

Mr. Sharp: Why just "continuing"?

Mr. Lewis: Parliament ought to be the body to decide what happens after the 60 days—not merely the decision to participate, but also the decision to withdraw. If such a decision is made, it ought to be made by parliament.

Mr. Fraser: One is included in the other.

Mr. Lewis: I don't think it is included in the other but, if it is, why not spell it out and then we can all agree? I appeal to the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) to yield to the appeal made by the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe and have this acceptance of the responsibility of government to come before this parliament, in order to get parliamentary approval for either continuing participation or withdrawal, before it takes either of those steps. I appeal to the minister to accept the supremacy of parliament in this instance and to make the change unanimous on the part of all members of this House.

• (1630)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lewis: Before I sit down, Mr. Speaker, I shall suggest the subamendment which occurred to me as the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe read his amendment.

Like every member of this House, Mr. Speaker, and every Canadian, my colleagues and I are uneasy about the role which Canada now plays. I have read and reread the agreements establishing the alleged cease-fire and the protocols attached to it. No one who has studied the documents can fail to have any other feeling than that the situation is dangerous and precarious. I share with the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe the feeling that it is dangerous; indeed, the minister kept emphasizing that he appreciated it was dangerous. I do not think any purpose can be served in blaming any part of the Canadian people, whether in government or outside, for the situation in Viet Nam.

Some of us believed that the agreement would never be signed and wondered whether it could be signed under the circumstances; but when it was signed, the world breathed a sigh of relief that the war in Viet Nam might now come to an end. Mr. Speaker, unlike members of the Conservative party in this House, unlike members of the Liberal party in this House and unlike members of the Social Credit party in this House, we in the New Democratic Party always condemned the war in Viet Nam and condemned the Americans for their barbaric involvement in it. On most occasions we have stood alone in our condemnation of that morally indefensible war. Because of that, we feel that the very signing of the agreement is of value to the world, of value not only for the people in Viet Nam but for the people of the world.

During the question period yesterday I was surprised to hear the right hon. gentleman from Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) interject. I am trying to find his exact words in *Hansard*, but if I paraphrase him I am sure he will correct me if I am wrong. I heard him ask if the minister will now find out that the agreement in Viet Nam is the Munich of 1973. I was sad to hear that comment by the

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right hon. gentleman because I am certain that he is as pleased as anyone in Canada that the war in Viet Nam is over. Because of his position in this House, and as a former prime minister of this country, he cannot be unhappy that there is at least a chance that it is over.

Mr. Diefenbaker: So there was a chance in 1938. I point out to the hon. gentleman that in his last few words he has indicated that he, too, is doubtful whether the agreement entered into will be effective.

Mr. Lewis: We are all doubtful, Mr. Speaker. I now have the words used by the right hon. gentleman yesterday. They appear on page 825 of *Hansard* at the bottom of the left hand column:

Mr. Speaker, is the minister coming to the point of concluding that the agreement made will, indeed, be the Munich of 1973?

What was wrong with Munich in 1938, Mr. Speaker, was not merely that the agreement did not work but that the world was sold to the most abominable dictator in the history of mankind. That was what was wrong in 1938.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Today it is Communism, and that you do not very often attack.

Mr. Lewis: If the right hon. gentleman is suggesting that the United States government should not have made the agreement with Communist North Viet Nam and should have continued the war and continued bombing South and North Viet Nam, which is what had happened, all I can say is that I am sad that the right hon. gentleman should take that kind of reactionary and antihuman stand at this time. I have no more use for Communism than he has, but the important thing in Viet Nam was to bring this war to an end. The first step was to have the American forces and other foreign forces withdrawn from Viet Nam, both north and south, and then leave it to Viet Nam, to decide its fate. I hope, with every other member of this House and every Canadian, that they will decide their future peacefully, that they will find ways of having genuinely free elections. Whatever they decide, and with all my heart I hope it will be in the peaceful way, I say that the first thing that this agreement about Viet Nam should accomplish is to give the people of Viet Nam the opportunity to decide their own future.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lewis: That would be the first step toward peace in Indo-China. I hope they decide for democracy; I hope they decide for independence from any bloc, but it is time that they had the right to make their own decision. Because this is the major and desirable result of the peace treaties, I welcome them.

It is assumed by some, Mr. Speaker, that all the violations that are now taking place and that may take place will be the actions of the North Vietnamese or the Viet Cong in South Viet Nam. Frankly, I am not convinced that this is necessarily the case. I have no reason to believe that the totalitarian regime of President Thieu is any kinder to the people of South Viet Nam than the totalitarian regime of Ho Chi Minh is in North Viet Nam. History has shown that the so-called elections carried on by President Thieu in South Viet Nam were no more free