

attack. If ever there was a moment to come to the aid of an ideological ally, this was it. But the Russians and the Chinese contented themselves with some unkind oratory. (And the Chinese were quick to note that, when the bodies of Soviet sailors killed in U.S. raids on Haiphong were returned to the Soviet Union, not a word was published in the Soviet press, so as not to mar President Nixon's visit there.) The President now knew that both Peking and Moscow had given top priority to a *détente* with the United States — and had downgraded Vietnam.

The coincidence of interest was solidly confirmed.

Impact on allies

This realignment of priorities by the Big Three had an electrifying impact on their

former wards and allies. During the of the cold war, North Korea as South Korea, Thailand no less the Philippines or even Japan, patterned policies, words and deeds on those powerful patrons. I was in Tokyo Dr. Kissinger's first visit to Peking July 1971, and I remember the Japanese officials. They were caught awares by this first "Nixon shock" they heard themselves still speaking language of the cold war at a point the Americans were already using the tongue of *détente*. Japanese diplomat spoke of the need to "discover Dr. Kissingers", while some of the tionalist press wrote bleakly of "Am betrayal". It was not until 1972 new Premier, Kakuei Tanaka,

Weighing a new peacekeeping role

External Affairs Minister Mitchell Sharp has set out the Canadian Government's position on the role Canada is being asked to undertake in Vietnam as a member of the proposed four-nation supervisory commission which would become operative in the wake of a negotiated ceasefire.

As of the end of December, the Government had taken no final decision on whether to join such a commission. The Secretary of State for External Affairs said Canada could not do so until the ceasefire negotiations had been completed and full information on the proposed arrangements is available.

In statements and interviews on November 21 and 25 and December 3, Mr. Sharp made it clear that the Canadian Government wished to have assurances on certain points before arriving at a decision. Among the points raised by Mr. Sharp were these:

That the proposed supervisory commission would be acceptable to all the parties concerned — that is, the North Vietnamese, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, the Government of South Vietnam and the United States — and that the protocol governing the operations of the commission would be accepted by all four parties;

that there would be a continuing political authority to receive reports from the commission members;

that the procedure for reporting by the commission would be workable;

that the commission would have the necessary freedom of movement to carry out investigations in all parts of South Vietnam;

that there will be arrangements for a member's withdrawal from the commission.

While ceasefire negotiations were under way, the Canadian Government did announce, on November 2, that it would be prepared to place at the disposal of the new international commission the services of the Canadian delegation to the existing International Commission for Supervision and Control in Vietnam for an initial period. It was Canada's hope, Mr. Sharp said, that this would meet the need until the international conference, provided in the proposed ceasefire agreement, enabled Canada as well as the other parties concerned to determine what, if any, future role Canada could play.

What has been suggested is a proposed arrangement to be embodied in a protocol signed by the parties to an agreement that would become operative in advance of an international conference and continue after it. Canada sought clarification from the governments involved about the structure of the proposed new observer commission, the role it would be expected to play in Vietnam, its size and terms of reference. Canada's representative in Hanoi was instructed to explore these questions with North Vietnamese authorities and Canada's Ambassador in Washington