Confronting the 'Essence of Decision':
Canada and the Cuban Missile Crisis

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Technical Memorandum

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Abstract

This Technical Memorandum, which is the first full case-study in a series of eight, examines how Canada dealt with the Cuban Missile Crisis. The case will focus on accounting for why the Diefenbaker government, in the context of a grave threat to North American security and defence, delayed increasing the readiness level for the CF as requested by Washington, and the role played by the mechanics of Canadian Government decision-making at the time. By reconstructing the events and decision-making processes that existed in the political, bureaucratic and military domains, the case begins to build the 'story' of the Canada-US strategic defence relationship. In doing so, it recounts a sad story of leaders, both political and military, too readily accepting reasons to justify inaction in the face of a clear and present danger. Thus, while having a more streamlined national security structure cannot always negate the effect of personality on decision-making, what this case-study demonstrates is that the national security structure in place during the crisis allowed military civilian leadership to get away far too easily with finding reasons for inaction. While it is accepted that personality always makes itself felt, the lack of rigour in the system did nothing to soften its sharp edges since it did not force realistic and timely assessments of the nation's geostrategic imperatives, or of the developing threat from Soviet missiles in Cuba. Indeed, this case-study has shown that a degree of strategic laziness, enhanced by a slow move away from a mobilisation paradigm to one with large forces in-being, had crept into the nation's strategic planning and understanding of the likely nature of the next conflict.

Résumé

Le présent document technique, qui constitue la première étude de cas exhaustive d'une série de huit, porte sur la façon dont le Canada a géré la crise des missiles de Cuba. Dans cette étude, on tentera d'expliquer la raison pour laquelle le gouvernement Diefenbaker, dans un contexte de menace sérieuse contre la sécurité et la défense nord-américaines, a retardé la hausse du niveau de préparation des FC qu'exigeait Washington et on se penchera sur le rôle joué par les mécanismes décisionnels du gouvernement canadien de l'époque. En reconstituant les événements et les processus décisionnels politiques, bureaucratiques et militaires de l'époque, on commencera à écrire « l'histoire » de la relation entre le Canada et les États-Unis en matière de défense stratégique. Il s'agit d'une triste histoire où des dirigeants politiques et militaires se sont montrés trop enclins à accepter des raisons de justifier l'inaction devant un danger clair et imminent. Même si le fait de se doter d'une structure de sécurité nationale harmonisée ne suffit pas toujours à écarter les volontés individuelles du processus décisionnel, la présente étude de cas démontre que la structure de sécurité nationale en vigueur au moment de la crise a permis aux dirigeants militaires et civils de s'en tirer beaucoup trop facilement en justifiant leur inaction. Bien que l'on reconnaisse l'omniprésence des volontés individuelles, le manque de rigueur du système n'a été d'aucun secours pour en atténuer les effets pervers, car aucune évaluation réaliste et ponctuelle ne s'est imposée quant aux urgences géostratégiques de la nation ou à la menace grandissante liée à la présence de missiles soviétiques à Cuba. En effet, la présente étude de cas démontre qu'une certaine paresse stratégique, accentuée par un éloignement graduel d'un paradigme de mobilisation au profit de vastes forces en devenir, s'est installée dans les processus nationaux de planification stratégique et de reconnaissance de la probabilité du prochain conflit.

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Executive Summary

Confronting the 'Essence of Decision': *Canada and the Cuban Missile Crisis*

B. W. Gladman and P. M. Archambault; DRDC CORA TM 2010-250; Defence R&D Canada- CORA; November 2010.

Introduction: This Technical Memorandum, which is the first full case-study in a series of eight, examines how Canada dealt with the Cuban Missile Crisis. The case will focus on accounting for why the Diefenbaker government, in the context of a grave threat to North American security and defence, delayed increasing the readiness level for the CF as requested by Washington, and the role played by the mechanics of Canadian Government decision-making at the time. Was the Diefenbaker government well informed both of the Soviet threat as it had developed and the more specific threat of Castro's Cuba, and why or why not? To what extent did the tensions between Diefenbaker and President Kennedy, and specifically the former's active desire to be perceived to be pursuing independent foreign policy, influence his decision? And what does all this reveal about the nature of Canadian, and indeed American, strategic culture? By reconstructing the events and decision-making processes that existed in the political, bureaucratic and military domains, the case will begin to build the 'story' of the Canada-US strategic defence relationship. In the context of the full project, it might be more chronologically apt to 'begin at the beginning' with the Confederation case study. However, the Missile Crisis offers the opportunity to demonstrate the utility of the case method with a relatively constrained set of conditions and a single, distinct decision-point that occurred in a high pressure, high-stakes setting. In the case of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the very limited historiography dealing specifically with the Canadian role in the crisis does not delve into sufficient depth on these issues, and leaves as many questions as it answers.

Results: Much of the literature of this incident and the Canadian response points to confusion at the highest levels, but does not account sufficiently for it. It shows that Canadian political leadership hesitated at a key time when, despite misgivings over a lack of prior consultation, it was time to close ranks with our closest ally in defence of the continent. However, the literature either misinterprets what could have been done, or places the blame on the lack of an approved DND War Book as the chief culprit for the extended delay that occurred. This study has shown that useable, if not ideal, measures were in place by which the Chiefs of Staff Committee could have raised the readiness levels of all services, and NORAD and naval forces in particular, without appealing to Cabinet. So, although the literature is correct in capturing the delay, the reasons for it have hitherto eluded scholars.

Another common theme in the scholarship on the Canadian response to this incident is whether this reflected the collapse of civilian control of the military. Really, there are two levels to this. The first is what measures were available to the MND and senior military leadership, and why they were not used? This study argues that the Chiefs of Staff could have raised readiness levels to match those of the US without Cabinet approval, and has offered an explanation of why this did not happen. There is also a strategic level aspect to this question,

concerning the level of decision support available to the Prime Minister. This study demonstrates that serious obstacles prevented the dialogue between senior military and political leadership, the end result of which was a lack of essential information upon which to make clear decisions. The breakdown in civil-military relations occurred well before the crisis struck, of course, but an important part of the 'story' of the crisis requires recalling how key decision-makers were perceived by others, particularly the US.

In effect, the sad story of how Ottawa handled the Cuban Missile Crisis is replete with leaders, both political and military, too readily accepting reasons to justify inaction in the face of a clear and present danger. Thus, while having a more streamlined national security structure cannot always negate the effect of personality on decision-making, what this case-study demonstrates is that the national security structure in place during the crisis allowed military civilian leadership to get away far too easily with finding reasons for inaction. While it is accepted that personality always makes itself felt, the lack of rigour in the system did nothing to soften its sharp edges since it did not force realistic and timely assessments of the nation's geostrategic imperatives, or of the developing threat from Soviet missiles in Cuba. Indeed, this case-study has shown that a degree of strategic laziness, enhanced by a slow move away from a mobilisation paradigm to one with large forces in-being, had crept into the nation's strategic planning and understanding of the likely nature of the next conflict. The American 'essence of decision', while far from perfect, attempted to understand the context, the adversary's perspective, and tried to apply a degree of rigour to the decision-making process that may have prevented the crisis from developing into a major war.

Significance: While the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces have undergone various organizational changes since 1962, there are enduring lessons. To that end, this incident may serve as an example of the need for a national security apparatus to bring forward in a timely fashion all relevant information, in order to ensure that the leadership is adequately armed to make decisions. This is not to say that this information will be heeded, or that it will bring Canadian political leadership into line with their American counterparts on all issues. Rather, the process through which this understanding is developed and presented to senior leadership increases the likelihood that they will develop a common perception of the threat. How that threat is dealt with will be the subject of debate, but with the advantage of being armed *ab initio* with a deeper understanding of what are very complex matters. The alternative is incoherence; the muddled statements made by Ottawa about the relationship between NORAD and NATO demonstrated the reluctance - or inability - of Canadian decision-makers to be precise either about military matters generally or relations with Washington specifically. In the absence of a rigorous and expert-driven national security structure, military and political leaders were too easily able to accept reasons to justify inaction in the face of a grave threat to North America. As it turned out, the Canadian political leadership ultimately paid the price for its inaction in this crisis and on other issues.

Considerations for implementation: This body of knowledge can be deployed as a contextual backdrop to support key decisions both in the area of Canada-US defence relations and crisis planning.

Sommaire

Confronting the 'Essence of Decision': *Canada and the Cuban Missile Crisis*

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Introduction : Le présent document technique, qui constitue la première étude de cas exhaustive d'une série de huit, porte sur la façon dont le Canada a géré la crise des missiles de Cuba. Dans cette étude, on tentera d'expliquer la raison pour laquelle le gouvernement Diefenbaker, dans un contexte de menace sérieuse contre la sécurité et la défense nord-américaines, a retardé la hausse du niveau de préparation des FC qu'exigeait Washington et on se penchera sur le rôle joué par les mécanismes décisionnels du gouvernement canadien de l'époque. Le gouvernement Diefenbaker était-il bien informé de l'évolution de la menace soviétique et de la menace plus précise que présentait Cuba sous le régime Castro? Comment cela s'explique-t-il? Dans quelle mesure les tensions entre M. Diefenbaker et le président Kennedy, particulièrement l'ancien désir ardent d'être perçu comme une nation en quête d'une politique étrangère indépendante, ont-elles influencé sa décision? Que révèlent tous ces éléments sur la nature de la culture stratégique canadienne, et par le fait même, américaine? En reconstituant les événements et les processus décisionnels politiques, bureaucratiques et militaires de l'époque, on commencera à écrire « l'histoire » de la relation entre le Canada et les États-Unis en matière de défense stratégique. À l'échelle globale du projet, il pourrait être approprié sur le plan chronologique de « commencer par le commencement » avec l'étude de cas relative à la confédération. Toutefois, la crise des missiles nous donne l'occasion de démontrer l'utilité de la méthode des cas lorsqu'il est question d'un ensemble de conditions relativement restreint et d'un seul moment décisionnel distinct survenu dans un contexte où la pression et les enjeux étaient considérables. Dans le cas de la crise des missiles cubains, l'historiographie très limitée qui porte précisément sur le rôle du Canada dans la crise n'explore pas le sujet de façon assez approfondie. On y trouve un certain nombre de réponses, mais autant de questions restent en suspens.

Résultats : La majeure partie de la littérature sur l'incident et la réaction du Canada souligne la confusion qui régnait dans les hautes sphères décisionnelles, mais ne pousse pas la réflexion assez loin. On y démontre que les dirigeants politiques canadiens ont hésité à un moment clé où, malgré le doute laissé par un manque de consultation préalable, il fallait resserrer les rangs avec notre plus proche allié pour défendre le continent. Cependant, dans cette littérature, soit on interprétait mal ce qui aurait pu être fait, soit on pointait du doigt l'absence d'un recueil des mesures de guerre approuvé comme la principale cause du délai prolongé que l'on a connu. La présente étude a démontré que des mesures faisables, voire idéales, étaient en place à l'époque et que le Comité des chefs d'état-major aurait pu y recourir pour accroître les niveaux de préparation dans tous les services, notamment au NORAD et dans les forces navales, sans solliciter le cabinet. Donc, même si le délai a bien été

cerné dans la littérature, les raisons sous-jacentes ont échappé aux chercheurs jusqu'à maintenant.

Dans les études sur la réaction canadienne à cet incident, on soulève fréquemment la possibilité que le déroulement des événements soit le reflet de l'effondrement du contrôle civil de l'armée. En réalité, cette hypothèse comprend deux volets. D'une part, de quelles mesures disposaient le MDN et la haute direction militaire et pourquoi ne les ont-ils pas utilisées? Dans la présente étude, on avance que les chefs d'état-major auraient pu accroître les niveaux de préparation pour atteindre ceux des États-Unis sans l'approbation du cabinet et on tente d'expliquer pourquoi cela ne s'est pas produit ainsi. D'autre part, la question comporte aussi un aspect stratégique en ce qui a trait au degré de soutien décisionnel dont disposait le premier ministre. L'étude démontre que d'importants obstacles ont empêché l'établissement du dialogue entre les dirigeants militaires et politiques, ce qui s'est traduit par un manque d'information essentielle pour prendre des décisions éclairées. De toute évidence, la rupture des relations civilo-militaires s'est produite bien avant la crise, mais pour comprendre une importante portion de « l'histoire » de la crise, il faut se rappeler comment les décideurs clés étaient perçus par les autres, principalement par les États-Unis.

Le triste épisode de la gestion de la crise des missiles de Cuba par Ottawa est rempli de dirigeants politiques et militaires trop enclins à accepter des raisons de justifier l'inaction devant un danger clair et imminent. Donc, même si le fait de se doter d'une structure de sécurité nationale harmonisée ne suffit pas toujours à écarter les volontés individuelles du processus décisionnel, la présente étude de cas démontre que la structure de sécurité nationale en vigueur au moment de la crise a permis aux dirigeants militaires et civils de s'en tirer beaucoup trop facilement en justifiant leur inaction. Bien que l'on reconnaisse l'omniprésence des volontés individuelles, le manque de rigueur du système n'a été d'aucun secours pour en atténuer les effets pervers, car aucune évaluation réaliste et ponctuelle ne s'est imposée quant aux urgences géostratégiques de la nation ou à la menace grandissante liée à la présence de missiles soviétiques à Cuba. En effet, la présente étude de cas démontre qu'une certaine paresse stratégique, accentuée par un éloignement graduel d'un paradigme de mobilisation au profit de vastes forces en devenir, s'est installée dans les processus nationaux de planification stratégique et de reconnaissance de la probabilité du prochain conflit. « L'essence de la décision » américaine, bien que loin d'être parfaite, reposait sur un effort de compréhension du contexte ainsi que de la perspective opposée et sur une volonté d'appliquer une certaine rigueur au processus décisionnel, ce qui a peut-être empêché la crise de dégénérer en guerre majeure.

Importance : Bien que le ministère de la Défense nationale et les Forces canadiennes aient connu divers changements organisationnels depuis 1962, on peut encore tirer des leçons du passé. Cet incident peut servir d'exemple pour illustrer la nécessité qu'une structure de sécurité nationale fournisse en temps opportun tous les renseignements pertinents afin que les dirigeants soient en mesure de prendre des décisions. Une telle structure ne garantit pas que l'on accorde l'attention requise à ces renseignements ou que les dirigeants politiques canadiens s'entendront avec leurs homologues américains sur toutes les questions, mais le processus de réflexion et de présentation de l'information aux hauts dirigeants favorisera une perception commune de la menace. On pourra débattre de la façon de réagir à la menace, mais on aura l'avantage de bénéficier dès le début d'une compréhension approfondie des questions très complexes. À l'opposé, il reste l'incohérence. Les propos nébuleux d'Ottawa sur la

relation entre le NORAD et l'OTAN témoignent de la réticence, voire l'incapacité, des décideurs canadiens d'adopter une position précise sur la question militaire en général ou sur les relations avec Washington en particulier. En l'absence d'une structure de sécurité nationale axée sur l'expertise, les dirigeants militaires et politiques ont pu trop facilement accepter des raisons de justifier l'inaction devant une menace sérieuse pour l'Amérique du Nord. En fin de compte, les dirigeants politiques canadiens ont payé le prix de leur inaction dans cette crise ainsi que dans d'autres dossiers.

Considérations relatives à la mise en œuvre : Cet ensemble de connaissances peut servir de toile de fond contextuelle sur laquelle appuyer des décisions clés dans les domaines des relations canado-américaines de défense stratégique et de la planification des situations de crise.

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Project Overview

"In the final analysis, a Great Power will take whatever action it finds necessary to the maintenance of its security. It must do this or cease to be a Great Power, and the United States is no exception...in the final analysis the security of the United States is the security of Canada."[1] RJ Sutherland

This project's purpose, of which the following case-study is but one part, is to support decision-making on current and future defence and security questions facing the nation, both those focused specifically on Canada-US continental defence, and those concerning how the two nations approach conflict abroad. As will be shown, the 'home' and 'away' games are indivisible, since how the US deals with crises in distant lands and how Canadian politicians characterise those efforts, and consequently either support or withhold assistance, directly affect the nature of the partnership in continental defence. The final report, building upon the knowledge gained from each case-study, will identify and analyze the key elements of the relationship and thus lead to a better understanding of the nature of Canadian 'strategic culture', all of which will enable specific recommendations for consideration by senior leadership. This appreciation will assist DND/CF and the Government of Canada in its efforts to shape both the strategic relationship, and the military-to-military relationship in order to meet the challenges posed by the evolving international security environment.

Eight case-studies have been selected from key decision points in the nation's history that are sufficiently representative that we may draw from them specific conclusions deriving from the picture these case-studies will paint. It must be understood that, if taken in isolation, none of them is predictive. In other words, none of the single case-studies is sufficient in and of itself to enable conclusions about current defence and security problems to be derived. There is an unfortunate tendency to use history as a 'grab-bag' to supply useful quotes, often offered completely out of context, to support preferred options or courses of action. This project uses the historical method, rather than a theoretical approach, looking to illuminate the practical 'essence of decision' in each case.[2] Only when all eight case-studies have been completed, and thus the 'story' told, will sufficient knowledge be amassed and expertise gained to enable the authors to make specific recommendations applicable to the challenges posed by the current and foreseeable security environment.

The basis of any decision regarding the evolution of the Canada-US strategic defence relationship, or the military-to-military relationship, must be a clear understanding of how and why decisions have been made related to continental defence. Only through a rigorous analysis of primary source material can the assumptions underpinning the existing

[1] R. J. Sutherland, "Canada's Long Term Strategic Situation," *International Journal,* Vol. XVIII, No.3, Summer 1962, p. 203.

[2] There is already a great deal of international relations theory applied to this incident. For some examples of this literature, see Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), and the updated edition, Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis,* 2nd edition, (New York: Addison-Wesley Longman, 1999). Although this literature is informative to this study, the authors have chosen to employ a historical method rather than a theoretical modelling approach.

historiography be credibly challenged. In so doing, a comprehensive body of knowledge will be assembled that provides a clearer understanding of how the two countries have dealt in the past with key changes in the security environment, illuminating the extent to which the two governments have been guided by a common threat perception and how this influenced the response. As well, this body of knowledge will show whether inter-governmental and inter-service relations have set the tone of military-to-military relationships, or whether they were largely immune to the to-and-fro of political rhetoric. Collectively, the answers to these questions will address the larger question of how, and for what reasons, the Canada-US partnership in continental defence has been shaped. Moreover, it will provide a firm foundation upon which to suggest improvements to the National Security framework, as well as recommendations to improve the strategic defence relationship. In order to do so, this case-study will confront the 'essence of decision' from both the Canadian and American perspectives.

Introduction

This Technical Memorandum, which is the first full case-study in a series of eight, examines how Canada dealt with the Cuban Missile Crisis. The case will focus on accounting for why the Diefenbaker government, in the context of a grave threat to North American security and defence, delayed increasing the readiness level for the CF as requested by Washington, and the role played by the mechanics of Canadian Government decision-making at the time. Was the Diefenbaker government well informed both of the Soviet threat as it had developed and the more specific threat of Castro's Cuba, and why or why not? To what extent did the tensions between Diefenbaker and President Kennedy, and specifically the former's active desire to be perceived to be pursuing independent foreign policy, influence his decision? And what does all this reveal about the nature of Canadian, and indeed American, strategic culture? By reconstructing the events and decision-making processes that existed in the political, bureaucratic and military domains, the case will begin to build the 'story' of the Canada-US strategic defence relationship. While it might be more chronologically apt to 'begin at the beginning' with the Confederation case study, the Missile Crisis offers the opportunity to demonstrate the utility of the case method with a relatively constrained set of conditions and a single, distinct decision-point that occurred in a high pressure, high-stakes context. In the case of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the very limited historiography dealing specifically with the Canadian role in the crisis does not delve into sufficient depth on these issues, and leaves as many questions as it answers.

There was much written shortly after the Cuban Missile Crisis both by journalists and scholars that tended to put the blame for Canada's confused response squarely on the shoulders of ex-Prime Minister John Diefenbaker.[3] Most notable was Peter Newman's book *Renegade in Power*, originally published in 1963, the title of which speaks volumes.[4] Newman emphasised 'Dief's' inherent indecisiveness as a key contributor to the fiasco, and this perspective quickly became central to much subsequent literature. Reinforcing Newman's viewpoint was an article written by Robert Spencer in 1962, which provided more detail on the course of the crisis and also pointed to Diefenbaker's shortcomings, both in terms of not taking the country's defence seriously, and in his alleged indecisiveness.[5] Another key title written shortly after the crisis, but focusing more on NORAD and the nuclear weapons controversy that formed a major part of the fallout from this incident, is Jon McLin's *Canada's Changing Defense Policy, 1957*.[6] His discussion focuses on the systemic problems associated with having a defence relationship between unequal partners, and ways to mitigate them. James Minifie's work *Open at the Top* emphasised the difficulties inherent in Canada adopting an

[3] The review of relevant literature comes from the first Technical Memorandum of this project: see Brad Gladman and Peter Archambault, *The Canada-US Strategic Defence Relationship: Methodology and Case-Study Synopses*, (Ottawa: DRDC-CORA TM 2008-063, 2009), pp. 41-44.

[4] Peter C. Newman, *Renegade in Power: The Diefenbaker Years*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963).

[5] Robert Spencer, "External Affairs and Defence," *Canadian Annual Review, 1962*, quoted in Peter T. Haydon, *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis: Canadian Involvement Reconsidered*, (Toronto: The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1993), p. 34.

[6] Jon B. McLin, *Canada's Changing Defense Policy, 1957-1963: The Problems of a Middle Power in Alliance*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967). Also see Sean M. Maloney, *Learning to Love the Bomb: Canada's Nuclear Weapons during the Cold War*, (Washington DC: Potomac Books, 2007).

independent foreign policy, and actually praised Diefenbaker's delay in raising the alert level of the CF as assisting in preventing the crisis from escalating.[7] Showing astounding naiveté, Minifie not only praised indecision and confused decision-making, but used this experience to argue for total independence from the US. Collectively, these sources give some insight into what was being said about the handling of the crisis at the time and just afterwards, and the degree to which these perspectives shaped the subsequent literature and decisions on defence matters. Doing so will reveal much about the nature of Canadian strategic culture, as well as the mechanics of decision-making within the Government of Canada.

