

...It is clear that China could regard the Secretary-General, I regret to say, as persona non grata. It is true that China is not a member of the United Nations. It is true that South and North Vietnam are not members. It has not been possible to use the United Nations fully and there has been a failure on the part of some nations to appreciate the great role that the office of the Secretary-General affords in so delicate a situation.

These are obvious reasons why the United Nations has been unable to act and why the Secretary-General himself has not been able to act as fully as he would have liked. But I hope he will continue to explore all the possibilities that may be open to him as Secretary-General to encourage action that will set this conflict on a course of peace. I would also hope with him that there may yet be a role for the United Nations in securing the terms of any settlement of the present conflict. If and when that time comes, I can assure the Secretary-General and the House that the Canadian Government will do whatever it can to enable the United Nations to carry out its responsibilities in this area as it has done in similar circumstances elsewhere.

We have also directed our thinking toward the great task of rehabilitation in that whole area that will have to form a part of any durable settlement of the Vietnam conflict. We have resumed our pledge to participate in the works of the Mekong Development Committee. We have subscribed to the capital of the Asian Development Bank, which has now been established. We are prepared to devote further substantial resources to regional development in Southeast Asia, in which I hope both communities in Vietnam could play their full part and derive their full benefit. Indeed, I should go further and say that I should look toward this whole field of regional development as providing a framework within which these two communities might be able to establish a basis for mutual acceptance and co-operation.

Over the past month...efforts have been made by many countries to explore the opportunities there may be for peace in Vietnam. Canada alone, and Canada in concert with others, has done what it could do to try and bring about negotiations. The House will be aware of the efforts which have recently been made by the United States to reaffirm its readiness to negotiate an honourable conclusion to the present conflict. We are satisfied beyond any doubt that the efforts of the United States during the past month through its Secretary of State, through its Vice-President, through its delegate to the United Nations and through others, have been sincerely directed toward trying to bring about negotiations without any preconditions. It is regrettable that no response has been forthcoming, and I think it is only fair to point out that, whatever some may think of the course of action by our neighbour the fact is that no one can suggest that the United States has not sincerely sought to achieve negotiations. As I said in the United Nations, those who criticize the United States ought to engage in the same energetic pursuit to persuade North Vietnam and others that the time has come when we should have negotiations to establish peace.