

for many years. The cost of our contingent there, over and above pay allowances, has been \$6.5 million. We may reckon that is a small dollar cost in relation to the achievement, but the experience is still instructive as to the magnitude an involvement may take on when we enter on an overseas mission.

In 1964, for example, when this House was debating the sending of a peacekeeping force to Cyprus, the then secretary of state for external affairs was asked if the Canadian force would be in Cyprus any longer than a matter of months. He replied that the resolution provided for a limitation of three months. He went on to say that he suspected, of course, that in the light of events this would be open to review but that a limited period of three months was provided in the resolution. That was in 1964, and in 1973 we are still there. Of course, we should be there. However, I point to that experience to indicate the way in which we may enter into an overseas commitment believing it will be small in size and short in duration, but then be surprised by the way in which circumstances lead us on. That is one of the reasons why parliament, being the elected representative body of the nation as a whole, must have a voice—indeed a deciding voice—whenever there is proposed a long-term commitment of Canadian personnel overseas.

We recognize that the government had to act swiftly in this instance and it had to be free to act largely on its own in order to send a peace supervisory mission to Viet Nam. However, before the 60-day period, which is part of the government's arrangement, expires there will be adequate time for the government to come before parliament, to report to this House on what has happened in Viet Nam and to consult with parliament on the implications of a long-term commitment, if such is deemed necessary. I recognize that the government must have some kind of primacy in external affairs, a primacy which may not be granted in all areas. However, primacy does not mean monopoly. Parliament does have a role. That role must include consultation before any government undertakes a long-term commitment of our armed forces overseas.

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

**Mr. Stackhouse:** Indeed, the principle behind that which we are debating tonight goes back a long way in parliamentary history. The tension between the executive and the legislature over authority in foreign policy goes back at least to the Stuart kings of the seventeenth century. I suggest there might be some parallels between those kings and the present government. However, we believe, in the twentieth century, that it should be accepted as a commonly acknowledged principle that none of our armed forces will be committed for long term service overseas without the authority of parliament.

As support for that principle I could cite that eminent leader of Canadian public life of almost half a century ago, Arthur Meighen. May I, instead, repeat the words of another great prime minister, W. L. Mackenzie King who speaking in this House in 1938 said we may take the position that parliament will decide upon our course when and if an emergency arises, in the light of all the circumstances of the time. His critics may suggest that Prime Minister King used the doctrine of parliamentary

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supremacy in external affairs only when that suited his purposes. I think we must allow that any prime minister must adjust to circumstances. Of course, we have seen how a prime minister in the last three months can make a great many adjustments.

We recognize generally that there was something profound in the kind of policy Mr. King tried to enunciate, namely, his effort to assert the supremacy of parliament as a countervailing balance to what he feared would be the domination of the British cabinet, the League of Nations, or some other power outside Canada. That kind of hazard has largely passed. Unfortunately, we are still in danger of being dominated unnecessarily, against the interest of the people of this country, by our own cabinet.

**An hon. Member:** Right on.

**Mr. Stackhouse:** We must fear the danger of the cabinet thinking that it has an absolute monopoly in external affairs. In the interests of the people of this country we must assert the role of parliament in external affairs.

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

**Mr. Stackhouse:** After all, not only do the people pay with money; they may pay with blood when we enter into commitments beyond our shores.

In the United States, for example, the president having assumed an absolute control over foreign policy and military policy, a control so great that the checks and balances asserted historically by the United States Senate have now all but been eclipsed, the United States government has been able to send over half a million troops to Viet Nam to wage brutal war, without needing to obtain any congressional declaration of war, without seeking any greater support than the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, and without needing to acknowledge even that there was a war in Viet Nam until peace was signed.

We would not in any way suggest that the government of Canada is anything but circumspect as it assumes this new role in Viet Nam. However, we suggest that the government of Canada would show a great deal of prudence if it were prepared to come to parliament and submit the results of the venture which it has undertaken in the name of Canada. When the 60-day period is over, or even before it is over, I hope it will seek authorization from parliament for what it would wish to undertake in the future.

We think, as challenges arise in this troubled part of the world and as they may develop in other troubled parts of the world, that parliament, as Prime Minister Mackenzie King said a generation ago, ought to decide our course. Twice in the last quarter of a century it has been Canada's role to send peace supervisory missions overseas and this has been done by order in council.

**Mr. Sharp:** But not the ICC.

**Mr. Stackhouse:** In both instances there was debate in this House following such order. We submit, Mr. Speaker, that that kind of debate, that kind of thorough discussion is fundamental to the right conduct of Canada's role in the world at large.