
8 'Northern Ice': Jean Chrétien and the Failure of Constructive Engagement in Cuba

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Canada's Cuba policy in the Castro era is commonly thought to have ranged between the poles of 'constructive engagement' and 'benign neglect.' The former is typically identified with Liberal governments of Pierre Trudeau and especially Jean Chrétien, whose ministers adopted the terms 'constructive engagement' and 'principled pragmatism' to describe their approach to Cuba.¹ Neglect is understood to have characterized the approach of Conservative governments from John Diefenbaker to Steven Harper, the adjective *benign* signifying, importantly, that even the most anti-Castro of Tories have refused to follow the American example and subject Cuba to punitive trade and diplomatic sanctions. In Canada, the distance between these policies is salient, as Diefenbaker indicated when he famously told Pierre Trudeau in the House of Commons, 'During my period of administration we had relations with Cuba and that is right. We traded in non-strategic materials but we did not cuddle up to Castro.'²

here is yet another common idea about Canada's relationship with the Castro regime, however, and it stands uneasily in relation to the first. As a Canadian parliamentary backgrounder put it in 1998, 'while they share the goal of the democratization of Cuba, Canada and the United States have long differed over how best to pursue it.'³ This is a comforting claim, since it not only glosses over policy divisions within both Canada and the United States but posits a common set of core values shared by North America's liberal democracies. Disagreeing about means, according to this view, matters relatively little if Canada and the United States have the same ends in common – even if, from time to time, bilateral irritants like Helms-Burton carry an enormous symbolic weight on both sides of the 49th parallel.

What interests me about these commonly held ideas is not so much what they reveal as what they conceal. Introducing the second report of the Bush administration's Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba in 2006, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told the Cuban people: 'We will stand with you through the process of transformation to a democratic future.'⁴ Lloyd Axworthy, the Liberal minister who came to personify Canada's policy of constructive engagement, said in 1998: 'Our engagement is designed to provide Cuba with the assistance and support that will be needed if a peaceful transition is to occur with full respect for human rights, genuinely representative government institutions, and an open economy.'⁵ Are these statements so different? Is it possible that the chronic failure of both U.S. and Canadian policies to produce human rights and democratic reforms in Cuba, decade after decade, is in fact derivative of their common view of revolutionary Cuba as a society perched on the cusp of a transformative political and economic overhaul in the Western image?

The purpose of this chapter is to open up some of these questions by revisiting Jean Chrétien's 1998 state visit to Havana, ostensibly a defining moment in Canada's assertion of an 'independent' (read: anti-American) Cuba policy. I want to argue that, despite their superficial differences, what Canadian and American Cuba policies shared in the Chrétien years was the premise that liberal democracies in North America (and elsewhere) *ought* to be prodding the Cubans forcefully in the direction of liberal reforms. It is a premise that affronted the Cuban government in general and Fidel Castro personally, irrespective of whether it was articulated by the 'engaging' Canadians or the 'isolating' Americans. Rightly or wrongly, Cubans do not accept – any more than Canadians or Americans would – the intrusion of foreigners into their domestic affairs, whether this intrusion takes the form of the iron fist or the velvet glove. This refusal explains why the Chrétien state visit was an almost unprecedented diplomatic disaster in the history of Canada's relations with revolutionary Cuba.

Constructive Engagement

Jean Chrétien's political mentor, Pierre Trudeau, terminated Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) aid to Cuba in 1978 as a gesture of protest against Castro's intervention in various African hot spots, Angola foremost among them. Brian Mulroney did nothing to reverse this prohibition, nor to mitigate the frosty attitude that lay be-

hind it. Thus, when Chrétien became prime minister, in October 1993, he faced a stark choice. He could maintain the status quo and continue fifteen years of 'benign neglect,' or he could return to the 'engagement' policy of his mentor. He opted for the latter.

It must have seemed a low-risk choice. By 1993, little remained of the original rationale for the diplomatic isolation of Cuba. Castro had removed his troops from Angola in 1991, for one thing. For another, Cuba's Cold War alliance with the communist bloc had collapsed along with the Berlin Wall and later the Soviet Union itself, deflating much of the anxiety many North Americans had harboured about the presence of communism in the western hemisphere. In 1991 Castro introduced his *Período especial en tiempo de paz*, signalling not only that Cuba's economy was in shambles but that the island was almost completely isolated and no longer any threat to NATO or anyone else. The main issue weighing on Chrétien's decision to engage with Cuba, human rights, was a comparatively new one, the product of the 'human rights revolution' that President Jimmy Carter and others had pioneered in the late 1970s.⁶ The prime minister thus calculated that a pragmatic re-engagement with Cuba along lines similar to Pierre Trudeau's policy would carry limited political liability if it was paired with a strong, explicit Canadian objection to Cuban human rights abuses. The upside of such a strategy, of course, was the potential trade advantage to Canada – a concern never far from Jean Chrétien's thoughts about Canadian diplomacy. As James Bartleman, Canada's ambassador to Cuba in the early 1980s and Chrétien's special envoy to Cuba in the 1990s, later put it, the Liberal government 'hoped that closer ties would prepare the ground for Canadian companies to take advantage of the trade and investment opportunities certain to follow when Cuba eventually adopted a market economy.'⁷

In March 1994 Chrétien's foreign minister, André Ouellet, put in motion the policy that would come to be known as constructive engagement. He instructed Canada's diplomats to take 'a more positive position in the development of relations with Cuba,' which meant increasing high-level exchanges between the two countries and publicly criticizing the U.S. embargo, on the one hand, as well as beefing up Canada's criticism of Cuban human rights abuses via the United Nations, on the other.⁸ Four months later, Secretary of State Christine Stewart told a meeting of the Organization of American States (OAS) that Canada desired 'positive and orderly change in Cuba,' after which she visited Havana and announced that the Canadian development

assistance to the island that Pierre Trudeau had terminated would be reinstated.⁹ Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina visited Canada in 1995. The same year, the speaker of the House of Commons, Gilbert Parent, visited Havana, followed by various Canadian bankers and trade officials.

