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Harold Macmillan and the “Golden Days” of Anglo-American Relations Revisited, 1957–63

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Historians of Anglo-American relations have for the most part had little difficulty in characterizing the premiership of Harold Macmillan between January 1957 and October 1963 as an era of renewed closeness between

London and Washington.² In one sense this is no surprise. Sandwiched between the disastrous Anglo-American breach over the 1956 Suez crisis and the deterioration in relations during the mid-1960s prompted by a combination of the Vietnam War, the British financial crisis, and London's abandonment of its defense role east of Suez, the Macmillan era was almost bound to appear rosy in comparison. Robert Hathaway, in his survey of Anglo-American relations since the Second World War, describes the Macmillan years as being those of an "alliance sustained," sandwiched in between the eras of an "alliance threatened" during the Suez crisis and an "alliance depreciated" under Prime Ministers Harold...

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