330 POL. AFFAIRS--LAOS (U) 19

MARCH APRIL

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING

UNCLASSIFIED
Classification

Charge: EMBASSY

Control: 437

Date: April 29, 1961

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SENT TO: SECSTATE UNCLAS 1945

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE 882 PARIS 229 LONDON 234

[redacted] NEW DELHI 121

CINCPAC FOR POLAD 437

Laos.

According BANGKOK WORLD Apr 29 Thai Fon Ministry issued statement Apr 28 setting minimum Thai conditions for attendence at upcoming conf on Laos not only as ceasefire but also as cessation Communist personnel and material supply also. Relevant portion (no unnecessary words) reads:

"Whether Thailand participates depends certain conditions and circumstances, namely:

"1. Must be absolute cessation of supply by Communist countries of war equipment, arms and technicians to pro-Communist rebels.

"2. After (this accomplished) there must be a verified ceasefire which lasting and can be definitely checked.

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"If above two conditions fulfilled Thailand would decide whether she would participate.

"Communist countries, while professing desire see ceasefire, still sending without interruption war equipment and arms help pro-Communist rebels, who as consequence enabled engage in fighting with greater ferocity. It therefore clear Communists' main objective is expand area of occupation in Laos with view gaining political advantage and tightening their political stand at conference." Statement draws parallel with Dien Bien Phu.

This first categorical Thai official statement in response UK-USSR invitation attend conference.

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POL:WWHitchcock:jls

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

Charge: EMBASSY

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Classification

Control: 404

Date: April 27, 1961

SENT TO: SecState WASHINGTON 1930

RPTD. INFO: VIENTIANE 873, LONDON 228, MOSCOW 57

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LAOS.

BANGKOK POST Apr 25 reported following: Primin Sarit noted in informal talk with reporters Apr 25 that PL kept up attacks against RLG while ceasefire discussions going on. He asked "If neither side ceases fire what is going to be done?" Asked what method exists solve Lao problem better than UK-USSR proposed method, Primin said "It not our affair. We can only wait and see. If I say I would like have RLG drive PL back where they came from you would publish huge headlines and would be damaging. We not owners of Laos. We cannot intervene."

BANGKOK WORLD Apr 26 reported following: Fonmin Thanat told reporters after Cabinet meeting Apr 25 Thailand not yet decided whether or not attend 14-nation conference, that it depends on establishment of ceasefire and that ceasefire would take at least 48 hours to be put into effect. Fonmin said if it takes longer than 48 hours "it just too bad." Primin Sarit in separate interview said Apr 25 "Sincerely speaking we would not like participate but since conference will affect vital interests our nation we may have to attend."

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-2- Date: April 27, 1961

Contrary to above, BANGKOK POST City Editor Theh Chongkhadikij wrote Apr 26 that Thai Govt did decide Apr 25 to attend conference, sending Thanat as chief delegate. At conference Thailand will strive for genuinely neutral Laos. Thailand however will refuse be party any agreement partitioning Laos and opposes idea of coalition Govt for Laos which includes Communists. Latter stand may be modified if adequate guarantees provided against Communist takeover and against foreign intervention. Editor Theh reported that Fonmin said after Apr 25 Cabinet meeting that invitation to conference just received and immediate Thai reply should not be expected.

BANGKOK WORLD Apr 27 however said that despite reports that Govt has decided should attend, "highly placed Fonoff source" said Apr 26 no definite decision yet made and will probably take few more days before Govt makes its decision known. He said Fon Ministry more interested in implementation of ceasefire than in conference which would come later.

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POL:WWHitchcock:jfl

April 27, 1961

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Charge: Embassy

UNCLASSIFIED
Classification

Control: 318

Date: April 21, 1961

SENT TO: SecState WASHINGTON 1900

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE 856, CINCPAC/POLAD 613, USUN 68

Laos.

According BANGKOK WORLD Apr 21 PriMin Sarit told reporters Apr 20 that should Commie attack on Thakhek threaten Thailand Thai armed forces ready to move "with lightning speed." He emphasized that whatever action Thai Govt takes will be only for nation's safety and will take neighboring countries into consideration.

At same time FonMin Thanat said, in reply question about mil assistance, Thailand might consider giving assistance to Laos if Vientiane Govt requested it, but no request yet received. Sarit in separate interview expressed his concern that Laos may fear that too many conditions would be imposed on it by countries or organizations from which Laos might ask help. Sarit implied this reason why Laos has not requested aid.