Since the time of the crisis, its handling has received a great deal of attention from scholars, many of whom show signs of being influenced by what has become conventional wisdom. While some of that work is useful to this study, some is shallow and reflects either an attempt to trumpet the cause of increased independence from the US, or simplistic anti-Americanism.[8] Patrick Nicholson's work on the Diefenbaker government sketches out the deep differences of opinion within the cabinet on this matter.[9] But although it shed new light on some aspects of the mechanics of decision-making within government, it leaves more questions than it answers. In particular, while he emphasises Diefenbaker's personal turmoil over the appropriate response to the NORAD request and whether it would provoke the Soviets, he stops short of explaining that indecision. Peyton Lyon's contribution to the literature paints a detailed picture of the various political decisions surrounding the crisis, and gives a good assessment of its impact on Canada-US relations.[10] But once again it leaves many questions unanswered, perhaps because the author lacked access to the appropriate files. In particular, the question of whether 'Dief' knew of the crisis before Livingston Merchant arrived to brief him is asked, but Lyon was unable to answer it. Douglas Harkness, the Minister of National Defence at the time of the crisis, later shed light on this issue by saying that the Canadian Government received nothing through External Affairs "or through military channels, which in nearly all cases was a quicker and more complete source of information in regard to defence matters than the diplomatic channel."[11] He went on to say that the US preparation "was the best kept secret of anything in my experience concerning the Pentagon -- which generally resembled a sieve which could hold nothing in the way of news."[12]

A few other personal accounts of the crisis appeared in the late 1970s.[13] The second volume of John Diefenbaker's memoirs was published and contained many irregularities in its

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[7] James M. Minifie, *Open at the Top: Reflections on US-Canada Relations,* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1964).

[8] For an example of the latter, see John W. Warnock, *Partner to Behemoth: The Military Policy of a Satellite Canada,* (Toronto: New Press, 1970).

[9] Patrick Nicholson, *Vision and Indecision,* (Toronto: Longmans, 1968).

[10] Peyton Lyon, "The Cold War: Cuba-October 1962", *Canada in World Affairs, 1961-63,* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968). Also see Peyton Lyon, "Prime Minister Diefenbaker and the Cuban Missile Crisis", Thomas A. Hockin, ed., *Apex of Power: The Prime Minister and Political Leadership in Canada,* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1977).

[11] Library and Archives Canada (LAC), Manuscript Group (MG) 32, Papers of Douglas Harkness, vol. 57, "The Nuclear Arms Question and the Political Crisis Which Arose From it in January and February, 1963" by Lieutenant-Colonel the Honourable Douglas Harkness, p. 7.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Paul Martin, *A Very Public Life, Volume II – So Many Worlds,* (Ottawa: Deneau, 1976), Lester B. Pearson, *Mike: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson*, vol. 3.

persistent claim of American betrayal by not consulting with him before the US took any action.[14] At roughly the same time, two important articles were written on the crisis, one by Jocelyn Maynard Ghent and another by Howard Letner.[15] Ghent's article points to the steady deterioration of relations between Diefenbaker and Kennedy in the prelude to the crisis, and focuses on Pearson's exploitation of this troubled relationship. Letner argued that the crisis was a turning point in Canada-US relations that led the US to question Canada's reliability as an ally. Ghent wrote two other influential pieces on the conflict which provide more detail on the Canadian military response, but "technical errors in describing the Canadian military structure and its working relationship with the American services…detract from an otherwise sound analysis."[16] Although useful background for this case-study, these sources shed little direct light on the issues upon which this study will focus.

A very small number of works written in the late 1970s and early 1980s provide more of a starting point for this analysis. Jack Granatstein's biography of Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Norman Robertson, gives some detail on Diefenbaker's mistrust of External Affairs, and the different perspectives of Defence and External Affairs on continental defence matters.[17] Complementing this work is Reginald Roy's biography of defence minister Major-General George Pearkes, which outlines Diefenbaker's mistrust of the military, and how this precluded the development of a coherent defence policy. But it stops short of a full explanation of the degree to which this mistrust blocked advice from key military figures from reaching the cabinet during this crisis, and what, in turn, this says about Canadian strategic culture and the mechanics of decision-making within the Government of Canada at this critical time.

The most commonly cited source on the Canadian involvement in this crisis is Peter Haydon's *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.*[18] Haydon's book begins by surveying the literature on Canada's role in the crisis to identify the main issues and what scholars have said about them; most of those sources have been reviewed above. As discussed, of particular importance was Diefenbaker's refusal to heighten the readiness of the Canadian forces as well as his obvious disapproval of Kennedy's style of crisis management. From here, Haydon outlines the state of Canada-US relations, the agreements for continental defence, and the structure of the Canadian military. All of this sets the stage for a detailed and critical analysis of Canada's role in the crisis, and its political and military performance.

Haydon's analysis brings more clarity to the context in which both the Canadian military and political leaders operated during this crisis. His analysis includes some of the factors that may

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[14] John G. Diefenbaker, *One Canada: The Tumultuous Years 1962-1967,* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1977).
[15] Howard H. Letner, "Foreign Policy Decision Making: The Case of Canada and Nuclear Weapons," *World Politics,* Vol. XXIX (Oct. 1976), Jocelyn M. Ghent, "Did He Fall or Was He Pushed? The Kennedy Administration and the Collapse of the Diefenbaker Government" *International History Review,* (April 1979).
[16] The article is Jocelyn M. Ghent, "Canada, the United States, and the Cuban Missile Crisis." For a description of the technical errors see Peter T. Haydon, *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis: Canadian involvement Reconsidered,* p. 38.
[17] J. L. Granatstein, *A Man of Influence,* (Ottawa: Deneau Publishers, 1981), Reginald H. Roy, *For Most Conspicuous Bravery,* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1977).
[18] Peter T. Haydon, *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis: Canadian Involvement Reconsidered,* (Toronto: The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1993).

have motivated Diefenbaker, but these are fairly traditional, including Diefenbaker's indecisiveness, the belief that integration with the US eroded Canadian sovereignty but that the speed with which a nuclear exchange could be brought about made such integration necessary. In particular, Haydon argues that Diefenbaker's reluctance to order a heightened alert for Canadian forces was not due to indecisiveness, as some scholars have surmised, but rather was deliberate and based on a variety of political considerations. Of these, Haydon rejects out of hand the often quoted complaint that the US had not fulfilled its obligation to consult with Canadian political leadership before ordering a heightened NORAD alert. On the more important issue of whether this incident represented a collapse of political control of the Canadian military, Haydon argues convincingly that during the crisis the decision-making process was in disarray because of a confused command structure, exacerbated by a Prime Minister unfamiliar with military matters and distrustful of senior military leaders. In such circumstances, Haydon argues, Minister of National Defence Douglas Harkness' "decision to put the Canadian military on an alert state and to allow operational commanders to honour the joint continental defence commitments without reference to cabinet prevented an even greater national embarrassment."[19] Haydon continues by saying that while Harkness technically broke the rules, "he did so for the best reasons."[20] While understandable, this explanation leaves some important questions unanswered, or insufficiently so.

In Haydon's discussion of whether this incident reflected the collapse of civilian control of the military, one issue of importance to this study is not explored sufficiently. That is, what level of decision support was available to the Prime Minister to make an appropriate decision and with what departments did he consult, and what does this say about the mechanics of decision-making within the Government of Canada at that time? Some of the lessons from this incident thus have enduring value. Haydon supports the view that had Diefenbaker sought and considered advice from Canadian military leaders on their perception of the situation, there would have been less needless debate which presented a crack in the Western alliance and put the security of North America at risk. While there is some truth in this argument, the real issue for this study is what, if any, mechanisms were in place to ensure that this and other necessary advice reached those charged with making these decisions – in this case the Prime Minister and Cabinet. To extend this a bit further, this incident may serve as an example of the need for a national security apparatus to bring relevant information forward in a timely fashion to ensure the leadership has the information and advice it needs to make decisions. This is not to say that this information or advice will be heeded, or that it will bring Canadian political leadership into line with their American counterparts on all issues. Rather, the process through which this understanding is developed and presented to senior leadership increases the likelihood that they will develop a common perception of the threat. How that threat is dealt with will be the subject of debate, but with the advantage of entering the debate armed with a more profound understanding of the issues in play, decision-makers will be in a better position to comprehend and cope with the complex interplay of the myriad elements of the alliance.

What factors motivated Canadian political leadership to dither in the face of what was a dire threat to the continent, and what that says about Canadian strategic culture and the mechanics of decision making, are issues upon which this case-study will focus. The seeming failure to

[19] Ibid., p. 210.
[20] Ibid.

grasp the nature of the threat to both Canada and the US posed by the deployment of Soviet missiles to Cuba, and the desire on Diefenbaker's part to preserve an independent foreign policy and to make the point that Canadian leadership needed to be consulted earlier than it had been in this instance, are insufficiently explained and inadequate; this case-study will assist in their clarification.

In so doing, this case-study must tackle the accepted interpretation of events, beginning with that written during and immediately after the crisis, in part to illustrate both the mechanics of decision making and the nature of Canadian strategic culture, but also to determine the degree to which this interpretation shaped key decisions taken shortly thereafter. Showing how, for example, the interpretations of the handling of this crisis may have influenced decisions on the unification of the armed forces and whether this was appropriate will, in the context of a similar assessment in each case-study, reveal much about patterns in government decision making, and the difficulty (but considerable value) in correctly using historical analogy to inform current and future decisions. All of this will enable a better understanding of the subject matter, and enabling us to derive generalizable conclusions, and produce clear and relevant recommendations.

The 'Essence' of Decision in the Cuban Missile Crisis

The 1962 crisis was rooted in the overthrow of the Batista government in the Cuban Revolution in 1959, and the subsequent move of the Castro regime into the Soviet orbit.[21] A contemporary CIA report claimed that the "chain of events that culminated in the Cuban crisis of October 1962 can be traced back to the visit of Soviet First Deputy Premier Mikoyan to Cuba in February 1960. This visit constituted the first public endorsement of the Cuban revolution, after a year of Soviet reserve following Castro's seizure of power and Soviet diplomatic recognition of the regime."[22] A series of economic assistance agreements followed, as did the provision of military aid which "proceeded cautiously and deliberately, particularly when compared with assistance to other countries, as though the Soviet leaders were carefully testing both US reactions and their relations with the Castro regime."[23] It was not until mid-1962 that advanced weapons systems were deployed to Cuba, possibly as a means of testing Krushchev's assessment of President Kennedy from their Vienna summit in June of 1961.

Although the Soviets were aware of US photo-reconnaissance capabilities, and may have been aware of US overflights of Cuba by mid-1962, their planning and execution of the Cuban endeavour incorporated no steps designed to reduce the risks of detection. Indeed, they did not even attempt to camouflage or conceal the ballistic missile system equipment or the missiles themselves before they were combat ready. Thus, it seems inescapable that "the Soviet leaders in their planning did not regard the possibility of US detection as critical to the success or failure of the Cuban venture", and that they believed the "US would acquiesce in the deployment of strategic missiles in Cuba or at least would not attempt to force their removal by reacting militarily."[24] This was a grave miscalculation that ignored both the centrality of the Monroe doctrine, and that Washington considered the Caribbean to be a US *mare nostrum*; and that, as a result, it was extremely unlikely that Soviet trespassing on this scale would be ignored. Oddly enough, this misunderstanding of US thinking was shared by the Canadian political leadership, presumably the ally enjoying a 'special relationship' with Washington.

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[21] DHH, 73/1093, The USSR & Cuba: the US position, October 1962, p. 15; JFK, Papers of Theodore Sorensen, Special Council to the President, Box 109, Background: The Confrontation and The U.S. Decision-Makers, undated, p. 4; JFK, Papers of Arthur M. Schlesinger, White House Files, Box WH-5, Secretary of Defense, "Cuba: Questions and Answers," DoD Pam Gen-2, 29 October 1962, p. 1; NARA, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, Box 1, "The CIA's Internal Probe of the Bay of Pigs Affair", p. 70; NARA, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Records Relating to the Cuban Missile Crisis 1962-1963, Bloc Military Aid to the Castro Regime", 10 January 1962; NARA, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Subject Files 1960-63, White Paper, undated, p. 15; LAC, RG 25, Records of the Department of External Affairs, vol. 5049 File 2444-40 Part 4, Responsibility of Cuban Government for Increased International Tensions in the Hemisphere, 1 August 1960, p. 1.

[22] NARA, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, Box 1, "Krushchev's Miscalculated Risk", p. 1.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid., p. 4.

The crisis itself began with photographic intelligence showing the Soviets installing ballistic missiles in Cuba that would, once operational, be capable of hitting US and Canadian targets. This induced President John Kennedy to establish an American naval quarantine of the island and to threaten further action if preparation of the deployment and launch sites continued. As is often argued, tensions between the Kennedy administration and the Diefenbaker government over the latter's failure to cut ties with Communist Cuba and Diefenbaker's belief that the US position on Cuba was unbalanced, caused Kennedy to inform the Canadians only an hour and a half in advance of the quarantine announcement on 22 October.[25] As historian Richard Neustadt has noted, the Cuba problem was characterised by the spiral effect of "muddled perceptions, stifled communications, and disappointed expectations."[26]

As will be shown, while the Canadian 'essence of decision' was in fact an 'essence of indecision' for structural and other reasons, the decision-making on the American side through President Kennedy and his Executive Committee of the National Security Council (ExComm) was markedly different. While far from perfect, historians Neustadt and May have noted that the approach to decision-making adopted for the crisis departed from standard practice in a few important ways. First, ExComm subjected the analogies to which leaders always resort to serious analysis. Moreover, they sought to understand the history of the issue and its context, avoiding the tendency to rush immediately to a solution, and questioned key presumptions. In particular, while some analysts believed missiles in Cuba did not affect the strategic balance, Kennedy sought the advice of Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Nitze, a key planner since the Truman era. Nitze believed that Soviet missiles in Cuba might change Soviet reasoning about whether the United States would risk war over, for example, Berlin. Thus, the missiles made a real difference.[27] In questioning the presumptions, ExComm also sought to understand the Soviet perspective and context, and how their actions might be interpreted. Finally, Kennedy and his ExComm "paid attention to organizational histories". For example, as advisors were attempting to sort out the difference between two of Krushchev's cables, a US U-2 reconnaissance aircraft was shot down over Cuba. While some called for retaliation, Kennedy "accepted Thompson's counsel not to read political significance into what could well have been just a Soviet air defense unit acting according to the book."[28] Kennedy's decision not to retaliate avoided complicating Krushchev's decision to accept US terms.

On the Canadian side, the result of the "muddled perceptions, stifled communications, and disappointed expectations" was the Canadian government's hesitation in responding to the American request to increase the Canadian Forces alert status to the Canadian equivalent of

[25] This argument appears in many sources to varying degrees of importance as a factor in how events unfolded. For examples of this see Jocelyn Maynard Ghent, "Canada, the United States, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, *The Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 48 No. 2 (May, 1979), pp. 160-161, John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall, *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies*, p. 218, Robert Reford, *Canada and Three Crises*, (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1968), pp. 147-217, and J.L. Granatstein and Norman Hillmer, *For Better or for Worse: Canada and the United States to the 1990s*, (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1991), pp. 203-204.
[26] Richard E. Neustadt, *Alliance Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), p. 56.
[27] Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers*, New York: The Free Press, 1986. Also see the Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Papers of Paul H. Nitze, Box 82, Handwritten notes on the Cuban Crisis, October 1962.
[28] Neustadt and May, *Thinking in Time*, p. 13.

Defence Condition (DEFCON) 3, which was only resolved after lengthy Cabinet debates on 23-24 October when Ottawa finally (and very quietly) acquiesced. The historiography consistently paints a picture of Canadian political leadership fearing that a Canadian alert would further provoke the Soviets, especially in the context of what many cabinet ministers felt were unbalanced American policies towards Cuba. These fears, the argument continues, taken in combination with anger over a lack of advance consultation and concerns about implications for Canadian policy on nuclear weapons, led to Prime Minister John Diefenbaker (with the approval of Secretary of State for External Affairs Howard Green), displaying reluctance to agree to Kennedy's request. As the Soviet ships approached the quarantine zone later in the week, however, the position of the Minister of National Defence, Douglas Harkness, gained support and the alert was approved.

This incident exemplified the difference in the 'essence of decision' between the two countries. On the US side, one sees the President gathering only those with an interest and understanding of the incident, and applying some rigour to decision-making. The Canadian approach did not mirror this process. As will be shown, flawed advice opened the debate to those unfamiliar with the complex defence, security and alliances issues involved, making it far more difficult to separate informed opinion from uninformed emotion, all of which made timely decision-making all the more difficult.

As is frequently argued, Canada's response reflected in part the desire of the Prime Minister and others to preserve the independence of Canadian foreign policy and to maintain a balanced posture in crisis conditions – a posture that included not appearing to be too close to the American position for reasons of sovereignty. The delay, however, was widely criticised both at the time and since, contributing to a growing perception of the indecisiveness of the Diefenbaker government during a crisis involving a threat to Canada as much as to the US. Moreover, it exacerbated the already difficult relations with the Kennedy administration.

While Diefenbaker and President Dwight D. Eisenhower shared a warm relationship, the rapport between the prairie lawyer and the 'Imperial President' could not have been more stark.[29] Their relationship was frosty at best, and never improved, and this lack of a tangible interpersonal bond may have clouded and complicated discussions of the threat to the continent posed by Communist missiles, and what to do about them. The literature covers these issues, often tangentially and as part of a larger narrative. But what is lacking in most discussions is, amongst other things, an understanding of what sources of information and perspectives were sought by and pushed to 'Dief' and his cabinet in their deliberations; and whether the process in place to provide this information was a key factor in the resulting fiasco.

[29] Some scholars hold that anti-Americanism motivated Diefenbaker's approach to Canada-US relations. However, a more considered view shows generally good Canada-US relations with Diefenbaker and Eisenhower in power, but becoming almost antagonistic under the Kennedy administration. See Kevin Gloin, "Canada-US Relations in the Diefenbaker Era: Another Look" in D.C. Storey and R. Bruce Sheppard, (eds.), *The Diefenbaker Legacy: Canadian Politics, Law and Society Since 1957*, (Regina: Great Plains Research Center, 1998).

Biographies

When seeking an understanding of both the role of personality in a nation's 'strategic culture' and what motivated key decisions, it is useful to begin with a few brief biographies of key members of the Canadian decision-making structure. This will assist in attempting to come to terms with possible underlying motivations for the decisions that were made - or not made, as the case may be. While an individual's background is in no way predictive of future behaviour, an awareness of that background does help to explain how these key individuals came to understand the world they faced in 1962. In effect, while the missile crisis had a 'story,' so too did they. Furthermore, an important part of the 'story' of the crisis requires recalling how key decision-makers were perceived by others, particularly the US.

John G. Diefenbaker

John Diefenbaker, born in Ontario in 1896, was a fourth generation Canadian on both sides of his family. The son of a school teacher whose family moved to what is now Saskatchewan when he was eight years old, Diefenbaker was raised on a farm near Saskatoon. He graduated from the University of Saskatchewan and served overseas in World War I. However, his service had been compelled after he had tried "various excuses for not participating".[30] Part of his later difficult relationship with the military, writes Sean Maloney, was his fear that "there would be long-term ramifications in the media if this were known and he always thought that some general would call up his service record and use it against him for political purposes."[31]

After his return home, he studied law at the University of Saskatchewan, and would later become one of the outstanding courtroom lawyers in Canada. However, his enduring interest in politics took him in a new direction, and by 1936 Diefenbaker had become the provincial leader of the Progressive Conservatives in Saskatchewan. He was first elected to Parliament in 1940, and after two unsuccessful attempts, in 1956 had become leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.[32]

In June 1957, to the shock of many, possibly including Diefenbaker himself, he became Prime Minister of Canada when the Progressive Conservative Party won an unexpected victory, albeit with a minority government. The Conservatives' landslide victory in the March 1958 election, where he won the largest majority in Canadian history, was considered a personal triumph for Diefenbaker. In 1961, the US State Department characterised Diefenbaker as "a vigorous, self confident and a shrewd politician, [who] brought his party back into power on a dynamic platform of Canadian nationalism", and promoted this vision with evangelical fervour.[33] While at that time they did not believe he had any basic prejudice against the United States, State Department analysts noted his tendency "to seek on occasion to assert

[30] Sean Maloney, *Learning to Love the Bomb*, p. 106.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Library and Archives Canada (LAC), Manuscript Group (MG) 31, E 83 Papers of H. Basil Robinson, Volume 4 File 4, Washington – John F. Kennedy – General, February 1961, Memorandum for the President: Prime Minister Diefenbaker's Visit 20 February, 1961.
[33] Ibid.

Canadian independence by seizing opportunities for Canada to adopt policies which deviate somewhat from those of the United States, but...only when it has been possible without overwhelmingly serious consequences to U.S.-Canadian relations."[34] Furthermore, the State Department held that Diefenbaker remained "committed to close U.S.-Canadian cooperation and to Canadian participation in NATO", and that Diefenbaker took "a more realistic view of the dangers in the world situation and of Communist intentions than several of his colleagues."[35] Those colleagues no doubt included the Secretary of State for External Affairs during the Cuban Missile Crisis, Howard Green.

