Canada and the North Atlantic Triangle from Munich to Suez, 1938–1956

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Introduction

Hector Mackenzie

Although it is now 75 years since the publication of John Bartlet Brebner's *North Atlantic Triangle*, the essays in this issue of the *London Journal of Canadian Studies* attest to the resonance and utility of its depiction of 'the interplay of Canada, the United States and Great Britain'.[1] Though it may have been a geometric form often visible from only one of its vertices – Canada – the essays that follow, and many other scholarly works, have employed Brebner's metaphor not only to situate and explain Canadian policy but also to show how Canadian views and actions influenced and were shaped by the stances and conduct of Canada's closest allies. Not even its Canadian enthusiasts would misrepresent it as an equilateral triangle, but these articles and previous studies demonstrate that British and American policymakers often took heed of Canada's positions and interests when formulating their own options and conducting their diplomacy.

Brebner's book was arguably published at or near the peak of this trilateral relationship, as the close collaboration before, during and after the Second World War yielded exceptional opportunities and accomplishments for the partners. The Canadian prime minister most closely identified with these developments, William Lyon Mackenzie King, was under no illusions of equality among the countries or their leaders, but he firmly believed in a helpful Canadian role as an 'interpreter' to reconcile and align British and American stances. In some areas, notably wartime supply and finance, planning for peacetime and post-war reconstruction, the Canadian contribution went well beyond advice and the outcomes bore the imprint of those engagements.

Canada's place at the table in the key negotiations and institutions of the global economy and in the elaboration of the North Atlantic alliance was undoubtedly earned through its responsible and effective participation in the events described in these articles as well as other major wartime developments in which Canada played a meaningful and influential part. Moreover, American and British policymakers regarded

the Canadian involvement and assistance as valuable complements to their own deliberations and actions. The comparative neglect by later American and British scholarship – a point made directly and indirectly by the authors of these essays – does not reflect the reality of the decade surveyed in this collection.

In fact, none of these stories would be complete without Canadian content and records, as these articles demonstrate. Though the Canadian presence, personified by the ubiquitous Mackenzie King, is often overlooked – as in Anglo-American relations during the 1930s, and the mooted invasion of Greenland in 1940; or in the background, as with the St Pierre and Miquelon affair in 1941; or simply downplayed, as with the Permanent Joint Board on Defence, also in 1940, and the pretensions of the post-war Department of External Affairs – there is no doubt that Canada made a difference and that it defined its position within the North Atlantic Triangle in each of the episodes or themes examined herein.

Each of these authors sheds further light on key aspects of the international relations of the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada, whether unilateral, bilateral or, most often, trilateral engagements. As all remind us, Canada often had a key part to play and generally played it well in circumstances that were exceptionally favourable to the values and interests of the country, however perilous the overall situation.

Finally, this collection of articles also attests to the valuable contribution to our understanding of Canada made by the *London Journal of Canadian Studies*, published online by UCL Press, and by the Institute of the Americas at UCL, which has hosted the conferences and seminars from which most of these papers have been drawn and which continues to enrich our knowledge through its support and engagement. Special thanks are also due to the Canada–UK Foundation, located at Canada House in London, for its generous support in the funding of this issue of the *London Journal of Canadian Studies*.

Note

1 J. B. Brebner, *North Atlantic Triangle: The interplay of Canada, the United States and Great Britain* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1945).

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Mackenzie King and the North Atlantic Triangle in the Era of Munich, 1938–1939

Tony McCulloch

Abstract

This article looks at relations between Britain, the United States and Canada in the years leading up to the Second World War in order to ascertain the extent to which a North Atlantic Triangle can be said to have existed at the outbreak of war in September 1939. Drawing upon the author's contention that an Anglo-American 'tacit alliance' was formed against Germany, Italy and Japan during President Franklin Roosevelt's second term, it argues that the Canadian Prime Minister, William Lyon Mackenzie King, played an important part in this development by virtue of Canada's position as the northern neighbour of the United States and the senior Dominion of the British Empire and that this 'tacit alliance' went hand in hand with a 'North Atlantic Triangle' between these three governments. The article first analyses the evolution of Mackenzie King's relationships with Franklin Roosevelt and Neville Chamberlain in the 1930s. It then examines three key elements in the triangular relationship between Canada, the United States and Britain in 1938–9: the conclusion of an Anglo-American trade agreement in 1938; British appeasement policy and Roosevelt's role during the Munich crisis of 1938; and the British Royal Visit to the United States in June 1939.

Keywords North Atlantic Triangle; Franklin Roosevelt; William Lyon Mackenzie King; Neville Chamberlain; appeasement; Nazi Germany.

Introduction

On 1 February 1938, William Borah, the veteran isolationist from Idaho, stood up in the Senate and accused the Roosevelt administration of 'risking war by letting the world believe that the United States was in a "tacit alliance" with Great Britain'. Borah was referring to a statement by Anthony Eden in the Commons on 21 December in which, according to the Senator, he implied 'a secret understanding between Great Britain and the United States'. Borah's outburst came in the wake of the fierce debate in the United States and abroad that ensued when President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) said in his Chicago speech on 5 October 1937 that the peace-loving countries of the world should 'quarantine the aggressors'. FDR's announcement on 28 January 1938 that the United States required a much larger defence budget, together with reports of a meeting between US and British naval officials in London, confirmed the suspicions of isolationists such as Borah that Roosevelt's 'Quarantine' speech was the harbinger of a more interventionist policy. Senator Hiram Johnson, another well-known isolationist, demanded a public statement confirming that the President had not abandoned the traditional American policy of avoiding entangling alliances with the nations of Europe.[1]

Both Borah and Johnson had been among the so-called Irreconcilables opposed to US entry to the League of Nations in 1919–20, and they had been suspicious of any sign of American political cooperation with European powers, especially Britain, ever since. Other signs of a close Anglo-American relationship that suggested an 'informal alliance' were felt to include the visit to Washington of Walter Runciman, the British Trade Secretary, in January 1937. A trade agreement had been concluded between the United States and Canada in November 1935 and there were suspicions that one with Britain would have more than economic significance. The increasingly friendly relations between the Roosevelt administration and Canada, which was the senior Dominion in the British Empire, and the continuing efforts of the US President to gain more discretion in interpreting the American Neutrality laws passed by Congress between 1935 and 1937, had also raised suspicions among the isolationists. So too, at a later date, did the President's Queen's University speech in August 1938 during the growing crisis over German policy towards Czechoslovakia, as well as the Anglo-American trade agreement of 1938, and the Royal Visit to Canada and the United States in 1939.[2]

There is little doubt that William Lyon Mackenzie King felt he had a special role to play in bringing Britain and the United States closer

together in the late 1930s, although he hoped that this would help to preserve international peace rather than to disturb it. The longest-serving prime minister in Canadian history, he had occupied that post for most of the 1920s until being defeated by Richard Bennett and the Conservatives in the general election of July 1930. Mackenzie King and the Liberals gained their revenge in the general election of October 1935 when they achieved a large majority, and they were re-elected in 1940 and 1945. Mackenzie King remained in office until his retirement in November 1948. Unlike his predecessor, he was, in the words of C. P. Stacey, 'a fervent believer … in the "lynch-pin" theory – the destined role of Canada as the interpreter between the United States and Britain'. In March 1925, for example, Mackenzie King confided to his diary that, while Conservatives desired a 'common foreign policy' with Britain against the United States, he believed that Canada could 'render the British Empire greater service by being an interpreter of each to the other'.[3]

Stacey also referred to 'the peculiar relationship of Franklin D Roosevelt to Canada'. Pointing out that 'Mr Roosevelt is perhaps the first American President of whom it could be said that he was genuinely popular in Canada', he raised the question of how Roosevelt's evident special interest in Canada might be explained. 'He was certainly not obsessed with the country,' wrote Stacey, 'but he seems to have had a more genuine interest in relations with Canada than any other President has ever had' – especially in the case of defence. Stacey had no real answer to this question himself, beyond saying that the enigmatic FDR was often difficult to fathom and stating that too much influence on US foreign policy should not be attributed to Mackenzie King himself.[4]

In fact, FDR's attitude towards Canada needs to be seen within the context of the 'North Atlantic Triangle', the term coined by the historian John Bartlet Brebner in 1945 to describe the triangular relationship that had emerged between the United States, Britain and Canada – politically and economically – during the late nineteenth century. This development was underlined by Canada's strong contribution to victory during the First World War, its status at the Paris Peace Conference and its membership in the League of Nations. The uneasy relations of the 1920s between the United States, Britain and Canada were followed by 'the perplexing triangular interplay during the prelude to war', but cooperation was much closer between 1939 and 1945, including a 'triangular economic integration for war'. Indeed, Brebner regarded the Second World War as the heyday of the North Atlantic Triangle.[5]

The broad concept of a North Atlantic Triangle sketched by Brebner has been filled in by several later historians and political scientists, some

of whom have doubted the existence of such a triangle while others have argued that it was a significant factor in Canadian foreign policy. For example, while Gordon Stewart has launched a wide-ranging assault on Brebner's North Atlantic Triangle thesis, another Canadian scholar, David Haglund, has put forward an equally robust defence, arguing that the triangle concept was still of value, even in the twenty-first century, as an explanation of Canada's strategic culture. A similar difference of opinion exists concerning Mackenzie King's diplomacy, as can be seen in recent works by Roy MacFarlane, who regards appeasement and Canadian unity as the total of Mackenzie King's foreign policy, and Neville Thompson, who views him as the indispensable 'Third Man' in a triangular relationship with Roosevelt and Churchill during the Second World War.[6]

The main purpose of the current article is to examine the notion of a 'North Atlantic Triangle' in the years leading up to the Second World War and to assess Mackenzie King's role in acting as an 'interpreter' between the United States and Britain, and more specifically between Franklin Roosevelt and Neville Chamberlain in the 'era of Munich' – 1938–9. This will be done by examining the role of Canada under Mackenzie King's leadership in three main areas: (1) Mackenzie King's role in facilitating the Anglo-American trade agreement of 1938; (2) his support for Neville Chamberlain's appeasement policy during the crisis over Czechoslovakia and the influence this had on Roosevelt's attitude towards the Munich agreement; and (3) Mackenzie King's part in the British Royal Visit to the United States in June 1939. But before addressing these three examples of the 'North Atlantic Triangle' in practice, it is necessary to examine Mackenzie King's relationship with Neville Chamberlain and Franklin Roosevelt before 1938.[7]

Mackenzie King and Neville Chamberlain

As the leader of the Liberal opposition, Mackenzie King met Chamberlain and other members of the British trade delegation in the summer of 1932 when they travelled to Canada for the Imperial Conference to negotiate what became known as the Ottawa agreements orchestrated by his arch-rival, Richard Bennett, the Conservative Party leader and Canadian Prime Minister from August 1930 to October 1935. A convinced free trader, Mackenzie King was suspicious of Chamberlain as the son and political heir of Joseph Chamberlain, who had campaigned against free trade and for Imperial Preference at the start of the twentieth century. As a fellow Liberal he had more in common with Walter Runciman, the

President of the Board of Trade, who was also a member of the British delegation to Ottawa, along with Stanley Baldwin, who was the leader of the Conservatives in Ramsay MacDonald's National Government.[8]

Mackenzie King was also critical of Chamberlain's outspoken views, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the issue of the British war debts owed to the United States as a result of the Great War as liable to inflame American opinion, especially in Congress. For example, a speech by Chamberlain to American press correspondents in London in February 1933 was met with strong criticism in the United States and among Liberals in Canada. 'Everyone seemed to agree that Chamberlain has made a real mistake in his speech,' he noted in his diary. When asked by the Earl of Bessborough, the Governor General, for his view, Mackenzie King said the speech was 'a great mistake'. Bessborough regarded the speech as 'frightful' and, according to Mackenzie King, he 'put both hands to the side of his head saying it was too bad Neville should say such things' as better relations between Britain and the United States were essential in the lead-up to the London Economic Conference scheduled to take place in 1933.[9]

The 'Roosevelt Bombshell' message to the conference in July 1933 and continued tensions over war debts contributed to a difficult period in Anglo-American relations from 1933 to 1935, but relations improved when Baldwin became Prime Minister for the third time in June 1935. This improvement led to a degree of cooperation between the two governments when the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in October 1935 severely tested the effectiveness of the League of Nations in implementing 'collective security' for all its members, including the African kingdom that was under attack by Mussolini's Italy. While not wanting to alienate Mussolini for fear of driving Italy into the arms of Hitler's Germany, the Baldwin government reluctantly decided to support whatever sanctions France and the other League members could agree upon. Meanwhile, the Roosevelt administration, while constrained by the US Neutrality laws, introduced a 'moral embargo' against Italy in support of the League sanctions. However, in November the British Cabinet became increasingly alarmed at the prospect of economic sanctions leading to war with Italy, and it was against this background that Sir Samuel Hoare, the British Foreign Secretary, met with his French counterpart, Pierre Laval, in Paris in December 1935 and agreed that Ethiopia should be asked to make large territorial concessions to Italy in return for peace.[10]

When the Hoare–Laval pact became public, there was an outcry against it in Britain and Hoare was forced to resign. Sanctions were implemented, although not on oil, but they did not prevent Italian forces from defeating the Ethiopians and the proclamation of an Italian victory

in May 1936. Hoare received the sympathy of Mackenzie King, who was a regular critic of the League and especially of the notion of 'collective security', which he felt had the potential to involve Canada in a European war. 'He has allowed himself to be sacrificed not only to save a ministry … but a European war and a great conflagration,' he noted in his diary.

> If no war comes he will be the hero, because of his willingness to sacrifice the League to avert both the destruction of the League and of Europe … My own feeling is increasingly against Canada's being involved in these European situations, and against the continuance of the League of Nations as a body having to do with any matters involving more than police action.

He was therefore delighted with Chamberlain's speech on 10 June 1936, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Prime Minister-in-waiting said that the continuance of sanctions was 'the very midsummer of madness'. He was also pleased when, following Roosevelt's re-election in November 1936, Chamberlain indicated that he regarded a trade agreement with the United States as an early objective.[11]

Mackenzie King and Franklin Roosevelt

Mackenzie King welcomed Roosevelt's victory over Herbert Hoover in November 1932 and his first speech as president in March 1933, following the long interregnum period. 'It is an admirable inaugural address and Roosevelt has got off to a good start,' he wrote in his diary. However, while he supported some of the early measures taken by Roosevelt as part of his New Deal programme, by 1934 he had become concerned about what he regarded as the growing economic nationalism of the New Deal. 'I fear government in the US has become very much of a dictatorship – though not backed and controlled by coercion and force, beyond that of propaganda and publicity,' reads one diary entry. 'I confess I feel alarmed about some parts of Roosevelt's policies,' he continued the next day. 'The policy of encouraging scarcity, or substituting scarcity for plenty as a part of government policy seems to me not only folly but blasphemy' and 'was leading the US into state socialism'. More to his liking was the prospect of a trade agreement with the United States, which was initiated by his predecessor Richard Bennett, desperate for economic measures that might help him to gain an unlikely victory in the Canadian general election of October 1935.[12]

In fact, it was Mackenzie King and the Liberals who emerged as the victors in the election, and one of King's first acts as Prime Minister was to pay a visit to Roosevelt and his Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, to push for the conclusion of Canadian-American trade negotiations that had stalled under Bennett. He arrived in Washington on 7 November 1935 and was very soon on good terms with the President. According to Mackenzie King's own account, Roosevelt told him that he thought Canada could help him in his relations with Britain by acting as an 'interpreter' on some of the issues between the two nations. In particular, Roosevelt referred to the view that he had 'torpedoed' the London Economic Conference in July 1933 by sending his 'Bombshell message' criticising attempts at currency stabilisation at that time – an event that had particularly incensed Chancellor Neville Chamberlain, who became the British Prime Minister in May 1937.[13]

Besides helping to establish a rapport between Mackenzie King and Roosevelt, the visit was significant in other ways as well. The two leaders discussed the European situation at some length, and Roosevelt revealed his viewpoint by saying he favoured a blockade of Germany by the League of Nations if it became 'troublesome' again under Adolf Hitler. This was not a view that the new Canadian Prime Minister shared, but on the issue of a Canadian-American trade agreement the two leaders made rapid progress. Like Hull, Mackenzie King was a firm believer in the economic and political benefits of freer trade. This was less true of Roosevelt, but Mackenzie King helped to persuade the US President to agree to further agricultural concessions in return for larger Canadian ones. As a result, a Canadian-American trade agreement was signed on 15 November. Lindsay reported to London that Mackenzie King had told him the agreement had proved possible because Roosevelt had 'put his back into it' for the first time.[14]

In July 1936, Roosevelt paid a return visit to the Canadian Prime Minister in Quebec and also met John Buchan, Lord Tweedsmuir, who had become Governor General in November 1935. Mackenzie King's potential significance as a link between the Roosevelt administration and the British government can be seen in a report made by Malcolm MacDonald, the Dominions Secretary, based on a long conversation with Mackenzie King in Geneva on 20 September:

> Throughout the talk he showed every sign of a genuine anxiety to help us, and a readiness to be influenced by our opinions. At the same time it was clear that he is powerfully affected by the strength of Canadian opinion in favour of keeping clear of

European entanglements, and from the way in which he spoke about President Roosevelt I feel that he pays considerable heed to the President's views on foreign policy.[15]

Anglo-American trade agreement, 1938

The Foreign Office recognised that the obvious avenue of diplomatic cooperation with the United States was the negotiation of a trade agreement. This fact had been underlined in a series of despatches from Sir Ronald Lindsay, the British Ambassador in Washington. He pointed out that the trade agreements policy had been attacked by the Republicans during the 1936 presidential election, especially the agreement with Canada, and vigorously defended by Hull. As a result of the election, Hull had emerged as a much stronger figure in the administration, and he was now determined to add an agreement with Britain to his earlier agreements. The moral for Lindsay was clear. 'This must be of interest to His Majesty's Government in the immediate future when United States proposals for economic cooperation are renewed and negotiations for mutual tariff concessions are undertaken.'[16]

After the presidential election, on 16 November 1936, the State Department put forward an 'essentials list' of tariff requests to the British government, including reductions in the duties on hog products, barley, rice, fresh fruit, dried fruits, canned fruits, tobacco, softwood lumber and leather. The list was, in fact, made up almost entirely of items covered by the Ottawa agreements and therefore subject to Imperial Preference. Concessions on them could therefore be made only with the consent of Canada and the other Dominions, and this brought to the fore the issue of the Ottawa agreements negotiated in August 1932 and their central principle of Imperial Preference. The 'essentials' list was therefore greeted with dismay in the Foreign Office, where it was felt that it would be impossible to meet the American demands. American friendship was important, but it could hardly be obtained at the expense of the Dominions, it was felt.[17]

A further complication arose with the announcement in Ottawa on 14 January 1937 that a revised version of the Anglo-Canadian trade agreement signed in 1932 was imminent. Mackenzie King took much of the credit for this new agreement. 'I know that … except for the continuous and determined attention I have compelled the Cabinet to give to this matter, there would be no Agreement at this time, nor indeed would its provisions have been so favourable as they now are.' However, when

some of the details of the agreement appeared in the press in London, Hull telephoned Ottawa for clarification. 'Personally I have no doubt that the British are playing the old game and stating to the States that they cannot lower duties because of the opposition of Canada. I was anxious to make clear that we meant what we said about our liberal policy.' Hull's focus on the obstacles presented by the Ottawa agreements in concluding a trade agreement with Britain meant that Mackenzie King was bound to be a key player in Anglo-American relations in the late 1930s.[18]

However, the difficulty of reaching an Anglo-American trade agreement was highlighted during the visit of Walter Runciman, the President of the Board of Trade, to Washington in January 1937. Runciman had intended to visit Lord Tweedsmuir in Ottawa before going to Washington but the delicate nature of the Anglo-Canadian trade talks at the start of the year had dissuaded him from doing this. While in Washington, from 23 to 27 January, Runciman faced a barrage of information and arguments from Hull about the American trade agreements programme and he later complained that Hull was so proud of his own 13 agreements that he scarcely listened to the fact that Runciman had been responsible for 23. But the British minister also noted that Roosevelt was much less concerned about the details of trade policy and much more interested in the international situation. 'If the trade agreement were out of the way the course would be clear for more complete collaboration,' Runciman stated.[19]

On 29 January, Lindsay sent London a summary of the position of the Anglo-American trade talks following Runciman's visit. He stressed that the view in Washington was that 'for both countries the political reasons for agreement outweigh the commercial considerations'. The US government recognised that the maintenance of Imperial Preference was a political necessity for Britain but, at the same time, tariff reductions on agricultural items were a political necessity for them. The US government was disappointed with London's view that concessions could only be made with the consent of the Dominions. It was unable to give compensation for this consent. It was up to Britain to impress on the Dominions the gravity of the consequences of withholding consent, that is, 'the prevention of economic cooperation and further trade agreements'.[20]

The Imperial Conference due to take place in May 1937 would obviously be an opportunity to gauge Dominion – and Canadian – opinion. Revision of the Ottawa agreements was not officially on the agenda of the conference but the British plan, as agreed by the Cabinet Trade and Agricultural Committee, was to sound out Canada and the other Dominions unofficially while the conference was taking place. It was

hoped that they would be prepared to accept the need to modify the Ottawa agreements in the light of the 'essentials list', bearing in mind the desirability of obtaining the political sympathy of the United States.[21]

The imminence of the Imperial Conference, and the desire to make progress towards opening trade negotiations with Britain, was no doubt the main reason why Roosevelt invited Mackenzie King to Washington again in March 1937. Both Hull and Roosevelt dwelt on the worsening international situation in their discussions with the Canadian Prime Minister, although no specific requests were put to him for Canada to make concessions on its Imperial Preference. But he suspected, quite rightly, that Canada was being pressured to make economic sacrifices to facilitate an Anglo-American trade agreement, something he was determined to resist unless there were separate negotiations for a new Canadian-American agreement, to replace the one concluded in 1935.[22]

In the event, the Imperial Conference was not a great success in advancing the Anglo-American trade agreement as each Dominion insisted on compensation for any concessions on margins of preference. South Africa and New Zealand presented the fewest problems, but the Australians, led by Prime Minister Joseph Lyons, would not commit themselves before their general election, due in the autumn, for fear that any concessions would be exploited by the Labour opposition. As for Mackenzie King, he also steadfastly refused to countenance any Canadian concessions except as part of a wider package. 'We would be thought simpletons if we returned home after doing anything of the kind,' he told Oliver Stanley, who had replaced Runciman as President of the Board of Trade. Thus Mackenzie King was happy to act as an interpreter between Britain and the United States, but he was not prepared to sacrifice Canadian economic interests in the process. The United States would have to renegotiate the 1935 trade agreement if it wanted concessions from Canada regarding the Ottawa agreements.[23]

In October 1937, Mackenzie King received a visit in Ottawa from Cordell Hull, who was by now very anxious to make some progress on a trade agreement with Britain. Hull stressed the urgency of the international situation both in Europe, where the Spanish Civil War was raging, and in the Far East, where Japan had recently attacked China. In fact, this meeting took place soon after Roosevelt's 'Quarantine speech' in Chicago, which created something of a sensation in the United States as it suggested that the US President was moving away from isolationism. While Hull and Mackenzie King discussed international events in Ottawa, their officials met in Washington to discuss trade details. As a result, the Canadians were ready to recommend specific concessions

and the American side agreed to renegotiate the 1935 agreement with Canada. This meant that the US government was prepared to hold simultaneous negotiations with Canada and Britain – a course they had previously resisted for fear of paying twice for an Anglo-American trade agreement.[24]

It was now up to the British government to finalise its own concessions on the 'essentials' list, and this issue was discussed by the Cabinet on 27 October. The main opposition to concessions came from William Morrison, the minister of agriculture, who was worried about the effect on home agriculture and the political consequences that might follow. As a result, the final British list of possible concessions was some way from the requests made by the State Department. However, Hull, though disappointed, would brook no more delay and on 17 November accepted the British offers as a basis for formal negotiations for the trade agreement. Mackenzie King was delighted and claimed credit in his diary for resisting one-sided Canadian discussions and forcing Britain and the United States to take the Dominion into proper account. 'I know that this would never have been done but for my insistence upon every step that has led up to it both with the British Government and with the US Government,' he wrote.[25]

The Anglo-American trade agreement was finally signed in the East Room of the White House on 17 November 1938. The main participants were Roosevelt, Hull, Mackenzie King and Lindsay, the British Ambassador. But the man of the hour was Cordell Hull. 'Today was the big day in Mr Hull's career,' noted Pierrepont Moffat, the Head of the European Division of the State Department. Mackenzie King also recorded Hull's sense of achievement. 'Mr Hull was greatly delighted with the conclusion of the trade agreements and could not be too friendly. If I had been a long lost brother, I could not have received a warmer welcome,' he noted. 'He spoke almost immediately of how pleasant the negotiations had been between Canada and the United States, and indicated there had been a good deal of difficulty in the other negotiations.'[26]

Mackenzie King, appeasement and Munich, 1938

Although the Imperial Conference had not greatly advanced the conclusion of an Anglo-American trade agreement, it had reassured Mackenzie King that Neville Chamberlain was the right man to succeed Stanley Baldwin when the latter stepped down as Prime Minister. Before the conference he had been doubtful about Chamberlain's outlook on

world affairs, especially his attitude towards the United States, but while in London he developed a very high opinion of the new prime minister. On the evening of 15 June, Chamberlain, Eden and Malcolm MacDonald, the Dominions Secretary, discussed the European situation with the Dominion leaders. Mackenzie King said he was glad to note that Chamberlain recognised the value of 'economic appeasement' and was not opposed to German expansion in the East, as long as it was peaceful, or to colonial compensation to Germany. He wrote in his diary that 'the British ministers are earnestly and wholeheartedly working for the peace of Europe, and are likely to be wise and sane in their attitude'. He added for good measure: 'I have come to have the greatest confidence in Chamberlain.'[27]

Henceforth, Mackenzie King was to be a firm supporter of Chamberlain and his brand of appeasement, and although as reluctant as ever to commit Canada to any future action, he spoke warmly of Chamberlain to both Roosevelt and Hull. His support for appeasement was strengthened yet further as a result of a visit he made to Berlin after the Imperial Conference at the end of June 1937, during which he met German Foreign Minister Konstantin Von Neurath, Hermann Goering and Hitler himself. Mackenzie King told Hitler that he felt Chamberlain had a good understanding of foreign affairs and a broad outlook. The Canadian Prime Minister was very impressed by Hitler: 'My sizing up of the man as I sat and talked with him, was that he is really one who truly loves his fellow man and his country and would make any sacrifice for their good.' While this comment in Mackenzie King's diary does not inspire much confidence in his judgement of men, it does underline that he had become a strong advocate of appeasement and a great supporter of Chamberlain's foreign policy.[28]

Thus Mackenzie King approved of British neutrality during the Spanish Civil War, which had broken out in July 1936, despite events such as the bombing of Guernica by German and Italian planes in April 1937. He was also keen for Britain and the United States not to be dragged into the war between China and Japan that began in July 1937 or to confront Hitler after the enforced Anschluss between Germany and Austria in March 1938. This event altered the balance of power in Europe and proved a direct threat to Czechoslovakia, with its Sudeten German minority. As German pressure grew on the Czech government to make concessions, there was a real danger of France becoming involved in a war with Germany because of its alliance with the Czechs, and this in turn would mean Britain – and probably the Dominions – being dragged in. Certainly Mackenzie King was alarmed by the German move, but he was

confident that war could be avoided. 'I believe the British Government will be wise enough not to take a stand which will bring England into war and, with her, France and Russia and Italy and some other countries, as would be inevitable, but will bide her time to meet the European situation in some more effective way a little later on.'[29]

The strategy of Chamberlain and the British government was, indeed, to play for time and to try to defuse the potential crisis between Germany and Czechoslovakia. To this end the British government put forward a 'conciliator' – in the person of Walter Runciman, the former President of the Board of Trade – to travel to Prague in August 1938 to assess the situation and mediate if possible. Runciman, of course, was well known to Roosevelt because of his visit to see the US President in January 1937. He wrote to Roosevelt about his mission and the Foreign Office tried very hard to get a supportive statement out of Roosevelt in favour of the mission. Roosevelt was reluctant to do this, but Mackenzie King had no such hesitation, in private at least. 'I have found tremendous enjoyment and peace of mind in the appointment of Runciman as mediator to Czechoslovakia,' he wrote at the end of July.[30]

While Runciman was in Prague suffering from the heat and from insomnia, Roosevelt paid a significant visit to Canada in which he again met with Mackenzie King on the occasion of receiving an honorary degree from Queen's University, Kingston. At Queen's Roosevelt made a much-quoted speech in which he said, 'I give to you assurance that the people of the United States will not stand idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by any other Empire.' This was clearly a warning to Germany and Japan not to disregard the significance of American power. Roosevelt also took the opportunity to discuss the international situation with Mackenzie King, who by now had come to regard Hitler as the chief danger to European peace. The two leaders also discussed Chamberlain's policy, which Mackenzie King fully supported, and hoped that Chamberlain might be able to visit Washington when the trade agreements between Britain, the United States and Canada were eventually signed.[31]

The Runciman mission failed to solve the Sudetenland problem, but it did pave the way for the eventual Munich settlement of September 1938 as a result of which the German-speaking Sudetenland was incorporated into Germany. Roosevelt, despite his own misgivings, which he had shared with his Cabinet, appeared to endorse Chamberlain's policy in public, not least by sending him a telegram with the words 'Good man' at the height of the crisis. Aware of British and French weakness in the air at this time, and mindful of Mackenzie King's strong support of

Chamberlain's policy of appeasement, Roosevelt was more sympathetic towards the efforts of the British Prime Minister than was American public opinion in general.[32]

Needless to say, Mackenzie King was full of admiration for Chamberlain's policy. 'It is well for Chamberlain that he was born into this world and for the world that he was born into it,' he enthused in his diary. 'His name will go down in history as one of the greatest men who ever lived—a great conciliator.' He disagreed with Winston Churchill and Chamberlain's other critics in Britain, the United States and the Dominions and was sure he had done the right thing in supporting him. He was particularly pleased with the appeals made by Chamberlain and Roosevelt to Hitler to seek a peaceful solution to the Czech crisis at Munich. The calling of a conference at Munich was, for him, 'a relief indescribable', and he felt that his 'personal contacts' with Roosevelt and Chamberlain, and possibly even with Hitler, had helped to 'save the day'. When the Munich agreement was announced he immediately sent congratulatory telegrams to Chamberlain and Roosevelt.[33]

Royal Visit, 1939

While in Washington for the signing of the Canadian-American trade agreement in November 1938, Mackenzie King was able to have another exchange of views with Roosevelt and Hull. After the signing ceremony and speeches, there was a general conversation in the White House Library that included Lindsay and, for a time, Sumner Welles, the Under Secretary of State. Most of the conversation was about the European situation, and Roosevelt noted that Germany was seeking to gain a strong foothold in South America. The United States must be prepared to defend itself, he continued, because with the advent of air power the country was no longer beyond reach. Roosevelt developed this point later with Mackenzie King and went into detail about his new defence programme, announced to Congress in October 1938. He complained that Britain and France had been 'appallingly blind' over air defence and had let Germany get too far ahead. He said he had made his appeal to Hitler after he and the Cabinet had listened to Chamberlain's address on the radio on 27 September and been much moved by it. But he pointed out that Chamberlain was now unpopular in the United States because of the reaction against Munich. Mackenzie King had urged Chamberlain to attend the signing of the trade agreement, but he said he was exhausted after Munich.[34]

The Anglo-American trade agreement was generally well received in the United States and to some extent helped to counter the backlash there against the Munich agreement. As the influential radio commentator Raymond Gram Swing put it, 'the emotional distance between Britain and the United States was widening, and signing this agreement just at this time has suddenly wiped out most of that distance'. In a similar vein, Francis Sayre, the Assistant Secretary of State in charge of the trade agreements programme, was quoted in the *New York Times* as describing the agreement with Britain as 'the effective reply to the defeatism which appeared in some quarters after the Munich settlement'. But, as Roosevelt remarked, the trade agreements programme was 'just too goddamed [*sic*] slow. The world is marching too fast.'[35]

Roosevelt's overriding concern with events in Europe and the Far East was apparent in his annual address in January 1939, the first part of which dealt with the international situation. In an early reference to Munich, he said, 'a war which threatened to envelop the world in flames has been averted; but it has become increasingly clear that peace is not assured'. Rearmament, military and economic, was growing and there were new threats of aggression, he continued. No country was now safe from war and America must concentrate its resources on self-defence. He warned against the illusion of neutrality by legislation and said the United States could not be indifferent to aggression abroad. 'There are many methods short of war, but stronger and more effective than mere words, of bringing home to aggressor governments the aggregate sentiments of our people.'[36]

The *New York Times* felt that the President's message to Congress marked a turning point in the administration's foreign policy. Victor Mallet, Lindsay's deputy in Washington, pointed out that Roosevelt's main aim was to 'educate' American public opinion away from isolationism. Chamberlain himself made a short statement welcoming the speech 'as yet another indication of the vital role of the American democracy in world affairs and its devotion to the idea of ordered human progress', and Mackenzie King also wrote enthusiastically about the President's address in his diary. 'It was, I think, the finest thing I have heard anywhere at any time, in the way of a political utterance – fearless, comprehensive, constructive.'[37]

On 15 March 1939, German troops occupied the state of Czecho–Slovakia that had been left after the Munich settlement and it was subordinated to Hitler's Reich. Chamberlain tried to defuse the situation when he spoke in the Commons later that day, but opinion was in favour of a strong stand after the humiliation of Prague being virtually

annexed, in defiance of the Munich agreement. Fearing further German moves, and bowing to public opinion, the British and French governments gave guarantees of territorial integrity to a number of countries in eastern Europe, including Poland. These guarantees were a reversal of British policy since the Great War. Mackenzie King referred to Chamberlain's action as 'a curious sudden shift'. But Roosevelt favoured the stronger line now being taken in London. He told Sir Arthur Willert, a British friend and formerly the chief US correspondent of *The Times* of London, that he expected the Neutrality laws to be amended in the interests of the democracies, and he 'brushed aside' the Johnson Act of 1934 that banned loans to countries, such as Britain and France, in default of their war debts.[38]

The 'tacit alliance' between Britain and the United States was further strengthened by the Royal Visit to North America in June 1939, which owed much to Mackenzie King's good relationship with Roosevelt and his agreement to the original Royal Visit to Canada being extended to take in the United States. Mackenzie King told Roosevelt in August 1938, when they met at Queen's University, that the royal family planned to visit Canada in 1939. The President then wrote to George VI extending a personal invitation to stay with him at Hyde Park, his family home. The visit took place in June 1939, and Mackenzie King accompanied the royal family to Hyde Park. During the visit Roosevelt, George VI and Mackenzie King took the opportunity to exchange their views on the world situation. The President continued to stress the need for the democracies to increase their air power and referred to German designs on South America. The conversation also turned to Chamberlain's likely successor. 'The King indicated that he would never wish to appoint Churchill to any office unless it was absolutely necessary in time of war,' Mackenzie King recorded. 'I confess I was glad to have him say that because I think that Churchill is one of the most dangerous men I have ever known.'[39]

The Royal Visit was a great public relations success, but it failed to persuade Congress to repeal the arms embargo section of the Neutrality laws that prohibited the sale of 'arms, ammunition and the implements of war' during wartime. The final blow came on 12 July, when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 12 to 11 to defer consideration of any revision of the Neutrality laws until the following session. However, Anglo-American relations continued to improve in other ways. For example, the semi-annual exchange of notes over war debts between Washington and London was brought forward so as to avoid embarrassment during the Royal Visit. In addition, in June 1939, a cotton–rubber exchange agreement was arranged between the two governments under which Britain

was to take 600,000 bales of cotton in exchange for a substantial amount of rubber from the British Empire for American stocks.[40]

Along the same lines, steps were being taken to facilitate British purchases in the United States in the event of war. To this end Lord Riverdale, a businessman who made frequent trips to America, arrived in Washington for secret talks with members of the State and War departments. Most of these officials, reported Riverdale, believed that the Neutrality Act and Johnson Act would be repealed if war broke out in Europe. He was told by Louis Johnson, the Assistant Secretary of War, that the US President had expressed himself as '100 per cent in favour of what we are doing'. Riverdale had no doubt that a purchasing agency should be set up in the United States without delay to capitalise on American goodwill. This was agreed by the British Cabinet on 28 August.[41]

When war broke out in Europe, Roosevelt called a special session of Congress to secure revision of the Neutrality laws, which was accomplished in November 1939. Upon the repeal of the arms embargo Chamberlain was moved to write to Roosevelt to express his gratitude. 'I am convinced it will have a devastating effect on German morale,' he stated, too optimistically. 'We here have derived all the greater satisfaction from it because we realise to what an extent we owe it to your own personal efforts and goodwill.' The repeal of the arms embargo was, in many ways, the culmination of the Anglo-American 'tacit alliance' that had developed since the start of FDR's second term in January 1937.[42]

Conclusions

What was Canada's contribution to this Anglo-American 'tacit alliance'? Was the role of mediator a figment of Mackenzie King's imagination or was there, as Brebner claimed, a 'North Atlantic Triangle' in which Canada was an important player? Clearly the return of Mackenzie King to power in November 1935 proved to be an important factor in relations between London and Washington. Concerned about the deteriorating international situation, and having little faith in the League of Nations, Mackenzie King saw close cooperation between the British Empire and the United States as the best means of avoiding a war that was likely to involve Canada. His meetings and correspondence with Roosevelt and Hull on the one hand and Chamberlain and other British ministers and officials on the other meant that he was to some extent able to fulfil his aim of acting as an 'interpreter' between Britain and the United States at a time when Roosevelt, the liberal Democrat, and

Chamberlain, the staunch Tory, had a somewhat distant and strained relationship.

