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Page

6

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PERMANENT MISSION OF CANADA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

PRESS RELEASE NO. 18
April 2, 1965

CAUTION: ADVANCE TEXT

FOR RELEASE AT 8:00 P.M. FRIDAY, APRIL 2

Press Office
750 Third Avenue
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Excerpts From Text Of Speech To Be Made By The Canadian Prime Minister
The Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson On The Occasion Of Receiving
Temple University's World Peace Award, At The Founders' Dinner
Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa., on Friday, April 2, 1965

We have now reached a critical stage in the development of the United Nations peace-keeping capacity. The organization is quite different from what it was in 1945, or 1950, when it was able to mobilize under United States leadership collective resistance to aggression in Korea. The increase in membership to more than double the original number, the nature of increase and the diffusion of power amongst several regional groups have led to a corresponding decrease in the influence and authority of Western States.

Nevertheless, leadership in peace-keeping has come from the West, in close co-operation with the Secretary-General and with the members of the non-aligned group. I would reject, however, the Soviet charge that, in this leadership, we had some special Western axe to grind, indeed the General Assembly approved by large majorities assessment resolutions establishing collective financial responsibility for operations in the Middle East and Congo. What has happened is that since 1962 the balance of the membership has tended to take a more critical view of great power disputes over peace-keeping. They have begun to question whether, in the light of this disagreement, complete collective responsibility is often feasible in practice, however desirable it may always be in principle.

The facts of the matter tend to support the doubts expressed about this. There have been five major peace-keeping operations and not one of them has been collectively financed in practice, even though in two cases the world court itself formally advised the expenses were a joint responsibility. The loss of vote penalty against offenders has not been applied because these offenders have included two great powers and the bulk of the membership was not prepared to force this issue. For this reason all peace-keeping operations, since the Congo operation was authorized in 1960, have been financed on some basis other than assessment of membership. In Cyprus, for example, the force is financed on the basis of voluntary contributions. About a third of the members of the United Nations are contributing either personnel to the force or money for its financing. Some, including Canada, are doing both.

This is not a satisfactory situation if one believes, as I do, that a threat to the peace anywhere in the world is of concern to all and all should bear some responsibility for meeting the threat. But I acknowledge also that sovereign states cannot be coerced to take action to which they are opposed unless the Security Council so decides. It is unlikely to decide in today's world. What we have a right to expect, however, is that no great power or group of powers would actively thwart the expressed wishes of a majority that the United Nations should undertake a

peace-keeping operation, especially if such powers were not required positively to support the operation financially or in other ways.

The essential requirements are that the United Nations should be able to act in emergencies when it is feasible to do so and that as many countries as possible should be ready to respond to a duly authorized United Nations request for military assistance or financial support. Whatever the costs, they will be small compared to the costs of warlike coexistence in an unpoliced and disordered world. If we cannot make the United Nations work on a basis on great power co-operation, which is what we hoped to do at San Francisco, neither can we afford to let its purposes be frustrated by great power hostility or indifference. Whatever the changes since 1954 in the world environment, changes which the United Nations cannot help but reflect, there will be a continuing need, as Vice-President Humphrey has expressed it, "to keep disruptive change in non-violent channels". The United Nations must be able to depend on some of its members, if not all, to respond to this need. Canada, for one, will stand ready to do her share.

I would like now to turn to peace-keeping outside the United Nations, specifically to Indo-China. Canada has gained much experience in such peace-keeping through its participation, during nearly eleven years, on the International Supervisory Commissions in the former Indo-China States of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Many hundreds of Canadian civilian and military personnel have served on these three Commissions, carrying out responsibilities which were never easy, and often impossible. This experience, perhaps more than any other, has taught us to recognize the practical difficulties confronting peace-keeping operations; it has, however, also shown us the contribution - at times an essential contribution - which can be made to peace and stability by international bodies of this kind.

The Indo-China operation, of course, had a number of unusual aspects. The 1954 settlement was negotiated by the few major powers directly concerned, but Supervisory Commissions, appointed under this settlement, were made up of representatives of India, Poland and Canada. Any objective evaluation of the work of the International Commissions in the three countries would show that, within the limits imposed upon them by the terms of the 1954 settlement, the Commissions did accomplish a number of useful results, despite continuing obstructive efforts of North Vietnam.

It was in Vietnam, of course, that the absence of stability was most pronounced, and the utility of this International Commission was consequently most in doubt, especially in the last few years. There is, after all, something incongruous about a peace-keeping agency working in the midst of large-scale hostilities. We must remember, however, that the Commission was designed primarily to supervise the 1954 Cease-Fire Agreement between the French Forces and the so-called Peoples' Army of Vietnam. On the whole, it performed effectively most of its functions relating to the military clauses of

this agreement. It supervised the separation and regrouping of the armed forces of the two sides and it helped make it possible for nearly a million persons to move from the Communist North into South Vietnam. It was, however, not able to prevent the military build-up of North Vietnam, nor was it able to ensure that the inhabitants of the two zones were guaranteed democratic freedoms. Our experience has convinced us that these shortcomings were not so much a reflection upon the concept of peace-keeping as upon the co-operation of authorities in the zones supervised. Where co-operation was not forthcoming, the Commission was unable to do its job properly.

When a savage war broke out between the two Vietnams, the whole Vietnam problem entered a new stage. What had been a Vietnamese war against a colonial power became a Communist attack against a Vietnamese state. The International Commission had not been created to deal with this situation. It was in Vietnam to supervise a cease-fire which the two parties involved were prepared to observe, not to maintain a peace, where one party -- the Communist North Vietnamese regime -- had no intention of living peacefully with a democratic neighbour, South Vietnam. A handful of unarmed personnel, belonging to a Commission which was often paralyzed by the differences arising from its membership structure, obviously could not thwart a deliberate and well planned policy of this kind. It could make open violations of the 1954 Agreement somewhat more difficult but it could not make them difficult enough.

The Vietnam Commission, therefore, became virtually powerless. The problem now is not one of peacekeeping by an international commission, but of peace-making by warring states. But unless that peace-making takes place, a war in Vietnam could become a far wider and more terrible conflict. So the present situation in Vietnam is of concern to all people in every country.

Obviously the situation cannot be expected to improve until North Vietnam becomes convinced that aggression, in whatever guise, for whatever reason, is inadmissible and will not succeed. I hope this conviction is growing in Hanoi. I hope they also realize that the only alternative to a mutually acceptable settlement is chaos and disaster, and that North Vietnam would be a primary and tragic victim.

All countries, of course, would be involved. The universal concern which is being expressed about the tragedy of Vietnam is a reflection of that sense of world community to which I have referred. All nations watch with deep anxiety the quickening march of events in Vietnam toward a climax which is unknown but menacing. All are seeking solutions to the dilemma confronting us.

That dilemma is acute and seems intractable. On the one hand, no nation -- and particularly no newly-independent nation -- could ever feel secure if capitulation in Vietnam led to sanctification of aggression through subversion and spurious "wars of national liberation", to abandonment of respect for, and defence of, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states.

On the other hand, the progressive application of military sanctions can encourage stubborn resistance, not produce a willingness to negotiate. The continued intensification of hostilities in Vietnam could lead to uncontrollable escalation.

A settlement is hard to envisage in the heat of battle, but it is now imperative to seek one.

What are the conditions for such a settlement? First, a cease-fire, then negotiation?

