

(a) It was specified in the Khang Khay Agreement that the two Joint Sub-Commissions were created, one in Middle Laos, and the other in Lower Laos, "to facilitate in their zone of competence the work of the Joint Commission on which they depend and for the implementation of the clauses of the Geneva Agreement." Thus, since the clauses of the Geneva Agreement had not yet been fully implemented, it was proper that these joint organisations should be retained.

(b) It was specified in the Khang Khay Agreement that the Joint Groups were to "participate in the execution of the clauses of the Agreement on the cessation of hostilities." The clauses of the Geneva Agreement not having been fully implemented, the Joint Groups had to be retained to "participate in the execution of the clauses of the Agreement."

(c) The withdrawal of Joint Groups meant an annulment or amendment of the Khang Khay Agreement and should therefore have been submitted, as a question of principle, to a detailed discussion between the two Parties, and should never have been decided upon by one of them only.

(d) These joint organisations were being employed in the settlement of numerous questions not solved until then, particularly the question of payments and the violations of Article 15 of the Geneva Agreement which were engaging the serious attention of the International Commission and the two Parties.

7. On 14th January, the Franco-Laotian Delegation went further and announced their wish for the immediate dissolution of the Joint Commission itself.

8. The problem was considered by the International Commission at its meeting of 18th January. It was decided that the two Parties should be asked to submit to it before 24th January, memoranda, jointly or separately, stating their points of view. It was further agreed that the subject should be discussed at the next meeting with the Joint Commission.

9. The Franco-Laotian Delegation pointed out in their memorandum that the Joint Commission had been set up, under Article 28, "to facilitate the implementation of the clauses relating to the withdrawal of foreign forces", and that this withdrawal having been completed, the Joint Commission had outlived its utility. They added that the issues which remained to be solved under the Geneva Agreement were wholly concerned with the internal political arrangement of Laos, and a Joint Political Committee consisting of only the Royal Laotian and 'Pathet Lao' representatives had been set up at Plaine-des-Jarres for this purpose.

10. The objections which the Vietnamese People's Volunteers/'Pathet Lao' Delegation raised against the disbandment of the Joint Groups were repeated with much greater emphasis at the time of the suspension of the activity of the Joint Commission. The contention of