

The CHAIRMAN: Two members have indicated they still have questions. Perhaps we can complete the evidence this morning. The first one is Mr. Asselin and then Mr. Klein.

(Translation)

Mr. MARTIAL ASSELIN (*Charlevoix*): Mr. Minister, to return to Mr. Pelletier's question if North Vietnam were to ask for non-military assistance, before granting this assistance would you have to consult the United States?

Mr. MARTIN (*Essex East*): No. I believe this is a decision for the Canadian Government. This is not a question of military assistance, but of medical supplies for the civilian population. The decision to grant or not to grant such assistance is a matter exclusively under Canadian jurisdiction.

Mr. ASSELIN (*Charlevoix*): In this case, since the United States is involved in the Vietnam conflict, would you not like to consult the United States before providing such assistance to North Vietnam, since it is, in fact, the enemy of the United States?

Mr. MARTIN (*Essex East*): When we decide to provide assistance to a country, the decision is made by the Canadian Government without consulting any other country. This does not mean that we do not attempt to explain the assistance we give to various countries for peaceful purposes. Last Tuesday in Paris, for instance, we consulted the representatives of a number of countries with a view to helping them find a solution to the problem of famine in India. But this is not the same type of consultation which you mean.

Mr. ASSELIN (*Charlevoix*): Mr. Minister, you said a moment ago that the government of North Vietnam had refused U Thant's plan, maintaining that the aggressors in this instance were the United States.

Mr. MARTIN (*Essex East*): Yes, Mr. Asselin.

Mr. ASSELIN (*Charlevoix*): What I would like to know is: by what right, under what principle of international law can the United States justify their presence in Vietnam?

Mr. MARTIN (*Essex East*): I have already answered that question, but I am quite willing to repeat it. This question was asked by Mr. Pelletier, I believe, and by Mr. Andras.

Under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, any country has the right to ask another country to come to its assistance for its defence. It is under the provisions of that Article that the United States, agreed in 1961, through the late President Kennedy, to establish a military force acting in an advisory capacity to the Vietnamese government. The United States and the Government of South Vietnam did not sign the 1954 Geneva Agreement.

Thirdly, according to the Commission's 1962 majority report, signed by India and Canada, the aggression had originally been committed by North Vietnam.

Mr. ASSELIN (*Charlevoix*): There is also another...

Mr. MARTIN (*Essex East*): This was shortly after the 1954 agreements.