Characteristically, Jean Chrétien's decision to re-engage with Cuba was taken with one eye on Washington and, in particular, on President Bill Clinton's announcement in 1995 that his administration would begin taking 'calibrated steps' towards the establishment of full diplomatic relations with Cuba.¹⁰ But there was also a second, unprecedented 'opening to Cuba' in the air in the mid-1990s, one that would colour the Liberals' re-engagement strategy at virtually every turn. It was the sensational news, first announced in early November 1996, that Pope John Paul II would visit Havana, conduct an open-air Mass, and press for church-related reforms on the island (including freedoms for Catholic schools, charities, and media outlets, and compensation for nationalized church property).¹¹ The pope's own 'Cuba policy' was widely seen as a variation on constructive engagement. John Paul had played a crucial role in challenging the hegemony of the Soviets in Eastern Europe in the 1980s, and he made no secret of his willingness to use his own charismatic leadership and moral authority to challenge Fidel Castro's.¹² It was no accident that Chrétien, devout Catholic that he is, timed his visit to follow the pontiff's by mere months. More significant still was the influence of Vatican planning, for the pope announced his plan to visit Cuba after the Brothers to the Rescue incident had soured Bill Clinton on dialogue with the Castro regime.¹³

Fidel Castro first met Jean Chrétien in New York in October 1995, during the UN's fiftieth-anniversary celebrations. It was there that *El Comandante* first invited the Canadian prime minister to Cuba. The invitation was reissued the following spring, when the president of the Cuban National Assembly, Ricardo Alarcón, met with Chrétien in Ottawa. The prime minister expressed interest in meeting with President Castro – no doubt reckoning that it would to some extent evoke the glory days of Pierre Trudeau's historic state visit – but he was also blunt in expressing his hopes for radical political change in Cuba. He told a nonplussed Alarcón that 'Canada looked forward to the day when there would be an end to human rights abuses and the installation of democracy in Cuba.'¹⁴

In August 1996 President Clinton announced the appointment of a special envoy to consult with U.S. allies on the future of Cuba. The

same month, Chrétien despatched James Bartleman secretly to Havana to enquire 'if Castro would be willing to deepen Cuba's relations with Canada and begin a dialogue on market and democratic reforms and human rights.'¹⁵ Bartleman discussed the matter privately with the Comandante, presenting him with a fourteen-point *bout de papier* that listed 'possible areas for future collaboration' with Canada, including human rights. (This draft document would, in fact, form the basis of the 1997 *Joint Declaration of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Canada and Cuba* [CCJD] signed by Lloyd Axworthy.) Bartleman's message to Fidel Castro was that 'the world had changed and that countries that did not open their borders to the free flow of people, ideas, and trade would become marginalized.'¹⁶ Chrétien agreed. When Cuban Vice-President Carlos Lage ventured to Ottawa several weeks later to convey Castro's willingness to open a new dialogue on the basis of the fourteen-point plan, the prime minister told him point blank that 'he would like to see the people of Cuba elect their leaders as was done in Canada.'¹⁷ Bartleman later credited the prime minister with being even more aggressive on human rights with Lage than he had himself been with Castro: 'Lage made no comment but might have wondered whether Canada's aim was to help Castro adapt to globalization or to ease him out of office.'¹⁸ The Comandante would later draw the same conclusion.

When Pierre Trudeau had gone to Cuba in 1976, in the midst of the Cold War, his main goals were to drum up trade and promote détente. He went to Havana fully expecting to 'agree to disagree' with Field Castro and thus imposed few diplomatic preconditions on the visit. Not so Jean Chrétien. The political climate had changed dramatically since the 1970s, and both Chrétien and his critics knew it. The prime minister was not about to risk his own political capital in a photo-op visit to Havana that Fidel Castro could manipulate to his own advantage. Chrétien wanted assurances from the Cubans that any high-level exchange with his government would produce concrete results; and the Cubans understood that, without such assurances, the Canadian prime minister might well retract the offer to establish a new dialogue.

As part of this subtle diplomatic dance, the Cubans agreed to host a visit by the Canadian commissioner of human rights, Maxwell Yalden, in November 1996. Yalden was, from Ottawa's perspective, the canary in the Cuban coal mine. His mission was to draw the revolutionary government into a 'structured dialogue on human rights.'¹⁹ To achieve this improbable goal, he carried with him to Havana both carrots and sticks. 'A joint consultative mechanism' on human rights, Yalden re-

portedly told Foreign Minister Robaina, 'was a key element of any plan for a joint Canada-Cuba assistance plan.'²⁰ In the end, although Yalden was 'impressed' by the Cubans' willingness to exchange ideas about what such a mechanism might look like, he was forced to concede that 'it was difficult to engage in dialogue with Cuba about a problem it didn't even recognize existed.'²¹

When it became clear that the Cubans were reluctant to commit to concrete reforms as a pre-condition of a high-level visit, Chrétien's advisers urged him to maintain the dialogue but not to go to Havana himself. James Bartleman was one of the voices counselling caution. The Cubans had proved willing to pursue various memoranda of understanding, he later recalled, but they had 'stalled' on human rights reforms. Bartleman would later write about Cuban intransigence with a jaded eye: 'They were happy enough to attend seminars in Canada as long as Canada paid their expenses, and were, when pushed, willing to accord a limited freedom of action on non-governmental organizations in Cuba. There was, however, no meeting of minds. The Cubans repeated the Cold War communist double-talk that the Party reflected the will of the people, and that democratic elections and liberties in the developed world were but smokescreens for the interests of capitalists.'²² Chrétien took note, and decided the time was not right for a prime ministerial visit. Thus, it was Lloyd Axworthy who ended up going to Havana, in January 1997.

Axworthy in Havana

Lloyd Axworthy's visit to Cuba was the first by a Canadian foreign affairs minister since Fidel Castro took power in 1959. According to one recent study of constructive engagement, 'Axworthy hoped to reform the Cuban economic and political institutions and to train young technocrats to prepare the country for the possible transition to democracy.'²³ But this is not how it appeared when he went to Havana. Axworthy would engage the Cubans – and Fidel Castro personally – with the diplomacy of the grand gesture, which meant, among other things, taking pains not to affront them publicly the way Jean Chrétien had done in private. His visit would warm up the Cuban-Canadian dialogue, as intended, but it would also undercut the diplomatic advantage Canada had enjoyed in quietly pressing for concrete political reforms from the Cubans. Henceforth, the caution with which the diplomats and the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) had ventured into

the new dialogue would count for very little, as would Jean Chrétien's repeated insistence that engagement with Cuba be paired with tough language on human rights. In the subtle dance of Canadian-Cuban dialogue, the Cubans would now lead.

