

By and large there has been no significant change in the situation that would alter the view we formed at the end of the first 60 days, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of the Canadian contingent to support the functioning of the International Commission.

Let me repeat that our attitude results from Canadian experience in the old ICSC and the Canadian concept of the functioning of a peace observer body. We are not criticizing the Peace Agreement. We welcomed that Agreement, we regard it as a good agreement that provides as sound and honourable a basis for peace as was negotiable. If the Parties will set themselves to applying it, as we hope they may yet do, it can bring lasting peace to Viet-Nam. We hope that the efforts of Dr. Kissinger and Mr. Le Duc Tho to achieve a stricter observance of the Agreement will be crowned with success.

We have come to the conclusion, however, that the Canadian concept of the functioning of the International Commission has not been accepted and that it would be in the interest of all concerned if we were now to withdraw. Nor do we believe that Canadian withdrawal would have any significant effect upon the prospects for peace in Viet-Nam. That depends upon the Parties to the Peace Agreement and not upon the ICCS. It is only if the Parties are cooperating in a strict observance of the Agreement and are willing to use the ICCS as a means of reinforcing the Agreement that the Commission can perform its function with any hope of success.

Throughout our tenure on the ICCS we have sought above all else to be objective. We have represented none of the contending parties. We have been as insistent in calling for and participating in investigations of alleged violations by the United States and the Republic of Viet-Nam as we have with regard to alleged violations by the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and the other South Vietnamese Party. If the RVN or USA have been at fault we have said so. If the other Parties were to blame for cease-fire violations we also have said so. I assure the House that we have no need to listen mutely now or later to any charges that we have acted partially; we can be proud of our objectivity in the Commission and of our attempts to see this impartiality as an integral part of Commission activities.

I also said in my statement to the House on March 27, that Canada would be prepared to return to Viet-Nam to participate in the international supervision of an election clearly held under the terms of the Paris Agreement and therefore with the concurrence and participation of the two South Vietnamese Parties. It went without saying that our participation would not be necessary if a replacement were found for Canada on the ICCS. I am not convinced that there is much chance that an election will take place as provided for in the Agreement, but if it should, (and we would want to examine it carefully to make sure it was this kind of election), and if no