

with Prime Minister Diefenbaker [Document 7], while the State Department followed up the President's *démarche* with a "comprehensive but somewhat dogmatic" [Document 468] aide-memoire in August 1958 insisting on the maintenance of a common Western front.

This diplomatic debate over the desirability of recognizing Peking was quickly superseded by the outbreak of another serious crisis in the Taiwan Straits. The strategic impact of American military actions in the Pacific caused Sidney Smith to personally warn the American Ambassador that the Canadian government was "gravely concerned" about the crisis and the possible complications of a declaration of a state of readiness by NORAD commanders involving Canadian air defence forces [Document 427]. Throughout the crisis, Canadian officials in Washington and at the United Nations in New York monitored the situation with keen interest prior to the gradual de-escalation of tensions in the region in October 1958.

Canada remained most closely exposed to the Asian Cold War through its membership in the International Commissions for Supervision and Control. In Laos and Cambodia, Ottawa believed that the Commissions had served a useful purpose but that the time had come for their dissolution. This volume documents the diplomacy involved in the April 1958 Cabinet decision to withdraw unilaterally from the Laos Commission if India and Poland did not agree to dissolution; this Commission eventually adjourned *sine die* in July. However, no documentation on the Cambodian Commission is included in this volume as the deadlock that developed over dissolution of this Commission in 1956—documented in detail in Volume 23—was not resolved in the period covered by this volume. Arthur Blanchette, the head of the Canadian delegation in Phnom Penh, summed up the Canadian attitude towards the inertia of the Cambodian Commission when he informed his superiors that "rarely in the course of human events has so much money been spent by so many countries to so little avail".¹ The Diefenbaker government recognized that the Vietnam Commission continued to play an important role in preserving a semblance of political stability in the region in the face of North Vietnamese attempts to destabilize the South Vietnamese regime. For this reason, Canada was alarmed at American proposals advanced in the summer of 1958 to increase the number of United States military advisors in Vietnam. Strong representations made by Canadian officials – who feared the destabilizing effects of Washington's plans – failed to sway American opinion.

As the documentation in Chapter IV indicates, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union remained high on Ottawa's foreign policy agenda. Cabinet continued to devote attention to the problem of Hungarian refugees, although an unfortunate jurisdictional dispute between the Department of External Affairs and the Department of Citizenship and Immigration resulted in Canada's refusal to admit thousands of needy Hungarian refugees and the embarrassment of Canada's chief immigration representative in Geneva. A Soviet diplomatic initiative in December 1958 resulted in an exchange of correspondence between Soviet Premier Nicolai Bulganin and Prime Minister Diefenbaker and spurred early East-West discussions aimed at the convening of a summit meeting. Moscow's increasing confidence on the international stage and internal changes in the Soviet Union also prompted debate within the Department of

¹ Phnom Penh Letter 237, Commissioner, ICSC, Cambodia to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, November 26, 1958, DEA/50052-C-40.