Asked if Thailand intends seek UN observers to watch frontier, Thanat said UN has hands full in Congo, would have "no extra hands" for Laos and would be handicapped by Soviet veto.

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POL:WWHitchcock:la
April 21, 1961

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Foreign Service of the United States of America

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Charge: Embassy

Control: 310

Date: April 20, 1961

SENT TO: SecState WASHINGTON UNCLAS 1894

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE 854, [redacted], PARIS 215, LONDON 219, KARACHI 147, MANILA 300, CANBERRA 136, WELLINGTON 87, CINCPAC POLAD 610

Laos.

French Amb Clarac, in address to American Association Apr 19 re French position on Laos, made following points:

a. After Geneva settlement French convinced it unwise try change perilous Laos situation by drastic measures which undoubtedly would bring risk of upsetting precarious balance of power on which Lao independence depended. To large extent, Kingdom's weakness preconditioned its peace and tranquility. France feared that as soon as West tried bolster Laos up and transform it into anti-Commie bastion, strong reactions inevitable from Hanoi, Peking and Moscow. France did not pretend precarious state of affairs in Laos satisfactory. France simply thought that risks taken in cautious policy of compromise less than risks taken by attempting mend situation without regard for Commie reactions.

b. Thus France believed Souvanna right in advocating neutrality based on reconciliation different sectors of opinion in Laos. It not that France ignored danger of possibly giving Pathet Lao means of developing

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their influence in Laos, but that this danger a lesser evil.

c. Test of strength, should it become necessary, must be made if possible on ground where chances at least even. It doubtful that this so in Laos. Under much more favorable circumstances, British needed 300,000 men in Malaya for five years to destroy Commie force.

d. Use of force dangerous. We may have to come to it but let us hope Commies will understand in time that advantages they may acquire in Laos not worth risk of conflict by which they would have to pay for it.

e. France favored Souvanna not because he friendly to France and protected French interests but because he identified self with policy France deemed advisable.

f. Although France watching Lao situation carefully, France faces in Africa problems which touch France more closely and more directly.

g. French warnings in past have not proven unfounded. Troops of Kong Le and Souphanouvong stronger and more aggressive than ever.

h. Argument that US supplying legitimate govt whereas Commies supplying rebels has absolutely no value in discussion with people whose idea of international law is that ends justify means.

i. Only possible course for SEATO was one adopted unanimously by last Council Ministers meeting.

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Date:

j. "We insist on necessity of quick and satisfactory political solution; but if our conciliatory dispositions not to be met by corresponding attitude from other side, we remind Russians and their friends that Manila Pact binds us to act just in the kind of circumstances which would arise from such lack of cooperation."

Deputy PriMin Prince Wan and SEATO SecGen Pote present at speaker's table. Address published in full BANGKOK WORLD Apr 20.

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April 20, 1961

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TELEGRAM

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Charge: Embassy

UNCLASSIFIED
Classification

Control: 175

Date: April 13, 1961

SENT TO : SecState WASHINGTON 1816 ROUTINE

RPTD INFO: AmEmbassy VIENTIANE 832 ROUTINE

CINCPAC/POLAD 591 ROUTINE

LAOS.

Following appeared in BANGKOK POST April 12: Asked for views on US invitation to Souvanna to visit US, FonMin Thanat said today, "It Americans' affair, not ours." He added half-jokingly, "Perhaps purpose to cut short Souvanna's Moscow visit." Asked whether coalition Lao Government including Souphanouvong would be dangerous to Thailand, Thanat answered, "Not only to Thailand but to Free World. Souphanouvong definitely a Red."

Presumably report same interview appeared BANGKOK WORLD April 13 as follows: Thanat thought continuation Soviet airlift and Soviet delay reaching agreement with UK for cease fire indicated Commies "not yet ready see peace in this region." Demonstrated by fact Commies continuing create trouble and disorder despite all efforts of Thailand and other Free World

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Date:

countries find political solution. Thanat expressed satisfaction that Pres Kennedy and PriMin Macmillan reached agreement in US talks. Thanat said Americans had right to invite Souvanna to visit US and question of US recognition of Souvanna did not arise.

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POL:WWHitchcock:mvl

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AIRGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING AmEmbassy LONDON

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PAGE ___ OF ___ PAGES

Date Sent: April 13, 1961
1:00 p.m

20 APR 1961

FROM: AmEmbassy LONDON

TO: Secretary of State

NO. G-1268

RPTD INFO: AmEmbassies VIENTIANE G-20; PHNOM PENH G-22; SAIGON G-24; BANGKOK G-26; PARIS G-211; MOSCOW G-80, NEW DELHI G-48; CINCPAC G-12.

