

should establish from the outset that it is not going to let the new Agreement be thus diluted" (Document 480).

The withdrawals began in late August 1962 and were supposed to be complete within 75 days, but there were widespread reports that many North Vietnamese forces remained. As a result, Washington placed pressure on Ottawa to take a more forceful stance (Documents 487-489). The Canadians instead reluctantly agreed to wait for a Laotian request to investigate the alleged violations, temporarily accepting the constraints that this course placed upon the Commission's actions (Documents 490-492). However, Ottawa was determined to stand by its understanding of the Commission's true role. Thanks to the efforts of Bridle in Vientiane and Ronning in New Delhi, the Commission's report of January 31, 1963 asserted the ICSC's right to make independent investigations and made clear the restrictions under which it had been forced to carry out its work (Documents 494-497, 499-507, 509, 510).

Given the unsatisfactory nature of the Geneva agreement, the extent of opposition from the Polish commissioner, and the difficulties of convincing the Indians to support Canada's position, the report might well have been considered a minor diplomatic triumph, yet it elicited only criticism in Washington for not favouring the Western point of view strongly enough. In particular, the Americans believed that the report should have contained explicit criticism of the restrictions. Meanwhile, Canada's role within the Commission was made more difficult by heavy-handed American approaches in New Delhi that caused "irritation and even rage" (Document 522) among Indian politicians and diplomats. As a result, talks with US officials were held in Ottawa on March 4-5 (Document 526), while Bridle travelled to New Delhi for discussions with Y.D. Gundevia of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (Document 528). In Ottawa, the Americans complained that the Commission "was not only ineffective but was positively harmful to United States interests"; the Canadians retorted that "they had always assumed that the U.S. Government would not expect them to take an ... indefensible position in the ICSC in support of Western interests." The need for closer and more frequent consultation was agreed on by both sides. Later in March, the process of convincing India to support Canada's strategies made modest but significant advances; however, this progress was offset when the broader situation in Laos deteriorated dramatically following the murder of the foreign minister, Quinim Pholsena. By the date of the Canadian election it appeared that "the storm warnings may well be up in Southeast Asia" (Document 546).

For the Vietnam Commission, 1962 opened with consideration of an exceptionally thorny issue: the United States and South Vietnam claimed that the provision by the US of military aid beyond the level permitted by the 1954 Geneva Accord was justified given the numerous violations committed by North Vietnam. While some practical considerations seemed to favour this argument, Ottawa was uncomfortably aware of its doubtful basis in law and the potential it would offer for Communist propaganda. George Glazebrook put the matter concisely when he wrote: "In general, we have in the past attempted to avoid action in any of the Commissions which could give to the Poles a substantive argument that we were departing from our proper