Lloyd Axworthy and Jean Chrétien personified two competing strains in the Liberal foreign policy tradition, both of which, oddly enough, were characterized by their conservative critics as 'Trudeauite'.²⁴ For the pragmatic Chrétien, who personally led seven so-called Team Canada missions abroad between 1994 and 2002, the main emphasis was always trade. Axworthy, on the other hand, drew far more heavily on Pearsonian internationalism, hoping, as he later put it in his book *Navigating a New World*, that Canada might 'take a special kind of leadership in helping manage a world dominated by the power and influence of our continental neighbour'.²⁵ Yet, as William Christian observed in 1998, the two emphases were never entirely at cross-purposes: 'Anything Axworthy does has to be seen as nestled into the context of Chrétien's primary focus and drive in foreign policy, which is to expand Canadian trade. Axworthy has a more moralistic and humanitarian agenda than Chrétien has. He can exercise it in minor ways that don't contradict the main thrust.'²⁶ Although both men expressed the hope that Cuba would improve its human rights record and move towards Western-styled democracy, they agreed that good trade relations with the island should not be contingent on such reforms. (Bill Clinton made the same case for China when he extended it most-favoured-nation status and explicitly 'delinked' human rights from trade.)²⁷ The day before Axworthy left for Havana, the CBC's Julie Van Dusen asked him, 'Do you plan to link trade with human rights?' He replied, 'No, I think what we want to do is to have a good, continuing engaged dialogue with the Cuban government, based upon mutual interest.'²⁸

Axworthy spent two days in Havana, and much of this time in the private company of Fidel Castro. Like Trudeau before him, Axworthy made no secret of his admiration for the Cuban leader. Appearing at the Canadian ambassador's residence unexpectedly for lunch on the second day of the visit, Castro chatted with Axworthy for so long that he had to cancel a scheduled public appearance. Castro's long-winded talk, which ranged from gardening to Canadian politics, was a 'tour de force,' Axworthy later said. The Comandante had even cracked some jokes.²⁹ Meeting the Canadian press outside the ambassador's residence after their meeting, Castro was obviously pleased. 'Canada has a lot of prestige,' he said. 'What it says and what it thinks has great

meaning for us.³⁰ When asked whether Axworthy had broached the subject of human rights with him, Castro replied, 'We spoke of everything. Among friends you can speak of everything.'³¹

The big story coming out of Axworthy's Havana trip was the publication, finally, of the fourteen-point Joint Declaration that had been under discussion for months. Axworthy knew beforehand that the Cubans had agreed to sign off on the document, which helps to account for his confident, amicable rapport with Castro. By the terms of this communiqué, Canada and Cuba pledged collaboration in six key areas of political reform in Cuba, including exchanges of judges and parliamentarians, cooperation on strengthening a Cuban citizens' complaints commission, discussion of human rights, and support for the work of Canadian and Cuban non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Less contentious items in the CCJD included cooperation in the areas of economic policy, banking, foreign investment, narcotics interdiction, the prevention of international terrorism, health matters, and various cultural, athletic, and academic undertakings. What Axworthy could not know at the time, of course, and what continued to worry Prime Minister Chrétien and his advisers, was whether the Cubans would take concrete steps to honour the accord. The ink had not dried on the Joint Declaration before its North American critics were calling it vague and even naive. They noted in particular that, rather than holding the Cubans to specific goals or timetables, it promised only 'regular reviews.'

Prior to his departure for Havana, Axworthy had taken pains to place his historic visit in the context of Canada's long-standing bilateral relationship with Cuba. Taking a page from the Trudeau oeuvre, he had said: 'We look forward to this meeting to discuss areas of trade, investment, governance, rights – all of the matters we have discussed in the past. That doesn't mean to say we will always share universally all opinions. But as long as we are prepared to dialogue with a sense of respect and openness and frankness, that's the best way to conduct matters between countries.'³² Even in the immediate aftermath of the visit, Axworthy acknowledged that the CCJD was meant only as 'an opening' to ongoing discussions about reform in Cuba.³³ 'It's a good beginning,' he said. 'It's a start. It's a work in progress. We've had in the last 24 hours very broad, very open very frank discussions with ministers, President Castro and others. The dialogue has been very important.'³⁴ But before long, like Trudeau before him, Axworthy let his enthusiasms

get the better of him. Just a week after he had returned from Havana, he boasted that he had made more headway with Castro in five hours than the Americans 'have accomplished in the last 30 years.'³⁵

These were, of course, fighting words. The Cuban-American community, which had protested the Axworthy visit with a billboard campaign urging Canadian tourists to boycott Cuba, was incensed. In Washington, there was talk of the Canadian foreign minister having deliberately provoked the Clinton White House. Said State Department spokesperson Nicholas Burns: 'It doesn't make sense to reward a dictator in our own hemisphere who's completely behind the times. You [Canadians] reward him by sending your foreign minister down to visit, by having business as usual, by trading, and we think that's wrong.'³⁶ (When Burns got a laudatory call from Senator Jesse Helms, he realized that he had overstated his case, contacting the Canadian embassy in Washington to soften his remarks.) Not surprisingly, Helms himself – co-author of the 1996 Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (*Libertad*) Act – was Axworthy's harshest critic. He publicly compared Axworthy's visit with British prime minister Neville Chamberlain's appeasement of Adolf Hitler prior to the Second World War. For his part, President Clinton kept to the middle ground. He said he was gratified that Axworthy had discussed human rights and domestic reforms with the Cubans. But he added: 'I'm skeptical, frankly, that ... the recent discussions between the Canadians and the Cubans will lead to advances. I believe that our policy is the proper one, but I'm glad that the Canadians are trying to make something good happen in Cuba.'³⁷

In Canada, elite opinion polarized along predictable lines. Historian Michael Bliss wrote that Axworthy's 'apparent adulation of Castro is shameful. Canadians get cheap vacations, but Cubans are no more free. It's just more hypocrisy on our part.'³⁸ At least one veteran Canadian diplomat disagreed. 'It was,' said Gordon Ritchie of Axworthy's visit, 'a most impressive performance.'³⁹ (Ritchie added: 'The American stance has never been about noble principle. It is about corrupt congressional politics, wealthy Cuban expatriates, a rich and powerful sugar lobby and a rich and powerful tobacco lobby.') Asked to comment on American criticisms of the Axworthy visit, Jean Chrétien observed that the United States had only itself to blame for Castro's iron-fisted grip on power. 'Let them normalize the situation between Cuba and the United States,' said the prime minister, 'and I don't think that Mr. Castro will have it easier.'⁴⁰ Chrétien also praised the Joint Declaration. 'The accord

we signed with Cuba yesterday means there will be an ombudsman for Cuba's national assembly and a dialogue between Canada and Cuba on human rights,' he said. 'This is considerable progress.'⁴¹

