

*Viet Nam*

prison for alleged political reason. Nor does this choice make us indifferent toward the task of socio-economic reconstruction of Viet Nam.

Quite on the contrary, we express our deep regret of the obligation to withdraw, and we do hope that this withdrawal will enable us to appeal freely once more within the framework of the United Nations in order that in all justice a lasting and healing peace may at last come about for all the people of Viet Nam.

[*English*]

I say to the minister, and I say so with sincerity, that as a nation we should not be discouraged by this episode, either in terms of pursuing peace in Indo-China or of discharging our responsibilities as a member of the world community.

The minister's statement on our withdrawal should be seen by Canadians as something more than an end to a valiant international effort. It should be seen as a beginning of a very real determination to pursue peace in Indo-China through other means.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Wagner:** There may be those nations that will say that Canada quit when the going was rough. I say to those nations, as I am sure every member of this House would say, that to make this suggestion is to deny the fundamental spirit and international sense of responsibility that have become our nation's tradition in foreign policy. I know that that tradition will be enriched by this experience rather than discouraged by our withdrawal.

[*Translation*]

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I should like to subscribe to the sentiments expressed by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) concerning our valiant peace ambassadors who are entitled to hold their heads high when they come home, having well deserved of their fellow-citizens.

[*English*]

**Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, we in this party agree with the substance of the decision announced by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp). We agree with the proposal that the Canadian contribution to the International Commission of Control and Supervision be withdrawn.

● (1430)

We regret that the making of this decision was not left to parliament. There are, of course, in the realm of international affairs many things that have to be left to the executive, but major decisions as to war or peace or decisions as to important Canadian international commitments and their withdrawal should, in our opinion, be made by parliament itself.

With respect to the actual decision to withdraw, my colleague, the hon. member for Selkirk (Mr. Rowland), stated our view in the debate on March 27. The position of the New Democratic Party stated by the hon. member for Selkirk was that Canada should give the 90 days notice provided for in the agreement and make it clear that Canada would be leaving on June 30, 1973, at the end of

[*Mr. Wagner.*]

the 90 days whether or not a replacement was found. The government has now, in effect, decided to accept this policy, and we will naturally support the government's decision.

This party approved originally of the acceptance of an observer role in Viet Nam in the ICCS by Canada. We believed then and we still believe that there was no honourable alternative. Canada had for a long time maintained a position as a member of the international community ready, willing and qualified to seek, through the provision of peace-keeping forces and observer teams, to maintain peace. But while we approved of Canada's participation we made it clear that we did so on the basis of the conditions formally set out by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and we added that we would urge that Canada should make clear its intention to withdraw, unilaterally and promptly, if the parties did not accept the cease-fire or if they indicated by their actions or by their words that they were not accepting the provisions of the agreement.

We do not regret the decision we made to support the original contribution. Indeed, the presence of Canada in the ICCS may have contributed to some of the constructive things that have happened, namely, the withdrawal of American troops from Viet Nam and the exchange of military prisoners.

But the question remains whether the conditions for Canada's continued participation in the ICCS and our acceptance of a role there have been fulfilled. The answer is clearly no. There has been and there is no cease-fire to observe. Violations have continued on both sides. Indeed, the head of Canada's truce observers, Ambassador Gauvin, stated in the last day or so that fighting was continuing and even was intensified since the truce.

Precisely the same report was brought back from Viet Nam by the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the hon. member for Selkirk in March. There has been no sign of real improvement since. The commission cannot, therefore, fulfil its function.

Canada, as we have stated from the beginning, does not want a repetition of the exercise in futility which characterized the International Control Commission under the Geneva Agreement. The various parties to the present agreement have in fact disregarded its terms, and they are not in a strong position to ask that Canada undertake grave risks to maintain a non-existent peace and a constantly violated agreement.

Both the United States of America and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam have continued military activities in Cambodia and Laos, contrary to Article 20(b) of the Paris Peace Agreement. We read every day of the violation of this part of the agreement by both sides. The Americans continue the aerial bombardment of Cambodia and Laos, adding to the devastation, death and flood of refugees in those unhappy countries. If it be said that to call attention to this fact is in some way anti-American bias, let me remind the House that both the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States have cut off funds for this operation.

Lastly, the spirit, if not the letter, of the agreement which called for national reconciliation between the two