

in the International Commission. This will be one of the prime factors in determining whether the Commission is playing or can play an effective role in restoring peace to Vietnam.

We must now examine very carefully the political authority and the reporting arrangements that have been established to determine whether, in our judgment, they have a reasonable prospect of operating effectively. We must also relate these arrangements to the effectiveness of the International Commission on the ground. The Canadian delegation, under the direction of Ambassador Gauvin, is making a tremendous effort to see that the Commission works. But we cannot do it alone, and disturbing developments in Vietnam compel us to question whether the International Commission will be allowed to function in a way that would justify our continued participation. Perhaps -- and I cannot say that I am very confident -- the discussions in Paris will result in increased support by all the participants at the Conference for the objectives we have in mind. Over the next few weeks, therefore, we will need to assess the relevant factors very carefully. It may be that at some time I should pay a visit to Vietnam and see the situation on the ground for myself. If so, I would invite members of the Opposition to come with me, but that is a decision that has not yet definitely been made. I will report to Cabinet on the results of this assessment and the Government will then be in a position to make its decision.

Perhaps I should emphasize again that the peace in Vietnam depends upon the parties to the peace agreement itself. The International Commission can help by investigation and observation and reporting but it cannot keep the peace. The Commission is not an essential element. It can be of help only if the parties -- and that means all of them -- wish to see the Commission function.

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