

U.S. Calls on Truce Commission To Investigate Loss of Helicopter

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Feb. 18—The head of the American delegation to the Four-Party Joint Military Commission today asked the International Commission of Control and Supervision to investigate an incident last week in which an American helicopter was shot down and five crewmen were injured.

The aircraft, a heavy CH-47 with twin rotors, was carrying supplies for the military commission, which is made up of delegates from North and South Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government, or Vietcong, as well as the United States.

Communists Blamed

Maj. Gen. Gilbert H. Woodward, the head of the United States delegation, said that he had earlier asked for an investigation by the military commission but that so far the Vietcong had not participated.

In a letter to Michel Gauvin, head of the Canadian delegation to the International Commission of Control and Supervision and the Commission's acting chairman, General Gilbert said that a preliminary investigation by "United States experts" indicated that the Vietcong were "directly responsible" for the crash of the helicopter last Friday south of the battered town of An Loc. South Vietnamese military of-

icers said at the time that it was clear the aircraft had been brought down by either the Vietcong or by North Vietnamese soldiers. "We haven't started shooting down American helicopters yet," one officer said.

Although General Woodward did not say so in his letter, other American officers have noted that the helicopter had not been painted with the bright orange stripes that identify aircraft that are assigned to the military commission.

These officers said it was likely that the troops on the ground had simply taken it for a Government aircraft flying supplies to Government troops and had considered it fair game in the much-violated ceasefire.

A Government spokesman in Saigon said there had been at least two reports of fighting near An Loc before the helicopter was shot down.

General Woodward told Mr. Gauvin that the leaders of Provisional Revolutionary Government in Saigon had said they did not have sufficient men in the field to permit them to participate with other members of the military commission in an investigation. The general said that they had indicated that members of their central delegation would be chosen to participate but that by this evening this had not been done.