

INTERVIEW WITH
Howard C. Green

by

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on

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for

Dwight D. Eisenhower Library



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Let me introduce this tape by saying that the interview is being conducted with Mr. Howard Green in Mr. Green's office in Vancouver, British Columbia. The date is January 19, 1973. The interviewer is Dr. Maclyn Burg of the Eisenhower Library staff.

DR. BURG: Mr. Green, let me ask you first, where you were born?

MR. GREEN: I was born in Kaslo in British Columbia. This is a small town in the Kootenay district, southeastern British Columbia.



DR. BURG: Kaslo. How is that spelled?

MR. GREEN: K-a-s-l-o.

DR. BURG: All right, fine. And the year of your birth, sir?

MR. GREEN: 1895.

DR. BURG: Were you educated up there at Kaslo?

MR. GREEN: Oh, I took my public school and high school training in Kaslo and then I went to Toronto, where I took my B.A. degree at the University of Toronto.

DR. BURG: In what field, sir?

GREEN: Oh, just in the general arts course. Graduated in 1915.

BURG: I see. And then, as part of your training at the University of Toronto, had you had officers' training or something of this sort?

GREEN: Oh, well, war broke out in the fall of 1914 and I joined the Officers' Training Corps at the university, and then as soon as I graduated, I enlisted in the 54th Kootenay Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force as a lieutenant.



BURG: I see.

GREEN: And I went overseas with them in December of 1915.

BURG: You went then into the lines at once when you got to France?

GREEN: We were in England until August, 1916, then we went to France as one of the battalions of the 4th Canadian Division. And we went into the line near Ypres at St. Eloi.

BURG: I see.

GREEN: I was a platoon commander, at that time, in the battalion.

BURG: Right. Now the time you had spent in England, from December '15 to August 1916, was that a period during which you were given additional training as a unit?

GREEN: Oh, yes, the battalion was training all that time.

BURG: So, going into the line at Ypres, you had some idea what you were going to face and were somewhat prepared and physically hardened.

GREEN: Oh, well, we had extensive training in England during our time there.

BURG: And you missed, did you not, the gas attack, that first gas attack, that the Germans launched?

GREEN: Oh, yes, that was in the spring of 1915. And it was the First Canadian Division that was involved in that. Our battalion was in the 4th Division.

BURG: Right.



GREEN: Canada had the 1st, and then the 2nd went out, I think, in the spring of '15, and the 3rd Division was formed in France, probably late in 1915 or early in 1916. We had only four divisions throughout the war. Eventually they were all formed into the Canadian Corps and there were four divisions in that corps.

BURG: Yes. Did your unit fight at Vimy Ridge?

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: And you were there?

GREEN: I wasn't in the actual attack at Vimy. I had been away on a course down near Boulogne, and I returned just a day or two before the attack. And, of course, I hadn't been trained for the attack, and also they made a practice in the battalion of keeping out half of the fighting officers, because the casualties were very heavy among the young officers.

BURG: Yes.



GREEN: So I was kept out of that attack. I wasn't involved in it directly.

BURG: Was your battalion heavily hit at Vimy?

GREEN: Our battalion had been in a very unfortunate raid about six weeks before Vimy, in which we had lost our colonel and about fourteen or fifteen officers and about three hundred men. It was a very foolish raid with four battalions involved; another case of the higher command making very bad decisions. Our battalion was very badly cut up in that raid and, of course, they had been reinforced by the time of the attack on Vimy Ridge--that is the general attack--but they didn't lose as heavily in the Vimy attack as they did in the gas raid which, I think, was on March the 1st, 1916. No, 1917.

BURG: You had actually led troops in combat for say six, eight months, or more, before Vimy?

GREEN: We had, yes, we went into the line in August 1916. I was never in an attack "over the top".* I was very fortunate

*Mr. Green uses this phrase to describe an attack in which the infantry climbed up out of their trenches and crossed the open ground separating them from the enemy trenches. Such a frontal attack was called "going over the top".



in that way. I wouldn't be here today if I had been. But I never happened to be in an actual "over the top" attack.

BURG: I suppose that those of us who never fought in that war see it as nothing but a series of "over the top" attacks, and yet a lot of it was--

GREEN: There weren't very many "over the top" attacks; most of the time we were in the trenches.

BURG: Just occupying ground.



GREEN: Oh, and being shelled all the time and this sort of thing.

BURG: Occasional raids, I would suppose?

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: Could I ask you this question, Mr. Green? Do you recollect what your feeling was when you first went into the line and saw for the first time what it looked like and what it smelled like?

GREEN: Well, of course, it was very exciting. I had a man killed in my platoon the first day we were in the line; we were trench-mortared that particular day by the Germans. Never a dull moment in the line.

BURG: [Laughter] I'll bet there wasn't. What was the effect on you? Now, you were there from '16, August of '16; did you go right through to the Armistice?

GREEN: Well, my war experience was really very helpful to me. After I had been with the battalion in France for not quite a year, I was sent down to the Canadian Corps Infantry School behind the lines, at which they had one officer and three non-commissioned officers from each of the battalions every month. And I was kept over there. I came out at the head of that particular course and I was retained there as an instructor at the Canadian Corps Infantry School as a captain. And I was with the school for about, oh, from July until about March, or April, of 1918. And during that time, of course, I was meeting dozens and dozens of men from the Canadian Corps. There would be one officer and three NCOs from each of the forty-eight Canadian battalions. So I made many, many friends there who have been friends in the



succeeding years.

BURG: I see.

GREEN: Then in the spring of 1918, I was posted to the 6th Canadian Infantry Brigade Staff. Now that brigade was in the 2nd Division. It was a first class brigade; one of the best, I think, the best brigade in the Canadian Corps. It was composed of four battalions, one from each of the western provinces, and the westerners always thought they were a little bit better than the easterners in the Canadian Corps. [Laughter]

BURG: We felt that way in the American Army, too. [Laughter]

GREEN: So I was with--you did? [Laughter] I was, first of all, staff learner under the staff captain intelligence on the brigade staff. Now he was responsible for all the scouting and the observation, and all that sort of thing, in the line. And on the brigade staff we knew what was going on. It wasn't like being stuck in a trench, where you just had orders that sometimes seemed ridiculous. You didn't get the whole picture, but on the brigade staff you got the story, both from the front line and from the back, from the divisions, and so on.



There was a very fine spirit, very high morale in this brigade and we had a first class brigade major, who was the most outstanding leader I've ever met. He was an English nobleman by the name of the Honorable Francis Grosvenor, of the Grosvenor, the Westminster family. And we had a first class staff captain, under whom I was serving. And we had first class brigadier generals, so that the conditions were excellent and I liked it very much and made many friends there, and got very broad experience. Eventually, I was acting as a staff captain myself, and at the time of the armistice, I was doing that particular job with the brigade.



BURG: Well, Mr. Green, was the brigade staff a mixture of Canadian and United Kingdom people?

GREEN: No, no, no, no, entirely Canadian. The whole Canadian Corps at that time was entirely Canadian. We attacked on the last day, actually. Our brigade attacked on the morning of November eleventh. And that's a very interesting story, too. Then about a week after the armistice, we led the 2nd Division to Germany as part of the Army of Occupation.

BURG: I see.

GREEN: Our division went to Bonn and then we spread out across the Rhine in a bridgehead so that we were the first infantry troops into Germany on that particular part of the front; there were only four divisions went in the Army of Occupation at the start, two British and the 1st and 2nd Canadian. So this, too, was a fascinating experience.

BURG: Right.

GREEN: You can understand, a young staff officer with the brigade going through Belgium and then into Germany and right up to the Rhine. I was with them until about Christmas and then my general arranged for me to get a staff appointment--I'd been only acting in the meantime--a staff appointment at [Field Marshal Douglas] Haig's headquarters down at the sea-coast at a place called Montreuil. There was a Canadian section there under a brigadier general who had been formerly the commander of the same battalion that the brigadier general of the 6th Brigade had commanded. They were great friends. Well, anyway, I was sent down and there I was made a staff captain and got my full rank; I was actually liaising with



the British, working on demobilization. I was posted to go over to work with about twenty British staff officers. My particular job was to work in connection with demobilizing the Canadian Corps. So that, too, was a fascinating experience and I got to know the British very well.

BURG: How long did you serve in that capacity?

GREEN: Six months. I served long enough to get my gratuity on the basis of the pay of a staff captain, which was very important. A staff captain was paid more than a major; more than a fighting major in a battalion.

BURG: Oh, I hadn't known that.

GREEN: So it was pretty good business to stay there for six months.

BURG: Yes, yes, indeed.

GREEN: So then when I came back to Canada, back to British Columbia, I had decided by then to go into law, mainly as training for public life. My family, members of my family, had been in public life in British Columbia. I had an uncle in the House of Commons at the time. And they were very



strongly in favor of the Union government which had brought in conscription and--really, the Conservative government had been in charge, throughout the whole of the First War, under Sir Robert [Laird] Borden. He was one of our greatest prime ministers.

BURG: I see.

GREEN: And so I went back to Osgoode Hall. I took this gratuity and got permission from the "benchers" in British Columbia--that's the governing body of the law society--I got a year's leave of absence to go to Osgoode Hall, the law school in Toronto. British Columbia didn't have a proper law school at that time at all; there were really only two first class law schools in Canada, Osgoode Hall in Toronto, and Dalhousie in Halifax. So I went back on a, on this year's leave, and they were allowing all the university graduates who had been overseas to skip the first year, which wasn't an unmixed blessing. Anyway, I got into the second year in the law school and got through that in the spring of 1920, and then they were allowing the veterans to take a summer course. So I went into my third year and I graduated in the one year I had, for which I had leave of absence from British Columbia.