In more specific terms, Mackenzie King's most obvious contribution to better relations between London and Washington in this period was his role in facilitating the signing of the Anglo-American trade agreement in 1938. Like Hull, he was a firm believer in trade liberalisation as a way of improving economic and political relations. He was obviously determined not to sacrifice Canadian commercial interests and resented what he regarded as undue pressure from Britain and the United States. However, following the Canadian-American agreement of 1935, he was prepared to see Ottawa make further tariff concessions, as part of a wider package, in order that an Anglo-American trade agreement could be achieved. The political importance of such an agreement increased as the situation in Europe and the Far East deteriorated, and had an agreement not been finalised it might have been more difficult to secure the revision of the Neutrality laws in November 1939.

A second important contribution by Mackenzie King to Anglo-American relations in this period was the way in which he supported Chamberlain's policy of appeasement and helped to gain Roosevelt's acceptance of it, especially during the Munich crisis. Canada's position was of great importance to Roosevelt, as he made clear when he said in August 1938 that the United States would 'not stand idly by' if Canada was threatened by a hostile power. Mackenzie King's personal attitude therefore had to be taken into account. Similarly, the Canadian Prime Minister encouraged Chamberlain and Roosevelt to support a peaceful solution to the Sudetenland crisis in September 1938 through his telegrams to them both. Chamberlain's policy of appeasement, especially at Munich, was unpopular within the State Department and across American public opinion and it would have led to a damaging split between London and Washington if Roosevelt had openly opposed it.

Third, Mackenzie King played an important part in the Royal Visit to the United States in June 1939. It was he who alerted Roosevelt to the planned visit to Canada when they met at Queen's University in August 1938, and this prompted Roosevelt to invite George VI to the United States and specifically to Washington, DC and his home at Hyde Park in upstate New York, not far from the border with Canada. This visit was of great psychological significance at the time and may perhaps be likened to the visit by Edward VII to France in 1904 that helped to cement the 'Entente Cordiale' before the First World War.

As the Prime Minister of Canada in the late 1930s, Mackenzie King's role was largely confined to being a concerned spectator to the

events unfolding in Europe and the Far East. But his part in strengthening Anglo-American relations during this critical period and thereby contributing to the 'tacit alliance' between Washington and London at the outset of the Second World War is certainly worthy of note. If nothing else, it helps to balance Mackenzie King's naivete in trusting in Hitler's good intentions and thereby presents a fuller picture of his significant role in Anglo-American relations during the era of Munich.

Declarations and conflicts of interest

Research ethics statement

Not applicable to this article.

Consent for publication statement

Not applicable to this article.

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The author is the Editor-in-Chief of the *London Journal of Canadian Studies* this article is included in. All efforts to sufficiently anonymise the author during peer review of this article have been made. The author declares no further conflicts with this article.

Notes

1 *New York Times*, 2 February 1938; FO/371/21491, A965/1/45, Sir Ronald Lindsay (British Ambassador in Washington) to Anthony Eden (British Foreign Secretary), 2 February 1938. See also McCulloch, *Tacit Alliance*, 3–4.
2 For US isolationism see McCulloch, *Tacit Alliance*, 5–9; Adler, *Isolationist Impulse*; Cole, *Roosevelt and Isolationists*; Jonas, *Isolationism in America*; Wapshott, *The Sphinx*; Maddox, *William E Borah*; McKenna, *Borah*; Lower, *Bloc of One*.
3 Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 31; Mackenzie King Diary, 7 March 1925.
4 Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 230–1; see also Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada*; Perras, *Franklin Roosevelt*.
5 Brebner, *North Atlantic Triangle*, xx, 304, 325; see also Brebner, 'A changing North Atlantic Triangle'; Brebner, 'Canada in North American history'.
6 See Kottman, *Reciprocity*; McKercher and Aronson, *North Atlantic Triangle in a Changing World*; Stewart, 'What North Atlantic Triangle?'; Haglund, 'Brebner's North Atlantic Triangle at sixty'; McCulloch, 'North Atlantic Triangle'; MacLaren, *Mackenzie King*; Thompson, *The Third Man*.
7 For an earlier examination of this topic by the author see McCulloch, '"The key log in the jam"'.

8 Mackenzie King Diary, 23, 25–28 and 30 July 1932 for Mackenzie King's conversations with Runciman and other members of the British delegation.
9 Mackenzie King Diary, 3 and 4 February 1933. See also *New York Times*, 2 February 1933, for details of the speech and the US reaction.
10 McCulloch, *Tacit Alliance*, 22–30.
11 Mackenzie King Diary, 19 December 1935; 11 June 1936; 12 November 1936.
12 Mackenzie King Diary, 6 March 1933; 17 January 1934; 18 January 1934; 8 February 1934.
13 Mackenzie King Diary, 8 November 1935.
14 Mackenzie King Diary, 7–15 October 1935; FO/371/18756, A9726/321/45: Sir Ronald Lindsay to Sir Samuel Hoare (Foreign Secretary), 17 November 1935.
15 Mackenzie King Diary, 31 July 1936; FO/371/20476, W11944/79/98: Note by Malcolm MacDonald of conversation with Mackenzie King, 20 September 1936.
16 FO/371/19829, A8703/170/45: Lindsay to Eden, 5 November 1936.
17 SD/611.4131/205: memo of essential American requests, 16 November 1936. See also Kottman, *Reciprocity*, 117–48 for background; FO/371/19834, A9627/890/45: memo by John Troutbeck, 24 November 1936.
18 Mackenzie King Diary, 12 and 18 January 1936.
19 McCulloch, *Tacit Alliance*, 40–7; McCulloch, 'Runciman visit', 211–40; Harrison, 'Runciman visit', 217–39; Hull, *Memoirs*, Vol. 1, 524–6; Kottman, *Reciprocity*, 159–60.
20 FO/371/20658, A805/228/45, Lindsay to Eden, 29 January 1937.
21 FO/371/20659, A2964/228/45, including Minutes of Cabinet Committee on Trade and Agriculture, 12 April 1937.
22 Mackenzie King Diary, 5 March 1937. See also Hull, *Memoirs*, Vol. 1, 526–9.
23 FO/371/20660, A4104/228/45: memo by Frank Ashton-Gwatkin, 4 June 1937; Mackenzie King Diary, 7 June 1937.
24 Mackenzie King Diary, 21 October 1937; FO 371, 20663, A7663/228/45: Victor Mallet (British embassy) to Eden, 26 October 1937. For 'Quarantine speech' see McCulloch, *Tacit Alliance*, 83–106; Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt*, 148–51.
25 CAB 23, 39 (1937), item 7, 27 October 1937; FO/371/20664, A8249/228/45: Lindsay to Eden, 16 November 1937; Mackenzie King Diary, 17 November 1937. See also Kottman, *Reciprocity*, 183–215, for background and press reaction to the announcement of negotiations.
26 Moffat Journal, Vol. 41, 17 November 1938; Mackenzie King Diary, 17 November 1938. See also Kottman, *Reciprocity*, 183–215; Witham, 'Seeing the wood for the Trees', 29–51.
27 Mackenzie King Diary, 15 June 1937.
28 Mackenzie King Diary, 29 June 1937; see also Ovendale, 'Canada, Britain'; Teigrob, *Four Days in Hitler's Germany*.
29 Parker, *Chamberlain and Appeasement*, 124–55; Mackenzie King Diary, 11 March 1938.
30 Vysny, *Runciman Mission to Czechoslovakia*; McCulloch, 'Franklin Roosevelt'; Mackenzie King Diary, 28 July 1938.
31 FO/371/21527, A6744/64/45, including State Department press release on FDR's speech, 18 August 1938; Mackenzie King Diary, 18 August 1938.
32 McCulloch, *Tacit Alliance*, 160–2.
33 Mackenzie King Diary, 14, 21, 26, 28, 29 and 30 September 1938.
34 Mackenzie King Diary, 17 November 1938; McCulloch, *Tacit Alliance*, 178–81.
35 FO/371/21509, A8917/1/45: text of commentary by Raymond Gram Swing, 19 November 1938; *New York Times*, 13 December 1938; Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries*, Vol. 1, 524.

36 *Roosevelt Public Papers*, Vol. 8, address to Congress, 4 January 1939, 1–12.
37 *New York Times*, 5 January 1939; FO/371/22812, A660/98/45: Mallet to Halifax, 10 January 1939; *The Times*, 6 January 1939; Mackenzie King Diary, 4 January 1939.
38 Parker, *Chamberlain and Appeasement*, 200–15; Mackenzie King Diary, 31 March 1939; FO/371/22829, A2907/1292/45: memo of conversations between Willert and Roosevelt, 25 and 26 March 1939.
39 Roosevelt Letters, Vol. 3, Roosevelt to George VI, 25 August 1939, 239–40; Mackenzie King Diary, 10–12 June 1939. For Royal Visit see also McCulloch, *Tacit Alliance*, 211–28; Rhodes, 'British Royal Visit of 1939'; Reynolds, 'FDR's foreign policy'. For Chamberlain's attitude towards Churchill see Phillips, *Fighting Churchill*.
40 Divine, *Illusion of Neutrality*, 229–85; FO/371/22815, A4828/98/45: Lindsay to Halifax, 12 July 1939. For cotton–rubber agreement see Herbert Feis papers, Box 56, memo by Feis on cotton–rubber agreement, June 1939; CAB 23, 32 (1939), item 12, 14 June 1939. See also McCulloch, *Tacit Alliance*, 233–4.
41 FO/371/23905, W12351/9808/49: report of Lord Riverdale's mission, August 1939; CAB 23, 45 (1939), item 3, 28 August 1939.
42 McCulloch, *Tacit Alliance*, 266–80; PREM 1/367, Chamberlain to Roosevelt, 8 November 1939.

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'Keen to Foul Their Own Nests': Contemporary and Historical Criticism of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence of 1940

Galen Roger Perras

Abstract

On 17 August 1940, President Franklin Roosevelt met with Canada's Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King in the town of Ogdensburg, which lies just across the Canadian border in upstate New York. There the two leaders agreed on the formation of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence (PJBD) to advise on policies for the defence and security of the North American continent. The PJBD was commended on all sides, in public at least, not only in the United States and Canada but also in Britain, where the new prime minister, Winston Churchill, speaking in the House of Commons on 20 August, compared the trend towards growing cooperation between the British Empire and the United States to the relentless flow of the Mississippi river. He also referred approvingly to the Permanent Joint Board in his post-war Fulton speech, delivered on 5 March 1946, as an important element in the 'special relationship' between the British Empire and the United States. Later commentators, including John Bartlet Brebner, have also seen the Joint Board as a significant part of the 'North Atlantic Triangle'. However, as this article shows, the PJBD has also attracted plenty of criticism – both contemporary and historical.

Keywords Permanent Joint Board on Defence; PJBD; Franklin Roosevelt; William Lyon Mackenzie King; Winston Churchill; North Atlantic Triangle.

On 17 August 1940, President Franklin Roosevelt (FDR) and Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, in Ogdensburg, New York, formed the Permanent Joint Board on Defence (PJBD) to create continental defence plans. Secretary of War Henry Stimson, witnessing 'very possibly the turning point in the tide of the war', wrote that a 'perfectly delighted' King had agreed to FDR's notion 'almost with tears in his eyes'. O. D. Skelton, Canada's Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs since 1925 – King did not take Skelton to Ogdensburg – praised the PJBD as 'the best day's work for many a year' and the 'inevitable sequence of public policies and personal relationships, based upon the realization of the imperative necessity of close understanding between the English-speaking peoples'.[1] The *New York Times* lauded the signatories for bypassing 'the usual formalities of diplomatic intercourse' and making North America 'an entity in repelling threats from abroad'. Almost 84 per cent of Canadians backed the PJBD, and 87 per cent of Americans saw it as 'opening the way for an eventual defensive alliance' with Canada.[2]

In his seminal 1945 monograph *North Atlantic Triangle*, John Bartlet Brebner's intent 'was to get at, and to set forth, the interplay between the United States and Canada – the Siamese Twins of North America who cannot separate and live'. Still, Canada and America 'could not eliminate Great Britain from their courses of action, whether in the realm of ideas, like democracy, or of institutions, or of economic and political processes'.[3] And while the book's chapter about strategic interplay prior to 1942 is its weakest, Brebner praised the PJBD for 'solidly' filling a 'conspicuous gap' in the 'inter-American system'. He also cited British Prime Minister Winston Churchill's 20 August 1940 public assertion that:

> These two great organizations of the English-speaking democracies, the British Empire and the United States, will have to be somewhat mixed up together in some of their affairs for mutual and general advantage. For my own part, looking out upon the future, I do not view the process with any misgivings. I could not stop it if I wished; no one can stop it. Like the Mississippi, it just keeps rolling along. Let it roll. Let it roll on full flood, inexorable, irresistible, benignant, to broader lands and better days.[4]

Yet the PJBD incited much criticism. While Britain's Cabinet, on 19 August 1940, 'took note with satisfaction' of King's telegram explaining the Ogdensburg meeting, the mood had soured two days later. As 'Mr. Mackenzie King was putting himself into a difficult position from the view of Canadian politics' and might encounter problems to 'obtain

approval' to permit US military manoeuvres in Canada, Churchill would 'introduce one or two cautionary phrases' in his reply to King. Cabling King on 22 August, Churchill threatened that if Britain prevailed against Germany, 'all these transactions will be judged in a mood different to that while the issue still stands in the balance'.[5] Canada's former Conservative Prime Minister Arthur Meighen – despite telling a British friend in June 1940 that 'most certainly the United States will have to come in [to the war]' – nearly 'lost his breakfast' as the deal's 'disgusting publicity' would buttress 'the idea that we do not have to exert ourselves' militarily. Galled that King and Skelton steadfastly had refused to jointly plan with Britain before 1939 'for fear it might entangle us in war', Meighen acidly remarked there was no danger of the PJBD 'entangling us in the war because there is no Spain left that the United States could lick'.[6]

Many American anti-interventionists feared that security ties with a belligerent Canada would drag America into another European war. Britain's Dominions Office worried that an avaricious FDR hoped to detach Canada from the Empire, while Australians puzzled over why FDR would not give them a similar defensive deal. Canadian generals, pleased that the PJBD permitted them to ship more forces to Britain, sought to limit continental defence burdens that might injure the overseas war effort. British and Australian historians either ignored the PJBD or castigated it as a selfish scheme designed to isolate North America. For American scholars, the PJBD lacked true strategic import, nor did it demonstrate Canada's natural entry into America's security orbit. In Canada, while some averred that catastrophic defeats in Europe had left King no choice but to embrace FDR's plan, most concur that the PJBD irrevocably tied Canada's security, for good or bad, to America.

FDR's interest in Canadian security predated 1940's dark summer. He had told King in 1936 that a highway built across western Canada could speed US troops to Alaska to combat Japanese threats. The President had also covertly convened US and Canadian service heads in January 1938 to discuss west coast security, then had pronounced in August 1938 that he would defend Canada against foreign empires. Often wrongly castigated as obsequious in his dealings with FDR, King had to be convinced by America's Minister to Canada to send officers to Washington in 1938 as King feared that American security guarantees would threaten Canada's independence.[7] But as Germany ran riot through France in spring 1940, King, noting FDR's public declaration on 18 April 1940 that his Cabinet would protect Canada from foreign powers,[8] sent Department of External Affairs (DEA) staffer H. L. Keenleyside to meet FDR on 19 May. Desirous that the Royal Navy decamp to North America if Britain fell, FDR wanted

King to push that scenario. Although appalled the Americans were using Canada to 'protect themselves', King fretfully contacted Churchill on 30 May. Britain's new leader offered two responses. He stirringly pledged on 4 June to 'fight on beaches, landing grounds, in fields, on streets and on the hills. We shall never surrender.' If Britain fell, he would fight on with 'our empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British Fleet'. Churchill's private message to King put matters more ominously. If Britain was 'conquered locally', the fleet might go to Canada if America was fighting. If America was neutral and Britain was 'overpowered', Churchill could not say 'what policy might be adopted by a pro-German administration such as would undoubtedly be set up'.[9] A furious FDR wanted King to tell Churchill that a naval transfer was designed '*to save the empire*'. When King wired London on 17 June about the transfer plus permitting American access to British bases in the western hemisphere, Churchill saw 'no reason to make preparation or give countenance' to such initiatives.[10]

King summoned the new US Minister to Canada, J. P. Moffat, on 14 June. Moffat had been sent to Ottawa in late May with firm presidential orders to emphasise two things to Canadians: (1) Canada, 'for its own sake', should seek assurances Britain's navy would not surrender; and (2) a neutral America could aid the Allies almost as much as a belligerent America. As Canada 'would immediately be faced by many problems of a practical nature which could not be solved without American aid' if Britain foundered, King pressed Moffat 'to feel out the situation and let him know' if FDR would permit staff talks.[11] As a noted anti-interventionist Anglophobe – Moffat had rejected Stimson's 3 May assertion that this was 'our war' too – King's comments indicated that Canadians wanting closer ties with America had bested those clinging 'to the old colonial mentality'. Moffat happily relayed King's proposal to Secretary of State Cordell Hull on 16 June.[12]

An uninterested Hull, having rejected Ambassador Lord Lothian's plea for UK–US staff talks, deflected Canada's request to the Navy and War departments.[13] Hull's tactic was an error as the War Plans Division (WPD) already had recommended talks to determine if Canada could defend itself. Vitally, Hull had misjudged his boss. After FDR met Lothian's request and then appointed Stimson and fellow interventionist Frank Knox to head the War and Navy departments on 19 June, a backpedalling Hull brought Moffat briefly back to Washington to discuss Canada.[14] United States Navy commander Admiral Harold Stark and Brigadier General George Strong wanted to speak to Canada. Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall did not, as talks were pointless until FDR had decided what to do if Britain fell. Although 'an entirely frank' disclosure

of America's military situation might prove discouraging, Marshall would 'be delighted' to meet Canadian officials although 'he feared under the present conditions he would be more the talker than the listener'. Marshall's delight dissipated when he met FDR and Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau on 3 July. Opposed to aiding the Allies as vital arms would be lost if Germany prevailed, Marshall said that US forces should enter Canada only during a crisis. Morgenthau dressed down Marshall as such talks might reveal Canada's military capabilities and prompt bilateral cooperation. Agreeing with Morgenthau, FDR thus enjoined Moffat to invite 'high-ranking' Canadians to Washington to discuss 'matters of our respective interests in the field of defense'.[15]

Three Canadian officers came to Washington on 11 July to discuss Newfoundland's security status, industrial production and equipment needs. The American delegation's briefing note, explaining that moving forces to Canada would 'involve the United States in the war' and noting a shortage of trained soldiers, asserted that if transfers to Canada became 'necessary', only two army divisions and an air group would be used.[16] The Canadians, 'far from pessimistic about the [war's] outcome', wanted no American aid that came at Britain's expense. One cannot dispute an American official historian's judgement that these 'inconclusive' meetings had little impact on US military planning. Canada had to defend itself and Newfoundland with 'such assistance as the United States can give in the way of equipment', although America would safeguard Newfoundland if it joined the war.[17] Admiral Ernest J. King listed Canada's security just fifth on his service's hemispheric priorities.[18]

An American pollster told Lothian on 20 June that while 69 per cent of Americans fretted that a German victory would endanger America, just 28 per cent would fight to prevent that prospect.[19] The isolationist *Chicago Tribune* proposed making an alliance with Canada, while *Saturday Night* magazine advised that American protection would allow Canada to buttress Britain.[20] Officials in Ottawa did not disagree. As there would be 'no possibility of our being able to defend ourselves without United States aid' if Japan entered the conflict, Skelton thought that Canada would have to 'contribute our share to the common pool in a way that would appeal to United States opinion'. As Washington could not 'be expected to be willing to accept responsibility for' defending Canada when it had no control, Keenleyside warned on 17 June that America 'will expect, if necessary, demand, Canadian assistance in the defence of this continent and this hemisphere'.[21]

Hemispheric defence dominated a Canadian Institute of International Affairs (CIIA) conference convened in Ottawa in mid-July.

As even 'pro-imperial Canadians were beginning to transfer their allegiance from London to Washington' according to Loring Christie, Canada's Minister to America,[22] the CIIA, aided by Keenleyside, who had Skelton's backing, produced 'A Programme of Immediate Canadian Action'.[23] As North America's geostrategic indivisibility demanded Canada's substantial contribution, there must be 'a new board of strategy in connection with the present general staff'. Further, 'such extensive coordination of defence' would 'require some political understanding' as Canada and America needed to know 'the type of political relationship that may be established and the extent to which one country may influence or limit the policy of the other'.[24]

On 13 July, Christie advised King that FDR was pondering continental defence matters. While Major General Harry Crerar, Canada's Chief of the General Staff, supported security talks with America, King judged that nothing could happen until after November's presidential election.[25] King was wrong. Deciding on 2 August to 'sell directly or indirectly' 50 destroyers to Britain but concerned that Congress might block a sale unless Marshall and Stark certified the vessels as 'not essential for US defense', FDR swapped the ships for 99-year leases of several British bases in the western hemisphere.[26] Thus, when FDR told Christie on 27 July that he wanted staff talks and Lothian, worried that the destroyer deal could collapse since Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden opposed this 'grievous blow to our authority and ultimately to our sovereignty', told King on 12 August that his influence in Washington might be 'decisive', King instructed Christie to inform Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles of his desire to discuss the destroyer deal with FDR.[27] Moffat then intervened. Noting 'an extraordinary recrudescence of optimism', Moffat thought that 'all too many' Canadians refused to admit that defeat was possible. By August, Moffat worried that Canada's ambitions to field an air force and four army divisions 'outran the possibilities of practical realization'. Moreover, while rabid imperialists, seeking aid for Britain, and leftist intellectuals, fearing British defeat, wanted an American alliance, King was hesitating.[28] Informing State Department official John Hickerson that Canadians held a 'spirit of optimism' unsupported by military facts, Moffat spurred FDR to move quickly. Upon reading Moffat's despatches on 16 August, FDR immediately telephoned King about meeting the next day to consider the 'mutual defence of our coasts on the Atlantic'.[29]

Arriving at Ogdensburg on 17 August with Moffat in tow, King received FDR's proposal to form the PJBD. King agreed, but he said he 'would not wish to sell or lease any sites in Canada but would be

ready to work out matters of facilities'. As 'he had mostly in mind the need, if Canada were invaded, for getting troops quickly into Canada', FDR displayed what Canadian historian J. L. Granatstein termed 'a Rooseveltian iron fist draped in the velvet of warmest good fellowship'. Claiming that Britain's reluctance to grant access to Caribbean bases was incomprehensible, FDR admitted to King that he had told Lothian he might grab those bases to safeguard US security. However, FDR confided, 'it was much better to have a friendly agreement in advance'.[30]

As FDR told his Canadian-born aide Lauchlin Currie on 24 August, 'at the present time the good feeling is better than it has ever been during my lifetime'. Stimson praised FDR for handling the PJBD matter 'with great skill'. For Moffat, the Ogdensburg Agreement had dispelled misplaced fears that a Canada–US rapprochement would sunder the Empire. Instead, it would 'bring Britain and the United States closer together'.[31] King recorded 'what had enabled us to get on so splendidly together is that we felt that the really important things in life are very simple and that all that is needed is good-will and sincere intent to effect any great end'. King cabled Churchill on 18 August to reiterate that Britain remained Canada's first line of defence, adding 'outside the British Commonwealth, you have no truer friends or stronger allies than are to be found in the President and Secretary Stimson'. To Canada's Parliament that November, King played up the PJBD's value, asserting that 'in ultimate importance [it] far surpasses the formation of the triple axis', while it enabled Canada to funnel more aid to embattled Britain.[32]

In America, the *Foreign Policy Bulletin* trumpeted the Agreement as 'one of the historic moments in both British Empire relations and American diplomacy'. The *Chicago Tribune* called Ogdensburg the most important event since the Revolutionary War.[33] Even notoriously anti-FDR media barons agreed. W. R. Hearst termed the pact 'a beneficial thing', while Colonel Robert McCormick, fearful that Germany could attack New England via Canada, wanted a defensive barrier erected in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia.[34] Canadian broadsheets, Moffat wrote, were 'almost universally favorable' as the PJBD was 'a potent aid' to win the war, a 'reinsurance premium' for Canada, a continental defence contribution and a boon to UK–US rapprochement. The *Toronto Daily Star* saw the PJBD as 'a bond of good hope' signifying Canada's coming of age, and the *Toronto Telegram*, usually critical of King, praised the pact's 'wide import'. The *Toronto Globe and Mail*, calling King the 'central figure' in a strategic tripartite arrangement with Britain as a 'silent partner', named the Ogdensburg pact as King's 'greatest triumph'. For Bruce Hutchison of the *Vancouver Sun*, the PJBD was 'essential' to confront Japan's menace

to British Columbia.[35] Vincent Massey, Canada's High Commissioner in London, relayed that British newspapers were 'unanimously favourable'. Massey's second in command, Lester Pearson, calling the PJBD 'one of the wisest and most astute things Mr. King has ever done', noted its 'tremendously good press' in Britain. *The Times* of London noted that the pact's effects on Latin America and Britain 'will be worth watching'. The *New Statesman and Nation*, while stating that 'a constitutional pedant' might object to Ogdensburg, judged that 'continents are now the natural units for defence'.[36]

Moffat reported on 30 August that Canada's Conservative Party leader, R. B. Hanson, was 'satisfied' by the PJBD. But after telling Meighen on 23 August that 'there could be no objection to Staff conversations', Hanson assailed King in person for going behind Churchill's back. King, according to Hanson, had accused FDR of forming the joint board as 'window dressing' to gain congressional approval for the destroyer deal.[37] Meighen, doubting FDR had prompted the PJBD as 'it is too much in line with Mr. King's life long inclinations', contended the agency was 'not window dressing but something the people of Canada do not want'. Hanson publicly savaged King for 'casting off old and now embattled ties and taking on new and untried vows'.[38] The *Globe and Mail* averred that Hanson's attacks threatened 'great harm when nothing should be permitted to disturb the spirit of good-will behind' Ogdensburg. The pact, which would allow Canada to aid Britain presently, was also a 'tree under the shade of which our children may find comfort'. But the *Toronto Telegram* defended Hanson. Not only was Ogdensburg 'entirely unnecessary', Canadians must recall 'that Britain is Canada's first line of defense'.[39] Moffat shrewdly explained Canada's split reaction to the PJBD. Noting on 30 August that some Canadians worried that FDR would 'drive too shrewd a bargain' for bases, Moffat told Hull on 4 September that Canadians would forget Hanson's attack amid the 'jubilation' surrounding the destroyer-for-bases agreement. Further, there was 'no probability the Conservative Party will allow the Ogdensburg declaration to become a partisan issue'. Still, when Moffat claimed that Hanson was parroting Meighen – the latter had condemned *Saturday Night*'s call for cooperation with America and wanted the *Chicago Tribune* banned from Canada – King asserted instead that 'the soul was the soul of [R. B.] Bennett', Canada's Conservative Prime Minister from 1930 to 1935.[40] Christie put matters more bluntly. As Canadian opposition could 'distort' the pact's significance and 'imply the event represented something other than a common resolve between equals', he deemed it 'strange that some people should be so keen to foul their own nest'.[41]

American opposition to the PJBD was muted thanks to previous events. In October 1939, Charles Lindbergh, charging that Canadians had no right 'to draw this hemisphere into a European war simply because they prefer the Crown of England to American independence', had averred that Americans 'must demand the freedom of this continent and its surrounding islands from the dictates of European power'. Although former FDR administration official General Hugh Johnson had thought that Lindbergh had exposed the contradiction in FDR's pledge that a neutral America would defend Canada – what would America do, Johnson asked, if Canada assaulted 'a country of the Eastern Hemisphere' and that country countered? – Canadian newspapers had hammered 'Herr Von Lindbergh' and 'Wrong Way Lindy'.[42] The American press's response to Lindbergh's protests had been mixed. While *The Nation* had called Lindbergh's remarks 'half-baked and puerile', some newspapers, though critiquing Lindbergh's phrasing, had said Canada's belligerence complicated US neutrality. Christie had put things more bluntly: Lindbergh, 'like some others in the public eye, may be a case for a psychiatrist'.[43] Perhaps recalling Lindbergh, Congressmen treaded carefully in 1940. Republican Representative Roy Woodruff said the PJBD 'smacks too much of a dictatorship to suit a good many people'. Representative George Tinkham opined that the Constitution demanded the President must submit the deal for senatorial approval. However, isolationist Senator Arthur Vandenburg 'heartily' endorsed exploring hemispheric defence as 'such a study might well be of desperately important consequence to our own country'. Still, congressional partnership was essential if 'study' were to be transformed into 'commitment'.[44]

Some American journalists opposed the PJBD. On the left, Oswald Garrison Villard accused FDR of making 'an effective defense union with a country actively engaged in a war in which we are supposed to be neutral'. On the right, *Christian Century* magazine charged that the President had formed a 'virtual military alliance' with a nation 'already at war' which could 'become the seat and military center of a warring empire'.[45] Felix Morley, the editor of the *Washington Post*, dissected the PJBD on 25 August. Believing that it had been 'clearly foreshadowed' by FDR's 1938 promise to defend Canada, Morley judged the PJBD to be 'the most severe strain yet encountered' by US neutrality policy and 'unquestionably' hostile from Germany's viewpoint. As Canada had been 'brought definitely into the orbit of the [Monroe] doctrine as developed by the FDR administration', Morley predicted the end of 'the rigidity of national frontiers in favor of a new cohesiveness in contiguous areas'.[46]

New world continentalism also concerned Whitehall, especially as the British Chiefs of Staff had warned on 23 July that the 'full financial and economic co-operation of the whole of the American continent' was needed 'for us to win the war'.[47] Indeed, King had vexed Dominions Office denizens in May 1940 by declining to participate in joint imperial planning in London as he could better represent Commonwealth interests 'as a whole' to America by staying home. It is unclear if Dominions Secretary Lord Cranborne initially opposed the PJBD, for he told his officials in November 1940 to distribute the PJBD's first report to relevant British agencies as it was 'of very considerable interest'. But after Secretary to the British Chiefs of Staff L. C. Hollis claimed Ogdensburg would prompt Canada to divert forces to British Columbia, the Royal Navy averred in January 1941 that Britain should reject Canadian requests to buttress continental defence.[48] Although he told King on 19 February that he kept Canadian 'interest' in mind, Cranborne, worried that the PJBD constituted an alliance between a British Dominion and a foreign power 'without any reference to or consultation' with Britain, advised Churchill on 6 March 'to resist the whole principle of hemispheric defence' and to contact King to ensure that no one could 'drive a wedge between us and Canada'. Churchill thus 'bluntly' stated Britain could not provide 'complete protection on both sides of the Atlantic'.[49]

Subsequent British policy on North American defence was somewhat schizophrenic. On the one hand, a Dominions Office memorandum in September 1942 concluded the PJBD 'now appears to be more or less dormant', having been replaced by the powerful US Chiefs of Staff apparatus. Yet in May 1943, as Canada pondered helping America to retake the western Aleutian Islands occupied by Japan, Major General Maurice Pope, heading Canada's Joint Staff Mission in Washington, fended off Britons who, worried by the vast scale of US Pacific operations, plumbed Canada's intentions.[50] Malcolm MacDonald, Britain's High Commissioner to Canada, although he said later that he had disputed London's opinion that King was associating 'Canada too closely with the neighbouring United States', noted in March 1941 that there 'may be some danger that Mr. Mackenzie King will be inclined to associate Canada too closely as a North American country with the United States as distinct from the United Kingdom'. After visiting vast US defence projects in northwest Canada in 1942–3, MacDonald's complaints about their scale and apparent permanence spurred King to purchase those projects.[51]

Despite serving on the PJBD, Pope doubted its military necessity, even if the actions of 'consummate artists' such as King and FDR 'could not successfully be held by ordinary men to be without merit'.[52] When

the PJBD's US section sought strategic control of continental defence, Canada insisted in July 1941 that 'mutual cooperation' should pertain. When American officials demanded west coast unity of command after Japan's Pearl Harbor attack thrust America into the global conflagration, Pope, certain the threat was overstated, helped to block the initiative. In May 1942, as Japan's massive Midway offensive loomed, Pope backed Canada's initial refusal to despatch planes to Alaska for he believed, as did British officers in Washington, that the Americans were 'prone to panic'.[53] While praising the PJBD as 'a major step forward', Crerar feared it would bolster a Canadian tendency 'to look inward and think in terms of strict "continental defence"'. As such parochialism threatened Crerar's goal to field seven divisions against Germany,[54] Crerar told Skelton that hemispheric cooperation with America should be mainly 'naval and air'. When the PJBD's Canadian Section pledged ground forces to defend Alaska, Crerar complained that such a promise met only a perceived Canadian 'political need' to accept 'a specific responsibility' to assist America. When Ottawa and Washington finally approved a continental security scheme in July 1941, Crerar's views won out. While Canada's air force and navy would help to safeguard Alaska in a crisis, the army was excluded from that responsibility.[55]

Assistant Secretary of State Adolf Berle – who had joined the State Department in 1938 lest the job go 'to some second-rate intriguer picked from the political basket who will get us in a British alliance and a European Asiatic war'[56] – had greeted the PJBD unenthusiastically. Although he had told a visiting Canadian journalist in June 1940 that he backed a North American economic union, Berle worried that 'our own arrangements [with Canada] would thus force us either to talk with Germany [if Britain fell] or immediately declare war ourselves'. After speaking to Hickerson, Berle reconsidered. Not only was it 'plain that the plans are made so that even in the event of a defeat in Great Britain the fleet would continue fighting in the Atlantic', the plan was also 'an interesting one, especially because it does not greatly involve this hemisphere'.[57]

Some thought the PJBD should expand its powers and geographic jurisdiction. The *New York Herald Tribune* averred that the pact was a 'full treaty of mutual defense, formally ratified by the constitutional agencies of both countries, for which the situation urgently calls'.[58] The *Canadian Forum*, claiming the PJBD was FDR's initiative alone as King 'was still afraid to buy a lead pencil for war purposes without authorization from London', doubted that North America faced a 'Nazi invasion'. Instead, the PJBD would be more valuable in the Pacific as the US

Navy 'is the only major armed force that Canada (and Australia and New Zealand) can count on in an emergency'. Indeed, Captain W. L. Murray, Canada's Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff, told reporters that the PJBD would cover Canada's west coast, potentially allowing for the completion of an Alaskan highway, although he would not speculate about the possibility of an American naval base being situated in British Columbia. Leonard Brockington, a Welsh-born advisor to Canada's Cabinet War Committee, according to a bemused Moffat, 'let his fancy fly until he had an American, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand working arrangement which would ultimately include Great Britain'. Telling Pearson on 4 September that America's interests were 'not confined to the three mile limit', Crerar informed Moffat in October that Britain should join the PJBD or send officers to its meetings.[59]

However, Hull told US missions in South America, the 'Board was created solely for the purpose of determining in advance the steps of a military and naval character which should be taken by both governments in the event that Canada is attacked by a non-American power'. Hickerson, described by Pope as 'a good friend of Canada about which he was extremely well informed', was most displeased, despite Moffat's judgement that Ottawa would not ask to expand the PJBD. Describing Crerar's proposal as 'the first suggestion of this sort which I have heard', Hickerson hoped Canada would not 'raise such a question' for it 'would destroy the premise' that the PJBD was designed 'to consider the *defense* of Canada and the United States from attack, and no other question'.[60] King did not object on 22 August when FDR suggested just four PJBD planning priorities – Newfoundland, Canada's east and west coasts, and procuring arms. Nor did Britain come up when the PJBD first met on 26–27 August as Brigadier Kenneth Stuart, Crerar's deputy, believed that expanding its strategic purview would render PJBD work 'academic'.[61]

Canadian pique at Churchill's icy dismissal of the PJBD may have dampened Ottawa's enthusiasm for a British role. As King carped to Britain's High Commissioner Gerald Campbell on 26 August, 'Churchill had been ready enough to appeal very urgently to the US for help and to ask my cooperation to get it' when matters had been 'bad'. Indeed, Churchill's message 'showed how much appreciation was given in British quarters to anything that did not suit their particular mood at the moment'. When King read Churchill's telegram to the Canadian War Cabinet on 27 August and suggested 'ignoring' it, indignant ministers wanted Churchill brusquely informed that his words 'had not been appreciated'. King and Ernest Lapointe agreed that Churchill had been influenced by two malign Canadians in Britain, Lord Beaverbrook and R. B. Bennett.

