

Tabling of Reports

The Chair is quite prepared to leave this matter in abeyance for the time being in the hope, as I have said, that by referring the matter of substance to the committee on procedure we might in due course resolve the other matter, which I really do not think should be made a tragedy. That is my view, and I feel very confident that all hon. members will want to co-operate with the Chair in this respect so we can get on with the business of the House, which I understand is very important business today, rather than spending the day on whether a word is parliamentary or unparliamentary.

I insist on my feeling that certain words have to be judged by the Chair and that it is the duty of the Chair to take action. I suggest it is the duty of individual members to co-operate with the Chair in ensuring that we can proceed on a reasonable basis, observing the proprieties of this chamber. I seek the co-operation of all hon. members, and I am confident that they will extend that co-operation to me as they have in the past.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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[Translation]

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT

TABLING OF REPORT OF COMMISSION FOR PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

Mr. Speaker: It is my duty, pursuant to section 19 of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act, chapter E-2, Revised Statutes of Canada 1970, to lay upon the table of the House a certified copy of the report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission for the province of Alberta, 1973.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE****FISHERIES AND FORESTRY**

Second report, in both official languages, of Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry—Mr. Béchard (Bonaventure-Îles de la Madeleine).

MISCELLANEOUS ESTIMATES

Third report of Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates—Mr. Leblanc (Laurier).

[Editor's Note: For text of above reports, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

[Mr. Speaker.]

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**VIET NAM—DECISION TO WITHDRAW CANADIAN ELEMENT FROM INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF CONTROL AND SUPERVISION**

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, speaking in the House of Commons on March 27 I said that the government had decided to extend Canadian participation in the International Commission of Control and Supervision until May 31 and that before that date the government would decide whether to remain or to withdraw.

At that time I said, as will be found on page 2630 of *Hansard*, that we would withdraw our contingent by June 30 unless there had been a substantial improvement in the situation or some signs of an imminent political agreement between the two South Vietnamese parties.

The decision is a serious one and the government so regards it. Canada has a reputation, I believe, for responsibility in international affairs. We have served in more peacekeeping and peace observer roles than any other country and we remain ready to serve wherever we can be effective. We have also in the course of this varied and extensive experience, including 19 years in Indo-China, learned something about the conditions that are necessary to success in peacekeeping and peace observer activities.

The House will recall the efforts that the government made to establish conditions which would help to improve the prospects for the successful functioning of the International Commission of Control and Supervision provided for in the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam. I shall not repeat them now. The record of Canada's approach to the question of participation in the ICCS up to the end of March, 1973, is to be found in a White Paper that I shall table at the conclusion of this statement.

Stated briefly, what we sought to ensure was that the new International Commission would be an impartial, fact-finding body, supported by the parties to the peace agreement, with sufficient freedom of access to enable it to ascertain the facts about any alleged breach of the agreement and reporting quickly not only to the parties to the agreement but also to the international community as a whole. While we did not achieve all our purposes, I think it is fair to say that we helped to effect some improvements, at least in form.

What we could not ensure, and what the ICCS could not ensure, was peace in Viet Nam. That depends on the parties to the peace agreement and not on the ICCS. Nor can Canada alone ensure that the ICCS fulfils its function of peace observing and reporting as provided for in the peace agreement. That too depends on the parties to the agreement and on the other member delegations of the commission.

Notwithstanding our hesitations and doubts we accepted membership for a trial period of 60 days. At the end of that first 60 days our hesitations and doubts had been reinforced but we were urged by many countries to show patience. So we agreed to another two-month period which is not coming to an end.