

U.S. Invasion of Cambodia

a productive way. But I urge that the Secretary of State for External Affairs and his colleagues utilize every prospect of initiative, including the full utilization of the ICC rather than cutting back at this time. I also urge that they pursue vigorously the possibilities of any diplomatic initiative leading to some kind of an international conference to regulate this eruption which is causing so much concern to all of us and, indeed, to the whole world.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately we did not have an advance copy of the statement made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs. We had to follow it by ear. I am sure all members agree with the minister when he said that we listened to the speech of President Nixon last night with anxiety and that we all regret the action which has been taken in the form of military intervention by the United States and South Vietnamese troops in Cambodia.

The minister has detailed the steps which led to the withdrawal of the International Control Commission because of their failure to insulate Cambodia. The fact is, of course, that the International Control Commission, particularly in Viet Nam, has been totally disregarded by both sides. This can be seen by anyone who takes the trouble to read the reports of that commission.

I think the important thing at the moment is to ascertain the reasons for the military intervention at this time. The President of the United States said in his television speech last night that North Vietnamese troops and the Viet Cong have been in Cambodia for years. What is the particular reason for action at this time? It is significant that the Cambodian government spokesman in Phnom-Penh said yesterday that the government had not approved the South Vietnamese-United States intervention and added that Cambodia is a neutral country. In Washington Thay Sok, the ranking diplomat at the Cambodian embassy, said:

There is no agreement between Phnom-Penh and the United States to bomb Cambodian territory. We sent a protest to the U.S. government over a new bombing incident only last week.

● (11:20 a.m.)

So what was held out originally as an intervention at the request of the Cambodian government would now appear on the face of these reports to be a unilateral intervention. This is something which it seems to me is

most serious. We have a special concern in this matter. Yesterday the Secretary of State for External Affairs made a comment that I had not protested about Vietnamese troops being in Cambodia. I would point out that we do not have a defence-sharing arrangement with North Viet Nam, nor are we selling weapons to North Viet Nam, nor do we have North Vietnamese bomber bases in Canada.

An hon. Member: Thank God.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): We are involved, whether we want to be or not, in any action which the United States government takes and in this case, unless there are facts which have not come to light, it would appear there has been a unilateral military intervention in Cambodia without either the approval or the consent of the Cambodian government—an intervention which the President said in his television address was to make sure that the United States did not become a second-rate power and that it did not suffer its first defeat in its 190-year proud history.

I think the government must do more than make a statement here on motions. I hope there will be an opportunity for a full debate on this question so that the Secretary of State and his colleagues can tell us what initiatives they intend to take.

During the past few weeks I have asked the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Prime Minister whether the Canadian government would follow the lead of the government of France in asking for a reconvening of the Geneva conference. I drew attention to the fact that Mr. Jacob Malik, the Soviet ambassador to the United Nations, had said that the Soviet Union would be interested in having the conference reconvened. It seems to me that this was the time to have seized the initiative and to have joined with other countries in pressing Britain and the Soviet Union, the joint chairmen of the Geneva conference, to reconvene the meetings in the hope that some settlement could be reached which would prevent the Viet Nam war becoming an Indo-China war.

Unfortunately, the only reply I got from both the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs was that Canada was willing to participate. Canada was not prepared, apparently, to take any initiative or to express publicly its desire for such a conference. When I suggested we might attempt to have this matter placed before the United Nations again, the Secretary of