Howard Green

Howard Green was born in a mining town in British Columbia in 1895, graduated from the University of Toronto, and became a practising lawyer in Vancouver. Following military service in France during the First World War, he entered politics in 1935 as a Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament. Similar to the assessment of Diefenbaker, the US State Department characterised Green as a "shrewd politician and a good parliamentarian, [who] rapidly rose to a position of prominence in his party, and for some years served as Opposition floor leader in Parliament."[36] More accurate was their appraisal of Green being "handicapped in his present post by his previous unfamiliarity with the international scene and lack of administrative experience", reinforcing "a naive and almost parochial approach to some international problems which was first attributed to his inexperience but which is now believed to be part of his basic personality." Furthermore, they correctly noted that Green was

> a nationalistic Canadian and extremely sensitive to any implied interference with Canada's independence of action, particularly by the United States...He believe[d] that Canada's mission in the world [was] one of leadership of the middle powers in easing world tensions, and the resumption of disarmament negotiations [was] his main concern. While he support[ed] NATO and other defense agreements, he [was] rigidly opposed to the resumption of nuclear tests of any kind. Green [was] an old and close associate of Prime Minister Diefenbaker, and exercise[d] a voice in the cabinet second only to that of the Prime Minister. His self-righteousness and stubbornness [were] causes of friction between him and some of his colleagues. Less flexible and harder to deal with than the Prime Minister, Green [was] identified as the leader of the more nationalistic element in the government. [37]

One element of the State Department appraisal of Green would become a major factor in the Canadian response to the Cuban Missile Crisis: his almost pacifist attitude that created the conditions for confrontation with Defence Minister Harkness and other Cabinet members. Sean Maloney, referring to General Foulkes' opinion of Green, has written that "Green apparently thought that God had put him on earth to use Canada's influence to rid the planet of nuclear weapons."[38] Furthermore, Green "was fixated on preventing nuclear testing to the detriment of his other responsibilities", an attitude that "made cooperation in the political-

[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Sean Maloney, *Learning to Love the Bomb: Canada's Nuclear Weapons During the Cold War*, p. 173.

military field rather difficult, because agreement is occasionally needed on some positive project."[39]

US State Department officials complained of this attitude in internal communications. In one instance, US Counsellor for Political Affairs at the US embassy in Ottawa, Rufus Smith, commented that recent press accounts praising Green's "lecturing of his US, UK and French colleagues about their UN responsibilities" were "of no use to anyone." He went on to say that at the 1961 NATO Ministerial Meeting in Oslo, Green "was not at his best in meetings of this kind since he [did] not have a background of experience in diplomacy, [did] not have the same intellectual sophistication, and refuse[d] to wear a hearing aid despite the need for one."[40]

Douglas Harkness

Douglas Harkness was a popular Calgary politician who served in Parliament from 1945 to 1972. His popularity likely sprang from his distinguished service in World War Two. A militia officer before the war, Harkness was mobilised into the regular Canadian Army in 1939 and deployed overseas in 1940, serving with the Royal Canadian Artillery. It was in the Sicilian campaign in 1943 that Harkness received the George Medal for "courage, gallantry and devotion to duty of a higher order." While enroute from England for Operation 'Husky' the motor vessel Devis was attacked by a U-boat in the Mediterranean. During the evacuation of the vessel, as later reported by survivors, Harkness "was talking to the men, quieting them and was cool and calm." Throughout the ordeal, "Major Harkness showed a complete disregard for his own safety and it [was his] conviction that had it not been for his cool courage and leadership, the casualty list would have been much higher."[41] Obviously, this was a man able to keep a grip on a complex situation, and act calmly and rationally when others went to pieces, something that would be tested in Diefenbaker's Cabinet.

With Diefenbaker's victory in the 1957 election, Harkness took on numerous portfolios in Cabinet, becoming Minister of Northern Affairs, Natural Resources, and Agriculture. Not surprisingly, this proved too much for one man to handle, whereupon Harkness handed over Northern Affairs and Natural Resources to Alvin Hamilton, a man who once remarked that Harkness was "the only person who could make both farmers and city folk mad in the same speech."[42] Two years after the overwhelming Progressive Conservative victory in the 1958 election, Harkness took over the difficult defence portfolio. The context for this new assignment was the 1959 cancellation of the Avro Arrow project and a perception by the Americans of "growing "softness" in the current East-West struggle", something the poor relations and growing antagonism between Diefenbaker and the Kennedy administration did

[39] Ibid; NARA, RG 59 Entry 3077 Box 1, Record of Conversation between ADP Heeney and Mr. Armstrong, 29 August 1960.

[40] NARA, Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Office of the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, Subject files 1960-1963, Box 24, Memorandum of Conversation between W. H. Barton Chief, Defence Liaison (l) Division, Canadian Department of External Affairs and Rufus J. Smith, Counselor for Political Affairs, U.S. Embassy, Ottawa, 22 May 1961.

[41] LAC, RG24,Vol 10971, 239C1 (D21), Statements regarding the Sinking of the MV Devis,1943.

[42] Biography of Douglas Scott Harkness on the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Foods website, available at http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1169477079622&lang=eng, 11 February 2010.

little to improve.[43] It was a difficult assignment in the context of the shifting threat perceptions in the early 1960s, from manned-bombers to ballistic missiles, compounded by the realities of Canada-US relations. For example, a transcript of a telephone conversation between William R. Tyler, the Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs, and George Ball, the Undersecretary of State, gives some indication of the level of name recognition for Canadian ministers outside of Ottawa. Even after all the concern over the Canadian handling of the crisis, when Tyler referred to Harkness, Ball responded "Who is Harkness?"[44]

R.B. Bryce

Robert 'Bob' Bryce was both the Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to Cabinet from January 1, 1954, to June 30, 1963. Initially a student of engineering at the University of Toronto in 1932, Bryce later studied economics at Cambridge and Harvard universities. His public service began with the Department of Finance in 1938, and because of his considerable abilities and service during the Second World War by 1947 was the Assistant Deputy Minister of Finance and Secretary of the Treasury Board. After serving as Clerk of the Privy Council and Cabinet Secretary to Prime Ministers St. Laurent and Diefenbaker, Bryce returned to the Finance Department as Deputy Minister. From there, Bryce served on Prime Minister Trudeau's staff as the Economic Advisor on the Constitution, and also was appointed Canadian Executive Director to the International Monetary Fund in 1971. Topping off a long career was his appointment as a Companion of the Order of Canada for his long service to Canada.[45]

Some accounts highlight Bryce's central role in coordinating and presenting defence information to the Prime Minister, but curiously he was also often the route for information delivered to US officials. For example, a telegram from US Ambassador White to the Secretary of State on 24 October 1962, stated that Bryce, Secretary of the Cabinet,

> told [him] confidentially that Cabinet had authorized Defence Minister Harkness to invoke for Canadian Air Force (NORAD only) "ready phase of military vigilance" to bring Canadian force at NORAD into line with US forces." General James informs me that this is equivalent to US DEFCON 3 which is present stage our forces. James informed by Defence Ministry that Canadian forces NORAD have been authorized to assume NORAD DEFCON 3. [46]

Contrary to what the scholarship on this crisis has said, Bryce's message to Ambassador White on 24 October that the NORAD forces would be raised to a "ready phase of military vigilance" is further proof that those measures were available for use before the 25 October

[43] National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park MD, Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Records Related to Military Matters, Entry 5298 Bo9, "Canadian Manifestations of 'Softness' in East-West Struggle", undated.

[44] JFK, The Personal Papers of George W. Ball, Subjects – Canada, 4/26/61-11/8/63, Transcript of a telephone conversation between Tyler and Ball, 29 January 1963.

[45] These biographical notes were taken from the Clerk of the Privy Council website at http://www.clerk.gc.ca/eng/bio.asp?id=18, accessed 6 April 2010.

[46] NARA, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Records Relating to the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962-1963, Telegram From Ambassador White to the Secretary of State, October 24, 1962.

Cabinet Defence Committee approval "in principle [of] the Department of National Defence War Book, including the concept of States of Military Vigilance."[47]

Bryce's role as the conduit for defence information to the Prime Minister did not begin with the Cuban Missile Crisis. For example, on 5 September 1958, R.B. Bryce "sent a very long memo to the Prime Minister on what should be done with the Arrow."[48] He felt that "in light of the changes in military advice, and the inevitable difficulties in forming judgements on such important yet uncertain information," Bryce tried to reach a reasoned conclusion, but perhaps was not equipped to do so.[49] These recommendations included the "cancellation of [the] entire CF-105 contract" through to measures to acquire the Bomarc missile batteries and "ordering 40 or 50 F-106C aircraft from the United States…at the lowest prices possible and with the best possible cancellation rights."[50] Many of these recommendations became government policy. Indeed, this was not lost on senior military officials. In a report from the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee it was noted that "Mr. Bryce's organization…is becoming involved more and more in the co-ordination of governmental activities within Canada involving more than one department, to such an extent that his position soon may rival that of a senior minister in the Cabinet."[51] Moreover, it is notable that the Cabinet Secretary served essentially as a national security advisor to the Prime Minister, by default rather than any plan.

Air Chief Marshal Frank Miller

Frank Miller hailed from Kamloops British Columbia, born there on 30 April 1908 and attending public and high school. He left British Columbia for the cooler climes of Edmonton to complete a Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Alberta, during which he "was a member of the Canadian Officer Training Corps…upon graduation, he aspired to become a service pilot."[52] After being commissioned in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) as a pilot, Miller spent years gaining experience before war broke out. In the autumn of 1938, with the prospect of war looming, Miller was posted to England to undertake an advanced air navigation course at RAF Manston because "his superior airmanship skills had come to the attention of his air force superiors. Miller had also proven leadership potential superior to that of his peers."[53] Miller returned to Canada to command a training school as part of what became the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. His performance in command was noted by the Air Member for Personnel in Air Force Headquarters, Group Captain Sully, who recommended him for accelerated promotion. Upon reaching the rank of Group Captain in

[47] LAC, Record Group 2, Cabinet Defence Committee Documents, The one hundred and thirty-seventh meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, 25 October 1962, p. 2.
[48] Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIVD6 Volume 7, Defence – Memoranda, Memorandum 2: The Arrow: 1956 to September, 1958, undated, p. 2.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid; see also, Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIVD26 volume 10, Memorandum for the Prime Minister from R.B. Bryce Re: The 105 Problem, 5 September 1958.
[51] DHH, Raymont Papers 73/1223, Series IV File 2126, CCOS Report on Working Group on War Measures, 21 January 1957, p. 1.
[52] Ray Stouffer, "Air Chief Marshal Frank Miller – A Civilian and Military Leader", *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol. 10 No2, 2010, p. 42.
[53] Ibid., p. 44.

1943, Miller was employed at AFHQ, eventually becoming the Director of Air Training and Deputy Member for Training.[54]

Finally posted overseas in 1944 to No. 6 (RCAF) Group Headquarters in Yorkshire, he eventually gained command of "an operational bomber unit, RCAF Station Skipton-on-Swale." Again, his performance impressed his superiors, something which eventually saw him appointed Deputy Commander of Roy Slemon's RCAF Tiger Force, the units designated to be Canada's commitment to the fight against Japan.[55] This force did not see action, as the war with Japan ended not long after the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Miller was sent home to watch the RCAF, along with the other services, demobilize dramatically. Yet Miller was being groomed for higher command based on his wartime record and personal contacts. By 1951 he was an Air Vice Marshal and Vice Chief of the Air Staff. The Chief of the Air Staff later noted that Miller had "made an outstanding contribution in the field of Canadian-US military relations."[56]

Miller's military record and accomplishments did not escape the notice of his political masters. In 1955, Miller met with Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent, who wanted him to replace Budy Drury as Deputy Minister of National Defence. So, for a time ended Miller's military career and began a bureaucratic one. Had he known what was in store for him, he may have thought longer about accepting the position. During his time as Deputy Minister (DM) Miller was involved in the cancellation of the Avro Arrow program, the acquisition of the Bomarc missile system, the acquisition of the CF-104 Starfighter and CF-101 Voodoo, and major upgrades and changes to the radar warning systems to detect Soviet bombers. As with his military career, Miller performed his job competently, and with that position came a better understanding of the civilian side of National Defence than most of his former military colleagues.

By 1960, Diefenbaker had decided to replace General Foulkes as the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. After some debate over which service and which individual would get the nod as his replacement, Diefenbaker made it clear that Miller would replace Foulkes. The reasons for this reflect both the perceived decline of the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) and Canadian army in importance, and that the RCAF strength of 51,000 exceeded the army and received more defence spending than both the army and RCN.[57] Thus, in April 1960 Air Marshal, eventually Air Chief Marshal, Frank Miller was appointed Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee, a position he would hold through the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Political Relations and the Role of Personality

As stated earlier, the personal relationship between Diefenbaker and Kennedy was frosty at best and never improved. The issue that really cemented Kennedy's opinion that Diefenbaker could not be trusted occurred over the so-called 'Rostow memorandum', a communication between the President and one of his advisers inadvertently left in Ottawa after Kennedy's visit in 1961. The memorandum, entitled "What we want from the Ottawa trip," included

[54] Ibid., p. 45.
[55] Ibid., p. 46.
[56] Ibid., p. 47.
[57] Ibid.

unfortunate language that fanned the anti-Kennedy flames that had smouldered within Diefenbaker since their first meeting. The memorandum called on the President to "push the Canadians towards an increased commitment to the Alliance for Progress"," and to "push them towards a decision to join the OAS" and "towards a larger commitment for the India consortium and for foreign aid generally." It also advised the President to push for "their active support at Geneva and beyond for a more effective monitoring of Laos and Viet-Nam."[58] While perhaps not phrased diplomatically as official correspondence would have been, or guarded well enough, it was Diefenbaker's reaction that reflected the degree to which relations had soured immediately before the missile crisis, and his seeming lack of appreciation of the requirements of furthering Canada's role in continental defence. The exchange is but one example illuminating the role of personality in strategic culture.

In what was to have been a fifteen minute meeting between Diefenbaker and US Ambassador to Canada, Livingston Merchant, Diefenbaker displayed his displeasure with what he felt were efforts by the US administration to influence the upcoming 1962 federal election. The fifteen minute meeting lasted nearly two hours, and Merchant described both the topics of concern and the Prime Minister's mood. While beginning on friendly terms, Merchant recounted, Diefenbaker soon "launched into what [could] only be described as a tirade" and was "excited to a degree disturbing in a leader of an important country, and closer to hysteria than I have seen him, except on one other possible occasion."[59] The main issues at hand were the language of the Rostow memorandum and a recent meeting between President Kennedy and opposition leader Lester B. Pearson on the international situation. The Prime Minister told Merchant he could "only interpret the President's devoting so much time to a personal talk with Pearson…as an intervention by the President in the Canadian election", and that he "was satisfied that, if not Pearson himself, then his campaign lieutenants would present this to the Canadian electorate as the President turning for advice on international affairs to a single Canadian who was the Leader of the Opposition and running for Prime Minister against the present government."[60] Merchant's response to this accusation was very direct, arguing that "it was entirely understandable that Mike Pearson should attend a White House dinner given by the President and Mrs. Kennedy for all the living Nobel Prize winners of North and South America", and that there was no "basis for criticizing the President in taking advantage of the visit to Washington of a prominent Canadian public figure to discuss with him international affairs."[61] He went on to say that it "was childish to assume that this constituted any effort or intent to intervene in Canadian domestic politics."[62] Merchant concluded with his personal assurance that there was no favouritism on the part of the President towards the Liberal party against the government, that the President had great respect for the Prime Minister, and

[58] John F. Kennedy Presidential Library (JFK), White House Files, Personal Papers of Arthur M. Schlesinger, Canada 1961-1963, Memorandum to the President from WWR, "What we want from the Ottawa trip," 16 May 1961. Also see JFK, Papers of President Kennedy, Box 18 Folder Canada – General, Rostow Memorandum.
[59] JFK, Papers of President Kennedy, Box 18 Folder Canada – General, Rostow Memorandum, Letter from US Ambassador Livingston Merchant to Acting US Secretary of State, George Ball, 5 May 1962, pp.1 and 4.
[60] Ibid., p.2.
[61] Ibid, p. 4.
[62] Ibid.

although there would always be problems between the two governments, in general relations were good.[63]

Turning to the so-called Rostow Memorandum, Merchant's response was sterner. When Diefenbaker threatened to reveal the contents of the note to the Canadian public to counter the Liberal line that Pearson was better able to manage Canada-US relations, Merchant urged him in the strongest terms to discard any such thought.[64] While Merchant claimed he had not seen the document, he argued that if it was as the Prime Minister claimed, it must be considered as advice to the President from one of his personal advisors who "had no Constitutional or administrative responsibility for advising the President on foreign affairs."[65] In short, it was just staff advice and not official correspondence, and not something to be revealed for political purposes. Moreover, if Diefenbaker did as he had threatened

> there would be a serious backlash, if not in Canada, then certainly in the United States. People would ask how the Prime Minister had come into possession of such a privileged internal document addressed to the President of the United States, and why it had not been immediately returned, without comment or publicity.[66]

While Diefenbaker seemed to accept these arguments, Merchant left the meeting believing the odds were "three or four to one that, having blown his top to me, the Prime Minister will not do as he has threatened, but will, in fact, act responsibly." However, he was far from certain he had "dissuaded him from his originally stated intent to use the Rostow memorandum in the campaign."[67]

The matter was referred to McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, who evidently discussed the matter with the President.[68] The tone of the response that came through the acting Secretary of State was predictable and reflective of a relationship that, despite official claims on both sides that all was well, had soured in large part because of personality and assumptions likely reinforced by inadequate knowledge. In any event, the matter distracted the highest levels of both governments and doubtless reinforced the negative views each side shared. For instance, McGeorge Bundy told George Ball that

> the President's current wish is that Merchant should go back to Diefenbaker and say that it is his (Merchant's) own conclusion that he is most reluctant to report to Washington anything which could be construed as a threat to publish a private communication from one of his staff officers to the President of the United States. Such publication would not only cast a grave shadow over public attitudes between our two countries; it would also make relations between the President and the Prime Minister extremely difficult to sustain from now onward and quite obviously that would be very bad for both countries. Even the suggestion of such publication would have a bad effect in Washington; the President would be sure to feel troubled about his relations

[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid., p.5.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid, pp. 5-6.
[68] JFK, McGeorge Bundy, Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 3/1964.

> to a government which would consider the use of his personal papers for a political purpose.[69]

Regarding the Pearson meeting, Kennedy directed that Diefenbaker was to be informed that "this was an entirely informal meeting arranged at Pearson's request through a personal friend of both men."[70] Moreover, it lasted only twenty minutes and not the forty Diefenbaker had claimed, and "that the invitations went out before the elections were called, and to have recalled the invitation because of a political campaign would indeed have been an act of intervention."[71] Perhaps most telling of all was that Kennedy wanted it made clear that "the President ha[d] no intention of seeking a meeting with Diefenbaker in the near future."[72] By this time, Kennedy's attitude towards Diefenbaker had changed from what McGeorge Bundy later called "a sense of what a footless character this was" into "plain disgust."[73]

Both the thinly veiled warning regarding the Rostow memorandum and this rebuff illustrate the level to which relations had sunk a mere five months before the Cuban Missile Crisis. It also exemplifies the role of personality in the Canada-US relationship at this point in the nation's history, and possibly as a central feature of a nation's strategic culture. While the vagaries of individuality are always felt to one degree or another, they are exacerbated by a confused national security structure where unchallenged inaccurate assumptions are key drivers because needed information is either unavailable or not called for. In short, organisational structure matters to effective decision-making, and although some scholarship has looked at parts of this piece, none have looked at the record through this study's unique lens. Thus, a fairly detailed look at the mechanics of decision-making during this crisis will assist in an understanding of where the system failed.

Canadian Defence Decision-Making Structure

Canada is governed by a parliamentary democracy and the ultimate control of defence is, like all other Government endeavours, vested in parliament. However, policy making and executive action are the responsibility of Cabinet, the body accountable to Parliament and to the Canadian voters for the control and management of, amongst a host of other things, the Canadian defence effort. As true today as it was in the 1960s, the Cabinet simply was too large a body to deal effectively with the intricacies of national defence. Moreover, it was composed of Cabinet Ministers with little or no stake in, or understanding of, defence issues. Thus, for the sake of efficiency and rational action, military matters normally were considered by a smaller body known as the Cabinet Defence Committee. In peacetime, Cabinet Defence Committee normally met from five to ten times a year, but only when necessary to consider pressing issues. The lack of a set schedule for these meetings combined with what many have described as Diefenbaker's dislike and suspicion of committees to force the whole Cabinet to meet on issues only a few were adequately prepared to understand and discuss.

[69] Memorandum for the Undersecretary of State, George Ball, from McGeorge Bundy, 8 May 1962, p. 1.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid., p.2.
[72] Ibid.
[73] JFK, McGeorge Bundy, Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 3/1964, p. 70.

While other case studies will demonstrate that this was not always so, Kennedy's speech in 1961 that said "history has made us friends…necessity has made us allies" made clear the Cold War realities of the Canada-US continental defence partnership.[74] Indeed, Canada and the United States were and still are members of NATO's Canada – United States Regional Planning Group, and the joint defence efforts of the two governments are reviewed continuously at the highest level through the Canada – US Ministerial Committee on Joint Defence.[75] The chief advisory body supporting the continental defence enterprise was the Permanent Joint Board on Defence, which still operates today.

From the standpoint of continental defence, formal and permanent collaboration between Canada and the United States had its origin in the Ogdensburg Agreement of August 1940, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Prime Minister MacKenzie King made a joint declaration on the desirability of Canada-US defence collaboration. The result was the Permanent Joint Board on Defence, which was and is a purely advisory board with no executive functions that investigates joint defence projects and makes recommendations to the two Governments. The specific terms of reference for the PJBD were to "consider in the broad sense the defence of the north half of the Western Hemisphere", but the overall initiative was very much Roosevelt's.[76] Flowing from this agreement, in April 1941 the two leaders announced the Hyde Park Declaration, stating "as a general principle that in mobilizing the resources of this continent each country should provide the other with the defence articles which it is best able to produce, and, above all, produce quickly, and that production programs should be coordinated to this end."[77] While Ogdensburg largely was Roosevelt's initiative, Mackenzie King and Clifford Clark, the Deputy Minister of Finance, seem to have pushed for this declaration.[78] The Canadian historiography correctly views these two agreements as landmark events, including C. P. Stacey who viewed Ogdensburg as "the beginning of a new era in Canadian-American relations."[79]

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[74] LAC, MG 30 E144, Papers of Arnold Heeney, Volume 4, Canada-US Relations 1965, "Canada and the United States – Principles for Partnership," a report by Livingston Merchant and A.D.P. Heeney, published in a State Department Bulletin, 2 August 1965, p. 202.

[75] Directorate of History and Heritage (DHH), Box 87 File 47, The Evolution of the Structure of the Department of National Defence 1945-68, Report to the Task Force on Review of Unification of the Canadian Armed Forces by R.L. Raymont, 30 November 1979, p. 31; DHH Raymont Papers 73/1223, Serial 1, Box 3 File 54, "Canada-US Ministerial Committee on Joint Defence, Extracts from House of Commons Debates, Appendix 'A', 14 July 1960; DHH, Raymont Papers, Serial 1 Box 45, File 827, Canada-US Defence Planning, Letter from Air Chief Marshal Frank Miller to Ross Campbell, Assistant Undersecretary of State for External Affairs, 13 January 1964; LAC, MG 31 E83, Papers of H. Basil Robinson, File 4.4, "Memorandum to President Kennedy, p.3; LAC, RG 2, Vol. 2479 File Vol VIII, Cabinet Defence Committee meeting, 24 October 1959, p.1; Diefenbaker Centre, MG01/VIIA1647 Volume 177, Nuclear Weapons – Agreement, "Statement by the Honourable Paul Martin, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the Special Committee on Defence of the House of Commons on July 25, 1963, p. 8.