Axworthy's public posturing was risky, something he learned even before he left Havana. Cuban officials arrested three high-profile dissidents (journalists Tania Quintero and Juan Antonio Sanchez, and Marta Beatriz Roque, director of the Association of Independent Economists) just hours after Axworthy's talks with Fidel Castro, apparently because they had been trying to circulate independent analyses of the Cuban economy. Axworthy pressed the Cuban government on their detainment, taking credit for their release after only several hours in custody. 'We took the opportunity to make that case and were given assurances that they had been released,' he told the press while he was still in Cuba.⁴² More ominous for constructive engagement, however, was Roberto Robaina's blunt appraisal of Canada's ability to influence the regime's policies on dissidents. 'We are not a case for Canada to check,' he said during the press conference to announce the CCJD. 'Canada is not for us a teacher that gives us orders or certifies or decertifies us.'⁴³

Whether the Joint Declaration produced any short-term benefits for Cuban dissidents and other victims of human rights abuses is doubtful. As Yvon Grenier noted in his stinging 2000 critique of Canada's Cuba policy, 'Our Dictatorship,' Ottawa took credit for the release of Ismael Sambra and twelve other dissidents in 1997 and 1998; but Sambra himself credited PEN Canada for his release and, in any case, the others were nearing the end of their sentences.⁴⁴ In its 1997 annual report on Cuba, Human Rights Watch acknowledged that 'Canada's role as a leading foreign investor in Cuba provided it with important leverage for pressuring Cuba to make genuine human rights reforms during 1997.' But the same report criticized the Joint Declaration for its failure to provide a 'concrete agenda for improvements in Cuban human rights practices.' It then concluded: 'Unfortunately, the Cuban government, which detained several dissidents during the negotiations, showed little sign of taking the accord seriously.'⁴⁵ To judge from Human Rights Watch's description of Cuba's persecution of dissidents in 1997, the apparatus of state repression barely paused during the Axworthy visit.

When Pope John Paul II visited Cuba for five days in late January 1998, he engaged in much the same diplomatic dance with Fidel Castro as the Canadians had. In a scene that foreshadowed the Chrétien visit four months later, Castro welcomed the pontiff at José Martí air-

port with a vitriolic speech attacking what he called the U.S. 'genocide' against Cuba. ('It was an ambush,' a Vatican official later told *Newsweek*.⁴⁶) The pope reacted graciously. He kept to prepared texts for the twelve speeches he gave on the island, emphasizing that his mission on behalf of the church was spiritual rather than political. Even so, the pontiff's visit to Cuba represented a watershed in the extension of basic freedoms for the Cuban people, especially concerning matters of faith. According to Human Rights Watch, 'the pope's calls for freedom of religion, conscience, and expression and the release of political prisoners created an unprecedented air of openness.'⁴⁷

In response to John Paul II's call for an amnesty – a request made indirectly through his secretary of state, which impressed Fidel Castro – the Cubans claimed to have released 299 prisoners. Of these, roughly one hundred were 'political.' Nineteen were released on condition that they exile themselves to Canada, and ultimately fourteen did so. A February 1998 press release from the PMO announced that Canada was happy to welcome these 'prisoners of conscience.' Prime Minister Chrétien was quoted as saying: 'The decision to release these prisoners demonstrates the benefits of a policy of constructive engagement with Cuba on a broad range of issues, including sensitive political ones.'⁴⁸ Once the exiles had landed in Toronto, Sarah DeCosse of Human Rights Watch flew up from Washington to interview them. They informed her that conditions in Cuba's prisons had deteriorated recently, noting that some prisoners were now being kept in solitary confinement for up to five years. DeCosse told *Maclean's* magazine that Canada was doing too little to press the Cuban authorities on their treatment of dissidents. 'As a leading foreign investor in Cuba,' she said, 'Canada really could exercise more leverage.'⁴⁹ Her detailed findings were published the following year as *Cuba's Repressive Machinery: Human Rights Forty Years after the Revolution*.⁵⁰

According to James Bartleman, who visited the Vatican in the wake of the pope's visit, Rome feared that Cuban dissidents would face a crackdown when Cuba was once again out of the international spotlight. It therefore urged the Canadian prime minister to visit to Havana as a means of forestalling this possibility. And indeed, in the aftermath of the papal tour, according to Human Rights Watch, 'Cuba's stepped-up prosecutions and harassment of dissidents, along with its refusal to grant amnesty to hundreds of remaining political prisoners or reform its criminal code, marked a disheartening return to heavy-handed repression.'⁵¹

Bartleman returned to Havana in February 1998 to resume negotiating the terms of a possible prime ministerial visit. He recalled Fidel Castro being in a 'foul mood' when they met, because he had not appreciated the Canadians' insistence that there would be conditions before Chrétien would agree to see him. 'I'm tired of visitors that come asking the impossible,' Castro said. 'They are no better than the foolish Don Quixote.'⁵² Bartleman pressed Castro to release more high-profile prisoners and to sign the UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. But ultimately, at the end of an all-night visit with the Comandante in his private residence, Castro told Bartleman that he was not prepared to make any such concessions in advance of a visit by the prime minister. 'Don't ask Cuba to do anything that would damage it,' Castro said, 'and Cuba will not ask Canada to do anything that would embarrass it.'⁵³ According to Bartleman, this news discouraged Chrétien but did not cool his interest in visiting Cuba. 'Following the submission of my report on returning to Ottawa,' Bartleman later wrote, 'the prime minister decided to proceed with a working visit on April 27 and 28. In so doing, he hoped to reinforce Canada's policy of constructive engagement, in particular our desire to advance the cause of human rights. He was by now under no illusion that Castro wanted our help to ease the transition of his country to a market economy or was really interested in lessening Cuba's isolation in the hemisphere at the cost of loosening his totalitarian control.'⁵⁴

Seen in retrospect, Chrétien's decision to visit an intransigent Castro was a decisive fork in the road for his Cuba policy. Like Roberto Robaina and Carlos Lage before him, Fidel Castro had sent a clear message to the prime minister that he would brook no outside interference in Cuba's domestic affairs. He was plainly not interested in being engaged constructively.

