

Viet Peace

Commission

Bogs Down

Associated Press

Saigon

The Vietnam peace-keeping commission ceased to function yesterday when meetings of delegation chiefs were suspended because of an East-West dispute over procedure.

With the four-nation commission further weakened by the impending withdrawal of Canada, new charges of major cease-fire violations were reported.

The Saigon command reported the first Communist tank assault since the cease-fire went into effect January 28, and the People's Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (Viet Cong) charged the U.S. with new air attacks on the Vietnam side of the border with Cambodia.

The PRG said it would seek a new investigation by the International Commission of Control and Supervision.

Ambassador Michel Gauvin, head of the Canadian delegation, said he would assume the chairmanship of the commission today under the four-nation rotating policy. But he said he would call no further meetings until a ten-day dispute over investigative reports is resolved.

One of the four nations — Canada, Indonesia, Poland and Hungary — assumes the chairmanship of the commission each month.

While Gauvin stood firm, so did the Hungarian delega-

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tion in opposing him. Indonesia backed Canada and Poland supported Hungary in the commission's usual East-West split.

The dispute involves Canadian and Indonesian reports that interviews with Communist prisoners document North Vietnamese infiltration into South Vietnam both before and after the cease-fire.

INTERVIEWS

The Polish and Hungarian delegations have blocked consideration of the reports by the commission after they refused to take part in the interviews with the prisoners on grounds that investigations of infiltration are outside the scope of the commission's mandate.

The peace agreement says the commission "will report to the two South Vietnamese parties" on matters concerning the control and supervision of the implementation of Article 7, which prohibits the introduction of troops into South Vietnam.

UNANIMITY

The Hungarian delegation argued Thursday that it was basing its stand on the principal of unanimity for the operation of the commission. Such a principle is spelled out in the agreement.

The Canadian and Indonesian delegations have maintained that there need not be unanimity to conduct an investigation.

On the battlefields, the Saigon command reported that three Communist PT76 light amphibious tanks spearheaded an attack across the Rao Nai River against a government position 18 miles southwest of Hue and to the east of the A Chau Valley, a Communist stronghold bordering Laos.

ARTILLERY

Lieutenant Colonel Le Trung Hien, chief spokesman for the Saigon command, said one tank was destroyed and 15 Communist troops were killed by government artillery. The other tanks withdrew across the river.

The Viet Cong charged that three flights of U.S. F-4 Phantom fighter-bombers attacked the Viet Cong entry point of Xom Mat, along the Cambodian border 75 miles northwest of Saigon, on Tuesday.

A spokesman for the U.S. Embassy denied the charge.