BURG: Oh, you did?



GREEN: And we had a wonderful year. A lot of these fellows I had known overseas were there; they were nearly all veterans, and so we had a very fine year. As a matter of fact, I got the silver medal in the graduating class at the end of the summer session of 1920. We didn't get our medals until about six or seven years ago, because the benchers of the law society in Ontario didn't think they should give a medal for a summer session. However, finally, they did; each year there are three medals--a gold, silver and a bronze--and by the time I got my silver medal, three of the six had died! There had also been a summer session in 1919 for veterans.

BURG: That medal was given as a mark of academic distinction in the performance--

GREEN: In the--yes, at Osgoode Hall, you see.



BURG: Yes.

GREEN: Then I came back to British Columbia and--because I had not been called to the bar in Ontario. I was only on leave there from British Columbia I wasn't articulated in Ontario, although I had worked in a law office during most of my time in Toronto just to keep busy, really. When I came back

the benchers here decided that they wouldn't recognize my standing there; that I had to pass all the exams over again in British Columbia.

BURG: Were the exams different, Mr. Green?

GREEN: Oh, not a great deal, no. And we arranged to--through the legislature we got the time cut, and we also got our fees cut for the veterans at that time. We had some veterans in the legislature and they very kindly helped us out in this way and, really, very much to the dislike of the benchers. The benchers, of course, were older lawyers who couldn't see giving all this help to the young veterans. However, I got through in two years. In 1922, I started to practice.



BURG: So you had to read law in British Columbia for about a two-year period of time before you could take--

GREEN: No, about, it was only about a year and a half after I finished at Osgoode.

BURG: And then, in effect, you were passing a bar examination licensing you to practice law in the province of British Columbia?

GREEN: In British Columbia, that's right.

BURG: With the older lawyers a little resentful of making you--

GREEN: Well, the benchers were resentful that we would go to the legislature and get a bill through cutting down our fees and cutting down our time. They took rather a dim view of that.

BURG: They hadn't realized how much you young men had learned overseas--

GREEN: No, that's right! However, it was all very interesting and very much worth while,

BURG: Now you were not married at this time?

GREEN: No, I didn't marry until 1923.

BURG: I see.

GREEN: So then, I've practiced in Vancouver now for over fifty years.

BURG: What kind of practice did you begin with, Mr. Green?



GREEN: Oh, general practice. First with a firm and then two of us young men formed our firm.

BURG: So, no specialization; you took whatever--

GREEN: Took whatever work we could get. In those days we were very glad to get anything.

BURG: This was a time of economic depression here?

GREEN: The depression started about 1930.

BURG: Oh. But it was not so bad in the '20s.

GREEN: No, we formed our firm in 1926.

BURG: So you put in about four years with one of the firms.

GREEN: Well, before that I had been with one of the larger firms.

BURG: Right, I see. So then you had your own firm and were handling general cases.

GREEN:—Yes, yes.—



BURG: Because I've run into people, in Texas for example, who immediately specialized in oil leases; this kind of thing.

GREEN: Well, you can understand them doing that there--

BURG: Oh, yes.

GREEN: No, we had a general practice.

BURG: Now, how about political activities?

GREEN: Well, throughout this time we were very much interested in the Conservative party. We were, first of all, in Young Conservative Associations and, I guess, making quite a lot of trouble for the older conservatives. [Laughter] Then, after we had married and settled down in our respective districts in Vancouver, we got into the political associations in those districts. And eventually, I became president of the association in the Federal Riding which I subsequently represented.

BURG: Where is the Federal Riding? What area?

GREEN: Well, at that time the riding was known as Vancouver South--it was the best Conservative district in Greater



Vancouver. It included Shaughnessy Heights and Kerrisdale and was largely a residential district.

BURG: Kerrisdale, my transcriber will not recognize. Could you spell that one?

GREEN: K-e-r-r-i-s-d-a-l-e.

BURG: All right.

GREEN: It's one of the districts in Vancouver; by and large this riding comprised the best residential districts in Vancouver.



BURG: Right, I see.

GREEN: It wasn't in the downtown area, and it wasn't in the poor area.

BURG: And the year that you became president of that group?

GREEN: Yes, I eventually became president of the Vancouver-South Conservative Association.

BURG: What year was that, do you remember?

GREEN: Oh, I think in the fall of 1934.

BURG: I see, right in the depths of the depression.

GREEN: Yes. And then in 1935 there was an election and we tried to get various well-known people in Vancouver to run but none of them would run because they all thought they were going to be beaten. The Prime Minister was very unpopular then, Mr. [Richard Bedford] Bennett; he had had a most difficult time during the depression and there was very strong feeling against him, so that the party had a very bad time. As a matter of fact, in the election we only returned thirty-nine members in the whole of Canada. We'd been the government from '30 to '35. When we couldn't get any of the leading men in the city to run, finally, the members of the executive of my riding said, "Well, we're going to run with one of our own people; we'll run you." I happened to be the president, so I was duly nominated as a candidate and, fortunately, we won, largely because of the speech made here by the Prime Minister. We had a very big auditorium here at the time, and the unemployed were heckling all the leaders who came here to speak; heckling them very, very vigorously, and Bennett, who



had had a heart attack a few months before, Bennett, of course was heckled far worse than anybody else had been and he stood up to this, to these hecklers, and shouted them down. Whether by arrangement or not, eventually they all got up and walked out after about twenty minutes of this sort of a row, so the people in my riding said, "Well, that's the kind of a man we're going to back for Prime Minister. He's shown his courage," and all this sort of thing. And that got me a great many votes in my riding.

BURG: I can see that it might.



GREEN: And also the Liberals were fighting the Socialist party, which was then called the CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation]. These two were hammering each other and I kept out of the way of both of them, just went about saying what I was going to do if I were elected. And I think the housewives in my riding put me in. I heard afterward that all of the ballots at the bottom of the boxes were Green ballots, most of them, and that the ballots that came in late were for the Liberals, because it was known on the radio, about three o'clock in the afternoon, the results from eastern Canada

began coming in--

BURG: Surely.

GREEN: --and they were all very, very strongly Liberal. Well, the men went and voted Liberal to be on the winning side. Now they have stopped that nonsense. Now they can't broadcast results any more until the polls are closed here but in the 1935 election I had to go around my riding, that afternoon of that election day, hearing radios blaring out all over "Liberals are sweeping Canada!", and all this sort of thing. However, I got in by two or three hundred votes; it was very close.

BURG: Now in your campaign, Mr. Green, had that involved going door to door?



GREEN: No, we didn't do that--

BURG: --talking--you didn't do that kind of thing?

GREEN: --in those days. No, we had a lot of public meetings. And teas, receptions, and things of that kind.

BURG: I see, uh-huh. And that made you the sitting member for Vancouver South.

GREEN: Vancouver South. There were four Vancouver members at that time and I was one of them.

BURG: This move into politics for you had been an unexpected one, I take it.

GREEN: Not really. I set out to go into public life. That's why I took my law. It was training for public life.

BURG: I see. So you were schooling yourself for this kind of service--

GREEN: Oh, yes, I was aiming--

BURG: --all along?

GREEN: --to be, to be a member.

BURG: Right. Now, in Ottawa, I think you said you had only thirty-nine--

GREEN: That's right.

BURG: --Conservatives in the House of Commons. What did you do when you got back to Ottawa? What things especially interested you?



GREEN: Well, I didn't know very much about anything when I went back to Ottawa. [Laughter] The only thing I did know something about was veterans' affairs, so quite soon, I became the party expert on veterans' affairs. Mr. Bennett put me in charge of all the legislation having to do with veterans.

BURG: And this is W.A.C. Bennett?

GREEN: No, no, no. R.B. Bennett, the former Prime Minister of Canada. No, no. W.A.C. Bennett was a provincial premier.

BURG: The man here in British Columbia, of course.

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: And that's the name that I keep encountering all the time.

GREEN: No, R.B. Bennett from Calgary--

BURG: Right.

GREEN: --he was the Prime Minister of Canada from '30 to '35.



BURG: When he put you in charge of veterans' affairs, am I right then in thinking that you would be part of a caucus, a Conservative caucus, whose chief interest was watching what the government was doing--

GREEN: On veterans' affairs.

BURG: --on veterans' affairs.

GREEN: It came about this way. We were, as veterans, we were--some of us--were put on the veterans' affairs committee of the House. Each party would have a number of men on each committee, depending on the strength of the party. The numbers depended on the strength of the party. And there were six or seven Conservatives on the veterans' affairs committee. Some of them had been members of the House and they were all very discouraged because we had taken such a beating in the election. But there were three of us young men on the committee and, finally, we got to a stage where we didn't know whether to fight the government or to go along; our older men wanted to go along with the government, with the government members on the committee. So the three of us went to Mr. Bennett and I explained to him what was happening,



and that we wanted to know whether he thought we should fight or what we should do. And he said, "Well, what have you been doing, boys?" I said, "We've been fighting!" He said, "Good! That's fine! You go on fighting." So, of course, he gave us carte blanche to raise all the opposition we could in this committee, and whenever anything came up in the House having to do with veterans' affairs, Bennett would turn around in his front seat--and I was way at the back--and he'd say, "Where's Green? Where's Green?" [Laughter] So that--



BURG: Then you had to rise and--

GREEN: Well, I would have to take--I was responsible for the questions having to do with the veterans, you see, during that whole Parliament.