Further, Churchill was antagonistic towards America thanks to his 'pride' in the Empire. When he cabled Churchill on 17 September, as Churchill's response 'seemed to question the wisdom of the step taken', King asserted that Lothian 'had been kept aware of the conferences on joint defence' that had produced the PJBD. Thus, King concluded, 'the only possible explanation was that you had been influenced by representations from sources that might be supposed to reflect Canadian opinion but which, quite clearly, were either greatly prejudiced or wholly mistaken in their appreciation of the true position'.[62]

Canada's High Commissioner in Canberra reported that Australians viewed the PJBD 'with universal approval which is not unmixed with envy', which is unsurprising as Canadian diplomats condescended towards Australians. On 17 September 1940, America's Minister to Australia warned that Australians viewed the PJBD as 'no less than a harbinger of the extension of the American arm of protection to Australia'.[63] Australian Prime Minister Joseph Lyons had unsuccessfully sought security deals with America in 1935 and 1937. As FDR had told King in 1936, while some American senators, asked by FDR what he should do if Japan attacked Canada and Australia, favoured helping Canada, they thought that 'Australia is a hell of a long way off'. After R. G. Casey became Australia's first Minister to America in March 1940, FDR declared that Australia was not a direct American interest.[64] FDR, however, had told King in May 1940 he would protect the Antipodes if war erupted in the Pacific.[65] When the PJDB was announced, Canberra instructed Casey to see if there was a 'disposition on the part of the Administration to contemplate similar arrangements eventually with Australia and New Zealand?' After meeting with Welles, Casey thought it 'inadvisable' to seek an Australian PJBD as America was 'largely preoccupied' with hemispheric defence. William Glasgow, Australia's High Commissioner to Canada, believing initially that the pact constituted 'an offensive and defensive alliance' against Germany and Japan, but noting the PJBD's focus on north-eastern North America, judged that enhancing Pacific security was not contemplated in Washington.[66]

As a 'public discussion' about a Pacific PJBD 'was unwise at present', Berle told Casey that any future arrangement should be done 'quickly and confidentially', a remark Casey deemed 'significant'. Indeed, Berle wrote in his diary on 5 September that if America could make Atlantic defence arrangements, 'it can be done in the Pacific also'. Casey concurred.

> [The State Department] would be forced to rebuff any official approaches which implied the preliminaries to military

> co-operation or a military alliance with any country outside the western hemisphere, unless and until some overt action has been taken by Japan or until public opinion in this country has been moved to a state which I am quite sure it has not yet reached regarding the South West Pacific.

Still, it was not 'inconsistent' to 'insist at every opportunity of unofficial suggestions for the extension of the US–Canadian talks should be welcomed'.[67] However, Hull told Casey and Lothian on 16 September that American public opinion 'was not ready for anything that could be called a military alliance in the Pacific'. America could keep 'the Japanese guessing' while suggesting 'parallel action but not joint action' in the Pacific.[68] Undiscouraged, Casey told Canberra that the *New York Herald Tribune*'s military correspondent, George Fielding Eliot, an Australian, wanted a PJBD for the Pacific. Casey had never discussed 'the subject of direct [military] American assistance to Australia' even with senior State Department officials, for 'although we have many friends in this country, there are also a great many who do not wish us well'. Americans, Casey said, possessed 'the instinct of the horse trader' and liked 'clever' things but only if they could 'obtain a ready-made advantage'. Casey cautioned a week later that while Washington must be allowed to act 'on the assumption that national defence policy should be based on American interests', more Americans were concluding that an outer line of Pacific defences served their interests.[69]

Casey visited Hull and FDR separately on 16 October. Persuading Hull was vital as he had accused Australia of 'putting a knife to our throat economically' and giving 'us a worse jolt than the discrimination of Germany and other countries'.[70] However, Hull deflected a request for an Australian officer to visit Washington to discuss naval cooperation, refused to specify Pacific plans as America was operating 'on a week to week and at times a day to day basis' and opposed Lothian's plan to send a goodwill US Navy mission to Australia. The President promised to keep a naval mission 'up his sleeve' and wanted an Australian sailor in Washington for 'private' talks about 'naval matters of mutual interest', but he opposed broad staff talks or 'publicity regarding collaboration on defence questions'. Still, Navy Secretary Knox thought 'many things could and would be done that could not be done now' once FDR was re-elected. The Americans shared intelligence with Australia and Britain and sent delegates to Anglo-Dutch talks about the South Pacific in October 1940.[71] Australia did not get its own PJBD, while US military aid

to Australia came only in 1942 as Japanese forces loomed dangerously on the Antipodean horizon.

British historian David Reynolds has asserted that Churchill's wartime memoirs depicted the grand alliance as a natural cultural outgrowth of the English-speaking peoples.[72] Churchill devoted just three lines to the PJBD and he did not mention his warning to King, an omission that Britain's official war history repeated.[73] Correlli Barnett's 1972 study of the collapse of British power, while savaging King's pre-war opposition to a unified Commonwealth foreign policy, left King's role in 1940 and the PJBD unmentioned. Two books by John Charmley about Churchill and a third by Kathleen Burk on UK–US relations also ignored King and the PJBD. Monographs by John Lukacs and Ian Kershaw noted only King's 1940 fleet linchpin role.[74] Matters were little better when British authors discussed the PJBD. David Reynolds' study of the origins of the UK–US alliance contended that FDR had kept his options open with the PJBD. King's motives went neglected beyond a comment that FDR had used King to contact Churchill as King 'naturally shared FDR's anxiety about Atlantic security and [his] advice would be less offensive to the British than that of an American'. Further, 'Britain's naval crisis in the summer of 1940 loosened the ties of Empire and helped to force Australia and New Zealand, like Canada, into greater dependence upon the United States'. D. C. Watt castigated FDR as 'a moral imperialist on super-Wilsonian scale' and criticised King as 'yet another channel by which isolationist ideas could be fed to the President'.[75] More propitious judgements exist. While David Dilks stated that King had 'done his utmost' to convince FDR to assist the Allies, Andrew Stewart went further. Although the PJBD 'caused some confusion within Whitehall's obstreperous clique', Canada's special relationship with FDR 'cannot now be seen as surprising given Canada's geography, history and culture'.[76]

British disdain for King and the PJBD was replicated down under. Paul Hasluck's 1952 official history of Australia's war policies devoted half a paragraph to Casey's attempt to extend the PJBD. Not only did Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies not discuss his May 1940 appeal to King about obtaining US aid, King merited no mention in Menzies' two memoirs even though Menzies visited Canada in May 1941.[77] Menzies' 1941 trip diary obliquely referred to the PJBD by noting King's pride at 'keeping US onside'. According to Menzies, King was no 'war leader, possesses no burning zeal for the cause, and is a politician who possibly prefers to lead from behind', a quotation that Menzies' biographer cited without noting either the PJBD or Menzies' May 1940 appeal

to King.[78] Casey's memoir only specified that Hull had dashed hopes for a Pacific alliance, omitted Casey's talk with FDR and implied that US media pressure about the Pacific had compelled his approach to Berle. W. J. Hudson's biography of Casey, noting that Casey's 'natural shyness … and boyishness' had charmed US officials, said nothing about an Australian PJBD.[79]

Few academic studies dealing with Australia's war effort mentioned the PJBD. Raymond Esthus' 1964 study of Australia–US relations, while citing Casey's meetings with Hull, concentrated on Pacific security matters. Roger Bell's 1977 monograph, asserting that Australia was America's ranking Commonwealth ally behind Britain and 'perhaps' Canada, mentioned the PJBD only in the context of a 1946 effort to convince America to join with Australia and New Zealand in a 'tripartite regional defence plan similar to the joint U.S.–Canadian plan'. According to Carl Bridge and Norman Harper, Australian pleas for help in 1940 revealed that Australians and Americans did not yet trust or understand each other.[80] Echoing Casey's 1941 comment that Canada had developed a 'poor relation' complex thanks to US protection, David Horner's 1981 study of Australia's part in Allied strategy-making said that 'King had made important defense arrangements with FDR which, if on the one hand could be described as turning Canada into an American satellite, on the other hand took care of Canada's long term strategic interests for the next half century'. The notion that Canada had obtained special treatment echoed when David Day averred that Canada – unlike Australia, which prompted Churchillian scorn – was 'warmly regarded in Whitehall' and its political problems 'met with much understanding'. As soldier-scholar John Blaxland noted, rather than being imperial siblings, Australia and Canada were strategic cousins as 'cousins can be friendly to one another without being close'.[81]

Few American historians have acknowledged the PJBD, an indifference exemplified by the US Army's 'Green Book' official histories. Mark Watson's pre-war planning tome did not cite FDR's interest in Canada prior to 1940. A study of wartime hemispheric defence by Stetson Conn and Byron Fairchild, declaring 'there was little of the dramatic in the story of the wartime relations', linked the PJBD to FDR's 1938 declaration to defend Canada and mentioned Marshall's opposition to aiding the Allies.[82] Stanley W. Dziuban's *Military Relations Between the United States and Canada, 1939–1945* contended that the PJBD's birth had followed 'a fairly well-defined pattern for joint collaborative mechanisms'. However, Dziuban wrongly claimed that King had initiated the fleet debate by sending Keenleyside to Washington in 1940. Dziuban's lack of Canadian

sources harmed his study. Despite FDR's wishes, no US military bases were leased in eastern Canada, a failure that Dziuban attributed to a lack of US service 'desire'. In fact, King would not cede bases.[83]

Civilian American historians had mixed views on Ogdensburg. Charles Beard's incendiary books on FDR's alleged march to war oddly failed to cite the PJBD as evidence of FDR's deviousness. By contrast, Basil Rauch asserted that FDR's 1938 speech had made a desirable 'link between the collective security system of Pan America and Great Britain' while the PJBD had facilitated Lend Lease deliveries to Britain. *The Challenge to Isolation, 1937–1940*, by William Langer and S. Everett Gleason, praised FDR's 1938 speech as 'Americans of all stripes' thought it eminently sensible to defend Canada against attack while the PJBD 'came like a breath of fresh air'.[84] Forrest Pogue did not mention Marshall's opposition to Canadian talks in 1940. Julius Pratt claimed that Hull's absence at Ogdensburg demonstrated his isolation from military matters 'so organically related to foreign policy'. According to Gerald Haines and Chris Van Aller, FDR had exceeded Monroe Doctrine traditions by promising to defend Canada, although FDR thought he was following precedents. For Richard Kottman, the Canada–US 1935 trade agreement 'facilitated the emergence of the joint North American security structure'.[85]

The opening of key archival sources in the 1970s did not encourage American historians to re-examine the PJBD. While Robert Dallek's 1979 study of FDR's foreign policy posited the President as an internationalist who 'made his share of errors', Canada rarely figured. While the PJBD 'directly associated the United States with a belligerent and opened the administration to additional charges of involvement in Britain's war', Dallek ignored Canada's motivations.[86] For Thomas Bailey and Paul Ryan, the PJBD demonstrated that Canada was more vital than Latin America. Godfrey Hodgson's Stimson biography allotted just four lines to the PJBD, while John Lamberton Harper stated that FDR's comparison of the PJBD's import to the Louisiana Purchase seemed 'obvious' to the President if not his critics. Mark Stoler's history of the Joint Chiefs, ignoring the PJBD, said the US Army thought that burgeoning American economic power in Canada would leave only a 'sentimental' attachment to Empire. Gordon Stewart's 1992 revisionist monograph, proclaiming the 'benign view' that the Canada–US relationship 'was a construct of the 1930s and 1940s', argued that war permitted 'the completion of American hegemony in the western hemisphere'.[87]

Fred Pollock's argument that FDR created the PJBD solely to acquire Britain's navy if it moved to Canada is unsustainable given FDR's pre-war interest in Canadian defence, a topic that Pollock ignored. Justus Doenecke's probe of anti-interventionists is the sole American study to note Lindbergh's claim that Canada should not drag the western hemisphere into another European conflict. However, Doenecke said that FDR lost interest in the PJBD when it became clear that Britain would survive. In 1991, Warren Kimball averred that while Canada's belligerence posed 'problems' for US neutrality, FDR 'looked on Canada as a natural, logical part of any regional system in the hemisphere'. As Canada must cooperate 'or face the possibility of the FDR administration imposing its will in the event of a crisis' early in the Second World War, Kimball was uncertain whether US service demands for continental strategic command reflected 'an understandable' military desire to control US forces or a conviction 'that Canada would naturally, by a sort of gravitational pull, become part of the United States'. Further, 'in a pattern that alternatively pleased and annoyed' King, FDR said little about Canada's place in hemispheric affairs. Still, the April 1941 Hyde Park Declaration, committing America to buy Canadian munitions, demonstrated FDR's readiness to 'act as a good neighbor'.[88] By 2013, Kimball took a different tack. The President had proposed the PJBD 'to ensure that the United States had some control over whatever remnant of the British fleet might end up in Halifax'. Moreover, Churchill was far less worried about King's political manoeuvres than Roosevelt's 'reluctant bride' approach.[89]

Historian Reginald Stuart has maintained that a 'continentalist perspective dominated Canadian-American studies in the 1960s'.[90] The PJBD may be an exception to that rule. While University of Toronto historian Frank Underhill praised the PJBD in 1940 as a welcome shift from Canada's outdated ties to Britain, Professor A. R. M. Lower warned in November 1940 that Canada must not become 'an American kite' after being a 'British kite' for so long. Lower feared that King's government had not widened its strategic gaze 'far beyond the boundaries of Canada', a judgement he later abandoned since the PJBD had put Canada–US affairs 'on a basis of complete equality' while King's 'American policy [was] an open book'.[91] In 1954, George Stanley, seeing the PJBD as 'a logical sequel' to FDR's pre-war overtures, described the Canada–US defence relationship as, if not 'a marriage of love', at 'least one of convenience'. Further, only mutual goodwill and Canada's acceptance that America's views carried more weight had prevented serious disputes, for 'co-operation is always more acceptable than coercion, even when the net result is

the same'. C. P. Stacey, the Canadian army's official historian, commented in 1954 that the PJBD 'scarcely [could] have come into existence in any other circumstances' than desperate peril.[92]

By the 1960s, claims of global US imperialism resonated for increasingly confident Canadians who employed anti-Americanism, anti-imperialism and pro-Canadianism to label America as a danger to Canada's 'peaceable kingdom'.[93] For leftist scholar Philip Resnick, Canada had submitted to 'continental reorientation' and US domination in 1940. John Warnock's book title, *Partner to Behemoth: The Military Policy of a Satellite Canada*, conveyed his bias. Postulating that FDR had used the PJBD to justify giving 50 destroyers to Britain, Warnock noted that the PJBD was the only bilateral wartime agency formed by America with the appellation 'Permanent'. While King thought that he had played a treasured 'linch-pin' role in the Atlantic Triangle, he was an American 'chore boy'.[94]

Canada's right also savaged the PJBD and King. W. L. Morton, who pronounced in 1964 that Canada was 'so irradiated by the American presence that it sickens and threatens to dissolve in cancerous slime', had cut King some slack in 1963. While Morton condemned FDR for spurring Canadian neutrality sentiment in the 1930s, the PJBD, 'a wise and far-sighted measure at the time … bound [Canada] to the United States as never before'.[95] In George Grant's 1965 polemic *Lament for a Nation: The Defeat of Canadian Nationalism*, the villains were Ottawa's anti-British Liberal elites. While it had been 'necessary' for Canada to 'throw in her lot with continental defence', Grant deemed it 'extraordinary' that King had ignored the long-term consequences given his affection for FDR, 'one of the great imperialists of American history'. In 1976, a furious Donald Creighton unleashed *Forked Road: Canada, 1939–1957*. FDR, appealing to King's 'vain' linchpin pretensions, had made King a 'stooge' willing to relay FDR's demands to Churchill. Further, King had 'bound Canada to a continental system dominated by the United States and largely determined Canadian foreign and defence policy for the next thirty years'. Theirs was not a relationship 'of two equals, but that of master and pupil'.[96]

In his last official history, released in 1970, Stacey said that FDR's desire for the Royal Navy had put an 'embarrassed' King in a linchpin 'position with a vengeance', while the PJBD, 'for better or for worse', marked a new era in bilateral relations although its value lessened after Pearl Harbor. When Canada rejected US strategic control, 'amazed and shocked' American officers accepted a Canadian compromise that

emphasised cooperation. In 1976, citing King's 1935 comment 'that he wanted to choose "the American road"', while King had 'hitched his wagon to FDR's star', Stacey said that phrasing demonstrated King's desperation for a trade deal, not broader long-term policy. Stacey's nationalist 1984 chronicle of Canadian foreign policy, acknowledging that FDR's 'evident special interest' in Canada was not easily explainable, averred that such interest, while banishing the notion of America as 'a hereditary enemy', did not prompt King to embrace military cooperation before 1940.[97]

In 1975, J. L. Granatstein and Robert Bothwell posited that King had used his 'close relationship' with FDR to forge Anglo-American ties while protecting Canada from 'vassalage' if America's leadership changed. But in a 1975 book about Canada's war government, Granatstein labelled King's linchpin hopes 'quaint and naïve', while King 'deferred to the President with somewhat embarrassing haste', reflecting his status as 'the junior partner in their relationship' even if King skilfully played up to FDR. The PJBD 'was prudent and wise' though the lack of understanding about that choice was 'striking'.[98] Granatstein showed some sympathy for King's conundrums in *How Britain's Weakness Forced Canada into the Arms of the United States*. While King could be blamed for suspecting British motives, questioning America's imperialism 'was virtually impossible' in 1940. In 1991, with Norman Hillmer, Granatstein maintained that FDR's 'lofty rhetoric' in 1938 had concealed a 'tough assertion of self-interest and an urgent request for action. Neighbourhood was no guarantee of equality or genuine friendship.' Yet in 1996, Granatstein assailed critics for not recognising that King's duty to defend Canada required an American alliance in 1940.[99]

Foreign policy scholar John Holmes reasoned that Americans had not pushed Canada harder thanks to 'a strong conscience that restrains them from forcing their will on us'. Journalist Lawrence Martin proclaimed that 'the FDR–King years were the ones when the bilateral clichés took on real meaning'. FDR visited Canada more than any other president, invited Canadian prime ministers to Washington more than any other president and could name Canadian Cabinet ministers, a 'feat unheard of for presidents'. Political scientist Stéphane Roussel asserted that the process had begun years before as Canadian and American liberal-democratic elites forged bilateral bodies embodying 'equality, reciprocity, and consultation'. Thus, FDR's intent was to build a 'democratic alliance' with Canada. John A. English's critique of Canada's wartime policies charged that as FDR and Churchill required

no Canadian linchpin, Canada was locked in an Anglo-American vice as Washington assumed a 'grander imperial stance' while King's insistence on autonomy hindered the Commonwealth's ability to balance American preponderance.[100] Asa McKercher's 2019 study of Canada's place in the world since 1867 recalled Churchill's displeasure in 1940. However, citing FDR's interest in Canadian security in the 1930s, McKercher claimed that 'whatever its nature, the Ogdensburg Agreement marked an expansion of US security interests and a shift in Canadian international relations towards a more American orientation, developments that had already been in train'.[101]

Many accounts have treated the PJBD as an unexpected issue that, John A. English has written, 'signaled a changing of the guard in Canadian external relations'.[102] But as I noted in a 1999 book, which one reviewer said was 'the first book to focus on FDR and the Canada–US relationship',[103] the matter was more complicated. I made four arguments. First, FDR's interest in Canadian security began long before 1940. Second, FDR's pre-war comments about Canadian security were meant to compel Canada to better defend itself so that the United States would not have to defend it. Third, FDR educated his Anglophobic officials about the need to cooperate with Canada. Fourth, the notion of an obsequious King is wrong. As King asserted in 1937, a common North American viewpoint 'was all right up to a certain point', but it 'should never be permitted to run counter to the advantages' Canada gained from Commonwealth membership. Indeed, King claimed in 1948 that 'it was the secret aim of every American leader, including Franklin Roosevelt, to dominate Canada and ultimately to possess the country'. When US PJBD officials sought closer cooperation in 1947, King agreed to it only on a case-by-case basis.[104]

While extant, the PJBD's import faded with the North American Aerospace Defence Command's advent in 1958. As a Canadian officer wrote in 1988, whether the PJBD was 'a mechanism kept in place in case of an emergency, or whether it had outlived its usefulness are questions which are unlikely to get answers either in Ottawa or in Washington'.[105] A university undergraduate would have trouble finding PJBD references. The popular Canadian history textbook *Destinies* explained that King sought talks with FDR, mentioned Creighton's complaints and noted an assertion by Granatstein and Hillmer that King sought to protect Canada and aid Britain. A second text by J. M. Bumstead opined that Canada was 'routinely … treated as little different from Allied nations like Chile and Brazil, which had only token forces in the war'.[106] Three US foreign

policy volumes omitted the PJBD.[107] Permanence apparently does not guarantee memorability.

Introducing their 1996 North Atlantic Triangle study, B. J. C. McKercher and Lawrence Aronsen averred that the Triangle 'was largely a Canadian idea, conceived in the aftermath of the granting of dominion sovereignty in foreign policy following the imperial conference of 1926'. Further, the 'idea of a triplice of English-speaking powers existing as a bloc in the swirl of modern international politics needs to be tempered with the realization that Great Britain, the United States, and Canada had different national interests and thus pursued foreign policies that did not always mesh'.[108] The PJBD did, and did not, mesh with the Triangle. On the one hand, it incited Canada–US cooperation and permitted greater aid to Britain. On the other hand, hostile reactions to Ogdensburg revealed just how fragile that Triangle was. Still, the PJBD's many opponents, a diverse collection riven by ideological, national and geographic differences, could not have prevented the agency's formation. Public opinion on both sides of the Canada–US border ensured the PJBD's ready acceptance. Moreover, FDR and King, extraordinarily skilled political operators, denied their domestic foes any legislative opportunity to derail their deal by making the pact an executive agreement rather than a treaty that the US Senate and Canada's House of Commons would have to ratify. And while Churchill could have publicly denounced the pact, it would have risked alienating FDR just as many Britons were realising that their national survival depended on America. But once a belligerent America took its fight overseas, continental defence became far less vital. If the PJBD enhanced Canada's gravitation into the American security orbit as British and Canadian historians have alleged, how could it have been otherwise given the dire circumstances? Would any prime minister, even Meighen, have declined FDR's offer in August 1940 as frightened Canadians feared Britain's destruction? I cannot imagine any Canadian leader rejecting aid at so critical a juncture.

Declarations and conflicts of interest

Research ethics statement

Not applicable to this article.

Consent for publication statement

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The author declares no conflict of interest with this work. All efforts to sufficiently anonymise the author during peer review of this article have been made. The author declares no further conflicts with this article.

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Greenland (1940) as an Instance of Pickwickian 'Cooperation' Between King's Ottawa and Roosevelt's Washington

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Abstract

The German invasion of Norway and Denmark in April 1940, which is usually regarded as marking the end of the so-called Phoney War between Germany and the Allies, also led to a short-lived diplomatic stand-off between the United States and Canada. The tension stemmed primarily from misapprehensions in both North American countries over what should be done about Greenland, the Danish colony whose political and legal status had suddenly been placed in question by the German move. It soon subsided, but in the process it resulted in a pronounced overreaction by some on the US side of the dispute. The quarrel largely took place behind the scenes and has attracted relatively little attention from historians. In fact, although the US government mostly got its way at the expense of Canada, the Greenland episode was presented by Prime Minister Mackenzie King as an instance of diplomatic cooperation to the benefit of both countries – a view that has been repeated by later commentators. If the episode really did represent an instance of close cooperation between Canada and the United States, then it was only in a Pickwickian sense, that is, one in which the reality of the situation was very different from the roseate view offered by its apologists.

Keywords Greenland; cryolite; United States; United Kingdom; Canada; Denmark; Ivigtut.

Introduction

One immediate, if ironic, consequence of the German invasion of Norway and Denmark in April 1940 was a short-lived diplomatic spat between the United States and Canada. The tension stemmed primarily from misapprehensions in both North American countries over what should be done about Greenland, the Danish colony whose political and legal status had suddenly been placed in question by the German move. The spat subsided almost as quickly as it had flared, but not before triggering some surprising and intemperate remarks on the part of a few high-ranking American policymakers. The quarrel largely took place out of public view, and it has remained more or less obscure to the present time. Perhaps the most surprising aspect of this northern dust-up was the manner in which its eventual resolution (along American lines) became stylised as a signal instance of bilateral *harmony*. Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, speaking in the House of Commons in February 1941, expressed his satisfaction with the handling of the Greenland affair, remarking that the 'cooperation which has taken place thus far has been of real advantage to both countries'.[1] This roseate view was reflected a few years later when a leading Canadian political scientist wrote of the Greenland affair that 'the Dominion worked in close cooperation with the United States'.[2] If the Greenland incident really did represent an instance of close cooperation between the two countries, then it was only in a Pickwickian sense. The reality is that Ottawa and Washington were each pursuing their own interests, as well as labouring under a set of significant misperceptions. In the following section, I provide a brief sketch of the onset of the dispute. Following that, I examine the two countries' respective interests.

Alarm in Ottawa, consternation in Washington

The German move into Norway and Denmark on 9 April 1940 not only signalled the end of what Americans had taken to calling the 'Phoney War', but also brought the European fighting potentially closer to Canadian shores than it had theretofore been. On the day of the Nazi incursion into Scandinavia, Prime Minister King cabled the Dominions Secretariat in London about his concern over 'reports of enemy ships heading in direction of Iceland and Southern Greenland'.[3] The worry was that Germany, having overrun Denmark, would seize by right of conquest the Danish possessions of Iceland and Greenland. This worry spurred

decision-makers in Ottawa to begin planning the pre-emptive occupation of the latter island.

'Occupation' might be too grandiose a word to describe what Ottawa actually intended to do. The pre-emptive strike would be launched by a tiny force of no more than 50 officers of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), supported by the Coast Guard vessel *N. B. McLean*. The objective would be to seize and hold the towns of Ivigtut, Godhavn and Godthaab.[4] Needless to say, the planners were anticipating little if any German opposition to the occupation. What would come as a surprise, however, was the opposition stemming from another quarter, Washington. To be sure, planners in Ottawa, as well as British officials, realised that America's reaction to the pre-emptive strike was going to have a critical bearing on its chances of success. It was precisely with the aim of determining Washington's position that Britain's Ambassador to the United States Lord Lothian paid a visit to the State Department on 12 April to sound out Secretary of State Cordell Hull. The latter told the ambassador that Greenland was within the purview of the Monroe Doctrine, that the US recognised the sovereignty of Copenhagen over it and that there could be absolutely no question of its being transferred to a third party. Lothian closed the interview with the observation that the matter could be worked out 'without friction or serious discussion'.[5]

That was undoubtedly Lothian's wish, but he would soon make it impossible for it to become realised. Four days after his meeting with Hull, he was quoted in the *New York Times* as saying that 'if Britain decided that Greenland should be occupied to forestall a German move the undertaking would be carried out by Canada in order to avoid complications under the Monroe Doctrine'.[6] The ambassador would soon be complaining that he had been misquoted; whether he had been or not is unclear, but he was clearly upset by the story in the *New York Times*. Canada's Ambassador to Washington Loring Christie informed Ottawa that Lothian was 'quite chastened and nervous as a result of his press statements'.[7]

Although Lothian may genuinely have been seeking to placate the United States, he managed to alienate not only it, but also Canada, by his remarks. Nevertheless, officials at the Department of External Affairs, especially Under Secretary O. D. Skelton, remained convinced that Washington was 'definitely sympathetic' to the idea of a Canadian occupation of the Danish possession, although matters had hardly been helped by Lothian's public comments, which to Skelton constituted 'one of the most incredibly stupid and embarrassing interviews ever … by a public representative'. Nevertheless, Skelton could relate to Prime Minister King

that the State Department was satisfied with Ottawa's protestations that 'Lothian had not been authorized to speak for Canada'.[8]

But the State Department was not amused; nor did it 'sympathise' in the slightest with the Canadian plan. On 19 April, the department's political adviser, James C. Dunn, informed Christie that the United States could not support, for several reasons, any Canadian move into Greenland.[9] By contrast, the British were growing ever more insistent that something be done to safeguard Greenland, and that it must fall to Canada to do so. Adolf Berle, the Assistant Secretary of State, had never been a great admirer either of Britain or of Canada's continuing links to it (the nature of which never were clear in his own mind), and he threw himself into the brewing controversy with zeal. In early June he administered a very undiplomatic tongue-lashing to some British and Canadian diplomats who he suspected (wrongly) were still pushing for an Anglo-Canadian incursion into Greenland: 'I told both … the Britisher and … the Canadians that Cecil Rhodes had been dead a long time and even if alive, Greenland was hardly a place for his talents.'[10] As early as mid-April, Berle's ire began to rise in response to talk (genuine, this time) of Canadian pre-emptive action, and he became particularly annoyed to learn, the morning after Dunn's meeting with Christie, that the RCMP had 'sent word, through the FBI, to know if we objected to their sending a force to Greenland to find out what was going on. I think the Royal Mounted should mind its own damned business, and let the governments settle high policy'.[11]

Berle did not always mince his words on the Greenland matter. And while his language might have been strong at times, his words reflected what really was a significant difference in the respective interests of the North American neighbours as they contemplated the future of the Danish possession. They also reflected some profound mutual misperceptions, derivative of those interests, to which I now turn. One of the American interests, as officials both in Britain and in Canada would discover to their surprise, would have a strong Asian component.

Canadian and American interests in comparative context

On the face of it, Canada appeared to have the greatest stake in Greenland. To begin with, at the moment the Germans launched their spring offensive of 1940, Canada had already become a belligerent in the war. The United States, meanwhile, continued to imagine it could remain outside the European struggle and concentrated its security attention southward

in the western hemisphere, from which direction many American officials thought trouble would come in the event the Germans won the war. A McGill University professor of law accurately summed up the American perspective at this time, when he noted that as Washington saw matters, the 'chief menace to North American security is not the possibility of a direct attack by a non-American power. It is rather that some non-American power or combination of powers might use a South American base as a jumping-off place for an attack on North America'.[12]

From the US point of view, the security situation in the northern part of the western hemisphere looked relatively benign: Canada enjoyed the protection of the British fleet as a safeguard against any German assault, and it was regarded (correctly) as being a well-run polity, hence not one likely to be 'destabilised' by the kind of Nazi subversive activities American officials were constantly looking for, and sometimes finding, in so many Latin American lands. This is not to say that Americans universally subscribed to the view that Canadian security could be taken for granted; indeed, just one month after the war began, one American senator was moved to proclaim that unless Hitler was stopped by the European democracies, he would transform Canada into an 'armed camp of Hitlerites, with a Siegfried line on our northern border from ocean to ocean'.[13] Remarks such as these notwithstanding, most American officials regarded Canada as a haven of stability compared with nearly all the rest of the hemisphere, and it was to the south, not the north, that they turned their anxious gaze.[14]

Canadian security officials could not afford to adopt such a blasé approach to the north in general and to the future of Greenland in particular. In the first place, there was the matter of arranging protection for the cryolite mines at Ivigtut (today's Ivittuut), on the south-western coast of that giant island. The Ivigtut mines were the world's only commercially exploitable sources of natural cryolite, a mineral used in the electrolytic refining of aluminium. Although natural cryolite has since been displaced by synthetic cryolite, in 1940 much of North America's aluminium output remained dependent upon the relatively inexpensive (compared with the synthetic) natural cryolite.[15] Canadian production was of critical importance to the Allied war effort, with Canada alone accounting for 80 per cent of the Commonwealth's entire aluminium output in 1940 – a fact of considerable relevance to the British interest in Greenland. In early April, Fraser W. Bruce, an official of the Aluminum Company of Canada (Alcan), signalled his company's Greenland apprehensions in a letter to Norman Robertson, First Secretary in the Department of External Affairs: 'As Norway has also been invaded, and Great Britain and France have

relied on Norwegian smelters for a considerable tonnage of aluminum, the importance of Canadian aluminum production, and, consequently, Greenland cryolite, cannot be stressed too strongly.'[16]

Apart from cryolite, Greenland was considered vital to Canadian interests for defensive reasons: it simply lay too close for comfort to Canadian territory, in an age in which technology was rapidly shrinking distances and hurdling climatological barriers. For this reason alone, Greenland could not be allowed to fall into German hands. Although Vincent Massey, High Commissioner in London, did not believe there was much likelihood of a German attack on Greenland, Prime Minister King thought otherwise. He thus instructed Canada's ambassador to Washington, Christie, to bring the Americans up to speed on Canadian views, by meeting with Secretary of State Hull to apprise him of Canadian apprehensions that Germany might set up an air base on Greenland. Canada was contemplating a pre-emptive strike of its own to prevent such a scenario.[17] That Germany was not about to build a landing strip in Greenland is beside the point: what matters in international relations is the perception of reality, not the reality itself, and there were more than enough reasons for Canadian officials to indulge in a bit of worst-case analysis. When national security is thought to be at stake, even slight reason can be 'reason enough'.

Moreover, exploration in Greenland during the 1930s had led geographers to revise earlier assessments of the island as unsuitable for aviation, commercial or military. According to the revised thinking, as expressed in an April 1939 *Foreign Affairs* article written by Vilhjalmur Stefansson, Greenland was deemed 'suitable for flying'. Not only that, but with its massive ice cap (1,500 miles long and 600 wide), the island 'forms a continuous and nearly perfect emergency landing field'.[18] While it would not be until the Cold War that Greenland began to emerge as an important strategic interest for air forces (especially the US Air Force, which constructed its northernmost base at Thule following the Second World War), it was obvious even in 1940 that the island's days of being isolated from air communications were ending. Furthermore, as Stefansson would write a few years later, Greenland was not going to be useful only for emergencies; given proper compaction of the layer of snow that sits atop the ice sheet, 'you will surely have a surface not merely hard but also thick enough to take bumps from the wheels of even the heaviest bombing planes'.[19]

A third Canadian interest in Greenland soon developed: prestige. Once it became obvious that the United States was hardly going to applaud a Canadian pre-emptive strike on Greenland, Ottawa found itself

on the horns of a dilemma. How was it to avoid losing face and not bow to Washington's demands that it not 'meddle' in Greenland's affairs, while at the same time finding a way, effectively, to go along with American preferences? That the British were urging Canada to take military action did not help matters. By the end of April, some three weeks after the onset of the affair, the question of prestige had moved to the forefront of Canadian concerns. Hugh L. Keenleyside, a counsellor to Skelton at External Affairs, stated on 30 April that 'our primary purpose [concerning Greenland] is, of course, to protect the interests of the Canadian government through the maintenance of Canadian prestige, the establishment of Canadian security, and the provision of cryolite supplies for Canadian industry'.[20]

To understand why those Canadian interests needed protection, we now have to examine what *America*'s stake in Greenland was during the spring of 1940. In large part, it was the United States' initial failure to take action to protect the cryolite mines, coupled with its vocal disapproval of Canada's plan to implement pre-emptive measures, which led to the bilateral dispute over the island. American behaviour was conditioned by a different set of factors from those that were prompting Canadian decision-making, but Washington was, in its own way, as constrained by external political forces as was Ottawa.

To begin with, there was the Monroe Doctrine, by which the United States decreed that no 'non-American' power had a right to undertake military interventions anywhere in the western hemisphere. Although Canada was considered a friendly enough power in Washington, it was also, by dint of its relationship with Great Britain (not terribly well understood in the United States, or for that matter even in Canada), possible to regard it as a 'non-American' power.[21] Thus, when Britain declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939, the view in the State Department was that Canada was automatically going to be at war, too, because of its membership in what was still being called, in some circles, the 'British Empire'. Certainly this is how the State Department's most militant officer on the Greenland file, Adolf Berle, thought (and Berle was someone who thought he knew it all, not just on matters related to Canada). 'The law was', the Assistant Secretary had written in early September 1939, 'that when England was at war Canada was at war. Sir Wilfred [*sic*] Laurier had said so, twenty-five years ago; and the Attorney General of Canada had ruled so, very recently. Canadian neutrality was equivalent to secession.'[22] As things transpired, the 'law' was that when Canada declared itself to be at war, it would then be at war, and this did not occur until a week after the British declaration.[23] Still, Berle may have captured the spirit, even if he missed the letter, of the law; there really was no question

in Mackenzie King's mind, after 1937, that should Britain enter another European war, Canada would be at its side.

State Department uncertainty over the exact 'American' status of Canada was accompanied by a great deal of certainty as to where Greenland fit into the western hemisphere. And if anyone was in doubt about it, there was the Under Secretary of State, Sumner Welles, to remind them in early April 1940 that as far as Washington was concerned, Greenland was indeed a hemispheric land.[24] This, in turn, meant that, in the event intervention in Greenland proved necessary, it would have to be a strictly *American* affair. To be clear, deeming it such an affair meant, in theory at least, that *any* so-called American country – even Bolivia – would be justified in involving itself in Greenland's affairs, according to the norms of the inter-American system that had been evolving under the aegis of Washington. Realistically, of course, only the United States was going to be in a position to 'sort out' Greenland. And while in a very short time, by August 1940, Canada would become a formal ally of the United States upon the signing of the Ogdensburg Agreement and the creation of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence (PJBD), and thus would arguably bind itself to upholding the Monroe Doctrine,[25] this was still in the future when the Greenland flap was at its peak of intensity. The spring of 1940 remained a time during which it was relatively easy for State Department officials to regard Canada as a 'non-American power'.[26] In Ottawa that spring, policymakers assumed not only that Canada was as 'American' a power as any other, but that the United States would actually *prefer* that it occupy Greenland.

