

**“A Difficult Dinner Companion”:
Canadian-American Relations During the First Taiwan Strait Crisis,
1954-1955**

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Abstract

During the opening decade of the Cold War, Canada, under the leadership of Liberal Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent and Secretary of State for External Affairs Lester B. Pearson, experienced a heightened sense of influence on global affairs, often described as the “Golden Age of Canadian Diplomacy.” This state of affairs led Canada to believe that it could punch above its weight and subsequently influence the United States of America’s foreign policy. Using the First Taiwan Strait Crisis as a microcosm of this “Golden Age”, understanding America’s behaviour during the crisis, and Canada’s involvement throughout, brings into question the validity of Canada’s grand influence and tempers the idea that Canada could significantly influence America’s policies.

Beginning with the memoirs and biographies of the diplomats of the 1950s and then juxtaposing sources from the Canadian Department of External Affairs and American State Department, this thesis demonstrates that Canada did not play a significant part in the First Taiwan Strait Crisis. This is an odd result, considering that this crisis, which could have had devastating consequences for Canada if it had expanded from just the Offshore Islands, was a perfect opportunity for a country that was supposedly experiencing a Golden Age to flex its diplomatic clout. This thesis suggests that perhaps Canada’s inflated sense of self, which has persisted in the national conscience, can be attributed to the exaggerated importance the 1950s diplomats gave to themselves.

Dedication

For Mr. Kim Latourell

You were an excellent history teacher.

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All that glisters is not gold –
Often have you heard that told.

– William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act II, Scene VII

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Table of Contents	vi
An Introduction: Canada's Place in the World, 1948-1957	1
Chapter I – Neutralization to Escalation: Canadian and American Far East Policies, 1948-1954	26
Chapter II – Uncle Sam's Way or the Highway: U.S. Efforts to Resolve the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, September to December 1954	50
Chapter III – Incapacitated Influence: Canada's Attempts at Diplomacy during the Crisis, 1954- 1955	69
Chapter IV – Discontent from the Wings: Opposition, Media, and Public Criticism of American Policies, 1953-1955	92
Conclusion: Canada's Limited Influence	109
Appendices	118
Bibliography	124

An Introduction: Canada's Place in the World, 1948-1957

The end of the Second World War brought significant changes for Canada as the traditional world order had been shattered and the bitter bipolar conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States of America was taking shape. Canada's government, and more specifically the Department of External Affairs (DEA), found itself leaning more on the leadership of the American superpower for direction rather than a war-ravaged United Kingdom. With these global order developments, Canada's prestige had significantly grown to the point where it was possible to claim that Canada was enjoying a "Golden Age of Diplomacy" as diplomat-turned-scholar Escott Reid first argued when he put forward the idea of a Golden decade. Reid stated, "we Canadians have made constructive contributions which have been large for a country our size and power" and that "there was a golden age in Canadian foreign policy, a period when, because of a peculiar and temporary set of circumstances, we in Canada became... one of an inner group of three countries [Britain and America] which moulded the shape of the future."¹ A significant portion of this Golden Age involved Canada's relationship with the U.S., the new Western superpower following the Second World War. Canada used its unique relationship, unique in how both countries collaborated on many issues such as trade, continental defence, and during the Korean War. By using "quiet diplomacy", Canada was able to caution America to act with constraint in regards to its more aggressive policies as it had done during the Korean War.²

While it was possible to make such a claim that Canada had greater global status as compared to Canada's quite minimal pre-Second World War influence, Reid's biased opinion

¹ Escott Reid, "Canadian Foreign Policy, 1967-1977: A Second Golden Decade?" *International Journal* 22, no. 2 (1967): 171-3.

² John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall, *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 182-3.

still begged the question: Did Canada truly experience a Golden Age of Diplomacy in the 1950s? In short, the answer is not quite. This increase in global prestige requires a more nuanced lens to properly understand that Canada was a Middle Power, a term that Hector Mackenzie describes as a concept that has been associated with powers of mediation and conciliation in relation to a country's size and might.³ This thesis will demonstrate this by examining Canada's relationship with the American superpower during the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, which nearly brought the Cold War to another head in the Far East during the mid-1950s. Additionally, it will showcase how the opinions and actions of Canadian diplomats did not have a Golden Age-esque influence on the U.S. State Department.

The United States and its allies had been interested in the Far East in a Cold War context since the end of the Second World War, an interest that swelled with the advent of the "Two Chinas" schism. This chasm formed in 1949 when the Communist Chinese, led by Mao Zedong, forced the Chinese Nationalists, led by Chiang Kai-Shek and backed by the Americans, from mainland China to Taiwan and the surrounding archipelago⁴. Shortly after the Nationalists' defeat, the Korean War broke out, 1950-1953, a crisis which heightened Cold War tension. The First Taiwan Strait Crisis began on September 3, 1954, when the Communist Chinese began launching artillery strikes against Chinese Nationalist-held islands in the Taiwan Strait (the Offshore Islands)⁵. This event occurred at a time when Cold War tensions were still relatively high in the Far East. The Korean War had ended the previous year, France had lost its grasp on Indochina, while the Western fear of Communism spreading in the Far East thanks to the Domino Effect was at its apex. For the next eight months, the Communists shelled the Offshore

³ Hector Mackenzie, "Golden Decade(s)? Reappraising Canada's International Relations in the 1940s and 1950s," *British Journal of Canadian Studies* 23, no. 2 (2010): 187.

⁴ See Appendices 1 and 2.

⁵ See Appendices 1 and 2.

Islands and the American threat of retaliation escalated to the point that the Canadian government vocalized its opposition to the escalation for fear that the crisis could plunge the Far East into a general war. During the first four months of the crisis, the Chinese Communists fired artillery against the Nationalist-held Offshore Islands in the Taiwan Strait, with the Nationalists returning fire. While the shelling was not continuous, nervous that it could escalate into a larger conflict, America worked closely with New Zealand and Britain to put forward a resolution at the United Nations forcing a resolution to the crisis. Simultaneously, the State Department worked with the Nationalist Chinese government to establish a Mutual Security Pact that would signify to the world that America was aligned with the Nationalists and would assist them should they face a Communists attack. During the first half of the crisis these American efforts experienced a lot of back-and-forth with all involved countries in order to achieve the U.S. goals while not over committing them to the region.⁶

Canada was mostly absent from these early efforts to resolve the crisis, spending the early months simply attempting to ascertain what its allies were doing to resolve the crisis. With the increased aggression in January 1955 when the Communists attacked the Tachen Islands⁷, the Canadian diplomats became increasingly concerned that the conflict could pull Canada and its allies into another Korean situation. Worried that America's policies were enflaming the situation, Canada, along with other Commonwealth countries at the Commonwealth Ministers Conference in early February, agreed that efforts to reign in U.S. brinkmanship was required. America continued to work on the UN resolution and affirming the Mutual Security Pact in the opening months of 1955 while having to contend with Canada publically and privately disapproving of U.S. policy in the Taiwan Strait. Towards the end of March, Secretary of State

⁶ Bruce A. Elleman, *Taiwan Strait: Crisis in Asia and the Role of the U.S. Navy* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 1, 59-70.

⁷ See Appendix 2.

John Foster Dulles went to Ottawa where he spoke to Canadian statesmen and quelled the dissent stemming from America's northern ally. While the artillery continued to fall until May 1, 1955, Canada was effectively silenced by Dulles's visit to Ottawa and reassuring words he brought with him. The crisis came to an end, not thanks to Canadian efforts or the UN resolution and Mutual Security Pact, but by India's efforts to open a dialogue with Peking. Ultimately, this crisis, which had the potential to escalate considerably, showcases an instance where Canada failed to adequately involve itself in a crisis that could have had significant consequences for Canada.

Utilizing the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, a major Cold War event that has not gained the same notoriety of crises like the Korean War in the early 1950s or the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, as a case study to explore Canada's global influence allows important questions to be raised regarding Canada's global importance in the mid-twentieth century. Questions surrounding the degree to which Canada influenced global events at the beginning of the Cold War, the nature of the Canadian-American relationship and collaboration that occurred, plus the impact that specific personalities within the Department of External Affairs will all be addressed within this thesis. Ultimately, this thesis demonstrates that the leaders of the DEA, known colloquially as the *Ottawa Men*⁸, such as Lester B. Pearson and Norman Robertson did not necessarily have a realistic awareness of the limited extent of their global impact. Most importantly, Canada's involvement in the First Taiwan Strait Crisis adds nuance to the understanding of Canada's Golden Age of Diplomacy. This thesis maintains that Canada did experience a heightened sense of global importance during the 1950s. However, the First Taiwan Strait Crisis demonstrates that this newfound importance only went so far in the 1950s. Rather, Canada's limited involvement

⁸ A label given by J.L. Granatstein to the men who dictated foreign policy during Liberal rule. J.L. Granatstein, *The Ottawa Men: The Civil Service Mandarins, 1935-1957* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 2-3.

suggests that the more nuanced label of Middle Power ought to be used to describe Canada's global significance because it does not entirely disregard the Golden Age while simultaneously allowing for cases where, as seen in the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, Canada failed to live up to its status as a global powerhouse. By asking the above questions about Canada's global influence and involvement in the crisis, it becomes clear that American and Canadian policies differed greatly when it came to the Cold War in the Far East.

It is important to appreciate why these two countries' policies differed and how the working relationship shaped these differences. The American men of power were President Dwight Eisenhower and Dulles, influential men in their own right who together formed a powerful American foreign policy team. Historians Robert Bowie and Richard Immerman explain that Dulles and Eisenhower appreciated the importance of effective U.S. foreign policy in the new global dynamic that was governed by both "an explicit and integrated grand strategy." Bowie and Immerman, citing Eisenhower's creation of the National Security Council (NSC) to allow the American government to decisively respond to issues, describe how it was Eisenhower and Dulles's deft ability to realize the need for the American government to have an efficient mechanism to effectively respond to situations as they arose. Ultimately, Eisenhower and Dulles's understanding led to Eisenhower's "New Look" policy which was focused on upholding both Eisenhower and Dulles's grand strategy.⁹

Dulles was a formidable Secretary of State who often sacrificed courtesy in order to achieve his goals. Immerman's biographical study, *John Foster Dulles: Piety, Pragmatism, and Power in U.S. Foreign Policy*, paints a somewhat ruthless caricature of Dulles. On the need to combat Moscow's repeated attempts at expanding its global dominance, Dulles repeatedly

⁹ Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 4-5.

believed that any allies that were not as committed to stemming the tide of Communism would be made to heel to America's determination to prevent such an occurrence. As Immerman writes, "Fainthearted allies and fence-sitting neutrals would then fall in line behind U.S. leadership and rally in support of dynamism."¹⁰ Eisenhower, who noted Dulles's strengths as a statesman shortly after the two met for the first time, evidently noted Dulles's intensity. Stephen E. Ambrose, Eisenhower's official biographer, notes that the two men got on well from the start. Recounting when the two men met each other in April 1952, Ambrose noted that while most politicians who dealt with Dulles found him to monopolize, moralizing, pompous, and dull, Eisenhower liked Dulles's appreciation for hard work, ability to serve, and for always appreciating that Eisenhower was the person in command.¹¹

Eisenhower's understanding that he was always the one in command meant that he was able to reel in Dulles's more belligerent diplomacy that at times antagonized America's allies. Peter G. Boyle's biography of Eisenhower expresses that Eisenhower tempered Dulles' extreme rhetoric. For example, when Dulles advocated that western countries ought to stir up resistance within Warsaw Pact countries, following that speech, Eisenhower, who sought more peaceful means of Communist satellite states revoking Communism, advised Dulles to calm such rhetoric. Subsequently, Dulles' following speech suggested peaceful means of freeing Communist enthralled satellites.¹² Immerman describes Eisenhower's appreciation for U.S. allies, which was not shared by Dulles, as the biggest difference between the two men. Immerman states that Eisenhower's time as Supreme Commander during the Second World War provided him with a deep appreciation for America's allies. But Dulles, who had shaped his view of American allies

¹⁰ Richard H. Immerman, *John Foster Dulles: Piety, Pragmatism, and Power in U.S. Foreign Policy* (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1999), 61.

¹¹ Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Volume Two, The President* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 21.

¹² Peter G. Boyle, *Eisenhower* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2005), 40-1.

from their uninspiring involvement at the Versailles Conference of 1919 and during the interwar period, believed that western countries lacked the ability to make the sacrifices required to rebut the expansion of Communism. This when Dulles wanted to take a hardline with the People's Republic of China [PRC], particularly on trade, Eisenhower opted to lighten restrictions given allied requests to do so.¹³

In turn, Dulles's hardline approach to dealing with American allies helps explain the relationship Canadian diplomats had with him. Similar to Robert Bothwell's less critical evaluation of Canada's involvement in the Canadian-American relationship in *Alliance and Illusion*, historian Lawrence Martin suggests Canadian admired Eisenhower's presidency since Eisenhower encouraged a cooperative bilateral relationship. Martin explains that Canadians often agreed with U.S. policies, but adds the caveat that American policies could inspire Canadian hostility though namely condemnation. For example, Martin notes that during Eisenhower's first state visit to Canada, Canadian statesmen barely challenged the president about his and Dulles's more hawkish policies – a fact that bothered Arnold Heeney, Canada's Ambassador to the U.S., who had wished the Canadian government had pressured the president on contentious issues.¹⁴

Heeney's desire to have the Canadian government criticize Eisenhower more aggressively coincides with what both Heeney and Pearson thought of Eisenhower and Dulles in particular. Initially, both Pearson and Heeney were impressed with Dulles. In his memoir, Heeney wrote that following their first meeting he found Dulles a relaxed, pleasant, and jovial individual who seemed quite fond of Canada as Dulles' had a summer home in Ontario.¹⁵ Following their initial meeting which had occurred shortly after Dulles became Secretary of

¹³ Immerman, *John Foster Dulles*, 59, 120.

¹⁴ Lawrence Martin, *The Presidents and the Prime Ministers, Washington and Ottawa Face to Face: The Myth of Bilateral Bliss, 1867-1982* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1982), 167, 170.

¹⁵ Arnold Heeney, *The Things that are Caesar's: Memoirs of a Canadian Public Servant* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 116.

State, Pearson saw Dulles as both friendly and frank. However, Pearson tempered his opinion more so than Heeney because he also believed Dulles was superficially cold and unsympathetic, citing Dulles's lack of ability to engage in simple banter. Pearson believed that "he would never be on the same terms with him."¹⁶

Heeney and Pearson, both of whom seemed to like the thought of working with Dulles to some extent, eventually changed their perspective of the man's diplomatic tactics. Heeney was quite damning in his reassessment, writing that:

Dulles was generally unattractive in manner and, on most occasions, lacking or spurning any of the social graces. He often appeared strange, almost gauche, a difficult dinner companion with little 'give' and no charm. Yet he was certainly intelligent and gave every evidence of commitment to his country's interest as he saw them. I sensed in him a strong personal ambition to be a 'great secretary of state,' but I could not believe then, nor indeed did I later when I got to know him better, that he had the quality of greatness.¹⁷

Pearson continued to be wary of Dulles, slowly placing much of the blame for disagreement between allied western countries at Dulles' feet, claiming that the Secretary of State's diplomatic tactics and Far East policies placed considerable strain on those western relationships.¹⁸

This less-than-ideal working relationship between Heeney/Pearson and Dulles led to the Canadian policy of constraint – a phrase used by Denis Stairs, who also interchanged it with restrain, as a way to describe Canada's attempt to moderate aggressive U.S. policy¹⁹ – when it came to working with the U.S. In Heeney's memoir, discussing Canada and the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, he stated that it had always been Canada's intention to openly push back against any extreme American policies regarding the region.²⁰ Pearson, who admittedly knew very little

¹⁶ Pearson, *Mike*, 185.

¹⁷ Arnold Heeney, *The Things that are Caesar's*, 134.

¹⁸ Pearson, *Mike*, 67.

¹⁹ Denis Stairs, *The Diplomacy of Constraint: Canada, the Korean War, and the United States* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), xi.

²⁰ Heeney, *The Things that are Caesar's*, 133

of the region's history and was always perplexed by his counterparts in the State Department's fixation on the Far East, thus further playing into his own Eurocentric perspective.²¹ Pearson demonstrated the obvious attempt by Canada to constrain aggressive U.S. policy when he recounted a time when he was confined on a tiny plane with Dulles. While Pearson claimed that he was focused on trying not to be airsick, Dulles pontificated his criticism of Canadian interference with U.S. foreign policy. Dulles made the reasonable point that Pearson too often believed Canada ought to be consulted on every U.S. policy and complained whenever it felt left out. Utilizing the fictitious example of a game of golf, a sport that Eisenhower greatly enjoyed, Dulles stated that if Eisenhower, Pearson, and he played a round together and at the final putt on the eighteenth hole all three were tied, Pearson would interject that while Dulles was making the deciding putt to say that he ought to be consulted before Dulles took the swing.²² This comical interaction with Dulles that Pearson included in his memoirs is quite significant in that it simultaneously showcases the relationship the men of the DEA and the State Department had while also explaining the approach Canadian diplomacy took with the U.S. during the 1950s, Canada's presumptuous desire to counsel constraint.

Historiography

Studying Canadian reactions to American policy during the 1954 Taiwan Strait Crisis and any potential influence Canada may have had requires an exploration of several different historiographies as so little has been written specifically about Canada and the crisis. The American historiography on the subject rarely mentions Canada and, instead, focuses on the importance of the crisis. Historian Bruce Elleman, in *Taiwan Straits: Crisis in Asia and the Role of the U.S. Navy*, explores how Dulles believed that Taiwan and the region surrounding the strait

²¹ John English, *The Worldly Years: The Life of Lester Pearson Vol. II: 1949-1972* (London: Vintage U.K., 1993.), 31-3.

²² Pearson, *Mike*, 68-9.

was critical in America's goal of preventing the spread of communism in the Far East. More importantly, the Taiwan Strait region was in a state equivalent to "living on a volcano."²³ Richard Bush, echoes Elleman, in his *At Cross Purposes: U.S.-Taiwan Relations Since 1942*, by stating that the U.S. used many justifications to support the Chinese Nationalists, one of the primary reasons was its use as a bulwark against communism in the region.²⁴ Again, David Finkelstein's work on the subject matter, *Washington's Taiwan Dilemma, 1949-1950*, discussed that as Taiwan was vital to American interests in the Far East it was imperative that the island not fall to the Communists.²⁵

This thesis does not delve deeply into the historiographies focused on Britain's, New Zealand's, or Australia's involvement in the crisis unless specifically required to. These historiographies are either outside the scope of this thesis's subject matter of Canadian-American relations or they do not consider Canada in their own discussions. Scott Kaufman's article, *Operation Oracle*, which does not explore Canada's involvement in the UN resolution to resolve the crisis, does consider New Zealand and Britain's perspectives on the crisis.²⁶ An example of when Canada is mentioned in another country's historiography is historian Norman Harper's work on Australia's relationship with America, *A Great and Powerful Friend*. In his chapter on Australia's policies on the "Two China Schism" Harper explains that Canada had greater involvement with the U.S. on formulating policy than Australia ever could. Stating, "the real diplomatic clout was possessed by London and Ottawa and Paris rather than by Canberra and

²³ Bruce A. Elleman, *Taiwan Strait: Crisis in Asia and the Role of the U.S. Navy* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015.), 59.

²⁴ Richard C. Bush, *At Cross Purposes: U.S.-Taiwan Relations Since 1942* (Taiwan in the Modern World Series. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2004.), 85-6.

²⁵ David M. Finkelstein, *Washington's Taiwan Dilemma, 1949-50: From Abandonment to Salvation* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2014), 1-2.

²⁶ See Scott Kaufmann, "Operation Oracle: the United States, Great Britain, New Zealand, and the Offshore Island Crisis of 1954-55," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 32, No. 3 (2004).

Wellington.”²⁷ Harper concedes that Canada, along with America’s European allies, was more important to America than Australia or New Zealand.

Still, Canadian historiography dealing specifically with the First Taiwan Strait Crisis is relatively thin. Greg Donaghy is one of the few Canadian scholars to have explored the First Taiwan Strait Crisis and Canada’s participation. In his 2013 article, “Canadian Diplomacy and the Offshore Islands Crisis, 1954-1955: A Limited National Interest,” Donaghy discusses the Canadian government’s interest in the First Taiwan Strait Crisis. Specifically, Donaghy, looking at individuals within the DEA, concludes that these Canadian policymakers, somewhat concerned with U.S. policy, acted to hopefully prevent a Korean War scenario in the Formosa Strait. Ultimately, Donaghy argues, the Canadians had a limited national interest in the region and, therefore, avoided becoming embattled in the region and with America’s behaviour in dealing with the crisis.²⁸ Donaghy is right. Canada did back down in criticizing America’s policies, but did it really do this because of its limited interest or its limited influence.

One of the most seminal works on Canadian foreign policy in the 1950s is political scientist Denis Stairs’s 1974 monograph, *The Diplomacy of Constraint: Canada, the Korean War, and the United States*, not only because it is one of the most continually cited monographs by Canadian diplomatic historians, but also because it set the groundwork for future debates on Canada’s foreign affairs. Specifically, Stairs demonstrates that Canada’s policy in Korea was one of moderation in regions of conflict and believed it had to restrain aggressive U.S. policy.²⁹ Donaghy’s article begins by acknowledging Stairs’s conclusion that Canada’s diplomacy focused on constraint in the Korean War, the Korean armistice, and in Canada’s involvement in Indo-

²⁷ Norman Harper, *A Great and Powerful Friend: A Study of Australian American Relations Between 1900 and 1975* (London: University of Queensland Press, 1986.), 284.

²⁸ Greg Donaghy, "Canadian Diplomacy and the Offshore Islands Crisis, 1954-1955: A Limited National Interest" *International Journal* 68, no. 2 (2013): 242-3.

²⁹ Denis Stairs, *The Diplomacy of Constraint: Canada, the Korean War, and the United States*, xi.

China. Donaghy based his examination of Canada's involvement in the First Taiwan Strait Crisis by using Stairs' revelations on Canada's involvement in these events as a starting point in understanding Canada's policies in the 1950s.³⁰ This idea of constraint as Canada's guiding principle in its foreign policy that Stairs suggests has permeated academia since it was published in the 1970s and has provided a framework for historians to analyze Canada's role in foreign affairs during the 1950s.

Stairs rightly did not take the Korean War at face value, that Canada participated in a collective security force that was protecting a victimized country which was simultaneously a member of the United Nations. Rather, Stairs asked questions of Canada's role in the Korean War by engaging in a close examination of Canada's relationship with the United States with the understanding that the war was yet another battleground of the Cold War. Stairs uses the following analogy, "[it] is not so much to a united community dispatching a posse in search of a lone and predatory outlaw, as to a pair of rival street gangs in a lawless city." Stairs goes on to contend that Canada was part of the West's hope to prevent the communist bloc from spreading its influence in the Far East to adequately question what Canada's policy was, concluding that the policy was one of constraint against America's policies, the leader of the western gang in his analogy.³¹ The process of viewing conflicts during the 1950s in their proper context with the U.S. taking charge of all western allied policies, which Stairs has done with his analogy, allows for a proper examination of Canada's foreign policy. More specifically, in this context, the extent to which Canada had a moderating effect on the U.S. can be determined.

Geoffrey A.H. Pearson's monograph, *Seize the Day: Lester B. Pearson and Crisis Diplomacy*, makes similar conclusions. The primary difference between the two works was that

³⁰ Greg Donaghy, "Canadian Diplomacy and the Offshore Islands Crisis": 244.

³¹ Denis Stairs, *The Diplomacy of Constraint*, ix-xii.

while Stairs focuses on the Korean War, Pearson examines the entire period when his father Lester B. Pearson was the Secretary of State for External Affairs from 1948 to 1957. Pearson concludes, like Stairs, that Canada aimed to act as a moderator between the world and the United States, often using the term “peace-maker” to describe Lester B. Pearson’s attempts at diplomacy. Furthermore, Geoffrey Pearson sets out to answer questions about this era, notably whether Canada was simply a satellite of America and having its foreign policy dictated by its southern neighbour.³² This theme of Canada becoming a power that advocated constraint towards Cold War conflicts and acted as a moderator is common throughout much of the historiography on Canada’s foreign policy.

In 1993, Greg Donaghy compiled an anthology, *Canada and the Early Cold War, 1943-1957*, which included works by prolific historians such as Robert Bothwell, John English, Denis Stairs, and Hector Mackenzie. In his introduction, Donaghy explains that Canada’s early Cold War policies aimed to be more influential given a realization within the Department of External Affairs, following the Second World War, that Canada could be a world player. Donaghy summarizes the essays within his collection as attempting to define exactly what Canadian policy during the early Cold War was, arguing that Canada had acted realistically given of its limiting global influence.³³ In his contribution to Donaghy’s compilation, Robert Bothwell argues that throughout the Cold War Canada was more concerned with conflict in Europe and thus left the Far East to America. Bothwell concludes that Canada’s foreign policy in the Far East involved postponing conflict in the region, with constraint being a necessary practice in order to avoid an

³² Geoffrey A.H. Pearson, *Seize the Day: Lester B. Pearson and Crisis Diplomacy* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), xiii-xvii.

³³ Greg Donaghy, "Introduction," in *Canada and the Early Cold War, 1943-1957*, Greg Donaghy ed. (Ottawa: Dept. of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 1998), 14-20.

escalation of tension.³⁴ It is clear that from this exploration of the historiography regarding Canada's foreign policy that such questions of what Canada's exact role in foreign conflicts was, the extent of that influence, and the supposed importance of the Transpacific relationships, have all been important to understanding Canada's role during the 1950s. All of these questions clear must be asked when studying Canada's role in the First Taiwan Strait Crisis and to create a better understanding of Canada's relationship with America.

The theme of Canada experiencing a Golden Age of diplomacy in the late 1940s and most of the 1950s has persisted within the Canadian historiography throughout the decades. Since 1967, Canadian diplomats, historians, political scientists, and journalists argued that Canada had experienced a climax in its foreign influence during the early years of the Cold War. Canadian diplomat Escott Reid first used the phrase when he lamented the perceived decline of Canada's influence on the world stage and reminisced about a high tide of Canadian influence when he was working at the DEA from 1941 to 1951. Reid's criteria for the Golden decade was that Canada, one of the most influential western powers along side America and Great Britain, had wielded tremendous influence in shaping the future.³⁵ It is important to note that while many historians believe Canada experienced a "Golden Age of Diplomacy", the majority assert that the era ranged from 1948 to 1957, not the years Reid had proposed. Reid's periodization ended when his own influence waned within the DEA. But the historical consensus was that Canada's greatest influence became apparent in conflicts between 1948 and 1957 when Lester B. Pearson led the DEA.³⁶

³⁴ Robert Bothwell, "Eyes West: Canada and the Cold War in Asia," in *Canada and the Early Cold War, 1943-1957*, Greg Donaghy ed. (Ottawa: Dept. of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 1998), 59-60, 68.

³⁵ Escott Reid, "Canadian Foreign Policy, 1967-1977: A Second Golden Decade?" *International Journal* 22, no. 2 (1967): 172.

