

Red Siege Threatens Viet Pact

Saigon

The two-party Joint Military Commission, which began operating as a peace-keeping body only five days ago, was threatened with collapse today in a dispute over a besieged South Vietnamese Ranger outpost.

Saigon said that until the dispute is settled to its satisfaction it would boycott the meetings of the commission, and hinted that it is prepared to undertake major military action to relieve the besieged outpost.

The Viet Cong warned that if Saigon boycotted the meetings, it would "bear the responsibility for the consequences."

The commission, now composed of South Vietnam and the Viet Cong, took over the primary peace-keeping function in South Vietnam when the four-party joint military commission, which included North Vietnam and the United States, disbanded on March 28 in conformity with the provisions of the January 27 Paris peace agreement.

The two-party commission met last Thursday for the first time and held an emergency meeting Sunday to discuss the ranger outpost dispute. The ranger outpost is located at Tong Le Chan, about 50 miles north of Saigon. The base is manned by 600 men and has been under siege by the Communists since February 26, according to Saigon military authorities.

The base is said to have been attacked 21 times and to have been under almost constant shelling. South Vietnam says 15 men have been killed and 109 wounded at the base since the siege began.

According to the Communists, the fighting at the base started when troops launched "nibbling operations" against surrounding Communist-held areas.

Saigon has called upon the International Commission of Control and Supervision, also set up under the Paris cease-fire agreement, to investigate the fighting at Tong Le Chan, but at a meeting yesterday the group reportedly was unable to take any concrete action. Sources said Canada and Indonesia were pressing for an immediate investigation while Hungary and Poland were reluctant to go along without assurances that the investigators could operate safely.

N.Y. Times Service

Morocco Socialists

Rabat, Morocco

The Moroccan government outlawed the Socialist opposition party yesterday and accused its leaders of heading an "abominable conspiracy" by fomenting armed subversion to various parts of the country.

Reuters