

U.S. Invasion of Cambodia

this must be a governing factor in the implementation of his policy. I think it is fair to say too that the President made his decision in full knowledge of the opposition of many leading figures in the United States, including Senator Fulbright, as referred to by the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis).

The United States is a democratic country. There are many countries in the world where decisions of government are made without attention to the views of their people. The American people can at any time reject a government that makes decisions that are contrary to what they believe to be in their interests. I believe, if I may say so, that the American people are as fully conscious as we are as Canadians of the implications of the decisions that have been made by the U.S. government.

• (3:50 p.m.)

It is for this reason I doubt either the utility or the appropriateness of many of the simplistic appeals such as have been suggested in the House today by the deputy leader of the New Democratic Party. I understand the anguish expressed by him. I share it and I am sure all members of this House share the anguish about the war in Viet Nam and in Indo-China. I doubt very much, however, whether the anguish in Indo-China would end if the United States were simply to withdraw its forces immediately and without condition. This seems to me to be the dilemma in which we all find ourselves today.

Hon. members of the opposition have made a number of suggestions. I should like to comment on some of these now. First, it has been suggested that we ought to do more to have the International Control Commission in Cambodia revived. It has also been suggested that we should do more to reconvene the powers involved such as the members of the Geneva conference. Others have suggested we should take steps to bring the matter before the United Nations.

Let me deal first with the question of reconvening the International Control Commission. We have been discussing this question with those governments directly involved in any decision that would be taken on this matter and there is no indication yet that they see the reconvening of the commission as being helpful. I have made the Canadian government's position clear. We are of course prepared to see the commission reconvened if there is any reasonable prospect of it being able to do a job. We have indicated our readi-

ness to participate in a tripartite meeting in New Delhi in order to discuss with India and Poland the function of a reconvened International Control Commission as well as improvements in its methods of operation which would be necessary in order to make it more effective than it was before. Whether there is now any better prospect of the commission being reconvened is at least doubtful. The only responsibility which the commission has is to supervise a cease-fire which has already been agreed upon. It may facilitate the implementation of an agreed cease-fire, but it has no mandate and indeed no capacity to stop the parties engaging in a full-scale conflict.

The French government has put forward the idea of negotiations among what they call interested parties with a view to the neutralization of the whole of Indo-China. When I discussed this proposal with Mr. Schumann in Paris a few weeks ago he made clear that this was not a new proposal for a new Geneva conference, although that possibility was not ruled out. As the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas) pointed out, the Soviet Union appeared to show some interest in the idea of a Geneva conference. However, the Soviet Union made no specific proposal as some believe and subsequently made clear, in the words of the Soviet Ambassador to the United Nations, that "Convening such a conference is unrealistic at the present time". The New Zealand Prime Minister, Mr. Keith Holyoake, has also urged the convening of a new Geneva conference on Indo-China. No concrete proposals, however, have been made by anyone and from our own reports we have concluded there is no agreement on the part of the parties most directly concerned that a Geneva conference should be called.

There is some movement toward the convening of a meeting of Asian countries in Djakarta on May 11 and 12.

An hon. Member: It was postponed to the 16th.

Mr. Sharp: Thank you. While Canada has not been invited to attend this meeting naturally we have a keen interest in it since it represents an effort by the countries of the region to reach a consensus on the Cambodian situation and to make recommendations to the parties involved.

It has been suggested that Canada should bring the question of Cambodia before the United Nations. In fact, the Cambodian gov-