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*Le secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
à l'ambassadeur aux États-Unis,
au haut-commissaire au Royaume-Uni
et au haut-commissaire en Inde*

*Secretary of State for External Affairs
to Ambassador in United States,
High Commissioner in United Kingdom
and High Commissioner in India*

TELEGRAM Y-598

Ottawa, November 1, 1961

SECRET. CANADIAN EYES ONLY. OPIMMEDIATE.

Reference: Your Tel 3330 Oct. 31,† Saigon Tels 206 Oct. 30† and 205 Oct. 28.†

Repeat for Information: NATO Paris, Paris, Laosdel Geneva, Saigon, CCOS, DGPO, CGS, DN/DND (Priority).

By Bag: Moscow, Phnom Penh, Vientiane, Hanoi from London.

VIETNAM COMMISSION

I take a serious view of mounting campaign in South Vietnam against Commission in general and Polish Delegation in particular. South Vietnam now appear to be trying by harassment and threats to force Commission to move to Hanoi or even (though this is denied) to disband altogether. South Vietnam could of course make either continued operation in Saigon or continued existence of I.C.S.C. impossible; and as you say present trend if continued might be very difficult to reverse. It is essential therefore that principally interested Western Powers should consider urgently whether either of these possible results is likely to be conducive to greater stability in Southeast Asia or to Western interests in area.

2. Commission's transfer to Hanoi under pressure would be widely interpreted as an indication of RVN intention to expel Commission altogether and to repudiate Geneva Agreements, and would have undesirable results elsewhere in Indochina. The irresponsible actions of the RVN, especially if followed by a retreat of the Commission from Saigon, might well jeopardize chances for the successful conclusion of the Geneva Conference.

3. It is not clear what RVN hope to gain from a move of this kind. We doubt very much if Indians would have been able to make kind of decision they did on subversive question had Commission been in Hanoi at the time. In any case, to subject Indians to possibility of continual pressure from DRVN could not have results that RVN would welcome.

4. Commission cannot keep silent indefinitely on treatment of Polish Delegation. Woodsworth has properly so far resisted efforts to have Commission consider matter formally. For the time being we should try to keep up pressure by other means since formal action by the Commission might only add fuel to the flames. However, formal action by Commission and possibility of complaint to Co-Chairmen (paragraph 1 Saigon telegram 204)† will soon have to be considered if results are not otherwise obtained.

5. If consensus is that disappearance of Commission or its reduction to complete impotence (which in our view would be result of departure from Saigon under pressure) is undesirable, then we believe that interested governments, and especially USA Government which is only one having real leverage, should without delay exercise strong pressure in Saigon to turn South Vietnam from its present course. Meanwhile, we consider that we have no option but to regard harassment of one delegation as matter of concern to whole Commission, and to show in all