Aggressive action by North Vietnam to bring about a Communist "liberation" -- which means Communist rule -- of the South must end.

Continued bombing action, however, against North Vietnam beyond a certain point may not bring about this result. Instead of inducing the authorities in Hanoi to halt their attack on the South, it may only harden their determination to pursue, and even to intensify, their present course of action.

The retaliatory strikes against North Vietnamese military targets, for which there has been great provocation, aim at making it clear that the maintenance of aggressive policies toward the South will become increasingly costly to the Northern regime.

I think that after two months of air strikes, the message has been received "loud and clear". The authorities in Hanoi must know that the United States, with its massive military power, can mete out even greater punishment. They also know that, for this reason, the costs of a continuation of their aggression against South Vietnam could be incalculable.

If, however, the desired political response from Hanoi has not been forthcoming, which would indicate a change in policy, this may result from a desire to avoid what would appear to Hanoi to be the public humiliation of backing down under duress. The Northern Communist regime is probably also under pressure from another direction to avoid the public abandonment of a policy which fits the Communist Chinese doctrine of "wars of national liberation".

If a series of increasingly powerful retaliatory strikes against North Vietnam should unhappily make this preliminary condition of a cease-fire unattainable, serious consideration must be given to every other way in which the stalemate might be broken.

There are many factors which I am not in a position to weigh, but there does appear to be at least a possibility that a suspension of air strikes against North Vietnam at the right time might provide the Hanoi authorities with an opportunity, if they wish to take it, to inject some flexibility into their policy without appearing to do so as direct result of military pressure.

The rate of incidents in South Vietnam would provide a fairly accurate way of measuring the usefulness of this move and the desirability of continuing any suspension. I am not

of course, proposing any compromise on points of principle, nor any weakening of resistance of aggression in South Vietnam. I would suggest, however, that a measured pause in one field of military action at the right time might facilitate the development of diplomatic resources which cannot easily be applied to problems under existing circumstances.

Obviously, the objectives of any lasting settlement cannot be defined in detail at this stage. I think, however, that few would quarrel with President Johnson's view - that an honourable peace should be based on "a reliable arrangement to guarantee the independence and security of all in Southeast Asia". Both sides should examine the substance of a possible, rather than a perfect, settlement. The crisis in Vietnam is, in part at least, a reflection of a broader, if less dramatic, conflict, and a lasting resolution of the problem may be possible only within the framework of a much broader settlement. But one thing is certain - without a settlement guaranteeing the independence, neutrality and territorial integrity of North Vietnam's neighbours in Southeast Asia and without a willingness by all parties to respect and protect these, a continuation of present fear and instability will be inescapable.

The problem, therefore, remains the responsibility of the international community, and the members of the international community will therefore be obliged to make available means of supervising any settlement and guaranteeing the fulfilment of its terms in spirit and in letter. The world community will also be obliged to assist in establishing the economic, as well as political, foundations of future understanding and security. In this connection, I was encouraged by President Johnson's expression of the willingness of the United States to help in promoting economic and social co-operation in the whole area. This is important.

There is at present a United Nations project for social and economic enterprise going on in this part of the world; the Mekong River project.

The Mekong River watershed embraces most of Indo-China as well as Thailand and a part of Southern China. In this United Nations' project there are twenty-one states participating. They have merely scratched the surface of a development which could lift up the standard of life of the people from deprivation, distress and hunger, to comfort and decent living. It could do this, if given the opportunity and the resources. The amount now being spent in armed conflict in Vietnam and Laos over a few weeks could do the job and could help millions of people to a better life.

I propose that the United Nations try to enlarge this project in a spectacular way, even while the political and military conflict is going on; that for this purpose, the United Nations call a conference of the states concerned - whatever their political relations - in order to make this part of Southeast Asia a centre of international, social and economic development. Finally, I propose that the United Nations Secretary-General, without delay, should visit the countries in question to pave the way for such a conference. I would like to see it held as soon as possible. Because China is not a member of the United Nations, a special development agency set up by the conference could take over and extend the work now being done.

With this kind of great international development project, with a cease-fire followed by political negotiations, with the countries in the area given an international guarantee of neutrality and assurance of aid for peaceful development, then the danger, destruction and distress of the present hour might be replaced by peace, hope and progress.

I know that the policy and the effort of the Government of the United States of America is directed to this end. Such an effort deserves and should receive the support of all peace-loving people. We in North America have a special duty and a special opportunity in this struggle for peace. We enjoy a standard of material well-being and security with freedom. Our good fortune carries with it a corresponding obligation.

At the moment the most immediate obligation facing the international community - not merely the United States - is to restore peace, freedom and security to the people of Vietnam. If we fail here, the consequences may extend far beyond the area directly concerned. If we succeed, it could make possible new and greater progress toward a better world.

✓ 20 Apr.

SG

From Ramses:

Courtesy of Rudolph Stadjuhar:

Mr. Martin at a press briefing gave the following highlights:

1. He is in agreement with methods employed by the SG re. Vietnam.
2. The Cambodian conference was discussed with the SG.
3. On stopping the bombings and a cease-fire Mr. Martin was very cagey and did not reveal the substance of the talks with SG.

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From the P.R. of Canada.

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Visit to New York
by the Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada,
The Honourable Paul Martin,
February 17-18, 1966

The purpose of the visit to New York where the Secretary of State for External Affairs had conversations with Secretary-General U Thant and the United States Permanent Representative Goldberg was to gather information and explore possible ways of bringing the Vietnam conflict closer to a conference situation. The Secretary of State for External Affairs has two or three meetings with the United Nations Secretary-General every year for consultation. These liaison trips are very important, as Canadian support for the United Nations is one of the mainstays of our foreign policy and we can be thoroughly effective in our United Nations policies only through closest rapport at all levels with the United Nations. Discussions ranged over several subjects, most important of which was Vietnam.

Secretary of State for External Affairs
Talk with Secretary-General U Thant on
Vietnam

Proposals have been made from various quarters in the hope of bringing the Vietnam conflict to an end. Canada has supported all of them: the unaligned 17-power appeal; the United States proposal for unconditional discussions; the Vatican's proposal for mediation by neutral powers. Canada is open-minded concerning the means of getting meaningful discussions started, but is firmly committed to doing all in its power to foster the objective of bringing the conflict to an end through negotiations. Canada viewed favourably the inscription on the Security Council agenda of the Vietnam question because it has believed for a long time that the United Nations cannot remain indifferent to that conflict and that discussions in that forum may contribute to progress being made on the issues involved.

Canada for its part considers that there exists a very real possibility of the members of the International Control Commission in Vietnam being able to play a useful role. The Commission powers have gained invaluable experience. They are the only group of nations in a position to talk directly to Saigon and Hanoi.

There should be no misunderstanding on what we are trying to do. (a) At this stage we are trying to find out whether there is a consensus that Commission members could play a useful role, as we believe they can. (b) That role in essence would be to probe with the parties to the conflict every possible avenue which might lead to a basis for negotiations. The existing obstacles to talks must be removed before a conference can usefully be called. In order to achieve this the Commission members might explore and try to expand what common ground already exists in the positions of the opponents. We may in the process find that the time is not yet ripe for that sort of concerted action. If so, we shall nonetheless pursue our efforts in that direction with vigour until such time as they succeed. (c) The Secretary of State for External Affairs is convinced that at an appropriate time, which has not yet come, a new Geneva Conference would be the best available forum for discussions to bring the conflict to an end.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs talk with the Secretary-General was helpful and conversations with the Indians and Poles and other

interested parties will be continued.

