

the disposal of the new international supervisory body its Delegation to the existing International Commission created in 1954. Having offices in Saigon and Hanoi, the Canadian Delegation could participate in the initial supervisory activities of the proposed new commission until the expected international conference was held. It was anticipated that the strength of Canada's existing Delegation, then numbering under 20, could be augmented. Future Canadian participation, if any, would depend on further developments.

The expectation at the end of October that peace was just around the corner proved ill-founded, and the negotiations in Paris faltered. Therefore, Canada had more time to explore the possible problems of the proposed supervisory role. For that purpose, the Government established an interdepartmental task force. The Government had two main and related objectives: to compile the ground rules required for a supervisory commission to work effectively and to make these requirements known to the Parties so that they could take them into account in their negotiations. The latter objective was particularly important since it soon became clear that whatever modalities were decided for the international supervisory commission, they would probably be largely decided by the Paris negotiators and not by any subsequent international conference. The meeting between the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the United States Secretary of State on November 28 was in keeping with these endeavours. The Secretary of State for External Affairs explained to his counterpart, Canadian views on the observation of a cease-fire in Viet-Nam and the importance of their being taken into account in any protocol concerning an international commission.

For Canada the situation was more one of darkness than of light. While Canada had a clear perception of what terms of reference a new international supervisory body needed to operate effectively, it was neither privy to nor participating in the cease-fire negotiations. Indications were that the international conference would follow closely after a cease-fire. However, the intended functions of the conference were not clear and in this situation Canada could not be certain that it would produce the conditions Canada considered necessary for effective supervision, particularly concerning the establishment of a continuing political authority.

Nevertheless, Canada's overriding desire was still to see an end to the war in Viet-Nam, the withdrawal of foreign troops, the return of prisoners-of-war and the reduction of violence. The Paris negotiations had proved uncertain enough and any action that might impair them and so prolong hostilities could only be taken after the most careful consideration of where Canadian interest and responsibility lay. It was within this frame of reference that the Government directed its thinking to trying to ensure that whatever came out of the negotiations between the USA and the DRVN by way of peace supervisory machinery was capable of doing its intended job, whether or not Canada was involved. While the Government recognized that, after a lapse of eighteen years, more than an international supervisory