

92. It will be noted from the tables that:- II

(a) both the Vietnamese People's Volunteers/"Pathet Lao" and the Franco-Laotian sides failed to keep to the schedule of release. Up to 10th October, 1954 the Vietnamese People's Volunteers/"Pathet Lao" side had released 350 prisoners of war and civil internees instead of 716 as promised by them. Similarly, the Franco-Laotian side released 173 instead of 210 prisoners of war and civil internees;

(b) each Party claimed that the other had a greater number of prisoners of war and civil internees than it actually admitted. This was most glaring in the case of Laotians presumed to be held by the Vietnamese People's Volunteers/"Pathet Lao" side (see Table II). Similar divergencies may also be noted in Table III;

(c) the Franco-Laotian side accused the Vietnamese People's Volunteers/"Pathet Lao" side of holding 703 Laotian civil internees. The Vietnamese People's Volunteers/"Pathet Lao" side, on the other hand, denied having held any civil internees at any time,

93. The situation was rendered confused by the claims which the Franco-Laotian side forwarded subsequent to the agreement of 27th September, 1954. The first one, dated 29th September, 1954 gave precise figures, according to each province, of the Laotian civil internees alleged to be held by the Vietnamese People's Volunteers/"Pathet Lao" side. But the total number of civil internees (557) given in this document was less than that (703) given by the Franco-Laotian side on 23rd September, 1954. This figure was increased to 758 on 19th October, 1954 in a second document and finally to 900 as given in a document of 20th December, 1954. The most significant rise was in the case of the province of Xieng Khouang, where the Franco-Laotian figures went up from 28 to 187. The same document of 20th December, 1954 brought up the number of Laotian prisoners of war to 999.

94. The Vietnamese People's Volunteers/"Pathet Lao" and Franco-Laotian figures, 606 and 177 respectively, regarding the French Union prisoners of war and civil internees, however, remained the same as before, and no attempt was made by the latter to claim the additional French Union prisoners of war and civil internees offered by the former. As a possible explanation of this divergence, the Franco-Laotian Delegation stated, at the meeting of the International Commission with the Joint Commission on 29th September, that during the war, there were several mobile groups which came from South Vietnam, North Vietnam and Central Vietnam which fought in Laos and lost certain men who were taken prisoners but within units which did not belong to Laotian Forces. They added that that was probably the reason why the other Party was handing over more prisoners than the Franco-Laotian side had claimed. In fact, towards the end of September, 1954 the Franco-Laotian Delegation had requested the Vietnamese People's Volunteers/"Pathet Lao" Delegation to hand over 400 prisoners of war who were captured in Laos but belonged actually to the French Army in Vietnam.

Prisoners of Laotian Nationality

Prisoners of War & Civil Internees of French Union