[76] C.P. Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments: The War Policies of Canada, 1939-1945,*(Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970), p. 339.

[77] Ibid., p. 490.

[78] C.P. Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflct: A History of Canadian External Policies vol. II: 1921-1948 The Mackenzie King Era*, (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1981), pp. 315-317.

[79] Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*, p. 339; also see S.W. Dzuiban, *Military Relations Between the United States and Canada 1939-1945*, (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 1959); J.L. Granatstein, *Canada's War: The Politics of the Mackenzie King Government, 1939-1945*, (Toronto:

The effect of PJBD during the Second World War was such that in November 1945, "the United States Secretary of War and Secretary of Navy forwarded a joint letter to the Canadian authorities requesting that the collaboration and defence which existed through the war should be continued."[80] Thus, Canada-US collaborative defence planning has continued without a break since 1940. As stated earlier, the signing of the NATO agreement in 1949 brought the Canada – US Regional Planning Group, which, as will be shown later, complicated matters in the context of a Diefenbaker government led by inaccurate assumptions and both unfamiliar and arguably uninterested in the intricacies of Canada-US defence planning. Curiously, the Ministerial Committee on Joint Defence announced in 1960 that "the existing machinery for consultation on defence matters between the two countries [was] operating effectively".[81]

While the political level had the potential to be well-informed, but was not, on defence matters, the military-to-military relationship functioned rather well. On the combined defence planning side, in December 1945, the Cabinet Defence Committee accepted a US proposal to collaborate in military planning, something some scholars argue arose out of a determination of the US to not be caught again by a similar surprise attack and which shaped their approach to continental defence planning.[82] The Military Cooperation Committee (MCC) resulted, with the Canadian Section consisting originally of the Vice-Chiefs of Staff who also were members of the PJBD, the senior planners from each of the three services, as well as the secretary of the PJBD. As time went on and the broad defence plans were agreed, the MCC settled down to a representation of the three senior Planners of the three Services responsible for detailed plans. Essentially, this had the unintended effect of creating a military planning system separate from the PJBD, "decreasing the political input into the defence planning process, to a greater extent in Canada than in the United States."[83] Again, in the context of a Diefenbaker government with little interest in military matters, the effect of this sort of a divide is more keenly felt. Not only does it complicate civil-military relations, but makes more likely a discord in threat perception. This is something made worse by Diefenbaker's avoidance of the Cabinet Defence Committee, where issues could have been debated by those with an interest and understanding of defence questions.

University of Toronto Press, 1975); Stetson Conn and Byron Fairchild, *The Framework of Hemisphere Defense*, (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 1960); Robert D. Cuff, and J. L. Granatstein, *Ties That Bind: Canadian-American Relations in War-Time From the Great War to the Cold War*, (Toronto: Hakkert, 1977); J.C. Arnell, "The Development of Joint North American Defence," *Queen's Quarterly* vol. 77 (Summer 1970), pp. 190-204; Hugh Keenleyside, "The Canadian-American Permanent Joint Board on Defence, 1940-1945," *International Journal* vol. 9 (Spring 1954), pp. 107-124.

[80] LAC, MG 32, Papers of Douglas Harkness, "Canadian Organization for Defence for Presentation to the National Defence College, 12 September 1960," by R. L. Raymont, p. 11.

[81] DHH, 73/1223, Raymont Papers Serial 1 File 54, Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee, Canada-US Ministerial Committee, 1958-1960, appendix 'A', "Canada-U.S. Committee on Joint Defence – Communiqué," p. 6337.

[82] Christopher Conliffe, "The Permanent Joint Board on Defence, 1940-1988", in David Haglund and Joel Sokolsky, eds., *The U.S.-Canada Security Relationship*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), p. 153; also see Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIVD26 Volume 10, Memorandum to the Cabinet Defence Committee, 14 August 1958, p. 2.

[83] Peter T. Haydon, *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis: Canadian Involvement Reconsidered*, (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1993), p. 68.

Cabinet Defence Committee

The Cabinet Defence Committee emerged shortly after the end of the Second World War as a follow-on to the Cabinet War Committee. The secretary to the Cabinet War Committee, Arnold Heeney, in consultation with the undersecretary of state for External Affairs, Norman Robertson, argued for

> a continuing subordinate Committee of Cabinet in peace-time to deal with defence, international security and other political-military questions to ensure that the service departments did not lose touch with government thinking and policy and proceed in the implementation of major measures without adequate government direction.[84]

The formal approval for what was known as the Cabinet Defence Committee (CDC) came in October 1945. Its terms of reference were "to consider defence questions and to report to Cabinet upon matters of major policy relating to the maintenance and employment of the three Services."[85] As it eventually developed, the Cabinet was chaired by the Prime Minister, with the Minister of National Defence as its vice-chairman, and was the principal forum for discussion and decision-making on defence issues referred to it "by the Cabinet or Treasury Board, by other ministers, by the Chiefs of Staff as approved by the Minister of National Defence, from the Panel of Economic aspects of Defence Questions, and the Permanent-Board on Joint Defence."[86] Of critical importance to the relatively smooth functioning of the CDC was restricting participation only to those with a major role to play in the execution of defence. For instance, in 1948 experience had shown the need to add the Minister of Defence Production and the Minister of Justice, the latter due to the RCMP's responsibility for internal security, and remove the Minister of Fisheries.[87] Limiting the membership of the CDC enabled quick and clear decision-making on matters of national defence for the simple reason that it was far easier to reach a consensus because the membership was more familiar with the issues at hand.[88]

During Diefenbaker's time as Prime Minister, the Cabinet Defence Committee fell into some disuse. The CDC met only once, on 31 January, in 1962 before the Cuban Missile Crisis, and only once during the crisis on 25 October 1962 after a nearly three day delay following President Kennedy's announcement that Cuba would be quarantined.[89] Rather than limit the debate to those involved in national defence and external affairs, Diefenbaker insisted the matter be debated in cabinet. Whether this was because "Mr. Diefenbaker disliked and did not want to concern himself with committees", was "suspicious of the senior officials of

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[84] Directorate of History and Heritage (DHH), Box 87 File 47, The Evolution of the Structure of the Department of National Defence 1945-68, Report to the Task Force on Review of Unification of the Canadian Armed Forces by R.L. Raymont, 30 November 1979, p. 5

[85] Ibid.

[86] Ibid, p.4.

[87] Ibid.

[88] General Rick Hillier noted the absence of detailed discussions and a lack of subject matter expertise in the large committee format of National Defence Headquarters. See General Rick Hillier, *A Soldier First: Bullets, Bureaucrats and the Politics of War*, (Toronto: Harper Collins, 2009), pp. 414-418.

[89] Library and Archives Canada (LAC), Record Group 2, Records of the Privy Council Office, Vol. 2749, File volume IX, Cabinet Defence Committee Documents, "The One Hundred and Thirty-Sixth meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, 31 January 1962", and "The One Hundred and Thirty-Seventh meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, 25 October 1962".

departments, and the Chiefs of Staff, thinking of them as Liberal-minded officials", or due to his fear that "there would be long-term ramifications in the media if this were known and he always thought that some general would call up his service record and use it against him for political purposes", points to other facets of his personality.[90] Moreover, it illustrates a lack of coherent and accepted process by which such issues were dealt with in the appropriate forum with all necessary information being pushed by the Ministers and agencies with a role to play. Even when, as was the case in 1962, "considerable coolness" had developed between the Departments of Defence and External Affairs, had the perspectives of their Ministers, Douglas Harkness and Howard Green respectively, been presented to the Prime Minister in the CDC without needless debate, it is at least possible the decision-making would have been if not more coherent, at least more rapid. From a defence perspective, the chief advisory body bringing the military perspective to the CDC was the Chiefs of Staff Committee.

Chiefs of Staff Committee

The Canadian Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) was first formed in June 1927. Initially called the Joint Staff Committee, its first meeting was on 31st October 1927. In November 1938, "the appointment of Senior Air Officer was changed to Chief of the Air Staff and also came directly under the Minister, and at that time the Joint Staff Committee changed its name to the Chiefs of Staff Committee."[91] This committee was composed of the three Service Chiefs until just after the end of the Second World War, when the Chairman of the Defence Research Board became a member with the status of a Chief of Staff.

It was the context of the early Cold War that illustrated needed changes to the Chiefs of Staff Committee. The deteriorating relations between the Western Alliance and the Soviet Union, including the Berlin Air Lift of 1948 and the start of the Korean War in 1950, led to an increase in the size of the services. At the time, the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee also was the Chief of the General Staff, and the demands of both jobs at this busy time were too onerous. These considerations "caused the Government to agree on the reorganization of the Canadian Chiefs of Staff with the appointment of a Permanent Chairman, Chiefs of Staff, on the 1st February 1951."[92] His responsibilities included "all NATO military matters, matters affecting strategy, tactics and employment of forces, requests regarding employment, training and logistic support of foreign forces, and all matters of a Joint Service nature other than financial."[93] All recommendations and decisions of the Chiefs of Staff Committee had to be unanimous. While in theory the Chairman had no over-riding authority, and merely coordinated inter-service and international matters, in practice this position became "almost the same level of influence as the minister".[94]

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[90] Ibid; DHH, Box 87 File 47, "The Evolution of the Structure of the Department of National Defence 1945-68, Appendix A: The Organization of Higher Control and Coordination in the Formulation of Defence Policy, 1945-1964", p. 5. Also see, Reginald H. Roy, *For Most Conspicuous Bravery*, pp. 340-341.

[91] LAC, MG 32, Papers of Douglas Harkness, "Canadian Organization for Defence for Presentation to the National Defence College, 12 September 1960," by R. L. Raymont, Part 2 p. 1.

[92] Ibid., p. 2.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Maloney, *Learning to Love the Bomb*, p. 16.

General Foulkes, as its first Chairman, quickly became the Government's professional military advisor, much to the chagrin of the Service Chiefs. While the Chiefs of Staff Committee's responsibilities were to "advise the Minister of National Defence and the Cabinet Defence Committee on matters of defence policy and to prepare strategic appreciations and military plans" most often it was the Chairman who presented these plans to the CDC. Moreover, since the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff initially sat on the Panel on the Economic Aspects of Defence Questions, the Cabinet Defence Committee, the Defence Research Board, and was a member of NATO's Military Committee, at times the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee had great influence over the formation of national security policy.[95] Indeed, seemingly in an effort to assuage the service chiefs, the Government formed the Defence Council in 1953 to allow the service chiefs some access to the minister.[96] After the war, other links between the political and military structures had been created, but unfortunately some important ones had been removed just prior to the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Liaison with the Cabinet Secretary

During the Second World War, "a useful system of cooperation was built up between the military and civil elements of the Government when an officer from the Navy and the Air Force was loaned to the Cabinet Secretariat."[97] Eventually, it was agreed "that in future the Secretary to the Chiefs of Staff Committee would be a member of the Cabinet Secretariat", subsequently assuming "the post of Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet War Committee."[98] At the Chiefs of Staff Committee on 24 September 1946, Heeney held that the "informal system of cooperation built up between the military and civil elements of the Government should now be placed on a more formal basis."[99] Moreover, he also suggested that "the Director General of Defence Research might wish to be represented on the Cabinet Secretariat at some future date in view of the present trend toward the study of scientific matters."[100] All of this became formalised when, on 3 January 1947, the Cabinet War Committee was re-constituted as the Cabinet Defence Committee and "the Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee assumed the post of Military Secretary to the Cabinet Defence Committee."[101]

The value of this liaison was such that in early 1950 it was decided that "Service officers of appropriate rank and qualifications be seconded for service with the Defence Section of the Cabinet Secretariat for duty in connection with interdepartmental cooperation in overall defence matters." Reflecting the recent wartime experience of many government officials, both the Cabinet Secretary and the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs had seen the value of having serving officers of appropriate rank forming part of the Cabinet Secretariat. It was felt important "to maintain this arrangement not only from the point of view of the valuable experience which would be gained by the officers concerned but also from the contribution which these officers would make in interdepartmental coordination."[102]

[95] Ibid., p. 17.
[96] Ibid., p. 16.
[97] DHH, 72/1223, Raymont Papers, Series 2 Box 50 File 929, Chairman, Chief of Staff and CDS Files, "Origination of the Military Secretary to the Cabinet Defence Committee," 16 October 1962, p. 1.
[98] Ibid., p. 3.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid., p. 4.
[102] Ibid.

However, a new breed of politician was entering the scene and this productive relationship did not last long. In a letter dated 20 June 1958, the Cabinet Secretary advised the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff that "the necessity of having a Service officer assigned for duty to the Cabinet Secretariat was not as great as it was some years ago and that the arrangements which were in effect should be suspended."[103] The position was vacated in July 1958, and remained so throughout the Cuban Missile Crisis. In the context of a Prime Minister unwilling to hold Cabinet Defence Committee meetings, R.B. Bryce, the Cabinet Secretary and Clerk of the Privy Council, was left as the key figure coordinating and presenting defence information to Diefenbaker and the Cabinet. In a sense, Bryce served as a national security advisor, arguably without sufficient awareness of the issues at hand.

Following the Crisis and the election of the new Liberal government under Lester B. Pearson in 1963, Ottawa moved to re-insert the military presence in the Cabinet Secretariat. In particular, officials at External Affairs recommended that "a military element be included in the Secretariat through which recommendations are forwarded to the Canadian Cabinet…[that] will make more likely [the] mutually beneficial politico-military cooperation within the Canadian Government."[104] The arrangements under the Diefenbaker government tended "to cause disagreements rather than solve them."[105] The difficulty was something still experienced within government today – where often inadequate lateral coordination with other government agencies occurs. At the time, for example, the armed forces staffed their proposals to the Minister of National Defence "with little if any lateral coordination with other governmental agencies."[106] The problem then became "a difficult one of reversing a Minister's decision, and intra-governmental discussion at the Cabinet level under circumstances not usually conducive to fully considered examination."[107] It was felt that by "re-including the military in the Cabinet Secretariat, the proposals could be coordinated and worked out at a lower level with a better opportunity for detailed consideration."[108]

The to and fro over military liaison demonstrates in a meaningful way what should be a truism: In national defence and security matters, proper organizational structure is imperative. Having a clearly defined and entrenched procedure for ensuring needed information reaches decision-makers in a focused forum where only those who understand the issues are involved facilitates coherent and timely decision-making. Such a procedure also would help to mitigate, to the degree possible, the vagaries of personality. To wax counterfactual, had Diefenbaker held regular meetings of the Cabinet Defence Committee in which regular briefings were made by the Joint Intelligence Committee on the Soviet threat, followed by the Defence implications of that threat, it is at least likely that he would have developed a more sophisticated perspective on the general Soviet threat and the specific incident in Cuba. This is not to say that anything necessarily would have changed, but it certainly would have been far more difficult to delay action in the context of a clearly described (by Canadian defence officials) Soviet threat to all of North America from bases in Cuba. As it was, Diefenbaker

[103] Ibid., p. 5.
[104] NARA, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Entry 5298 Box 1, Records Relating to Military Matters 1942-1966, Record of discussions with David Kirkwood at External Affairs in Ottawa, "Informal Canadian Comments on Consultation", 4 December 1963, p. 2.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.

was influenced primarily by his External Affairs Secretary, Howard Green, who was motivated to some degree by anti-American sentiments and obsessed with disarmament and avoiding discussions of the CF acquiring nuclear weapons.[109] In the context of Diefenbaker's lack of understanding of defence issues, Green's opinion no doubt carried more weight, and absent the potentially countervailing perspective provided through the Cabinet Defence Committee, made it far more likely that action would be delayed.

Threat Perception

The scholarship on the Cuban Missile Crisis makes it clear there was no shared appreciation of the threat posed by communist support to the Castro government in Cuba by the political leadership in Washington and Ottawa.[110] Moreover, although the roots of this specific crisis began with the discovery of the missile base construction, the tension between the US and Soviets over Cuba had been building for some time, and the Diefenbaker government's handling of trade and diplomacy with Cuba and the communist bloc was one factor that shaped the political relationship between Canada and the US. All of this was influenced by differing threat perceptions between Canada and the US, and even between the Canadian military and political leadership. Both the means by which information was presented to the various Cabinet committees and by whom, and whether that information was asked for or had to be pushed can tell much about the mechanics of decision making and to what extent the incident exposed elements of Canadian strategic culture. Thus, an understanding of the degree to which the Canadian military shared a common perception of the threat demonstrated specifically by the Cuban Missile Crisis and the existential Soviet threat with their US counterparts, and how this differed from Diefenbaker's perspective will allow for a more comprehensive understanding of both the reasons for the Canadian government's delay and the nature of the obstacles standing in the way of coherent decision making.

Canadian Military Threat Perception

The experience of the Second World War ingrained a mobilization concept, rather than one with large forces-in-being, as a central feature of Canada's strategic thinking. These ideas were entrenched in the Government War Books which reflected "the idea that another major war would be fought with conventional weapons in much the same manner as the last one, and that a gradual transition from peace to war would permit the normal machinery of government to function in an orderly fashion."[111] However, these ideas did not fit the context of the early Cold War, with the advent of nuclear weapons systems and the ability to deliver an attack with little warning. Indeed, as early as January 1955, the North Atlantic Council had

[109] LAC, MG 32, Papers of Douglas Harkness, vol.57 "The Nuclear Arms Question and the Political Crisis Which Arose From it in January and February 1963."

[110] See Jocelyn Maynard Ghent, "Canada, the United States, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, *The Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 48 No. 2 (May, 1979); John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall, *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies*, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994); Robert Reford, *Canada and Three Crises*, (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1968); J.L. Granatstein and Norman Hillmer, *For Better or for Worse: Canada and the United States to the 1990s*, (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1991).

[111] DHH, Raymont Papers 72/1223 Series IV File 2126 A Brief On the Report to the Interdepartmental Committee on the War Book by the Working Group on War Measures, 24 January 1957, section II, p. 2.

approved the assumption "that from the outset of hostilities the enemy will launch nuclear attacks against allied atomic production and delivery capabilities as a first priority, and against such other priority targets as allied centres of government, industrial and communication centres directly supporting the war effort, the major port complexes, and the major centres of population."[112] This new reality was realised quickly by military leadership, often spun to support parochial interests, but only slowly made its way into the political planning framework of the Government War Books.

Regarding continental defence, Canadian military authorities assessed that a central part of Soviet strategy in a major war with NATO was the prevention of effective retaliatory strikes against the Soviet Union. An important secondary aim would be neutralizing "the manpower and industrial resources of North America." Moreover, given that US Strategic Air Command (SAC), which was NATO's main retaliatory force, was located mainly in the US, it was assumed that Soviet air attacks would "be made on North America from the outset of a major war, directed against SAC bases, some industrial and population centres, and ports." In order to succeed, this strategy needed to catch the majority of SAC aircraft on the ground, and thus the belief that the Soviets would "subordinate all other considerations to the achievement of surprise, and consequently there may be little or no strategic warning of attack."[113]

The belief in the decreasing importance of the manned bomber as a major threat to North America gained support in the late 1950s and early 1960s, especially by political figures, and was one area where some senior military leaders differed from their political masters. It is likely that both were partly motivated by parochial interests – politicians because of the cost savings and Air Force officers to avoid losing the RCAF's unequal share of defence spending – both of which have always resonated in defence debates. Despite the growing belief that the ICBM would replace the manned bomber as the main threat to North America, the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Dunlap, pointed to intelligence estimates indicating that the "Soviet manned bomber will be arrayed against us for some years to come."[114] Moreover, and quite correctly, other intelligence demonstrated that the rate of Soviet construction of ICBMs had been far less than initially forecast. The so-called 'missile gap', upon which Kennedy ran and won the 1960 Presidential election, did not exist. Dunlap went on to say that the manned bomber was the most dangerous threat to hardened ICBM sites and control centres because they were more accurate than ICBMs, could carry several nuclear weapons, were thus more flexible and could be recalled.[115] All of this supported his position that the Bomarc squadrons should be maintained, and that "we are compelled to retain good defences against the Soviet bomber threat for the foreseeable future."[116]

This assessment was completely in accordance with the agreed Canada-US intelligence assessment of the air threat to North America, which indicated that the bomber threat would continue through the 1960s. Curiously, Canadian and American intelligence authorities were "not wholly in agreement on the extent of its duration and the rate at which it will diminish in

[112] Ibid.
[113] Ibid.
[114] DHH, Raymont Papers, 73/1223 Series 1 File 306, Memorandum to the Minister from the Chief of the Air Staff, *Canadian Bomarc Squadrons*, 22 February 1963.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid.

strength in relation to the missile threat."[117] Indeed, the American National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), the NATO Standing Group, and the Canadian Joint Intelligence Committee views all differed, with the Americans believing the bomber would continue to be a significant threat longer than their Canadian counterparts. In particular, NORAD intelligence staff disagreed with many of the assumptions underpinning the NIE, including that "a mass attack by manned bombers would throw away the initiative of surprise" and thus the Soviets would no longer pursue these weapons.[118] C-in-C NORAD maintained that there was no assurance of warning before a Soviet bomber attack, that "a sneak attack by bombers is feasible and, therefore, likely to be followed by the mass attack." Furthermore, and possibly influenced by parochial interests, C-in-C NORAD questioned the assumption that a nuclear deterrent was sufficient to maintain peace, asserting that preparations to meet the Soviet bomber fleet were essential to the preservation of the deterrent. [119] The lack of a forceful consensus prevented the development of a detailed threat estimate that could be used to determine specific defence requirements. At times of rapid changes to aspects of the security environment, a clear dialogue based on sound analysis and frank, operationally-focused advice between the military and political leadership is all the more essential in order to ensure, to the extent possible, that defence investment delivers capabilities suited to the operational requirement.