BURG: What kinds of veterans' issues were at stake?

GREEN: Oh, all kinds. Defects in the pension legislation, and the hospitalization, and in what we call the war veterans' allowance, and the veterans' legislation wasn't anything like as good then as it became after the Second War. And the veterans needed to have a few friends in Parliament.

BURG: I understand.

GREEN: Mind you, there were members of the other parties, too, who were veterans and generally speaking, we worked together on these questions, and we all insisted on getting a fair deal for the veterans.

BURG: Right. With money in short supply, the funding for these programs must have been difficult.

GREEN: Oh, well, you always have, you're always up against the Minister of Finance, of course.

BURG: Yes. Is it your impression that, as a result of the work of your party, and the other parties, too, that the veterans' program was a good one by the time World War II came?

GREEN: Well, it had been remedied quite a bit. Mind you, there are always problems come up and I guess there still are. Then, when the Second War was drawing to a close, they set up a special committee, which spent a great deal of time working up what was called a veterans' charter, which was made up of perhaps eight or ten different bills and they were all very



good. They were, I think--I think, probably, it was the best veterans' charter that any country had which participated in the Second War. The members of that committee were all very proud of the results.

BURG: Right. Looking back at yourself as a young member of the House of Commons, what other areas especially attracted your interest and your notice during this period before World War II?

GREEN: Well, I was very much involved, of course, on questions of trade. For example, on the tariffs and being able to get our goods into the British market and the American market, and all this sort of thing. It was all very important for a city like Vancouver.

BURG: Yes.

GREEN: And also I was quite interested in external affairs.

BURG: Oh, you were?

GREEN: ~~Having been overseas it was a natural interest for me.~~



BURG: So, all of these areas became areas where you gave your efforts and felt at home.

GREEN: Oh, yes, and where there were so few members in our party--in the opposition, the official opposition party--we had very wide scope. We took part in far more debates than the government supporters were able to do.

BURG: Yes, I can see that.

GREEN: And you are a free agent; we all became pretty good guerillas.

BURG: Thirty-nine of you, that's right!

GREEN: Especially when some of our own men wouldn't fight. I mean, had lost heart. There were comparatively few of us carrying the fight.

BURG: Yes. So, the scope of your duties would be far larger than it would have been had your party had the advantage.

GREEN: Oh, yes and far fewer restrictions on what you said, too.



BURG: I suppose so. Yes.

GREEN: We weren't bound down by any policy very much. I mean, we--

[Interruption]

GREEN: We were also very much interested in welfare measures, for example the old age pensions, unemployment insurance, and all these measures, because, mind you, we had been through the depression years and we were very conscious of the hard time people were having. So that these issues, too, were to the fore all the time during that first Parliament.



BURG: Did you feel that the government in power was not responding adequately in matters of welfare, social welfare?

GREEN: We always felt that a good pat on the back, quite low down, was good for the government--

BURG: I see. [Laughter]

GREEN: --on these questions. And we didn't hesitate to use it.

BURG: How often would you come up for election?

GREEN: The second election was in 1940. That was after war had broken out. The next one was called in, oh, very early in 1940. House was called into session and the Prime Minister dissolved, got a dissolution, within twenty-four hours. So we fought the second election in 1940.

BURG: With what results, sir?

GREEN: Well, we came back with about forty, I think. We didn't do very well. We had a new leader then, a Dr. [Robert J.] Manion, and with all the--with the war on the government was able to say, "Elect us. We're responsible for carrying on the war and you must support it," and they got a very big vote.

BURG: And this was the government, then, of MacKenzie King?

GREEN: MacKenzie King, yes.

BURG: With the war on, was there a change for you in the pattern of your life as a member of the House? You, yourself did not serve again in World War II?

GREEN: No.



BURG: Right. So you were a member of the opposition at a time of warfare, and the government itself had that extra advantage of "We're at war," so may I ask you how you and your colleagues responded in that situation? What did you do?

GREEN: Well, under those conditions there wasn't the same criticism that you would level in peacetime. There was a good deal of cooperation between all the parties in the House. For me, of course, the weight of interest shifted to defense questions; questions of the forces, and so on, and so forth.

BURG: I see.

GREEN: As veterans, we were very much interested in these particular questions. And we, eventually, one or two of us were taking the lead in the defense questions in the House.

BURG: May, may I have for the record the kinds of defense questions that came up?

GREEN: Oh, there were all kinds of them. For example, whether there should be conscription or not, and whether the forces were being properly trained and equipped, and all this sort of



thing; a whole host of problems that come up in wartime in a Parliament.

BURG: And the conscription issue was, if I remember correctly, a very hot issue during that period of time.

GREEN: Yes, the Liberals were hanging back on it all the time. They had been against conscription in the First War and they were very reluctant to bring in conscription. Eventually, they had to bring in a modified type of conscription because the losses were so heavy that the men couldn't be replaced by volunteer methods.



BURG: And you, having gone through that experience on the Western Front, I would suppose that you felt those losses pretty heavily yourself.

GREEN: Oh, well, we, we, were protesting, of course. We were not for conscription at the start; we didn't urge it from the beginning. Perhaps we should have done, but we didn't. But eventually, we were advocating it. They had thousands of trained men in Canada who wouldn't volunteer to go overseas and the government wouldn't send them overseas. In the mean-

time, the men who were doing, the troops who were doing the fighting were not being properly reinforced. In some cases, men were being sent back into battle with their wounds not healed. Our youngsters, who weren't properly trained, were being sent into the fight.

BURG: Yes. Yes.

GREEN: And a lot of the men here who wouldn't enlist, or wouldn't volunteer for overseas service, said, "Well, if the government wants us, let them have the backbone to say so. We'll wait till they say we have to go." It was a bad situation. Eventually, the government had to bring in, as I said, a weak-kneed type of conscription.



BURG: Right. It was my understanding that it was not very satisfactory to the people concerned.

GREEN: No, and over this, the Minister of Defence, who was a very distinguished soldier in the First War, Colonel [James Layton] Ralston, he was eased out, or fired, by MacKenzie King. King brought in [General Andrew George Latta] McNaughton, who had been commander of the first Canadian troops to go to England in the Second War, and had been relieved of his

command, eventually; he was brought in as Minister of Defence. But King could never get him elected to the House; he never did have a seat in the House.

BURG: General McNaughton?

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: I see. Your own constituents here in Vancouver came to favor conscription during the Second World War?

GREEN: Oh, yes. Yes, I was elected in 1940 and again in 1945. And in five more elections after that.



BURG: I see, right. Now after the war, you found yourself, because of your length of service--wait, let me go back a bit. May I ask you how many parties were in the House, say in 1940, when you tended to cooperate?

GREEN: Well, there was three; the Liberals, Conservatives, and the CCF.

BURG: I see.

GREEN: Which is the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, they're the Socialists. They're now the NDP, the National Democratic Party.

BURG: Right. And each of you there in proportion to your representative strength--

GREEN: On committees.

BURG: --yes, committees. O.K. And at the end of the war, what was your major interest as a member of the House of Commons, now that that unusual wartime period was over? I'm sure it must have been a strain for all of you during that period; what then became of vital concern to you as an individual?

GREEN: The questions of reconstruction.

BURG: Reconstruction?

GREEN: Yes, we had a department of reconstruction and supply, I think it was called. It was a question of rehabilitation of the country, and all the developments that were to take place in Canada, internally, after the war; very, very many questions



of that type. Rehabilitating the economy, and so on. These were my main concerns. By that time, there were members who had served in the war, like General [George Randolph] Pearkes and [Edmund] Davie Fulton and others. These men took over the defense questions in the House, so that I became more interested in reconstruction.

BURG: Now, Mr. Green, does that mean that the government at Ottawa focused its attention and began to project, perhaps at the end of the war, or near the end of the war, what the future course of Canada might be?

GREEN: Oh, yes.

BURG: I see. And all--

GREEN: Oh, yes, there was a great deal of thought given to that. See, we had had the experience of the First War; everybody knew that there would be tremendous problems to be solved in the reconstruction period.

BURG: This is very interesting to me, sir. All parties took a hand in this?



GREEN: Yes.

BURG: And so among the Conservatives there would be a caucus, or a group of people, who were working out their views on what should be done, and the Liberals would be working out plans--

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: --and yet, as a House of Commons, all of you then worked together with the ideas that you had in mind?

GREEN: That's right.

BURG: I see. Might I have some examples of the things that you gentlemen foresaw as needs for Canada; the kind of thing that you were aiming for?

GREEN: Well, for example, Canada had built up quite a large industrial machine during the war, very big production on a wartime basis. Now, it was desirable to carry that on into peacetime, as much as possible, converting, of course, to the manufacture of peacetime goods. Then, rebuilding our trade.



Canada depends on external trade to a great extent, far greater than the United States.

BURG: Yes.

GREEN: So that the problems of trade, too, were very important. And the social security problems, too. These were very important. If you remember, at that time many countries were introducing far-ranging, new social security measures, and these were all involved in the picture.



BURG: And how about internal transport systems here in Canada?

GREEN: Yes, that's true, too.

