350 POL. AFFAIRS—LAOS (U) 1960
OCTOBER 16 DECEMBER 31

4 JAN 1961

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	ACT.	INF.
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ACTION NOTE		

December 27, 1960

Amembassy MOSCOW

Secretary of State
G-428

RPTD INFO: Amembassies Vientiane, Bangkok, London, Paris, - UNN

Received E & C Section
Date 12 JAN 1961

A short article datelined Moscow Dec. 22 by TASS "Observer" Vasilii Kharkov entitled "Laos Should Not Become A Second Korea" was published in the Moscow newspaper Komsomolskaya Pravda on Dec. 23.

As far as content is concerned, the article states that "in certain circles abroad" fear has been expressed that Laos could turn into a second Korea because of the interference of the US in Laos internal affairs, the activization of the SEATO in connection with Laos, and the introduction of Chinese Nationalist instructors and specialists. The article argues that the situation in Laos is not, as the US claims, a confrontation of communism versus anti-communism by claiming that the Pathet Lao forces support the legal government of Souvanna Phouma. The article ends on the note that American activity in Laos poses a threat not only to the independence of Laos but also to the security of neighboring countries and that this situation calls for the prompt convening of the participants of the 1954 Geneva conference. Curiously, there is no mention of the re-establishment of an ICC presence in Laos, although this is one of the main proposals made in the Soviet Dec. 22 note to the British (published in Pravda, Dec. 24).

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The Embassy notes that the TASS "Observer" article was given prominent treatment in the Dec. 23 Paris edition of the New York Herald Tribune, where it appeared in the upper right-hand corner on page 1. Although the implications of certain features of the article — second Korea, SEATO activization, Chinese Nationalist involvement — are serious, apart from the headline there are no elements in it not incorporated in previous Soviet press material or in the recent notes of the Soviet Government to the US and the UK on Laos.

Articles written by "Observers" in the Soviet press are in effect expressions of editorial opinion. They are considered more weighty and authoritative expressions of the Soviet point of view than news dispatches or ordinary by-line articles. However, the fact that the TASS "Observer" article in question was published only in a minor Moscow newspaper instead

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350 Pol Affairs - Laos (Soviet Press)

of in Pravda and Izvestiya to some extent offsets the threatening image evoked by the headline.

A likely explanation for the caution in handling the theme that the Laotian situation is comparable to Korea might be that the Soviet regime is reluctant to alarm its own people over the prospect of large scale hostilities involving the communist bloc with the United States. On the other hand, the Soviets may find it useful abroad to exploit the fear of enlarged hostilities over Laos to promote its immediate objectives of bringing about a reconvening of the 1954 Geneva conference on Indo-China. and the return of the ICC to Laos.

THOMPSON

(BHKlosson)

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12/27/60

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Authority NND 949832

AIRGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING Amembassy KARACHI

- 9 JAN 1961

UNCLASSIFIED
Classification

PAGE 1 OF 1 PAGES

Date Sent: December 24, 1960

FROM: Amembassy KARACHI

TO: SecState WASHINGTON

NO: G-221

RPT INFO: Lahore G-57 Murree G-59 Dacca G-[illegible] Bangkok G-[illegible] Vientiane G-01 Manila G-04

	ACTION	INFO
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ACTION-NOTE		

Iaotian crisis has been subject several editorials in Pak press during past week. Only one paper, small circulation Awan, has specifically endorsed Pres Ayub view that if SEATO intervenes Pakistan would contribute forces, but both Dawn and Nai Roushni underscored threat to whole Southeast Asia posed by possible Communist success in Laos and saw need SEATO powers remain on alert and intervene if necessary.

Morning News, Afaq and Imroze, however, made clear they not in favor of SEATO or other outside interference. Morning News favored compromise solution between contending factions noting unlikelihood either side winning outright victory. Paper also stressed that even in "rightest" camp neutralist sentiment was strong. Afaq suggested that if rightests included Communists in coalition government, it would put an end to Communist "disruptive activities". Otherwise, paper said civil war would eventually result in Communist victory. Imroze was strongly critical of U.S. policy in Laos. It claimed that main responsibility for present crisis "falls on U.S. shoulders" for its refusal to continue military aid to Prince Phouma government after Phouma rejected US demand for exclusion of Pathet Lao from Government. Paper concluded with comment that it was futile to expect peace in Laos now that U.S. and Soviet Union had entered fray.

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Received E & C Section
Date 13 JAN 1961
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Classification

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- 5 JAN 1961

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JUSMAG		6
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FILES		7
ACTION NOTIF		

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Dec. 23, 1960

Amembassy BELGRADE

Secstate WASHINGTON

G-141

RPTD INFO: Amembassy VIENTIANE G-1 Amconsul HONG KONG G-6
" " MOSCOW G-24 " " ZAGREB G-59
" " SAIGON G-1 " " SARAJEVO G-60
" " BANGKOK G-1
" " TAIPEI G-4
" " TOKYO G-4

Yugoslavia's position on Laotian situation shown in editorials from leading Belgrade dailies Borba and Politika. Position taken by these papers predictably reflects Yugoslavia's public international posture as "nonaligned" champion of the "small", the "exploited", and the "suppressed". They also reflect her Communist regime's unwillingness initiate direct criticism of Sino-Soviet bloc. Therefore, while describing Laos as a zone of struggle between "blocs", Belgrade editorials have blamed the United States and SEATO for the current situation in Laos.

On November 28, Borba contrasted offer "left wing" Neo Lao Haksat (Pathet Lao) to support "legitimate" government of Prince Souvanna PHOUMA with unwillingness "third group" supporting General NOSAVAN and Prince BOUNOUM to enter into "coalition" or take role of "opposition" in Parliament. Borba blamed Nosavan and "those giving orders to him" for this attitude. Borba then charged SEATO with "seeking to create reasons for outside intervention". The paper continued that "impermissible statements and suggestions by representatives of the United States, Thailand, and the Philippines at recent meeting of SEATO Military Committee.....demanding that a policy of force be adopted against advance Communism in Laos and South Vietnam had an equally negative effect" against the "inevitable and urgently needed movement of Laos away from subordination and misery toward independence and gradual social and economic progress".