Secretary of State for External Affairs
Talks in Washington

In conversation with Mr. Rusk, Mr. Martin continued consideration of the prospects for Commission members to play a useful role.

PERMANENT MISSION OF CANADA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



MISSION PERMANENTE DU CANADA
AUPRÈS DES NATIONS UNIES

H.E. U Thant,
Secretary-General of the United Nations,
New York.

From the P.R. of Canada.

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1912

Interview with the Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada,
The Honourable Paul Martin, shown on NBC Television Network on Friday,
February 18, 1966

Introduction
by announcer:

" . . . Canada is now urging, and India has joined her, that the I.C.C. become the bridge to bring both sides to a Geneva Conference. They are awaiting the response of Poland, the third member of the Commission. . . ."

Mr. Martin:

"I have had some discussions with representatives of governments concerned and we are following this through further with them. We are waiting for final reactions. We are also having discussions with other countries and other personalities. I came down here to the United Nations late yesterday to discuss Vietnam generally with the Secretary-General and I had a useful talk last night with Mr. Goldberg, and tomorrow morning I will be seeing Mr. Rusk in Washington."

Question:

"What do you think of the prospects for a Geneva Conference soon?"

Mr. Martin:

"I don't think the prospects of a Geneva Conference soon are good, but I would hope that sometime after the end of March we might, on the basis of the explorations that I have spoken about - we might examine whether or not that was not a good time to try and once again resurrect the Geneva framework. In the meantime, I hope that the Commission, of which my country is a representative, will be able to begin to explore the difficulties as a commission to serve as a nexus, as a liaison between both sides. It should not be forgotten that the Commission is the only instrument that has ready access both to Saigon and to Hanoi. Members of the Commission move from both capitals and this is a very valuable means of determining the position of the two countries directly concerned."

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18/7/66*

Extracts from a statement on Vietnam made by The Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada, The Honourable Paul Martin, in the House of Commons on July 8, 1966.

The Prime Minister made clear on June 29 that we would be glad to see the bombing stopped, that we would be glad to see infiltration of North Vietnamese troops into South Vietnam stopped, and that we would be glad to see unconditional negotiations for peace started. This has always been our position... It is the judgment of the Canadian Government that there is a relationship between this whole matter of bombing and the prospects of arriving at even a beginning of a process which might in due course yield an honourable accommodation of the interests of the major parties in the conflict in Vietnam.

I should like to take this point a little further by explaining to the House the positions of the Government of North Vietnam and the Government of the United States, as I understand them, on the basis of what has been said publicly and in private discussions. The Government of North Vietnam has called for a permanent and unconditional cessation of all bombing and other acts of war against their territory. This is one of the elements in a letter which President Ho Chi Minh addressed to the Prime Minister on January 23, and in the absence of which the Government of North Vietnam does not appear prepared to envisage a political solution. The argument behind this formulation is that by bombing targets in North Vietnam the United States is encroaching on the sovereignty of that country, and that this is a violation of accepted standards of international law and international relations. The Government of North Vietnam accordingly does not think that a willingness to cease this bombing should be qualified by any conditions whatsoever, or that it warrants any countervailing undertakings by the North Vietnamese Government in respect of its own policies... The United States is prepared to stop the bombing of North Vietnam at any time as part of a mutual reduction of hostilities on both sides. They regard the military activities in North and South Vietnam as forming part of a single problem. If the North Vietnamese were prepared to respect the demarcation line in terms of the assistance they are providing to the insurgency in the South, the United States, for their part, would be prepared to match such a move by halting the bombing of targets in the North which are associated with that assistance.

This, then, is the impasse as I see it. There is a relationship between this matter of bombing and whatever moves it may be possible to make towards an eventual settlement... What is to be the position of the Canadian Government in this situation? I believe that there are two choices open to us. We can take strong public positions on any or all of the issues involved in the present conflict. That is the easiest thing we can do. Alternatively, we can continue to do what we have been trying to do. So long as I am in this office that is what I propose to continue to do, because I believe this is the only effective way available of achieving the objectives we have in mind. We will continue to conduct quietly and through diplomatic channels our efforts to find the basis for an accommodation in Vietnam.

I think we have to admit to ourselves that there are no simple solutions to this conflict. And, because there are no simple solutions, a settlement

in Vietnam will not be achieved overnight; it can only emerge from a patient probing of positions.

It will have to go right to the roots and the origins of the conflict in Vietnam and it will have to be such as to hold out an assured prospect of peace and stability, not only in Vietnam but in Southeast Asia as a whole.

It is being put to me from time to time that Canada, either by itself or in co-operation with other countries, should issue a call to a new Geneva conference ... It seems to me that a conference lies at the end of the road, not at the beginning. If one could be held now, and if the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as Co-Chairman, acquiesced in the suggestion of the Prime Minister of India to join with Britain in calling such a conference, all of us would support this. But I would have to say, as I have already implied, that knowing what I do I would be greatly surprised if the representations that must be at such a conference would be prepared to attend one at this time, whether it would be on Vietnam or indirectly on Laos or Cambodia.

I cannot foresee what intermediate steps may have to intervene before the time for such a conference is ripe. But, on the basis of all the discussion we have had, it is my assessment that it is likely there would have to be some preliminary undertakings, about the points of substance which are at issue in this conflict. What this means, in Canadian terms, is that we must do all we can to try to create the conditions in which the processes which will lead to an ultimate settlement can be started. This is precisely the task to which we have addressed ourselves.

I say again that we welcome the proposals made yesterday by the Prime Minister of India. The purposes and objectives behind her proposals are shared by the Canadian Government and they are shared by all of us in this House. If these proposals commend themselves to the parties concerned, and if the parties concerned would attend the conference - I am sure the United States would be among those that would - and if progress on that basis were possible, I can assure the House and the Government of India that Canada is prepared to do whatever may be required of us to see that these proposals are translated into action.

First, I have said that Mr. Ronning's mission was a Canadian initiative and that it was carried out by Mr. Ronning on the instructions of the Canadian Government, and not on the instructions in any way of any other government. I reiterate this today because the impression has been created in some quarters that Mr. Ronning's mandate may have been something other than it was.

Second, I would like the House to understand that the assignment we have taken on is essentially in the nature of a good offices assignment. It is inherent in such an assignment that we would be concerned to understand the positions and attitudes of all the parties, and that we would do our best to interpret and clarify the positions and attitudes of one side to the other. That, broadly speaking, has been the form which Mr. Ronning's assignment has taken.

Third, I would like to restate the ultimate object of this initiative. It has seemed to us that if a beginning is to be made in the long and patient process which we hope will lead to ultimate peace in Vietnam, we must find a basis on which

both sides would be prepared to see such a beginning made. The mere calling of a conference, desirable as that is, does not meet this essential objective, as we have learned in our discussions with both sides. This is the only potentially useful channel through which there has been contact with both sides in a long time. I will not say it is the only channel, but it is the only channel which has access to both sides. I regard this as a tribute to our country as well as to Mr. Ronning himself.

I do not wish to give the House a misleading impression of our results so far. We have not achieved any spectacular results and I think I can quite frankly say that we have had no illusions as to the pace at which progress was likely to be possible.