Chrétien in Havana

Word of Jean Chrétien's plan to visit Cuba leaked while he was at the Summit of the Americas conference in Santiago, Chile, on 19 April 1998. (Canadian officials later said that it was the American delegation who leaked the story.) The two-day conference – at which every country in the western hemisphere but Cuba was represented – was designed to promote free trade. But, according to one observer, when word of Chrétien's imminent visit to Cuba leaked, the matter of how best to deal with Castro in hemispheric relations 'eclipsed' all others.⁵⁵ Some lead-

ers used the news as a pretext to openly criticize U.S. policy on Cuba; others suggested that it was yet another signal that Cuba's isolation in the hemisphere was ending. 'Everybody's going to Cuba, and it's good for inter-American relations,' said a spokesperson for Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo.⁵⁶ When asked how word of his plan to visit Cuba was received at the summit, Chrétien replied: 'Most of the leaders who learned about it talked to me very positively about this decision. They all said it was a good thing.'⁵⁷ Chrétien was cagey about whether his visit meant that he would be inviting Fidel Castro to the next Summit of the Americas, to be held in Canada two and a half years hence. 'To invite someone new,' he said, 'you have to have a consensus that does not exist right now.'⁵⁸ These words would prove to be prescient.

Two days after the leak, the PMO issued a short statement announcing the upcoming Chrétien visit. In addition to talks with Fidel Castro, it said, the prime minister would be meeting with representatives of the Catholic Church as well as members of Cuban NGOs. 'Canada has long practiced a policy of constructive engagement with Cuba,' the prime minister was quoted as saying. 'We believe the best way to promote our values is through dialogue, not isolation.'⁵⁹ Lloyd Axworthy went even further, suggesting that Canada might play a role in reuniting Cuba and the United States. President Clinton, said Axworthy, was trying to build new bridges to Cuba. 'Frankly, the Prime Minister's visit is in a very crucial timing to help build that bridge. I think it really can provide a significant step because we have good relations with the United States.'⁶⁰ Much was made in the press of Chrétien's apparent willingness to ruffle American feathers, but at least one perceptive observer acknowledged that it was in Washington's interests to have a trusted friend at Castro's dinner table. 'If anything it's good for the United States to have a close ally who the United States can consult with to go and talk with Castro,' said Philip Brenner of American University, 'to get a first hand sense is this man still healthy, is he still lucid, what is his agenda?'⁶¹

In the days leading up to the trip, Canadian officials adopted a guarded tone with the national media. More than one journalist noted, for example, that Chrétien's aides would not state explicitly what would have to happen during the visit to deem it a success. In stark contrast with Trudeau's 1976 visit – which was cited in just about every news report leading up to Chrétien's trip – they made it clear that the prime minister would not be speaking at any public rallies in Cuba. The phrase 'working visit' was deployed repeatedly, implying that diplo-

matic pomp would be kept to a minimum. There would be no Viva el Primer Ministro Fidel Castro! from Jean Chrétien! The prime minister was keenly aware of the need to raise human rights with Fidel Castro. 'Of course we will raise the question of human rights and political rights,' the prime minister said before his departure.⁶² His 'background briefing book' mentioned explicitly that 360 political prisoners were incarcerated in Cuba.⁶³ Yet his aides gave not so much as a hint that the prime minister might raise specific dissidents' cases with Castro, despite the fact that some Canadian activist groups had been vocal in urging him to do so.

Like many Canadians of his vintage, Chrétien harboured sentimental feelings for Castro, and they influenced his decision to go to Havana. He told reporters that he had been enamoured of Castro in the 1950s. 'He was a very popular person, a young man taking on the Batista regime,' said Chrétien. 'He had been in jail, he had risked his life, he wanted to change society. At that time, I was fighting the Duplessis regime, so, as a student, he was a star for a lot of us.'⁶⁴ Chrétien elaborated on his and Castro's contrasting political philosophies: 'He still wants to use communism. I don't believe in it, it's been proven it doesn't work ... I'm a practical politician – that doesn't mean I don't have goals, that I don't want to have social justice. I'm just not doctrinaire on the means. My view is we have to have growth in the world so there will be more money for governments to give to people who are suffering in society. I'm not in politics to make the rich richer. Castro wants the same thing. He has a different technique.'⁶⁵

The prime minister arrived in Havana on the evening of Sunday, 26 April, 1998. His itinerary began with the inauguration of the new Terminal Three at Havana's José Martí airport, a facility whose air-traffic infrastructure was designed by the Ottawa firm Intelcan Technosystems and whose construction was underwritten by a \$40-million loan from the Canadian Export Development Corporation. Cuban media were on hand to televise both leaders' remarks at the ceremony, and thus, as he had done during the pope's visit, Fidel Castro used the occasion to blast the United States. 'No state should pretend to have the right to starve another people to death,' he said, 'or let it die from diseases. That is genocide. That is turning a nation into a ghetto and imposing on it a new version of the Holocaust; it's like using biological, chemical or nuclear weapons. Those who do such things should be taken before an international court of law to stand trial as war criminals.'⁶⁶ In the same speech the Comandante also dismissed international criticism of

Cuba's human rights record. 'Let's do away with the infamous manipulations and slanders against Cuba by the hegemonic power on the [UN] Human Rights Commission. The heroic people of Cuba have been, in this century, an unblemished example in the struggle for man's dignity within, and outside, our homeland.'⁶⁷

Jean Chrétien would later be pilloried in the press for not so much as flinching at his host's vitriol. The prime minister later said of Castro's remarks: 'I was not very happy because the words were too strong. I told him that. It was a very tough speech. But I wasn't warned that he would use the occasion to make what, for Cuba, is a normal speech.'⁶⁸ Instead, Chrétien kept to the standard diplomatic script and gave a measured speech. He emphasized Canada's commitment to 'a more dynamic, more democratic, more prosperous hemisphere, and to achieving 'greater social, economic, and political justice throughout the region.'⁶⁹ Chrétien later said of his own remarks: 'I was satisfied that I was raising all the points I wanted to raise. What was important was to tell everybody there that change is coming and you'll have to adjust. He was in the past. I was in the present and the future.'⁷⁰ But he and his entourage knew that Castro had put him on the ropes, and that they now had to counterpunch with something equally forceful. Later that evening, a Canadian official announced that Chrétien would appeal directly to Castro for the release of four Cuban dissidents – Vladimiro Roca, Martha Beatriz Roque, Felix Bonne, and Rene Gomez Manzano – all of whom had been imprisoned without charge in July 1997 for belonging to the Internal Dissidence Working Group. 'We are making a general plea for the release of all political prisoners,' the official told the press, 'and we're specifically asking for those four to be freed.'⁷¹