On December 16, Borba accused "foreign interests, having absolutely nothing to do with the real interests of Laos", of having thrown Laos into civil war. Borba termed present situation "absurd" since the United States was supplying, under agreements concluded with Laotian Government,

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Belgrade G-1

330 Pol Affairs - Ltr

12-23-60

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Authority NND 949832

arms to the "legitimate government's pro-Western, rightist" opposition. Borba then contrasted the provisions of the Geneva Agreements of 1954, stating that Laos should not ask for foreign military assistance "unless defense of Laotian territory is necessary", with $300,000,000 of United States military assistance to Laos. The paper then deplored Western action "proclaiming" the Phouma government a "minority government" in order "to launch a 'policy of force' toward Laos" including "military intervention" from Thailand. Borba concluded that the "exploitation" of Laotian internal problems" and disregard for the Geneva Agreements created a "serious threat" to peace in Asia and the World"as a whole".

Politika, on December 18, clung to similar themes and noted that "continuous conflict" between great powers had resulted in growing pressure on Laotian independence. SEATO in general and Thailand in particular were singled out as sources of pressure. America was accused of having taken over control of the Laotian Army during recent years with "increased political influence" and "brutal economic corruption" the result. Politika noted in this regard United States investigation of its own aid policies in Laos. Politika continued that "everything" in the Army became "American" except the "general feeling" and that the Kong Li coup d'etat in August 1960 reflected "agitation and anger" against American policy.

Politika applauded Souvanna PHOUMA's efforts to act "independently" and also noted his "preparations" to negotiate with the "left-wing" Pathet Lao and that he was "even" prepared "to reach a compromise" with "right-wing" General Nosavan. Politika concluded that "brutal foreign intervention against independent Government of Laos threatened make that country the scene of a dangerous and direct military conflict between the two military blocs".

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While the anti-Western bias of these writings is clear, the Belgrade press did go so far as to publish on December 18 a Reuters report that the United States had delivered a note to the USSR charging the USSR and its allies with responsibility for present Laotian troubles. As published in Politika and Borba, this report described the United States note as a reply to the USSR's note of December 13 charging the United States with carrying out a policy of intervention and support of the Nosavan forces. According to the Reuters report as published here, the United States reply said that the United States carried out a policy of assistance to help Laos achieve "integrity" and "independence". Fuller details of United States note published here in Embassy's USIS "Bulletin" of December 19.

At regular Foreign Secretariat press conference December 16, Spokesman KUNC said that at November 18 press conference Yugoslavia had offered "full support to all efforts for the internal relaxation and strengthening of unity of Laos in accord with provisions Geneva agreements". Kunc also recalled that on November 18 ~~press~~ Yugoslavia had pointed to "harmfulness of outside interference" in Laos.

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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Econ
Attaches
JUSMAG

Charge: EMBASSY

UNCLASSIFIED
Classification

Control: 372

Date: December 22, 1960

SENT TO: SECSTATE UNCLAS 1099

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE 549, PHNOM PENH 258, SAIGON 338,
CINCPAC/POLAD 375

BANGKOK WORLD Dec 22 quoted Fonmin Thanat making fol comments:

There enough evidence prove who really interfered in Lao crisis. Soviet arms drops to pro-Commie forces were evidence Commie intervention. If Thailand intervened it did so by sending medical supplies Vientiane. Intervention charges should be substantiated by positive evidence, otherwise such allegations only political propaganda. Had there been no foreign intervention would not have been such battle for Vientiane with such damage. Thailand small country and would get no benefits from interfering Laos. Legally Thailand has right claim reimbursement for damage Thai Emb during battle for Vientiane but for political purposes Thailand would wait before taking appropriate steps.

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Authority NND 949832

JOHNSON

POL:JSRoy/sra
Dec 22, 1960

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

INCOMING

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Classification

Control: 770

Rec'd: 23 Dec 60 7 PM

ACTION

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JUSMAG
USIS 2

FROM: SECSTATE

NO: CIRCR 891 Dec 22

PRIORITY

CINCPAC FOR POLAD CANBERRA ALSO PASS WELLINGTON

In view tendency of some govts and foreign press to equate Sov and US aid to Laos, you should draw on following statement to set record straight:

(Excerpt from transcript of noon press briefing Dec 22)

Mr. Whitdve "As I have indicated before, the Soviets have been supplying pro-Communist rebel troops in Laos, and apparently are continuing to do so. This is a matter of serious concern. Now, having said that, I would like to go on to say that we have noted a tendency in some quarters to equate US and Soviet aid to Laos. This is a fundamental error. There is nothing new about US economic and military aid to Laos which we have been providing since 1955. However, the recent clandestine Soviet airlift of weapons and ammunition to rebel forces-which I have already said is apparently continuing--is a new and sinister factor in the situation. You will recall what we stated in our note of Dec 17 to the Soviet Union, such supplies as have been furnished by the US to the forces in Laos, in whatever region, have been provided pursuant to a long-standing agreement with Laos, and with the approval of the legal govt of Laos. This American aid has been furnished to enable the Royal Lao Army to maintain the intregrity and independence of the country. It is in sharp contrast to the Soviet aid which is for the support of the pro-Communist elements determined to overthrow the established govt and destroy the independence of Laos."

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Dept. Circ. 891

350 - Pol. Affairs - Laos (Re Soviet Aid)

12-22-60

File
Uncl

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FS Form No. 495
Revised June 1960

CROSS-REFERENCE SHEET

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 320 Int'l Pol Aff Pass/USSR FOR Tel

FROM Saigon ( ) DATED Dec. 21, 1960
NAME

TO Dept. 1199
Bkk 238

REGARDING:

350 Pol Affairs - Laos (Camp)

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Authority NND 949832

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

Charge: EMBASSY — UNCLASSIFIED *Classification* — Control: 315

Date: 20 Dec 60

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Mr. Batson
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ECON
SA
SEATO
JUSMAG
Attaches
Files

SENT TO: SecState WASHINGTON 1076

RPTD. INFO: Amembassy PHNOM PENH 253

SAIGON 330

CINCPAC/POLAD 366

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 94488.32

According BANGKOK WORLD Dec 20 Radio Thailand Dec 19 denounced as groundless recent Radio Hanoi charge naming three Thai soldiers who claimed captured by Kong Lae troops in recent fighting for Vientiane. Radio Thailand said lists Thai armed forces did not contain names these three soldiers and Vietnamese charge intended fool world into misunderstanding that Thai troops interfering in Laos fight. Reason for this false charge is draw attention other countries away from what Commies themselves doing in Laos. If there any interference in Laos it probably by Commie soldiers from North Vietnam who only few days ago helped Kong Lae in Vientiane fight.

