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Camelot and Canada: Canadian-American relations in the Kennedy era

McKercher, Asa, author

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Abstrak

John F. Kennedys thousand days as president coincided not only with the crisis years of the Cold War, but also with the most fractious period in the Canada-United States relationship since the War of 1812. Thanks in part to mounting Canadian nationalist sentiment, Kennedy confronted a host of issues with Canada magnified by Canadian concerns over their countrys close economic, cultural, military, and diplomatic links with the United States. The early 1960s saw tensions in Canada-US relations as growing numbers of Canadians came to question both their governments quiet support for US leadership in the cold war and American economic and military hegemony. Canadas prime minister, John Diefenbaker, with whom Kennedy had a tense relationship, personified these sentiments. While the young president and his administration have often been criticized for stirring up anti-US opinion due to their conduct toward Canada, Camelot and Canada shows that US foreign policymakers dealt with Ottawa in a judicious manner that took account of Canadian nationalism as well as Canadian concerns. In re-examining this fascinating period in Canada-US relations, this book makes clear that the special relationship between Canadian and US officials continued to function, even as the overall bilateral relationship suffered due to nationalist attitudes and differences over major foreign policy issues, from the Cuban revolution to Britains decision to join the European Common Market. The image that emerges of Kennedy is of a policymaker who was pragmatic in his handling of his countrys increasingly nationalistic northern neighbor.