As I have explained previously to the House, we regard the two visits which have now been made to Hanoi - there may be others - as phases of a continuing effort. Over how long a period of time this effort may extend I cannot say. What is significant is that we have had a fair hearing, and on both occasions with the top personalities of the North and the South and, of course, with the Government of the United States. I can say that if the channel we have established remains open, and if its potential usefulness is not called in to question by any of those concerned, I do not think, in a situation where a failure of communication may be crucial, we can discount the significance of such a channel for the time when the circumstances for the solution of the Vietnam conflict are ripe.

The situation facing us in Vietnam is as serious as any which has faced us since the Korean War. Since that time there has been growing confidence on the part of the international community that it has the means of bringing its influence to bear on situations of this kind, and to put an end to armed conflict, and to lay the groundwork for political solutions. That is the essence of the concept of peacekeeping which Canada and others have tried to develop and strengthen through the United Nations.

We accepted the suggestion of the President of the United States that he would welcome any effort by any country to try and bring about at least preliminary talks that might lead to serious negotiations, which in turn might result in a negotiated settlement. It was in the light of this situation that we thought last December there was a role for the International Commission. Canada, India and Poland, as members of this Commission, have had experience in Indo-China now for 11 years. Being the only body that has a continuing link with Hanoi and Saigon we thought that, quite apart from any authority given to that Commission under the Geneva Agreement, it might undertake the effort to try and bring about a narrowing in the position taken by the various parties.

To that end we have had useful and fruitful exchanges with India and Poland. Our view was that the time had come to use the Commission for this purpose. We did not suggest they were not as sincerely interested in peace as we were. One of the countries took the position that perhaps this was not the particular moment in which to establish a role for the Commission as a mediating instrument. But we continue, all of us, India, Poland and Canada - and this was reaffirmed yesterday by the Prime Minister of India - to look upon the Commission as having a role in this situation... I believe, Mr. Chairman, that a military solution of this problem of course is not possible by itself. We are all aware

of the dangers that flow from the conflict that has raged in that area. We are dealing with the situation as it is now; we are not dealing with its genesis. We have sought not to emphasize the history of this situation, but to try and see if we could not make our position as a mediator more effective by taking the most objective position possible. I think thus far we have succeeded in doing this.

I can tell the House that no opportunity will go by without our making every attempt that we can - by ourselves, as a member of the Commission or in concert with other countries - to try to bring about peace talks. When they do take place, whether by a Geneva Conference or as a result of the kind of situation that developed in Korea and Malaysia, namely by gradual process, then we will address ourselves as one country in the international community to those methods by which we hope to bring about an effective neutralization of the whole area.

This undoubtedly is one of the most serious situations the world faces. It is not a conflict in which we are engaged. It is not a conflict in which we have any intention of dispatching Canadian armed forces. This, we continue to repeat, would be inconsistent with our role on the International Control Commission.

We have done everything we know, with our friends, to put forward our point of view. We have done so as a result of the accommodation extended our representative, Mr. Ronning, in Hanoi. We intend to respect the nature of the conversations that have taken place there and elsewhere, in the hope that we might be able, as a result of this instrument, to bring about the beginnings of peace in Vietnam. If we do not succeed, it will not be because Canada has not tried. We are not wedded to this method alone. If there is some other way by which peace negotiations can be begun, we will support it. But I want this House to know that we are not weakening in our effort to try to bring about peace in Vietnam.

London

PRESS RELEASE



DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CANADA

COMMUNIQUE

MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

B.
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Statement by the Honourable Paul Martin,
Secretary of State for External Affairs,

to

the House of Commons Standing Committee
on
External Affairs

on

April 11, 1967, at 9 a.m.

VIETNAM

I would like to be able to tell the Committee that the prospects in Vietnam are encouraging. In some respects I might be justified in saying that they are. In particular, I think there is reason to feel encouraged by the progress that is being made in South Vietnam towards the facts and forms of responsible government. In the wider perspective of the conflict, however, I must frankly confess that neither an end to the fighting nor the outlines of a political solution are as yet within sight.

In my presentation to the Committee this morning I would like to do three things. I shall begin by trying to set out in some detail what we know of the positions of the parties as they have emerged over the past year or so. I will then try to explore whether there is any basis on which it might be possible to break out of the present impasse. I will conclude my presentation by setting out some of the elements which we see as forming part of any eventual accommodation in Vietnam.

Before I proceed with my presentation, however, it might be useful if I were to restate briefly some of the salient aspects of the Canadian position in relation to the Vietnam conflict as I see it. I believe it would be useful to do that because there continues to be a good deal of misunderstanding of our position in the public debate which is going on in Canada about the Vietnam situation.

|| The first point which I think needs to be made in that regard is that Canada has no direct national interest to assert or maintain in Southeast Asia. Nor do we have any formal military or other commitments there. If we have been drawn into that part of the world, it has been solely as citizens of the wider world community. What we are doing in

Southeast Asia is twofold: we are there on a peacekeeping mission on behalf of countries which do have a direct national interest in that area; and we are also there as a contributor to the collective effort to meet the rising expectations of the people in that area for a better life.

|| Second, there are responsibilities which we have in Vietnam as members of the International Commission. We have endeavoured to carry out these responsibilities with fairness and impartiality and we will continue to do so. I would be the last to deny that the course of events in Vietnam has in some important respects overtaken the mandate of the Commission. But there is agreement among all the parties that, as the representative of the Geneva powers, the Commission cannot simply wash its hands of the situation. There is also agreement that the Commission will have a role to play in the context of any final settlement and, quite possibly, in helping to pave the way for it. Because of these opportunities which are potentially open to the Commission, I believe I can say that it is the unanimous view of the three Commission powers that we are justified in maintaining our presence in Vietnam notwithstanding the anomalies and the frustrations of the present situation.

|| Third, apart from whatever role Canada may be able to play as a member of the International Commission, we have tried to use our national influence in promoting the course of peace in Vietnam. We have done this on the basis of our close relations with the United States and the access we have to the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in Hanoi as well, of course, as the Government of the Republic of Vietnam in Saigon. I do not want to exaggerate the influence which a country like Canada can command in a matter of this kind which has engaged the power of the super-

of at least three of the great powers. Nor do I want to hold out any promise to the Committee that our efforts will turn out, in the end, to have been of more than marginal usefulness. But there is one thing of which I am sure and it is this: if our efforts are to be of any avail, they must be deployed within the limits of what the situation suggests is realistic. They are best directed towards arriving at some common denominator which the parties themselves are prepared to accept as reasonable. We will neither bludgeon nor shame the parties into accepting a course of policy which they regard as being contrary to their basic national interest. And this is something which I would ask those who would have us follow a different course to remember.

11 Fourth, the Canadian Government has made it clear that it is prepared to make its own contribution to an eventual settlement in Vietnam. Such a settlement is almost certain to involve some form of international presence which will afford to the parties concerned the necessary guarantees that the terms of the settlement are being fairly and effectively carried out. If, in the light of our first-hand experience of the Vietnam problem over the past thirteen years, Canada were to be asked to participate in an international peacekeeping effort in Vietnam, whether under the auspices of the Geneva powers or under those of the United Nations, I am sure that we would be prepared to accept such a responsibility within the limits of our capacity. We have also recognized for some time that, in the aftermath of any settlement, it is likely to be necessary for interested countries to mount a collective effort for the economic recovery and rehabilitation of

all parts of Vietnam. I want to remind the Committee that our commitment to contribute to such an effort is on the record and that we will meet that commitment when the time comes.

