

only hours before it envisaged that an international commission would be in place in Viet-Nam. In these circumstances, if the role defined by the Parties were accepted by the Government, Canada would be committed to full participation before knowing with any certainty to what extent its conditions had been met. If, on the other hand, the Government refused to participate because it had not had time to examine the full implications of participation, it would risk delaying an end to hostilities. Therefore, the Secretary of State for External Affairs explained, the Government had decided that once all four Parties had signed the Agreement and had clearly extended an invitation, Canada would serve for an initial period of 60 days and during this time would do what it could to discharge the obligations of full membership. A definitive reply would have to await a thorough study of the Agreement, the commitment of the Parties to it, and the lessons of Canadian experience in the initial stages of the Commission's operations. "It is no secret that we have serious doubts about what we are being asked to undertake." Keeping the peace was the responsibility of the Parties to the cease-fire. If they did not fulfil their obligations the supervisory commission could do nothing to prevent the cease-fire from being broken.

On January 27, the Agreement and its Protocols were signed on schedule and Canada was invited to participate in a new commission with Hungary, Indonesia and Poland. The Secretary of State for External Affairs announced that the Parties had been informed of Canada's willingness to serve for the initial period of 60 days. Under the Agreement a total of 290 Canadian military and civilian personnel would serve in Viet-Nam, with the first group arriving in Saigon on January 29 by Canadian Armed Forces aircraft. The head of the Canadian Delegation would be Mr. Michel Gauvin, Canadian Ambassador to Greece, who had earlier served in Viet-Nam. Major-General D. A. McAlpine would be his Senior Military Adviser and Commander of the Canadian military component, and Mr. V. G. Turner of the Department of External Affairs would be his Senior Political Adviser. The Secretary of State for External Affairs noted the serious difficulties the commission would face in the immediate future and emphasized that its role would be limited to observing and reporting how the Parties implemented the cease-fire arrangements to which they had agreed. Such limitation would not prevent the commission from acting in a mediatory role if requested by the Parties concerned and if it chose to do so.

The "Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet-Nam" provided, *inter alia*, for the withdrawal of United States forces and those of the other foreign countries allied with the United States and the Republic of Viet-Nam, and for the return of captured military personnel within 60 days.