BURG: It seems to me that another thing might have been on the agenda. The Canadian population tends to group up along the southern borders of Canada; were you also working in terms of opening up new lands to the north?

GREEN: Yes, although at that time there hadn't been so much emphasis placed on development of the north as there has been in recent years.

BURG: I see. How about energy sources. I think I remember that you were well aware of some fabulous energy reserves in--

GREEN: Not at that time.

BURG: --you didn't know that?

GREEN: Not at that time.

BURG: The Alberta fields came in later?

GREEN: Canada got into very serious economic difficulties a few years after the war--I don't remember what year it started-- because we didn't have, for example, iron, oil, and two or three other key resources that we were short of. Since then, of course, we've made great discoveries of oil, and vast discoveries of iron ore, for example, in Northern Quebec and Labrador. But in the late forties we were in a very short position, short supply, with several of these commodities.

BURG: Now, what form would this take? Your respective committees would lay plans, how were these plans implemented?

GREEN: Oh, well, the government, of course, would come up with the plans. And they would be aided by the civil



service. They always have a great advantage over the opposition parties, because they've got the whole of the civil service to draw on. And a good many of the ideas would come from the civil service, probably more than from any other source. And the opposition parties would make suggestions, but we wouldn't have the knowledge that was available to the government members through the civil service.

BURG: Yes, I see.

GREEN: And the government was responsible for bringing in proposals and then we would criticize them and offer improvements, or ask for deletions, and so on.

BURG: Let me ask you, Mr. Green, was it your later estimation that what had been foreseen, and the programs used to reach goals, that, generally, this was pretty well done? Or were there areas that you later felt dissatisfied over?

GREEN: Oh, I think, by and large, the results were very good.

BURG: And your party played its part in this--



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GREEN: Oh, yes, we were the leading opposition party throughout. See, I was in opposition for twenty-two years.

BURG: I see. But that changed in 1957?

GREEN: Yes.



INTERVIEW WITH
Howard C. Green

by
Maclyn P. Burg
Oral Historian

on

April 14, 1974

for

Dwight D. Eisenhower Library



This is an interview being conducted by Dr. Maclyn Burg of the Eisenhower Library staff with Mr. Howard Green in Vancouver, B.C. in Mr. Green's home. The date is April 14, 1974. Present for the interview are Mr. Green and Dr. Burg.

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DR. BURG: When we were talking before, we had gotten to the year, 1956. And at the time when we had to cut our conversation short, we had just begun to say something about the "Leadership Conference" in the Conservative Party, which took place in 1956.

MR. GREEN: Yes, there was one then.

DR. BURG: Did that determine who would lead the party in the election which was going to take place in 1957?

MR. GREEN: Yes.



DR. BURG: That was the purpose of that conference?

MR. GREEN: Oh, no. The purpose was because the former leader, the Honorable George [Alexander] Drew, had resigned because of ill health, so we had to get a new leader. You see, we didn't know when an election would be; it isn't at any set interval. We would not know at that time that it would be in 1957, although that would have been very likely because the preceding

one had been in 1953. Ordinarily the parliaments run between four and five years. The Prime Minister of the day sets the date.

BURG: So in '56 it was the other matter; it was the need to select a new leader, and the new leader was Mr. Diefenbaker.

GREEN: That's right.

BURG: And what precipitated, or was there a precipitating event, that brought about the election in '57?



GREEN: I think the government decided that would be a good time for them to ask for a dissolution of Parliament. The Prime Minister can go to the Governor General and ask for a dissolution; this is a prerogative of the Prime Minister.

BURG: Does he do it, Mr. Green, because he suspects that if he does this now, his party stands to gain more seats?

GREEN: Well, that is the overriding consideration.

BURG: But in this instance, it did not occur?

GREEN: No, in this instance the government was defeated, by a very narrow margin; I think we had six or seven more seats than the government. And we didn't have a clear majority; we were a minority government in 1957. And our Prime Minister asked for dissolution in February, I think it was, of 1958. And in that election we were returned with an overwhelming majority.

BURG: I see. But your margin was not so slim in '57 that you needed to seat other parties in the cabinet in forming the government?

GREEN: No, we carried on as a minority government.

BURG: Now you were given a post in that government as it formed in '57?

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: May I ask you what your post was?

GREEN: Well, I was Minister of Public Works, and that included being in charge of housing, and also I was Acting Minister of Defence Production for the first ten months of our government.



And, in addition, I was Government House Leader in the House of Commons and chairman of the Conservative caucus.

BURG: So, a multiplicity of jobs for you as that government started.

GREEN: Well, I was the senior minister, next to the Prime Minister. I would act for him when he was away.

BURG: This must have been very difficult, to carry on all of these functions? Must have been difficult for you.



GREEN: Well, there were several ministers that had more than one portfolio during the early days of our government. [Edmund] Davie Fulton had, I think, two. He was Minister of Justice and also Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. And there was some doubling up of that kind.

BURG: Was there a particular reason why it was done that way, Mr. Green?

GREEN: Well, we only elected about a hundred and twelve members and the cabinet wasn't filled out at the start. Gradually, further ministers were added.

[Interruption]

BURG: I asked the question about the doubling up on portfolios because I wondered if perhaps--your party had not been in power for some period of time--if it was necessary for you to take a little bit of time to look over those who were in Parliament from your party to see who could handle these various tasks.

GREEN: No, we had not been in power for twenty-two years. And not one member of the cabinet had ever been in a cabinet before, except the minister from Newfoundland who had been in the Newfoundland government. But we'd had absolutely no experience in government. For example, I had been twenty-two years in opposition. So that, for example, we didn't have a Secretary of State for External Affairs; the Prime Minister acted in that capacity for some months, until he finally chose the president of the University of Toronto, [Dr.] Sydney [Earle] Smith. It was a case of filling out the posts as that became reasonably possible.

BURG: Right. Secretary of External Affairs, or Minister for External Affairs, is the equivalent of our Secretary of State, is it not?



GREEN: Yes.

BURG: Now, in your first cabinet position, Public Works, did that bring you into contact with the, then, negotiations, I guess, on the Columbia River Treaty?

GREEN: Not directly, but I came in contact with that problem in reality as the senior minister from British Columbia, and also some of the steps were taken while I was Acting Prime Minister; the Prime Minister was away. I made some of the announcements as the Acting Prime Minister.



BURG: Right. Now let me ask you, in your capacity as a minister of the government, had those negotiations, and the arrangements that were being carried out, satisfied you?

GREEN: Well, there were no negotiations underway when we took office. There had been talks, but there were no actual negotiations.

BURG: Perhaps studies had been done, too.

GREEN: Shortly after we took office, it was agreed that the IJC would bring in an outline of questions that should be

negotiated. We had--that step was taken under us. And then, after this outline had been prepared by the IJC--which, as you know, has two sections, the Canadian and an American--then the negotiating teams were appointed and the negotiations got under way.

BURG: In your position at that particular time, you were rather unique, having come from British Columbia, having lived here virtually all your life.



GREEN: Yes, I was born in British Columbia.

BURG: Right. And knowing this situation and this part of the country as thoroughly as you did, I would assume that you had a very personal interest in these negotiations.

GREEN: Oh, yes, and we had been raising it on numerous occasions when we were in opposition. Matter of fact, I was born about the middle of the Columbia area in British Columbia.

BURG: Not Kamloops, was it?

GREEN: No, it was called Kaslo. Kamloops is not drained by the Columbia River. Kaslo is on Kootenay Lake.

BURG: Right. In your time in opposition, Mr. Green, what had been your attitude toward the negotiations, or the studies, and the whole idea of the Columbia River Project then?

GREEN: Well, we took great interest in the Columbia, largely because General McNaughton was an enthusiast about developing the Columbia. He would appear before the External Affairs Committee, of which I was a member, and outline what he hoped would be done there. Also, it was becoming a very hot subject because the British Columbia government, a year or two earlier, had made a tentative deal with the [Henry J.] Kaiser people to put a project on the Columbia in Canada, and the Dominion government had hurried through an act giving the Dominion the power to issue permits for any construction on an international river. So they took control, they really took control of the river developments by that act. And in the discussions on that act, we'd had McNaughton, I think, and representatives from the provincial government, so the Columbia River development was quite a hot one in Canada by the time we took office. And one of our main planks in the election had been to carry out a development program in Canada. One example being the South



Saskatchewan Dam, which had been under discussion for quite a few years. But for British Columbia, the Columbia River was the main development that we had in mind, and then, of course, constructing roads to the north, and many other aspects of this development program. But the Columbia was our main development project for British Columbia so that, naturally, we were very deeply interested in it.

BURG: Well, am I right that that federal, the Dominion action, in establishing this kind of control over an international river, wasn't that rather unusual for Canadian-- aren't the provinces--

GREEN: Well, the question had never come up before, you see, and if the provincial government under Premier Bennett had been allowed to go ahead and put in a project of that kind, it would have ruined the Canadian development on the Columbia River, for it would have prevented an overall program. So the Liberal government which preceded us, I think quite rightly, moved very quickly to get this International River Improvements Act made law, and that stopped the Kaiser deal.



BURG: I see. Had Mr. Bennett's government been allowed to proceed with what they had in mind, they would have then, in effect, settled for one bird in the hand and ignored the possibilities of many birds in the bush later on.

GREEN: Oh, yes. It would have destroyed an overall agreement on the Columbia in Canada.

