

49. The Polish member of the Sub-Committee was of the opinion that the Franco-Laotian claims could not be confirmed since the documents examined and submitted by the French Liaison Mission did not seem to be the original ones. He felt, however, that they might be taken into consideration after checking the actual facts on the spot by Commission Teams.

50. This divergence of opinion regarding the authenticity of the documents became more manifest at the 63rd Meeting of the Commission held on 2nd February, 1955. At this meeting, the Canadian Delegation suggested that the general enquiry into the present strength, etc., of the Laotian National Army troops in the northern provinces should be discontinued. In its opinion there was conclusive documentary evidence about the presence of these elements in Sam Neua prior to the Cease-Fire. It further proposed that the French Liaison Mission should be invited to submit similar documentary proof concerning the presence of the Laotian National Army elements in the province of Phong Saly "if the particular documents are available."

51. The Canadian Delegation submitted a resolution in the above sense for the approval of the Commission.

52. The Polish Delegation repeated its earlier view that no conclusion about the presence of the Laotian National Army troops either in Phong Saly or in Sam Neua was possible on the basis of available evidence. It stated that investigations on the ground should be undertaken in both the provinces to determine the facts.

53. An incident at Nong Khang in the province of Sam Neua indicated the importance of a decision on this point. The Indian and Canadian Delegations considered that the incident was the result of a violation of Article 19 by the 'Pathet Lao' and invoked Article 32 in support of a resolution. (Appendix 'C').

54. The Polish Delegation, on the other hand, declared that the presence of the Franco-Laotian troops in Sam Neua and Phong Saly was a violation of Article 14 which, in its opinion, had given the two provinces in their totality to the 'Pathet Lao' as a regroupment area, and that the voting on the resolution was invalid, as it tended to amend the Geneva Agreement and therefore required unanimity.

55. This was one of the occasions when the Canadian Delegation contended that the situation in the two northern provinces could not be resolved until the Commission took a decision on the interpretation of Articles 14 and 19. In its opinion it would be difficult for the two Parties to reach agreement on either the political or the military settlement unless they knew the Commission's views on the legality of the opposing claims.

56. The implications of Articles 14 and 19 were further discussed at several meetings of the Commission. The Polish Delegation expressed its inability to agree to the Canadian resolution referred to in paragraph 51 above, on the ground that the Franco-Laotian groups which