

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, may I rephrase the question by asking the Prime Minister whether there has been any further contact with the UN or the international control commission in the efforts of Canada to bring about some kind of solution.

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): My statement on Saturday night certainly was not in any sense a United States or Canadian proposal; it was made in the light of the activities that are now going on with respect to a role for the international control commission in bringing about a negotiated settlement, and it was made also in the light of the discussions with the secretary general of the United Nations and others.

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. May I direct my question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the likelihood that the military escalation on both sides in Viet Nam may seriously jeopardize the efforts to which the right hon. gentleman referred a moment ago in respect of the international control commission, would he consider making representations to the administration in the United States to the effect that they reconsider the decision, reported in today's newspapers, to accelerate their military participation in Viet Nam?

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, in a matter of this sort I think it is dangerous to rely on reports which appear in the newspapers before one has had a proper opportunity to examine their full import. In a matter of this sort I do not think conclusions should be drawn from such stories until there has been the fullest opportunity to examine all the circumstances.

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, may I ask a supplementary question. I did in fact send notice of the question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, but this arises out of the questions which have been asked of the Prime Minister. As the hon. member for Red Deer said, the secretary general of the United Nations is reported to have said, after discussions about Viet Nam with General de Gaulle, that for the time being he did not see any possibility of a new initiative on the part of anyone. I should like to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs, in the light of this report, whether he believes the proposals of the Canadian government to use the international control commission to bring about negotiations to end the

[Mr. Speaker.]

conflict in Viet Nam can serve a useful purpose.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, this question has been dealt with in part by the Prime Minister. The hon. gentleman will recall that I indicated to the external affairs committee on Thursday last that we did not believe the time was opportune for calling a Geneva conference. I believe that what the secretary general had in mind was mainly related to that, but I can say that the difficult situation attending the possibility of calling such a conference in no way interferes with the Canadian proposal that there is a role for the commission to play in probing and seeking to narrow the differences between both sides. As a matter of fact, as the Prime Minister said, the secretary general strongly concurs with the ideas we have for the role of this commission in the circumstances prior to the calling of a general conference.

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am wondering why questions based on the Prime Minister's speech to the world federation of veterans were ruled out of order yesterday, yet are in order today.

LABOUR RELATIONS**CHAIRMAN OF CONCILIATION BOARD IN RAILWAY UNION DISPUTE**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Minister of Labour based on a report that the Canadian brotherhood of railway, transport and general workers has refused to endorse the nominee of the Minister of Labour, Judge Craig Munroe, as chairman of the conciliation board. What is the position now taken? Will the minister insist that Judge Munroe be chairman of that board, or will he submit another name for consideration?

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I am very glad this question has been asked. There are actually three conciliation boards. The requests from the railways and the unions regarding the chairman of the first two boards both called for Mr. Justice Munroe. It was following those requests that the announcement was made.

In respect of the third dispute, where conciliation has been requested, no approach has been made to Mr. Justice Munroe. Consideration will have to be given to the fact that