While Canadian defence officials largely agreed that the Soviet air threat was the main danger to North America, both the Army and Navy had their own views on the general Soviet threat and their service's requirements – a disagreement driven by the competition for scarce defence funding. As the Cold War progressed, and the percentage of defence spending on the RCN and Army declined, each sought unique roles. In 1959, Prime Minister Diefenbaker issued the Civil Defence Order which gave the Minister of National Defence, and, in turn, the Army certain responsibilities.[120] These included attack and fallout warnings, damage assessment following a nuclear attack, and other duties to maintain law and order and assist with recovery. The wisdom of that decision has been debated ever since, but it gave the Army, and the militia in particular, a role to play.[121] Furthermore, following the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Army pushed the idea that it needed to be ready to counter Soviet attempts "to create a feeling of insecurity by raiding parties or the threat of such on Canadian soil."[122] While the thought of hordes of Soviets sweeping over the North had been dismissed, plans for the 'Defence of Canada Brigade' progressed. This three battalion 'fire brigade' was to be maintained at high readiness and could be moved by land, air, or sea in conjunction with the other services to dislodge any enemy establishments.[123] The RCN also used its assessment of the maritime Soviet threat as a means to press its requirements. The three main aspects to this

[117] DHH, Raymont Papers, 73/1223 Series 1 File 54, Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee, Canada-US Ministerial Committee, Continental Air Defence, 28 June 1960, pp. 5-6; Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIVD26 Volume 10, Defence Questions for Discussion, 4 November 1959, p. 1.
[118] DHH 79/469, Air Vice Marshal M. M. Hendrick Papers, Daily Diary, 30 May 1958.
[119] Ibid.
[120] DHH, 72/175, Statement by the Chief of the General Staff Canadian Army to the Special Committee on Defence, 11 July 1963, p. 29.
[121] John A. English, *Lament for an Army: The Decline of Canadian Military Professionalism*, (Concord, ON: Irwin, 1998), pp. 51-52.
[122] DHH, 72/175, Statement by the Chief of the General Staff Canadian Army to the Special Committee on Defence, 11 July 1963, p. 29.
[123] Ibid., pp. 29-30.

threat were the Soviet submarine force, Soviet long-range aviation, and the Soviet fishing fleet which had a covert purpose.[124]

Thus, the development of an inter-service or 'joint' threat assessment eluded the CF and, as a result, the Government of the day. The best that could be hoped for was a cobbling together of the threat assessments of each service without the perspective of a joint force commander to bring it all together and provide that perspective to government.[125] While the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee's responsibilities included "all NATO military matters, matters affecting strategy, tactics and employment of forces, requests regarding employment, training and logistic support of foreign forces, and all matters of a Joint Service nature other than financial", all recommendations and decisions of the Chiefs of Staff Committee had to be unanimous.[126] The Chairman, although often quite influential and at times with "almost the same level of influence as the minister", ultimately had no over-riding authority and merely coordinated inter-service and international matters; rather than directing, he was limited to horse-trading to convince others to agree.[127]

Happily, this is no longer the case. In today's organisational structure, the CF has two main operational-level commands ideally positioned to develop a clear statement of joint requirements for both current force generation, and for future force development. Moreover, these commands are integrated, which means they have representatives of all three services to provide the essential service-specific advice and recommendations, but have a single voice responsible for operations in that area of responsibility that can provide a unified CF contribution to a Whole of Government response to emerging crises.[128]

Canadian Political Threat Perception and Views of Canada's Role in Continental Defence

No assessment of the Diefenbaker government's handling of this crisis can exclude the reasons for the considerable coolness which had developed between the Departments of Defence and External Affairs. The delay over an appropriate response was enhanced by the split between these two departments which polarised the Cabinet into two distinct camps during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Exacerbating the delay and confusion was Diefenbaker's avoidance of the Cabinet Defence Committee, which forced the discussion to the whole Cabinet and thus included those unfamiliar with defence issues. In such a context, delay and confusion become all but unavoidable. The main reason for the 'considerable coolness' between defence and external affairs was the debate over the acquisition of nuclear weapons both for the CF overseas and for the domestic and continental defence forces under the operational control of NORAD. This was a microcosm of the very different perspectives

[124] Ibid., p. 2.
[125] For an example, see Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIVD26 Volume 10, Summary Estimate of the Threat to North America (1960-1970) Based on Current Agreed Canadian-United States Intelligence Estimates, 29 October 1959.
[126] LAC, MG 32, Papers of Douglas Harkness, "Canadian Organization for Defence for Presentation to the National Defence College, 12 September 1960," by R. L. Raymont, Part 2, p. 1.
[127] Maloney, *Learning to Love the Bomb*, see pages 16 and 17.
[128] Arguably, however, this potential has not been realised due to a desire to maintain the status quo of service, or environmental, pre-eminence . See Brad Gladman, *The Requirements for a Canada Command Integrated Operating Concept*, (Ottawa: DRDC-CORA TR 2006-39, 2007).

between the two departments, and which led to the delay at a time when the need for decisive and rapid action was abundantly clear.

Further illustrating the role of personality in shaping the decision-making environment, the death of Sidney Smith and the appointment of Howard Green to succeed him as Secretary of State for External Affairs was, according to Defence Minister Douglas Harkness, "the starting point for the difficulties and divisions within the Cabinet over the acquisition of nuclear weapons."[129] To Harkness, the decisions to acquire

> a ground to ground missile for the army -- at first the Lacrosse, later the Honest John; two Bomarc squadrons to help fill the gap left by the cancellation of the Arrow aircraft program, and the program to replace the interceptor aircraft of the First Air Division in Europe with the F-104 strike reconaissance[sic] aircraft

should have left no question that these weapons would be equipped with nuclear warheads. Yet, and something which reinforces the notion that defence questions must be decided by those with a detailed understanding of the issues, when put before the Cabinet as a whole, "the concern over cancellation of the [CF-105 Avro Arrow] occupied the minds of members of cabinet to such an extent that the significance of acquiring the Bomarc, equipped with nuclear warheads, did not make much impression."[130]

It was in the context of Diefenbaker's need to present defence matters to Cabinet as a whole that Secretary of State for External Affairs Howard Green "became steadily more and more concerned over the disarmament question which finally became what one can only call an obsession with him."[131] He delayed consistently and resisted any decision on proceeding with a nuclear arms agreement with the US, an essential first step in obtaining the nuclear ammunition needed to make these weapon systems effective. Since his department was responsible for such agreements, Green was able to avoid any negotiations until the weapon systems were delivered. Harkness later recalled that to "have accepted this position would really have meant that an agreement would never have been signed until a general war had broken out."[132]

While Harkness felt negotiations should begin before the weapon systems were in hand, and expressed this view to Diefenbaker who evidently agreed, no decision was taken before the Cuban Missile Crisis. Indeed, even when the Honest John rocket launchers were delivered in 1961, and with the North Bay Bomarc site reaching completion, Green's opposition to the nuclear question could not be shaken and Diefenbaker refused to force the issue. Harkness was able to arrange a series of meetings between Defence and External Affairs officials, but was met with Green's delaying tactic of insisting that detailed agreements be worked out and approved by Cabinet for each weapon system before beginning any real negotiations with the US. Even after all of this was done and approved, External Affairs did not proceed with the negotiations. Moreover, and reflecting the nature of Canadian strategic culture at the time, when Harkness attempted to force the issue in Cabinet, "it was always passed over completely

[129] LAC, MG 32, Papers of Douglas Harkness, vol.57 "The Nuclear Arms Question and the Political Crisis Which Arose From it in January and February 1963," p. 1.
[130] Ibid., pp. 1-2.
[131] Ibid., p. 2.
[132] Ibid. p. 3.

or came up for only two or three minutes' discussion at the end of a cabinet meeting." The importance of the negotiations simply was not appreciated by the Prime Minister or key members of that Cabinet. In private discussions, Harkness accused Green of "deliberately holding the matter up in defiance of the cabinet decision to proceed and [Green] maintained it was the Prime Minister who was delaying the matter". The Prime Minister always evaded a decision, arguing "there were too many other matters which were more urgent"," to the point where Harkness "told both the Prime Minister and Howard Green that [he] could not present and defend any intelligible and defensible defence policy unless [the government] moved forward on the nuclear arms agreement, and it was apparent that the matter must soon come to a head."[133]

The Cuban Missile Crisis occurred in the context of the growing dissatisfaction by the US administration of the shrill and self-righteous Diefenbaker government. Whatever the disagreements and problems within the Canada-US strategic relationship, the military-to-military relationship seemed largely unaffected. The two shared a similar view of at least the nature of the Soviet threat, and more so on the danger of the missile base construction in Cuba; as a result, the working relationship functioned smoothly. When, at the beginning of the Cuban crisis, the US Department of Defense "began a series of emergency moves to deploy nuclear weapons in forward bases around the world", Canada "figured largely in the advance planning for such a move."[134] As such, a request was made to Ottawa for "640 overflights with nuclear weapons the Air Force considered essential for [the] deployment of the deterrent."[135] This was significantly more than the roughly four flights per day normally allowed. However, the Royal Canadian Air Force responded immediately that they would recommend approval to the Diefenbaker government. With the two superpowers seemingly poised on the brink of war, four days were allowed to pass without a response from the Canadian government. When a response was finally received, it was far less than had been expected. Instead of 640 overflights, only "eight overflights with nuclear weapons would be permitted for the duration of the crisis."[136] While Harkness later denied the veracity of this claim, the anger expressed by the US government reflected the gravest crisis in Canada-US relations since the end of the Second World War, and was thought by many to be a "deliberate refusal on the part of an ally and nearest neighbor to cooperate in the mutual defense of North America." Moreover, the US State Department later declared that the Canadian government "has not…as yet proposed any arrangement sufficiently practical to contribute effectively to North American Defense."[137] While this language evidently was not approved by the President, and reflected the continuing disappointment over the failure of the Diefenbaker government to live up to its commitments to acquire nuclear weapons for its Bomarc missiles

[133] Ibid., pp. 5-7.
[134] DHH, Raymont Papers 73/1223, Series II Box 50 File 929, Chiefs of Staff Committee and Chief of the Defence Staff, Telegram from Washington to External Affairs, "Canada-USA Relations," 13 February 1963, pp. 1-2.
[135] Ibid., p. 2.
[136] Ibid. Also see DHH, Raymont Papers 73/1223, Series II Box 50 File 929, Chiefs of Staff Committee and Chief of the Defence Staff, George Bain, "Washington, Ottawa Deny Canada Tardy", *Globe and Mail*, undated; "Harkness Denies U.S. Report", *Journal*, 13 February 1963.
[137] Ibid., p. 3; also see LAC, MG 32, "The Nuclear Crisis and the Political Crisis that Arose from it in January and February 1963, p. 45.

and Canadian Forces in Europe, it illustrates the depths to which the relationship had sunk.[138] The reasons for this seem largely structural, in terms of the way information reached Cabinet and its committees and what was asked for, shortcomings exacerbated by the effect of personalities on the process.

Diefenbaker's View of the Soviet threat and the developing Crisis

Prime Minister Diefenbaker had some peculiar views on world issues and events, which were likely created or at least supported by that destructive combination of a clumsy decision-making structure and the presence of polarizing personalities. When information needed to make an informed decision is missing, either because it cannot reach those making the decisions or because it is not requested, it should be no surprise that the resulting decision is based more on belief and frequently on poorly conceived notions of what should be done (i.e., received or even conventional wisdom) than on a pragmatic and educated assessment of the situation.

In that context, Diefenbaker came to share Green's obsession with nuclear weapons in general. Moreover, while the US State Department initially felt that Diefenbaker took "a more realistic view of the dangers in the world situation and of Communist intentions than several of his colleagues," and that he did not have any basic prejudice against the US, this had changed by 1962.[139] A hand-written note gives a true indication of Diefenbaker's understanding of sovereignty, the existential threat posed by the Soviet Union, and of Canada-US relations. Diefenbaker wrote that interdependence in a "Continental sense cannot exist without derogation to sovereignty," due largely to the disparity in strength between the two countries.[140] On its surface there is an element of truth to the belief that at the time there was a growing cultural, economic, and military interdependence. However, and something as true today as then, if this interdependence is entered into freely, for good reason, and through trade and military agreements that are acts of state, then these are an expression of sovereignty instead of a challenge to it.

Diefenbaker's public statements on the Soviet threat often were quite strong, likely motivated by political reasons, but there was no consistency to his approach. Indeed, although admittedly as part of a campaign promise, Diefenbaker once pledged "to introduce a resolution in the UNGA [United Nations General Assembly] condemning Soviet colonialism."[141] Curiously, Ross Campbell (Special Assistant to Canadian Foreign Minister Green) felt this resolution "was deplorable and that Canada would 'fall flat on its face' at the UN if it attempted to sponsor such a resolution."[142] The Americans shared this view, believing

[138] Sean M. Maloney, *Learning to Love the Bomb: Canada's Nuclear Weapons During the Cold War*, passim.
[139] LAC, MG 31, E 83 Papers of H. Basil Robinson, Volume 4 File 4, Washington – John F. Kennedy – General, February 1961, Memorandum for the President: Prime Minister Diefenbaker's Visit 20 February, 1961.
[140] Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIIF212 Volume 112, Foreign Affairs – Canadian-American Relations, undated handwritten notes by Diefenbaker.
[141] NARA RG59, General Records of the Department of State, Records Related to the Cuban Missile Crisis 1962-1963, Memorandum of Conversation with Rufus Smith of the US Embassy, 23 May 1962.
[142] Ibid.

"there would be little support at the UN."[143] In spite of the views of his closest ally and key government officials, and demonstrating a lack of appreciation of their advice, four months later Diefenbaker delivered a forceful denunciation of Soviet colonialism in an address to the United Nations General Assembly. At the same time, however, Diefenbaker's other actions and statements seem to show a conciliatory attitude towards the Soviet move into the hemisphere and the Caribbean.[144]

On the matter of trade with Cuba, for example, the Prime Minister continued normal relations with the communist Castro regime despite an appreciation of the sensitivity of this issue in Washington, and the US administration having "concluded that strong economic sanctions against Cuba…might avert armed intervention later." Both the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations had decided to suspend all imports from Cuba and all exports to Cuba except "welfare food supplies," citing the Monroe Doctrine as justification to prevent Soviet penetration of the Western hemisphere.[145] Diefenbaker later defended the continuation of trade with Cuba by saying "the Monroe Doctrine was not recognized by international law and was not binding on Canada. In fact, we regarded the Monroe Doctrine and its extension by the OAS Caracas resolution of 1954 as an unacceptable unilateral decision on spheres of influence and types of governments in the Western Hemisphere."[146] While this interpretation might have resonated with international lawyers it fails to understand 'the story' of American history and how central this doctrine was (and remains) to US strategic culture. Moreover, taking such a stand sent a very strong message to Canada's closest ally, potentially harming Canada's longer term interests, while at the same time sending a message of appeasement to the enemy Diefenbaker had recently denounced as 'colonial'.

In a draft speech entitled *The Free World's Approach to the Sixties*, Diefenbaker outlined a remarkably naïve plan for dealing with some of the world's pressing problems. Ironically, more than fifty years later these problems remain, including the population explosion, the rise of China, how "to enable underdeveloped countries to obtain adequate and stable earnings from their exports", and how "to work out effective international agreements to reduce the dangers resulting from the development of methods of mass destruction."[147] While believing NATO needed to continue the policy of countering the communist bloc, the plan envisaged the free world uniting to deal with these problems through "one international agency as the chief organ for consultation and common action within the free world".[148] Moreover, in this utopia there

> must be leadership from those who are qualified to lead, but there must be no self-appointed directorates in the free world, and those nations which are

[143] Ibid.
[144] Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIVE94 Volume 13, Defence – Policy – General, Canada's Defence Policy: Partial text of a statement by Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker to the House of Commons on January 25, 1963, p. 1. In this speech, Diefenbaker called for trade and cultural exchanges to bring about a mutual understanding.
[145] LAC RG2, Privy Council Office, Series A-5-a Volume 6176, Joint Canada-US Committee on Trade and Economic Matters – Cuba, 16 March 1961.
[146] John G. Diefenbaker, *One Canada: The Years of Achievement 1957-1962*,(Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1976), pp. 173-174.
[147] LAC, MG 31 E83, Papers of H. Basil Robinson, Volume 4 File 4.1 January 1961, The Free World's Approach to the Sixties", 23 December 1960, p. 9.
[148] Ibid., p. 39.

> most directly concerned in problems and have most to contribute to their solution must participate as principals in working out solutions.[149]

Despite this, the President of the United States was called upon to lead "the countries of the free world towards the solution to these problems."[150] Ultimately, the hope was that "out of this kind of undogmatic, functional, pragmatic approach there may gradually emerge during the sixties the outline of some institutional or constitutional structure for the free world as a whole."[151]

While sounding good on paper, this speech naïvely assumed that "the steady growth of constructive cooperation" on all aspects of these issues was (or is) an attainable goal.[152] It reflects a lack of understanding that nations that matter act according to their interests, and in order to matter those interests must be defined clearly and perhaps ruthlessly.[153] Realism is a timeless character in international relations. Today, for instance, one need only look at events unfolding in Europe over the Greek debt crisis to recognize that nations always act in accordance with their own interests even at the expense of a larger federation like the European Union. While it might be nice to imagine the world in altruistic terms, this does not get a nation very far in the real world. The Canadian response during the Cuban Missile Crisis showed a lack of understanding of the nation's central vital national interests – the unity of the Western alliance against the Soviet threat, the centrality of the Canada-US relationship, and the need to respond swiftly and with strength to direct threats to the continent without needless debate.

US Political Threat Perception

The Soviet placement of missiles in Cuba, quite possibly the result of Krushchev's miscalculation of the resolve of President Kennedy and an underestimation of him and his advisors, was of both military and strategic importance. It was the logical culmination of a communist presence in the hemisphere that had been building for years, and that challenged both the global status quo the Western alliance wished to maintain, and long-standing US hemispheric interests dating back to the early 19th century. The eponymous 'Monroe Doctrine', delivered in an address to Congress on 2 December 1823 by President James Monroe, cautioned Europe that the US government viewed the Western Hemisphere as its sphere of influence and that European expansionism into the Western Hemisphere would be regarded as "dangerous to [U.S.] peace and safety".[154] The US would respond as necessary to

[149] Ibid., p. 40.
[150] Ibid., p. 44.
[151] Ibid., p. 40.
[152] Ibid., p. 44.
[153] In other words, a "realist" approach to international relations.
[154] RG 59 General Records of the Department of State, Records Related to the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962-1963, Box 3, Public Law 87-733, Joint Resolution Expressing the determination of the United States with respect to the situation in Cuba, 3 October 1962. See also RG 59 General Records of the Department of State, Records Related to the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962-1963, Box 3, President's Statement on Cuba, Press Conference 13 September 1962; RG 59 General Records of the Department of State, Bureau of Inter-American Relations, Office of the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, Box 30, United States Policy Toward Cuba, 25 September, 1962; JFK Library, Papers of Arthur M. Schlesinger, Box WH5, Cuba: Questions and Answers, Department of Defense Document, 29 October 1962, p.17;

protect itself. In May 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt expanded the Monroe Doctrine to include the right of US intervention in the Western Hemisphere and the Caribbean.[155] Thus, any intervention by the Soviet Union into the Western Hemisphere or Caribbean would be seen by the Americans as a provocative move. In many ways, this intuitive response to external interference is – and was – well known and well established. In fact, it is as deeply ingrained in the American national psyche as Canadian reaction to real or perceived incursions into 'our Arctic', which makes the Canadian approach to Cuba following the communist revolution there all the more puzzling.

The decision to put missiles into Cuba, the first Soviet ally to receive ballistic missiles, in 1962, would inevitably be viewed as a direct attack against US public and private perceptions of regional influence and global balance. Indeed, ever "since the Monroe Doctrine, the United States has perceived [sic] a special interest in excluding European military power from the Western Hemisphere. This was a powerful fact of [U.S.] political consciousness...".[156] It was something the Kennedy administration had no alternative but to address immediately and firmly. As R.J. Sutherland wrote, "a Great Power will take whatever action it finds necessary to the maintenance of its security. It must do this or cease to be a Great Power, and the United States is no exception."[157] The missiles in Cuba not only violated the long-standing Monroe Doctrine, but "would affect global perceptions of U.S. strength and resolve, and consequently, allies and adversaries would question the U.S. ability and commitment to global alliances."[158] Put simply, the missiles in Cuba, from an American perspective, were a challenge from which the US could not shrink, as they threatened "the global power structure which the U.S. sought to maintain."[159]

Following US reconnaissance flights in late August 1962 that revealed Soviet surface-to-air missiles in Cuba, President Kennedy issued a sharp public statement warning the Soviets against establishing nuclear weapons in Cuba.[160] Similarly, in a press conference just prior to the crisis, President Kennedy again made quite clear the US position on Cuba. When asked whether the build-up of military forces in Cuba would constitute a contravention of the Monroe doctrine or if the use of that force was required, President Kennedy responded "that if Cuba should possess a capacity to carry out offensive action against the United States, … the

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RG 59 General Records of the Department of State, Records Related to the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962-1963, Box 4, Letter to the Secretary of State from Leonard Mesker, "Blockade of Cuba", 1962.

[155] JFK Library, Theodore C. Sorensen Papers, Classified Subject Files 1961-1964, Box 109, paper entitled "Background: The Confrontation and The U.S. Decision-makers", p. 6.

[156] JFK Library, McGeorge Bundy, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis*, CSIA Working Paper No 89-2, D. Welch, ed., Cambridge: Center for Science and International Affairs, Kennedy School of Government, 1989, p. 32.

[157] R. J. Sutherland, "Canada's Long Term Strategic Situation," p. 203.

[158] JFK Library, McGeorge Bundy, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis*, CSIA Working Paper No 89-2, D. Welch, ed., Cambridge: Center for Science and International Affairs, Kennedy School of Government, 1989, p. 32.

[159] Ibid.

[160] Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh, (eds.), *The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962: A National Security Archive Documents Reader*, (New York: The New Press, 1992), pp. 352-354; James Blight and David Welch, *On the Brink: Americans and Soviets Re-examine the Cuban Missile Crisis*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989), pp. 374-376.

United States would act." He went on to say that he previously had "indicated that the United States would not permit Cuba to export its power by force in the hemisphere".[161]

The Canadian government was well aware of the Monroe Doctrine and its importance in American thinking, having discussed it in Cabinet on at least one occasion.[162] As shown previously, Diefenbaker's position on the Monroe Doctrine was that it was not recognized by international law and was not binding on Canada. While perhaps true in 'Diefenbaker the lawyer's' mind, it was 'Diefenbaker the politician' who should have had some understanding of how central this matter was to US thinking and responded in the interests of Canada-US relations. Instead, Diefenbaker chose the remarkably short-sighted view that "the Monroe Doctrine and its extension by the OAS Caracas resolution of 1954 [w]as an unacceptable unilateral decision on spheres of influence and types of governments in the Western Hemisphere."[163] Further feeding what McGeorge Bundy later called "a sense of what a footless character [Diefenbaker] was" when facing a threat as grave to Canada as to the US, the Diefenbaker government dithered for days when a unified and rapid response was required to oppose a bold move by the Soviet Union. Instead of allowing the Chiefs of Staff to raise the readiness levels of the Canadian Forces with those of their key ally, and assisting in the deployment of the deterrent, Canadian leaders insisted on debating the matter in Cabinet. The political decision had been taken in 1959 to put measures in place to allow the Chiefs of Staff to bring CF readiness levels to appropriate levels without appearing overly provocative, and thus allow political leaders to focus on other options. But in this crisis they were not used.

