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**CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY:
THE CASES OF CUBA AND CHINA**

by

Ross Strick

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
through the Department of Political Science
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts at the
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the international human rights policy of Canada with respect to that of the United States. The assumption is made that given the fact that Canada and the United States share many similarities with respect to culture and ideology, the human rights policies which they adopt should also be very similar. Furthermore, given the importance of the United States for Canada in terms of economics and security, it is assumed that Canada will tend to follow the lead of the United States. This paper, therefore, seeks to test these assumptions by using a case study method.

Chapter One provides a general outline of the concept of human rights by examining existing literature on the subject. It shows that human rights are difficult to define in concrete terms and that there is a subjective nature to the entire concept.

The second part of Chapter One outlines the major considerations involved in the Canadian foreign policy decision making process. These are the variables which either support or deter adopting a human rights policy which is similar to that of the United States.

Chapter Two examines the variables which affected the policies Canada adopted with respect to Cuba in 1961 (in response to the Bay of Pigs invasion and the American embargo) and China in 1961 (which prompted the Canadian wheat sales to China). In

both of these cases it was found that the variables exerted such pressure on the Canadian government as to produce a policy which was in direct conflict with the policy adopted by the United States.

Chapter Three examines the variables which affected the policies Canada adopted with respect to Cuba in 1996 (in response to the American Helms-Burton law) and China in 1989 (in response to the Tiananmen Square massacre). It was found that in the case of Cuba (1996) the variables combined to lead the Canadian government to take a position which openly contradicted that of the United States. In the case of China (1989) the policies of Canada and the United States were virtually identical.

Chapter Four attempts to identify a dominant variable which led Canadian governments to adopt policies contrary to those of the United States in spite of the numerous commonalities between them. It concludes that while the variables are inconsistent between cases, Canadian policy consistently follows a principle of constructive engagement. This is in direct conflict with American policy, which tended to be of an isolating nature.

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Any errors or omissions are entirely the responsibility of the author.

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CHAPTER 1: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine Canadian human rights foreign policy with respect to the United States. Canada and the United States share the longest undefended border in the world. The two countries are bound tightly together by economics, security, ideology and culture. It is therefore easy to assume that Canada and the United States will adopt similar policies on a number of issues (given the similarity of the influences acting on the two countries). This study tests this assumption as it relates to the efforts made by each country to promote human rights in Cuba and China and seeks to explain why these policies may diverge.

To fulfill this task, it is first necessary to provide background information on the key concepts involved. This chapter, therefore, will provide a general overview of the nature of human rights. It will also examine the key factors which influence the Canadian government in the foreign policy decision-making process.

The Nature of Human Rights

Although the term 'human rights' has only recently come into vogue in international relations literature, it is in fact a fairly old concept. At its very heart, it asks the question "what rights is a person entitled to based on the person's membership in the human race?" Some scholars would argue that people have been asking this question for centuries.¹

For example, the ancient Greeks produced a code of laws which, in effect, answered the question, (though it should be noted that non-Greeks were seen as less 'human', thus not entitled to enjoy the rights outlined in the laws). However, in spite of its lack of universality, the Greek code of laws produced a very basic set of what could be called human rights. They were simple in that they were laws that seemed rather obvious, such as: if a Greek murders another Greek, that person should be punished. The code of laws (and many that followed) drew upon what is now known as "natural law".²

The concept of 'natural law', which emanated not from the minds of man but from some higher power, be it God or nature or something else (depending on the culture in question), was slowly 'discovered' over the years by various philosophers. The most influential for human rights were the early liberals. Authors

¹J. Roland Pennock and John Chapman Human Rights (New York: New York University Press, 1981), pg.1

²Ibid.,pg.2.

such as John Locke in his work The Two Treatises of Government (1688) established the role of the individual and that of society. Basically it was argued that humans are free to do as they wish provided they respect "a natural right to execute the natural law".³ In fact, society and government were formed in order to more effectively protect the natural rights of the individual.

This concept was key to the Western ideology because it subordinated the government and the collective to the individual. Government existed for the sole purpose of providing a restraining role on the individual so that the individual did not violate the natural law. In short the government acted to bound an individual's freedom to the point where he/she could act however the person wished but could not go so far as to infringe upon the rights of others. The liberal ideology, therefore stated that people could have as much as they wanted, or do whatever they wanted provided that in undertaking that action "there is enough and as good left in common for others".⁴

Further theoretical support for the Western view of human rights can be found in the works of Sir William Blackstone, such as his Commentaries on the Laws of England (1769). He argued that there were three principal rights of man: the right to

³Jack Donnelly Universal Human Rights In Theory and Practice (London: Cornell University Press, 1989), pg.89.

⁴Ibid.,pg.94.

security of person, the right to personal liberty and the right to private property.⁵ Each of these are individual, as apposed to collective rights as they outline what society must allow an individual to do or have.

In human rights terms, the Western view is said to emphasize the 'civil' and 'political' aspects of human rights. Since this paper endeavours to examine the policies of the Canadian government (with comparisons being made to those of the United States), it will be accepted that the 'civil' and 'political' aspects of human rights are the defining ones. Countries which violate these rights will be seen as being in need of reform. Although this assumption is required in order to conduct the study, it must be noted that the field of human rights is not confined to an entirely western liberal interpretation.

The communist interpretation presents a very different view of human rights. The communist ideology is based upon collectivism and society rather than individualism. Therefore, a collectivist view of human rights is also favoured. The focus is placed on 'cultural' and 'economic' rights which stress the equality of existence rather than equality of opportunity.⁶

Another key aspect of human rights which will be prominent

⁵Robert O. Matthews and Crawford Pratt Human Rights in Canadian Foreign Policy, (Kingston: Queens's University Press, 1988), pg.35.

⁶Kathleen E. Mahoney, "Human Rights and Canadian Foreign Policy", *International Journal* (Summer 1992), pg.560.

in this study is the concept of self-determination and freedom from outside intervention. The idea of intervention has been a very thorny one in practice. There are two reasons for this. First of all, intervention implies a forced reforming of another society. The foundation of intervention is the hotly debated view of the universality of human rights. The universalist argument is that the rights of a Nigerian, Iraqi or Brazilian should be no different from those of a Canadian or American because people are defined not by nationality or culture but by membership in the human race. Therefore, countries which violate the so-called universal standard of human rights justifiably face foreign intervention. If there was indeed a set universal standard for human rights, this concept would be far more credible. However, it is extremely difficult to establish a concrete definition of human rights which is universally excepted and enacted. Instead, the universalist position is constantly challenged by those who believe that humans are differentiated by the culture in which they live. This 'cultural absolutism' argument proposes that "culture is the sole source of the validity of a moral right or rule".⁷ This concept has been argued many times by Third World countries afraid of western moral imperialism. In the San Jose Declaration of (January) 1993 a group of Latin American countries argued for a "respect for

⁷Rhoda Howard Human Rights and the Search for Community (Boulder Colorado: Westview Press, 1995), pg.52.

pluralism and the principles of national sovereignty, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and self-determination".⁸ A like-minded group of Asian states issued their own statement in Bangkok in March 1993. The statement read that "while Human Rights are universal in nature, they must be considered in the context of a dynamic and evolving process of international norm-setting, bearing in mind the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical and religious backgrounds".⁹ Morality, therefore, changes with culture and human rights cannot be anything other than what the people in that culture will it to be. Justification can be made, therefore, for virtually any act, so long as the people of the affected culture accept the act as just. For example, Koranic Law is often seen as savage and brutal in the western world but since it is viewed as being just by the people who live under it, it can be justified. As author Loretta Lynn Rose argued, since the leaders responsible for forming and enforcing the supposed violations also accept the policy and are subjected to it, it passes the "Golden Rule" of human rights and is not a

⁸Christina M. Cerna, "Universality of Human Rights and Cultural Diversity: Implementation of Human Rights in Different Socio-Cultural Contexts," *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol.16 No.4 (Nov.1994), pg.743.

⁹Ibid.

violation.¹⁰

The principle of non-intervention is not entirely alien to western philosophy either. Indeed, in his work, Locke discussed the social contract between the people and their leaders. It was argued that in order that the government have the ability to restrict individual actions to within the natural law, individuals had to give up some of their freedoms to the government. The government, therefore had a mandate to rule the people by whatever means it desired. If those means were viewed as unacceptable by the people, they had to nullify the social contract by taking back their freedoms (through a revolution). If the people did not overthrow the government by internal revolt, the social contract was still valid and the government could continue to rule as it wished.

Regardless of which idea is used, the end result is still the same. It is the people within the country which must decide if a government is to be deposed. Foreign intervention to overthrow a government which has the support of the majority of the people infringes on a basic human right : the right to self-determination. This right, like most rights, is subject to debate. However, for this study, it will be accepted as a possible human rights element. Therefore, if a country chooses to undertake an interventionist action in another country, with

¹⁰Loretta Lynn Rose "Foreign Aid and Human Rights." *International Perspectives* (November 1986), pg.23.

the objective of altering or deposing the government in power, then that is, in effect, a violation of the rights of the people of the country in which that intervention occurs.

Indeed, the idea of self-determination has another aspect which poses problems for human rights intervention; that of sovereignty. The international state system, as it exists today, places a very high regard on the concept of state sovereignty. As a result a strong intervention can be seen as a violation of international law. A relatively new phenomenon, humanitarian intervention, appears to be an exception to this rule. Humanitarian intervention is a violation of the sovereignty of another country in order to pursue goals which benefit primarily (if not entirely) the citizens of the violated country.¹¹ This, of course creates a problem in itself as it is often difficult to gauge when someone is better off. For example, is replacing a corrupt semi-democratic regime with a socialist one an improvement or vice versa? Different states may take different views. Michael Levitin proposed a "liberation of Paris Principle" whereby "if people throw flowers", the intervention is

¹¹Hedley Bull Intervention In World Politics (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), pg.159.
(Note: Bull refers to Collective Intervention with humanitarian purposes rather than unilateral humanitarian intervention)

lawful and "if they throw anything else", it is not.¹²

The United Nations has been active in the field of human rights, both in terms of intervention and definition. However, even this body has had many problems in this area. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1966 Covenants on Economic and Social and Political and Civil rights were impressive documents. They outlined a fairly clear set of standards which formed what could be considered a universal standard. Indeed, as Article 1 of the Declaration stated: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."¹³ In spite of this, however, the 'universal standard' has not been universally applied. Many states objected to the Westernness of the civil and political rights. For example, Articles 16 and 18 of the Declaration of Universal Human Rights were seen to interfere with Moslem faith.¹⁴ Furthermore, many western scholars¹⁵ argued that the

¹²Freidrich Kratochwil "Sovereignty as Dominion: Is There a Right of Humanitarian Intervention?" in Beyond Westphalia? State Sovereignty and International Intervention. Gene M. Lyons and Michael Mastanduno ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), pg.35.

¹³Quoted from Calvin Lake The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: A Discussion (Fredericton: Canadian Human Rights Foundation, 1978), pg.25.

¹⁴Ibid., pg.27.

¹⁵Such as Maurice Cranston, Sir Hersch Lauterpacht, L.C. Greene, Maxwell Cohen, Louis B. John (see Lake p.31-36)

economic rights were of little consequence as they were unenforceable. This has made them largely ineffective.¹⁶

Enforceability is a very difficult issue. The UN documents formed a sort of utopian vision which may not be attainable in reality. In the real world, choices must often be made between rights. For example, the United States raised no objection to the Economic and Social Covenant¹⁷ yet its decisions have favoured Political and Civil rights over those of the Economic and Social Covenant.¹⁸

The Foreign Policy Process in Canada

Canada is an open, democratic country which has extensive international ties and membership in numerous organizations. Because of this, there are many different influences at work on the government for any foreign policy decision (and human rights decisions are not exempt from this). Therefore, before examining the strength of these factors in Canadian human rights foreign policy, it is important to examine how they affect policy making in general. To do this, a survey of the literature produced by

¹⁶Jon Faulds, The Law of Nature and the Law of Nations (Edmonton: Canadian Human Rights Foundation, 1978), pg.1.

¹⁷United Nations Monthly Chronicle (United Nations Office of Public Information) Vol. III No. 11, December 1966, pg.80-83.

¹⁸As shown by its opposition to socialist states.

Canadian foreign policy scholars is required.

The first set of influences which will be examined can be grouped together as the domestic sources. The domestic influences are extremely important in a country like Canada because the policy makers must answer to the people for all decisions through the electoral process. As well, globalization and economic interdependence have created a blending of foreign and domestic concerns. No longer is a country such as China a far-off state which can be ignored by the population of Canada. Canadian citizens have concerns in the foreign realm and these concerns must be addressed by the government. Indeed, the claim has been made that "the traditional distinction between foreign policy and domestic policy implies a hard and fast dividing line that no longer exists".¹⁹ Rather than focussing simply on traditional issues such as war and peace, government must also deal with such matters as refugees, capital flows, trade and trade barriers, currency management and other matters of 'low politics' which affect both the domestic and international system. This has allowed for a greater role for domestic sources in shaping foreign policy.²⁰

¹⁹Canadian Department of External Affairs, Statements and Speeches 1979/6, March 5 1979,4.

²⁰Kim Richard Nossal "Analysing the Domestic Sources of Canadian Foreign Policy" *International Journal* Vol. 39 (Winter 1983), pg.9.

Public Opinion

The first factor of note is general public opinion. This is the pressure placed on the government by various sections of the public regardless of those persons' motives for applying the pressure. Simply put, a portion of the Canadian public holds a certain view on a subject and that view is made known to the government in power. It is not really necessary to ascertain why the public has formed this view to examine its impact.²¹

Indeed, the number of people who contribute to foreign policy formation is vast. As former Undersecretary of State for External Affairs Allan Gotlieb noted: "those who contribute to policy formulation (are) parliamentarians, provincial officials, journalists, academics, business or labour leaders."²² These people are in turn influenced by the general public as "in an open society like (Canada), the interest and concerns of the public as a whole must be reflected in foreign policy".²³

As well, the media (whether print or electronic) appears to have an important role in the formation of public opinion. It serves to put items on the agenda and to get people to think

²¹A further discussion of possible reasons for the formation of certain views will be discussed later in this chapter.

²²Canadian Department of External Affairs Statements and Speeches 79/11 Feb.15, 1979, 7.

²³Ibid.

about them.²⁴ Often, the media serves as the key source of information available to the public. Hence the opinions expressed therein, have a great impact on the opinions on the people (especially if no alternative source of information is available upon which to base judgement as is often the case in foreign policy issues where first-hand knowledge is rare).²⁵ It is therefore rare that the views expressed in the media will be completely out of step with the views of the general public on foreign affairs issues.

One scholar who has devoted much attention to the impact of public opinion on Canadian foreign policy is Kim Richard Nossal. He offers a number of different possible roles for the public in the decision making process. The Pluralist interpretation, for example, proposes that "state activity is the aggregate of diverse interests and preferences of civil society".²⁶ Under such a belief, the role of the public is the decisive factor in policy formation. This allows for a strong role for interest groups.

Compared to their American counterparts (where the system is very susceptible to lobbying) Canadian interest groups appear

²⁴Walter I. Romanow and Walter C. Soderlund Media Canada (Toronto: Copp Clark Ltd., 1996), pg.71.

²⁵John Eldridge Getting the Message (London: Routledge, 1993), pg. 25-27.

²⁶Nossal "Analysing the Domestic Sources of Canadian Foreign Policy", pg.3.

small and weak. This is not entirely true, however. Pressure groups have a great deal of sway in Canada as well. In some cases, the input of pressure groups is gladly received by the government. This stems from a view that "organizations do not so much create values as embody them".²⁷ Thus interest groups can serve a very important function by communicating to the government the views of key elements of society. Indeed, the claim has been made that "pressure groups are frequently the most reliable and the best-informed link between government agencies and the portions of the public that they particularly serve".²⁸ Thus the unfavourable image of pressure groups is misleading. Indeed, the view that pressure groups simply act for their own benefit is difficult to reconcile with the context of human rights. Clearly business interest groups may serve to impede the implementation of human rights actions if these damage economic relationships. However, issue specific interest groups (which tend to be the dominant type in this study) tend to be more 'grass roots' based, lacking the organization and long range goals of more institutionalized groups.²⁹ Thus they are more 'public', reflecting attitudes rather than moulding them.

²⁷A. Paul Pross Pressure Group Behaviour in Canadian Politics (McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1975), pg.10.

²⁸A. Paul Pross "Pressure Groups: Talking Chameleons" in Canadian Politics in the 1990's Michael S. Whittington and Glen Williams, ed. (Scarborough, Ont: Nelson Canada, 1990), pg.287.

²⁹Ibid., pg.294.

The impact of public opinion and pressure groups is not absolute, however. In fact, Nossal also outlines the other extreme - the Statist Approach which views the government as being composed of people "charged with making authoritative decisions for the polity" and that they are "not mere automata, robotically pursuing the interests dictated to them by others" but people with their own views of how things should be done and act on their own beliefs more than those of the public.³⁰ The reality of the situation no doubt lies somewhere between the two extremes though it cannot be said to be constant. The degree to which the public will be able to effect policy will change with governments. As well, the degree to which the government seeks to mould public opinion will also change. While some governments are more inclined to listen to the public, others focus on shaping and controlling public opinion. Such tactics have been applied to Canadian policy for many years. Walter Lippman wrote in 1925: "The public must be put in its place so that it may exercise its powers, but no less and perhaps even more so that each of us may live free of the trampling and the roar of a bewildered herd."³¹ This leads to the second major influence on

³⁰Kim Richard Nossal The Politics of Canadian Foreign Policy (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1989), pg.10.

³¹Walter Lippman The Phantom Public (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1925), pg.155 as quoted in Robert Bothwell and John English "The view from inside out: Canadian Diplomats and their Public" *International Journal* Vol. 39 (Winter 1984), pg.58.

foreign policy - the government itself.³²

As noted by John Kirton and Blair Dimock: "A Prime Minister and his colleagues can enter office with an extensive or limited array of societal contacts and experience. Their beliefs and circumstances can lead them to open or closed styles of government with more or less attention devoted to the substance and forms of consulting the governed."³³ Hence it is important to have an understanding of the openness of the government in order to draw any meaningful conclusions on the impact of public opinion on the decision making process. A government which possesses a strong majority in the House of Commons may not have to devote a great deal of concern to public opinion for a number of years (until later in its mandate when an election starts to draw near).³⁴ As well, public opinion can be overridden if the government in power views the issue as being 'too important' to be left to the whim of the people, as noted by Deputy Minister de Montigny Marchand (1983). "[The Government] can listen and we can

³²The term 'government' will be meant to include the Prime Minister and Cabinet first and foremost. However, also included are the backbenchers (in so far as they influence policy) and the chief bureaucrats and civil servants.

³³John Kirkton and Blair Dimock "Domestic Access to Government in the Canadian Foreign Policy Process 1968-82" *International Journal*. Vol. 39 (Winter 1984) pg.70-71.

³⁴This is not to say that public opinion will not be a factor in the decision making process, only that the emphasis placed upon it may be greatly reduced. As a result it becomes a less important influence.

accommodate, to some extent we can even manage certain contradictions, but we cannot avoid the overriding need for a policy which is a coherent synthesis of national interests and priorities. There will be times when government exercises its leadership somewhat ahead of public opinion."³⁵

Government Views of the Relationship with the United States

The views which the leadership of the Canadian government has with respect to the United States are a key consideration in examining Canadian human rights foreign policy. Since the Prime Minister and his/her cabinet play a very important role in the country's foreign policy, the views and opinions which they hold will tend to be reflected in foreign policy. In this sense, the personal views and experiences of the key decision makers is of pivotal importance. For example, the personal relationship between two leaders can sometimes have an extremely important impact on international relations. In the context of Canadian-American relations, one needs only look at the difference between the Trudeau-Reagan relationship and that of Mulroney-Reagan. By most accounts, Trudeau and Reagan had little affection for one another and the relationship between the two countries was relatively strained at that time. Trudeau was not the 'Cold Warrior' that Reagan was and the fundamental difference in views

³⁵De Montigny Marchand "Foreign Policy and Public Interest" *International Perspectives* (July 1983), pg.9.

which the two leaders possessed made for a strained personal relationship. Mulroney and Reagan, conversely, had a very good personal relationship and the result was the re-establishment of the Canada-US 'special relationship' and relative policy coherence and tolerance.³⁶

The view which the Canadian leadership takes with regards to the United States will affect the way in which other countries are viewed. If the leadership is strongly pro-American (seeking to expand ties with the US) then the relative importance of other countries will be reduced. If the leadership is strongly anti-American (fearing dominance by the US) then the relative importance of other countries will be greater as Canada seeks to diversify its relations. For example, Latin America was viewed with greater interest by Trudeau than by Mulroney in part because Trudeau was more receptive to the idea that Canada and Latin America had much in common as middle powers dominated by the United States.³⁷

However, while government policy may be coloured by the general views of the decision makers, there are many more tangible factors which must also be considered. While general

³⁶Stephen Clarkson "Canada-US Relations and the Changing of the Guard in Ottawa." in Canada Among Nations 1984 Brian Tomlin & Maureen Mott ed. (Toronto: James Lorimer and Co., 1977) pg.158-161.

³⁷Edgar J. Dosman "Canada and Latin America: The New Look." *International Journal*, Vol. 48. (Summer 1992), pg.530-536.

views will cause policy makers to lean in a certain direction, these 'leanings' must have justification in order to form into policy. For indeed, if the tangible costs of a policy are excessive, it will be very difficult to justify the implementation of that policy in absence of visible benefits.

