

But let us look more closely at the position we have taken in respect of the situation in Vietnam. I think it is fair to say that we have tried to take a balanced view of that situation. We have tried to draw the attention of all concerned to the dangers inherent in that situation. We have appealed to all concerned to face up to their responsibilities. We have reported and will continue to report breaches of the Geneva Agreement on both sides. And we have never, of course, in any way whatsoever condoned the use of force -- and again we must remember that force is being used in Vietnam on both sides. In sum, we have tried to approach our responsibilities in the Commission with fairness and impartiality. We have not approached those responsibilities any differently from the way in which we have approached our responsibilities in the Middle East, in the Congo, in Cyprus and elsewhere where Canadians have served to keep the peace.

Given the nature of the situation in Vietnam, however, we have thought it right that events, and the sequence of events, in that country should be set in their proper perspective. And it is part of that perspective, I think, that, almost from the beginning, the authorities in North Vietnam have been engaged in inciting, encouraging and supporting hostile activities in South Vietnam. That support has taken the form of armed and unarmed personnel, of arms and munitions, of direction and guidance. And it has been aimed at nothing less than the ultimate overthrow of the South Vietnamese administration. This is neither a fairy-tale nor a piece of fiction, as some would have us believe today. It is a judgment fully supported by evidence, including evidence presented by the Commission. And it must certainly form part of any balanced assessment of the situation in Vietnam.

I am concerned that there should be no misunderstanding of the nature of the conflict that is being conducted in that country today. Above all, let us not be deluded into thinking that what is happening in Vietnam is a basically domestic matter, a matter of spontaneous insurgency, which the Vietnamese should be left to settle in their own way. Of course, there are in Vietnam, as in many other emergent countries, elements of social and economic discontent, of dissatisfaction and disillusionment with the pace at which it has been possible to make progress towards better conditions of life and a reshaping of political institutions. But that is not the root cause of the instability that has taken such a tragic toll in that country.

What we are facing in Vietnam is a process of subversion directed by the authorities of North Vietnam against South Vietnam; and it is aimed, in the final analysis, at establishing in South Vietnam a form and pattern of government which the South Vietnamese rejected decisively ten years ago. It may not be aggression in the classical sense of the term, but it is aggression all the same, aggression carried on under the guise of a "war of national liberation". And, being aggression, it must be identified as such