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POL:AE
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CB-7

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CINCPAC for POLAD.

Following is Hansard's account of questions and oral answers in the House of Commons April 11 concerning the situation in Laos:

"Mr. Healey asked the Lord Privy Seal if he will make a statement on the latest situation concerning the negotiations for a settlement in Laos.

"The Lord Privy Seal (Mr. Edward Heath): In their reply of 1st April to the United Kingdom Note of 23rd March, the Soviet Government expressed general agreement with our view that the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference should call for a cease-fire, instruct the International Commission for Supervision and Control in Laos to verify its effectiveness and issue invitations for a 14-Power Conference.

"Her Majesty's Government have now made firm proposals to the Soviet Government as to the next steps, suggesting dates for each of the various stages, but making it clear that an effective cease-fire must precede the opening of the Conference. I hope that it will be possible for the Co-Chairmen to make the necessary announcements and to issue invitations in the near future.

"Mr. Healey: While welcoming very much the progress which has been made towards a peaceful settlement of this problem during the last few weeks and in particular the growing recognition, as I think, in all the countries concerned that Prince Souvanna Phouma is likely to be the most hopeful focus for a new Government in Laos, may I ask what precisely are the subjects still at issue between us and the Soviet Government? In particular, is it not the case that at the present time the initiative in

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London G-26 350 Rel Geneva - Laos 4-13-61

the fighting is being taken by the Royal Government forces?

"Mr. Heath: The answer to the last part of the supplementary question is that I understand that that is not the case. In answer to the first part of the supplementary question, we are now awaiting a reply from the Soviet Co-Chairman as to whether there are any further points of difference between us. We have now made firm proposals about the next steps. We have pointed out to the Soviet Co-Chairman that it would be possible for the appeal for the cease-fire, the reconstruction of the Control Commission and the invitations for the Conference all to be sent out at the same time, with specific dates for each, and indeed for the appeal for the cease-fire and the reconstruction of the Commission to take place at the same time. The only point we have also made is that which I mentioned in my substantive Answer, namely, that before the Conference can actually convene the cease-fire should have been verified by the Commission. We have given forms of wording which we think will be suitable for all these, and we now await the reply of the Soviet Co-Chairman."

BARBOUR

POL/F:LMPurnell:bh
April 12, 1961

Francis J. Galbraith

Clearance:
POL - Mr. O'Shaughnessy

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(SEAL)

Personal and
Confidential.

Government House,
Bangkok, 12th April 1961.

Dear Mr. Dulles,

Ever since Captain Kong-Le had staged Coup d'Etat in Vientiane on the 6th August 1960, the situation in the Kingdom of Laos has caused always the great anxiety. That situation has been brightened for a short period of time when the faithful army of the King of Laos, under the leadership of General Phumi Norsavan, friend of the free democratic camp, has retaken Vientiane last December. Since then the Soviet Union has openly and promptly sent arms, ammunitions and other war materials to the communist Pathet Laos without limit. The latter has also received helping hands of Viet-Minh soldiers and the strong political support of several influential communist countries. Nowadays, the situation in the Kingdom of Laos is much more deteriated than on the 9th of August last year because the communist side is in the advantageous position both in political field and in battle field. I myself, following closely the events and knowing well the Kingdom of Laos and Laotiens, feel that it is now the most important turning point of the security of South-East Asia. What happens in this period of time will indicate the fate of the free world especially of the United States in future. I am afraid that if the United States and the free world do not take the wise and reasonable decision with careful consideration in every way, they will lose the territories and friendly peoples to communist in addition to what was already lost. They will also lose the trustworthy friends and the final result of which I need not mention here.

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His Excellency
Mr. Allen Dulles,
Washington.

4-12-61

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This is the reason why I decide to write to you once more with the feeling of mutual friendship and affection, in order that you may be informed of several facts and my idea concerning the situation in the Kingdom of Laos and of this region of the world. You may take my informations into consideration together with other sources you have in your hands in order to facilitate the decision of the United States, who are leader of the free world and from whom the appropriate assistance is expected by all the small countries. This will benefit the free world and your own country in future.

I shall also be glad if you will deem it expedient to bring the contents of my message to the knowledge of the leaders of the United States.