DND War Book Confusion

At the end of the Second World War, Canada's overall strategic concept was based on mobilization, rather than on the maintenance of large forces in-being. The three services maintained cadre forces to allow for the rapid expansion of the Militia, Naval Reserve and Auxiliary Air Force in the event of war. Ships and aircraft were mothballed, while the resources for several divisions were stored at various sites throughout the country. The mobilization plan called for the activation of an army roughly the same size and shape as the 1st Canadian Army deployed in northwest Europe in 1944-45. Several factors prevented the Militia from maintaining the numbers necessary for such mobilization in peacetime, the most significant of which were high employment rates in the post-war boom years.[164]

The concept of national, and even military, mobilization had changed with the advent of nuclear weapons and the possibility of attack with little or no warning. The commitment of national resources to war remained, of course, the responsibility of the state, and as always included political, social, economic, industrial and military components. In the Cold War,

[161] NARA, Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Records Relating to the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962-1963, Box 3, Press Conference: President's Statement on Cuba, 13 September 1962.
[162] LAC, Record Group 2, Privy Council Office Records, Series A-5-a, volume 6176, Cabinet Conclusions, Joint Canada-US Committee on Trade and Economic Matters – Cuba, 16 March 1961, p.3.
[163] John G. Diefenbaker, *One Canada: The Years of Achievement 1957-1962,* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1976), pp. 173-174.
[164] Hon. John A. Fraser, *In Service of the Nation: Canada's Army Reserves for the 21st Century*, a report presented to the Minister of National Defence, the Hon. Art Eggleton, May 2000.

planners were influenced by the concept of total war, as it had played out in various forms between 1914 and 1945. Centralized control of national assets, geared toward total victory, had been applied by all combatants, including Canada. Of course, the concept of military mobilization in Canada is tarnished by the memory of Sam Hughes, who, as Minister of Militia, ignored military mobilization plans and implemented his own, making him long since the target of criticism. The difficulty of maintaining adequate capacity to mobilize the military remained a particular problem for the Army well into the Cold War, as it faced the challenge of balancing requirements to respond quickly to crises and the political need to sustain the framework for mobilization of reserve units across the country for longer term preparations.

Nonetheless, Canada and the United States recognized the need for quick decision-making in the event of a threat to the continent as early as 1947. The Canada-US Basic Security Plan, agreed in that year, outlined an operational plan for Canadian and US forces "in the event of a threat to the security of the Northern part of the Western Hemisphere," i.e., the defensive portions of a War Plan for these areas which could be placed in effect when so directed by the two Governments. The Basic Security Plan also accounted for long-term planning and routine analysis of the evolving threat appreciation by both parties, based on the mutual appreciation that a potential enemy would not be able to deliver "weapons of mass destruction in significant quantity on vital areas of Canada and the United States" until 1952. In the event of enemy aggression, most importantly, the MCC recommended that the "ultimate objective of any war effort of both countries is to seize the offensive with the maximum practicable strength in the minimum length of time." As such, an "acceptable state of readiness" could be achieved, with "purely defensive measures" held to "the absolute minimum."[165]

Canadian Governments demonstrated their general agreement that defensive and mobilization capabilities were not a priority by the way they treated the reserve mobilization framework, particularly the Militia, in the years between 1945 and the Cuban Missile Crisis. Over the next few years after the end of the Second World War, as the Soviets demonstrated their atomic capability and the Canadian military had to undergo "peacetime" mobilization for the Korean War and the NATO Integrated Force in Europe, strategic planning became more focussed on the likelihood of a nuclear – and rapidly decided – war. The Cold War developed to the point where Canadian forces were required to respond to alliance activities. However, the single regular brigade group in Canada, which by this time had the dual role of handling continental and homeland defence, could not be deployed since it was already over-committed. For the Korean War, a two brigade-group force was raised off the streets using the legal term 'Special Force' since this was supposed to be a limited engagement for this particular operation. One brigade group acted as a manpower pool while the other, 25 Brigade, deployed to Korea. During the early stages of the Korean conflict, which lasted from 1950-1953, the Government also deployed forces to Western Europe to meet its NATO commitment. This was a new type of war that was markedly dissimilar to the Second World War. The Cold War called for maintaining forces in-being to both deter enemy action and, in the event of a conflagration, hold ground until larger forces could be mobilized.[166]

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[165] LAC, MG 26 J4, Volume 318, File 3365 PJBD 1946-1948, "Memorandum by the Canada-United States Military Co-operation Committee, "Implementation of the Canada-United States Basic Security Plan, 23 July 1947.

[166] Sean Maloney, *War Without Battles*: *Canada's NATO Brigade in Germany*, (Toronto: McGraw Hill Ryerson, Ltd., 1997).

The Army was completely re-organized in 1954: all four brigade groups reverted to regular force formations and the Militia and Special Force personnel were allowed to sign up. Reserve restructure was not far from the minds of Army leadership, who deemed them useful forces in-being at a high state of readiness.[167] The so-called Kennedy and Anderson reports (1954 and 1957 respectively) resulted. The former proposed to rename the reserve force the Canadian Army (Militia), and to organize it as a mobilization nucleus. The latter, upon the direction of the Chief of the General Staff Howard Graham, took a shorter-term approach to improve the militia's capability to fill out the "1st Canadian Infantry Division on M-Day" and reinforce the 1st and 2nd Canadian military organization in 30 days. The study also called for the militia to be able to perform civil defence tasks if necessary.[168] Civil defence, as opposed to war-fighting, would soon become the militia's primary task, however, when John Diefenbaker's Tories won the 1957 election, and Major-General George Pearkes took on the job of Minister of National Defence.

Pearkes strongly favoured a civil defence role for the Militia, a role that had been in the hands of the Ministry of Health and Welfare since 1951, and one that the Army generally was glad not to have.[169] It appeared to be an opportune time for new ideas, because the enemy's deployment of a thermonuclear capability and the means to drop it on North America generated an even greater shift in emphasis toward continental defence. The air defence system absorbed the bulk of the defence budget. Projects like the AVRO Arrow, BOMARC, and the sensor systems in the North took absolute priority. Consequently, more and more money was drained from supporting reserve forces. Mobilization was now considered a dead issue since there would not be enough time to mobilize during a nuclear war. In that context, in 1959, the Diefenbaker Government assigned the role of civil defence and "national survival" duties to the Militia, mainly among the combat arms units. Debate over the wisdom of that decision has since continued.[170]

Despite the internal military debates over roles and assigned resources, however, the fact was that civil defence writ large was a serious national or strategic problem to be considered in the 1950's. Bureaucrats and military officers knew the necessity of rapid decision-making in the event of any type of nuclear exchange long before 1962. That need was evident in the creation of the War Book in 1942 and the increasingly acknowledged requirement to accord the civil defence organization, housed in the Ministry of Health and Welfare, higher status as an Emergency Measures Organization.[171] Even within the context of continental defence and the need for two national governments to make rapid decisions, there was understanding within the Canadian bureaucracy that, in a nuclear emergency, circumstances might preclude full consultation and exhaustive consideration of options. In January 1957, Arnold Heeney, then

[167] T. C. Willett, *Canada's Militia: A Heritage at Risk* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987) p. 76

[168] Tamara Sherwin, "From Total War to Total Force: Civil-Military Relations and the Canadian Army Reserve (Militia) 1945-1995", (Master of Arts Thesis in History, University of New Brunswick, 1997), pp. 70-75.

[169] Reginald H. Roy, *For Most Conspicuous Bravery: A Biography of Major-General George R. Pearkes, V.C., Through Two World Wars*, pp. 296-297.

[170] See, for example, John A. English, *Lament for an Army: The Decline of Canadian Military Professionalism*, (Concord, ON: Irwin, 1998), pp. 51-52.

[171] DHH, Raymont Papers, Memorandum from ESO to CCOS, "Report of Working Group on War Measures," 21 January 1957.

the Ambassador to Washington acknowledged that "an occasion may arise where time does not permit consultation before the declaration of an alert because the imminence of attack seems to either Government to be a matter of hours rather than days."[172]

Since 1947, therefore, Canadian civil and military leaders treated strategic planning problems primarily to be deterring nuclear attack or dealing with its aftermath. In so doing, a series of plans were needed to mobilise national resources towards these ends. These plans came in the form of the Government War Books.

At the top of the hierarchy was the Government of Canada War Book, but given the responsibilities of the Department of National Defence in war-time, the DND War Book was a close second in importance. The books consisted of the identification and listing of certain measures that likely would have to be taken "to meet an emergency that might or does lead to war, and to assign responsibility for executing the measures."[173] In many ways, this was a true 'whole of government' effort to mobilize national resources to respond to Soviet aggression, the lessons from which are something current concept developers should take note of when developing contemporary concepts often touted as being revolutionary breaks with past experience.[174]

The War Books were written to deal with specific threat environments, which never remain static or unchanging in character. For example, the first post-World War Two Government War Book was written in 1948 with the experience of World War Two in mind, and therefore the drafters expected mobilization rather than large forces in-being to be the norm. The speed with which crises could erupt, complete with the possibility of a nuclear exchange involving Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM) rendered this planning concept largely irrelevant, and the War Books were in need of updating. Nonetheless, and contrary to the interpretation of key literature on the Cuban Missile Crisis, the outdated War Books remained in effect until replacement versions were approved.[175]

The Government War Book stated in general terms the measures that may have been required in an emergency, and indicated the department or agency of government responsible for plans

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[172] DHH, Raymont Papers, Series IV, File 2126. ADP Heeney, "Draft Letter to US Secretary of State," January 1957.

[173] DHH, Joint Staff Fonds, 2002/17, "The Department of National Defence War Book," July 1961, p.1.

[174] Chief of Force Development, "The Future Security Environment 2007-2030, Part One," (Ottawa: unsigned draft dated 8 November 2008); US JFCOM "The Comprehensive Approach: A Conceptual Framework for Multi-National Experiment 5 – A Summary Paper", (Suffolk: Joint Futures Lab, United States Joint Forces Command, November 2006), p. 1; US JFCOM "The Comprehensive Approach: A Conceptual Framework for Multi-National Experiment 5 – A Summary Paper, Suffolk: Joint Futures Lab, United States Joint Forces Command, November 2006; Chief of Force Development, "Objective Force 2028," (Ottawa: undated draft document); and Chief of Force Development, "Integrated Capstone Concept", (Ottawa: draft document dated 30 June 2009), on page 26 refers to the period from 1838-1989 as "Jominian and Simpler", a completely indefensible and superficial characterisation of past experience. For a contrary position, one showing that these revolutionary concepts are no such thing, see Brad Gladman and Peter Archambault, *An Effects Based Approach to Operations in the Domestic and Continental Operating Environment: A Case for Pragmatism* (Ottawa: DRDC CORA Technical Memorandum 2008-033, 2009).

[175] Peter Haydon, *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis*, p. 96

to execute particular measures. The Department of National Defence war book listed and described the measures for which the Minister, the Deputy Minister, the Chairman Chiefs of Staff, and the Chiefs of Staff Committee were responsible.[176] The wording here is key, as a main theme in the Canadian historiography focuses on the perceived lack of authority on which Defence Minister Douglas Harkness raised the readiness levels and authorised various activities of the Canadian Forces.[177] The confusion that existed during the initial stages of the crisis shaped the subsequent action, or lack thereof.

After the briefing by Livingston Merchant on the planned US quarantine of Cuba, and in the context of the situation and the Prime Minister's response, Harkness met with the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, Air Chief Marshal Frank Miller, and "told Frank to order the Chiefs of Staff to put their forces on the "READY" state of alert."[178] Unfortunately, the Chairman questioned whether these measures were available to the Defence Minister. The difficulty arose because the updated Department of National Defence War Book, which included detailed descriptions of the instances in which the Defence Minister had authority to raise the alert levels of the Canadian Forces, had been under review by various government departments since at least early 1961, and had yet to be approved by Cabinet. Thus, as Harkness later described, "my legal right to take such action was not clear."[179] After a short discussion it was decided that this action needed to be cleared with the Prime Minister. This mistaken advice opened the way for extended debate at a time when united and timely action was called for both to defend the continent against a burgeoning threat, and to avoid the appearance of a divided Western alliance at a time of severe crisis.

Again, the reasons for the need to revise both the DND and Government War Books were that the existing DND War Book presupposed a conventional war, "because policy guidance for a nuclear war was inadequate at the time it was being prepared." As well, the Canadian Formal Alert Measures from 1955 were "increasingly unrealistic to deal with the speed and decisiveness with which a nuclear attack [could] be delivered."[180]

Since it was believed that the declaration of a Formal Alert by the Government of Canada, and the time required to do so, would unnecessarily alarm the public and could increase international tensions, a series of revisions were proposed to the Cabinet Defence Committee

[176] DHH, Joint Staff Fonds, 2002/17, "The Department of National Defence War Book," July 1961, p.1.
[177] See David Welch's review of Peter Haydon, *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis: Canadian Involvement Reconsidered*, pp. 149-153; Jocelyn Maynard Ghent, "Canada, the United States, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, *The Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 48 No. 2 (May, 1979); John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall, *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies*, Athens GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1997; Robert Reford, *Canada and Three Crises*, (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1968); J.L. Granatstein and Norman Hillmer, *For Better or for Worse: Canada and the United States to the 1990s*, (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1991); also see Peter Haydon, *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis*, p. 210
[178] LAC, MG 32, Papers of Douglas Harkness, vol. 57, "The Nuclear Arms Question and the Political Crisis Which Arose From it in January and February, 1963", pp. 8-9.
[179] Ibid.
[180] DHH, Box 83, File 2002/17, Joint Staff Fonds, "Memorandum to The Minister: Revised DND War Book," August 1961.

for certain measures that could be taken without instituting a Formal Alert.[181] These were the 'States of Military Vigilance' to be ordered when the readiness of the Canadian Forces needed to be raised, but where there was no need to begin mobilizing national resources for a war. It was noted at the time that there were several instances in which a 'State of Military Vigilance' could have been applied appropriately, including the Suez and Lebanese crises, as well as those in the Congo and Laos.[182] While there was a significant difference between incidents like the Congo crisis and a direct threat to North America from Soviet missiles in Cuba, what is interesting in these debates is the assumption that declaring a Formal Alert would alarm the public and increase international tensions. One wonders where this belief originated or whether any rigorous analysis went into its formulation, or if this was another example of opinion becoming 'received wisdom' that could not be challenged. In any event, the assessment of the speed with which a nuclear conflict could develop certainly was true. At the very least, these beliefs drove the Joint Planning Committee to seek to update the DND alert measures.

Because of changes in the character of the threat faced, the Joint Planning Committee developed additional Canadian Forces States of Increased Military Vigilance to supplement the alert measures in the DND War Book. These new states would alert the CF "during a period of international tension prior to the declaration of an Alert by the Canadian Government."[183] The two proposed states, 'Discreet' and 'Ready', of military vigilance would be called by the Chiefs of Staff, and the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee would inform the Minister. The 'Discreet' state of military vigilance would, amongst other things, require the services to review their emergency plans, place ships and aircraft on short notice to move, increase the readiness of intelligence and communications facilities.[184] The 'Ready' state of military vigilance increased force protection measures at bases and defence installations, cancelled military leave, deployed mobile and alternate headquarters, alerted standby battalions for deployment, and brought units up to wartime strength. These states of military vigilance were designed for use prior to the existing Canadian formal alert system of Simple, Reinforced, and General alerts which could only be implemented by the Federal Cabinet.[185] Before these amendments were made, the War Books simply did not meet the requirements of the threat environment that the country faced. But the point here is that changes were made to the War Books in operation during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and that the measures could have been used by military and political leadership without a requirement for Cabinet approval.

The "States of Military Vigilance" applied only to the CF, and were similar to those adopted by the major NATO command areas. These states provided for precautionary measures that could be taken by the Services in Canada during periods of heightened international tension.

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[181] LAC, MG 32 Papers of Douglas Harkness, vol. 57, "The Nuclear Arms Question and the Political Crisis Which Arose From it in January and February, 1963", p. 11; LAC, RG2, Cabinet Defence Committee Documents, Vol. 2752, File D-1-6-1, "Memorandum to Cabinet: Revised DND War Book, 9 January 1962.

[182] DHH, Joint Staff Fonds, 2002/17, Box 83, Memorandum to the Minister, "Revised DND War Book", p.2.

[183] LAC, RG24 vol 549 file 096 103 v.3, Joint Planning Committee to the Chiefs of Staff Committee, "Canadian Forces States of Increased Military Vigilance, 23 December 1958."

[184] Ibid.

[185] Ibid.

They consisted only of military measures, and could be ordered by the Chiefs of Staff Committee prior to the declaration of a formal alert by the Canadian Government. The Formal Alert Stage was still to be declared by the Government, but confusion existed over what measures were available to senior military and civilian leadership to act when needed.[186] Thus, Harkness later recalled Miller arguing that the Minister's legal right to take such action was not clear, and after a short discussion it was decided to first clear this action with Diefenbaker.[187] Aside from the seeming confusion by both the senior civilian and military leadership over what measures were available to the Chiefs of Staff and the Minister of National Defence is the curious temerity of a military leader in giving an unsolicited legal opinion to the civilian authority. Regardless, any attempt to understand the sophistication of Canadian strategic thinking at the time must include an analysis of the measures that were in place and the reasons for the confusion at this key time in Canadian history. It must also engage the accepted national narrative, which misinterprets this critical aspect of the Canadian involvement in the Cuban Missile Crisis.

One of the most commonly cited sources on Canadian involvement in this crisis is Peter Haydon's *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.*[188] In his discussion of the Canadian crisis management system, Haydon outlines the series of five alert phases proposed in the July 1961 version of the DND War Book, which had not been approved by Cabinet before the Cuban Missile Crisis began. Indeed, it was only after three days of delay during which the entire Cabinet debated the Canadian response to the crisis that the Cabinet Defence Committee finally met and the Minister of National Defence raised the War Book matter. On 25 October 1962, after nearly nine months deferment of a decision "to allow time for further study by other departments" that the Cabinet Defence Committee finally "approved in principle the Department of National Defence War Book, including the concept of States of Military Vigilance," but with a curious provision that "the Minister of National Defence would obtain the approval of the Prime Minister before declaring a Ready State of Military-Vigilance".[189] This requirement, which speaks volumes about the nature of Canadian strategic culture, stood in defiance of the entire reason for changing the War Book – the need for speed and decisiveness in response to attack. However, what Haydon's analysis misses is that a half-step towards this crisis system had been taken.

Harkness and Miller's confusion following Merchant's briefing regarding what measures were available to the Chiefs of Staff Committee and Minister of National Defence is perplexing given the recent developments that had occurred regarding alert measures. According to the Canadian Army's Director of Military Operations and Planning (DMO&P), the states of military vigilance (discreet and ready) "were adopted by the Chiefs of Staff Committee on 18 Jun 1959."[190] These were military measures only and could "be ordered by the Chiefs of Staff Committee prior to the declaration of a formal alert by the Canadian

[186] LAC, RG2, Cabinet Defence Committee Documents, Vol. 2752, File D-1-6-1, "Memorandum to Cabinet: Revised DND War Book", 9 January 1962.
[187] LAC, MG 32 Papers of Douglas Harkness, vol. 57, "The Nuclear Arms Question and the Political Crisis Which Arose From it in January and February, 1963", p. 9.
[188] Peter T. Haydon, *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis: Canadian Involvement Reconsidered*.
[189] LAC, Record Group 2, Cabinet Defence Committee Documents, The one hundred and thirty-seventh meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, 25 October 1962, p. 2.
[190] DHH, File 115.3M1.009 (D6), Colonel AJB Bailey, Director Military Operations and Planning, "Draft Amendment – Army War Book, States of Military Vigilance," 12 February 1960.

Government." He went on to write that those states of military vigilance had "been added to the DND War Book by Amendment No.1 dated 21 Dec 59."[191] This contradicts an observation made by another scholar of the period, Sean Maloney, who argued that the "Chiefs of Staff approved these new States of Military Vigilance in July 1959", but that they do "not appear to have been referred to Cabinet for approval".[192] Again, while Maloney is justified in his analysis given the evidence cited, the fact remains that he, like Haydon, has not accounted for the amendments made to the 1955 DND War Book which, although not perfect, would have allowed Miller to act as Harkness wished.

Haydon's account does, however, go on to assert that "the war books had been withdrawn for updating" and that they "could only be put back into force by cabinet direction".[193] He has reiterated this allegation in a paper for *The Northern Mariner* in 2008.[194] In both cases, Haydon provides no substantiation for this assertion, and the available evidence shows that the problems were not due to the lack of an authorized DND war book, but rather to the confusion or outright misunderstanding of the measures available to senior leadership. At the very least, Haydon's assertion that the War Books had been withdrawn for updating seems a misreading of the available record. It made no sense to withdraw the War Books from service while debating even significant updates. Had war erupted before completing this exercise, which lasted from roughly mid-1960 to late 1962, the Government would have been left without a coherent response plan. This simply would not have been a bureaucratically rational move, and there is sufficient evidence showing the War Books remained in effect throughout the crises, even if they needed updating. A Memorandum to the Minister in August 1961 supports the argument that the War Books were in effect during the crisis. It states that in "1955, DND adopted the War Books currently in use in the Department for the development of emergency defence plans and for their execution when the need should arise"; as well, on 25 October the Vice Chief of the Air Staff noted that the "Air Staff has gone over the War Book with the Minister", indicating the War Books were in effect.[195]

Further evidence that the DND War Book had not been taken out of service before the crisis can be seen in communication between R. B. Bryce through the US Ambassador to the Secretary of State on 24 October 1962, a day before the Cabinet Defence Committee approved "in principle the Department of National Defence War Book, including the concept of States of Military Vigilance."[196] A telegram from Ambassador White to the Secretary of State on 24 October 1962, stated that Bryce had

> told [him] confidentially that Cabinet had authorized Defence Minister Harkness to invoke for Canadian Air Force (NORAD only) "ready phase of military vigilance" to bring Canadian force at NORAD into line with US forces." General James informs

[191] Ibid.
[192] Sean Maloney, *Learning to Love the Bomb: Canada's Nuclear Weapons During the Cold War,* (Dulles VA: Potomac Books, Inc., 2007), p. 192.
[193] Peter T. Haydon, *The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis: Canadian Involvement Reconsidered,* p. 96.
[194] Peter T. Haydon, "Canadian Involvement in the Cuban Missile Crisis Re-Reconsidered," *The Northern Mariner,* Volume XVII No.2 (April 2007), p. 60.
[195] DHH, Box 83, File 2002/17, Joint Staff Fonds, "Memorandum to The Minister: Revised DND War Book," August 1961.
[196] LAC, Record Group 2, Cabinet Defence Committee Documents, The one hundred and thirty-seventh meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, 25 October 1962, p. 2.

