cuban Missile crisis proved that all Canadian steps towards Cuba can be linked to the question of Canadian sovereignty.

We were also able to assess that even though Canada aligned its navy forces with the US, the optics prior to this development ensured that this too would not be regarded as Canadian submission to the US. Prior to the escalated events of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Diefenbaker refused the US pressure of nuclear warheads. For Canada it was unacceptable to have its defence policy dictated by the US. Most importantly, it was during the Cuban Missile Crisis that Canada directly considered US hostility towards Cuba to its own situation. The US was seen as an aggressor "with a big stick" endangering the sovereignty of a country that could be Canada one day. Protecting Cuba meant protecting Canada. In the context of the Cuban Missile Crisis Diefenbaker's position was also highlighted by Canada's enforcement of the trade policy. Keeping the "open door" to the West by Canada aligns with the fact that when Canada was deciding its approach to the US quarantine it sought multilateral action.

All of the unique circumstances, including the geography of the Northern hemisphere, contributed to the special Canadian Cuban relationship. The fact remains that during the unique circumstances, Diefenbaker used Cuba as a tool of Canadian independent foreign policy. Ultimately, the consecutive Canadian prime ministers followed in line, while not compromising on security risk and NATO solidarity.

We have repeatedly mentioned that the Cuba policy set under Diefenbaker was to last. While not discussed in the present thesis, Canadian Cuban policy under Lester Pearson would prove a great example of Canada's not willingness to breach the Canadian tone to Cuba set under Diefenbaker. Even though, Pearson was more pro-American in his policies than Diefenbaker, Canadian Cuba policy was not changed. The relationship was not deepened, nevertheless, even Prime Minister favouring greater mirroring of the US policy acknowledged that changing Canadian Cuban policy ultimately means changing Canadian US policy.

All of the above discussed aspects contribute to the “special” in the Special Canadian Cuban relationship.

Souhrn

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá speciálními kanadsko-kubánskými vztahy za vlády kanadského předsedy vlády Diefenbakera. Pro tento účel využívá konceptů „jiných diplomacií“ jako nástroje kanadské „soft power“ a dále se opírá o koncept kanadské národní politiky.

První část práce se věnuje změnám, k nimž dochází v mezinárodních vztazích a zabývá se konkrétněji konceptem „jiných diplomacií“. Využitím tohoto konceptu je možné se více soustředit na nástroje diplomacie jako komunikace a vyjednávání, které jsou v kontextu kanadsko-kubánských vztahů klíčové. Jelikož tento koncept zahrnuje i ekonomické zájmy států, umožňuje jiný pohled na tradiční obchodní zájmy Kanady na Kubě. Dále se tato část práce věnuje problematice kanadské národní politiky. Přesněji se věnuje zhodnocení konceptu kanadského antiamerikanismu a problematice kanadského nacionalismu ve vztahu ke Spojeným státům. V souvislosti s kanadským předsedou vlády Diefenbakerem je podtržena potřeba Kanady se za jeho vlády skutečně odlišit od Spojených států a mít nezávislou zahraniční politiku.

Jádro práce se zabývá vývojem kanadsko-kubánských vztahů za amerického prezidenta Eisenhowera a následně za Kennedyho. Diskuse týkající se prezidenta Eisenhowera nastiňuje fakt, že v této době, i díky přátelským vztahům mezi Diefenbakerem a Eisenhowerem, nedošlo k zásadní kolizi ve vztahu Kanady a USA jelikož prezident Eisenhower akceptoval Kanadskou suverenitu. Kanadsko-kubánská politika se tedy v této době nelišila zásadně od americko-kubánské. Během embarga z roku 1960 artikuloval předseda kanadské vlády Diefenbaker ale to, že Kanada odmítá následovat americké diktum, jelikož by to bylo v rozkolu s kanadskou zahraniční politikou, která věří, že izolace komunistických států je ukotví ještě hlouběji v tomto režimu. Na základě rozboru událostí okolo Kubánské raketové krize se nám podařilo dobrat tomu, že díky rozkolu mezi prezidentem Kennedym a kanadským předsedou vlády Diefenbakerem, se Kuba skutečně stala nástrojem kanadské nezávislé zahraniční politiky. Diefenbaker odmítl okamžitě následovat povely od amerického prezidenta a podtrhl důležitost multilaterální spolupráce. Co někteří interpretují jako Diefenbakerovu nerozhodnost či jeho antiamerikanismu, je možné ale vnímat jako kanadský boj za nezávislou zahraniční politiku a vůli po multilaterálním postupu. Kanadsko-kubánské vztahy, nastoleny za předsedy kanadské vlády Diefenbakera přetrvávají a jakákoliv zásadní změna v nich by znamenala reformulaci nezávislé kanadské zahraniční politiky.

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