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U. S. Sending Laos 16 'Copters To Improve Mobility in Jungle

25/3/61
Decision Is Viewed as Move
to Bolster President's
Warning to Soviet

By JACQUES NEVARD
Special to The New York Times.

VIENTIANE, Laos, March 24—The United States is sending sixteen more troop-carrying helicopters to Laos.

The decision to enlarge the present force of four helicopters was viewed as a bold move to convince the Soviet Union that President Kennedy made no empty threat yesterday when he said the United States would not stand idle if the Communists threatened to overrun Laos.

The helicopters detached from the Seventh Fleet in the South China Sea, are already in Thailand en route here. A unit of United States Marine technicians is establishing a repair base in Udorn, Thailand, thirty-five miles south of here, since there are no adequate maintenance facilities in Laos.

The craft will be flown by civilian pilots employed by Air America, a subsidiary of the Civil Air Transport Company of Taiwan.

The additional helicopter will greatly increase the mobility of the Royal Laotian Army, which has suffered a number of grave reverses in recent weeks in battles with the pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement. The Leftist rebels are strongly supported by the Communist bloc through a Soviet airlift and advisers, technicians, artillerymen and matériel from North Vietnam.

Each helicopter can carry twelve to fifteen armed soldiers. The total capacity of the fleet of twenty could be a decisive factor in the Laotian fighting.

In this mountainous, heavily jungled country of no railroads and only a few roads, lack of transport is a major reason why most battles in the six-year-old civil war have been fought with fewer than 1,000 men on each side and usually only a few hundred or less.

Even with some of the machines out of service for normal repairs, the helicopter fleet will give the Royal Army the capability of moving more than 200 men at a time to a battle zone.

Many observers here were impressed by the timing of President Kennedy's strong statement on Laos and the sending of the helicopter. Although the Leftist forces appear to hold the initiative in the battle zones, military men here believe they will need at least several weeks to consolidate their recent gains before they can launch a new offensive.

At the same time, if they decide the time is ripe to accept a political settlement, the current lull could be extended indefinitely without a loss of face to the Communists.

Supporting the emerging picture that the United States has decided not to permit the pro-Communists any more easy victories here was the two-day visit to Laos by Lieut. Gen. Thomas J. Trapnell, commander of the Eighteenth Airborne Corps, which is part of the Strategic Army Command at Fort Bragg, N. C.

The mobile force is trained for quick movement to any of world's crisis areas.

General Trapnell met Gen. Phoumi Nosavan, Minister of Defense and strong man of Prince Boun Oum's pro-Western regime, and made several trips to forward positions of the Royal Army.

He left this morning for an unannounced destination.

Yesterday this capital wore a holiday mask of gaiety to hide its fears as Laos celebrated the eleventh anniversary of the formation of the Royal Army.

The few thousand civilians who lined the route along which the relative handful of troops marched appeared to be painfully aware that it was not a victory parade. They knew that two weeks ago the army was driven from the key crossroad village of Sala Pou Koun by a sudden Leftist attack and fell back in confusion to a point just north of Vang Vieng, 100 miles north of here.



Lieut. Gen. T. J. Trapnell
U. S. Army

Last Chance in Laos? 25/3/61

If it is possible to achieve a peaceful settlement in Laos, the statement made on Thursday by President Kennedy, together with new proposals to Russia put forward by Britain, provides a reasonable basis for such a settlement.

Mr. Kennedy emphasized the resolution of the United States to counter Communist aggression and preserve an independent, neutral Laos, but it was clear the primary aim of his declaration was to bring about a peaceful solution of the Laotian crisis.

Britain's proposals, which have the support of the United States, embody agreement on the part of the Western Allies to a big international conference on Laos that Russia and the other Communist-bloc countries have long advocated. Before the conference meets Russia was asked to appeal for a cease-fire in Laos, to be verified by the reactivated International Commission that supervised the cessation of hostilities and internal political settlement following the Geneva Conference of 1954.

The Russians and the forces they support in Laos may object to a cease-fire before the international conference meets and use this as grounds for rejecting or at least parrying the British proposals. It should be clear to Moscow, however, that any delay in acting immediately to end the warfare in Laos enhances the danger of an enlarged conflict. Already, the United States military effort in support of the Laotian Government has been expanded, and the determined United States attitude voiced by Mr. Kennedy underlines the certainty that this effort will be further enlarged if such is necessary to forestall a Communist military takeover of Laos.

