

Such a decision would be a very sad one for my government to have to make. All Canadians have taken justifiable pride in the manner in which the Armed Forces of Canada in particular have contributed to peacekeeping operations through out the world. It would be a bitter disappointment to them and to us to have to terminate our participation unilaterally. But I am satisfied that no Canadian would wish to see our representatives placed in the position of having to choose between suppressing relevant information or accepting full and direct national responsibility for the possible consequences of transmitting it under the existing arrangements. Even less would the Canadian people wish to see our delegation stand idly by, as Canadian delegations in Indo-China have had to do in the past, while agreements they are supposed to supervise are disregarded.

I am hopeful that the new agreement will succeed if there is a desire on the part of those present to help make it succeed and to involve themselves in the process. If I am wrong we shall have to arrange for the orderly transfer of our International Commission of Control and Supervision responsibilities to some other government. In doing so we would not be suggesting that our partners in the International Commission or a potential successor would be less sensitive or less alert to the problems that could arise than we were. We reached our own conclusions on peace-keeping in Viet-Nam some years ago and 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 cease-fire 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 Commissions ability to meet its obligations.

With respect to the cease-fire, it is evident from this report that the Viet Nameese parties are still engaged in hostile activities related to efforts by one side or the other to enlarge its areas of control. The Commission