

sion in Vietnam and made it essential to determine whether the Commission could rely on the co-operation of the Government of South Vietnam with regard to the provision of supplies and transportation.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs reminded the Committee that Mr. Diem's government had issued a statement a few weeks previously outlining their attitude toward the Commission. This statement could be interpreted as an invitation to the Commission to remain in Vietnam, but it made clear that the South Vietnam Government did not accept any legal responsibilities under the Armistice Agreement. Mr. Pearson stated that the future of the Commission in the light of the new situation in South Vietnam was being examined by the representatives of the Co-Chairman of the Geneva Conference, who were meeting at London at that time. The Co-Chairmen were, of course, the Foreign Ministers of the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, who were being represented at the London meeting by Lord Reading and Mr. Gromyko.

The Minister then expressed some uncertainty as to whether the position taken by the Government of South Vietnam would provide an adequate legal and practical basis for the future work of the Commission. He also reported that it had not yet been decided whether the articles of the Geneva Agreement which were concerned with elections in Vietnam had been, or could be implemented in such a way that certain members of the International Commission could be persuaded to remain there. The Canadian Government would be willing to continue to participate in the work of the Commission in Vietnam as long as there was any possibility that the Commission's work would be useful in maintaining peace and establishing conditions of stability. He thought that the whole situation in Vietnam should become clearer when the report of the Co-Chairmen had been received.

### Laos

Mr. Pearson then turned his attention to Laos, where the main difficulty arose from the situation in the two strategically located northern provinces. The Pathet Lao, whose forces controlled these two provinces, had not accepted the authority of the administration of the Royal Laotian Government, nor had they been willing to participate in the elections which were held in December, 1955. The Commission had agreed on a resolution calling on the Royal Government to take the necessary measures to bring about integration of the Pathet Lao forces into the national community but this resolution had not been implemented because of the resistance of the Pathet Lao. It had therefore been necessary to refer this matter to the Co-Chairmen, and the situation in Laos was also being discussed in London by Mr. Gromyko and Lord Reading. The Minister stated that the responsibility for the failure to bring about a political settlement in Laos lay with the Communist forces in the north. He went on to say that in the absence of a political settlement it would probably be necessary for the Commission to remain in Laos for some time if peace were to be maintained in that area. The Canadian Government had been urged to continue its work on the Commission and Mr. Pearson stated that he believed it should do so.

### Cambodia

The Minister said that elections had been completed in Cambodia in September 1955. The former members of the resistance movement had been