Jean Chrétien and Fidel Castro spent their first morning together in formal talks at the Plaza of the Revolution. In contrast with Pierre Trudeau's high-profile state visit in 1976, Castro's stage-management of the Chrétien visit was almost unremarkable. There were no crowds at Revolution Square to greet the Canadian prime minister. One twenty-three-year-old Cuban woman told Reuters that people were not aware of the visit. 'I didn't know anything about the visit of the Canadian president,' she said. 'My television is broken. Even if the television had been working, I wouldn't have seen it, because speeches bore me.'⁷²

During the official talks, Chrétien went on the offensive. At one point, he stopped Castro mid-sentence to discuss the Joint Declaration, and to ask specifically whether the new Civilian Complaints Commission could include human rights complaints among its other responsibili-

ties. Then came the showstopper. Chrétien thrust a card with the names of the four dissidents in front of Castro and asked that they be released from prison. 'You're getting to the toughest issues first,' Chrétien later recalled Castro saying.⁷³ James Bartleman's recollection of Castro's reaction was even more pointed: 'I have never been so humiliated,' he said in a barely audible voice. He would have walked out the door, I believe, had he not been in his own office. The dialogue never recovered, although the leaders remained at the table for two hours and fifteen minutes. The president had been prepared to release three low-level prisoners as a sort of human gift but the prime minister had just raised the stakes. It was at this point that Castro probably decided that the policy of constructive engagement with Canada had reached the limits of its usefulness. The Canadians were taking human rights far too seriously.⁷⁴

Chrétien was later asked exactly what had happened when he presented Castro with the list. He replied: 'It was tough, the first 20 minutes. He was shocked. He does not accept the words "political prisoners."' He says: "They are prisoners. Don't you have prisoners in Canada?" I had to say yes. But how many are political prisoners? He said they are condemned under the laws of the country. I said: "'Yeah, but I have a good case on some of them because they have not been tried.'" He said: "Have you never had somebody in jail in Canada who has not had a trial for six months?" And I know that we have that once in a while. He told me the Pope gave him a list [of political prisoners] and a lot of the people on that list were not in jail any more and some were dead.'⁷⁵ Once word got out that Chrétien had asked Castro to release the dissidents, the state visit captured the attention of Cubans and Americans. Elena Roque, sister of the imprisoned Marta Beatriz Roque, tearfully told an American reporter: 'I have faith in God that this petition will be heard. We will be waiting anxiously for news.'⁷⁶

After the morning meeting, the prime minister had lunch with Cardinal Jaime Lucas Ortega y Alamino, where he discussed some of the reforms the pope had sponsored. James Bartleman and Chrétien aide Michael Kergin spent the afternoon in meetings with Cuban human rights activists, including Elizardo Sanchez. Chrétien and Castro reunited Monday evening for what was scheduled to be a two-hour 'working dinner' at the Palace of the Revolution but turned into a four-and-a-half-hour affair that ended only in the early hours of Tuesday morning. Canadian officials later described the dinner conversation as 'freewheeling,' taking in environmental concerns, world affairs, glo-

balization, and the situation of Canada's Native people. Said one Canadian official: 'Castro was very much interested in picking the PM's brains about the world that was out there that Cuba is not a part of.'⁷⁷

Tuesday morning the prime minister met with representatives of three Cuban NGOs – the church-based charity organization Caritas, the cultural organization Feliz Varela Centre, and the Martin Luther King Centre, a community housing organization. Officials of Oxfam Canada also attended the meetings. Tuesday afternoon, Chrétien did a walking tour of Old Havana with his wife, Aline, and attended a reception at the home of Canadian ambassador Keith Christie. Chrétien and Castro signed bilateral agreements respecting health-care delivery, audio-visual co-productions, and athletic exchanges. They opened negotiations on a Foreign Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement (FIPA), designed to promote foreign investment. They also signed an agreement in principle resolving Confederation Life's long-standing claim against the Cuban government for nationalizing its Cuban assets at the beginning of the Revolution. Fidel Castro was in good spirits when he bade farewell to the Chrétien's later that afternoon, evidence that the tensions of the formal talks had been at least partly attenuated by the amicable atmosphere of the working dinner. Yet, as James Bartleman observed, 'the good will between the leaders stimulated by the vigorous, candid, and friendly discussions of the previous evening did not disguise the fact that the Canadian initiative to engage Cuba in a policy of constructive engagement had gone as far as it could, at least as long as Castro was alive.'⁷⁸

'Northern Ice'

Most Canadian pundits who had been following Chrétien's visit pronounced it entirely predictable, with no diplomatic breakthrough expected and none achieved. 'Jean Chrétien came and went,' wrote Paul Knox of the *Globe and Mail*, 'and Fidel Castro stood firm.'⁷⁹ Asked whether he had really expected the Cuban leader to change or whether 'we are merely laying the groundwork for a post-Castro future,' Chrétien replied: 'I think he is changing. The fact that my [airport] speech was on the air is a big change; the fact that I met the Cardinal in public. But if people naively thought I would go there and train the leader of the opposition, it was too high an expectation. One step at a time.'⁸⁰ Fidel Castro was asked whether he intended to modify his policies in light of Chrétien's appeals for change. 'The Revolution is the biggest

change in history,' he responded, 'and we aren't going to give it up.' When asked for his thoughts on Chrétien's request that he free four jailed dissidents, Castro replied coolly, 'What he and I talked about is between him and me.'⁸¹

The prime minister had never made a secret of his jaded view of Cuban-American politics in the United States. Interviewed on CNN the day after his return from Havana, an unusually feisty Jean Chrétien asserted that the embargo was having no positive effect in advancing political reform in Cuba, and it was plainly hurting the Cuban people. 'I am told that the dentists do not have the proper anesthesia to serve the people,' he exclaimed. 'Come on!' The prime minister's advice for Washington was to take the high road. 'When you are that powerful, that is the time to be benevolent, to be nice, not to show your muscle.'⁸² Asked whether he would be inviting Fidel Castro to the next Summit of the Americas meeting in Canada, he said he did not yet know and would prefer to wait and see whether the regime made any advances on political reforms.