And this gets us to the Asian dimension. For no matter how the Monroe Doctrine and Canada's relation to it were being interpreted, the United States understood that it had an even more important interest to protect in the Greenland affair – an interest located not in the north, but halfway around the planet. The most important reason for American opposition to a Canadian pre-emptive move into Greenland was the deep-seated concern that whatever Washington did in the matter would not be seen by any other state as establishing a precedent for potential action of its own. If Washington gave the green light to Canada's moving into Greenland, how would it be able to oppose some other country's pre-emptive move into a European power's colonial possession, should such a power find itself conquered by Germany?

One did not require too much imagination to fill in the specifics that underlay the problem of precedent-setting – and the same concern about a precedent being set with Asian implications has featured more recently in American diplomatic behaviour in respect of another

northern issue within the western hemisphere (namely, the legal regime that is to govern the Northwest Passage). In the Greenland case, it was obviously Japan upon which American sights were set. Specifically, the United States was afraid that Japan might follow a Canadian example and occupy in its own right a colonial holding of a country overrun by the Nazis. Although by April 1940 the Germans had not yet attacked the Netherlands, few observers of international relations were predicting that the country would long remain free of the Nazi yoke. By the same token, there were few who doubted that one of the possessions most desired by Japanese imperialists was the Netherlands East Indies. After the war was over, Cordell Hull would recall the reason for his and his department's opposition to Canadian plans to occupy Greenland: 'What we had in mind was the necessity to avoid any precedent that might give Japan an excuse to seize the Netherlands East Indies if Holland were invaded by the Germans.'[27]

The Canadians were aware of this American concern. As early as 19 April, James Dunn had informed Loring Christie that the Japanese 'analogy' was what was driving his government's opposition to Canada's Greenland planning. Nor was it just a Canadian move into Greenland that was at issue; the United States itself was afraid to bring Greenland into a protective embrace (though it later would do just that) for fear of how the Japanese might interpret it. The Japanese, reasoned Dunn, would not care whether it was Ottawa or Washington that gave them a legal basis for taking over the Netherlands East Indies. Dunn did say to Christie that his government was equally concerned about the cryolite mines, but it could not afford to take any drastic steps to protect them. He assured the ambassador that Washington would find a way to assure the uninterrupted supply of the mineral.[28] At the end of the month, Prime Minister King travelled to Warm Springs, Georgia, to visit President Roosevelt. The Prime Minister was surprised to learn how much the President knew about Canadian planning regarding Greenland, and Roosevelt reiterated that the last thing he wanted was for any ally to intervene in Greenland, thereby giving the Japanese reason to think they might do the same in Southeast Asia. King assured his host that Canada had no intention of landing a force in Greenland.[29]

Conclusion: from one precedent to another

Following some high drama in late spring 1940, when it appeared to Berle, at least, that the Canadian 'invasion' of Greenland was back on, the

Canada–US dispute over this northern territory would finally end, and in such a way that it could be passed off as having represented healthy 'cooperation' on the part of the North Americans. Hitler never did get as far as Greenland (and almost certainly never even intended to), the cryolite continued to flow to aluminium producers in North America (Alcan and Alcoa) and, in a final twist, Canadian military personnel even ended up using facilities on Greenland's soil, built by the United States and nominally under the 'sovereign' control of a provisional Greenland government recognised by Washington as the legitimate guardian of Danish interests, until such time as Denmark could be liberated.

But there was one lasting legacy of this tempest in a northern teapot, and it concerns the impact of the Asian 'analogy'. For though many things changed in the ensuing decades, one thing did not: Canada–US diplomatic relations in the north continued, in part, to be influenced by American worries about setting an unhelpful 'precedent' that could come back to haunt US interests in Southeast Asia. In this later instance, it was the status of the Northwest Passage and not Greenland that served as the bone of contention between the two countries.

Declarations and conflicts of interest

Research ethics statement

Not applicable to this article.

Consent for publication statement

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Conflicts of interest statement

The author declares no conflict of interest with this work. All efforts to sufficiently anonymise the author during peer review of this article have been made. The author declares no further conflicts with this article.

Notes

1 Dominion of Canada, *House of Commons Debates*, 19th Parliament, second session, 25 February 1941, 999.
2 Dawson, *Canada in World Affairs*, 244.
3 King to Dominions Secretariat, 9 April 1940, Department of External Affairs, in *Documents on Canadian External Relations* (hereafter cited as *DCER*), Volume 7, 948.

4 Commander (RCN) J. W. R. Roy to Chief of Naval Staff, 13 April 1940, in *DCER*, 7: 956–7.
5 Hull memorandum of conversation with Lothian, 12 April 1940 in *Foreign Relations*, 352–3.
6 Quoted by King in cable to Vincent Massey, Canadian High Commissioner in London, 17 April 1940, *Department of Canadian External Relations* (hereafter *DCER*), 7, 1940: 964–5.
7 Memorandum of O. D. Skelton, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, of telephone conversation with Christie, 19 April 1940, *DCER*, 7: 967.
8 Skelton memorandum to King, 18 April 1940, *DCER*, 7: 966.
9 Christie to King, 19 April 1940, *DCER*, 7: 968–9.
10 Unpublished diary of Adolf A. Berle, Jr., 3 June 1940, Berle Papers, box 212, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library (hereafter cited as Berle Diary, date, box no.).
11 Berle Diary, 20 April 1940, box 211.
12 Humphrey, *Inter-American System*, 15.
13 Sen. Matthew M. Neely of West Virginia, quoted in US Congress, *Congressional Record*, 896.
14 See Haglund, *Latin America.*
15 Street and Alexander, *Metals in the Service of Man*.
16 Bruce to Robertson, 9 April 1940, *DCER*, 7: 947–8.
17 Massey to King, 15 April 1940; King to Christie, 15 April 1940, *DCER*, 7: 960–2.
18 Stefansson, 'American Far North', 523.
19 Stefansson, *Greenland*, 315.
20 Keenleyside to Skelton, 30 April 1940, *DCER*, 7: 980–2.
21 In December 1942 a Wartime Information Board poll revealed that only 52 per cent of English Canadians believed that Canada was independent of Great Britain. For French Canadians, the figure was 30 per cent. See Granatstein and Winsor, 'Third of Canada hoped to join U.S.'.
22 Berle Diary, 6 September 1939, box 211.
23 Clokie, 'The British Dominions'.
24 For Welles' statement see Logan, *No Transfer*, 301; and Langer and Gleason, *Challenge to Isolation*, 429–30.
25 For this interpretation see Humphrey, *Inter-American System*, 17–19.
26 Not only a non-American state, but also for a time an embarrassing element in the administration's policy of seeking to isolate the western hemisphere from the European war. As Harold Innis observed in 1938, Canada was 'the Achilles' heel to North American isolationism'. Quoted in MacCormac, *Canada*, 137.
27 Hull, *Memoirs*, 755–6.
28 Christie to King, 19 April 1940, *DCER*, 7: 968–9.
29 Skelton memorandum of King–Roosevelt meeting, 2 May 1940, *DCER*, 7: 983–4.

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Mackenzie King and the St Pierre and Miquelon Crisis of 1941

David Woolner

Abstract

The St Pierre and Miquelon affair is perhaps the classic example of a Canadian phenomenon whereby the net effect of the country's unusual domestic and international position serves to paralyse Canadian policy. For nearly two years the Canadian military pushed the government to do something about the islands, and for two years the Cabinet – caught between the demands of the British and the Americans, and always concerned about the potential domestic repercussions of any move that involved France – refused to act. And so it did nothing – nothing, that is, until the Cabinet arrived at a tentative plan (initially suggested by the Americans) for the takeover of the radio station on St Pierre. But the plan, in the end, was too heavy-handed for the Americans and too weak for the British, so the Cabinet drew back again to consider the merits of its proposal, unable to take action against two minute and undefended islands just miles from Canada's shore, held by a potentially hostile power in the middle of a world war.

Keywords Winston Churchill; Charles de Gaulle; Mackenzie King; Franklin Roosevelt; St Pierre; Miquelon; Vichy France.

As Prime Minister of Canada during the turbulent years from the mid-1930s to the mid-1940s, William Lyon Mackenzie King frequently thought of himself as the fulcrum of the North Atlantic Triangle – the leader whose close relationship with the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the President of the United States placed him, and Canada, in a unique position between the two principal Western Allied powers.[1]

Certainly Canada's role in such activities as the negotiation of the Anglo-American Trade Agreement of 1938, the ferrying of American aircraft to the Allies in the initial year of the war and the facilitation of the September 1940 Anglo-American Destroyers for Bases Agreement – as well as Mackenzie King's personal involvement in the much celebrated Royal Visit to the United States in 1939 – supports the notion of Canada as a go-between for the United States and Great Britain. So too does Canada's involvement in such key initiatives as the Manhattan Project, and the many joint boards Canada established during the war to help bolster and enhance the ties between London and Washington.[2]

But Canada's unique position could also land the country in serious difficulty, caught between Great Britain's desire to see its principal Dominion follow the British lead in foreign policy, and the American desire to make sure that Canada – as a fellow occupant of the western hemisphere – did not carry out any external policies that ran counter to traditional American security concerns for the region. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the crisis that erupted over the tiny French islands of St Pierre and Miquelon in late December 1941.[3]

Located just 12 miles to the south of Newfoundland's Burin peninsula, St Pierre and Miquelon have belonged to France for more than four centuries. Aside from the distinction of being the oldest colony of France, and the attention they have occasionally attracted over fishing disputes or the running of rum,[4] the islands, over the years, have remained relatively isolated, wholly French and intensely loyal to their mother country.[5] At first, the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 did not seem to indicate that St Pierre and Miquelon's status as a somewhat isolated and rather insignificant French outpost in the New World would change. But with the fall of France in June 1940, the islands fell under the control of a potentially hostile government – Vichy France – and as a consequence their location, territorial status and potential use as a military installation became a much more serious cause for concern, not only for Canada, but also for Great Britain and the United States.

Complicating all this was the fact that in the weeks and months following the collapse of France, the three powers found it difficult to agree on a policy with respect to the Vichy government (or for that

matter to the emerging Free French movement led by Charles de Gaulle). Thanks to Operation Catapult (the British effort to seize French warships stationed outside France in early July 1940, which resulted in the Royal Navy bombardment of the French fleet at Mers-el-Kebir), diplomatic relations between the newly established Vichy government and Great Britain had been severed and would remain tense for the duration of the war. But this was not the case in Canada, where the French legation, led by the French minister René Ristelhueber, remained in place and where diplomatic relations between Vichy and Ottawa continued – in part due to the joint British–Canadian desire to gain information about the activities of the Vichy regime, and in part due to Canadian sensitivities concerning the country's francophone population.

For the Americans, not yet in the war, Vichy also represented both a concern and an opportunity. The United States shared the British and Canadian fears that the Nazis might use the armistice agreement and/or their somewhat uncertain relationship with Vichy as a means to gain control of the French fleet or French North Africa. But Washington's immediate anxiety lay with the possibility that the Nazis might use their relationship with Vichy as a means to acquire French territory in the western hemisphere. Particularly worrying was the French island of Martinique, which was not only strategically located, but also the site where several French warships were stationed, including the aircraft carrier *Bearn* (with over 100 American-made military aircraft), two French cruisers and 245 million US dollars' worth of gold bullion.[6]

Well aware of the potential danger this island and other European possessions in the western hemisphere represented, US Secretary of State Cordell Hull wasted no time in calling for an 'urgent consultative meeting' of the American republics in the wake of the French collapse.[7] Building on the legacy of the Monroe Doctrine, the United States felt it was critical to establish a united foreign policy among the American republics based on the explicit principle that no change in territorial status should occur in the western hemisphere as a consequence of the war. At the subsequent Conference of Havana, therefore, the United States secured an understanding with the Latin American states whereby it was agreed that 'it would be contrary to the interests of the American republics to permit the European possessions in the New World to become a subject for barter in the settlement of European differences'. Moreover, the United States also insisted that the 'use of these possessions to promote systems alien to the inter-American system could not be countenanced'[8] and that 'any effort to modify the existing status of these possessions whether by cession, by transfer, or by any impairment

whatsoever in the control heretofore exercised would be of profound and immediate concern to all the American republics'.[9] Backing up this 'no-transfer principle' was the Act of Havana, which provided for 'the emergency establishment of a regime of provisional administration' in any territory which was determined by a committee of the republics to be in danger of a change in status.[10]

By autumn 1940, and in keeping with the policies articulated by the Conference of Havana, the Roosevelt administration had also reached an understanding with the Vichy government on the maintenance of the status quo in Martinique. Under the terms of this agreement, which was negotiated with the governor of the island, Admiral Robert, it was understood that Martinique would remain neutral for the duration of the war and that the phrase 'status quo' referred not only to the preservation of territorial integrity but also to the movement of ships and gold, neither of which were to be transferred from Martinique without prior notification of the government of the United States.[11] In return, the United States would allow oil and foodstuffs as well as sufficient funds to be released from French holdings in the United States to provide for the maintenance of Martinique and other French territories in the New World, including Guadeloupe, French Guiana and the islands of St Pierre and Miquelon.[12]

Having established an understanding with France over the status of Martinique (and by implication other French territories in the western hemisphere), it is not surprising that the United States would view any independent discussion of the future of St Pierre and Miquelon on the part of the British or Canadians with concern. Furthermore, as the war progressed, and the United States invested more and more energy in developing a relationship with the Vichy government, in part to keep Vichy outside the Nazi orbit, and in part to maintain the understandings that had been achieved over the western hemisphere, this sentiment, if anything, intensified.

Although Canada as a Dominion of the British Empire was not a party to the Conference of Havana, Mackenzie King was well aware of the strength of American opinion on the maintenance of the no-transfer principle. The Canadians, in fact, had already experienced the extent of US sensitivity over this issue when, following the German occupation of Denmark, they had suggested that a small Canadian expeditionary force be sent to Greenland to defend it against possible German aggression, a move which the Americans – as the guardians of the western hemisphere – vehemently opposed. From spring 1940, therefore, Mackenzie King had insisted that his government keep the Americans fully informed of any discussions that went on between Ottawa, London and Newfoundland

over the status of St Pierre, or any potential move Canada might make to ensure the islands were not engaged in any activity that might harm the Allied cause.[13] In 1940 this meant ensuring the economic well-being of the islands (which ultimately involved both US and Vichy cooperation), as well as keeping an eye on the one French warship that was temporarily moored in St Pierre (an armed sloop, named the *Ville d'Ys*), and dealing with the future of the French North Atlantic fishing fleet – two issues that had attracted the interest of the British government in London, but which had ceased to be of concern with the departure of both by December of that year.[14]

By January 1941, in fact, it looked as if St Pierre and Miquelon would not present the Allies with any major difficulty. But the apparent calm that had settled over the islands was suddenly disrupted in May 1941 when a disturbing report from the Committee on French Resistance (CFR) reached the War Cabinet in London. The report noted 'mounting evidence' that the Vichy government 'intended using the powerful wireless station on St. Pierre and Miquelon to signal to German U-boats the movement of Allied convoys in the North Atlantic'.[15] Two other developments in the spring of that year rendered this news even more problematic. The first was the rapidly deteriorating situation in the North Atlantic, where Allied losses continued to mount and where U-boats were now being sighted as far west as 38° longitude, and the second was the worsening situation at Vichy, where it appeared that the Vichy French leader, Marshall Petain, might pursue a policy of collaboration with Germany. The most ominous sign of the latter came through the negotiation of the so-called Paris Protocols, a secret understanding signed by Petain's Vice Premier, Admiral Darlan, in May 1941 that seemed to portend an extensive programme of collaboration between France and Germany.[16] While the texts of these agreements were not available to the Allies, what was known of the proceedings triggered a major crisis over Vichy in the West. Of foremost concern was the possibility that Hitler might use his relationship with Vichy to reap tremendous gains in the Near East and North Africa, where a major campaign through Spain, France and the Levant seemed imminent.[17] For the British, such a move could prove disastrous and potentially result in the loss of their ability to control the Mediterranean or maintain their tenuous hold in Egypt. Moreover, if the Nazis gained North Africa, the consequences for the United States might also be dire. Dakar, on the west coast of the African continent, was only seven hours' flying time from the eastern tip of Brazil. Should the Nazis take control of it and capture the remainder of the French fleet, the danger to America's sea lanes and the western hemisphere would be substantial.[18]

Britain responded to this crisis by invading Syria in June and by warning Petain through US diplomatic channels that French collaboration with Hitler would make it impossible for Britain 'to maintain in any respect the distinction we have hitherto drawn between unoccupied and occupied France in the execution of our military and economic plans'.[19] US President Franklin Roosevelt also issued warnings to Petain, and in a *Fireside Chat* broadcast to the nation on 27 May he indicated that the military situation in the North Atlantic and in Europe presented the United States with an 'unlimited national emergency'. In the face of this threat, Roosevelt asked the US Army and Navy to draw up a joint plan for the occupation of the Azores, a key outpost for the defence of the western hemisphere should the Nazis successfully take Gibraltar and move into North Africa,[20] while his Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshall, considered sending US troops to Brazil and even contemplated occupying the island of Martinique.[21]

In taking these steps, both countries sought to reduce the chances that France would go ahead with Darlan's plans, but by this time British and American policy with respect to Vichy had diverged. The British favoured a tough approach of maintaining the blockade they had begun following the armistice and refusing to lift it – even for humanitarian reasons – as long as France or French North Africa refused to declare itself unequivocally opposed to the Nazi regime. The Americans, meanwhile, held out the carrot rather than the stick through the somewhat controversial policy of trying to entice France away from collaboration with Germany by offering to supply France and French North Africa with desperately needed provisions.[22]

The Canadians, meanwhile, were caught between the diverging British and American views. As noted, Canada had maintained relations with France following its defeat, but its reasons for doing so were more complicated than those of the Americans. Canada had to consider its domestic situation and the sympathy many of its Quebec citizens felt for Petain and his efforts to maintain French sovereignty.[23] Compounding this was the uncertain support (even antipathy) for de Gaulle and the Free French movement within Canada during the early years of the war.[24] Prime Minister King, therefore, tried to avoid any activity that might be considered openly hostile to Vichy and dreaded the possibility of war between Britain and France more than any other Western leader. He also tended to look with tacit favour on the Americans' Vichy policy, including US efforts to secure concessions from the French in North Africa through the diplomatic mission of Robert Murphy.[25] Still, as the leader of Britain's foremost Dominion, he could not afford to ignore British policy with

respect to Vichy. Nor could he ignore the contempt that most English-speaking Canadians had for Petain or the growing unease felt by many within his own government over St Pierre and Miquelon now that it appeared likely that Petain was prepared to collaborate with Hitler.[26] Moreover, with the British fighting Vichy in Syria, and a worsening situation in the North Atlantic, the possibility that pro-Vichy elements on the islands might be using the St Pierre wireless station for purposes inimical to the Allies' interests could no longer be countenanced.[27] For all these reasons, it was becoming more and more apparent that the status quo in the islands could not be maintained.[28]

In response to this mounting anxiety, King's War Cabinet began to discuss the possibility of a Canadian takeover of the islands,[29] and by autumn 1941 the Canadian Chief of Staff had fully endorsed this course of action. But Prime Minister King – fearful of the French Canadian reaction and the likely opposition to the move on the part of the Americans – remained opposed to occupation. As an alternative, King preferred a policy whereby Canadian radio personnel would be stationed at the short-wave transmission station 'to control all outgoing messages'. It was also proposed that 'the use of code and cipher be stopped'; that the wireless equipment of all fishing boats be inspected and the equipment limited to a range of 500 miles; and that the small radio stations on the islands furnish Canadian personnel 'with copies of all messages sent'. If the administrator of the islands refused to consent to these arrangements, economic pressures would be applied to see to it that he would 'agree to the proposed supervision of his wireless station'.[30]

Consistent with past practices, King insisted that before any of these steps were taken, the concurrence of the United States and Great Britain must be obtained, and as a first step a cable detailing Ottawa's plans was sent at once to Washington.[31] Given that the Americans had already suggested Canadian supervision of the wireless station as a possible solution to the problem, and that the Canadian proposals did not involve occupation of the islands and hence there would be no change in status, the State Department indicated that it had no objection to the proposal.[32] Washington also concurred with Ottawa's plan to use Canadian and American economic pressure to force the administrator to comply should he prove recalcitrant. But when Canada's Cabinet War Committee met to discuss the details of the operation a week later, the proposals for applying economic sanctions were curiously absent from the discussion. Instead, the Cabinet agreed that if the administrator proved uncooperative, a landing party of Canadian troops should be put ashore 'which will effectively dismantle all radio transmitters on

the Islands'.[33] This decision, which was communicated to London and Washington in a memo sent on 5 December, brought a swift and negative reply from the State Department. Washington remained firmly opposed to any action that might be perceived as a Canadian occupation of the islands and still believed that the best approach was to apply economic pressure rather than the 'more drastic procedure set forth in the Canadian memorandum'.[34]

* * *

Before Canada and the United States could work out an agreed-upon response to the Canadian proposal of 5 December, however, the issue of what to do with St Pierre and Miquelon became further complicated by the arrival of a small contingent of the tiny Free French Navy in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on 9 December 1941. The contingent was under the command of Admiral Emile Muselier, who served as Free French Commissioner for the Navy and Merchant Marine as well as Commander-in-Chief of all Free French Naval Forces. Muselier had set sail for Canada on 24 November.[35] His stated objective was to make an inspection of the Free French vessels assigned to convoy duty under British command in the North Atlantic.[36] But Muselier also had a secret agenda, which was to make for St Pierre at the first opportune moment and to rally the islands to the cause of Free France.[37]

Both Muselier and de Gaulle insisted that they had thought of rallying the islands to Free France 'since the beginning',[38] and over the course of the initial year of the war the idea was informally raised on occasion in both London and Ottawa.[39] But it was not until the summer and autumn of 1941 that the two men began to take the matter seriously. As leader of the Free French Navy, under overall British command, Muselier was in an excellent position to press the idea on his superiors at the Admiralty, while de Gaulle's personal relationship with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden gave him access to the highest levels of the British government. It appears that the Free French decision to rally the islands came in mid-November 1941, at roughly the same time as the Canadians and the Americans were in discussion over the Canadian proposal to seek control of the wireless station. De Gaulle had already initiated conversations with Eden and other Foreign Office officials about the possibility of a Free French take-over of the islands.[40] Throughout these discussions, Eden emphasised the need for de Gaulle to consult the Canadians on the matter before taking any action,[41] although there was considerable support for the idea in London.[42]

At the time of Muselier's sailing, however, it is not clear whether anyone within the British government knew of or had given sanction to the Free French decision to take over the islands. Had Muselier reached Canada a few days earlier, he might have proceeded at once, but the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor convinced him that he had no choice but to consult with the Canadians and the Americans before going ahead with the plan. De Gaulle concurred with this decision, and at Muselier's request he agreed to get in touch with Churchill to find out whether His Majesty's Government had any objections to this 'petit coup de main'.[43]

De Gaulle soon learned that both Churchill and Eden were inclined to allow the operation to go ahead.[44] So too were the British Chiefs of Staff, who indicated in this instance that they 'were strongly in favor of Admiral Muselier being authorized to rally St. Pierre and Miquelon … without his saying anything about it until it had been done'.[45] The Dominions Office, however, urged the Prime Minister to consult the Allies, and Churchill, in spite of his apparent willingness to 'unmuzzle Muselier',[46] decided to ask de Gaulle to postpone the operation for 36 hours so as to allow him enough time to inform the Canadians and the Americans.[47]

It soon became apparent that both Ottawa and Washington were opposed to the Free French move. Indeed, FDR himself stated that he felt 'it would be a mistake for such an occupation to take place', and, fully briefed on the discussions that had been taking place between the United States and Canada, he felt 'there would be fewer repercussions if the Canadians took control of the communications from the Island, by suasion, if possible, but otherwise by stronger [economic] means'. Thus, the President indicated that he 'entirely approved' of the approach discussed a week earlier with Ottawa.[48]

Having received word that Roosevelt was against the Free French operation, on 17 December Sir William Strang informed M. Dejean of the Free French National Committee that the United States had rejected the plan.[49] Dejean immediately contacted de Gaulle, who later informed the Foreign Office that 'no orders would be issued for this operation'. London, therefore, considered the Free French operation cancelled and immediately cabled Washington and Ottawa to inform both governments that 'de Gaulle … agrees that the proposed action should not, repeat not, now be taken'.[50]

By the third week of December, it was clear that the Americans were on record as opposing a Free French takeover of St Pierre and Miquelon. It was also clear that by this point the British and American governments differed in their approach to the problem of the islands, with the Americans urging action by Canada solely to gain control of the radio

station, and the British urging a complete takeover. London, in fact, still felt that the proposal to have Canada take over the wireless station on St Pierre (even with Roosevelt's endorsement) was 'wholly inadequate from a military point of view'. His Majesty's Government preferred 'outright occupation by British or Allied Forces', but since the United States had ruled this out for the moment, London recommended that Canada 'not take any action for the time being'.[51] In the light of this, Prime Minister King urged his Cabinet to refrain from executing the Canadian plan until such time as the US and British governments had agreed upon a common course of action. The Cabinet concurred, and on 22 December both the British and American governments were informed of this decision.[52]

In the meantime, things had become a bit difficult for Admiral Muselier. By some strange circumstance an article appeared in the *London Sunday Dispatch* on 14 December that 'announced' Admiral Muselier's intention to go to Washington for negotiations with the Americans. Tensions between de Gaulle and Muselier had existed for some time and when de Gaulle, who had not authorised such a visit, read the article, he was furious. He immediately sent a despatch to Muselier ordering him to return to London as soon as his tour of inspection was finished. Muselier agreed, but before he could make the necessary arrangements, a second telegram arrived from de Gaulle which, after taking note of the recent Canadian plan to take over the radio station on St Pierre, countermanded his earlier communication and ordered the Admiral – despite the direct assurances given to the British, Canadian and American governments to the contrary – to take St Pierre and Miquelon 'without saying anything to the foreigners'.[53] Muselier, who received this communication while on an official visit to Ottawa, promptly showed the telegram to Colonel Pierrene, the Free French representative in Canada, who is said to have remarked incredulously of de Gaulle, 'Il est fou'.[54]

There has been a great deal of speculation as to why de Gaulle suddenly reversed his position and went back on his word to the Allies not to undertake the operation. De Gaulle himself asserted that on 17 December, the same day he gave the Foreign Office his assurance that no Free French occupation of St Pierre would take place, he also learned of the proposed Canadian operation. This 'foreign intervention', he insisted, meant that there could no longer be any hesitation on his part; he had to act to protect the interests of France Libre and the sovereignty of France. His reference to the Canadian operation in his final telegram to Muselier on 18 December reinforces this interpretation, as does his subsequent communication with Eden, in which the General vehemently protested

the fact that the Allies had planned such an operation on French territory without consulting him.[55]

But it is not entirely clear that the proposed Canadian operation was the principal reason behind the General's dramatic decision. It may have been that he simply wished to disrupt the all-too-comfortable relations between the United States and Vichy. There is some evidence for this in his memoirs, where he admitted that he may have provoked the St Pierre incident in order 'to stir up the bottom of things, as one throws a stone into a pond'.[56] But the most tangible proof for this interpretation comes from a document sent by Pierre Dupuy, the Canadian Chargé d'Affaires for France, Belgium and the Netherlands, to the Secretary of State for External Affairs in Ottawa. In this telegram, which originated from London, Dupuy insisted that there were three principal reasons for de Gaulle's occupation of St Pierre and Miquelon. The first was to 'prevent an agreement between Washington and Vichy concerning St. Pierre, as in the case of La Martinique'; the second was to 'protest for not having been more closely associated with the conversations in Washington'; and the third, and to this writer the most important, was to 'provoke complications between Washington and Vichy which might lead to [a] severance of diplomatic relations and thus facilitate recognition of his movement as the true French government'.[57] Thus, while it may be true that de Gaulle, as he claimed, was motivated to take St Pierre out of his desire to protect French sovereignty from 'Canadian intervention', it seems equally true that he did so in a desperate attempt to gain both attention and recognition from Washington.

In any event, if de Gaulle needed an excuse to act, the Canadian plan had provided one, and at 4:00 a.m. on 24 December 1941, Muselier's little fleet quietly made its way into the port of St Pierre.[58] A colourful scene greeted Muselier when he arrived. News of the Free French arrival 'spread like wildfire', and as the marines disembarked from their ships and fanned out across the town to take control of strategic points, the people of the village rushed out of their homes 'in various stages of dress', cheering wildly, brandishing home-made Free French flags and offering 'wine to every hand'.[59] Within half an hour St Pierre was reported secure. The citizens then joined the men and sailors of Free France in an emotional chorus of 'La Marseillaise'. Not a shot had been fired, and the Vichy administrator of the islands, M. de Bournat, and other officials surrendered peacefully.[60] Muselier then announced that as a 'Christmas present' Free France would hold a plebiscite and give the people of the islands the liberty to choose between 'the course of the Free French and

the course of collaboration with the axis powers, who starve, humiliate, and martyrise our country'.[61]

In the meantime, Ira Wolfert, a special correspondent for the *New York Times* who had somehow managed to get word of the Free French operation and had shown up in Halifax threatening to expose the whole affair if he were not invited along, was busy cabling the news to New York.[62] That same afternoon, Muselier himself also sent word to the British Admiralty in London,[63] as well as to the Canadians and Americans, that 'conformément aux ordres du général de Gaulle, et appelé par la population, je m'étais rendu à Saint-Pierre et avais libéré les îles'.[64]

Not surprisingly, de Gaulle's sudden reversal of his earlier pledge not to rally the islands was met by considerable disquiet in the Canadian, American and British governments. Prime Minister King was 'shocked' and 'distressed' by the news and took immediate measures to inform Washington, London *and* Vichy that Muselier's actions had come as a complete surprise to his government.[65] The State Department was informed, for example, that Canada had no foreknowledge of the Free French move and had acted throughout 'in good faith'.[66]

But these assurances meant little to Secretary Hull, who took the matter so seriously that he himself chaired a Christmas morning meeting of senior department officials to discuss what to do about the Free French seizure of the islands. Hull feared that Muselier's actions ran the risk of upsetting the 'delicate balance' of US relations with Vichy, involving not only the earlier agreements reached between Roosevelt and Petain over the maintenance of the status quo on both sides of the Atlantic, but also additional guarantees that had recently been obtained from Admiral Robert and the Vichy government over the status of Martinique and French possessions in the western hemisphere in the wake of the US entry into the war.[67] Beyond this, there was the question of how the Free French action might affect the United States' ability to maintain the principles achieved at the Havana Conference, as well as the question of its effect on the US position at the upcoming Rio Conference in which the State Department hoped to strengthen and reaffirm those principles by inducing all the American republics to sign a joint declaration severing relations with the Axis powers.[68] Finally, there was also the question of how the incident might affect recent American efforts to build a bridge to the Vichy French in North Africa through the work of the American Consul there, Robert Murphy.[69]

Hull, whose patience reportedly 'snapped' upon hearing of the Muselier coup, clearly wanted action.[70] He insisted that the State Department must 'persuade the Canadians that afternoon to take steps

to restore the status quo', and in a subsequent conversation he had with J. P. Moffat, the American Minister in Ottawa, Hull insisted that the former put the question before the Canadians immediately. Moffat noted that, 'although the Canadians were extremely embarrassed by what had taken place', he feared that 'they would be reluctant to restore the situation, particularly in the event that the plebiscite, which was being held at this moment, went favorably to de Gaulle'.[71] Moffat then said that Prime Minister King (who was scheduled to leave for Washington shortly to attend the Arcadia Conference) hoped to discuss St Pierre and Miquelon upon his arrival. But Hull insisted that 'that was not quick enough, that the situation was so urgent that the Canadians should start steps this very afternoon'. He then referenced Canadian pledges, to which Moffat replied that as he understood it, there had been no pledge, 'but merely an understanding as to policy'. This brought a bitter reply from Hull, who insisted that:

> In the first place Mr. Wrong's [previous] conversation with Mr. Atherton virtually involved a pledge, in the second place whether it was a pledge or an understanding was merely a quibble, that in the third place, on the basis of a meeting of minds, the United States had reached an understanding with Admiral Robert, which had now been breached. Unless the *status quo* were immediately restored, Admiral Robert could make the accusation, and with considerable justice, that the agreement had been violated from our side, and Vichy, the Nazis, etcetera, could play that up to a damaging degree. Canada had perhaps greater responsibilities than anybody else, partly because of geography, partly because of her understanding with Admiral Muselier. In any event, we must ask Canada to repair the damage and to do so at once.[72]

Hull indicated he was thinking of issuing a public statement 'to the effect that Admiral Muselier's action was an arbitrary one contrary to agreements, and that the United States was asking Canada what steps she was prepared to take to restore the status quo'. Moffat, however, urged Secretary Hull to withhold any statement until he had had the chance to discuss it with the Canadians.[73]

Moffat soon learned through Canada's Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Norman Robertson, that Prime Minister King felt that action by Canada to restore the status quo was out of the question until both the British and the Americans had agreed to it. Furthermore, as the Prime Minister was about to leave for Washington to attend the

Arcadia Conference, it seemed best to defer any action until he had had the opportunity to discuss it with the President and Mr Churchill.[74] As far as publicity was concerned, all agreed that it was 'essential to keep the matter as quiet as possible'.[75]

In fact, the seizure of the islands had already created a sensation in the press, where – thanks to Wolfert – news of the event had made the Christmas headlines of the *New York Times* and was being widely reported in other newspapers and over the radio.[76] Moreover, public interest in the event was inadvertently heightened by Hull, who, without warning and at roughly the same moment that Moffat was discussing the problem with the Canadians, issued the following statement to the press:

> Our preliminary reports show that the action taken by three so-called Free French ships at St. Pierre Miquelon was an arbitrary action contrary to the agreement of all parties concerned and certainly without the prior knowledge or consent in any sense of the United States Government.
>
> This government has inquired of the Canadian government as to the steps that government is prepared to take to restore the status quo of these Islands.[77]

The statement was a colossal blunder. Hull's use of the phrase 'so-called Free French' created a storm of protest and was widely viewed by the American public as a gratuitous insult to the Free French, who, in seizing St Pierre, had provided the world with the first 'good news' about the war since the stunning blow at Pearl Harbor.[78] Equally significant was the fact that the Canadians had not been given the opportunity to comment on the statement, which they regarded as 'most embarrassing in its suggestion that the Canadian Government should at once restore the status quo' and 'entirely misleading in its reference to an agreement between Muselier and the Canadian Government'.[79] Robertson, upon learning of Hull's remarks, immediately telephoned Moffat 'in great perturbation' to protest Hull's actions, to remind the minister of the consistent Canadian efforts to work with both the American and British governments on this question, and to inform him that insofar as the Prime Minister was concerned, 'his whole attitude had changed from one of helpful cooperation to one of most reluctant cooperation'.[80]

None of Ottawa's objections, however, carried much weight at the State Department, where the Canadian attitude was beginning to be viewed as 'obstructive and of doubtful validity', especially with regard to their insistence on bringing the British into what the Americans

regarded as 'essentially a North American problem'.[81] But Prime Minister King would not back down, and at 10:00 p.m. he issued a retort to Hull's earlier statement that left no doubt as to his position:

> Canada is in no way responsible for the Free French occupation of St. Pierre. We have kept in close touch with both the United Kingdom and the United States on this question and have always been ready to cooperate in carrying out an agreed policy. We decline to commit ourselves to any action or to take any action pending such agreement. In the circumstances and until we have had an opportunity of considering action with the President and Mr. Churchill, the Canadian Government cannot take the steps requested to expel the Free French and restore the *status quo* in the Islands.[82]

In London, meanwhile, news of Admiral Muselier's actions led the Foreign Office to call for an immediate meeting with the Free French Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, Maurice Dejean, to demand an explanation. Dejean insisted that de Gaulle's reasons for ordering the coup stemmed from his knowledge of the Canadian operation, which, had it been carried out, would have undermined the cause of Free France. Having obtained this information, the Foreign Office quickly dispatched a telegram to Washington that placed the blame for the affair 'squarely on de Gaulle'.[83] This did not mean, however, that London approved in any way of Hull's demand that the Free French withdraw from the islands. On the contrary, when word of his suggestion that Canada restore the status quo reached the War Cabinet in London, the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs was called in to send an urgent telegram to Ottawa asking Canada 'to take no action in regard to any proposal to restore the *status quo* in the Islands'.[84] To do so, London concluded, would not only greatly agitate the British public, who were now as caught up in the news of the affair as the Americans, but also might cause serious harm to de Gaulle and his movement.

