

duties and acting as a stooge of the United States. Perhaps we now have to do just that, but we are not even sure whether it would be helpful” (Document 561). During May 1962, Canadian efforts were focussed on ensuring that the Commission’s Special Report on the situation (signed on June 2) would make explicit the causal connection between Communist subversion in South Vietnam and the increased US aid. Although not fully satisfied with the draft produced by the Indians, the Canadian commissioner—and the State Department—ultimately accepted it as a reasonable compromise (Documents 563-579). However, the lack of any constructive response from the UK and the USSR (in their role as co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference) to the Special Report meant that the ICSC was “left with the responsibility for administering a peace treaty in a time of hostilities without political guidelines and without cooperation from either of the two parties.” For the remainder of the period covered by this volume, the Commission was “stagnant” and “at an impasse,” holding few meetings and receiving little support from either North or South Vietnam for its field teams (Document 580).

The Commonwealth, usually a priority for Diefenbaker’s Conservatives, was much less prominent in 1962-1963 than in earlier years. As in 1961, the most contentious issue was the United Kingdom’s proposed membership in the European Economic Community. In March 1962 British draft proposals on new arrangements for Commonwealth trade were delivered to Canada House in London with a request for Canadian comments within an extremely short time (Document 335). This episode reinforced the Canadian belief that British promises of consultation were empty. Ottawa was critical of the March proposals; a later revision was deemed even worse, and evoked a complaint that the UK was “progressively moving away from the safeguarding of our interests ... the nil tariff list has now been reduced from the original ten to three items of interest to Canada” (Document 365). Conversations in other Commonwealth capitals indicated that Canada was not alone in its apprehensions (Documents 346-351, 354, 357).

Debates within the government as to whether Ottawa should lead any open opposition to British entry became moot when the negotiations with the EEC collapsed early in 1963. However, the possibility that a British move towards Europe might seriously weaken the Commonwealth had sparked interesting discussions of the organization’s value in a decolonizing world. Unlike a British official who reportedly expressed the opinion that “it might not ... be a bad idea if some of the new members were to withdraw” (Document 316), members of the Department of External Affairs were firm in their support of the Commonwealth as an essential link between the West and the developing Asian and African nations. From London, Canada’s deputy High Commissioner, Benjamin Rogers, complained that “Britain has been unable to move far from the mother-and-children concept,” and stated his belief that Canada would bear key responsibility for “a fundamental redefinition” of the Commonwealth’s “essential purposes and objectives” (Document 329). From Accra, High Commissioner Bruce Williams wrote that Canada must convince the new members there was “more to [the] Commonwealth than simply [the] British