

Vietnam and other interested countries are likely in these circumstances to undertake a re-consideration of the general usefulness of the Commission and that the pro and cons of its continued operation may be closely examined.

8. Please send instructions as soon as possible.

[F.G.] HOOTON

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*Le secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures  
à l'ambassadeur aux États-Unis*

*Secretary of State for External Affairs  
to Ambassador in United States*

TELEGRAM Y-648

Ottawa, December 2, 1961

SECRET. CANADIAN EYES ONLY. OPIMMEDIATE.

Reference: Your Tel 3599 Nov 27.†

Repeat for Information: Candel New York, Permis New York, Laosdel Geneva, London, NATO Paris, Paris, Delhi, Saigon from Delhi, CCOS, CGS, DGPO, DM/DND.

VIETNAM – USA MEASURES

In view of some of the remarks made to you, it may be useful to summarize our position concerning USA moves in Vietnam as guidance for further discussions in State Department.

2. (a) In respect of steps which USA may consider necessary, I have nothing to add to paragraph one of my telegram 2877 of November 23.† I realize that USA has important responsibilities in Vietnam in the setting of Southeast Asia and that it must make its own decisions on how best to carry out these responsibilities.

(b) Canada, on other hand, has responsibilities of a different kind arising from our membership in ICSC. Therefore, while we of course share with USA broad objectives for future of Vietnam and all Indochina, our comments on present situation are confined to Commission aspect. Following paragraphs should be read with that in mind.

3. Because the inter-action of developments in Vietnam, Laos and Geneva is an important factor in determining whole future of Commission structure in Indochina, failure or hopeless frustration in any one could have a serious effect on the others.

4. It seems to be generally agreed among governments – at least Western ones – that for time being, at least, there is a role for the Commissions; though there must be a, perhaps tacit, reservation that some degree of effectiveness is a condition to that conclusion. There also appears to be agreement on the particular importance of developments in Vietnam; and from the Western point of view the effectiveness of the Commission in Vietnam is likely to be judged in the weeks and months ahead by action it takes on subversion cases. Difficulty for us may well be to press Vietnam Commission into rapid and effective action on subversion question while at same time using delaying tactics on accusations of USA breaches of agreement. In pursuing one aim on which USA lays emphasis we would be exposing ourselves to having this record played back if we later attempted to use the same devices to delay Commission action on accusations of USA breaches. If RVN in frustration and exasperation were to revert to tactics recently employed against Poles, it would probably be impossible to make any progress at all in Commission.