THE ROAD TO HELL:
CANADA IN VIETNAM, 1954-1973

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> *"To join in the fighting would please American opinion without contributing essential military strength. On the other hand to denounce U.S. policy would only stiffen their determination at the expense of incalculable damage to U.S — Canadian relations. The problem is difficult for Canadians who honestly believe that one or the other of those straightforward positions is our moral obligation, but the Government knows that neither would carry the judgement of a majority*."[1]

It is an irony of history that the above words, written over twenty years ago about the conundrum faced by Canadian policy makers over their involvement in Vietnam, could just as easily be written today to reflect the current Canadian policy debacle over the American intervention in Iraq. Canadian policy in Vietnam from 1954-1973 provides an interesting insight into the difficulty created for Canadian politicians and strategists by American — led military interventions that do not have wholehearted national or international support. The current conflict in Iraq, like Vietnam, creates a natural paradox for Canadians, who often support the broader ends of American foreign policy, but disagree with their American friend and ally on the means. Conflicting and complex interests collide, with the result that Canadian policy often appears inconsistent, ill-defined, and ill-considered. Moreover, the Canadian tradition of an often deliberately vague and ambiguous foreign policy allegedly predicated on high moral grounds and with the best of intentions has consistently led to confusion and conflict both domestically and abroad. This paradox has become one of the central themes in Canadian foreign policy since the end of the Second World War.[2] The Chretien government's recent acrimonious break with the American policy on use of military force to accomplish "regime change" in Iraq is only its most current manifestation.[3] For politicians, there may be some very pressing reasons to create and maintain deliberate

ambiguity. Politically, such a policy allows politicians the freedom to manoeuvre and exploit high-minded rhetoric, especially if the topic is fraught with emotion, or a key relationship is involved. The downside, however, is that a deliberately ambiguous or vague policy predicated on hope, and not reality, has often become frustrating for those tasked with conducting it, especially if the true aim is not readily identified or identifiable. The policy conundrum faced by Canadians over Vietnam from 1954 to 1973 posed precisely this dilemma of hope and ambiguity that has become a central and lasting theme in Canadian foreign and defence policy. As this paper will illustrate, Prime Minister Chretien's stance on Iraq is consistent with what has come before.

It has been nearly three decades since the last Canadian peacekeeper left Vietnam in a cloud of ignominy and frustration. By that time, Canada's nearly twenty year involvement in attempting to achieve a peaceful solution to the Vietnam conflict had become engulfed in a sea of controversy and acrimonious debate, fuelled by a suspicious media, and compounded by a sense of national angst over the seeming inconsistency and incoherence of our national policy. This sense of guilt and frustration was created not so much by Canada's own actions, but the perception of complicity with the policies of its American neighbour and friend. Public reaction and revulsion in the United States at its misguided and tragic policy migrated across the border and ignited the debate in Canada over our nation's role in Vietnam. Yet, if the Americans have been able only very recently to come to grips with their role in the tragedy that was Vietnam, and to learn vital lessons from it, then perhaps it is time Canadians did the same.[4] There is a dearth of writing on the subject of Canada's involvement in Vietnam, and it remains a sensitive subject in some government circles.[5] Nevertheless, the time has come to re-examine Canada's role in Vietnam, and to ascertain what it can teach us about our nation, and its foreign and defence policies.

How did Canada come to be involved in Vietnam, and how did successive Canadian governments struggle with competing and conflicting demands in order to meet both the moral and pragmatic imperatives they faced? Canada's role in Vietnam became a road to Hell paved with good intentions and mapped out by a deliberately ambiguous policy. Moreover, the conflict surrounding Canada's policy was exacerbated by a cultural difference between the policymakers (primarily in the Department of External Affairs) and the policy executors (primarily in the Department of National Defence). In the final analysis, Canadian angst over its involvement in Vietnam is misplaced because, to some degree, Canada could not have avoided the role it played as a simultaneous quiet accomplice and victim of its own, and American "hell of good intentions." The delicate balancing act that Canadian policymakers sought to use was both underpinned and undermined by Canada's close relationship with the United States.

AN OFFER WE COULD NOT REFUSE

The role Canada found itself playing in Indochina in general, and Vietnam in particular, came about not because of a deliberate government policy, but by virtue of a number of special relationships it held at the beginning of the Cold War, including personal relationships with the leaders of Communist China, and its unique position vis-à-vis America, Britain, France, and even India. Canada's place in the world at the conjunction of several large blocks of power — chief Dominion among the British Commonwealth, best friend and neighbour of the American hegemon, and

most eloquent proponent of multilateralism and peaceful solutions — allowed it to play a role on the world stage the throughout the 1950's that marked the heyday of Canadian diplomacy and the high point in the history of the department of External Affairs.[6] Under the mentorship of future Prime Minister (and Nobel Peace Prize recipient) Lester B. (Mike) Pearson, External Affairs was leveraging Canada's unique geo-strategic position using the emerging doctrine of "middlepowermanship."[7] But being a middlepower came with its disadvantages as well as its advantages, as Canada was soon to find out in its entanglement in the thicket that was Vietnam.

Canada's role in Vietnam was virtually thrust upon it unseen and unwanted. The Department of External Affairs had sent three observers to the Geneva Peace Talks on Indochina in May of 1954, led by then Secretary of State for External Affairs, Pearson. Accompanied by two Foreign Service officers, John Holmes and Chester Ronning, Pearson had been instructed by the Prime Minister, Louis St. Laurent, simply to act as an observer, and, only if absolutely necessary, tender Canada's good offices as a mediator. Pearson and Ronning, however, had too many old friends in Geneva among the diplomats from Britain, the United States, and Communist China. Ronning's influence with China's Chou En Lai led to an offer that the Canadians could not refuse — membership, along with India and Poland, on the International Commissions on Supervision and Control (ICSC) for Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam.[8] These bodies were set up to over-see and report on the implementation of the Geneva Accords, the basis of a tenuous peace plan for the Indochina region.[9] Canada had been a last-minute replacement for Belgium, whom the Americans and French preferred, but was unacceptable, as a previously "imperial" power, to the Communist Chinese and Vietnamese. Chou En Lai himself proposed Canada, and France and the United States, eager to make deal, quickly accepted.[10]

The full ramifications of Canada's nomination to the ICSC were significant but perhaps not fully understood by all involved. John Holmes, who would go on to become a *doyen* of Canadian foreign policy and the *primus inter pares* among all of the bright lights burning in the Department of External Affairs during its zenith, was also to become the chief architect and apologist for Canada's role in Vietnam.[11] Holmes described the Canadian nomination thusly:

> Canada's name had sometimes been mentioned jokingly, but there seemed no reason to take it seriously. Canada had already acquired…the reputation of being the most objective of the NATO countries and it is believed that [Indian Representative] Krishna Menon persuaded Chou En-Lai that Canada would be the best Western candidate….[12]

To Holmes, however, it was clear from the outset that what was expected from the Canadian representation was not true objectivity, "but a judicial approach — a willingness to look at evidence and if necessary agree with decisions which might be contrary to the wishes of the South Vietnamese, the French, or the Americans…. We had been appointed at Geneva to make sure that the other side of the case got a fair hearing…."[13] In other words, Canada was to act not as an impartial *judge*, but rather as an *advocate* on behalf of Western interests. For their part, the Americans accepted Canada's involvement because, as President Dwight Eisenhower put it, "[ICSC membership] will put Canada in a position where it can block things."[14] The Americans were not particularly supportive of either the Geneva Accords, or the ICSC, but from the

outset saw the opportunity for Canada to act as their unofficial "proxy" veto on the Commissions, much as the Poles were expected to act for the Communist Block. This view of a "partial but fair" role for the Canadians, however, was not shared by all. Senior Canadian diplomats such as Chester Ronning and Escott Reid, for example, had truly expected Canada to act in an impartial manner. So had most of the members of the Indian delegation, who hoped in general that the Commission would prove objective, non-partisan, and effective.[15] From the outset, then, Canada's role was ambiguously and paradoxically conceived.

Ambiguity was the stuff that the Geneva Accords were made of. Robert Randle, the foremost historian of the Geneva Accords, has argued that the deliberate ambiguity of the Accords as a whole was key to its acceptance and implementation, as there were just too many stakeholders in the outcome to craft a precise document that everyone involved could formally agree to.[16] In fact, the final declaration of the Vietnam Ceasefire agreement portion of the Geneva Accords was never formally signed, but merely "approved" by various Foreign Ministers, thereby adding to the ambiguity. More ominously, the head of the South Vietnamese delegation openly stated that his government refused to be bound by the agreements. In short, the Geneva Accords were a very flawed document on which to base the ICSC and Canadian involvement; in Douglas Ross' view, they were "a rush job…. Confusing, contradictory, and ambiguous because of the fundamental absence of consensus among the Geneva powers [United States, Soviet Union, China, France, and Britain]."[17] The Accords were, however, the best that could be had, and their ambiguity was accepted for expediency's sake. Nevertheless, the deliberate ambiguity designed into the Geneva Accords would find itself translated into Canadian policy, with confusing and crippling effect.