³⁶ Adam Chapnick, "The Golden Age: A Canadian Foreign Policy Paradox" *International Journal* 64, no. 1 (2009): 208-9.

What is most crucial to note about the historiographical conclusions regarding Canada experiencing a “Golden Age of Diplomacy” was that the assumption had held for decades, persisting even after the revisionist ideas of this concept began appearing. In 2003, journalist Andrew Cohen wrote *While Canada Slept: How We Lost Our Place in the World*. The book’s premise very nearly mirrored the declarations that Reid had made thirty-five years earlier, claiming that Canadian governments in the 1990s and early 2000s had relinquished the influence Canada had wielded in the years following the Second World War. Cohen explicitly singles out the individuals who worked in the DEA under Lester B. Pearson as the renaissance men who provided Canada with hitherto unrealized global influence.³⁷ What is most striking about Cohen’s work is his unshakeable conclusion that Canada had a Golden Age throughout most of the 1950s.

The idea that Canada experienced a Golden Age of Diplomacy is present in the work of other distinguished historians as well. One such example is J.L. Granatstein’s work, *The Ottawa Men: The Civil Service Mandarins, 1935-1957*. In this monograph, first published in 1982 and then revised in 1998, Granatstein stands by the notion that Canada had experienced a period of heightened political prestige when Canadian Mandarins, the same ones Cohen referenced, made Canada’s foreign policies efficient and influential globally. The idea that the individuals in the DEA had a tremendous impact was coupled, as Granatstein suggested, with a changing world dynamic where Canada had gained power due to the global shift in power following the Second World War.³⁸ The idea of the Golden Age was evidently prevalent within the historiography regarding Canada’s foreign relations during the start of the Cold War. And yet, the idea of the Golden Age came from the so-called Mandarins themselves.

³⁷ Andrew Cohen, *While Canada Slept: How We Lost Our Place in the World* (Toronto, Canada: McClelland & Stewart, 2003), 1-4.

³⁸ Granatstein, *The Ottawa Men*, xvii-xviii.

The biographies and memoirs about Lester B. Pearson and Norman Robertson, not counting Escott Reid's original declaration in 1967, all suggest that the First Taiwan Strait Crisis occurred at a time of unparalleled Canadian diplomatic influence. First, and perhaps the most important, was Lester B. Pearson's memoirs, particularly Volume 2, *Mike: The Memoirs of The Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, 1948-1957*, in which he fondly recollected his time heading the DEA. Pearson asserted that the years when he was the Secretary of State were a tremendously prosperous time for Canada on the world stage, describing it as Canada ascending to new levels of influence because of the state of global affairs and the tenacity of the Liberal government of which he was a part.³⁹ Pearson's views on the 1950s were further cemented with John Hilliker's official history of the Department of External Affairs, particularly his 1989 work, *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume 2: Coming of Age, 1946-1968*. In the opening chapters of his second volume, recounting the history of the Department, Hilliker demonstrates that under Pearson's leadership the Department grew immeasurably, adding numerous personnel as well as many specialized divisions. The Department's growth worked in two ways. First, it allowed for Canada to have a greater impact on world affairs. Second, when Canada naturally found itself with more international influence, the Department's growth allowed the country to sustain that power.⁴⁰

In his exceptional 1981 biography of Norman Robertson, Granatstein avers that Robertson was one of the foremost Mandarins in the 1950s. Granatstein concludes that Robertson was one of the primary reasons the DEA gained influence for Canada around the globe during the 1950s. He claims that Robertson, a man of great intellect, was capable of

³⁹ Lester B. Pearson, *Mike: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, Volume 2: 1948-1957*. John A. Munro and Alex I. Inglis ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 2-5.

⁴⁰ John Hilliker and Donald Barry, *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume 2: Coming of Age, 1946-1968* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 2-22.

standing up to American pressures on Canada's foreign policy, specifically Canada's refusal to take nuclear weapons from the United States.⁴¹ As seen with Pearson, Hilliker, and Granatstein, it is clear that the Golden Age viewpoint is rife throughout the historiography. Ultimately, this discussions leads to the Golden Age's validity to be questioned for a historian cannot take the existence of a Golden Age for granted.

In his monograph, *Alliance and Illusion*, Bothwell suggests that while a Golden Age certainly occurred, it was perhaps exaggerated. However, Bothwell fails to elaborate on the extent of the exaggeration.⁴² More recently there have been historians who have taken a skeptical view of the influence Canadian of diplomatic interactions during the 1950s, including Adam Chapnick and Hector Mackenzie. Chapnick, whose work constituted a direct response to Andrew Cohen's previously mentioned work, demonstrated skepticism regarding Canada's Golden Age and cautioned about leaping to exaggerated conclusions. Certainly, while Canada experienced an increase in its foreign influence during the 1950s, Chapnick discards the idea of the "Golden Age" to argue that gilded label stemmed from the perceptions of the individuals involved who were certainly biased about their own achievements.⁴³ Mackenzie goes one step further by claiming that historians have simply fallen into nostalgic tendencies when studying Canada's foreign affairs in the 1950s, especially when those historians have politicized their work and used the favourable view of the past to criticize their contemporary governments.⁴⁴

Historiography delving into the Canadian-American relationship during the 1950s is also important to understand because of the importance the relationship played in providing Canada

⁴¹ J.L. Granatstein, *A Man of Influence: Norman A. Robertson and Canadian Statecraft, 1929-68* (Toronto: Deneau Publishers, 1981), 384-5.

⁴² Robert Bothwell, *Alliance and Illusion: Canada and the World, 1945-1984* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007), 132-3.

⁴³ Chapnick, "The Golden Age: A Canadian Foreign Policy Paradox": 219-20.

⁴⁴ Mackenzie, "Golden Decade(s)? Reappraising Canada's International Relations in the 1940s and 1950s": 194-5.

with its heightened influence. The second edition of R.D. Cuff and Granatstein's monograph, *Ties That Bind: Canadian-American Relations in Wartime From the Great War to the Cold War*, declares that Canadian historians had become obsessed over the relationship between the two North American countries. The two authors explored the nature of the relationship in the late 1940s and 1950s given the massive shift in power that occurred following the Second World War. Specifically, they also discussed the relationship between Lester B. Pearson and U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson. While their leaders and their respective nations shared similar ideals, America was more stringent with its foreign policies while Canada supported internationalism.⁴⁵

One of the best works on the discussion regarding the Canadian-American relationship that brings into question Canada's ability to have any influence on America was John Holmes's excellent monograph, *Living With Uncle: The Canadian-American Relationship*. Holmes examines the extent to which Canada was involved in setting global policy for its allies and whether it had the ability to do so considering the awesome global influence the United States wielded during this time. Holmes, addressing the stereotype of Canada being swallowed, slowly but surely, by the United States, believes that this notion ignored nuances of the relationship.⁴⁶ Holmes understands that the relationship was a sophisticated one demonstrating certain patterns, but that it could only be established within the context of individual circumstance that were both bilateral and multilateral in nature.

The historiographical work surrounding the Canadian-American relationship in the postwar era shares a common theme, the idea of Canada cautioning constraint along side the

⁴⁵ R.D. Cuff, and J.L. Granatstein, *Ties That Bind: Canadian-American Relations in Wartime From the Great War to the Cold War* (Toronto: Samuel Stevens Harkkert & Company, 1977), ix, 114, 118-20.

⁴⁶ John W. Holmes, *Life With Uncle: The Canadian-American Relationship* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 2-8.

question of Canada's influence on its southern neighbour. Norman Hillmer's edited collection, *Partners Nevertheless: Canadian-American Relations in the Twentieth Century*, begins the discussion by claiming Canada was a "Cold Warrior" just as much as the United States, but that the difference was that Canada was often intimidated by the tenacity and aggression of the American approach to Cold War conflicts.⁴⁷ Again, Hillmer's work reaffirms the idea that Canada practiced a policy of constraint in the 1950s. Furthermore, historians demonstrate that Canada cautioned constraint the most when it came to American policies towards Asia. Douglas A. Ross explores Canada's concern with U.S. Far East policies in *In the Interest of Peace: Canada and Vietnam 1954-1973*. Explaining that the DEA was often most frustrated with U.S. Asian policy-making, and describing it as "the most difficult, intractable, and frustrating experience that faced Ottawa in the post-war era," Ross characterizes Canada as being concerned that U.S. decision making towards the Far East was neither sensible nor prudent.⁴⁸

Conversely, Bothwell describes a Canadian-American relationship that was not as at odds with one another during the 1950s as other historians have asserted. Bothwell's title for his section that examined the relationship from 1953 to 1957 says a lot about the relationship, "The Era of Good Feeling." Citing George Vest, a junior officer at the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa, Bothwell explains how American diplomats saw Canada as experiencing an exciting time in its role in global affairs and how Washington thought it was a great time for Canada under the leadership of St. Laurent and Pearson. While Bothwell was not beholden to making such claims

⁴⁷ Norman Hillmer, "Introduction," in *Partners Nevertheless: Canadian-American Relations in the Twentieth Century*, Norman Hillmer ed. (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1989), 4.

⁴⁸ Douglas A. Ross, *In the Interest of Peace: Canada and Vietnam, 1954-1973* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 1984), 41, 43.

from just a foreign policy perspective for he considered the economic relationship as well,⁴⁹ his comments certainly hint at a more copasetic relationship than perhaps existed.

This view of constraint, as described by Hillmer in *Partners Nevertheless* and showcased in the biographical work on the men involved, is further explained by Francine McKenzie. She suggests that the questions that Denis Stairs asked in the 1970s regarding how Canada's foreign policies could coexist with the United States' more aggressive policies in the 1950s were still theoretically relevant in that they had not been sufficiently answered. McKenzie responds to Stairs by asking how Canadian foreign policy could coincide with American policy while at the same time constraining it? But while McKenzie vouches for the importance of Stairs' work, she concludes that it could only be a foundation for continual work on the relationship between the two countries.⁵⁰ Chapnick and his colleague Brian Bow also suggest a theoretical change to studying Canadian-American relations. The two suggest that a merging of three separate debates on Canadian-American relations is required – those three debates including the influence both states have on one another, the power dynamic that exists between both countries, and whether or not their relationship can be described as naturally cooperative or conflicting – to create a revised version of this history that is more nuanced and accurate.⁵¹ To do this, the two scholars posit a refocus on the questions to which interrogate our sources with, these three questions include examining how the two countries viewed themselves in the eyes of the other, how the policies of both countries were (or were not) coordinated, and finally, how does the bilateral relationship exist in a global paradigm.⁵²

⁴⁹ Robert Bothwell, *Alliance and Illusion: Canada and the World, 1945-1984*, 105-6.

⁵⁰ Francine McKenzie, "The Conundrum of Canadian-American Relations," *International Journal* 69, no. 1 (2014): 110-1, 116-7.

⁵¹ Brian Bow and Adam Chapnick, "Teaching Canada-US Relations: Three Great Debates," *International Journal* 71, no. 2, (2016): 293.

⁵² *Ibid*: 309-11.

These different historiographical approaches to understanding Canadian foreign policy in terms of its influence and coexistence with the United States has brought to light the previous questions and conclusion regarding foreign policy during the 1950s. Finally, it is critical to see how these historiographies have influenced Donaghy's article about the Offshore Crisis because the focus of Donaghy's work runs parallel with this thesis' focus. While Donaghy makes several conclusions, the most important is his claim that the First Taiwan Strait Crisis demonstrated to Canadian diplomats that their national interests were unmistakably connected to American desires. Specifically, "the crisis drove home to Ottawa policymakers how closely Canada's fate was bound up with the fortunes of its American neighbour. It served as a stark reminder, if one was needed, that Canada's interests during the Cold War lay south."⁵³ What is most important is that Donaghy's particular addition to the historiography is that it demonstrates the sort of questions that must be asked. What is the relationship between the interests of Canada and how did these influence its ability to be an international influence, how influential it may have been.

Examining the historiography on Canadian foreign policy plus a closer examination of Canada's supposed Golden Age and the Canadian-American relationship has provided a framework to ask a number of different questions regarding Canada's role in the First Taiwan Strait Crisis. Did Canada's actions during the crisis support the notion that its policy constituted constraint? Did Canada's limited interest in the Far East limit its ability to influence crises in the region? Did Canada's actions in 1954-1955 support the concept of a Golden Age or did they demonstrate that such a label lacks sufficient nuance or validation? Finally, what does a study of the First Taiwan Strait Crisis add to the discussion regarding the Canadian-American relationship and does it suggest that Canada was more or less subservient to American desires?

⁵³ Donaghy, "Canadian Diplomacy and the Offshore Islands Crisis": 253.

Methodology

The flawed perception of a Golden Age of Canadian Diplomacy has been the pitfall of many historians and other writers who have attempted to add to the understanding of Canada's place in the world. Andrew Cohen's aforementioned work left much to be desired due to his singular focus on the memoirs and biographies of the men who made up the Department of External Affairs in the 1950s.⁵⁴ Granatstein's seminal work, *The Ottawa Men*, with its focus on the biographical work on the "Mandarins", acknowledges that an examination of the policy documents from the records of the DEA are crucial in the examination of such a topic. To create an appreciation for Canada's foreign policy of the 1950s, the men in the Department had to be studied "both collectively and individually".⁵⁵

Therefore, the sources consulted for this thesis include the memoranda, reports, and meeting minutes from the Department of External Affairs' records – housed at Library and Archives Canada – surrounding the Taiwan Strait Crisis. The DEA's counterpart documents from the State Department records, many located in College Park, Maryland at the National Archives and Records Administration, have also been researched in order to help us to better comprehend the issue. Research also was conducted first on the published *Documents on Canadian External Relations* (DCER)⁵⁶ and the *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS)⁵⁷ in order to pinpoint where relevant foreign relation documents were located within their respective archives.

⁵⁴ Cohen, *While Canada Slept*, 3-4.

⁵⁵ Granatstein, *The Ottawa Men*, xxi-xxii.

⁵⁶ Canada, *Documents on Canadian Foreign Relations, Volume 15, 1949*, Greg Donaghy ed., (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 1996). Also see Volumes 16 through 21.

⁵⁷ United States, Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, China and Japan (in two parts), Volume XIV, Part I*, John P. Glennon ed. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1952-1954); and United States, Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957, China, Volume II*, John P. Glennon ed. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1955-1957).

This initial examination of the DCER and the FRUS led to the examination of all Department of External Affairs files on the Formosa Strait Crisis, including files on the Statutes of Formosa, U.S-China Relations, U.S.-Communist China relations, Canadian policy in the Far East, to name a few. With State Department records, documents created by the diplomats within the American Embassy in Ottawa were sought, notably weekly reports on the situation within Canada regarding the crisis plus files on America's diplomatic interests/happenings in both Canada and Taiwan. It becomes evident that Canada's importance to the U.S. during the Formosa Crisis but that that importance only went so far. In order to demonstrate this, this thesis is broken down into the following chapters.

Chapter I will explore the policies of both the United States and Canada regarding the Far East at the beginning of the Cold War, placing emphasis on the start of President Eisenhower's first term in office and the years leading up to the First Taiwan Strait Crisis. This contextual chapter will demonstrate how Canada's involvement in the Far East prior to the crisis and the practical use of its policies were an indication of how Canada conducted itself when the crisis in the Strait broke out. Chapter II, focusing on the events of the crisis itself, discusses the attempts different countries took to resolve the situation, specifically the efforts the U.S. took with the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and the Chinese Nationalists. The Mutual Security Pact between America and the Nationalist Chinese and the United Nations' involvement in the crisis via the New Zealand Security Council Proposal are two examples of what will be examined to understand the efforts taken to end the crisis. This chapter will explore these events in order to better understand the undeniable power America wielded while simultaneously exploring why Canada was not involved in these events. Shifting focus away from Canada will be critical to demonstrate the argument of this thesis because it will contrast the important roles that several

Commonwealth countries had in the crisis while simultaneously highlighting the absence of Canada's highest diplomatic dignitaries, further suggesting a lack of Canadian influence.

Chapter III will investigate how Canada's involvement in the crisis, showcasing the limited Canadian diplomatic involvement during the crisis's first four months, then shifting to understand the DEA's more vocal protest of American actions during the latter half of the crisis. This chapter studies how Canada was involved with the crisis in order to cement the fact that the DEA was limited when compared to the actions of other countries as seen in the previous chapter and how the U.S. dealt with Canada's attempts to restrain U.S. policy. Shifting focus to the opinions of the Opposition party, George Drew's Progressive Conservatives, the Canadian press, and the voices of private citizens, Chapter IV will explore how the State Department responded to the criticisms of these three sources of Canadian opposition. While the State Department may have been keen on knowing these unofficial opinions, this chapter will confirm that the U.S. was not influenced by Canadian opinion but rather the U.S. was the one tempering Canadian criticism of American policy.

Finally, the conclusion will explain that Canada's influence on the world stage had certainly increased in the decade following the end of the Second World War. However, the First Taiwan Strait Crisis is an example of why Canada ought to be known as a Middle Power that sometimes failed to have any impact on global events and that tales of its "Golden Age" have misrepresented the extent of its global diplomatic impact. Ultimately, while Canada's interest in the Taiwan Strait Crisis was limited at best as Donaghy suggests⁵⁸, he failed to adequately characterize Canada's value on the world stage in the 1950s. Canada could not have significantly influenced the outcome of the First Taiwan Strait Crisis not because of its limited interest in Far Eastern Affairs – Canada was interested and concerned with the spread of violence in the region

⁵⁸ Donaghy, "Canadian Diplomacy and the Offshore Islands Crisis": 253.

– but rather its limited influence on U.S. policy, which was leading the western response to the crisis. Furthermore, this thesis will conclude that adopting the view of the “Golden Age of Canadian Diplomacy” often muddies the nuance of Canada’s influence on the global stage during the start of the Cold War.

A brief note is required about the English translation of Chinese names throughout this thesis. While the contemporary spelling of many names differs from the translated spellings used in the 1950s, for example Chiang Kai-Shek is contemporarily known as Jiang Jeshi, this thesis uses the spelling found in the archival sources cited throughout, therefore Chiang Kai-Shek rather than Jiang Jeshi. Similarly, other names, such as Quemoy, Matsu, and Tachen, are used instead of their respective modern spellings, Kinmen, Mat-su and Dachen. Finally, Taiwan is the modern name for the island under control of the Republic of China [ROC], and, historically, it was known as Formosa by western colonizers. Thus, both names are used interchangeably throughout the thesis as both names were used interchangeably in archival sources.

Chapter I – Neutralization to Escalation: **Canadian and American Far East Policies, 1948-1954**

When Lester B. Pearson became Secretary of State for External Affairs in September 1948, his appointment marked the beginning of a nine-year period of increased Canadian-American collaboration on issues of foreign policy. However, closer co-operation meant that each country's policies regarding the Far East, which were not always aligned, began to clash more often especially as the crisis neared. The Canadian and American reaction to the heightened tensions in the Formosa Strait illustrates the differing Canadian and American Cold War approaches. Consequently, as tensions mounted before the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, Canada took a markedly cautious approach to the "Two China" schism and focused instead on the Communist threat in Europe. The Department of External Affairs (DEA), primarily interested in maintaining the pre-Eisenhower status quo, only addressed issues of policy when forced to as tense situations arose. Conversely, the State Department became more interested in actively halting the progression of Communism throughout the Far East. America had already been leading western involvement in the Far East due to its efforts in Korea. However, when President Dwight D. Eisenhower took office in 1953, his administration implemented the "New Look" policy, which resulted in the United States balancing its military engagements across the globe while simultaneously preventing the spread of Communism in the Far East. Consequently, America sought a more involved role in the Formosa Strait as tensions rose in the year preceding the crisis, a role that did not always encourage collaboration with its allies, specifically, Britain, New Zealand, Australia, and Canada. Additionally, the U.S. caused its allies to fear that America could pull them into a war over Taiwan or in Indochina.¹ The different approaches to the

¹ Douglas A. Ross, *In the Interest of Peace: Canada and Vietnam, 1954-1973* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 1984), 58.

Formosa Strait demonstrates the escalating contradictions, and resulting tensions, between Canada and America born out of their increased post-war collaboration. This chapter will explore this tension and escalation in order to show that even prior to the crisis Canada's influence on America's Far East policies was relatively limited.

From the outset of the Cold War, Canada's policy towards the Far East was notably more reserved than its southern neighbour. On its muted role, Robert Bothwell states:

The Cold War in Asia belonged to somebody else, usually the Americans, and it was [Canada's] job to make sure that they did not exaggerate its importance. Canadian policy in Asia was different from American – different in focus, different in importance, and different in commitment.²

Further, Bothwell describes how Canada sought to prevent any potential engagement in the Far East as long as possible. He states, in a Micawberesque fashion, evoking Charles Dicken's character Wilkin Micawber in *David Copperfield*, a character noted for his optimism and hopeful expectations), that although "something [would] turn up" in the region that would require Canadian intervention, Canadian government officials, dreading an escalation in the Far East, sought to avoid it as long as possible.³ One of the primary reasons that Canada sought to avoid heavy involvement in the Far East was that any significant involvement directly conflicted with its Western-oriented Cold War focus. America's maverick approach to the Far East was often heavy-handed and occasionally alienating for western allies and local governments. In December 1953, Pearson acknowledged this conflict in an aptly titled public statement, "Don't Let Asia Split the West". Pearson recognized that America's heavy-handed involvement in the Far East was at odds with the tempered approach from its western allies, and any tension over the different approaches could threaten Canada's efforts in the West. Canada, and other western

²Robert Bothwell, "Eyes West: Canada and the Cold War in Asia," in *Canada and the Early Cold War, 1943-1957*, Greg Donaghy ed. (Ottawa: Dept. of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 1998), 60.

³ Ibid, 67-8.

allies, promoted a general policy of establishing democracy in the Far East that went beyond just halting Communism. As Pearson concluded, collective and uniform action was the only successful way the West would establish a western allied Asia.⁴

Pearson understandably was concerned with American intervention in the Far East. When the Korean War broke out in 1950, President Harry S. Truman ordered the U.S. Navy's Seventh Fleet to deploy to the Strait. In effect, the United States unilaterally decided that the best way to neutralize the threat that war might spread to the strait was to threaten retaliation against mainland China.⁵ Such actions validated Pearson's concerns that Truman's policies threatened his hope that the West could collectively deal with crises in the Far East. Ultimately, the different approach, and global focus, became a continued source of friction between American and Canadian policies in the region throughout the 1950s. The situation in the strait affected Canada's approach to the "Two Chinas" schism and its consideration of Formosa's independence from mainland China, and influence Canada's reaction to the escalation of events in the Formosa Strait leading to the First Taiwan Strait Crisis.

Setting the Stage, Creation of the "Two Chinas" Schism

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s China experienced a brutal civil war between the Communists led by Mao Zedong, and the Nationalists led by Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek. Following the Second World War's end, the civil war raged on, with the Nationalists losing more ground to the superior forces of the Communists.⁶ Canada and its Department of External Affairs had been paying very close attention to the happenings in China. According to H.O. Moran,

⁴ Lester B. Pearson, December 1953, "Don't Let Asia Split the West," Lester B. Pearson Fond, MG26, N9 – Speeches, Volume 7, Library and Archives Canada [LAC].

⁵ Nojeim, Michal J, "US Foreign Policy and the Korean War," *Asian Security* 2, no.2 (2006): 138-9.

⁶ Special Assistant to Acting Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Lester B. Pearson, 18 January 1949, *Documents on Canadian External Relations* [DCER]: *Volume 15*, Hector Mackenzie ed. (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. 1995), p. 1759-60.

Special Assistant to the Acting Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, the DEA was increasingly concerned by the continual failings of the Nationalists, particularly their recent loss of the Shanghai-Nanking region. Furthermore, Moran expressed concerns that the Nationalist Chinese could not hope to maintain any hold on the Yangze River, an opinion shared by the British and American governments.⁷ Such concerns about the failings of the Nationalists only increased in the following years, validating Canada's position that collaboration with London and Washington was needed.

Throughout 1949, the question of Canada's relationship with the Communist Chinese was of primary concern to the DEA. In early June of that year the DEA ordered the Canadian Ambassador to stay in Nanking even though Chiang Kai-Shek's forces had been pushed out of the region. Further, Canadian diplomats began to consider if Canada ought to recognize Communist China as *de facto* government of China.⁸ Escott Reid, Deputy Under-Secretary for External Affairs, felt that Canada ought to collaborate with both the United Kingdom and the United States to guarantee the best action forward regarding China. Reid added that he was concerned that Canada could only support the Nationalists in so much that it did not prevent assistance for other parts of the Far East at risk of falling to the Communist Chinese.⁹ By August, Under Secretary of State for External Affairs A.D.P. Heeney wrote to Norman Robertson, Canada High Commissioner in London, posing the question of recognition again by stating it was evident that the Communist Chinese would control China's most critical regions by year's end.¹⁰

⁷ Special Assistant to Acting Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Lester B. Pearson, 18 January 1949, DCER, *Volume 15*, p.1759-60.

⁸ A.D.P. Heeney to Pearson, 3 June 1949, DCER *Volume 15*, p. 1767-70

⁹ Escott Reid to Heeney, 20 June 1949, DCER *Volume 15*, p. 1770-1.

¹⁰ Heeney to Chairman of Security Panel, 20 June 1949, DCER *Volume 15*, p. 1770-1.

By early November 1949, the Communist Chinese took control of the majority of the Chinese mainland as Heeney had foretold, forcing the Chinese Nationalists retreat to Formosa and other, much smaller, offshore islands. T.C. Davis, Canada's Ambassador in China, warned Pearson that the mainland that the Communists did not hold currently would soon fall under their control. However, as Davis believed that the Communists would need more time to secure Formosa, foreign intervention could prevent its capture.¹¹ While visiting Canada in November, Davis suggested that given Mao's success on the mainland, Canada should consider *de jure* recognition of Communist China to secure stability in the region.¹² Ultimately, Canada did not recognize Communist China until 1971. Most importantly, the question of how the western allies were to proceed in the Far East set the stage for the neutralization and subsequent escalation that occurred in the Taiwan Strait. Historian David Finkelstein explains that Taiwan's neutralization resulted from the start of the Korean War. President Truman's administration agreed that while the west was at war in Korea, Taiwan had to remain out of the Communists' grip while the Nationalists had to be constrained from attacking the mainland and expanding the Korean War to the Formosan Strait. To maintain this neutralization the U.S. stationed the Seventh Fleet in the Strait with a hope to maintain the tense status quo.¹³

By mid-1950, the Chinese Civil War came to a close when the Chinese Nationalists retreated to Formosa and the offshore islands, and the Communist Chinese received recognition from the Soviet Union as the political entity representing China. Meanwhile, Canada continued to grapple with Davis's advice that the West should recognize Communist China. However, the Americans and the start of the Korean War soon answered the question regarding recognition.

¹¹ T.C. Davis to Pearson, 2 November 1949, DCER *Volume 15*, p. 1786-8.

¹² Memorandum by DEA, 15 November 1949, DCER *Volume 15*, p.1801.

¹³ David M. Finkelstein, *Washington's Taiwan Dilemma, 1949-50: From Abandonment to Salvation* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2014), 332-3.

