

armaments, munitions and war material generally except such quantities of conventional armaments as the Royal Government of Laos might consider necessary for the defence of Laos (Article 6).

It is against this background that the developments set out in the Commission's Message No. 35 must be set. The Message is based on the report of an investigation carried out by a Commission team which, between November 12 and December 21, 1964, interviewed the three North Vietnamese prisoners and ten other witnesses. The prisoners who, according to the Commission's report, "appeared to give their evidence freely and without hesitation" and "did not seem to be under duress" claimed that they entered Laos between February 1964 and September 1964 as regulars of the North Vietnamese armed forces and as members of complete North Vietnamese army units varying in size from 50 to about 650 soldiers; that they brought their personal weapons and ammunition with them, and that they, together with other soldiers of their groups, fought on Laotian territory against the Royal Laotian armed forces, until their capture. The Commission points out that although, for reasons beyond its team's control -- i.e., the refusal of the Communist forces to permit the team to pursue its investigations in the areas of Laos under Communist military control,

"... a complete verification or authentication of the evidence given by the prisoners has not been possible, the Commission is satisfied in regard to the veracity

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