

But I do not deplore the fact that contingency plans have been made to remove our troops in the event that hostilities are not to come to an end. There is no doubt that if hostilities do erupt beyond the point of control, beyond the point where the safety of Canadians and of other members of the supervisory commission can no longer be guaranteed by those who have undertaken to assure their safety, they should be removed.

Nobody would argue against the commitment of planes, ships and any other means necessary to get our troops out of Viet Nam in the event that that is required. What is regretted is the displacement to that side of the Pacific of an armed warship for the purpose, to use the words of the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Richardson), of an extended training cruise. Why could we not have sent a couple of 707s over there, or a couple of Hercules, to be located at strategic points? I will never know the reasons for sending that ship.

Like most Canadians, I remain deeply concerned about peace. There is not a member of this party that is not concerned about peace. But our concern runs a little bit deeper than apparently the concern of the government. This afternoon we heard words that were sincerely uttered, that were considered words. I quote from the remarks of our lead-off speaker in this debate, the distinguished member for Saint-Hyacinthe, that it is sad but true that our present situation in Viet Nam is precarious, and that in contradiction of his own statements laying out the ground rules for Canadian involvement, the Secretary of State for External Affairs made the one decision he obviously did not want to make.

There are two different points at issue here. The lessons we learned in our history of peacekeeping operations around the world have not been made any clearer than they were during our involvement in the ICC. There it was made abundantly clear that you cannot operate without clear direction as to what you are doing, the purpose for which you are there and the body to whom you should report. Even now we have not arrived at a satisfactory authority to which we can report. I hope that in 30 days' time we will be able to sort out this final problem.

Again I trust that the government will give the House an opportunity to speak tonight, to enlarge upon the things that we would like to see Canada's representatives discuss at meetings of the commission, things such as the plight of the refugees, the plight of the children, the restoration of North Viet Nam. All of these things we must participate in, and forcefully. We are in Viet Nam to oversee the truce.

• (2150)

It is clear now to the world, I suppose, that North Viet Nam and South Viet Nam are indeed one country and that the demarcation line was a temporary instrument. If this is true, we are not in Viet Nam only to observe cease-fire arrangements but to help reunite a nation, to help re-establish its people, to show that we are concerned, are willing and indeed want to help, and that if we do not help it will be on our conscience.

The interjections this evening from the Secretary of State for External Affairs were highly partisan and not called for in the context of this debate. There is not one

Viet Nam

man or woman in this House or in this country who does not share the ideals of those who would help to restore, and want to restore, a lasting peace to Viet Nam, who does not want to participate in the restoration of that country and the rehabilitation of its children, its institutions and its systems of democratic government or whatever type of government they choose.

We are not there as observers of the cease-fire alone; this must be kept in mind no matter what we do. Every act and every thought that is voiced by Canadians in that country will be watched and listened to. As has been said, they bear a great burden not only to observe the truce, the cease-fire, but as well in the role of men of good will working toward a lasting peace in that country. That is why the government, in the next four or five minutes, should permit this matter to come to a vote.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Forrestall: Let the people of this nation lend their strength and support to the government in this matter; let them express their will. We are asking only that the matter come back to the House prior to the expiration of the 60-day notice so that it may be debated. The government's failure to do that can only be construed as contempt for the voice of the people of this country who in their hearts all welcome the attempts at peace in Viet Nam and the role of the Canadian forces in helping to bring that about. Given the guidance and strength of this House, I think the troops that we have in Viet Nam will be the stronger.

Some hon. Members: Question.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I find it extremely unfortunate, as I wanted to exercise my privilege, which is equal to that of any other member, that I cannot say at great length how happy I am to see the end of that terrible conflict in Viet Nam. I would have liked to give some background of Canada's participation in the International Control Commission. I would have also liked to inform the House about the various steps that some Liberal members, with the support of colleagues from other parties, have taken.

As for myself, I have brought my indirect contribution by helping young draft dodgers who believed that this war was immoral take advantage of this haven that Canada could appear to be at this time. I am referring to American draft dodgers whom we have welcomed to this country.

Mr. Speaker, I would have liked to elaborate on this and explain that I, a pro-American, have contacted the United States ambassador, for instance, last week to ask him to inform the White House of the happiness that I felt at seeing President Nixon take a historic step by ending the war in Viet Nam, and ask him also to consider the possibility, from now till the end of his term of office, of showing generosity and allowing these young Americans to return home.