

department was all the more likely to respond to Green, even if his field of interest appeared to be narrow. At last here was a minister who knew where he wanted to go, and whose relationship with the prime minister was solid enough to permit him to follow the trail he had marked out.”<sup>3</sup>

During the fourteenth session of the General Assembly, the Canadian Delegation launched an important initiative on atomic radiation, calling for more systematic collection and analysis of data, in order to better understand the biological effects. After considerable behind-the-scenes negotiation, resolution 1376 (XIV) was passed. Among other United Nations issues in which Canada played an important role, the Security Council elections proved especially contentious. Before the fourteenth session began, South Africa lobbied Canada to support its candidature for the Commonwealth seat on the Security Council. Recognizing that the Asian and other African Commonwealth members would oppose this, Canada successfully convinced South Africa to withdraw in favour of Ceylon. Canada also supported Poland's election to the Council, even though the United States and Britain strongly preferred Turkey. In Cabinet, Green curtly dismissed American lobbying in favour of Turkey as a “cold war manoeuvre ... undesirable under present conditions” (Document 6). After 52 inconclusive ballots, a coalition of nations, including Canada, intervened to negotiate a compromise: Turkey and Poland agreed to split the seat, with Poland resigning in 1960 in favour of Turkey.

Green's stand on the Security Council election showed his determination that Canada not be perceived as an American satellite. This determination was shared by the Prime Minister, and it would lead to serious conflicts, particularly on defence and nuclear issues. A strong hint of future problems came when Cabinet vetoed the staging of Operation Skyhawk, the first major air defence operation scheduled since the inception of NORAD and an exercise which had been exhaustively planned by military officials for many months. After the United States Ambassador, Richard Wigglesworth, informed Diefenbaker that Washington officials were “mad as hell” (Document 204) about the Canadian decision, President Dwight Eisenhower intervened personally in the dispute and asked his Canadian counterpart to authorize the staging of Skyhawk. Cabinet remained resolute, however, and refused to reconsider its position.

Trouble also loomed when the United States formally requested that ongoing negotiations in military channels to allow the storage of nuclear weapons at leased bases in Canada be swiftly concluded with a formal diplomatic agreement. In preparation for the second meeting of the Canada-United States Ministerial Committee on Joint Defence, to be held at camp David in November 1959, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs Norman Robertson emphasized the importance

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<sup>3</sup> H. Basil Robinson, *Diefenbaker's World: A Populist in Foreign Affairs* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), p. 103.