So much for the Canadian position in relation to the conflict in Vietnam.

It is now almost exactly two years since the major parties to the Vietnam conflict began publicly to define their positions in regard to a settlement of the Vietnam conflict. In the case of the United States I would date that process as having been initiated by President Johnson in his address at John Hopkins University on April 7, 1965 when he first announced the willingness of the United States to enter into unconditional discussions with the other side. Almost by coincidence, the first public definition of the position of the Government of North Vietnam was given by Prime Minister Pham Van Dong on the following day, that is April 8, 1965, in a report to the North Vietnamese National Assembly. The position then set forth took the form of the now familiar four points to which, to my knowledge, the Government of North Vietnam remains firmly committed.

In a sense, the refore, it may be said that a process of public negotiation has been in progress between these two governments over the past twenty-four months. We have regarded this process as useful and encouraging. At the same time we have always recognized that there were limits to this process and that, sooner or later, efforts would have to be made by third parties to bring the two sides into some form of direct contact.

As the Committee is aware, that was the essential purpose of the two missions which Mr. Chester Ronning undertook on behalf of the Canadian Government in March and June of 1966. Put in its simplest terms, what we asked Mr. Ronning to explore in the course of those two visits was whether there was any minimal basis on which it might be possible to arrange for bilateral contact between representatives of the United States and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam without commitments of any kind on either side. This seemed to us at the time and still seems to us to be a valid approach. The issues at stake in Vietnam are such that no third party could probably presume to negotiate them on behalf of one side or the other. Nor, I think, would such a course be acceptable to the parties to the present conflict. And if that is so, the conclusion which necessarily follows is that the efforts of third parties are best directed towards enabling the parties themselves to enter into such a negotiation at the earliest possible time and before the mounting lack of confidence on both sides makes the possibilities of peaceful accommodation in Vietnam recede beyond reach.

In the discussions which Mr. Ronning had with the Prime Minister and other senior personalities of North Vietnam, it became apparent to us that as far as the North Vietnamese were concerned the bombing of North Vietnam represented the key to any efforts which might be made to bring the two sides into direct informal contact. This conclusion, which we reached in the light of Mr. Ronning's first visit to North Vietnam in March of last year, has since been borne out in the official public statements of the Government of North Vietnam. I think the Committee might find it helpful, therefore, if I were to try to say something more about the North Vietnamese position on this subject as I understand it.

As the Committee is aware, the Foreign Minister of North Vietnam, in an interview with the Australian journalist Wilfred Burchett in January of this year, explained the position in the following terms:

"If (the United States) really wants talks, it must first halt unconditionally the bombing raids and all other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. It is only after the unconditional cessation of United States bombing and all other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam that there could be talks between the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the United States".

I do not want to suggest to the Committee that this is the whole position of the Government of North Vietnam as regards a solution of the Vietnam conflict. As far as that is concerned, the Government of North Vietnam continues to stand by its four-point programme which it regards as reflecting the fundamental principles and provisions of the Geneva settlement of 1954 and as representing the most correct political solution of the Vietnam problem. It is only in respect of finding a basis for bilateral contact between the United States and North Vietnam that the matter of the cessation of the bombing has been put forward as a prior and unilateral condition.

The question has been raised in some quarters as to whether, if there was a cessation of the bombing of North Vietnam, this would have to be permanent as well as unconditional. The Committee will note that in the passage which I have quoted from the interview given by the Foreign Minister of North Vietnam only the word "unconditional" appears. The same is true of a similar passage which occurs in President Ho Chi Minh's reply of February 15 to President Johnson. I am bound to say, however, that in other passages both in the Foreign Minister's interview and in President Ho Chi Minh's message to President Johnson the word "definitive" is used along with the word

"unconditional" in setting out the requirements of the Government of North Vietnam on this subject. Furthermore, if there was any lingering doubt on this score, it was removed by the North Vietnamese representative in Paris in a conversation with reporters from the New York Times on February 22. In that conversation the North Vietnamese representative is quoted as saying that any cessation of the bombing which was not clearly labelled as permanent and unconditional would leave the threat of bombing intact and would thus constitute an unacceptable interference with whatever talks might then be in progress between the two sides. When he was asked how a distinction could in practice be drawn between a temporary and a permanent halt to the bombing, the North Vietnamese representative answered that the United States would have to declare at the outset that the halt was both permanent and unconditional. In any event, it seems to me that North Vietnam could logically say no less since anything less would amount to saying that the United States could resume the bombing if Hanoi did not meet Washington's conditions.

There has also been some question as to whether Hanoi would require the United States to accept its four-point programme before being willing to enter into any direct talks with them. On the basis of what Prime Minister Pham Van Dong told Mr. Harrison Salisbury at the beginning of January this year, I would judge that acceptance of the four points would not be regarded by North Vietnam as a precondition to such talks, although the four points would almost certainly figure prominently on any resulting agenda.

To summarize, therefore, the North Vietnamese position would appear to be as follows. If the United States ceases the bombing and all other military action against North Vietnam permanently and without condition, the Government of North Vietnam would be prepared to enter into direct talks with

representatives of the United States. The further information we have suggests that such talks could be initiated within a reasonable interval after the cessation of the bombing, such an interval being presumably required by the North Vietnamese side to give effect to their argument that the holding of talks would not, in fact, be regarded as a "condition" of the cessation of the bombing.

I think it is only fair that I should set out the United States reaction to this proposition which I understand to be as follows. As regards the matter of talks, the United States Government would be prepared to enter into such talks with representatives of the Government of North Vietnam at any time and without any prior condition whatsoever. As regards the matter of a reduction in the scale of hostilities, the United States would be prepared to discuss such a reduction on a basis of reasonable reciprocity. What the United States is not prepared to do, so far as I understand it, is to discontinue for good what they regard as a significant aspect of their military activity in Vietnam in return for a mere undertaking on the North Vietnamese side to enter into bilateral talks.

Perhaps I should say something at this point about the recent series of proposals for putting a halt to the conflict in Vietnam which have been put forward by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Some thirteen months ago the Secretary-General first developed a proposition which envisaged the following three steps: a cessation of the bombing of North Vietnam by the United States; a mutual de-escalation on the ground in South Vietnam by both sides; and a negotiation involving all the parties which are actually fighting in Vietnam, that is to say, including the Vietcong.

As far as I know, the Government of North Vietnam does not object to the first and third points of the Secretary-General's proposal. To my knowledge, however, they have not at any time specifically endorsed the second point.

which envisaged a mutual de-escalation in South Vietnam.

The reply of the United States to these proposals was made by Mr. Goldberg in the General Assembly on September 22. As I interpret that reply, it expressed the willingness of the United States to stop the bombing of North Vietnam as a prior and unilateral act on the understanding, which could be conveyed either in public or in private, that there would be a reasonable measure of military reciprocity on the other side within a given interval of time. The United States also reiterated at that time that they did not regard the problem of affording the Vietcong an opportunity to make their views heard at any future conference as insurmountable.

