

*U.S. Invasion of Cambodia*

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, may I be permitted to continue my statement?

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** If you do not even know that—

**Mr. Sharp:** Perhaps my right hon. friend has not been listening to the number of statements I have made in the House.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I asked a simple question which should have been answered.

**Mr. Sharp:** Ever since the conflict began in South Viet Nam, one of our objectives as a member of the commission was to try to insulate Cambodia from the effects of the Viet Nam war. To achieve this we tried to have the International Control Commission consider a Cambodian government request in 1966 to have the Control Commission supervise Cambodian ports and borders.

In 1967 we tried to have the commission strengthened by having it accept a United States offer of helicopters which Prince Sihanouk suggested the United States should provide for the International Control Commission. We tried in 1968 to have the commission undertake investigations into the presence of North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces in the very area of Parrot's Beak, now the subject of military operations, on the basis of prime facie evidence provided by the Cambodian government and Prince Sihanouk himself.

Had we been successful in convincing our commission colleagues to take these measures, the International Control Commission might at least have been able to provide some warning of the magnitude of the Vietnamese Communist intervention in Cambodia which has elicited the present United States and South Vietnamese response and might even have helped avoid the situation developing to the present stage.

I certainly hope the situation in Cambodia will not now be allowed to develop as did the situation in Viet Nam. I deeply regret that the United States government has considered it necessary to take this step, but we are somewhat reassured that President Nixon has given an assurance of the limited nature of these operations and that United States forces will be withdrawn once their immediate objectives are achieved. It would be tragic, and I am sure this view is shared not only by all members of this House but by the American people themselves, if these operations were to result in a further escalation of the conflict in Indo-China.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, we must all be very concerned about the developments to which the Secretary of State for External Affairs has referred and the announcement made by the President of the United States last evening concerning armed intervention in Cambodia. I am quite disappointed that the minister has not been able to tell the House this morning of any initiatives the government of Canada has in mind to be helpful in this situation.

Yesterday he indicated, and I agreed, that before the President spoke it would be premature for the Canadian government to decide what initiatives, if any, it might take. But the President has spoken and, indeed, announced somewhat more drastic action on the part of the United States than had been contemplated or expected up to that time.

I suggest that the government of Canada should not abandon hope for a conference like the Geneva conference. I am not in a position to know fully what difficulties there may be in this regard, but it seems to me it is of the utmost importance that every prospect be explored that may achieve some kind of international regulation of this situation which may very well escalate despite the hopes of the President and despite the hope expressed by the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I therefore urge the government of Canada to take the initiative in association with other countries that are concerned to see whether there is a possibility of a conference, along the lines of the Geneva conference that took place earlier, in order to try to find a solution to this difficulty.

I regret also that the government of Canada has chosen this time to cut back on its International Control Commission commitment. I recognize there have been difficulties in this regard. The Secretary of State for External Affairs referred to them this morning. But here again it is important that we retain and pursue every prospect of being helpful.

I do not know what efforts the government of Canada made in the past within the International Control Commission, other than those mentioned by the minister, to protest the presence of North Vietnamese troops in Cambodia. Yesterday the Secretary of State for External Affairs said this was a definite fact. As I say, this relates to the past. I am not minimizing the difficulties of the efforts of the government of Canada within the ICC as they relate to the past; I am not minimizing the difficulties of continuing to use the ICC in