

The Franco-Laotian Delegation has submitted certain proposals which it terms military measures to be taken before any political settlement. But at a first glance itself it appears that these measures are not of a military nature, on the contrary these measures are exactly political, included in the ensemble of political problems to be discussed shortly by the representatives of the two Governments concerned. For, proposals such as the delimitation of zones of influence of the forces of the two Parties, the placing of a representative of the Royal Government in the two provinces, with his Headquarters in the capital of each province, are they not questions of a political nature? All these questions, clearly of a political nature, are not, in our opinion, within the sphere of responsibility of the Delegations of the Military Command of the two Parties in the Joint Armistice Commission, but must be discussed and settled in the coming political conferences between representatives of the "Pathet Lao" Government and those of the Royal Government.

(b) The argument of the Franco-Laotian Delegation that there exists in the two provinces elements of the Laotian National Army is entirely without foundation.

1) The two provinces Sam Neua - Phong Saly are provinces reserved to the "Pathet Lao"; the "Pathet Lao" Liberation Forces worked therein since long and were able to create several strong and large bases. In April, 1953 the province of Sam Neua was completely liberated, as was a little later the province of Phong Saly in February, 1954. The forces of the French Union and the Laotian National Army in these two provinces were almost entirely wiped out, there only remained a very small portion who had succeeded in running away to the provinces of Luang Prabang and Xieng Khouang. Since then, "Pathet Lao" Administrative Organizations of all levels, from the level "BAN" (Village) to the level KHOENG (province), have been set up in these two provinces; the population is happy to live peacefully and happily under the regime of the "Pathet Lao" Administration. No unit of the French Union or the Laotian National Army forces appeared there.

2) But since the cease-fire, taking advantage of our respect for the Agreement, the Franco-Laotian forces have wilfully committed serious violations of the Agreement: