



A Canadian soldier keeps watch on the Turk-Greek line in Nicosia, Cyprus.

international peacekeeping forces can only operate effectively where the countries at odds with each other will permit the invited observers to do so.

All the ICSC managed to do before it fell a victim to paralysis was supervise the disengagement of the rival forces. The North Vietnamese evidently wanted a respite and the French only wanted to leave. Once the battle flared again, the unarmed ICSC personnel could only look on. They had been handed responsibilities disproportionate to their capacities.

**T**HE French were out of Indochina in two years, leaving the ICSCs with a whole range of responsibilities covering not only truce violations but chores like ballot scrutineer and village ombudsman. As the tempo of hostilities resumed, the inability of the ICSCs to operate effectively in a widening war situation became more and more apparent. Whether the Commissions could have prevented the growing hostilities is doubtful. Certainly they could not serve any useful purpose once the parties reverted to full-

scale combat.

The cumulative result was what Mr. Sharp called "a farce". If the observers stayed on it was largely because to pull out would have been seen as a gesture of despair. As long as the ICSC was functioning there remained a technical basis for an armistice, however theoretical. To the same end, the Commission retained access to Hanoi, which could prove useful any time the two sides were ready to talk.

The Canadians were still in position, though in reduced numbers, when the ceasefire came