Ottawa's initial reaction to Canada's nomination was, in Holmes's words, "a shock," and its reception to the invitation was ambivalent at best.[18] St. Laurent and Pearson were wary of accepting a commitment in a marginally important region to Canada that had the potential to bring it into conflict with important friends like France and the United States. Moreover, membership in the ICSC also called for the deployment of a large number of Army and External Affairs officers, both of which were already in short supply. Regardless of these demands, Canada could not have rejected the offer without creating the danger of the collapse of the fragile peace accords. Refusal also would have made hypocrisy of the rhetoric of "Pearsonian internationalism." Holmes stated:

> In the early stages the Americans offered us neither support nor understanding, going no further than saying that if there was to be a Commission, they would prefer to have us on it. On the other hand, the [Canadian] Government… never doubt-ed for a moment that it was an obligation we had to accept…. To have rejected it … would have caused the whole settlement to become unstuck, for the composition of the ICSC was one of the most delicate and latest of the compromises reached.[19]

Foreign policy analyst Douglas Ross has argued that "refusal [to participate] was a very real option," but even he admits that the repercussions of such a stance would have proved too daunting for a Canadian government focussed on "Eurocentric defence priorities… and fears of American nuclear adventurism…."[20] Faced with an offer it could not refuse, the St. Laurent gov-

ernment accepted its invitation with a pragmatic discretion that has since become a hallmark of Canadian foreign policy.[21] "We have no illusions," claimed a Department of External Affairs statement, "that the task we are undertaking will be either easy or of short duration, but we take satisfaction from the fact that in performing it, Canada will be playing a worthy and responsible part in an effort to strengthen peace."[22] In Holmes' own words, "our role in Indochina was a classic case of middlepowermanship."[23]

PREPARATION FOR THE ICSC

If the decision to participate in the ICSC had been made easier by its inevitability, the actual setting up of the Commission and its logistics were not. Preliminary meetings between the three commission members were held in New Delhi in early August 1954. Here, the basic framework for the Commission's work was mapped out.[24] ICSC headquarters (HQ) in Vietnam would be in Hanoi, and the Commission would officially begin its work on August 11, 1954. On the ground, the Commission would have representatives in Hanoi, Saigon, and in fourteen fixed team sites at designated legal entry points, seven in the North, and seven in the South. From these locations, ICSC representatives would monitor the exchange and withdrawal of military forces, equipment, or supplies, and would supervise the handover of governmental authority to the respective regimes north and south of the 17th parallel, the artificial and temporary boundary imposed by the Geneva Agreements. An undetermined number of "mobile teams" were to have freedom of movement throughout the border zones and the demilitarized zone (DMZ) along the 17th parallel, monitoring the ceasefire and disengagement of forces in these highly sensitive areas. The fixed team sites were to be manned by six ICSC members, two from each delegation, and the mobile teams were to consist of three members, one from each country. These teams were also tasked with the responsibility of investigating and reporting any complaint about a breach of the Geneva Accords. These reports would be passed to the ICSC headquarters for formal findings to be recorded. These findings were then passed to the co-sponsors of the Geneva Accords (Great Britain and the Soviet Union), and to the Joint Commission, an organization consisting of high-level French and North Vietnamese officials, who would then decide on what action would be taken to rectify the problem. The most significant flaw in this whole arrangement was that the ICSC had no executive power whatsoever; its mandate was only to report and record violations to the Co-sponsors, and the Joint Commission. Once the French had completed their withdrawal and had left the Joint Commission, the South Vietnamese government refused to abide by the provisions of the Geneva Agreements, and the ICSC became wholly ineffective. In short, the ICSC's mandate was never to "keep the peace," but rather to facilitate the withdrawal of the French.[25]

India's position on the ICSC was critical. Not only did it supply the majority of logistical and command and control support, but it also acted as the Permanent Chair of the ICSC, and was responsible, through the Secretariat, for the production of the reports on investigations. The bulk of the ICSC staff were Indian; for example, in 1955, there were 150 Canadian personnel in ICSC Vietnam positions, 135 of these being military personnel, but more than one thousand Indian personnel, of which 941 were military.[26] Despite the fact that most of the ICSC's decisions required unanimity before being passed to the Joint Commission, reports of majority and minority positions could also be lodged to the Co-sponsors of the Geneva Agreements. As a result, with

the Polish stance being considered a foregone conclusion, Canadian External Affairs officials emphasized India's crucial "swing vote" between the Poles and the Canadians. This pivotal role proved a continual discomfort to the Indians, who disliked having their honest opinions disparaged as "taking sides," and played a role in the eventual breakdown of the ICSC, as will be seen.[27]

The New Delhi Conference ended on 6 August 1954, after setting an ambitious target date for the opening of ICSC operations in Vietnam as 11August 1954, only slightly more than a week away. A scramble ensued in Ottawa to find personnel available to fill the slots. Some of the more senior ICSC members went directly from New Delhi to their positions in Indochina, their luggage to be forwarded once packed. The Canadian contingent required over 150 military and diplomatic personnel, 83 of these being military officers.[28] This requirement, given on such short notice, necessitated the "panic posting" of many officers, some being jerked directly out of field training exercises to be shipped overseas.[29] Despite the extremely short notice, ICSC Vietnam opened its HQ in Hanoi on time, by 11 August 1954. In order to help alleviate some of the administrative and logistical problems that inevitably faced a large group entering a war-torn and strange country, an advance party of Canadian Army officers were hastily shipped in from Korea to make whatever preparations they could for the others. Unfortunately, little has been written about the logistical nightmare that must have confronted these individuals, but it appears that ad hoc, verbal, temporary arrangements became permanent as the ICSC's tenure dragged on throughout two decades. Canadian officers found themselves living in rooms "permanently" rented by the ICSC in all manner of establishments, from mere huts in the DMZ, to squalid brothels in small villages, to the best hotels in Saigon and Hanoi.[30]

Holmes gave great credit to the Canadian Army for the success of the deployment, and it is interesting to note his view of the Army's success in its first ever "peacekeeping mission:"[31]

> The response of the Canadian Army to this challenge was highly creditable…. I recall some quite understandable tendency in military quarters to say that this was not a soldier's but a diplomat's job, and that they did not want to do the dirty work for the Department of External Affairs… but the Department of External Affairs could not possibly have fielded officers on the scale required…. [The Canadian Army] rounded up on short notice the best staff-trained officers who could be taken away from their present duties and fielded within a few weeks teams for Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos which carried on their unaccustomed duties of soldier, diplomat, and judge with remarkable success.[32]

Despite the critical role Canadian Army officers were to play in the ICSC, the Department of National Defence emphasized that it wanted nothing to do with the direction or formulation of policy, an interesting abrogation of bureaucratic interest.[33] This disinterest in what would become a long-standing and controversial task for the Canadian Army, however, is understandable given the Defence Department's fixation with the Soviet threat in Europe. As historian Jack Granatstein has noted, "[the ICSC] was a serious drain on limited resources, one that was resented by National Defence Headquarters at a time when the country's commitments to NATO were large and taken very seriously indeed."[34] Given the problematic future of the ICSC, however,

perhaps the Department of Defence would have done better to demand a much larger role in policy formulation. But it was early in the Canadian Army's experience with peacekeeping, and if they failed to act or acquiesced to their political and diplomatic counterparts too easily, it was more out of naïveté than a deliberate act of subordination or abrogation.

In addition to looking to the Canadian Army for the bulk of the ICSC's officers, the Canadian government felt it necessary to reach outside its own foreign service bureaucracy to find a man suitable for the highly sensitive and significant post of Commissioner for ICSC Vietnam. On 17 August 1954, the government nominated Sherwood Lett, a corporate lawyer and ex-Deputy Chief of the General Staff, for the position. Lett had been highly-decorated during the Second World War, and had retired at the rank of Brigadier General. Having wrangled with the toughest military and legal problems Canada had to offer, the St. Laurent government considered him the best choice to undertake what it rightly assumed would be the gruelling task awaiting him in Hanoi. Holmes praised Lett by saying, "Lett was not only a soldier but also judicial by training and temperament. No one could have been more fair minded," and later added that, "[Lett was] a man of extraordinary integrity ...dedicated to the principle of impartiality."[35] The American Consul in Vancouver was asked by his government for his opinion of Lett, to whom he gave his enthusiastic endorsement: "the Canadian government could not have selected a finer man for this difficult position...."[36]

Lett recognized that his mission of supervising the disengagement of two almost intractable foes would be a daunting challenge, but he accepted it nonetheless. What he could not have foreseen was that his task would be made even more difficult by the ambiguous instructions given to him by the Canadian government. Lett received his ambassadorial "Letter of Instruction," from the government on 22 August 1954.[37] In it, External Affairs Minister Pearson outlined the policy objectives he expected Lett to pursue. The first objective was, not surprisingly, "the maintenance of peace in Indochina." This primary goal, however, was almost immediately contradicted by the second: "to encourage the development of a Southeast Asia Defence Organization...as a safeguard against Communist aggression." The third objective was to further the economic development of the region, preferably in the capitalist mould, under the auspices of the "Colombo Plan." The last objective set Canada's policy directly at odds with the successful completion of Lett's mission, and the mandate of the ICSC: development of, "strong, independent, **non-communist** (emphasis added) regimes on the Asian mainland outside present Communist areas." As James Eayrs has rightly pointed out, "the last three of these objectives were clearly anti-communist in purport," and therefore compromised the impartiality of Lett's position on the Commission.[38] The government's instructions concluded that Lett should "reflect a Western outlook," while at the same time, "maintaining an attitude of judicial impartiality;" in essence, he was to be fair, but not too fair. Neither Pearson nor Holmes saw this dichotomy as being impossible to achieve, and the deliberate ambiguity of the government's instructions did not seem to them, at the time, to be a signal of the potential dangers to come.[39] As Douglas Ross has pointed out, Pearson was rightly cautious that Canadian involvement in the ICSC should not undermine the more important goal of assisting the Western world in "containing" communism. The paradoxical Instructions he provided Lett, however, would ultimately, "pave the way for ambivalence, potential lack of direction

in policy implementation — and an endless litany of misguided accusations of moral turptitude by anti-interventionist critics."[40]

THE ICSC's INITIAL SUCCESS

By the end of August 1954, ICSC operations in Vietnam were underway, and the Commission enjoyed a brief honeymoon of impartiality. Lett's instructions had also included a warning about what Lett should expect from his Polish counterpart: "[He will] combine a show of co-operation with varying degrees of obstruction, deceit, and bad faith," including, "abusive language."[41] Initially, at least, this description of the Polish delegates proved to be incorrect. The first Polish Commissioner, P. Ogrodizinsky, proved to be "co-operative, friendly, and easy in his manner," according to Canadian delegate R.M. Macdonnell.[42] The accomplishments of the ICSC's first year were quite remarkable given the short time it had been given to organize and execute its functions. Within its first year, the ICSC effectively completed its largest and most difficult task, that of overseeing the transfer of government authority on either side of the DMZ. Simultaneously, ICSC observers had supervised the military disengagement of the North Vietnamese and French forces, and the French withdrawal from South Vietnam; this too, was accomplished with few problems. Even Charles Taylor, one of the harshest critics of Canada's role in the ICSC, later said:

> During the first 300 days the ICC [ICSC] performed a remarkable task in supervising the separation of the former belligerents without any serious incident. It was an achievement in which the Canadian diplomats and soldiers rightly took enormous pride.[43]

The third task, however, that of overseeing the repatriation of displaced persons and refugees, became a chronic problem for the ICSC, and neither belligerent ever felt that the other side had been completely honest in its efforts or rhetoric on this issue.[44] The fourth and last task, that of verifying compliance with the Accords with respect to the rotation and replacement of military personnel and equipment, was to prove to be the stumbling block that eventually exposed the ICSC's impotence and fatally compromised its impartiality.