When Secretary of State Dean Acheson stressed to Pearson that the Korean War's outbreak marked the start of another struggle between Communism and the Free World, it struck a chord with Pearson. Korea had become symbolically critical because it had the potential to either strengthen the western alliance's influence in the Far East or to facilitate the spread of Communism in the region. Consequently, Korea's position in the Cold War competition for spheres of influence became all the more important. As Pearson recalled at a Cabinet meeting in early August 1950:

Acheson had emphasized that the Korean situation could only be dealt with and intelligently understood as a phase (and not in the long run the most important phase) of the general conflict between the free and Communist worlds. Strategically, Korea was not important and the decision to resist aggression there had been primarily determined by political considerations.¹⁴

For the United States, these political considerations were primarily the neutralization of the Communist threat and the promotion of democracy in the Far East. Pearson felt that Acheson's emphasis on Korea's position in the greater Cold War applied to the situation pertaining in the Formosa Strait. In his August 15 letter to Acheson, Pearson, stating that he understood Acheson's interpretation of Korea's role in the evolving Cold War conflict, suggested that support for the Chinese Nationalists in the Formosa Strait was vital to the situation in Korea and beyond. Affirming that Formosa was another "phase" in preventing the spread of Communism, Pearson endorsed the "neutralization" of Formosa by supporting the Nationalists over the Communists. Therefore, the recognition that Davis had hoped for was now incompatible with State Department desires. While seeking to approach the Far East uniformly with its western allies, Pearson did express a cautionary recommendation. In the same letter to Acheson, he stressed that while Canada supported Acheson's recommendation to support the

¹⁴ Extract from Cabinet Conclusions, 2 August 1950, *Documents on Canadian External Relations* [DCER]: *Volume 16*, Greg Donaghy ed. (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. 1996), p. 99.

Nationalists over the Communists, he strongly believed that America and its western allies should avoid direct engagement with the Communist Chinese in the Strait in order to maintain the status quo.¹⁵ While at the start of the Korean War it appeared Canadian and American policies for Formosa were in sync, they soon differed about how to deal with the situation as it escalated over the next four years. Most importantly, Canada's primary engagement with the Formosa Strait between the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1950 and the outbreak of hostilities within the Strait in 1954 concerned the legal status of Formosa. Determining and protecting the legal status of Formosa became critical in ensuring that it would not fall to the Communists, a strategic priority for the West's Cold War aims.

An Issue of Legality, Maintaining the Neutralization of the Taiwan Strait

In late 1950, the United States and its western allies discussed how to handle the Formosa situation. One path to a resolution was using the United Nations as a means to find a resolution. Hume Wrong, Canada's Ambassador to the United States, informed Pearson that the State Department was concerned that if Formosa's continued neutralization were given to the United Nation's General Assembly to solve, America would not maintain control of the neutralization. However, the Americans, conflicted about whether to continue the status quo by themselves or giving control of the region to the UN, feared that a lack of resolution could potentially permit an opening for the Communist takeover of Formosa. Using the UN to maintain the status quo would also effect whether or not Formosa could be considered a part of China or not.¹⁶ Eventually, the Americans, as will be discussed shortly, concluded that the UN option should at least be discussed. The United Kingdom, a significant contributor to the discussions regarding the status of Formosa, had its own concerns over Formosa and American policy. Still, it agreed with the

¹⁵ Pearson to Dean Acheson, 15 August 1950, DCER *Volume 16*, p. 457-8.

¹⁶ Hume Wrong to Pearson, 25 October 1950, file 50056-A-40 Part 2, Status of Formosa – Policy of the Western Powers, Vol. 4724, RG25, Library and Archives Canada [LAC].

Americans that no attack against the mainland could be sponsored by the West until such a time that consensus on the status of Formosa be decided on by the UN's General Assembly.¹⁷

Canada's opinion on the matter exceeded Acheson's interpretation from earlier that summer. In a DEA memorandum to the Prime Minister dated November 13, 1950, DEA officials believed a drafted resolution maintaining Formosa's neutralization went beyond understanding Formosa as simply a part of the Korean situation, as Acheson had previously argued when the American policy of neutralization was put in place. The Canadians, along with other collaborating nations, believed that neutralizing Formosa played a larger role in preventing the potential spread of communism throughout the Far East. Instead the Department understood Formosa as important to peace in the international order of peace.¹⁸

Should the proposed resolution be accepted by the United Nation's General Assembly, then the subsequent commission's findings, a commission created as a result of the proposed resolution, would not likely be presented until after the Korean situation had been resolved. In effect, the Formosa question was separate from events already occurring in the Far East.¹⁹ This potential scenario pleased the Canadian diplomats for it endorsed their preference to maintain the status quo in the Far East and did not propose the dispatch of further western resources to the region. However, Pearson wrote to the Chairman of the Canadian delegation at the United Nations, Robert Riddell to express Ottawa's desire to postpone the resolution for two reasons. First, any proposed resolution may unduly burden the western allies with greater involvement in the Formosa Strait. Second, if the resolution was postponed, there remained a possibility that

¹⁷ Robert Riddell, Canadian Delegation to the U.N. General Assembly, New York, to Pearson, 3 November 1950, file 50056-A-40 Part 2, Status of Formosa – Policy of the Western Powers, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

¹⁸ Riddell to Pearson, 13 November 1950, file 50056-A-40 Part 2, Status of Formosa – Policy of the Western Powers, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

¹⁹ Ibid.

negotiations with the Communist Chinese might peacefully settle the Formosa Question.²⁰ The Canadian approach appeared to become a game of sitting on their hands until forced to deal with a situation, in line with the “something would turn up” mentality. As demonstrated earlier, Canada’s reason for postponing any General Assembly discussion regarding Formosa was in keeping with Canada’s general Far Eastern policy of maintaining limited involvement. The Canadian government appeared conflicted because it understood the benefits of a resolution but only wanted the matter discussed if absolutely necessary. Similarly, the Americans were conflicted on whether a resolution was beneficial or not to them.

However, the Americans disagreed with the Canadians’ desire to delay the General Assembly debate on Formosa’s status. When Hume Wrong met with Dean Rusk, Second Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, Rusk advised that the United States was concerned that a postponed settlement for Formosa meant the United States would have to station the Seventh Fleet in the region for a period longer than desired. Further, as the status quo sapped U.S. military resources, the State Department sought a more secure resolution. Finally, Rusk, fearing that postponing a UN resolution could exacerbate tensions among western allies over how to settle the Formosa question, stated that “they were anxious to prevent the disposition of the island becoming a serious issue between friends whose policies were already divergent on Far Eastern questions.”²¹ This comment had the greatest effect on the Canadian delegation. Several days later, on November 24, the Chairman wrote to Pearson to say that perhaps a review of Canada’s policy – Canada was considering establishing relations with Communist China and postponing talks regarding a resolution – should be reoriented to be more in sync with American

²⁰ Pearson to Riddell, 21 November 1950, file 50056-A-40 Part 2, Status of Formosa – Policy of the Western Powers, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

²¹ Wrong to Pearson, 22 November 1950, file 50056-A-40 Part 2, Status of Formosa – Policy of the Western Powers, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

priorities.²² While the Canadian and American policies differed about how to deal with the Formosa question towards 1950's end, specifically in its rigidity towards the Communists, Canada appeared to be ready to tow the line when American diplomats pushed back against the contradicting policies. However, Canada's desire to postpone the resolution was soon a moot point thanks to Formosa's legal status.

Ultimately, it was the DEA's Legal Division that terminated the desire to postpone or to discuss the UN resolution. According to a memorandum written by the Legal Division on February 19, 1951, the UN could not legally interfere with the Republic of China (ROC) on Formosa as that interference potentially invalidated the 1943 Cairo and 1945 Potsdam Declarations which had guaranteed the ROC's right to self-government.²³ Canada's Delegation at the UN pushed back against this conclusion. Stating that like the West's involvement in Berlin during the 1948 blockade, the UN resolution should continue as the Formosa situation was a "threat to the [global] peace".²⁴ Responding to the Delegation's argument a month later, the Legal Division, pointing out that the actions Canada took during the blockade did not contradict its legal opinion, it stood by its original belief that a UN resolution on Formosa infringed upon ROC rights to govern Formosa.²⁵ While the Canadian diplomats had wanted the UN resolution – albeit one that was postponed – it appeared that any resolution on Formosa would be firmly illegal according to the Legal Division.

Without the ability to legally resolve Formosa's status, Pearson strengthened his commitment to the Canadian policy of restraint. On May 7, 1951, Pearson informed the House of

²² Riddell to Pearson, 24 November 1950, file 50056-A-40 Part 2, Status of Formosa – Policy of the Western Powers, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

²³ Memorandum by Legal Division to American and Far Eastern Division, 19 February 1951, file 50056-A-40 Part 2, Status of Formosa – Policy of the Western Powers, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

²⁴ The Permanent Delegation of Canada to the United Nations to Pearson, 30 March 1950, file 50056-A-40 Part 2, Status of Formosa – Policy of the Western Powers, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

²⁵ Memorandum by Legal Division to American and Far Eastern Division, 21 April 1951, file 50056-A-40 Part 2, Status of Formosa – Policy of the Western Powers, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

Commons of Canada's Far Eastern policy, laying out how Canada planned to address the status of Formosa. Although Pearson spoke mostly about the successes and failures of the UN forces in Korea, he made a few statements regarding Formosa. First, despite the Legal Division's conclusion, Pearson stated that once the Korean conflict ended, Formosa's future ought to be discussed within the nature of the United Nations Charter regardless of the legality of such discussions. Second, Pearson stated that the Canadian policy regarding Formosa for the foreseeable future was to maintain Formosa's neutralization via the American's Seventh Fleet in order to prevent the region from becoming an offshoot of the Korean conflict. Finally, Pearson made that the Formosa question could not be dealt with until fighting had ended Korea.²⁶ While the Canadians had hoped to resolve the Formosa question in 1950-1951, it was clear that the uncertain legality of interfering with Formosa and the international agreements affirming ROC's right to governance without foreign interference meant that Canada could only hope to maintain the status quo in the region until such a time as the situation could be resolved. In the meantime, Canada was content to accept America's lead on policy, specifically Formosa's neutralization.

While the Americans took note of Canada's approach, that recognition did not influence America's course of action, a theme that became common throughout the First Taiwan Strait Crisis. The U.S. Embassy in Ottawa was fully aware that the Canadians continued to deny the Far East as a central focus.²⁷ While the Canadians had been firm in their approach, American politicians had not solidified their own Far East policy given their own indecision about pursuing a UN resolution or not. Further, Canada's resoluteness did not factor significantly into America's ongoing evaluation of the growing tensions or the formulation of its own Far Eastern policy. As

²⁶ Pearson to the House of Commons, 7 May 1951, file 50056-A-40 Part 2, Status of Formosa – Policy of the Western Powers, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

²⁷ U.S. Embassy Ottawa to Acheson, 2 February 1951, file 642.00/2-251, box 2917, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal File 1950-1954, National Archives and Records Administration [NARA]; Bothwell, "Eyes West: Canada and the Cold War in Asia," 60-1.

for Formosa, the situation was clearly at a standstill until the Korean War terminated. In fact, the Americans did not fully form their approach until the Korean War had ended and Eisenhower's administration started. However, as Washington developed its Far East policy, which was formed while tensions in the Formosa Strait were escalating, Canada's influence on U.S. policy was minimal and was only taken into account in Washington when Canada's approach mirrored U.S. interests.

Rising Tension, Escalation in the Taiwan Strait

The fighting in Korea continued until July 1953. But with Eisenhower's election, the implementation of a new U.S. foreign policy was set to occur. Ultimately, this policy guided America's intervention as the escalation of events began in the Formosa Strait in 1954. In early 1953, the British expressed concern over America's increasingly outdated Formosa neutralization policy to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, J.M. Allison. The British felt that since the Nationalists had commenced guerilla raids against mainland China, U.S. policy was no longer tenable. In response, Allison suggested that the new Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, was open to revising U.S. policy about the Taiwan Strait.²⁸ Two days later, the State Department notified Chiang Kai-Shek that the Seventh Fleet's directive would no longer prevent ROC's attacks against the mainland but would continue to protect Formosa and the Pescadores Islands.²⁹ However, the State Department also informed Chiang Kai-Shek that it would not commit to any new offensive policies.³⁰ The Generalissimo responded optimistically, hoping that such a change would promote further cooperation between his regime and the Americans. He was apprehensive about the Offshore Islands, confiding that the Communists

²⁸ Memorandum of Conversation, 28 January 1953, *Foreign Relations of the United States* [FRUS]: *Volume 14, Japan and China* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office), p. 128-30.

²⁹ Islands in the southern end of the Taiwan Strait but separate from the Offshore Islands.

³⁰ Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in the Republic of China, 30 January 1953, FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 132.

may respond to the change in direction by attacking the islands.³¹ However, Chiang Kai-Shek's concerns did not sway the State Department's planned policy changes.

In his first State of the Union Address on February 2, 1953, President Eisenhower publically announced the new Seventh Fleet's directive. As the old neutralization policy had become a form of American defence protecting Communist China, America could no longer permit such a policy considering China's role in the Korean Conflict.³² In early April, the Joint Chiefs of Staff sent new orders to Admiral Arthur W. Radford, Commander in Chief – Pacific Command. Radford must work in conjunction with the Chinese Nationalists to defend Formosa and the Pescadores, to prepare and maintain base facilities on Formosa, and to train ROC armed forces. He was also instructed that American forces were only allowed to partake in defensive maneuvers against the Communist Chinese. Any attacks against the mainland must be approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.³³ Over several months, as escalating tensions in the Taiwan Strait came to their pinnacle, this new directive guided the Seventh Fleet's presence in the region. The change in the Seventh Fleet's directives reflected broader changes in American policy following Eisenhower's introduction of his "New Look". The "New Look" policy, a cornerstone of Eisenhower's campaign, intended to decrease global tensions and avoid further conflicts like the Korean War by stressing the threat of American nuclear retaliation. Moreover, New Look sought to minimize America's spending on conventional military ventures.³⁴

Canada was not immediately alarmed by Eisenhower's new foreign policy. As Heeney assured Pearson in January 1954, this new policy was not a significant change to American foreign policy. In fact, Heeney discerned that the "New Look" would permit a withdrawal of

³¹ Karl L. Rankin to the Department of State, 1 February 1953, FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 135.

³² Extract from message to Congress on the State of the Union Address, 2 February 1953, FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 140.

³³ JCS to Admiral Arthur W. Radford, 6 April 1953. FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 172-4.

³⁴ Heeney to Pearson, 22 January 1954, *Documents on Canadian External Relations* [DCER]: *Volume 20*, Greg Donaghy ed. (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. 1996), p. 942-3.

Western forces from the East Asia region, leaving only enough forces in place to guarantee defence commitments already made.³⁵ In Heeney's initial assessment, the "New Look" policy seemed to mirror Canada's own policy by cutting western resources in the region and maintaining the current status. However, when Pearson forwarded Heeney's assessment to Prime Minister St. Laurent on February 2, he added a few cautionary remarks. In particular, Pearson stated that with the new Administration's defence plan relying more on atomic retaliation, successful diplomacy between countries was made that much more imperative. Thus, Pearson advised:

It is clear that the new strategy is going to make diplomacy, both in its inter-allied aspect and in relations with the communists, more important than before. It is also clear that the weapon of overwhelming retaliation, or the threat of it, is one which can only be exercised when the issue is clear-cut and decisive. There will, however, be many blurred and unclear situations constituting aggressive action when it could not be used.³⁶

Pearson's evaluation of the new American foreign and defence policy echoed Canada's cautious position during the First Taiwan Strait Crisis and the events preceding its outbreak. While Canada and the United States had similar regional aims, Canada felt that the severity of "New Look" policy contributed to the storm brewing in the Taiwan Strait. Thus, Canada's belief in its role as a tempering influence on the United States was validated. Additionally, Canada knew that when the storm inevitably struck, it would use its diplomatic position to help settle the crisis peacefully.

Given U.S. knowledge of Canada's perceived role and the State Department's engagement with the DEA, both parties understood each other's position. This two-way understanding no doubt contributed to Canada's inflated view of its influence on the United States. The first meeting between the new heads of the State Department and their DEA

³⁵ Ibid, p. 948-9.

³⁶ Pearson to Louis St. Laurent, 2 February 1954, DCER *Volume 20*, p. 951-2.

counterparts occurred on February 15, 1953. The meeting began with Dulles informing Pearson that Eisenhower's administration wished to continue its collaboration with Canada using informal communication between both countries; in other words, without formal consultations on all matters.³⁷ But Dulles warned that at times America might have to act without any consultation with allied nations such as when America unilaterally had neutralized the Taiwan Strait. This condition of collaboration where America acted independently from its Allies often caused tension with Canada's preference to ensure uniform policies from the West in the East.

The two parties discussed their mutual concern that the incursion of Communism into Indo-China could threaten Formosa. On the recent decision to change the Seventh Fleet's directive, Pearson expressed apprehension as it was not clear how America intended to behave in the region. Dulles reassured him that the United States would not conduct any "sensational military action."³⁸ While Canada's tangible influence on American policy seemed minimal, Pearson's concerns expressed in this meeting were considered in Washington. Consequently, the United States made it clear that while it was willing to be forthcoming and transparent about its policy, that did not mean it would defer to Canadian influence. In a despatch on June 29, 1953, from the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa to Washington, Counselor John H. Morgan acknowledged that Canada had a disproportionate importance to the United States, stating:

The Department of External Affairs... in view of the feeling that Canada is a country of growing importance, takes an interest in many matters with which it might not seem to be directly concerned. The disproportionate significance of Canada is recognized by other countries, especially Great Britain and France, who make every effort to keep the Canadians informed. Needless to say, the viewpoint of these two countries does not always coincide with that of the United States. It is important, therefore, on many occasions, that the Danadian [sic] Department of

³⁷ Memorandum of Conversation, 15 February 1953, file 611.42/2-1553, box 2773, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-1954, NARA.

³⁸ Memorandum of Conversation, 15 February 1953, file 611.42/2-1553, box 2773, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-1954, NARA.

External Affairs should have prompt and full information concerning American policy and the reasons behind this policy.³⁹

This American despatch, coupled with the meeting between Dulles and Pearson earlier in the year, demonstrated that Eisenhower's administration intended to keep Canada appraised of its Far Eastern intentions. However, this promise did not necessarily translate into Canada having anything more than a minimal impact on that U.S. policy. Although Canada was kept informed of the situation in the Taiwan Strait, Canada's preference for a more cautious approach went unheeded, rendering Canada's influence relatively meager.

With Washington's intention to keep Canada appraised of the U.S. status in the Taiwan Strait, greater collaboration between the United States and Canada in the Far East appeared to develop. Throughout 1954, various meetings between the State Department and Canadian diplomats disclosed numerous American interests and plans in the Far East. For example, on March 4, 1954, State Department officials told Canadian diplomats in Washington about the new U.S. direction for defence and economic investment strategies. Both parties agreed that these consultation meetings should continue.⁴⁰ The meetings continued throughout the year, specifically after Communist artillery fire began striking the Offshore Islands. A consultation meeting between the Americans and Canadians occurred three weeks after the first artillery shells fell. They discussed potential motivations for the PRC shelling the island of Quemoy and the greater implications of further attacks on other islands, too.⁴¹ While the importance of these meetings during the crisis itself will be explored in more detail in Chapter III, it is important to note here that these meetings reflected the growing collaboration between the two countries and

³⁹ John H. Morgan to Department of State, Washington, 29 June 1953, file 611.42/-2953, box 2773, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-1954, NARA.

⁴⁰ Heeney to Pearson, 9 March 1954, DCER *Volume 20*, p. 1067.

⁴¹ Heeney to Pearson, 27 September 1954, DCER *Volume 20*, p. 3309.

the fact that Canada had some agency concerning Far Eastern events. Ultimately, Canadian politicians would try to use these opportunities to assert their influence on the United States.

Despite the increased collaboration, tensions and frustrations with one another's policies endured. Eisenhower's State Department kept an eye on the Canadian policies and statements by DEA officials, looking for any potential changes to their approach or interests in the Far East. In August 1953, the Liberal government won another majority government. Given the Liberals' new mandates and campaign promises, the State Department was curious if any Canadian policy changes would materialize. On November 12, 1953, when the Canadian Parliament held the Throne Speech, American diplomats in Ottawa found no planned change to foreign policies and Canadian opposition parties challenged the Liberals' agenda.⁴² Canada's reticent policy in the Far East continued to contradict the Americans' own "New Look" policy.

Following the election, American diplomats were not hopeful for a solution to the contradiction as they noted that Canada, as indicated by a speech given by Pearson in 1953, remained uncommitted to extended international commitments in the Far East. Pearson's speech expressed some frustrations that the DEA felt stemmed from collaboration with the United States. The DEA was not satisfied with America's cooperation with allied western countries on foreign issues, going so far as to criticize America for "rigidity, self-righteous, and failure to consult with [its] allies."⁴³ While Pearson admitted that the Americans had improved their consultation with allied nations on global issues, he argued that it had not developed as he had hoped. The Americans commented that Pearson was simply being hoary for criticizing

⁴² Ernest de W. Mayer to Department of State, 18 November 1953, file 742.00/11-1853, box 3546, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-1954, NARA.

⁴³ Mayer to Department of State, 19 July 1953, file 642.00/7-1953, box 2917, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-1954, NARA.

America's lack of consultation.⁴⁴ Such sentiments expressed by the State Department and the DEA revealed the increasing tensions between Canadian and American officials regarding the Far East. It is also telling that Canadian officials, including Pearson, remained disappointed by the limited extent to which the Americans involved their western allies – including Canada – in foreign policy practice. Such disappointment may have been borne out of the exaggeration of Canada's perceived role in the Canadian-American collaboration regarding the Far East.

Following the change in the Seventh Fleet's directive, the Americans were increasingly committed to working with the Chinese Nationalists. Throughout the summer of 1953, the Chinese Nationalists and Americans entered into discussions as to how the United States would increase its commitment to the region. In early June 1953, Admiral Radford met with Chiang to discuss the future of the Nationalist Chinese-American relationship. Both agreed that the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) would continue to train Formosan forces. Further, a separate Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Command (CINCPAC) Liaison Office was organized to facilitate direct contact with the President for more efficient operational planning in the region.⁴⁵ However, ROC armed forces expressed concerns that the Americans had not committed enough support in case of armed intervention from the Communist Chinese. Thus, the Chinese Nationalists requested a direct set of conditions that could dictate American intervention in the region.⁴⁶ While the Americans did not commit to a full security agreement with the Chinese Nationalists, they were open to increased commitments in the region. Ultimately, these early talks laid the groundwork for the mutual security pact that came the following year.

By the end of July 1953 with the Korean Armistice, the American commitment to the protection of Formosa and the Pescadores expanded to include the protection of the Offshore

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ H.P. Jones to Department of State, 18 June 1953. FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 205-6.

⁴⁶ H.P. Jones to Department of State, 19 June 1953. FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 210-1.

Islands, including Quemoy and Matsu. William M. Fechteler, Chief of Naval Operations, stated the importance of the islands in a telegram to CINCPAC: “[These] are other ChiNat islands which are desirable for retention as they serve to facilitate the security of [Formosa and Pescadores] essential islands.” However, Fechteler stated that while this protection did not include the direct defense of these new islands, America could encourage and assist (via supply of materials) the Chinese Nationalists to establish their own defenses.⁴⁷ Dulles suggested that the Department of Defense go even further and prioritize the potential defense of the islands, and the directive should include defense of the islands.⁴⁸ He argued that the change should be made in light of the fact that Communist Chinese appeared to be massing forces along the Amoy coastal region. With the Korean War’s armistice having been signed just weeks before, the U.S.A. was further committing itself to the ROC.

Thus, by mid-1954, the U.S.-Chinese Nationalists Mutual Security Pact was taking shape. For the ROC, the critical feature of the proposed pact was the agreement that any attack in the Pacific region by Communist China would be considered an aggressive act against both ROC and the U.S.A.⁴⁹ Although it took some time to respond to ROC’s proposed draft, the Department of State accepted the terms of the draft proposal, believing that it signified a material reassurance of existing commitment rather than an extension of said commitment. As the Department of State explained, the “signing of mutual security pact at this time would be strong reassurance that US would not let free China down. Since US already committed to defence of Formosa, pact would simply represent formal acknowledgement of existing status.”⁵⁰ This

⁴⁷ Felix Budwell Stump to William M. Fechteler, 23 July 1953, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 237-8.

⁴⁸ Dulles to Charles E. Wilson, 17 August 1953, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 244-5.

⁴⁹ Rankin to the Department of State, 19 December 1953, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 343-4.

⁵⁰ The Chargé in the Republic of China to the Department of State, 24 February 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 367.

interpretation of the Pact's purpose would affect how the Americans negotiated the proposal in the following weeks and months.

Walter S. Robertson, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, bringing the ROC proposal to Dulles's attention, recommended that the Department of State move the process forward. However, he clearly stressed that any pact must not extend American resources in the region beyond what the new directive had already set out.⁵¹ In the subsequent months, the Americans did not sit down with the Nationalists to flesh out the terms of the pact. In fact, it was not until the beginning of May that preliminary talks between both countries began.⁵² On May 19, Dulles and Dr. Wellington V. Koo, ROC's Ambassador to America, discussed the parameters of the pact. Dulles expressed concerns over the pact's potential outcome, unintended or otherwise. Particularly he worried that as no armistice between the Communists or Nationalists had been signed, the civil war remained ongoing and could instigate more conflict in the Far East. Nevertheless, the meeting ended with Dulles reassuring Koo that as the Americans were sympathetic to ROC's concerns, the negotiations must move forward.⁵³ The next chapter will explore the negotiations and resulting agreement on the mutual security pact, but what is critical here are the increasing and formal commitments by Americans to the Chinese Nationalists to prevent the loss of Formosa to communism in the months leading up to the crisis.

When Threats Turn Violent

While the Americans were committing to the Taiwan Strait region, by the spring of 1954, the Strait had become heavily militarized. Emboldened by the growing American commitment to their cause and facing a mounting Communist threat to the offshore islands, Chiang Kai-Shek implemented his "Kai-Plan" to increase Nationalist military capabilities. The "Kai-Plan", Chiang

⁵¹ Walter S. Robertson to Dulles, 25 February 1954, FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 367-8.

⁵² Rankin to the Department of State, 11 May 1954, FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 415-6.

⁵³ Memorandum of Conversation, 19 May 1954, FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 422.

Kai-Shek explained, depended on America providing resources so that ROC could increase its military by three dozen divisions, or 500,000 men. The purposes of these divisions were two-fold: first, they would ensure the defence of Taiwan, the Pescadores, and the Offshore Islands; second, they could be used to invade the mainland. While Chiang stressed that the plan would not be an offensive plan for the mainland, plans for an invasion transpired then these divisions could be used for that.⁵⁴

In July 1954, the U.S. Embassy in Taipei notified Washington about increased activity since February near the Offshore Islands. Of particular note were naval and air engagements and the destruction of several Communist gunboats. Furthermore, the comments attached to the report from the Embassy stated that due to its lack of confidence in Chinese reporting it was difficult to ascertain the full extent of the increased military activity and speculated that perhaps it was not greater than it had been in the previous two years.⁵⁵ Whether or not the military activity had increased, the perception of escalation was important. The potential Communist buildup and proposed Nationalist military buildup bred an environment of escalation, dousing the region with fuel for conflict.