Economics

One of the 'tangible' factors which affect policy is economics. In the period under examination, (1960-present) international trade grew substantially. With faster transportation, greatly increased communications, increasing financial maturity and greater specialization, international trade has become faster, safer and more important. Canada, especially, has become a trade dependent country. There are two important facets of this relationship. First, since Canada trades heavily, it will be economically sensitive to disruptions in its world trade. Second, since Canada is only a middle power, it lacks the ability to economically dominate another country to the same extent as the United States. In effect Canada's world trade puts it in an interesting position. It has the ability to impose sanctions on a large number of countries (given its numerous trade relationships) but lacks the ability to impose devastating sanctions (because the trade is not vital to the survival of its trade partners). As pointed out by Nossal, the economic relationships of Canada allow it to undertake a 'Rain

Dance' whereby it uses sanctions to give the impression that it is punishing another country without actually causing any great harm to either itself or the target.³⁸ In short, the effectiveness is secondary to the impression that something is being done. However, it should be noted that Canada is sensitive to disruptions in trade especially to non-industrialized or non-Western regions. Trade with these areas tends to focus on agriculture, making it a politically sensitive area.³⁹

Trade and economic relations are not only a motivating (or deterring factor) when it comes to human rights, but it is also recognized as a possible tool for human rights promotion. As pointed out by Thomas d'Aquina, President of the Business Council on National Issues, trade can promote openness, transparency and accountability as well as raise the standard of living in poorer countries.⁴⁰ ⁴¹ Each of these functions promote good governance and adherence to human rights.⁴² Indeed, this sentiment was voiced by Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy in a February

³⁸Kim Richard Nossal, Rain Dancing: Sanctions in Canadian and Australian Foreign Policy, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), pg.29.

³⁹Ibid., pg.17.

⁴⁰Gerald Schmitz and Corinne McDonald Human Rights, Global Markets: Some Issues and Challenges for Canadian Foreign Policy. (Ottawa: Canada Communication Group, 1996), pg.2.

⁴¹Note: poverty is often seen as a root cause of human rights abuses. For further discussion of causes see below.

⁴²Schmitz and McDonald Human Rights, Global Markets, pg.2.

1996 speech in which he stated that "respect for human rights is a critical component of the Canadian identity and therefore must play an important role in our foreign policy agenda" and that "both trade and the promotion of human rights can serve the same purpose -- namely bettering the well-being of individuals".⁴³

However, the link between trade and human rights promotion is one which is very questionable. In many cases trade simply enhances the power of the oppressor, as it did with the current Indonesian regime.⁴⁴ Trade, the argument states, provides the oppressive government with a source of foreign exchange as well as a sort of legitimacy. The danger is that the maintenance of normalized relations (especially economic relations) may send the signal that the abusive behaviour of the offending regime is viewed as acceptable.

As well, trade can sometimes be a source of human rights violations. The much publicized case of NIKE 'sweatshops' in Viet Nam and other South East Asian states is a clear example of this phenomenon. The lure of low wages and weak or non-existent labour laws attract western companies looking for higher profits. As a result, the workers in these multinational corporations face economic exploitation and terrible working conditions which are arguably a form of human rights violation.

⁴³Ibid., pg.1.

⁴⁴East Timor Alert Network Canadian Trade with Indonesia Leaflet.

Security

A second though less tangible consideration for the government with respect to human rights is security. This aspect was particularly important in Cold War politics. Since the United States and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had made the rest of the world their battleground, it was very important to each of them that their opponent not gain ground in any region of the world. Thus punishing an ideologically sympathetic country on the basis of its human rights performance was seen as detrimental to the overall 'war effort'. It was in light of the security concern that the United States supported oppressive regimes. A prime example of such a situation was the Marcos regime of the Philippines. In spite of the fact that it was widely known that the leadership was seriously corrupt and that it imposed martial law in order to maintain its oppressive reign, the United States continued to support Marcos because of his pro-western stance and the fact that the Philippines were located in a strategic area. Furthermore, the United States had just suffered a bitter defeat in Viet Nam and believed it could ill afford to lose another ally.⁴⁵

A further example of security concerns and of cold war

⁴⁵William J. Barnds "Political, Security Relations" in Crisis in the Philippines. John Bresnan, ed. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986) pg.233.

David Forsythe Human Rights in World Politics. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), pg.116.

politics dominating human rights is the rather bizarre theory put forth in the Kirkpatrick Doctrine. This claimed that "authoritarian (pro-capitalist) violations of human rights were not as bad as totalitarian (pro-socialist) violations".⁴⁶ This rather flimsy argument was used to justify the American protests of the actions of Soviet allies and the virtual impunity enjoyed by American allies. Clearly fighting communism was more important than fighting oppression. The fact could not have been made clearer than it was in the Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act which denied assistance to countries which "engaged in a consistent pattern of gross violation of internationally recognized human rights" except when doing so would harm vital US interests.⁴⁷

The counter-view to this security dominance of human rights is the argument which links human rights and security. For while it may be valid that assisting allies is a requirement for maintaining ones own security, it is equally possible to argue that such policies can actually produce security threats. Returning to the Philippine example, because there was no outlet for dissent against the government, resistance was forced to go underground. Furthermore, since opposition faced severe

⁴⁶Forsythe Human Rights and World Politics, pg.116.

⁴⁷Barry M. Rubin and Elizabeth P. Spiro. Human Rights and US Foreign Policy. (Colorado: Westview Press Inc. 1979), pg.110.

oppression, moderate groups were forced to become radical.⁴⁸ In effect, supporting oppressive regimes and permitting human rights abuses to go undeterred, is tantamount to holding down the lid of a boiling pot. Without a way to release the pressure, the situation has a fairly strong potential to become explosive. Revolution, coup d'etat, or other form of overthrow tend to be very destabilizing situations and thus potential security threats. Furthermore, the regime which replaces the deposed leader will often have a very dim view of the forces which assisted the former tyrant. There are numerous examples of this fact: China, Iran, Nicaragua, Cuba.

Source of Human Rights Abuses

Another major factor in deciding what action to take against a violator comes from the perceived source of the problem. If a counter-action is undertaken without addressing the root of the problem, then the action will be ineffective or, indeed, may simply make the situation worse. However, information on the sources of Human Rights violations is often insufficient. While some scholars (such as Robert McNamara) argue that violations are a result of economic hardship, others (like Samuel Huntington) claim that it is the political

⁴⁸Barnds "Political, Security Relations", pg.231.

structure (and colonial legacy) which is the cause.⁴⁹ The two differing theories outline a major problem. For example, if the source of the violation is economic backwardness, then reduction of aid or implementation of sanctions will only make matters worse. However, if it is the political system itself which is flawed, promoting development may serve only to entrench the system and the human rights violations inherent therein.

The two different approaches to the cause of human rights violations have been hotly debated by the industrialized and Third World countries. The Third World countries tend to blame human rights violations on the lack of wealth in their region and claim that economic development would bring a greater respect for Human Rights. Since the worst Human Rights violators tend to be within countries which were classified as poor, a correlation is easy to identify. It is therefore argued that the best way to promote Human Rights is to create industry and financial stability in Third World countries. Indeed, the Third World has pushed for the recognition of the 'Right to Develop' as an indisputable Human Right through such actions as the United Nations General

⁴⁹Neil J. Mitchell and James McCormick. "Economic and Political Explanations of Human Rights Violations." *World Politics* Vol.40 (July 1988), pg.478.

Assembly Declaration on the Right to Develop in 1986.⁵⁰ The Western World has been very reluctant to embrace the views held by the Third World. Westerners tend to believe that it is simply a way for the poor states to press for a greater share of the world's resources rather than an honest attempt to deal with Human Rights. The West further claims that policies based on development have been unsuccessful in the past. One only needs to examine the effects which they had on countries such as Peru, South Africa, South Korea and Indonesia. In each of the aforementioned countries, greater wealth for the country did not mean a better standard of living for the masses. Indeed, it produced greater unemployment (as workers were replaced by machines), increased the numbers in absolute poverty and greatly widened the gap between the rich and the poor. Further, it gave elites greater resources with which to entrench their social positions and perpetuate the oppression of the masses.⁵¹

The Western democracies have tended to favour the promotion of political freedom as the proper way to promote Human Rights. It should be noted, however, that the western

⁵⁰Mahoney, "Human Rights and Canadian Foreign Policy," pg.565.

⁵¹Ibid., pg.579.

democracies are not completely of one mind on this topic. Indeed, Canada supported the 1986 United Nations Declaration on the right to develop as an inalienable Human Right while the United States voted against it. Canada has not made exceptionally strong efforts to narrow the North-South gap in wealth but since it too is dominated economically (by the United States) it is more inclined to see the Third World point of view.

International Support

Canada, as a middle power of limited resources often lacks the power to act effectively in a unilateral manner. Indeed, it has been argued that this lack of power has served to limit the scope of Canadian foreign policy as some "potential interests are so far beyond Canada's reach as not to be 'interests' at all".⁵² However, by acting in a multilateral fashion, Canada can combine its capabilities with those of other countries in order to produce a more influential force. Thus, almost by necessity, Canada has been prone to seek assistance and support for foreign policy and human rights actions.

Clearly one of the key forums which Canadian politicians have employed is the United Nations. Created in 1945, the United

⁵²Annette Baker Fox and William T.R. Fox "Domestic capabilities and Canadian foreign policy." *International Journal* Vol. 39 (Winter 1984), pg.24.

Nations Human Rights Commission has served as the only human rights body responsible for universal protection and promotion of human rights for over fifty years.⁵³ Its membership includes not only sovereign countries but also non-governmental organizations which allows it to hear views from a number of different sources. Most important for Canada, however, is the fact that it, combined with the UN in general, provides the opportunity to marshall support for policies.

Though the United Nations is the most visible group in terms of multilateral action, it is not the only source of support to which Canada can turn. The European Union, the (British) Commonwealth and the Francophonie are just a few other organizations which are potential sources of assistance.

One of the main reasons Canada seeks out policy allies, however, is not so much to gain support for a new initiative but to prevent its domination by the United States. This domination is partly Canada's own doing as it appears to have adopted an 'affiliation strategy'. This policy, as described by scholar Charles Henly, is one in which:

[A]small power [adopts] a great power as its leader in international affairs. The small power will then seek to acquire some measure of influence over the course of events through its relation to a great power - an influence which it believes it could not have on the same events if acting independently. To augment its influence the small power will support the major

⁵³Phillipe LeBlanc, "Canada at the UN Human Rights Commission" *International Perspectives* (Sept. 1985), pg.20.

policies of the great power to which it affiliates and refrain from taking initiatives of its own that would create open conflict. If the small power disagrees with the great power, it will neither openly declare its opposition nor do what it can to counteract the policy; it will, instead, seek to use its general support of the aims of the great power as the grounds for claiming the right to have its views taken into consideration by the decision-makers of the great power. Independence of action is limited to those areas in which the interests of the great power are not at stake.⁵⁴

The US is Canada's largest trading partner, its greatest ally and, at times, its greatest enemy. The extent to which Canada relies on the United States for its economic well-being, its military defence (and some would argue its culture) make it an extremely influential force in Canada and Canadian foreign policy. Indeed, no country can compare with the importance of the United States to Canada. Therefore, it becomes very difficult to justify threatening the Canada-United States relationship in any way for the foreign policy objectives vis a vis another state.

However, Canada frequently develops a complex about being in the American shadow. Over the past fifty or so years, there have been frequent bouts of panic over the integrity of Canadian sovereignty. Indeed, American culture has so penetrated Canada that fears emerge that Canadian culture is crowded into non-existence. American investment in Canada is so large that there

⁵⁴Charles Henly "The Ethics of Independence", An Independent Foreign Policy For Canada?, Stephen Clarkson ed. (Ottawa: Institute of Canadian Studies, 1967), pg.22

are fears that Canadians no longer control their industries. Fears emerge that what is "Canadian" will drown in a flood of "Americanism". This sensitivity can emerge in a number of forms ranging from Canadian content requirements to the National Energy Policy of Trudeau or even the 1996 Flag day initiative of Shileas Copps. Whatever form the backlash takes, the reason remains the same- to distinguish Canada from the United States. It is therefore a distinct possibility that the simple need to "be Canadian" or rather "not be American" will serve as a major influence on Canadian foreign policy (human rights policy included).

The Effects of the Influences

The purpose of this study is to examine the key motivations behind Canadian human rights policy and study how these factors provide an explanation for divergence between Canadian and American human rights foreign policy. By applying the variables outlined above to four different cases (Cuba 1961 - The Bay of Pigs invasion, China 1961 - The Canadian wheat sales, Cuba 1996 - The Helms-Burton Act, China 1988 - The Tiananmen Square Massacre), it will test if there are any dominating factors or overriding principles in Canadian human rights policies which would be of sufficient weight to override the pull which American policy should exert on Canada. Since the United States is such a

daunting international power and has such strong ties to Canada (economic, cultural, etc.), it is hypothesized that there will have to be a fairly powerful reason for adopting a position different from that of the United States.

The cases were chosen because with the fall of the Soviet Union, Cuba and China have become 'anomalies' in the international community. The communist system is, now more than ever, open to attack on a number of fronts (one such front being human rights abuses). Unlike many human rights abuse cases, however, the abuses in this study are not the result of conscious oppression of the many for the benefit of the few. Rather they are more a difference of opinion on human rights in general.⁵⁵ Therefore the 'abuses' are caused by the system, not the leadership⁵⁶ and this opens the opportunity for meaningful dialogue. In essence, both the capitalist and communist systems work for the people though in different ways. There are therefore two ways to deal with these countries. One of these possibilities is to isolate the regime from the rest of the international community. This seeks to prevent the regime from functioning properly so that it must reform in order to end the

⁵⁵For further discussion on this difference, refer to Chapter 1, p.4

⁵⁶Though it could be argued that the leadership is more concerned with stability or productivity than human rights, the violation of civil and political liberties are (under the communist doctrine) acceptable in order to maintain economic and social homogeneity.

punitive measures or else perish and be replaced by a less oppressive regime. The other possibility is to convince the leadership of the oppressive regime that the interests of the people can be better served under a different system.⁵⁷ This range of possibilities make the cases of Cuba and China particularly interesting.

The cases are also interesting because they represent countries which were of particular interest to the United States. Both China and Cuba were viewed as threats to American (and therefore Western) security. As such, the pull which the United States exerted on Canada with respect to these cases was much greater than it would be with respect to countries which were deemed to be 'unimportant'. Hence the influences which caused a divergence between Canada and the United States would have to be much stronger when dealing with China and Cuba.

The first set of cases (1961), represent a Cold War setting while the second set (1996, 1988) occurred in the post cold war era. This is important because it isolates the security aspect.

⁵⁷The second possibility, that of dialogue, follows a policy of Constructive Engagement. This approach argues that participation in the international community promotes interdependence and in doing so, breaks down barriers. Thus it is very difficult for a country which is open in terms of trade and international exchanges to insulate itself from external ideas. Exposure to external ideas and philosophies gives people a broader view of the world and expands lines of thinking. While external ideas will not necessarily be embraced, they do serve to challenge established methods and thus provide the environment for change.

Human rights, as an issue of 'low' politics, can be overshadowed by other considerations (such as security). Hence, changing the security environment while keeping the human rights aspect fairly constant should allow for a clearer view of non-strategic variables.

It is the aim of this study, therefore, to ascertain the key elements of Canadian human rights foreign policy and how they relate to the influence of American policy.

Chapter 2 : The Bay of Pigs and Wheat Sales to China

The first cases which will be studied are the Bay of Pigs invasion and embargo of Cuba and the Canadian wheat sales to China. These events both occurred during the early 1960's which was a very interesting period of recent Canadian/American history.

General Overview

The world of 1960 was epitomized by the Cold War. The Western powers had recently fought a hard war against the forces of communism in Korea. As well, the atrocities of World War Two were still relatively fresh in peoples' minds. Many of the world leaders had fought in that war and had experienced the horrors of war first-hand. Furthermore, the cinders of Hiroshima and Nagasaki still burned in peoples' minds. The world was in a nuclear era and both the Western and Eastern blocs had the power to inflict destruction upon the other that would dwarf the Japanese bombings in magnitude. It was clear that a major confrontation between the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, could very easily lead to a nuclear holocaust. Simply put, a war between the superpowers could likely spell the destruction of most of the world. Direct confrontation between them was to be avoided at all costs. Therefore, the conflicting ideologies waged their war on the peripheries, building client

states in less developed regions, running space and arms races, and trying to subvert countries in the opposing camp.

The so-called "Red Menace" and the threat that it was said to represent, should have ensured that Canada and the United States would act with an absolute cohesion in policy regarding Communist expansion. However, in the two incidents being studied from this era the policies adopted were decidedly different. Indeed, the two incidents are not entirely exceptional for there were many differences between the stances taken by Canada and the United States at this time.⁵⁸ A particularly striking difference emerges from an examination of the views of the two governments.

The United States was under the Presidency of John F. Kennedy. A war hero with a well connected political family, Kennedy had a charisma that sold well to his public. He was bold and brash and looked to run a decisive presidency. Moreover, he was a self proclaimed 'Cold Warrior'.

Kennedy claimed he ran for president "because [he did] not want it said that ... the years when [his] generation held power... were the years when America began to slip and the balance of power began to turn against the United States and the cause of freedom".⁵⁹ Kennedy believed that the 'red tide' had to

⁵⁸These differences included a number of fields from security (the Bomarc Missile debate, the Cuban Missile Crisis) to general relations (Canadian reluctance to join the OAS)

⁵⁹New York Times, "Kennedy attacks Nixon 'Weakness'" (Aug.25,1960).

be rolled back and that to give ground anywhere meant a victory for the communists. Furthermore, with each victory the communists won, they would grow more powerful and more ambitious.

Canadian Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker was a different sort of man. He was a small time lawyer from the West. He was well aware of the source of his support and he associated himself with 'the little guy'. Unlike the bold young Kennedy, Diefenbaker was a more cautious politician. He was a conservative and a traditionalist. Indeed, despite his German surname, he had a great fondness for Great Britain and the royal heritage of Canada. He has been described as a "sentimental British-Canadian nationalist"⁶⁰; a fairly accurate description. The pro-British view of Diefenbaker (in his opinion at least) was not shared by Kennedy. Diefenbaker made the statement that "[Kennedy] hated Britain and did not conceal his attitude".⁶¹ This was only one personal irritant between the two men and by many accounts, it was only one in a long list.⁶²

Nothing bothered Diefenbaker more, however, than what he perceived to be the constant bullying of a rather arrogant, ill-informed American administration. He saw the United States as an

⁶⁰John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall, Canada and the United States (Kingston: Queens University Press, 1994), pg.215.

⁶¹John G. Diefenbaker One Canada Vol.2, pg.172.

⁶²See Knowlton Nash Kennedy and Diefenbaker: Fear and Loathing Across the Undefined Border (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1990)

obstacle to Canadian greatness. Therefore ties to the United States should be avoided rather than embraced. As he said "I do not belong to those who see Canada and the United States in a form of continental arrangement. That's something my forebears didn't come to Canada to witness. They came to Canada to build a Canada strong and *independent*."⁶³ Furthermore, he was not alone in this view. Indeed, a large section of the Canadian public were decidedly against bowing to American pressure.⁶⁴

It appeared that the absolute worst course of action which the Kennedy administration could take in trying to convince the Diefenbaker government to do something was to publicly ask for it. This fact was clearly shown with relation to the Organization of American States (OAS). The Diefenbaker government was seriously considering joining the OAS in 1962 but all consideration was ended when Kennedy publicly appealed to Canada to join in speech before the Canadian Parliament. For Diefenbaker to join following such an overt statement would have been a blatant bowing down before the United States.⁶⁵ The situation was not made any better by the secret note which

⁶³Nash Kennedy and Diefenbaker, pg.47.

⁶⁴This impression was given from many sources which referred to Diefenbaker's concern that his popularity would drop substantially if he was seen as too American. As well there was an anti-American view expressed in many of the newspaper articles which were surveyed from this era. Further specific examples of this can be found below.

⁶⁵Thompson and Randall Canada and the United States, pg.218

Kennedy left behind after a meeting with Diefenbaker. In what is now known as the "What We Want from Ottawa Trip" note, Kennedy officials declared that they wanted him to get from Canada:

1. To PUSH the Canadians towards an increased commitment to the Alliance for Progress...
2. To PUSH them towards a decision to join the OAS
3. To PUSH them towards a larger contribution for the India consortium and for foreign aid generally.... Like the rest of us, they have their political problems with foreign aid, but we might be able to PUSH them in the right direction.
4. We want their active support at Geneva and beyond for a more effective monitoring of the borders of Laos and Viet Nam.⁶⁶

Special note should be given to the frequent reference to 'pushing' Canada into following American directions for this had a particularly galling effect on Diefenbaker. His response was understandably defensive. Diefenbaker would not be told what to do. "I was not about to have Canada bullied into any course of action. This was the first of a number of occasions on which I had to explain to President Kennedy that Canada was no Massachusetts or even Boston."⁶⁷ Furthermore Diefenbaker went on to say that he "became increasingly aware that President Kennedy had no knowledge of Canada whatsoever. More importantly, he was activated by the belief that Canada owed so great a debt to the

⁶⁶Quoted from Nash Kennedy and Diefenbaker, pg.121.

