

19. The Commission adopted the following practical steps in regard to the elections:

(a) It gathered information regarding the conduct of the electoral campaign from the Teams, newspaper reports and its own observations and received petitions from Cambodian citizens. Instructions were issued to our Teams in the provinces so that they could gather as much information as possible. A copy of these instructions is given in Appendix "C". It will be noticed that though we have only nine Teams, we so divided their responsibilities that all the fourteen provinces were covered in the electoral period and on polling day. This was the best we could do within the limits of our resources, but we provided for adequate observation of electoral practices. By periodic visits to the Teams, the Commissioners also gathered useful first-hand information of the electoral campaign in the provinces.

(b) It intervened with the Government if there was any major issue of possible discrimination against the former members of the Khmer Resistance Forces, as in the case of the Pracheachun party to be referred to later in this report.

(c) The Commission met the Prime Minister every week and in the electoral period seven such meetings were held. At these weekly meetings, many problems were discussed. There was free and frank exchange of views, as a result of which the Commission had a better understanding of the Government's point of view. The Commission also drew the attention of the Government to a number of petitions and complaints which it had received. Reference to these discussions is made in Paragraphs 26 to 28 below.

20. The Commission studied the Electoral Laws and satisfied itself that they did ensure secrecy of ballot. No opposition party had suggested that these laws needed amendment. Also, from what we had gathered, there had been no complaints on this score in the previous elections.

21. One opposition paper suggested that new instructions were being issued to alter Articles 56 and 57 of the Electoral Laws to modify the accepted practice of placing all unused ballot papers in a box in the polling station and instead voters would be asked to keep the unused ballot papers with them. The paper suggested that this was a means to find out for which party a citizen voted. The Commission discussed this newspaper report with the Prime Minister, who assured us that the rumours were false. Later a communique was issued by the Government denying that any change in the laws had been made.

22. A week before polling day, the following notification was issued:

"In case of contradiction between the name of the candidate and the distinctive sign of the political party, only the distinctive sign will prevail. The voting papers thus contested will not be null. They are valid for the benefit of the candidate of the political party represented by the distinctive sign."