

questionable whether time is ripe for such a major concession by West, and I would not wish Canadian delegation to be associated with any efforts to persuade Americans to make up their minds on this essential point. As I said above our main responsibility is to ensure the effective supervision of the cease-fire and to secure terms of reference which will enable the Commission to discharge adequately the responsibilities placed upon it.

[H.C.] GREEN

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*Note du premier ministre
pour le premier ministre de l'Inde*

*Message from Prime Minister
to Prime Minister of India*

CONFIDENTIAL

[Ottawa], July 8, 1961

As you will know, we have been much concerned about the International Supervisory Commission in Laos not only with regard to its present responsibility for maintaining effective supervision over the cease-fire but also in relation to whatever tasks may be assigned to it by the powers now conferring in Geneva.

2. On broad objectives, I feel we are in complete accord. When the invitation to serve on the Indo-China Commissions arrived seven years ago, Canada accepted in the belief that the Commissions would help to establish conditions of stability and security in South East Asia and to keep the Indo-China States outside the scope of great-power conflicts. These purposes have been fundamental to our approach to the Indo-China problem since 1954.

3. I have also been impressed by your view that the various balances in Indo-China have been precarious, requiring constant mediatory efforts by the Commissions. I recognize that the opportunity for the Laotians to shape their own future may turn upon maintaining the delicate equilibrium between the political forces at work within and about that unhappy country. It is precisely for this reason that I have sought to ensure that the Laos Commission be an effective one and not become merely a façade under cover of which one particular group may achieve its aims with outside support.

4. From the statements of their representatives at Geneva and developments both in Laos and at the Conference, I believe that the Communist powers are unwilling to accept a measure of international supervision which would offer reasonable assurance that the genuine neutrality and independence of Laos can be maintained. So far they have effectively blocked every effort to investigate breaches of the cease-fire, and the current negotiations about equipment are the most recent example of their determination to ensure that the Commission should not have independence of action in carrying out investigations.

5. The establishment of conditions that would enable the Commission to carry out effective supervision of the cease-fire is important not only in relation to the cease-fire but also in relation to the main task which still lies ahead at Geneva. It is for this reason that we have strongly urged the importance of adequate facilities and freedom of action. As I see it, since the Conference is presumably not concerned with the type of government which will emerge, the main issue which it must face is that of supervision, and the main task to seek acceptable terms of reference for the Commission.

6. Our reports from Geneva indicate that an impasse has developed on whether the Soviet or the Franco-American drafts should be taken as a basis for discussion. To overcome this difficulty we are suggesting that the Conference might begin with the 1954 terms, which most delegations have agreed would constitute a suitable starting point.