⁶⁷Diefenbaker One Canada Vol.2, pg.171.

United States that nothing but continuing subservience could repay it."⁶⁸

The security issues of the day mostly revolved around the Soviet Union and its expansionism. The 'Iron Curtain' had been lowered across Europe and the Western powers were feeling threatened by the size of the Soviet conventional forces and its newly acquired nuclear arsenal. What is more, the successful space voyage of Yuri Gurgarin in the Soviet rocket Sputnik raised serious questions about how well the West would be able to keep up with the USSR in missile technology. For all intents and purposes, the United States and its allies were feeling more and more like they were on the defensive and slowly losing the Cold War. Under such circumstances, the Americans believed that they could not suffer any sort of political defeat anywhere in the world or they would risk falling even further behind the Russians in prestige and power. Indeed, a poll conducted on December 3rd, 1960 asked Americans: "In the last year, would you say respect for the U.S. in other countries around the world has increased or decreased?" Only 22% believed that it had increased while 45% felt it had fallen (23% said it was the same, 10% had no opinion).⁶⁹ Clearly, something had to been done to reverse this

⁶⁸Ibid., pg.171-2.

⁶⁹Canadian Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup Canada) "Is the U.S. Losing Prestige Abroad?" (December 3, 1960)

impression and improve the morale of the country if the Cold War was to be won.

The fear of the USSR caused the United States to place a great deal of emphasis on its key alliances : the North American Air Defence Agreement (NORAD) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Since Canada was a junior partner in both of these, the Americans expected that they could count on unwavering Canadian support. This rather bold assumption created a number of problems. Indeed, the purpose of a military alliance is to protect the sovereign territory and sphere of interest of the home country from foreign intervention or invasion. However, by joining NATO and NORAD, Canadian sovereignty appeared compromised rather than preserved. While Canada was protected against Soviet invasion, the 'American invasion' was strengthened. Fear of American domination was provided a sound basis by these defence arrangements and the Diefenbaker government was very much aware of them. The radar sites which formed the Distant Early Warning (DEW) line were manned mainly by American officers and, for the most part those officers treated the sites as though they were American soil. One interesting example of American overbarence occurred in 1957 when Alvin Hamilton, newly appointed to the post of Minister of Northern Affairs, was conducting an inspection of the sites. Upon landing at one site, he was met by an American colonel who informed him that he could not land there as it was an American military

installation. Furthermore, Hamilton was shocked to see an American flag flying over the base but no Canadian flag. Hamilton reportedly flew into a rage saying: "You get that flag down or I'll pull it down. You are not in Georgia here. You are in Canada and every square inch of this soil is Canada's. Take that thing down and put up a Canadian flag, and if you also put up an American flag make sure the Canadian flag is higher."⁷⁰ The flag was taken down, but the affront was one which Hamilton would carry with him for a long time afterwards, including his tenure as Minister of Agriculture.

Clearly the stage was set for serious disagreements between Canada and the United States. The Canadian leadership saw Canada as being threatened by US dominance and it would not be inappropriate to label this period as a 'protectionist period'.⁷¹ The dislike which Diefenbaker had for Kennedy, coupled with a fairly common view that the United States was too powerful in Canada's affairs, made the administration very keen to diverge from the American lead. While this 'anti-Americanism' constituted a major factor in Canadian foreign policy decisions, the cases under examination in the era illustrate other factors which contributed to the divergence of policies.

⁷⁰Nash Kennedy and Diefenbaker, pg.51-52.

⁷¹See Chapter 1 for reference to periods of anti-American protectionism in Canada.

CASE 1 - Cuba : The Bay Of Pigs Invasion And Ensuing Embargo

In January 1959, a popular revolution headed by Fidel Castro succeeded in overthrowing the corrupt and oppressive regime of Fulgencio Batista. The news was greeted differently in Ottawa and Washington. For Canada, the revolution represented a step forward for Cuba as it had thrown off the shackles of a dictator. For the United States, the revolution represented the loss of an ally. Indeed, regardless of what else he was, Bautista had been an American friend. As noted by Arthur Gardner, the United States ambassador to Cuba: "I don't think we ever had a better friend... It was regrettable, like all South Americans, that he was known... to be getting a cut... in almost all the things that were done. But... he was doing an amazing job."⁷²

As it became increasingly apparent that Batista would be unable to weather the storm of revolution that had formed around him, the Eisenhower administration attempted to distance the United States from him.⁷³ This was, however, too late to be convincing. Indeed, the United States had been the driving force behind the Cuban anti-communist secret police (BRAC) which had

⁷²Gardner evidence to Senate Internal Security Sub-Committee. Quoted from: Hugh Thomas The Cuban Revolution, (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1977), pg.163.

⁷³Trumbull Higgins The Perfect Failure: Kennedy, Eisenhower, and the CIA at the Bay of Pigs, (New York: W.W.Norton & Company, 1987), pg.39-42.

frequently used arbitrary arrest and torture against the Cuban people.⁷⁴ This was a fact which could not easily be erased. There are indications that, perhaps in an effort to control Castro, the United States provided assistance to his revolution in its later stages.⁷⁵ It became clear, however, that if the Americans had helped him, their help would not be rewarded. Castro had held communist beliefs since his days as a student. This made him very suspicious of American bourgeois intentions and, as a result, he drifted firmly towards the Soviet camp. The United States government had been concerned with the expansion of communism around the world and yet it had failed to stop a communist revolution a mere hundred miles from its shores. Castro's Cuba became a perennial sore spot for US foreign policy and it became an important objective to remove him from power.

On August 5, 1960, Castro struck back at the United States for its interference in Cuban affairs and its hostility. He nationalized all thirty-six American sugar mills, two oil refineries and two utilities (telephone and power).⁷⁶ American business interests and investments in Cuba had been swallowed up entirely.

On October 19, 1960, the Eisenhower administration imposed

⁷⁴Ibid., pg.41.

⁷⁵Thomas The Cuban Revolution, pg.165.

⁷⁶Philip W. Bonsal Cuba, Castro and the United States (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971), pg.160.

an embargo on all trade with Cuba except food and medical supplies.⁷⁷ Then on January 3, 1961, all diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States were severed by the US government.⁷⁸ Both of these actions were designed to isolate Cuba. It was believed that by being cut off from trade, Cuba would be unable to function. The internal transportation systems would break down as vehicles ran out of spare parts. The factories would start to shut down as raw materials ran out and machinery broke down. This line of thinking was clearly displayed by Eisenhower early in the Castro leadership when he noted that if the Cuban people got "hungry" enough "they would throw Castro out".⁷⁹

An embargo was not sufficient, however, for a number of reasons. The first and foremost of these was the cold war situation. The United States had suffered a severe blow to its prestige when Francis Gary Powers' U2 spy plane was shot down in Soviet airspace on May 1, 1960.⁸⁰ Khrushchev had won a diplomatic coup just before a summit meeting with Eisenhower.

⁷⁷Richard A. Preston Canada in World Affairs 1959-61 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1965), pg.180.

⁷⁸Denis Stairs "Confronting Uncle Sam: Cuba and Korea" An Independent Foreign Policy For Canada?, Stephen Clarkson ed. (Ottawa: Institute of Canadian Studies, 1967), pg.59.

⁷⁹Eisenhower Papers "Memorandum of Conferences with the President" (Abilene, Kansas, January 26, 1960), Box 4. Quoted from Higgins The Perfect Failure, pg.48.

⁸⁰Preston, Canada in World Affairs 1959-61, pg.31.

The blow to the prestige of the United States was heavy. In the words of the Halifax Chronicle it had been "a sad story of amateurish and ill-timed bungling".⁸¹

Thus when Kennedy took the helm of the United States government in January of 1961, he believed that the United States had to strengthen its resolve and push back communism. The United States needed diplomatic victories on the scale of the U2 incident if it was to maintain its credibility. Removing Castro from power would send a clear message to the rest of the world that the United States could effectively combat communist expansion. Furthermore, it would deter further communist revolutions in Latin America, at least, by showing that the United States would not allow them to be successful. In short, Kennedy was under pressure to take the initiative in order to maintain credibility. As he noted himself: "We must realize that any bluff will be called. We cannot tell anyone to keep out of our hemisphere unless armaments and the people behind these armaments are prepared to back up the command, even to the ultimate point of going to war."⁸² To stand on the defensive would invite further ambition.

The second major problem with respect to Cuba that the new Kennedy administration was facing was the influx of large numbers

⁸¹Halifax Chronicle-Herald, (May 10, 1960).

⁸²John F. Kennedy Why England Slept (Westport Conn. 1961) p.229-230, Quoted from Higgins The Perfect Failure, pg.95.

of refugees into Florida. As stated in the New York Times (April 2, 1961) Florida was receiving about 900 refugees each week from Cuba.⁸³ Most of these refugees had few skills and few resources on which to live. As a result, there was a flood of unskilled workers on the job market in Miami and the surrounding area. This surplus created severe difficulties for American citizens who had to compete with the refugees for jobs in the area. Furthermore, the Cubans had a distinct advantage over American citizens as they were willing to accept a much lower wage.⁸⁴ As more refugees flooded the region, pressure mounted. As one relief worker noted: "Relief measures, developed on short notice and without previous experience, may buy time for days or weeks but not for months. One sees each day more evidence of a growing (hostility)."⁸⁵

Indeed the refugee problem was not only one of worker surplus, it was also one of instability. The refugees were vying for the chance to 'free' Cuba from the Castro regime and, in short, they would not be satisfied until they had the chance to do so. Kennedy admitted to Diefenbaker that his administration had not known what to do with 1,300 highly trained Cuban

⁸³New York Times, "Cuba Refugees a Paradox Amid the Luxury of Miami" , (Apr.2,1961).

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵New York Times "Miami Economy Strained as Cubans Hunt for Jobs" (Apr.3,1961).

volunteers in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Miami⁸⁶ and "[t]he point had been reached where it would have been necessary either to break them up or to use them in active operations, and he had decided that they would be better in Cuba than out".⁸⁷

Perhaps the greatest consideration which Kennedy faced had to do with security. It was ridiculous to argue that Cuba posed a serious direct military threat to the United States. As pointed out by United States Senate Majority whip Hubert Humphrey (1962): "[It is a] ridiculous and shabby fabrication that Cuba is a military threat to the US" and "[t]here is enough American firepower afloat off Cuba at any one moment to destroy every major Communist installation in Cuba in a few hours. We know exactly where these installations are and Castro knows we know."⁸⁸ Another, fairly colourful view of the situation described the prospect of Cuba attacking the US as "tantamount to the absurdity of a flea attacking an elephant".⁸⁹ However, it was far more conceivable that Cuba was an indirect threat to the United States as an agent undermining the stability of other Latin America regimes. Kennedy himself made this point on April

⁸⁶Though Kennedy downplayed the role of the Miami Cubans in the invasion.

⁸⁷Diefenbaker One Canada Vol.2, pg.169.

⁸⁸Globe and Mail "Humphrey Ridicules Assertion Cuba Poses Threat to US", (Sept.12,1962).

⁸⁹Globe and Mail "United States and Cuba", (Sept.10,1962)

22, 1961. He noted, "a nation of Cuba's size is less a threat to our survival than a base for subverting the survival of other free nations throughout the Americas".⁹⁰

Therefore, there were a number of pressures working on the Kennedy government in deciding to launch the Bay of Pigs invasion.

1.Communist expansion had to face strong opposition in order to prevent further ambitions.

2.The Cuban regime had to be eliminated to prevent its functioning as a base for further insurrections in Latin America.

3.Following his rise to power, Castro executed many Batista supporters proving him, in Washington's view, to be a ruthless dictator with a flagrant disregard for the rights of his people.

4.Kennedy had to win a diplomatic victory to counter the prestige won by Khrushchev with the U2 incident.

5.Large numbers of refugees were putting pressure on the Florida economy. Furthermore, these refugees were eager to fight back at the Castro regime.

6. American business interests were seeking some form of punishment of Castro for the nationalization of American industries without compensation.

Therefore, Kennedy felt he not only had a number of good reasons to launch the invasion but he had also been provided the means to invade without using American troops.

⁹⁰Globe and Mail "Castro Threatens US Security", (Apr.26,1961).

Canada did not follow the American lead with respect to the trade embargo, the severing of diplomatic ties or the Bay of Pigs invasion. In effect, the Diefenbaker government was not facing the same pressures as the Kennedy government. Indeed, the pressures that it felt were pushing it in an opposite direction.

Diefenbaker outlined his view of the considerations he faced with regards to Cuba in his memoirs. They are:

- 1) It was Canada's duty to maintain with Cuba the cordial relations customary with the recognized government of another country.
- 2) It was an accepted rule of international conduct that differences in philosophical outlook in political systems do not justify a refusal to maintain normal intercourse with another government. We might disapprove of various regimes but it had long been Canada's practice to carry on normal relations with countries or governments whose philosophies were at variance with our own.
- 3) It was also an accepted principle that nations were free to choose their own form of government and to determine their own policies. Under this practice, outside interference with a view of changing internal conditions or external policies was unjustified.
- 4) The United States' interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine was not recognized by international law and was not binding on Canada. In fact, we regarded the Monroe Doctrine and its extension by the OAS Caracas resolution of 1954 as an unacceptable unilateral decision on the spheres of influence and types of governments in the Western Hemisphere.
- 5) There were no grounds on which Canada's departure from normal diplomatic conduct could be justified, from either a legal or any other point of view.
- 6) To the extent that discriminatory action vis-a-vis Cuba might have been justified, Canada could hardly be expected to take a more drastic action than that taken by the Latin-American members of the OAS.
- 7) The diplomatic ostracizing of Cuba by the Western powers could serve only to eliminate her options and drive her into the Soviet orbit. By maintaining normal diplomatic relations with Cuba, Canada might have little opportunity to influence the course of Cuban events; by

breaking diplomatic relations with Cuba, Canada would have no opportunity to influence these events at all. We had a window on an otherwise darkened courtyard.

8) Finally, and not at all least important, Canadian policy towards Cuba had the overwhelming support of Canadian public opinion and of Canada's press.⁹¹

This explanation by Diefenbaker is particularly important because it shows the difference in views which the two governments had of the Cuban situation. The Canadian view was described by Kennedy as being willfully blind to the expansionist ambitions of Khrushchev and the communist doctrine in general.⁹² However, this 'blindness' was not a lack of vision, as Kennedy suggested, but a different perspective. The fourth point which Diefenbaker discussed (the reference to the Monroe Doctrine) truly highlights the difference in thinking with respect to intervention. While Kennedy supported intervention, Diefenbaker was opposed to it and saw it as being an 'unacceptable' course of action.

The most appropriate method of outlining the other differences in perspective is to examine the considerations which Kennedy faced⁹³ and show how they did not apply to the Canadian government (or were of a different nature). For while the two countries shared concerns over such issues as communist expansion and human rights, they had different perspectives on these issues

⁹¹Diefenbaker One Canada Vol.2, pg.173-174.

⁹²Thompson and Randall Canada and the United States, pg.217.

⁹³Outlined on pg 47

which led them to pursue different policies as outlined below.

The first factor which was attributed to Kennedy's hard line on Cuba was the overall Cold War situation and the need to push back Communist expansion. The Diefenbaker government was not as intolerant in its cold war stance. Communism was a threat, and something to be stopped, but it was accepted that fierce resistance to communism was likely to be counter-productive. External Affairs Minister Howard Green was continually critical of the United States for being excessively hostile to the Soviet Union. He argued that hostility blinded the United States to possibilities of conference and understanding especially with regards to the Third World.⁹⁴

The United States' fear that Cuba would act as a base for further Communist expansion received only marginal support in Canada. While the Kennedy Administration warned that Cuba would become a tool for the USSR in undermining other Latin American regimes, it was more common among Canadians and their leaders to argue that Cuba was pushed towards the Soviet camp by misguided American policy. "[B]oth Mr. Diefenbaker and the Canadian press suggested Canadian policy was based on the belief that Castro's drift to Moscow had been at least partially caused by a mistaken American policy."⁹⁵

⁹⁴Thompson and Randall Canada and the United States, pg.217.

⁹⁵Preston Canada in World Affairs 1959-61, pg.181.

Furthermore, the greatest threat to the security of Latin America was not Castro, it was argued, but the forces which caused him to come to power in the first place. As discussed in the previous chapter, revolution and violent overthrow are almost always caused by some underlying social problem with which the regime in power is either unable or unwilling to deal. In the case of Cuba, it was not only Batista's corruption which cost him his government, it was also the economic and social hardship which spread discontent. The American solution for the economic problems of Latin America - The Alliance for Progress- was not dealing with these problems adequately.⁹⁶ The economy and political structure of most Latin America countries had been mapped on the model of the United States. However, it was not recognized that pretending to be the United States did not make a country as successful as the US. Much as Russia is learning now, declaring a country to be a democracy does not mean that it is democratic.⁹⁷ Furthermore, it does not mean that there is freedom.

This raises the human rights question. To the United States, Castro was a flagrant abuser of human rights just as all communist systems abused human rights. However, it was possible

⁹⁶Ian Lumiden "The Free World of Canada and Latin America", in An Independent Foreign Policy For Canada?, Stephen Clarkson ed. (Ottawa: Institute of Canadian Studies, 1967), pg.207.

⁹⁷New York Times Magazine (Jun.26,1997) pg.101.

to argue that the Castro regime was, in fact, an improvement over the Batista regime as far as human rights were concerned. It was contended that "in comparison to the preceding regimes and to the rest of Latin America's political systems, Cuba is in some respects a relatively democratic society, for its government effectively promotes the social and economic interests of the majority of the population, an assertion that cannot be made for the rest of Latin America where you find neither stable social democracy, nor tangible evidence of much economic growth".⁹⁸

While the preceding view was not readily endorsed by all Canadians, it was much more common in Canada than in the United States.⁹⁹ Even Diefenbaker expressed a view that the revolution was a product of internal difficulties rather than the work international communism: "Castroism was at worst a symptom and the most radical manifestation of the social and economic tensions existing in Latin America. One treats an illness by getting rid of its causes, not by erasing its symptoms. If economic, social, political and administrative reforms were not effected throughout Latin America, then misery and discontent would continue with whatever explosive results."¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸Lumiden "The Free World of Canada and Latin America", in An Independent Foreign Policy For Canada?, pg.207.

⁹⁹This statement is based on a review of newspaper articles, editorials and official statements from the time.

¹⁰⁰Diefenbaker One Canada Vol.2, pg.175.

Castro, therefore, may have been oppressive, but it was an oppression which was better than the utter hopelessness which existed before him. It was this reason that caused many in Canada to believe that he had the support of the majority of Cubans.¹⁰¹ One article found in the Globe and Mail (April 3, 1961) expressed a view which was common in the Canadian papers of the time. It stated that although Castro's "image as a knight in shining armour suffered serious dents... he can still count on the bulk of the rural population".¹⁰² Furthermore, it was estimated by one Canadian who had dealings with Cuba that approximately three of every five Cubans were "strongly pro-Castro".¹⁰³ This was a fact which appeared to be lost on the Kennedy administration. They believed that Castro had betrayed the ideals which had gained him support during the revolution. The White Paper on Cuba which they published conveyed this idea to the American public. It listed the transgressions which Castro had made since rising to power and spoke of all of those who had turned against him.¹⁰⁴ While this may only have been meant for public consumption in order to justify the invasion, it

¹⁰¹The actual level of support which Castro possessed is very difficult to determine as there were obviously no reliable polls.

¹⁰²Globe and Mail "Impending Showdown in Cuba" (Apr.3,1961)

¹⁰³Globe and Mail "Success of Invasion Depends on Local Support", (Apr.21,1961)

¹⁰⁴New York Times (Apr.5,1961).

is very unlikely. Indeed, part of the reason that the invasion was such a disaster was that it relied heavily on popular uprisings. It was believed that once Castro was threatened, the majority of Cubans would use the opportunity to overthrow him. However, when the invaders landed, they found that the population stood with Castro.

It was the expressed view of the Diefenbaker government that the human rights abuses which were taking place in Cuba were more a result of the power struggle between the US and USSR than Castro. "Cuba is a casualty of the *internationalization* of its original revolution. In the process the interests of the Cuban people have been subordinated to the *interplay of outside forces* (presumably the US and USSR) beyond their control. Civil liberties are further curtailed in the name of national security... What we earnestly wish to see established are stable conditions within Cuba which will allow it to develop in peace and live *free from outside pressures...*"¹⁰⁵

With respect to human rights, was the Bay of Pigs invasion an effort to put an end to human rights abuses, or was it in fact a human rights abuse itself? The definition of human rights (as taken by this author) includes the right to self determination. Thus efforts by a foreign power (in this case the United States)

¹⁰⁵House of Commons Hansard, Vol. IV, 1960-61 p.3795 (April 19, 1961).

to change the government in power (the Castro regime) are unlawful unless they are demanded by the people.¹⁰⁶ This is another possible divergence between the Canadian and American view of the situation.

