

in the way of ending the fighting in Vietnam. No Canadian would have wished his country to do that.

We therefore decided to take part initially, and make available to the new commission the number of Canadian observers required by the agreements to meet the time-table set by the parties -- in short, during that initial period, do all that we could to discharge the obligations of membership. But we were not prepared to commit Canada to open-ended membership before we were satisfied that Canada's pre-conditions for membership had been reasonably met. I should like to add parenthetically that these pre-conditions on membership had been enunciated by myself on behalf of the Government and by the Prime Minister on a number of occasions, not only in recent weeks but really over a long period of time when we had been asked to consider the possibility that somewhere in the world we might have to participate in some supervisory operations. Indeed, at the time we debated in this House the question of the bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong, I laid down very clearly the kinds of pre-condition we had in mind. I believe it was useful for us to have done so, and I believe that that has had some salutary effect upon the forms of the agreements entered into by the parties and upon the form of the protocol relating to the supervisory commission.

Our participation, which will be for the first 60 days, will enable us to evaluate the arrangements made for international observation and reporting and to learn what scope there is for mediation. I must make it clear that Canada's pre-conditions were not mere gestures of reluctance; they were the product of long and sometimes bitter experience, and they were an effort to point the way toward effective international observation and reporting. Indeed, I think the pre-conditions that were established will help whatever other supervisory activities may be authorized by anyone anywhere in the world in future. They are the sorts of condition we have laid down before the United Nations when we have talked about peacekeeping activities and how they might be organized.

We shall see, in the first 60 days, whether the arrangements can be improved. In particular, we shall see whether a continuing political authority is provided. We shall see whether the contracting parties are determined to make the agreements work. We shall see how our associates in the new commission view the responsibilities of our collective role. If we conclude that Canada's conditions are adequately met and that Canada's continued participation would be effective, we may decide to accept full continued membership, with or without reservations. If we conclude that Canada's conditions are inadequately met or that we are likely to be drawn again into an exercise in futility and frustration, as the previous commission had become, we shall decide to withdraw. Whichever decision is made will be conveyed to this House.

To avoid misunderstanding, let me add this: we are not going to tackle those first 60 days of the commission's existence in a spirit of diffident and passive caution. We are going to make this commission work, if it can be made to work. Within its properly limited functions, we shall try to make it an active and inquisitive commission and an open, hard-working and