

## DOUBT EXPRESSED ON TRUCE TEAMS

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Regional Units to Maintain  
Vietnam Cease-Fire Still  
Aren't Fully Manned

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Monday, March 5—A major provision of the Vietnam peace agreement has been virtually written off as no longer possible to carry out, according to well-informed sources here.

Under the terms of the agreement signed on Jan. 27, the basic responsibility for keeping the peace in South Vietnam is vested in the Four-Party Joint Military Commission for the first two months. The commission members are the United States, North Vietnam, South Vietnam and the Vietcong.

After the two months, the responsibility falls to the Two-Party Joint Military Commission, made up of South Vietnam and the Vietcong.

To carry out its mandate under the agreement, the four-party unit is required to establish a central commission in Saigon—which it has done—seven regional units in major centers around the country and 26 subregional teams in smaller towns and villages.

### Deployment Is Only Partial

These teams, along with the central military commission in Saigon, are charged with the basic task of halting hostilities and bringing a genuine cease-fire into effect. But with the four-party Joint Military Commission scheduled to remain in existence only three more weeks, the deployment of these teams has been accomplished only partially and, Western sources say, is unlikely ever to be completed.

The seven regional units were supposed to be in operation within 48 hours after the cease-fire took effect Jan. 28 and the 26 subregional teams were supposed to be in place and operating within 15 days.

But more than five weeks after the official cease-fire, only four of the seven regional sites have representatives of all four parties to the joint Military Commission and none of the 26 subregional sites has representatives from all the members of the four-party group.

### Other Ways Are Explored

"I don't think there's much chance they'll ever get into the field," said a well-informed Western source. "In three weeks, the J.M.C. goes out of business and the whole question becomes moot."

The Joint Military Commission, though unable to deploy its peace keeping teams fully, is still trying to quell the remaining fighting in other ways.

A proposal by Gen. Gilbert H. Woodward, the chief United States delegate, that the commission issue another appeal for a complete end to hostilities in South Vietnam was expected to be acted upon soon by the central unit of the Joint Military Commission.

The commission issued a similar appeal on Feb. 17. Though the fighting has declined substantially since then, reports of small-scale combat in many parts of the country keep coming in a steady stream.

An American source close to the Four-Party Joint Military Commission says that American and South Vietnamese representatives are fully deployed on all regional and subregional teams.

### Two Trouble Spots

But there are no North Vietnamese representatives at two of the regional sites: Da Nang and Hue. The North Vietnamese delegations to those sites were withdrawn to Saigon Friday in the wake of attacks by rock-throwing mobs.

In addition, Western sources say, there are no representatives of the Vietcong's Provisional Revolutionary Government at Hue and Da Nang, in northern South Vietnam, or at Pleiku, in the Central Highlands. A Military Commission source says that the Provisional Revolutionary Government has "only token representation" at Bien Hoa, just north of Saigon in the south, and at My Tho and Can Tho, south of the capital.

The sources said the Vietcong representation was at full operational strength only in Phan Thiet, on the coast just under 100 miles east of Saigon.

### Communists' Reasons Unclear

The Paris accord requires each party in the commission to assign 16 men to each of the seven regional sites and four men each to the subregional sites. According to Western sources, the Provisional Revolutionary Government has only five or six men at each regional sites where it is represented, except at Phan Thiet, which is in an area of traditional Vietcong strength.

Just why the Communists have not deployed their men to the commission teams is not clear. The North Vietnamese have a full complement of 825 delegates to the Four-Party Joint Military Commission in South Vietnam. They say that they are unwilling to deploy them because of security problems—as at Da Nang and Hue—or because living and working conditions are inadequate.

The Vietcong have only 210

men certified to the Military Commission. In attempting to explain the low number, Western sources suggest, variously, that the Vietcong lack sufficient qualified men to staff their

delegations, that they are "suspicious of each other" and concerned about possible defections, and that they are keeping their best men in reserve for "the political struggle."