

know the freedom that we have found here. Canadians and Americans thus responded with a great outpouring of indignation and compassion to the tragedy of the Vietnamese boat-people. Tens of thousands of Vietnamese refugees have been welcomed into both our countries, where private citizens have opened their hearts and homes and pocket-books to help them find the security we take for granted.

Different size,
different
perspective

So goes the similarity. A few years ago, however, the U.S.A. was engaged in a terrible war in Vietnam. By January 5, 1973, that war and Canada's view of it had developed to the point where the Canadian Parliament adopted a resolution condemning U.S. bombing operations in North Vietnam. In these facts there lies a world of difference. In saying this, however, I do not wish to imply any sort of moral comparison between Canada and the U.S.A. or between the Canadian and U.S. governments. I simply wish to illustrate what I said earlier about differences of size involving differences of perspective. I also want to make the point that the scars of the Vietnam and Watergate years have affected U.S. institutions in a way that is affecting relations between the U.S.A. and Canada.

Those British gentlemen who decided to break away from the British Crown a little more than 200 years ago gave the U.S.A. a form of government which in a way retained more of kingship than was preserved in that part of the continent which remained "British North America". The U.S. Constitution, after all, institutionalized through separation of powers, the old conflict between executive and legislature which in Britain and Canada was resolved by having the legislature absorb the executive, leaving the sovereign to reign but not to rule.

In Britain and Canada, the executive, having thus been made part of and accountable to the legislature, was freed from the struggle for supremacy — but not, let me hasten to add, from the struggle for survival — and was able to get down to the job of governing. In the U.S.A., on the other hand, the struggle for supremacy was incorporated within the system, in the very checks and balances which were devised to ensure that no part of the government could grow too powerful and that sovereignty would forever abide with the people. The President, so it seemed for a long time, had been guaranteed political survival for at least four years, but — as it now seems — had not been guaranteed the ability to govern. Nevertheless, the most powerful institution in the U.S. government for most of this century has been the Presidency. With the resignation of President Nixon, however, the apparent guarantee of survival for a full term in office was shattered; presidential accountability was dramatically reaffirmed; and Congress in effect finally achieved what the legislature had long since enjoyed *vis-à-vis* the executive under the parliamentary system.

It is too soon to tell what will be the long-term effects of these historic developments on the U.S. system of government. That system, however, is complex and delicate and every piece must interact with the others to make it work. Seen from Canada, in the foreign policy context, it has not fully recovered from recent shocks and is not working well at present. As a representative of the parliamentary system I can hardly challenge the concept of presidential accountability; I can, however, mourn the fact that it does not seem to have left the President the effective power to carry out the constitutional responsibility to shape and conduct the foreign policy of the U.S.A.