Predictably, some of Chrétien's strongest American critics went after him. Writing in the *Harvard International Review*, New Jersey Democrat and Cuban American Robert Menendez said: 'Chrétien's visit was something of an embarrassment for Canada. Castro's refusal to discuss human rights refuted Canada's claim that it could successfully press for change in Cuba by engaging Castro. Canada is now faced with a choice: either it must abandon its efforts to press for reforms in Cuba or it must tie future efforts to Canadian economic interests in Cuba. This incident has proven that so long as Castro can dictate the terms of engagement, engagement alone will not lead to change in Cuba.'⁸³

Menendez turned out to be correct. On 15 March 1999 a closed Cuban court tried the four dissidents that Chrétien had appealed to Fidel Castro to free. All four were found guilty of sedition and sentenced to jail terms ranging from three and a half to five years. For the prime minister, the convictions came as a blunt acknowledgment that his interventions had had no impact on Fidel Castro. Whatever the Cuban leader thought he could accomplish by cracking down on internal dissent, he had no qualms about risking the good opinion of Canadians in the process. Chrétien moved immediately to take what was, by diplomatic standards at least, strong action. The day the dissidents were sentenced he ordered a review of Canada's relations with Cuba. 'Cuba sends an unfortunate signal to her friends in the international community when people are jailed for peaceful protest,' the prime minister said in a press

release.⁸⁴ He cancelled ministerial visits already on the books and postponed a trip to Cuba by a Canadian trade delegation. He froze talks with Cuba to set up a joint medical program in Haiti (which Fidel Castro later said punished only Haitians). Perhaps most symbolically of all, he terminated a Canadian plan to provide computer technology to help modernize Cuba's courts, his aides later stating that it would not be appropriate for Canada to collaborate with the regime's repressive legal apparatus.⁸⁵ On 30 June, a plainly frustrated Chrétien told reporters that, although he was not prepared to abandon constructive engagement, 'we have to put some northern ice in the middle of it.'⁸⁶

The prime minister's luck worsened. On 24 July 1999 Human Rights Watch published the scathing book-length report by Sarah DeCosse, *Cuba's Repressive Machinery*. It called Canada's policy of constructive engagement a failure, Jean Chrétien's approach to Cuba 'meek,' and his state visit the previous year 'a wasted opportunity to build on the momentum ... begun by the Pope.'⁸⁷ Two days later, on 26 July – the most important date on the Cuban patriotic calendar – Fidel Castro gave a four-hour speech in Cienfuegos in which he included Canada in his harangues against the United States. The Cuban leader accused both the United States and Canada of deliberately manoeuvring against Cuba during the Pan American Games in Winnipeg, and he singled out the local *Sun* newspaper for urging Cuban athletes to defect. 'We have never seen so many tricks, so much filth,' said Castro, 'in the Pan American Games.'⁸⁸ Canadian Citizenship and Immigration officials acknowledged in a brief press release that three athletes had indeed sought refugee status, but they were not identified by name or even by country. Rumours circulated in Winnipeg that Castro's main objection to the games was the presence of opportunistic sports agents on the lookout for new professional talent, especially among Cuban baseball players.

Castro's and Chrétien's increasingly icy exchanges in the two years after the state visit did not prevent them from meeting privately in Montreal in October 2000 after the funeral of Pierre Trudeau, nor from sharing amicably their memories of the late prime minister. But, as most observers had long expected, the moment of truth for Chrétien's Cuba policy arrived the following year, when a decision had to be made on whether to include Cuba at the Summit of the Americas conference in Quebec. By this time, Lloyd Axworthy had been replaced as foreign affairs minister by John Manley, a man with little invested in constructive engagement and for whom the restoration of good Canadian-Amer-

ican relations was a top priority. To the surprise of no one, Manley announced that Cuba would remain outside the inter-American family because of its 'lack of commitment to democratic principles.' Jean Chrétien fell in behind this decision, telling the press that he had spent 'hours and hours' trying to persuade an intransigent Fidel Castro to abide by international human rights covenants.⁸⁹

Fidel Castro then did something most extraordinary. Infuriated by the suggestion that he had allowed the Canadian prime minister to browbeat him for 'hours and hours,' he went on Cuban television on 25 April 2001 and described in minute detail what, exactly, he and Jean Chrétien had discussed during the 1998 state visit. (The 5,500-word text of his remarks was reprinted in *Granma* the next day.) He began by noting that he was not especially surprised when Chrétien placed the dissidents' names in front of him, since this had become 'a tactic consistently used by the U.S. government to apply pressure in favor of its friends, taking advantage of any friendly visit to Cuba.' After reminding the Canadian prime minister of all of the 'misdeeds and crimes' committed by the United States against Cuba, Castro identified the four dissidents as 'mercenaries in the service of the United States ... who were trying to destroy the Revolution.' In contrast with Bartleman's account of the remainder of the meeting as fraught with tension, Castro recalled the atmosphere as 'warm and friendly at all times.' Of Chrétien, the Cuban leader recalled: 'I carefully observed the Canadian prime minister's character and personality. He is a pleasant conversationalist and has a good sense of humor, and one can strike up an interesting exchange with him on various subjects. He is concerned about certain problems in the world today ... He appeared to be sincerely patriotic. He is loyal to his country and proud of it. He is a fanatical believer in the capitalist mode of production, as if it were a monotheistic religion, and in the naive idea that it is the only solution for all of the world's countries, on every continent, in every era, in every clime or region.'

The same congenial tone prevailed over the entirety of the state visit, Castro recalled, and there was much enthusiasm on both sides for the bilateral projects that had been discussed. Yet after the visit, he continued, Chrétien appeared to lose interest in Cuba. Little was done in Ottawa to follow up on the collaborative projects. Then, on 4 March 1999, 'we received a genuinely surprising response' from the Canadians. Lloyd Axworthy sent a letter to Roberto Robaina, in which he stated, among other things, that in light of the 'forthcoming sentencing of the members of the Internal Dissidence Working Group,' he would

be asking his officials 'refrain from undertaking new joint initiatives.' Said Castro of this communication: 'Although I do not want to offend anyone, not even the distinguished author of this letter, it is impossible to ignore the arrogant, overbearing, interfering and vindictive tone in which this letter was written.'

