

There can be no question that a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Vietnam is almost universally desired -- and not least by the United States. There must be no let-up in the search for an agreement as to how this can be brought about, and on what conditions a new and lasting settlement can be based.

Canada has a direct involvement in Vietnam, although it is of an entirely different nature from that of the United States and came about for entirely different reasons. Under the Agreement on Vietnam which was signed at Geneva in July of 1954, Canada undertook a quasi-judicial role as a member of an International Commission, consisting of Poland and India along with ourselves, to supervise the implementation of the cease-fire arrangements agreed to at that time.

Unfortunately, the Geneva arrangements failed to bring to Vietnam the peace and stability which their authors envisaged. Gradually, over the intervening years, the situation has evolved into a new military crisis and the world community is again confronted by a serious threat to peace which is tearing that unhappy country apart.

As far as Canada is concerned, our policy toward the conflict can be summarized broadly as follows:

- (1) A solution by military means alone to the kind of problem underlying the present crisis is not possible.
- (2) An equitable and lasting settlement can only be achieved by peaceful means, that is through a mutual accommodation of interests through negotiations.
- (3) It is imperative that such negotiations be entered into as soon as possible, and to this end responsible members of the international community must do everything within their power to see whether they can help create conditions in which such negotiations can become a reality.
- (4) As the only international body with established links with both sides, the International Commission collectively, or its members individually, may be able to play a constructive role in facilitating the beginning of a continuing political dialogue between the parties, and, it is to be hoped, of negotiations.

In the final analysis, of course, the settlement of any conflict or any dispute depends on the terms which the parties to it are able to agree on between themselves. But before they can agree peaceably, they must begin to discuss peaceably. If, through its membership in the International Commission and through its close relations with the United States, Canada is able to make some contribution to the process of translating military exchanges into arguments across a negotiating table, I think we shall have adequately served, and, indeed, furthered, some of the deepest interests and ideals our two countries share.