Over the next few months, sparks ignited the region with clashes between the Communists and Nationalists. On July 23, 1954, two Communist Chinese fighter jets shot down a British airliner travelling from Bangkok to Hong Kong, killing three of six American citizens on the flight. In a phone conversation the following day between the President and Dulles, the two men agreed to condemn the Chinese attack and to send two aircraft carriers to the crash site to show strength and provide support for the rescue operation. Still, President Eisenhower

⁵⁴ Memorandum of Conversation, 15, June 1954, file 793.00/6-1554, box 4208, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-1954, NARA.

⁵⁵ Robert W. Rinden to Department of State, 15 July 1954, file 793.00/7-1554, box 4208, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-1954, NARA.

expressed some uncertainty as he believed that Britain ought to take the lead.⁵⁶ On July 25th, Dulles brought Admiral Radford into the conversation with the President. Uncertainty withstanding, the U.S. aircraft carriers were directed to defend themselves against any Communist aggression and to engage in “hot pursuit” as long as U.S. fighters did not violate Communist territory.⁵⁷

Three days after the British airliner incident, a second encounter occurred, this time involving two American search planes which were attacked by two Communist fighter planes. The resulting engagement ended with the two Communist planes being shot down. During a meeting in Washington the British Ambassador was notified of the incident, with Dulles explaining that the United States hoped that Communist China would back down.⁵⁸ However, Chang Han-fu, the PRC’s Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, did not see the American actions as defensive. Instead, Chang condemned American involvement in the British airliner incident, an issue that should involve China and Britain only. Further, the second incident had occurred when American fighter planes had strafed Polish tankers, entered Chinese airspace, and attacked the Chinese planes.⁵⁹ Dulles countered this narrative in a National Security Council meeting, describing the first incident as resulting from a “trigger happy” Chinese pilot, the second from Communist orders to attack any western planes photographing the Polish tankers.⁶⁰ While the skirmish had come to a close by July’s end, tensions remained; it was not the only incident before the Offshore Island crisis broke out.

In a surprise maneuver, ROC detained the *Tuapse* Soviet tanker in early July. While a displeased Washington requested that ROC release the Soviets or risk raising tension with the

⁵⁶ Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, 24 July 1954, FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 505.

⁵⁷ Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, 25 July 1954, FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 506-7.

⁵⁸ Memorandum of Conversation, 26 July 1954, FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 508-9.

⁵⁹ Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, 28 July 1954, FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 510-1.

⁶⁰ Cited in Editorial Note, 29 July 1954, FRUS *Volume 14*, p. 511-2.

Communist bloc, the Nationalists ambiguously responded that they would only release the tanker after further considerations.⁶¹ A month after the ship's seizure, ROC still had not released the tanker, leading Dulles to say that:

Continued detention Soviet Tanker TAUPSE (sic) highly questionable needlessly provocative and tends impair international position Free China. It affords plausible pretext for increased Communist Air and surface patrol activities in general area South China Sea which would be regarded as highly undesirable by Australia and New Zealand as well as by US.⁶²

Tuapse's detention continued following the outbreak of the crisis at the beginning of September; however, its seizure marked a critical point for the Americans. As it became evident that tensions in the area were building and that the Nationalists' actions jeopardized their own legitimacy, such events also threatened the Americans' western allies.

Throughout this summer of escalation, disclosure or collaboration between the United States and Canada was largely absent. Despite the American promise to keep the Canadians better apprised of their actions, Pearson's feeling that the Americans were falling short of this promise was seemingly validated. In the midst of rising tensions and American negotiations for a mutual Security Pact with ROC, there was no meaningful communication with Canada regarding American interests during the summer months. This lack of communication regarding the Taiwan Strait existed right up to several days before the outbreak of hostilities. Even as Western interests were threatened by the seizure of the Soviet tanker, Canadian involvement remained negligible. On August 31, Dulles responded to the Commonwealth Relations Office (CRO), answering to the American commitment to the Pescadores and the offshore islands. He explained the American desire for the Nationalists to retain the offshore islands for their

⁶¹ W.P. Cochran to Dulles, Washington, 13 July 1954, file 15 Interception of Shipping, Taiwan –Top Secret Records, Box 2, RG84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, National Archives and Records Administration [NARA].

⁶² Dulles to U.S. Embassy in Taipei, 7 August 1954, file 15 Interception of Shipping, Taiwan –Top Secret Records, Box 2, RG84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, NARA.

retention was critical to protecting Formosa from the Communists. However, the CRO responded stating that the Allies were concerned with the escalating tensions in the strait, and made it clear it was the Americans' responsibility to guarantee that Chinese Nationalists did not provoke an incident in the strait with the communists.⁶³ This final response clearly exposes the differing interests of the United States, which sought to avoid Communist expansion in the Far East at all costs, from that of its Western allies who sought stabilization. Moreover, while better collaboration and transparency may have been promised to Canada and other western allies, it is clear from America's role in the escalation of events between ROC and the PRC that this cooperation did not occur.

Finally, in the year preceding the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, one can see the growing difference between Canadian and American interests in the Far East, differences which originated with the end of the Second World War and were encouraged by the end of the Chinese Civil War, the debate surrounding Formosa's legal status, and the start of Eisenhower's presidency. As the year passed and tensions escalated, the Americans increased their commitment to the region while Canada opted for little involvement. However, Canadian policy makers also began to perceive themselves as the guiding hand to temper America. Ultimately, as events in the Far East, and in the Taiwan Strait particularly, became tenser in 1954, the influence that Canada seemed to have garnered appeared to be not as significant as previously suggested. The next chapter will investigate the events of the First Taiwan Strait Crisis as it unfolded and explore the American allies that did play a significant role in the crisis, further suggesting that Canada's global influence was not always significant.

⁶³ Commonwealth Relations Office Memorandum, 31 August 1954, file 50293-40, Part 4.1, United States Policy in the Far East and reactions thereto from other democracies including Canada, Vol. 6032, RG25, Library and Archives Canada [LAC].

Chapter II – Uncle Sam’s Way or the Highway: U.S. Efforts to Resolve the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, September to December 1954

The First Taiwan Strait Crisis broke out in earnest on September 3, 1954, when the Chinese Communists initiated artillery strikes from mainland China against the offshore islands, beginning with Quemoy. As discussed in the previous chapter, this conflict had resulted from rising tensions in the Taiwan Strait region over the preceding year. Concurrently, the Americans had become increasingly entwined in the area due to their growing commitment to the Chinese Nationalists. While the West had hoped to preserve the status quo in the region by preventing Communism’s further spread, despite the Americans’ behaviour that was in fact escalating tensions, the Communist shelling of Nationalist-held islands required immediate intervention by the global community. While many western countries had been involved in the ongoing discussion as to the status of Formosa over the past five years, there was now a greater and immediate urgency and the need to contain the conflict. Most importantly, the outbreak of the crisis and the subsequent western allies’ response demonstrated that consideration for American interests was going to play a significant role in solving the situation. The desires of the Chinese Nationalists and U.S. allies, such as Britain and New Zealand, and Canada which played an even less significant role in these early events, were to be overshadowed by this consideration.

This chapter first explores the events at the start of the crisis and how they unfolded. In doing so this chapter lays the groundwork for understanding the rationale behind America’s approach when supporting the Chinese Nationalists and considering their allies’ concerns. Subsequently, the chapter will focus on the western allies who collaborated with the Americans to solve the crisis and how significant their roles in solving the crisis were. Specifically, the efforts of the United Kingdom and New Zealand to produce a resolution for the United Nation’s Security Council that sought to resolve the conflict and fortify the Sino-American relationship by

way of the Mutual Security Pact will spotlight the type of actions U.S. allies undertook during the crisis. By doing so, this chapter will demonstrate that Canada, despite its interest in the region, its purported increase in global influence, and self-perceived image as a diplomatic and tempering influence on the United States was absent or only peripherally involved in the efforts to stabilize the Taiwan Strait. Suggesting that Canada, playing such a limited role early on in the crisis, could only have had limited influence at best considering Britain, New Zealand, and the Nationalist Chinese, who all played a larger role than Canada, played to American interests. In order to emphasize Canada's limited influence regarding Formosa, this chapter explores the intentions and interest of American diplomats and policy makers to confirm that the Eisenhower administration, seeking to establish its own order in the region, worked with its allies only in so far as they contributed to this aim. Consequently, Canada's Department of External Affairs (DEA) was often not consulted due to its differing interests and desired approaches in the region. When the United States did consult Canada, it believed that Canada's interest would align with their own and that Canada would support the U.S. position. Together, these facets uphold this thesis's primary goal of tempering the idea of Canada's grand global influence.

Shaping America's Response to the Outbreak of the Crisis

President Dwight Eisenhower was first notified of the artillery shelling in the evening of September 3, 1954. The Joint Chiefs of Staff's (JCS) message to the President relayed that two of the sixteen U.S. personnel of the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) had been killed in the initial shelling. The Chiefs predicted that the attack was the precursor to a Communist assault on the island of Quemoy, expected to occur at daybreak the following morning.¹ Following years of mounting tension and months of direct escalation in the Strait, it

¹ R.B. Anderson to D.D. Eisenhower, 3 September 1954, *Foreign Relations of the United States* [FRUS]: *Volume 14, Japan and China* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office), p. 556.

was evident to the American government that the tensions had hit an apex. In the same note, the majority of the JCS advised the President to change the directive governing the Seventh Fleet so that it could redeploy to assist in the direct defense of Quemoy and the other Offshore Islands, as Communist assaults were also anticipated. However, the JCS's Army representative believed such actions should not be taken given that the Offshore Islands were deemed not to be a tactically critical part of the defence of Formosa and the Pescadores.² The next day, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles voiced his concern that Quemoy's loss could have potentially devastating psychological repercussions, including diminished anti-Communist morale amongst the Nationalists and emboldened Communist action that could result in the loss of numerous Offshore Islands.³

Over the following days American government officials hastened to identify the best approach to the crisis. On September 7, several high-ranking officials of the National Security Council (NSC), including Admiral Arthur W. Radford and several of the acting Secretaries, met to decide the best approach. They agreed to recommend to President Eisenhower that the Army should supply the Chinese Nationalists with the necessary supplies and equipment to defend Quemoy. Further, the Americans should compensate for any Nationalist losses.⁴ After a lengthy meeting of the NSC on September 12, and after he was briefed about the Offshore Islands, the President concurred with the JSC that while the loss of the Offshore Islands would not have a significant impact on the defense of Formosa and the Pescadores, it would have a great psychological impact on the Chinese Nationalists, would weaken Western influence in the

² Anderson to Eisenhower, 3 September 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 556-7.

³ J.F. Dulles to Department of State, 4 September 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 560.

⁴ Memorandum of Conversation, 7 September 1954, file 793.00/9-754, box 4209, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1950-1954, National Archives and Records Administration [NARA].

region, and would inhibit America's ability to prevent Communism's spread in the Far East.⁵ Dulles previously had equated the situation on Quemoy to France's defeat at Dien Bien Phu in early 1954. The loss of the islands would similarly permit further extension of communism in the Far East. Dulles added that if a communist takeover of the Offshore Islands was prevented, then the West could potentially recover its lost standing in Asia that had followed the Communist victory at Dien Bien Phu.⁶ Consequently, regardless of the Offshore Islands' limited military significance, America's approach in the Taiwan Strait was governed by psychological implications.

Following the conclusion of these meetings, the President approved two actions that directed the U.S. response to the crisis and how the U.S. would collaborate with its western allies. First, as stated at the NSC meeting he "Requested the Secretary of State promptly to explore and report back to the [NSC] on the possibility and desirability of taking early action in the United Nations with a view to stabilizing the *status quo* with relation to the islands now held by the Chinese Nationalist." Second, as the NSC and Eisenhower agreed to augment U.S. defensive efforts in the region, the Department of Defense was to maintain alert readiness to carry out any orders given should the Communists attack any of ROC-held islands.⁷ Further, the Americans committed to hashing out a Mutual Security Pact with the Nationalists. These two directives defined how the Americans would not only move forward with their own response, but also how they would employ their allies in defusing the situation. While such a direction would have significant global consequences, Canada was absent in these initiatives, contradicting its purported reputation for growing global influence.

⁵ Memorandum of Discussion at the 214th Meeting of the National Security Council, 12 September 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 615-6.

⁶ Dulles to Department of State, 5 September 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 572.

⁷ Memorandum of Discussion at the 214th Meeting of the National Security Council, 12 September 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 621, 623.

The following sections of this chapter explore how the United States worked with, or more accurately employed, the United Kingdom and New Zealand to develop a UN resolution for stability in the region that was shaped by America's own strategic interests, a resolution that eventually became known as the UN's Operation Oracle. More specifically, the British hoped that working closely with the Americans could mend the difficulties between both countries in regards to their differing Far East policies – Britain being more lenient with the Chinese while America took a hardline approach. Like Britain, New Zealand hoped that involving itself with the UN resolution would mean that it played a role in ending the Anglo-American dispute over how to deal with Communist China.⁸ Both of these perspectives yielded to America's interest, as seen in the subsequent sections. Then the chapter will explore how the Mutual Security Pact with the Chinese Nationalists was interconnected with America's efforts at the UN, all the while noting Canada's absence from these deliberations.

The American “New Zealand” Proposal

The first ally to be informed about the American plan was Britain. On September 8, 1954, prior to the NSC meeting that firmed up the UN approach, President Eisenhower drafted a letter to Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Eisenhower, voicing his belief that the Americans and the British, along with all other democratic allies, needed to work together to resolve crises in the Far East, averred that the American-British relationship should be the foundation for any multilateral collaboration.⁹ Eisenhower added that the United States and Britain were then at odds because of Britain's choice to recognize Red China. The U.S. would not do so as its primary goal was to do whatever was necessary to combat any Communist attempts to capture

⁸ Scott Kaufmann, “Operation Oracle: the United States, Great Britain, New Zealand, and the Offshore Island Crisis of 1954-55,” *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 32, No. 3 (2004): 106.

⁹ Eisenhower to Acting Secretary of State, 8 September 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 578.

Formosa.¹⁰ Furthermore, Eisenhower reiterated America's continued intent to redouble its involvement in Formosa to block Communist gains. Following the NSC meeting on September 12, the Eisenhower administration approached the British with the proposed UN resolution. The Americans had two purposes, first to mitigate the disconnect between the American and British stance on the "Two China" issue and to maneuver Britain into a position where the US could shape a resolution to its liking.¹¹

Following several informal discussions between American and British diplomats, a formal meeting was held on September 22 in New York between both countries' UN delegations. The British, represented by Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Anthony Eden, requested further clarification as to how exactly the Americans sought to use the UN to resolve the situation in the Formosan Strait. Particularly, Eden sought to know if a UN resolution would be used to demilitarize Quemoy or to provide UN military support; he also wanted the Communists to be invited to discuss the resolution, and sought clarification about which countries could present such a resolution. Dulles's response was telling about America's true intent regarding the UN. Dulles stated that while Communists would be invited to participate, he also stressed the concern that a Communist capture of Quemoy could facilitate more attacks on the Tachen Islands and Formosa. If that happened, it would trigger an American military response. Therefore, although the goal of the UN resolution was to establish peace in the region, more importantly, it was a preliminary tool to eliminate any further incursions and to limit Communist expansion.¹² Should negotiations with the Communists break down, Dulles was clear that containing Communist forces might take precedence over establishing peace. In addition,

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Memorandum of Discussion at the 214th Meeting of the National Security Council, 12 September 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 623.

¹² Memorandum of Conversation, 22 September 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 653-4.

Dulles forewarned that any provisional measures to halt Communist aggression needed the approval of the Nationalists to prevent the latter from breaking the peace.¹³

On September 27, Dulles reported from London that he had met with Eden the previous night to discuss the September 22 meeting in New York. Eden made it clear that Britain fully supported utilizing the UN to pacify the region. At this dinner, Eden suggested that neither Britain nor the United States ought to put forward the resolution because of their heavy involvement in the region. Instead, Eden suggested that New Zealand as another member of the Security Council with an obvious interest in the region given its location in the South Pacific, should do so.¹⁴ Two days later, Eden and Dulles met with the Acting New Zealand High Commissioner in London, Richard M. Campbell, to officially propose that New Zealand bring the UN resolution to the Security Council. Campbell agreed to transmit the proposal to his government and get an answer as soon as possible.¹⁵

By October 1, New Zealand's Ambassador to the United States, Leslie K. Munro, contacted the Americans before committing to the British and American request. Munro specifically wanted reassurances from the U.S. that ROC could be controlled by the Americans so as to prevent the ROC from pulling western allies into a great Far East conflict. The Americans guaranteed that they could control the Chinese-Nationalists. Another concern of Munro's was that because New Zealand was having an election on November 13, his current government could not devote the resources to a resolution regarding Formosa. Furthermore, a New Zealander's opposition party was running on an anti-Chiang Kai-Shek platform. Munro stressed that these negotiations must remain secret until the resolution was finally proposed so as

¹³ Ibid, p. 654.

¹⁴ J.F. Dulles to Department of State, 27 September 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 663-4.

¹⁵ Memorandum of Conversation, 29 September 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 667-9.

to prevent any negative domestic political consequences.¹⁶ Upon receiving these assurances, New Zealand's government notified American and British officials that it would present the resolution to the Security Council. The three countries decided that the tentative plan was to put forward the resolution at some point in November of that year.¹⁷ With the plan set, the United States, Britain, and New Zealand proceeded to negotiate about how to best propose a resolution that could maintain the status quo in the Formosan Straits. But the Americans dominated the negotiations to carefully shape the resolution to fit their specific strategic aims.

In New York on October 6, members from the three collaborating countries attended a consultation meeting to discuss the first proposed draft of the UN resolution and a time frame for working on the resolution. The Americans stated that they needed Chiang Kai-Shek's view of the proposed resolution merely as a show of good faith before taking the resolution to the Security Council. Moreover, a member of the New Zealand delegation, Foss Shanahan, emphasized that the resolution needed to be as narrow in scope as possible so as not to stress the fact that British and American policies about China differed.¹⁸ The draft resolution read as follows:

The Security Council

Having noted the recent occurrence of armed hostilities between the Peoples Republic of China and the Republic of China in the area of Quemoy (Chinmen);

Having concluded that these hostilities have resulted in a situation the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security;

Being concerned that these hostilities may extend to other islands in close proximity to the coast of China;

Calls upon the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China forthwith to terminate such hostilities, and to seek by peaceful methods to prevent their recurrence.¹⁹

¹⁶ Memorandum of Conversation, 1 October 1954, file 793.00/10-154, box 4209, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-54, NARA.

¹⁷ R.B. Anderson to U.S. Embassy in the Republic of China, 1 October 1954, *FRUS, Volume 14*, p. 672-3.

¹⁸ D. Key to Dulles, 6 October 1954, file 793.00/10-654, box 4209, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-54, NARA.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Both the British and ROC pushed back against this first U.S. submitted draft. Eden was most concerned with the draft's limited reach as it did not appear to lead to a settlement of the broader regional conflict. However, Eden made it clear that he did not believe the amendment needed to solve the "Two Chinas" issue in its entirety.²⁰ The Nationalist Chinese argued in a lengthy meeting on October 13 that the draft resolution constituted a first step to legitimizing Communist China. Moreover, the Nationalists condemned the resolution's language as it seemed to imply that the two Chinas were equal, a fact that puzzled Chiang Kai-Shek and his subordinates as they stressed the Chinese Nationalist claim to being the one true China. Chiang Kai-Shek suggested that if the resolution was passed at the UN, then a defence treaty between the Nationalists and the Americans would become even more important. Further, should the resolution go forward or not, they wanted defence treaty negotiations to resume. Finally, the Nationalists wanted a note added to the draft to emphasize two things: that the Nationalist China would not engage in offensive action without the consent of the Americans' and if the Communist Chinese attacked the off-shore islands, U.S. forces would come to ROC's defence.²¹

Replying to Eden's concerns, Dulles stressed that a limited resolution that focused solely on the Taiwan Strait was required to prevent the spread of violence to other regions and the commitment of additional Western forces to the Far East. Dulles stressed this by stating "that the U.S. could not by this single step commit itself to take further steps in the direction of a broader settlement or even take any action which would be interpreted as constituting such a commitment." Dulles also expressed his desire to prevent a far-reaching settlement to the Chinese Nationalists in his response to their own concerns.²² Dulles notified the Nationalists that

²⁰ Memorandum of Conversation, 8 October 1954, *FRUS, Volume 14*, p. 710.

²¹ Memorandum of Conversation, 13 October 1954, *FRUS, Volume 14*, p. 729-30, 732.

²² Memorandum of Conversation, 9 October 1954, *FRUS, Volume 14*, p. 717.

he was not surprised by their negative reaction to the resolution.²³ Dulles was somewhat amenable to the Nationalists' desires, noting that with the current circumstances in the Far East it was appropriate to move forward with discussions on the Mutual Security Pact.²⁴ However, Dulles politely brushed off Nationalist concerns regarding the Two China issue by reassuring Chiang Kai-Shek that the U.S. would not permit the resolution to be used by the Communists to further their goals. Dulles said the U.S.'s intention was to delay the resolution until November or until Communists violence forced America's hand, a tactic used by the Americans in the months leading up to the conflict.

While the Americans, British, and New Zealanders continued consultation meetings throughout the rest of the year, the concerns always focused on the American dealings with the Nationalists via the Mutual Defence Treaty and how such a pact could work in tandem with the resolution brought to the Security Council.²⁵ Interestingly, additional concerns came from outside the three members of Operation Oracle. In early November, Percy Spender, Australia's Ambassador to the United States, contacted Dulles and General Douglas MacArthur for clarification on both the progress of the New Zealand proposal and the Sino-American Mutual Defence Treaty. Most importantly, Spender voiced his government's disappointment that Australia had not been invited to participate in the UN resolution as its position in the region should have qualified it for such involvement. While Dulles responded that New Zealand was only involved because of its position in the Security Council, where he promised only to keep Australia fully informed in future decisions, he did not offer Australia a guaranteed spot at any

²³ Dulles (drafted) to Embassy in the Republic of China, 14 October 1954, *FRUS, Volume 14*, p. 762.

²⁴ D. MacArthur to Acting Secretary of State, 14 October 1954, *FRUS, Volume 14*, p.757.

²⁵ Memorandum of Conversation, 15 October 1954, file 793.00/10-1554, box 4209, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-54, NARA, and Memorandum of Conversation, 30 November 1954, file 793.00/11-3054, box 4210, RG 59, Central Decimal File 1950-54, NARA.

negotiations.²⁶ Dulles's response to Spender suggests that America's interest in coordinating and negotiating with allies only went so far as it was essential for furthering its own interests. In the absence of such a need, the U.S. had no interest in including needless allies in discussions, such as Canada. The most that the U.S. was willing to do was provide updates on U.S. decisions as a courtesy.

The negotiations for the resolution exposed the limits of American collaboration with its allies. Even though Operation Oracle was not successful in ending the hostilities, it demonstrated that the U.S. simply attempted to utilize the UN to sway the conflict in its favour by preventing the scales from tipping in such a way that could disrupt the region's status quo. While proposing cooperation as an approach to establishing peace in the region, it is clear that Oracle was simply a diplomatic tool to further American strategic aims. Despite opposition to the resolution's initial draft, Dulles did not waver from the original intent and re-iterated that a limited scope was necessary to avoid over commitment to the region, as was the American foreign policy preference. In addition, the resolution did not confine or affect America's other interests or potential involvement in the region. Despite the British preference for Communist inclusion in the negotiations, the United States was clear in its preference for limiting Communist bargaining power.²⁷

Although Dulles went to great lengths to assuage Nationalist concerns, ultimately the ROC's concerns did not influence the American position. Furthermore, the United States was not so much collaborating with its allies as using them to forward its preferred outcomes with regards to the First Taiwan Strait Crisis. Given that a country that was geographically closely situated to the crisis like Australia was barely consulted by the Americans, it should not come as

²⁶ Memorandum of Conversation, 3 November 1954, file 793.00/11-554, box 4210, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-54, NARA.

²⁷ Scott Kaufmann, "Operation Oracle": 107.

a surprise that a country like Canada, given its well establish Europe-centric interest, was not involved in the UN process despite Washington's earlier assurances that it would keep Canada apprised of actions in the region. While not a definitive demonstration of Canada's limited influence, U.S. involving select Commonwealth countries to partake in the New Zealand Proposal, in conjunction with America negotiating the Mutual Security Pact with the Nationalists, further demonstrates the lack of Canadian influence on the U.S. State Department during this period.

Committing to the Nationalists: the Mutual Security Pact

As America's ultimate priority was to contain Communist China and to prevent the loss of the Offshore Islands, the UN resolution to establish peace in the region was only one facet of America's policy. The other aspect was a continued commitment to the Mutual Security Pact with the Chinese Nationalists. As made clear by Dulles, the United States would block the advance of Communism in the Far East with military power and by supporting the Nationalists. As discussed previously, the Chinese Nationalists and the Americans had been working together to negotiate a Mutual Security Pact during the months of increasing tension in the Taiwan Strait. On September 1, two days prior to the outbreak of the crisis, Dulles disclosed to Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs Walter S. Robertson that while there was a high probability of such a pact's necessity, he wished for that commitment to be delayed as long as possible.²⁸ The Americans were able to put off commitment for roughly a month, with Robertson sending Dulles a memorandum on October 7 urging the security pact settlement in light of the UN efforts to solve the crisis and increasing escalation in the region.²⁹ Dulles had warned the NSC on October 7 that the Communists appeared to be amassing forces around the islands of

²⁸ Acting Secretary of State to Robertson, 1 September 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 555.

²⁹ Robertson to Dulles, 7 October 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 706-7.

Matsu and Tachen, north of Quemoy.³⁰ Alarming, Dulles reported that the forces around the Tachens exceeded those near Quemoy, suggesting that the Communists intended to capture the islands first rather than Quemoy or perhaps the Matsu Islands.³¹

Consequently, the Americans and ROC hastened to finalize the Mutual Security Pact. On October 18, Dulles notified the U.S. Embassy in Taipei via telegram that the President had finally approved the acceleration of negotiations for the Sino-American Security Pact, adding that approval from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was forthcoming. With this, the negotiations to finalize the pact were endorsed and aptly timed.³² ROC relief was palpable for just days before ROC Ambassador V.K. Wellington Koo had reminded the Americans that he had been assured in September that Dulles would raise the pact with the President.³³ While Robertson's briefing document stated the urgency of the Americans and Nationalists in forming the Sino-American Pact, more importantly, it revealed that the Americans conceived the pact as primarily defensive in nature.³⁴ This was a critical facet of the pact. In early October, the President and other high-ranking officials made clear that they could only endorse a Pact that was focused on halting any Communist expansion. Specifically, they said "This treaty, however, should make it clear that it is truly a defensive treaty and that we are not going to defend our partner while our partner attacks."³⁵ This qualification was central to American negotiations with ROC, as well as Britain and New Zealand throughout the UN resolution negotiations.