Secretary Hull, however, was not to be deterred. On 26 December, in separate meetings with Prime Minister King (who had just arrived in Washington) and British Ambassador Halifax, he suggested settling the controversy by arranging for an agreement with Admiral Robert in Martinique, approved by Vichy, which would allow for Allied supervision of the radio station on St Pierre in return for a British request that the Free French withdraw from the islands. As a face-saving measure, Britain and Canada could then publicly 'praise very highly the part the Free

French occupation had taken in securing the agreement for supervision [of the radio]'.[85]

At White House discussions later that day between Hull, King, Roosevelt and Churchill, the latter observed that FDR – who was not even aware of where Muselier had obtained the ships with which to attack St Pierre – seemed 'to shrug his shoulders over the whole affair'.[86] Nevertheless, the President and Churchill were inclined to agree on 'the need to get this incident closed up so as to avoid its developing into a serious question'.[87] FDR suggested that 'Canada might appoint a commission of some kind to look after the supervision of wireless transmission, that the Governor might be restored, and the Free French forces withdraw'.[88] Churchill concurred on the need for some sort of 'compromise settlement' and said he was 'prepared to take de Gaulle by the back of the neck and tell him he had gone too far and bring him to his senses'. The meeting concluded with the President suggesting that it might be best for Mr Hull and Prime Minister King to work out 'a suggested arrangement'.[89]

In keeping with this recommendation, Hull and King discussed St Pierre and Miquelon the following morning, on 27 December.[90] Both men agreed that something along the lines of what had been discussed at the White House the previous afternoon would be fine. They then discussed various ideas as to how the supervision of the wireless station might be effected as well as what to do with the governor, whom Prime Minister King insisted had to be removed.

Over the course of the next several days, Hull pressed an initial solution to the crisis that involved four essential points: (1) that the Free French forces should be withdrawn; (2) that the wireless should be put under Canadian control; (3) that a new governor agreeable to Vichy should be appointed; and (4) as he informed Lord Halifax, that 'the solution be quick'.[91]

London responded to Hull's proposed solution with 'a blast from the Foreign Office' that pointed out, for example, that there was no hope of the Free French withdrawing voluntarily, and that if they were to be compelled to withdraw, there might be bloodshed, which 'would have a deplorable effect'. Moreover, the Foreign Office wanted to know 'on what grounds the Free French would be asked to withdraw', especially in light of the plebiscite that ran 90 per cent in favour of de Gaulle. The Foreign Office also noted that British public opinion was firmly behind de Gaulle and reiterated the view, expressed earlier by the Chiefs of Staff, that 'control of the wireless by Canada with the Vichy Governor in occupation would not be enough'.[92]

Hull remained unmoved by these arguments, and in a meeting with Ambassador Halifax he continued to insist that de Gaulle, by his actions, had violated international law; that, unchallenged, he would probably attempt to capture other French colonies in the New World; and that furthermore, should this incident lead to a break with Vichy, all that had been accomplished by Leahy in unoccupied France, and Murphy in French North Africa, including the 'valuable information that these Americans have obtained by keeping in touch with the Vichy Government', would be lost.[93] It was 'unthinkable', the Secretary continued,

> that all of these benefits to the British and American governments should be junked and thrown overboard in order to gratify the desire of the de Gaulle leaders, who, in open violation of their pledge to the contrary, suddenly seized and occupied St. Pierre and Miquelon by force, thereby inflicting on Great Britain and the United States unimaginable injury to their military defensive situation in this hemisphere and in French Africa.[94]

Hull went on to say that the use of force to evict Muselier had never been contemplated by the State Department,[95] and that should the Vichy French offer a 'suitable agreement', it would be 'entirely consistent' for de Gaulle to be thanked for his contribution to the safeguarding of the wireless station and for him to withdraw from the islands and 'move on to some other act of service to the allied Government!' Halifax agreed to put the matter once more before his government while he and Secretary Hull waited for the response to Hull's initial ideas from the authorities at Vichy.[96]

Shortly thereafter, Hull received word that while the Vichy government appreciated the steps Washington was taking to restore the legitimate government in St Pierre, it was nonetheless obliged 'to take the position that the status quo ante must be restored' *before* the 'conditions in the [state] Department's telegram … would be examined'. Furthermore, the French government 'could not comply' with the US request to withdraw the governor from the islands.[97]

On the following day, the Vichy French Ambassador met with Secretary Hull to discuss his government's response. The ambassador indicated that Vichy had decided to leave any further discussion on the matter in the hands of Admiral Robert in Martinique. He then infuriated Hull by launching into 'a loud monologue about French sovereignty and about France being a great country and having to be treated accordingly'.[98] Unable to take any more, Hull cut the ambassador off by

retorting that the last thing he expected at this moment, when he was 'being subjected to every sort of abuse, even in this country', for trying to settle this affair in an amicable manner, was a 'stump speech about the greatness of the French nation!'[99] St Pierre and Miquelon, he continued, may be 'a small matter on the surface', but in the present situation 'it is a highly explosive question' which demands immediate settlement. The French government, therefore, must find a way to cooperate before 'reckless people and publicity seekers … inflame the public everywhere and make the matter of greater difficulty and injury to all governments concerned'.[100]

Hull was clearly beginning to resent being vilified in the press for his stand on St Pierre and Miquelon. Robert Sherwood notes, for example, that after years of dignified public service, the Secretary found it 'bewildering as well as infuriating' to become 'the target of the kind of insults and jibes to which many of his colleagues in the Administration had long since become accustomed'.[101] But Hull's anxiety rose even further when he learned of Prime Minister Churchill's address to the Canadian Parliament on 30 December 1941. In that speech, Churchill heaped scorn upon the 'men of Vichy', who, he said, 'lie prostrate at the foot of the conqueror', while he praised de Gaulle, who he noted had refused to bow to Hitler and was 'being held in increasing respect by nine Frenchmen out of every ten throughout the once happy, smiling land of France'.[102]

After this address, Sherwood writes that Hull's rage reached 'hurricane proportions',[103] and on the day following the speech, Hull fired off a memorandum to the President, reiterating the importance of the St Pierre incident and drawing the President's attention to a report from Leahy which quoted Darlan as indicating that Germany had already 'used the seizure of those Islands by de Gaulle as an argument for the entry of Axis troops into Africa in order that it may be protected against a similar invasion'.[104] Hull termed this 'just the beginning of ominous and serious developments' which would no doubt occur as a result of the affair. He then pointed out the fallacy of Churchill's contention that nine out of every ten Frenchmen supported de Gaulle,[105] and he warned the President of the consequences for North Africa 'if the fact goes out to the world that the British government was really behind this movement [to take St Pierre] and we abandon our own policies without serious protest'.[106]

Hull then went to work on a formal proposal that he sent to Roosevelt in Hyde Park in early January.[107] The plan contained six points, which were drawn in part from various suggestions made previously by the

British and Canadians. It stated, first, that the islands 'are French and will remain French'; second, that the radio station would be subject to Allied supervision; third, that the islands 'shall be neutralized and de-militarized and shall be considered out of the war'; fourth, that the 'administrator shall be withdrawn for the period of the war' and that no new administrator shall be appointed for the same period, leaving the administration of the islands 'in the hands of the Consultative Council'; fifth, that all armed forces would be withdrawn; and sixth, that the Canadian and American governments would agree to continue providing economic assistance to the inhabitants of the islands.[108]

Roosevelt responded to Hull's scheme by advising another meeting with Churchill, who subsequently accepted it on the condition that de Gaulle agreed.[109] Churchill then forwarded it to Eden at the Foreign Office, noting that the President had raised this issue 'as an urgent matter' that must be considered 'in connection with Super-Gymnast',[110] which meant that he did 'not wish to break sharply with Vichy'. The Prime Minister also observed that the State Department officials were 'boring along on their old lines quite oblivious of the fact that the further they go against de Gaulle the worse they will fare in American opinion'. Nevertheless, Churchill was 'of the opinion that the … proposal should be embodied in a communiqué representing the policy of the United States, Canadian and British governments'. It was, he said,

> a reasonable compromise, and … in the circumstances it is only prudent to accept and enforce it. This means that you [Eden] should tell de Gaulle that this is our settled policy, and that he must bow to it. He has put himself entirely in the wrong by his breach of faith. If he is to retain any measure of our recognition he must send orders to Muselier which the latter will obey. You should dwell on the many advantages gained by Free France and that many of the points agreed will be a bitter pill to Vichy, but however you dish it up he has got to take it.[111]

Churchill closed by mentioning 'they are in a mood here to use force – i.e., the battleship *Arkansas* which the President mentioned – or starvation without stint',[112] and, adding that it was 'intolerable that the great movement of events should be obstructed' by this crisis and that he would 'certainly not intervene to save de Gaulle', he expressed the hope that all would be 'fixed' by the following day. 'By all means,' he concluded, 'consult the Cabinet if you will, but we will soon be flitting and I must settle this before I go.'[113]

Eden did in fact consult the Cabinet, which responded to Churchill's telegram by declaring that the formula suggested above 'would come as a bitter blow not only to General de Gaulle, but also to public opinion in this country, which would fail to understand how our previous support of the Free French movement was compatible with the enforcement of the present terms upon it',[114] and that they would 'not appreciate going easy with Vichy'.[115] Indeed, the Cabinet felt that the State Department had overestimated Vichy's reaction. As such, they would not acquiesce to compelling de Gaulle to accept these terms but would agree to Eden 'trying persuasion'.[116] They objected to the idea of the islands being governed by a Consultative Council, noting that it was 'not clear whether such a Council was in existence (in which case it might be of a Vichy complexion) or would have to be elected'.[117] The Cabinet insisted on the latter and deferred speaking with de Gaulle until this matter was cleared up.[118] Churchill spoke with Roosevelt at once, who agreed to amend point four of Hull's formula by altering the reference to the 'Consultative Council' to 'a Council freshly elected within ninety days'. Eden was then asked by the Prime Minister 'to seek at once to persuade de Gaulle to agree to the plan',[119] with the additional warning that should de Gaulle not settle on these terms, the United States would immediately 'issue a statement which has been prepared [with Churchill's authorisation], and will enforce the arrangements outlined therein with whatever force is necessary'. Clearly, Churchill admonished, 'the business must be settled'.[120]

On 14 January, Eden met with de Gaulle, who was as recalcitrant as ever. Unwilling to recognise 'the delicacy of Washington's relations with Vichy',[121] de Gaulle refused to quit the islands and insisted on the retention of his own newly appointed Free French governor and a number of Free French marines, even after Muselier had left. De Gaulle also characterised the US attempt to alleviate the crisis as amounting to 'nothing less than an American effort to establish a "protectorate" over a government collaborating with Hitler', and he was completely unperturbed at the possibility of American intervention.[122]

Following a second conversation with Eden, however, de Gaulle softened his position and accepted the terms of the Hull–Roosevelt–Churchill proposal, subject to three secret conditions: (1) that a small number of Free French marines would be retained in the islands; (2) 'that the Consultative Council would take orders from the Free French National Committee'; and (3) that the Free French administration should remain but should be merged in the Consultative Council.[123]

Eden immediately telephoned these terms to the embassy in Washington. Churchill's reaction was not favourable. The Prime

Minister, in fact, lashed out at Eden for having 'failed lamentably', fearing, as he put it, that there would be an explosion in Washington as a result. Exasperated, Churchill himself drafted a new communiqué on the matter that he then presented to Roosevelt with the further suggestion that the whole matter be deferred until after the Prime Minister's return to London, whereupon he would take it upon himself to talk de Gaulle out of his reservations. On 22 January, Churchill met with de Gaulle and in a frank discussion insisted that the General 'had no right to take action in these unimportant territories without consideration for the Great Alliance'[124] and without which France could not be restored. Furthermore, since the President was unable to 'accept de Gaulle's secret clauses, which he felt he could never communicate to Vichy, the General had no choice but to endorse the present Anglo-American communiqué, which … granted the Free French all save formal control in St. Pierre'.[125]

De Gaulle, however, insisted that the tone of the communiqué ran directly counter to the Churchill–de Gaulle agreement of August 1940, which recognised de Gaulle's leadership of all Free Frenchmen who rallied to him in support of the Allies.[126] He was suspicious of the composition of the St Pierre Council, and even went so far as to seek assurances on French sovereignty, questioning whether under the proposed agreement the islands would indeed be able to remain part of France. At this, Churchill exploded, questioning de Gaulle's 'claim to monopolize France'[127] and asking the General if his demand that St Pierre and Miquelon remain a part of France referred to the 'France' crushed under the heel of Nazi occupation, to the 'powerful and considerable France of Vichy'[128] or to the 'comparatively small' Free French movement.[129] Then, as if to emphasise the diminutive stature that de Gaulle in fact had among his countrymen at that moment, Churchill pointed out that the agreement of August 1940 had been 'based on a hope, which had since proved false, that de Gaulle would be able to rally an impressive number of Frenchmen. As the agreement stood, it was entirely in de Gaulle's favor without corresponding benefit to His Majesty's Government'.[130] Having weathered this storm, and having been assured by Eden, who was present, that the acceptance of the communiqué would result in concessions that merely changed the appearance, but not the substance, of Free French control over the islands, de Gaulle gave in and agreed to drop his demand for the three secret clauses.[131]

Churchill sent word at once to Roosevelt in Washington, telling him that, after a 'severe conversation', de Gaulle had agreed to 'the communiqué, which I left with you'. He then noted that de Gaulle had asked for

time to consult Admiral Muselier, but that he expected to receive the final assent from the Free French the following day. Canada would be asked to agree as well.[132] Finally, the Prime Minister said that he hoped 'the solution for which I have worked here will be satisfactory to Mr. Hull and the State Department', noting that it finally looked as if the two tiny islands could 'relapse into the obscurity from which they have more than once emerged since the Treaty of Utrecht'.[133]

But there was one final problem. The communiqué which de Gaulle had agreed to was not the six-point proposal put forward by Hull. Rather, it was the communiqué issued by Churchill on the day of his departure. In many respects this document was quite similar to Hull's except that it did not call for the withdrawal of all armed forces, nor did it insist that the islands be 'neutralized and demilitarized' and 'considered out of the war'. This meant, of course, that the door was left open for de Gaulle to leave a detachment of marines on the islands. It also left open the question of Free French involvement in the government, which de Gaulle assumed he could continue to control.

Secretary Hull would never have agreed to such a proposal, but it appears that he had been effectively locked out of the White House discussions over St Pierre and Miquelon from the moment the British War Cabinet refused to accept his six-point draft communiqué *in toto* on 12 January. Aware by this point that this was indeed the case, Hull sent a message to Mackenzie King through Moffat that intimated at some of his frustration over the way the affair had been handled since the two of them had last discussed it with the President and Mr Churchill on 26 December.

At that meeting, the Secretary recalled, it was understood that he and Prime Minister King were to work out a solution to the problem, but 'in practice', he continued, 'Mr. Churchill kept taking the ball in his hands, insisting that he would clear the formula with Ottawa, and then apparently did nothing about it'.[134] Secretary Hull, therefore, was afraid that Prime Minister King 'would feel that he was being sidetracked' and he wondered 'if Mr. King would prefer any other method of proceeding than the one now being followed'.[135]

The Prime Minister responded by indicating there were 'no hurt feelings' in Ottawa as to the manner in which the negotiations had proceeded.[136] Indeed, over the course of the next few days, it became more and more apparent that Ottawa was in fact more fully informed of the discussions going on between the White House and the Foreign Office than was the State Department. It was through the Department of External Affairs, for example, that the State Department first learned

of the British reservations regarding the composition of the Consultative Council in Hull's proposal.[137] It was also through the Department of External Affairs that Secretary Hull learned that Churchill, in his 12 January telegram to Eden, had mentioned the possibility that the Americans might send the *Arkansas* to evict the Free French from the islands, which came as a complete shock to Hull, who immediately sent instructions to Moffat to inform the Canadians that in all the discussions he had had with Roosevelt over this matter, 'the one thing the President had consistently opposed is any idea of sending armed ships to the islands'.[138]

Roosevelt, in fact, gave Hull little or no information on the discussions that went on after 14 January. Secretary Hull, therefore, was unaware of Churchill's new communiqué, knew little or nothing of the discussion that had gone on with de Gaulle, and was not even informed when word arrived at the White House that de Gaulle had finally agreed to drop his objections and sign on to the proposed solution put forward by Churchill. Thus, when the Canadian government sent its final approval for the publication of the Churchill communiqué to the State Department on 28 January, Minister Wrong learned that Secretary Hull had not as yet seen the communiqué in question – five days after Churchill had sent it to the White House.[139]

When he finally saw the document, Hull had no doubt that it would not be acceptable to the Vichy government, which as early as 5 January had given the Secretary an indication of the terms it might be willing to accept. These included approval of Canadian and American observers of the radio station, as well as the appointment of a new administrator, but only on the conditions that de Bournat be allowed to return to his post until a new administrator had been appointed; that all Free French forces withdraw; and that Canada issue a declaration noting respect for the 'territorial sovereignty of the Islands'.[140] Clearly, these terms would not be acceptable to either Churchill or de Gaulle, and on 2 February an exhausted Secretary Hull concluded in a memo to the President that, 'in view of the failure to achieve a general satisfactory settlement, … and in view of the paramount importance of furthering unity and harmony in the … cooperative war effort with Great Britain, Canada, and the other United Nations, I recommend that further negotiations or discussions of the matter be postponed for the period of the war'.[141]

* * *

With Secretary Hull's decision to drop all discussion of the islands, St Pierre and Miquelon soon drifted back into obscurity. The Free French

were quietly allowed to remain. The State Department, as a face-saving measure, announced on 13 February that it did not consider the Havana Convention as being applicable to the islands, thus tacitly acknowledging the Free French fait accompli. Two weeks later, Admiral Muselier departed, leaving behind a new administrator and a small detachment of Free French marines, who, with the help of local volunteers, were determined to defend the colony 'to the last man'.[142]

For all intents and purposes, then, the St Pierre and Miquelon affair was over. But this did not mean that it was without consequences or significance. The most immediate tangible result of the affair, of course, was the subsequent resignation of Admiral Muselier as the commander of the Free French Naval Forces.[143] But the crisis was also significant and instructive in other ways. Among other things, the affair tells us a great deal about the character of Charles de Gaulle; the differences between British, Canadian and American policy towards Vichy and Free France; and the importance of Churchill and Roosevelt in the conduct of the war. It also provides a remarkable window on Canada's unique role in the conflict, and the difficulties involved in developing and maintaining a military alliance among the three powers that make up the North Atlantic Triangle, especially when an issue arises that has direct bearing on that geographical entity.

Perhaps the most significant consequence of the St Pierre and Miquelon affair is the effect the incident had on the relationship between the Western Allies and Charles de Gaulle. For the British, there can be no doubt that the affair placed them in a difficult and embarrassing position vis-à-vis the United States at the very moment when they were undertaking the establishment of an active wartime alliance with that country. De Gaulle's timing, then, could not have been worse, particularly for Churchill, who would not soon forget it. Indeed, according to François Kersaudy, Churchill complained in the spring of 1942 of the General's 'breach of faith' in his seizure of St Pierre,[144] and there is no question that the affair contributed significantly to the deterioration of their relationship.[145] But this did not mean that Churchill or his government could simply write off de Gaulle. The Foreign Office remained convinced that de Gaulle, irascible or not, *was* Free France, and that without him the Free French movement would die. The British government judged this to be politically inexpedient, especially, as Henri Bybelezer notes, in the early months of 1942, when, 'at the height of Allied military disasters, the principle of French resistance was more important than its actual existence'.[146] Nevertheless, de Gaulle's actions did have a price. Churchill, for example, was for the moment much more reluctant to push the Free

French on the Americans and would raise little or no objection to the exclusion of Free France from the signing of the Declaration of the United Nations,[147] or to their exclusion from the Allied invasion of North Africa later that year.[148]

As far as the Americans themselves were concerned, the St Pierre and Miquelon affair was of crucial significance in determining the US attitude 'toward both de Gaulle and the Free French'.[149] Its most immediate consequences, as noted, were the absolute exclusion of the Free French from even the knowledge of Super-Gymnast (later Operation Torch) and Secretary Hull's insistence that they not be allowed to sign the Declaration of the United Nations on 1 January 1942. But there were less tangible results as well. Indeed, the seizure of the islands seemed to confirm the worst fears about de Gaulle in both the State Department and the White House, where he was suspected of being an arbitrary and dictatorial character who could not be trusted to act in the best interest of either France or the Allies. As a result, US relations with Free France, which had been warming, however slowly, in the last half of 1941,[150] now turned quite cold, while the relationship with de Gaulle himself took on the acrimonious and even hostile characteristics that would plague it for the remainder of the war. In fact, Henry Stimson, Roosevelt's Secretary of War, notes in his memoirs that the 'very mention of de Gaulle was enough to produce an outburst of skillful Tennessee denunciation' from Secretary Hull, and that to the President, 'de Gaulle was a narrow-minded French zealot with too much ambition for his own good and some rather dubious views on democracy'.[151] De Gaulle, as such, was more or less shunned by the US diplomatic community, which did not hesitate to run the risk of insulting the General in even the smallest of matters, such as the exclusion of any Free French representatives from the Memorial Day ceremonies in Washington on 30 May 1942.[152]

Much more serious and indicative of the hostility which the Roosevelt administration held towards de Gaulle was the effort the Americans launched to replace him at the end of 1942 and the beginning of 1943, best exemplified by Roosevelt's championing of General Henri Giraud as the leader of the French resistance.[153] De Gaulle's difficulties with the Americans only increased with their expanding role in the war, and there can be no doubt that any subsequent recognition or help he received from the US administration came not out of any attempt on the part of Roosevelt to improve his personal relations with de Gaulle, but rather out of sheer military and political necessity. Thus, it would seem reasonable to conclude that if de Gaulle's aim in seizing St Pierre and Miquelon was indeed to 'provoke complications between Washington

and Vichy which might lead to severance of diplomatic relations and thus facilitate recognition of his movement as the true French Government',[154] then he failed miserably to achieve his goal. The US–Vichy relationship was not seriously affected by de Gaulle's actions and in fact continued unabated until it fell apart, not out of any desire on the part of the United States to move closer to de Gaulle, but of its own accord following the German and French reaction to the Allied invasion of North Africa.

Equally instructive is what the crisis reveals about Allied relations with the Vichy government. It makes it clear, for example, that by December 1941 Great Britain had lost all hope of reaching a rapprochement with the Petain regime. As a result, all thought of appeasing Petain in order to secure promises of non-collaboration had vanished. British policy was thus centred on making Petain understand that any move towards closer collaboration with Germany would be undertaken at France's peril, and that in such circumstances Britain would not hesitate to retaliate with whatever military force it could muster. With Petain completely discredited in Britain, London could find little reason not to grant de Gaulle permission to take over St Pierre and Miquelon. Churchill's hesitation to give final sanction to the scheme, therefore, was not due to his concern over the possible reaction at Vichy, but rather due to his concern over the reaction of the United States, which might object to the move on the grounds that it was a violation of the no-transfer principle and a threat to their delicate relations with the Petain regime.

Accordingly, any cooperation Churchill afforded the Americans over Vichy stemmed not from his faith in the merits of their Vichy policy, but rather from his desire to strengthen the inchoate Anglo-American alliance, especially at this critical stage when the Americans had just entered the war. Moreover, Churchill was particularly sensitive to the feelings of Roosevelt, and, being in the White House when the crisis erupted, it is not surprising that the Prime Minister took his cues from the President in this matter. Thus, in the first few days of the crisis, when Roosevelt tended to treat the whole affair as a 'tempest in a teapot', Churchill remained somewhat ambivalent in his attitude towards de Gaulle, defending him at times, while at others offering to take him by the scruff of the neck to force some sense into him. But as the crisis continued, Roosevelt began to take the affair more seriously. It may have been that Hull's persistent warnings about the consequences of the Free French action were finally getting through to the President. Certainly, the report from Darlan indicating that the Germans were pressing him to grant concessions in North Africa as a result of the takeover was not something the President could take lightly, especially in view of his strong support for Super-Gymnast.

Sherwood notes that Roosevelt was also upset by Hull's threat to resign over the incident, writing that a 'major rupture' of this sort was something that Roosevelt was 'anxious to avoid at any cost'.[155] It may also have been that the President was simply losing patience over an incident involving 'two tiny islands' which, he noted, 'cannot be made an issue in the great effort to save the world'.[156] It was probably a combination of all these factors, but in any case, the more Roosevelt pressed Churchill to bring de Gaulle around to some sort of compromise, the more Churchill pressed the Foreign Office to do the same, even in the face of strong opposition from many members of his own Cabinet.

This brings us to another significant aspect of the St Pierre and Miquelon affair – its illustration of the considerable power each of the two leaders held within their respective governments, and the control that power gave them over the conduct of the war. For it is clear that by the middle of January, both men were in effect ignoring the advice of their chief advisers on foreign policy in this matter, preferring instead to work out their own personal solution to the problem. Eden's demand, for example, that Churchill put de Gaulle's three secret conditions before Roosevelt for approval was quickly discarded by the Prime Minister; rather, both leaders agreed that Churchill himself would endeavour to talk de Gaulle out of his reservations and that the basis for his talks with the Free French leader would rest on a communiqué written not by FDR's Secretary of State Cordell Hull, but rather by Churchill. Moreover, none of this was made known to Secretary Hull, who would soon find himself in the embarrassing position of having to learn about these developments through the agencies of the British and Canadian governments. The State Department, in fact, was so cut off from the White House that it soon began to query both the Canadian and the British embassies for information as to what was going on, leaving the Canadians with the strong impression that there was 'a serious lack of liaison between the White House and the State Department'.[157] Indeed, this may have contributed to the rapid denouement of the whole affair, since Secretary Hull, when confronted with the finished Churchill communiqué, quickly decided that it would be better to quietly accept the Free French fait accompli than to put such unacceptable terms before the Vichy government, which would no doubt find them insulting, further damaging US–Vichy relations.[158]

Ironically, Hull's decision to drop his demand for a Free French withdrawal from the islands was not greeted all that warmly at the Foreign Office, where, after all the wrangling with de Gaulle, news of the Secretary's decision came as something of a shock. Furthermore, the Foreign Office did not give much credence to Hull's fears about

the potential impact of de Gaulle's move on the behaviour of the Vichy government and, in response to his anxieties, suggested that he counter any threat of concessions in North Africa as a result of the affair with a threat of his own – occupying Martinique and seizing all French assets within the grasp of the United States.[159] But Hull would not hear of such a suggestion, which ran counter not only to his policy towards France, but also to his policy towards the Latin American republics and his firm adherence to the policy of no transfer. Given these considerations, the State Department's objections to the Free French seizure of St Pierre and Miquelon – on the grounds that it was a violation of the principle of no transfer and of the terms of the Havana Conference – were no doubt genuine.

Canada, of course, was not party to the agreements reached between the United States and the American republics, but this did not mean that the United States was any less concerned over its defence, or over the possibility that Canada, too, might attempt to effect a change in the status of a territory in the New World. Indeed, the warnings Canada received from the State Department over Greenland and St Pierre and Miquelon illustrate this concern quite well. Still, Canada's position was unique. As a member of the British Commonwealth, it was frequently thought of by many officials within the state Department as being part of the 'Old World'. As such, Canadian control over St Pierre and Miquelon was seen by many within the department as unacceptable on the grounds that it was tantamount to turning the colony over to the British, which would be a violation of the Monroe Doctrine. When it did cooperate with the United States, however, Canada often found itself in the position of being a somewhat junior partner that was expected to follow the American lead, even to the detriment of British policy, as Secretary Hull's initial reaction to the Muselier coup clearly shows. For all intents and purposes, then, Canada was caught between the British and the Americans and frequently found itself being pulled in two directions at once.

This, of course, was the unique dilemma – or blessing, or curse – that Canada would often find itself in as the hinge of the North Atlantic Triangle, which brings us to the final example of how the crisis over St Pierre and Miquelon proved to be significant. For it amply illustrates the challenges that Mackenzie King and his government faced in trying to maintain good relations with the two larger powers in the midst of a world war. One of King's strategies for coping with this dilemma was to refrain from action until all three parties had agreed on a settled policy for Canada. At times this 'policy of inaction' frustrated his military chiefs, who in the case of St Pierre and Miquelon were more willing to act in

an independent fashion. But King had other reasons to move cautiously – reasons that all too often both the British and the Americans were slow to understand or recognise.

Here, of course, we must speak of Canada's unusual position as both an anglophone and a francophone nation, and the domestic and international implications of this fact. Because of it, Canada's relationship with France was far more complex than that of Great Britain or the United States. Indeed, it was directly tied not only to such critical issues as conscription and public support for the war, but also to Canadian unity itself. As a result, Mackenzie King had to tread very carefully when dealing with any issue that stood at the core of Franco-Canadian relations. It was primarily for this reason that he maintained relations with the Vichy government after the fall of France, opposed the British attack on Dakar in September 1940, agreed to send the Canadian diplomat Pierre Dupuy to Vichy as Churchill's envoy and refused to agree to a Canadian military operation to take over the wireless station on St Pierre in autumn 1941.

In some respects – and this is perhaps no fault of the Canadians – the net effect of Canada's unusual domestic and international position was to paralyse Canadian policy. The St Pierre and Miquelon affair is perhaps the classic example of this phenomenon. For nearly two years, the Canadian military pushed the government to do something about the islands, and for two years the Cabinet – caught between the demands of the British and the Americans, and always concerned about the potential domestic repercussions of any move that involved France – refused to act. And so it did nothing – nothing, that is, until the Cabinet arrived at a tentative plan (initially suggested by the Americans) for the takeover of the radio station on St Pierre. But the plan, in the end, was too heavy-handed for the Americans and too weak for the British, so the Cabinet drew back again to consider the merits of its proposal, unable to take action against two minute and undefended islands just miles from its shore, held by a potentially hostile power in the middle of a world war.

The crisis over St Pierre and Miquelon has much to teach us about the North Atlantic Triangle and about Mackenzie King's and Canada's unusual relationships with Great Britain and the United States. Furthermore, we should not underrate the impact it had at the time on all three governments. It was serious enough to damage de Gaulle's relations with the United States and Great Britain, it created a great deal of animosity between some of the key policymakers of the war, and, had Secretary Hull had his way, it could have led to a serious breach between the Foreign Office and the State Department

over the United States' Vichy policy and British support for de Gaulle. The affair also placed a great deal of strain on Anglo-American and Canadian-American relations. Indeed, Secretary Hull's public demand that Canada restore the status quo ante was resented at both the Department of External Affairs and the Foreign Office, and it is no doubt fortunate for all the parties involved that the incident and the differences it created – which were widely reported in the press – faded so quickly from public view.

From February 1942 onwards, the islands themselves were all but forgotten, and the people of St Pierre and Miquelon soon resumed their quiet and isolated existence. The majority of them, however, remained unquestionably loyal to de Gaulle and unwavering in their support for his efforts to avenge the humiliation France had suffered at the hands of the Nazis in spring 1940. In this sense, then, de Gaulle's victory over St Pierre and Miquelon may not have been entirely pyrrhic, for by war's end, no one questioned the right of the citizens of St Pierre and Miquelon to maintain their ties to their beloved France and to remain, as they have to this day, the last proud outpost of its once vast empire on the North American continent.

Declarations and conflicts of interest

Research ethics statement

Not applicable to this article.

Consent for publication statement

Not applicable to this article.

Conflicts of interest statement

The author declares no conflict of interest with this work. All efforts to sufficiently anonymise the author during peer review of this article have been made. The author declares no further conflicts with this article.

Notes

1 Winston Churchill made a similar observation in 1930 when he noted that Canada 'is a magnet exercising a double attraction, drawing both Great Britain and the United States towards herself and thus drawing them

closer to each other'. Conn and Fairchild, *Framework of Hemisphere Defense*, 370–1.

2 On wartime US–Canadian defence cooperation see Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*; and Dziuban, *Military Relations*. On Canada's role in hosting the Quebec Conferences see Granatstein, 'Happily in the margins'.

3 Works on the St Pierre and Miquelon crisis include Anglin, *St. Pierre and Miquelon Affair*; Christian, *Divided Island*; Woolner, *Storm in the North Atlantic*; and Thomas, 'Deferring to Vichy'.

4 During Prohibition, St Pierre became a virtual smuggler's paradise, where European wines and spirits were stored in vast quantities and then shipped illicitly to the United States and Canada. France also benefited from the huge tax revenues it collected from the islands' trade in this precious commodity. Rannie, *St. Pierre and Miquelon*, 72–7; *Maclean's*, 1 January 1941, 11.

5 Rannie, *St. Pierre and Miquelon*, 12; Christian, *Divided Island*, 1; *National Geographic*, December 1941, 743; Muselier, *De Gaulle contre le Gaullisme*, 247.

6 Bercuson and Herwig, *One Christmas in Washington*, 146.

7 *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter *FRUS*), *1940*, Vol. 5, Secretary of State to Chiefs of Diplomatic Missions in the American Republics, 17 June 1940, 181.

8 *FRUS, 1940*, Vol. 5, Secretary of State to President Roosevelt, 12 September 1940, 255.

9 *FRUS, 1940*, Vol. 5, Secretary of State to President Roosevelt, 12 September 1940, 255.

10 *FRUS, 1940*, Vol. 5, Secretary of State to President Roosevelt, 12 September 1940, 255–6.

11 *FRUS, 1940*, Vol. 2, Chargé in France to Secretary of State, 7 October 1940; Memorandum of conversation by Under-Secretary of State Welles, 25 November 1940, 528–9. Under this agreement the US was also granted the right to send consular officers to Martinique and the other French holdings in the New World, including St Pierre and Miquelon.

12 In August 1940, Roosevelt also initiated talks with Mackenzie King aimed at linking Canadian and American security. These talks resulted in the signing of the Ogdensburg Agreement and the creation of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence to oversee the protection of North America from hostile powers. See, for example, Dziuban, *Military Relations*, 13–30. The economic maintenance of St Pierre included an understanding reached with Canada that allowed trade between the territory and the mainland to continue.

13 Pickersgill, *Mackenzie King Record*, 319; Woolner, *Storm in the North Atlantic*, 7–8, 27–8.

14 Woolner, *Storm in the North Atlantic*, 1–33. It also meant dealing with the occasional suggestion from London and/or the Free French that the Canadians consider a de Gaullist takeover of the islands. Woolner, *Storm in the North Atlantic*; and Thomas, 'Deferring to Vichy', 816–17.

15 Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 276; *Documents on Canadian External Relations* (hereafter *DCER*), Vol. 8, document 664, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Prime Minister, 15 July 1941, 829.

16 Woodward, *British Foreign Policy*, 68.

17 Langer, *Our Vichy Gamble*, 142, 144.

18 Roskill, *War at Sea*, 272–3, 376, 379–80, Appendix M 605; Conn and Fairchild, *Framework of Hemisphere Defense*, 114–15.

19 Woodward, *British Foreign Policy*, 68. Free French forces also took part in the Syrian operation.

20 Conn and Fairchild, *Framework of Hemisphere Defense*, 117; Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 296.
21 Conn and Fairchild, *Framework of Hemisphere Defense*, 113–14; Marshall, *Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, 495–6.
22 Under the Murphy–Weygand Pact, for example, the United States had agreed to supply Vichy North Africa with food and fuel in the hope that doing so would encourage General Weygand to maintain a degree of independence from Nazi-dominated Europe and resist possible German demands for the cession of bases in the region. It was even thought, in some British and American circles, that Weygand might eventually be persuaded to join the Allied cause, since he had repeatedly demonstrated strong opposition to direct French collaboration with Germany. Mattloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning*, 103.
23 Dawson, *Canada in World Affairs*, 261–2.
24 *DCER*, Vol. 8, Part II, document 450, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Under-Secretary of State, 29 September 1941, 619–20; see also Thomas, 'Deferring to Vichy', 817.
25 See note 22 above and Thomas, 'Deferring to Vichy', 819–20.
26 Pickersgill, *Mackenzie King Record*, 208–12.
27 Pickersgill, *Mackenzie King Record*, 208–12.
28 *DCER*, Vol. 8, document 661, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Prime Minister, 8 July 1941, 827.
29 *DCER*, Vol. 8, document 671, Commissioner R.C.M.P. to Under-Secretary for External Affairs, 4 August 1941, 836–7, and document 672, Memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 15 August 1941, 838–9. At roughly the same time, Canada received a query from de Gaulle about a possible Free French takeover of the islands. Mackenzie King was also quick to reject this proposal, for the same reasons. See Thomas, 'Deferring to Vichy,' 819–21.
30 Thomas, 'Deferring to Vichy,' 819–21.
31 *FRUS, 1941*, Vol. 2, Canadian Legation to the Department of State, 3 November 1941, 541.
32 *FRUS, 1941*, Vol. 2, Canadian Legation to the Department of State, 3 November 1941, 541.
33 These messages were sent in the form of a telegram from Prime Minister King to Prime Minister Churchill, a copy of which was also sent to the State Department in Washington; both countries received this telegram on 5 December 1941. *DCER*, Vol. 8, document 684, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Cabinet War Committee, 29 November 1941, 856.
34 *FRUS, 1941*, Vol. 2, Memorandum of Conversation with Canadian Minister, Hume Wrong, 8 December 1941, 543–4.
35 Villefosse, *Les Iles de la liberté*, 116.
36 De Gaulle, *Mémoires*, 184–5.
37 De Gaulle, *Mémoires*, 185; Muselier, *De Gaulle contre le Gaullisme*, 252.
38 De Gaulle, *Mémoires*, 184; Muselier, *De Gaulle contre le Gaullisme*, 247.
39 See note 29 and Woolner, *Storm in the North Atlantic*, 17.
40 De Gaulle, *Mémoires*, 486.
41 De Gaulle, *Mémoires*, 486.
42 *DCER*, Vol. 8, document 670, British High Commissioner to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 31 July 1941, 835–6, and document 675, British High Commissioner to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 21 October 1941, 844–5; Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 278.

