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DEA/50052-A-40

*Le secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
au haut-commissaire en Inde
et au commissaire de la Commission internationale de surveillance
et de contrôle pour le Vietnam*

*Secretary of State for External Affairs
to High Commissioner in India
and Commissioner, International Commission for Supervision
and Control for Vietnam*

TELEGRAM Y-44

Ottawa, February 13, 1961

SECRET. OPIMMEDIATE.

Reference: Delhi Tel 95 Feb 8† and Saigon Tel 45 Feb 10.†

Repeat for Information: London, Washington, DND/DGOP

VIETNAM COMMISSION

We have noted with interest Gundevia's comment that action by both sides in continuously blocking investigation of charges of breaches of the agreement and refusing to permit carrying out of controls had rendered Vietnam Commission ineffective to a degree that would soon have to be reported to Co-Chairmen. By coincidence, report of your conversation with Gundevia reached us about same time as Woodsworth's letter No. 29 February 2 of which a copy has been referred to you. Paragraphs one and two of that letter make it clear that Woodsworth concurs with conclusion that Commission is bogged down, though his reasons differ from those given to you by Commonwealth Secretary.

2. As stated in recent messages, we are concerned about failure of Commission to carry out its responsibilities in Vietnam at a time when developments in Laos have increased tension throughout Indochina and have focussed world attention on the area.

3. In the circumstances, we have been wondering whether a report to Co-Chairmen setting out present stalemate in Commission and reasons for it would serve a useful purpose at this time. Such a report would probably have to cover Southern complaints about Kontum incidents and Soviet airlift through Hanoi, as well as PAVN allegations about United States intervention and aid by South to Phoumi's forces in Laos. We think report might also mention North's refusal to allow team at Vinh to carry out controls formerly done by team at Muong Sen (paragraph 4 of Brigadier Allan's letter to Bishop enclosed with Saigon's letter No. 29). Doubtless our delegation in Saigon can supply further instances where normal investigations have been frustrated by one of the parties.

4. Our thought is that a letter to Co-Chairmen at this stage (i.e. before 11th Interim Report, for which cut-off date is February 28) might enable Commission to take a broader look at its duties and responsibilities, and to concentrate less on procedural manoeuvres relating to current problems before it. Moreover, forcing issue in Commission might compel Chairman to take sides on certain issues and might to some extent clear the air. It may be of course that Indians would not agree to a special report or that if they did it would be impossible to agree with them on a suitable text. Possibility of our having to take a minority position is therefore one factor to be taken into account. The suggestion that such a minority report should deal only with the subversion issue would also have to be considered (Saigon reference telegram). Although prospects of enlisting Indian support for any document we would consider acceptable appear doubtful, we wonder whether our long term interests might not better be