The communist denial of personal liberty and freedom was such a severe abuse to the American standard of human rights, that it was unjustifiable. Therefore, Castro, in the minds of most of the Kennedy administration, had to be maintaining power by fear, oppression and propaganda.¹⁰⁷ Under such a circumstance, the Cuban people were either too confused or too afraid to revolt. Hence they did not openly challenge Castro but secretly wanted him removed. The belief that Castro did not have the support of the people effectively voided the sovereignty of the country. For indeed, according to Western principles, a government which does not have the support of the people is in violation of the social contract and has no legitimate authority. Kennedy expressed such a view in an interview with Aleksei Adzhubei, editor of Izvestia on November 25, 1961. Adzhubei asked Kennedy how it was possible to believe in self-

¹⁰⁶Intervention would be justified even if the majority of people supported the government in the event that a specific section of the population (ie, ethnic or religious group) was being specifically targeted. In such a case, their right to self determination has already been denied. However, in the case of Cuba, the alleged human rights abuses were relatively uniform based on communist ideology rather than genocidal practice.

¹⁰⁷New York Times "Text of the State Department's Document Denouncing Castro Regime in Cuba", (Apr.4,1961).

determination yet disregard the fact that Cuba had chosen its system of government, albeit different from that of the United States. Kennedy responded by saying that there had been no 'choice' and that "until the [Castro] government of Cuba will allow free and honest elections, in our opinion, it cannot claim to represent the majority of the people".¹⁰⁸ Therefore, intervention is justified because there is no sovereignty to prevent it.

The Canadian approach, however, assumed that the Castro government was the legitimate government of Cuba. While a lack of elections was a disappointing feature of the Castro regime, it was not enough to undermine the fact that he was the de facto ruler of Cuba and the Cuban people (in large part) accepted and were content with his leadership. Indeed, of the views expressed by Canadians at the time were of the belief that if Cubans wished to be communist it was within their rights to be so. This was shown by a letter to the editor (and many similar positioned articles) of the Globe and Mail (Sept 10, 1962) stating: "[L]eave Cuba alone and let them do what they want. If they think Communism might better their condition they should have the right to choose it."¹⁰⁹ Ergo, direct intervention in the internal

¹⁰⁸Harold W. Chase and Allen H. Lerman Kennedy and the Press: The News Conferences, (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1965), pg. 133.

¹⁰⁹Globe and Mail "Bruce West on Cuba", (Sept.10,1962)

affairs of Cuba was unjustified (though few have gone so far as to call it a human rights violation). An April 8th, (1961) editorial in the Globe and Mail referred to the Bay of Pigs invasion in a way which was common among Canadian newspaper editorials of the time. It said: "The most disturbing and discouraging thing about the [Bay of Pigs invasion] is the complete lack of any widespread protest in the United States itself. Has the hatred and fear of Communism reached such a pitch that any action is considered justified against a nation whose government is suspected of Communist tendencies?"¹¹⁰ The invasion was simply too extreme for the liking of many Canadians.

The different perceptions which Canada and the United States had with regard to Cuba had forced a difference in policy. The United States saw Castro as an oppressive dictator operating as a tool of the international communist movement. In the eyes of the Kennedy administration, the Castro regime had unlawfully compromised American business interests in Cuba and was directly responsible for the flood of refugees which were causing difficulties in Florida. Furthermore, it was believed that a failure to undertake decisive action would lead to an even further disintegration of American prestige, one that could tip the balance of power forever in the favour of the USSR.

Canadians and their leaders saw the situation in a different

¹¹⁰Globe and Mail "Undeclared War", (Apr.8,1961).

light. Castro, to them, was a symptom of the bigger problem of social and political disorder in Latin America. Hence he was not the product of an international communist conspiracy but the result of a desperate attempt to find relief from suffering on the part of the Cuban people. Holding such a view, it was not possible for Diefenbaker to agree with the American policy of either invasion or economic embargo. Increasing the suffering of the Cubans would only strengthen the forces which brought Castro to power.

In the Canadian view, it appeared that trade embargos and intervention would only make Castro stronger or, if he were deposed, replace him with something worse. It was far better, in the view of the Canadian government, to try to influence Castro than to try to dictate to him. Perhaps this view stemmed somewhat from a recognition on the part of the Canadian government of the type of resentment which dictates can breed, having experienced it first hand from the Americans.

This was the argument which the Canadian government used to justify the maintenance of trade with Cuba following the American embargo. Castro was 'here to stay' and severing ties could only serve to push him further into the communist camp and insure the continuation of oppression.¹¹¹ The American objections to the maintenance of trade ties were both vocal and vicious. Kennedy

¹¹¹Stairs "Confronting Uncle Sam: Cuba and Korea", pg.62.

argued that "the complacent, self-indulgent, soft societies are about to be swept away with the debris of history".¹¹² Only stubborn resistance would carry the day. Canada, by failing to make sacrifices for the fight against communism was selling out its future. United States Senator Kenneth Keating voiced a similar view, saying that it was senseless for a country "willing to supply troops for the defence of freedom ... not [to] be willing to make economic sacrifices for the same objective".¹¹³ He, along with many other Americans, basically charged Canada with compromising its principles for a 'fast buck'. As well, Canada was seen to be providing Cuba with the resources it needed to export the revolution to other Latin American countries, further undercutting its own security.

An examination of the bilateral trade statistics for this period tends to dispute the American claims, however, as Table 1 illustrates.

¹¹²Thompson and Randall Canada and the United States, pg.218.

¹¹³Stairs "Confronting Uncle Sam: Cuba and Korea", pg.61.

TABLE 1

YEAR	Canadian Imports from Cuba ('000's C\$)	Canadian Exports to Cuba ('000's C\$)	Trade Balance ('000's C\$)
1957	\$13,840	\$16,846	\$3,006
1958	\$18,836	\$17,549	(\$1,287)
1959	\$12,011	\$15,222	\$3,211
1960	\$7,243	\$13,038	\$5,795
1961	\$5,034	\$31,104	\$26,070
1962	\$2,803	\$10,878	\$8,075
1963	13,041	\$16,433	\$3,392
1964	\$3,464	\$60,930	\$57,466

Source: Statistics Canada Canada Yearbook 1958-1965

As the statistics show, Canada maintained a trade surplus with Cuba every year from 1959 to 1964. This shows that rather than aiding Cuba in 'exporting the revolution', Canada was, in fact, siphoning scarce currency out of Cuba. By using its foreign exchange to purchase non-strategic goods from Canada, Cuba had less with which to purchase strategic goods (such as military hardware).¹¹⁴ Indeed, the foreign exchange shortage in Cuba became so dire that it forced Cuba to cut back on purchases of Canadian imports as well. (Thus the fall in trade from 1961 to 1962 is attributed to foreign exchange shortages rather than a

¹¹⁴Ibid., p.63

conscious Canadian policy).¹¹⁵

Furthermore, the argument that Canadians were profiteering is unfounded as there were conscious efforts on the part of the Diefenbaker government to insure that American goods would not reach Cuba by being routed through Canada. As well, the volume of Canada's trade with Cuba was, on average, lower than pre-revolution trade. This indicates a maintenance of the status quo rather than efforts to exploit the markets opened by the American embargo. As stated by Diefenbaker on December 12th, 1960: "With respect to [non-strategic] goods of Canadian origin, there can be no valid objection to trade with Cuba as with other countries."¹¹⁶ He went on to say that with respect to normal trade, "it is our hope that in so far as mutually beneficial economic relations are maintained or developed, conditions in Cuba may be eased and the general relations of western countries with Cuba may be promoted".¹¹⁷

While there were questions as to whether Canadian trade was strengthening Cuba put forth from the Liberal opposition, these focussed on strategic goods. Trade in non-strategic goods was supported.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵Diefenbaker One Canada Vol.3, pg.85

¹¹⁶House of Commons Hansard, Vol. IV, 1960-61, (Dec.12,1960) pg.700

¹¹⁷Ibid., pg.701.

¹¹⁸Ibid.

The trade was also supported by the majority of the public in Canada. A Gallup poll, conducted on Jan. 30th, 1963 asked Canadians "Do you approve or disapprove of Canadian sales of food, wheat and products other than war materials to communist countries such as Red China, Cuba or Poland?" Fully 63% responded that they approved (26% disapproved, 4% offered qualified answers and 7% were undecided).¹¹⁹ This support was found to be fairly consistent across political party affiliations (PC - 64% in favour, Lib - 62%, Other - 69%).¹²⁰ Thus it is difficult to see the decision as simply an effort by Diefenbaker to annoy Kennedy.

There was a fundamental difference between how Canada and the United States perceived their roles in the Americas and the world. Canada was inclined to be non-interventionist while it saw the US as attempting to dominate the entire region. Indeed, it appeared that the Monroe doctrine was still fully in place. Kennedy simply strengthened this impression by replacing the Monroe Doctrine with what became known as the 'Kennedy Doctrine'. It stated that if countries "do not keep their own houses in order with respect to outside Communist penetration, the United States reserves the right to intervene in its own interest to put

¹¹⁹Canadian Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup Canada), "Big Majority Favour Selling Food, Wheat, To Communists" (Jan.30,1963).

¹²⁰Ibid.

them in order".¹²¹ It seemed to be of little consequence that such a statement was in direct conflict with Article 15 of the Charter of the OAS (of which both Cuba and the United States were members) which stated that: "No state or group of states has the right to intervene directly OR INDIRECTLY for any reason whatever, in the internal or external affairs of any other state."¹²² Thus not only was Kennedy inclined to intervene in Cuba, he also threatened to intervene in the rest of the Americas (including Canada) as well.

American posturing in Latin America, combined with what the Diefenbaker government saw as American attempts to bully it into obedience, could not be met with anything other than a defensive attitude. The fact that Diefenbaker personally disliked Kennedy only served to make him even more sensitive to American pressures. As a result, Canada did not lend support to either the Bay of Pigs invasion or the trade embargo. It should be noted, however, that given the strong relationship between Canada and the United States, neither of the actions was strongly denounced in public. Instead, quiet diplomacy was used to express discontent.¹²³

¹²¹Globe and Mail "Kennedy Doctrine Applies to Canada", (Apr.22,1961).

¹²²New York Times "Top US Advisors in Dispute on Aid to Castro's Foes" (Apr.11,1961)

¹²³House of Commons Hansard, Vol. IV, 1960-61, (Apr.21,1961) pg.3873.

In summary, therefore, the Canadian and American policies with respect to Cuba in 1960 were different because the motivations behind the policies were different. Certainly Canada did not have a refugee problem like the United States but this is only a minor factor. The major reason for the difference stemmed from the Cold War and the position which Canada and the United States occupied in the world at that time. While the United States was inclined to look at Cuba in a Cold War setting, Canada was not. This was because the Kennedy Administration had little choice but to regard Cuba in a Cold War setting. As the 'bastion of democracy', the United States was committed to fighting communism anywhere and everywhere. Thus because Cuba adopted a communist system, the conflict immediately became ideological. Even if Kennedy wanted to pursue a different policy, the anti-communist hysteria of the United States (both public and congressional) would not have permitted it.

The Diefenbaker government and much of the Canadian public, on the other hand, were less worried about communist infiltration from Cuba than American dominance. This made it very easy to adopt a policy contrary to the American policy. In effect the close relationship between Canada and the United States pressed a divergence rather than harmonization. Furthermore, since it appears Cuba was not viewed as a major threat to the security of the Western world by the Canadian government, a divergence was made possible.

It was therefore possible for Canada to pursue a policy based on its own interpretation of the situation. For Canada, the belief was that the Cuban revolution and Fidel Castro were the result of economic and social strains in Cuba. Therefore, continued trade and diplomatic ties, meant to help alleviate these pressures was the more rational policy. It was this fundamental belief difference, therefore, coupled with the opportunity to separate Canadian policy from that of the United States which prompted two different policies.

CASE 2 - China : Wheat Sales

The second case which is being studied for this period is that of China and the decision by the Canadian government to sell wheat to a communist country. As in the Cuban case, it is necessary to first provide a brief background of the Chinese situation in order to grasp the environment in which the Canadian decision was made.

On October 1, 1949, the communist forces in China, under Mao Tse-tung, declared victory over the Kuomintang (Nationalist) forces of Chiang Kai Shek. After years of bloody civil war, the Nationalists had been driven from mainland China and forced to flee to the island of Formosa (now Taiwan). Though it had been clear for some time that the communist forces would prevail, the news was still ill received in the western camp. The most populous country in the world was under the control of communism.

Chiang Kai Shek had been a very ineffective ruler. He had allowed China to be badly beaten during the second world war and he had been unable to satisfy the needs of his people. In spite of this, however, he was pro-west and thus received favour from the western countries, especially the United States.

Furthermore, as was customary during the Cold War, the United States seemed to prefer the most inept, corrupt, oppressive but marginally democratic leader to the best intentioned communist

government.¹²⁴ The US shipped millions of dollars in aid to Chiang but, in the later stages of the conflict had hesitated. The Canadian government was even less supportive of Chiang as missionary societies had been fairly effective in "publicizing the abysmal human rights record of Chiang's government and the deplorable conditions of life" which existed under his rule which turned public opinion against him.¹²⁵

Even with the full support of the western powers, Chiang would have been hard pressed to maintain power. Without it, he was doomed. This left the United States in an unhappy position. It was strongly associated with the defeated Nationalist faction and thus was viewed as an enemy of the revolution. Indeed, Communist Chinese literature singled out the United States as "the bastion of all the reactionary forces in the world".¹²⁶ In effect, it had lost the war every bit as much as had Chiang Kai-Shek. The event became known as the "loss of China" and was "an unbelievable disappointment to all hopes of peace and stability in Eastern Asia".¹²⁷ In the opinion of then Representative John

¹²⁴For discussion of the human rights aspect of communism versus pseudo-democracy, see Chapter 1.

¹²⁵Stephen Beecroft "Canadian Policy towards China 1949-57", in Reluctant Adversaries, Paul M. Evans and B. Michael Frolic, ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), pg.46.

¹²⁶Foster Rhea Dulles American Policy Toward Communist China 1949-1969. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1972), pg.4.

¹²⁷Ibid., pg.2.

F. Kennedy, the onus was on the United States to "assume the responsibility of preventing the onrushing tide of communism from engulfing all Asia".¹²⁸ For, indeed, there was no point in struggling to contain communist expansion in Europe if Asia was allowed to fall.

Thus it was entirely in keeping with the American policy of containment to try to keep China isolated from the rest of the world. Every effort was made to deny China a role in the international arena and prevent it from being able to spread its influence to the rest of Asia. In effect, the United States made every effort to ignore communist China. As far as the White House was concerned, the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-Shek was still the legitimate government of China. The Communist government was to be denied legitimacy.

Mao's government could not be recognized. To do so would force the United States to acknowledge that it was the legitimate holder of the China seat in the United Nations Security Council.¹²⁹ This would seriously weaken the ability of the United States to control that body as the USSR would no longer be isolated in the Security Council.

The main goal of the American policy was to keep China economically isolated. This fell under the "Trading with the

¹²⁸Ibid.

¹²⁹Preston Canada in World Affairs 1959-61, pg.114.

Enemy Act" which prevented American businesses (or their foreign subsidiaries) trading with countries which were viewed as threats to the United States.

As a close ally of the United States in the 'war' against communist expansion, Canada was expected to follow the American policy. For over ten years it did. Though it was often thought in Ottawa that the American policy towards China was excessive and rather unrealistic, there was no benefit to be gained by breaking from that policy. Canada had very limited interests in China or Asia.

Canada's involvement in the security of Asia resulted in severe casualties in the region during World War II. As a result, Canadians were not interested in participating in the strategic affairs of Asia in the post-war era. Too many young men had already died for an area of little interest to Canada. Instead, therefore, the Canadian government was content to follow the American lead.¹³⁰

The Canadian government was not the only one which questioned the value of attempting to isolate the Chinese. The British government, for example, believing that Mao's government was the de facto government of China regardless of whether it was recognized, had extended recognition on January 5, 1950. In the words of British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, this was "not to

¹³⁰Beecroft "Canadian Policy towards China 1949-57", in Reluctant Adversaries, pg.44.

confer a compliment but to secure a convenience".¹³¹

Indeed, there were also a number of officials in Washington who favoured a more moderate stance towards China. It was even conceivable to count Kennedy among these during his election campaign. During one debate, he even went so far as to say that the hard line policy had "failed dismally in its principle objective of weakening Communist rule on the mainland".¹³² However, as his opponent, Richard Nixon, successfully countered by stating that a hard line had to be adopted because allowing China any gains would only make it stronger and bolder, Kennedy had to toughen his stance.¹³³ Public opinion in the United States was so anti-communist that any softening of policy toward China would have been labelled with the much-hated term 'appeasement'. Furthermore, the legacy of McCarthyism was still relatively strong in the United States and being 'soft on Communism' was still politically dangerous.¹³⁴

As well, there was a fairly powerful lobby group in Washington known as the "Committee of One Million", (which included former Senators and Representatives), which fiercely

¹³¹Dulles American Policy Toward Communist China 1949-1969 pg.52.

¹³²Ibid.,pg.190.

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴John W. Holmes "Canada and China: The Dilemmas of a Middle Power", in Policies Toward China: Views from Six Continents, Abraham Meyer ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1965), pg.105.

opposed any opening toward China.¹³⁵ There was also the very powerful "China Lobby" which would not permit the United States to deal with any Chinese government other than the one based in Taiwan.¹³⁶ Thus any thought Kennedy may have had about easing up on China was short-lived. He faced numerous pressures to maintain the hard line and virtually none to soften the stance.

The hard line which the United States adopted vis-a-vis China was necessarily reciprocated by the Chinese. Since the United States was the leader of the capitalist world, and the strongest opponent to the communist way of life, it was natural that the US be viewed as China's biggest threat. This image was cultivated by Chinese propaganda which became known as the "Hate America" campaign.¹³⁷ This propaganda campaign was described by author Richard L. Walker as being such that "it is impossible to convey the full intensity and viciousness of the Hate America Drive which the Chinese Communists waged almost without letup since the early 1930's".¹³⁸ Following the end of World War II, the campaign was greatly intensified and, by 1961 had not

¹³⁵Ibid, pg.193.

¹³⁶Rupert D. Haley, The Development of Canadian Policies Toward Communist China M.A. Thesis (Calgary, 1968), pg.22.

¹³⁷Peter S.H. Tang Communist China Today Volume I: Domestic and Foreign Policies (Washington D.C.: The Research Institute on the Sino-Soviet Bloc, 1961), pg.642.

¹³⁸Note: During the 1930's the United States was giving support to the Chiang Kai-shek regime in opposition to the communist forces.

diminished.¹³⁹ In effect, therefore, both China and the United States had limited their range of action. In the words of one author, the United States and China were basically "hog-tied by their own earlier stand".¹⁴⁰

Canada, however, was not facing the same constraints as the United States. Indeed, Communist propaganda had often regarded Canada as a fellow victim of American imperialism.¹⁴¹ As well, Canadians had not been heavily involved in South East Asia during the Chinese civil war. Thus Canadians did not have the emotional attachment to the area or the feeling that they had 'lost China' that was prevalent in the United States.¹⁴² As a result Canada had a greater range of options than the United States with respect to China. However, this does not mean that Canada could act without consequences. Indeed, there were a number of costs to be associated with establishing better relations with China. The most prevalent among these was the risk of alienating the United States. This risk was too great in absence of any foreseeable benefits.

In the early 1960's, however, there emerged a very strong

¹³⁹Tang Communist China Today Volume I: Domestic and Foreign Policies, pg.642.

¹⁴⁰Preston Canada in World Affairs 1959-61, pg.114.

¹⁴¹Holmes "Canada and China: The Dilemmas of a Middle Power", in Policies Toward China: Views from Six Continents, pg.108.

¹⁴²Ibid., pg.104,108.

benefit to softening Canada's stance with regards to China: wheat. Diefenbaker and his Conservatives had won a majority government in 1957 based on the strong support of Western Canada. Farmers had been facing severe difficulties in the late 1950's. It was calculated that farmers' costs had risen by over 50% since 1947, while the average price of wheat, barley and oats had fallen 21%, 27%, and 37% respectively.¹⁴³ The Conservatives had promised to ease this suffering and that promise had won them the election.¹⁴⁴ The Government now had to deliver on that promise. In spite of a number of efforts to relieve the suffering, the Diefenbaker government was unwilling to provide farmers with what they wanted most: 'deficiency payments'. This was because it was believed that such a measure would do more damage to the Canadian agricultural sector in the long run.¹⁴⁵ The failure to provide adequate assistance led to a grass roots march on Ottawa in March of 1959 which created a great disturbance within the Diefenbaker government. As Diefenbaker noted, "It would be politically disastrous if nothing were done".¹⁴⁶

When Alvin Hamilton was moved from Minister of Northern

¹⁴³Patrick Kyba. Alvin: A Biography of the Honourable Alvin Hamilton P.C. (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1989) p.155.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., pg.156.

¹⁴⁵Ibid.

¹⁴⁶Ibid.

Affairs and Natural Resources to Minister of Agriculture in 1960, he was given the task of finding a way out for the Conservatives. To do this, he requested and received control of the Wheat Board, which was responsible for the promotion of wheat sales abroad. Thus empowered, Hamilton began to seek out foreign buyers of Canadian wheat.

The Chinese crops had suffered a third straight year of poor harvests and the situation had grown rather desperate.¹⁴⁷ As a result, the communist government was forced to turn to the West as a source of food. It was a near perfect match. Hamilton and the Conservatives were desperate to sell, in order to provide relief for the western farmers, and thus shore up their sagging political support in the west, and the Chinese were desperate to buy in order to stave off starvation.