43 De Gaulle, *Mémoires*, 490. De Gaulle, in his memo, says that, in any case, he had to go along with Muselier's request and warn the British in order to avoid the appearance of concealment now that the 'secret was thus out'. De Gaulle, *Mémoires*, 185.
44 Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 279.
45 Foreign Office 371/31837 St. Pierre and Miquelon, Diary of Events, quoted from Kersaudy, *Churchill and De Gaulle*, 170; Bybelezer, *British Policy*, footnote 4, COS (41) 419, page 8, 12 December 1941. The Foreign Office also indicated that they saw no reason to inform the Americans, who they believed would not 'raise any objections at such a late date about such a small matter'. Bybelezer, *British Policy*, footnote 4, Morton to Churchill, 19 December 1941; Sir. O. Sargent Minute, 14 December 1941, 210810/93/17.
46 Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 280, 377, 13 December 1941.
47 Foreign Office to Washington, tel. 6957, 15 December 1941, 210591/93/17, quoted from Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 280, footnote 3; Kersaudy, *Churchill and De Gaulle*, 170. According to Bybelezer, Churchill may also have wavered in his support of the operation not only because of his concern over American and Vichy reaction generally, but also because of his hope to be able to obtain Roosevelt's support, at the upcoming Arcadia Conference, for the issuance of a joint communiqué, which he minuted to the Chief of Staff would be 'blessing or cursing to Petain in the names of Great Britain and the United States … I do not think this prospect would be marred by a Free French descent upon Miquelon and St. Pierre. It would be more convenient if it happened after an Anglo-American ultimatum had been delivered and rejected (by Vichy), but if you feel that it is better to unmuzzle Muselier now, I am prepared to consent.' Churchill to Ismay, Minute D 313/1; 13 December 1941, Premier 3. 377, quoted from Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 280.
48 *FRUS, 1941*, Vol. 2, Memorandum of Conversation, 16 December 1941, 548.
49 Kersaudy, *Churchill and De Gaulle*, 171.
50 Strang Minute, 17 December 1941, Z10592/93/17; Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 281; Foreign Office 371/3183, St. Pierre and Miquelon, Diary of Events, quoted in Kersaudy, *Churchill and De Gaulle*, 171.
51 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1309, Dominions Office to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 18 December 1941, 1642.
52 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1314, Memorandum by Minister in the United States, 22 December 1941, 1645. De Gaulle, however, was not informed that the Canadians had in fact decided to postpone the operations. Muselier, *De Gaulle contre le Gaullisme*, 304.
53 Telegram General de Gaulle to Muselier, 18 Decembre 1941. 'Nous avons, comme vous le demandiez, consulté les gouvernements britannique et américain. Nous savons, de source certaine, que les Canadiens ont l'intention de faire eux-mêmes la destruction du poste radio de Saint-Pierre. Dans ces conditions, je vous prescris de procéder au ralliement de Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon par vos propres moyens et sans rien dire aux étrangers. Je prends l'entière responsabilité de cette opération, devenue indispensable pour conserver à la France ces possessions françaises'. De Gaulle, *Mémoires*, 494.
54 Muselier, *De Gaulle contre le Gaullisme*, 265.
55 Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 281; *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1316, Foreign Secretary Eden to British Ambassador in Washington, 24 December 1941, 1647.
56 De Gaulle, *Mémoires*, 184.
57 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1339, Chargé d'Affaires Dupuy to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 29 December 1941, 1671.

58 Ira Wolfert, 'Free French seize St Pierre and Miquelon', *New York Times*, 25 December 1941, 7; Villefosse, *Les Iles de la liberté*, 136.
59 Wolfert, 'Free French seize St Pierre and Miquelon', 7.
60 But not without turning to the crowd of de Gaulle supporters assembled on the quay and shouting 'Vive Pétain' as he made his way up the gangplank of Muselier's ship. Villefosse, *Les Iles de la liberté*, 137.
61 Wolfert, 'Free French seize St Pierre and Miquelon', 1.
62 Wolfert was the lucky recipient of a tip about the operation from two St Pierrais who were in New York, and who suspected that Muselier's presence in Canada was the prelude to his moving on St Pierre. Thus informed, Wolfert set out at once to find Muselier, with whom he eventually met up in Halifax, whereupon Wolfert proceeded to bluff the Admiral into thinking he knew everything about the operation. Muselier 'arrested' the reporter – illegally but good naturedly – and placed him in the hold of one of his ships in order to keep him quiet, at least until Christmas Eve, when the Admiral notes 'Il (Wolfert) eut la satisfaction bien gagnée de transmettre à son journal la première nouvelle de la libération. Son renom de reporter est désormais nettement assuré.' Muselier, *De Gaulle contre le Gaullisme*, 286; Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 949.
63 Muselier, *De Gaulle contre le Gaullisme*, 281–2.
64 Muselier, *De Gaulle contre le Gaullisme*, 281–2.
65 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1324, Memorandum by Minister in United States, 26 December 1941; Pickersgill, *Mackenzie King Record*, 318–19. Ristelhueber had sent another cable a few hours earlier which informed the Petain government that Canada had said it would not allow the Free French to take possession of St Pierre. *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1326, 457.
66 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1324, Memorandum by Minister in the United States, 26 December 1941, 1652–4.
67 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1324, Memorandum by Minister in the United States, 26 December 1941, 1652–4.
68 Secretary Hull called this conference, which was held between 15 and 28 January 1942, in response to Pearl Harbor. He hoped to unify the foreign policies of the republics by calling upon them to break off relations with the Axis powers as one. Chile and Argentina, however, refused to sign the joint declaration, with the result that the former, in Hull's words, became 'a hotbed for Axis activities'. The question of St Pierre and Miquelon, however, was never raised at the conference. Hull, *Memoirs*, 1143–4, 1150.
69 See note 15 above and Dziuban, *Military Relations*, 158–60.
70 Canadian Minister Wrong makes numerous references to the anger expressed at the State Department over the Free French action, but he singles out Secretary Hull, who, he notes, issued his statement to the press on 25 December in a 'White Heat'. *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1344, 3 January 1942, 1676.
71 Both the Canadian and American governments had been informed of Muselier's intention to hold a plebiscite by their consuls in St Pierre. News of the plebiscite was also reported in the press.
72 Moffat, *The Moffat Papers*, 365.
73 Moffat, *The Moffat Papers*, 365–6.
74 Churchill had arrived in Washington on 22 December to attend this conference, which he had called on his own initiative following Pearl Harbor.
75 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1325, Memorandum by L. B. Pearson, 26 December 1941, 1655.
76 There were in fact many top officials in both External Affairs and the State Department who first heard of the affair over the radio or read it in the press.

77 *FRUS, 1941*, Vol. 2, Secretary of State to Admiral Leahy, 25 December 1941, 551; *New York Times*, 26 December 1941, 1. Copies of this statement were sent to both Admiral Leahy in France and Admiral Robert in Martinique.
78 Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 482.
79 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1325, L. B. Pearson, 26 December 1941, 1655–6.
80 Moffat, *The Moffat Papers*, 367.
81 Moffat, *The Moffat Papers*, 367.
82 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1325, L. B. Pearson, 26 December 1941, 1655. It should be noted that King decided not to issue this statement to the press but to deliver it only to the State Department. Moffat, *The Moffat Papers*, 370. However, King did tell a group of reporters that evening that there had been no prior agreement between Muselier and Canada and that Canada had no prior knowledge of the operation. When asked what Canada was prepared to do to restore the status quo, King offered no comment. *New York Times*, 26 December 1941, 10.
83 *FRUS, 1941*, Vol. 2, 1943, British Ambassador Halifax to Prime Minister Churchill, 25 December 1941, 380.
84 CAB (Cabinet record) 65/25, 136(41) 5, 26 December 1941.
85 Hull, *Memoirs*, 1131; Pickersgill, *Mackenzie King Record*, 320; *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1329, Memorandum by Hume Wrong, 26 December 1941, 1660–1.
86 Churchill, *Grand Alliance*, 667.
87 Pickersgill, *Mackenzie King Record*, 321.
88 Pickersgill, *Mackenzie King Record*, 321.
89 Pickersgill, *Mackenzie King Record*, 322.
90 Pickersgill, *Mackenzie King Record*, 322; *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1329, Memorandum by Hume Wrong, 26 December 1941, 1661.
91 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1334, Memorandum by Minister in the United States, 29 December 1941, 1667–8, and document 1335, Memorandum by L. B. Pearson, 29 December 1941, 1668–9.
92 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1335, Memorandum by Assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 29 December 1941, 1668.
93 *FRUS, 1941*, Vol. 2, memorandum of conversation Hull and Halifax, 29 December 1941, 562.
94 *FRUS, 1941*, Vol. 2, memorandum of conversation Hull and Halifax, 29 December 1941, 562.
95 On the same day, the State Department received a communication from the US Consul in St Pierre that indicated Muselier's determination, in view of the results of the plebiscite, to defend the islands 'against any attacks by the Vichy, British or American fleets'. The Admiral also indicated his tremendous disappointment with de Gaulle, whose actions, he was convinced, were taken not only in direct contradiction to the wishes of the Allies, but also without the express approval of the Free French National Committee in London. As such, the Admiral thought it important for the department to understand that he himself was 'not a gangster' but had carried out the order because of his conviction that his failure to do so would necessitate his resignation as Commander of the Free French Naval Forces. This, he concluded, would no doubt result in their disintegration since the force was largely held together 'because of his personal following'. *FRUS, 1941*, Vol. 2, Consul in St. Pierre to Secretary of State, 29 December 1941, 556–7.
96 *FRUS, 1941*, Vol. 2, Secretary of State, 29 December 1941, 563.
97 *FRUS, 1941*, Vol. 2, Leahy to Hull, 29 December 1941, 565.
98 He also mentioned in the same conversation that de Bournat had just been given the 'Cross of Honour' for his service to France. Hull, *Memoirs*, 1131–2.
99 Hull, *Memoirs*, 1131–2.

100 *FRUS, 1941*, Vol. 2, Conversation between French Ambassador and Secretary of State, 30 December 1941, 565.
101 Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 483.
102 Churchill, *The Complete Speeches*, 6544–5.
103 Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 483.
104 Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 484–5; *FRUS*, Conference at Washington, 1941–1942, and Casablanca, 1943, Secretary of State to President, 31 December 1941, 381–2.
105 Hull insisted that, although (according to the State Department) 95 per cent of the French populace was anti-Hitler, more than 95 per cent of this number 'are not Gaullists and would not follow him'. *FRUS*, Conference at Washington, 1941–1942, and Casablanca, 1943, Secretary of State to President, 31 December 1941, 382.
106 Sherwood writes that Secretary Hull remained suspicious of British involvement in the takeover of St Pierre and Miquelon throughout the crisis. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 486.
107 This proposal differed considerably from the initial terms sent to Vichy on 5 January and included suggestions that the islands be neutralised for the period of the war.
108 *FRUS*, Conferences at Washington, 1941–1942, and Casablanca, 1943, Prime Minister Churchill to Eden, 12 January 1942, 399.
109 Hull, *Memoirs*, 1136.
110 Super-Gymnast was the code name for the Allied plan to invade North Africa, later called Torch, which was discussed at length at the Arcadia Conference. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 460. It should be noted that in its original form, the plan assumed that the Vichy French in North Africa would offer no resistance or might even be induced to 'invite' the Allies in. It was with this in mind that the President and Mr Churchill decided, early in the discussions at Arcadia, to build on Robert Murphy's earlier mission to North Africa in the hope of enticing General Weygand to support just such an Allied operation. Weygand, when approached, however, refused to cooperate and insisted on informing Marshall Petain of the American advances. Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare*, 102–3; Langer, *Our Vichy Gamble*, 209–11.
111 *FRUS*, Conferences at Washington, 1941–42, and Casablanca, 1943, Prime Minister Churchill to Eden, 12 January 1942, 399–400.
112 The Canadians were shocked when they learned of the *Arkansas* proposal, and Prime Minister King sent a message at once to President Roosevelt imploring him not to take any such action. *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1356, Minutes of Cabinet War Committee, 14 January 1942, 1688, and document 1358, Memorandum by Minister in the United States, 15 January 1942, 1690.
113 *FRUS*, Conferences at Washington, 1941–42, and Casablanca, 1943, Prime Minister Churchill to Eden, 12 January 1942, 399–400.
114 CAB 65/25, 4(42) 4, 12 January 1942.
115 *FRUS*, Vol. 2, Conferences at Washington, 1941–1942, and Casablanca, 1943, Atlee to Prime Minister Churchill, 12 January 1942, 400.
116 *FRUS*, Vol. 2, Conferences at Washington, 1941–1942, and Casablanca, 1943, Atlee to Prime Minister Churchill, 12 January 1942, 400.
117 CAB 65/25, 4(42) 4, 12 January 1942.
118 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1353, Under-Secretary of State to Prime Minister, 13 January 1942, 1656.
119 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1355, Memorandum by Minister in the United States, 14 January 1942, 1687.

120 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1357, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Prime Minister, 15 January 1942, 1689; CAB 65/25, 5(42) 1, 14 January 1942, Prime Minister Churchill to Foreign Secretary Eden. In the same communication, Churchill also mentioned the possibility that in the 'prepared statement' Roosevelt might announce the appointment of a US trustee for the islands.
121 Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 291.
122 Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 291.
123 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1360, British High Commissioner to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 24 January 1942, 1691–2.
124 Foreign Office 371/3/873; Kersaudy, *Churchill and De Gaulle*, 178.
125 Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 294.
126 Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 291.
127 Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 295.
128 Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 295, footnote 1, note of conversation between Prime Minister and General de Gaulle, 22 January 1942, Z766/3/17.
129 Foreign Office 371/3173, note of conversation between General de Gaulle and the Prime Minister, 22 January 1942, quoted from Kersaudy, *Churchill and De Gaulle*, 178.
130 Kersaudy, *Churchill and De Gaulle*, 178.
131 Barker, *Churchill and Eden*, 53; Kersaudy, *Churchill and De Gaulle*, 178–9.
132 Churchill had been informed by this point of Prime Minister King's decision to give his assent to any proposal that the United States and the British had agreed to.
133 *FRUS, 1942*, Vol. 2, 668. II, 1942, Churchill to Roosevelt, 22 January 1942.
134 Hull indicates that he was so frustrated over Churchill's conduct in this affair, and over Roosevelt's refusal to pressure Churchill into clarifying 'the relations between Great Britain and the United States with regard to de Gaulle and Vichy', that he seriously considered resigning from office and even pencilled out a note of resignation to the President. Hull, *Memoirs*, 1137.
135 *FRUS, 1942*, Vol. 2, memorandum of phone conversation between Moffat and Dunn, 14 January 1942, 663–4.
136 *FRUS, 1942*, Vol. 2, memorandum of phone conversation between Moffat and Dunn, 14 January 1942, 663–4.
137 *FRUS, 1942*, Vol. 2, memorandum of phone conversation between Moffat and Dunn, 14 January 1942, 663–4; *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1356, Minutes of War Cabinet Committee, 14 January 1942, 1688.
138 *FRUS, 1942*, Vol. 2, memorandum of phone conversation Moffat, 15 January 1942, 667–8. A few hours later Secretary Hull had second thoughts about delivering this message to the Canadian government and telephoned Moffat to tell him to not deliver the message.
139 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1364, Memorandum by Minister in the United States to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 28 January 1942, 1697.
140 *FRUS, 1942*, Vol. 2, 660.
141 *FRUS, 1942*, Vol. 2, 2 February 1942, 669. II, 1942, Leahy to Hull, 6 January 1942, Hull to Franklin D. Roosevelt.
142 Muselier, *De Gaulle contre le Gaullisme*, 316.
143 For more on Muselier's resignation see footnote 88 above; Thomas, 'Deferring to Vichy', 809–35; and Muselier, *De Gaulle contre le Gaullisme*, 329–58.
144 Kersaudy, *Churchill and De Gaulle*, 184.
145 Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 294.
146 Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 325.

147 This document, which was signed by 23 nations on 1 January 1942, set forth the Allied principles for fighting the Axis.

148 Churchill, it should be noted, had in any case been reluctant to inform the Free French of the planned North African invasion because of their tendency to leak information, but as Kersaudy notes, even if he had decided to involve them at some point, he would have been overruled by Roosevelt, who 'had disliked de Gaulle from the start, … distrusted him since Dakar, and hated him since St. Pierre and Miquelon'. Kersaudy, *Churchill and De Gaulle*, 214.

149 Langer, *Our Vichy Gamble*, 212.

150 Bybelezer notes that under René Pleven's tenure relations between the Free French and the Americans had begun to improve in the latter half of 1941. In September, for example, the State Department approved of Free France establishing a standing Free French delegation in Washington. In October, the State Department recognised the de facto legitimacy of Free French authority in the colonies they controlled, and in late November, Roosevelt himself declared that 'Free French territory was vital to the defense of the U. S. and, hence, liable for lend-lease aid'. Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 303; and Washington telegram 5297, 20 November 1941, Z9870/4445/17, quoted from Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 303.

151 Stimson, *On Active Service*, 546.

152 De Gaulle reacted angrily to this and quipped to Churchill a week later that 'for the Americans, the Frenchmen of Bir Hakeim are not belligerents'. Kersaudy, *Churchill and De Gaulle*, 189. For more on the antipathy held for de Gaulle within the State Department and his *persona non grata* status see Conn and Fairchild, *Framework for Hemisphere Defense*, 163.

153 General Giraud was hand-picked by Roosevelt to assist the Allies in the Torch operation, where it was hoped he would be able to secure Vichy French North African cooperation.

154 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1339, Memorandum by Chargé d'Affaires for France, Belgium and the Netherlands (Dupuy), 29 December 1941, 1671.

155 Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 488. In fact, Sherwood writes that initially Roosevelt was amused by all the fuss the incident created and even seemed to derive 'a certain amount of mischievous pleasure from the spectacle of his esteemed old friend, the Secretary of State learning at last how it felt to be the target of widespread criticism'. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 488.

156 Churchill minute to Roosevelt, 14, I, 1942, quoted from Barker, *Churchill and Eden*, 53. Roosevelt pencilled these comments in the margins of this minute.

157 *DCER*, Vol. 9, document 1363, Minister in the United States to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 27 January 1942, 695.

158 Hull also wanted to avoid a revival of the issue in the press.

159 Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 299; Strang memorandum on St. Pierre and Miquelon, Z1259/3/17, 5 February 1942, quoted from Bybelezer, *British Policy*, 299; CAB 65/25, 17(42) 3, 6 February 1942.

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North Atlantic World: Canada and the Wartime Plans for the Post-War Global Economy, 1941–1947

Hector Mackenzie

Abstract

There were numerous bilateral financial and commercial measures in the 1940s within the North Atlantic Triangle of the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada, in wartime and thereafter.[1] However, the focus of this article is on Canada's interest in the multilateral economic proposals for the post-war world. As the following account demonstrates, that option for Canadian policymakers was likewise defined and framed within the North Atlantic Triangle. As for the long-standing but elusive goal of diversification of markets for Canadian exports, the initial benefits to Canada of the multilateral alternative tended to reinforce rather than contradict the trend – evident in Canada's bilateral deals – for its fortunes to be identified with its commerce with its North Atlantic partners. In other words, Canada's economic world was fundamentally a North Atlantic world, and its multilateral plans and actions took that reality into account.

Keywords Canada; United Kingdom; United States; North Atlantic Triangle; Second World War; finance; trade; global economy; post-war plans.

Depression, recovery and trade prospects

Canada's approach to the global economy during and after the Second World War was shaped by experience, including the devastating impact of the Great Depression, as well as hopes for a prosperous future. No country in the world had suffered more than Canada from the breakdown of international finance, the erection of trade barriers and the collapse of markets and prices for food and natural resources in the 1930s. Canada's gross national product (GNP) had fallen by 42 per cent at market prices, or 29 per cent in real or constant dollars, from 1929 to 1933; economic output fell by about 40 per cent in those years, with industrial production less than half of what it had been. Unemployment increased as much as tenfold (figures were inexact and unreliable) – affecting an estimated one-third to one-quarter of Canada's non-agricultural workforce. The agricultural economy of the prairie provinces was devastated, with an extraordinary sequence of accumulated surpluses, lost markets and crops depleted by drought and ravaged by pests. The impact of this collapse was particularly significant in the transportation and construction sectors, as well as associated manufacturing and industrial fields.

Recovery in Canada had been slow and incomplete, so that on the eve of the war, the previous heights of 1929 had still not been scaled. The demands of war revived agricultural and industrial production, with effective full employment in the Canadian economy. The national budget grew sixfold as the war effort replaced unemployment relief and public works as the focus of government expenditures. By 1944, government spending had reached the unprecedented level of $4.4 billion, or 37.6 per cent of GNP, with remarkable popular support for the significant role of government in the wartime and post-war economy. Meanwhile, Canada's GNP had more than doubled in six years of war.[2] That positive wartime experience and the apparent determination of the victorious Allies to reconstruct the global economy after the war prompted a hopeful perception of post-war possibilities.

Before, during and after the Second World War, Canada's prospects for international trade and consequently its potential prosperity were largely determined by its financial and commercial relations with the United Kingdom and the United States. As the report of the Rowell–Sirois Royal Commission on Dominion–Provincial Relations so memorably put it in 1940:

> Canada's position in both her world trade and other financial relations with the outside world is largely that of her position in relation to the United States and the United Kingdom. This position

> is similar to that of a small man sitting in a big poker game. He must play for the full stakes, but with only a fraction of the capital resources of his two substantial opponents; if he wins, his profits in relation to his capital are very large, and if he loses, he may be cleaned out.[3]

Before the war, Canada had offset a chronic deficit in merchandise trade with the United States with a surplus largely earned from exports to the United Kingdom. As R. S. Sayers so aptly put it, Canada's 'pre-war economy was based on bilateral imbalance within a balanced "North Atlantic Triangle"'.[4] Of necessity, the Canadian government pursued a wary and pragmatic approach to external economic policy. Bilateral measures to deal with immediate needs often trumped multilateral aspirations for the longer term.[5] In fact, that dualistic heresy was shared with the British and American governments.

Thus, during the Second World War and in the uncertain peace that followed, the Canadian government employed bilateral methods to maximise Canada's exports. There were commitments to finance British imports from Canada, including the Billion Dollar Gift of 1942, Mutual Aid from 1943 to 1945, and the Reconstruction Loan of $1,250 million which was negotiated in March 1946.[6] On a lesser scale, credits to Western Europe and Asia also underwrote Canada's exports to specific countries. Under the Export Credits Insurance Act of 1944, the Canadian government attempted to restore its trade and diversify its markets through loans to actual and potential trading partners. More than $500 million was expended by 1948, with France as the single-largest recipient.[7] The post-war financial measures were depicted as interim expedients to assist reconstruction for wartime allies and to ease the transition to freer global commerce. As for financial dealings with the United States, the continental understanding was symbolised by the Hyde Park Declaration of April 1941 and sustained by subsequent bilateral arrangements, so that Canada's reserves of gold and American dollars actually increased during the war and cross-border trade soared to previously unheard-of levels.[8]

The need for secure markets for Canada's key exports likewise shaped Canadian commercial policy. During and after the war, to assure Canadian producers of sales abroad, bulk purchase contracts were signed with the United Kingdom, most famously the multi-year wheat contract of July 1946. Other commodities, including bacon, beef, eggs and cheese, were also covered by bilateral deals between British and Canadian authorities. 'From our point of view', Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King observed in December 1944, 'the whole

business [of bilateral finance and contracts] relates back to making sure of our holding a place in the British market'.[9]

Canada and Anglo-American talks about the post-war world

At the same time, the Canadian government professed its abiding faith in the multilateral creed and collaborated closely with its North Atlantic trading partners to reach common aims in external economic policy. Throughout a period of fundamental change and uncertainty, what mattered most in Ottawa was achieving and maintaining a high level of exports, seen as the key to Canada's prosperity, by whatever means were available. Moreover, its commitment to the multilateral ideal was bolstered by fear of any serious split between the British and the Americans. 'No country stood to gain more than Canada', A. F. W. Plumptre has observed, 'from the reduction of prewar and wartime trade barriers, from the establishment of codes of rules for international trade, payments and exchange rates, and from the introduction of more stable arrangements for international lending.'[10] That quest for better order and greater stability governed the Canadian approach to global finance and trade.

Motivated by enlightened self-interest, therefore, Canadian policymakers devoted considerable attention to multilateral instruments in wartime plans and policies for peacetime. With respect to global finance, that prompted keen attention to and support for the development of the so-called Bretton Woods institutions, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) or World Bank. To facilitate world trade, the Canadian government was actively engaged in the negotiation of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) as well as the ill-fated International Trade Organization (ITO).

These were the most prominent bodies in an elaborate alphabet of international agencies dealing directly or indirectly with the global political economy in wartime and after, including the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Labour Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the World Health Organization, the International Wheat Agreement, the United Nations Economic Social and Cultural Organization, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund and others, most of which were associated with the development of the United Nations, first as the wartime title and then as the peacetime reincarnation of the victorious alliance.[11] In the

formation, elaboration and implementation of these various bodies, Canadians and their government played significant roles, individually and collectively.[12]

Not only did the pre-eminent commercial and monetary bodies originate in Anglo-American discussions and commitments, but also Canada defined its approach to this concerted effort to restructure international economic relations primarily on the basis of the potential impact of these multilateral instruments on Canada's transactions with its principal economic partners, the United States and the United Kingdom. Moreover, as one scholar has observed, 'a multilateral global economy founded on Anglo-American cooperation would allow Canada not to have to choose between its two most important markets and its two most important relationships'.[13] So long as the United States and the United Kingdom both aimed and collaborated in that direction, multilateralism was effectively also the only option available to Canada to further its external economic interests and thereby to secure its prosperity.[14]

Canadian policymakers welcomed the Anglo-American emphasis on rebuilding and reordering the international economy and attempted to influence attitudes and plans in a direction favourable to Canada's interests. The Roosevelt administration initiated this reassessment of global economic policy – beginning with the Atlantic Charter, to which the American and British leaders subscribed in August 1941. That declaration pledged the neutral and the belligerent under Point 4 'to further the enjoyment by all States, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity' and, under Point 5, 'to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field with the object of securing for all, improved labour standards, economic advancement, and social security'.[15] As Canadian Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs Norman Robertson advised King, 'there is nothing very new or spectacular' in the text, though 'it is clearly well worth while at this particular juncture having an authoritative restatement of the general principles of international relations which will have to govern any tolerable post-war world'. Overall, he regarded it as effective propaganda, though with one conspicuous flaw:

> To my mind its most serious defect is the reservation in Point 4, under cover of the phrase 'with due respect to their existing obligations', of the whole system of Imperial Preference. This must weaken the force and scope of the promise of free access for all countries to markets and materials, and makes it difficult to say much about the free trade implications of the Declaration.[16]

Robertson's doubts were evidently shared in Washington.

When the commitments in the Atlantic Charter proved insufficient to bind the British government to what they regarded as a favourable course in international trade, American authorities supplemented its provisions with the more firmly worded Article VII of the Mutual Aid Agreements in January 1942, the 'consideration' for Lend–Lease. That stipulated that the settlement for Lend–Lease

> shall be such as not to burden commerce between the two countries, but to promote mutually advantageous economic relations between them and the betterment of world-wide economic relations. To that end … [the terms and conditions] shall include provision for agreed action by the United States of America and the United Kingdom, open to participation by all other countries of like mind, directed to the expansion, by appropriate international and domestic measures, of production, employment and the exchange and consumption of goods, which are the material foundations of the liberty and welfare of all peoples; to the elimination of all forms of discriminatory treatment in international commerce, and to the reduction of tariffs and other trade barriers.[17]

Although the overall aim of attaining the economic objectives of the Atlantic Charter was welcomed by Canadian ministers and officials, one financial adviser condemned what he regarded as 'vicious Chicago tactics to attach non-discrimination as a consideration to lease–lend rather than to discuss it as part of all trade policy'.[18]

As British and American ministers and officials attempted to translate the lofty rhetoric into specific and practicable proposals, the Canadians were keenly interested. 'We need both the UK and the US as customers but we need them both under a multilateral arrangement whereby neither can apply undue pressure to us,' one Canadian economic adviser observed as the plans developed. 'There would be no net gain in any move which would merely substitute one market for the other. A multilateral convention is also our best chance of re-entry into the European market from which we would probably be excluded under regional arrangements.'[19] There was also some anxiety in Ottawa about 'the disposition on the part of the United States to determine, by bilateral negotiations with the United Kingdom, questions of policy intimately affecting us'. Even so, there was hope 'that these Lease–Lend negotiations could be used in order to secure an agreement helpful in resisting the onset of post-war economic nationalism'.[20]

Canada was not a direct recipient of Lend–Lease, so it was not initially a signatory of a Mutual Aid Agreement nor obliged by its provisions. However, the aims of those accords, particularly the commitments in Article VII, were sufficiently in Ottawa's interest that its agreement was conveyed in an exchange of letters with Washington that was seen by the Canadian government as formal justification for its participation in discussion of the post-war economic world.[21] 'We are the extreme case of the effects of the repercussions of U.K. and U.S. relations,' insisted the Deputy Minister of Finance W. C. Clark. 'We can do more to help those relations and much more to injure them than any other country. We are a substantial industrial power.'[22]

At key points in the Anglo-American talks, Canadian experts attempted to sway their British and American counterparts. Before and after a British delegation travelled to Washington, Canadian experts met with colleagues from the British and other Commonwealth governments in London.[23] In late October 1943, on their way back home, some of the British delegates visited Ottawa to brief Canadian economic officials about their lengthy talks in the American capital.[24] In early 1944, after the Anglo-American discussions on the implications of Article VII, Canadian and American officials met in Washington and New York. Those talks attested to a broad sense of common purpose, with the Canadians keen to sustain the progress of post-war planning.[25] 'In general, the exploratory discussions of post-war international economic policy began on a hopeful and courageous note and were based on a broad international approach,' a Canadian commentary observed. 'However, a number of important difficulties have been encountered, particularly in the vitally important field of commercial policy.' The Canadian interest in a positive outcome was stressed. 'The alternatives for Canada to timely action on a broad international basis are not attractive. Canada would have to look principally to special bilateral arrangements with the United States and the United Kingdom.' In neither case would the benefit to Canada match that potentially available in a multilateral agreement.[26]

Thus, the Canadian perspective was distinct – not surprisingly, it was a compromise between the British and American views – and it was articulated gradually as policymakers in Ottawa responded to stances adopted in Washington and London and contemplated the significant change in the international economy which was anticipated for the post-war world.[27] In other words, the Canadian government developed a North Atlantic perspective which responded to the plans of its economic partners and to the prospects for transatlantic finance and trade in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Sterling, dollars and a new global financial order

On financial policy, Canada's interest as a trading nation was to avoid the corrosive phenomenon of competitive devaluation of currencies, which had exacerbated the effects of the pre-war depression. That threat to Canadian prosperity was compounded by the possibility of sterling–dollar convertibility problems after the exceptional wartime financial arrangements came to an end. The need to overcome exchange barriers through generous assistance to the United Kingdom and other countries in the sterling area had already been demonstrated to the Canadian government, so that any multilateral regime which could help to avoid the division of the economic world and the disruption of Canada's familiar triangular pattern of trade would be welcome to authorities in Ottawa.

During the war, Canada had become the second leading international creditor, after only the United States, so it sympathised with the American preference for a regulatory institution (Harry White's Stabilization Fund) that favoured lenders. At the same time, its hopes to export to the British market, as well as its long-standing ties with the United Kingdom, prompted an understanding of the British concern about the vulnerability of borrowers and the need for a well-funded institution to help maximise global commerce (represented by Lord Keynes' International Clearing Union).[28]

Not surprisingly, the convertibility of currencies and monetary questions generally were viewed by Canadian policymakers principally through the lens of sterling–dollar relations. At the same time, Canada identified its self-interest with a positive outcome, necessarily involving Anglo-American agreement and thus likely a compromise between the stances of its most important trading partners.[29] 'Canada's diplomacy reflected its need for a postwar monetary regime that included both the United States and the United Kingdom.'[30] At a relatively early stage in the deliberations, Canadian officials put forward 'General Observations of Canadian Experts on Plans for Post-War Monetary Organization', which were designed to bridge the differences between the American and British schemes.[31] However well intentioned, that initiative was apparently resented in London, where it was perceived as undermining the prospects for acceptance of the plan advanced by Keynes.[32]

That appreciation certainly characterised its approach to the institutions created at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire – the IMF and the IBRD. The Canadian delegation of key ministers and senior officials in July 1944 strove to bridge Anglo-American differences, serve Canada's interests and bring order and stability to international financial transactions

through a multilateral accord.[33] From a British perspective, the Canadian experts, most notably Louis Rasminsky of the Bank of Canada, sided most often with their American colleagues. That difference of views, interests and tactics memorably culminated in a 'fierce' clash between Rasminsky and Keynes, though ultimately the North Americans drew back from a damaging 'break' with the British.[34] A distinguished and effective group of representatives from Canada 'contributed forcefully and incisively to the technical deliberations' during the conference.[35] A British delegate reported that 'the Canadian Delegation included some of the most competent technicians at the Conference', who 'earned the highest praise from all sides'. Their performance at Bretton Woods had 'served once again to demonstrate that Canada is fully alive to the responsibilities of her newly-found status as an almost-great Power, and that she possesses officials with breadth of vision and intellectual equipment equal to the role which she is assuming'.[36] Ultimately, however, it was the American government and its representatives who exercised decisive influence on the IMF and the IBRD. 'The British could not afford to disagree', Robert Bothwell has observed, 'and so the conference reached an accord on what were basically American terms.'[37]

As the Canadian minister of finance, J. L. Ilsley, observed one year later, the Canadian government was convinced that the IMF and the IBRD 'can play a very important part in facilitating the economic reconstruction of the world. They can minimize economic friction among nations and can help to provide the monetary conditions necessary to attaining a high level of world trade on a non-discriminatory basis.' That would be especially helpful in the immediate task of post-war reconstruction. Ilsley acknowledged that Canada's interest was 'not solely altruistic' and his explanation of the potential benefit to Canada was firmly situated within the North Atlantic Triangle. 'When the Fund is fully functioning', he forecast,

> it should be of assistance to us in enabling us to use our surplus with the United Kingdom to cover our deficiency with the United States. To attempt to balance our accounts bilaterally with both the United Kingdom and the United States would only result in great economic disorganization and a lower standard of living in this country.[38]

Consequently, as Ilsley's successor, D. C. Abbott, argued, '"multilateral convertibility of currencies" is of special significance to Canada', and the 'new international institutions' promised 'a practical approach to a solution of our problems'.[39]

Curiously, in the early years of the IMF, Canada's conduct did not conform to its earlier rhetoric. Though Canada's economic stature as a major creditor had earned it a seat on the board for the IMF, and consequently it was intimately involved in its proceedings, the Canadian government failed to notify the IMF before it revalued the Canadian dollar to parity with the American dollar in July 1946.[40] When that evaluation ultimately proved unsustainable, the Canadian authorities arbitrarily revalued Canada's currency in September 1949 in association with British and American authorities but again without prior IMF sanction. Instead, the Executive Board of the IMF was simply informed of the Canadian government's decision to reduce the par value of the Canadian dollar by 10 per cent on the eve of its implementation.[41] That decision was overshadowed by the devaluation of the British pound, which had dominated tripartite discussions in Washington.[42]

That straying from the true faith of multilateralism was compounded when Canada floated its dollar in 1950, once more with minimal notice or consultation with the IMF, and on this occasion without the gloss of tripartite discussions, as a 'temporary' expedient that lasted 12 years.[43] Of course, there were much greater problems for international exchange in the 1940s and 1950s than Canadian infidelity to the agreed rules, but the willingness of the Canadian government to go its own way certainly indicated the limits of its multilateral zeal when it came to monetary policy. Moreover, the circumstances that prompted Canada's transgressions were inextricably linked to its own shortage of American dollars, as well as British convertibility problems.[44]

The quest for markets: wartime plans for post-war commerce

A similar contradiction between word and deed marked Canada's approach to commercial institutions and trading policies. As was the case with financial institutions and monetary policies, Canadian expectations were not met with respect to the immediate impact of the new external economic regime, whatever its longer-term significance.

When British officials first proposed a comprehensive approach to international trade, the Canadian government's principal economic advisers firmly endorsed the initiative.