FRUSTRATION AND INCREASING PARTISANSHIP

In order to ensure that military equipment and reinforcements were not being smuggled into prohibited areas, the ICSC supervision teams needed complete freedom of movement. North Vietnam refused to grant the ICSC this freedom, and insisted that the ICSC advise it 48 hours in advance of an inspection. When the ICSC acquiesced, the North Vietnamese then further demanded a "de facto" veto on a teams' movement by stipulating that all ICSC inspection teams had to be accompanied by a North Vietnamese Army (NVA) "guide" in addition to the NVA Liaison Officer already present; if the guide failed to show up, the inspection simply could not occur. As early as October 1954, the ICSC teams had found their movements restricted by this kind of North Vietnamese intransigence.[45] When a compromise was finally reached allowing teams "freedom of movement" only within their clearly specified zone, the Canadian delegation assented, but was clearly unhappy. In Ramesh Thakur's words:

> The zone of action, in sum, had been narrowed from the whole of Vietnam on 10 September [1954] to a ten-kilometre wide strip on 21 December 1954. The debate also set the pattern for the positions of the three delegations in the ICSC: Poland would agree with North Vietnam, Canada would

> seek to shape the Commission into a forceful body willing to assert its authority, and India would move away from an initial broad view to a position of...compromise.[46]

In historian Robert Bothwell's words, "The Canadians pressed, the Poles obstructed, and the Indians dithered."[47]

The freedom of movement issue continued to act as a reef against which the ICSC would wreck continuously throughout the rest of 1955. More sinister was the fact that the Canadians were finding the Poles increasingly partisan in their support of North Vietnam. The Polish change in attitude probably stemmed from a change in the inter-Communist Block politics. When the Poles had originally joined the ICSC, the Soviets had sent a very clear message to them about their expected behaviour: in the interests of "international socialism," and "peaceful co-existence," the Polish delegation was to behave, "as if they were neutral."[48] As a Sino-Soviet rift began to appear, and the Cold War re-heated, the Poles found themselves under increasing pressure to side further and further with the North Vietnamese against the other ICSC members.[49] North Vietnam also began restricting movement of refugees to the South, because the burgeoning exodus was proving a growing embarrassment and potential threat to the regime in Hanoi. News of these restrictions created a humanitarian uproar in the Canadian House of Commons, and in an attempt to create some movement on the issue in December 1954, Pearson instructed Lett to take a harder line with North Vietnam, and the ICSC. For his part, Lett was content with the governments' decision to, as James Eayrs puts it, "unmuzzle him."[50] Lett, like many Canadians that would follow him, had become increasingly frustrated with the growing obstructionist tendencies of the Poles, and with the indecisiveness of the Indian Chairman, Mr. Desai.[51] To Canadian minds, the freedom of movement question was not only unambiguous, it also went to the heart of the effectiveness, and therefore the relevance of the ICSC. If the teams were not free to move, then why have the ICSC at all?

Polish obstructionism and North Vietnamese intransigence towards the ICSC were not the only factors that helped to end the early days of co-operation. The Geneva Accords had provided for free elections to be held in July 1956, elections that would probably have been won by the Communists. In an ironic and troubling twist for Pearson, Canada, by virtue of its membership on the ICSC, was placed in a position whereby it might have to actually help install and legitimize a Communist regime in South Vietnam by upholding democratic freedoms. This was a nightmare scenario for a Canadian government that shared the same fears as the United States about the Communists winning a legitimate electoral victory, and the "domino theory" found as many proponents in Ottawa as it did in Washington.[52] The ambitious and ruthless President of South Vietnam, Ngo Dinh Diem, also recognized the very real potential for a communist victory in any free elections held in 1956, and therefore set out to stall, if not destroy this possibility by again stating that, "the Government [of South Vietnam] does not consider itself bound in any way by the Geneva Agreements, of which it was not a signatory."[53] He underlined his refusal to abide by the Geneva Accords by encouraging protests and violence *against* ICSC members, especially in Saigon, South Vietnam's capitol city.[54] American President Dwight Eisenhower tacitly supported Diem's position, and as a result, Pearson found himself trapped between his desire to have an effective ICSC in Vietnam, and his need to support the West's policy of "con-

tainment." While Lett's careful juggling act throughout 1955 kept alive hopes for both ICSC effectiveness, and for eventual Western triumph in Indochina, the election issue further hastened the polarization of East and West in Vietnam.

Why was the ICSC so effective in it achieving its first two goals of transfer of government authority and military disengagement, and yet so ineffective in fulfilling its mandate on Refugee return and democratization? The answer lies in the ambiguity of the Geneva Accords and the ICSC's mandate and powers, and the will of the parties involved. Because all parties had truly wanted to achieve the first two objectives, they created clear, well-defined, and unambiguous political guidance in the Geneva Accords (Articles 1-16) which was easily translated at the operational level into tasks which could be achieved through the use of military means; in this case, the observers working as part of the ICSC. More importantly, both the North Vietnamese and French forces were *willing* (and perhaps even desperate) to comply with these conditions. As historian Robert Randle has pointed out:

> Demobilization, regroupment, disarmament, and withdrawal were often accomplished without adequate ISC supervision. This was due to the decision of the commanders … to comply with the procedural terms of the military cease-fire before the ISCs had established their headquarters and posted their inspection teams.[55]

In short, the ICSC was successful in these missions because the political preconditions had been properly set for their conduct, appropriate strategic guidance had been given, and appropriate military means had been employed. The essential precondition — the *political* will to withdraw — was already in place even before the ICSC came into existence. Success — the achievement of the strategic and operational goals — was therefore achievable by the limited tactical military (and diplomatic) means employed.

The same political will and strategic preconditions, however, did not exist for the implementation of the other aspects of the accord. The ICSC was given neither the political mandate (through the Accords), nor the operational capability (through its militarily insignificant "observer" force), to enforce compliance. This was deliberately done by the drafters of the Geneva Accords because they did not want to have their freedom of action curtailed by an effective ICSC once the French had made good their exit. Again, in Robert Randle's blunt assessment:

> It is not surprising that the ISCs for Laos and Vietnam were institutional symbols of the inadequacy and incompleteness of the Geneva Conferences…. Neither the co-chairmen nor the Geneva Powers displayed any great interest in the functioning of the ISCs after the conference adjourned in July 1954…. The great powers might give lip service to the "Geneva Accords", but by 1956 it was clear, even to the Hanoi government, that they were prepared to see the ISCs drastically reduce, perhaps even cease, their operations.[56]

Success, therefore, was impossible; the ICSC's operational capability was deliberately designed by the Geneva Powers to be impotent, and therefore incapable of fully enforcing the rhetoric of the Accords.

Why did Canadian policymakers not recognize this situation, "clear" as it was to everyone else involved (less perhaps the Indians)? The answer provides some profound insight into the conduct of Canadian foreign policy. There are two key elements

to the answer. First was the illusion of utility created by the delusion of hope and fear. As Holmes has himself admitted, "Canadians never walked out because they feared the vacuum that would be created… Not that the teams would have been much missed, but …(the ICSC) seemed the only thing that prevented the area from lapsing into anarchy."[57] Simply put, Canadian policymakers were too afraid to move, and too hopeful that the ICSC's presence might somehow, someway, prevent the coming anarchy. Second, as will be seen, sound military advice on the operational futility of the ICSC was never heeded; the Canadian soldiers and diplomats of the ICSC were abandoned like the "forlorn hopes" of Napoleonic warfare to the "humiliating job of "supervis[ing] an armistice in a country at war."[58]

THE RISE OF COMPLICITY

It was not just the Canadian officers in Vietnam that were frustrated with the widening impasse. Pearson and Holmes were also be-coming increasingly concerned with the ICSC's ineffectiveness in Vietnam, and were searching for a solution. If Canadian impartiality had fail-ed to make the ICSC an effective body, then perhaps increasing advocacy of the West's position would help advance Canada's foreign policy goals. The "unmuzzling," of Lett had shamed neither the North Vietnamese, nor their Polish supporters into concessions on the freedom of movement issue. By 23 March 1956, John Holmes, then the External Affairs officer responsible for Indochina, conceded that in view of the Polish behaviour, the ICSC was unlikely to operate any more with unanimity. Holmes therefore instructed the Canadian delegation (Candel) to, "shape the record [wherever] possible so that we still have good grounds to refuse further participation in the Commission's less useful functions."[59] As a result, Canada tabled a minority report on the freedom of movement question in which it not only bashed North Vietnam for its obstruction, but also asserted the legality of Diem's claim that his regime was not bound by the Geneva Accords.[60] This position lent further credence to Diem's refusal to hold elections in accordance with the Geneva Accords. Victor Levant has claimed that Canada's increasing partisanship in the ICSC allowed Diem to refute the Accords, implicating that Canadian policy had "sabotaged the political solution," thereby indirectly leading to the Vietnam War.[61] Although both his argument and his evidence appears on the surface as quite persuasive, Levant misses one critical point in his indictment of Canadian policy: nothing Canada could have done, either through the ICSC or through bilateral channels with the United States, could have changed Diem's mind on the election issue.[62] By early 1956, both the North Vietnamese and the Diem regime recognized that the "free democratic elections," called for by the Geneva Conference would never be held. North Vietnam's leader, Ho Chi Minh realized that he would have to accomplish his goal of re-unifying Vietnam by bullet, and not by ballot, as he had hoped. As a result, Ho began to encourage increased activity by the Viet Cong insurgents south of the DMZ as a prelude to war.[63]

The solution — or rather, non-solution — to the elections issue meant that resort to force to achieve the political goals of Ho and the North Vietnamese was almost inevitable. Trapped by the pragmatic requirement to support the West's policy of containment, Pearson and Holmes deliberately hid behind the ambiguity of the Geneva Accords. In yet another irony of history, the Canadian decision to tacitly support the American (and South Vietnamese) position undermined the very legitimacy of the ICSC, and contributed to its inevitable

failure. Canada had compromised its dedication to democratic principles in pursuit of a more important (and perhaps more elusive) goal: Western security and containment of communism. Given the political and strategic conditions of the time, Pearson had little choice but to make the wrong decision for the right reasons, and thus help in paving the path to war.[64] As Pearson and Holmes were to find out, it was a slippery path indeed.

