

Introduction

The goals established by the Latin American Division, Department of External Affairs were set out in a memorandum of February 17, 1967. They were as follows:

Specifically, we would like to suggest an initial study on the extent, focus and changes of Canadian public interest in Latin America, and the extent to which this interest has been affected by Canadian policy toward Latin America over the past ten years, or possibly since the accession of Castro to power in 1959. By more precisely identifying the areas of public interest such a study, if effectively presented, would be helpful to the Division and to missions in Latin America in defining our priorities in the area and in developing policy recommendations. It would be interesting to know more of the extent to which the attitude toward Latin America in English-speaking Canada differs from that in French-speaking Canada.

It seemed appropriate to begin the project by selecting 1945 as a starting point and concentrating specifically on the decade 1957-1967. This was done in order to determine the impact, if any, of Cuban affairs on Canadian public opinion. The study carried forward through August, 1967.

The sources used for assessing the objectives of the study included Canadian newspaper comment and editorial opinion,¹ scholarly journals, journals of opinion, letters and comments of the public contained in the files of the Latin American Division, radio and television scripts, and, where time and availability permitted, personal contact with institutions and individuals who have some knowledge of Latin America.² It does not contain information readily available from Parliament or from government departments (e.g. Hansard, Foreign Trade, etc.).