> me that this is equivalent to US DEFCON 3 which is present stage our forces. James informed by Defence Ministry that Canadian forces NORAD have been authorized to assume NORAD DEFCON 3. [197]

Had the War Books been withdrawn from service, the Cabinet could not have done so until after the Cabinet Defence Committee approved the DND War Book in principle the following day. When the decision was finally taken, it was not to restore the War Books but rather to approve the series of updates that had been pending for some time. Ultimately, and something demonstrating a lack of appreciation for the needed changes, the decision taken was a retrograde step due to the curious provision that "the Minister of National Defence would obtain the approval of the Prime Minister before declaring a Ready State of Military-Vigilance". [198]

A key point critical to the understanding of the confusion that occurred during the Cuban Missile Crisis was that the major revision of the 1955 War Book planned for 1961 was not, as some authors argue, over adopting the new alert system but rather over making clear distinctions between the categories of alert. The 1959 amendment to the DND War Book which brought the new alert system into effect contained a "certain amount of duplication particularly between "Discreet" vigilance measures and "Simple" alert measures," and the "major revision of the DND War Book…[was] to remove these discrepancies and to bring the War Book into line with current concepts."[199] The updates to these measures were proposed in mid-1961, but reflecting a lack of appreciation of the threats faced, the debate continued into late 1962. However, it was not due to the War Books having been withdrawn from service, nor was it because the measures had not been approved. It seems the only issue was that the existing measures were a bit confusing and had some wrinkles to be ironed out. Because of this, and seemingly because of a lack of awareness of the 1959 update to the DND War Book which allowed the COSC to raise the readiness level of the CF, Miller told Harkness that "the new War Book covering the instances in which the Minister of Defence had authority for this action had not yet been approved by Cabinet."[200] While this statement was not incorrect, it served to obfuscate the fact that the COSC had the authority, granted them by the 1959 amendment to the 1955 DND War Book, to act.

Thus, when Harkness told Miller to raise the alert level of the CF to a 'READY' state of military vigilance, while it may not technically have been the responsibility of the Minister of National Defence with the measures in place, the Chiefs of Staff Committee certainly could have done so and informed the Minister. The measures, adopted by the Chiefs of Staff in June of 1959 and by amendment to the DND War Book in December, made it quite clear that this responsibility was vested in the Chiefs of Staff Committee and could be used prior to the declaration of a general alert by the Government of Canada. Doing so would have avoided the entire mess of long Cabinet debates involving members with no real appreciation of defence

[197] NARA, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Records Relating to the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962-1963, Telegram From Ambassador White to the Secretary of State, October 24, 1962.
[198] LAC, Record Group 2, Cabinet Defence Committee Documents, The one hundred and thirty-seventh meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, 25 October 1962, p. 2.
[199] DHH, File 115.3M1.009 (D6), Colonel AJB Bailey, Director Military Operations and Planning, "Draft Amendment – Army War Book, States of Military Vigilance," 12 February 1960.
[200] LAC, MG 32 Papers of Douglas Harkness, vol. 57, "The Nuclear Arms Question and the Political Crisis Which Arose From it in January and February, 1963".

issues. If Harkness's account is correct, the question then becomes, why did Miller give the advice that he did? After all, he was Deputy Minister of National Defence when these measures were accepted by the Chiefs of Staff Committee and later that year as an amendment to the DND War Book, and must have been aware of the changes.[201] The only tolerably acceptable explanation is that the debate and significant delay over the adoption of the revised version of the DND War Book pushed these developments out of mind, and thus inappropriate advice was given.

If ever there was a time for the Chiefs of Staff to use their initiative and the authorities granted them by the revised DND War Book, it was in October 1962. The threat posed by the missiles in Cuba was as much a military threat to Canada as it was to the United States, and the US military posture, including C-in-C NORAD's repeated requests to the Chiefs of Staff Committee to raise the readiness levels of the Canadian assets over which he theoretically had operational control, demanded a concomitant increase in the CF readiness to illustrate that there were no cracks in the Western Alliance that the Soviets might exploit.[202] Yet, whether because of political pressure or because of a lack of awareness of the measures available, the Chiefs of Staff Committee failed to act. Moreover, Diefenbaker assumed that the practices of the NATO alliance, of which he incorrectly felt NORAD was a part, entitled him to be consulted on any proposed course of action that would involve raising CF readiness.

The Right to Prior Consultation

The issue of consultation in general, and Diefenbaker's belief that he was entitled to it, was not unique to the Cuban Missile Crisis. Rather, it was a long-standing issue dating back at least to the NORAD agreement of 1958.[203] At the time, External Affairs had noted its displeasure with the agreement, being "…particularly concerned about ensuring adequate consultation by the USA with Canada before taking any action under the guise of NORAD. It was not enough, they felt, that they should just be informed. They wanted to be "consulted", [even] when action might have to be taken almost immediately."[204] Indeed, the final text of the diplomatic notes had External Affairs' concern over consultation worked in. It read that the two governments "consider that the establishment of integrated air defence arrangements of the nature described increases the importance of the fullest possible consultation between the two [governments] on all matters affecting the joint defence of North America, and that defence cooperation between them can be worked out on a mutually satisfactory basis only if such consultation is regularly and consistently undertaken."[205] However, consultation is not

[201] LAC, RG2, Records of the Privy Council Office, Cabinet Defence Committee meetings. The records of these meetings show Mr. Miller's attendance as Deputy Minister of National Defence.
[202] DHH 79/469, Air Vice Marshal M. M. Hendrick Papers, Daily Diary, 25 October 1962, Record of Conversation between Vice Chief of the Air Staff and Air Officer Commanding Air Defence Command, 25 October 1962.
[203] In case studies covering earlier periods in Canadian history, we will explore the origins of the "right to consultation" within the context of how Canadian political leaders have viewed the concepts of autonomy, sovereignty and operational control.
[204] DHH, Box 87 File 47, The Evolution of the Structure of the Department of National Defence 1945-68, Report to the Task Force on Review of Unification of the Canadian Armed Forces by R.L. Raymont, 30 November 1979, Appendix 'A' p. 5.
[205] Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIIA556 Volume 20, North American Air Defense (NORAD) n.d., 1957-1961, "NORAD Exchange of Notes," Final text, 10 May 1958, p. 2.

always possible due to operational security requirements and the need for rapid action, and is not always a priority when dealing with a persistently antagonistic ally.

More important to Diefenbaker's reaction was his incorrect assumption that "NORAD [was] part of the NATO complex". His later defence of this notion pointed to discussions with US military authorities and heads of government at a NATO Council in which "none of them [had] indicated to me that I was exaggerating the relationship".[206] Indeed, the Secretary General of NATO tried unsuccessfully to disabuse Diefenbaker of this misapprehension.[207] But Diefenbaker was characteristically stubborn in his beliefs and, shortly after NORAD stood up on 13 November 1957, he addressed the House of Commons and called NORAD an "arrangement within the Canada-United States regional planning group (CUSRPG)" that was a "further step in achieving the agreed NATO objectives for the CUSRPG".[208] Surprisingly, this misconception was shared by the Canadian Chiefs of Staff, who in a letter on 26 November stated that "NORAD is actually a NATO command set up within the Canada-United States region...it does not necessarily have to be designated a NATO command to come under the NATO umbrella".[209] While perhaps a normal by-product of such a major reorganisation of air defence, one could legitimately expect better professional advice, not to mention understanding, from the Government's chief military advisors. Some six months later, Diefenbaker attempted to dodge responsibility for his statements by saying that while there was no NATO Command in North America, military planning in the area was reported to NATO through the Canada-US Regional Planning Group. That group, in turn, reported to the Standing Group "and through that agency to the Military Committee and the NATO Council. Accordingly, the NATO Council [was] kept informed of air defence arrangements in the Canada-U.S. Region."[210]

Ironically, of all departments it was External Affairs which throughout did "not believe that NORAD [was] a NATO command in the normally accepted sense of the term."[211] However, someone forgot to tell the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Howard Green. In a CBC broadcast on 25 October at the height of the crisis, not only did he only reluctantly agree the Cuban missiles were a threat to North America, but he "kept insisting that NORAD was part of NATO."[212] Green's, and certainly Diefenbaker's, confusion on this matter was particularly alarming given that the Tories had spent so much time deflecting Liberal and CCF proposals

[206] Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIIA556 Volume 20, North American Air Defense (NORAD) n.d., 1957-1961, "Notes on NORAD", June 10 1958, p. 11.
[207] Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIVD6 Volume 7, Memorandum 1: NORAD, undated, p. 2.
[208] Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIIA556 Volume 20, Memorandum to the Minister, "NORAD-Points of Special Interest to External Affairs, 2 December 1957, pp. 2-3.
[209] Ibid., p. 3.
[210] Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIIA556 Volume 20, Press Release from the Office of the Prime Minister, 30 May 1958.
[211] Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIIA556 Volume 20, Memorandum to the Minister, "NORAD-Points of Special Interest to External Affairs, 2 December 1957, p. 3.
[212] DHH, Air Vice-Marshal M. M. Hendrick Papers, 79/469 folder 26, Daily Diary, Thursday, 25 October 1962; LAC, MG 32 B13 Papers of Howard Green, Volume 12 File 45, Text ot TV interview of Secretary of State for External Affairs, 25 October 1962.

to integrate the NATO and NORAD agreements after the latter was established by exchange of notes – only four-odd years earlier.[213]

While Diefenbaker had been disabused of the idea that NORAD was part of NATO by 1962, it is clear he still expected to be consulted before the US took military action anywhere in the world. His basis for this expectation was the bilateral NORAD agreement, supplemented by a series of letters between Ottawa and Washington as far back as 1956 on consultative mechanisms between the two governments.[214] These discussions resulted in bilateral agreements between Canada and the US, pledging consultation before alerts were declared or readiness levels raised.[215] All that to say Diefenbaker was probably correct in assuming he would be consulted in a slowly developing crisis in Europe or elsewhere overseas, but the nature and speed with which the Soviet missile threat developed in Cuba did not permit this. Moreover, the position of the Canadian government towards Cuba over the preceding years and the antagonism between the Diefenbaker and Kennedy administrations combined with the extreme secrecy needed while options were explored to preclude any consultation with any US ally. This is not a typical US response. As Melvin Conant, author of *The Long Polar Watch*, has argued, the US preferred to carry their allies with them rather than act unilaterally. The nature of the Cuban Missile Crisis was such that consultation simply was not possible, especially with a persistently antagonistic ally.

Yet Diefenbaker's world view did not seem to allow him to accept that operational security at times precludes consultation. In the context of flawed advice by his military counsellors, and confusion and disagreement within Government, Diefenbaker persisted in his belief that the treaty obligations required him to be consulted in advance of any decision on a course of action, or before the readiness of the Canadian Forces assigned to NORAD was raised, even given the short timelines in which crises could develop in the threat environment of the time. After the crisis, US officials noted that this belief was shared by elements of the Canadian public, and that it was another "point of criticism as far as Canadian public opinion is concerned…that there had not been adequate U.S. consultation with its allies." That same report pointed out accurately that more "emphasis seems to have been given to this point recently in retrospect than during the actual crisis itself." Diefenbaker, in a statement at a convention of the Zionist Organization of Canada on November 5, fanned these flames by

[213] William R. Willoughby, *The Joint Organizations of Canada and the United States* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), pp. 141-142.
[214] DHH, 2002/3 Cabinet Defence Committee Fonds, Series 1, File 96, Draft Letter to US Secretary of State Concerning Arrangements for Consultation Between Governments, March 1956; Extract from Minutes of the 591st Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee held 19 and 22 Mar 56; Memorandum to Cabinet Defence Committee: Procedures for Consultation on Alerts, 16 April 1956; Draft Letter to US Secretary of State from the Canadian Ambassador in Washington, January 1957; Draft Letter to Canadian Ambassador in Washington from the United States Secretary of State, January 1958.
[215] DHH 2002/3 Cabinet Defence Committee Fonds, Series 1 File 96, Record of Cabinet Defence Committee Decision, Canada-US bilateral arrangements regarding declaration of Alerts, 117th meeting April 28, 1958; Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIVD26 Volume 10, Memorandum: Proposed Review of Consultative Machinery, November 1959, p. 1.

saying the Cuban crisis "emphasized more than ever before the necessity of there being full consultation before any action is taken or policies executed that might lead to war".[216]

Thus, the Canadian response to the threat posed by Soviet missiles in Cuba was affected by confusion at all levels over what could be done and by whom, a different view of the specific threat in Cuba and the existential threat posed by the Soviet Union by political and military leadership, and a failure by the former to judge correctly Canadian public opinion on this issue.[217] It was a combination of needed information either being unavailable or not asked for, combined with a confused decision-making structure, all of which accentuated the effect of personality. It is also important to note, however, that after the Cuban Missile Crisis officials in External Affairs and Defence came to accept the reasons for why the US had avoided consultation, illustrating that in this case the discord experienced at the senior political level had little effect on the lower-level working relationship.

[216] LAC, Record Group 25, Records of the Department of External Affairs, Numbered Letter to The Canadian Delegation to the North Atlantic Council, Paris from The Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 10 January 1963, p. 1.

[217] See Peter C. Newman, *Renegade in Power: The Diefenbaker Years*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963), Jon B. McLin, *Canada's Changing Defense Policy, 1957-1963: The Problems of a Middle Power in Alliance*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), Sean M. Maloney, *Learning to Love the Bomb: Canada's Nuclear Weapons during the Cold War*, (Washington DC: Potomac Books, 2007), James M. Minifie, *Open at the Top: Reflections on US-Canada Relations*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1964).

Putting the Pieces Together

While the Canadian involvement in this crisis began following Livingston Merchant's briefing to Diefenbaker, Green, and Harkness on the evening of 22 October, a glimpse of how the Canadian Government might react to a serious international incident can be seen in its handling of the NORAD and NATO exercises right before the conflict. In the case of the former, the first major test of the NORAD response to a Soviet attack was to have been the 1959 exercise Sky Hawk, which was to involve the whole NORAD area and all units assigned OPCON to the C-in-C NORAD, USAF General Slemon. As originally designed, the exercise would have involved a realistic penetration of the defence system by Strategic Air Command (SAC) bombers, and roughly 1500 NORAD fighters and all its surface-to-air missiles would be employed.[218]

The planning began early in 1959 for the exercise which was to take place in October of that year. There is no indication in the primary record that this exercise was intended as a signal to the Soviets over recent tensions over Berlin, and indeed the dates of the exercise were changed to avoid coinciding with Krushchev's visit to the United States, so as to prevent any misinterpretation.[219] Despite this, and despite a personal letter from President Kennedy urging Canadian participation, Diefenbaker insisted on interpreting the exercise as "a provocative gesture because it too nearly coincided with Krushchev's visit to the United States". Ultimately the exercise was vetoed by the Canadian Government.[220] Curiously, this contradicted advice by External Affairs on the effect of raising NORAD readiness levels during increased international tensions surrounding the Berlin situation in 1959. Officials from External felt that it was entirely reasonable for NORAD to raise its readiness levels in response, and that "since the measures relate[d] to forces which [were] strictly defensive in character, they could hardly be regarded by the USSR as provocative or conducive to a further deterioration in the international atmosphere."[221] Thus, there was no good reason to avoid an air *defence* exercise even if it almost coincided with Krushchev's visit to the United States.

Despite having agreed at the Ministerial Committee meeting at Camp David to a follow-on exercise code-named SKYSHIELD for 1960, and that neither government would withdraw except for compelling reasons, US officials were again uncertain of Canadian participation. Indeed, it was of such concern that it became part of the briefing package for, and a point to be raised in, the meeting between Diefenbaker and President Eisenhower in 1960.[222] It was thought the recent incident in May 1960 where a Soviet surface-to-air missile brought down a

[218] NARA, Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Box 3219, "Proposed Press Release – Operation SKY HAWK", undated.
[219] RG 59, Box 3219, Memorandum to US Ambassador White, undated.
[220] NARA Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Entry 5298 Records Relating to Military Matters, 1942-1966, Briefing Package for President Kennedy for his Meeting with Prime Minister Diefenbaker, 1961, p. 4.
[221] Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIIF335 Volume 117, Memorandum for the Prime Minister, NORAD – Increased State of Readiness, by Norman Robertson, April 24, 1959, pp. 1-2.
[222] NARA Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Entry 5298 Records Relating to Military Matters, 1942-1966, Briefing Package for President Kennedy for his Meeting with Prime Minister Diefenbaker, 1961, pp. 4-5.

U-2 reconnaissance aircraft "may cause Canada to again exaggerate the significance of an air defense exercise vis-à-vis the Soviet Union".[223]

For its part, the Canadian Government was troubled over the number of times recently that it had to express "concern over the wisdom of carrying on major defence exercises at particular times. The first related to exercises to test the practicability of the airborne alert for SAC at the time when a crisis over Berlin appeared to be in the making."[224] Regarding the Sky Hawk exercise, despite the lengths to which planners had gone to prevent misinterpretation, the timing was still questioned by Ottawa. Rather than linking it to a visit by Krushchev to the US, Canadian officials were more worried that it took place "when a major effort was under way to relax tensions between Russia and the West".[225] The Canadian Government foresaw possible difficulties arising over requests to deploy "tankers to northern bases at some time of international tension in the future", opining that "the U.S. authorities had not felt as much concern over these problems of timing in relation to the international situation as has the Canadian Government".[226] US concerns about the reliability of its ally in continental defence appear in retrospect to have been justified.

Coincidental with its issuance of strong statements over the Soviet military build-up in Cuba, a NATO command post exercise code-named FALLEX 62 was to take place in September 1962. Planned since the spring of 1962, FALLEX 62 was designed to "test the military preparedness of NATO, the operational ability of the Command staffs, and, in particular, the emergency planning for the population."[227] Despite what some scholars say about the War Book having been withdrawn from service, or that draft versions were used for the exercise, the updated 1955 DND War Book complete with new, but not perfect, alert measures was the edition in effect during this exercise and the crisis itself.[228] A more realistic test of Canada-US defence preparations took place very shortly after this exercise.

On 14 October, U-2 reconnaissance aircraft photographed the construction of Soviet ballistic missile installations in Cuba. The next day, the National Photographic Interpretation Center in Washington analysed the photographic evidence and informed Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. The following day the information reached the President who ordered more U-2 flights, revealing that SS-4 SANDAL medium-range ballistic missiles were already in place, and that preparations for the emplacement of SS-5 SKEAN intermediate-range ballistic missiles were underway. The former missiles could reach Washington with as much as a sixteen megaton warhead, and the latter could hit any target in either Canada or the US with a three or five megaton warhead.[229] Recent evidence shows that the Soviet nuclear deployment

[223] Ibid., p. 5; Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIIF212 Volume 112, Briefs for Prime Minister's Visit to Washington, Joint Defence Matters, 27 May 1960, pp. 3-6 .
[224] Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIVD26 Volume 10, Memorandum entitled 'Defence Questions for Study' at Camp David, 8 November 1959, p. 7.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Ibid.
[227] "Fallex 62" *Survival*, 5:1, p. 19.
[228] Sean Maloney assumes that a draft War Book was used for the purposes of the exercise. However, there is no evidence that was the case, and using a draft war book for an exercise seems counterintuitive. Using a different version of the war book for the exercise would lead to confusion when and if a real situation required the use of the version in effect.
[229] Maloney, *Learning to Love the Bomb*, p. 276.

to Cuba included thirty-six SS-4 missiles with warheads between 200 and 700 kilotons. In addition were a half-dozen free-fall bombs for the IL-28 BEAGLE light bombers, and tactical nuclear weapons which would have made a landing difficult for US forces. The SS-5 rockets were to be equipped with warheads of 800 kiloton yield, but those warheads were not unloaded from the transport vessels.[230]

The historiography of this incident typically focuses on tensions between the Kennedy administration and the Diefenbaker government over its failure to cut ties with communist Cuba, and the latter's belief that the US position on Cuba was unbalanced, as the main motivations for Kennedy's decision to inform the Canadians only an hour and a half in advance of the quarantine announcement.[231] This argument is not a sufficient explanation for why the Canadian government was not consulted earlier, although as has been shown there were certainly tensions between the two leaders.

The true reasons for the lack of consultation appear to have been the need to maintain operational security around the discussions of what to do, as well as the preparations being made in Washington to design a response. The lead up to the crisis had seen much speculation about how the US might respond to the Russian arms build-up in Cuba, but the Canadian Government received nothing through External Affairs "or through military channels, which in nearly all cases was a quicker and more complete source of information in regard to defence matters than the diplomatic channel."[232] Douglas Harkness later recounted that the US preparation "was the best kept secret of anything in my experience concerning the Pentagon -- which generally resembled a sieve which could hold nothing in the way of news."[233] Arthur M. Schlesinger later wrote that "secrecy was imperative—concerning not only our preparations for response but even our knowledge that the sudden change in Soviet policy had occurred."[234] This sentiment was later echoed by Livingston Merchant in a discussion with H. Basil Robinson where he "pointed out the dilemma of achieving surprise by secrecy and at the same time consulting well in advance all our friends and allies."[235] However, Diefenbaker expected to be consulted well in advance despite the risks to operational security and the tight timelines in play.

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[230] Anatoli I. Gribikov and William Y. Smith, *Operation ANADYR: U.S. and Soviet Generals Recount the Cuban Missile Crisis*, (Chicago: Edition Q, 1994), p. 26; John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 274.

[231] This argument appears in many sources to varying degrees of importance as a factor in how events unfolded. For examples of this see Jocelyn Maynard Ghent, "Canada, the United States, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, *The Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 48 No. 2 (May, 1979), pp. 160-161, John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall, *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies*, p. 218, Robert Reford, *Canada and Three Crises*, (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1968), pp. 147-217, and J.L. Granatstein and Norman Hillmer, *For Better or for Worse: Canada and the United States to the 1990s*, (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1991), pp. 203-204.