In the light of these reactions, the Secretary-General apparently decided that an adaptation of his proposals might be able to overcome the difficulties which the parties evidently had in accepting them in their original form. Accordingly, he discussed with representatives of North Vietnam in Rangoon and subsequently formulated in writing, on March 14, an adaptation of his original proposals on the following lines: as a first step, there would be a general stand-still truce by all parties to the conflict; the parties directly involved in the conflict would then enter into preliminary talks, with or without the assistance of the Co-Chairman of the Geneva Conference of 1954 and the members of the International Commission, the purpose of such talks being to reach agreement on the terms and conditions for reconvening the Geneva Conference; these preliminary talks would be followed by the holding of the actual conference with the participation of all those who are actually fighting and with the object of returning

to the essentials of the original Geneva settlement.

These revised proposals were accepted in their essentials by the United States. In signifying their acceptance on March 18, the United States pointed out, however, that they would expect the Government of South Vietnam to be appropriately involved throughout the entire process envisaged by the Secretary-General. They also implied that a stand-still cease-fire could not be automatically brought about without prior discussion either directly by the two sides or through some other channel. The note indicated that the United States, for its part, was prepared to enter into such discussions without delay.

While I have not seen the reply made to the Secretary-General's proposals by the Government of North Vietnam, I understand that these proposals did not command themselves to that Government to the extent that they appeared to place the United States and North Vietnam on the same basis whereas it is the contention of the Government of North Vietnam that a distinction must be drawn between the United States as the "aggressor" and North Vietnam as the "victim of aggression".

It is my understanding that the Secretary-General still stands by the proposals he put forward on March 14. I also understand that he would not wish his more recent public comment on a speech by Senator Joseph Clark to the National Convention of Americans for Democratic Action to be regarded as representing a new proposal or appeal. In view of the great dangers inherent in the continuation of the present conflict, however, the Secretary-General appears to have concluded that it might be necessary for his own proposals to be given at least initial effect by a unilateral initiative on

one side or the other. And it was presumably with these considerations in mind that he gave his personal endorsement to Senator Clark's suggestion that the United States give a unilateral undertaking to put a stand-still cease-fire into effect and thereafter to fire only if fired upon.

As regards our own position I would like to say only this. We have maintained all along that the settlement of this conflict will require concessions on both sides. I believe that this is a view which is widely shared regardless of how the rights and wrongs of the Vietnam conflict are interpreted. In response to those who have asked the Government to dissociate itself from the bombing of North Vietnam by the United States, we have made it clear that we would, indeed, like to see the bombing stopped, but that we would also like to see the infiltration stopped, and that we would like to see negotiations looking towards the peaceful solution of this conflict begun. As I indicated to the House on April 11, it is from this general perspective that we endorsed the Secretary-General's proposals of March 14 and that we shall continue to judge all proposals which are aimed at putting a halt to the fighting in Vietnam.

As far as the Canadian Government is concerned, Mr. Chairman, it will continue to be the object of our diplomatic efforts to try to establish a basis on which the two sides might be brought together. There is, of course, no dearth of formulas for trying to do that. But the fact remains that the test of any such formula is its acceptability to both sides. This has been the experience of the Secretary-General; it has been our own experience; and it has been the experience of other countries which have tried to play a helpful part in this matter.

This does not mean, however, that any of those who have tried to lend their good offices to the parties intend to abandon this effort. Certainly, as far as Canada is concerned, I can assure the Committee that we have no intention of doing that. The question that arises is whether there is any new direction which it might be worth exploring in the hope that it might avoid the impasse which has apparently now been reached and which has brought us to the point where, for the first time in some sixteen months, no new initiatives, either public or private, appear to be within sight.

It seems to me that, in trying to bring this conflict to a halt, the same principle may be applicable which we have found, in practice, to be applicable to the process of general and complete disarmament. In essence, that principle is that there must be a condition of parity between the two sides at all stages of the process. That is to say, care would have to be taken to avoid a situation where either side is placed or considers itself to be placed in a position of relative disadvantage at any given stage.

Having that principle in mind, I wonder whether it might not be worth while to take another look at some of the terms of the 1954 Agreement. The core of that Agreement lies in the concept of a cease-fire and a disengagement of forces. Surely, that is what we are seeking today as a matter of first priority. Would it be going too far to suggest that some thought might now be given to the possibility of discussing a stage by stage return to the Geneva cease-fire arrangements as a first step towards a more permanent settlement which would necessarily have to encompass many other factors. Of course, the cease-fire arrangements are only one aspect of the Geneva

settlement and I recognize the difficulty of trying to persuade the parties to return to one aspect of the settlement in the absence of some preliminary understandings at least as regards the basis on which the other, and more intractable aspects of the settlement might be tackled in a subsequent negotiation. Accordingly, it may well be necessary to envisage a progressive re-application of the 1954 cease-fire terms as an agreed preliminary to direct discussions between the two sides and as something which would of itself help to create a favourable climate for such discussions.

If there were any merit in an approach on these lines, I could envisage it being carried out in four stages.

The First step should involve some degree of physical disengagement of the parties. This might be accomplished by restoring the demilitarized character of the zone on either side of the seventeenth parallel by the withdrawal of all military forces, supplies and equipment from that zone, by enforcing a prohibition against any artillery action across the zone, and by barring any overflights of the zone except for purposes of impartial supervision. At the same time, it would be necessary to reactivate those provisions of the cease-fire agreement which prohibit either North or South Vietnam to be used for the carrying out of hostile acts against the other. In my view this would in equity have to include the bombing and any other military action against North Vietnam, whether actually undertaken from South Vietnam or from some other point of origin.

Second, I think it would be necessary to freeze the course of military events in Vietnam at its present level. This might entail undertakings on both sides not to engage in any military activities which differed in either scale or pattern from the activities which are currently being engaged in. It might also entail the practical reapplication, as from an agreed point in time, of

those articles of the Geneva Cease-Fire Agreement which prohibit reinforcement of troops or arms, munitions and other war material into North or South Vietnam from any source or quarter.

The Third stage of such an approach would logically involve the cessation of all active hostilities between the parties, whether on the ground, at sea or in the air.

The Fourth and final stage would complete the process of return to the cease-fire provisions of the Geneva settlement. At that stage, provision would have to be made for the liberation and repatriation of prisoners, for the withdrawal of all outside forces whose presence in the area of conflict was not provided for at Geneva, and for the dismantling of military bases or their conversion to peaceful purposes.

I have been concerned to sketch out one line of approach to ending the present conflict which seems practicable to me and which, in addition, has behind it the sanction of the Geneva arrangements to which both sides have said that they continue to subscribe.

Any such approach, however, would clearly have to be acceptable to the parties concerned. I want to be perfectly frank with the Committee and say that, on present evidence, I am not very optimistic on that score. For while it is true that both sides are prepared to subscribe to the objective of a return to the Geneva arrangements, I am not so sure that they are at one in their interpretation of what that objective implies or as to the means by which it can best be achieved. In particular, of course, we cannot be unmindful of the position of the Government of North Vietnam which is that they cannot accept any proposal which treats both sides on a basis of strict equity because this would ignore the factor of responsibility for the present conflict as they see it.

If this approach or any variant of it were to commend itself to the parties, the International Commission might have a special role to play in translating these general ideas into concrete proposals and, in due course, providing the required guarantees that they were being properly implemented on both sides. I would also like to point out to the Committee that this particular approach is one which the Commission might be fully justified in putting to the parties and to the other members of the Geneva Conference who have an obvious interest in any proposal designed to ensure that the Agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Vietnam is respected.

