

AND SO WE LEAVE

CANADA took a lot of persuading to serve on the International Commission of Control and Supervision (ICCS) in Viet-Nam. It was not a case of playing hard to get. Nearly 25 years' experience of peacekeeping operations had taught Canadians how much it cost to achieve usually modest ends. Canada had already been in Indochina for 18 years trying ineffectively to make the 1954 Geneva accords work. If Canadians were to prolong this involvement, they wanted some assurance that the experience would not be equally frustrating.

Indochina and a dozen more peacekeeping operations with which Canada had been associated since World War II testified to the acceptance of a share in the responsibility for making the world safe to live in. Though militarily a small power, Canada was able to assume a significant role in international affairs by placing itself constantly on call to police the world's trouble spots. But the idealism behind this effort was sorely tried.

From Kashmir in 1949 to Viet-Nam today, Canada has regularly contributed men and equipment to international peacekeeping

operations. Some of that experience, as External Affairs Minister Mitchell Sharp told the House of Commons earlier this year, had been positive. But "some of it, notably in Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia...has been profoundly disappointing."

Canada pulled its truce observers out of Viet-Nam at the end of July, ending 19 years of service in the cause of peace.

The UN contingent sent to restore normalcy to Cyprus was still there nine years later guarding an uneasy truce and the United Nations Emergency Force assigned to the Gaza strip in 1956 had to be withdrawn when it was most needed on the eve of the Six-Day War.

Against this there were solid achievements like the policing of West Irian during its transition from the Netherlands to Indonesia, the patrolling of the frontiers of Lebanon after it complained of outside intervention and above all the Congo operation, which in the words of UN Secretary-General U Thant was "the decisive factor in preserving the territorial integrity" of the new

nation. All this apart from Korea, where 8,000 Canadians served in the Commonwealth division as part of the UN force.

But in terms of motivation Canada's experience in Indochina just about cancelled this out. When Canada agreed to serve along with India and Poland on the former International Commission for Supervision and Control (ICSC) the expectation was that it would take perhaps a year or so for Indochina to return to normal. Under the 1954 Geneva agreements, the ICSC would check suspected violations of the armistice between the communist insurgents and the allies of the French.

The task proved impossible. There were violations all right, building up over the years into a full-scale war. But the three control commissions—in Laos, Cambodia and Viet-Nam—were unable to prevent peace violations without the cooperation of the parties involved. The Control Commissions made up of India, Poland and Canada were observer groups, not policemen. This distinction is vital since

COVER: Eskimo pilot Markoosie flies a de Havilland Twin Otter like this one. The short take-off and landing DHC-6 carries 20 passengers or 5,300 pounds of cargo. See page 12.

Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and External Affairs Minister Mitchell Sharp applaud Prime Minister Indira Gandhi after her address to Parliament during her visit to Canada in June.