The match was not quite perfect, however, because, as noted above, trade with China was not simply a business transaction but an act which was filled with international issues and consequences. Indeed, much as it had in the Cuban case, the Kennedy Administration began accusing the Diefenbaker government

¹⁴⁷It was estimated that 1958 production had been 193.5 million metric tons. 1959-1961 production had been 168,160 and 167 million metric tons respectively. This represents a decline of 15% (on average).

John Scott China: The Hungry Dragon (New York: Parents' Magazine Press, 1967), p.220

of trading with the enemy.¹⁴⁸ The American argument was that Canada was "sacrificing principles for commercial gain".¹⁴⁹

The American argument, however, merely represents one line of thinking. From the perspective adopted by the Diefenbaker government, the policy of moderation was far more beneficial. Much like the policy which was adopted towards Cuba with respect to the American trade embargo, the Canadian response to the embargo on China stemmed from a different perspective. The Canadian policy appears to have been governed by the belief that the maintenance of ties promoted greater opportunities for influence. Such thinking was outlined by author Charles Hanly when he wrote that "despite our ideological differences with China and some uncertainties concerning China's international goals, it is right for Canada to sell wheat to China".¹⁵⁰ He further points out that not only did the trade prove profitable for the Canadian farming industry, but it also greatly benefited the economic development in China. By satisfying the basic needs of the Chinese people, it was hoped that this would "contribute toward the establishment of peaceful and cooperative relations

¹⁴⁸For discussion of the charges of profiteering in the Cuban case see p. 26-27

¹⁴⁹Holmes "Canada and China: The Dilemmas of a Middle Power", in Policies Toward China: Views from Six Continents, pg.114.

¹⁵⁰Charles Henly "The Ethics of Independence", An Independent Foreign Policy For Canada?, pg.20.

with China in other areas in the long run".¹⁵¹ As well, Prime Minister Lester Pearson reiterated such a stance in 1964 saying: "If we exposed [China] more to the views of the rest of the world, we might some day expect a more realistic policy from them. The present isolation of China encourages recurring crises."¹⁵²

Not all Canadians agreed with their government's assessment of the ethics of trading with a communist country. Indeed, Hamilton received a number of angry letters following the trade agreement. One, written by a Mr. F.L. Williams claimed that "such a trade transgresses the treaty amongst Christian democratic nations... for the specific purpose of countering Communist aggression".¹⁵³ Another implored that "[i]n the name of reason, responsibility and the 25 million urban Canadians who must ultimately face the awesome legacy of 800 million Chinese communist imperialists that we are leaving for them, let us have no more of such jingoistic junk as 'Breaking the Embargo' or

¹⁵¹Ibid.

¹⁵²Holmes "Canada and China: The Dilemmas of a Middle Power", in Policies Toward China: Views from Six Continents, pg.120.

¹⁵³F.L. Williams to Hamilton, Feb.4, 1961 (Hamilton Papers Box 268656), Quoted in Patrick Kyba "Alvin Hamilton and Sino-Canadian Relations" Reluctant Adversaries, Paul M. Evans and B. Michael Frolic, ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), pg.174.

'feeding our enemies' ".¹⁵⁴ Yet another letter accused Hamilton of being "an opportunistic hypocrite... selling wheat for dollars regardless of the ethics involved".¹⁵⁵

In spite of this rather pointed criticism, the decision was fairly well supported. Indeed, the expected source of criticism was quiet. During the cabinet meeting prior to the conclusion of the trade agreement, many ministers expressed concern that ethnic groups would object to the sale. Ukrainians, Poles, Czechs and other Eastern European immigrants had been "pretty worked up" about the Russian communist domination of their homelands and there was concern that they would not distinguish between the Chinese and the Russian governments.¹⁵⁶ Hence assisting a communist country could create a fierce protest. Indeed, in 1961 the population of Canada was 18,238,247. Of these 323,517 were Polish and 473,337 were Ukrainian.¹⁵⁷ Thus these two groups alone represented approximately 4% of the population. While this may seem small, it is enough to form a very powerful lobby group. However, it was found that, for the most part, these ethnic

¹⁵⁴F.C. Quelenton to Hamilton June 16, 1961 (Hamilton Papers Box 199) quoted from Kyba Reluctant Adversaries, pg.174.

¹⁵⁵R.M. Bond to Hamilton, October 23, 1962 (Hamilton Papers Box 199), quoted in Kyba Alvin: A Biography of the Honourable Alvin Hamilton P.C., pg. 175.

¹⁵⁶Hamilton interview with Kyba, Oct. 26, 1982 from Kyba Reluctant Adversaries, pg.171.

¹⁵⁷Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1961 Census of Canada Vol.1 Part 2, "Population", p.35-1,35-2

communities were not bothered by the trade.¹⁵⁸

In fact, the majority of Canadians were in favour of the wheat deal with China. This was shown when a Gallup poll asked Canadians: "Should Canada and Red China work out a business arrangement to buy and sell goods to each other ... that is other than war materials?" Fully 72% thought it was 'a good idea' while only 24% thought it was 'not a good idea' (4% were undecided).¹⁵⁹ Rather surprisingly, support was not confined to the farming industry as 81% of "Professional & Executives" 66% of "White Collar", 71% of "Labour" were in favour of the trade. Of the farming industry, only 71% felt it was a good idea.¹⁶⁰ This shows that it was not simply the Western farmers who wanted the trade, surprisingly it appears they wanted it less than other groups.

There were a number of obstacles which the Diefenbaker government had to overcome in adopting the trade policy. The largest of these was the opposition of the United States. In deciding whether or not to authorize the sale of wheat to China, many cabinet ministers were fearful that it would bring about harsh penalties from the United States in the form of reduced

¹⁵⁸Kyba Reluctant Adversaries, pg.171.

¹⁵⁹Canadian Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup Canada), "Big Shift Brings Approval For Trade With Red China" (Jun.10,1961).

¹⁶⁰Ibid.

investment or defence sharing.¹⁶¹ However, in an effort to defuse the situation, Hamilton kept in close contact with the United States State Department so that the American officials would have a clear understanding of Canadian objectives. Furthermore, in a meeting with Kennedy, Hamilton offered him half the sales to China, showing that Canada was not obsessed with profits as it would be willing to give up half.¹⁶² (While Kennedy was receptive to the idea, he never took Hamilton up on the offer). Furthermore, in meetings between the Minister of Agriculture and the US Secretary of Agriculture, the sales were discussed with no objection from the United States.¹⁶³

The American position changed, however, and Canada's trade with China soon faced difficulties created by American policy. The first of these was the restriction of sales by Imperial Oil of Canada to shipping companies carrying wheat to China.¹⁶⁴ As Imperial Oil was a subsidiary of an American company, it was bound by the American Trading with the Enemy Act and thus was not permitted to assist in 'breaking' that law. However, rather than deterring the trade, the United States Treasury Department probably increased the resolve of the Diefenbaker government to

¹⁶¹Kyba Reluctant Adversaries pg.173.

¹⁶²Ibid.

¹⁶³Ibid.

¹⁶⁴Nash Kennedy and Diefenbaker, pg.92.

continue its policy. It was seen as meddling in Canada's internal affairs. As Diefenbaker noted: "I would not consider having the Canadian government request an exemption under US regulations for the sale of Canadian oil by a Canadian company in order to carry out the export of Canadian grain."¹⁶⁵ In his view, the trade was an "important and essentially Canadian transaction" and the US had no right to interfere.¹⁶⁶

A second disruption occurred on June 5, 1961, when the US Treasury Department halted the export of grain unloading pumps (vacuators) to Canada.¹⁶⁷ The pumps had been shipped from Batavia, Illinois to Vancouver but before they could be installed on the Canadian ships, the Dubar-Kettle Company (the US manufacturers) was ordered by the Treasury Department to bring them back to the US.¹⁶⁸ Without the pumps, the ships could not sail. Diefenbaker would not permit the United States to wreck the trade. He declared Kennedy "was not going to prevent our carrying out Canadian policies because Washington didn't think those policies right or appropriate".¹⁶⁹

In both cases, diplomacy won out and the impediments were

¹⁶⁵Diefenbaker One Canada Vol.2, pg.180.

¹⁶⁶Ibid.

¹⁶⁷House of Commons Hansard, Vol. IV, 1960-61, (Jun.7,1961) pg.5961.

¹⁶⁸Nash Kennedy and Diefenbaker, pg.133.

¹⁶⁹Diefenbaker One Canada Vol.2, pg.181.

removed as requested. However, there was a clear message sent by the American government that it disapproved of Canada's actions in selling wheat to China.

In terms of international pressure, however, Canada did not stand alone in seeking to bring China out of isolation. Indeed, the British Commonwealth (which Diefenbaker as an Anglophile looked kindly upon), had pushed to bring China into the international system. As mentioned previously, Britain had been among the first to recognize the Peoples Republic of China. As well, during the late 1950's - early 1960's, Commonwealth Asia - India, Pakistan and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) - all expressed dissatisfaction with the isolation of China.¹⁷⁰ Thus there was a foundation for establishing ties with China. It was also certainly a factor that the Australian government was also quite willing to sell wheat to China.¹⁷¹ In fact, even when China began pursuing an aggressive policy towards India which led to border clashes and military incursions, the Indian government did not sever its diplomatic relations with China. Nor did it seek to

¹⁷⁰Holmes "Canada and China: The Dilemmas of a Middle Power", in Policies Toward China: Views from Six Continents, Abraham Meyer Halpern ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1965), pg.109.

¹⁷¹Coral Bell "Australia and China: Power Balance and Policy," in Policies Toward China: Views from Six Continents, Abraham Meyer Halpern ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1965), pg.191.

join the American policy of containing China.¹⁷²

The support of other members of the international community with which Canada had ties allowed Canada to diverge from the United States. The decision to trade with China was thus given enhanced legitimacy as an acceptable course of action and not a defection from the Western camp.

Regardless of how the action was viewed by the United States, however, it was not simply an effort to 'make a fast buck'. In fact, a poll conducted on Feb. 2, 1963 asked Canadians why they supported trade in food and non-strategic goods with communist countries. 54% of the respondents believed that it was "the humane thing to do; we must keep innocent people from starving". Only 26% cited economic reasons for their support.¹⁷³

Admittedly trade with China increased by well over 1000% from 1960 to 1961, but this must be kept in perspective.

¹⁷²Hirendranath Mukerjee "China and India" in China: Co-existence or Containment? Edited by J.M. Robson (Toronto: International Forum Foundation, 1968), pg.56.

¹⁷³Canadian Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup Canada), "Most Want Sales to Reds for Humanity - and Market", (Feb.2,1963).

TABLE 2

YEAR	Canadian Imports from China ('000's C\$)	Canadian Exports to China ('000's C\$)	Trade Balance ('000's C\$)	Percentage of Total Canadian Exports
1958	\$5,370	\$7,809	\$2,439	0.163%
1959	\$4,840	\$1,720	(\$3,120)	0.034%
1960	\$5,638	\$8,737	\$3,099	0.166%
1961	\$3,233	\$125,448	\$122,215	2.180%
1962	\$4,521	\$147,438	\$142,917	2.386%
1963	\$5,147	\$104,738	\$99,591	1.541%
1964	\$9,420	\$136,263	\$126,843	1.683%
1965	\$14,445	\$105,131	\$90,686	1.233%

Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Yearbook 1959-1966

Although the wheat sales greatly increased Canadian trade with China, there was only a marginal gain in total Canadian exports. More importantly, however, the trade with China resulted in a massive surplus for Canada. China, like many communist countries, was extremely low on foreign exchange at this time. Therefore, they were being forced to use up a large amount of scarce hard currency on foodstuffs rather than military equipment.¹⁷⁴

The argument was put forth that the trade in food was, in fact, helping the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA). Such a proposition was put forth November 3, 1962 by the Financial Post.

¹⁷⁴Kyba. Alvin: A Biography of the Honourable Alvin Hamilton P.C., pg.177.

It asked: "At a time when China is fighting a Commonwealth country, should another Commonwealth country do anything to ease China's financial woes?"¹⁷⁵ These criticisms were coupled with the claims that the wheat was not reaching the starving Chinese but was being used to strengthen the government. Some believed that it was going almost entirely to the military. Indeed, Hans Bertelsen, the Dutch Ambassador to Peking claimed that "not a grain of Canadian wheat has ever reached the starving masses of China" but was going to the armed forces and essential workers.¹⁷⁶ Another view was that the grain was being sold on the black market in order to provide China with foreign exchange.¹⁷⁷ As well, it was argued that about 13% of the grain was being diverted to Albania and East Germany in order to extend China's international influence.¹⁷⁸

However, while each of these arguments raise serious questions about the morality of the Canadian trade with China, there is another aspect which must be considered. That is, in the absence of Canadian wheat, would the Chinese leadership have embarked on a different set of policies? For example, what is

¹⁷⁵Financial Post, "Should Canada Feed China's Soldiers?", (Nov.3,1962)

¹⁷⁶Peyton V Lyon. Canada in World Affairs 1961-63 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968), pg.426.

¹⁷⁷Jack MacBeth "Red China's Racket in our Wheat" Saturday Night, (Mar.3,1962).

¹⁷⁸Financial Post (Nov.18,1962).

the likelihood that Beijing would allow its military and essential workers to go hungry? Given the nature of the Chinese regime at the time, it probably would have meant even greater suffering for the masses. Hence while it may have been the case that Canadian wheat fed the military, or Albania, or the coffers of the Chinese Communist Party,¹⁷⁹ the net result was still more food in China. As a result, it was not as pressing to rob the masses of their meagre stores of food.

Feeding the masses was a key objective of the Diefenbaker government because as he pointed out: "empty stomachs are the major reason for the march of Communism."¹⁸⁰ Thus the sale of wheat was in keeping with the Conservative government belief that communism tended to be a symptom of deeper problems, which had to be dealt with if the war against communism was to be won and 'human liberties' restored. This was, of course in marked contrast to the dominant American view that the PRC was an "instrument of communist conspiracy".¹⁸¹

Isolating communism was not the answer for the Diefenbaker government with respect to Cuba and it was also not the answer

¹⁷⁹The extent to which these claims are true is rather unclear given the general lack of information on the developments within the PRC at this time. This lack of reporting is discussed in Preston Canada in World Affairs 1959-61, pg.116.

¹⁸⁰Globe and Mail "PM Gets Bets of Exchanges with Hecklers in Red Deer", (Jun.1,1962).

¹⁸¹Dulles American Policy Toward Communist China 1949-1969, pg.192.

with respect to China. Again there is the principle that by establishing trade and diplomatic ties, a dialogue can take place and through this dialogue, the hostility can be broken down and real solutions can be reached. As Hamilton noted: "The Chinese are willing to trade. They are willing to talk. In time our political differences can be resolved if basic interests are accepted, but first let us get on with the task of raising the standards of living by bringing the newly developed nations into the orbit of world trade. If we have faith in the ability of our economic institutions to prevail, then there should be no doubt that we can arrive at political solutions."¹⁸²

In fact, there is evidence to support Hamilton's claim as China was far more open towards Canada than the United States. For example, while American journalists were shut out of China, Canadian journalists were permitted entry.¹⁸³ As well, at the Geneva conference on Laos, the United States received a "stony-faced" reception from the Chinese while the Canadian delegates received friendly contact. 'Chinese sources' confided that this friendliness "showed China's gratitude".¹⁸⁴

¹⁸²Hamilton speech to the 30th Annual Kansas Institute of International Relations Conference (March 29, 1965) Hamilton Papers Box 199, quoted from Kyba Reluctant Adversaries pg.180-1.

¹⁸³Preston Canada in World Affairs 1959-61, p.116

¹⁸⁴Globe and Mail (May 17, 1961)

In the case of China, perception pushed Canada and the United States in different directions. The US administration saw China as a communist threat to be isolated and eradicated. The Canadian administration, however, was more inclined to see China as an opportunity. First of all, there was the tremendous opportunity to alleviate pressure from the west by giving farmers a huge market for their grain. This, as well, gave the government a chance to run a fairly large trade surplus. However, the economic opportunities were not the only ones which the government saw. Indeed, through trade, the Diefenbaker government had a chance to give China a stake in the international community and was seen as one way of moderating it. The trade relationship permitted the opportunity for a better communication between Canada and China thus keeping Canada better informed about China. It also allowed the Canadian government to help the Chinese masses.

By taking the position it did, the Canadian government was acting much as it had with the Cuban case. It adopted a view that it was better to work with a problem country than to condemn it and shut it out. It was this factor, more than any which permitted the divergence. Without it, there could be no justification for 'trading with the enemy'. To argue that the wheat sales were entirely economic would be somewhat inaccurate. Indeed, one must keep in mind that not only was it China that approached Canada in order to initiate the trade, but also that

Hamilton was willing to give half of the sales to the United States. Furthermore, there is little difference between Canadian and American wheat so that the economic opportunity which was available to Canada should have been available to the United States as well, all other things being equal. It is the fact that all other things were not equal, however, which defines this case. Unless the argument is made that Canadians were more greedy than the United States (a rather difficult argument to make), there must have been another principle at work.

CHAPTER 3: The Helms-Burton Act and the Tiananmen Square Massacre

General Overview

The world of the 1990's was decidedly different from that of the 1960's. The greatest difference, in terms of international relations, was of course the fact that the Cold War was over. The fall of the Soviet Union radically altered the world system. The bipolar system of the Cold War was replaced by what was viewed as a unipolar system with the United States as the only remaining superpower.

This change had a great impact on both the field of human rights and the ability of Canada to move in the international system. Since security issues were of less importance, given the absence of a 'menacing enemy', there was less of a need for strong allies. In terms of human rights, therefore, it was much easier to discuss the embarrassing human rights violations of other nations without fear of driving them into the Soviet camp. It was suggested in previous chapters that the United States favoured anti-communist dictators over benevolent socialist regimes. However, with the end of the Cold War, the fear of the spreading of communism was substantially reduced and, consequently, the value of oppressive allies was greatly reduced.

These changes affected Canada, enabling it to manoeuvre much more in the post-Cold War environment than it had before. Alliance systems such as NATO were not as important to its junior

members for their security. This allowed them to break from the major partner without fear of compromising their security. Thus the 'affiliation strategy'¹⁸⁵ was less powerful as middle powers such as Canada had less need of the protection of the superpowers.

Furthermore, the new-found power of groups such as the European Union (EU), allowed for a more diverse set of views in the international scene. While the EU may not have represented a 'pole' comparable to the United States, it was a group from which Canada could find support for views which do not correspond to those of the United States.

The emergence of the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA), however, had a detrimental effect on Canada's independence from the United States. While the military/strategic ties to the United States became less important, the growing economic ties compensated. This tied Canada to the United States far more than NATO or NORAD ever could. NAFTA removed the ability of Canada to erect barriers which were designed to protect Canadian industries or cultural institutions from outside (American) competition. This, in turn, led to heightened fears of American influence.

There are, however, differences between this period and the one previously examined. In the first place, there was not the

¹⁸⁵See Chapter 1, p.22

same 'anti-Americanism' as was shown in the Diefenbaker era. Secondly, the period being studied includes 1989 (the Tiananmen Square Massacre) and 1995 (the Helms-Burton Act). This means that it cuts across two Canadian governments: The Mulroney government (1984-93) and the Chretien government (1993-). These two governments had very different views with respect to the United States.

Brian Mulroney was a decided continentalist. He viewed the United States as Canada's strongest ally, largest trade partner and best friend. He was aghast at the way Prime Minister Trudeau had soured relations with the US. He made it an objective to repair these relations, promising stronger ties to.¹⁸⁶ Indeed, he was true to his word. He was described by one US State Department official as "the frankest advocate of pro-US positions to run Canada in thirty years".¹⁸⁷

Under Mulroney, Canada openly courted American investment. The former safeguard, the Foreign Investment Review Agency (FIRA), which was designed to limit US ownership and subsequent control of Canadian industry, was replaced with Investment Canada

¹⁸⁶Clarkson "Canada-US Relations and the Changing of the Guard in Ottawa" in Canada Among Nations 1984, pg.161.

¹⁸⁷Lawrence Martin Pledge of Allegiance: The Americanization of Canada in the Mulroney Years (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1993), pg.1.

which sought to expand American investment.¹⁸⁸ This 'opening of Canada for business' culminated in the Canada United States Free Trade Agreement (CUSFTA) and, later, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

The closeness which the Mulroney government carried with the Americans was not favourably viewed by many Canadians, sensitive to US influences. Success in Canadian politics, noted Lawrence Martin, requires a delicate balancing act. "Prosperity... [requires] intimate economic relations with the United States, the survival of Canada require[s] distance."¹⁸⁹ CUSFTA was strongly opposed by the opposition political parties as well as many unions and small businesses. The closeness of the Mulroney government to the United States created a strong opposition bloc. This opposition was a major contributing factor in the greatest electoral defeat the Conservative party had ever seen.

Mulroney's replacement, Jean Chretien, and his Liberal party were keen to promote a more 'Canadian' image. Indeed, Chretien was far less impressed with the American system than was Mulroney. He was described years earlier as "a fervent supporter of the need to build a society different from that of the US".¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸Clarkson "Canada-US Relations and the Changing of the Guard in Ottawa" in Canada Among Nations 1984, pg.161.

¹⁸⁹Martin Pledge of Allegiance: The Americanization of Canada in the Mulroney Years, pg.271.

¹⁹⁰Lawrence Martin Chretien Vol.1: The Will to Win, (Toronto: Lester Publishing, 1995), p.178.

