

UNIVERZITA KARLOVA V PRAZE
Fakulta sociálních věd
Institut mezinárodních studií

PROTOKOL O HODNOCENÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE
(Posudek vedoucího)

Práci předložil(a) student(ka): **Jiří Růžek**

Název práce: **Role velvyslanců Spojených států na Kubě v době diktatury Fulgencia Batisty během 50. let 20. století**

Vedoucí práce (u externích vedoucích uveďte též adresu a funkci v rámci instituce):
doc. PhDr. Francis Raška, PhD.

1. OBSAH A CÍL PRÁCE (stručná informace o práci, formulace cíle):

The thesis evaluates the respective roles of the three American ambassadors who served in Cuba during the second presidency of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba between 1952 and 1958. The role of each ambassador is discussed in the context of the evolving situation in Cuba and according to the standards of contemporary and present-day diplomacy.

2. VĚCNÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (náročnost, tvůrčí přístup, argumentace, logická struktura, teoretické a metodologické ukotvení, práce s prameny a literaturou, vhodnost příloh apod.):

The topic is challenging. Jiří Růžek has tackled the question well, consulted numerous sources, provided a theoretical framework, and advanced sound arguments.

3. FORMÁLNÍ A JAZYKOVÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (jazykový projev, správnost citace a odkazů na literaturu, grafická úprava, formální náležitosti práce apod.):

There are a few minor typographical errors. Overall, I find the presentation, citation of sources, and other formal aspects satisfactory.

4. KONTROLA ORIGINALITY TEXTU

Prohlašuji, že jsem se seznámil/a s výsledkem kontroly originality textu závěrečné práce v systému:

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Komentář k výsledku kontroly:

I have no problem with the findings.

5. STRUČNÝ KOMENTÁŘ HODNOTITELE (celkový dojem z bakalářské práce, silné a slabé stránky, originalita myšlenek, naplnění cíle apod.):

Jiří Růžek has chosen the diplomatic practices of three United States ambassadors to Cuba and their respective roles during the second presidency of Fulgencio Batista as the topic of his BA dissertation. The period selected is significant because it directly preceded the Cuban Revolution. The topic also sheds light on how each ambassador perceived the evolving circumstances. Jiří has divided the work into an Introduction, six main chapters, and a Conclusion. I will evaluate each part of the treatise in the ensuing paragraphs.

The Introduction informs the reader clearly and succinctly of the aims of the dissertation. A roadmap of sorts summarizes the content of the individual chapters. I think that Jiří's review of the relevant literature is particularly impressive. Indeed, the Introduction fulfills its purpose.

The theoretical basis of diplomacy forms the subject of Chapter 1. As Jiří notes, the role of ambassadors evolved over time. He provides a detailed summary of the theoretical evolution and refers to the main theorists. The significance of the Congress of Vienna and bilateral and multilateral diplomatic arrangements is elucidated well. Jiří also refers to the Havana gathering of American states in 1928, which codified diplomatic arrangements among signatories. It was only in 1961 that a United Nations agreement stipulated how diplomacy should function. Numerous theorists and their ideas are discussed. More specifically, in the case of the United States, the standard of practice of American diplomats was stipulated by the Foreign Service Act of 1946. Jiří correctly mentions the reorganization of American diplomacy in 1954, which involved a deepening of the relationship between diplomacy and the State Department. Overall, Jiří's knowledge of the theory of diplomacy and its evolution is obvious. I quite like this chapter.

In Chapter 2, Jiří portrays the American conception of foreign policy and diplomacy in the 1950s. American diplomacy towards Cuba during Batista's second presidency in the 1950s was determined by the overall foreign policy priorities of the United States within the context of the early Cold War. The transition from the Good Neighbor policy to the Cold War policy of containment articulated by George F. Kennan is highlighted. Jiří also mentions Kennan's tour of Latin America and his belief that the prerequisites for American-style democracy were not present in most Latin American countries. The dirty work in favor of various dictators by the Dulles brothers (Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and CIA Director Allen Dulles), who served under President Dwight D. Eisenhower, are portrayed well. Fighting Communism, not democracy promotion, was the main aim of United States foreign policy in the given period. Regarding Cuba, Jiří recapitulates the history of Cuba-United States relations since Cuban independence and the American domination of Cuba's economy is emphasized here. During Batista's second presidency, American domination intensified and up until the spring of 1958, the Eisenhower Administration provided generous military aid to Batista's military. This assistance was halted because the Eisenhower White House lost patience with Batista's inability to keep order in the face of Fidel Castro's advances in the countryside and with the fact that Batista proved unable to organize presidential elections. When the elections were finally held in the autumn of 1958 and victory was claimed by the Batista-endorsed candidate, the Eisenhower Administration decided to sever ties with Batista in the hope of replacing him with somebody more credible to prevent the seizure of power by Castro's 26th of July Movement. In this chapter, Jiří clearly demonstrates his mastery of events in Cuba and the role played by the United States. Moreover, the chapter naturally leads into the next three chapters, in which the activities of each of the three Batista-era American ambassadors is analyzed.

Chapter 3 evaluates the tenure of United States ambassador Willard L. Beaulac, who was a career diplomat with a focus on Latin America appointed by President Harry S. Truman. Beaulac began his tenure in Havana when President Carlos Prío Socarrás was in power. Beaulac witnessed the coup that replaced Prío with Batista. Jiří's meticulous analysis of Beaulac's correspondence and telephone conversations with Washington is laudable. It is obvious that Beaulac was truly engaged in the quest to ascertain what was going on. Shortly before the end of his posting in Havana, Beaulac had to deal with the raid by Cuban revolutionaries on the Moncada barracks, which took place on 26 July 1953. As Jiří writes, Beaulac remained interested in Cuban matters even after being posted to other countries. The content of the chapter speaks for itself. I like the intricate detail that is the result of meticulous research.

