sanctum. The Board could then be reconstituted as a kind of Advisory Council on International Development. It should follow the Dutch model and sit at regular and fairly frequent intervals.

CIDA's ties with the business community might also be smoother if Mr. Gérin-Lajoie stifled the impulse to use some of his public speeches to launch trial balloons. Late last year, for example, he proposed to the Canada Grains Council that developing countries be given a "right of first refusal" on the purchase of Canadian grain. Such a proposal, if ever implemented, could badly disrupt the Canadian Wheat Board's export business.

External Affairs Minister MacEachen let the air out of this balloon when he was asked about it in Parliament. But, notwithstanding the disclaimer, CIDA needlessly irritates the private sector when, in an already chancy period, it floats rash, ill-considered proposals. Canada's development-assistance program has benefited from a remarkable reservoir of public support. That backing is much broader than the public underpinning for the United States aid effort. Even as Canadian taxpayers rebel against government spending, they exempt foreign aid from their censure. But that reservoir is not bottomless, and CIDA ought not carelessly to deplete it.

Remarkable reservoir of public support

Battle of ideologies marks the twenty years since Suez

By Nicholas Vincent

An extraordinarily intense spotlight burns on the last few months of 1956, on the historical currents surrounding the events of the Suez invasion. From the vantage-ground of today, it can be seen that in those events were exposed several key indicators of the future global balances of power.

Over the conflicts of that moment rolled the disharmony amongst the Western allies, the waning power of Britain and France, Arab and evolving Third World consciousness, the burgeoning prerogative power and foreign policy of the United States, and the tough assertiveness of the Soviet Union. The concentration of these forces at Suez had the rippling effect of catalysts to the future throughout the industrialized and Third World nations.

Over the past 20 years this future has become the past, and subsequent developments clearer. These years have witnessed the final decline in the global power of the former imperial states, the continuing evolution of the European Economic Community, the easing of the Cold War, the split between the Soviet Union and China and their respective increasing strengths, the altering political texture of the United Nations and its Third World membership, the effectiveness of terrorist movements, and the sudden power of the Arab OPEC states in a chronically-inflammable Middle East.

These developments have embraced the growth of the decolonized Third World, both as an evocative conception and as a disjointed grouping of relatively weak nations finding strength through occasional unity and through links with industrialized or wealthier powers. For the United States, these and other changes have combined with the results of the Vietnam war to produce an uncertainty of approach to global affairs.

Nicholas Vincent is a freelance writer who worked for international mining companies in Canada and abroad and then for the Federal Government in 1970. From 1970 to 1974, he worked for the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, with a tour of duty in External Affairs, where he dealt with energy questions. During the later stages of the Vietnam war, he was broadcasting from Saigon. He returned to Canada in mid-1975, and has since been writing on national and international affairs. The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Vincent.