A ton of Canadian nickel in every B-52

Canadians make the U.S. war machine run The Varsity

If an air force base in California needs brooms, and a Canadian businessman can provide them quickly, American customs officials can forget about applying the usual tariff, according to Voice of Women vicepresident Ursula Franklin.

Franklin, a U of T engineering professor, told 300 people at a St. Lawrence Centre forum on Vietnam Tuesday night that Canadian government officials expedite the process. They inform Canadian businessmen of the need for their goods, help arrange financing to fill the order, and even help fill in the necessary forms.

All this occurs under the umbrella of the Defense Production Sharing Agreement, which was instituted under former prime minister John Diefenbaker, who claimed it was a solution to Canadian unemployment problems. It illustrates how Canada is involved in supporting the United States' war effort, she pointed out.

"The agreement covers everything from brooms to anti-personnel bombs," Franklin

"There is a ton of Canadian nickel in every B-52 bomber", she added. "And there are no restrictions on the sale of such rare raw materials to the U.S., although export of copper and nickel to other countries is restricted."

"The excuse is that the U.S. hasn't officially declared war."

The audience responded to this information by voting unanimously to urge the Canadian government to end the defense agreement.

Franklin suggested that a better way of creating Canadian jobs would be to improve cross-Canadian transportation systems, so that Canadians can get to know each other.

Dave Monie, president of Local 531 of the United Electrical Workers, agreed.

"Canada makes the U.S. war machine run", he insisted, "and Canada can make it stop.

He praised the recent refusal of British Columbia dockers to unload some American ships, and the B.C. NDP government's support of the action.

Trade union action can eventually cut off supplies of nickel and copper, he suggested. Trade union members should organize

peace movements", he urged, "even though this may not be popular at first" Monie himself represented his union at a recent 82-country assembly held in Paris to

work on ending the Vietnam war. "Canadian Union leaders who were anti-American lost votes in the past," he explained, "but now the Canadian Labour

Congress have hard-hitting peace resolutions," The UEW was recently permitted to rejoin the CLC after being expelled over 20 years ago.

Unions should work together with middleclass people, intellectuals and students to end the war, Monie feels.

Another panelist, Donald Wilmott, chairman of Glendon College's Sociology Department, warned that Canada, a possible member of the peacekeeping force which the U.S. wants to oversee a ceasefire agreement, should remember that international forces didn't fulfil their neutral role in the past.

After the 1946 Japanese surrender, "under the umbrella of a British-Chinese international peace-keeping force", the French were allowed to re-take the southern part of Vietnam their former colony.

The French ignored a 1946 Vietnam-wide election which elected Ho Chi Minh with a 90 per cent turn-out, and set up a puppet regime in South Vietnam. "They waged a full-scale war against North Vietnam, while 80 per cent of their costs were paid by the U.S. President Eisenhower said that the area's raw materials must be protected."

Again, after the 1954 Geneva accords, the new international peacekeeping force -Canada, Poland and India — failed to hold the Vietnam-wide elections called for in the

accords. "Eisenhower was informed in 1956 when the elections were supposed to occur that 80 per cent of the populace favored Ho Chi Minh's government," explained Willmott in a quietly cynical tone.

"Instead, South Vietnam has had a succession of corrupt governments, which reversed early land reform attempts, and suppressed dissenting Buddhists and students", he continued.

"And now (South Vietnamese president) Thieu has convinced the U.S. of a 'two nations' idea, which repudiates the Geneva accords and an October 1972 agreement which promised one Vietnam."

"Nixon will repudiate his pre-election promises about a Vietnam treaty", he predicted, "until there is enough pressure from within and without."

"There is a lot of work to do."

The ad hoc committee which called the forum approached federal party leaders in December, calling for an end to the Defense Production Sharing Agreement, and nonrenewal of NORAD.

Although External Affairs minister Mitchell Sharp prefers what one panelist called "a friendly, quiet, diplomatic approach", the committee feels that their stand influenced the government to officially protest American bombing in Vietnam.

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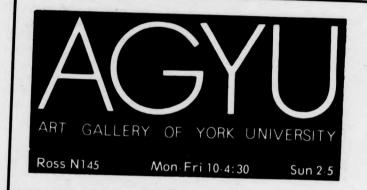
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