

GAINS REPORTED AS TRUCE CHIEFS CONFER IN SAIGON

Meeting of 2 Bodies Termed
One of Most Constructive
Measures in a Week

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FASTER ACTION IS URGED

U.S. Command Says Talks
on Mine-Clearing Begin
in Haiphong Today
NYTimes

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Monday, Feb. 5—An official spokesman said yesterday that the meeting in Saigon between the heads of the two peace-keeping commissions was "one of the most constructive steps" that have been accomplished in a week. The commissioners met earlier in the day.

The spokesman, Michel Gauvin, the Canadian delegate to the International Commission of Control and Supervision, said that he had urged the delegates to the Four-Party Joint Military Commission to speed the deployment of their regional inspection teams because without their cooperation "our mandaté cannot be effectively discharged."

Mr. Gauvin also reported that "arrangements are being made for an exchange of prisoners by the middle of the week." He declined to specify which prisoners were involved or where they would be released.

Teams Set to Go Out

The international commission, which is composed of Indonesia, Poland, Hungary and Canada, is scheduled to send its seven regional inspection teams called for by the Paris agreement to their sites around South Vietnam today.

But the military commission, made up of the United States, South Vietnam, North Vietnam and the Vietcong, has been bogged down in procedural disputes and has not been able to begin its work of monitoring the cease-fire, which was marred by only isolated minor incidents yesterday.

[The Pacific military command announced in Honolulu that the first meeting on mine-clearing operations between senior military representatives of the United States and North Vietnam would be held in Haiphong, North Vietnam, on Monday, The Associated Press reported.]

Yesterday's meeting of the chiefs of the two commissions, in an old yellow colonial villa of the Canadian delegation, marked the first time that the

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Vietcong and North Vietnamese delegates have come to downtown Saigon or made a public statement since their arrival last week. They have been living and working under close guard by South Vietnamese military police at Tan Son Nhut air base on the edge of the capital.

Vietcong Chief Friendly

Lieut. Gen. Tran Van Tra, the head of the Vietcong delegation, said in response to questions shouted by newsmen before he entered the meeting that he was "happy to be here in order to settle the peace." Waving and smiling self-assuredly as South Vietnamese officers tried to usher him inside, General Tra added, "Of course, we are going to respect the cease-fire."

General Tra, a short, bouncy man who helped direct the Communists' 1968 Lunar New Year offensive and who is reportedly the second-highest-ranking member of the Communist government in South Vietnam, was dressed in a baggy, dark-green field uniform, with an olive drab pith helmet decorated with a red

and blue Vietcong star. He spoke in Vietnamese.

The eight chief delegates, four from each commission, met around a long, rectangular table covered with a plain white cloth.

During the hour-long session, a North Vietnamese officer who identified himself as Lieut. Col. Bui Din, wandered around outside the villa chatting with newsmen.

"We have lots of news to tell you," Colonel Din said with a smile, "but they have not let us make contact with you." Previously, the South Vietnamese police have detained newsmen who tried to talk to the Communists.

Colonel Din, who wore an olive drab Soviet-style uniform with a North Vietnamese red star on his hat, tried at one point to put his arm around a South Vietnamese paratrooper. "This is the reconciliation of the Vietnamese people," the colonel said. But the paratrooper moved away in embarrassment.

The Communist delegates appeared more at ease and better adjusted to the new situation than did the South Vietnamese. When the delegates came out of the villa, the chief North Vietnamese representa-

tive, Maj. Gen. Le Quang Hoa, smiled and waved, but the South Vietnamese delegate, Lieut. Gen. Ngo Dzu, looked tense and said nothing.

The top American representative, Maj. Gen. Gilbert H. Woodward, a tall heavy-set man with graying hair, also looked on impassively.

Mr. Gauvin said that he had been "really impressed, happily surprised," by the friendly atmosphere of the meeting.

"They talked to each other, they mingled, it was really very comforting," said Mr. Gauvin, a stock, sandy-haired Canadian who has been acting as chairman of the commission.

