

Military Commission
Bogs Down Over
Credentials

Military Con

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By FOX BUTTERFIELD
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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Tuesday, Jan. 30 — The military commission that is to help monitor the Vietnam cease-fire held its first meeting yesterday, but it immediately became bogged down in a procedural dispute as the Vietcong delegates refused to present their credentials, well-informed sources said.

One source close to the talks said that "they accomplished absolutely nothing, all they did was just jabber, jabber." Another official said, "They are going at it in such a nit-picking way, it is incredible."

Meanwhile 90 more North Vietnamese and Vietcong representatives who arrived on two United States Air Force planes from Hanoi yesterday afternoon refused to fill out landing cards for South Vietnamese immigration department and were compelled to spend the night on the aircraft. The group reportedly included Maj. Gen. Le Quang Hoa, the head of North Vietnam's delegation to the Four Party Joint Military Commission.

A previous group of 13 Communists, who had spent 20 hours aboard their plane for similarly refusing to complete the forms, were allowed to debark yesterday only after the South Vietnamese Government temporarily relaxed its requirements.

Saigon Firm on Waiver

But the South Vietnamese Foreign Ministry stressed in a statement announcing its action that the problem of landing forms would have to be "taken up by the Joint Military Commission," and added that the decision did not "constitute a precedent."

The Foreign Ministry therefore refused to extend its waiver to the group of 90 Communists who landed at Ton Son Nhut Air Base from Hanoi at 3:30 P.M., three hours after the earlier group had been allowed to debark.

The Four-Party Joint Military Commission consists of the United States, South Vietnam, North Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Vietcong. Its duty is "to coordinate, follow and inspect the implementation" of the Paris agreement, and to "deter and detect violations."

According to the protocols of the Paris accord, the central military commission in Saigon was to begin its activities yesterday by 8 A.M., and the seven regional military commissions by 8 A.M. today.

The Saigon commission held its first meeting at 10:40 A.M. yesterday after a meeting scheduled for Sunday night was postponed when the Vietcong did not attend, well-informed officials said. The meeting lasted an hour.

The commission met twice again during the afternoon and evening at its freshly painted headquarters in what were formerly the offices of the United States Seventh Air Force.

It was not entirely clear why the Vietcong delegates refused to present their credentials. Some officials suggested that there had been a mix-up and that the wrong Vietcong officers had shown up for the meeting.

Confusion Suggested

But it was thought that the Vietcong might be confused about how to proceed, since their senior delegates have not yet arrived and might be on the two American C-130's that landed this afternoon.

Sunday the Hanoi radio announced that North Vietnam's delegation would be headed by General Hoa, a deputy director of the political department of the North Vietnamese Army and a relatively senior officer. But there was no official word of who might lead the Vietcong delegation.

According to the Paris agreement each of the four delegations must be headed by an officer of the rank of general and must consist of a total of 290 men. The highest ranking Vietcong officer known to have arrived is Col. Dan Van Thu, who was among the group that spent

20 hours on the plane before being allowed to debark.

There was some concern among American officials that the Vietcong might be trying to turn the credentials issue, like the issue over landing forms, into a dispute over governmental sovereignty. The Vietcong delegates reportedly refused to fill in landing cards because they considered that it would have been tantamount to recognizing the sovereignty of the Saigon Government.

The question of recognition of the Saigon Government or the Provisional Revolutionary Government in South Vietnam caused one of the most heated disputes in the Paris peace talks.

To add to the confusion, the first group of 19 North Vietnamese and Vietcong representatives who arrived Sunday did fill out their immigration forms and were speedily allowed to get off their plane.

South Vietnamese military police again yesterday as they did Sunday detained several journalists who attempted to watch the arrival of the Communists. Security was extremely tight at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, and American Air Force officers complained about being ordered around by South Vietnamese policemen.

So far as could be determined no food was taken to the Communists on board the two aircraft, which must have become very hot as they stood on the concrete runway in the tropical sun.