

146. Article 12 of the Geneva Agreement provided for 12 Provisional Assembly Areas, one for each of the 12 provinces of Laos, for the scattered "Pathet Lao" forces.

147. Under Article 13, the foreign forces (the Vietnamese People's Volunteers and the French Union forces) were to finally withdraw from Laos. The Laotian National Army under Article 12 were to remain in situ during the entire duration of the operations of disengagement and transfer of foreign forces and the fighting units of "Pathet Lao".

148. Under Article 14 all the fighting units of "Pathet Lao" were finally to move into the two northern provinces.

149. The problem of the two provinces had a military as well as a political aspect. Its military aspect was further defined by Article 14, which stated:

"Pending a political settlement, the fighting units of "Pathet Lao", concentrated in the Provisional Assembly Areas, shall move into the Provinces of Phong Saly and Sam Neua except for any military personnel who wish to be demobilized where they are. They shall be free to move between these two Provinces in a corridor along the frontier between Laos and Vietnam bounded on the south by the line Sop Kin, Na Mi, Sop Sang, Muong Son. Concentration shall be completed within one hundred and twenty (120) days from the date of entry into force of the present agreement".

150. In this context, Article 19 also should be noted, for it laid down that "the armed forces of each Party shall respect the territory under the military control of the other Party and engage in no hostile act against the other Party".

151. The term "political settlement" in Article 14 has not been defined in the Agreement.

152. The Royal Government of Laos in its unilateral declaration made on 20th July, 1954, with reference to Article 3 of the Final Declaration of the Geneva Powers, declared "itself resolved to take the necessary measures to intergrate all citizens, without discrimination, into the national community and to guarantee them the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms for which the Constitution of the Kingdom provides; affirms that all Laotian citizens may freely participate as electors or candidates in general elections by secret ballot". As regards the two provinces, it stated that it will promulgate measures to provide for special representation in the Royal Administration of the provinces of Phong Saly and Sam Neua, during the interval between the cessation of hostilities and the general elections, of the interests of Laotian nationals who did not support the Royal forces during hostilities".

Clauses relating to the Two Provinces

Military and Political Aspects of the Problem

Article 19 of Geneva Agreement

Royal Government Declaration

(d) both Parties should submit details of their forces in each province;