

fundamental importance. Secondly, the People's Republic of China has been invited to participate. This invitation acknowledges, albeit very late, that China has a stake in the future of Indo-China. Thirdly, Canada and the other three countries of the International Commission of Control and Supervision will be at the conference. Thus we have an opportunity to participate in decisions relative to the reconciliation and healing of a country which is exhausted by almost 30 years of fighting.

One of the most perceptive comments I have seen about the matter of our role was made by John Holmes, writing in the *Toronto Star* on January 24 last. Mr. Holmes was an official of the Department of External Affairs and has experience in Indo-China. He wrote:

After almost 19 years, the parties are back to an agreement which looks a lot like that reached in Geneva in 1954.

The hope is that everyone concerned, the great powers and the Indo-Chinese peoples, have digested a basic lesson about the validity of war and violence as instruments of policy. We have had a confrontation of two concepts of the just war: on the one hand the war of national liberation and on the other the principle of collective defence against aggression.

Both concepts have their place but not when they are applied fanatically, simple-mindedly, and without discrimination. One side set out to overthrow the armistice and achieve its ends by guerrilla terror. The other responded with gross overconfidence in its ability to apply disciplined military force to defend a country whose internal conflicts it could not understand.

Mr. Speaker, anybody who wants to know the tragic story of this should read a book, which is perhaps the best one written on Viet Nam, called "Fire in the Lake" by Frances Fitzgerald. The author writes not only of the terrible destruction of a country but of 1,000 or 2,000 years of its civilization. The article by Mr. Holmes continues:

The concepts seemed all very well in their respective textbooks, but the theories were mechanical not human. War fed on war. The sense of purpose was lost in insensate escalation.

That the lesson may have been learned in Washington, Moscow, Peking, Hanoi and Saigon is our ground for hope. This armistice presumably has a better chance of holding than that of 1954 because the chastened powers may be more grimly determined to maintain it. Unless they do, there is no role for an international supervisory commission.

The major lesson of the war is that foreigners, either with guns or with white armbands, cannot lead or drive the Vietnamese people to live with each other.

Mr. Speaker, this is a theme on which I want to make a few remarks about what I should like to call the internationalization of a war that has had tragically little internationalization up until now. No purpose would be served if I were to list the grim statistics of Viet Nam. Death and devastation no longer seem to shock a world which has body count totals tattooed into its very soul. Philosophers and poets can jog the conscience of men about what horror war has wrought in a cause which has been long since drained of meaning to all except the beleaguered Vietnamese.

I seek for Canada no ideological stance. We lost our virginity on the old International Control Commission when, perhaps unwittingly, we allowed ourselves to become identified with one side in the struggle. We cannot regain what we have lost, but we do have an opportunity to underpin the ongoing and continuing authority of the United Nations as a legitimate peacekeeper. There must be no slip up this time, Mr. Speaker.

### *Viet Nam*

This is what the debate is all about. Observing and reporting are not enough. After all, that role—this is in no way meant to disparage the Canadians who are on the spot—can be filled by the wire services and broadcast networks. If we were just observing the next withdrawal and the return of prisoners, one could say that such activities have been carried out for 20 years by the wire services and various broadcasting agencies. There is a terrible litany of observations; they have had decades of experience at observing.

• (1750)

What we must do is seize the chance offered by the conference to initiate certain objectives. The real question, after all, is not the interpretation of what to my simple mind is an Alice in Wonderland protocol and agreement. The real question is: Will there be peace in Indo-China at last?

During the next 60 days the United States will withdraw her troops from Viet Nam and, in return, American prisoners of war will be released. This is a bilateral bargain; this is peace with honour. One need not be very perceptive to predict that America will be extremely reluctant to renew her entanglement in Viet Nam. Now that the Secretary General of the United Nations will be a member of the conference, the Security Council can be the continuing political authority to which the ICCS can report. All the powers who want or have a vested interest in peace are on the Security Council. It is to the United Nations and its specialized agencies that we must look for leadership in the massive job of rehabilitation in Indo-China. I submit we must substitute statistics of tons of seed and fertilizer for tons of bombs.

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

**Mr. Fairweather:** We must transform body counts into lists of men—

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

**Mr. Fairweather:** May I say this, Mr. Speaker; if man ever again is foolish enough to be engaged in war, I hope the scandalous term "body count" will be exorcised from our language. We must transform body counts into lists of men, women and children supplied with prosthetic limbs and rebuilt faces. We must reunite families and provide homes for refugees. We must do all these things, and more, through the agencies in the world already established to deal with these things. And thank God they are ready. I am referring to the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the Commission on Refugees, the United Nations Development Program, and even to the World Bank. Elections, I submit, must be supervised by a polyglot spectrum of the earth's peoples. Africans and Asians and others have a role to play here. Colour should mean more than ideology in choosing countries for various roles for ensuring political stability and peace.

Thousands of South Vietnamese civilians, Mr. Speaker, whose offence is that of being opposed to the government have been imprisoned for as long as American prisoners of war. The Americans are now to be released under the agreement signed also by Saigon. We have been reminded