Radio Thailand Dec 19 also claimed 1,200 pro-Commie soldiers surrendered to Phoumi forces, among them several Vietminh troops. Capture Vietminh called obvious proof outside interference in Laos affairs. Radio also said Lao Health Min Touby Ly Foung announced over 100 looters, most belonging leftist Lao youth movement, arrested in Vientiane.

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POL:JSRoy:jfl
Dec. 20, 1960

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Secret 1076 350 Rel Phoumi - Kong Lae Coup 12-20-60

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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UNCLASSIFIED
Classification

Charge: EMBASSY

Control: 314

Date: 20 Dec 60

SENT TO: SECSTATE 1075

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE UNN, PHNOM PENH 252, SAIGON 329,

CINCPAC/POLAD 365

According BANGKOK WORLD Dec 20, Fonmin Thanat commented that Lao crisis smoothed out but future that country needs close watch. Interior Min Praphat said Lao situation calmed down and things in good order. He discounted reports that Primin Sarit ordered Thai armed forces alerted fol hurried border visit since security measures in border provinces near Laos had long been ordered and there no need for another order.

According BANGKOK POST Dec 19, consensus official views in Bangkok is Lao situation vastly improved but may get worse than ever before. SEATO officials stressed SEATO could not get involved unless there proof largescale Commie invasion Laos. Thai officials expressed belief Lao situation may either stabilize or Pathet Lao movement, integrated with Kong Le forces, may intensify civil war and, with Commie aid across border from North Vietnam and Commie China, plunge country into unprecedented bloodshed. However, it felt current Lao circumstances vast improvement over critical conditions since Kong Le overthrew Somsanith Gvt.

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POL:JSRoy/sra
Dec 20, 1960

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

-INCOMING

Wellington 3

UNCLASSIFIED

Classification

Control: 636

Recd: Dec. 20, 1960 10 a.m.

ACTION

AMB 2

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FILE
BATSON
POL
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JUSMAG 2
USIS 2
CORCORAN

FROM: Wellington

NO : 3, December 19

ROUTINE

SENT DEPARTMENT 250; RPTD INFO 3

Re Laos.

Prime Minister Holyoake made following statement 16 December when asked at informal press conference to comment on allegations from Communist China that SEATO was preparing for military intervention in Laos.

"I have no knowledge of troop or fleet movements on the part of any country directed towards SEATO involvement.

Of course, the members of SEATO concerned in developments affecting the security of South East Asia as a whole, and of the protocol states of which Laos is one. Should any appeal for assistance be received, the appropriate course of action under the SEATO Treaty is for the states concerned to consult together. This can be done at any time through a meeting of the SEATO Council Representatives in Bangkok.

At present the conflict in Laos is essentially one involving different local political elements. I am accordingly by no means certain that in existing circumstances SEATO intervention would be desirable or appropriate in terms of the Manila Treaty. I would not wish, however, to minimize the seriousness of the situation which has already been aggravated by the recent introduction of military supplies from the Soviet Union.

The situation is a developing one which calls for close consultation with our allies."

BACON

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250 Re Laos - Coup (Cong)

18-19-60

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

Charge: UNCLASSIFIED *Classification* Control: 225

Date: Dec. 16, 1960

DIST

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SENT TO: SecState / 1023

RPTD. INFO: Amembassy PHNOM PENH 241

Saigon 318

PARIS 105

CINCPAC/POLAD 344

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Authority NND 9488.32

Paris for Merchant and Parsons.

BANGKOK WORLD reported fol info on Lao situation Dec 16:

1. "Highly reliable" informants said Primin Sarit expected make on-the-spot check Thai northeast frontier Dec 16 fol flareup battle for Vientiane. Interior Undersecy Luang Chart stated Interior Ministry inspectors making continual border inspection tours particularly in area opposite Vientiane. High-ranking military officer said full measures being taken safeguard border.

2. Gen Sunthorn Pathamwong, Lao Army C-in-C under ousted Souvanna Gvt, accompanied by wife and young Lao Army Lt, brought Bangkok in Border Patrol Police plane Dec 15 after fleeing from Vientiane. Sunthorn told Thai officials he has liver trouble and wants only transit Thailand for medical attention Paris and that he fled Laos because did not want participate Lao civil war. He had 30 min talk with Defense Min Thanom in which told Thai officials he

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doubted Lao crisis would soon end because rebel Pathet Lao force large and unlikely surrender.

3. Lao Charge d'Affaires Phaya Chanpanya Buapet said that acting on advice newly formed Gvt Prince Boon Oum, he formally contacted Thai Fonoff Dec 15.

4. Interior Min Praphat said US and UN should be blamed for letting USSR do what it pleases in Laos. Reports indicated Russia has flown 36 planeloads arms and ammunition Laos in past few days but US and UN have not even protested against Soviet action. Praphat said he wanted representative UNSG come Thailand inspect damage caused by shelling from Vientiane. At this stage must assume shelling deliberate due Quinim threat Dec 12 shell Thailand if Phoumi attacked Vientiane. Bullets and shells from Vientiane could not land Srichiengmai if not deliberately fired. Commenting on how long crisis will last Praphat said Laos could make revolution every four hours. Increasing numbers refugees arriving Nongkhai and hospital full.