It is my conviction that the loss of the Kingdom of Laos will lead to the loss of the whole South-East Asia and to other losses which the free world cannot prevent.

If the Kingdom of Laos fall entirely under the communist influence, or if the said Kingdom is divided into two parts, or even it is governed by the government mixed with the communist elements, Thailand will be in the precarious position. I use to announce and have made myself clear that I shall never tolerate the communist domination in Thailand. It is also obvious that Thailand has opposed to the communism much more fervently than most of the allied countries. I beg to emphasise once more that so long as I live, I shall never let my country and my king fall in the communist hands. I am willing to co-operate in every way with allied countries especially with the United States, either by the peaceful means or by using force to halt the expansion of the sphere of communist influence in this and other parts of the world. This is my unswerving policy and I am in quest of friends who dare to follow resolutely this ideal.

To solve the problem of situation in Laos and in South-East Asia two things must be promptly and simultaneously done, that is to say:

1. To settle the existing problem in laos, and

2. To prepare ourselves to face the emergency in case the situation in Laos becomes so deteriated that it threatens the security of South-East Asia.

I beg to express to you my idea on these two points as follows:

1. To solve the existing problem in Laos.

In my opinion, we should push the military operation to effect strong pressure upon enemy without ceasefire. This must be supported by political manoeuvre including the following:

1) taking Geneva Agreement as basis of negotiation and trying to find other better measures;

2) supporting promptly and thoroughly the military operation of the present Laotien Government with arms, ammunitions and war materials in emergency character and not in ordinary way which requires restriction and complicated procedure causing always long delay;

3) appointing special representative of the United States to be stationed in Bangkok with full powers to make the close study of the situation and to co-ordinate the working system of the American authorities in Vientiane and in Bangkok.

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2. To prepare ourselves to face the emergency.

When the situation in the Kingdom of Laos becomes so deteriated that it threatens the stability of South East Asia, the most important action to be taken is to halt the expansion of the communist influence in South-East Asian peninsula in order to prevent its further expansion to different archipelagos rich in man power and natural resources. This will be realised by creating Thailand to be a strong fortress with absolute security in military, economic and political fields. So long as Thailand stands in such a position the communists will not be able to expand their influence in the South without formidable naval and air forces.

This creation of Thailand as strong fortress must be hurriedly done from now, before it will becomes too late. I am prepared to co-operate with the United States Government in every way in order to reach this objective. This means to include the conclusion of special agreement and other necessary legal measures.

To create Thailand to be a strong fortress will be highly beneficial not only in the military but also in the political point of view as it will convince the peoples of South-East Asia, Africa and other parts of the world that a small and completely independent country such as Thailand can maintain the close and intimate

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friendship with the United States to saveguard full sovereignty. Furthermore it will be an investment with less expense in money and in man power than to solve the problem after the emergency arises as in the case of Laos nowadays.

I beg now to express my opinion as to how Thailand can be made an important fortress to hold out the communist expansion:

1. The United States should increase assistance for Thailand's economic development by financial and technical help in order to build up the political stability and to provide sufficient expenses for maintaining strong military, naval and air forces. Weakness in economy will not only make the above objective unrealisable but will also facilitate the communist penetration in Thailand.

2. The United States should share the burden of organising and maintaining the military, naval and air forces by providing partly expenses, salary and allowance for the service men as will be decided upon by the American and Thai authorities. The United States should also provide Thailand with arms, ammunitions and war materials and also military uniform. In order to expedite this matter without delay I beg to propose that the existing military assistance program be speeded up and the additional assistance program be specially established. All there must be done with the purpose of providing Thai fighting forces with necessary equipments in sufficient quality to carry out military operation with efficiency and as quickly as possible.

3. Now, at the beginning of the crisis, I beg to submit an urgent request that the United States kindly provide Thailand with the capacity of air and ground defence. As precaution against air raid Thailand should be given radar and defence arms as soon as possible. As to the ground defence I would request the United States assistance in financing and organising immediately two volunteer regimental combat teams for utilisation in unconventional warfare outside Thailand when needed. Beside this, there are more miscellaneous problems which should be discussed with mutual understanding and co-operation by Thai and American personnel concerned.

4. It is necessary that the United States Government supports Thailand for sending troops to occupy, with the consent of the present Laotian Government, two localities in Laotian territory situated on the right bank of the Mekong

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immediately after having the clear indication that the communist will overrun the greater part of the Laos Kingdom. This is to prevent the communist invasion from these two localities, which are the weak points of Thai defence, to the central part of Thailand.

