

expenses of the organization. This was an idea originally put forward, that the members of the commission should also pay part of the infrastructure. We took the strongest exception to it. Should Canada decide to participate it would signify its acceptance by a formal unilateral communication to the parties. At the same time, the Government would also communicate any reservations it may have in respect of the documents embodying the settlement, or in respect of the commission, or Canada's participation in it.

When all the texts are available, the Government will examine them in the light of these criteria, conditions and viewpoints and make its own determination on the viability of the operation and on the existence of a suitable role for Canada. The Government is conscious of the fact that there are several possible forms of response open to it between a simple refusal to take part at all and a full and unconditional involvement. The Government's assessment of the relevant texts will also take into account the importance of contributing to a scaling-down of hostilities in Vietnam and to the disengagement of American forces and the return of their prisoners of war. It is conceivable that the result of this examination might suggest a participation limited to certain aspects of the agreement or a participation for a limited period rather than an outright refusal or an unqualified undertaking to serve. If so, the parties concerned will be so advised and, if they found this acceptable, Canada could take part on a limited basis.

Also drawing on our experience, we are conscious of the dangers of allowing ourselves to be frustrated as a member of the new international organization through the possible application of a rule of unanimity. One way in which this risk could be minimized would be by regarding the new body not as a diplomatic conference held under the normal rules of confidentiality but as an international forum where the proceedings are normally open to the public. Consequently, we should not regard the new commission's proceedings as confidential or privileged in any way unless there was in any particular instance a unanimous decision of all the members to the contrary. We should instead consider ourselves free to publicize the proceedings in any way we saw fit to ensure that our view of events and, if necessary, the difference between our view and that of others was publicly available.

In putting forward our conditions, it was, of course, not our desire or intention to raise unnecessary difficulties or to seek any special position for ourselves. The fact is that Canada is in an excellent position to judge from its own experience what is necessary to a successful operation in international supervision, whether or not we become members of the proposed commission. Some of Canada's experience has been positive. Some of it, notably in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, where for 18 years we have tried to make international supervision work, has been profoundly disappointing. From that disappointment we have learned a good deal, and it is in the light of what we have learned there that we have arrived at the position I have just described, which we believe essential to the success of the operation in which we may be invited to participate.