One compromise inevitably led to another for Canadian policymakers. As the guerrilla war in the South slowly escalated throughout the late 1950s, Diem turned increasingly to the United States for military assistance. Chapter III of the Geneva Accords, however, did not allow reinforcement of forces beyond the number present in 1954.[65] This stipulation meant that the United States was legally restricted to only a handful of military advisors because its Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) had numbered less than 400 personnel when the Accords went into effect.[66] The American solution to this legal quandary was simple: ignore the ICSC. Between 1956 and 1961, over two thousand additional advisors entered South Vietnam under the guise of MAAG, and the Temporary Equipment Recovery Mission (TERM).[67] This influx touched off an acrimonious debate in the ICSC, with the Poles vigorously supporting the North Vietnamese assertion that the United States was in violation of Article 16 and 17 of the Geneva Charter. In response to these charges, the Americans countered with the accusation that the North Vietnamese had abrogated Articles 16 and 17 first by supporting the Viet Cong insurgency in South Vietnam.[68] The Canadians, sympathetic to the American position, devised an ingenious, if not completely ethical argument to support their pro-American stance. First, the Canadians had from an early date supported the assertion that the North was in violation of the Agreements by supporting insurgency in the South. Second, the Canadians pointed out that the "status quo" provision made no specific mention of nationality; therefore, as the French forces, 150,000 strong when the agreement went into effect, had completely withdrawn, the Americans could legally claim to be simply taking their place.[69] In effect, this view meant that the Americans could "rotate" up to 150,000 "replacement" troops into South Vietnam before Canada would have to find them in violation of the Geneva Accords. This legal hair-splitting may have eased the consciences of some of the External Affairs delegates forced to take this less than truthful line in order to support the much more important Canadian — American relationship, but it further served to reduce the illusion of ICSC legitimacy in the eyes of all involved, especially the belligerents.[70]

The Canadian decision to look the other way on the American build-up was made with the best of intentions, but inevitably led to the worst of results. Like a man struggling in quicksand, External's well-intentioned efforts only served to open it up to further charges of collusion with, and complicity for, American policy in Vietnam. Yet another well-intentioned Canadian attempt at seeking a negotiated settlement outside the Geneva Accords and the ICSC was the "Seaborne Mission." In 1964, Canadian diplomat and ICSC Commissioner Blair Seaborne was employed by the United States, at the recommendation of now Prime Minister Lester Pearson, and his External Affairs Minister, Paul Martin, as an intermediary to the government in Hanoi. Seaborne, under the aegis of his ICSC membership, had access to the leadership of the Hanoi regime, and was therefore well-placed to act as a go-between for the American State Department. At first, the Ameri-

cans only asked Seaborne to try to ascertain North Vietnamese war aims and intentions.[71] Later, Seaborne was asked to convey peace offers, coupled with thinly veiled threats of a bombing escalation to the North Vietnamese.[72] It was these later visits, from June 1964 until June, 1965, that created controversy in Canada when they were made public by the release of the Pentagon Papers in 1973. Accusations that Canada had abused its position in the ICSC were hurled at the government, and, in the words of Victor Levant:

> If the Seaborne mission was a peace initiative, it was clearly a failure....[P]ublic knowledge of the mission served to weak-en Canada's moral position by further associating it with the increasingly discredited U.S. war effort.[73]

North Vietnam, already incensed by the role played by the ICSC in failing to condemn American intervention in what it clearly saw as an internal struggle, was further offended by Seaborne's use of Canada's ICSC membership to convey President Lyndon Johnson's threats to them. As guerrilla warfare metamorphosized into a conventional conflict, the ICSC became increasingly irrelevant and illegitimate in the eyes of the North Vietnamese. In March 1965, Hanoi informed the ICSC that its headquarters was no longer welcome in North Vietnam; the ICSC, for all intents and purposes was dead.[74]

In summary, Canadian policymakers had allowed themselves to be drawn into the Indochina question in general, and Vietnam in particular, for all the right moral and pragmatic reasons. Nevertheless, the inherent flaws of the Geneva Accords coupled with conflicting strategic demands upon Canada outside of Vietnam, led Pearson and External Affairs to adopt a policy that was deliberately ambiguous, hoping on the one hand to contribute to peace through the ICSC, while on the other hand undermining that same peace by supporting the American (and by extension South Vietnamese) goals. High mind-ed meddling had met the harsh realities of war, and the result was only to add to the confusion both at home in Canada, and abroad in Vietnam and Washington. It was becoming a lose — lose situation for the Canadian government.

ICSC ACTIVITIES DURING OPEN WAR (1965-73)

The ghostly apparition of the ICSC continued to exist after expulsion from Hanoi, moving its headquarters to Saigon. In reality, the Commission served only as a forum for the continued bickering and stalemate between the Polish, Indian, and Canadian delegates. External Affairs found it nearly impossible to fill some of its vacancies, as career foreign service officers saw a stint on the ICSC as having no professional advancement opportunity, and as a personal hardship posting.[75] In reality, during the period March 1965 to its final demise in 1973, the ICSC was completely ineffectual. Robert Bothwell has aptly characterized ICSC functioning during this period: "life on the Commission drifted into a routine of trips North, trips South, trips out, reports and debate."[76] Brigadier H. Chubb, Senior Canadian Military Advisor to ICSC Vietnam from September 1966, to September 1967, described a typical meeting:

> A full meeting of the Commission in the morning.... Masses of paper flowing from one side of the table to the other and the inevitable final results that adds up to virtually nothing.... Today it was the turn of the Canadians to indulge in a little...shouting and waving of arms....We continue this nonsense tomorrow afternoon! The

> only sensible suggestion... came to [naught]. However, it is on the record that we tried and that is what counts — or so I am told![77]

Why did Canada keep playing its part in this futile charade? There are a number of important reasons. First, Canadian policy makers were nothing if not hopeful, and throughout the period of open warfare in Vietnam, the policymakers in External Affairs refused to pull out of the ICSC in hopes that someday, somehow, it might form the basis of a peace agreement, as it had in its early days of 1954. John Holmes, perhaps the most important single figure in Canada's Indochina policy during the 1960s, reported that "Mike [Lester Pearson] was always asking me, 'when are you going to get us out of there?'"[78] Holmes' reply was invariably, "soon, but not just yet." In his own words, Holmes summed up the dilemma of hope: "Somehow or other we felt that in some way possibly there was one chance in a hundred that we could be of some help in bringing an end to this dreadful war.... So, we stayed on."[79]

Furthermore, there was a real and useful purpose for the Canadian presence in Vietnam, but it was not for bringing about peace. Ironically enough, it was in supplying strategic intelligence to the United States. From its beginnings, the Canadian delegation had been quite forthcoming in their co-operation with the Americans in this respect, and, in November 1969, Brigadier Donald Ketchison (ICSC 1958-9) admitted to routinely supplying intelligence on troop movements to the Central Intelligence Agency.[80] It became accepted practice to send duplicate copies of all Canadian reports to the American embassy in Saigon throughout the late 1950s and 1960s.[81] When information on the intelligence gathering activity hit the Canadian media, there was a frenzy of denials on the part of External Affairs Minister Paul Martin Sr. but, as Brigadier Chubb said at the time:

> The papers and wires have been full of yarns about the ICC running interference and doing espionage for the Yanks! True, of course, up to a point, but very disturbing in certain quarters to see it in print![82]

The real problem that underlay the question of intelligence passing was that Canadians, even on the ICSC, simply identified too closely with Americans to act as anything but proxies for their "big brother" on the ICSC. The senior Canadian delegates socialized with the Americans, drank with the Americans, and relied upon the Americans for logistical support and provision of services not normally available to members of the ICSC, and found it all quite natural.[83] There was a deep affinity between the Americans and Canadians, who were the closest of neighbours and allies everywhere else in the world except in Vietnam, an affinity that the Canadians could not share with their erstwhile "brothers" on the ICSC. Brigadier Chubb, himself one of the self-admitted worst offenders, pointed out the problem in 1967:

> [It is] recommended that we stop using transport and other [American] facilities so readily made available to Candel which are not available to Poldel and Indel....Canadians have been cheating in this regard for years, and our position would be quite indefensible....To divorce ourselves from these facilities would be most unpleasant, but in my view must be done.[84]

THE ROOTS OF COMPLICITY

Yet this divorce entailed much more than a matter of rejecting free flights home on American military aircraft, and American

PX privileges; it called for a rejection of some of the values Canadians and Americans shared, and a denial of the natural Canadian — American relationship based on over 200 years of common history, and fifty years as close allies. Little has been written about the hundreds of Canadians who joined the American Armed Forces to fight in Vietnam, but a quick look at their own words shows that they were volunteering for almost exactly the same reasons as young American men were volunteering; some wanted adventure, but a large number joined to "fight communism."[85] Moreover, the close cul-tural bond between Canadians and Americans was augmented by the necessity to become even closer to the Americans militarily throughout the 1960s. The increasing importance of the North American Air Defence (NORAD) agreement, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Permanent Joint Board on Defence, and the Defence Production Sharing Agreement all reflected the political and strategic reality that Canadians could not divorce themselves from the United States, a nation upon which it relied so heavily for its own defence.[86] Writers like Victor Levant may condemn Canada for its "quiet complicity," towards American policy in Vietnam, but they ignore the geo-political realities that narrowed Canada's options until the Canadian media and public, spurred on by the example set by their counterparts in the United States, made another option feasible.[87] Perhaps even more so than American President Lyndon Johnson, Canada became trapped in Vietnam by a "hell of good intentions."[88]

Donald Ross has argued that another reason the Pearson government may have felt compelled to remain involved in Vietnam and the ICSC was President Johnson himself, given his deeply personal approach to the ever widening American war in Vietnam, and its impact upon the United States. Pearson wanted both to be a good friend and useful ally, and opted for a policy of "quiet diplomacy" in order to shape American intentions in Vietnam. Pearson was fearful that the more reckless elements in Washington, such as US Air Force General Curtiss Lemay, might push Johnson to widen and even "nuclearize" the war, which would have had dramatic and perhaps catastrophic effects upon the wider world, especially the balance of power in Europe. As ever, with the best of intent, Pearson made a call for American restraint in Vietnam at a speech at Temple University in April 1965. Despite its polite and even pro-American tone, the very questioning of American motives and methods in Vietnam drove Johnson into a fury that led to an impolite and vulgar "dressing down" of Pearson by Johnson at Camp David.[89] Given the sensitivity of the open wound that Vietnam was becoming to America in general, and Johnson's presidency in particular, even "quiet diplomacy" could only serve to degrade relations between an American administration obsessed with winning a war, and a Canadian government seeking to limit that war's impact and extent.