The geographical position of these two localities constitutes direct menace to Thailand. The said two localities are: one opposite to Luang Phrabang, and the other opposite to Pakse. Historically these two plots of land belonged to Thailand since the time immemorial. They were forcibly taken away from us by the French 49 years ago (in 1902) and added to the French Laos. Therefore, these two pieces of Laotien territory are adjacent to Thailand without any natural border. As soon as the communist conquer Luang Phrabang and Pakse, they will surely throw their powerful forces into these two localities because it is golden chance for them to put their feet on the right bank of the Mekong. In this case, Thailand will be placed in the most dangerous position. Without natural frontier such as the great river or high mountain, it will be difficult for Thailand to defend herself against communist penetration and subvension. Strategically, the communist possession of the territory on the right bank of Mekong opposite to Luang Phrabang will enable them to come down to Pitsnuloke and to apply the usual communist method, that is, to divide Thailand into two parts. I consider this possibility with the greatest concern and Ambassador Johnson was invited to my home on the 6th instant to get the full explanation about this matter from me and from the highest authorities for the national security. The similar concern is no less felt for another plot of land in the South, opposite to Pakse.

All I have said is of extreme importance for Thailand and, in my opinion, is the means to solve the problem successfully and satisfactorily. If your Government will take it into consideration with the purpose of putting it into practice, I shall be very pleased to effect further negotiation with your Government. I can give my promise that I shall never change my mind in this connection and shall forever honour obligations on my part and on the part of my government.

Once on the 10th and the 11th of August, 1960, less than 48 hours after Captain Kong-Le had staged Coup d'Etat in Vientiane, I explained to the representatives of your Government in Thailand that we should at once help the

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the Government of Prince Somsanit to wipe out the rebel elements. If this could be promptly done by the Thai and American co-operation, there will be no difficulties or complications as we have at present.

Now, I hope our two countries will be able to reach an agreement which will be useful, equal and just, for the sake of stability and security of the free world, of the United States and of South-East Asia.

I wish to mention quite frankly that the United States have sacrificed each year an enormous amount of money to help many countries of the free world, but I feel that the benefit derived from such sacrifice is limited and unworthy, as the countries receiving help do not sufficiently feel grateful. This is because, in giving assistance, the United States weigh neither importance of the countries nor order of priority by taking the sympathetic feeling into consideration. Besides, the assistance is incomplete, given half way and always with hesitation, which often causes discontentment in different countries. The hesitation and tardive action such as in the case of Laos in the past have given rise to many troubles with which we are facing today.

As to Thailand, it is now obvious that she acts as a stronghold and obstacle against communist expansion to the south and I think it is not unreasonable for the United States to hurriedly effect the improvement of this fortress in order that it be more secured both in economic and political fields, so that Thailand may stand against the great peril before it will be too late.

I hope you will understand our deep feeling. In fact I intend not to speak to you any more about such the matter because it may be interpreted in selfishness on the part of my country. I have spoken on numerous occasions with American representatives in Thailand about this matter but without result. On the contrary, Thailand has much heavier burden and is called to make many sacrifices before the United States both in men and materials such as in the case of Laos. Of course, our burden and sacrifice seem to be insignificant in comparison with yours, but the position of our country can never be compared with the United States. We feel sometimes discourage when this state of thing grows day by day. I wish to draw your attention to the historical fact that Thailand is faithful to friends and always fulfilled her promise. I myself, in particular, have shown

trustworthiness to everyone, but my Government and I are so exposed to the criticism and blame from the general public that I feel unable to do anything more that what I have already done.

However, my earnest hope and confidence in our intimate friendship encourages me to open to you by this letter all I have in my heart. I leave in your judgment what steps are to be taken in this connection.

I take this opportunity to renew to you, dear Mr. Dulles, the assurance of my everlasting sincere friendship and profound affection.

Field-marshal /S/ S. DHANARAJATA

(Srisdi Dhanarajata)
Prime Minister of Thailand.

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING AmEmbassy LONDON

1961 APR 17 PM 5 39

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Charge: STATE

Control: A-274

Date: April 11, 1961 6PM

TO: SECSTATE 4111

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Via Pouch: AmEmbassies BANGKOK, MOSCOW, NEW DELHI, PARIS, CANBERRA, SAIGON, PHNOM PENH, OTTAWA and CINCPAC. UNN

CINCPAC for POLAD.

