

# Canada Says It Was Misled on Vietnam

3/26/73  
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Special to The Washington Post

MONTREAL, March 25—The government of Pierre Elliott Trudeau was misled by U.S. State Department officials last October into believing that the signing of the Paris cease-fire agreement hinged almost exclusively on Canadian acceptance of a peace-keeping role in Vietnam, according to reliable sources in Ottawa.

This misleading information put tremendous moral pressure on Canada and forced the Trudeau government to make a reluctant commitment to the four-nation International Commission for Control and Supervision set up by the agreement, these sources said.

This commitment was made by External Affairs Secretary Mitchell Sharp on Nov. 2, at which time Canada had been given no details about the draft cease-fire agreement then under negotiation between Washington and Hanoi. Specifically, Canada was told nothing about arrangements for the truce commission in which it was asked to participate together with Poland, Hungary, and Indonesia.

The realization, soon after,



MITCHELL SHARP  
... pressured by U.S.

that the information disclosed by the State Department was false has immensely complicated Canada's decision on a pullout from the already lame ICCS.

The Canadian Department of External Affairs is no longer confident that what Ottawa is told by U.S. officials is an accurate reflection of the

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Nixon administration's intentions in Vietnam.

This murky episode in U.S.-Canada relations was recently disclosed by reliable sources who refrained, however, from accusing State Department officials of outright lying.

They said that soon after White House adviser Henry Kissinger's "peace is at hand" press conference Oct. 25, Ottawa was told by William Sullivan, deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, that the conclusion of the cease-fire agreement then being negotiated in Paris depended on Canada's willingness to be a member of the proposed supervisory commission. Canadian officials were told that Poland, Hungary and Indonesia, were already committed to the new ICCS, the implication being that Canada was the only odd man out.

Similar arguments were used by Assistant Secretary of State Marshall Green in talks with Canadian officials, after they attended memorial services for former President Harry S. Truman.

These U.S. pressures were successful. Sharp interrupted his campaigning for the parliamentary elections Oct. 30 for hasty consultations with his diplomatic advisers. On Nov. 2 Sharp announced:

"The parties concerned appear to have concluded that when a cease-fire goes into effect in Vietnam, there should be some form of international presence immediately on the ground to participate in such supervisory functions as may be required.

### Geneva Conference

"To meet this situation, therefore, the government of Canada is prepared to place at the disposal of the new international supervisory body, for the initial period, the Canadian delegation to the existing International Commission for Supervision and Control (ICSC) in Vietnam established by the 1954 Geneva conference.

"The government hopes that, insofar as Canada's participation is a factor, this course of action will enable the initial cease-fire arrangements to proceed without delay, subject of course to an agreement being reached among the parties concerned."

The minister's statement

was made against the better judgment of his advisers and the bitter lessons Canada has learned from 19 years' membership in the old Vietnam peacekeeping commission. U.S. pressures also forced Sharp to disregard a Cabinet decision made in 1970 that, henceforth, the Canadian government would only accept new peacekeeping missions after a series of carefully drafted technical requirements was met.

In 1954, Ottawa had naively accepted on the spot a telegram invitation from Geneva to become a member of the supervisory commissions in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and had lived through 19 years of frustrations to regret it. As a result, the Trudeau government was determined not to undertake a similar role in the area except after the most careful consideration.

The urgings by Sullivan and Green compelled Canada once again to commit itself. In January, when the Paris agreement was finally signed, Sharp found it impossible to back down, despite his misgivings about the probable effectiveness of the cease-fire and its supervisory arrangements.

Soon after agreeing to serve on the new truce commission, the Canadian government discovered, through diplomatic contacts in several capitals, that it had been handed a line by U.S. officials. Among other things, neither Poland, Hungary nor Indonesia had apparently committed themselves at the time to the ICCS.

### Ottawa's Bitterness

This lack of truthfulness by the U.S. State Department aroused considerable bitterness in Ottawa. Some officials refer to the incident as "the battle of twisted arm."

But quite apart from these hurt feelings, Canadian officials now find it extremely difficult to establish what are the true intentions of the Nixon administration in Vietnam.