

BUT WHAT HAVE WE DONE...



Minh army consisted of 100,000 men, many of whom had formerly lived in "South Vietnam", withdrawn north of the 17th parallel in 1954. It therefore is of little surprise that some of these men returned home and joined the South Vietnamese. Clearly, the opposition to the U.S. and the Saigon regime at that time was almost entirely comprised of indigenous people who were largely equipped with U.S. weapons obtained as a result of tens of thousands of desertions from the Saigon Army. It is worth mentioning here that North Vietnam claimed to have captured 76 South Vietnamese soldiers in 1963, specially trained by U.S. advisors and dropped into North Vietnam by parachute from U.S. planes.

Influenced by U.S.

In March, 1965, Colonel Bradley Webb, a former military advisor to the Canadian delegation of the ICC spoke at a public meeting in Toronto stating that the Canadian minority report was probably "strongly influenced" by the U.S. and that as far as he knew, "there had been no significant infiltration of North Vietnamese troops or equipment into South Vietnam". It is also interesting to note that Mr. Blair Seaborn, the author of the Canadian minority report, in a subsequent article in Mclean's Magazine, made it clear that he stood right behind U.S. policy in Vietnam. It is difficult to reconcile this partisanship with his position as a delegate on the neutrally defined ICC. It was later revealed that Mr. Seaborn was using his position on the ICC to make confidential reports, not to the other members of the Commission, but to the U.S.

The facts of Canada's early involvement in supporting U.S. military decisions in Vietnam suffice to show that we have failed colossally to meet the obligations of our acceptance of membership on the ICC. There has been no significant change in the activities of the Canadian delegates to the Commission in recent years. The Canadian representatives continue to serve the interests of the U.S. military-industrial complex. There is no more fitting condemnation of Canadian Policy than its actions on this commission. Canada cannot escape from its minority position on the commission while still acting as an errand boy for the U.S. It is time that Canadians realized that our supposed neutrality is a shallow facade and as long as our foreign policy represents American imperialism, it will be impossible to take an independent stand on any conceivable issue at home or abroad.

Working for American imperialism has not in any way benefitted the Canadian people (of course we speak of the majority). While Vietnam and its people suffer from U.S. aggression U.S. monopoly capital has increasingly dug its tentacles into the Canadian economy. The close diplomatic relationship between the U.S. and Canada has been harmful to the poor people of Vietnam, the poor people of America and the poor people of Canada. The facts which follow will show how Canadian complicity is simply an expression of the overriding problem of U.S. socio-economic aggression.

In September, 1967, Canada changed her Immigration Statute to the revised "point" system. It might be argued that in so doing, Canada was simply renovating an outdated system, rationalizing her bureaucratic structure to keep institutionally abreast of the rapid industrialization taking place within her borders. Thus the new immigration policy restricts the inflow of unskilled labour while permitting an increase in the number of young, highly-trained technicians, scientists, physicians, university professors and other professional and technical manpower. Statistics for just the second quarter of 1967 show that while the total number of immigrants to Canada remained almost the same, the percentage of professionals increased from 20% to 31%. Immigrants are classified into 10 occupational groups, according to their intended occupation in Canada. Prior to the new law, all occupational groups showed, with minor variations, steady increases. In the third quarter of 1967, all occupational groups decreased, particularly agricultural, mining, clerical, and service workers. Only managerial and professional classes increased. The largest gain was in the numbers of professionals, from 7 thousand to 11 thousand between the second and third quarters of 1967.

Under the new law, an applicant's country of origin is not considered. Instead, each new applicant's value to the Canadian economy is assessed as objectively as possible without regard to race or national origin. The publicized reason for such an adjustment is to make the policy seem more egalitarian and to eliminate any racial or national bias in the selection of applicants. Yet the basic requirements of the point system serve to exclude unskilled or poor persons, eliminating most Asians, Africans, Latin Americans and Southern Europeans. The so-

called egalitarian adjustments are to attract relatively young highly trained individuals, irrespective of origin, who fit into a corporate-structured economy. It does not take much to perceive that the 1967 Immigration Statute is geared towards the educated middle-class at the severe expense of the unskilled, the poor, the uneducated — in brief, the lower class — whose entrance would further undermine the stability of the economy, adding to the ranks of the unemployed.

With over 50 percent of Canada's capital controlled by the corporate elite of Toronto and Montreal, this elite is linked very closely to the U.S. elite by an extensive network of shared interests, it is not surprising that the Canadian immigration point system is almost perfectly paired to the draft deferral system in the U.S. Those most favoured by immigration are precisely those allowed educational and occupational military deferments. Those most likely to be rejected at the border are the very persons now dying in Vietnam. Just as the poor, the nonwhite, the unskilled and inarticulate are channeled into the army because they are useless to the domestic economy of the U.S., the poor, the non-white, the unskilled and the inarticulate are denied entry to Canada, thus reinsuring their possible elimination. Skilled and educated middle class (and therefore mostly white) young men are welcomed because they are potentially useful to the Canadian branch-plant corporations. The high proportion of U.S. poor and Blacks serving on the frontlines of Vietnam reflects not merely the nature of the selective service system, but significantly, the Canadian point system as well.

If one examines the educational and occupational levels of the Black minority of the U.S. for example, it becomes clear that only an extremely small number can hope to accumulate enough units for entrance into Canada. Far fewer Blacks have high school diplomas; very few would have relatives in Canada.

Who could come

The Canadian Immigration Service also requires an applicant to have with him enough money to support himself until he is settled, usually at least 300 dollars for a single man trying to settle in an area with job opportunities. This stipulation also obviously excludes draft. This presumes, of course, that a young man about to be drafted has knowledge of the possibility

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military aid. In addition, Diem refused to carry out the prescribed 1956 election. Instead he threw tens of thousands of people into concentration camps to nullify any opposition to his dictatorship. It is interesting to point out that President Eisenhower himself later admitted that if a free election had been held, 80 percent of the people of the north and the south would have voted for a coalition government under Ho Chi Minh. All these actions and many others taken by the U.S. and its puppet Diem constituted a flagrant disregard of the Geneva agreements. Indian and Polish members of the ICC issued a report condemning the deliberate violation of the Agreements. Canada not only did not endorse this condemnation, but it supported Diem and argued, as did the U.S., that his regime was a "sovereign state" and was not bound to comply with the terms of the Agreements since it had not signed.

Clearly, Canada is guilty of the complicity with the U.S. aggression and must at least partially share the blame for the war that followed. In November, 1965, Squadron Leader Hugh Campbell, who served on the ICC from 1961-1963 spoke before a Political Science forum at the University of Victoria and related how he was instructed by his superiors to ignore shipments of planes and other war materials brought in by the U.S.

In 1964, when the U.S. commenced the bombing of North Vietnam, the Indian and Polish delegates of the ICC issued a majority report condemning the armed aggression of the U.S. against a country on whom no declaration of war had been made. Again Canada not only refused to sign this majority report, but in addition, in a minority report drawn up by its representative on the ICC, justified the bombing attacks. The minority report raised the thoroughly unsubstantiated charges, in accord with a White Paper published by the American State Department a few months earlier, of military infiltration and aggression from North Vietnam. In truth, all evidence at that time indicated that aid received by the Vietnamese from "North Vietnam" was very limited indeed and that no significant infiltration of men and weapons was occurring. It must be remembered that the Viet