> The Advisory Committee on Economic Policy is of the opinion that the negotiation of a multilateral convention of commerce, providing for tariff reductions and limitations and the removal of

> other barriers to the exchange of goods, is the soundest method of securing satisfactory conditions of trade between nations after the war. It is especially in Canada's interest, first, because our trade extends over many countries and it would be difficult, if not actually impracticable, to achieve any pattern of bilateral agreements which would serve our interests so effectively, and, second, because the United States will undoubtedly press for the removal of preferences, even though under the Trade Agreements Act, should it be renewed, there is comparatively little she can offer as a *quid pro quo* to Canada.[45]

Unfortunately for the Canadian government, the Anglo-American negotiations on global trade soon foundered on the shoals of fundamental political divisions in the British government and American fidelity to familiar but conservative methodology (bilateral bargaining) for reducing barriers to international commerce.[46]

Before the meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in May 1944, Canadian officials learned that the government of Prime Minister Winston Churchill was 'stuck, split and in recession on Commercial Policy', as the President of the Board of Trade, Hugh Dalton, put it. At a reception associated with the conference, Dalton met Robertson, 'who is very sad at what he calls the "confused and ignoble end of the Commercial Policy proposals"'.[47] As Robertson informed his colleague, Hume Wrong, the British government had

> circulated a very cautious and non-committal paper summarizing without endorsement the conclusions reached by the meeting of experts in March. Internal political divisions within the United Kingdom Government which are not likely to be resolved during the next few months make it unlikely that resumed conversations with United States officials could lead to concrete and useful results.[48]

In February 1945, informed and disturbed about the increasing influence of protectionist sentiment in Britain's coalition government, the Canadians attempted to sway British commercial policy in a more favourable direction with an offer of post-war financial assistance as well as a generous settlement of wartime obligations.[49] However, the fate of that initiative, as well as the decisive influence on the external economic policies of the United Kingdom, would be determined in Washington, not Ottawa or London. Ultimately, the administration of Harry S. Truman would use its own financial clout as an inducement to commit the

peacetime Labour government to a course which the Americans regarded as consistent with the wartime pronouncements.[50]

From the Canadian perspective, the approach of the United States to commercial policy was also disappointing, as its emphasis, in contradiction of the wartime discussions but designed to appease congressional attitudes, was on selective rather than horizontal tariff reduction. In July 1945, Canadian officials learned that this domestic political bargain would necessitate a cumbersome, complicated, and likely less effective and comprehensive process. The American minutes of the meeting convey the Canadian reaction.

> The Canadian officials had had definite hopes for the horizontal formula because they considered it as the most practicable method, politically and economically, of solving the trade-barrier problem. The proposal for horizontal tariff reduction would represent a fresh approach designed to concentrate emphasis on expanded world trade and international cooperation. Its very magnitude, and the fact that it would deal with all tariffs in all countries with an even hand would assure for it strong support and would weaken the vested minority interests in every country.

The revised American approach would instead bolster protectionism in the United States and elsewhere, and it would stall progress on the liberalisation of global trade. For Canadian policymakers, this abdication of leadership by authorities in Washington would necessitate 'a complete reappraisal of what could be expected to be accomplished in the trade-barrier field as a whole'.[51]

When bilateral consultations resumed in Ottawa, Norman Robertson stressed 'that the Canadians were deeply disappointed and dismayed by the change in the American position'. For their part, the visitors emphasised that 'legislative approval of the plan for horizontal tariff reduction could not be obtained and that it would be virtually useless to make the attempt'. When alternative means were then explored, the Canadian officials favoured negotiation of 'substantial tariff reductions' by bilateral agreements within a 'nuclear group' of perhaps a dozen countries, with concessions generalised.[52] Although it was clear that this was seen as an inferior alternative to horizontal tariff reduction, there was at least the prospect of some improvement in international trade.

As a consequence of the fundamental differences in outlook and strategy between British and American authorities, there had been little advance in wartime with respect to commercial policy. Not until the lengthy and acrimonious Anglo-American loan negotiations were concluded

in December 1945 did an agreed document dealing with international trade emerge. Under the circumstances, *Proposals for Consideration by an International Conference on Trade and Employment* bore the taint of a concession extracted under duress by the American negotiators from a vulnerable British government.[53] Even so, a course was charted for further progress. The initiative was endorsed by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and then elaborated by a Preparatory Committee in Geneva, which produced a Draft Charter for the ITO and negotiated the GATT prior to a world trade conference in Havana.[54]

Implementing ideals: the post-war framework for global trade

Predictably, the guidance for the Canadian delegations to Geneva and Havana stressed the implications of the deliberations and the possible outcome for Canada's trade with the United Kingdom and the United States. 'In normal times, the surplus of our exports to the United Kingdom has been used to pay for the deficit in our balance of payments with the United States,' the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Louis St-Laurent, was advised. With the 'breakdown of multilateral exchanges', Canada favoured the establishment of the ITO 'to pave the way for the restoration of multilateral trade' and to avoid the division of the world into 'a number of trading blocks', with sterling and dollar countries separated.[55] The head of the Canadian delegation in Geneva, Dana Wilgress, affirmed at the first plenary session that

> no country in the world has a more vital interest in the success of our deliberations than Canada. We have been blessed by nature with an abundance of natural resources which the industry and skill of our people have created surpluses of which the whole world stands in need. It is only through the co-operation of other countries that we can assure our people of a better way of life by exchanging our surplus products for those surplus to other lands. In this way we can make our contribution to a better life for the peoples of those lands.[56]

In spite of this universal language, however, his reports to Ottawa were dominated by familiar concerns about trade within the North Atlantic Triangle. Indeed, within days of his speech to the final plenary meeting of the ITO, Wilgress was reporting on the acrimonious 'tariff negotiations at Geneva between the United Kingdom and the United States', which

were complicated by the latter's renewed assault on Imperial Preferences and the former's acute anxiety about its exchange difficulties.[57] One month later, Lester B. Pearson, the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, advised the Prime Minister that 'negotiations between the United Kingdom and the United States Governments have reached a crisis', with the Americans insisting that the British accept a proposal from the American representatives.[58] In fact, King was sufficiently concerned about the British attitude that he expressed to Clement Attlee his

> hope that the United Kingdom Government may find it possible to reach agreement in the present tariff negotiations with the United States since failure in this respect would not only imperil the future of the International Trade Organization itself but in addition might well have the gravest consequences for the entire programme of United States assistance in the reconstruction of Europe.[59]

Though Wilgress was generally sympathetic to the British plight, he believed that 'the United Kingdom Delegation have played their cards badly' with respect to the timing and extent of any concessions. 'Fundamentally', Wilgress added, 'the Geneva discussions are part and parcel of that attempt to secure the whole-hearted co-operation of the United States in post-war economic reconstruction, and it can only be regarded as short-sighted that the United Kingdom has failed to see the situation in this light'.[60] The Canadian delegation was anxious to play its part in bridging such serious differences as arose in Geneva in order to avert a breakdown and to permit the signature of the GATT, which eventually took place on 30 October 1947, with Canada as one of the original signatories.

The final report of the Canadian delegation after the conclusion of the UN Conference on Trade and Employment at Havana also stressed dealings with the British and American delegates and the impact of the accord on Canada's familiar pattern of commerce. The attitude of the United Kingdom to the ITO 'seemed to be dominated by the desire to have nothing in the Charter that would impede their programme of agricultural protection nor their freedom to discriminate for balance of payments reasons'. As for the United States, its agricultural policies, involving import quotas and export subsidies, complicated its stance at the prolonged meetings in Cuba. Moreover, the impact of the Latin American delegations was such that Wilgress complained that the conference was demonstrably 'held not only in the wrong place but at the wrong time'. Thus, Wilgress opined that 'only the Benelux countries and Canada stood for the full acceptance of the basic principles of multilateral trade', though 'Canada was not absolutely pure'

as it attempted to safeguard its own balance-of-payments position. Overall, Wilgress concluded that the ITO Charter should be ratified by the Canadian parliament as it was important 'to have some meeting place where representatives of governments can gather to consider complaints and to endeavour to remove obstacles impeding the free flow of world trade'.[61]

As the principal historian of Canadian commercial policy notes, Canada's delegation played a significant part in elaborating the ITO's Charter and in developing the framework and methodology for the multitude of bilateral negotiations that cumulatively provided the schedules of tariffs for the GATT.[62] An American delegate later recalled Wilgress as 'a very great man' and identified Canada as 'our great supporter. They ran interference, they always took the "simon pure" free trade positions and then we would make concessions, but they ran interference, so to speak.'[63] In spite of these efforts, however, the ITO did not withstand the scrutiny of the American Congress and thus was consigned to the dustbin of history (at least until later diplomatic dustbin-divers retrieved, revised and renamed it as the World Trade Organization).

Meanwhile, the GATT, the interim organisation, was transformed into a quasi-permanent institution whose provisions included rules and regulations that had been intended for the ITO. All told, at the third session of the preparatory committee, with invited others in Geneva, 23 countries negotiated 123 agreements covering about 45,000 items in their tariff schedules. Canada made concessions affecting about two-thirds of its imports, while it benefited from reductions in tariffs on about three-quarters of its exports.[64] The Canadian aim of trade diversification through the multilateral accord was reflected in the fact that Canada signed 14 trade agreements, though obviously none were as important as its deals with the United Kingdom and the United States.[65] Six months of complex and often acrimonious negotiations, with myriad frustrations and tensions, nonetheless culminated in the first major multilateral accord on international commerce, including an interim arrangement of remarkable durability and acceptance.

Rather than diversify Canada's trade, the GATT negotiations confirmed its continental direction. 'Canada carried on bilateral discussions with many of the participants in the Geneva negotiations,' Wilgress later recalled, 'but it was chiefly with the United States that substantial results were achieved.'[66] Unquestionably that was the most significant and comprehensive bilateral deal struck by Canada. The success of that and other agreements reached by Canada's negotiators 'confirmed for Canadian trade officials that the multilateral framework was a potent vehicle for promoting Canadian trade objectives'.[67] The benefits with

other potential trading partners were limited by the 'escape clauses' in the GATT necessitated by the immediate post-war economic difficulties. At the same time, Canada's zeal to dismantle barriers to global commerce was tempered by its own exchange problems. On the same day as it announced its adherence to the GATT, the Canadian government imposed import restrictions to conserve its dwindling reserves of gold and American dollars. Wilgress had long urged that such action, which had been anticipated for months, should avoid the taint of discriminatory treatment, as that would undermine the efforts in Geneva and the credibility of the Canadian delegation there.[68] Though formally non-discriminatory, the measures were obviously directed at imports of American products. As one response to Canada's exchange crisis, Canadian officials negotiated a tentative free trade agreement with the United States (though that was eventually scuttled by King for political, not economic, reasons).[69]

Thus, the pragmatic Canadian approach to commercial policy was obvious at the end of the first round of GATT negotiations. That stance was evident as well at subsequent sessions in Havana, Annecy and Torquay, the cumulative effect of which was to confirm, not correct, the continental drift in Canada's external trade. As Bruce Muirhead has put it, 'Canadian policy was multilateral by preference, bilateral by necessity, and manifestly continental by default'.[70]

Conclusion: Canada's North Atlantic world

In their early years, these multilateral financial and commercial institutions tended to increase rather than diminish Canada's dependence on trade with the United States for its prosperity. Neither organisation functioned initially in ways that promoted the diversification of Canada's international trade. Moreover, Canada's conduct in this period within and outside the international organisations that it had helped to found contradicted earlier lofty declarations of its commitment to multilateralism. Canada's rhetoric may have been global, but its policies and actions demonstrated that, in external economic policy in the early post-war years, as before, its world was the North Atlantic.

Declarations and conflicts of interest

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Consent for publication statement

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The author is the Guest Editor of *London Journal of Canadian Studies* 36(1) this article is included in. All efforts to sufficiently anonymise the author during peer review of this article have been made. The author declares no further conflicts with this article.

Notes

1 On the contradiction between multilateral aims and bilateral measures see Bothwell and English, 'Canadian trade policy'; Mackenzie, 'White Paper'. On the principal bilateral agreements see Pressnell, *External Economic Policy*; Mackenzie, 'Justice denied'; Mackenzie, 'Path to temptation'; Mackenzie, 'Chaff with the wheat'.
2 Mackenzie, 'Sinews'. All dollar amounts refer to Canadian dollars. Most economic statistics cited are from Urquhart and Buckley, *Historical Statistics*. On the profound impact of the Great Depression on Canada see Safarian, *Canadian Economy*.
3 Royal Commission, *Report*, 182.
4 Sayers, *Financial Policy*, 322–3.
5 Bothwell and English, 'Canadian trade policy'; Mackenzie, 'White Paper'. 'Multilateralism might have much to offer in the long run,' Michael Hart has written, 'but in the short run there were goods to be exported and import bills to pay. Thus, as they pursued the road to the multilateral heaven, Canadian officials ensured that no doors were closed to the more immediate benefits that might accrue from bilateral or other arrangements with Canada's two major trading partners, the UK and the USA.' Hart, *Also Present*, 2.
6 Mackenzie, 'Sinews'; Mackenzie, 'Path to temptation'; Mackenzie, 'Transatlantic generosity'.
7 Spencer, *From UN to NATO*, 201–2.
8 Mackenzie, '"Little Lend–Lease"'; Mackenzie, 'Sinews'.
9 King Diary, 1 December 1944, King Papers (MG 26 J), Library and Archives Canada (LAC).
10 Plumptre, *Three Decades*, 30.
11 Plesch, *America, Hitler and the UN*. A pre-publication copy of the manuscript was generously provided by the author. The most comprehensive account of the Canadian approach to the development of post-war policies and institutions is Holmes, *Shaping of Peace*, Vol. 1. The establishment of the international organisations and Canada's external policies in the aftermath of the war are analysed in Holmes, *Shaping of Peace*, Vol. 2.
12 For example, see MacKenzie, *Canada and International Civil Aviation*; Armstrong-Reid and Murray, *Armies of Peace*; Farley, *Brock Chisholm*.
13 Rasmussen, 'Old wine, new bottles', 101.
14 Rasmussen, 'Old wine, new bottles', 91.
15 The agreed text of clause four began with the words 'they will endeavour, with due respect for their existing obligations', which was interpreted by the

British Cabinet as permitting the continuation of Imperial Preferences and the maintenance of the sterling area for exchange purposes. On the meeting at Placentia Bay and the drafting of the Atlantic Charter see Wilson, *First Summit*; Brinkley and Facey-Crowther, *Atlantic Charter*. The various drafts of points four and five may be found as appendices 3–9(b) to Pressnell, *External Economic Policy*, 373–80. See also Plumptre, *Three Decades*, 32–3.

16 Memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs [USSEA] to Prime Minister [PM], 14 August 1941, Documents on Canadian External Relations (*DCER*) 7, 239.

17 Appendix 2, 'The Mutual Aid Agreement of 1942: Final Version of Article VII', Pressnell, *External Economic Policy*, 380; Eckes, *Search for Solvency*, 38–40. On the evolution of the Lend–Lease Act and the political circumstances which necessitated a 'consideration' for American aid to Britain, see Kimball, *Most Unsordid Act*; Dobson, *US Wartime Aid*.

18 Mackintosh, Memorandum, 4 November 1941, in LAC, Records of the Department of Finance [RG19], volume 3580, file M–02. On Mackintosh see Grant, *W. A. Mackintosh*.

19 [Mackintosh], Memorandum, 14 December 1943, in RG19, volume 4663, file 187–EAC–58.

20 Memorandum from USSEA to PM, 30 December 1941, *DCER 9*, 604–7.

21 Keating, *Canada and World Order*, 49. Special Assistant to Deputy Minister of Finance [W. A. Mackintosh] to USSEA, 5 October 1942, *DCER 9*, 620–1. To Mackintosh, the 'agreement to enter into conversations' in the draft exchange of diplomatic notes was more important than the restatement of the principles articulated in Article 7. As he put it, the proposed correspondence could 'pin the United States down to including us in post-war conversations, if not in conference with the United Kingdom and others, at least bilaterally with the United States herself'. The exchange of notes took place on 30 November 1942 and was published in Government of Canada, *Treaty Series*, 1942, No. 17.

22 Clark to Robertson, 27 May 1942, RG19, volume 3989, file T–2–9–2, I. On Clark see Wardaugh, *Behind the Scenes*.

23 Memorandum ['Report of the Canadian Representatives at the Post-War Economic Talks in London'] from Acting Deputy Minister of Trade and Commerce to Minister of Trade and Commerce, 23 December 1942, Report of Representatives at the London Discussions on Post-War Commercial Policy, 16 July 1943, *DCER 9*, 627–9, 680–7. Acting Canadian High Commissioner in United Kingdom [A/CHC(UK)] to Secretary of State for External Affairs [SSEA], Telegram 466, 24 February 1944, A/CHC(UK) to SSEA, Telegram 498, 29 February 1944, SSEA to A/CHC(UK), Telegram 400, 3 March 1944, A/CHC(UK) to SSEA, Telegram 539, 4 March 1944, A/CHC(UK) to SSEA, Telegram 627, 16 March 1944, *DCER 11*, 31–7. The talks with British representatives on commercial policy are documented in the same volume (62–9), as are those with American officials (70–8).

24 Diaries of James Meade: 26–27 October 1943 [Mission to US (September–October 1943), Volume 2], British Library of Economic and Political Science [BLEPS]. For an edited collection of the diaries of Meade and his colleague Lionel Robbins, see Howson and Moggridge, *Wartime Diaries*. 'Note by Mr Snelling of a Meeting in Ottawa on Commercial Policy and Cartels' [22 October 1943] and 'Note by Mr Liesching of a Conversation in Ottawa on Commercial Policy' [23 October 1943], United Kingdom National Archives [UKNA], Records of the War Cabinet and Cabinet, Miscellaneous Committees [Cab 78], Volume 14, File GEN.19/48.

25 [Constant Southworth, Divisional Assistant, Division of Commercial Policy, Department of State of the United States], Statement on Discussions on

Commercial Policy, enclosed with Counsellor, Embassy in United States, to USSEA, 11 March 1944, *DCER 11*, 69–78.

26 Memorandum ['Post-War International Economic Policy'], 25 April 1944, *DCER 11*, 78–82.

27 The best account of the wartime Anglo-American discussions may be found in Pressnell, *External Economic Policy*, 28–214. For an analysis from the perspective of Keynes see Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes*.

28 Steil, *Battle of Bretton Woods*. The texts of the British and American plans were tabled in the House of Commons by King on 14 April 1943 in response to a request from the leader of Social Credit and Member of Parliament for Lethbridge (Alberta), John H. Blackmore, shortly after they had been published by the respective governments.

29 Eckes, *Search for Solvency*, 90–1.

30 Rasmussen, 'Old wine, new bottles', 93.

31 Extract from Minutes of Cabinet War Committee, 2 June 1943; Memorandum, 9 June 1943; Enclosure ['Draft Proposals for a Foreign Exchange Stabilization Union'], 1 June 1943, *DCER 9*, 655–71. These documents were published by the Wartime Information Board and tabled in the Canadian House of Commons on 12 July 1943.

32 Memorandum from USSEA to PM, 11 June 1943, *DCER 9*, 673–4.

33 The Canadian proposals, published prior to the meetings at Bretton Woods, 'offered a compromise between the American and British points of view in an effort to bridge the gap between them but which leaned more in the direction of a fund than a clearing union'. Soward, *From Normandy to Paris*, 174. The instructions to the Canadian delegation were given at a meeting in Bretton Woods on 1 July 1944. Special Wartime Assistant to USSEA [J. J. Deutsch] to USSEA, 5 July 1944, with enclosures, *DCER 11*, 48–52.

34 Pressnell, *External Economic Policy*, 172–3. On Rasminsky see Muirhead, *Against the Odds*.

35 Eckes, *Search for Solvency*, 139.

36 A. W. Snelling, 'Notes on the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference, Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, USA. 1st–22nd July, 1944', 31 July 1944, in UKNA, Records of the Dominions Office [DO 35], Volume 1216, File WR254/1/40.

37 Bothwell, *Alliance and Illusion*, 29.

38 Press Statement by Minister of Finance, 26 July 1945, *DCER 11*, 57–60.

39 As had Ilsley, Abbott stressed the importance of convertibility for Canada's trade with the United States and the United Kingdom in a speech to the Canadian Life Insurance Officers Association on 15 May 1947. Abbott, 'International mobilization'.

40 Memorandum ['Establishment of Par Values and Relations of Members with the Fund'] by Canadian Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund, 1 August 1946; Memorandum ['International Monetary Fund Position Prior to Establishment of Initial Exchange Rates'] by Bank of Canada, 30 August 1946, *DCER 12*, 1192–205. These documents discuss the procedural and legal questions associated with changes in exchange rates. The official history of the Department of Finance discusses the devaluation of 1949 and the exchange crisis which preceded it, but not the decision in 1946 to raise the Canadian dollar to parity with the American dollar. Bryce, *Cost of World War II*, 316–19. Canadian financial authorities had been preoccupied with the likely inflationary impact of imported American goods in Canada so that parity had been seen as a brake on that effect.

41 Memorandum by Department of Finance, 15 September 1949; Extract from Cabinet Conclusions, 16, 17, 19 September 1949; Ambassador in United States

[CA(USA)] to SSEA, Telegram WA-2572, 19 September 1949; CA(USA) to SSEA, Telegram WA-2575, 19 September 1949, *DCER 15*, 866–73.

42 Mackenzie, 'ABCs'. The decision to devalue the pound and the discussions in Washington are assessed in Cairncross, *Years of Recovery*, 182–92. Other devaluations linked to that of sterling are mentioned on page 209 of the same book.

43 Executive Assistant to Governor of Bank of Canada to Clerk of Privy Council, 23 October 1950, with enclosed Memorandum ['Report on Washington Discussions Re Floating the Canadian Dollar September 28-30 1950'], 21 October 1950, *DCER16*, 696–704. The Canadian action was a 'technical violation of the IMF rules'. Eckes, *Search for Solvency*, 245.

44 Keating, *Canada and World Order*, 71–2.

45 Report of the Advisory Committee on Economic Policy, 14 May 1943, *DCER 9*, 643–8.

46 The sources and consequences of the British retreat on commercial policy are analysed comprehensively in Pressnell, *External Economic Policy*, chapters 6 and 8. The commitment of the Roosevelt administration and its successor to the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act (RTA) and the implications of that stance for the overall American approach to international commercial policy are explained in Gardner, *Sterling–Dollar Diplomacy*. Whatever its limitations, especially as perceived abroad, the RTA had been a significant advance on previous American trade policy, particularly with respect to limiting the impact of congressional oversight on the detailed provisions of any negotiated outcome.

47 Diaries of Hugh Dalton: 26 April 1944; 11 May 1944 [in Volume 30], BLEPS.

48 'Dominion' to 'External' (N. A. Robertson to H. H. Wrong), 7 May 1944, LAC, Papers of W. L. M. King [MG 26], Primary Series Correspondence [J1], Volume 369 [note: misfiled with Ritchie correspondence].

49 Mackenzie, 'Path to temptation'.

50 Mackenzie, 'Justice denied'.

51 Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. John M. Leddy, Assistant Adviser in the Division of Commercial Policy, 9 July 1945 ['Informal Discussions on Commercial and Financial Policy Between Officials of the United States and Canada'] in United States Department of State, *FRUS 1945 VI*, 61–6. The series is accessible online: http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS.

52 Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. John M. Leddy, Assistant Adviser in the Division of Commercial Policy, n.d. ['Informal Discussions on Commercial Policy Between Officials of the Canadian Government and Officers of the Department of State'] in *FRUS 1945 VI*, 66–74.

53 Mackenzie, 'Justice denied'.

54 Canada was one of 17 countries represented on the preparatory committee, which met for six weeks in London for its first session in early 1946, then again from 20 January to 25 February 1947 in Geneva and finally for six more months in Geneva beginning at the end of April 1947. The delegates at that third session revised the draft charter, negotiated a web of bilateral agreements (which included six additional countries that were invited to participate in the trade negotiations) and concluded a general agreement to link the various bilateral deals. That final task produced the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which ultimately served as a surrogate for the unratified International Trade Organization (ITO). Stone, *Canada, the GATT*.

55 Memorandum for SSEA, n.d., enclosed with Chairman, Delegation to the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment, to the SSEA, 1 February 1947, *DCER 13*, 1126–30.

56 Address by Head, Trade Delegation, to Final Plenary Meeting of ITO, 22 August 1947, *DCER 13*, 1153–7. In the quoted extract from this speech, Wilgress is paraphrasing his own remarks at the opening plenary meeting on 11 April 1947. Privately, Wilgress admitted to Robertson that 'I never thought that, after reading about developments in the United States last winter, we would attain the objective of substantial reductions in tariffs. What we are going to attain are a large number of moderate reductions plus bindings on present rates. Since all rates listed in the schedules will be bound against increase, the tariff agreement will serve to give a stability to tariffs which the world has never known before. This in itself will be well worth while.' Wilgress to Robertson, 29 April 1947, LAC, Records of the Department of External Affairs [RG 25], Volume 2117, File AR429/3/5.
57 Head, Delegation to Trade and Employment Conference, to SSEA, Despatch G/9, 26 August 1947, in *DCER 13*, 1157–9.
58 Memorandum from USSEA to PM, 22 September 1947, in *DCER 13*, 1171–2.
59 Attlee's reply argued that 'in our judgment the United States are now trying to drive an unfair bargain and one which we are not in a position to accept'. United Kingdom High Commissioner in Canada [UKHC(C)] to Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations [SSCR], No. 896, 24 September 1947 (PM to PM), SSCR to UKHC(C), No. 859, 26 September 1947 (PM to PM), UKNA, Records of the Office of Prime Minister [PREM 8], Volume 490.
60 Head, Delegation to Trade and Employment Conference, to SSEA, Despatch G-11, 23 September 1947, in *DCER 13*, 1174–7. Wilgress blamed the guidance and control of the Board of Trade for the unfortunate and ill-advised conduct of the British delegation.
61 Chief Delegate, Delegation to United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment, to SSEA, Despatch 165 ['Report of the Canadian Delegation to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment at Havana'], 13 July 1948, *DCER 14*, 896–916.
62 Hart, *Trading Nation*, 135–9.
63 Interview with Winthrop G. Brown, 25 May 1973, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, Oral History Records.
64 Hart, *Also Present*, 40–1.
65 Rasmussen, 'Old wine, new bottles', 95.
66 Wilgress, *Canada's Approach*, 17.
67 Hart, *Trading Nation*, 136.
68 CHC(UK) to SSEA, No. 815, 17 May 1947 (Wilgress to Clark), RG25, Volume 2083, File AR16/14/II. The deputy minister of finance, Clifford Clark, had warned the minister in the American embassy in Ottawa, Julian Harrington, in late April 'that the present situation could not be allowed to continue indefinitely. Either exports to the United States must be stepped up substantially, he said, or some means must be found to discourage imports. He hoped that it would never be necessary to control imports since restrictions of this nature run counter to the post-war efforts of the major powers to restore a free and natural flow of goods.' Harrington to Foster, 25 April 1947, United States National Archives [USNA], Records of the Department of State [RG59], File 842.5151/4-2547.
69 Cuff and Granatstein, 'Rise and fall'; Hart, 'Almost but not quite'; Mackenzie, 'King's road'; Bothwell, *Alliance and Illusion*, 35–9. Two of Canada's principal trade negotiators, H. B. McKinnon and J. J. Deutsch, had been diverted from work on GATT/ITO to the bilateral negotiations. Hart, *Also Present*, 7–8.
70 Muirhead, *Development*, 14–15.

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The 'Anglo-Saxon Triangle' Downplayed by Canada's Department of External Affairs, 1946–1956

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Abstract

In July 1951, Canada's Department of External Affairs despatched a secret policy paper to the heads of overseas Canadian posts, instructing Canadian diplomats abroad not to refer to Canada's 'inner triangle' with Britain and the United States or encourage its development into a formal alliance. The explicitly named 'Anglo-Saxon triangle' was acknowledged affectionately as a 'cornerstone of Canadian foreign policy' but was regarded as damaging to the ultimate goal of a North Atlantic community inclusive of continental Europeans. The 'inner triangle' comprising Canada, the United States and Britain had to be concealed, and diplomats were warned not to speak of it publicly as an objective of policy, lest another triangle would form, that of a Franco-German–Italian grouping that would split the prospects of a North Atlantic alliance. The discovery of this secret despatch provides some explanation of why references to the North Atlantic Triangle faded from statements in the post-war years.

Keywords North Atlantic Triangle; Anglo-Saxon triangle; Franco-German–Italian triangle; Department of External Affairs; North Atlantic community; Western Europe.

Introduction

The publication of John Bartlet Brebner's *North Atlantic Triangle* in 1945 pushed the configuration of a triangle among Canada, Britain and the United States into Canadian public consciousness.[1] Scholars praised the book, with one reviewer going so far as to suggest that the book should be 'required reading for every intelligent citizen of the three countries with which it deals'.[2] Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King had already done much to validate the existence of a triangle by having long referred to Canada's propensity to serve as the interpreter linking together the two powers, a sentiment that was shared by other civil servants in the Department of External Affairs, notably Lester Pearson, the Ambassador to Washington (1944–6). Gradually, however, amid rising public speculation that Canadian policymakers were intent on positioning the country in a posture of subservience, the Department of External Affairs set out to emphasise that decision-making occurred independently of the other two powers, and that Canadians should not be regarded as a 'corps of professional interpreters'.

Not only did domestic grounds justify obscuring the triangle, but international considerations also made it necessary. According to a hitherto unpublished classified policy paper that was prepared by the Department of External Affairs and circulated to the heads of Canadian posts abroad in the summer of 1951, the objective of keeping the British and American governments together in their foreign policies was regarded succinctly as 'a cornerstone of Canadian foreign policy'. Moreover, the paper explicitly acknowledged the existence of an 'Anglo-Saxon triangle' but instructed Canadian diplomats not to refer to it in public or in private; they were forewarned that an open recognition of their 'inner triangle' might marginalise their European allies and inadvertently encourage the formation of a separate 'Franco-German–Italian triangle', which would hinder transatlantic solidarity and thwart their objective of creating a North Atlantic community.[3] The 'Anglo-Saxon triangle' was to be deliberately downplayed and any mention of it muted.

The post-war climate: a new era in Canadian foreign policy?

The compartmentalisation of history into distinct phases is necessary for the historian, yet one must be careful not to insert a break prematurely. In the years immediately preceding the Second World War, and over the course of the war itself, Prime Minister King had impressed on

the public his diplomatic conduct. His occasional wartime meetings with President Franklin Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill were photographed and publicised, with the intended effect of persuading Canadians that their country had matured and served as an important intermediary between the two powers. King often referred publicly to Canada's role as the 'interpreter', which he hoped to make manifest by his own actions.[4]

It was against the backdrop of the war that Brebner worked on his manuscript and finally completed the draft in 1942. He shared it with James T. Shotwell, his trusted academic colleague at Columbia University, who encouraged him to change the title of the book from 'Rival Partners', as he considered that it was both 'a little too challenging in wartime' and 'a bit unctuous'.[5] The simple alteration of the title would have a sizeable impact on the book's popularity. The new title, *North Atlantic Triangle*, had broad appeal and a constructive effect in exalting Canada's post-war status.

In reviewing the published book in January 1946, Frank H. Underhill, the revered scholar of Canadian history at the University of Toronto, commented on Canada's altered relationship with the other two powers, saying that 'our part in past Anglo-American relations would be that of the little brother who makes a nuisance of himself by tagging along behind the big boys when they go off for a ball game'. He continued to suggest that Canada had reached maturity and rubbed shoulders with the other powers: 'We have now outgrown the little boy stage … we are now a member of one of the teams in the World Series.'[6] For the individuals making up the Department of External Affairs, the post-war atmosphere presented them with new opportunities, and they were determined to get up to bat often, rather than to sit passively on the sidelines.

The changes that took place following the war, particularly the division of the world into two ideological camps, imparted a sense of responsibility to Canadian diplomacy. The detection of Soviet spy rings following the war revealed that their former ally could not be trusted, and that older relationships needed to be counted on. Lester Pearson, in his position as the ambassador to the United States, referred to the importance of the Anglo-American relationship to Canada in a dinner address he delivered in South Carolina on 20 February 1946:

> Canadian-American relations, as we see them, must be a part of Anglo-American relations. I mean by this simply that our position in Canada would become quite impossible if we were ever asked

> to choose between the U.S.A. and the U.K. That, for us, fatal contingency is, thank God, a pretty remote one now. It is a matter of life and death to keep it remote. We consider co-operation in the English speaking world a first essential of international policy.[7]

Pearson's willingness to work towards 'cooperation in the English speaking world' is congruent with Churchill's subsequent call for a 'fraternal association of English-speaking peoples', famously delivered in Fulton, Missouri, on 5 March 1946. A few days before Churchill delivered the speech, during a stay at the British embassy in Washington, he received Pearson as a visitor and shared the text with him. While seated at his bedside, Churchill read aloud that it was necessary that 'the constancy of mind, persistency of purpose, and the grand simplicity of decision shall rule and guide the conduct of English-speaking peoples in peace as they did in war'. Pearson would not disappoint him.

Pearson spoke again on the direction of Canada's post-war policy in international relations on 13 May 1946. His message was concordant with Churchill's own sentiments and with those of his own prime minister:

> The basis of my country's foreign policy is a simple one. Subject always to our obligations as a member of the United Nations, we desire to maintain the closest possible relations of friendship with the U.S.A. and the U.K. and do what we can to see that these two countries remain on terms of friendly understanding with each other. Canada knows well that, if they fall apart, her own position would be impossible, as she would be forced to choose between her two friends. That would be an impossible choice.
>
> That, ladies and gentlemen, in a word, is Canada's position in international affairs. It also emphasizes her opportunity to act as a link, if you wish to call it that, between our great mother-country and our great neighbour. We in Canada are now in a position to play that part more effectively than ever before.
>
> We will, I know, do our very best to promote friendship and understanding between all peace-loving states, and to maintain in particular the closest possible relations between Washington, London and Ottawa.[8]

Pearson's words, generally unknown by contemporary Canadians, indicate a repetitive tendency to operate within the bounds of a triangular

world view. The international scene was not promising, and there were internal cleavages within Canada between English and French Canadians that made external affairs an uneasy issue, particularly as the French Canadians were assumed to be isolationist and the Liberal Party relied upon Quebec for electoral support. King understood the uneasy Canadian platform better than most, but at 72 years of age he realised that he would not be fit to steer the country through the post-war years. On 4 September 1946, King gave the external affairs portfolio to Louis St-Laurent, his trusted minister from Quebec who had counselled him during the conscription crisis a few years earlier, and on the same day he appointed Pearson as the Under-Secretary for External Affairs (1946–8). Upon taking up his appointment, conflicts in Palestine and Iran threatened the Anglo-American relationship and provided Pearson with ample conflict to capture his attention.

The readiness of the Department of External Affairs to embark on an active role in international affairs was announced in the inaugural Gray Lecture in January 1947, delivered by St-Laurent. In this landmark speech, entitled 'The Foundations of Canadian Policy in World Affairs', the external affairs agenda was clearly framed around five main principles, which consisted of the need to maintain national unity; political liberty; the rule of law; Christian values; and the willingness to accept international responsibilities. While the content was not particularly revolutionary, its very delivery signified an altered approach to international affairs; previously, when King had held the external affairs portfolio, he had deliberately avoided speaking specifically about contentious issues, a tactic he used to hinder his opponent's ability to come up with a suitable retort. The lecture seemed to announce that there was a new external affairs agenda to accompany the beginning of a new era.

Over the course of the immediate post-war years, new terminology was introduced which conveyed vivid mental images. Churchill's internationally broadcast address in Fulton put into circulation the construct of an insurmountable 'iron curtain' that separated European countries from each other. American journalist Walter Lippmann subsequently popularised the 'Cold War' catchphrase with his book of the same title.[9] Following the success of President Harry Truman's speech in March 1947 in which he appealed to Congress to provide funds for Greece and Turkey, and General George Marshall's address at Harvard University in June in which he urged that further funds be provided to assist in Europe's recovery, the projected image of the United States was one of caretaker to the peoples across the North Atlantic. To obstruct the Soviet Union from encroaching on the area, George Kennan, the new head of the

department's policy planning staff, published an article anonymously in *Foreign Affairs* in July advocating for a strategy of containment.[10]

In the midst of the general mood of insecurity, the subsequent proposal to create a Western alliance was well received in Ottawa; Escott Reid, then Canadian Assistant Under-Secretary of External Affairs, publicly suggested at Lake Couchiching on 13 August 1947 that the peoples of the Western world should collectively unite to create a regional security organisation. In American policymaking circles it was hoped that Western Europe would pull together and develop a political personality of its own that would be capable of withstanding Soviet pressure. The American interest in rebuilding Western Europe went hand in hand with its strategy to contain communism, an endeavour that extended beyond regional perimeters to confront the global pandemic.

By the end of that year, Pearson and St-Laurent approved the participation of a Canadian delegation in the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea. The move had come after an American proposal, and Canadian representatives were increasingly put at the forefront of international dialogue. Canada was also represented as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, starting in January 1948, the same month that King announced his retirement. The subsequent year promised to be as tumultuous as the previous one. In February the Prague coup brought into focus the real security concerns in Western Europe.

To meet the security threat on the European continent, on 11 March 1948 British Prime Minister Clement Attlee proposed a tripartite meeting among British, Canadian and American representatives in Washington, as an extension to the Brussels Treaty that was to be signed by Britain, France and the Benelux countries on 17 March. From 22 March to 1 April, secret negotiations took place at the Pentagon to discuss the scope of a transatlantic security alliance.[11] This had been motivated not only by the recent Soviet advance in Czechoslovakia, but also by the rumours of a Soviet approach to Norway to conclude a non-aggression treaty, which indicated a threat to Scandinavia, coupled with ongoing insecurity in Germany and communist parties gaining support in France and Italy. The exploratory talks in Washington were kept secret to avoid drawing the attention of the Soviets, offending the Europeans with a meeting among 'Anglo-Saxons' and alerting the wider domestic publics of future security commitments before a concrete agreement was reached.