BURG: So that was turned aside and your party was very interested in seeing things in a broader context.



GREEN: That's right. And we backed the Liberal government in bringing in this bill.

BURG: And then you, yourselves, when you went into power in 19--

GREEN: I thought there had been more progress made between Canada and the United States. After that act had been passed, I was surprised to find when we took office that, really, the dealings on the Columbia were stalemated.

BURG: Oh, they were?

GREEN: Well, there was nothing being done, nothing of any account. We moved to get agreement with the United States that the IJC would bring in the principles which should be the basis for the treaty.

BURG: Now, the principles that they would bring in, Mr. Green, were intended to relate to the Columbia River development.

GREEN: Only.

BURG: Was there anything in the offing to indicate that either we or you were thinking in terms that these principles might be applied the full length of the border?

GREEN: Oh, I don't think so. They were, primarily at least, for the Columbia River.

BURG: Right, one item at a time. All right, then that Columbia River affair was one of the first things that crossed your desk as you took your job?

GREEN: It didn't come under my department. It interested me because of my position with regard to British Columbia, and because of the activities that I had been participating in before



we became government.

BURG: Now did the signing of the Columbia River Treaty come into fruition after the Diefenbaker government left office?

GREEN: The work on the principles took the IJC almost a year, and then the negotiations took quite a few months. The treaty was not ratified by our government, not because of any trouble with the United States, but because of trouble with British Columbia. The whole objective, purpose, of the treaty, insofar as we were concerned for Canada, was that in return for building storage dams in Canada, which would result in an increased production of power in the plants in the United States, Canada would get back half of that very cheap downstream power. And it particularly affected greater Vancouver, because practically all that power would have been used here. It would have been very, very cheap and this was the great attraction for Canada. Well, the negotiations went on with four negotiators. Mr. Fulton was the chairman; he was another British Columbia minister, Minister of Justice; then we had a senior man from External Affairs; and a senior man from Northern Affairs and Natural Resources; and a



deputy minister from British Columbia. We were very careful to keep British Columbia completely in the picture, although we didn't have to. Then, after the treaty had been negotiated and signed by President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Diefenbaker, then Mr. Bennett, the provincial premier, took the position that he wouldn't allow any of that cheap downstream power back into Canada. He said it all had to be sold in the United States, so that, in effect, he completely destroyed the usefulness of the treaty from our point of view. We would not agree with him on that; we wouldn't give in to him. Mr. [Lester Bowles] Pearson became the Prime Minister in 1963 and, in spite of the stand of his own Liberals in British Columbia, and of the NDP [National Democratic Party], he turned right around and agreed with Bennett's plan and allowed the downstream power to be excluded, to be sold, so that none of it has come back to British Columbia. And, in the meantime, there had been inflation, and the cost of the dams has been higher than expected, and they haven't got enough money from the United States to pay for all the dams. They're out a good many million dollars at the moment. And the Lower Mainland has no cheap power, and this was all done by Bennett, deliberately, so that



he could force the Peace River power--which is more expensive--
force the Peace River power onto the Lower Mainland. And in
order to do that, he took over the British Columbia Electric,
which was a private company, the power company, in B.C. Now,
the new government of British Columbia, which of course is
the NDP--and they were very strongly behind our stand on the
Columbia River Treaty--they're faced with finding millions of
dollars to complete the Mica Dam and the power plant there,
over and above what's been paid by the United States, and
we're getting absolutely no downstream power. Under the
treaty, as we negotiated it, the Americans had to deliver half
the downstream power to the border at Osoyoos, that's at the
foot of the Okanagan Valley. And then we would have had to
transmit it from there to Vancouver. So that the Columbia
River Treaty turned out to be, from my point of view, a
tragedy, entirely because of the attitude taken by the pro-
vincial government, and by the Liberal government throwing in
its hand and allowing Bennett to get away with it.

BURG: Mr. Bennett just thwarted the intent of the federal
government, of your federal government.



GREEN: That's right! He had a deputy sitting in as a negotiator; we had an intergovernmental committee, with ministers from the federal government and from the province, and officials; there was not one word, to my knowledge, ever said about not allowing that downstream power back into Canada! And, as I say, this was the main attraction in the treaty from the Canadian point of view!



BURG: Yes. Well, Mr. Green, I'm an innocent in matters of this sort. What reaction did you get from the American government, which--

GREEN: Well, the Americans were perfectly happy to go ahead, and they were upset, of course, by the dispute between the Dominion government and the British Columbia government. Nobody was quarreling with the American government.

BURG: Right, they stood ready to deliver this power.

GREEN: Yes, they were ready to deliver. They--under the treaty, they had to deliver that downstream power to the border. And they were prepared to do that.

BURG: And it was just simply a matter of Mr. Bennett saying, "Never mind that; you're not going to bring that power in here", and offering to his own province the Peace River--

GREEN: That's right. It was a complete doublecross; now that's what it was.

BURG: Instead of having two choices, the people of British Columbia had one choice.

GREEN: Well, it wasn't the matter of two choices; it was the matter of the cheapest power, where they get the cheapest power. And they would have got it from the Columbia.

BURG: Coming back up from us.

GREEN: Cheaper than the Peace River power, you see. But now, of course, Vancouver has to use Peace River power. And the president of the BC Electric told me himself, he said, "The premier is trying to force my hand and make me agree to take Peace River power, but in fairness to my shareholders and to the public, I simply can't do it because the Columbia River power is so much cheaper", you see, so Bennett got around this by seizing the BC Electric.



BURG: In effect, nationalizing that?

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: Was that done as a power play of Mr. Bennett's, Mr. Green?

GREEN: Yes, absolutely.

BURG: Simply to--did he hope to enhance--

GREEN: To carry out his own way. He needed money, for example, to develop the Peace River. He gets the money from the U.S. for the Columbia River storage and spends it on the Peace River projects.

BURG: Which were his own. And did this to enhance his own position?

GREEN: Yes, to carry out his policy. He was determined to force that Peace River power on Vancouver, and he did it.

BURG: And there would be nothing that could be done about that, Mr. Green, unless the voters turned him out at the polls?



GREEN: No. I think it was completely bad faith. Because, as I say, we had all these personal contacts and not one word breathed about not allowing any downstream power back into British Columbia.

BURG: Right. Was there anything that anyone in the government could do about this? Nothing, evidently?

GREEN: The federal government couldn't do anything in the meantime; no one could. We'd offered to help him finance his transmission lines, and I think we would have gone further along that line, but he announced that he was not going to allow any downstream power back into Canada. The BC Electric was the distributor for the whole Lower Mainland. And he takes over the BC Electric. [Laughter]

BURG: And he took it?

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: So, to this day, that power from us has not come up into BC?

GREEN: No, no.



BURG: I have heard discussions among Canadians that they'd like to see that treaty renegotiated.

GREEN: Well, I don't think that's possible. The treaty was a fair treaty, in my estimation. But the trouble was entirely between BC and Ottawa.

BURG: "A fair treaty" because both the United States and Canada seemed to get--



GREEN: Oh, yes. There are arguments now that it was a sellout to the United States, and I don't doubt in the United States there are arguments that it was a sellout to Canada. I've never seen anything to convince me that the treaty was not a fair treaty.

BURG: Did your colleagues seem to agree with that feeling, too?

GREEN: Oh, I think so, yes.

BURG: I've only talked to a few people who were active in doing studies of it and working it, and they, too, seem to think that it was a fair arrangement.

GREEN: And Fulton was our main negotiator, so you could ask him about that.

BURG: Right, and I shall too. I'll be talking with him on Monday. It puzzles me--now the British Columbia government, since Bennett, has not been able to call into action the terms of that treaty? That is to say--

GREEN: Well, they had the treaty, had a protocol to the treaty, negotiated after we were defeated and Pearson agreed with Bennett's position. And Pearson committed the federal government to Bennett's position.

BURG: And that, too, has not changed since Mr. Pearson's day?

GREEN: No, Pearson negotiated the protocol in order that BC could sell that power in the states.

BURG: What a remarkable situation!

GREEN: Well, I thought it was fantastic. Certainly it was my greatest disappointment in respect to any policy while we were in the government. If I had known it would turn out that way, I never would have supported negotiations.



BURG: Could there have been, Mr. Green, any private approach, by those of you in the cabinet, to Mr. Bennett?

GREEN: I thought Bennett was a friend of mine. He was Conservative, originally. I had spent six weeks in 1948 trying to get him elected to the federal house in a by-election in his constituency. And Bonner, the attorney general, had been president of my Young Conservatives in my own riding; I don't think that Bonner knew that Bennett intended to do this doublecross.



BURG: This is Robert Bonner?

GREEN: Bonner was the attorney general. He was on the Intergovernmental Committee in Canada.

BURG: So you think that he also was caught unaware?

GREEN: Well, I don't know, but I would be very surprised if he knew that Bennett planned to refuse to allow any of that downstream power back to Canada. He may have known, I don't know.

BURG: Now, Mr. Green, did you ever have an opportunity to talk to Mr. Bennett about this?

GREEN: Oh, I saw him all the time.

BURG: And your best efforts failed to move him.

GREEN: Never any--well, by that time, at the time, he'd taken his stand on it; there was no use talking to him then.

BURG: Good Lord! Really, a very daring and very brazen thing to do.

GREEN: Well, in my view it was a doublecross.