³⁰ See Appendices 1 and 2.

³¹ Memorandum of Discussion at the 216th Meeting of the National Security Council, 6 October 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 689.

³² Dulles to U.S. Embassy in the Republic of China, 18 October 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 775.

³³ Memorandum of Conversation, 12 October 1954, file 793.5/10-1254, box 4220, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-54, NARA.

³⁴ Robertson to H.C. Hoover, 26 October 1954, file 793.5/10-2654, box 4220, Central Decimal File 1950-54, NARA.

³⁵ Memorandum by Robertson, 8 October 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 709.

Serious negotiations for the defence treaty began in early November after a brief delay occurred by U.S. mid-term elections. ROC Foreign Minister George Yeh suggested that that previous year's preliminary drafts be the starting point for the negotiations.³⁶ In the early discussions, both the American and Nationalists addressed their objectives and disinclinations for the pact. While the Nationalists emphasized their desire to use the treaty as a foundation for more permanent relations between both countries, the Americans sought to keep their commitment to defend ROC interests rather nebulous.³⁷ The most important output of the early talks were summarized by George Yeh:

- a) The Chinese Government does not have the slightest intention of making a Treaty with the United States serve as a basis for action against the mainland of China.
- b) There is no intention on the part of the Chinese Government to involve the United States in war with Communist China.³⁸

Yeh's remarks suggest that from the start the Americans had shaped negotiations to ensure that they would not have to commit to any major engagements beyond the Taiwan Strait region.

When the two sides met on November 6, 1954, the Americans stood firm that the treaty had to clearly prescribe that unless mutual consent of the parties existed, ROC was not permitted to unilaterally attack mainland China and risk pulling America into a full-scale war with the Communists. Moreover, the Americans sought to maintain the vagueness of their commitment to protecting the Offshore Islands so that the Communist Chinese would be unsure if America would defend these islands, thus promoting a form of deterrence. Finally, to ensure the longevity of these provisions, the Americans sought to ensure that the treaty did not become null and void

³⁶ Memorandum of Conversation, 27 October 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 799.

³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 800.

³⁸ *Ibid*.

should the Nationalist government led by Chiang Kai-Shek be voted out and a government that was less interested in maintaining America's interest in the status quo was elected.³⁹

Back-and-forth negotiations over the subsequent weeks of that November revealed that the pact would not prove as useful as the Nationalists initially had hoped. At a meeting on November 16, George Yeh expressed to his American counterparts that both he and Ambassador Koo thought that not enough progress was being made. More importantly, he conveyed ROC dissatisfaction with the formality of the protocol regarding the bilateral agreement requirement for any military action. The Nationalists stressed that the existing informal agreement meant that they would have to consult the Americans before they committed to any military action, a formal protocol would cause unnecessary bureaucratic delays should military action be necessary. As Yeh reminded Robertson, the informal agreement had already delayed ROC's response to the initial shelling of Quemoy. However, Robertson reiterated that the Americans were adamant that the protocol be made formal and official in the security treaty and stressed once again the need for joint agreement on action taken. Robertson reassured the Chinese Nationalists that any protocol could be worded in such a way as to mitigate any potential delay.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the issue of a formal protocol for mutually agreed on action continued to be a point of friction throughout the negotiations.

During the following meeting on November 19, there was a debate regarding which Nationalist held islands the U.S. was going to protect and what the extent of that support would be. The Nationalists offered the following proposed provision to the agreement:

The Government of the Republic of China declares its firm intention to defend all territory now under its control. It is, however, mutually understood that while the question of the joint defense of the offshore islands now under its control

³⁹ Memorandum of Conversation, 6 November 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 871-3.

⁴⁰ Memorandum of Conversation, 16 November 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, 896-8.

and other territory which may hereafter come under its control, is subject to further agreement between the Parties in accordance with Article VI of the said Treaty, the Government of the United States of America will provide full logistic support for the effective defense of the said offshore islands.⁴¹

However, Robertson countered that the Nationalists' proposed revision still fell short of the American preference that the pact simultaneously be specific as to the degree of American commitment to the region while remaining nebulous enough to avoid forcing the Americans into direct conflict with the PRC. Specifically, the phrases "full logistic support" was a point of contention as Robertson believed it would be difficult to get the Treaty through the U.S. Senate as such an undefined term could be misconstrued and pull the Americans into conflict.⁴² However, Robertson and Yeh agreed that while the pact would guarantee American defence of Formosa and the Pescadores Islands, American personnel were not to be used to defend the Offshore Islands.⁴³

Following a number of additional meetings, the Nationalist representatives finally acquiesced to the American bi-lateral agreement provisions to prevent the ROC from dragging the U.S. into a war with the Communist Chinese. Notifying President Eisenhower that he had initialed a draft treaty with George Yeh, Dulles reassured the President that the treaty favoured the American demands, for:

The Treaty covers an attack directed against Formosa and the Pescadores. The note will in substance recognize that the Chinese will not use force from wither Formosa, the Pescadores or the offshore islands without our agreement and will not transfer military equipment and the like from Formosa to the offshore islands without our agreement.

This has been a difficult negotiation but the result, I believe, stakes out unqualifiedly our interest in Formosa and the Pescadores and does so on a basis which will not enable the Chinese Nationalists to involve us in a war with Communist China.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Memorandum of Conversation, 19 November 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 904.

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 905.

⁴³ Memorandum of Conversation, 19 November 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 907.

⁴⁴ Dulles to Eisenhower, 23 November 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 929.

Like their collaboration with Great Britain and New Zealand regarding the UN resolution, the Americans obtained their objectives for the pact without conceding much to ROC. The Sino-American relationship, being similar to the relationship many allied countries had with the U.S., was predicated on the interests of the Americans. The Americans used their allies to cultivate their own interests rather than to engage in a more harmonious relationship where the Americans sincerely considered their allies' interests.

The ratification of the Mutual Security Pact on December 13, 1954, cauterized American responsibility in the Far East.⁴⁵ Although the treaty did not fully commit the Americans to materially defend the Offshore Islands, it globally signified America's interest in ensuring the Nationalist control over the region against Communist expansion. This ratification meeting did not mean that the treaty was finalized, as it still had to go through the respective governments' bureaucratic structures, which Robertson hoped could be finalized by the end of February of 1955.⁴⁶ The American delegation in Taipei noted that the Chinese Nationalist press was very pleased with the Sino-American agreement because it officially guaranteed a relationship with America while simultaneously allowing for the eventual attempt to retake the mainland with American support. However, American reports concluded that the Chinese press was aware that large-scale American assistance was necessary for any successful invasion of the mainland, thus safeguarding the American authority to initiate such a campaign.⁴⁷

The potential consequences of both the UN resolution and the Mutual Defense Treaty were significant for America and its allies, including Britain, New Zealand, ROC, and Canada.

⁴⁵ U.S. Embassy Taipei to Department of State, 7 December 1954, file 793.5/12-754, box 4220, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-54, NARA.

⁴⁶ Memorandum of Conversation, 13 December 1954, *FRUS Volume 14*, p. 1019.

⁴⁷ U.S. Embassy Taipei to Department of State, 7 December 1954, file 793.5/12-754, box 4220, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-54, NARA.

With that in mind, it is odd that Canada, a country that was supposedly experiencing a Golden Age of diplomacy under Lester B. Pearson and his fellow members of the DEA, was not involved in the attempts to solve a crisis that could have easily led a massive war in the Far East. In the previous chapter, Canada's interests in and policies for the Far East centered on not over committing to the region while maintaining focus on the Cold War in Europe. However, this chapter demonstrates that the U.S. committed to the Chinese Nationalists, and in turn the region, and disregarded the desires of its allies for its own goals, the exact opposite of what the DEA had put its emphasis on. Therefore, if Canada had experienced a heightened sense of influence on the U.S. during this time, should Canada's policies have been reflected in the events explored in this chapter? Yes, Canada's policies ought to have been present due to its involvement in other Asian conflicts such as the Korean War and the International Control Commission. However, they were oddly absent from negotiations explored in this chapter. This fact suggests that Canada's influence was not as great as past histories have suggested.

This chapter situates two critical issues that underpin this thesis's overall contention that Canada's influence on global affairs during the 1950s has been overstated and ought to be tempered. First, the United States conducted the negotiations for the UN resolution and Sino-American Security Pact in order to influence the conflict in Taiwan Strait to best serve its own geo-strategic interest, in short to halt the expansion of Communism in the Far East. The disposition of American representatives during these negotiations was to maintain and prioritize American objectives without compromising their autonomy by over committing to the region and being pulled into a conflict they did not want.⁴⁸ American interests meant that the priorities of its western allies had little significance in the negotiations, thus inhibiting the Canadians as

⁴⁸ Robert Accinelli. "Eisenhower, Congress, and the 1954-55 Offshore Island Crisis," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (1990): 335

they attempted to exert their influence on the situation in the Far East. Simply because Canadian diplomats were not involved in America's attempts to resolve the crisis early on does not necessarily mean that Canada did not have substantial influence. In order to fully appreciate Canada's limited influence, and further temper the argument that Canada experienced this Golden Age, the next chapter will examine the First Taiwan Strait Crisis from the view of the DEA and explore, the means by which Canada could have been more influential.

Chapter III – Incapacitated Influence: Canada’s Attempts at Diplomacy during the Crisis, 1954-1955

The potential consequences of both the New Zealand proposal to the Security Council and the Sino-American Mutual Defence Pact were significant within the region and globally both for the United States and its western allies. Yet, Canadian involvement was non-existent during the New Zealand Resolution and Mutual Security Pact negotiations. While these negotiations were of national interest for Canadian policy makers as they influenced their preferred policy to limit the Western commitment in the Far East, this understanding helps to explain what Douglas Ross describes as Canada’s attempt to dissociate itself with the U.S. focus on the Far East.¹ Canada’s preferred approach that maintained Western cooperation in Europe and avoided additional conflict in Asia was threatened by America’s Far East stance. Moreover, Canada had a vested interest in intervening in the Far East order to de-escalate tensions that could incite a greater conflict. This chapter examines the First Taiwan Strait Crisis from Canada’s diplomatic perspective and evaluates the extent to which Canada was influential in ensuring stability in the region. Ultimately, as the Department of External Affairs’ (DEA) preferred approach held little interest for the Americans, DEA influence was rendered inconsequential. Therefore, the claim that throughout the 1950s Canada had a disproportionate global influence seems exaggerated given its underwhelming influence during the First Taiwan Strait Crisis.

This chapter will explore three facets of Canada’s reaction to the First Taiwan Strait Crisis and the American policy to the conflict. First, Canada’s limited initial response during the first four months of the crisis will be examined to understand the DEA’s absence from the New Zealand resolution and its commentary on the Sino-American Mutual Security Pact. The chapter

¹ Douglas A. Ross, *In the Interest of Peace: Canada and Vietnam, 1954-1973* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 1984), 134.

then shifts focus to the opening months of 1955 when the crisis escalated as the People's Republic of China (PRC) launched attacks against the Republic of China's (ROC) Tachen Islands, thus providing the international community with a sense of urgency to resolve the crisis. Accordingly, the Canadian government took a greater interest in the crisis at that time. This chapter examines Canadian policy makers' opposition to the American approach, as they considered the American policy detrimental to bringing peace back to the region. Finally, the chapter will explore the crisis's conclusion and elucidate the absence of Canadian influence in resolving the crisis. Canada's initial lack of engagement to resolve the crisis is not sufficient evidence to demonstrate Canada's limited influence during the supposed "Golden Age of Diplomacy". However, Canada's lack of meaningful influence on a peaceful resolution after involving itself in the mediation of the crisis substantiates this thesis's position that while Canada during the 1950s had a greater presence on the international stage and more opportunities to voice its position, it did not mean that it was entirely successful in making its influence felt globally. Suggesting that Canada's new global position allowed it to influence American foreign policy – as has been suggested in the historiography – misses the point that the massive global shift in power following the Second World War meant that countries like Canada were simply more prominent internationally only briefly.

Looking the Wrong Way

By the end of 1954's summer, Canada's involvement in the situation brewing in the Taiwan Strait remained limited. On August 25, a memorandum from the Canadian Embassy in Washington, detailing Canada's deference to American interests in the region, explained that if conflict broke out in the region, the United States reserved full freedom to decide what action

would be taken and what islands would be defended.² Norman Robertson, High Commissioner for Canada in Britain, confirmed the rising tensions in the Strait in a letter to Lester B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, on September 2, 1954. Robertson noted the PRC's increased rhetoric that the Nationalist-controlled islands should be taken. As DEA members already conceded that any conflict between ROC and the PRC lay within America's sphere of influence, deference to American policy seemed inevitable. Robertson suggested to Pearson that should war break out, the Department's aim should be to remind its allies that unification is not always the best course and that the status quo – preserving the demarcation line along the offshore islands – in the Strait opposes totalitarianism.³ Robertson's counsel eventually became the framework that guided Canadian policy throughout the crisis.

The following day the First Taiwan Strait Crisis erupted. However, it was not until September 8 that the American officials briefed the Canadians in Washington about Quemoy in the form of a courtesy meeting.⁴ Canadian Ambassador to the U.S. Arnold Heeney related the particulars to Pearson, informing him that the Communists had been shelling Quemoy Island for the previous five days. The Americans had assured Heeney that any reports stating America was mobilizing the Seventh Fleet to intervene were incorrect as the Communists were not capable of taking Formosa, if indeed the shelling of Quemoy was a prelude to such an attempt. Therefore,

² Chargé d'Affaires Canadian Embassy to U.S.A. to Lester B. Pearson, 25 August 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, Library and Archives Canada [LAC].

³ Norman Robertson to Pearson, 2 September 1954, Pearson Fond, MG 26, N-1, Vol. 13, Pre-1958 Series, Heeney, A.D.P.-Canada-External Affairs, LAC.

⁴ As discussed in Chapter II, the Americans had made clear that these meetings were extended as a courtesy to Canadian officials in order to maintain a forthcoming and transparent relationship with Canada regarding its policy. Secretary of State John F. Dulles indicated that this did not mean the United States would heed Canadian advice or preference. John H. Morgan to the Department of State, Washington, 29 June, 1953, file 611.42/6-2953, box 2773, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1950-1954, National Archives and Records Administration [NARA].

any increase in the U.S. Fleet's alert level was simply a normal military precaution.⁵ However, by September 14, after a phone conversation with Walter Bedell Smith, the outgoing Under Secretary of State, Heeney reported to Pearson the Americans were reversing their original position. Heeney relayed that the American government was split on the question of the PRC intentions, questioning that it was either to take the Offshore Islands or simply to be a show of force. The impression given to Heeney was that the Americans, being uncertain of PRC intentions, would not directly intervene in the situation.⁶ Yet, as explored in the previous chapter, the United States had already put in motion its next move in the form of the Mutual Security Pact and the New Zealand Proposal at the Security Council.

Immediately following the eruption of the crisis, Canada's initial interest remained largely limited, so much so that Arthur Menzies of the Department's Far Eastern Division encouraged his superiors to more carefully study events. In his briefing of the situation on September 23 to Jules Léger, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Menzies pointed out that Britain had a strategic interest in the situation given its control of Hong Kong. Furthermore, Britain had asked the Americans to keep London informed of any policy decisions.⁷ Menzies suggested that Canada should show greater interest in the region as American policy could jeopardize Canada's efforts as a member of the International Supervisory Commission in Indo-China. Menzies concluded by reminding Léger that "although Canada has little direct interest in the area, events which seemingly have no connection with Canada can quickly involve this and other countries."⁸ Greg Donaghy, having studied DEA machinations during this crisis and

⁵ A.D.P. Heeney to Pearson, 8 September 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

⁶ Heeney to Pearson, 14 September 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

⁷ A. Menzies to Jules Léger, 23 September 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

⁸ Ibid.

rightfully describing Menzies as one of the more concerned Canadian diplomats regarding the situation, contends that Canada's "little direct interest" in the crisis meant Canada was by and large absent in its resolution and why Canada ultimately "beat a speedy retreat".⁹ However, as suggested by Menzies, Canada had an interest in events given that potential attacks on Quemoy could potentially engulf the globe in another war. Yet, Canada struggled to involve itself in the resolution of the crisis, let alone to have any tangible influence in any attempts in resolving the conflict.

While conflict persisted in the region for the remainder of the year, the DEA continued to view the Far East through the lens of its focus on Europe, interesting itself with the Soviet actions at the UN about the Far East. Additionally, on September 30 the Canadians' interests were piqued when the Soviet delegation to the United Nations desired to include the "Violations of the Freedom to Navigate in the Area of the China Sea" agenda item for the ninth session of the General Assembly. The Soviets hoped that this agenda item would allow for discussions at the UN about the described piratical behaviour of the Chinese Nationalists, citing the *Tuapse* incident, among others.¹⁰ Canadian diplomats made special note of this agenda item as well as another item that the Soviets intended to propose at the plenary session of the General Assembly, "Acts of Aggression Against the People's Republic of China and Responsibility of the United States Navy for Those Acts." The Soviets, claiming that the Americans used their alliance with ROC to encourage further conflict between ROC and the PRC, contended that the US sought continued conflict in the region following the cessation of hostilities in Korea and Indo-China. Therefore, the Soviets implored the UN to demand that the Nationalists stop harassing mainland

⁹ Greg Donaghy, "Canadian Diplomacy and the Offshore Islands Crisis, 1954-1955: A Limited National Interest." *International Journal* 68, no. 2 (2013): 243, 246.

¹⁰ Chairman David Johnson, Canadian Delegation to the Ninth Session of the General Assembly to Pearson, 5 October 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

China.¹¹ While the Americans purportedly had been fearful that the crisis could upend the status quo, the Soviets claimed that this was exactly what the U.S. intended. The Canadians initially approached the crisis from this vantage point of utilizing the UN rather than the direct involvement of its allies the United States, Britain, and New Zealand.

Despite their concern about the Soviet agenda items, the Canadian delegation's response was relatively benign. The Canadian delegation, telling Pearson that the British delegation was working to dispose of the agenda item quickly by discounting the Soviet claims against the U.S. simply as Communist propaganda. Furthermore, Canada's delegation, indicating that it was awaiting the formal American response before endeavoring to formulate its own, revealed that the Americans would notify it of their attitude as soon as it was decided upon.¹² A few days later, the Canadian delegation, taking its lead from Britain, supported the postponement of any agenda item put forth by the Soviets in the General Assembly.¹³ The General Assembly agreed to a fourteen-day postponement, giving the Canadians some time to formulate a stance on the crisis. Menzies urged John W. Holmes, the Assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, that Canada needed to commit to a position that its UN delegation could act on in regards to the crisis and how the matter ought to be brought before the United Nations.¹⁴

Canada's participation in the General Assembly and its opposition to proposed Soviet agenda items was not Canada's only exposure to the crisis unfolding in the Taiwan Strait. On October 15, 1954, Pearson disclosed to the Canadian UN delegation that he had received word from the British High Commissioner in Ottawa that while the British and Americans were

¹¹ Johnson to Pearson, 15 October 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

¹² Johnson to Pearson, 16 October 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

¹³ Johnson to Pearson, 19 October 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

¹⁴ Menzies to John W. Holmes, 22 October 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

working with New Zealand to bring their own resolution to the Security Council, said resolution had been put on hold for unknown reasons. Instructing Robertson to “not inform any other delegation that you are aware of the New Zealand proposal,” Pearson suggested that the delegation only discuss it with Leslie Munro, New Zealand’s Ambassador to the United States, to learn what the New Zealanders hoped to get from the resolution and the reason for its postponement.¹⁵

On October 18, Robertson informed Pearson that the New Zealand proposal was delayed due to ongoing discussions between ROC and the Americans regarding the Mutual Security Pact, notably ROC’s conditional support of the proposal contingent on an American guarantee of military alliance. As discussed previously, this provision was a sticking point for the Americans and British as they were both concerned of potential increased U.S. military commitment that may have to be provided to the ROC. Unsure of the scope of this commitment, the U.S. and Britain decided that the best course of action was to postpone the Security Council proposal. While Pearson also received a response from Munro via the Canadian delegation, Munro stated “the proposal to discuss the Quemoy situation in the Security Council was entirely a New Zealand initiative. It has, however, the support of the United States and the United Kingdom.”¹⁶ In fact, Munro, not feeling obligated to disclose any reason for the postponement to Canada, was annoyed that the British had disclosed the existence of the proposal to another Commonwealth country.¹⁷ As the United States had been the progenitor of the New Zealand proposal and Britain had suggested that New Zealand should bring it to the Security Council, Munro, seeking to

¹⁵ Pearson to Johnson, 15 October 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

¹⁶ Robertson to Pearson, 18 October 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

¹⁷ Johnson to Pearson, 19 October 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

imbue his country with greater agency in the proposal, felt that Canada was not to be included in its strategy. Munro's correspondence to Pearson elucidates a quasi-sibling rivalry among Commonwealth countries about who should have a seat at the global table. Accordingly, Munro made it clear that this moment was New Zealand's opportunity, not Canada's. In any event, Canada was decidedly excluded from taking a role in the New Zealand proposal. But New Zealanders and the Americans considered any divulgence of information to Canadian officials as a courtesy based solely on a need-to-know-basis.

Consequently, Canada's briefings on the events in Quemoy largely came from Britain as America and New Zealand remained tight-lipped. Menzies's earlier correspondence outlining British and Canadian interest in Quemoy and the First Taiwan Strait Crisis set the circumstance for Canada feeling the need to be appraised of the unfolding events in Quemoy.¹⁸ Accordingly, Canada clearly had failed to assume its position as liaison – a role it believed it had – between the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as other Commonwealth countries. According to the dominant historiography, Canada was experiencing a greater global influence and its role was to temper and guide its allies to diplomatic resolutions rather than combat ones. However, Canada did not take on this role with respect to Quemoy. Instead, Canada was kept appraised of the situation by Britain for Britain acted as the liaison between America and its western allies. For example, the Commonwealth Relations Office telegraphed the British High Commissioner in India while carbon copying other Commonwealth counterparts, including Canada and South Africa, to update them on the American position. This message explained the U.S. apprehension with committing to the defense of the Offshore Islands, America's ultimate goal of neutralizing

¹⁸ Menzies to Jules Léger, 23 September 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

Formosa, and how the U.S. planned on trying to utilize the UN to establish the neutralization.¹⁹ This is not to say that information was provided exclusively by the British. The U.S. continued its practice of holding informal, courtesy meetings. Moreover, the Americans provided a copy of the Sino-American Mutual Defense Pact to Pearson on December 3, 1954.²⁰ Ultimately, Britain concluded the telegram by stating that it wished to assist the U.S. in neutralizing the region while preventing the latter from over committing to the entire defence of the Offshore Islands.²¹

As Canada continued to remain a bystander as the New Zealand resolution and Mutual Security Pact evolved, it often found itself in the uncomfortable position of not being appraised of its allies' actions or intentions. The Canadian Embassy in Washington disclosed to Ottawa that Walter MacConaughy, Director of the State Department's Office of Chinese Affairs, had been unexpectedly tight-lipped regarding Walter Robertson's, the Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs, trip to Formosa. However, the Canadian Embassy assured that it was fairly obvious that the trip was to discuss the New Zealand proposal with Chiang Kai-Shek. Additionally, the message provided an update regarding the American position on the proposed Soviet agenda items. The Embassy suggested that there was no issue with the Soviets' proposed discussion since similar benign proposals had been provided in the past.²² Again, on October 22, Pearson notified the Canadian delegation at the North Atlantic Council in Paris that a message from Earncliffe, home of the British Ambassador in Ottawa, had informed him that New Zealand planned to present the proposal to the Security Council once Robertson had returned

¹⁹ Commonwealth Relations Office to U.K. High Commissioner in India, 2 November 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

²⁰ Heeney to Pearson, 3 December 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

²¹ Commonwealth Relations Office to U.K. High Commissioner in India, 2 November 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

²² Canadian Embassy in Washington to Under-Secretary, 20 October 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

from meeting Chiang Kai-Shek.²³ Evidently, the Canadians were increasingly interested in the progress of the New Zealand proposal and the Sino-American defence pact, but struggled to remain properly informed as to their status.

The pattern of British briefing Canada on the situation continued until year's end. On December 13, the Commonwealth Office explained to the High Commissioner in Canada how the State Department wished the proposal to be discussed at the Security Council.²⁴ Another telegram sent hours later warned Canada that no discussions on the crisis ought to be mentioned while the UN was on a mission to Peking.²⁵ Consequently, for the first four months of the crisis Canada remained a benched player. This position did not seem to bother Heeney at 1954's end when he described relations between Washington officials and Canadian diplomats posted there as leaving "nothing to be desired." Conversely, Heeney forewarned Pearson that the Eisenhower administration's somewhat intemperate policy decisions could prove troublesome for Canada, going so far as to acknowledge a concern at the Canadian Embassy that a potential clash of American and Canadian interests could occur.²⁶

Nevertheless, the hard-won information on the New Zealand proposal and the Mutual Security Pact, which actually was quite minimal and just a diplomatic courtesy, had an important bearing on Canada's response to the proposed Soviet agenda items for the ninth session of the UN General Assembly. Pearson formalized the Canadian stance when he told the Canadian delegation in New York that, should the Soviet agenda item on Formosa come up, the delegation must avoid any debate on the matter as New Zealand was going to initiate the same conversation

²³ Pearson to Canadian Delegate to North Atlantic Council, 22 October 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

²⁴ Commonwealth Relations Office to U.K. High Commissioner in Canada, 17.45 hours 13 December 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 2, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, LAC.

²⁵ Commonwealth Relations Office to U.K. High Commissioner in Canada, 21.15 hours 13 December 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 2, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, LAC.

²⁶ Heeney to Pearson, 9 December 1955, Pearson Fond, MG 26, N-1, Vol. 5, Pre-1958 Series, Heeney, A.D.P.-Canada-External Affairs, LAC.

at the Security Council. Referring to Article 34 of the United Nations declaration, Pearson reasoned that it was the Security Council's prerogative to discuss issues that could lead to international disputes as his reason for leaving the Formosa situation to be handled by the New Zealand proposal rather than by the General Assembly. Moreover, in the event that the Soviet discussion proceeded in the General Assembly, the Canadian delegation should withhold its opinion until other western allies had been consulted, Pearson stated that "if, however, a vote in plenary session on the inscription issue is called, we would like to receive the views of the other Western delegations before coming to a decision on the manner in which we should vote."²⁷ In short, Canada's stance on the Soviet agenda items followed its pattern of deferring to its allies' policy regarding the crisis in the Far East despite the potential clash between Canada's national interests and American interests.

Consequently, despite its interests in the region and its self-promoted reputation of peacemaking diplomatic liaison, Canada, understanding that the Formosa crisis was going to be solved with the Security Council via New Zealand's proposed resolution, deferred its influence at the UN rather than taking a lead in resolving the crisis. Additionally, Canada's lack of tangible involvement in the UN resolution and generally involving itself in the crisis is telling in that it showcases a Canada that was not attempting to influence an event that could potentially have widespread impact. While Greg Donaghy suggests that Canada's actions during the crisis were indicative of its limited interest in the conflict²⁸, a fair assessment given Canada's west-oriented interests and lack of a direct interest regionally compared to other western allies, as this chapter will now explore, even as Canada increased its attention to the crisis in 1955, its influence on the

²⁷ Pearson to Canadian Delegation in New York, 22 October 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 1, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4724, RG25, LAC.

