

Front to lay claim in those negotiations to a voice equal in authority to that of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam. The year 1969 witnessed the death of President Ho Chi Minh of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, one of the giants of recent Vietnamese history. Canada was officially represented at the state funeral in Hanoi by Brigadier General G.G. Bell, Acting Commissioner, Canadian delegation to the International Control Commission in Vietnam. With President Ho's death, following by six years the death of President Ngo Dinh Diem of the Republic of Vietnam in 1963, the personal and symbolic links with the immediate past of the Vietnam problem appeared to be loosening. Whether changing personalities would result in changing policies remained to be seen.

Canadian aid to the Republic of Vietnam continued in 1969 and, in connection with the problem of maintaining liaison with students from Vietnam on scholarships in Canada, plans materialized for the opening in Montreal of an office for that purpose.

Addressing the Foreign Correspondents Club in Tokyo on April 15, the Secretary of State for External Affairs projected forward the Government's thoughts on Vietnam in these terms:

"We hope the discussions now in progress in Paris are part of an irreversible process, the final outcome of which will be what Southeast Asia so badly needs -- a stable and durable political settlement, fair to the legitimate interests of those involved, unjust to none and above all mutually acceptable to everyone. That may be a tall order. It is not unrealistic in the sense that anything short of an adequately defined and workable political settlement would only invite a tragic repetition of the events which flowed from the basic flaws of the settlement made in Geneva 15 years ago. In the re-establishment of peace, and in ensuring that new political understandings are carried into effect, there may well be an important role for international guarantees and an international presence designed to moderate the situation and to help re-establish a working measure of confidence between those so recently in armed conflict. It is impossible to say at this stage whether Canada might make an effective contribution in such a context. Much would depend on whether we were asked to play such a part by all those directly involved. It would also depend on whether the tasks to be carried out, and the means available for doing so, gave such an assignment a realistic potential for a worthwhile contribution. I do not intend to sound unduly negative or pessimistic, or to imply that Canada is seeking to avoid all forms of commitment or involvement simply because they may prove frustrating or difficult. Far from it. What does concern me, however, is the need to avoid unproductive commitments which tend to freeze problems rather than help solve them."

#### Cambodia and Laos

In Cambodia, the Royal Khmer Government (RKG) ceased asking the International Control Commission (ICC) in Phnom Penh to make any kind of investigations early in the year, although increasingly the RKG provided public evidence of considerable intervention in Cambodia by Vietnamese