A transatlantic security alliance would bring London and Washington into closer alignment, an objective that had long featured in the minds of Canadian civil servants. The memoirs of one high-profile civil servant,

Vincent Massey, were published in 1948. Massey had served as Canada's first Minister in Washington (1927–30) and as the High Commissioner to London (briefly in 1930, and steadily from 1935 to 1946), and his monograph, *On Being Canadian*, provided advice to the next generation of Canadian statesmen. On the Anglo-American relationship, he wrote: 'It is obvious that we should do all that we can to promote such mutual understanding. Canada has a vested interest in Anglo-American goodwill; Anglo-American estrangement might well be our undoing.'[12]

Massey's advice to adhere to the Canadian objective of promoting the alignment of British and American foreign policies had resonance with his contemporaries in the civil service. As a recent study indicates, in the crises brought forward that year in the United Nations that focused on Palestine, Kashmir and Indonesia, the Canadian representatives reached decisions that were entirely dependent upon the views taken up by Britain and the United States.[13] Pearson spoke frankly on the subject of Canadian principles of foreign policy in a meeting of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs held in Vancouver on 21 June 1948, in which he explained the importance of Anglo-American relations and the post-war postulates of Canadian policy:

> It will be remembered that the one great nightmare of pre-war Canadian governments was a clash, a divergence of policy, between the two governments – American and British – with both of which Canada had to keep in step … There is no danger of that kind in the United Nations – in which British and American policies usually march side by side. So we can stride along beside them … It is, of course, to our interest to strengthen any organization which brings London and Washington into closer alignment … [T]he earlier postulates of policy still – almost unconsciously – apply.[14]

Pearson's avowal that Canada would 'stride along beside' Britain and the United States in the forum of the United Nations warranted a subsequent need to do some back-pedalling to deter speculation that the Department of External Affairs was advocating a subservient posture and tailoring its foreign policy according to British and American positions. In part to appear distinct from Britain and the United States, Canada did not participate in the airlift to counter the Soviet blockade of Berlin that began that same month in June, in spite of an informal appeal made by Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary.[15] King had actually given instructions to Norman Robertson, the High Commissioner in London, to ask Bevin to refrain from making a publicised request for transport planes.

King, feeling too tired from political responsibility to go on as Liberal Party leader, announced his retirement in August. The office of the prime minister was to go to St-Laurent, and Pearson was appointed Minister of External Affairs on 10 September 1948. There remained a desire to take on a more robust external affairs agenda with King gone. Speaking to an audience at the National War College in Washington, DC, on 25 October 1948, Arnold Heeney, the Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet, attempted to introduce a fresh perspective regarding Canada's role in external affairs. He urged his audience to stop thinking of Canadians as 'a race of Anglo-American hermaphrodites' and to recognise that Canada was not a 'satellite' of either of those two powers.

> We should not, I suggest, be any longer regarded as a sort of corps of professional interpreters between Britain and the United States. No doubt we shall continue to perform this role. But we're rather tired of being 'interpreters' and 'links' and 'bridges' … Today Canada is at once a member of the Commonwealth and a North American nation, the modest but stout ally of both Britain and the United States and satellite of neither.[16]

To further dispel suspicions that Canada was a subservient ally to Britain and the United States, Pearson also took to the airwaves on 20 January 1949 to deliver a public lecture transmitted nationwide by the Canadian Broadcast Corporation. His talk was to address the question of Canada being 'a satellite state in matters of foreign policy', and on the matter of Canada voting with the British and American representatives in the United Nations Security Council, Pearson asserted that Canada was 'not following somebody else's line', but rather that 'we and our friends have common interests and that we often agree about the way in which we should act. This is not the role of a satellite; it is the role of the good and cooperative member of the international community.'[17] Increasingly, however, American policymakers would be the first to set a course of action, and as obliging allies, Canadians would stride swiftly to their side.

Towards a North Atlantic community: the danger of two triangles

The creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in April 1949 by its 12 founding members was an important step forward in

securing the North Atlantic area against Soviet aggression, but the optimistic vision of progressing towards 'better, safer ground' that Pearson forecasted at the time of the treaty's signing was marred a few months later, in August, by the explosion of the Soviet Union's first atomic bomb. To address the heightened insecurity in Europe, talks soon arose over whether the recently created Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) could provide a military contribution to the defence of the region.

Konrad Adenauer, the recently appointed Chancellor of West Germany, tried to allay fears of German revanchism in an interview he gave on 7 November 1949 to the *Baltimore Sun*, a newspaper read by President Truman. Adenauer pledged to improve Franco-German relations and work within the limits of French 'psychology' over its insecurity.[18] He understood that the United States and West Germany had converging interests, as both desired to prevent a communist advance into West Germany and into the rest of Europe; both were also in favour of West German rearmament; and both were in favour of Franco-German cooperation as a precursor to an integrated Europe. From Adenauer's perspective, transatlantic solidarity and European integration were mutually sustainable and would give the West a stronger hand against the Soviets.

The prospect of integrating Europe was gaining momentum in France, an undertaking that had to involve changing Frenchmen's attitudes on the subject of Germany. Jean Monnet, a French public official appointed to devise a plan for France's economic recovery, contemplated Franco-German cooperation during his trip to the Alps in spring 1950 and reached the conclusion that Germany must no longer be feared, but must be recognised as a direct link to France's post-war recovery.[19] The Schuman Declaration of 9 May 1950, drafted by Monnet and read by Robert Schuman, the French foreign minister, emphasised France's commitment to cooperate with West Germany by proposing the pooling of coal and steel under a High Authority to make war between them 'materially impossible' and to take the first step towards a 'federal Europe'. Several months later, in October, the French government also proposed the creation of a European army incorporating a military contribution from West Germany. The advantage of the Pleven plan, named after René Pleven, the French minister of defence who proposed it and subsequently became prime minister, was that German soldiers could contribute to the European army without raising a new German army.

British attitudes towards the proposed European army were sceptical; of overwhelming concern was whether the transatlantic alliance

would be able to accommodate a separate European force within it. Bevin likened the concept of a European force to an undesirable growth, a sort of 'cancer' which threatened the 'Atlantic body'.[20] Similar concerns were voiced in Canada. Historian Lionel Gelber addressed Toronto's Empire Club in November 1950 and posed the question: 'Would the unity of Europe add to the unity of the West or detract from it?' He concluded that a European segment would fracture the transatlantic alliance and ultimately weaken the security of the North Atlantic area.[21]

From the American perspective, however, a Franco-German rapprochement was necessary, and so the French proposal for a supranational European army could not simply be overlooked. A compromise was reached in December 1950 that came to be regarded as the Spofford Compromise, named after Charles M. Spofford, the US deputy representative on the NATO Council. Spofford asserted that the transatlantic alliance, underpinned by NATO and the French proposal for a European army, were complementary goals; Western Europe first needed NATO as an immediate response to its current insecurity, and thereafter the European army could assume responsibilities. The integration of Western Europe and the development of the transatlantic alliance were seen as compatible objectives, and as conducive to broader American interests in defending Western Europe from Soviet encroachment and curtailing communism.

It was the American perspective that carried the most weight in Ottawa, given how indispensable the United States was in defending Western Europe and fighting against communism worldwide. Anti-communist coalitions formed in the United Nations, and the lofty ideal of collective security was soon understood to be regrettably unrealisable. John Holmes, serving as a diplomat in the Canadian UN Division, expressed his concern to Escott Reid, who was then serving as Deputy Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs. In his letter, dated 29 December 1950, Holmes divulged that 'it is the decisions of the U.S. Government which really count. It is they ultimately who will decide which countries can be defended and which must be abandoned.'[22] Cognisant of the Americanisation of the United Nations, the Department of External Affairs sought to be cooperative and receive guidance from Washington over which conflict areas should receive Canada's attention.

In Ottawa, Arnold Heeney, then serving as Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, received a classified letter from the Canadian Permanent Delegation in Geneva, dated 18 January 1951, which proposed that Canada and its North Atlantic partners should prepare 'a plan of global strategy' to decide which areas must be defended 'by force',

and which areas can only be held 'by words, or bluff if you will'.[23] Covert meetings were proposed so that 'serious work' could be conducted 'behind closed doors'; in so doing, Canadian policymakers could determine which areas of the world would be the targeted recipients of Canadian aid. A more cohesive alliance among countries in the North Atlantic area was deemed necessary, underlined by the danger of communist expansion; yet on a rudimentary level, there was still debate over which countries formed part of the North Atlantic area, a geographical region too vast to neatly delineate its perimeters.

Debate continued over whether an American military presence in Europe should be permanent or gradually replaced by a workable European army. David Bruce, the American Ambassador in France, helped to persuade Dean Acheson, the Secretary of State, that a permanent American commitment was needed in Europe to avoid the rise of rival national armies. Consensus with Bruce's position was found among other Atlanticists in the State Department, notably John Hickerson and Theodore Achilles, his deputy in charge of Western European affairs. Spofford and Milton Katz, the American special representative to Europe, were also in favour of the development of a single North Atlantic body working in all fields, not exclusively military in nature. In April 1951, Achilles shared the American interest in a permanent American presence in Western Europe with his Canadian and British counterparts, namely Dana Wilgress, the Canadian High Commissioner in London, and Evelyn Shuckburgh, the British head of the Foreign Office's Western Department. The British Foreign Office offered immediate support for the American preference for a permanent presence, or indeed for 'any American initiative' that directed attention towards the idea of a 'community' which had 'long-term and non-military aspects'.[24]

To discuss the scope of a community among North Atlantic partners, Lester Pearson travelled to Western Europe in July 1951 and met with various political leaders in a number of capital cities. From a diary he kept of his travels, it is evident that the question of membership in the alliance bore heavily on his mind, particularly whether Greece and Turkey should be admitted. He was concerned that the extension of the transatlantic alliance to the Mediterranean would confirm Soviet fears of encirclement and provoke a retaliation of some kind, but the military and strategic strength of these countries made their inclusion necessary.

While Pearson was still abroad in Europe, on 17 July 1951 the Department of External Affairs despatched a classified policy paper to the heads of overseas Canadian posts.[25] The paper, entitled 'Western

Europe and the North Atlantic Community', was part of a series of policy papers intended to bring greater focus and clarity to longer-range thinking on Canadian foreign policy, but this was the first of the papers to be given general circulation so that Canadian diplomats abroad could be informed of departmental policy. The paper reasoned that the progression of American military power was likely to become a more acute problem, and that greater influence could be exerted on Washington collectively as a means to stabilise the 'eccentricities of United States foreign policy'.[26]

Given the Canadian desire to bolster the cohesion of the North Atlantic area, the policy paper explicitly stated that the pattern of Canada's 'inner triangle' with Britain and the United States should not be stated in public, nor should it be permitted to develop into a formal alliance. Discretion was urged; at a time when integrative efforts were being made to cohesively bind countries in the North Atlantic area into a community of states, any perception of an inner 'Anglo-Saxon triangle' could fracture the structural integrity of the whole. Of serious concern was that the perception of their existing triangle would inadvertently encourage the formation of a second triangle, composed of a 'Franco-German–Italian group' that could, in a few years, be dominated by the Germans. The policy paper is sufficiently illuminating to be quoted at length here:

> As Canada has especially close relations with both the United Kingdom and the United States and as Canadian foreign policy is seldom subject to severe strains or embarrassing choices while the United Kingdom and United States Governments are in agreement, a cornerstone of Canadian foreign policy might be expressed as doing everything possible to keep the United Kingdom and United States Governments together in their foreign policies …
>
> The question then arises whether the Anglo-Saxon triangle is a desirable development not only from the point of view of Canada – for whom it is essential – but from the larger point of view of the North Atlantic community. Undoubtedly, the same sort of doubts and misgivings must arise in the minds of continental Europeans when they consider the Anglo-Saxon triangle as arise in our minds when we worry about the possible growth of neutralism crystallizing around Strasbourg or around a Paris–Bonn–Rome axis. If, from the broader point of view, two inner triangles are allowed to develop within the North Atlantic community, there is a danger

that, instead of strengthening the whole structure, they may cause it to split …

… From the purely Canadian point of view, nothing could be more satisfactory than a firm enduring partnership, whether expressed formally or not, with the United States and the United Kingdom. Yet we cannot get on without our partners on the European continent, and though we may usefully pursue the pattern of our 'inner triangle', we must not state it publicly as an objective of policy. Indeed, both publicly and privately, we must work for the development of the North Atlantic community as a whole through a larger measure of real co-operation and genuine trust with our continental European partners. The open espousal of what amounted to a United States–United Kingdom–Canadian alliance might split NATO still more fundamentally than the projected Franco-German–Italian grouping threatens to split Western Europe …

… A more intimate and more formal kind of co-operation between the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada might come about if Western Europe were overrun, but if we were in present circumstances to strive for more intimate and formal co-operation it would be bound to increase continental fears that the Anglo-Saxons were planning to let the Continent go almost by default in the first round.[27]

As Canada was in a relationship that could not be spoken about, acknowledged or formalised, its position in the triangle was to be purposefully obscured. An alternative grouping within NATO of the United States, Britain and France was put forward as offering a better safeguard to continental security; such a tripartite alliance made the 'most obvious sense' both politically and militarily from the perspective of the Department of External Affairs. The policy paper urged its diplomats to 'be prepared to do everything' in order 'to strengthen Western Europe, but *as part of the North Atlantic community*'.[28]

For France, collaborating with the 'Anglo-Saxons' provided a cornucopia of opportunity. Of particular benefit was that it would diminish the likelihood of the United States directly collaborating with West Germany and bolstering it to take on a preponderant role in Western Europe. French statesmen held onto hope that they might assume the leadership position on the continent, and harness West Germany's rearmament by imposing restraints in the European army.

Although the British had no interest in participating in the French scheme for a European army, there was an overwhelming acceptance that cooperation with their Western European allies was essential in order for the United States to commit itself to the defence of the continent. Churchill told Pearson as much during an informal half-hour meeting they had on 24 July 1951 at the House of Commons in London; the following day, Pearson relayed the conversation to St-Laurent: 'On North Atlantic he was emphatic that anything that can be done to strengthen it and encourage USA to get stronger and whole heartedly committed to the defense of western Europe should be supported.' Churchill told Pearson that American help was necessary or else Western Europe, in the next year or two, would be a 'very easy victim' for an enemy invader.[29]

The French scheme for a European army had previously received a lukewarm reception in the United States, but a major policy shift swiftly occurred in July, when Dwight Eisenhower became the new American commander of the Supreme Allied Command of Europe (SACEUR), headquartered in Paris, and came out publicly in support of the idea. Eisenhower, along with John McCloy, the US High Commissioner to West Germany, and David Bruce, managed to persuade the Truman administration to accept the French plan for a European army as the only means to get the French to accept German rearmament. There were several American advantages to the French scheme; in particular, the European army offered dual containment in terms of keeping the Soviets out of Western Europe and keeping Germany in. Furthermore, a European army would enable the United States to withdraw its own troops from the continent and thereby reduce federal expenditures.

When Churchill's Conservative government regained leadership in the election in October, British as well as American defence expenditures were set to rise, and France was to be on the receiving end. The Mutual Security Act in October 1951 strengthened the defence of Western Europe on a reciprocal basis within NATO. This legislation featured the condition that the armed forces of any recipient be equipped for service in NATO and deployed accordingly. France received substantial defence assistance from the scheme, which enabled it to undergo a major expansion and modernisation of its armed forces, and ultimately helped in reviving its fallen status in Europe and abroad. Georges Bidault, the French minister of defence, saw to it that funding was allocated to fight against the communists in Indochina.

The French expectations, however, that the alliance with the 'Anglo-Saxons' would expedite the modernisation of its armed forces, propel it towards great-power status and allow it to maintain its besieged colonial

empire would only be partially fulfilled; moreover, the French intention to take on a position of leadership in a European defence community would not be realised. At the Lisbon Conference, from 20–25 February 1952, the United States succeeded in getting the NATO Council's endorsement for the European defence community, thereby transforming the French proposal into an American endeavour. To showcase the intended congruency between the transatlantic and European defence initiatives, it was also agreed upon at Lisbon that NATO would be headquartered in Paris.

As for the non-military dimension of the transatlantic alliance, there was a distinct lack of commitment from NATO members. Pearson presided over the Committee of Five, a group established in September 1951 and composed of the foreign ministers of Canada, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Norway, to focus on developing Article 2 of the NATO treaty that called for greater socio-economic and political cooperation among members. Reluctance ensued over being obliged to accept labour mobility within the alliance, and when the committee's report was presented at the Lisbon Conference, there was little of substance to it. The anxieties and apathy of other member states ultimately resulted in the non-military dimension of the alliance being sidelined.

The NATO alliance was to remain military in essence, and the presence of the 'Anglo-Saxons' in the defence of Western Europe gained ground on the same day that the European Defence Treaty was signed on 27 May 1952 by France, West Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries, which launched the idea of the European army. Concurrently, the Tripartite Declaration was issued in which Britain, France and the United States promised to regard a defection from the European army as a threat to their own security and take action. The United States had thereby underwritten the defence of Western Europe with its strategic nuclear force, and so too had Britain, as it was preparing to become the world's third nuclear power – a distinction which it earned upon the success of its nuclear test on 3 October 1952.

The signing of the European Defence Treaty was a landmark achievement for European integration, even if the prospects of gaining parliamentary ratification seemed to many to be poor. Over the next two years, French discomfort over the defence of Western Europe simmered. Debates raised valid points regarding the reluctance to see Germany rearmed; fear of German preponderance in the European force, particularly given that France was preoccupied with the war in Indochina and other colonial commitments; and the absence of British membership. Suspicions also grew in France that Eisenhower, inaugurated as President

in January 1953, was too keen for the European force to materialise, and that domination by the 'Anglo-Saxons' was looming.

Progress in ratifying the European Defence Treaty was disappointingly slow and, regardless of the death of Joseph Stalin in March and the armistice reached in Korea in July, the Soviet Union still represented a malicious force that remained threatening. Over the course of 1953, the Eisenhower administration undertook a revaluation of its defence programmes and shifted towards greater reliance on nuclear weapons over conventional forces. At the end of that year, from 4–8 December, the leaders of the United States, Britain and France met in Bermuda to discuss their common strategy in defending Western Europe. Taking the place of the French prime minister, who was ill, Bidault met with Eisenhower and Churchill and was subjected to an intense diatribe directed against France's resistance to German rearmament; the 'Anglo-Saxons' informed him that unless a shift in sentiment occurred in France, the entire transatlantic alliance would be destroyed.[30] Bidault remained in solidarity with his American and British colleagues at the subsequent four-power conference in Berlin that began on 23 January 1954, but the security of Western Europe remained an unresolved issue.

The objective of collaborating with France and diminishing the existence of the 'inner triangle' among the United States, Britain and Canada was intended to bring about the security of Western Europe. Canadian policymakers remained receptive to the principles outlined in the classified memorandum circulated years earlier, in spite of having swapped positions with one another. Heeney had left his work in Paris at NATO headquarters to take up the position of ambassador to the United States (1953–7), replacing Hume Wrong, who was to become Under-Secretary in Ottawa, taking over from Dana Wilgress; and Wilgress took up Heeney's former position in Paris (1953–8). As these individuals orbited around the Department of External Affairs, and others remained fixed in a given position, as was the case of Pearson, who continued to serve as Minister of External Affairs under the premiership of St-Laurent (1948–57), they were able to fulfil Churchill's earlier call for the 'constancy of mind' to feature in the conduct of diplomacy.

When Heeney delivered an address on 27 January 1954 to the Pilgrims of the United States in New York, he revisited an earlier understanding about Canada's position with respect to the other two members of the tacit 'Anglo-Saxon triangle'. He shared with his audience that the Department of External Affairs was still committed to serving as the 'interpreter' between them:

> The stake which we Canadians have in Anglo-American friendship needs sanction in no text. Since her earliest beginnings, Canada has been a party at interest in every issue, whatever its nature or origin, capable of dividing or uniting the American and British peoples. When the policies of Britain and the United States have diverged, Canadian counsels have been darkened and confused. Any disagreement on fundamentals between Washington and London has at once been reflected in embarrassment and uncertainty in Ottawa …
>
> On such occasions as this it is customary to refer to us Canadians as the interpreters in Anglo-American affairs, endowed by Providence with the gift of tongues that can be understood on both sides of the Atlantic. We can explain cricket in the language of baseball, the glories of Harvard in the idiom of Oxford. No doubt this is still true. Nor should we seek to avoid this traditional Canadian role. For we share with both Britain and the United States much that we value most – in the past and in the present …
>
> Now in this anxious atomic age our attachment to the preservation of your partnership is stronger than ever.[31]

The common threat of a Soviet attack justified the building of radar lines in the Canadian Arctic to give warning of incoming Soviet bombers. The United States shared the cost of the Pinetree line along the 49th parallel, Canada covered the cost of the mid-Canada line along the 55th parallel, and in June 1954 the proposal was put forward to build a third radar fence along the 70th parallel, which became the Distance Early Warning line, with the cost covered by the Americans.

The relations within the 'Anglo-Saxon triangle' were reinforced during a visit by Churchill to Ottawa in June. During the trip he referred to Canada as 'the master-link in Anglo-American unity' and reminded listeners at a press conference held at the Department of External Affairs that 'good continuous, intimate, trusting relations between Britain, and Canada and the United States' remained the 'foundation and security of world peace'.[32] Although Churchill was fond of using melodramatic and exaggerated language,[33] his message is sufficiently repetitive to suggest that it was marked by sincere conviction.

The intentions of the 'Anglo-Saxons' to develop a tripartite alliance with France continued even after it appeared that the European Defence Treaty would not be ratified. The new Prime Minister of France, Pierre

Mendès, offered assurances to Churchill during a meeting at his residence in Chartwell that West Germany would have to join NATO, so there was some comfort that softened the French parliament's rejection of the European Defence Treaty on 30 August 1954, which scuppered plans for a European army. The following October, West Germany was proposed for membership in NATO on the conditions that it produced no nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and that its troops would remain within the NATO structure.

The transatlantic alliance was strengthened by West Germany's inclusion, thereby easing the concern about there being 'two inner triangles' within the alliance. However, the threat of disunity within the alliance never disappeared altogether, nor did the unshakeable feeling that the 'Anglo-Saxons' had a stronger foundation for partnership and a superior vantage point from which to oversee the defence of Western Europe, which left France on the perimeter rather than in the centre. In spite of the intentional downplay of the 'Anglo-Saxon triangle', France did not find itself wholly comfortable in the folds of an 'Anglo-Saxon' embrace. By the end of the year, Mendès engaged privately with a select group of his own Cabinet ministers over the possibility of possessing a military use of nuclear energy. The highly secret meeting that took place on 26 December 1954 was motivated by a begrudging understanding that the world was divided between those that possessed nuclear power and those that did not, and he sought for France to join the higher ranks as soon as possible – irrespective of the anticipated dissent from the 'Anglo-Saxons'.

Being helpful during the Suez Crisis

The Suez Crisis is one of the best-known disputes in which the governments of the United States and Britain were at loggerheads. Once President Abdel Nasser nationalized the canal in July 1956, British strategists came together with their French and Israeli counterparts to conjure a plan to dispose of him. Anthony Nutting, the British Deputy Foreign Secretary, has provided much of what is known of the plan to counter the crisis.[34] A series of confidential meetings held at Chequers resulted in the plan for Israeli forces to attack Egypt across the Sinai Peninsula, thereby seizing the disputed area. Britain and France could subsequently order a withdrawal of the forces, and then occupy the canal under the pretence of safeguarding it from further fighting. The plan, known as Operation Musketeer, was put into play on 29 October, when the Israeli military

moved against Egypt and towards the canal. As anticipated, Nasser did not abide by the Anglo-French ultimatum to withdraw ten miles from the Canal, and so on 31 October Britain and France forcibly intervened and began to bomb selected points.

In the United States, the Eisenhower administration took the stance that the British had behaved like an imperial power, which was 'rough' and 'unacceptable'. The Americans, in the closing days of a presidential election campaign, were particularly incensed that their friends had launched an attack without prior consultation. Canada's position was extremely awkward, as public opinion was divided between those inclined to compare Nasser to Hitler and applaud the Anglo-French assault, and the others who bemoaned the use of force against an emerging state.[35] Added to the political sensitivity of this situation in Canada was that both aggressors involved were 'mother countries' that pulled upon emotive bonds of kinship.

Lester Pearson, in a telegram sent to Prime Minister Anthony Eden, urged the necessity of an Anglo-American convergence. In his words, it would be a 'tragedy beyond repair' if their relationship were to weaken, as it would jeopardize the peacefulness of the world:

> The deplorable divergence of viewpoint and policy between the United Kingdom and the United States in regard to the decisions that have been taken, and the procedure followed, is something that will cause as much satisfaction to the Soviet Union and its supporters as it does distress to all those who believe that Anglo-American co-operation and friendship is the very foundation of our hopes for progress toward a peaceful and secure world. That co-operation and friendship, which you yourself have done so much to promote, has now served the world well for many years. It would be a tragedy beyond repair if it were now to disappear, or even to be weakened. It is hard for a Canadian to think of any consideration – other than national survival or safety – as more important. This aspect of the situation is very much in our minds here at the moment, as I know it must be in yours.[36]

Over the next few days while Britain and France flouted the UN demand for a ceasefire, Pearson worked with the UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld to develop the proposal for a peacekeeping force. Pearson presented the resolution on 3 November, and without opposition from the Assembly, it was passed in the early morning hours of 4 November

by a vote of 57–0 with nineteen abstentions. Nutting later reflected that Pearson 'had thrown us a straw and we were clutching at it in a desperate attempt to extricate ourselves from our predicament'.[37]

The proactive leadership of the Canadian government was praised around the world, and on 6 November Eisenhower called St-Laurent to offer his thanks for 'a magnificent job'. Domestically, however, many Canadians claimed that Canada had sold out Britain in its hour of need. The aim of the Department of External Affairs' Suez policy had not been anti-British, but rather, as long-time civil servant John Holmes later reflected, they had been trying 'to rescue the old lady from an unfortunate and uncharacteristic aberration'.[38] Pearson also reflected with a feeling of certainty that the British government was 'grateful' for the line followed.[39] The Canadian government's role in resolving the Suez Crisis was part of their long-term international foreign policy strategy in bringing about, and maintaining, Anglo-American amity.

Conclusion: bona fide evidence of the triangle's post-war existence?

Brebner's *North Atlantic Triangle* received praise from academics immediately following its publication, but the matter of the triangle's existence was only vaguely treated in the book. Brebner himself suggested a few years later, in 1948, that the 'triangle' was 'changing'; Canada, he observed, was seeking political commitments elsewhere, most notably through its membership in the United Nations, and in actively providing military guarantees to Western Europe.[40] Since then, scholarly accounts of the triangle during the early years of the Cold War have pointed to an absence of close personal ties between the political leaders of the three countries, which made relations less intimate than they had once been.[41] Historians continue to grapple with the presumed existence of the triangle, with one scholar memorably likening it to the smile of the Cheshire cat – as both seem to be characterised by their very act of disappearing.[42] This article has argued that part of the difficulty in being able to detect the triangle is due to the intentional practice by the Department of External Affairs to keep it out of public view.

The classified policy paper that was circulated to the heads of Canadian posts abroad in July 1951 provides conclusive evidence that Canadian policymakers operated with an understanding that an 'inner triangle' existed within NATO, and that their foreign policy objective

was to draw together British and American foreign policies. This finding directly challenges the conclusions reached by historians Lawrence Aronsen and Brian J. C. McKercher in *The North Atlantic Triangle in a Changing World*, who surmised that the triangle never existed 'much – if ever – in the political realm'.[43] These scholars argued that in the post-war years, 'Canada made it abundantly clear that it would no longer assume Mackenzie King's version of the linchpin role'.[44] Their assumption, however, that Canada's foreign policy objective was markedly different in the post-war years does not stand up to historical evidence.

A suggestion has been made by political scientist David G. Haglund that the triangle remained a 'cognitive reality' for Canadian policymakers into the years of the Cold War, a proposition that is supported here.[45] Scholarship from political psychology informs us that policymakers have an understanding of their country's role in the world rooted not only in formative events, but also in personalities of the distant and recent past, and in culturally derived conceptions of national conduct.[46] It is believed that this understanding of the part their country plays on the international stage endures cognitively and provides a sort of road map that can be relied upon as a template for action. While ready-made beliefs can change incrementally, policymakers tend to make 'superficial alterations' rather than rethink their fundamental assumptions.[47] As put forward here, the 'Anglo-Saxon triangle' featured in the thoughts of post-war Canadian policymakers but it was deliberately downplayed due to the opinion of the Department of External Affairs that there were dangers involved in having it conjured in the minds of the public.

The Canadian policy of obscuring the existence of the 'Anglo-Saxon triangle' and encouraging collaboration with France was intended to bring about greater security. John Holmes, in a newspaper article he wrote for the *Financial Post* in 1964, openly referred to the existence of the triangle: 'The conception of the Atlantic as a link rather than as barrier, the idea of an oceanic association of kindred peoples had always been implicit in our ties with Britain, France, and the U.S. in the Atlantic Triangle.'[48] In a book published years later, he further attested that the triangle had validity, but that it had been politically unfashionable to refer to it. There had been, he admitted, 'a unique element of commitment, priority and candour in the relations of the United States, Britain, and Canada; an element rooted in habit and history, a fact of life – not a contract'.[49] A special relationship among the 'Anglo-Saxons' could not be made public, whether by official acknowledgement, or by an institutionalised tripartite alliance.

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Research ethics statement

Not applicable to this article.

Consent for publication statement

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The author declares no conflict of interest with this work. All efforts to sufficiently anonymise the author during peer review of this article have been made. The author declares no further conflicts with this article.

Notes

1 Brebner, *North Atlantic Triangle*. The historical text provides an account of relations between Britain and North America from 1492 to 1942. The monograph was the final volume in a series of some 25 volumes, 'The Relations of Canada and the United States', which was funded by the Carnegie Endowment in 1933. Brebner and his colleague at Columbia University, James T. Shotwell, gathered the list of contributing authors and headed the project, which included several biennial conferences.

2 F. Cyril James, *Survey Graphic* (2 January 1946), John Bartlet Brebner Papers, Box 6, folder 'Triangle Reviews', University Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

3 Departmental Policy Papers: Western Europe and the North Atlantic Community, 29 June 1951, Secret, in Library Archives Canada, Escott Meredith Reid fonds, MG31 E46, Vol. 7.

4 Many of King's speeches touched upon this theme; see in particular his 'Citizenship' speech delivered at Kitchener, Ontario; Old Boys' Reunion, 4 August 1925, in King, *Message of the Carillon*, 148–9.
5 J. T. Shotwell to J. B. Brebner, 8 September 1942, John Bartlet Brebner Papers, Box 10, University Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University in the city of New York; and J. T. Shotwell to J. B. Brebner, no date, John Bartlet Brebner Papers, Box 12, folder 'Criticisms, etc', University Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.
6 Frank H. Underhill, 'Review of J. B. Brebner's *North Atlantic Triangle*', *University of Toronto Quarterly* (January 1946), John Bartlet Brebner Papers, Box 6, University Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.
7 Address given at dinner in Francis Marion Hotel in Charleston, South Carolina, 20 February 1946, Library and Archives Canada, Lester B. Pearson fonds, MG26-N9 Vol. 1 'Speeches', file: '7 Feb. 1946 to 6 Sept. 1946'.
8 Address entitled 'UNO as seen from Canada', delivered before English-Speaking Union, Princeton, NJ, 13 May 1946, Library and Archives Canada, Lester B. Pearson fonds, MG26-N9 Vol. 1 'Speeches', file: '7 Feb. 1946 to 6 Sept. 1946'.
9 Lippmann, *Cold War*.
10 X [Kennan], 'Sources of Soviet conduct', 575.
11 Zeeman and Wiebes, 'Pentagon negotiations'; Folly, 'Breaking the vicious circle'. The Canadian perspective is provided in Mackenzie, 'North Atlantic Triangle'.
12 Massey, *On Being Canadian*, 90.
13 Mackenzie, 'Knight errant'.
14 Address entitled 'Some Principles of Canadian Foreign Policy', given at the Annual Conference of Canadian Institute of International Affairs, Vancouver, 21 June 1948, Library and Archives Canada, Lester B. Pearson fonds, MG26-N9 Vol. 1 'Speeches', file: '11 Jan. 1947 to Dec. 1948'.
15 At a meeting of high commissioners in London on 28 June 1948, four days after the Soviet blockade had begun, Bevin told Robertson that any assistance from other countries in providing transport aircraft would be gratefully appreciated. MacLaren, *Commissioners High*, 426. King's distaste towards Canada's participation is recorded in his diary, 30 June 1948.
16 Address entitled 'The Kingdom of Canada', delivered at the National War College, Washington, DC, on Monday 25 October 1948, Library and Archives Canada, A. D. P. Heeney fonds, MG30 E144, Vol. 11, File 'Speeches 1946–1953 General.'
17 A broadcast by Mr. L. B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, delivered over the Trans-Canada Network of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation at 7:45 p.m. on Thursday 20 January 1929, Library and Archives Canada, Escott Meredith Reid fonds, MG31 E46, Vol. 7.
18 Adenauer, *Memoirs*, 202.
19 Monnet, *Memoirs*, 289.
20 Trachtenberg, *Constructed Peace*, 117.
21 Gelber, 'Britain versus Europe'.
22 Draft covering letter for the memorandum on re-examining the UN, Holmes to Reid, 29 December 1950, Secret, in Library and Archives Canada, Statements and Assessments of Canada's Policy Towards the UN, RG25 Vol. 6460 file 5475-FA-40, pt. 1.1.
23 Re-examination of the United Nations in light of the reverse in Korea, from the Canadian Permanent Delegation, Geneva, to the Under-Secretary of State

for External Affairs, 18 January 1951, Secret, in Library and Archives Canada, Statements and Assessments of Canada's Policy Towards the UN, RG25 Vol. 6460 file 5475-FA-40, pt. 1.2.

24 Cited in Milloy, *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, 72–3.

25 Departmental Policy Papers: Western Europe and the North Atlantic Community, 29 June 1951, Secret, in Library Archives Canada, Escott Meredith Reid fonds, MG31 E46, Vol. 7.

26 Departmental Policy Papers: Western Europe and the North Atlantic Community, 29 June 1951, Secret, in Library Archives Canada, Escott Meredith Reid fonds, MG31 E46, Vol. 7, 10.

27 Departmental Policy Papers: Western Europe and the North Atlantic Community, 29 June 1951, Secret, in Library Archives Canada, Escott Meredith Reid fonds, MG31 E46, Vol. 7, 12–13.

28 Departmental Policy Papers: Western Europe and the North Atlantic Community, 29 June 1951, Secret, in Library Archives Canada, Escott Meredith Reid fonds, MG31 E46, Vol. 7, 15 (emphasis in the original).

29 Letter from Mr Pearson to Mr St-Laurent, dated 25 July 1951, University of British Columbia Library, Rare Book and Special Collections, John Munro papers, Vol. 12, file 16 'Diary by Pearson: Trip to Western Europe in July 1951'.

30 Hitchcock, *France Restored*, 184–5.

31 Speech entitled 'Canada and Anglo-American Friendship', delivered to the Pilgrims of the United States in New York, NY, 27 January 1954, Library and Archives Canada, MG30 E144, A. D. P. Heeney papers, Vol. 11, file 'Speeches as Ambassador to US 1953–March 1954'.

32 Cited in Dilks, *Great Dominion*, 415, 422.

33 Weidhorn, 'Churchill the phrase forger'.

34 Nutting, *No End of a Lesson*, 93.

35 For an examination of Canadian public opinion during the crisis, see Earys, 'Canadian Policy and Opinion During the Suez Crisis', 102–8; Igartua, '"Ready, Aye, Ready"'.

36 Pearson, *Mike*, 239.

37 Nutting, *No End of a Lesson*, 134.

38 Holmes, 'The Anglo–Canadian Neurosis', 256.

39 Pearson, *Mike*, 274.

40 Brebner, 'Changing North Atlantic Triangle'.

41 Thornton, 'Ernest Bevin; Aronsen, 'From World War to Cold War'.

42 Stewart, '*What* North Atlantic Triangle?'

43 Aronsen and McKercher, *North Atlantic Triangle*, 8.

44 Aronsen and McKercher, 'Afterword', *North Atlantic Triangle*, 264.

45 Haglund, 'North Atlantic Triangle revisited', 14. To validate Haglund's suggestion that the triangle was a 'cognitive reality' for Canadian policymakers, I conducted a study into the minds of five Canadian prime ministers from John A. Macdonald to Pierre Elliott Trudeau, using qualitative content analysis; see Silver, *Canada's Role in International Relations*.

46 See, for example, Vertzberger, *World in Their Minds*, 260–95.

47 Hudson, 'Cultural expectations', 769; Stein, 'Foreign policy decision-making', 104–6.

48 Newspaper article by John W. Holmes entitled 'Good Reason for Us to Stay Canadian', *Financial Post*, pages 2–3, 9 May 1964, Library and Archives Canada, MG30 E144, A. D. P. Heeney papers, Vol. 3, file 'Canada–U.S. Relations 1964–1967 Miscellaneous clippings, speeches and articles'.

49 Holmes, *Better Part of Valour*, 157.

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