

reached its present level and long before the onset of open hostilities, North Vietnam had been deliberately violating the Agreement by organizing, assisting and encouraging activities in the South directed at the overthrow of the Government of South Vietnam.

We have not only recognized this situation; we have a public and official statement about it. In June 1962, Canada and India, in a special report to the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva conference, concluded that the situation in Vietnam had "shown signs of rapid deterioration". Part of the responsibility for this situation, the report goes on to say, was South Vietnam's for entering into a de facto military alliance with the United States and for allowing the entry into its territory of armed personnel and equipment beyond approved levels. These measures of military assistance, the South Vietnamese Government had said, were necessitated by the growing interference by the North in the internal affairs of the South. The report also concluded that there was evidence to show that North Vietnam had sent armed and unarmed personnel, equipment and supplies into the South for aggressive purposes and that the North was allowing its territory to be used for hostile actions against the South.

This, in our view, was a balanced and accurate presentation. In agreeing to it, we and the Indians attempted to place before world opinion our assessment that a difficult situation was developing in Vietnam because of the increasing violations of the cease-fire by both sides.

I think that this report can be characterized not as neutral about truth and falsehood but as impartial and objective with respect to all the facts and evidence we had before us.

In February 1965, with the beginning of air strikes against the North, it was decided that the Commission should send another special message to the Co-Chairmen. We made repeated attempts to convince our colleagues that this too should be a balanced and objective report in relation to all the facts, and not just a partial selection of them. Nevertheless it was decided, with Canada dissenting, that the message would deal only with the air strikes.

In dissenting, we had no doubt that these strikes had been carried out and that violations of the Agreement had taken place. We were not attempting to cover up these serious developments -- the Commission could scarcely hide something which was front-page news all over the world. Our concern, and our decision to submit a minority statement, were dictated not by an attempt to whitewash our friends but by the danger of misleading world opinion about what had been going on in Vietnam. Our minority statement was accordingly cast in terms of violations on the other side of the ledger in an attempt to restore an essential balance to the Commission's judgments.