Chretien, it seems, had a better understanding of the need to keep some distance from the United States, saying, in 1988: "I know that Canadians are willing to pay a price to be Canadians."¹⁹¹ No doubt, this idea was reinforced by his witnessing of the strong opposition of many Canadians to the free trade agreement with the US.

Therefore, unlike Mulroney, whom he described as having the "ambition of becoming governor of America's fifty-first state"¹⁹², Chretien sought to distance Canada from the US. This does not mean that Chretien possessed the same anti-Americanism as Diefenbaker. Rather it would appear that he falls somewhere between Mulroney and Diefenbaker.

Another factor which must be considered closely when examining the two cases from this era is the changing nature of the economy. The late 1980's/ early 1990's saw a fairly serious recession in Canada (and the United States) followed in the mid-1990's with a great deal of concern with government deficits and debt. Both of these factors turned governments inward. Facing domestic pressures relating to the economy made it difficult for the government to pursue a decisive foreign policy. Simply put, jobs achieved such a premium that sacrificing them in order to affect the human rights policies in another country would have an

¹⁹¹Ibid.

¹⁹²Ibid., pg.348.

amplified political fallout.

CASE 3 - Cuba: The Helms-Burton Act

The trade embargo which the United States placed on Cuba following the rise to power of Fidel Castro¹⁹³ has never been lifted. For the past 35 years, the United States has been attempting to subdue the Castro regime through economic strangulation. For the most part this policy has been a failure.

Despite the vast economic power of the United States, it was impossible for it to unilaterally block Cuba from international trade. Indeed, shortly after the embargo was put in place, the US's chief rival, the Soviet Union, stepped in to fill the void. In fact, the USSR engaged in trade with Cuba as a means of subsidizing its junior ally. Thus while pre-revolution trade with the United States had been exploitive of Cuba, post-revolution, post-embargo trade with the USSR was more along the lines of foreign aid.

The American imposed embargo was also ignored by other western powers. This meant that the Castro regime had access to the technology of the west and western style goods. The hope that the Cuban infrastructure would break down as machinery broke down or parts wore out could therefore not be realized. American parts would simply be replaced by parts made in Canada, Britain, West Germany, etc. Furthermore, American goods could easily be routed through Mexico (or another country not participating in

¹⁹³See Chapter 2: Cuba: Bay of Pigs Invasion

the embargo). Thus the sanction was ineffective in stopping American goods from reaching Cuba and could do little to stop 'western goods' from reaching Cuba. Indeed, the Canadian Ambassador to Cuba in 1997 described the embargo as a sieve. He noted that US goods were readily available through 'middle-men' such as Mexico, Panama or Canada but, more importantly, that the embargo was regularly skirted by US businessmen as well.¹⁹⁴

Economic sanctions are an interesting weapon against human rights violators. They can effectively show dissatisfaction with a regime and impose a measure of punishment. In effect, the country initiating the sanction attempts to coerce the violating country into changing its policies.

Once the Bay of Pigs invasion failed to dislodge Castro, the military intervention option was gone for the Americans. The use of US troops would draw in the USSR. The use of non-US troops again would be a very shoddy screen, fooling no one. Either way, the world's response to the Bay of Pigs had been so negative that a second attempt would have only served to discredit the US and fuel communist propaganda. The embargo, therefore, was one of the few methods by which the United States could punish Cuba without appearing to be an imperialist bully.

Once an embargo is put in place, it is very difficult to shut it off unless a specific time frame is set out. This made

¹⁹⁴Globe and Mail "Americans in Cuba", (Jan.31,1997)

the Cuban embargo rather awkward. As long as the embargo was in place, Castro could claim that he was effectively defying the 'imperialist Americans' by not backing down. It "provide[d] Castro with a ready-made enemy and all the excuses he need[ed] to keep the Cuba people enslaved".¹⁹⁵ He was the underdog fighting the big bully.

As ineffective as it was, however, the embargo could not be lifted because to do so would be an admission on the part of the United States that the tiny, weak, rather insignificant country of Cuba had successfully defied it. Cold War or not, this would be an unacceptable blow to the prestige of the US. Therefore, the Cuban embargo passed from administration to administration, ineffective but unavoidable.

With the end of the Cold War, however, a new opportunity arose. The major counter-force to the embargo, the USSR was put into disarray. The collapse of the USSR was accompanied by the collapse of the Russian economy. Therefore, Moscow could no longer subsidize the Cuban economy. This patched up a major hole in the American embargo and had a severe impact on the Cuban economy. The value of Cuba's total imports fell from US\$ 8.1 billion (1989) to US\$ 2 billion (1993).¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵The Economist "How to lose friends and annoy people" (Jul.20,1996), pg.16.

¹⁹⁶"Cuba Trade and Economic Overview" <http://dfait-maeci.gc.ca/english/geo/lac/cubatrad.htm> (Dec.1996)

It was now conceivable for the United States to place sufficient economic pressure on Cuba to force Castro to change his policies. All that had to be done was to seal up the other leaks - the other western countries. In the event that they too could be brought into the fold the Cuban economy would be under extreme pressure without the Soviet outlet.

The timing was also seen as particularly appropriate because the Cuban air force shot down two small American civilian aircraft which were working with Cuban refugees. The operator of the aircraft, an organization called "Brothers to the Rescue", was an anti-Castro group which monitored activity within Cuba and, according to the Castro regime, promoted insurgency.¹⁹⁷ In the wake of this event, Castro's image fell sharply and an emotional response was produced in the United States.

Consequently support was fairly strong for the legislation which was introduced by Jesse Helms, chairman of the Senate foreign relations committee, and co-sponsored by Dan Burton in March 1996 (passing the US Senate by a vote of 74 to 22).¹⁹⁸

The act effectively gave US courts jurisdiction to try suits against non-US companies which had dealings with interests in Cuba which had profited by the expropriations made by the Castro

¹⁹⁷Globe and Mail "Latin America and the Helms-Burton insult", (Jun.21,1996) .

¹⁹⁸Globe and Mail "Canada assailed as Cuba bill passes" (Mar.6,1996) .

regime.

Canada's refusal to join the American embargo represents an independent human rights action with respect to Cuba. The main justification for the US embargo has been the claim that Castro is an oppressive dictator (and thus a human rights violator). Hence the American action is a human rights action. Refusal to endorse the American policy therefore has human rights aspects.

Indeed, the Canadian government has not taken the stance that the Castro regime is perfect. The human rights abuses of the regime are disappointing to Canadians just as much as they are to Americans. However, Canada has adopted a policy of dialogue and openness as apposed to the isolationistic policies of the United States. There are a number of reasons why this policy has been adopted.

The first major factor which must be considered in this case (as with previous cases) is the Canadian/American relationship. Even though the Chretien government was far less hostile to the United States than the Diefenbaker administration, the aversion to American dominance is still an important consideration. The closeness which the Mulroney government showed towards the United States led to a serious fallout and another escalation of anti-American sentiment in Canada. This feeling was only reinforced by what was perceived as the incredible arrogance of some members of the US government.

It is difficult to find a more blatant example of this 'preaching' than Helms-Burton cosponsor, Jesse Helms. Believing the US policy to be the only 'moral' policy, Helms made a number of statements to try to convince others of this. One such statement was made on March 5, 1996 when he compared dealing with Castro to the Munich Treaty which Neville Chamberlain signed with Adolf Hitler.¹⁹⁹ He went on to say that by dealing with Castro, Canadians had "become a part of what [they] condone", that they were "condoning Fidel Castro." Furthermore he suggested that Canadians "should be ashamed of themselves".²⁰⁰ Much like the Kennedy-Diefenbaker example, however, this approach was counter-productive. Chretien, like Diefenbaker, refused to allow the United States to claim a monopoly on morality. He responded to Helms' charges of hypocrisy and 'appeasement' by claiming that, historically, Canada had a better record of standing up to tyrants than did the United States. He noted that Canada entered the war against Hitler two years before the United States and had also entered the First World War three years before the United States.²⁰¹ Though Chretien attempted to play down the significance of Helms' statement by saying "Jesse Helms is Jesse

¹⁹⁹Ibid.

²⁰⁰Ibid.

²⁰¹Globe and Mail "Chretien joins word war with Helms over Cuba" (Mar.9,1996).

Helms"²⁰², he was, in effect backed into a corner. Much like the "What we want from Ottawa" note of Kennedy,²⁰³ the stance of Helms aggravated anti-American sentiment in Canada.²⁰⁴

Helms was so convinced of the superiority of the American position that he seemed unconcerned about the view of other states. In an interview on CNN (March 12, 1996), he illustrated his feelings toward Canada, the EU and Mexico, saying: "All we're saying is, obey OUR law."²⁰⁵ The stance was so condescending it would have been impossible for Canada to agree to the Helms-Burton Act without suffering a serious blow to its sovereignty. Regardless of the question of the moral superiority of the American position, forcing the issue could only harden the resistance of Canadians. Helms may have been speaking from what he saw as the moral high ground, but preaching in the international community (where subservience is to be avoided), is a poor choice.

²⁰²Ibid.

²⁰³See Chapter 2 , pg.37.

²⁰⁴This was exacerbated by the fact that one of the companies which Helms-Burton specifically targeted was a Canadian mining company named Sherritt. Sherritt was operating in Cuba in conjuncture with interests confiscated from the United States. In spite of the open and friendly relations which Canada and the United States enjoyed, the top executives of Sherritt were banned from entering the United States. This measure implied that the executives were some sort of 'undesirable element' and served to promote an image of American arrogance.

²⁰⁵Globe and Mail "The many sins of the Helms-Burton law", (Jul.1,1996)

The second key issue of the Helms-Burton law is the response of the international community. As stated previously, Canada has tended to look to other nations for support in its disagreements with the United States. In the case of Helms-Burton, Canada did not have to look very hard to find dissenting voices. Indeed, it was difficult to find many voices which supported the law outside of the United States.

At the Ibero-American Summit in November, 1996, leaders from Latin America, Spain and Portugal joined together in condemning the Helms-Burton law.²⁰⁶ They claimed that the law "ignore[d] the fundamental principle of respect for the sovereignty of states".²⁰⁷ This opposition is particularly interesting because one of the main reasons that the embargo was originally applied was to protect Latin American from 'communist tyranny'.²⁰⁸ Fellow Latin American countries should have been the most concerned with the 'oppression' engineered by the Castro regime. However, rather than supporting a law designed to topple him, they opposed it.

The OAS, an organization which had expelled Cuba in 1962 for being an oppressive communist nation, expressed opposition to the

²⁰⁶Globe and Mail "Latin leaders attack US embargo on Cuba", (Jun.21,1996)

²⁰⁷Ibid.

²⁰⁸See chapter 2, pg.47.

Helms-Burton law. In June of 1996, the OAS passed a resolution which condemned the Helms-Burton law for its "extraterritorial effects damaging other countries' sovereignty".²⁰⁹ The resolution passed by a vote of 23 to 1 with 10 abstentions.²¹⁰

Canada's fellow junior partner in NAFTA, Mexico, was also strongly opposed to the Helms-Burton law. On October 1, 1996, the Mexican parliament voted 317 to 1 for legislation that would fine any company which allowed itself to be swayed by the Helms-Burton law.²¹¹ Thus, rather than simply not endorsing the law, Mexican officials pushed their corporations to openly defy the law and punished those that did not.

The most important opposition, however, came from the European Union. The EU represented an economic bloc which stood on an equal footing with the United States. The Latin American countries would have made feasible allies for Canada but they were so weak relative to the United States that they would not have been sufficient to check the United States. The opposition of the EU, however, formed a pole toward which Canada could gravitate with some degree of security. The opposition of a group to which the United States could not dictate, provided

²⁰⁹Globe and Mail "Latin America and the Helms-Burton insult", (Jun.21,1996)

²¹⁰The Economist "Biter bitten", (Jun.8,1996), pg.45.

²¹¹Globe and Mail "Mexico, EU attack Helms-Burton Act", (Oct.2,1996).

Canada a strong alternative. In effect, failure to support the Helms-Burton law on the part of Canada would not draw the same degree of retribution as if the EU was not present. The American counter-action would be diffused across a much larger spectrum. Furthermore, it was quite possible for Canada to simply follow the policies of the EU. Thus, Canada would not be seen as *leading* the opposition.

The presence of widespread opposition to the Helms-Burton law was a very liberating factor for Canada. In effect, it allowed Canada to diverge from the American policy without drawing too much attention to itself. Indeed, the phrase "there's safety in numbers" applies to the international community as well. In standing against the Helms-Burton law, Canada would simply be one of many. This would provide credibility to Canadian opposition as opposition was a commonly held view in the international community.

There were many factors which contributed to the opposition to the Helms-Burton law. The first of these, the implications for state sovereignty, has been discussed briefly above.²¹² Furthermore, the act also broke a number of international conventions with regards to international trade and extraterritoriality. As one columnist wrote: "This act violates

²¹²See pg.102.

many tenets of free-trade policy expressed by the United States for the last 40 years."²¹³ As well, Wayne S. Smith, former chief of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana (equivalent to Ambassador) stated that Helms-Burton "place[d] the United States on the wrong side of international law and in defiance of ethical behaviour".²¹⁴

Indeed, it was the violation of international trade law which was the basis for most international opposition. Because the United States and the countries most affected by the Helms-Burton Act were members of the World Trade Organization (WTO), many of the affected countries, most notably the EU countries, sought to have the WTO rule on the legality of the law. The extraterritorial measures and the process of subjecting foreign companies to United States court rulings were extremely questionable on legal grounds. Thus opposition to the law could take a technical form rather than an attack on the principles of the law.

This was an approach adopted by two Canadian Members of Parliament. John Godfrey and Peter Milliken reasoned that there was no theoretical difference between the confiscation of US interests in Cuba following the Castro revolution and the

²¹³Globe and Mail "A principled stance against Helms-Burton", (Jul.24,1996).

²¹⁴Globe and Mail "The many sins of the Helms-Burton law", (Jul.1,1996).

confiscation of United Empire Loyalist interests in the US following the American revolution. Therefore, they presented a private members bill which would allow former Loyalists to sue the United States in the same manner which Helms-Burton allowed Americans to sue Canadians dealing with Castro. In their opinion, their bill was "no more outrageous than Helms-Burton".²¹⁵

However, it is the principles involved which are the most important factor. Though the Helms-Burton act was seen to set a very dangerous precedent with regard to national sovereignty, this represented a problem of procedure rather than a challenge to the the principles which motivated the policy. Helms-Burton was seen as going too far in pushing foreign countries into supporting the American policy towards Cuba. The real issue, however, is not whether the law went too far, but why it went that far. Indeed, even if the Helms-Burton law had taken a more 'reasonable' stand (reasonable in the view of other nations), it is doubtful that Canada would have endorsed it. The key, therefore, is not the text of the Helms-Burton law or the measures which it put forth, but the principles and motivations behind it.

The catalyst behind the legislation, as stated above, was the downing of two civilian air planes. Canada joined the United States (and most western nations) in condemning the action.

²¹⁵Globe and Mail "MP's bill spoofs Helms act on Cuba", (Oct.23,1996) .

However, the position which the Canadian government took with regards to the downing was much different than that of the United States. The United States view was that the downings were a conscious policy of Fidel Castro made in an effort to quell opposition. It was not an isolated incident but a part of a greater policy of oppression and human rights violations. According to US Ambassador to the United Nations, Madeline Albright, Castro was getting "nervous about the desire of freedom" on the part of the Cuban people, and shot down the planes to reassert his control.²¹⁶ The Canadian view did not tie the action to a general policy of oppression. Said Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy: "It certainly was a serious problem. We deplored it. We said it was a major mistake... [However, it was] not a question of democracy or human rights; that it [was] a question of one state reacting to the incursion into its territory by taking unacceptable action."²¹⁷

This belief was part of the reason why the Canadian reaction was not as strong as that of the United States. In a way, the downings tapped into a sense of outrage towards Castro which was ever present, ever powerful in the United States. Because of the large number of anti-Castro Cuban refugees in Florida, the issue

²¹⁶"Cuba Warned" http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/latin_american/albright_cuba_2-26.html (Feb.26,1996)

²¹⁷Globe and Mail "Reaction cool to Clinton's Cuba plan", (Jul.18,1996).

was certain to generate a more emotional response. Furthermore, as these refugees had organized into the Cuban-American National Foundation (CANF) they held political clout. Indeed, the CANF has been described as "arguably the most effective lobbying force in Washington".²¹⁸ The group had put more than US\$ 3.2 million into the US political system (from 1979-97).²¹⁹ Thus as a lobby group, the Cuban exiles could exert direct pressure on the US government. Indeed, it is believed that Jesse Helms (a co-sponsor of the Helms-Burton Act) had been one of CANF's chief beneficiaries.²²⁰

As well, the United States Congress was under even greater pressure because it was an election year. Since Florida is an important state electorally, and the Cuban element represents a large vote, it would have been difficult for the government to bring itself to ignore them at that time. There was no comparable force in Canada. Thus the Canadian government could downplay the incident as one which was 'deplorable' but not sufficient to force a change in policy with regards to Cuba. Therefore, the presence of an angry, large and politically powerful element in the United States exerted a force on the American government which was absent in Canada.

²¹⁸Globe and Mail "Cuban exiles wield big stick, watchdog says", (Jan.24,1997).

²¹⁹Ibid.

²²⁰Ibid.

It should be noted that the Helms-Burton act was, to a degree, self-serving. For not only was it politically advantageous to curry favour with the Cuban exiles, but it had a number of other beneficial purposes. Section 3-Purposes of the Helms Burton act outlines the goals of the act. Two of these are solely for the benefit of Americans, not Cubas. They are:

(3) to provide for the continued national security of the United States in the face of continuing threats from the Castro government of terrorism, theft of property from United States nationals by the Castro government, and the political manipulation by the Castro government of the desire of Cubans to escape that results in mass migration to the United States.

(6) to protect United States nationals against confiscatory takings and the wrongful trafficking in property confiscated by the Castro regime.²²¹

Thus the United States is not immune to charges of being self-serving.

Since there was not a powerful lobby group forcing the issue in Canada, nor a set of national interests to be achieved by removing Castro quickly, the Chretien government saw no need to take a hard line. Instead, the Canadian government continued the same policies which it had followed with regard to Cuba since the revolution of 1959. That policy was not an immoral one (as suggested by Senator Helms) but one which differed from the American one on the basis of perception.

²²¹"Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996" <http://www.usis-canada.usia.gov/cuba.htm> (Mar.4,1996)

The Canadian government had long perceived that the best way to promote greater freedom and a better level of human rights in Cuba was to pursue a policy of openness. It was better, it was thought, to keep the lines of dialogue open than to close them. Thus the fall of the Soviet Union did not mean as much to the Canada-Cuba relationship as it did to the United States-Cuba relationship. While the American government saw it as a opportunity for 'tightening the screws', the Canadian policy would be made more effective by a greater willingness on the part of the Cuban government. The absence of an alternative set of voices and the failure of the communist ideology in other countries could only make western words more powerful for the few remaining communist countries (such as Cuba).

It was, however, the Chretien government's failure to take the 'opportunity' to tighten the embargo which the fall of the USSR presented with respect to Cuba which caused many Americans to label Canada as 'opportunist'. United States Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (a strong supporter of Helms-Burton) explained her view of the Canadian trade: "[E]ven though it's immorally wrong, they feel free to do it because they have no problems with, let's say, worker complaints."²²² It was argued that since the Castro government controlled most business in Cuba, Canada (and similar countries) were paying Castro who, in

²²²"Ill Trade Winds" http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/latin_america/helms_burton_debate_7-11.html (Jul.11,1996)

turn, would exploit the Cuban people. An extremely weak peso, low environment standards and few workers rights (it was said) made Cuban trade very profitable but immoral.²²³

There is little doubt that trade with Cuba has been lucrative for Canada. Indeed, it has been one of the most important of Canada's Latin American trade partners. In 1995, Cuba was Canada's sixth largest Latin American export market.²²⁴ Furthermore, it was Canada's second largest trade partner in the Caribbean.²²⁵ There can be little doubt that a large part of this trade was due to the lack of American competition.²²⁶

²²³Ibid.

²²⁴"Cuba: Trade and Economic Overview"

²²⁵Ibid.

²²⁶Globe and Mail "Canadian business with Cuba booming since 1992", (Mar.6,1996).

TABLE 3

YEAR	Canadian Imports From Cuba ('000's C\$)	Canadian Exports To Cuba ('000's C\$)
1990	\$130,000	\$176,000
1991	\$153,000	\$134,000
1992	\$256,000	\$136,000
1993	\$171,000	\$145,000
1994	\$194,400	\$119,000
1995	\$320,000	\$274,300

Source: 1990-1993: Canada Yearbook

1994,1995: <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/english/geo/lac/82015.htm>

In this sense, there is some truth to the American accusations. However, it is inaccurate to label the Canadian policy as immoral or unprincipled. The fact is, there was a difference in approach rather than a difference in moral standards. Indeed, the Canadian and European approaches were simply a different means to the same end (the improvement in the human rights and living conditions of the Cuban people). As EU Trade Commissioner Sir Leon Brittan stated: "Europeans and Americans share a continuing desire to help turn Cuba into a responsible member of the international community... but the Helms-Burton law is not the right way to achieve that goal."²²⁷ Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy reiterated this sentiment. He noted : "We're approaching it in different ways...