BURG: Now, let me ask you this, Mr. Green--again, to help clarify politics here in BC, which many Americans would not understand--having done that and having, in effect, saddled his province with higher cost power, how did he remain in office? Surely the people--or maybe I'm wrong--my thought was that when his own people found out--

GREEN: Well, one thing which helped him politically was this, that the people of this province have always been very much in



favor of development. If somebody comes up with a policy that would mean hiring a thousand men, whether it's a wise project or not, a great number of the people are for it. And I presume that's the same attitude in Washington and Oregon. Now Bennett was shouting about a two-river policy. He was going to develop the Peace and he was developing the Columbia. This was his great hue and cry, that this was a wonderful development policy; it would give thousands of men work and would produce all sorts of power, and this sort of thing. Now this was a very difficult appeal to attack on the hustings. And also, the provincial government is always closer to the people than the federal government. We're sitting in Ottawa, two thousand miles away, and it's much easier--the provincial people are much closer to the public and can get at the public much quicker. And it isn't easy to convince the public against the provincial people. Eventually, BC caught up with Mr. Bennett; he suffered a terrible defeat two years ago.

BURG: Yes, I remember that had happened just before I came out here. And has his political career pretty well ended, Mr. Green, as far as you can tell?



GREEN: Oh, I think so. His son has taken over as leader of the Social Credit Party.

BURG: I think I now understand. The promise of many jobs in construction on two projects looked very good at the moment--

GREEN: Oh, yes, this was big stuff.

BURG: Right. And the cost was--

GREEN: Now, they're just beginning to wake up to realize what's happened, you see. Always, in Ottawa, it was fundamental in our government, and with the earlier Liberal government, that half the downstream power had to come back to Canada. That's all there was in it for Canada! If we were going to dam the Columbia River in Canada, and thereby enable the American plants to produce more power, the only way we could be paid off was by some of that cheap power. And that got away from the fluctuations in the value of money.

BURG: That's right, it would have. In effect, we got better control over the lower Columbia, less flooding, less chance of flooding; we got half of the power from it; the storage areas



would have inundated Canadian land, not our land; so, really, what you were to get out of it was that half of the power that was to come up.

GREEN: That's all we had to get out of it--but mind you, we will get power from the Mica Dam which is under construction now. It's the only one of the three dams that produces any power. There's no power at Duncan Dam up at the head of Kootenay Lake, and there's no power on the High Arrow Dam on the Arrow Lakes. They're purely storage dams.



BURG: I see. Mica, M-i-c-a?

GREEN: Yes, it's up in the Big Bend above Revelstoke.

[Interruption]

BURG: You also said that you held a position which dealt with Canadian defense; defense buying, I would assume.

GREEN: Yes, the Department of Defence Production had the responsibility for procuring for the Department of National Defence and we also had supervision of six or seven Crown

Corporations, the main one of which was POLYMAR, the big synthetic rubber plant at Sarnia; which, by the way, has been a very profitable undertaking.

BURG: Where is that location again? I didn't--

GREEN: At Sarnia, Ontario.

BURG: You called it a Crown Corporation, Mr. Green. What does that mean?



GREEN: Well, it was a government company. And there were several; the Canadian Arsenal was another Crown Corporation, and another was the Crown Assets Disposal Corporation, which disposed of surplus Crown property. Oh, there were six or seven different Crown Corporations that came under the Defence Production Department. The main activity was procuring for the armed forces, and for the armed forces of the United States as well.

BURG: Oh, you procured for us too?

GREEN: Well, there were agreements between the two countries about the exchange of equipment, and so on. Canada producing

certain articles for the U.S. Defence Department and the Americans producing some for the Canadian Defence Department.

BURG: Had those agreements been a result of World War II, Mr. Green?

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: And they were simply continued?

GREEN: Really, the Defence Production Department was a continuation of the Department of Munitions and Supply during the war. It's been changed since; there's a new setup now.

BURG: As you did that work, were your dealings ever with Americans? Let's say--I suppose they would be from our Department of Defence.

GREEN: With the Pentagon, yes.

BURG: With the Pentagon. Do you recollect whether these dealings were always friendly, or were there times--

GREEN: I don't think we negotiated directly. We were dealing more with the actual firms supplying the goods, I think,



supplying equipment.

BURG: I see. Rather than through the Pentagon, then, you might be dealing with North American Aviation, for example, or a concern like that?

GREEN: Yes. I don't recall having any negotiations with the American officials in my capacity as acting Minister of Defence Production. I only held the position for about ten months and then a permanent minister was appointed.



BURG: I see. All right, when you put down that portfolio at the end of ten months, what was your next position?

GREEN: Well, I carried on as Minister of Public Works; I was two years Minister of Public Works.

BURG: And then, ultimately, became Minister of Exterior Affairs.

GREEN: I was appointed Secretary of State for External Affairs in 1959, June of 1959.

BURG: Would that have been considered the senior cabinet position?

GREEN: Well, it certainly is one of the top two or three. In

fact, there had never been a Secretary of State for External Affairs who was not Prime Minister until Mr. [Louis Stephen] St. Laurent was appointed to the office in the forties. And then Pearson succeeded him and Smith succeeded Pearson. Then Smith died, unfortunately, and I followed him, and [Paul] Martin succeeded me. And now [William Mitchell] Sharp.

BURG: When Mr. Diefenbaker offered you that portfolio, were there particular things that he asked you to concentrate on with regard to External Affairs, or was there anything that your government, all of you, felt was a priority matter?

GREEN: No. No. Mr. Smith died about two or three months before I was appointed, and I think there were several other ministers after the position. Mr. Diefenbaker would discuss the situation with me from time to time because, as I say, I was the senior minister. Well, I was completely surprised when one morning he said, "Well, you're it. I'm going to name you Secretary of State for External Affairs."

BURG: This was a job you had not sought and you were quite surprised to receive it?



GREEN: Yes, I was perfectly happy. I liked Public Works and got on very well with the department and also, I was Government House Leader, which I liked, and chairman of the caucus. Well, I had to give all those up, you see, and go into this External Affairs Department. Mr. Pearson, of course had been the under-secretary of the department, and then the secretary, and there was quite a belief among our party members that it was a Pearsonite department. So I didn't know just exactly what I was walking into. But when the Prime Minister tells you you are to take a certain position, you either have to take it or get into trouble. And I liked the challenge, too. I'd always taken a great interest in External Affairs, so that I was quite pleased about it, actually.



BURG: Did Mr. Diefenbaker explain, either then or later, why you--you had work that contented you and which you were doing in an exemplary fashion, and suddenly he told you, "You're it." Did he ever explain that to you?

GREEN: No.

BURG: He didn't. Was that typical of Mr. Diefenbaker?

GREEN: Mind you, we had thought pretty much alike on all these questions anyway; we were both very strong Commonwealth men, and on the left wing of the party, left wing of the Conservative party. And we had been together in quite a few fights, debates, during our period in opposition. And, of course, I had been two years, in effect, the Deputy Prime Minister before I was appointed to the job.

BURG: Could I ask you what the expression "Commonwealth men" means? I've heard it before and I think I know what it means.



GREEN: Well, we're very strongly in favor of the British connection. That's been one of the outstanding characteristics of the Conservative party from the time of the Confederation.

BURG: Trade, interrelated trade setups, and--

GREEN: Oh, well, it went much deeper than trade. And, mind you, we were both in the first World War and very much attached to the British, and the Australians, and the New Zealanders.

BURG: Right, right. So it's not only an economic thing but there are very strong ties of blood.

GREEN: Sentimental thing.

BURG: Right, blood and background, and many other things. Let me ask you this then. Both of you were Commonwealth men; do you now recollect your basic attitude toward the United States, which had taken a different kind of path? And you as a Canadian, and particularly as a leader in the government, would it be fair, for example, to describe your feeling about the United States as one of caution, wariness, or did you see the necessity--



GREEN: Oh, I wouldn't say that, no. We were on very friendly terms with the Americans and the people of the two countries are very much intertwined. Every family, Canadian family, practically, has relatives in the States. And they travel back and forth all the time, so that there really is a good neighbor situation.

BURG: So if I use a word like wary or cautious, that's too strong?

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: But it seems to me--as you know, I have roots in Canada, too, in New Brunswick. I'm one of those relatives in the United States that somebody up here has--it seems to me that one finds in Canada a very strong feeling of independence and an understandable lack of desire to stand in the shadow of the United States in any way. So what I was searching for was your view on that and how it might best be expressed.

GREEN: Well, of course, this has always been a problem for Canada and always will be, just because she's beside a much more powerful neighbor. And we always have to be careful not to be dominated by the more powerful neighbor. And this, of course, goes back many years. For example, the construction of the Canadian-Pacific to this west coast was mainly done in order to prevent the west coast from joining the States. At the time, it was after the American Civil War, and some of the Americans had been anxious to take over Canada, and they didn't like the attitude of the British during that war. And that was one of the main reasons that there was Confederation in Canada, that the different colonies got together, for fear the United States would take over all of them.



BURG: Not just British Columbia, but--

GREEN: Well, that was before Confederation in 1867. And then with the construction of the CPR, finished in 1885, that again was a race, really, to keep the west coast Canadian. See, the west coast wasn't in Confederation, originally; just the four provinces in the east. I guess Canada will always be faced with this problem. It's very serious right now, about American economic domination of Canada, and whether there will be interference in Canadian policy by reason of that domination. This is more acute now in Canada than it has been for a long time, I think. I mean the public awareness is more discernible.