²⁸ Donaghy, "Canadian Diplomacy and the Offshore Islands Crisis": 243

crisis remained stunted and demonstrated that its limited international influence, not its limited interest in the crisis, inhibited Canada from having any meaningful impact.

Intensified Involvement: Public and Private Channels of Diplomacy

The New Year marked a change in Canada's approach to Quemoy, mirroring the heightened confrontation between Nationalist and Communist China. The Canadians, still being updated by Britain, continued to toe the line in terms of policy towards the crisis. In a December 31 message, Canada's High Commissioner in London wrote to Pearson to reaffirm that Britain did not want Formosa to fall under PRC control for several reasons: Formosa's strategic importance in the Far East; the negative impact the loss could have on Southeast Asian morale; and the loss of a focal point for anti-Communist Chinese.²⁹ However, the Canadians changed their practice from passively receiving updates primarily from the British to actively taking their concerns directly to the State Department once the conflict ratcheted up at January's start. The first note mentioning the increased fighting was on January 14:

Press reports of January 10th carried a story of a raid by 100 Communist planes on the Tachen Islands. This was alleged to be one of the largest recent air raids. There were a number of fighter-bombers escorted by MIG fighters. Apparently 300 bombs were dropped, mostly into the sea.³⁰

Following these escalating attacks on the Tachen Islands, Canada, seeking a more active role in the resolution of the crisis, sought to collaborate with the United States directly. However, despite the DEA's desire to increase its role in the crisis, there was no corollary improvement in Canada's influence on American policy or the establishment of a resolution.

Canadian officials first began by ascertaining their allied counterparts' comprehensive intentions in the Far East. The Canadian delegation in New York approached Ambassador

²⁹ Office of the High Commissioner for Canada to Pearson, 31 December 1954, file 50056-B-40 Part 2, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, LAC.

³⁰ Far Eastern Division, 14 January 1955, file 50056-B-40 Part 2, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, LAC.

Munro on January 17. The Canadian delegation sent a memorandum to Pearson relaying its conversation with Munro regarding Formosa and New Zealand's proposal.³¹ Munro apparently had disclosed that Dulles had begun to put more faith in the Sino-American Defence treaty rather than the New Zealand proposal before the Security Council.³² Shortly thereafter, further information was relayed to Pearson, this time from Heeney in Washington, informing him of a conversation with Edwin W. Martin, Deputy Director of the State Department's Office of Chinese Affairs, regarding American policies. The meeting with Martin corroborated Munro's interpretation of the American outlook on the New Zealand resolution. Martin added that the Communists were most likely shelling the Tachen Islands in preparation for an eventual full-scale assault. Most importantly, ROC-controlled Yikiangshan Island had been captured by the Communist Chinese, marking Taiwan's first loss of territory and exacerbating tensions along the Chinese coast.³³

Consequently, Heeney's 1954 warning of potential intemperate responses by American policy makers seemed to be increasingly imminent, and in January 1955 the DEA was concerned how far the Americans were willing to go to stop PRC advances. Moreover, briefings from State Department officials remained scarce, a point which deeply troubled Heeney. Informing Pearson of the ratification of the Mutual Security Pact debate in the American Senate, Heeney noted that much of his most recent information about the debate was coming from the American press, notably the *New York Times*.³⁴ Heeney reported that a number of Democratic Senators, with the support of former members of President Harry Truman's administration, had spoken out against

³¹ In fact, this memo to Pearson was the first time its code name, Oracle, had been disclosed to Canadian officials.

³² Office of the Permanent Representative from Canada to the United Nations to Pearson, 17 January 1955, file 50056-B-40 Part 2, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, LAC.

³³ Heeney to Pearson, 18 January 1955, file 50056-B-40 Part 2, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, LAC.

³⁴ Heeney to Pearson, 19 January 1955, file 50056-B-40 Part 2, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, LAC.

ratifying the ROC treaty. This revelation further corroborated Heeney's conversation with Deputy Director Martin the previous day, as he had discussed the push back from the Democrats. However, Martin indicated the Eisenhower administration was not worried by the pushback coming from Democratic Senators and previous Truman administration's members, notably Dean Acheson. Heeney's closing remarks elucidates his concern regarding the American disposition to be heavy handed:

We hear much of the [...] importance to the United States of maintaining Chiang Kai Shek's forces for use in the eventual defeat of the Communist Chinese Government. We hear less of the views of Americans who are fully conscious of the delicacy of the position in the area and who realize that United States interests may not best be served by unquestioned support of the Nationalist Chinese cause. It is somewhat refreshing, therefore to get such concrete evidence that there are elements of opinion in the United States which will serve as a counterpoise to the extremist opinion as to what best policy the Government should follow in the China area.³⁵

There was a wary Canadian optimism that the Eisenhower administration would practice restraint. On the same day as Heeney's report, another message came from the Canadian Embassy in Washington about Eisenhower's Formosan press conference. Eisenhower had reassured that the U.S., retaining faith in the UN's ability to produce a cease-fire between ROC and the PRC, would not object to UN efforts. Eisenhower thus appeared to want the UN to solve the crisis, contradicting Dulles's reported skepticism that the UN could not do the job.³⁶

Canadian optimism about a delicate and diplomatic American approach via the UN unfortunately was short-lived. On January 20, Jules Léger's memorandum carefully outlined his understanding of the current events unfolding in the Strait and the lack of U.S. transparency with their plan, stating, "up to this time the United States Government has not made clear their

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Canadian Embassy, Washington, to Pearson, 19 January 1955, file 50056-B-40 Part 2, , Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25LAC; Office of the Permanent Representative from Canada to the United Nations to Pearson, 17 January 1955, file 50056-B-40 Part 2, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, LAC.

attitude which it would adopt in the event of an attempted invasion of [the Dachen Islands] by the Communists.” First, Léger was skeptical about Operation Oracle’s success given that the PRC could not be compelled by the Security Council to negotiate a cease-fire and seemed disinclined to enter into discussions with ROC. Furthermore, if the PRC entered into negotiations, these talks could bolster its bid to join the UN. Second, Léger speculated that the PRC would seek control of more of the coastal islands, such as the Tachens, before it would consider any cease-fire negotiations. Léger concluded by confirming Canada’s impotent influence on the United States, admitting that if Pearson wished to voice Canada’s position then he ought to go through the United Kingdom to entreat with the U.S.³⁷ Consequently, the DEA’s practice of relying on the Commonwealth office to entreat with U.S. resumed in February.

Pearson publically expressed the DEA’s misgivings about the crisis and American policy as well as his support for a UN settlement. On January 25 in the House of Commons, Pearson stated:

Although we are not involved in United States Commitments in this area, we are of course deeply concerned over the dangerous situation existing there and we, with other free governments, are anxious that steps should be taken to bring to an end the fighting which has now been taking place for some time along the China coast.³⁸

Additionally, Pearson expressed his hope that a cease-fire could be negotiated through the UN, citing such UN-led cease-fires in Indonesia and Palestine and specifically expressing a desire for a *diplomatic* UN resolution, in order to resolve the crisis.³⁹ Accordingly, Canadian efforts in the following months centered upon putting together another diplomatic solution to the crisis, one not based solely on the American-led employment of UN.

³⁷ Léger to Pearson, 20 January 1955, file 50056-B-40 Part 2, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, LAC.

³⁸ Pearson to House of Commons, 25 January 1955, Pearson Font, MG26-N9 – Speeches, Volume 9, LAC.

³⁹ Ibid.

Canada took an opportunity to join a meeting of Commonwealth ministers in early February in order to persuade the United States to use its influence to force a peaceful settlement of the crisis. In anticipation of the meeting, Pearson publicly reiterated Canada's stance on the crisis via a broadcast from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), stating that America was attempting to resolve the conflict by employing peaceful negotiations at the UN, which he suggested may require relinquishing control of certain Offshore Islands to the Communists. Pearson also stated that Canada was not committed to the American policies, adding that the situation required Canadian attention in case of potential widespread fallout from American action. He posited that while global war could be one of the eventualities stemming from American action, the upcoming meeting of Commonwealth leaders would examine the situation in Formosa specifically in an attempt to find peace.⁴⁰ When the State Department was provided a copy of the CBC transcript by the Canadian Embassy in Washington, Edwin W. Martin responded by stating America was not even considering recognizing the coastal islands as Communist territory. Further, the U.S. was fully committed to defending Formosa on the best possible terms. Martin concluded by stating in no uncertain terms that the U.S. had no intention to strike a deal on the Offshore Islands such as suggested by Pearson.⁴¹ Already, Pearson's suggested approach to reconciliation was unpalatable and thus firmly dismissed by the Americans.

The Commonwealth Ministers' conference, which began in London on January 31, 1955, lasted more than a week.⁴² Much about the meeting can be gleaned from Pearson's diary.

⁴⁰ Pearson to Heeney, 28 January 1955, file 50056-B-40 Part 3, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, LAC.

⁴¹ Memorandum of Conversation, 2 February 1955, file 793.00/2-255, box 3916, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1955-1959, NARA.

⁴² Pearson's Diary, January-February 1955, Pearson Fonds, MG 26, N-1, Vol. 19, Pre-1958 Series, Britain-Canada Rels., 1950-1957, LAC.

Pearson noted that he lunched with Eden the day before the meeting began. Both he and Eden were concerned by what they viewed as America's potentially reckless support for the Nationalists. Pearson commented that the atmosphere was gloomy in light of the PRC's unwillingness to negotiate a potential cease-fire with the Security Council. Moreover, Pearson noted that the PRC's refusal to engage prevented the participants of the conference from coming to a formal position about the crisis, let alone how they ought to advise the U.S. Commonwealth nations feared that if they pushed the Security Council to solve the crisis and the Communists refused, then the U.S. could be provoked to escalate the situation as the UN had failed to solve the crisis.⁴³

Nevertheless, endorsing the approach that he had suggested in his CBC broadcast, Pearson thought that conference participants should recommend that the U.S. should peacefully disengage from the conflict by allowing the PRC to take the Offshore Islands while guaranteeing the security of Formosa and the Pescadores.⁴⁴ Ultimately, the participants opted to observe how the immediate future unfolded before committing to a set of actions. The U.S. Embassy in London, acutely aware of the Commonwealth deliberation, reported to Dulles that Formosa was discussed at length, and that many of the Commonwealth ministers had apprehensions about the growing relationship between America and Chiang Kai-Shek. Yet the members appreciated the Eisenhower administration's tact in treating Formosa and the Offshore Islands separately.⁴⁵ Still, America's cursory interest in the conference's discussion did not impact its position or its resolve.

⁴³ Pearson's Diary, January-February 1955, Pearson Fonds, MG 26, N-1, Vol. 19, Pre-1958 Series, Britain-Canada Rels., 1950-1957, LAC.

⁴⁴ Pearson's Diary, January-February 1955, Pearson Fonds, MG 26, N-1, Vol. 19, Pre-1958 Series, Britain-Canada Rels., 1950-1957, LAC.

⁴⁵ Arthur R. Ringwalt to Dulles, 1 February 1955, file 310 Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference, box 23 Classified General Records, 1950-1961, RG84, Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, NARA.

In March 1955, Pearson took a more public and direct approach in order to influence the State Department. Speaking about the state of the Canadian-American relationship, Pearson described the two countries as neighbours who were interconnected to the point that collaboration was essential and together they were the “bulwark of the free world.”⁴⁶ Given Canadian-American interconnectedness, one nation could not remain neutral while the other engaged in war. Pearson stated:

Our position in this regard in [sic] something that we should never forget when we say, and correctly, that certain United States commitments, those, for instance, covering help to Chiang Kai-shek in Formosa and certain Chinese coastal islands, have not been accepted by us. But that is not the same thing as saying that they may not involve us. And it is certainly not the same as saying they do not concern us.⁴⁷

Pearson’s statements clearly demonstrated that Canada publicly did have an interest in the Taiwanese Strait Crisis. Moreover, its relationship with the United States meant that any potential for American engagement in conflict meant Canada was implicated regardless of its legal and material investment in the region.⁴⁸

The following week, meeting with Secretary of State John F. Dulles to discuss the Formosa Question, Pearson attempted to sell Dulles on conceding the coastal islands to the PRC in order to facilitate a cease-fire. Pearson stressed that Formosa and the Pescadores should be considered separately from the coastal islands in terms of defensive priorities. However, unlike Eisenhower’s separate treatment of the islands in negotiations with the ROC, Dulles was adamant that the coastal islands were critical given their impact on the Nationalist morale. He did venture, however, that as the Nationalist military forces became increasingly made of Formosan natives (Republic of China’s citizens born on Formosa), that the strategic importance

⁴⁶ Pearson to the Canadian Club, “Some Aspects of Canadian-American Relations”, 14 March 1955, Pearson Font, MG26-N9 – Speeches, Volume 9, LAC.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

of the Offshore Islands in buoying Nationalist morale likely would wane. To counter this previous point, Dulles additionally indicated that a concession of the islands was not be an immediate possibility. Yet, Pearson believed that ending the crisis and dealing with morale could be done separately. Additionally, Pearson protested to Dulles about the lack of consultation by the State Department with the DEA, especially given that Canada could be dragged into a conflict because of American policy.⁴⁹

A follow up meeting between Pearson and Dulles occurred two days later. Pearson questioned whether it was still the American intention to find a resolution through the UN. Dulles confirmed that while he and the President still hoped that the New Zealand proposal would move forward, he doubted that it would succeed. Interestingly, Dulles inquired about Pearson's hopes for the resolution of the crisis, perhaps in response to Pearson's lament that Canada was not being sufficiently consulted. Pearson admitted that he was not envious of the Security Council members for if a motion was tabled and failed, said failure could potentially be worse than the UN doing nothing at all to solve the crisis. Pearson then yet again suggested an idea of a "neutralized strip" in the Formosan Strait. Dulles, unswayed by Pearson's appeals, remained firmly opposed for a "neutralized strip" would obscure the clear status quo that existed before the conflict and encourage the Communists' attempt to retake Formosa. Further, the only possible means of enacting such a solution could be through back channeling with the Communists.⁵⁰ Consequently, it seemed that despite the increased American willingness to engage with Canada over the resolution solving the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, that willingness remained nominal.

⁴⁹ Memorandum for the Prime Minister – Conversation with Mr. Dulles, 17 March 1955, Pearson Font, MG 26, N-1, Vol. 65, Pre-1958 Series, U.S.A.-Can. Rels., 1950-1957, LAC.

⁵⁰ Memorandum for the Prime Minister – Second Conversation with Mr. Dulles, 19 March 1955, Pearson Font, MG 26, N-1, Vol. 65, Pre-1958 Series, U.S.A.-Can. Rels., 1950-1957, LAC.

A Lack of Influence Rather Than a Lack of Interest

Although Pearson's discussions with Dulles did nothing to influence the State Department's policy, Pearson applauded Canada's impressive effect upon Britain and America in remarks made in the House on March 24, 1955. Additionally, Pearson stated that Canada had a special influence on the American government, which in turn gave Canada a special influence on how events unfolded. Yet, when it came to discussing the situation in Formosa and Canada's influence on the UN resolution he had next to nothing to report in terms of the crisis ending. Pearson did not report his conversation with Dulles about the "neutralized strip" because in that same conversation Pearson expressed that he wanted to keep such discussions in the private channels of diplomacy. He stated that while Canada disagreed with the heavy American commitment to Formosa with the Sino-American Defence pact, a commitment that could lead to increased conflict and also tensions amongst western allies, he acknowledged that criticizing the American approach also could threaten unity among western countries in the face of communist aggression. Concluding that Canada would play no part in the defence of Formosa or the Offshore Islands, Pearson instead alluded to the idea of a "neutralized strip" by arguing for the prioritization of Formosa over the coastal islands.⁵¹

Dulles confirmed Canadian vulnerable position in a letter to Pearson after he read Pearson's House speech:

I have read with much interest your statement made in the House of Commons on March 24th concerning Formosa et als. It is, I think, a very fair statement of the position. While we might have to take a decision with reference to this matter with which you do not wholly agree, I am confident that you would agree with our motives and purposes in taking it.⁵²

⁵¹ Pearson to the House of Commons, 24 March 1955, Pearson Fond, MG26-N9 – Speeches, Volume 9, LAC.

⁵² Dulles to Pearson, 29 March 1955, Pearson Fond, MG 26, N-1, Vol. 4, Pre-1958 Series, Dulles, John Foster-U.S.A.-Sec of State, LAC.

Dulles admitted that the State Department was unwilling to change its disposition in the face of Canadian disapproval and that the preservation of Western unity far outweighed Canadian opinion. Pearson responded in a House of Commons speech on April 21. Stating that Canada plus the Commonwealth must not distance itself from the U.S. for fear of creating a third bloc that split western efforts to combat Communism, Pearson reiterated Canada's interest in the events unfolding in Formosa should tensions escalate further. However, he no longer spoke of a "neutralized strip" in the strait. While the UN Charter could pull Canada into a war to combat aggression, Pearson reassured the House that he truly believed that aggression was not Dulles's goal. Pearson echoed Dulles's interpretation, conceding that while he often disagreed with Dulles's policies, he believed that Dulles was doing what he thought best to keep America out of war.⁵³

Pearson's final acquiescence to the State Department's policy became Canada's lasting position on the First Taiwan Strait Crisis. While Canada had been entreating the State Department to end the crisis, other governments were organizing its resolution. Australia had proposed a Joint Commonwealth Declaration to a state of bi-lateral talks between the Americans and PRC. Like Canada's suggestion, the Australian proposal would encourage the ROC to relinquish the coastal islands in order to maintain its control of Formosa. However, Britain dismissed the proposal as it guaranteed western intervention should Formosa or the Pescadores be attacked by the PRC. The solution to the crisis took seed at the Bandung Conference, held from April 18 to 24, an African-Asian conference that saw many newly independent countries meet to condemn colonialism and promote Africa and Asia. The solution stemmed from members of the conference stated their opposition to the apparent Communist desire to take

⁵³ Pearson to the House of Commons, 21 April 1955, Pearson Font, N9 – Speeches, Volume 10, LAC.

Formosa by force.⁵⁴ Léger reported to Pearson that Dulles believed that such third-party condemnation was enough to sway the Communists into finding a peaceful solution to the crisis.⁵⁵ Discussions that stemmed from the Bandung Conference led to peace in the Taiwan Strait until another crisis broke out in 1958.⁵⁶ In the end, neither Canada nor the U.S. had a direct hand in ending the crisis. Nevertheless, Canada's influence on shaping American policy remained nominal during the escalation and ultimate climax of the conflict.

Donaghy's characterization of Canada's Far East position as non-committal and deferential due to its limited interest in the region is misleading. As articulated by Pearson many times, Canada did have an interest in the region. What is more, the DEA had a clear preferred approach that it attempted to exert onto the United States. Donaghy describes Canada's behaviour at the end of the crisis as a "speedy retreat" given Canada's limited interest in the Far East and its greater interest in cultivating its influence with the U.S. and safeguarding continental security.⁵⁷ Although, Donaghy is not inaccurate, and many historians elsewhere have explored how continental security was of the utmost interest for Canada during the 1950s, Donaghy believes that Canada's behaviour towards the end of the crisis was due more to its limited interest than its limited influence. However, Canada's involvement in the crisis and its attempted collaboration with the U.S. indicates that after many failed attempts by the DEA to inform American policy, Canada decided to acquiesce in favour of preserving its relationship with the U.S., a priority held by Canada since the outset of the crisis, rather than earn the ire of the State Department. Thus, Pearson's readiness to follow its western allies' lead or the lack of tangible

⁵⁴ To learn more about the importance of the conference and the Non-Alignment Movement it helped create see chapter 3 in: Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War* (Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁵⁵ Léger to Pearson, 29 April 1955, file 50056-B-40 Part 8, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, LAC.

⁵⁶ A Second Taiwan Strait Crisis broke out in 1958. This event is not explored in this thesis as the "Golden Age of Canadian Diplomacy" had come to an end when Diefenbaker's conservatives in the 1957 Canadian federal election defeated the Liberals and Pearson was no longer the Secretary of State of External Affairs.

⁵⁷ Donaghy, "Canadian Diplomacy and the Offshore Islands Crisis": 243, 253.

Canadian influence on American policy was not simply a product of absent interest. More accurately, it was the result of an inability to meaningfully influence American policy on its own.

This chapter demonstrates that Canada operated under the assumption that it had greater global influence than it actually had and whatever influence it was had was negligible in having tangible impacts on American policy in the case of the First Taiwan Strait Crisis. Consequently, this re-examination of Canada's role in the First Taiwan Crisis provides a cautious revision, altering, but not completely abandoning, the myth of Canada's "Golden Age of Diplomacy". As previously mentioned, every Golden Age contains a misstep or two. While Canada had experienced greater exposure on the world stage during this decade, the First Taiwan Strait Crisis is one of the forgotten instances where Canada's influence was more akin to a Middle Power that was not always successful at influencing global events, thus tempering the concept of the Golden Age.

Chapter IV – Discontent from the Wings: Opposition, Media, and Public Criticism of American Policies, 1953-1955

The Canadian government's opinion was increasingly vocalized in the postwar period even if it was not proportionately heard or heeded. As explored in the previous chapters, there was a willingness by State Department members to meet with Canadian Department of External Affairs' (DEA) officials such as Lester B. Pearson regarding Formosa. However, these meetings, more often than not token gestures, had little effect on American foreign policy. Throughout the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, the State Department not only objected to Canada's official position on the crisis, it also took notice of non-official Canadian attitudes, including Canada's opposition parties such as the Progressive Conservative and Co-operative Commonwealth Federation [CCF], the Canadian press, and the Canadian public opinion. This practice speaks more to the American habit of maintaining awareness on opinions that supported or opposed its policies rather than validating the efficacy of Canada's influence on its southern ally. This chapter explores the American appraisal of the Canadian opposition, press, and public's opinions on Formosa and the extent to which the State Department heeded such opinions. Ultimately, this chapter demonstrates that the State Department's interest in unofficial Canadian opinion was no different than its interest in Canada's official one and the extent of the State Department's influence on tempering criticism coming from within Canada of its policies. This chapter suggests that Canada had little chance of influencing U.S. policies because the Americans were the ones who were influencing, or quelling, dissent coming from Canadians.

By examining Canadian global influence from this perspective, this chapter's further demonstrates America's policy of maintaining awareness of all aspects of its ally's opinion, not just those individuals in power, while simultaneously not indicating any change to its own behaviour because of any foreign criticism. American diplomats in Ottawa were tasked with

understanding Canada's opposition parties' opinions throughout the entire crisis, opinions that were often concerned with Canada potentially becoming involved in a war due to American actions. Additionally, U.S. diplomats kept track of what members of the press were often exclaiming, which criticized the American brinkmanship policies relentlessly. Additionally, while this thesis has demonstrated that Canada's influence on America should not be described as a sort of "Golden Age of Canadian Diplomacy", this chapter builds on America's perception of Canada's own perceived influence. Furthermore, this chapter's exploration of America's focus on the attitudes shared throughout Canada on U.S. Far East policies and its ability to sway those opinions in its favour, questions Canada's ability to influence the U.S. when itself was being influenced by U.S. power of persuasion.

Antics of the Opposition

Following President Dwight D. Eisenhower's first State of the Union address in early 1953, the new U.S. administration was quick to take note of the Canadian government and opposition responses to Eisenhower's comments on Formosa. In his speech, Eisenhower defined Formosa as being part of America's general Far East foreign policy strategy. Eisenhower described the island as potentially being influenced by the Korean War (which continued to rage until July of that year), but that the Seventh Fleet, which had been preventing escalation of aggression in the Strait for the past three years, would no longer be used as an inadvertent defense for the Communists' hold on the mainland. He explained how the Seventh Fleet had been preventing the Nationalists from attacking the Communist land holdings, thus, inadvertently being a defence mechanism for the Communists.¹ The American Embassy in Ottawa noted that the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives, led by George A. Drew,

¹ Message from the President to the Congress, 2 February 1953, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 14, Japan and China* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office), p. 140.

responded positively to the President's statements in that they agreed with the directive's change. Furthermore, Pearson's own statements approved the President's address encouraged the Conservatives as they described Pearson as showcasing great dexterity in dealing with his American counterparts. Second Secretary of the Embassy, George S. Vest, noted, however that:

CCF spokesperson Angus MacInnis vigorously attacked the Formosa action as a possible prelude to an extension of the Korean action to a world war. He further opposed it on the basis that the free Asian nations would be alienated if the West should back the "undemocratic, reactionary and corrupt" Chiang.²

Vest was not perturbed by CCF's claims as the party only held 13 of 262 seats in the House of Commons.³ At this early moment in the Eisenhower administration, it seemed satisfied to keep a passive watch of Canadian opinion so long as it generally conformed to the American position and opposition was negligible.

However, the Americans took note of the increasing criticism from the opposition regarding Pearson and American policies in the Far East as tensions escalated. Several months after the August 1953 Canadian election, won by the Liberals with another majority, the Americans re-evaluated Canada's foreign policy and the different parties' response to it. The most notable aspect for the Americans was how the Opposition parties, for the most part, approved of Pearson's policies, chose not to criticize them, and simply voiced concern about Communist aggression.⁴ In March of 1954, during a foreign policy debate in the House of Commons, the Conservatives and CCF expressed clear concern for the potential brinkmanship of America's foreign policy and the supposed lack of consultation that occurred with its allies. However, Pearson reassured the House that "the United States would consult its allies before

² George S. Vest to Department of State, Washington, 13 February 1953, file 350 Political Affairs Part 2, Classified General Records, box 33, RG84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, National Archives and Records Administration [NARA].

³ Ibid.

⁴ George S. Vest to Department of State, Washington, 3 February 1954, file 350 Political Affairs Part 2, Classified General Records, box 33, RG84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, NARA.

retaliating”, a response which accordingly “softened the tone of opposition concern over U.S. ‘massive retaliation’.” American diplomats in Ottawa indicated that Pearson’s reassurances on America’s brinkmanship “took the wind out of the PC sails.” Interestingly, while Pearson had been quelling the Oppositions fears about American policy, those fears, as noted above, were not entirely different from Pearson’s own concerns. The American were quite interested in the opposition’s position on the “Two China Question”. The State Department was relieved to see the Progressive Conservatives’ condemnation of the Liberals’ flirtation with the idea of formally recognizing Communist China – a condemnation that mirrored their own. Conversely, the Americans were piqued to see that the CCF favoured recognizing the Communists and concerned that the CCF believed that semi-recognition had already occurred. Nevertheless, the Americans concluded that the debate was of relatively low importance given the low attendance among parliamentarians, and a lack of engaging discussion on the topic, beyond a series of disconnected speeches.⁵ Consequently, Canadian political debate had little effect on American opinion in the months leading up to the First Taiwan Strait Crisis.

