

South would be killed. (They admitted freely that war between the two would also hamper the North's development programme.)

4. The Prime Minister, Colonel Mai Lam and the Polish Ambassador were also greatly interested in the discriminatory treatment currently being accorded the Polish Delegation to the I.C.C. in Saigon and what this may portend for the future of the I.C. itself. Bearing in mind that we must do everything to protect our Canadian I.C.C. personnel from reprisals in the North, I emphasized how Candel and Indel have both urged the GRVN to restore administrative and transport services to the Poles and meanwhile have been extending to Poldel what help we can. All concerned appeared duly appreciative of this attitude, of which at least Pham Van Dong and Mai Lam appeared to have been informed.

5. I would conclude from my talks that the North is genuinely anxious to keep the Commission alive and is seriously disturbed by the threat to its existence. It is taken for granted in Hanoi that Colonel Nam's death is only being used as a pretext by the South for its campaign against the Poles and the I.C.C., and that the real reason is the GRVN's wish to rid itself of the I.C. in order that American military plans can be carried out more freely.

6. When I asked Pham Van Dong why he considered the continued existence of the Commission so important to the North he replied, "Because the I.C.C. represents peace to Vietnam and an international guarantee that the Geneva Agreements, including reunification, will be carried out. Without the Commission we would be facing the unknown – an adventure with nothing in sight but chaos."

7. I was curious to test Pham Van Dong's reaction to an I.C.C. move to Hanoi and as one possible clue to the South's present attitude cited the recommendation of the Women's Solidarity Movement of Vietnam (see our telegram No. 206 of October 30),† then inquired "Would it really matter to you if the I.C.C. were to be headquartered here instead of Saigon?" After some reflection the Prime Minister answered, "It would not matter at all if the South were really prepared to cooperate with the I.C. and permit it to function properly, but if the South were not prepared to cooperate fully it would be very serious indeed."

8. Apropos of Colonel Nam's murder, Pham Van Dong offered some interesting comment. Some time ago Colonel Mai Lam suggested to Paul Lapointe the possibility that the GRVN had got rid of Nam because the latter had been at least "indifferent" to President Diem's fate in the November 1960 attempted coup. Nam, according to Mai Lam, resented the fact that after seven years with the South Vietnamese Mission he had not been promoted.

9. On this occasion Pham Van Dong asked me pointedly, "Have you any idea whether Colonel Nam's relations with the Government were good?" He went on to suggest that Colonel Nam may have been murdered by people "inside the Government" because he was strongly pro-French in a régime that is strongly anti-French, and that he said has rid itself in past years of many pro-French officials. They had then cast the blame on the Viet Cong and the North. Mai Lam's explanation, given to me later, was that anti-French feeling in the South was still high and that it is good political tactics to exploit the anti-colonial successes of the resistance movement, i.e., try to make themselves out "true patriots." When I countered that Colonel Nam was surely not widely known to the people of South Vietnam, was certainly not a national figure, and that therefore there would be little point in murdering him because of his alleged pro-French attitude, Mai Lam observed that as a one-time Chef de Province in the North, and a collaborator of the French, Nam had been very well known indeed. Needless to say Pham Van Dong and Mai Lam denied scornfully that the North or the Viet Cong had anything to do with Nam's death.

10. For other than personal reasons it is noteworthy that my reception by the Prime Minister and everyone else in the North could not have been more friendly. Considering certain issues the Canadian Delegation has raised at I.C.C. meetings in the past 18 months it was somewhat