

administrations in Viet Nam and for the maintenance of civil rights and of freedom of speech, and for holding of elections, has been nullified by the detention of many thousands of civilian political prisoners subject to gross mistreatment.

It has been clear from the beginning that the observer role of the ICCS would not put the ICCS in the position to enforce a peace the parties themselves were unwilling to accept. I think Canada has made an honest effort to make its contribution to the working out of the agreement. I think it has a perfect right now to say that it has discharged its international obligation in this respect.

There is another international obligation which we share with the world community, and in my view it is not in any way discharged or lessened by withdrawal from the ICCS. I refer to the responsibility for humanitarian intervention in respect of civilian prisoners held in jails and camps in South Viet Nam. While there have been denials, a number of completely reliable sources such as the World Council of Churches, Amnesty International and many other reputable witnesses, including some who spoke to members of this House in the last few days, have given detailed statements in support of these allegations.

Imprisonment has been accompanied by torture, by detention after the service of sentence, by detention without trial. The people so held include those best qualified in the country to make a reality out of the process of national reconciliation called for by the Paris Peace Agreement.

Canada, of course, cannot deal with this problem alone, but it can do all in its power to arouse world public opinion. General Thieu and his regime rely entirely on American supplies of ammunition and weapons. The American government contributes a good part of the budget of his regime. That regime could not function without massive American aid.

It is our position that the Canadian government should make an urgent appeal to the American government and the American people to see that the Thieu government is responsive on this humanitarian issue to world opinion. This is not intervention in the internal affairs of South Viet Nam. It is in accordance with the well established tradition of international law of the right to intervene where fundamental human rights are denied on a substantial scale.

I have just two more sentences, Mr. Speaker. I would like to conclude my remarks by saying—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brewin: Thank you. I would like to conclude my remarks by saying that peacekeeping—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Speaker, some people may not understand the importance of these matters, but I think most members of the House do understand.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brewin: Peacekeeping and the use of observer teams have not been discredited by what has happened. Indeed, the Canadians in particular on the ICCS have conducted

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themselves according to the highest traditions. Peacekeeping and observer teams remain, as they have been in the past and will be in the future, an important instrument in the making of peace.

To say that, after the 25 years of war in Viet Nam and the bitter hostilities there, the present truce is not working and cannot work without a change of attitude on the part of the adversaries is not to devalue peacekeeping and the Canadian policy of being willing to participate and contribute in such efforts to build the world community.

[Translation]

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, when Canada was asked by the countries involved in the Viet Nam war to participate in the International Commission of Control and Supervision of the cease-fire, we agreed because we feel that Canada cannot refuse to help maintain peace in the world.

As long as the parties to this conflict showed some goodwill and there was still some hope that the fighting would stop, we supported the efforts of the Canadian delegation within the Commission. However, we must admit that the cease-fire is only a myth. Fighting has started again and it is a miracle that there have not been more people killed within the Commission, which had to carry out its mandate under the fire of machine guns and bombs.

The infiltration of communist battalions from North Viet Nam, American bombings in Cambodia are all hostile acts which show that the parties involved are not willing to stop fighting.

Therefore, we find it logical to withdraw the Canadian delegation from the ICCS in the hope that such action will give cause for reflection to the countries involved in this costly war.

However, let us be ready to serve and to maintain peace whenever we are asked and our co-operation is really useful.

If there is a real cease-fire in Viet Nam and the countries involved in this conflict put an end to their warlike acts, we will be in a position to return to Viet Nam in order to help establish a lasting peace.

But we believe that this government is wise to withdraw our delegation from Viet Nam before more Canadian soldiers are victims of this continuing war.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I should also like, on behalf of my party and my colleagues in the House, to give my respects to our ambassador, Mr. Gauvin, as well as to our brave soldiers who showed so much courage and fair-mindedness.