In Chapter 4, Jiří discusses the activities of Beaulac's successor, namely Arthur Gardner. Unlike Beaulac, Gardner was a political appointee with no previous diplomatic experience. As in the previous chapter, Jiří documents Gardner's activities. It is interesting that, despite being aware of repression and economic difficulties in Cuba, Gardner claimed that Batista was the best person to lead Cuba. The analysis of the correspondence is fine. Though Gardner concurred with the New York Times reporter, Herbert Matthews, who conducted interviews with Fidel Castro during the insurgency against Batista, about the extent of opposition, the ambassador asserted that Batista had the situation under control. Even when recalled as ambassador after President Eisenhower's reelection, Gardner retained ties to officials associated with Batista. It is noteworthy that, after Batista's defeat and flight from the island, Gardner bore witness to a visit to the Cuban embassy in Washington, D.C. of an official of the new regime who arrived to seize and secure crucial documents. After all, Gardner was good friends with Batista's ambassador to the United States. Jiří is on the mark in his assessment of Gardner. Gardner spoke no Spanish and thus his knowledge of what was going on often came from his wealthy English-speaking friends on the island. This chapter is of superb quality.

Chapter 5 depicts the short tenure of the last American Batista-era ambassador, Earl E. T. Smith. Just like his predecessor, Smith was a loyal Republican political appointee. Interestingly, Smith was given the task of trying to change public perceptions inside Cuba that the American ambassador was a mouthpiece of the Batista regime. After criticizing brutal police suppression of a demonstration by women in the city of Santiago de Cuba, Batista considered having Smith declared *persona non grata*. Smith and Batista somewhat reconciled their differences and Smith cabled back to Washington that Batista was convinced that the revolutionary activities of former president Prío Socarrás from the United States represented a source of instability in Cuba and ought to be terminated. So much for the US embassy not working in Batista's interests! For the sake of brevity, it is safe to say that, despite State Department recommendations, Smith refused to stand up sufficiently to Batista as the dictator became more desperate. Several incidents, including the taking of American hostages by the 26th of July Movement and Batista's later stealing of the supposedly free elections, Smith refused to see the writing on the wall. Ironically,

when the US refused to send a shipment of military aircraft and other equipment to Batista, Smith even approached the British ambassador in Cuba to persuade the United Kingdom to sell weapons to Cuba. Given Smith's conduct, it comes as no surprise that American plans to replace Batista with a military junta was not consulted with the American ambassador. Smith's later activities involved attempting to convince Batista to resign and perhaps settle in Franco's Spain. In the end, the ambassador was unsuccessful on Batista fled at the very end of 1958 as the rebels advanced. Smith was recalled to Washington and relieved of his duties as US ambassador to Cuba. I very much enjoyed reading this chapter and, once again, Jiří has demonstrated mastery of the sources.

In Chapter 6, Jiří evaluates the significance of the three American ambassadors. Jiří maintains that US ambassadors were not only important for the conducting of US-Cuban relations, but they also played a significant role in Cuba's internal affairs. These two roles weakened considerably during the second half of 1958. Jiří maintains that Willard L. Beaulac was the most significant ambassador during the period in question because of his activities. The role of Arthur Gardner was to maintain the status quo insofar as US-Cuban relations were concerned. Earl E.T. Smith was dispatched to Havana to change the image of the United States ambassador and the near rupture of diplomatic relations resulted in Smith becoming reluctant to pursue the State Department's goal. Whereas Beaulac and Gardner were relatively free to conduct their tasks as they saw fit, Smith went to Havana with strict State Department instructions. Also, unlike with Beaulac and Gardner, the influence of the American ambassador on final foreign policy decisions during Smith's tenure waned significantly. Jiří's analysis is superb and his finding that American diplomacy in Cuba reflected general Cold War foreign policy priorities is most convincing. This chapter truly justifies Jiří's assertion.

The Conclusion represents a well-written recapitulation of the content of the individual chapters. As Jiří asserts, "all three ambassadors worked within the fundamental framework of United States foreign policy, existing legislation and international customary law." I consider the conclusions Jiří draws to be both sound and valid.

The quality of Jiří's dissertation speaks for itself. His powers of analysis are impressive. The few typographical errors in the text in no way detract from the excellence of Jiří's work. Without hesitation, I recommend an excellent classification (A).

6. OTÁZKY A PŘIPOMÍNKY DOPORUČENÉ K BLIŽŠÍMU VYSVĚTLENÍ PŘI OBHAJOBĚ (jedna až tři):
Do you think that the appointments of Gardner and Smith were ill-judged? Why or why not?

Could the United States have done anything apart from invading Cuba to thwart the Cuban Revolution?
Please speculate about the potential role better diplomacy could have played.

7. DOPORUČENÍ / NEDOPORUČENÍ K OBHAJOBĚ A NAVRHOVANÁ ZNÁMKA
(A-F): A

Datum: 31 August 2021

Podpis:

Pozn.: Hodnocení píše k jednotlivým bodům, pokud nepíšete v textovém editoru, použijte při nedostatku místa zadní stranu nebo příložený list. V hodnocení práce se pokuste oddělit ty její nedostatky, které jsou, podle vašeho mínění, obhajobou neodstranitelné (např. chybí kritické zhodnocení pramenů a literatury), od těch věcí, které student může dobrou obhajobou napravit; poměr těchto dvou položek berte prosím v úvahu při stanovení konečné známky.