

I met separately with the Foreign Ministers of Greece and Turkey, both before and during the meetings. I listened to their views and pointed out to them my grave concern. I can say that these preliminary and other discussions were very helpful in furthering mutual understanding of our various preoccupations.

Hon. Members have already seen my references to relations between Greece and Turkey and to the Cyprus situation in the conference statement which the Prime Minister tabled on May 15. Other foreign ministers also expressed concern that the solidarity and strength of the alliance should not be prejudiced by a deterioration in relations between Greece and Turkey, and spoke in support of the United Nations operation there. I believe it will be a matter of pride to Members of this House that practically every foreign minister who took part in the discussion referred to Canada's participation not only in peace keeping in Cyprus but in practically every other peace-keeping operation under the auspices of the United Nations.

It was agreed after some discussion that the Secretary-General of NATO should keep in touch, pursuant to recommendations made by the Committee of Three in 1956, with Greece and Turkey in order to be available to assist in easing relations between these two allies. In effect, the NATO Secretary-General has been given an informal watching-brief over a situation affecting the relations of two member countries.

Because of our preoccupation with Cyprus, this was a valuable part of our meeting at The Hague from my point of view. I want to make it clear that there has been no infringement by NATO of United Nations responsibilities in Cyprus. Exclusive responsibility for restoring peace and promoting a political settlement in the island rests with the two Cypriot communities assisted by the United Nations force and the United Nations mediator. But a quite separate responsibility, which has now been recognized, rests on NATO to see to it that the actions of none of its members either weaken the alliance or render the task of the United Nations in Cyprus more difficult. War between Greece and Turkey is unthinkable -- unthinkable for NATO and unthinkable, as I told the foreign ministers concerned and as others did, for the two countries themselves. I think the recent frank airing of this problem in the Council gave all the members an opportunity to express their concern and to offer assistance to Greece and Turkey in restoring good relations, and thereby contributing also to an improvement in intercommunal relations in Cyprus.

Situation in Indochina

We are reading these days about a developing and critical situation in Indochina that concerns Canada. Although the Cyprus operation under the United Nations auspices has been a constant and urgent preoccupation over recent weeks, other peace-keeping duties continue as we know to be discharged by our country. Some, such as the United Nations Emergency Force in Gaza and the Observation Mission in the Yemen, are going forward quietly. Another major operation, that in the Congo, is scheduled to be wound up next month; four years after its inauguration.