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JOHNSON

for JSRoy:jfl

December 16, 1960

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING AmEmbassy, Bangkok

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Charge: Embassy

Control: 156

Date: Dec. 13, 1960

SENT TO: SecState WASHINGTON UNCLAS 993

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE 532, PHNOM PENH 228, SAIGON 303,
PARIS 93, CINCPAC/POLAD 329

PARIS FOR MERCHANT AND PARSONS

BANGKOK WORLD reported fol Fonoff statement issued Dec 12:

Statement issued by Gvt Commie North Vietnam on Dec 8 accusing Western power and Thailand of interference Laos is travesty truth of which only Commie countries seeking dominate their smaller neighbors and advocating war as means ensure fulfillment their objectives are capable. In fact world knows, and Lao nation, more than any other people, knows that ever since Lao independence, Commie North Vietnam and its masters have striven impose their rule upon Lao people through intermediary their stooges whom they have fed, clothed, armed and trained to destroy latter's own countrymen. Commie North Vietnam also infringed upon sovereignty Laos by sending its hordes through that country to attack Republic Vietnam. Lao people have been aware this diabolical design for sometime and have now unmistakenly rejected this unwarranted interference by Commie North Vietnam and its masters and in particular stooges they set up in Laos, some of whom only few days ago went Hanoi seek instructions

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING

Charge: UNCLASSIFIED *Classification* Control:

-2- Date:

and wherewithals destroy Lao people. Let true facts be known and let aggressors beware consequences their actions.

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DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 9488.32

POL:JSRoy:la
Dec. 13, 1960

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

INCOMING

UNCLASSIFIED
Classification

Control 413

Recd: December 14, 1960
10:00 AM

ACTION

DATE
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ACTION AMB 2

INFO

FILE
BATSON
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SEATO
SA
JUSMAG
USIS
CORCORAN

FROM: VIENTIANE

NO : 958 December 13

ROUTINE

SENT DEPT 1149 RPTD INFO BANGKOK 958 CINCPAC 806 LONDON 534 PARIS 543 PHNOM PENH 450 SAIGON 615

ADDRESSEES PASS INTERESTED AGENCIES

Latest propaganda developments re Laos:

1. Moscow PRAVDA and Peking PEOPLE'S DAILY commentaries over Communist radios strongly denouncing US "intervention" in Laos.

2. Radio Pathet Lao December 11 broadcast Prince Souphanouvong appeal to Lao people rise up and smash Phoumi-Boun Oum "rebel clique" and US, Thai allies. Action urged in order protect nation, religion, throne, constitution.

3. Radio PL broadcast December 12 general order to all PL units calling for general expansion warfare inc luding defense Vientiane. Liberation Luang Prabang, attack weak spots Xieng Khouang and central and lower Laos, in close cooperation with Vientiane forces and all forces loyal Souvanna.

4. Vientiane radio December 13 continuing Kong Le radio, pamphlet appeals to people to rise up and fight Phoumi-Boun Oum, US-Thai interventionists (EMBTEL 1142).

5. Vientiane daily vernacular press continues call for peace, compromise.

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FORM FS-511
8-31-59

Vientiane 350 Re Phoumi-Kong Le Coup

12-13-60

AIRGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

16 DEC 1960 OUTGOING

DNB LOP JR WWH JSR CEE RGH JEM PEB

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ACTION NOTE		

1. FILES
2. CHRON
3. POL
4. RF
5. BANGKOK
6. SAIGON
7. VTIANE
8. CINCPAC

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PAGE 1 OF 8 PAGES

Date Sent: November 23, 1960

TO: American Embassy, PHNOM PENH
FROM: SecState WASHINGTON

NO: G-107

RPTD INFO: Amembassy BANGKOK G-66
Amembassy SAIGON G-67
Amembassy VIENTIANE G-68
Cincpac POLAD G-57

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

In front page editorial entitled "Laos Crisis Rebounds" (summarized here), daily Dépêche Nov 20 sees "little coup" of Luang Prabang as signalling increased activity by Savannakhet Committee and renewed determination of Phoumi Nosavan, "now covered with dollars and sufficiently supplied with arms and munitions", liquidate legal government Vientiane. After US recognized authority of latter and resumed aid Lao crisis appeared nearly resolved and dissolution Savannakhet Committee seemed near. American realism praised, for Mr. Parsons and his colleagues had rendered inestimable service to peace in Laos and area. On other side Pathet Lao had ended its military operations, its radio broadcasts less aggressive, and negotiations with RLG progressing satisfactorily.

However, public and private encouragement from certain SEATO members and more or less discreet intervention of certain foreign so-called secret services poured on Savannakhet. Gratuitous accusations and base calumnies came from certain leaders and newspapers against government of Souvanna charging latter accomplice of Communist expansion in Asia.

Work of foreigners has borne fruit and Phoumi has undertaken new offensive. Capture of Luang Prabang precedes other planned actions. But to conclude Phoumi faction will soon take power in Laos is to trust appearances and underestimate underlying forces in country as well as evolution of international situation. Impossible for Phoumi clan destroy legal government because time has worked for latter. USSR has recognized it as has US. Although recognition of a government does not always signify that underground action will not be undertaken to undermine its power, it equally possible that such action will bring no results of value.

Pathet Lao and its allies will not remain indifferent to offensive from right. To every success of Savannakhet Committee, Pathet Lao responds with an equivalent success. Every defeat of neutral government of Souvanna brings growing progress to pro-Communist party toward control of country. Division of country and civil war, under these conditions, appear likely final result which Lao people ardently hope avoid. Experience in SVN not

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350 Rel Affairs - Laos (Envoy)

11-23-60

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enough to open eyes of "SEATO warmongers" (quotation marks in text). Power of Phoumi as permeable to red subversion as that of his "great cousin" in SVN.

Souvanna's government merits support of all peaceloving countries and realistic governments. This is only solution which will allow Laos and SEA live in peace and concord. All other roads will lead to war. "If in the interest of a peace always threatened and always slipping away, if in the interest of the Lao people, our brother people, it should be necessary from now to unite our destinies by a pact or defensive alliance, Cambodia would not hang back." END SUMMARY. BEGIN COMMENT.

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Leftist Dépêche has Information Minister Chau Seng for managing editor. Basic approach of editorial not new. However suggestion of a defensive alliance between Cambodia and Laos appears for first time. Although perhaps suggested by Sihanouk's proposal for "neutral belt" of two countries guaranteed by major powers, essence of editorial's thought seems to be different, in effect appears posit willingness Cambodia fight for RLG and rest on belief Cambodia sufficiently respected by powers having major interests in Laosto be able alone provide protective umbrella. May be related to Sihanouk's original "confederation" idea although goes further. Not known whether suggestion officially inspired. Not impossible editorial intended as "trial balloon," although Embassy has no information to this effect.

