

U.S. Invasion of Cambodia

any overtures to Great Britain? Have we sought to cash in on our special relationship with that country and with France to give them encouragement, to give them a good hard push, in the right direction, if that is what is needed?

What can we do on our own, besides the steps I have outlined? I suggest that the attitude expressed by the Secretary of State for External Affairs with respect to the I.C.C., for example, is not good enough. Although I recognize the difficulties which have been encountered I believe the hon. gentleman's attitude to be defeatist. Unquestionably, the I.C.C.'s chore has been difficult, frustrating and ineffective. There has been little glory to it and it is dirty slogging, especially when one considers the attitudes displayed at times by Poland and by our other partner, India. But we ought not to abandon the one channel of direct action which Canada possesses. The minister says we left because we were asked to go. Very well. But there is now a new government in Cambodia. Would it not be proper for Canada to approach this new government to see whether it would not accept, indeed, welcome, the I.C.C. back?

The I.C.C. will not be able to settle the whole business but it could make a useful contribution particularly if it could be established in a workable form. I believe we ought all, as Canadians, rather than indulge in condemnation, to concentrate our efforts on exploring methods and approaches which might be helpful in the circumstances of this tragedy. Canada dare not pass up the opportunity of even doing this much. We must not pass up any opportunity to persuade the countries involved and the international community generally to freeze the fighting and to get the talks started again. Of course, all this will be of no avail unless there is efficient machinery for seeing that what is decided will be carried out.

I want, now, to make four points in this discussion of the situation. I put them forward with considerable humility and great sympathy for all those involved. I suggest:

1. The terrible conflict in South Viet Nam must not be escalated; it must be isolated and brought to a halt.

2. Canada's fundamental approach must be to use every possible diplomatic and political opportunity which exists for restricting the expansion of the conflict.

3. We should demand an emergency session of the Security Council, asking it to set up,

under United Nations sponsorship, a new Geneva conference on Indo-China.

4. Simultaneously we should examine the possibility that a different government in Cambodia would be prepared to take a new approach to the International Control Commission, one which might allow it to work effectively, at least for the achievement of a limited purpose.

• (3:40 p.m.)

It is on this basis, with the hope that some of these suggestions may be constructive, that I put them forward.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I thought it might be useful to the House if I were to begin my remarks with a short historical background to the events that we are discussing this afternoon.

The 1954 Geneva Conference on Indo-China drew up cease-fire agreements for each of the three Indo-China states. As one of the countries invited to serve as a supervisory power on each of the three International Commission provided for in the cease-fire agreements, Canada undertook, together with India and Poland, to see whether or not the parties involved in the agreements properly implemented the terms of those agreements to which they had subscribed. In Cambodia these parties were the Cambodian national armed forces, on the one hand, and the Cambodian resistance forces and Vietnamese military units on the other.

The implementation of the 1954 cease-fire agreement for Cambodia proved to be a straightforward matter. The more purely military provisions were put into effect without too much difficulty and, with the Cambodian elections of 1955 over, the Canadian delegation urged that the commission should be disbanded. In Canada's opinion, the job for which the commission had been established had been completed. We were not, however, able to convince our Indian and Polish colleagues, particularly when it became clear that the Cambodian government wished to see the commission continue in being. So the commission remained in Cambodia with its personnel progressively reduced until by 1958 only a token staff was left.

Until about 1963 there was not much for the commission to do. The renewed conflict in Vietnam, however, began increasingly to be felt in Cambodia—often with tragic loss of Cambodian lives and property. As the situa-