There is one further point which I should like to leave with the Committee. We have said consistently that we regard a purely military solution of the conflict in Vietnam as neither practicable nor desirable. I would like to take that proposition one step further today and say this: on the basis of all the knowledge I have of the proposals that have been made and the initiatives that have been taken over the past sixteen months, I am doubtful if it will be possible to solve the purely military aspects of this conflict without at the same time tackling the political questions which lie at the root of it. As I have already suggested, this applies to the approach I have outlined to the Committee as it would to any other approach to this issue.

The simple fact is that these aspects are inter-related and that progress on one front may well depend on progress being made on the other. I am inclined to think that the recent experience of the Secretary-General bears out this impression. On the face of it a stand-still cease-fire does not look as if it should involve any inordinate problems for either side if there was a willingness in principle to stop the fighting. On second thought, however, it will appear that such a cease-fire does pose problems for both sides to the point where one side cannot envisage such a move being made without prior discussion, if not negotiation, which the other cannot apparently see it being made at all.

in present circumstances. It is my considered view that, apart from any possible military problems, there are political problems posed by this proposal which are such as to have a bearing on the terms on which the conflict may eventually be resolved.

The underlying political issue as I see it are the ultimate political arrangements in South Vietnam and the willingness of others to allow those to be worked out by the South Vietnamese people without interference from any quarter. One aspect of this issue, of course, is the status of the Vietcong. What is at stake here is not really their representation at any eventual conference table but the terms of their participation within the ultimate political structure of the country. These are the really crucial points which will have to be resolved and on which, I am afraid, the position of the parties are as far apart as ever.

? / It is clearly not for Canada, any more than for others, to the South Vietnamese people now to order their affairs. I have made it clear that we regard a continuance of the present division of Vietnam into two communities as probably unavoidable for the time being if only to allow the scars which have been opened by the conflicts of the past quarter century to heal and for new dispositions to be agreed for the eventual reunification of Vietnam. It will be for the people in the two parts of Vietnam to decide how soon and under what conditions the first steps towards reunification can reasonably be taken. I am convinced that there is a basic desire for reunification in Vietnam as there is in other divided countries. At the same time, it seems to me on the basis of recent statements that there is also a realistic appreciation on both sides that reunification is not something which is likely to be accomplished overnight.

Whatever the prospects of early progress toward actual reunification, I would hope that, once the hostilities have ceased, a basis can be laid for a genuine reconciliation between the two communities. I appreciate that this may not come about either quickly or easily. But I am sure there is much to be said for the early opening of channels which respond to the interests of the people of Vietnam on both sides of the temporary dividing line. I have in mind, in particular, such matters as the reunification of families, the establishment of at least minimum facilities of communication, and the institution of commercial exchanges on a basis of mutual advantage. It is around such a nucleus of common interest that I believe the foundations for the eventual reunification can most securely be laid. And if any international presence in Vietnam could lend its good offices in that direction, I would hope that this is something which could be explored.

I have already had occasion, at the outset of my presentation, to comment on recent constitutional developments in South Vietnam. We welcome these developments which are likely to culminate in the election of a genuinely representative government before the end of the current year. We would like to think that, once the hostilities have ceased and a settlement of the present conflict has been reached, the constitutional structure that is currently being evolved will be strong enough and flexible enough to accommodate all segments of the South Vietnamese people who are prepared to play their peaceful part in the political life of South Vietnam.

When I last spoke to the House, I said that we could see merit in proposals which are being made for the neutralization, in due course, not only of Vietnam but possibly of a wider area in Southeast Asia. I continue to think that such proposals may well offer a promising basis for political arrangements

in that area. I think it important, however, that whatever arrangements are ultimately arrived at, they cannot be imposed on the countries of the area against their will. They must be such as to reflect the genuinely held preferences of these countries based on an assessment, which each country can only make for itself, as to the course which is most likely to serve its own best interests and those of the area in which it is situated.

That, Mr. Chairman, concludes my review of the Vietnam situation. I cannot say that I assess the prospects in the short term any too hopefully. I say this because so far the simple formula which will bring the two sides together without raising other intractable issues has eluded all those who have tried. I can assure the Committee, however, that the government remains committed to the search for a solution of this conflict. I am in close touch with the representatives of all countries which may be in a position to help in this matter, in particular, of course, our Commission partners with whom we hope it will be possible to concert our efforts in the right circumstances. I am firmly convinced that there is a role which Canada will be called upon to play in Vietnam in one form or another and we are now looking into the results of our experience over the past thirteen years to determine how best we can play that role when the time comes.



Mr. Lucien Lamont
for
Secretary - General

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF
THE PERMANENT MISSION OF CANADA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Anthony Fraser *1/1/61*

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OTAKA CF -External Affairs Minister Martin said today that nothing constructive is likely to happen in the Vietnam situation until the U.S. bombing of North Vietnam ends.

In an address to students at Carleton University, he said:

"... We have become convinced that the key to de-escalation, and the creation of an atmosphere in which talks could take place, is the cessation of the bombing. . . .

"It seemed to us that if the bombing were suspended unilaterally a new situation would have come about in which the North Vietnamese would be under considerable international pressure to enter into negotiations or preliminary talks.

"In other words, the focus of international concern might shift from U.S. policy in bombing North Vietnam to North Vietnam's intransigence. . . .

"It would be extremely unlikely that it would be possible to get any advance commitment from the North Vietnamese as to precisely what would happen if the bombing were stopped—certainly not a public commitment, and probably not even a private one. . . .

"We recognize clearly . . . that unless the decision to suspend the bombing were to lead to some tangible concessions by North Vietnam, the chances of any resultant talks producing fruitful results would certainly be diminished; the obligations for restoring peace are reciprocal and it would be totally unrealistic to expect that all the concessions would be made by one side only, namely the U.S.

"There is also the serious danger that a suspension of the bombing that did not lead to fruitful results could lead to a subsequent reversion to military measures, perhaps on an intensified scale. This is a problem that cannot be overlooked or minimized.

"Nevertheless, we can see no way out of the present impasse other than by taking the calculated risk of what will in all probability have to be a unilateral concession by the U.S."

CVN/cc

30 October 1967

My dear Ambassador,

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of 26 October with which you sent me a complete report of the statement by Mr. Paul Martin at Carleton University on United Nations Day. I have read it with great interest.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

U Thant

His Excellency
Mr. George Ignatieff
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Canada
to the United Nations
866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 250
New York, N.Y. 10017

cc: Mr. Narasimhan
Mr. Lemieux ✓



THE PERMANENT MISSION OF CANADA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
LA MISSION PERMANENTE DU CANADA AUPRÈS DES NATIONS UNIES

866 United Nations Plaza,
New York, N.Y. 10017.

October 26, 1967.

Dear Secretary-General:

When we were talking about Vietnam at the Council meeting yesterday, you mentioned that you would like to have the text of what Mr. Martin said at Carleton University the other day. I have obtained from Ottawa a more or less verbatim report which was prepared for Mr. Martin's use in a speech before the Carleton University International Relations Association last Tuesday, October 24:

"As a result of our diplomatic soundings over the past year and a half we have become convinced that the key to de-escalation and the creation of an atmosphere in which talks could take place is the cessation of the bombing. We believe that nothing constructive is likely to happen until it comes to a halt.

All the attempts that we (and others) had made to find a feasible "de-escalation equation" -- that is a mutually acceptable pattern of steps to be taken by both sides more or less simultaneously -- had not won the agreement of one or other or indeed both sides.