There was another seeming utility to Canada's continued participation in the sham commissions: it gave Canadian politicians a good excuse for not overtly supporting the American war effort in Vietnam with soldiers.[90] As the American military became more and more committed to Vietnam and Southeast Asia, Washington increased its pressure on allies to assist. Paul Martin Sr., Minister for External Affairs in 1965, considered pulling out of the ICSC in June 1965, but rejected the possibility because in part, "membership in the Commission also enables us to resist pressure for direct Canadian involvement in the Vietnam situation."[91] This continuing aspect of Canadian

foreign policy can also be recognized in the recent Chretien government's surprising decision to undertake a role in the International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan, thereby giving it an excuse for not being able to support more fully American initiatives elsewhere, especially Iraq.

Donald Ross's study of Canadian involvement in Vietnam provides an enlightening explanation for the perceived inconsistencies in Canadian policy and attitudes towards the Vietnam conflict. Ross argues that Canada's Vietnam policy suffered from the tension and conflicts between three predominate groups within not only the policy-making elite, but throughout Canadian society in general.[92] The first group Ross labels as the "liberal-moderates," and included key figures such as Pearson and Hol-mes. They sought to find a peaceful solution to the conflict through engagement on the Commissions, by compromise, and by careful diplomacy with the United States. On one side of the "mainstream" liberal-moderates were the "Left-liberals" (essentially anti-American) who vehemently opposed Western interventions in the developing world, especially Asia. Members of this group included key figures in External such as Chester Ronning and Escott Reid, as well as writers voicing an antiwar opinion like Clare Culhane, or Walter Scott.[93] On the other side were the "conservatives" (essentially pro-American), who felt that Canada should at provide increased diplomatic and moral support for American policy. Holmes' quote that opens this examination clearly points to the dilemma of the "liberal-moderates". The problem for Canadian policy makers, especially for Holmes and Pearson, was that their "liberal-moderate" compromises often left all sides feeling betrayed, and their adoption of a policy that was deliberately ambiguous, while perhaps seemingly sophisticated, also created confusion and conflict. In Robert Bothwell's assessment, "there was, therefore, an inherent contradiction in the Canadian role in Vietnam,"[94] that left the government open to charges of complicity. In a scathing but eloquent condemnation of Pearson's "quiet diplomacy," Canadian poet Dennis Lee pointed out what to the "left Liberals" was the ultimate cost of compromise:

> In a bad time, people, from an outpost of empire I write; Bewildered, though on about living. It is to set down a nation's Failure of nerve; I mean complicity… The humiliations of imperial necessity Are an old story, though it does not Improve in the telling and no man Believes it of himself. Why bring up genocide? Why bring up Acquiescence, profiteering?... Doesn't the Service of quiet diplomacy require dirty hands?[95]

By 1966, the failure of Pearson's "quiet diplomacy" and the Seaborne Mission, as well as the increasing irrelevance of the ICSC and increasing irrationality and emotion of the Johnson Administration virtually paralysed Canadian policy on Vietnam. As Donald Ross has point-ed out:

> The Canadian government was almost silent on Vietnam publicly after 1968 both because the issue area was judged too hot for rational debate, and because there was no pressing requirement that Ottawa take a stand on any aspect of the sordid mess in Indochina. The ICSC for Vietnam had been effectively dead since 1965…there was literally nothing for the External staff to do but wait for the call to armistice supervision.[96]

Canada's continued participation on what had clearly become a "sham commission," as well as all its other well-intentioned efforts, point-

ed to the problems created by a policy predicated on the dilemma of hope. *Hope* became the chief driving principle of Canada's Vietnam policy, but, as American general Gordon Sullivan has pointed out, "hope is not a method."[97] Moreover, altruistic Canadian motives were further complicated by the pragmatic realization that Canadians and Americans, in the final analysis, shared the same overarching strategic goal — the containment of communism. Pearson and Johnson, however, disagreed on the means necessary to achieve this containment, especially in Southeast Asia, and the result was misunderstanding and rancour between the two leaders, as demonstrated by Pearson's Philadelphia speech, and its effect upon Johnson.

Interestingly enough, the hopes so clearly evidenced by Pearson, Holmes, and other policymakers within External Affairs were not shared by their military advisors. As early as 1959, Canadian senior officers had voiced their opinion that Canada should quit the ICSC in order to avoid the conflicting demands it created. The Senior Canadian Military Advisor on the ICSC in 1958-1959, Brigadier D. G. Ketcheson, was quoted as saying, "the ICC/ VN [ICSC Vietnam] no longer serves free world interests."[98] The inherent contradictions in, and the deliberate ambiguity of External Affairs policy was already at this point causing distress within the Department of National Defence, who were by necessity and perhaps by culture the most close in co-operating with the Americans. In the case of Vietnam, this led to an ironic divergence of opinion between the "mandarins" of External Affairs in Ottawa, and those delegates and officers actually on the ground in Vietnam.[99] John Holmes, the man chiefly responsible for Canada's continued participation in the ICSC, defended the government's policy of increasing partisanship against the accusation of "complicity" with American foreign policy. In an essay published in 1971, Holmes defended the Canadian delegations increasing partisanship on the ICSC:

> It would be wrong to attribute the cautious Canadian attitudes on Vietnam to U.S. pressure...Ottawa regarded the American intervention as a response to violation, rather than calculated imperial expansion... [T]he single-minded advocacy of one party by the Poles pushed the Canadians into protecting the rights of the other.[100]

To Holmes, Canada's *only* option on the ICSC was to compromise itself by supporting the West's interests against the obvious Polish advocacy of North Vietnam's position, thus leading to the eventual complete loss of legitimacy and effectiveness of that body. Yet, was increased partisanship Canada's only, or even best option? It may seem in retrospect that a more effective approach would have been for Canada to pull out of the ICSC once it had proven hopelessly stalemated and at odds with the broader goals of Canadian foreign policy. As already discussed, this was precisely the advice given by the Senior Military Member of the ICSC, Brigadier Ketchison, as early as 1959. Perhaps in doing so, Canada could have sent a clear message to not only the belligerents, but to the international community at large, that at least one nation refused to be a party to a pathetic peacekeeping facade in Southeast Asia. Holmes, when considering this argument, admitted:

> Canada did have one weapon it could have used: it could always threaten to walk out if the attitudes of the parties were too outrageous…. Perhaps we should have used this form of blackmailmanship [sic] and packed up, thereby saving the country frustration and humiliation and criticism of the

> Commission for failing to do what it was never expected to do — enforce the peace in Indochina…. We never walked out because we feared the vacuum that would be created if we did…. Perhaps it wouldn't have made much difference if we had pulled out, but I am sure that we were right not to take the chance.[101]

Holmes further argued that, "virtually all Canadian vets of Indochina have returned with more hawkish attitudes than prevail at home."[102] This statement appeared to be an attempt to justify the Canadian government's policy by pointing to what Holmes claimed were the attitudes of those who had actually seen the problem up close, and were therefore in the best position to decide. Statements by actual veterans, however, contradict Holmes' assertion. Squadron Leader Hugh Campbell, an ICSC member from 1961 to 1963, bluntly stated:

> I was bloody ashamed of the things I was required to do because of the External Affairs Department policy in Vietnam…. There are men, Canadians, there [in Vietnam] trying to build a career. To antagonize the Americans would have restricted their futures. I don't recall any occasion when I saw anything in print that we should cover for the Americans, but at the same time, if you did not, you'd be in a very difficult position.[103]

Brigadier Chubb, himself no dove, had an excellent opportunity to examine up close, with the very best information available, the effects of Canadian policy in Vietnam. His concluding thoughts on his entire tour were:

> I feel that as an individual I leave here sadder and wiser for having been. Sadder because I find it impossible to accept the policy of my own government; I feel very strongly that it is not an honest one in spite of the efforts made by various officials to justify our presence in this unfortunate country.[104]

Why did this gap between the policy makers and the policy executors develop? Holmes' attitude towards the people whose foreign policy he was helping to shape may pro-vide a key to understanding why there seemed to be a disconnect between the foreign policy shapers in Ottawa, and their field hands in Vietnam. What is most striking is Holmes' surprisingly dismissive attitude toward the majority of Canadians, whom he described as, "...the Lumpen Middle, brain washed by television, that is least aware of the fact that Canada is not itself at war in Vietnam."[105] This statement is all the more surprising because the media coverage of the Vietnam conflict suggests that the Canadian public actually had a fairly good awareness of what was going on. Clearly, the above quote reflects the frustration Holmes felt at trying to develop a policy that was an effective and palatable compromise between what Donald Ross has labelled the "conservative" (pro-American) view, and the "left — liberal" (anti-American) position which were in constant conflict not only within the Canadian public, but within successive Canadian governments and within External Affairs itself. Attempts at compromise by Holmes and Pearson created a policy that was both ambiguous and ambivalent.[106] Moreover, it often resulted in a policy that was difficult to translate and communicate to the Canadian public in general, and even those who were tasked to execute it. Holmes himself pointed this out:

> When I visited Vietnam in the spring of 1955…the solid work of the Commission was finished and the frustration was becoming more and more apparent. The morale and enthusiasm of the Canadians… was quite remark-

> able, but I recall reporting on my return how difficult I thought it would be for them to sustain for a long period when they could see little success in what they were doing…. It is pretty galling for them, therefore, to be told by fellow citizens who do not trouble to study the record that the Commissions have been nothing but a farce and that they have been nothing but the docile agents of the Americans.[107]

Thus, the deliberate ambiguity of Canadian po-licy in Vietnam exposed and magnified the ex-tant cultural differences between the policy-makers in External Affairs who were seemingly comfortable with the ambiguities of the policy, and the diplomats and soldiers who were un-happy with the seeming muddle. Even within External Affairs, conflict eroded consensus, and eventually led to a "paralysis" in Canadian po-licy. To some degree, the sheer institutional in-ertia caused by this paralysis would keep Cana-da involved in the ineffective and unfortunate Commission for almost twenty years, until 1973.[108] But the freeze could not last forever, as events both in America and in Vietnam would shake the Commission, and Canada, out of its winter of discontent.

HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL — THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON CONTROL AND SUPERVISION (ICCS)

As the Nixon Administration attempted to negotiate its way out of Vietnam in a "peace with honour" at the Paris Peace Conference in 1972-3, the Canadians were once again diplomatically press-ganged into serving on a truce supervisory body in Indochina. Despite its better judgement, and the ignominious history of the ICSC, the government of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau accepted a place as one of the four countries on the "new and improved" International Commission on Control and Supervision (ICCS), along with Hungary, Indonesia, and Poland, (the CHIP nations). American officials had made it plain to the Canadian Minister of External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp, that the fragile and politically important Paris Peace Accords would be placed in real jeopardy if Canada declined participation in the ICCS. Presented with yet another offer it could not refuse, the Trudeau government agreed to participate, if only to help the United States extricate itself from the Vietnam quagmire that now threatened more important aspects of U.S.- Canadian relations. But Canadians would no longer tolerate an open-ended commitment, and a two-month deadline was set.[109]

In a marked departure from the "quiet diplomacy" of the Pearson era, Sharp and Trudeau decided from the outset that the Canadian delegation to the ISSC "would consider itself free to publicize the proceedings as it saw fit — which in due course became known as the 'open-mouth' policy"[110] From the outset, it appears that Canadian officials, especially Sharp, were pessimistic about the outcome of the ICCS. In order to give the ICCS more credibility and relevance, Sharp tabled a draft resolution to the International Conference on Vietnam (the Paris peace talks) that would have allowed the ICCS to forward its reports to the Secretary General of the United Nations, who could then forward them to the Security Council for comment or action. This resolution was summarily rejected by both sides, much to Sharp's disappointment.[111] The ISSC was to be no more powerful or effective than its progenitor, the ICSC.

The ICCS picked up almost exactly where the ICSC had left off. Headquartered in the ICSC's old building in Saigon, and organised almost exactly like its predecessor, save for the four vice three nations, the ICCS was sabotaged from the outset.[112] The Hungarian and Polish officers at the team-

sites were not given the "delegated authority" to investigate alleged violations by their superiors, and, as a result, the Canadian and Indonesian representatives often found themselves investigating alone.[113] Even more frustrating was the requirement for unanimity of opinion on not just findings, but even on *evidence*.[114] In reality, there was no truce to supervise — both sides were fighting major engagements, regardless of the Paris Agreements or the ICCS. In a confidential signal to Ottawa, the Canadian delegation to the ICCS reported that: "[I]t is incontestable that the ceasefire has not… been effective throughout Vietnam… [a] **total of six thousand sixty incidents have been reported between Jan 28 and Mar 14** [sic]."[115] A later message spelled out that the Polish and Hungarian representatives were clearly blocking any ICCS action, much to the growing consternation of the Canadian delegation.[116] This time, however, Ottawa vented its frustrations publicly, following its "open mouth policy," but its public castigation only served to undermine Canada's position further vis-a-vis the United States and Vietnam.[117] When two Canadian officers were detained by the North Vietnamese as "spies," and another was killed when his helicopter was shot down "mistakenly," Ottawa was moved to action.[118] For the first time ever, Canada withdrew unilaterally from a peacekeeping role. Although Canada had gone for all the right reasons, there were no more illusions about the effectiveness of "Commissions" in Indochina. The last Canadian peacekeeper left Vietnam in July 1973, ending almost twenty years of frustration and failure.

The Commission's eulogy was written even before its death by Canadian delegate R.D. Jackson:

> The International Commission for Supervision and Control has for much of its existence been an ineffectual and rather pathetic body. In recent years problems from without and within rendered it a veritable vegetable of an institution…. Its achievements fell pitifully short of what was expected of it. It squandered its time, it frittered away its energies, it consumed its own resources, while the smoke and flames of war engulfed it. A victim in part of the perversity of nations, it also became a sad monument to poorly conceived and poorly employed international machinery. The Canadian delegation trusts that it at least provided all concerned with experience that can be usefully applied in the future.[119]

LESSONS LEARNED

What can Canada's twenty-year involvement in the Vietnam conflict tell us about Canadian foreign and defence policy, and those who formulate and execute it? There are seven lessons that emerge from the peculiar Canadian quagmire in Vietnam. First, Canada's policy in Vietnam, and especially the "liberal-moderate" tendency to support American political ends but disagree with American military means, points unequivocally to the difficult "acceptance of paradox" that has formed a central tenet and conundrum for much of Canadian foreign policy, including the current debate over support for the American intervention in Iraq.[120] This "acceptance of paradox" and the "liberal-moderate" tendency towards compromise often results in a foreign policy that seems reactive, confusing, and incoherent, both to the Canadian public, and to the world at large. These charges are precisely the ones being leveled at the Chretien government's current policy over Iraq; when asked if Canada is for or against the American position, the Chretien answer has been an unequivocal "maybe."[121] If anything, then, Canadian policymakers are consistent

in their inconsistency — they try hard not to choose any one side, and often maintain a deliberately ambiguous foreign policy in order to walk the tightrope between all.

The second observation to be made from the history of the ICSC and ICCS is the significant role that Canadian soldiers played in the execution of foreign policy, and not just in the military realm. Canadian Army officers on the ICSC were expected to be, in Holmes' words, "soldiers, diplomats, and judges," and by his own admission, those officers sent to Vietnam fulfilled these often complex and contradictory roles with skill and aplomb.[122] Canada's involvement in Vietnam therefore, points to the peculiar Canadian penchant to send soldiers to do the job of diplomats or humanitarians. As seen, the military component of the ICSC, when the right pre-conditions had been set, had no difficulty in achieving its goals. The success of the first 300 days of the ICSC in disengaging French and Vietnamese forces, and in establishing governmental authority on either side of the DMZ points to this. But military personnel cannot be consistently expected to solve political, humanitarian, and diplomatic problems beyond their scope, and beyond their mandate. Ironically enough, as we have seen, the Department of National Defence (DND) was adamant that it have no formal say in the policy it was expected to execute, despite the fact that the twenty-year commitment to the Commissions was a significant drain on the Canadian Army's resources in a theatre that was of little strategic importance to Canada. Soldiers continue to play a key role in the execution of Canadian foreign policy, especially at the operational and tactical levels. They create the miracle of the transubstantiation of foreign policy; they are the physical manifestations of the hot air and cold ink of debate and policy transformed into the warm flesh and hard fact of physical reality. Yet, if soldiers are to understand and implement policy, then perhaps they must also have some contribution into the direction of policy. The Vietnam experience suggests that in future, the Department of National Defence in general, and Canadian Forces officers in particular, may wish to have more formal input into the foreign policy of their nation. This change would have implications not just for the training of officers, but also for the closer interaction, or even integration of elements of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and DND. It would also allow an increased harmonization and synchronization between policy makers, and policy executors, and may remove some of the friction and frustration so evident in the reaction of ICSC members such as Brigadier Chubb. Increased input into foreign policy debates can only enhance the ability of the Canadian Forces and its officers and troops in the execution of policy.[123] As historian Harry Summers has pointed out, American politicians and military leaders have learned to harmonize their political and military strategies from their mistakes in Vietnam.[124] Perhaps it is fitting that Canada learn the same lesson from the same conflict, but from different circumstances.

Third, Canadian experience in Vietnam points to the Canadian dilemma of being a very junior partner in its own defence. Heavy dependence upon the United States for its security forced Canada into seeming complicity on American policy in Vietnam, and into participation on the sham Commissions that were the source of so much frustration for Canadian diplomats and soldiers alike. Dependence upon an ally is, in itself, not a negative thing; in fact, from a strategic, geo-political and economic point of view, such dependence seems a highly pragmatic solution to the dilemma of Canadian security.[125] But it must be recognized

that the economic and strategic advantages of being able to rely so heavily on another nation for our security are purchased only at a concomitant price of the surrender of some of our sovereignty and independence. Moreover, increasing cultural, economic, and security convergence with the United States has in fact eroded Canadian political sovereignty. Canadian governments may chose to stand apart from American policies but given our close ties, there will nevertheless be widespread disagreement and disappointment on both sides the border. As the John Holmes' quote that opened this study so vividly pointed out, even the broadest possible compromise is likely to offend a significant portion of the population. Canada's role in Vietnam points most clearly to this dilemma. More-over, the chance of giving offense is increased if an already contentious policy is then ineffectively communicated or implemented. While Canadian governments should not allow themselves to be railroaded by their giant American friend and neighbour into decisions that they morally or ethically oppose, the onus remains on the policy maker to communicate that policy in an effective and understandable manner. In both the historical case of Vietnam, and apparently in the current case of Iraq, the Canadian government has failed this test.

Pearson's "quiet diplomacy," the reaction to his speech in Philadelphia by Lyndon Johnson, and the failure of Sharp's "open mouth" diplomacy to have any serious effect on American conduct of the war also point to the conclusion that disagreement with American actions must be done with tact, or it will inevitably prove counterproductive to the aims of Canadian policy, and to the wider Canadian-American relationship. Here, again, Chretien's unwillingness or inability to curb the more vocal "left- liberals" in his government from their emotional anti-American and *ad hominem* attacks on the Bush administration over the Iraq question have proven highly counterproductive and potentially damaging.[126] As seen by the historical example of Vietnam, the American *juggernaut* is little influenced by high-minded Canadian rhetoric, and "open mouth" diplomacy is seldom of much effect.

Perhaps the most relevant deduction that can be made about the current rift in the Canada — US relationship in light of the Vietnam experience is that it is highly unlikely to inflict permanent damage upon the friendship between Canada and the United States. Despite the dire predictions of many current pundits that Canada's position on Iraq will permanently and significantly damage the Canada — U.S. relationship,[127] history seems to indicate otherwise. Successive Canadian governments disagreed with the means used to accomplish American policy in Vietnam, and at times that disagreement was open and angry. But the disagreement focussed on the *means* used, and not on the ultimate goal — the establishment of a free and democratic South Vietnam, and solidarity in the face of the Communist threat. Short of declaring open support for Saddam Hussein's regime, the Chretien government cannot fundamentally alter the deep and con-tinuing relationship between the people of the United States and Canada. The governments can disagree on this one issue, but as amply evidenced by the public outcry in both Canada and the United States, the two North American peoples will continue to consider themselves family.[128]

Another lesson gleaned from the experience of the ICSC and ICCS points to the difficulty in reliance upon multilateral international institutions that have neither the will nor the means to enforce their mandate. The ICSC's impotence in the face of

the intransigence and transgressions by all sides in the Vietnamese conflict, and the humiliation and frustration this caused Canadian soldiers, diplomats, and politicians should serve as a stark reminder for future Canadians to ensure that future international institutions have the "teeth" required to execute their mandates, or they will be doomed to irrelevance at best, and abject failure at worst. The United Nations is clearly the most obvious of Canada's cherished multilateral foundations, and Canadian diplomats should perhaps focus on how to re-create the UN to overcome its past failures, especially in light of the impasse and its impotence in disarming Iraq. No less a personage than the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, has called for this himself.[129] Other multilateral international institutions embraced by Canada need to receive the same scrutiny for effectiveness, including the International Criminal Court, and the Kyoto Accords. Care should also be taken not to undermine those effective multilateral organizations that Canada has come to rely upon, including NATO. The road to Hell is not necessarily paved with good intentions, but it is most certainly travelled by organizations without the will or ability to translate those good intentions into good acts.