[232] LAC, Manuscript Group (MG) 32, Papers of Douglas Harkness, vol. 57, "The Nuclear Arms Question and the Political Crisis Which Arose From it in January and February, 1963" by Lieutenant-Colonel the Honourable Douglas Harkness, p. 7.

[233] Ibid.

[234] JFK, Papers of Arthur M. Schlesinger, Box W-5, Writings, "Keating and Cuba," undated.

[235] JFK, Kennedy Papers, Box 18, Folder – Canada General – Rostow memorandum, "Memorandum to the Secretary from Livingston Merchant," undated.

At around ten o'clock in the morning on 22 October 1962, news reached the Government that recently retired US Ambassador Livingston Merchant would arrive that afternoon with a very important message from the US President for the Prime Minister. Only Diefenbaker, Harkness and Green were present at the briefing where Merchant outlined the intelligence situation in Cuba, and the officers with him displayed the photographic evidence and what it meant. Merchant then outlined the action to be taken and read the speech Kennedy would make that evening. While reading the President's message, the Prime Minister "expressed a strong reaction to the sentence in the speech which referred to the President's conversation with Gromyko" where the President referred to Groymyko's statement as "dishonest and dishonourable". Diefenbaker said this language "was unnecessary and provocative and was tantamount to the severance of diplomatic relations."[236] He went on to say that the language "in the draft characterizing Gromyko's statement…was a provocation to war after 24 hours", and demonstrating a remarkably poor use of analogy argued that "Gromyko was in much the same position as the two Japanese before Pearl Harbor."[237] This analogy also was offered by the US Secretary of State, George Ball, but later rejected by the Executive Committee of the National Security Council (EXCOM) who planned the US response.[238]

However, through the course of the briefing, the Prime Minister's general tone shifted from one of "scepticism bordering on antagonism to a more considered, friendly and cooperative manner."[239] Harkness later recounted that the "Prime Minister stated that in the event of a missile attack on the United States from Cuba, Canada would live up to its responsibilities under the NATO and NORAD agreements."[240] Merchant must have left the meeting feeling the Canadian Government understood the threat and the course of action and that they could be counted on to provide support and a united front against Soviet aggression.

As this case-study demonstrates, a misunderstanding of the measures available to both the Minister of National Defence and the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee prevented clear and immediate action in defence of the continent, and opened the door to needless debate. After the briefing by Livingston Merchant, and in the context of the situation and the Prime Minister's response, Harkness met with the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff, Air Chief Marshal Frank Miller, and "told Frank to order the Chiefs of Staff to put their forces on the

[236] JFK, Papers of President Kennedy, Box 18 Folder Canada-General, Rostow Memorandum, Memorandum of Meeting with Prime Minister Diefenbaker to Deliver Copy of President Kennedy's Letter of October 22 on Cuban Situation, 22 October 1962, p. 3; also see NARA Record Group 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, Entry 27 Box 5, Studies in Intelligence, Sherman Kent, "The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962: Presenting the Photographic Evidence Abroad", 2.

[237] JFK, Papers of President Kennedy, Box 18 Folder Canada-General, Rostow Memorandum, Memorandum of Meeting with Prime Minister Diefenbaker to Deliver Copy of President Kennedy's Letter of October 22 on Cuban Situation, 22 October 1962, p. 4.

[238] NARA, Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Records Relating to the Cuban Missile Crisis, Box 1, Recommendations of George W. Ball, p. 1. JFK, Papers of President Kennedy, National Security Files, Box 327, Theodore C Sorensen, "The Olive Branch or the Arrows: Decision-making in the White House, May 9, 1963, p. 25.

[239] JFK, Papers of President Kennedy, Box 18 Folder Canada-General, Rostow Memorandum, Memorandum of Meeting with Prime Minister Diefenbaker to Deliver Copy of President Kennedy's Letter of October 22 on Cuban Situation, 22 October 1962, p. 4.

[240] LAC, MG 32, Papers of Douglas Harkness, vol. 57, "The Nuclear Arms Question and the Political Crisis Which Arose From it in January and February, 1963", pp. 8-9.

"READY" state of alert."[241] Unfortunately, the Chairman Chiefs of Staff, Air Marshal Miller, questioned whether these measures were available to the Defence Minister. The difficulty arose because the updated Department of National Defence War Book, which included detailed descriptions of the instances in which the Defence Minister had authority to raise the alert levels of the Canadian Forces had been under review by various government departments since at least early 1961, and had yet to be approved by Cabinet. Harkness later argued that his "legal right to take such action was not clear."[242] However, as has been shown, the measures for the Chiefs of Staff to raise the readiness levels of their forces seem to have been in place. Thus, the forces could have been raised to a 'READY' state of military vigilance without the Government declaring an alert. Because of this erroneous advice, after a short discussion it was decided that this action needed to be cleared with the Prime Minister, allowing for extended debate by the whole Cabinet at a time when timely action in defence of the continent was called for.

A far better way of managing the crisis would have been for the COSC to raise the readiness levels with the US forces to display a united front to the Soviets while Cabinet sought a way to apply the other levers of national power in support of a peaceful solution. Once that approach was foreclosed due seemingly to inaccurate advice to political leadership, the matter was referred to Cabinet. However, the route this decision should have taken was one that would have forced Diefenbaker into a relatively quick decision – the matter should have been handled by the CDC, whose role was "to consider defence questions and to report to Cabinet upon matters of major policy relating to the maintenance and employment of the three Services."[243] Thus, only those with a major role to play in the execution of defence would have been part of the initial debate leading to a recommendation to Cabinet. The limited membership of the CDC, which had not met since 31 January 1962, would have enabled quick and clear decision-making for the simple reason that it would have been far easier to reach a consensus because the membership was more familiar with the issue at hand.[244]

Rather than limit the debate to those involved in national defence and external affairs, Diefenbaker insisted the matter be debated in cabinet – something that was not necessary given the updates to the DND War Book in 1959 allowing the Chiefs of Staff to raise the readiness levels of the CF without an order in council. Whether this was because "Mr. Diefenbaker disliked and did not want to concern himself with committees", was "suspicious of the senior officials of departments, and the Chiefs of Staff, thinking of them as Liberal-minded officials", or simply wanted to avoid a decision points to other facets of his personality.[245] Moreover, it illustrates a lack of coherent and accepted process by which such issues are dealt with in the appropriate forum with all needed information being pushed by the Ministers and agencies with a role to play. Even when "considerable coolness" had developed between the Departments of Defence and External Affairs, had the perspectives of Harkness and Green been presented to the Prime Minister in the CDC without needless debate, the decision may have been more coherent and rapid.

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[241] Ibid., p. 9.
[242] Ibid.
[243] Ibid.
[244] General Rick Hillier, *A Soldier First: Bullets, Bureaucrats and the Politics of War*, pp. 414-418.
[245] DHH, Box 87 File 47, "The Evolution of the Structure of the Department of National Defence 1945-68, Appendix A: The Organization of Higher Control and Coordination in the Formulation of Defence Policy, 1945-1964", p. 5. Also see, Reginald H. Roy, *For Most Conspicuous Bravery*, pp. 340-341.

The failure of the measures put in place for just such an incident points to an underlying difference in threat perception between the political leadership in Canada and the US, but also between Canadian political and military leadership. For example, when briefed on the imminent threat to both Canada and the US posed by the Soviet missiles, Diefenbaker was more concerned over provoking the Soviets with harsh language than over confronting a serious threat only 90 miles off the US coast. Patrick Nicholson's work on the Diefenbaker government sketches out the deep differences of opinion within the cabinet on this matter.[246] But although it sheds new light on some aspects of the mechanics of decision-making within government, it leaves important questions unanswered. In particular, while he emphasises Diefenbaker's personal turmoil over the appropriate response to the NORAD request and whether it would provoke the Soviets, he stops short of explaining the confused decision-making structure feeding that indecision.

While Canada prevented overflights of Soviet aircraft, it did not apply the same rules to Warsaw Pact member states – namely Czech and Polish aircraft – because, as Green and Diefenbaker pointed out, "they were members of the ICAO Convention."[247] The following day, it was decided that "Czechoslovakian, Cuban and other Soviet bloc aircraft covered by the ICAO agreement be permitted to fly over and land in Canada but subject to being searched to verify that such flights are in accordance with Canadian law (which does not permit civilian aircraft to carry firearms or explosives, nor nuclear material).[248] During the discussion surrounding the search of Soviet Bloc aircraft, some interesting perspectives were displayed. Some in Cabinet argued that "the government should not have decided to search Soviet bloc planes", and that the US "government had been ill-advised to act unilaterally in this crisis, without consulting its allies. The Suez incident should have served as an object lesson, but apparently had not."[249] Moreover, they felt that the "searching of Cuban aircraft was itself a provocative action", and that to "avoid unnecessary delays, the senior customs collector at each of the eastern Canadian airports should be authorized to clear aircraft destined for Cuba if he was satisfied that no war material was being carried."[250] There was no direction provided to ensure those customs collectors were adequately equipped to detect war material, only that unnecessary delays be avoided. With these views being expressed by a faction of the Cabinet, and being opposed as strongly by Harkness and his supporters, it is not surprising delay occurred. This is not to say that those two perspectives would not have been reflected in the CDC, but avoiding having to sway those members of the Cabinet who had no appreciation of the situation would have forced Diefenbaker to make a decision much faster than he did. More importantly, with the measures in place to the Chiefs of Staff Committee, the decision should only have been political if the Government decided to declare a national alert – simple, reinforced, or general.

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[246] Patrick Nicholson, *Vision and Indecision*, (Toronto: Longmans, 1968).
[247] JFK, Papers of President Kennedy, Box 18 Folder Canada – General, Rostow Memorandum, Letter from US Ambassador Livingston Merchant to Acting US Secretary of State, George Ball, 5 May 1962, p. 4. The ICAO is the international Civil Aviation Organization.
[248] DHH 73/1223, Raymont Papers File 1344, Record of Cabinet Decision, 24 October 1962.
[249] LAC, RG2, Privy Council Office, Series A-5-a, Volume 6193, Cabinet Conclusions, 24 October 1962, p. 3.
[250] Ibid., p. 4.

While the debate was going on in Cabinet, the delay imposed by the Canadian government extended beyond Washington and Ottawa to the United Nations, and the degree of disappointment by US leadership was apparent. Assistant US Secretary of State, Harlan Cleveland, then working very closely with US ambassador to the United Nations, Adlai Stevenson, reported to the White House on 24 October 1962 that the "Canadians are still pressing their resolution holding every thing up until observers are sent to check accuracy of the President's statement."[251] The report went on to comment that Cleveland "thinks we will have more trouble from the Canadians."[252] The frustration with what the Americans must have viewed as foot-dragging by the Canadians when faced with a threat as grave to Canada as to the United States reflects a very different threat perception – both of the Soviet Union in general and this incident specifically – between the political leadership of each country.

The result of these and other factors discussed was the Canadian government's hesitation in responding to the American request to increase the Canadian Forces alert status to the Canadian equivalent of Defence Condition (DEFCON) 3, which was only resolved after lengthy Cabinet debates on 23-24 October when they finally (and very quietly) acquiesced. The historiography consistently paints a picture of Canadian political leadership fearing that a Canadian alert would further provoke the Soviets, especially in the context of what many in the Canadian Cabinet felt were unbalanced American policies towards Cuba. These fears, the argument continues, combined with anger over a lack of advance consultation and concerns about implications for Canadian policy on nuclear weapons, all of which led – with the approval of Secretary of State for External Affairs Howard Green – to reluctance on Diefenbaker's part to agree to Kennedy's request. As the Soviet ships approached the quarantine zone later in the week, however, the position of the Minister of National Defence, Douglas Harkness, gained support and the alert was approved.

[251] JFK, Papers of John F. Kennedy, National Security Files, Countries – Cuba – Night Log, 10/04/62-10/30/62, Memorandum for MacGeorge Bundy, Night Log, 24 October 1962; Diefenbaker Centre, MG01XIIC120 Volume 56, Memorandum for the Minister, Cuba, 24 October 1962, p. 4.
[252] JFK, Papers of John F. Kennedy, National Security Files, Countries – Cuba – Night Log, 10/04/62-10/30/62, Memorandum for MacGeorge Bundy, Night Log, 24 October 1962.

Conclusions

The responsibility finally rests with the Prime Minister. No one else. He takes the best advice he can get. But decision on all vital matters must finally receive his approval. - John Diefenbaker[253]

In the end, the literature on this incident and the Canadian response to it treats certain aspects well, but has left many questions unanswered. Much of it points to confusion at the highest levels, but does not account sufficiently for it. It shows that Canadian political leadership hesitated at a key time when, despite misgivings over a lack of prior consultation, it was time to close ranks with our closest ally in defence of the continent. However, the literature either misinterprets what could have been done, or places the blame on the lack of an approved DND War Book as the chief culprit for the extended delay that occurred. This study has shown that useable, if not ideal, measures were in place by which the Chiefs of Staff Committee could have raised the readiness levels of all services, and NORAD and naval forces in particular, without appealing to Cabinet. So, although the literature is correct in capturing the delay, the reasons for it have hitherto eluded scholars.

Another common theme in the scholarship on the Canadian response to this incident is whether this reflected the collapse of civilian control of the military. Really, there are two levels to this. The first is what measures were available to the MND and senior military leadership, and why they were not used? This study has shown that the Chiefs of Staff could have raised readiness levels to match those of the US without Cabinet approval, and has offered an explanation of why this did not happen. There is also a strategic level aspect to this question, concerning the level of decision support available to the Prime Minister. This study has shown that serious obstacles prevented the dialogue between senior military and political leadership, the end result of which was a lack of essential information upon which to make clear decisions.

Peter Haydon, for example, supports the view that had Diefenbaker sought and considered advice from Canadian military leaders on their perception of the situation, there would have been less needless delay, resulting in North American security being put at risk. While there is some truth to this argument, this study has shown the real issue to be a breakdown in civil-military relations that occurred well before the crisis struck. More than any single factor contributing to differing military and civilian threat perceptions was the lack of a clear dialogue between civilian and military leadership. This appears to have shaped the Canadian response in a number of ways.

To extend this a bit further, this incident may serve as an example of the need for a national security apparatus to bring forward in a timely fashion all relevant information, in order to

[253] Thomas A. Hockin, "Three Canadian Prime Ministers Discuss the Office," Thomas A. Hockin, ed., *Apex Of Power. The Prime Minister and Political Leadership in Canada*, Second edition, (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall of Canada, Ltd., 1977), p. 249; also see, Russell Steven Paul Isinger, The Avro Canada CF-105 Arrow Programme: Decisions and Determinants, (Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan MA Thesis, 1997), accessed online on 18 March 2010 at: http://scaa.usask.ca/gallery/arrow/thesis/index.htm.

ensure that the leadership is adequately armed to make decisions. This is not to say that this information will be heeded, or that it will bring Canadian political leadership into line with their American counterparts on all issues. Rather, the process through which this understanding is developed and presented to senior leadership increases the likelihood that they will develop a common perception of the threat. How that threat is dealt with will be the subject of debate, but with the advantage of being armed *ab initio* with a deeper understanding of what are very complex matters. The alternative is incoherence; the muddled statements made by Ottawa about the relationship between NORAD and NATO demonstrated the reluctance – or inability – of Canadian decision-makers to be precise either about military matters generally or relations with Washington specifically. In the absence of a rigorous and expert-driven national security structure, military and political leaders were too easily able to accept reasons to justify inaction in the face of a grave threat to North America. As it turned out, the Canadian political leadership ultimately paid the price for its inaction in this crisis and on other issues.

Following the defeat of the Diefenbaker government in 1963, some effort was made by the Pearson government to repair the damage done to Canada-US relations, and to develop specific processes to present critical information to Cabinet committees. Pearson told Kennedy that his government was "…arranging for more frequent consultation at all levels in order that the intentions of each Government may be fully appreciated by the other, and misunderstandings may be avoided."[254] Moreover, he referred to the various special arrangements for communication and consultation which had been established over the years including the PJBD and Joint Cabinet committees on economic matters and defence as a means to this end. He expressed his hope that the PJBD would concern itself with improving communication at its meeting in June. Moreover, Pearson felt "that individual Ministers (he mentioned particularly Mr. Martin and Mr. Hellyer) should visit their opposite numbers in Washington DC; such visits would of course be in addition to the meetings between Mr. McNamara and Mr. Drury mentioned above."[255] For his part, the President "gave every impression of being personally favourable to the development of inter-governmental exchanges at all levels."[256] Still, the damage had been done, and such wounds often take long to heal.

Other changes also were made to repair the damage and improve the functioning of Government. In particular, officials at External Affairs recommended that "a military element be included in the Secretariat through which recommendations are forwarded to the Canadian Cabinet…[that] will make more likely [the] mutually beneficial politico-military cooperation

[254] DHH Raymont Papers 73/1223, Series 2 File 827 Meetings between president John F. Kennedy and Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson at Hyannis Port, Mass., May 10-11, 1963, pp. 1, 3.
[255] DHH Raymont Papers 73/1223 Series 2 File 827 Meetings between president John F. Kennedy and Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson at Hyannis Port, Mass., May 10-11, 1963, Summary Report, 15 May 1963, p. 3; also see DHH Raymont Papers, 73/1223 Series 2 File 827, Canada-United States Defence Relations, undated, p. 1.
[256] DHH Raymont Papers 73/1223 Series 2 File 827 Meetings between president John F. Kennedy and Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson at Hyannis Port, Mass., May 10-11, 1963, Summary Report, 15 May 1963, p. 3.

within the Canadian Government."[257] The arrangements under the Diefenbaker government tended "to cause disagreements rather than solve them."[258] The difficulty was something still experienced within government today, with often inadequate lateral coordination occurring between government agencies. At the time, for example, the armed forces staffed their proposals to the Minister of National Defence "with little if any lateral coordination with other governmental agencies."[259] The problem then became "a difficult one of reversing a Minister's decision, and intra-governmental discussion at the Cabinet level under circumstances not usually conducive to fully considered examination."[260] It was felt that by "re-including the military in the Cabinet Secretariat, the proposals could be coordinated and worked out at a lower level with a better opportunity for detailed consideration."[261] In addition, the Cabinet Defence Committee was resurrected and although some scholars have argued it never regained its former prominence, it met far more regularly than had been the case under Diefenbaker. Clear rules were introduced to ensure needed information would reach the appropriate committees, thus facilitating clear decision-making.[262]

In effect, the sad story of how Ottawa handled the Cuban Missile Crisis is replete with leaders, both political and military, too readily accepting reasons to justify inaction in the face of a clear and present danger. Thus, while having a more streamlined national security structure cannot always negate the effect of personality on decision-making, what this case-study demonstrates is that the national security structure in place during the crisis allowed military civilian leadership to get away far too easily with finding reasons for inaction. While it is accepted that personality always makes itself felt, the lack of rigour in the system did nothing to soften its sharp edges since it did not force realistic and timely assessments of the nation's geostrategic imperatives, or of the developing threat from Soviet missiles in Cuba. Indeed, this case-study has shown that a degree of strategic laziness, enhanced by a slow move away from a mobilisation paradigm to one with large forces in-being, had crept into the nation's strategic planning and understanding of the likely nature of the next conflict. The American 'essence of decision', while far from perfect, attempted to understand the context,

[257] NARA, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Entry 5298 Box 1, Records Relating to Military Matters 1942-1966, Record of discussions with David Kirkwood at External Affairs in Ottawa, "Informal Canadian Comments on Consultation", 4 December 1963, p. 2.
[258] Ibid.
[259] Ibid.
[260] Ibid.
[261] Ibid.
[262] MG 31, volume 7 File 21, Memorandum for Deputy Ministers from the Privy Council Office, 16 October 1963; MG 31, volume 7 File 21, Memorandum entitled "Handling of Cabinet Business" 3 September 1963.

the adversary's perspective, and tried to apply a degree of rigour to the decision-making process that may have prevented the crisis from developing into a major war.

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List of symbols/abbreviations/acronyms/initialisms

AFHQ	Air Force Headquarters
C-in-C	Commander-in-Chief
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CCF	Co-operative Commonwealth Federation
CDC	Cabinet Defence Committee
CF	Canadian Forces
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
COSC	Chiefs of Staff Committee
CUSRPG	Canada-US Regional Planning Group
DEFCON	Defence Condition
DHH	Directorate of History and Heritage
DM	Deputy Minister
DMO&P	Director of Military Operations and Planning
DND	Department of National Defence
DRDC	Defence Research and Development Canada
ExComm	Executive Committee of the National Security Council
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICBM	Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile
JFK	John F. Kennedy Presidential Library
LAC	Library and Archives Canada
MCC	Military Cooperation Committee
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NIE	National Intelligence Estimate
NORAD	North American Aerospace Defense Command
OAS	Organization of American States
PJBD	Permanent Joint Board on Defence
RAF	Royal Air Force
RCAF	Royal Canadian Air Force
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RCN	Royal Canadian Navy
SAC	Strategic Air Command
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
US	United States
USAF	United States Air Force

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13. ABSTRACT

This Technical Memorandum, which is the first full case-study in a series of eight, examines how Canada dealt with the Cuban Missile Crisis. The case will focus on accounting for why the Diefenbaker government, in the context of a grave threat to North American security and defence, delayed increasing the readiness level for the CF as requested by Washington, and the role played by the mechanics of Canadian Government decision-making at the time. By reconstructing the events and decision-making processes that existed in the political, bureaucratic and military domains, the case begins to build the 'story' of the Canada-US strategic defence relationship. In doing so, it recounts a sad story of leaders, both political and military, too readily accepting reasons to justify inaction in the face of a clear and present danger. Thus, while having a more streamlined national security structure cannot always negate the effect of personality on decision-making, what this case-study demonstrates is that the national security structure in place during the crisis allowed military civilian leadership to get away far too easily with finding reasons for inaction. While it is accepted that personality always makes itself felt, the lack of rigour in the system did nothing to soften its sharp edges since it did not force realistic and timely assessments of the nation's geostrategic imperatives, or of the developing threat from Soviet missiles in Cuba. Indeed, this case-study has shown that a degree of strategic laziness, enhanced by a slow move away from a mobilisation paradigm to one with large forces in-being, had crept into the nation's strategic planning and understanding of the likely nature of the next conflict.

14. KEYWORDS, DESCRIPTORS or IDENTIFIERS

Canada-US, Strategic Culture, NORAD, Vietnam War, Cuban Missile Crisis, National Security Architecture, Government Decision-Making, Continental Defence, Threat Perception, Monroe Doctrine, Government War Book, Crisis Management

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