Investigation Called Possible

He added that the military commission delegates had left him with the impression that they would begin to send out their own seven regional cease-fire inspection teams "in the next few days."

But Mr. Gauvin was unclear on whether the international commission's regional teams would be able to monitor cease-fire violations by themselves before the military commission teams were also in place.

"It will be difficult," Mr. Gauvin explained, for the teams to operate by themselves. "But we



Associated Press

Michel Gauvin, Canadian delegate to peace-keeping commission, talks with leaders of the military commission at the Saigon meetings. From left, Lieut. Gen. Ngo Dzu of South Vietnam; Lieut. Gen. Tran Van Tra of the Vietcong; Maj. Gen. Le Quang Hoa of North Vietnam. Meeting was held at the home of the Canadian delegation.

can certainly investigate certain violations if they are reported to us," he said.

Diplomats familiar with the Paris agreement say it appears that the articles citing the duties of the military commission and the international commission were purposely left vague as to which commission must act first. This was done, the diplomats say, so that if one commission became embroiled in disputes, the other would not be prevented from acting.

Despite Mr. Gauvin's optimism, there were still signs that the military commission was having trouble getting organized. The 244 additional North Vietnamese members of the military commission who arrived yesterday on six United States Air Force C-130 transport planes from Hanoi were again prevented from debarking for several hours when they refused to fill out South Vietnamese immigration forms.



United Press International

Maj. Gen. Gilbert H. Woodward, U.S. representative at the military talks, watches the North Vietnamese officers leave the building. Maj. Gen. Le Quang Hoa, center, without glasses, leads the group.

Delegates Stay on Planes

Three planeloads of Communist delegates had to spend the night aboard their aircraft last week for similar reasons. Since informed officials said that a compromise had been worked out allowing the Communists to get off without having to fill in the entire form, the reason for yesterday's incident was not clear.

Some officials speculated that the South Vietnamese police were simply trying to make life uncomfortable for the Communists.

The American pilots of the C-130's reported that officials at the Hanoi airport had been "kind, cooperative, and friendly." The Communist authorities gave them soft drinks, tea and bananas, the pilots said.

"I've never been treated so well in Vietnam," one pilot told a superior officer on his return to Saigon.

Paris Meeting Today

PARIS, Feb. 4 (Reuters)—Representatives of the Saigon Government and the Vietcong will hold their first meeting here tomorrow under the Vietnam peace agreement to discuss the future of South Vietnam.

The Vietcong will be represented at the meeting by a deputy negotiator, Dinh Ba Thi. The South Vietnamese were unavailable for comment today on who would lead their delegation. But observers believed that Nguyen Xuan Phong, the deputy Saigon negotiator here, would represent the South.

The talks were described by a Saigon spokesman yesterday as preliminary discussions aimed at drawing up guidelines for substantive talks.

The peace agreement, signed on Jan. 27, stipulates that the South Vietnamese parties meet immediately after the signature to set up a National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord that would organize general elections in South Vietnam.

Mine-Clearing Talks Set

HONOLULU, Feb. 4 (AP)—The first meeting between senior military representatives of the United States and North Vietnam on mine-clearing operations will be held in Haiphong, North Vietnam, tomorrow, the Pacific military command announced today.

The command said that the American delegation would be headed by Rear Adm. Brian McCauley, commander of Task Force 78, which will clear the mines.

Admiral McCauley and 14 members of his staff are expected to fly to Hanoi aboard a C-130 aircraft and travel on to Haiphong in transportation provided by the North Vietnamese, the command said.

An American task force that Pentagon officials say will total 20 to 25 vessels has been gathering in the Gulf of Tonkin to begin the clearing of mines from North Vietnam's seven ports and from inland waterways.

The United States Navy laid hundreds of mines in Haiphong, North Vietnam's principal port, and six other harbors in early May on orders from President Nixon. Those harbors have remained sealed to ocean-going shipping ever since.