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(w.c.t.)

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PAGE 1 OF 1 PAGES

Date Sent: Nov. 1, 1960

FROM: AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO: SECSTATE

NO: G-154

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE G-38, PHNOM PENH G-55, SAIGON G-50,

CINCPAC/POLAD G-46.

BANGKOK WORLD reported interview with SEATO Secy-Gen Pote Sarasin Oct 31 in which he warned that Laos' neighbors, particularly Thailand, cannot afford be careless over Laos situation. Lao crisis has become more complicated situation which appears critical. SEATO has kept careful watch since start but reports from Laos still very confused. SEATO will take action in Laos only when sufficient evidence gathered. SEATO cannot afford take action and find that crisis similar that of last year when UN observers found no evidence aggression but did find that North Vietnam materially aiding Pathet Laos. Pote declined comment on acceptance Soviet aid by Lao Gvt.

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7 NOV 1960

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PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES

DATE SENT: October 31, 1960

INFO: JCG DNB IGP JR JSR EJM JYK ROB JEM

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DIST:
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USCM
MAAG
USIS
FILES-2

FROM: Amembassy SAIGON

TO: SecState WASHINGTON

NO: G-192

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE G-63 BANGKOK G-70 PHNOM PENH G-65 CINCPAC POLAD G-98.

Received E&C Section
Date NOV 1960
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JCD

Saigon editorial comment on resumption U.S. aid to Laos varied. Following is summary editorials dealing specifically with subject:

Vietnamese language Dan Chung October 17 interpreted US aid resumption as timely move thwarting Soviet attempt supply assistance Souvanna Phouma government, but also stated aid may slow but cannot completely stop Communist political, military infiltration Laos. Ngon Luan, October 17, also Vietnamese language paper, considered resumption aid indication US thought it unwise abandon Laos.

Vietnamese language Tu Do, October 18, expressed belief aid resumption represented Souvanna victory. Said Tu Do: "By maintaining presence Communists, he (Souvanna) clever enough obtain American aid... and by showing US he is nationalist, he has succeeded in making Americans accept his role."

Chinese language Yuan Tung Jih Pao October 18 stated belief US feared aid suspension would drive Souvanna to Soviets. Implied Parsons' talks with Souvanna responsible for aid resumption decision. Another Chinese language paper, Ah Chau Jih Pao, on October 18 editorialized that resumption aid was indication US progress in efforts stabilize Laotian situation. Paper adds, however, because of Souvanna's opportunistic attitude, it questionable whether aid resumption will be able avert completely a Laotian crisis.

English language Times of Viet-Nam October 19 stated decision resume aid "has injected fresh moral assurance into minds SE Asians. New reversal attitude considered both timely and effective at time when doubts were beginning cloud real intentions behind US aid to needy nations... Mere move to retrace one's steps and tacitly admit one's mistakes by reversing decision is move of courage and greatness that only people with noble heart can afford to make." (See Saigon G-168, re earlier Times of Viet-Nam editorial on suspension of U.S. aid to Laos.)

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CR/1115/10-29

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COMMENT: Majority of commenting papers thus saw aid resumption as result U.S. fear of Soviets jumping in, and as Souvanna victory. Also evident some papers felt resumption of aid only stop-gap measure against Communists.

While above editorials interesting, it should be stressed the Embassy believes these views are not necessarily a reflection of GVN views.

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Charge: Embassy

Control: 458

Date: 28 Oct 60

SENT TO: SecState WASHINGTON 765

RPTD INFO: AmEmbassies VIENTIANE 416, PHNOM PENH 189, SAIGON 249

CINCPAC/POLAD 255

BANGKOK WORLD Oct 28 reported fol statements Defense Min Thanom:

Four Thai priests who ordained in Vientiane defrocked by Vientiane authorities and executed on banks Mekong. This latest in series reports from Vientiane that Thai natls badly treated in Laos. Thai priest who managed escape claimed witness execution. Bodies later thrown in Mekong. According priest Lao soldiers push faces Thais against trees during interrogations. Executions and mistreatment Thais in Vientiane must have developed from anti-Thai propaganda distributed to Laotians. Most Laos believe Radio Vientiane accusation that Vientiane food and fuel shortage due alleged economic blockade by Thailand. This not true. Thailand's real intention opposite that indicated in Lao propaganda. Thailand glad supply Vientiane rice shortage on humanitarian grounds. Rice purchasing contract already signed by RTG and officials working on final details. Lao Gvt request for fuel another matter since any fuel going Vientiane from Thailand must be used for public utilities and not military purposes. Defense Ministry and Fonoff officials investigating fuel request.

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There no change in military plans protect Thailand should Lao crisis make this necessary. Military forces prepared face any outside aggression. We realize now must depend own strength and not outside help.

Thai press reported Gen Thanom saying US Amb had told Fonmin Thanat that US resumed Lao mil aid on firm guarantee from Lao authorities that all Lao army will be paid, including those troops in Suwannakhet region. Thanom commented he unable see how they could pay both sides. How possible that soldiers fight each other at noon and get paid from same source in evening?

Comment follows.

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PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES

Date Sent: Oct. 28, 1960

FROM: AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO: SECSTATE

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 9488.32

NO: G-144

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE G-34, PHNOM PENH G-50, SAIGON G-45,

CINCPAC/POLAD G-40

Fol are summaries recent Thai press commentary on US aid to Laos:

CHAO THAI in article Oct 20 noted Vientiane sided with Commies while Suwannakhet adhered democratic camp. Souvanna rejected Parsons' attempt unite factions, but despite Souvanna's confidence in ability prevent Commie interference, Russia and Commie China now aiding Vientiane with money and men to fight Suwannakhet. Since US, if it does not have change of heart, has no alternative, it will probably suspend Lao aid at once and support Suwannakhet faction to prevent Laos falling into Commie hands.

In Oct 20 editorial KIATTISAK stated Lao moves towards Commies forced US temporarily suspend aid and send observer to Laos decide whether continue aid or stop all aid completely. Parsons mission total failure. If US continues aiding Laos blindly, equivalent to aiding Commies. If US stops all aid Laos at once, will be practical measure stop conflagration before it can spread further.

