

Columbia River Basin. The Diefenbaker government established the Cabinet Committee on the Columbia River Problems, which eventually proved able to establish liaison mechanisms with the provincial government of British Columbia in October 1958. Diplomatic notes exchanged between Ottawa and Washington in November and December 1958 [Documents 223 and 225] laid the basis for formal negotiations to commence through the International Joint Commission.

Chapter II of this volume documents Canada's foreign policy towards the Middle East, a region which also continued to be a flashpoint for East-West tensions. Ottawa remained committed to a peacekeeping role in the aftermath of the 1956 Suez Crisis and reaffirmed its participation in the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) in July 1957 [Document 256]. Moreover, the Canadian delegation to the Twelfth Session of the United Nations General Assembly played a leading role in placing UNEF financing on a sound and permanent footing. The Diefenbaker government also worked diligently to maintain Canada's embargo on shipments of military equipment to the Middle East, approving a comprehensive policy to control the export of arms in September 1957 [Document 236]. This policy came under increasing scrutiny as a result of the Israeli government's requests to secure military equipment from Canada. These representations were most forcefully made during the visit of the Israeli Foreign Minister, Golda Meir, to Ottawa in October 1958 [Document 388].

These Middle Eastern matters, however, were overshadowed by an international crisis in Lebanon and Jordan in the summer of 1958. Continued Soviet economic penetration of the Middle East and the union of Egypt and Syria to form the United Arab Republic (UAR) had steadily increased tensions in the region early in the year. By the spring, Lebanon and its weak pro-Western government headed by President Camille Chamoun was effectively under siege. Canada was active in seeking UN assurances for Lebanon and agreed to serve in the United Nations Observer Group in Lebanon (UNOGIL) in June 1958 [Document 326]. But the bloody overthrow of the pro-Western Iraqi monarchy resulted in Lebanon's immediate call for military support, and American and British troops landed in Lebanon and Jordan to preserve the existing governments in Beirut and Amman. The American intervention activated NORAD states of readiness protocols and brought home to Ottawa for the first time the unforeseen and far-reaching implications of North American defence cooperation [Document 66]. Eventually, in August 1958, an Emergency Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly was convened to defuse the crisis. While Sidney Smith reported from New York with typical Canadian modesty that he was "not ashamed of Canada's contribution" to the special UN debate [Document 382], the American reaction was more gratifying. United States Secretary of State John Foster Dulles praised Ottawa's diplomatic effort as "the key to a successful outcome" [Document 383].

As much of the documentation in Chapter III indicates, Cold War themes dominated Canadian foreign policy in the Far East. Ottawa was keenly interested in policy issues concerning Communist China. Canadian officials, spurred on by the desire to increase Sino-Canadian trade, again evaluated the merits of recognizing the Peking government, before deciding that there was "no clear cut balance of argument discernible" on the issue [Document 466]. Washington, of course, remained implacably opposed to any change in the West's longstanding opposition to the recognition of Communist China. President Eisenhower emphasized this in personal discussions