

*Viet Nam*

would be nice if problems like this just disappeared and we could close our eyes to them, but these humanitarian problems will not disappear unless action is taken to solve them. We are committed to our part in seeing that this is done.

As the hon. member for Fundy-Royal (Mr. Fairweather) mentioned, a section of the Canadian people have already shown their concern. An international committee to free South Vietnamese prisoners has been formed which includes officers from the Canadian Friends Service Committee, the Canadian Council of Churches, the Anglican Church of Canada, the United Church of Canada, the Voice of Women and, I have no doubt, many others. They will be making their representations to the government and no doubt they will be heard as speaking for the conscience of the Canadian people.

I want to add one other observation. May I say a word about the amendment of the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner). I wholeheartedly support that amendment. It seems to me that an important decision on Canada's intervention in international affairs should be made by parliament, not by the executive alone. I think there is a basic question of principle involved here, and for this reason I would support the amendment.

**Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, first of all I think it would be very appropriate if I extended my congratulations to the hon. member for Fundy-Royal (Mr. Fairweather) for the high level of the speech he made in this House prior to the dinner hour. Obviously he has a great deal of background information and knowledge of this subject.

I should like to commence my remarks with a quotation that I think is very apropos. It is entitled "Peace":

The quest for peace is as old as mankind. For countless centuries man struggled to secure first his home, then his village, then his city. It is the unique heritage of our century that men must strive for a secure world.

• (2120)

Like many other hon. members of this House, it is with a great deal of satisfaction, a great deal of thankfulness and a very deep interest that I rise to participate in this debate on the ending of the war in Viet Nam and Canada's role in observation of that area in particular; it is also with a very deep sense of pride and tremendous respect for the individuals who have represented Canada abroad over the years of Canadian history when we have participated so actively in international affairs both at the diplomatic and the military level—and in most instances both have been intertwined. Those are only a few reasons why all of us should have an intensive appreciation for the role and the capabilities that Canadians have displayed in the past and which are still being displayed today.

As I started out to draft my speech for this debate I could not help but realize what a proud and satisfying moment this would have been for that great Canadian diplomat, soldier and statesman whom we lost just a short time ago in the person of the late Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson. We can look back over the years of our history at his many great accomplishments in bringing warring peo-

[Mr. Brewin.]

ples together, bringing them to the conference table to discuss the issues face to face, always in the best interests of humanity. We can recall many instances of somewhat the same nature as the present situation and the past situation in Viet Nam where his hand played a leading role in bringing disturbances in particular areas of the world to the same stage, hoping for the continued peace that we have in Viet Nam today.

It behooves all of us on both sides of this House, and it is the responsibility and should be the dedication of every Canadian, not only to retain the great image this nation of ours has had in world affairs in the past as a middle power and as a leading nation in the field of diplomacy, but to approach even greater respect, decor and success in the bringing about of peace. The major role of peace-keeping and truce supervision by our armed forces deserves much worthy and sometimes unsung respect. As parliamentarians, this is our challenge and our duty. Let us not take our eyes away from the subject of the world for a single moment.

All of us have heard comments from time to time, when issues of peacekeeping duties and international negotiation become the topic of the day, that these are too costly for us to undertake, that at times we spread ourselves too thinly and that we should not be participating to such a great extent in the problems of other peoples of the world at a time when we have problems of a more domestic nature. Domestic problems will be with us for decade after decade no matter what government or which men sit in the seats of power in this House. The scriptures tell us there will be wars and rumours of wars. This has in fact been so over the past years of world history and there is no particular reason for any of us to be so naive as to think it will suddenly stop.

Therefore, we as a responsible government and as a responsible parliament must consider each troubled spot in the world on its merits and decide what we can do to ease the situation and to prevent more suffering. To those who complain about the cost of our peacekeeping duties and other major responsibilities at the international levels of the world, I can only ask whether they prefer to pay for an attempted peace, whether they are prepared to pay for the retention of peace, whether they are prepared to pay for the future peacefulness of other nations of the world, or whether we on the other hand are going to go to our various churches each week, call ourselves dedicated Christians, dedicated members of the Hebrew faith, or dedicated members of any faith, and talk piously about peace and about being our brother's keeper and then go out during the week and take a "couldn't care less" attitude toward the major responsibilities of other peoples throughout the world.

Many of us in this House can remember the days when missionary societies used to come around from door to door to collect money to buy clothing and food for poor children in what were then the distant continents of Africa, Asia, South America, etc. Surely today, as we participate as an observer group and as people who are attempting to promote peace in an area of the world that has known nothing but war and devastation for years, we are to a great degree displaying an attitude of man's human feeling and sympathy for his fellow man and for a