

VII EAST ASIA

1. Indochina

One of Canada's major international preoccupations during the past year has been its membership on the three International Commissions for Supervision and Control in Indochina on which it was invited by the co-chairmen of the Geneva Conference (July 1954) to serve along with representatives of India and Poland. Canadian participation on the Commissions did not commit Canada to guarantee or enforce the provisions of the three Cease-Fire Agreements for Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia concluded at Geneva on July 21, 1954, or to undertake any new military or collective security commitments. Nevertheless, in supervising the execution of the agreements by the parties concerned, the Canadian Government believed that it would be assisting in establishing security and stability in Southeast Asia. Although no final military and political settlement has been reached in the Indochinese states, the presence of the Supervisory Commissions has served to restrain any tendency to resume open hostilities in the area.

By the beginning of 1956 the Canadian component of the three Commissions in Indochina, including fixed and mobile teams operating under the Commissions' jurisdiction, consisted of some 135 service personnel and 35 civilians drawn from or attached to the Department of External Affairs.

(a) *Vietnam*

During 1955 the ISC in Vietnam submitted four interim reports to the co-chairmen of the Geneva Conference, under whose authority Commission reports are published. The periods covered were, respectively, August 11, 1954, to December 10, 1954; December 11, 1954, to February 10, 1955; February 11, 1955, to April 10, 1955; and April 11, 1955, to August 10, 1955. These reports summarized the supervisory activities of the Vietnam Commission and reviewed the progress made by the High Commands of the People's Army of Vietnam (Communist) and of the French Union forces in the implementation of the Cease-Fire Agreement for Vietnam. Although considerable difficulty was involved in the withdrawal of military personnel and the transfer of civil administration in certain areas (in particular the Haiphong perimeter controlled by the PAVN) the Commission was able to conclude that withdrawals and transfers had been effected in all areas within the time limit specified (May 18) and in accordance with the provisions of the Cease-Fire Agreement. The Commission carried on its continuing responsibility of supervising the provisional demarcation line and the demilitarized zone and undertook to investigate alleged violations of the provisions of the agreement regarding the introduction into Vietnam of armed forces, military personnel, arms, munitions, and war materials, and to arrange for stricter border controls. Although the prisoner of war and civilian internee exchanges