

chiefly Norman Robertson, who encourage him in this last ditch opposition to our having these warheads available” (Document 326). Later in the year, the Minister of Defence, Douglas Harkness, told his Cabinet colleagues that “there was all the difference in the world between the defensive weapons desired for the Canadian forces and hydrogen bombs which everyone had in mind in thinking of nuclear weapons. BOMARCS could not start a war ... [T]he government should lose no time in starting negotiations for an agreement on nuclear weapons for the Canadian forces. The agreements should be completed first and then the government could decide later if and when they would actually have the weapons made available in Canada for the forces in accordance with the agreements” (Document 243). However, Robertson continued to support Green in his opposition to Harkness’s plans. Their fears of a nuclear conflict were hardly assuaged by such American statements as the remark by General Lauris Norstad that he “could think of half a dozen situations in which the use of atomic weapons by NATO forces would be the only possible action in terms of commonsense” (Document 295). Commenting on a draft agreement between Canada and the United States written by members of the Department of National Defence, Robertson and George Ignatieff warned Green it did not meet “the requirement you specified, namely that Ministers should know in advance the implications and obligations involved for Canada” (Document 345). Following the American decision to resume nuclear testing, the Prime Minister became much less receptive to the arguments put forward by Bryce and Harkness. He commented “that the public position now taken by the President had killed nuclear weapons in Canada. At another point, he said that more and more it was becoming clear that we would not be having nuclear weapons in Canada unless there was war.” (Document 360).

In contrast to earlier years, by the end of 1961 the tendency to serious conflict in Canada-U.S. relations was beginning to spread well beyond the nuclear weapons question. Nevertheless, many contentious issues were still resolved with relative ease. Relations between the Canadian government and the new Kennedy administration began on a promising note when Secretary of State Dean Rusk assured the Canadian ambassador, Arnold Heeney, that he was eager to maintain the “special relationship” between the two countries, so long as this could be done “without arousing suspicion or resentment on the part of other close allies of the United States.” In reply, Heeney stated that the relationship was “fundamentally sound and friendly,” and “any really serious divergence in major objectives was improbable” (Document 317). However, Cuba – which “seemed to have priority” among the subjects raised by Kennedy during his Ottawa visit (Document 324) – was a sore point, especially after Fidel Castro publicly proclaimed, “This is a socialist revolution” (see Document 821). An External Affairs memorandum noted that it could not “be assumed that the Canadian people would sympathize with any move by the United States to upset the Castro regime by force from outside.” Moreover, for Canada to join in the American embargo against Cuba would have severe economic repercussions. “As a country living by international trade Canada cannot lightly resort to the weapons of a trade war,” observed a Department of Finance brief for the 1961 meeting of the Canada-