

responsibility. The Teams were given all the information that was available and were directed to obtain details of the actual date and time of moves from local Commanders or Joint Sub-Commissions.

Joint  
troops

61. On 1st November, 1954, the subject was again reviewed at a meeting of the International Commission with the Joint Commission. Both sides assured the Commission that their forces were carrying out the withdrawals satisfactorily. The Vietnamese People's Volunteers/"Pathet Lao" side stated that their units had been completely withdrawn from the provinces of Vientiane, Attapeu, Pakse, Savannakhet and Saravane and that those assembled in the other provinces would be evacuated according to schedule. The Franco-Laotian side, too, stated that all except 250 French Union troops (not including those which could be retained in Laos under Articles 6 and 8) had left the country. It might be noted that the Delegations to the Joint Commission were under the impression that withdrawals and transfers were to be completed by 21st November. The parties were informed by the International Commission in a communication dated 4th November that the withdrawal should be completed by 0800 hours on 19th November, 1954, as laid down under Article 4(a) of the Geneva Agreement. The evacuation of all French Union troops, except those which were to be maintained in Laos under Articles 6 and 8, was completed by 19th November. The last Vietnamese People's Volunteers units left Lower Laos on 15th November and Middle Laos on 16th November. Those stationed in Phong Saly had to postpone their final date of departure because of the lack of transport and medical arrangement and completed their withdrawal by 22nd November.

Completion  
of With-  
drawals

Detailed  
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noit

william  
greeman

62. The International Commission has pleasure in reporting that, by and large, withdrawals were carried out without any clash or incident between the forces of the two parties. The details of withdrawals of which prior notice was given and the supervision as carried out by the International Commission is given in Appendices "A" and "B". The Commission would, however, like to bring out some of the salient problems and difficulties experienced in the course of supervising these withdrawals.

Difficulties  
Experienced  
in carrying  
out Super-  
vision

63. The problem of the withdrawal of the French Union Forces was not clear-cut in that the French High Command was entitled to leave behind at Seno a force of 3,500 men and also transfer 1,500 French personnel to the Laotian National Army. Therefore, the French forces did not merely have to leave the country but also to disperse their personnel to the various places where they were required by the Royal Laotian Government. In the case of troops for the French Union Garrison at Seno, they even brought a sub-unit from Vietnam, to complete the battalion. The procedure adopted by the French High Command was to disperse the personnel for the Laotian National Army directly from the Assembly Areas and concentrate the remainder of the French forces in Seno. Owing to lack of surface communications in the North, the forces from Luang Prabang and Plaines-Jarres were moved to Seno in small detachments as and space was available in any of the aircraft on routine flights from those places. Some of these reorganised units were retained at Seno as part of the 3,500 personnel and the

Withdrawal  
of French  
Union  
Forces

tion  
e Inter  
national  
division  
-with-  
drawals