PHIM THAI in article Oct 21 said that fol complete failure Parsons' talks with Souvanna, it announced US had decided not resume US aid Laos. However US reversed itself and announced decision support Souvanna Gvt fol increased Commie activity and Commie offer replace US aid. This report denied by AmEmb Bangkok. Fol confirmation report, later announced Kong Le disciplined and Souvanna decided oppose Reds, thus ending negotiations with Pathet Lao. These reports made situation more confused than ever and US attitude puzzling as crossword puzzle. If US aid to Souvanna Gvt can persuade him and his Gvt return anti-Commie policy and be sincere, undoubtedly all neighboring countries greatly relieved. But what guarantee is there of sincerity Souvanna Gvt which continually changing its policy? It true US has right give or suspend aid any country as deemed proper. But since Laos gateway Thailand, before US changes Laos policy in any way should consult Thailand to some extent. Would be tragi-comedy should Souvanna Gvt, which openly

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showing itself enemy Thailand, be given military aid by US, thus helping it increase strength carry on aggressive activities against Thailand.

In article Oct 23 KIATTISAK noted that US decision resume mil aid to Laos confirmed. According latest reports US officials will be sent be in direct charge payment salaries to Lao soldiers and only those fighting Commies will be paid. If this report true it good news, showing US recognizes fact Commie infiltration Laos. Unconditional aid Laos equivalent aiding Commies but if US aid only given Lao soldiers fighting Commies it wise decision. Will at least deter Commies, stop their plan seize whole country, and prevent them starting next phase in their plan --aggression against Thailand. At first feared if US did not speed up resumption Lao aid would give Commies opportunity but with exception armaments, Commies have not moved aid Laos yet. Revolutionary party now has opportunity concentrate on ridding country of Commies. If aided by US in form salaries, uniforms and essential foodstuffs, they will have big advantage over Commie forces who forced commandeer food and money from Lao people.

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- 4 NOV 1960

October 28, 1960

FROM: Amembassy VIENTIANE

TO: Secstate WASHINGTON

JCG DNB LCP JR JSR
ELM JYK DNB JEM

NO: G-90

INFO: Bangkok G-71 CINCPAC G-68 London G-[illegible] Paris G-60
CPenh G-66 Saigon G-67

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French language weekly Indépendant Oct 25:

1. States that for reasons beyond paper's control was impossible include political editorial this week.

2. Under heading "Au fil de ma plume", Indépendant alleges that a "bewildered" friend said "you must be happy, you who deplored fact dollars here were at root dishonest practices, now that Americans seem determined limit generosity". Thus even on such fundamental questions there are always those who distort things. We never, never said US aid was calamity for us; would be idiotic. We did write, and still think so, that being poorly administered, scattered in various over-independent spheres (police, army, commerce, Plan, education, etc.), it never gave rise to coherent govt policy. Without such policy nothing durable or tangible can be accomplished. Furthermore, it provoked excessive kip exchange rate in 1957-58 which permitted unrestrained trafficking in currency. This trafficking brought to stop by devaluation, so everything put back in order. Then why, when Free World should make propaganda effort with Lao people, does America upset everything? Could it be that Americans have genius for committing blunders and are they going to cut off generous efforts of past ten years at very moment Soviets set foot on our soil? Question goes far beyond framework of this paper. Our thoughts however reflect views all reasonable people, all those who at heart are pro-Western but for whom necessity to settle internal struggles is turning them into neutralists. And those reasonable folk think our great friend America is wrong to abandon us, to drop Souvanna govt, which is making "generous experiment."

Americans shouldn't think that by becoming neutral, Laos has become anti-Western. Laos is neutral because it wishes end to civil war. It seeks natl union and once this achieved, we will have general elections to learn Lao people's desires. At that time, and only then,

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350 Pol Affairs - Lao Coups

10-28-60

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will we know whether Laos is for or against this or that one, or no longer deserves this or that aid. Until then, generous friends, have a little patience and give us a little more largess!

3. Indépendant expresses gratitude to RKG for generous gift of fifty tons of rice.

4. Paper describes Soviet Ambassador's arrival, Secretary Parsons' visit and PL negotiations as part of great diplomatic activity Vientiane recent weeks. "It would seem Americans have decided no longer help Laos if RLG makes too many concessions to PL, which it considers commie. As first warning, announced PAL would no longer benefit by US aid. Emotions this caused were at once calmed down by Phoui's announcement that nothing would alter his policy vis-a-vis PL. According most recent word, US reportedly persuaded to release funds for Sept.-Oct. payment troops."

5. As final item, Indépendant refers to Capt Kong Le's welcome of Soviet Ambassador as "somewhat too enthusiastic". Kong Le received punishment for this "little prank", which unfortunately tended give false impression of Lao opinion with respect Soviets. Must point out that while population welcomed first Russian diplomats in Laos with sympathy and particularly with curiosity, it does not consider them liberators!

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COMMENT: At Vietnamese Ambassador's reception in honor SVN National Day Oct 26, Ngon Sanmikone, political director l'Indépendant in absence brother Phoui, informed reporting officer:

Writer this week's issue, whom he did not identify, had failed submit draft for his approval, having gotten into habit no clearance while Ngon away at UN, France and Japan for month. He has taken steps see this does not occur again as he was quite disturbed by line taken:

(a) RPL does not entertain views expressed this issue on US aid, which cast aspersions on Phoui as well as on US;

(b) Neither RPL nor l'Indépendant seek new general elections, though Souvanna's efforts effect agreement with PL may make by-elections necessary. General elections at this stage, Ngon stated, would almost certainly result in capture majority of seats by PL-NLHX.

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PAGE 1 OF 1 PAGES

Date Sent: October 27, 1960

FROM: AmEmbassy BANGKOK

TO: SecState WASHINGTON

NO: G-142

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 9488.32

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE G-33, PHNOM PENH G-49, SAIGON G-44,
CINCPAC/POLAD G-39

BANGKOK POST carried fol article Oct 26:

Official circles considering suggestion that formal request be made UN send mission inspect Lao situation as potential threat peace and security SEA. No decision yet made but it reportedly increasingly felt in official circles that Thailand cannot rely entirely on SEATO for sufficiently quick and effective assistance in event Commie aggression against Thailand through Laos. Informant said in mtgs SEATO Council Reps other member nations did not seem consider Laotian crisis as great threat security of region as Thailand does. Conjectured they probably too far away know facts situation Laos or, if know facts, feel Laos too distant deserve utmost concern at moment. Informant reported task has fallen on Thailand gather all evidence concerning Commie activities Laos and present it to other Council Reps. Mtg Council Reps reportedly scheduled Friday (Oct 28) when whatever info Thailand has on Laos may be presented.

