

[REDACTED]
April 20, 1995

Mr Robert McNamara
1455 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 0004-1008
U.S.A.

Dear Mr McNamara,

Let me first introduce myself. In 1964-65, I served in Saigon as head of the Canadian delegation to the International Commission for Supervision and Control, one of the three Indochina commissions set up in 1954. Because of the relative ease of my access to Hanoi through the ICSC, the Canadian Government of the day agreed to an American request that I convey certain very secret messages from your Government to the Government of North Vietnam, and the response to those messages back to the U.S. Government via Ottawa, in ^{an} attempt to see whether the North had any interest in a negotiated solution to the conflict. Twice in 1964 such messages were conveyed to Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, and three more messages were conveyed in 1964 and 1965 to others in the Hanoi government. Sometime late in 1964 or early in 1965, I met you either at the American Ambassador's residence or that of General Westmoreland, during one of your visits to Saigon, to give you an oral account of my missions to Hanoi as a complement to the reports which I had sent to Ottawa and which Ottawa had forwarded to Washington.

Although I left the foreign service of Canada in 1970 to take on other public service assignments in Ottawa, I have continued to follow events in Vietnam with real interest. My good intentions are some day to write up my personal observations on my missions to Hanoi, but other activities and assignments even in retirement continue to get in the way.

I did however read with great interest the news reports of your recent book on the retrospective views of one intimately and critically a part of the U.S. involvement, and of your interviews following publication. Let me say only that I felt for you in taking the difficult decision to make your views known now, and that on balance and despite the criticism I think you were right to do so.

As it is unlikely otherwise to come to your attention, I am enclosing a copy of an editorial on your decision which appeared recently in the Toronto Globe and Mail, which is probably the closest equivalent to a national Canadian newspaper.

first page
re-printed
with
corrections

much as that in the New York Times