18 APR 1961

LAOS:

Received E.R.C. Section 19 APR 1961

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Sunday Telegraph April 9, Daily Mail April 10 and The Times April 11 mention Communist China as likely reason for Soviet delay in replying to UK proposals for cease-fire. Sunday Telegraph also reports Pushkin has been exploiting one admitted weakness in British cease-fire proposal: "that in dense jungle dozens of control teams would need several weeks to establish total cease fire. West may well have to move a step sideways on this. It may have to accept an interim truce report from key points and leave 'ultimate verification' until after the conference is convened." Daily Telegraph editorial April 11 on Soviet delay comments "They will be well advised not take Mr. Kennedy's realism for weakness. With new aim and new flexibility of approach to

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it goes unmistakable determination not sacrifice or compromise essential principle of Laotian neutrality. This must be guaranteed and supervised. Should Communists attempt circumvent it, during conference or afterwards, then U.S. is plainly ready to intervene with whatever force necessary to prevent them."

Daily Express April 10 headlines "Now Prince Phouma gets a Surprise Invitation to U.S." Item states invitation extended by Ambassador Gavin and comments "it looks as if Washington has come round to view Souvanna Phouma must be included in any peaceful solution of Laos conflict. This striking enough when it is remembered that it was American backed Prince Boun Oum who forced Prince Phouma into exile last December." Article also states "Whitehall was jubilant over the news last night. Prince Phouma's neutralist policy for Laos has been backed by Britian ever since 1955" and "some credit for U.S. invitation must go to Prime Minister's arguments in White House last week."

Times April 11 cites reports from Vientiane that number leading Laotian politicians are supporting suggestion King

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should become Prince Minister but King believed argue this would be violation spirit if not letter of constitution. Item states Somsanith put suggestion to King and expected will raise again in talks with King at Luang Prabang after Laotian New Year begins Saturday.

BARBOUR

POL/F:LMPurnell:bh
April 11, 1961

Francis J. Galbraith

Clearance:
POL - Mr. O'Shaughnessy
PAO - Mr. Taylor

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5:00 PM

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PARIS, MOSCOW,
ACTION NOTE

13 MAR 1961

TO: SECSTATE ~~XXXX~~ 3528

RPTD INFO: AmEmbassy VIENTIANE UNN

Via pouch to: BANGKOK, SAIGON, OTTAWA, NEW DELHI, PHNOM PENH, MANILA, CANBERRA, KARACHI, RANGOON, WELLINGTON.

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Date 3 MAR 1961
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Following summary extracts Daily Telegraph, March 3, article by Michael Field reporting visit North Laos with Souvanna: Russian military aid is on scale to guarantee impregnability of areas held by pro-Communist. Delay in achieving political settlement increases likelihood this control will harden, binding area to adjacent Communist bloc. Souvanna has re-established personal contact with rump of his Government and made common cause with PL. Souvanna anxious I should not report Viet Minh infiltration from North Vietnam and I saw none. Unmistakable Communist air about these disciplined single-minded PL men -- Communist-style slogans and many have adopted "comrade" as form of address. I particularly struck at attitude Youth Committee who retreated with Kong Le -- they have all visited Hanoi,

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are deeply impressed with social and economic progress there, wear Viet Minh-style hats and jackets and say "they are helping to build socialism". Souvanna thinks they not yet Communist but I feel they have almost gone over.

Field hospital in Phonesavan supplied by North Vietnam Red Cross and staffed with Vietnamese doctors and PL nurses -- medicines supplied by East Germany. Evidence of Russian military backing is everywhere -- Groski and Zis lorries, perhaps as many as 50 carry troops and supplies. Russian jeeps and command cars stand alongside American jeeps with PL markings. Russian lorries haul the howitzers supplied by American aid program. I was told Russian heavy cannon in surrounding mountains. PL soldiers carry Russian sub-machine guns and I saw at least four camouflaged Russian troop carriers equipped with Russian anti-aircraft machine guns.

Souvanna embarking shortly on tour win support from friendly countries including Britain. He is no Communist but says has been forced accept Communist help due to American policies, and I do not doubt that most Laotians

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support him. He told me that if Western support not shortly forthcoming, he will be unable control events much longer and Laos will go Communist. It may already be too late. My Soviet authorized visit has convinced me no incubated anti-Communist regime can now prevail here against growing strength of Communist-harnessed nationalism.

BARBOUR

POL/F:LMPurnell:bh
March 3, 1961

F. J. Galbraith

Clearance:
PAO - Mr. Pettus
POL - Mr. O'Shaughnessy

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