CHAPTER II.

PROVISIONAL MILITARY DEMARCATION LINE AND DEMILITARIZED ZONE.

Article 33 specifically charges the Joint Commission with the execution of the provisions regarding the demarcation line and the demilitarized zone. The Commission feels that the parties in the Joint Commission are not working as cooperatively as they should in discharging their joint responsibilities in regard to the administration of the demilitarized zone. Several disputes arose regarding the administration of the demilitarized zone and the Commission had the present arrangements reviewed by its Operations Committee and made to both parties on 12th September, 1955, certain tentative suggestions for the improvement in the administrative arrangements including security measures and control procedures whose adoption and implementation would, in the view of the Commission, help in avoiding incidents along the demarcation line and in the demilitarized zone.

The French High Command accepted the suggestions generally without offering specific comments on each of the suggestions and also proposed a review of the Central Joint Commission Protocol on the status of the demilitarized zone. While accepting certain suggestions and rejecting others the V.N.A. High Command stated that any amendment of the status of the demilitarized zone would be premature. The P.A.V.N. High Command also stated that all that was required was a strict observance of the Agreement and the Protocol of the Central Joint Commission which provides for the settlement of all incidents by direct discussion between the two parties. The Commission has informed the parties that certain specified suggestions would be converted into formal recommendations unless the parties ask for particular modifications. The Commission was awaiting their further replies.

The Commission paid a visit to the demilitarized zone on both sides of the demarcation line and inspected the arrangements which have been made by the two parties to carry out the provisions of Articles 6, 7 and 8 of the Agreement.

The French High Command through its delegation on the Joint Commission remains responsible for the execution of the provisions of Articles 6, 7 and 8 regarding the demarcation line and the demilitarized zone. It has, however, no authority over the Civil Administration in the demilitarized zone which is run by the authorities under the control of the Republic of Vietnam.

This divorce of authority from responsibility in the south, along with inadequate administrative arrangements in the area of the demilitarized zone which the Commission's suggestions to both parties were designed to correct, are the chief causes of difficulties in this important area.