

we have no reason to doubt their validity. On the other hand, we can readily understand that other countries differently situated from Canada could come to quite different conclusions. We respect their points of view and hope that they will understand ours.

Canada was invited to this conference as a member of the International Commission of Control and Supervision and its participation now and in any final act or declaration is linked to our continued participation in the International Commission of Control and Supervision. It follows, therefore, that a cessation of Canadian participation in the International Commission of Control and Supervision would also mean a termination of any other Canadian responsibilities that might arise out of either the agreement and protocols or any acts or declarations emanating from this conference.

I have asked the head of our delegation in Saigon, who happens like myself, to be chairman at the present time, to give me an interim report on the work of the International Commission of Control and Supervision and the state of affairs in respect to the implementation of the agreement and protocols.

The report that I received late last week from the head of the Canadian delegation made two points very clearly: first, the ceasefire has not been effective throughout South Viet Nam, and, second, the four-party joint military commission has not operated effectively. Both these factors have seriously impaired the Commission's ability to meet its obligations.

With respect to the ceasefire, it is evident from this report that the Vietnamese parties are still engaged in hostile activities related to efforts by one side or the other to enlarge its areas of control. The Commission has received numerous complaints from the four parties alleging violations of the ceasefire. In a number of cases investigations have been ordered but, at this early stage, we have been obliged to settle for investigations of a more limited scope than that envisaged in the agreement, debate within the commission over what the commission is empowered to investigate and at whose request, delays on the part of the four-party joint military commission in establishing itself in the field, and the conditions of insecurity prevailing in the countryside as a result of continued hostilities—all these have militated against the commission's ability to take decisive action in investigating most ceasefire violations. After receiving a series of general complaints alleging ceasefire violations, the commission issued a strong appeal to the parties to respect the ceasefire. This appeal on February 16 predated by one day an appeal by the four-party joint military commission to the same effect.

The delay in the four-party joint military commission in becoming fully effective has presented the International Commission with serious problems in meeting its obligations with respect to the deployment of teams in the field. The Commission's regional headquarters teams were deployed on February 5, several days after the deadline imposed upon us. On February 20, the commission decided to deploy its teams at the subregional level. In addition, the commission has decided to deploy its teams to points of entry into South Viet Nam to control the import of

armaments and other military material, as well as four teams to observe the withdrawal of United States forces and other forces allied with the Republic of Viet Nam, from South Viet Nam. Every effort is being made by the Canadian delegation to ensure that teams in the regions and at points of entry are deployed within the deadline established by the agreement, that is to say, by February 27. Whether we succeed in meeting this deadline will depend, as everything will depend on the ability of the four parties to afford the necessary co-operation. We have however taken the position that the inability of the four party joint military commission to function smoothly should not necessarily be permitted to bring a halt to the attempts of the International Commission to meet its obligations.

We have been pleased to note the progress of the exchange of prisoners-of-war and foreign civilian personnel. This has been an operation in which the four parties, despite some initial difficulties, have exhibited an ability to cooperate and coordinate their activities. We can only hope that the cooperative spirit that has characterized this operation will be extended to the implementation of all other provisions of the agreement.

Simultaneously with its attempts to deal with substantive issues and to deploy its field machinery, the commission has been engaged in setting up its headquarters in Saigon, establishing its procedures, securing support facilities, and organizing a secretariat. This has been a complex and lengthy process which has not yet been completed, despite concentrated effort. Among the difficulties the commission has encountered in this area of its work is the fact that neither the agreement nor its protocols made provision for a secretariat, even though the necessity of establishing one was obvious. Personnel additional to the ceilings established in the protocol will be required if delegates are to be in a position to staff the secretariat adequately.

Fellow delegates, this, then, is the Canadian view of the status of the International Commission of Control and Supervision as of the last day or so. There are continuing problems of implementation and there remains the matter of a reporting authority for the Commission and its members. Implementation is the responsibility of the parties to the agreement assisted as best it can by the International Commission of Control and Supervision. However, the matter of providing an adequate international political authority as a basis for the operation and reporting of the International Commission of Control and Supervision and its members is clearly the main responsibility of this conference. My delegation will spare no effort in helping to achieve this objective on which we think so much depends. Thank you.