²²⁷Globe and Mail "EU moves to counter Helms-Burton", (Jul.31,1996) .

the reality is that I think [Canada] has gone further than anything [the United States] has been able to accomplish by building those bridges."²²⁸

Unlike Senator Helms, President Clinton was willing to view the Canadian approach as an alternative policy. He said that he was "gratified that Canadians ... are now talking more to the Cubans about human rights and democratic reforms" but was "sceptical... that the recent discussions between the Canadians and the Cubans will lead to advances".²²⁹ The discussion which Clinton refers to occurred on January 21 and 22, 1997 when Axworthy met with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba, Roberto Robaina Gonzalez.²³⁰ This was a dialogue which could not have occurred for the United States. Since Canada had adopted a strategy of openness towards Cuba, it possessed an ability to raise human rights issues.

The January meeting led to a joint declaration by the Canadian and Cuban ministers. In it, they agreed to work jointly in the following areas:

²²⁸Globe and Mail "Cuba visit likened to appeasing Hitler: Helms harshly critical of Canada's actions, Clinton 'gratified but sceptical'" (Jan.24,1997).

²²⁹"Newsmaker with Lloyd Axworthy" http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/latin_america/january97/canada_1-23.html (Jan.23,1997)

²³⁰"Joint Declaration of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Canada and Cuba" http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/english/foreign/jd_w_cba.htm (Jan.22,1997)

1.Cooperation in the area of the administration of justice and the judicial-legal system, including exchanges of judges and judicial training.

2.Support exchanges between the House of Commons and the National Assembly, focussing on the operations of both institutions.

3.Exchange of experiences between both countries relating to the Cuban intention to strengthen within the National Assembly of People's Power and Citizens' Complaints Commission.

4.Broadening and deepening cooperation on the issue of human rights, which will include the preparation of seminars on diverse matters of mutual interest, academic exchanges between officials, professionals and experts, as well as sharing experiences and positions on the work of the specialized organizations of the United Nations.

5.Supporting the activities of Canadian and Cuban non-governmental organizations within the framework of bilateral cooperation between both countries and in accordance with the laws and regulations of each country.

6.Continuation of macroeconomic cooperation, with an initial focus in the areas of taxation and central banking, while studying joint areas in which Canada might continue to support the Cuban policy of economic reform.

7.The negotiation of a Foreign Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement.

8.Further collaboration on narcotics interdiction, including the negotiation of a bilateral accord.

9.The establishment of bilateral conversations on the issue of international terrorism and its prevention.

10.The negotiation of a Memorandum of Understanding between Health Canada and the Ministry of Public Health of Cuba.

11.The negotiation of an audio-visual co-production agreement.

12.The renewal of a bilateral Sports cooperation accord.

13.The exploration of possibilities for joint research and development and cooperation projects in developing countries in the areas of health and environment.

14.The provision of food aid in response to the damages

caused by Hurricane Lili.²³¹

Admittedly, the provisions were less than concrete measures, but as Axworthy noted: "...They're a beginning. They're an important start."²³²

Axworthy also noted an important element in the Canadian policy; the need for gradual change. "I don't think anybody would gain by having a huge upheaval in Cuba..."²³³ Slow change is a much safer policy. As well, there were a number of other drawbacks to the American policy which led Canadian officials to avoid it.

For one, the embargo may have tried to hurt the Castro regime alone and spare the Cuban people, but this is extremely difficult. As virtually every good could be used by the Castro government, few items were not on the embargo list. As a result, it was not only the government which suffered as a result of the embargo but also the Cuban people themselves. One key example was that of medicine. While not an embargoed item, shipping restrictions make it so costly that it was, de facto, included. The American Association for World Health outlined the effect of the embargo saying is caused a "decline in surgical services, delays in diagnosis and treatment, a decline in quality of

²³¹Ibid.

²³²"Newsmaker with Lloyd Axworthy"

²³³Ibid.

hospital care and increased rates of water-borne disease, malnutrition, unnecessary suffering and premature death".²³⁴ This embargo-imposed suffering may serve, in the long run to end the human rights abuses perpetrated by the Castro regime. However, in imposing the embargo (it could be argued that) the United States is also violating the rights of Cubans by restricting their access to vital goods and services. Indeed, this was the sentiment displayed in a wall painting in Havana which showed 'Uncle Sam' strangling Cuba and saying "You'll just have to put up with it. Then I'll bring humanitarian aid."²³⁵ In spite of the intentions of the American action, therefore, the technique is questionable.

The Canadian resistance to the Helms-Burton law occurred for a number of reasons. First, it was very questionable from an international law standpoint. It was seen as somewhat improper to promote the rights of Cubans while infringing on the rights of other countries (by applying Americans laws outside their jurisdiction). The law, therefore attempted to disrupt a small but profitable trade between Canada and Cuba without any solid legal grounds. In effect the only real grounds for the law would

²³⁴Globe and Mail "The U.S. embargo is damaging Cubans' health", (Aug.7,1997).

²³⁵The Economist "Saying boo to Helms-Burton", (Oct.19,1996), pg.49.

be the Machiavellian realism whereby the strong do what they like and the weak accept it. Such heavy-handedness, however, is inappropriate in the interdependent system of the current age. In fact, such posturing served only to fuel fears of American dominance and increase the anti-American sentiment in Canada. As well, Canada was not alone as the law was virtually universally denounced by the international community. Hence there were many allies to which Canada could turn in its fight against the law. Most importantly, however, was the fact that the law did not seem to be beneficial to the struggle against human rights abuses in Cuba. By many accounts it would only further entrench Castro and make him less willing to undertake reforms. It was believed that Helms-Burton would only cause Castro to bar the door to change. Hence from a human rights perspective, Canada could not support the Helms-Burton law as it was viewed as counter-productive.

CASE 4 - China :The Tiananmen Square Massacre

On June 4th, 1989 the government of the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) shocked the world by using military troops to violently break up peaceful demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in the Chinese capital of Beijing. It represented an about face for China which had been seen as making progress toward greater freedom and human rights adherence. In effect, the world had been lulled into believing that China was 'safe', that it had abandoned violence as a policy.²³⁶

The blindness to the 'real face' of the PRC was not completely unfounded. The regime had taken steps to reform China both economically and politically in the years and months prior to the massacre. The leader of the PRC, Deng Xiaoping, had initiated a series of reforms. Indeed, he had secured his power in 1979 through the Xidan wall poster campaign which was a form of public expression.²³⁷ Deng exploited the campaign for his own political benefit and, when it became a political liability, he ended it. However, the campaign still showed that voices could

²³⁶Melanie Manion "Introduction: Reluctant Duelists - The Logic of the 1989 Protests and Massacre", in Beijing Spring, 1989 : Confrontation and Conflict, (New York: M.E.Sharpe, Inc., 1990), p.xiii.

²³⁷The Xidan poster campaign occurred from approximately March 1978 to March 1979. Posters were put up which criticized Mao's leadership and called for an end to miscarriages of justice and a greater adherence to human rights.

James C.F. Wang Contemporary Chinese Politics, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1985), pg.203-6.

be heard (if only briefly), and increased hopes that a trend would be created.

Deng was also seen as a promising reformer because of his "Four Modernizations" Plan (of the early 1980's) which sought to modernize China in the areas of science and technology, industry, agriculture and defence.²³⁸ In order to accomplish this feat, Deng had to gain access to foreign capital, technology and management techniques.²³⁹ As a result, China embarked on an 'Open-Door' policy which was designed to bring China out of isolation and make it a integral part of world trade.

The 'Open-Door' policy had a number of impacts on China. First, it was successful in bringing foreign capital into China. However, the amount was rather small, amounting to a total of \$19.96 billion by 1988.²⁴⁰ This was much less than China needed for its modernization. A much larger impact of the 'Open-Door' policy, however, was the Westernization of China. In importing Western capital and goods, the PRC also imported some of the Western values. Thus consumer demand exploded as former dreams of washing machines, refrigerators and televisions (items which beforehand had been out of reach or even unknown) became

²³⁸Scott Simmie and Bob Nixon, Tiananmen Square (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1989), pg.35.

²³⁹Chu-yuan Cheng, Behind the Tiananmen Massacre: Social, Political and Economic Ferment in China, (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1990), pg.18.

²⁴⁰Ibid., pg.21.

attainable.²⁴¹

A third effect of the 'Open-Door' policy - one which is far less tangible - was that it gave the Western world more of an interest in China and greater confidence in its ability to change. By showing that it was capable of making reforms, China joined with the Soviet Union (which was undertaking policies of Glasnost and Perestroika). Both countries, in the western view, were progressing towards the 'more enlightened' western way of life.

Unfortunately, Deng and the conservative elements of the PRC were very keen to avoid losing control of the reforms. There was also a very serious contradiction in the 'Open-Door' policy. The government sought to become 'a little capitalist' (which is not that different from being 'a little bit pregnant'). Once unleashed, the forces of capitalism and western ideals were very difficult to contain. The result was what the Chinese leadership referred to as the 'spiritual pollution' of the masses.²⁴² This led to the 'anti-spiritual pollution' campaign of 1983 which attempted to purge the bourgeois influence.²⁴³

In spite of Deng's efforts, however, the reformers such as Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang slowly gained more and more power.

²⁴¹Ibid.

²⁴²Ibid., pg.20.

²⁴³Ibid.

Indeed, they grew to be icons of the democratic movement in China. When Hu Yaobang died on April 15, 1989, it provided the opportunity for a mass gathering in Tiananmen Square to honour him and push for further reforms.

Unfortunately, the protests were an embarrassment to the government which could not be tolerated. Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev was to attend a historic Sino-Soviet Summit on May 15, which was to be a major political triumph for Deng.²⁴⁴ The presence of thousands of protesters just outside the government buildings would turn it into a serious black eye for the leadership. Attempts to convince the student protesters to leave the Square prior to Gorbachev's arrival failed and, as a result, the international media (there in substantial numbers to cover the summit) broadcast the government's ineffectiveness to the world.²⁴⁵

The Chinese leadership felt that it had been pushed towards a crossroads. Only strong and decisive action could stem the tide of reform which could otherwise push them aside. In the words of Premier Li Peng: "[R]esolute and powerful measures to curb the turmoil" were needed and failure "to put an end to such chaos immediately and let it go unchecked, [would] very likely

²⁴⁴George Black and Robin Monro, Black Hands of Beijing: Lives of Defiance in China's Democracy Movement, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1993), pg.173.

²⁴⁵Ibid., pg.176.

lead to a situation which none of us want to see."²⁴⁶ When threats failed to make the student protesters back down, the government used the military to 're-establish order' through the brutal massacre of the demonstrators.

The action taken by the Chinese leadership was unquestionably an affront to the principles of human rights.²⁴⁷ The Canadian and American responses to the action were actually quite similar. This is because the pressures placed on both governments were of a very similar nature and both seemed to possess the same basic mind-set.

The first factor which was present in the Tiananmen case has been discussed briefly above. That is, that the violent measures of the Chinese government were a reversal of a pattern of reform. Many western governments (including those of Canada and the United States) had felt that the changes would continue to progress. Furthermore, they believed that they had played a key

²⁴⁶Cheng, Behind the Tiananmen Massacre: Social, Political and Economic Ferment in China, pg.204.

²⁴⁷It is important to recall that a western standard of human rights is being applied for this study. However, it is inconceivable that any definition of human rights would consider the massacre of unarmed civilians by their own military an acceptable action.

part in fostering these changes.²⁴⁸ Because of this, there was a sense of betrayal in the West. Indeed, had the reforms not taken place prior to the crack-down, it is quite possible that the events would have been viewed as the 'nature of the beast' of communism. Indeed, the excesses of the Cultural Revolution of 1966-9 were not so disappointing to the West as Tiananmen Square was because expectations of the PRC weren't that high. It was seen as 'typical of communism'.

The massacre was particularly galling to the Canadian government because it had held a fairly optimistic position with respect to China. Indeed, it had even gone so far as to declare May "Friendship Month" between Canada and China.²⁴⁹ Furthermore, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney publically referred to the reforms in China as "astonishing".²⁵⁰ The feeling that they had been 'duped' by the Chinese leadership was fairly strong in both Canada and the United States, as illustrated by reference to 'the true face of China' or similar terminology in both official and public statements.

In spite of their perceived 'betrayal', however, the initial

²⁴⁸For Canada see Department of External Affairs Statements and Speeches, 89/28, June 5, 1989 pg.2.

For the United States see New York Times "Excerpts From Bush's New Session", (Jun.6, 1989).

²⁴⁹Nossal Rain Dancing: Sanctions in Canadian and Australian Foreign Policy, pg.171.

²⁵⁰Le Devoir, (May 6, 1989) Quoted from Nossal Rain Dancing: Sanctions in Canadian and Australian Foreign Policy, pg.171.

responses of both the Mulroney and Bush administrations were measured. In his first statement on Tiananmen Square, Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark expressed 'great regret' for the action.²⁵¹ This was a rather weak condemnation. However, by June 5th, the position of the Canadian government had grown much more strident. In what was described by the Liberal external affairs critic (Andre Ouellet) as "one of the toughest statements ever from the Canadian government" Clark harshly condemned the action of the PRC.²⁵² Clark opened by saying that he knew that "all Canadians share[d] with [him] a deeply-felt sense of horror and outrage at the events that [had] unfolded ... in China."²⁵³ He went on to describe the conservative elements in the Chinese leadership as "the forces of darkness".²⁵⁴

The measures which the Canadian government adopted with respect to China as a result of the Tiananmen Square massacre were fairly diverse. They were:

1. Advised Canadians to leave Beijing and put the Canadian Embassy at their disposal to assist their departure.
2. Cancelled or deferred all bilateral events planned or in

²⁵¹Nossal Rain Dancing: Sanctions in Canadian and Australian Foreign Policy, pg.172.

²⁵²Toronto Star "Clark Condemns Senseless Slaughter" (Jun.5,1989).

²⁵³Department of External Affairs Statements and Speeches (June 5/89)

²⁵⁴Ibid.

the immediate future.

3. Postponed the signing of a series of development assistance projects.

4. Suspended nuclear cooperation consultations.

5. Banned high level visits.

6. Planned to use moral suasion at the United Nations.

7. Proclaimed it would be "sympathetic to any requests" for extending the stay of Chinese students in Canada.

8. Suspended (for two months) "all removals to China" under the terms of the Immigration Act.

9. Suspended military sales and joint programs.²⁵⁵

It is interesting to note that by the time Clark had delivered his speech before Parliament, the Canadian public was already in an uproar. As one article put it; "the hardliners have made a pact with the devil... They have sacrificed the legitimacy of their administration".²⁵⁶ This opinion was shared by many. There were mass rallies throughout Canada to protest the Chinese action. Thirty thousand people gathered in Toronto to march to the Chinese consulate. As they marched they chanted that "Deng Xiaoping was a murderer" and "Death to [Premier] Peng".²⁵⁷ The Chinese community, regardless of their province of origin or exact ethnic background banded together in their

²⁵⁵Department of External Affairs Statements and Speeches (June 5/ 1989).

²⁵⁶Globe and Mail "Beijings Brutal Blunder", (Jun.5,1989).

²⁵⁷Globe and Mail "Emotional Crowd of 30,000 Marches on Consulate", (Jun.5,1989).

protests of the government action. As there were between 360,000 to 400,000 Canadians of Chinese decent and approximately 6,800 Chinese students in Canada at the time, this was an interest group that could not easily be ignored by the Mulroney government.²⁵⁸

The driving force behind the protests was a large number of established Chinese groups and an even larger number of ad hoc student groups.²⁵⁹ The former groups were often very broad-based and well connected. For example, the Toronto Committee of Concerned Citizens Supporting the Movement for Democracy in China contained: Toronto City Council members, a Nobel laureate (John Polanyi of the University of Toronto), New Democratic Party elites, numerous unions (including the Ontario Federation of Labour), two university umbrella organizations, Toronto area peace groups, Oxfam Canada, and numerous individuals.²⁶⁰ Thus Ottawa could not be silent on Tiananmen Square as the public would not allow it. The outcry was too vocal and too harsh.

President Bush faced similar pressures in Washington. Following the massacre, thousands protested in New York, Washington, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Houston, New

²⁵⁸Nossal Rain Dancing: Sanctions in Canadian and Australian Foreign Policy pg.163.

²⁵⁹Ibid. pg.164-65.

²⁶⁰Ibid. pg.165.

Orleans and other cities.²⁶¹ These marches condemned the Chinese leadership as ruthless tyrants and called upon Bush to "take immediate diplomatic and political measures" against China.²⁶² Much like in Canada, these protests required a response from the government. However, unlike in Canada, the American political system insured that a response would be taken.²⁶³ The US Congress was quick to respond to the massacre, calling for immediate and strong action to be taken against China. Indeed, in the words of House subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs chairman Stephen J. Solarz, if the President did not take action "Congress [would] do it for him".²⁶⁴ A further statement, made by Mickey Edwards (chairman of the House Republican Policy Committee) noted that "diplomatic messages of disapproval are a pretty puny reaction.... We need to do something besides talk".²⁶⁵

Indeed, weak talk had been the initial response from the Bush administration. Bush had stated that he "deeply deplore[d]

²⁶¹New York Times, "The West Condemns the Crackdown", (Jun.5,1989).

²⁶²Ibid.

²⁶³While the Canadian Parliament can be controlled by the Prime Minister of a majority government due to party discipline, the US system of checks and balances prevents the President from exerting the same control over Congress. Thus other branches of government can spur policy in the US far more than in Canada.

²⁶⁴New York Times "Administration Ponders Steps on China", (Jun.5,1989).

²⁶⁵Ibid.

the decision to use force" made by the Chinese government yet he failed to implement any sanctions against China.²⁶⁶ Indeed, the statements made by Secretary of State James Baker seemed almost defensive of the Chinese position. He noted that the government had exercised "a significant amount of restraint" prior to the massacre and that there may have been violence used by both sides. Far from imposing sanctions, he even refused to comment on why force may have been used as it "would be seen to be interfering in the internal affairs of China, and that would probably not be appropriate for us to do!"²⁶⁷

Thus both the Mulroney and Bush administrations faced strong domestic pressure to take action against China. However, the outrage was not confined to Canada and the United States alone. Indeed, virtually every western country made some kind of statement denouncing the actions of the PRC.

The British government expressed "shock" at the news.²⁶⁸ The French were "dismayed by the bloody repression".²⁶⁹ German Chancellor Kohl was shocked and expressed "heartfelt sympathy"

²⁶⁶Globe and Mail "Emotional Crowd of 30,000 Marches on Consulate", (Jun.5,1989).

²⁶⁷New York Times "President Assails Shootings in China," (Jun.5,1989).

²⁶⁸Times of London "Thatcher Tells of Britains Shock Over the Bloodbath", (Jun.5,1989).

²⁶⁹Globe and Mail "Emotional Crowd of 30,000 Marches on Consulate", (Jun.5,1989).

for the victims of the massacre.²⁷⁰ The European Community issued a statement which read: "[The Commission] deplores the brutal repression of the people of Beijing, so sorely tried. It recalls that the co-operation between China and the Community can only suffer as a result."²⁷¹

In a rare display of partisanship, United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros Gali issued a statement deploring the acts of the Chinese leadership. Even Yugoslavia, a long time friend of the PRC called upon the leadership to use "political means, without violence and the use of armed forces".²⁷²

There was therefore pressure internationally to take some form of action which would signal to China the seriousness with which their action was viewed by the rest of the world. This pressure produced the desire on the part of the Group of Seven (G7) industrialized countries to coordinate their policies and thus present a united front against China. Proof of this pressure is shown by the Paris G7 summit. Prior to the summit, Japan opposed taking action against China or even criticizing it by name.²⁷³ However, it joined the United States, Canada,

²⁷⁰Globe and Mail "Cuba, Viet Nam Lone Supporters of Violent Crackdown" (Jun.6,1989).

²⁷¹Ibid.

²⁷²Ibid.

²⁷³Peter Van Ness "Sanctions on China" *Far Eastern Economic Review*, (Sept.21,1989).

Britain, France, West Germany and Italy in issuing a declaration which did both. The "Declaration on China" condemned the repression, suspended official high-level contacts and trade in arms, postponed new loans from the World Bank and extended student visas.²⁷⁴

The sanctions adopted by the G7 countries are virtually identical to the sanctions adopted by Canada. In part this is because Canada was one of the leaders in advocating sanctions against China.²⁷⁵ However, there was also the fact that the western countries were basically of one mind with respect to China. Both Canada and the United States were keen to take action against China but not action which would seriously harm their bilateral relations.

Indeed there were a number of factors which were pushing the western governments not to take strong action against China. For Canada (as well as most western countries), one of the biggest factors was the economic relationship. China had undertaken a number of reforms²⁷⁶ which had allowed the West to infiltrate the vast Chinese market. Action which was too harsh would seriously threaten these economic opportunities. Chinese State Council Spokesman Yuan Mu played on these fears in a press conference on

²⁷⁴Ibid.

²⁷⁵Nossal Rain Dancing: Sanctions in Canadian and Australian Foreign Policy, pg.185.

²⁷⁶See pg. 119 for discussion of the Open Door Policy

June 8. He declared that China was "not afraid" of international sanctions and that the PRC would not permit interference in its internal affairs. He called on other countries to take a "long term view" because "if they take a long term view they will see that it is not enough reason to take extreme measures to excite the feelings of the Chinese government and people".²⁷⁷

For Canada, the trade relationship was just as profitable in the late 1980's as it had been in the early 1960's. As Table 3 illustrates, Canada was drawing a large trade surplus as a result of the bilateral relationship.

