

On October 25, 1972, I was informed by U.S. Secretary of State Rogers that Canada had been mentioned in connection with the arrangements being discussed between the USA and North Viet-Nam. On October 26, following Radio Hanoi's revelation of the existence of a nine-point draft peace agreement between the United States and North Viet-Nam, the Government was informed, through its Ambassador in Washington, that both sides had agreed on an international commission composed of Canada, Hungary, Indonesia and Poland to supervise the cease-fire. The same day Dr. Kissinger outlined in a press conference the details of the agreement he had worked out in Paris with the North Vietnamese. Later that day the Prime Minister said that Canada would carefully consider any invitation in the light of the conditions which had been set forth clearly on many previous occasions.

Shortly thereafter it seemed an agreement for a cease-fire in Viet-Nam might be concluded very quickly and there would be a need for some form of international presence immediately on the ground when a cease-fire went into effect. In those circumstances, the Government announced, on November 2, that it would be prepared to place at the disposal of the proposed new international commission the services of the Canadian Delegation to the existing International Commission for Supervision and Control in Viet-Nam for an initial period. It was our hope that this would meet the need until the international conference, provided for in the proposed cease-fire agreement, enabled Canada, as well as the parties concerned, to determine what, if any, future role Canada could play.

What has been put to us and what we have been examining since, is a proposed arrangement to be embodied in a protocol signed by the Parties to the agreement which would become operative in advance of the conference and continue on after it. We have accordingly sought clarification from the governments involved regarding the structure of the proposed new observer commission, the role it would be expected to play in Viet-Nam, its size and its terms of reference. Our representative in Hanoi was instructed to explore