BURG: I get the impression that it is. Now, during that period of time in the late 1950s, we were linked together in certain kinds of, let's say, defensive postures; I don't know whether one can use the term defensive alliances. We were both NATO members, were we not?

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: So Canada, therefore, had commitments for the defense of North America as we did; at least that's my understanding.



GREEN: Well, NATO was to defend the North Atlantic area. And Canada, of course, was one of the founding members of NATO and, in addition, we had the NORAD agreement, with the United States alone, for the defense of the continent. And various defense arrangements, cooperative defense arrangements, which were and still are very extensive.

BURG: Was it your experience at that time, and I'm thinking now particularly of the Eisenhower administration, was the American government's position with regard to Canada a reasonable one? Did our two governments seem to see eye-to-eye in their NATO stance, and in the NORAD stance that they took? Or was there any indication in your mind that we were unreasonable?



GREEN: Well, I think under Eisenhower there was very close cooperation and nobody felt that there was any attempt at domination by President Eisenhower, or by Herter, who was his Secretary of State.

BURG: Right, Mr. Dulles having died.

GREEN: Yes, Herter was appointed just about the same time that I was.

BURG: I see. It seemed to me that you must have come into Mr. Herter's field of influence.

GREEN: I think Dulles would have been quite a bit more difficult. From what I've heard, he was more difficult.

BURG: You didn't have to deal with him yourself though?

GREEN: Oh, no, Herter and I attended the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway. We drove up in a car together and I remember him saying, "Well, I guess we'll have to be good friends." That's the kind of chap Herter was. Yes, he said, "I guess you and I are going to be good friends." He was a very, very attractive person.



BURG: Was that the first time that you had ever made his acquaintance?

GREEN: The first time I met him, yes.

BURG: Was there any kind of further personal contact between the two of you?

GREEN: Well, Mr. Herter and I were always very good friends. We always got along very well.

BURG: Was it close enough, Mr. Green, so that you ever phoned or that he ever phoned you in connection with--

GREEN: Well, I don't remember but we could do that. We probably did, and I did with his successor, too.

BURG: It was that close?

GREEN: With the Secretary who succeeded Herter, the Democratic Secretary of State.

BURG: Under John F. Kennedy?

GREEN: He was an awfully good chap, too. He's now at the University of Georgia.

BURG: The man who succeeds Herter would have been Kennedy's Secretary of State.

GREEN: Yes, his Secretary of State, Kennedy's Secretary of State. He was a good friend of mine.

BURG: Rusk?

GREEN: Yes, Rusk, Dean Rusk, that's the chap.

BURG: Rusk, of course. I knew it was there somewhere if I



could ever get it out. Well, I'm interested that you felt that way about Mr. Herter and got along well with him. Your feeling then, is that relationship was one that--were you on first name basis?

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: So had there been any real need, your recollection now is it would have been easy to pick up the phone and talk directly to him.

GREEN: Oh, yes, we always could get through to him.

BURG: But, by and large, you didn't need to.

GREEN: I don't remember whether I did or not; I probably did, particularly from the UN. But Mr. Herter was only the Secretary of State for about a year and a half after I went in. We had a conference in Washington, on one occasion, of the foreign ministers of the five NATO countries which were represented in the disarmament negotiations. And also there was another--we used to have joint ministerial meetings with the Americans-- and Herter and I went up to Camp David together in a helicopter.



We had a weekend in Camp David when one of these discussions was held at Camp David.

BURG: You called it a "joint ministerial" discussion?

GREEN: Yes, there would be, I think, your Secretary of the Treasury, and your Secretary of Defense, and Herter, and we would have our Minister of Defence and, I'm not sure; we had probably Trade and Commerce or Finance, I think our Finance Minister was along at Camp David.

BURG: Who instituted these meetings, Mr. Green?

GREEN: I think it was our government took that initiative. I think it was. And also, we set up inter-parliamentary meetings, which were held twice a year, between representatives from the Senate and the House of Representatives and members of the Senate and the Parliament in Canada. They met twice a year, too. There would be about twenty-five or so at the camp.

BURG: And do you remember what the intent was of your government?



GREEN: Simply to discuss problems that were of concern to both countries. Mind you, at the time I was in Washington with the four other Foreign Ministers of NATO it was on NATO business; different from the consultation between the United States and Canada.

BURG: Right. But these meetings that might have been held with ministers from both countries present or, the meetings that were held where, in effect, members of the two parliaments were present, those meetings would, I presume, sometimes focus upon situations within one of our two countries, or perhaps situations elsewhere in the world, where both of us were concerned in some way?



GREEN: That's right.

BURG: Were they held on a regular schedule, Mr. Green? Or were they called on need?

GREEN: There would be an agenda, the officials would agree on what subjects would be discussed.

BURG: But these meetings did not occur every month or every

two months but, would you say, once or twice a year was about the frequency?

GREEN: I think the parliamentary groups met twice a year, and I'm not sure how often the ministers met; at least once a year, and I think more. I think more than once.

BURG: When you went to Camp David, this was during the Eisenhower administration?

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: Was the President there?

GREEN: No.

BURG: He did not attend?

GREEN: No.

BURG: Did he ever attend any of the sessions that you had?

GREEN: No.

BURG: All right. You met Mr. Eisenhower though, it seems to me did you not?



GREEN: Yes, I met him I think, first, in Ottawa when he came to visit Canada. And I think that would be after we formed the government. I remember meeting him at a luncheon; I was sitting right across the table from him. And then I met him in New York when he was up during the meetings of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Matter of fact, I've got a picture of that, taken in the Waldorf Astoria. And before that, I had met him at the opening of the Seaway in the summer of 1959. The Queen and the President, jointly, opened the Seaway, you remember.



BURG: Right, I do remember.

GREEN: And this is a picture of those foreign ministers meeting in Washington. That's [Selwyn] Lloyd of Britain, and [Maurice] Couve de Murville of France, and [Antonio] Segni of Italy, and Chris Herter, and myself. This is a picture of the occasion of a parliamentary meeting. This is Senator [George David] Aiken from Vermont. He was the head of the Senate group in that conference, and this is a chap named Cornelius [Edward] Gallagher from New York [New Jersey]. He was the head of the

House of Representatives group. I think he's out of public life now.

BURG: I think he is.

GREEN: Aiken is retiring this time. And this is [Daniel Roland] Michener, who was then the Speaker of our House and he later became the Governor-General.

BURG: I don't suppose that those are extra photographs?

GREEN: By the way, this is the picture of [Henry] Cabot Lodge at the United Nations.



BURG: I thought I recognized that smile on the face. And these are out of your collection?

GREEN: Yes. These conferences were very useful, I would say.

BURG: Particularly how, Mr. Green?

GREEN: Well, in studying each other's viewpoints.

BURG: This was quite an innovation?

GREEN: I think we initiated it. I'm not sure whether the Liberals had such a scheme before; I don't think they had. We certainly initiated the inter-parliamentary discussions. And I think the ministerial as well, but now they have them with Japan and one or two other countries.

BURG: And are they still being continued with the United States, as far as you know?

GREEN: I don't know.

BURG: But during the time your government was in this was a regular procedure.

GREEN: A fairly regular procedure.

BURG: Now with regard to Mr. Eisenhower--you had seen him informally--did you ever have an opportunity to sit down and discuss any particular problems with him at length?

GREEN: No. No, that would be done by the Prime Minister.

BURG: I see. Just because this is the Canadian system?

GREEN: Well, the Prime Minister and the President would hold discussions. My discussions would be with the Secretary of State.



BURG: Aside from the Secretary of State, Mr. Herter, were there any other members of the President's administrative family with whom you came into contact?

GREEN: Well, only at these conferences. Now, most of my contacts would be with the Secretary of State.

BURG: And your impressions then of Mr. Herter seem to be rather good.

GREEN: Oh, yes, I liked Chris Herter very much. He really was a very fine person.



BURG: What traits struck you as being particularly admirable in that man?

GREEN: Well, Americans generally have great gifts for friendliness and Herter was outstanding in that regard, I thought. Obviously straightforward and sincere, and just a mighty fine person.

BURG: He sounds like someone you felt you could rely upon--

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: --and whose word you could rely upon?

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: Let me ask you this--

GREEN: His son is the chairman of the American section of the IJC now.

BURG: Oh, he is? I didn't know that.

GREEN: Yes, I think so. And Herter was suffering, too; he had terrible arthritis, and in pain all the time.

BURG: And yet still remained an affable and friendly man. As you looked at the Eisenhower Administration from your position --those years where you overlapped with it--what is your general assessment of that administration and the President? I realize you're seeing it from a distance, and your contacts with Mr. Eisenhower were fairly brief but, as a very highly placed minister in the Canadian government looking south of the border, how did that administration strike you, sir?

GREEN: Well, I started out with great admiration for Eisenhower. I mean for what he had done in the war. And I always admired him very, very much. And, from my point of view, he's the ideal type of man to have as President of the United States from the



Canadian point of view, because you could be dead sure he wasn't going to try to shove anybody around.

BURG: That's a very interesting judgment to make. You placed a fairly high premium on his integrity then?

GREEN: Well, it was more than integrity. I feel it was the characteristics that made him a leader accepted by all the Allied countries.

BURG: All right. Could I safely conclude that, insofar as you were concerned, he had established in your mind a set of bona fides--very high set of bona fides in the period 1942-1945?



