

Here I was able to have conversations with Rear Admiral Olsen and Rear Admiral Leahy, senior officers of this island-base, and with Governor King of Hawaii. Within a day or so we had touched down on tiny Wake Island and spent a night on Guam before arriving, delayed overnight by a typhoon, in Manila. Because we had been delayed we had to compress our programme into one day, but I was able to have discussions with the President of the Philippines, Mr. Magsaysay, the Minister and the Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Health. The President impressed me as being an able and dynamic figure who is determined to encourage the development of a higher standard of living among his people. An extensive public health programme is an important part of the President's plan. One of the highlights of this all too brief visit was the elaborate marienda dance which was performed for us by workers in the Ministry of Health.

Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos

Our next stop was Indochina where we were to visit the 150 Canadians serving with the International Supervisory Commissions which were set up in the summer of 1954 by the Geneva Conference to supervise the implementation of the Cease-Fire Agreements. The phrase "Indochina" is of course no longer an accurate descriptive term, in that the area previously known as Indochina is now divided into three countries: Vietnam, partitioned by the Geneva Agreement at the 17th parallel into zones now controlled by communist and non-communist governments, containing twenty million people; Cambodia with four million; and Laos with approximately one and a half million. Canada is represented on each of the three International Supervisory Commissions in these countries.

Our first stop was Saigon, the capital of the Republic of Vietnam, which has been established in the southern zone. Here we were privileged to be the official guests of the Vietnamese Government. During our two-day visit I talked with the dedicated and courageous leader of this Government, President Ngo Dinh Diem, who, in the brief space of two years, has with amazing success consolidated and strengthened the position of the Government. One of the great achievements of the Diem Government, which of course has been materially assisted by American aid, has been the re-settlement of a million refugees who fled from Communist North Vietnam in the months immediately following the partitioning of the country in July 1954 to make their homes in the South. It is not easy to appreciate fully the difficulties and problems which the Government faced with this widespread dislocation of its people, and, having visited some of the camps where many of these refugees have been resettled, I was amazed by the degree of success achieved on so large a scale. In Saigon I talked also with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and other Government leaders, as I was privileged to do in almost all of the countries I visited. One of the highlights of our visit to South Vietnam was the opportunity it afforded to meet and talk with the many Canadians serving with the International Commission in Vietnam. The Canadian Delegation is engaged in a task which, while it seldom receives public attention, is nevertheless an excellent example of the effectiveness of a para-military force in action to ensure that peace is maintained in a troubled area of the world where the peace of all of us was threatened some two and a half years ago.