Officials noted North Vietnamese and ChiComs who assisting Pathet Laos Movement ever since end second world war doing so in such cunning manner that even when North Vietnam forces crossed border into Laos last year UN SYG unable obtain evidence aggression. Last year's incident believed have contributed to present reticence most SEATO members on Laos.

Officials said Vietminh Commies who training Pathet Laos forces now so well integrated it difficult provide evidence their presence in many strategic parts Laos, which made possible by desire Souvanna and Kong Le negotiate with Pathet Laos and obtain their cooperation in governing country. Officials said SEATO itself pointed out Commies have turned from open military aggression to infiltration and subversion to overthrow free democratic Gvts. This exactly what happening Laos and most SEATO nations have still to become aware of it. We nearest Laos, we know and are most concerned.

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Oct. 27, 1960

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Charge: EMBASSY

Control: 343

Date: 21 Oct 60

SENT TO: SECSTATE UNCLAS 717

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE 384, PHNOM PENH 176, SAIGON 235,
CINCPAC/POLAD 231.

language
English/press reported fol statements Primin Sarit Oct 20:

Asked whether resumed US mil aid would help end Lao crisis, Sarit said Free World policy anti-Commie. Therefore if US wants give aid Laos should be to anti-Commie forces. He not sure whether US has resumed Lao mil aid because while State Dept announced resumption, this denied by US officials locally. It possible US has certain method of its own for paying Lao soldiers. US officials may be making payments themselves. Re transit goods for Laos, US taking care US goods. [redacted] Eight airplane engines claimed by both Vientiane and Suwannakhet groups, [redacted] being held until question resolved.

Said SEATO has good principles and its members should help one another but there different views among them. In view danger to Thailand arising from Lao situation he asked Thai SEATO representative find out what steps SEATO plans take now that it obvious Souvanna backed by Commies and why SEATO partners not unified in attitude to Lao crisis. Results not yet known.

Stated Vientiane reports that Souvanna placed Kong Le under arrest should not be believed. Prince Souphanouvong has stopped negotiations with Souvanna because he knows Pathet Lao movement has infiltrated

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Vientiane and has greater force than Souvanna. Sarit noted Gen Ouane Rathikone had gone Luang Prabang and expressed wonder at Ouane's shifts.

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Control: 322

Date: October 21, 1960

SENT TO: SECSTATE 715

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE 382, PHNOM PENH 175, SAIGON 233,

CINCPAC/POLAD 229

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Fol treatment given AP stories re renewal aid to Laos in English-language press here:

Evening POST Oct 18 carried AP story attributed only to "State Dept officials" saying US had ordered resumption its "big military assistance program" in Laos, accompanied by denial by "spokesman for US Emb Bangkok" that resumption ordered.

Morning WORLD Oct 19 carried AP story quoting Press Officer Reap's statement of previous day which described in story as formal announcement of resumption salary payments to FAL. Same paper also quoted Primin Sarit as saying in reply newsman's question whether it right for US continue aid to Laos, "Maybe. It is the American policy. If US does not give aid to Laos, Laos might turn to Russian assistance."

POST Oct 19 also carried AP story quoting Reap plus report to POST "by US official" that cable received by US Emb "late last night" confirmed resumption military aid to Laos. Also quoted Fonmin Thanat saying "This affair of America's." He favored aid if can bring about unity and prevent Communism from expanding influence, but if aid brings

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about adverse effects such as preservation division and expansion Commie influence to extent threatens Thailand, "we shall be sorry."

WORLD Oct 20 carried AP story (Vientiane dateline) saying AmEmb Vientiane said military assistance not resumed. Indicated top USOM, PEO, Emb and Military Attaches not informed of any resumption and said specifically direct salary payments to FAL not resumed. Also quoted Souvanna as saying "must be mistake," must mean economic, not military aid. Story concluded with unattributed statement that in Vientiane resumption military aid regarded as "academic and meaningless" unless US decides to back Souvanna exclusively or rival rightwing regime led by Phoumi.

POST Oct 20 carried AP story saying Dept officials declined immediate comment on Souvanna statement mentioned previous paragraph, but added basic policy decision to resume FAL salary payments still stands. This followed by AP report from Vientiane quoting Souvanna and US officials Vientiane along lines previous paragraph with additional quote from US official that latest Washington announcement on aid left US policy in Laos "more confused, bewildering and contradictory than it had ever been before." Article proceeded with fol recital earlier statements on US aid: Gen Palmer's announcement suspension Oct 1; Dept's denial Oct 3; Souvanna's statement Oct 7 that aid in fact had been suspended; Dept's confirmation fol day; and Parsons recent confirmation aid [redacted]

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had been suspended and parting comment that he saw no immediate prospect for resumption. Article concluded "Only Gvt units based in Vientiane in position collect US aid. But US apparently has refused to pay only troops loyal to neutralist Gvt. Defenders this position say any other course would be playing one side against other in Laos' civil war."

In separate article, Primin quoted as saying if aid given, it should go to anti-Communists, but adding [redacted] he not yet sure whether aid resumed, noting Dept's announcements denied by US officials locally. Said it possible US has certain method of its own for paying soldiers in Laos; US officials may be making payments themselves.

WORLD Oct 21 carried Primin comments just noted plus AP and Reuter story saying decision resume aid confirmed by Dept in spite of Souvanna statements of previous day.

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Charge: EMBASSY

Control: 279

Date: Oct. 19, 1960

SENT TO: SECSTATE 700

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE 373, PHNOM PENH 172, SAIGON 229,

CINCPAC/POLAD 226

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 944832

BANGKOK WORLD Oct 19 reported fol statements Primin Sarit made Oct 18:

Lao situation worsening every day. When necessity arises I may have make last minute decision which I hope will be backed by my countrymen. King fully informed of situation. Message sent through Fonmin Thanat that if necessary King could cancel remainder European tour and return. Parsons told me his real concern is noncommittal attitude Lao King. Only learned about resumption US aid unofficially through press.

