

we shall decide to withdraw. Whichever decision is made will be conveyed to this House. To avoid misunderstanding let me add this: we are not going to tackle those first sixty days of the Commission's existence in a spirit of diffident and passive caution. We are going to make this Commission work, if it can be made to work. Within its properly limited functions we shall try to make it an active and inquisitive commission, and an open, hard-working and co-operative one. Frustration, inactivity and ineffectiveness have been forced upon us in Viet-Nam in the past. If they are forced upon us again, we are determined that it will again be no fault of Canada's.

Members will be aware that the cease-fire machinery includes joint commissions on which the Parties to the cease-fire are represented, as well as the international commission on which Canada is serving. Unless these joint commissions function effectively, the international commission cannot function.

There have been great difficulties in setting up these joint commissions. Many of these difficulties seem to be psychological in nature. Given the history of the conflict, this is no surprise. The time of enforced waiting is however being put to good use by the ICCS. The logistics support and organizational arrangements for the teams and the Headquarters are being improved. So far, co-operation between the members of the ICCS has left nothing to be desired. The moment the joint commissions are functioning effectively, the international commission can begin to deploy its teams and get down to work. The situation in Viet Nam is still serious. I do not want to minimize the real risks that exist. These can only increase if the cease-fire itself, and the supervisory parties, continue to be ineffective.

In trying to make the Commission work, we shall bear in mind that there are things which neither we nor the Commission as a whole are expected to do. In particular, it must be clearly understood that neither the Canadian delegation nor the Commission as a whole are a force to keep the peace. Our task will be to observe and report upon the performance of those whose responsibility it is to keep the peace; it is the Parties to the agreement who bear that responsibility. We may be able to play a good offices role from time to time if the Parties wish to avail themselves of the services of the Commission or of the Canadian delegation for that purpose.

To accomplish the tasks which do form part of the responsibilities of the Commission, we have provided and are continuing to assemble, a body of men and women of the first quality. The delegation is headed by a Foreign Service Officer of distinction and experience, including experience in Indo-China, Ambassador Michel Gauvin. It is composed of personnel of the Department of National Defence and of the Department of External Affairs who have been specially selected for the task. Many of them have previous experience of Indo-China and of international observation roles.

They can be counted upon to do all that anyone could, and the Government will give them maximum support in their task. The Government is mindful of the fact that Canada has been asked by all four Parties to participate, and that Canada and the Canadian delegation are not the nominees, representatives or spokesman of any one Party or of one side in the Viet-Nam struggle. The delegation will conduct itself accordingly. The Government will support them in this.