

in the mail, postmarked not later than midnight, July 5, to the export and import permits division of the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Applications for permits covering other contracts will be examined on a case by case basis.

There is just one other brief comment—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The minister is making a statement that normally ought to be made on motions. My suggestion to hon. members is that we now attempt to conclude the first round of questioning, after which the Chair will return to the hon. member for Lisgar and the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar, and recognize hon. members on additional supplementaries so that we may elicit additional information on many points.

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### EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

#### VIET NAM—REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON DISAPPEARANCE OF TWO CANADIAN OFFICERS ATTACHED TO CONTROL COMMISSION

**Mr. David Lewis (York South):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs or for the Prime Minister, whoever can give us the information. Can we be informed as to the latest report with respect to the two Canadians of the ICCS who are in Viet Cong hands.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre De Bané (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I shall provide a reply to the hon. member, but in English unfortunately because it was drafted in that language.

[English]

Our information indicates that the two officers were seen by South Vietnamese workers in the late afternoon of June 28, and they were in conversation with PRG troops at the time. We are also informed that they were seen on June 29 or on the morning of June 30 and they were safe and well. The fact is that Captains Patten and Thomson are with PRG troops in an area which appears to be controlled by the PRG, that the PRG is bound to accept responsibility for their safety and good treatment under the terms of the protocol of the ICCS, and that our delegation in Saigon has made this clear to them.

**Mr. Lewis:** Has there been any information as to the welfare of these two officers since June 30, or is June 30 the last date on which anything was heard about them, and about their being well?

[Translation]

**Mr. De Bané:** Mr. Speaker, we are obviously in constant contact with the other members of the International Commission of Control and Supervision. The Secretary of State for External Affairs is to meet his counterparts in Helsinki; the national Finnish troops are in Viet Nam. We keep on asserting that article 12 of the Paris Agreements should be applied, that is that the Canadian troops now in Viet Nam must enjoy diplomatic immunity and we hope that these prisoners will be immediately released.

### Oral Questions

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I am aware of article 12, but what I would like to know is whether the office of the Secretary of State for External Affairs or the Department of National Defence received reports today from our troops in Viet Nam?

**Mr. De Bané:** No, Mr. Speaker, I have received no information in the past few hours, but I have every reason to believe that the information I have just given, that is, that the two members of the Canadian contingent are safe, is still relevant; and we are continuing our attempts to have them freed under the terms of the four party agreements.

● (1420)

[English]

VIET NAM—INQUIRY AS TO WHETHER TWO CANADIAN OFFICERS ATTACHED TO CONTROL COMMISSION WHO DISAPPEARED WERE ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS

**Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham):** Can the parliamentary secretary inform the House whether the two officers were on official business or whether the government of Canada believes it makes any difference?

**Mr. Pierre De Bané (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, the PRG delegation takes the position that the issue revolves in part on the question of whether or not Captains Patten and Thomson were on ICCS duty when they engaged in the field trip. We do not consider that is an issue. The two officers, when they went on this field trip, were not engaging in an ICCS investigation and they had not been directed by the ICCS to make the field trip. They were, however, engaging in a normal activity that members of the Canadian and other delegations have conducted from time to time since arriving in Viet Nam. They were maintaining liaison and contact with the two South Vietnamese parties in their geographical area. That is, of course, a necessary and entirely legitimate activity for members of ICCS teams to facilitate their ICCS duties.

From the beginning of our participation in the ICCS—

[Translation]

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. It seems to me that the hon. parliamentary secretary's reply goes beyond what was asked in the question put to him. He might perhaps revert to motions to make a statement on which the members of the opposition parties might then comment.

**Mr. De Bané:** Very briefly, Mr. Speaker, our problem is that the Canadian contingent now in Viet Nam has diplomatic immunity under article 12 of the Paris agreements, on a round the clock basis, of course. It is quite clear that if an official representative or a member of the Canadian delegation goes shopping or crosses the street, he must, in our view, enjoy diplomatic immunity for the entire duration of his stay over there.