TABLE 4

YEAR	Imports From China ('000's C\$)	Exports To China ('000's C\$)	Balance of Trade ('000's C\$)
1986	\$566,594	\$1,112,506	\$545,912
1987	\$770,900	\$1,437,700	\$666,800
1988	\$955,000	\$2,610,000	\$1,655,000
1989	\$1,182,000	\$1,146,000	(\$36,000)
1990	\$1,394,000	\$1,658,000	\$264,000
1991	\$1,852,000	\$2,003,000	\$151,000

Source: Canada Yearbook

The severing of a trade relationship worth over \$3.5 billion (1988) is not a prospect which any government would relish.

²⁷⁷J.T. Patiel "Rude Awakening: Canada and China Following Tiananmen" in Canada Among Nations 1989 Maureen Molot and F.O. Hampson ed. (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1990) pg.51.

Even though the trade accounted for less than 2% of Canada's total trade (1989), the economy would not easily absorb the damage. This fact constituted a major disincentive towards taking strong action.

A second disincentive for the Canadian government was the fear of pushing China out of the international system. The reforms which China had made in previous years had been encouraging. Tiananmen Square was clearly a setback for the promotion of freedom in China but it was not necessarily a complete reversal. The objective was therefore, to keep China in the system and to urge the continuation of reform. Forcing it into isolation would undo the progress which Canada had been making since the 1960's. This was a fact which was not lost on Clark. In his initial speech, he declared that in considering what the Canadian response should be, "we must remember that we will cherish our friendship with the Chinese people".²⁷⁸ As well, in his June 30th speech, following the review of Canada-China relations, he noted that he would try to avoid measures which would push China towards isolation. Instead, he declared he would try to expand people to people links as "the more contacts people from all walks of life in China can have with their Canadian and other friends, the less likely the success of the

²⁷⁸External Affairs Statements and Speeches (June 5, 1989).

onslaught of the hardline propaganda machine".²⁷⁹ Indeed, the so-called 'spiritual pollution' which occurred in China following the Open Door policy justifies Clark's line of thinking.

Clark was not the only politician who was sensitive to the benefits which China's relations with other countries had for the democratic forces. Bush expressed the desire to take a "reasoned careful action that [took] into account ... long term interests and recognition of a complex internal situation in China".²⁸⁰ As well, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger declared it was not time for an emotional outburst which would only strengthen the oppressive, anti-foreign forces.²⁸¹

In fact, the view was endorsed by the international community as well. The G7 statement included a passage which urged China to "create conditions which will avoid their isolation and provide for a return to cooperation based upon the resumption of movement towards political and economic reform and openness".²⁸²

Faced with a virtually rabid public and a relationship which was beneficial to both Canada and the democratic movement in China, the Mulroney government had a very difficult choice to

²⁷⁹External Affairs Statements and Speeches (June 30, 1989).

²⁸⁰New York Times "Excerpts From Bush's News Conference" (Jun. 6, 1989).

²⁸¹Ibid.

²⁸²Van Ness "Sanctions on China" *Far Eastern Economic Review*

make. However, in viewing the sanctions which were imposed by Canada, one can see that they take both factors into account. Indeed, they appear, as Kim Richard Nossal claims, to do as little damage as possible²⁸³ yet at the same time appeared extensive enough to pacify the public.

An examination of the declared sanctions and their actual effect illustrates this point. The first measure announced was the recommendation that Canadians leave Beijing. This was more a effort to protect Canadians than a condemnation of China as the situation was fairly uncertain at the time. The second measure was to cancel all bilateral events. This is was not very difficult as there were no events planned. The third measure was the postponement or cancellation of development assistance programs. Most of these were resumed within one year.²⁸⁴ Of the ones which were not, one was the cancellation of the plans for a lube oil station²⁸⁵ - an act unlikely to bring China to its knees. Fourth, nuclear consultation talks were suspended. These talks had already stalled anyway.²⁸⁶ The ban on high level visits was routinely ignored. The moral suasion at the United Nations was

²⁸³Nossal Rain Dancing: Sanctions in Canadian and Australian Foreign Policy, pg.183.

²⁸⁴Paul Gecelovsky and T.A. Keenleyside. "Canada's International Human Rights Policy in Practice: Tiananmen Square" *International Journal* (Summer 1995)

²⁸⁵External Affairs (June 30,1989)

²⁸⁶Ibid.

little more than talk as resolutions condemning China were voted down or vetoed. The immigration measures were only in place a short time and did not have a serious impact.²⁸⁷ Finally, the government declared a ban on military sales and joint programs. These were mostly non-existent and therefore of little consequence as Clark himself admitted.²⁸⁸

Thus, one can see that while the sanctions appeared to be fairly broad and impressive, they were rather superficial in practice. This lends credibility to the belief that they were introduced primarily for public consumption. Thereby, the public could be placated while Canada retained a good relationship with China.

Much like the previous China example (that of 1960), the economic factors played a fairly large role in influencing the Canadian decision. In this case, however, it was not only a matter of the opportunity of opening new markets but also of maintaining the current ones. It is much easier to not give someone a job they don't know about than to fire them. This meant that severing the trade in 1989 would produce a greater political fallout than having not established them in 1961.

²⁸⁷Gecelovsky and Keenleyside. "Canada's International Human Rights Policy in Practice: Tiananmen Square" *International Journal* (Summer 1995)

²⁸⁸External Affairs (Jun.5,1989).

Furthermore, the heightened level of international trade and competition which existed in the late 1980's (compared to the 1960's) made it clear that if Canada pulled out, some other country would be willing to fill the void.

The main difference between this case and the others, however, is the role of public opinion. Unlike the other cases, the public was very concerned about the actions in Tiananmen Square. The fact that the incident had been beamed directly into Canadian homes through satellite television, made the public acutely aware of it. In a sense, the massacre touched off the 'bewildered herd'.²⁸⁹ Thus in taking to the streets with their outrage, the public forced the government to act with a conscience.

The public outrage in Canada was coupled with similar feelings throughout the Western world and these feelings were pushing foreign governments to act as well. The Mulroney government had little choice but to respond. However, in responding, it was consistent with the principle followed in the other three cases: that it is better to work with violating countries than to employ harsh measures that would isolate them.

²⁸⁹See Chapter 1, p.10 for discussion on Public Opinion

CHAPTER 4: Conclusion

"If we are to hope that in the future... governments which are so much different than ours may come closer to the road to freedom, the way to encourage this, in our judgement, is to ... negotiate a trade in non-strategic materials. We are happy that this is done with China, with Cuba or any other country even though we may object very violently to the particular form of government in those countries." - Hazen Argue M.P. Assiniboia ²⁹⁰

The above statement is a very telling one with regards to Canadian human rights foreign policy. It tells of a basic principle which is present in all four of the cases in this study; that of Constructive Engagement. In each of the four cases, the precise mixture of influences is different yet a similar policy is adopted. Each time, it was seen as more important to work with the violating regime than to punish it. This was in direct contrast to the policy adopted by the United States in three of the four cases. Admittedly, each case presents its own reasons for the policy adopted and why it was different from that of the United States. In each of the cases a policy of openness was adopted, though it should be noted that there was never an overwhelming opposition to such a policy (from the variables studied).

The findings of the study are only convincing when all four of the cases are examined together. For although in each case, a policy diverging from the United States appears to be the sum of

²⁹⁰House of Commons Hansard, Vol IV, (May 4, 1961) pg.4325.

the influences of the key variables, the impact of the variables is not constant between cases. This chapter will therefore examine each variable and show how, while it may have been dominant in one case, it was less significant in others.

Public Opinion

The effect of public opinion differed greatly between cases. Clearly, despite the similarities between the Canadian and American public's, their views were quite different on a number of aspects relating to the cases being studied. However, these views were not always completely divergent and not always effective at influencing the Canadian government.

In the case of China (1961), the public was supportive of the government action. In part, this was tied to economic considerations. The collective voice of the western farmers was very powerful at the time and the Diefenbaker government was receptive to it. Thus while the western farmers were pushing for wheat sales out of self-interest rather than out of compassion for the Chinese masses, the end result was assistance for China nonetheless. In the case of China (1989), however, the public was pushing for harsh action to be taken against the Chinese government. In spite of this, however, the action which was taken was actually rather lenient. The government took measures which would diffuse public pressure rather than succumb to it. The China (1989) case therefore represents a serious

contradiction to that of China (1961). This contradiction would tend to dispute the claim that public opinion decides Canadian human rights foreign policy. Indeed, despite the fact that public opinion pushed in opposite directions in these cases, the policy remained very similar. In both cases a strategy of Constructive Engagement was adopted.

In the Cuban cases, the voice of the public was rather muted. It was exceedingly difficult to find any hard evidence that the public felt strongly enough on the issue that it exerted a powerful force on the government. In the case of Cuba (1961) it was found that the majority of the views expressed were in favour of the Canadian policy but the fact that such a small number of views were expressed limited the impact which this had on policy formation. In the Cuba (1996) case, public opinion was also favourable but tended to be more anti-American than pro-Constructive Engagement, which served to exert a force on the Canadian government but one which affected governmental attitudes more than policy.

Government Views of the Relationship with the United States

Another key variable which was not constant throughout the four cases was the view which Canadian leadership had with respect to its relationship with the United States on a government to government level. The three Prime Ministers who appeared in the cases each took a different view of the United

States. Diefenbaker was an Anglophile and (for the most part) anti-American thus he looked to Europe for guidance. He had a great dislike for Kennedy and therefore was apt to take a position different from the United States. Mulroney, conversely was a continentalist and very pro-American. Under his leadership, Canada became very close to the United States. It would not be inaccurate to say, therefore, that all things being equal, Mulroney would be prone to adopt a policy close to that of the United States. Chretien represents more of a middle of the road. While recognizing the benefits of a good relationship with the United States, he has also shown an awareness of the dangers which such a relationship represents. Therefore, it is difficult to determine his propensity to follow American policy.

In spite of the different views of these Prime Ministers, however, the principle of maintaining relations with human rights violators was maintained through each of the four cases.

The government to government relationship ties in very closely to the variable of American action. While in three of the four cases, the Canadian policy was almost the opposite of the American policy, it cannot be said that Canadian governments act simply to be different from the United States. In the case of China (1989), Canadian and American policies were virtually

identical.²⁹¹ Furthermore, to conclude that Canada's human rights foreign policy differs from that of the United States simply to be different from the United States would be difficult. While there have unquestionably been bouts of anti-Americanism in Canada, it would be difficult to imagine at least two governments (those of Diefenbaker and Chretien) being so anti-American as to make this the key factor in Canadian policy. Anti-Americanism may create a propensity to disagree (as in the 1961 cases) but it is not strong enough to drive policy.

Economics

The economic variables were also dynamic. In the cases of China 1961 and China 1989, the economic benefit of maintaining trade relations was very high. Trade between Canada and China was extensive (relative to other countries excluding the United States) and this created a strong incentive to maintain good relations with China. In the cases of Cuba 1961 and Cuba 1996, the economic benefit was rather low. Furthermore, in the Cuba 1996 case, the overt threats of economic retaliation on the part of the United States overshadowed any economic gains received from the Canada-Cuba trade. Indeed, the smallest shock to Canada-US trade in 1996 would have a much greater impact on the Canadian economy than the total loss of Canada-Cuba trade. Thus

²⁹¹It should be noted that Canadian policy was consistent with the policy it had adopted in 1961. It was the United States which switched from an isolating policy to one of Constructive Engagement.

in the Cuba (1996) case, at least, there was a strong economic incentive to follow the American line.

Thus while it could be argued that in the two China cases, economic factors were the dominant influence, the same claim is extremely questionable when applied to the two Cuba cases. Hence to claim that Canadian foreign human rights policies were determined primarily by economic considerations would be rather inaccurate. Furthermore, Cuba and China represented similar economic opportunities to the United States as to Canada. While the relative impact of such trade would be smaller in the United States (as it would be dispersed over a larger economy), in none of the cases was Canada the only potential buyer or producer. For example, the wheat which China purchased in 1961 could have been purchased from the United States instead (there being little difference between Canadian and American wheat). Thus it is difficult to claim that economic considerations caused Canada to diverge from American policy as Canadian and American economic considerations were not all that different. It was a greater principle which caused the United States to label China and Cuba as 'enemies' and block trade with them.

Security

The first set of cases, (Cuba 1961, China 1961), occurred during the Cold War. The second set, (Cuba 1996, China 1989) occurred during the post-Cold War era. The security

considerations for these two eras was decidedly different. While the 1960's was a period dominated by the fear of nuclear war and communist expansion, that threat had largely subsided by the late 1980's. The Soviet Union was in decline and therefore could not be seen as masterminding a 'communist conspiracy'. The danger to world peace shifted from the 'red menace' to rogue states (such as Iraq or North Korea). Admittedly, Cuba and China could be viewed as threats in both periods.²⁹² However, the type of threat which these countries represent did change, yet Canadian policy towards them did not.

Furthermore, it has long been recognized that the security of the United States and the security of Canada are inseparable. A nuclear attack on the United States would be tantamount to a nuclear attack on Canada (given its close proximity). However, even the more subtle threats such as the loss of Middle Eastern oil would also have a great impact on Canada. Because of the strength of Canada-US ties geographically, economically and ideologically, threats to American security affect Canada as well. Therefore, in order for security to be a variable which

²⁹²It should be noted, however, that part of the reason that Cuba can be labelled a 'rogue state' (that is operating outside of the international system) is that it has been shut out of the international system since Castro came to power. In both the Cuba and China cases, however, much of the isolation has been self-imposed. In either case, it shows the paradox of the American policy that 'rogue states' (states which operate outside the system) must be isolated (kept outside the system) in order to eventually bring them back into the system.

permits divergence between Canadian and American human rights foreign policy, at least two Canadian governments would have had to have had completely different views from those of the United States of the security situation relating to two separate countries in two different security settings. While this is entirely possible, it is far more likely that Cuba and China were viewed as a different type of threat by the Canadian government rather than no threat at all.

Source of Violations

In each of the four cases examined, the cause of the human rights violations was very similar. It was, in fact, the communist system combined with poverty and underdevelopment which produced the bulk of the human rights abuses in Cuba and China. This, was a constant factor and consequently it was constant, it is rather difficult to measure the impact which it had on Canadian policy. It is important to note, however, that this may serve to confine the validity of this study to Communist target countries. Indeed, if the source of the violations was different, the response would likely change as well.

Much like the security variable, however, the interpreted source of the human rights abuses differed between Canada and the United States. This difference was most pronounced in the Cuban cases. While the United States took the view that the Castro regime was the source of the suffering of the Cuban people, the

Canadian approach saw the regime as the result of deeper problems. Hence, (in the Canadian view) deposing Castro would not solve all of Cuba's problems. This, in turn, helped prompt a different course of action by the Canadian government.

Both the security and source of violation variables contributed to the divergence between Canadian and American because of a difference of perceptions respecting these variables.

International Support

The views of other governments also played a role in all four cases. In the Cuba (1961) case, very few of the western countries supported the invasion and the ensuing embargo. In the China (1961) case, many countries (such as Britain) had already recognized China and many members of the Commonwealth were pushing for an end to the isolation of China. In the Cuba (1996) case, virtually no member of the international community supported the Helms-Burton law. In the China (1989) case, international condemnation of the Chinese action was widespread. Hence, in each of the cases, Canada was able to find considerable support for its actions.

However, simply because there was international support for a policy does not mean that Canada had to adopt that policy. Canada is an independent country and thus it is free to act as it wishes (within the bounds of international law and established

norms). As well, had Canada adopted the opposite strategy to that which it undertook in each of the four cases, it would not have been alone. In the Cuba cases, it would have found support from the United States had it followed its direction. While there was support for a policy of openness in the China (1961) case, support for an isolating policy was almost as strong. In the China (1989) case, international opinion was one of outrage but little action. As a result, Canada could have taken harsher action if it so desired and would have had the support of the international community (as it would have been very hypocritical to harshly condemn China and at the same time condemn Canada for taking harsh action).

Conclusion

In summary, none of the variables in itself can conclusively be found to be the prime motivation for Canada adopting a human rights foreign policy different from that of the United States. The significance of each changed between cases so that no one variable dominated in every instance. In spite of this, however, there was a pattern established between cases. For regardless of case by case influences, the Canadian policy was consistently of a Constructive Engagement nature while, with one exception, the United States adopted isolating policies. Each of the four cases produced a policy by which Canada maintained relations with the offending regime and sought to evoke gradual change. This was

decidedly different from the American policy which would isolate the violating regime.

In a sense, therefore, the general 'Constructive Engagement principle' formed a variable in itself. This variable was, much like the others, not one which could override all other considerations and, alone, was not strong enough to override the pull of the United States. This was shown by the period immediately prior to the China (1961) case. Accounts showed that the Canadian government had hoped to recognize China but it did not because there were too many pressures not to. American opposition and security concerns arising from the Korean war provided a check on this inclination. It was only when coupled with tangible economic benefits that an overture to the Chinese government was made. Conversely, in the China (1989) case, the principle was virtually overridden by public opinion. Economic considerations, however, no doubt helped to insure that action would not be taken which would serve to force China into isolation.

The degree to which openness was viewed by Canada and the United States as a policy by which the human rights records of oppressive countries could be improved served to affect the way in which the other variables were measured. This was particularly true of the security and source of violation variables which tended to be somewhat subjective. However, it also helps to explain why variables such as public opinion would

be treated differently from case to case.

In effect, the main reason for Canadian and American divergences on foreign human rights policy is not the economics or politics involved, but a difference in perceptions. Both countries have a desire to see a world in which human rights are universally accepted and people around the globe are free from oppression but (with respect to China and Cuba), they have taken different roads to reach that destination. The principle of Constructive Engagement exerted a pull of its own which (in three of the four cases) ran counter to the pull exerted by the United States. This principle combined with other, more tangible variables to produce a human rights foreign policy divergent from that of the United States.

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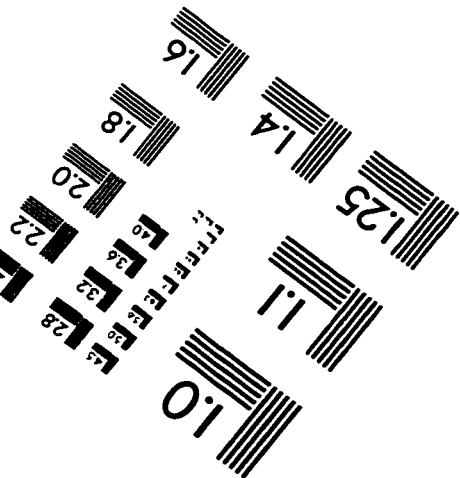
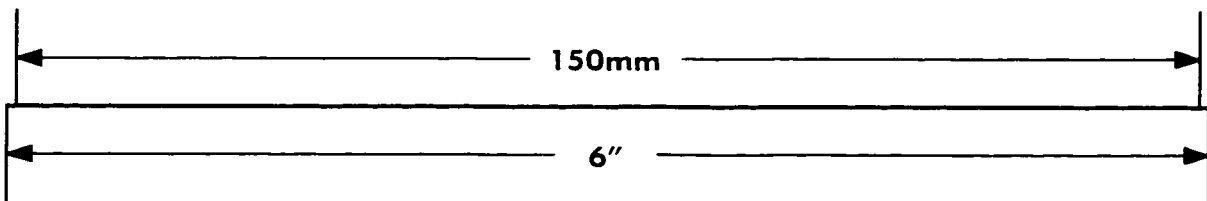
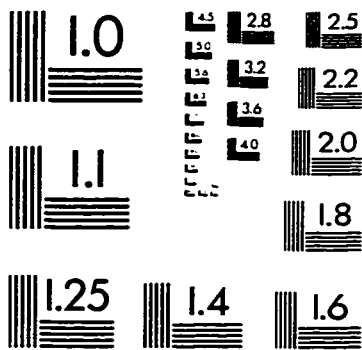
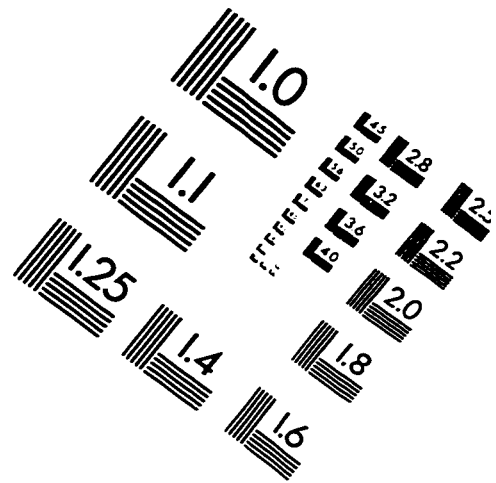
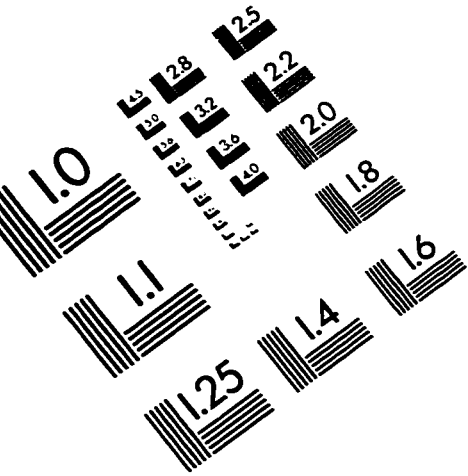
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