

under review, however, there was some indication that in areas where Pathet Lao and Royal Laotian Government forces were in close proximity, tension had not completely disappeared and that in some instances military incidents took place. The need for vigilance therefore continues.

### SAM NEUA PROVINCE

2. The situation in the areas around Muong Peun and Houei Thao in the province of Sam Neua in the second half of 1955 continued to deteriorate. At the beginning of July the team at Muong Peun reported that the Laotian National Army forces had been reinforced both in men and material by several paradrops. At the same time complaints were received from the Laotian National Army and the sub-team at Houei Thao indicating increasing tension at the place. There were indications of increased activities by both sides in these areas. Several complaints from the Fighting Units of Pathet Lao were received by the Commission alleging receipt of reinforcement by the Laotian National Army into the province of Sam Neua and the expansion of the territory under their military control and that it was because of attacks by these troops that the Pathet Lao forces were obliged to open fire in self-defence. At the same time the Royal Government lodged complaints with the International Commission alleging that the Pathet Lao were surrounding their positions and trying to drive them out. During July, owing to the lack of a Pathet Lao Liaison Officer and the non-availability of helicopters from the French Liaison Mission it was not possible to carry out investigations in the areas affected.

3. In July 1955, the International Commission unanimously agreed to send communications to both the Parties asking them to respect the cease-fire and stop the sending of further reinforcements to Muong Peun and Houei Thao areas.

4. In spite of these communications there was further worsening of the military situation between August and October 1955, particularly in the areas east and south of Muong Peun. Clashes continued to take place on an increasing scale with each Party maintaining completely opposite views with regard to the interpretation of Articles 14 and 19 of the Geneva Agreement. These different points of view have been explained in Chapter III of the Commission's Second Interim Report. From complaints received at this time it appeared that the Laotian National Army were attempting to consolidate their control over the area around Muong Peun while the Pathet Lao were determined to prevent this. Only one investigation was carried out by the Commission's team during this period in the vicinity of Pakha and Houei Nha which lie to the North of Muong Peun and West of Sam Neua. This investigation showed that the forces of both Parties came into contact in the vicinity of these Laotian National Army posts and that when the Laotian National Army troops ran short of ammunition and supplies, they withdrew from them. Later, they reoccupied both of these places.

### SECOND CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT

5. The cease-fire which according to the Rangoon Agreement was to be effective from 11 October, 1955 did not materialise. A second cease-fire agreement was entered into by the two Parties effective from mid-night 7/8 November, 1955. This too failed to produce the desired result particularly in the Muong Peun sector.