

"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 Indochina. 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....

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 Government is capable of doing so itself and has, indeed, brought the situation in Cambodia to the attention of the United Nations. So far, however, it has not pressed for a Security Council meeting. If, in fact, the Cambodians believe they have been invaded, notwithstanding the view expressed by President Nixon, then of course they could certainly take this matter before the Security Council.

The difficulty about discussing the situation in Southeast Asia at the United Nations remains as it always has. Many of the parties are not members. Neither North Vietnam nor South Vietnam...is represented and of course the chair of China is occupied by the Republic of China Government rather than by the People's Republic. Furthermore...the Communist side in the dispute has always vigorously denied the authority of the United Nations to discuss the war in Vietnam. ...

It is very difficult under these circumstances to feel that this would be the most useful thing today since there seems to be expressed opposition on the part of one of the parties to the conflict. For the moment, the prospect of any Security Council consideration of the Cambodian situation does not look promising, but there may be other United Nations machinery which might be employed.

I throw out this suggestion. In the past the despatch of a personal representative to troubled areas by the Secretary-General has proved a helpful intervention. This is something which I think might be a useful initiative at the present time. When it comes down to it, however, any of these efforts will be successful only when the various parties agree to negotiation. Until the parties are prepared to discuss the issues, a Geneva-type conference or any other initiative cannot be forced on them. As soon as there is any hope in this respect, there will be an opening for Canada, and indeed the other interested governments, to make a helpful contribution. All we can do in the meantime is to urge the parties to get together, but the idea that one could call upon a group of countries that are not involved in the dispute to settle the dispute is obviously unrealistic. There must be a disposition to negotiate and there must be a disposition to agree. In this case I can assure the House of the Canadian Government's desire to see this agony in Indochina come to an end as quickly as possible. We will spare no effort....
