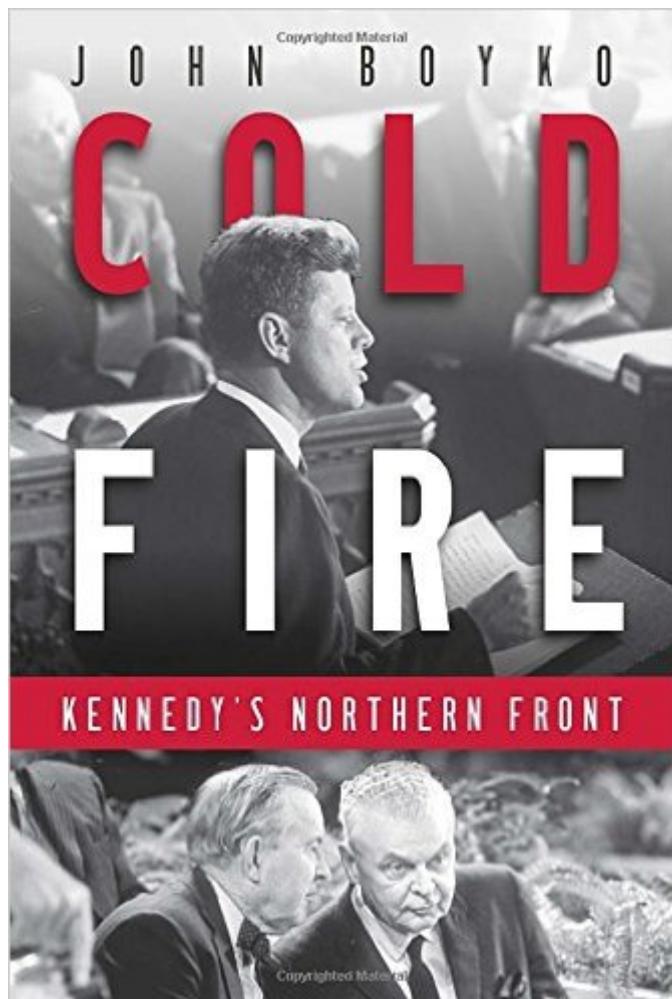


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# Cold Fire: Kennedy's Northern Front



## Synopsis

Forget all you think you know about the Kennedy years. With narrative flair and sparkling storytelling, acclaimed historian John Boyko explores the crucial period when America and its allies were fighting the Cold War's most treacherous battles, Canadians were trading sovereignty for security, and everyone feared a nuclear holocaust. At the centre of this story are three leaders. President John F. Kennedy pledged to pay any price to advance his vision for America's defence and needed Canada to step smartly in line. Fighting him at every turn was Conservative prime minister John Diefenbaker, an unapologetic nationalist trying to bolster Canada's autonomy. Liberal leader Lester Pearson, the Nobel Prize-winning diplomat, sought a middle ground. Boyko employs meticulous research and newly released documents to present shocking revelations. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Canadian warships guarded America's Atlantic coast and Canada suffered a silent coup d'état. Canada was involved in Kennedy's sliding America into Vietnam. Kennedy knew the nuclear missiles he was forcing on Canada would be decoys, there only to draw Soviet nuclear fire. Kennedy's pollster and political adviser travelled to Ottawa under a fake passport to help defeat the Canadian government. And, perhaps most startlingly, if not for Diefenbaker, Kennedy may have survived the bullets in Dallas.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Canada and the United States share the world's longest international border, and comprise the vast majority of the North American continent. The relationship between these two neighbors is generally

believed to be a friendly one, but as author John Boyko discloses in his excellent new book *Cold Fire: Kennedy's Northern Front*, the 1960s were a turbulent time for Canada-US relations. The 60s were a time of significant world tension as the Cold War heated up. Winning election to the presidency on the myth that the United States was falling behind in a missile gap with the Soviet Union, President John F. Kennedy took office at a time when the threat of nuclear war was at the heart of many North Americans' fears. The newly elected president stumbled out of the gate on the international affairs front, approving the disastrous Bay of Pigs fiasco and finding himself schooled at a meeting with Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev in Vienna. As the potential for a nuclear confrontation between the two great powers increased, Kennedy counted on Canadian cooperation in his nation's defense, viewing the Canadian government as a compliant subordinate, rather than as a sovereign and independent nation. Kennedy had not counted on meeting resistance from the strong-willed and initially popular Canadian Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, who possessed a passion for a strong Canadian identity, seeing his nation as an equal peer to its neighbor to the south, rather than as subservient or sycophantic.

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