

GROUP IS UNABLE TO START DUTIES

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Must Await Directions From
Joint Military Commission,
Which Is Not Formed Yet
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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Jan. 29—The new four-nation international control commission held its first meeting this morning and discovered that for the time being the organization was paralyzed.

The agreement to end the war closely linked the supervisory body with the Four-Party Joint Military Commission made up of representatives of the United States, South Vietnam, North Vietnam and the Vietcong. And the peace-keeping force can do virtually nothing without direction and assistance from the joint commission.

So far the joint commission has been unable to organize itself, largely because of disputes between the Vietcong and the Saigon Government.

The supervisory body is made up of representatives from Canada, Poland, Hungary and Indonesia.

Transport Awaited

At a news conference today, Michel Gauvin, the chief of the Canadian delegation, said that the supervisory force could not send teams into the field until "the joint military commission provides us with the means of transport and security."

"We cannot go out on our own," Mr. Gauvin said, "the international commission is not empowered to move into this country without the joint military commission to guide us."

"If a cease-fire takes place, there must be demarcation lines," he said, and the demarcation lines must be established by the parties that were involved in fighting. "If the military commission is not working, we can't get going," he said.

Mitchell W. Sharp, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, has made clear that his country does not intend to remain on the commission if it becomes apparent that the organization cannot be effective in peace-keeping.

Few Details Provided

The cease-fire agreement gave the commission broad operating instructions but provided few practical details, and this has led to difficulties.

For example, despite the close relationship of the supervisory body and the joint military commission, no clear channel of communication has been established between the two.

At the first meeting this morning, the supervisory body decided to try to establish contact with the Four-Party Joint Military Commission, or the Canadian official said, at least one of the members of the commission.

The cease-fire agreement specified that the headquarters of the supervisory commission had to be in operation within 24 hours after the cease-fire. But it did not say who was to be in charge of the commission in its formative stages, saying only that the selection of a chairman would be left up to the members and that they should rotate the chairmanship.

Everybody Waiting

So, after the representatives from Indonesia, Poland and Hungary arrived yesterday each of them politely waited for someone else to say when the first meeting would be held.

Finally, when the Canadians arrived early this morning about 150 strong, their leader, Mr. Gauvin, seized the initiative and suggested the first session, which was convened at about 10 A.M.

The location of the headquarters still had not been definitely decided upon so the Canadians brought the delegates together this morning in an aging yellow stucco villa that had once been occupied by Indian representatives to the old International Control Commission, the organization created to supervise the 1954 Geneva peace agreement on Vietnam, which never functioned effectively. Poles and Canadians had also served on that earlier body, which technically remains in existence but appears to be dying a quiet death.

Meeting in Tight Quarters

The meeting was held in a small rectangular front room of the villa. More than 20 delegates from the four countries sat cramped shoulder to shoulder on either side of a narrow wooden table on which one man could scarcely rest his arms without touching the man across from him. The table was draped with a white cloth and each delegate had a writing pad, a pencil and a water glass before him.

Members of the commission said that they had not decided who would be the first chairman but would probably decide that at the next meeting, which they said might be held tomorrow.

At a new conference after the meeting, a reporter asked Mr. Gauvin what the commission could do if "God forbid," fighting broke out across the street.

"Nothing," he replied wearily.