It was not until the First Taiwan Strait Crisis escalated considerably and the DEA began to publicize its opinion on the crisis and American policies that the Americans became mindful of the machinations within Canada’s Parliament. Pearson reassured Members of Parliament that America’s policies did not promote belligerence and that ROCs could not lead the West on an “adventure” by pulling America and its allies into a war.⁶ But Pearson also had begun to publically and privately criticize American policy in the Far East.

⁵ George S. Vest to Department of State, Washington, 5 April 1955, file 350 Political Affairs Part 2, Classified General Records, box 33, RG84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, NARA.

⁶ Ernest de W. Mayer to Department of State, 28 January 1955, file 742.00(W)/1-2855, box 3210, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1955-1959, NARA.

Most troublesome was Pearson's increased promotion of a "neutralization" policy in Formosa that he had been promoting since the early 1950s. Canada's Parliament increased its condemnation of American policies and promotion of neutralization that could threaten Canadian support for America's position. Therefore, the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa was very interested in the reception to Pearson's newly contrarian position. Not only did America pay attention to the opposition's reaction, but also how Pearson felt Canada should organize to effectively offset American actions.⁷ Moreover, the State Department took notice that Canadian citizens had begun to voice concerns that the U.S. policy in Formosa was too bold and that U.S. backing of Chiang Kai-Shek even riskier. American diplomats noted that the Canadian public thought that it was best to admit Communist China into the UN and conceded that the PRC had the best legal claim to Formosa. As the American Ambassador to Canada R. Douglas Stuart stated, "Although the press and officials have disagreed with U.S. policy with regards to the off-shore islands, the public seems to feel that it is our unwavering support of Chiang Kai-Shek on Formosa that is the greatest threat."⁸ Despite the many sources of Canadian vocal opposition, the State Department remained committed to Chiang Kai-Shek with the Sino-American defence pact, using the UN in an attempt to safeguard the West's control over Formosa. While the Canadian opposition did not affect the State Department's plans, the State Department increased its liaisons with the DEA and Pearson both to quell their discontent with U.S. policy and to convince the DEA to quell criticism within the House of Commons by showing support for U.S. policy. The American response suggests that they did not conceive Pearson to have influence on U.S. policy. Instead,

⁷ Ernest de W. Mayer to Department of State, 28 January 1955, file 742.00(W)/1-2855, box 3210, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1955-1959, NARA.

⁸ R. Douglas Stuart to Department of State, 4 March 1955, file 742.00(W)/3-455, box 3210, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1955-1959, NARA.

the increased correspondence between him and Dulles was designed to compel Pearson to sell the American approach to the House of Commons.

Consequently, the DEA's influence increasingly came in the form of endorsing the American policy domestically rather than exerting it on the U.S. to shape American policies. While Pearson was attending the early February Commonwealth Ministers conference in London, England, the CCF demanded a special debate on the escalating Formosan situation. However, acting External Affairs Minister Paul Martin rebuffed this demand as he believed a debate was fruitless while Canada waited to see if the American efforts at the UN yielded any resolution.⁹ By March's end, as the DEA had calmed many of the dissenting opinions against American policies in the Far East, U.S. diplomats in Ottawa seemed satisfied that Canada once again seemed an amenable ally.¹⁰ Dulles' visit to Ottawa from March 17-19 allowed him to provide reassurances to Canadian Members of Parliament. This coincided with his personal conversations with Pearson, where he reiterated the State Department's hope of utilizing the UN to find a solution to the situation in the Far East and his conciliar consideration of Pearson's "neutralized strip" approach.¹¹ While it appeared that the State Department was paying attention to Canadian opinion, it desired only to quiet any Canadian animosity to its position.

While Opposition parties reintroduced their critique of American policy in the following week's foreign affairs debate, Pearson continued to take a softer approach to his aversion to the American policy in the Far East. John Diefenbaker, representing the Progressive Conservatives, claimed that Pearson had simply paled in the face of criticism to Canada's position in global

⁹ Don C. Bliss to Department of State, 4 February 1955, file 742.00(W)/2-455, box 3210, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1955-1959, NARA.

¹⁰ R. Douglas Stuart to Department of State, 18 March 1955, file 742.00(W)/3-1855, box 3210, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1955-1959, NARA.

¹¹ Memorandum for the Prime Minister – Second Conversation with Mr. Dulles, 19 March 1955, Pearson Fond, MG 26, N-1, Vol. 65, Pre-1958 Series, U.S.A.-Can. Rels., 1950-1957, LAC.

affairs. CCF leader Maurice J. Coldwell voiced the harshest criticism of U.S. policy describing Chiang as a “moral leper”. Coldwell called for the removal of Chiang’s government in favour of a more effective Nationalist government, although he provided no criteria. American diplomats evaluated Coldwell’s harsh comments against the Nationalist government as a domestic political move to get the support of far-left CCF members who were disappointed with Coldwell’s direction on European policies rather than as true criticism of ROC. The Americans, however, did not appear concerned with the Canadian opposition’s renewed vigor, suggesting it was simply domestic political jockeying. Furthermore, U.S. diplomats suggested the reason for the increased criticism was that Dulles’s recent visit had reminded Canadian politicians that a crisis was occurring in the Far East.¹²

But the renewed criticism faded. At the start of April 1955, Americans reporting from Ottawa noted the Progressive Conservatives were taking a more moderate stance than the Liberals. The Conservatives had concluded that Formosa and the Pescadores needed to be defended by the West, but that the Offshore Islands were primarily an American responsibility. As U.S. diplomat Tyler Thompson said, “[opposition] party members who participated in the debate took a notably more favourable view of U.S. policy in the Far East, especially with regards to Quemoy and Matsu.”¹³ Throughout the Taiwan Strait Crisis, the State Department certainly took notice of the different Canadian political opinions on Formosa and the extent to which they supported American policy but this observation was only to ensure Canada’s position was consistent with its own. When the State Department felt that this was threatened it made inroads to ensure Canada was supportive of its policy. While there was a slight bump in criticism

¹² Stuart to Department of State, 25 March 1955, file 742.00(W)/3-2555, box 3210, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1955-1959, NARA.

¹³ Tyler Thompson to Department of State, 7 April 1955, file 742.00(W)/4-755, box 3210, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1955-1959, NARA.

at March's end, the comments made in April confirmed that Canadian politicians on all sides of the aisle had stopped trying to tell the State Department how it should form its Far Eastern policies. Indeed, while Dulles did not directly interact with the Progressive Conservatives or the CCF, Dulles's reassurance quelled dissent from all Canadian political parties while simultaneously keeping Canada at arms-length from American policy.

'Read All About It'!

The State Department also sought out the position of the Canadian press. Prior to the escalation and outbreak of the crisis in 1954, the State Department already had kept steady observation of American characterization in the Canadian press. The American diplomats made note of a wide range of newspapers throughout Canada, including both Liberal and Conservative-leaning press, that discussed American foreign policies. Additionally, the diplomats almost always noted which way a cited paper leaned, whether Liberal or Conservative.¹⁴ From the U.S. Embassy reports, it was clear the Canadian press was already developing a mythic representation of Canada's "Golden Age of Diplomacy" in the early 1950s. While not critical of the U.S. at this junction, radio and paper news outlets relayed Pearson's quasi-declaration that Canada was independent of American influence, suggesting that America needed to be less critical of Canada's foreign policies and that Canada was coming into its own.¹⁵ Even at this early point, the Americans recognized this self-perceived influential role being promoted in the Canadian press – an interesting case of self perception leading to a false sense of influence – and its effect on perceptions of the Canadian-American relationship.

¹⁴ Bliss to Department of State, 6 February 1953, file 742.00(W)/2-653, box 3548, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1950-1954, NARA.

¹⁵ L. Dean Brown to Department of State, 10 April 1951, file 642.00/4-1051, box 2917, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1950-1954, NARA.

During the escalation of tension in the Taiwan Strait, specifically in February of 1954, the State Department noted that media in Canada, *Maclean's* magazine in particular, was beginning to report on Dulles' foreign policy and its potential to fracture the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).¹⁶ American diplomats also observed the close friendships between reporters/authors and Canadian politicians, citing the *Maclean's* writer Blair Fraser's relationship with Pearson. Interestingly, Vest alluded to a reason for the American interest in Canadian press opinions:

The press at large has paid little attention to Mr. Dulles' redefinition of U.S. foreign policy. However, this group is a good microcosm of the Canadian press-radio intelligentsia – and we may well find that their concern will bear fruit in increasing expressions of sympathy for the European fears that they are being left to the whim of U.S. defense strategists.¹⁷

While this report pre-dated the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, Vest had suggested that any considerable allied combined critique of American policy potentially could impede America's execution of its planned policy. Consequently, managing Canadian opinion was important in furthering America's strategic aims in the Far East.

The following month the American Embassy in Ottawa reported that *Maclean's* magazine continued to publish critical comments regarding U.S. foreign policy. While reporting on the Eisenhower Administration's proposed policy to launch a massive retaliatory strike against the Communists should they attack U.S. allies in western Europe, *Maclean's* reporter Fraser argued that this proposed policy was too rigid and blunt. While it could only be effective in situations where Communist aggression was clear and decisive, that strategy could not account for situations that were more ambiguous. Considering that the events in the Far East were anything but clear and decisive, the American policy was decidedly too risky and

¹⁶ Vest to Department of State, 12 February 1954, file 320 U.S. Foreign Policy, Classified General Records, box 27, RG84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, NARA.

¹⁷ Ibid.

ineffective. Fraser criticized the lack of American consultation with its allies when it came to American retaliation against Communist aggression.¹⁸ Given the United States allies', including Canada's, preference for a diplomatic resolution to the crisis, commentary such as this was of particular interest to American diplomats for its potential to impede support for U.S. policies among its allies.

American diplomats in Canada were also acutely aware of certain press outlets' opinions on the Far East. The Canadian press was relatively warm towards the President's 1953 State of the Union address except when it came to his revisions to U.S. policy in Formosa. Some papers, such as the *Globe and Mail*, were simply worried, but others such as the *Ottawa Citizen* condemned the new Formosan policy.¹⁹ Comments from the Canadian press on the Far East continued throughout the rest of the year. Vest noted at the beginning of May 1953 that the editor of the *Ottawa Citizen*, Charles J. Woodsworth, was both writing articles for the paper and giving talks advocating for Canada's recognition of Communist China and its UN acceptance.²⁰ Later that year, Vest revealed that some newspapers such as the *Ottawa Journal* had begun to take a more critical approach to the American foreign policy. I. Norman Smith, Associate Editor of the *Ottawa Journal*, was recorded as saying that Canada needed to be more vocal with the U.S. when their foreign policies conflicted. Moreover, Smith advocated for greater Canadian support for the UN and for the Canadian government to exert pressure onto the U.S. more frequently.²¹ By the end of 1954, the State Department was acutely aware that the Canadian press throughout the spring and summer had been critical of American policies for escalating

¹⁸ Vest to Department of State, 11 March 1954, file 320 U.S. Foreign Policy, Classified General Records, box 27, RG84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, NARA.

¹⁹ Bliss to Department of State, 6 February 1953, file 742.00(W)/2-653, box 3548, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1950-1954, NARA.

²⁰ Vest to Department of State, 5 May 1953, file 642.00/5-553, box 2917, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1950-1954, NARA.

²¹ Vest to Department of State, 16 October 1953, file 642.00/10-1653, box 2917, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1950-1954, NARA.

tensions in the region.²² However, the Canadian press did not bring to bear its full attention on the Formosan situation until January of 1955, coinciding with the escalation of the crisis and the Canadian government's – including the opposition – increased commentary on events unfolding.

Following the increased conflict in the Tachen Islands at January's end, the Canadian press increased its reporting on America's policies in Formosa. On January 26, the Embassy reported that both Liberal and Conservative-leaning outlets had commented on President Eisenhower's recent public comments on the PRC intensified threat to ROC. While various press outlets expressed concern about U.S. support for Chiang Kai-Shek, they seemed impressed with Eisenhower's apparent restraint.²³ Similar to the narrative circling the House of Commons, the Americans noted the press's echo that while Formosa and the Pescadores were important, coastal islands such as the Tachen Islands were not as critical. While the press was supportive of America's expressed desire to seek resolution through the UN via the New Zealand resolution, both Conservative and Liberal press outlets argued that if the UN was utilized to solve the crisis, then the recognition of the PRC might follow.²⁴

Consequently, the criticism in the Canadian media, the Canadian government's opposition, and Pearson's own public condemnation of American policy in Formosa suggested the U.S. was losing the support of its northern ally. An Embassy report summarized Canadian sentiment by reciting the *Winnipeg Free Press's* position that America's allies did not support America's behaviour in the Taiwan Strait. General sentiment throughout Canada was that as recognition of the PRC was likely needed in the pursuit of peace, then U.S. policy to fully back

²² Bliss to Department of State, 23 December 1954, file 742.00(W)/12-2354, box 3548, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1950-1954, NARA.

²³ R. Douglas Stuart to Department of State, 26 January 1955, file 320 Formosa, Classified General Records, box 26, RG84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, NARA.

²⁴ Stuart to Department of State, 29 January 1955, file 320 Formosa, Classified General Records, box 26, RG84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, NARA.; Stuart to Department of State, Washington, 4 February 1955, file 320 Formosa, Classified General Records, box 26, RG84, Records of Foreign Service Posts, NARA.

Chiang Kai-Shek was one of the greatest threats that could incite war in the Far East. The *Winnipeg Free Press* believed the Canadian public would not permit Canada to become involved in an American war in order to maintain Chiang Kai-Shek's grasp on a few offshore islands.²⁵ Later in March, the U.S. Embassy reported that the press was not promoting the retreat from the islands of Matsu and Quemoy, arguing instead that the Offshore Islands could not be successfully defended. The press reasoned that attempting to maintain control of the islands simply increased the risk of war between America and the PRC.²⁶

With March's end came Dulles' damage control visit to Ottawa, discussed previously. Replicating his success with Canadian politicians, while the Canadian press continued to publish news stories and editorials that criticized American foreign policy, it appeared that Dulles had squashed the most vehement critiques. As Stuart reported:

The Vancouver Province (Cons) commented that a close look at Mr. Dulles "convinced both Parliament and the press he is not the bull-in-a-china-shop operator of popular fancy, but a hard-headed statesman who can supply good reasons for his attitudes on world questions." Editorial comment, which was quite limited, welcomed the frank and friendly interchange between Mr. Dulles and Canadian officials and stressed the close ties which exist between the two countries, especially with regard to the problem of continental defence.²⁷

Dulles had swiftly quelled Canadian criticism of U.S. policies regarding the crisis in the Far East with a single visit. This demonstrated that America had influence over Canada and not the other way around.

²⁵ Stuart to Department of State, 4 March 1955, file 742.00(W)/3-455, box 3210, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1955-1959, NARA.

²⁶ Stuart to Department of State, 18 March 1955, file 742.00(W)/3-1855, box 3210, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1955-1959, NARA.

²⁷ Stuart to Department of State, 25 March 1955, file 742.00(W)/3-2555, box 3210, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1955-1959, NARA.

“You’ve Got Mail”

Throughout the mid-1950s, numerous Canadians expressed their concern regarding the situation in Formosa, American policy, Communist Chinese aggression, and the general state of the world. All of this correspondence was sent to the DEA, most of it being reviewed by Pearson himself. Some letters even received a response from Pearson. Much of the correspondence by Canadians across the country voiced both extremes of the debate, either gushing over what the writer saw as Pearson’s masterful handling of the situation unfolding in the Far East, or condemning Pearson and U.S. policies aimed at combatting Communism across the globe.

One such example of condemnation Pearson received was from J.L. Greig in Nanaimo, British Columbia. Greig’s letter, dated January 25, 1955, threatened that neither he nor any member of his family could ever vote for a party or leader that did not condemn America’s “criminally stupid” policy on Asia.²⁸ Others issued more formal correspondence, occasionally on behalf of a special-interest group, to criticize American policy and Canada’s handling of the situation. Maurice Rush, on behalf of the Labour-Progressive Vancouver Committee, condemned America’s increase in military assistance to Chiang Kai-Shek in light of the events unfolding in the Tachen Islands. Rush admonished that American actions were illegal and Canada ought to respond by going before the UN to request that the U.S. withdraw all forces from Formosa.²⁹ Such letters were but a small example of the critical opinions Canadians held of both American policy and what they perceived as a limited response from the Canadian government. Much of the correspondence often concluded by providing advice that Canada needed to do more to influence America’s behaviour.

²⁸ J.L. Greig to Pearson, 25 January 1955, file 11578-E-40 Part 1, Vol. 7673, RG25, LAC. See Appendix 3.

²⁹ Maurice Rush to Pearson, 26 January 1955, file 11578-E-40 Part 1, Vol. 7673, RG25, LAC. See Appendix 4.

Not all of the communications from Canadian private citizens were critical. Some expressed unwavering support for Pearson, regardless of his ultimate response to American action. Some missives supplied Pearson and the DEA with political cartoons they believed summed up the situation quite accurately. Reverend Glynn Firth of St. Walburg, Saskatchewan, sent in one such political cartoon which depicted the Communist Chinese and Americans careening in cars towards a head on collision with one another over the Offshore Islands, adding the brief message that whatever Pearson decided to do about the Formosan situation, he would be supported by people in Saskatchewan.³⁰ Pearson replied to Firth that the Canadian government was planning on doing everything possible to avoid a “collision” between Communist China and the United States, and that Canada could not become embattled over the small islands of Matsu and Quemoy.³¹

Finally, some of the correspondences to Pearson were beaming with pride over how Pearson and the government were dealing with the situation. One such letter came from F.P. Galbraith who sent a letter at April’s end commending Pearson’s ability to handle global affairs on behalf of Canadians in such skillful and conscientious ways. Commenting on how impressed he was with Pearson’s ability to influence the Americans, Galbraith stated:

In no branch of these do you do better than in the intricate work involved in keeping our cousins south of the border more or less in line. A more unpredictable, warm-hearted, ignorant, enthusiastic and gullible nation does not exist in the world today and their strength makes them a terrible hazard to the peace of the world. It is a fortunate thing for all of us that you have the knowledge and the guts to speak firmly to them from time to time.³²

In his subsequent and appreciative reply to those kind words, claiming that the current state of foreign affairs was as complicated as ever in Canada’s history, Pearson stated that he was always

³⁰ Rev. Glynn Firth to Pearson, 10 March 1955, file 11578-E-40 Part 1, Vol. 7673, RG25, LAC. See Appendix 5.

³¹ Pearson to Firth, 17 March 1955, file 11578-E-40 Part 1, Vol. 7673, RG25, LAC.

³² F.P. Galbraith to Pearson, 25 April 1955, file 11578-E-40 Part 1, Vol. 7673, RG25, LAC. See Appendix 6.

trying to balance the Canadian relationship with the U.S. between independence and interdependence.³³ It is no wonder that in the decades that followed the 1950s, the Canadian diplomats of that time had an inflated view of their global influence. However, many of these writers often focused on the general concerns about Communism, their belief that Canada was becoming involved in a way it ought not to be, and the general Canadian-American relationship. Just as Canada seemed to not have the finger on the pulse of the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, views from the Canadian public did not appear to note the nuances of Canada's lack of influence in the U.S.

While the Americans did not have access to the personal correspondence being sent from Canadians to Pearson and the DEA, they were cognizant of the general Canadian public sentiment. As discussed earlier, the Americans were sometimes reporting from Ottawa not only comments made by the opposition parties and the Canadian press but also comments from the Canadian public that criticized U.S. foreign policies. One example was the American diplomats' concerns that Canadians were unhappy with America's support of Chiang Kai-Shek.³⁴ In the same way that the Canadian opposition and media had little sway on American policies, there was even less to indicate the Canadian public's concerns had an impact. Often the reports from the U.S. Embassy were simply a part of the job the diplomats posted in Ottawa were expected to do. The most significant impact these peripheral opinions had on the U.S. could be seen during Dulles' visit to Ottawa in March 1955 when he took an official state visit to single-handedly quell the dissent for the State Department's Far East policy in Canada. Even though in April, the final month of the crisis, concerns of U.S. behaviour reemerged in Canada, it ultimately amounted to nothing due to the end of the crisis. All three perspectives that were outside of the

³³ Pearson to Galbraith, 28 April 1955, file 11578-E-40 Part 1, Vol. 7673, RG25, LAC.

³⁴ Stuart to Department of State, 4 March 1955, file 742.00(W)/3-455, box 3210, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1955-1959, NARA.

DEA were noted by the American State Department but had negligible repercussions on U.S. policy formulation.

By examining the efficacy of Canadian influence from this perspective, we can further understand the motivation for America's public and private appearance of collaboration with Canada on its Far East policy. The American interest in Canadian opinion, whether from Canadian government, political opposition, press, and even Canadians themselves, was not borne out of an interest in taking these opinions under advisement when shaping their Far East policy. Instead, they were monitoring these opinions to ensure that they remained amenable to American policy and when they were found not to be amenable, Dulles went to Ottawa to speak to Canadian statesman to squash any dissent. Such an approach corroborates this thesis's argument that the Canadian influence on its southern neighbour has been overstated in the historiography and requires at least a degree of tempering. Certainly, some of this misrepresentation is borne out of the American strategy to deal with criticism coming from its allies. In the face of some opposition, the State Department seemed satisfied that despite this differing of opinion, that Canadians by and large deferred to and supported the American position; however, when criticism grew too great, or jeopardized their unencumbered control of the situation did the Americans step in. They did so by contacting their Canadian counterparts in the DEA, offering gestures to ensure that the Canadian government felt itself involved in the American policy-making decisions. However, as demonstrated in the previous chapters, these gestures were nominal and the Canadian opinions voiced as a result were not heeded. This American tactic was not dissimilar to the one employed with other western allies such as Australia and New Zealand. Therefore, Canada's influence on the United States in the post-war period on Far East matters was nominal at best. Canada was no more or less effective than its other allies with respect to the

First Taiwan Strait Crisis. Most importantly, U.S. interaction with Canadian criticism of American policies demonstrated how Canada could not have influenced American policies on Taiwan while its own were being brought to heel by the State Department.

Conclusion: Canada's Limited Influence

Had the Canadian Department of External Affairs (DEA) had a greater influence on American foreign policy in the 1950s, than perhaps Canada could have been a more active participant in the resolution of the First Taiwan Strait Crisis. It was India that had the most critical influence in resolving the conflict. Following the Bandung Conference, India's Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Krishna Menon, head of India's delegation at the UN, reassured America and fellow Commonwealth countries that the Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China, Chou-En-Lai, was willing to talk to them about Formosa.¹ Additionally, the Indians announced that Menon had specifically been invited to Peking to discuss how a cease-fire with the Chinese Nationalists could be created to relieve international tension.² Menon arrived in Peking on May 9, 1955. Over the course of the next ten days he continued the negotiations with the Communists that had been instigated in Bandung to seek a solution to the problem in the Taiwan Strait that benefitted all parties.³ Ultimately it was India, with its connection to the U.S. and other western allies given its status as a Commonwealth country, its affiliation with the Non-Alignment Movement – meaning the Communist Chinese trusted them more than western countries – and as a member of the Bandung Conference, that mediated the start of discussions between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and America, suggesting that other western allied countries could not have been as influential as they had thought.

The absence of Canada's influence in shaping the resolution of the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, despite its strategic interest in doing so, is the tent pole of this thesis's objective to temper

¹ Canadian Embassy, Djakarta, to Pearson, 30 April 1955, file 50056-B-40 Part 8, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, Library and Archives Canada [LAC].

² Office of the High Commissioner for Canada, New Delhi, to Pearson, 30 April 1955, file 50056-B-40 Part 8, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, LAC.

³ Office of the High Commissioner for Canada, New Delhi, to Pearson, 3 May 1955, file 50056-B-40 Part 8, Formosa and the Coastal Islands, Vol. 4725, RG25, LAC.

the aggrandized concept of the “Golden Age of Canadian Diplomacy”. Additionally, this thesis argues that the nature of the Canadian-American relationship, a vital part of Canada’s increased influence as historians John Thompson and Stephen Randall explain⁴, during the crisis has further corroborated the historiographical argument that Canada’s global influence did not extend past that of a Middle Power during the Cold War’s opening decade. Canada cautioned restraint about U.S. brinkmanship, but the Americans, specifically in the case of the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, did not heed that counsel. While Lester B. Pearson and other DEA mandarins attempted to exert their purportedly heightened influence on their American counterparts, they ultimately failed to meaningfully constrain American foreign policies in the Far East. Their inefficacy was not a result of the limited interest as Greg Donaghy suggests, but rather stemmed from a lack of tangible influence on America.⁵ True, Canada’s primary interests were centered on the West rather than the Far East. But as this thesis has demonstrated, the potential for conflict in the Far East to spread and force Canada into war, along with its other Far East commitments via the Korean War and the International Control Commission, meant that it was interested in obtaining a peaceful resolution to the First Taiwan Strait Crisis. Consequently, the DEA only preformed a “speedy retreat” when its attempts at influence were repeatedly rebuffed by the American State Department.

This thesis has examined four main aspects of the First Taiwan Strait Crisis in order to elucidate the nature of Canada’s relationship with the U.S. during the “Golden Age of Canadian Diplomacy”. First, the years leading up to the outbreak of the crisis, and the differences and similarities between Canada’s and America’s policies in regards to the Far East, were explored.

⁴ John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall, *Canada and the United States: Ambivalent Allies* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2008), 182-3.

⁵ Greg Donaghy, "Canadian Diplomacy and the Offshore Islands Crisis, 1954-1955: A Limited National Interest" *International Journal* 68, no. 2 (2013): 242

This allowed for an understanding that the DEA and State Department were often in agreement in regards to preventing the spread of Communism in the Far East. But with the inauguration of President Dwight Eisenhower in 1953, the two countries' policies began to diverge. Canada had favoured minimal involvement in the Far East, flirting with the idea of potentially recognizing the PRC, whereas America increasingly committed to the Far East in its security pact with the Nationalist Chinese and its intent to protect the region from Communism. Thus, the U.S. was only interested in collaboration with allies in so far as it served the success of its strategic aims of containing and denying the Communists any political foothold. America's lack of genuine interest in Canada's suggested course of action in the Far East only continued following the outbreak of the crisis. Given the differing Canadian and American approaches, the Americans looked to other allies, including Britain, New Zealand, and the Chinese Nationalists, to find a solution to the crisis.