It therefore seemed to us that if the impasse were to be broken a new approach had to be tried. It seemed to us that if the bombing were suspended unilaterally a new situation would have come about in which the North Vietnamese would be under considerable international pressure to enter into negotiations or preliminary talks. In other words, the focus of international concern might shift from USA policy in bombing North Vietnam to North Vietnam's intransigence.

These considerations were very much in our minds in deciding to call publicly for a cessation of the bombing as a necessary procedural step towards the negotiating table.

His Excellency U Thant,
Secretary-General of the United Nations,
New York.

"We also had in mind the conclusion we had reached that it would be extremely unlikely that it would be possible to get any advance commitment from the North Vietnamese as to precisely what would happen if the bombing were stopped -- certainly not a public commitment and probably not even a private one. It has seemed to us that Hanoi is as resolutely opposed to giving an advance commitment talk as to agreeing in advance to making a reciprocal military gesture both of which they regard as a "price" to be paid for getting the bombing stopped. As far as I can see they are determined not to pay any price for this and they will continue in their intransigent stand as long as North Vietnam is being bombed.

This said, we recognize clearly -- and I pointed this out in my speech to the General Assembly -- that unless the decision to suspend the bombing were to lead to some tangible concessions by North Vietnam, the chances of any resultant talks producing fruitful results would certainly be diminished; obviously the obligations for restoring peace are reciprocal and it would be totally unrealistic to expect that all the concessions would be made by one side only, namely the USA.

There is also the serious danger that a suspension of the bombing which did not lead to fruitful results could lead to a subsequent reversion to military measures perhaps on an intensified scale. This is a problem which cannot be overlooked or minimized.

Nevertheless we can see no way out of the present impasse other than by taking the calculated risk of what will in all probability have to be a unilateral concession by the USA."

With our most fervent regards

Yours sincerely,

George Ignatieff
George Ignatieff.

From the P.R. of Canada.

B. J. 1/107

CANADIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

PRESS RELEASE No. 12

April 1, 1968

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Office
866 United Nations Plaza
Suite 250
New York, N. Y. 10017

VIETNAM

Following are the Texts of Statements by the Canadian Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, and the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Paul Martin, issued in Ottawa on April 1, 1968.

Mr. Pearson

It would not be fitting for me to comment on President Johnson's announcement that he will not seek nor accept a nomination for another term as President. His decision was made, I am sure, out of regard for the public interest as he saw it, as one would expect from one who has devoted his life to the service of his people; a service which in recent years has been given under a burden of pressures and responsibilities heavier than those borne by any other person in the world.

The President's statement about Vietnam is of major importance for all countries.

Apart from a relatively small area adjacent to the scene of actual fighting, the bombing and shelling of North Vietnam by air and sea has now been stopped, without time limit or other conditions.

Therefore, it is now strictly up to the Communist side to reciprocate and show their desire to end the war by negotiation rather than force.

It is to be devoutly hoped that they will quickly respond to the USA action.

We must also hope that, in this new situation, the friends of Hanoi, and most of all the USSR, will urge the North Vietnam Government to react to the USA initiative so that the slaughter and destructions of this tragic conflict can be brought to an end.

It is also, I believe, a moment to consider seriously the possibility of United Nations intervention to assist in the process of peace making and reconstruction, the beginning of

which the President's statement has now made possible.

This is a time for urgent action on every front by all Governments who are concerned with ending the war and beginning the negotiation of peace.

The President said last night, "There is no need to delay the talks that could bring an end to this long and bloody war." The world can now say, "Amen" to this with a new hope. It would indeed be tragic if the reaction to this new situation were such as to betray and destroy that hope.

Mr. Martin

I am greatly heartened to learn that President Johnson has ordered a suspension of the bombing of the greatest part of North Vietnam and has coupled that suspension with a renewal of an earlier plea for prompt and serious talks on the substance of peace. I know that the decision could not have been an easy one for him to take. It is an act of courage on his part to take that gamble for peace.

Last September at the United Nations General Assembly, I urged that there be a halt to the bombing as a necessary first step on the road to de-escalation. I now urge the leaders of North Vietnam, and all those who may have any influence in their counsels, to seize this opportunity swiftly so that the next steps can be taken which may quickly end the tragedy and the suffering of all the people of Vietnam, and allow them and all of us to turn our hands to the works of peace.

Canada, for its part, stands ready to do anything within its power which may contribute to the prompt initiation of serious talks. The possibilities include Commission contact with the North Vietnamese Government and action in the Security Council, perhaps with a view to reconvening the Geneva Conference itself. If it should appear that it would advance the prospect for peace, our Commissioner will proceed promptly to Hanoi.

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CANADIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

PRESS RELEASE No. 12

April 1, 1968

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Office
866 United Nations Plaza
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New York, N. Y. 10017

VIETNAM

Following are the Texts of Statements by the Canadian Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, and the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Paul Martin, issued in Ottawa on April 1, 1968.

Mr. Pearson

It would not be fitting for me to comment on President Johnson's announcement that he will not seek nor accept a nomination for another term as President. His decision was made, I am sure, out of regard for the public interest as he saw it, as one would expect from one who has devoted his life to the service of his people; a service which in recent years has been given under a burden of pressures and responsibilities heavier than those borne by any other person in the world.

The President's statement about Vietnam is of major importance for all countries.

Apart from a relatively small area adjacent to the scene of actual fighting, the bombing and shelling of North Vietnam by air and sea has now been stopped, without time limit or other conditions.

Therefore, it is now strictly up to the Communist side to reciprocate and show their desire to end the war by negotiation rather than force.

It is to be devoutly hoped that they will quickly respond to the USA action.

We must also hope that, in this new situation, the friends of Hanoi, and most of all the USSR, will urge the North Vietnam Government to react to the USA initiative so that the slaughter and destructions of this tragic conflict can be brought to an end.

It is also, I believe, a moment to consider seriously the possibility of United Nations intervention to assist in the process of peace making and reconstruction, the beginning of

which the President's statement has now made possible.

This is a time for urgent action on every front by all Governments who are concerned with ending the war and beginning the negotiation of peace.

The President said last night, "There is no need to delay the talks that could bring an end to this long and bloody war." The world can now say, "Amen" to this with a new hope. It would indeed be tragic if the reaction to this new situation were such as to betray and destroy that hope.

Mr. Martin

I am greatly heartened to learn that President Johnson has ordered a suspension of the bombing of the greatest part of North Vietnam and has coupled that suspension with a renewal of an earlier plea for prompt and serious talks on the substance of peace. I know that the decision could not have been an easy one for him to take. It is an act of courage on his part to take that gamble for peace.

Last September at the United Nations General Assembly, I urged that there be a halt to the bombing as a necessary first step on the road to de-escalation. I now urge the leaders of North Vietnam, and all those who may have any influence in their counsels, to seize this opportunity swiftly so that the next steps can be taken which may quickly end the tragedy and the suffering of all the people of Vietnam, and allow them and all of us to turn our hands to the works of peace.

Canada, for its part, stands ready to do anything within its power which may contribute to the prompt initiation of serious talks. The possibilities include Commission contact with the North Vietnamese Government and action in the Security Council, perhaps with a view to reconvening the Geneva Conference itself. If it should appear that it would advance the prospect for peace, our Commissioner will proceed promptly to Hanoi.
