

60. Protocols were signed for limited withdrawals on the 80th and 100th day, and their evacuations took place without any conflict between the two parties but the dispute still persists. The Commission advised the parties to discuss the matter once again in order to arrive at an agreement, if possible. If the parties cannot reach agreement in a reasonable time, the Commission will undertake to make recommendation based on information supplied by both sides.

FORCES OF THE PEOPLE'S ARMY OF VIET-NAM

CHAPTER IV.

Ham Tan and Xuyennoc provisional

PRISONERS OF WAR AND CIVILIAN INTERNEES

INTERNEES

PRISONERS OF WAR

61. One of the first problems which the International Commission and the two parties were faced with in the implementation of the Geneva Agreement was the question of exchanging prisoners of war and civilian internees. The conditions under which prisoners of war and civilian internees are to be exchanged are defined under Article 21 of the Agreement. Article 21(a) provides that prisoners of war and civilian internees captured since the beginning of hostilities in Viet-Nam during military operations or in any other circumstances of war and in any part of the territory of Viet-Nam shall be liberated within a period of 30 days after the date when the cease-fire becomes effective in each theatre.

62. According to the above programme, the release of prisoners of war should have been completed on the following dates:

- Northern Viet-Nam ... 26th August, 1954
- Central Viet-Nam ... 31st August, 1954
- Southern Viet-Nam ... 10th September, 1954

63. In view of the time-limits laid down above, the parties started discussion on this question at an early stage. There were some disputes initially concerning procedures, and when the International Commission met the Joint Commission at TRUNG GIA on the 13th August, 1954, it was surprised to find that the exchange of prisoners had not yet commenced. The Democratic Republic authorities demanded full lists of all the prisoners the French were going to release and the French authorities claimed that they had many more prisoners than the lists which had been supplied by the Democratic Republic showed. The Commission was able to effect a compromise. The French authorities agreed to prepare a full list of prisoners of war and civilian internees whom they held and the Democratic Republic authorities agreed to start exchanges before they received the final list. On the 14th August, 1954, a protocol was signed and exchanges commenced at three points in North Viet-Nam (including Viet-Tri and Sam-Son).

64. In accordance with this protocol, several thousand prisoners were exchanged in the first few days. Some physical and technical difficulties,