Castro concluded his treatise with a grand rhetorical gesture, invoking his old friend Pierre Trudeau as a true friend to Cuba. 'I am sure that Trudeau would never have said that he spent four hours giving advice to someone who had not asked for it; nor would he seek excuses for excluding an honorable country from a meeting that it did not ask to attend, or ask it to sign an agreement that it would never have signed. History will say who is right.'⁹⁰

Conclusion

In September 1998, six months after Jean Chrétien's state visit, senior Canadian diplomat Peter Boehm, then serving as ambassador to the OAS, was invited to Miami to address the annual meeting of the Cuban Committee for Democracy. The mostly Cuban émigré crowd had come to hear him speak about 'how Canada approaches both Cuba and the Cuban dilemma in this hemisphere,' and they welcomed him warmly ('until the Miami media found out,' as he later noted sardonically⁹¹). Boehm opened his talk with a precis of Canada's long record of commercial relations with Cuba – what he called the two countries' history of 'engagement.' He then described how 'Canada has chosen to go beyond this into what we call constructive engagement, as our policy with Cuba reflects the priority the Canadian government attaches to deepening its involvement in the Americas. It defines a determined attempt to engage Cuba and to support movement in that country in the direction of peaceful transition and eventual reintegration into the hemisphere. We firmly believe that this is a goal that everyone supports; the means to achieve it differ of course. In Canada's view, we should face the fact that the Cold War is over; it is time to get on with things and for the largest country in the Caribbean region to be part of the new order.'⁹²

This is as compelling a definition of Canada's Cuba policy in the Chrétien era as exists anywhere in the public record – the more so for the crucial distinction it makes between 'engagement' and 'constructive engagement.' Critics of Canada's Cuba policy – especially the hardliners in the United States and their Canadian allies – tended to pillory the Liberals as if all aspects of Canadian engagement with Cuba were de

facto 'constructive.' According to this view, the only real alternative to any policy of engagement was embargo. Prime Minister Chrétien and especially Foreign Affairs Minister Axworthy did little to temper this perception, in part because they understood the political advantages of playing to a nationalist constituency in Canada that identified strongly with Fidel Castro's anti-imperialist views. But the failure to differentiate between 'engagement' and 'constructive engagement' also attracted the perennial criticism that Canada's ostensibly altruistic Cuba policy was in fact little more than a 'fig leaf' designed to hide a profitable bilateral trading relationship.

Boehm's allusion to Cuba's 'peaceful transition and eventual re-integration into the hemisphere' highlights the essential but still underappreciated premise of 'constructive' engagement: *it was a hedging policy*. Constructive engagement may well have evinced the symbolic importance to Canada of maintaining 'the dialogue,' as Yvon Grenier has argued, especially in the case of Lloyd Axworthy.⁹³ But the critical assumption – the one that the Canadians found themselves sharing increasingly not only with Washington but with Miami – was the inevitability of Fidel Castro's passing and the commonsense view that the Revolution as Castro had defined it was doomed to pass as well. Here was hard evidence, one might say, of the pervasiveness of Francis Fukuyama's 1992 claim that, with the globe embracing liberal democracy, we had achieved 'the end of history.' For the Chrétien Liberals, the advantages of constructive engagement were often invoked in the present tense, as happened, for example, when Jean Chrétien observed after his state visit that he thought Castro was 'changing.' But the policy was always positioned to look mainly towards the future, that is, to a 'post-Castro' future of liberal political and economic reforms.

Viewed in this light, Chrétien's state visit has to be seen as a far more complex and contradictory sort of diplomatic manoeuvre than it appeared to be at the time. He went to Havana knowing fully well that Castro did not want to be scolded for his human rights practices or for resisting liberal economic and political reforms. He demanded the release of four high-profile dissidents partly because he genuinely believed in pressing the regime on human rights, but also because he understood the enormous symbolic advantage this gesture might bring him as he positioned himself – and Canada – vis-à-vis Cuba's future. James Bartleman captured this logic succinctly in his own post-mortem on the 1998 state visit:

Was then prime minister Chrétien's initiative in the latter part of the 1990s a failure? Castro did nothing to open up either his economy or his repressive political system. On the other hand the luncheon with the archbishop helped consolidate the gains for the Church registered by John Paul II and our meeting with the dissidents could only have encouraged them. In addition, our efforts, however tentative, to implement the Fourteen Point Declaration exposed hundreds of Cubans to another way of managing an economy and governing a state that will not be forgotten when the transition comes, as it inevitably will, some day after the passing of Castro. The prime minister had the courage to take a risk for a noble cause that positioned Canada on the moral high ground for a major role in post-Castro Cuba.⁹⁴

Constructive engagement, in short, was a policy designed primarily to position Canada on the right side of history. In this sense, it was an affront to the Cuban people in general, and to Fidel Castro personally. When Castro invoked Pierre Trudeau in his critique of Jean Chrétien, he was not merely invoking the name of a great Canadian statesman. He was invoking an entirely different philosophical approach, one based on an appreciation of the Cuban Revolution's claims to legitimacy, and on the fundamental principle that sovereign states had no business meddling in the domestic affairs of others. What the Chrétien Liberals shared with their nominal American critics – but not with their own mentor, Pierre Trudeau – was the arrogant supposition, to quote the American political scientist Julia Sweig, that 'without Fidel's iron fist to keep Cubans in their place, the island would erupt into a collective demand for rapid change. The long-oppressed population would overthrow Fidel's revolutionary cronies and clamor for capital, expertise, and leadership from the north to transform Cuba into a market democracy with strong ties to the United States.'⁹⁵

Constructive engagement has failed, it is true, but *engagement* has not. Canadian politicians, diplomats, business people, students, academics, artists, and tourists have for years been building the myriad relationships and networks upon which real influence with their Cuban confrères rests – the influence not of the hard sell or of the grand gesture but of the everyday. Throughout the 1990s, while Washington and Ottawa were boldly fashioning policies designed to 'one day end Cuba's isolation,' thousands of Canadians were quietly working, each in their own way, to actually do so. The Cubans know this. So do the thousands

of Canadians for whom Cuba is a place of warmth, respect, and friendship.

NOTES

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