

CAI-VON, TAN-AU, TRA-VINH and MY-THO, POULO-CONDORRE being the most important of these prisons. The Commission sent a mobile team accompanied by Liaison Officers of both sides to the Island of POULO CONDORRE to investigate these complaints. The team examined the prison and has requested permission to scrutinise the dossiers of some of the prisoners in the Ministry of Justice at SAIGON. After considering the report of the team, the Commission asked the French authorities to arrange for the release of 70 persons who were admitted to be political prisoners by both sides and to carry out further investigations into the other 61 disputed cases of prisoners.

CHAPTER V

DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS GUARANTEED UNDER THE GENEVA AGREEMENT

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80. The preceding Chapters of this Report have been mainly descriptive of military and semi-military operations in the implementation of the Agreement on cease-fire in VIET-NAM. The Agreement contains, besides, important Articles of a political nature defining and guaranteeing certain fundamental liberties and freedoms to the people of this Country. Besides guaranteeing, in general, "democratic liberties", specific assurances have been given in Articles 14(c), 14(d) and 15(d).

81. The International Commission, realising the fundamental importance of these three Articles particularly in the peculiar political climate of this Country engendered by eight years of war, has, since its inception, given a great deal of attention to the implementation of these provisions. The first stage was to give due publicity to these rights available to the public. The Commission, therefore, issued a statement (Appendix IV) on the 2nd September, 1954, giving a clear interpretation of these provisions of the Geneva Agreement. This statement was released to the press. The Commission in addition, asked the Parties to give wide publicity to these provisions of the Agreement by means of posters, handbills, newspaper notices, radio announcements and broadcasts.

82. During the period under review, the Commission received 17,397 petitions which can generally be classified under the following heads:-

(1) Petitions received up to 10th December 1954 17,397

(2) Petitions dealing with matters of principle, freedom of movement, democratic freedoms etc. dealt with by the Commission through teams or other methods 11,035