

Howe, as well as senior officials, including Pearson (Document 654). However, it is worth recalling that King was responding not only to 'guidance from Beyond' (which for anyone else would be seen as coincidences that seemed to confirm his decision) but also to controversy in Canadian newspapers provoked by an editorial in *Life* on 15 March 1948: 'Customs Union with Canada: Canada Needs Us and We Need Canada in a Violently Contracting World.' In preparation for the meeting which sealed the fate of the proposal for a customs union, King had asked Pearson for a summary of editorial reaction to that trial balloon in Canada.<sup>8</sup> Whatever the apparent cause, King's retreat on this issue was quite consistent with his cautious approach to politics.

Other aspects of Canada's relations with the United States posed problems but proved less controversial. Ottawa responded to threats to Canadian sovereignty from defence cooperation in the Arctic as only Ottawa can, by establishing an interdepartmental committee, the Advisory Committee on Northern Development. The records of its deliberations (Documents 931 to 933) do give the reader a sense of what bothered Canadian policy-makers about American interest in northern defence. On the subject of Canadian-American cooperation in defence production and supply, it is interesting to juxtapose two approaches by Heeney to Claxton, one 'informal' (Document 978) and one official (Document 979). Provincial attitudes and actions sometimes complicated the continental relationship, as with the anticipated reaction from Quebec to the employment of black troops by the United States (Document 989) and the dealings with the Ontario Government and the Chairman of Ontario Hydro over the Niagara Diversion and the St. Lawrence Seaway and Power Project. However, the Canadian government was also concerned about the disposition of Americans towards Canada, hence the 'Canadian Cooperation Project' with the American film industry, whose revenues from Canada made it more susceptible to persuasion than radio or print (Documents 1040 to 1046).

Other bilateral relationships were less important to Canada. Though Europe remained a focus for Canadian interest and developments there were followed closely by Canadians, the few diplomatic issues of note were irritants associated with the bi-polar world. In the Gray Lecture of January 1947, Louis St. Laurent had identified France as one of Canada's principal partners, but there was not much evidence of that priority in the files of the Department of External Affairs. We have reproduced here a long and revealing despatch written by Charles Ritchie about 'the state of French preparedness, both moral and material' (Document 1058). As Escott Reid commented, it conveyed a sense of a French 'apathy which endangers our national interests.'<sup>9</sup> That report received a wide distribution in Ottawa and it likely influenced later Canadian efforts to inspire a more resolute commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty from France and Belgium (Documents 372, 373, 379, 381, 383 and 390).

The peculiar dispute over the Polish art treasures bedevilled relations with Poland and with the Quebec provincial government. Meanwhile, the deepening rift of the cold war prompted a fundamental reconsideration of what information and

<sup>8</sup>King Papers/14/Vol.240: L.B. Pearson, Memorandum, 14 April 1948 (with enclosure).

<sup>9</sup>PCO/Vol.245: E. Reid to B. Claxton, 16 June 1948.