Asked whether it right for US continue aid Laos, Primin said "maybe." It American policy. If US does not aid Laos, Laos might turn Russians for assistance. If Lao Gvt negotiations ended in bringing Commie Pathet Lao into Gvt would mean only one thing - danger to Thailand. US wants unification Laos in order counter Communism. US really concerned because constitutional Lao Gvt playing with Commies while anti-Commie group called rebellious.

JOHNSON

POL:JSRoy/sra
Oct 19, 1960

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Secstate 698

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

OUTGOING AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

DISTR:
AMB
Mr. Batson
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Charge: EMBASSY

Control: 281

Date: Oct. 19, 1960

SENT TO: SECSTATE 698

RPTD INFO: VIENTIANE 372, PHNOM PENH 171, SAIGON 228,
CINCPAC/POLAD 227

350 For Ops - Laos Corps

BANGKOK POST reported fol statements Fonmin Thanat in press conference Oct 18:

Lao situation becoming increasingly critical for Laos itself and its neighbors.

Thai Gvt will take action against correspondents, news agencies or newspapers, no matter whether they Western, Chinese, Indian or Russian, which spread Radio Vientiane and Commie lies concerning Thai policy toward Laos without any attempt check facts. News reports contributed in no small way to Congo crisis and reporters have tremendous responsibility being able bring about good or bad results. Claimed false reports from Vientiane carefully fabricated as Commie propaganda. Western reporters repeat Vientiane and Commie lies ignoring damage to property and threat to life in Thailand caused by Lao gunfire. All this points to control by group with certain political motives.

Called news of arrival Soviet Amb most significant. Vientiane throwing itself open as cold war battleground. It cold war that may become hot war. One radio report mentioned demonstration for appointment Ambs from Red China and North Vietnam. Appointment such

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10-19-60

TELEGRAM

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- 2 -

Date:

envoys would step up cold war. Thailand must watch closely. When cold war started anywhere it difficult limit it, just like hot war. Thailand as neighbor most concerned. We have not intervened and are not intervening but Laos does not realize danger to itself and neighbors.

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

INCOMING

Kent 581

ACTION

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Classification

ACTION

DATE
INITIALS

Control: 570

Read: October 20, 1960
10 a.m.

FROM: VIENTIANE

NO: 581, October 19

ROUTINE

SENT DEPT 775, RPTD INFO BANGKOK 581, SAIGON 422, PHNOM PENH 324, LONDON 330, PARIS 338, CINCPAC 537.

ADDRESS AS PASS INTERESTED AGENCIES.

"Public Forum" Lao Presse October 18 summarized as follows:

If one cannot speak in terms of impasse, nevertheless appears Souvanna-Parsons talks did not result indefinite understanding. Indeed after their final conversation on Sec's return from Luang Prabang, Prime Minister declared: "Mr. Parsons only expressed personal viewpoint known since 1956."

Man in street welcomed Prince's unequivocal stand. Laos has decided follow policy strict neutrality and intends adhere thereto. Laos has suffered because was considered trailing behind this or that power. Laos indeed needs help; that secret for none but such help must not be tied to any political or military strings.

After same interview, Mr. Parsons himself stated: Neutralism is one thing, means of pursuing policy another. Now, we know that when Communists offer aid to a country it not for country to follow neutral policy but rather Communist policy.

This statement to say least surprising to man in street. Would appear say: If you don't follow policy we desire, we will cut off our aid.

If confirmed, man in street would be surprised by such position on part of nation, which has always maintained friendly relations with Laos, nation which knows well that Laos is not and cannot become Communist. Under those circumstances man in street wonders whether Washington has not decided sacrifice a friendly country for which has done so much, wonders if rumors re eventual split of Kingdom may not be founded in fact.

350 Rel Laos - Laos (Comp)

10-19-60

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FORM FS-001
2-21-60

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Mr. Parsons was US Ambassador in Vientiane when first negotiations with PL took place. Thus was able evaluate results of breaking off those negotiations which provoked civil war. Is it desirable see such situation continue indefinitely?

Economic aid to country such as Laos is greatefully received: It necessary, indeed essential. But aid can only be effective if peace and security exist. Wouldn't joining of two things be what everyone hopes for and desires?

Man in street also surprised by obsession with Communism which distorts thoughts and actions of certain of his American friends for whom those who do not stricly follow Washington policy are automatically considered be in Communist camp. There are nevertheless certain nuances: One may not agree with certain Dept. of State decisions yet not be Communist or desirous of becoming so. This what we wish these friends understand and realize, i.e., that we are not and will not be Communists.

It is said that NLHX is pro-Communist party. True, one could not swear this party has not received help of Communist countries. But how could those in maquis live with only limited levies from population? When man is hungry, he takes mess tin offered him without asking whether hands outstretched are red or black. It is precisely by allowing such situation worsen that we play Communist game and not by trying reintegrate those of maquis into Lao community.

Is Cambodia Communist because receives USSR aid? At time Suez affair, when very short of gasoline, France made deals with USSR. Egypt also receives Soviet aid as does India. None of these countries is Communist. We think certain of our American friends are making mistake and risk involving country in ever greater chaos. Lao people's will is for neutrality, strict neutrality, i.e., not join either camp.

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PAGE 1 OF 1 PAGES

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Date Sent: October 18, 1960

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FROM: AmEmbassy BANGKOK

TO: SecState WASHINGTON

NO: G-122

RPTD INFO: AmEmbassy VIENTIANE G-22, AmEmbassy PHNOM PENH G-38, AmEmbassy SAIGON G-31, CINCPAC/POLAD G-28

BANGKOK POST Oct 14 reported fol statements Interior Min Gen Praphat re Vientiane Thai Exiles Association:

Association formed by leftists. They disappeared from Thailand, reappeared Vientiane. Formerly kept quiet because Vientiane not Commie. Now Vientiane pro-Commie so they showing their red color. These people Commies, no longer Thai.

JOHNSON

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Oct. 17, 1960

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