

the level of that terror did not abate. And let us also remember that, when the government of President Diem was forcibly overthrown in 1963, it was not overthrown by men or groups whose loyalty was pledged to the Viet Cong.

This is not to discount or to downgrade the hold which the Viet Cong has by one means or another been able to establish over sections of South Vietnam and its people; it is merely to suggest that we should be entirely mistaken if we regarded the Viet Cong as embodying a consensus of dissent in Vietnam. So far as we know, none of the major groupings in South Vietnam, the Buddhists, the Catholics, the trade unions, the intellectuals, the students, are significantly represented in the Viet Cong movement. Certainly, there is nothing to suggest that there is any basis for the claim of the Viet Cong to be the sole legitimate representative of the people of South Vietnam.

Second, there is the matter of outside intervention. Admittedly this is a difficult situation to disentangle in a divided country. After all, it is often argued: What is the sense in speaking of intervention in a context where Vietnamese are involved on both sides? I suggest to the House that, whatever the circumstances in which these dividing-lines were drawn, they have come to reflect political realities which it will take time to alter. They neither justify nor diminish the fact of aggression.

What is happening in Vietnam may not be aggression in the classical sense of the term but it is aggression all the same, and it is aggression carried out in this case under the guise of a war of liberation. The aim of that aggression is to establish in South Vietnam a form of political organization which we have no evidence to suggest that the people of South Vietnam would freely choose for themselves.

We have said that in principle we appreciate and support the purposes and objectives of the policy of the United States. This was affirmed by the Prime Minister when the matter was first discussed in this House. We have said that because, as the Prime Minister put it, we cannot in this nuclear world of ours "afford any permissible kinds of international violence" of the kind by which the North Vietnamese are trying to achieve their objectives in the South. We have said this because we are of the view that the people of South Vietnam must be left to work out their own future free from outside pressure or intervention. We are not disposed to deny to the people of the South the right of self-determination which we have conceded to others in accordance with the solemn principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Third, there is an even more broad perspective, one from which I think the course of developments in Vietnam has to be viewed. I do not want to urge on the House the "domino" or any other currently fashionable theory. But I do suggest to the House that we cannot look at the situation in Vietnam in isolation. In neighbouring Laos, the country is to all intents and purposes partitioned. The part that is under Pathet Lao control is being freely used for the movement of men and materials from North to South Vietnam. Members of the armed forces of North Vietnam have been engaged in open attacks against the armed forces of the Royal Government of Laos. All this is in clear contravention of the undertakings solemnly given in Geneva in 1962; and Canada was a member of that Conference.