Last, despite the accusations of some writers that Canada's participation in the ICSC and ICCS was motivated by economic or other "immoral" factors, it seems clear that Canada's twenty year involvement in Vietnam reflected a dilemma of hope, and the limits and complexities of middlepowermanship. In John Holmes own words, "for a 'middle power-in–training,' [it was] a rough but useful lesson in the need to live with paradox and to recognize that morality in international politics is prismatic."[130] For Canada, like the United States, involvement in Vietnam became a "hell of good intentions." Proponents of an ethically-based foreign policy must be aware of this potential trap, and be ever mindful that the best of intentions can produce the worst of outcomes if the means to achieve those high-minded ends are not carefully considered and painstakingly crafted. The most recent Canadian foreign policy, as outlined in *Freedom From Fear: Canada's foreign policy for human security*, is very idealistic in its language and intent, creating some concern for this author that Canadians may not have learned their lessons from Vietnam, or from Bosnia, Rwanda, and a host of other Hells created by our good intentions.[131] In the real world, intent counts for little, but effect counts for much.

CONCLUSION

Canada became involved in Vietnam for reasons that were both ethically and pragmatically sound, but the instrument of that policy — the ICSC — was fatally flawed from the outset. Its initial "success" in supervising the French withdrawal planted the seeds of its own demise, as the military peace created by the Geneva Accords paved the way for the possibility of elections that neither the South Vietnamese regime, nor the Americans, nor eventually Canada, wanted. At this point, the right thing to do for Canada may have been to exit the ICSC, and avoid the paradox of being a partial advocate on a supposedly impartial commission. Canada, however, allowed itself to be trapped by a dilemma of hope. Like a man struggling in quicksand, Pearson and Holmes' well-intentioned efforts aimed at the laudable goal of helping our chief ally, while still remaining impartial in Vietnam, led only to increasing moral compromise. As American in-volvement in Vietnam deepened, these two goals of Canadian policy became increasingly mutually exclusive. Repeated compromise led to silent and unhappy complicity, which inevitably led to conflict as a succession of Cana-

dian policymakers fought to find a tenable middle ground where there was none. The deliberate ambiguity of Canada's position led to an inconsistent and at times incoherent policy that eventually became mired in frustration and misunderstanding both within Canada, and externally with the United States. Only when Trudeau and Sharp ended the ambiguity with their explicit refusal to remain a hostage to hope by quitting the ISSC was Canada able to escape the hell of good intentions that was Vietnam.

Canadians can and should learn many important lessons about the formulation and execution of foreign policy, and about the difficulties of being a junior but sovereign member of the North American family from their unique experience with Vietnam. While foreign and defence policy must have an ethical component, it cannot rely on hope as its chief instrument, and must take into account the unique and pragmatic realities that confront Canada. In Vietnam, the Canadian government's good in-tentions created a road to Hell that was made all the more slippery by a policy designed to be deliberately ambiguous. Shapers of future foreign and defence policy must be aware of this potential trap, and be ever mindful that good intentions do not easily, or even ultimately translate into good outcomes.

NOTES

[1]John Holmes, "Key issues in Canadian Foreign Policy," *Peace, Power, and Protest,* ed. Donald Evans (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1967) p 210.

[2]C.P. Stacey argued that this deliberately ambiguous foreign policy actually began with MacKenzie King even before the Second World War, and has become one of the lasting characteristics of Canadian diplomacy; See Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict, Volume II* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), esp. p 426.

[3]The recent furor over remarks made by American Ambassador Paul Celluci are most indicative of this break; see, for example, Joseph Brean and Sheldon Alberts, "US Loses Faith In Canada," Allen Gottlieb, "Ottawa let down two nations," and J Granatstein, "The Empire Strikes Back," all in the *National Post,* Vol 5, No 126 (26 March 2003) 2 See, for example, Harry Sommers, *On Strategy II* (New York: Dell, 1992), and Richard Nixon, *No More Vietnams* (New York: Hearst, 1984).

[4]See Victor Levant, *Quiet Complicity*. (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1986), preface, and pp 1-6. Levant claims that External Affairs (now called the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, or DFAIT) has actually destroyed some of the more incriminating files and documents about its role in formulating Canada's Vietnam policy, and "continually frustrated [his] research, preventing access to its files." (preface). Levant resorted to finding some of the destroyed documents in personal collections, and in the U.S. State Department Archives. See also the bibliographical note at the end of this paper.

[5]It is clearly beyond the scope of this paper to give an account of the Canada's foreign policy and status during this monumental period in its history. The most widely acclaimed overview is James Eayrs' five volume work *In Defence of Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, v.d.), which covers the period from the interwar years to the end of the Vietnam conflict in 1973. For a more specific treatment, see Robert Bothwell, "The Further Shore: Canada and Vietnam," *International Journal*, Vol 56, No 1 (Winter 2000-1) pp 89-114.

[6]For an in-depth discussion of "Middlepowermanship", see *Issues in Canadian Foreign Policy Since 1945: Middle Power or Sattelite?* Ed. J.L. Granatstein (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1969).

[7]The ICSC was also variously known as the ICC (International Control Commission) or the ISC (International Supervision Commission). For clarity, this paper will use the "ICSC" abbreviation.

[8]The complete text of the Final Agreements of The Geneva Conference on Indo-China is included as Appendix 1 to Ramesh Thakur, *Peacekeeping In Vietnam*. (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1984) pp 287-309.

[9]The best studies of how Canada came to be named to the ICSC are James Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada, Volume 5 - Indochina: Roots of Complicity*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) pp 1-70, and Douglas Ross, *In the Interests of Peace: Canada*

and Vietnam, 1954-1973 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), pp 67-92.

[10]Holmes's impact upon External Affairs and Canadian Foreign policy in general is examined in *An Acceptance of Paradox: Essays in honour of John W. Holmes* ed. Kim Richard Nossal (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1982); see especially Denis Stairs essay, "The Pedagogics of John W. Holmes," pp 3-16.

[11]John Holmes, "Geneva: 1954," *International Journal,* XXII (Summer 1967) pp 469-483, reprinted in *Canadian Foreign Policy since 1945: Middle Power or Satellite* ed. J.L. Granatstein (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1969) pp 69-76.

[12]Holmes, "Geneva," p 70.

[13]Quoted in Eayrs, p 49.

[14]See Thakur, pp 1-30; Boothwell, p 97, Ross, pp 4-92; and Eayrs, pp 55-56.

[15]See Robert Randle, *Geneva, 1954: The Settlement of the Indochinese War* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1969) pp 389-427, and pp 525-568.

[16]Ross, pp 85-86. Ross bases much of his argument on Randle's work; see note above.

[17]Holmes, "Geneva," p 70.

[18]Holmes, "Geneva," p 70.

[19]Ross, p 92.

[20]For a good discussion on this "pragmatic discretion," see John Holmes, *The Better Part of Valour: Essays on Canadian Diplomacy* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1970).

[21]Press Release by the Department of External Affairs, quoted by Eayrs, p 57.

[22]John Holmes, "Canada and the Vietnam War" in *Canadian Foreign Policy: Historical Readings*, ed J. L. Granatstein (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1993) p 244.

[23]It should be noted that the Geneva agreements established, in effect, three ICSC's, for Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam respectively. I have limited my discussion in this paper to ICSC Vietnam, although Canadians played a crucial role in all three Commissions. For more information on ICSC Cambodia and ICSC Laos, see Randle, pp 482-523; Eayrs, pp 71-124, and Granatstein, "Canada: Peacekeeper, Indochina," *Peacekeeping: International Challenge and Canadian Response*. (Lindsay, Ont.: Canadian Institute for International Affairs, 1968) pp 109-111.

[24]See Ross, pp. 82-92; Randle, pp 267-288; Thakur, pp 58-63; and Fred Gaffen, *In the Eye of the Storm: A History of Canadian Peacekeeping*. (Toronto: Deneau and Wayne, 1987) pp 189-192.

[25]See Thakur, p 63.

[26]Eayrs, pp 151-171, or Thakur, p 69.

[27]Granatstein, "Canada: Peacekeeping, Indochina," p 110.

[28]See Eayrs, p 60.

[29]Evidence for this is contained in the self-published memoirs of Brigadier H. E. Chubb, Senior Canadian Military Advisor to ICSC Vietnam, September 1966 — September 1967, eloquently titled *Chubb's Folly — There be Dragons Here.* (Saigon: Unknown, 1967). See Volume 1, pp 2- 92, and Volume 2, pp 2-101; see also Bothwell, p 98.

[30]The ICSC predates the Suez Crisis and UNEF by two years (1954 vs 1956), and it may therefore be argued that this was the genesis of "peacekeeping"; see, for instance, Holmes, "Geneva," p 71.

[31]Holmes, "Geneva," pp 70-71.

[32]See Ross, pp 106-107.

[33]J Granatstein, "Peacekeeping: Did Canada Make A Difference? And What difference Did Peacekeeping make to Canada? In *Making A Difference? Canada's Foreign Policy in a Changing World Order*, eds. John English and Norman Hillmer. (Toronto: Lester Publishing, 1992) p 226.

[34]Holmes, "Geneva," p 70.

[35]See Eayrs, p 61, for both these quotes. It may prove redundant to remark on the irony that when External needed a good man to do a tough job, it had to look outside its own organization, even in its heyday of the 1950s.

[36]Letter from L. B. Pearson to Sherwood Lett, 22 August, 1954, National Archives of Canada Record Group (RG) 25 (Dept of External Affairs files), 4629 / 50052-A-40(1).

[37]Eayrs, p 67.

[38]For a more detailed discussion of the Letter of Instruction, see Eayrs, p 67; Ross takes a similar if more sympathetic view, Ross, p 100. For another view, see Levant, p 118-119.

[39]Ross, p 100.

[40]Eayrs, p 207.

[41]Quoted in Levant, p 177.

[42]Charles Taylor, *Snow Job: Canada, the United States and Vietnam [1954 to 1973]*. (Toronto: Anansi, 1974) p 10.