GREEN: I thought Eisenhower was an ideal leader for the strongest nation in the world.

BURG: That's very high praise, indeed. Mr. Green, did others in the Cabinet seem to take a similar view of him?

GREEN: I think everybody liked President Eisenhower. Take, for example, this picture that was taken in the Waldorf Astoria.

He and the Prime Minister were sitting on this chesterfield, talking, and Eisenhower noticed me standing by the door and he stopped his conversation and said, "Come on, Mr. Green, you better get in on this, too." And he asked me to come over and sit on this chesterfield. Now, very few leaders would do that. I mean leaders, primarily, are inclined to be self-centered. But Eisenhower did that, and he did the same thing with my wife on the [Royal Yacht] Britannia at the opening of the Seaway. She was sitting on one side of him, and I guess the Queen was on the other side, I'm not sure. In any event, he deliberately kept my wife in the conversation, all the way through; went out of his way to do that. Now he was just that sort of a human being that everybody liked. And, matter of fact, at that Seaway there was another incident. He and the Queen were--

[Interruption]

GREEN: The Queen and the President were standing on the bridge of the Britannia as she steamed up through the canal and at one spot you go under a bridge, and a group of American senators



and congressmen were up on the bridge, and one of them shouted out, "Hi, Ike! I like your girl friend! How about an introduction?" [Laughter]

BURG: Holy cow!

GREEN: Which I thought was quite significant.

BURG: Now tell me what the President of the United States said to that?

GREEN: I think he just smiled. [Laughter] What could he say?

BURG: There wouldn't be much he could say. All right, what did the Queen do?

GREEN: I guess she smiled too. [Laughter] She is very good with people, too.

BURG: She is good with them. She does have a nice sense of humor and, if I'm not mistaken, the General had known the Queen when the Queen was still a very young lady.

GREEN: Oh, in England. Yes.



BURG: Yes. And so they probably felt more at ease with one another than you'd think. But what a thing to have to cope with. Well, I'm very much interested, and very touched, by that story about his keeping your wife in the conversation as he talked with the Queen of England. Particularly if, as you remember, the two ladies were on either side of him.

GREEN: He may have been across the table from the Queen, I'm not sure. But, in any event, he went out of his way to keep my wife involved in the conversation and she was very much touched by it, because this doesn't happen very often.



BURG: Yes. And I can imagine the pressures that would have been on the man to keep his attention focused on the Queen.

GREEN: Mind you, he did much the same thing, at the luncheon I attended in the parliament buildings, with those of us who were near him.

BURG: Did you ever meet his Vice-President?

GREEN: Nixon? Oh, yes. When the five NATO foreign ministers met in Washington, we had tea in Nixon's home.

BURG: I see. But you had very little contact with him except on that occasion.

GREEN: I think that was the only time I met him. And I was very much impressed by Nixon, too. At that time, he was running for President and he gave us a very objective analysis of the political situation, outlining his own weaknesses as well as his opponent's.

BURG: Oh, he did?

GREEN: Yes, he did. And I came away with a very good impression of Nixon. Very, very capable and, I thought, very forthright.

BURG: You don't happen to remember--in his discussion of things that he thought represented weaknesses--any of those, specifically?

GREEN: Well, where he would be weak in, for example, on certain questions, or in certain parts of the country.

BURG: I see. I thought there might have been some particular trait, or problem of this sort, that he might have referred to. You know, based on his eight years of experiences as the Vice-President.



GREEN: No, no, he didn't deal with personal qualities.

BURG: Right. These were areas of knowledge where he felt he was not quite as competent as in other areas.

GREEN: Yes.

BURG: I see. Now, Mr. Green, you stayed with the Diefenbaker government until that government was replaced in 1963?

GREEN: That's right.



BURG: And, when that occurred, what was the next step for you?

GREEN: Well, of course, I was defeated, you see, in 1963 in my own riding, so I returned to practicing law in Vancouver.

BURG: And did you stay active in Conservative politics?

GREEN: I ran again in 1965, and I was defeated in '65 by a very narrow margin. I wasn't defeated by very much in '63 either, actually, but I ran again in '65.

BURG: And did you run thereafter?

GREEN: No.

BURG: Then you confined yourself to your law practice from that point on?

GREEN: That's right.

BURG: Did you, from '63 on, try to take an active part in the Conservative politics of British Columbia?

GREEN: Oh, here, yes.

BURG: And have you continued that active interest?

GREEN: No, I have not been active for some time.

BURG: Did you feel that it was time to turn it over to new men?

GREEN: Well, new men come onto the scene and your friends pass away, or become ill, or become disinterested, so that there isn't much point in trying to be very active. And your advice isn't appreciated very much, either. [Laughter]

BURG: [Laughter] I suppose. You sort of notice when they stop asking you for it.

GREEN: Yes.



BURG: Let me ask you this, too, one final question of you. What do you see in the future for Canadian-American relationships? How do you think things will go in the next five or ten years, given the problems that we both have, or the energy problem that my country has?

GREEN: I really don't know. I don't think anybody can tell.

BURG: Would you look forward to a continued existence as we're going, or do you see any sign in your country of a movement to link up with us in closer ties, or any movement to pull away from us?



GREEN: Oh, I would think that things would continue very much as they are at the present time. I think the real basis for good relationship is neighborliness, and that depends not so much on government policy as on individuals. And I don't see very much change in that regard. There are many, many links; for example, the service clubs are international, and many unions are international, and the news is pretty well international. There'll be variations as between the governments. Sometimes relations will be better than at other times. But geography has put us as

adjoining countries and I don't think that there's likely to be very much change. For example, if somebody started to make really serious trouble, I think that the people would step in; public opinion would stop it.

BURG: Oh, should either government--

GREEN: Yes, should the leaders on either side start to get really nasty with the other country, I don't think that the public opinion of the two countries would back it up.

BURG: No, I think you're probably right. You were telling me, earlier on, how Canada stood to benefit in terms of power from the Columbia River Treaty. It's been almost twenty years now, fifteen years, since you were in the government, have you been satisfied with--

GREEN: It's eleven years.

BURG: Eleven years. That's right, '63. Sorry, I was thinking back to '57 when you went in. Has Canada's share increased? Are you happy with the amount of benefit that Canada has been deriving in these associations that our two countries have had?



GREEN: You mean on the Columbia River?

BURG: No, I'm thinking from one end of the countries to the other. We share in many ways; we depend upon each other in many ways; Canada has been in the past, sometimes, the junior partner. Do you feel that Canada's role will grow in importance?

GREEN: Well, I think so. Under present conditions Canada is in a very fortunate position because of our supplies of energy, and we're not as hard hit as most of the developed countries.

BURG: One of your countrymen refers to all of you as the "blue-eyed Arabs of the world."



GREEN: Well, we have a very serious problem with energy, in that Quebec and the Maritimes don't have energy. They're just now planning to extend a pipeline to Montreal from Toronto, or Sarnia. And that, of course, leaves the Atlantic provinces still dependent on foreign oil. And the oil pipeline, by the way, goes through the United States; our natural gas line goes through Canadian territory all the way, north of the Great Lakes, but the oil pipeline goes through the States.

BURG: Oh, it does!

GREEN: Yes, down through Superior, Wisconsin, and crosses the St. Clair River at Sarnia. A good many hundred miles in the States. But we are lucky, terribly lucky, insofar as energy is concerned. I think that Canada will continue to grow, you know. Mind you, there are a lot of people here who don't want any increase in population, much to my surprise. But I'd always envisaged Canada as having about a hundred million people eventually. Fifty, or seventy-five, or a hundred million. Whether she will or not, I don't know; there's a good deal more talk against an increase in population than there used to be.

BURG: Yes, that's true in our country, too. Well, the young, particularly, seem to feel this way; that the available resources are ultimately limited, and the available space, and food, everything else is ultimately limited. So we often find there, and have in the last few years, young people talking in terms of, "Well, we'll only have two children."

GREEN: Well, I don't mean the natural increase but, also, the immigration. We've always had a heavy immigration, but whether



that's going to be allowed to continue or not, I don't know.

BURG: Your immigration has been relatively unrestricted from all parts of the world?

GREEN: Well, compared with yours, yes.

BURG: Yes, because I think we began to lock ours down in the early 1920s.

GREEN: Mind you, our position is completely different, because you do have a very big population, but we've only got about a tenth of the American population.

BURG: And great amounts of area that could be filled in. With difficulty, I would think.

GREEN: Yes. Our territory will never support as many people as United States will, because a lot of it is northern. But I had hoped that we would be at least up to fifty million, eventually. Canada is in a far more important position in the world than the Canadian people realize; I think today we're in the first ten countries [lost the closing words of this phrase]



BURG: How is that? In point of--

GREEN: In importance.

BURG: --influence on--

GREEN: In real weight. You take the United States, and the Soviet Union, and China, Britain, France, and West Germany, that's six, and Japan, of course, is seven, and there aren't very many more that rank ahead of Canada in world affairs.

BURG: In area--

GREEN: Well, in general weight in the world.

BURG: Right, the influence that she exerts--

GREEN: We might put India in, but there is no country in Africa, and no others in Asia; possibly we might put Italy ahead, but certainly Canada is in the first ten or twelve now.

BURG: Well, Mr. Green, thank you very much for two large blocs of your time, one a year ago and now today. I've really appreciated it.