The First Taiwan Strait Crisis was of importance to the Canadian government, and the DEA had a vested interest in shaping its outcome. Chapter III sketches Canada's attempts to affect the Crisis using the DEA's internal correspondence as well as its external communication with its counterparts in Britain, New Zealand, and the United States. But the DEA realized that it could not have a definitive role in its resolution, whereas New Zealand did play a role via its position on the Security Council. In the absence of direct involvement, Canada understood that its influence would come in the form of diplomatic appeals to their allies, specifically Commonwealth members and the U.S. As the crisis escalated, so too did the DEA's efforts to influence its allies' involvement. The Canadians attempted to use both private and public diplomacy to engage with and sway American policies regarding Formosa. Nevertheless, as the Canadian efforts were shown to be ineffectual at influencing the State Department's steadfast

approach, the DEA lamented its lack of consultation on Far East issues by the State Department. An examination of State Department internal communications and its dealings with the DEA corroborates the lacking Canadian influence, these briefing meetings and correspondence between the DEA and State Department throughout the Crisis was found to be nominal. Dulles provided updates to inform the DEA of its current policies, yet had made clear this was to keep Canada informed rather than an invitation for advice.⁶ Moreover, Dulles seemed indifferent to the contrarian opinions about U.S. Far East policies, even stating that the Canadian proposition for a neutralized strip and recognition of the PRC was wholly unpalatable. It was not until the Canadian opinion became increasingly public that the U.S. began to address the Canadian position. Yet even this attention was superficial, as Dulles offered the appearance of collaboration in order to appease the DEA, ultimately obtaining Canada's public support, as demonstrated by Pearson's subsequent supportive comments of Dulles and his policies in the House of Commons in March 1955.⁷ While the State Department monitored Canadian official and unofficial opinion, it only became concerned when that opinion became more public and condemning of U.S. policy. Consequently, the limited collaboration between the Canadian and American governments throughout the First Taiwan Strait Crisis showcased more American diplomatic acumen rather than Canada's.

This thesis sought to temper the traditional historiography's often-overstated characterization of Canada's global influence in the post-war period. This aggrandized narrative harkens back to a nostalgic (and potential self-important) interpretation offered by previous DEA member, Escott Reid in 1967, who suggested that Canada in the late 1940s and 1950s

⁶ John H. Morgan to Department of State, 29 June 1953, file 611.42/6-2953, box 2773, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-1954, National Archives and Records Administration [NARA].

⁷ R. Douglas Stuart to Department of State, 18 March 1955, file 742.00(W)/3-1855, box 3210, RG59, State Department Records, Central Decimal Files 1955-1959, NARA.

experienced a “Golden Age of Diplomacy”.⁸ At the same time Canada’s role as a Middle Power and its relationship with the U.S. was under debate as seen with the conference presentations by Pearson, Heeney, and Holmes at the Third Annual Banff Conference on World Development in 1965, all three of whom spoke about Canada’s Middle Power responsibility to temper American policies.⁹ However, the exaggerated understanding of Canada’s global influence in the 1950s overtook the more nuanced and accurate narrative of Canada during the period, a Middle Power that sometimes failed to influence events that could have significant consequences for itself. Even as recently as the early 2000s when Andrew Cohen revisited the idea of a golden age in order to criticise Canadian policy during his time, showcases how the idea of the golden age still muddies the water in regards to accurately understanding Canada’s role on the global stage in the 1950s. Fortunately, some historians, such as Adam Chapnick, rebut Cohen’s assertions of Canada’s “Golden Age of Diplomacy”, instead suggesting that Canada’s disproportionate global influence was more myth and Canada ought to be understood more as a sort of flawed Middle Power, having a greater role in world events but still coming up short in its ability to have a tangible impact.¹⁰ It is in this latter camp that this thesis has rested its argument.

For its part, as a case study, this thesis has explored how Canada’s involvement in the First Taiwan Strait Crisis reflects Canada’s role in the world and the nature of its influence during the 1950s. In the post-war period, many Western countries experienced greater global involvement, including Canada. The United Kingdom, once a great power but devastated by war, and New Zealand worked collectively with the U.S. to create the New Zealand resolution to

⁸ Escott Reid, “Canadian Foreign Policy, 1967-1977: A Second Golden Decade?” *International Journal* 22, no. 2 (1967): 172

⁹ Gordon, J. King, “Forward” in *Canada’s Role as a Middle Power*. J. King Gordon ed. (Toronto: The Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1965), V-VII.

¹⁰ See Andrew Cohen, *While Canada Slept: How We Lost Our Place in the World* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2003.); and Adam Chapnick, “The Golden Age: A Canadian Foreign Policy Paradox” *International Journal* 64, no. 1 (2009)).

bring the UN's Security Council to effect a cease-fire. Australia had its own attempts at lobbying the Americans to give them a seat at the table in order to help shape the de-escalation of tensions in the Far East. Canada attempted both private and public forms of diplomacy to directly engage the State Department in order to pressure America to seek peace in the Taiwan Strait. But it was India that proved the most successful at opening lines of communication between the Americans and the PRC.

Furthermore, unpacking the dominant perception of Canada's global status during the First Taiwan Strait Crisis permits a more nuanced questioning and insight into the nature of Canada's influence during this period in a broader context. Historians have asked whether or not Canada, as a Middle Power that was involved in numerous global events, was an independent agent or simply a satellite to the U.S. position.¹¹ This thesis's findings suggest that Canada was not simply a satellite of American policy that was made to heel, but rather a clear allied Middle Power that publically and privately pushed and negotiated with the American State Department, even if it was not always successful. Regardless of the efficacy of Canada's influence, Canada did have a fully formed policy and global outlook that differed from the American approach, and did, to an extent, push back against American policies during the 1950s. However, those efforts to influence American policy did not always come to fruition, as was the case in the First Taiwan Strait Crisis.

This thesis has also revealed some aspects of the American-Canadian relationship during that time. The most interesting takeaway from this examination is how complicated their relationship proved to be. While the relationship throughout the post-war period is certainly a heavily covered topic in the historiography, an examination of the American-Canadian

¹¹ See J.L. Granatstein "Introduction" in *Canadian Foreign Policy Since 1945: Middle Power or Satellite?* J.L. Granatstein ed. (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing, 1973).

relationship within the context of the First Taiwan Strait crisis, nevertheless, provides some interesting insights. Canada's influence on the America's foreign policy was limited throughout the purported "Golden Age of Canadian Diplomacy", coupled with America's lack of transparency about its policies, resulted in Canadian officials having to receive information from other parties, particularly the United Kingdom. All the while, the State Department continued to monitor Canadian opinion, and only made efforts to interact with Canadian opinions when those perceptions became too publically aggrieved. Conversely, the DEA remained skeptical of the U.S. motives in the Far East and an American tendency towards over-zealous reactions. Canadians regularly voiced their concern about the American policy and sought to ensure resolutions occurred bilaterally and multilaterally. Ultimately finding that Canada's best chance of influencing any resolution to the crisis was cooperating with America to use the UN rather than a supporting more direct U.S. military response.

Accordingly, this thesis corroborates the general historiographical consensus that Pearson strongly believed in the UN as a tool to solve many global crises. Throughout the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, the DEA supported a UN resolution for the crisis and was eager to help assure and guide the New Zealand resolution. When the crisis escalated at the start of 1955, Pearson increased his advocacy for a UN resolution even more, pleased by the apparent interest of the State Department to utilize the UN to solve the crisis. Pearson's advocacy for use of the UN to solve the Taiwan crisis supports the general characterization of Pearsonianism, which according to Robert Bothwell was an idea that combined Pearson's professionalism as a diplomat with the idea of liberal internationalism that promoted security and human rights around the globe.¹²

¹² Robert Bothwell, "Pearson and Personianism" in *Mike's World: Lester B. Pearson and Canadian External Affairs*, Asa McKercher and Galen Roger Perras ed. (Toronto and Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017), 27-8.

Asa McKercher and Galen Perras note the influence Pearson had on Canadian External Affairs, the idea of Pearsonianism, and why many have taken to fondly recalling Pearson's time as Secretary of State for External Affairs. They argue that the 1956 Suez Crisis and Pearson's role in its resolution, which earned him a Nobel Peace Prize and occurred near the end of Pearson's tenure as secretary, enabled an augmented perception of the entirety of Canada's diplomacy during the 1950s. They state:

Suez appeared to be the capstone to a "Golden Decade" of achievement in Canadian foreign policy, with Pearson, backed by a cohort of internationalist-minded diplomats, looming large. Their achievements, and this era, have inspired much myth-making about Canada and its international role.¹³

While the Suez Crisis was certainly a shining moment for Pearson and the DEA, it is incorrect to apply the acumen of Pearson's diplomatic achievements in the Suez Crisis to the rest of Pearson's time leading the DEA. If anything, this thesis's focus on the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, occurring nearly two years before the crisis in Egypt, demonstrates that while Pearson's involvement in the Suez Crisis was certainly an achievement, other crises, notably the First Taiwan Strait Crisis, have demonstrated that Canadian policy was not always as successful. Consequently, the glossy interpretation of Canada's foreign influence has permitted an anachronistic and exaggerated legacy of his time in the DEA, which is not wholly accurate. While this thesis has sought to peel back the mythic proportions of Canada's diplomatic acumen in the post-war period by using the crisis in Taiwan as case study, it does not seek to disregard Canada's influence or Pearson's altogether.

This exploration has added nuance to our understanding of Canada's role in the 1950s, tempering the idea of a "Golden Age" of Canadian international relations. It has determined that

¹³ Asa McKercher and Galen Roger Perras, "Introduction: Lester Pearson and Canadian External Affairs" in *Mike's World: Lester B. Pearson and Canadian External Affairs*, Asa McKercher and Galen Roger Perras ed. (Toronto and Vancouver, Canada: UBC Press, 2017), 3.

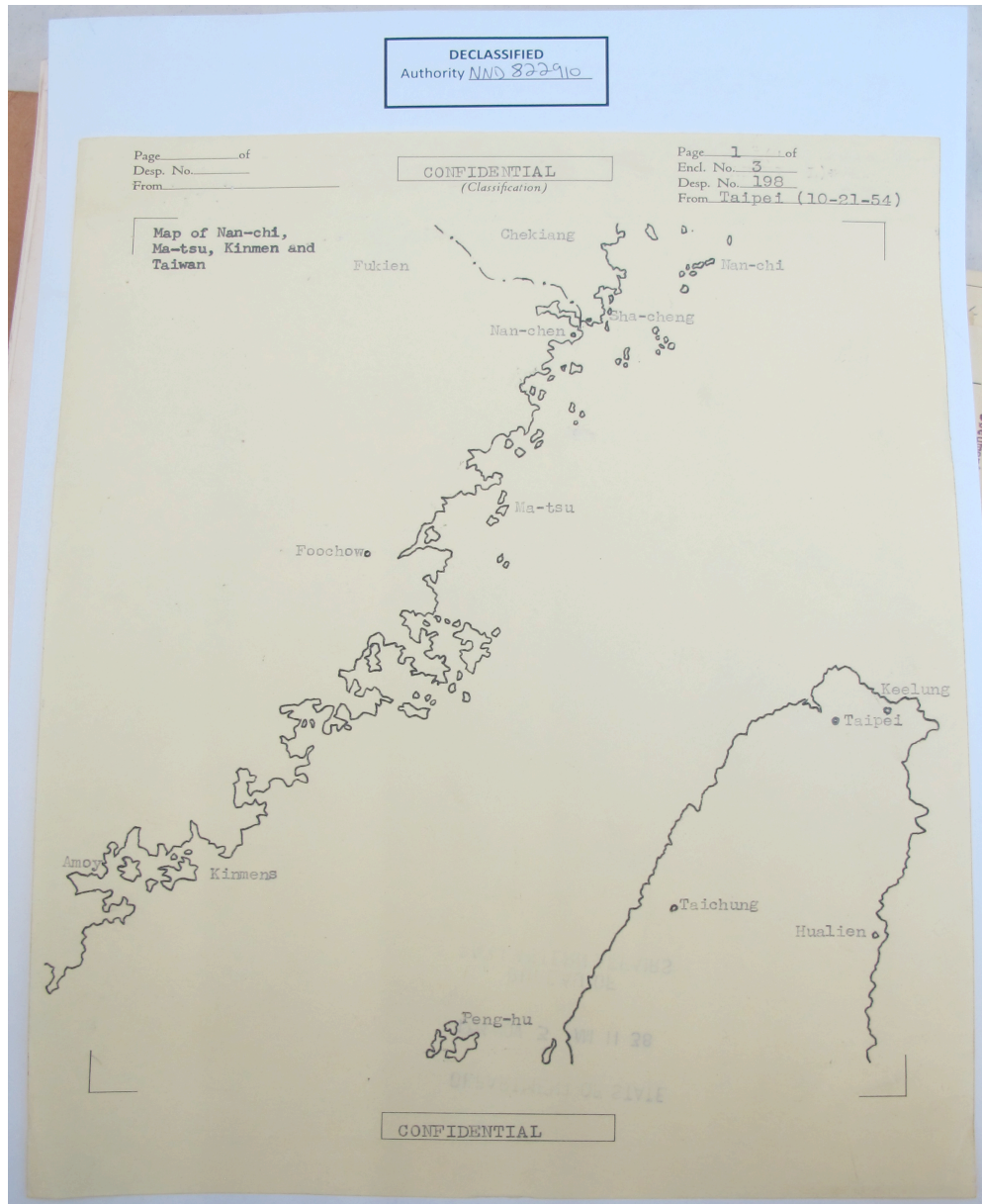
Canada, like other Middle Power countries, had moments of great influence and moments of nominal influence. Nostalgic interpretations of the past can often affect the work of historians, journalists, and politicians, and be either used as a way to criticize contemporary counterparts or to simply reminisce fondly on a country's past. Either way, both uses of history are problematic as in this case it muddies the nuance of Canada's role in global events during the 1950s. Furthermore, by relying on nostalgic anamnesis there is the risk of aggrandizing the past which obscures accuracy of Canada's role on the global stage.¹⁴ Hector Mackenzie cautions against the dangers of studying Canadian history with rose-tinted glasses in order to pedal a certain narrative – the “Golden Age of Canadian Diplomacy” is one such mythological narrative.¹⁵ Canada's involvement in the First Taiwan Strait Crisis is a counter-point to the aggrandized idea of Canada's influence during the 1950s that began with the politicians reminiscing on their time in power and has plagued the historiography ever since. If anything, history, even one's own, does not always offer the narrative that one might wish.

¹⁴ Adam Chapnick and Hector Mackenzie both criticize many authors who have contributed to this historiography as doing just this. Chapnick, "The Golden Age: A Canadian Foreign Policy Paradox" and Hector Mackenzie, "Golden Decade(s)? Reappraising Canada's International Relations in the 1940s and 1950s" *British Journal of Canadian Studies* 23, no. 2 (2010).

¹⁵ Hector Mackenzie, "Memory Lapses: The Use and Abuse of History," *Canadian Issues* (Summer 2013): 32.

Appendices

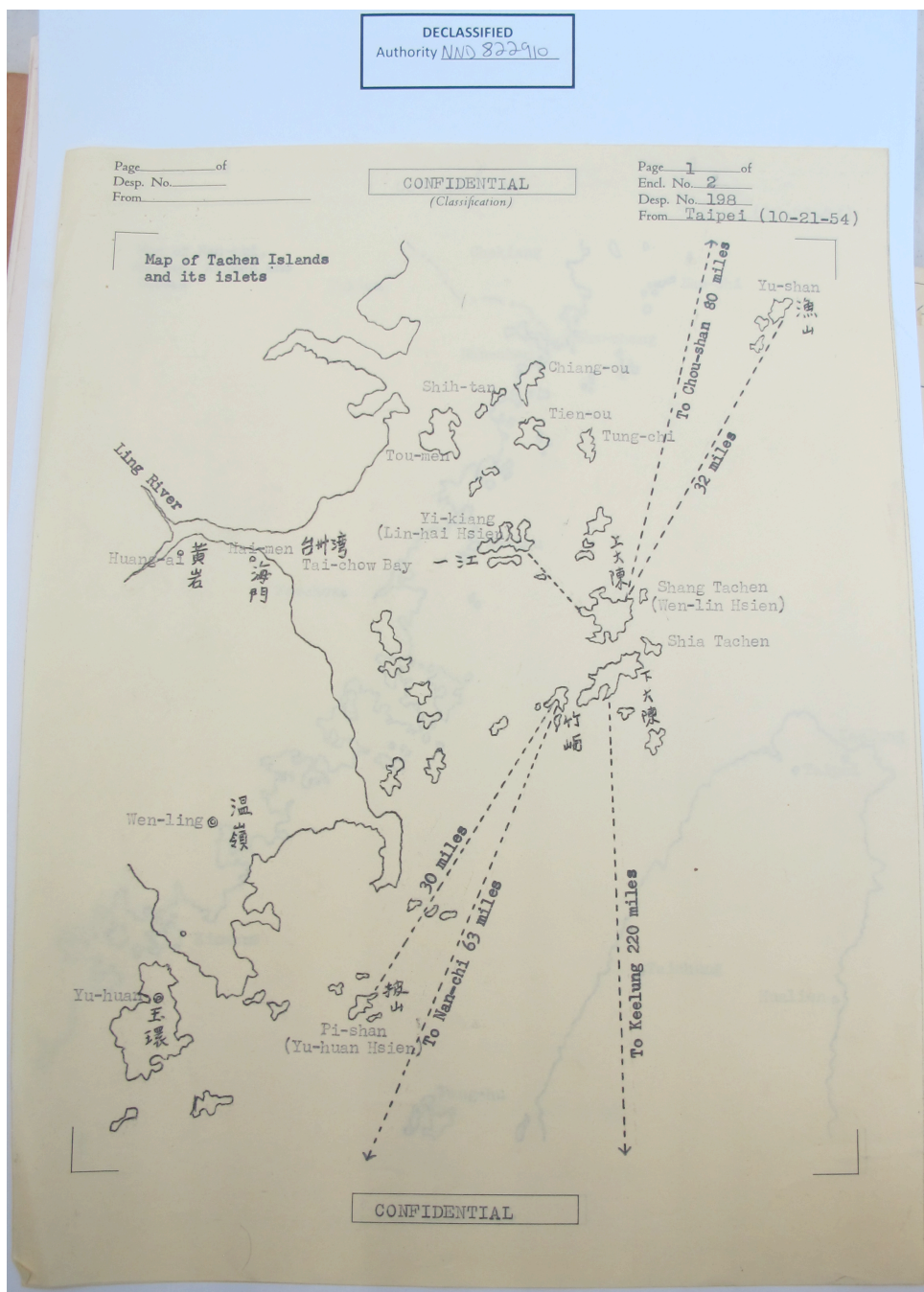
Appendix 1:



Map of the northern side of Formosa and the Offshore Islands, Kinmens (Quemoy) and Ma-tsu (Matsu).

Robert W. Rinden to the Department of State, Washington, 21 October 2019, 793.00/10-2154, box 4209, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-1954, National Archives and Records Administration.

Appendix 2:



Map of the Tachen Islands, part of the Offshore Islands, which are located north of Formosa, along the mainland of China.

Robert W. Rinden to the Department of State, Washington, 21 October 1954, 793.00/10-2154, box 4209, RG59, Central Decimal File 1950-1954, National Archives and Records Administration.

Appendix 3:

Nanaimo, B.C.
580 St. David St.
Jan. 25, 1955.

Mr. Lester Pearson
Ottawa, Canada

Dear Sir:

This is to protest - as strongly as
I know how - on apparent endorsement
and support of the criminally stupid
American policy in Asia.

My family will never forgive the
party or leader who involve us in
any war that may arise out of
the immoral American adventure
in Chinese waters!

Yours very truly,
J.L. Greig

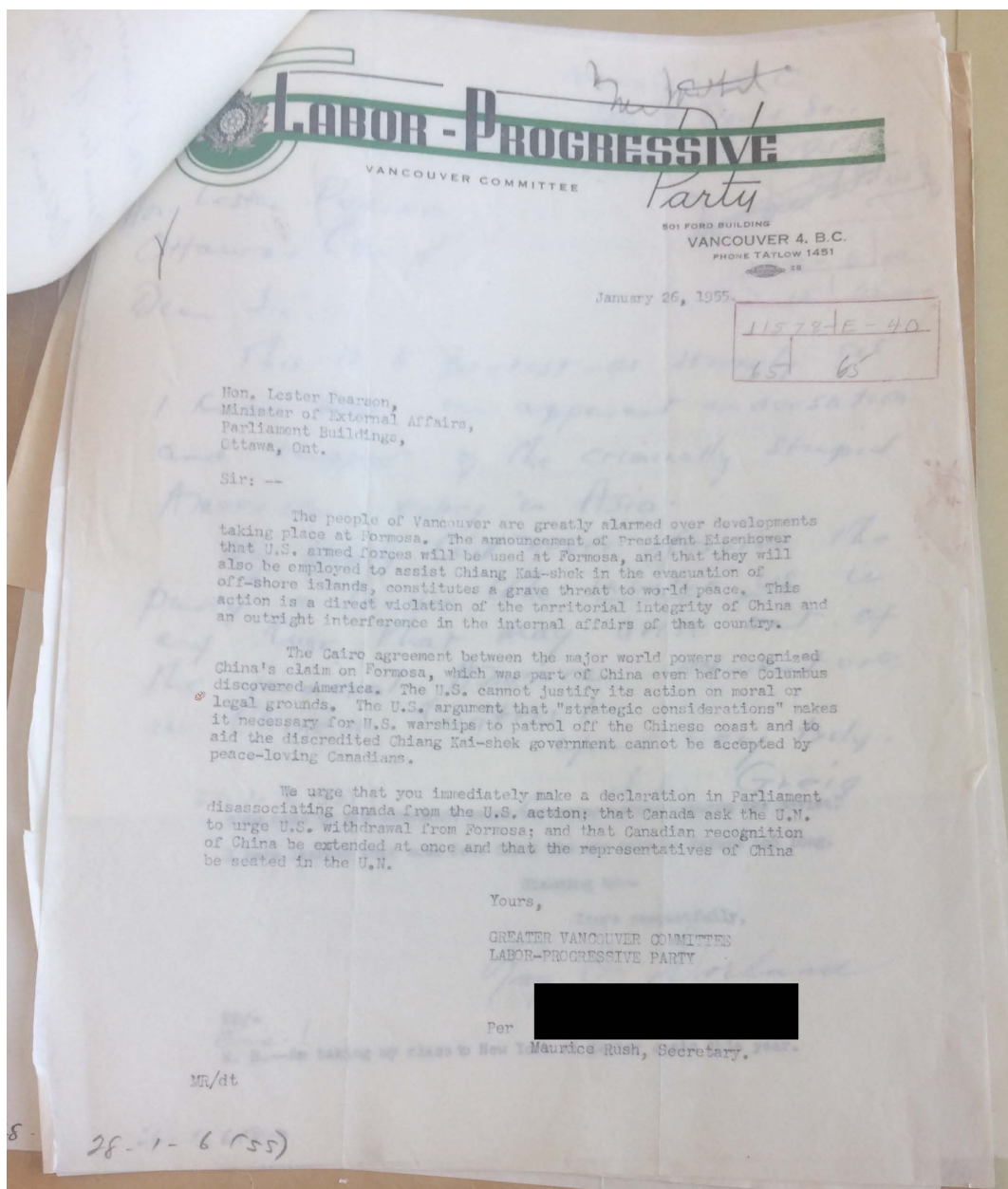
27-1-635)

COMMUNIST CHINA defending herself against the Soviet.

11578-E-40
65 65

J.L. Greig to Lester B. Pearson, 25 January 1955, file 11578-E-40 Part 1, Vol. 7673, RG25, Library and Archives Canada.

Appendix 4:



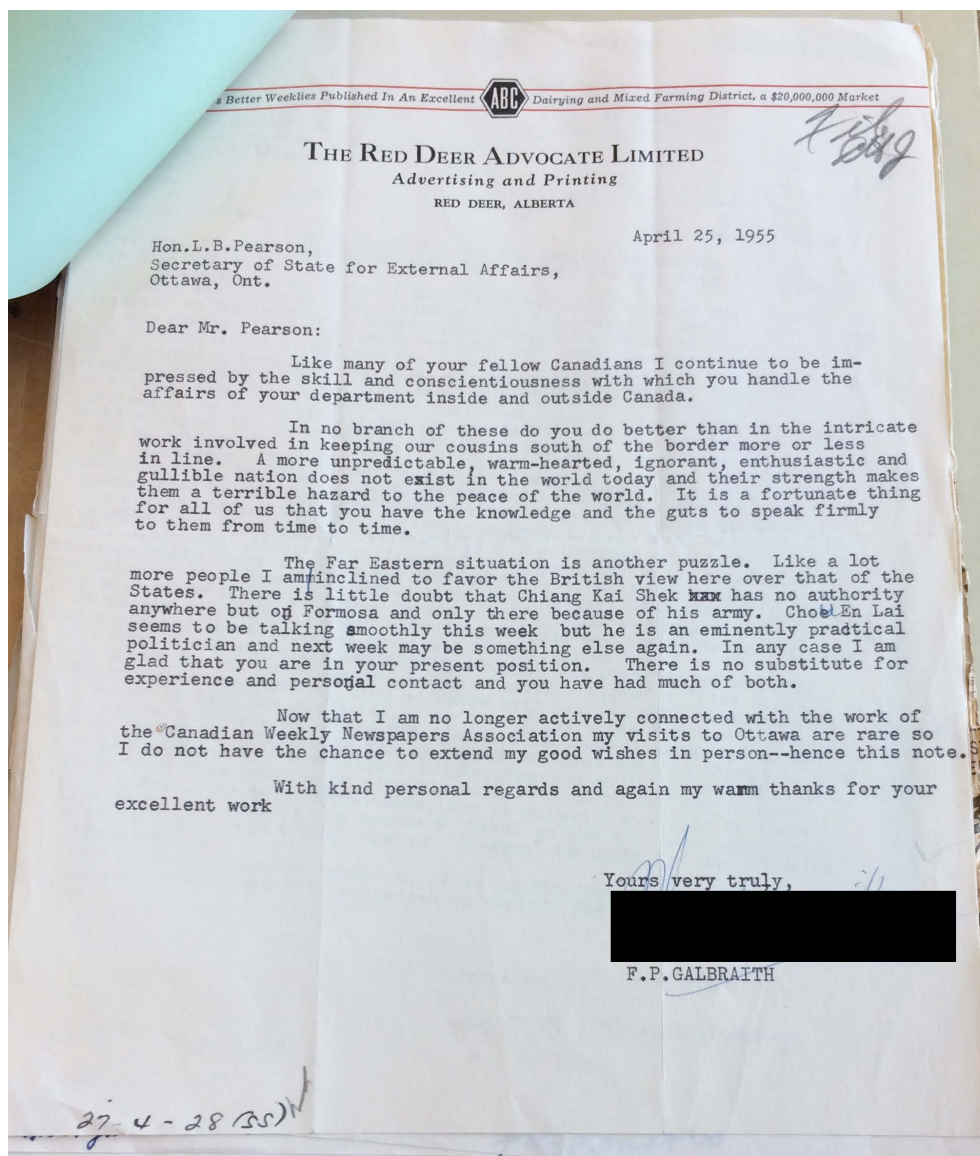
Maurice Rush to Lester B. Pearson, 26 January 1955, file 11578-E-40 Part 1, Vol. 7673, RG25, Library and Archives Canada.

Appendix 5:



Rev. Glynn Firth to Lester B. Pearson, 10 March 1955, file 11578-E-40 Part 1, Vol. 7673, RG25, Library and Archives Canada.

Appendix 6:



F.P. Galbraith to Lester B. Pearson, 25 April 1955, file 11578-E-40 Part 1, Vol. 7673, RG25, Library and Archives Canada.

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