[43]See Ross, pp 111-144; Eayrs, p 132.

[44]This allegation has been the subject of much discussion, with some writers claiming that the ICSC, especially the Canadians were at fault, an allegation that seems not to be wholly supported by the facts. For further information, see Eayrs, pp 133-185, and Thakur, pp 65-73.

[45]Thakur, p 69.

[46]Bothwell, p 101.

[47]Mieczyslaw Maneli, legal advisor to the Polish delegation, quoted in Levant, p 117. See also Eayrs, pp 207-213.

[48]Thakur, p 72.

[49] Eayrs, p 141.

[50]Eayrs, pp 170-171; Ross, pp 92-148.

[51]The election dilemma is discussed in detail by Ross, pp 144-202. See also Levant, pp 128-130; Eayrs, pp 172-178; and Taylor, pp 11-12.

[52]Quoted in Levant, p 129. For a discussion on the legal basis for Saigon's renunciation, see Randle, pp 455-480 and pp 533 –568; and Thakur, p 142.

[53]See Levant, p 129.

[54]Randle, p 564.

[55]Randle, pp 564-565.

[56]John Holmes, *The Better Part of Valour — Essays on Canadian Diplomacy* (Toronto: McClelland Stewart, 1970), p 226.

[57]A "Forlorn Hope" was an element chosen for a difficult and highly dangerous job with small chance of success that brought either death or glory e.g. storming a fortress wall. The last phrase is a description by John Holmes, *Better Part of Valour*, p 226.

[58]Quoted in Thakur, p 73.

[59]See Ross, pp 203-231; and Levant, pp 132-3.

[60]Levant, pp 121- 141.

[61]For evidence of Diem's determination to subvert the elections, see Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History*. (New York: Penguin, 1983) pp 213-239. Ross makes a similar conclusion in his work, pp 181-184.

[62]For more detail, see Stanley Karnow, pp 213-239.

[63]Ross examines in detail the elections issue, pp 160-202.

[64]See "Geneva Accords," in Thakur, pp 293-296.

[65]Thakur, p 83.

[66]See Eayrs, pp 221-242.

[67]See Thakur, pp 82-88.

[68]See Thakur, pp 86-88, and Eayrs, pp 225-250.

[69]Again, Ross examines this issue in detail, pp 221- 254; see also Levant, p 151-159.

[70]See "Canada In The Pentagon Papers," *The Canadian Forum*, September, 1973, pp 9-12. These are reprints in full, including classified portions, of The Pentagon Papers leaked by Daniel Ellsberg in 1973. They pertain specifically to the Seaborne mission.

[71]See "Canada in the Pentagon Papers," pp 13-19.

[72]Levant, p 181.

[73]Thakur, p 113.

[74]See *Chubb's Folly*, Vol 2, p 140.

[75]Bothwell, p 110.

[76]Brigadier H. Chubb, *Chubb's Folly*, Vol 2, p 48.

[77]Quoted in Eayrs, p 251.

[78]John Holmes, quoted in Eayrs, p 283.

[79]*Toronto Globe and Mail*, 28 January 1970; for a more detailed discussion, see Levant, pp 191-196, and Eayrs, pp 242-250.

[80]See Levant, pp 194-196.

[81]Brigadier H. Chubb, *Chubb's Folly*, Vol 2, p 87.

[82]Brigadier Chubb entertained, or was entertained by Americans practically on a daily basis, and found it "quite natural," to be giving a briefing on ICSC activities and on Hanoi's regime to the American Embassy; see *Chubb's Folly*, Vol 2, p 8. See also Bothwell, p 110.

[83]Brigadier Chubb, *Chubb's Folly*, Vol 2, pp 144-145.

[84]See Fred Gaffen's collection of memoirs from Canadian Vietnam Veterans, *Unknown Warriors: Canadians in the Vietnam War* (Toronto: Dundurn, 1990), or Tracey Arrial *I Volunteered: Canadian Vietnam Vets Remember* (Watson and Dwyer, 1996).

[85]This close connection has been treated in-depth by a number of authors; see, for instance, James Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada, Volume 4: Growing Up Allied*. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1980), and *In Defence of Canada, Volume 3: Peacemaking and Deterrence*. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1972); see also, James Minifie, *Peacemaker or Powder-Monkey: Canada's Role in a Revolutionary World.* (Toronto: McClelland Stewart, 1960), and J. Granatstein, *Canadian Foreign Policy since 1945: Middle Power or Satellite?* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1969).

[86]This is the title of Levant's book on Vietnam; see above for reference. See also Ross, pp 324-375.

[87]See Karnow, pp 383-474.

[88]See Ross, pp 258-263, and Charles Ritchie, "The Day LBJ confronted LBP," *Maclean's*, January. 1974.

[89]Granatstein, "Did Canada Make a Difference," p 226.

[90]DEA Memorandum entitled "Vietnam: Future of the Commission," quoted in Bothwell, p 109.

[91]See Ross, pp 4-34.

[92] See Claire Culhane's book, *Why is Canada in Vietnam? The Truth about our Foreign Aid* (Toronto: NC Press, 1972). Levant's book *Quiet Complicity*, is the best example of this view; see also articles such as Walter Stewart, "Proudly We Stand as Butcher's Helper in Southeast Asia," *Maclean's*, March, 1970; Jim Lotz, "A Modest Proposal," *The Canadian Forum*, September, 1969; and Fred Knelman, "Canadians Find Profit in the War Business," *Toronto Star*, October 1, 1970, all reprinted in *International Involvement*., ed. Hugh Innis (Toronto: McGraw- Hill Ryerson, 1972) pp 47-56.

[93]Bothwell, p 110.

[94]Dennis Lee, "Civil Elegies", quoted in Charles Taylor, preface.

[95]Ross pp 23-24.

[96]General Gordon Sullivan, *Hope is Not a Method* (New York: Random House) 1996.

[97]Quoted in a US Embassy Saigon Report, 28 January 1959, in Bothwell, p 110.

[98]See also Bothwell, p 99.

[99]John Holmes, "Canada and the Vietnam War," *War and Society in North America*, eds. J. Granat-stein and R. Cuff. (Toronto: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1971) pp 186-188.

[100]Holmes, "Geneva," p 75.

[101]Holmes, "Canada and the Vietnam War," p 189.

[102]*Toronto Globe and Mail*, February 16, 1966, quoted in Levant, p 174.

[103]Brigadier Chubb, *Chubb's Folly*, Vol 2, p 212.

[104]Holmes, "Canada and the Vietnam War," p 196.

[105]Ross's work *In the Interests of Peace* is a brilliant and detailed look at the tensions between these three views of Canadian Foreign Policy; see especially pp 2-34.

[106]Holmes, "Geneva," p 72.

[107]For an examination of this "freeze", see Ross, pp 22-323; Bothwell, pp 99-112.

[108]Mitchell Sharp describes the evolution of Canada's participation in detail in his memoirs, *Which Reminds Me…* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) pp 212–216. See also The Honorable Mitchell Sharp, *Vietnam: Canada's Approach to Participation in the International Commission of Control and Supervision (*Ottawa: Information Canada, 1973). For another view, see W.M. Dobbell, "A 'sow's ear' in Vietnam," *International Journal*, Volume 24, No 3 (Summer, 1974), pp 359-362.

[109]Sharp, *Reminds*, p 213.

[110]Sharp, *Reminds*, pp 214-215.

[111]See, for instance, Colonel D.G. Loomis, "An Expedition to Vietnam: the Military Component of the Canadian Delegation (MCCD), 1973," *Canadian Defence Quarterly*, Vol 3, No 4 (Spring 1974), pp 35-39, and *International Commission of Control and Supervision Military Component Canadian Delegation Vietnam Yearbook* (n.d, n.p) in CFC Library.

[112]See ICCS (Vietnam) LORE Team, "Canadian Land Ordnance Engineers in Vietnam, 1973 (part 1)," *Canadian Defence Quarterly*, Vol 5, No 1 (Summer 1975) pp 45-51.

[113]LORE Team report, pp 50-51.

[114]Message, CANDELSAIGON to External Affairs Ottawa 21 March 1973, included as Annex to Sharp, *Report on Vietnam*, p 32.

[115]Message, CANDELSAIGON to External Affairs 26 March 1973, in Sharp, *Report on Vietnam*, pp 40-51.

[116]See Levant, p 235-239, and Dobbell, pp 362-365, 390-392.

[117]For further information on these incidents, see Loomis, "An Expedition", pp 37-29, and Levant, pp 234-239, and 247-250.

[118]R.D Jackson, ICSC for Vietnam, *Minutes*, 770th Meeting, 13 Mar 03, DEA Files, 2-500052-A-12-40, quoted in Ross, p 24.

[119]This is in fact the title of a collection of essays in honour of John Holmes', and is taken from a passage Holmes wrote in his work, *The Better Part of Valour*.

[120]See, for instance, Daniel Leblanc, "Mixed Messages on Where Ottawa stands, and sails," *The Globe and Mail*, 29 March 2003, p A11.

[121]Holmes, "Geneva," p 70.

[122]These conclusions are echoed by many officers in the aftermath of nearly a decades worth of experience in the Balkans and elsewhere. See, for instance, Major-General Lewis Mackenzie *Peacekeeper: The Road to Sarajevo*. (Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre, 1993) pp 330-334; or Colonel Mike Ward, "Task Force Kosovo: Adapting Operations to a Changing Security Environment," *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol 1, No 1, pp 67-74.

[123]See Harry Summers, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1984), and *On Strategy II: A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1992), pp.1-138.

[124]For an excellent examination of this, see Joel Sokolsky, "Clausewitz, Canadian Style" *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol 3, No 3 (Autumn 2002), pp 3-10.

[125]See, for example, "What the Liberals have said about the U.S." *National Post*, 26 March 2003, p A1.

[126]See, for example, J.L. Granatstein, "The Empire Strikes Back." *National Post*, 26 March 2003, A17.

[127]See Granatstein, "The Empire Strikes Back", and Terence Corcoran, "The US was there for Canada," *National Post*, 26 March 2003, p. A17. For a similar but slightly different view, see Jeffrey Simpson, "They're Mars, we're Venus," *The Globe and Mail*, 21 March 2003, p A21.

[128]See Kofi Annan, "U.N. must rediscover unity of purpose," Statement to Security Council, 28 March 2003, *Toronto Star*, 29 March 2003.

[129]Holmes, quoted in Eayrs, p 283.

[130]*Freedom from fear: Canada's foreign policy for human security* (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 2002).