Russia should give great weight to the fact that Mr. Kennedy's statement and the British proposals reflect an increased unity of outlook over the Laos question among the Free World powers. Our response to Communist aggression in Laos, the President stated, "will be made in close cooperation with our allies and the wishes of the Laotian Government." British spokesmen, for their part, have emphasized their solidarity with Mr. Kennedy's approach and their respect for their treaty obligations under the SEATO pact to help preserve the independence of Laos. Mr. Nehru has put India's influence behind the new Western initiative by welcoming Britain's proposition for a settlement.

Moscow, Peiping and Pyongyang underestimated the resolve of the United States and its allies once before in Korea, and the result was a terrible conflict that solved nothing. It is to be hoped that Mr. Khrushchev will reciprocate the basic peaceful intention of Mr. Kennedy's approach to Laos and take action that is well within his power to halt the slide toward a major war in Laos.

Chinese Strings in Laos

In recent months Russia has seemed to be calling the shots on Laos for the Communist bloc, but the Geneva conference is providing evidence that on this issue Communist China may now be the dominant operator among the bloc nations.

The Russians have insisted on a veto over activities of the international commission that would supervise Laotian neutrality. But they have seemed to be willing to agree that the commission and Western powers play at least a limited role in the internal affairs of Laos.

In his speech at Geneva Monday, Chen Yi, chief Peiping delegate, virtually ruled out any supervision over domestic Laotian developments by the commission, by any outside Western power or by any agency with Western representation. He called such activity "intervention" and "enforcing an international condominium over Laos under the name of international control over its neutrality."

The Chinese Communist view, expressed in terms of violent denunciation of United States "interference" in Laos, makes the possibility of an agreement between the Western and Communist powers over Laos all the more remote. There might be some "give" in the Russian attitude on Laos, but Chinese intransigence cancels this out. Russia has been the chief supplier and public backer of the Communist forces in Laos, but Moscow is half a world away. Communist China is geographically in a position to control Soviet activities in Laos and ideologically can make it very difficult for Russia to show any less revolutionary toughness than Peiping expresses.

Communist China, in short, has preponderant leverage at Geneva, and Chen Yi seems inclined to use it.

PRESIDENT URGES NEHRU TAKE LEAD IN LAOS PEACE BID

25/3/61

Harriman Delivers Appeal
for India to Negotiate
End of Hostilities

REACTION IS FAVORABLE

Crisis in Asia Is Expected
to Be Major Question at
Warsaw Pact Parley

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 24 — President Kennedy has made a personal appeal to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru for India's support in winning a peaceful settlement in Laos.

A letter to the Indian leader from the President was delivered by W. Averell Harriman, Ambassador at Large, in the Indian capital.

The President urged that India assume a leading role in arranging a cease-fire in Laos and in making arrangements for that country to become truly neutral, free from outside interference.

[In Moscow, diplomats believed one of the major questions that will be taken up at the Warsaw Pact meeting there next week is what to do about the situation in Laos.]

Officials here were encouraged today by reports from New Delhi that the Indian Prime Minister had called the Kennedy message "helpful" and that he had promised to cooperate in any way he could.

Would Oversee Cease-Fire

Under the peace plan suggested by the British to Moscow yesterday, India would occupy a primary position. As chairman of the International Control Commission for Laos, she would oversee the proposed cease-fire in Laos and help bring foreign interference there to an end.

[Former Premier Souvanna Phouma of Laos said on a visit to Paris Friday that he supported Western proposals for a cease-fire in Laos, to be followed by a fourteen-nation conference on the crisis there.]

President Kennedy's message to Prime Minister Nehru covered much of the same ground as the statement Mr. Kennedy made at his news conference last night. It stressed Washington's desire to remove Laos from the "cold war" and to promote conditions favorable to her independent development.

The President disclaimed any intention of trying to include Laos in any military alignment or to establish military bases there. Some Indians long have suspected that this was the secret United States objective in Laos, despite denials by officials here.

President Kennedy's approach apparently has convinced the Indians and many others that he means precisely what he says about Laos.

Thus, in part, has been the purpose of much of the diplomatic activity by the United States in recent weeks and of the President's several statements, including his detailed description of the Laos situation last night. The latter had as its purpose, too, to explain to the American people the seriousness of the developing situation in Laos.

Officials here acknowledge that this purpose had been blunted necessarily by the attempt to approach the Russians on the problem through channels of "quiet diplomacy."

The prevailing judgment was that the President's statement had clarified the situation in the public mind. The White House was studying the first gauge of public response—the flow of telegrams to the White House following the President's statement—and indicated it would release a report tomorrow on this telegram and mail response.

Officials were delighted with the apparent response to the President's statement in most foreign capitals. But the most anxiously awaited reaction—from Moscow—was slow in coming.

Regarding the Kremlin's likely reply to the latest peace bid, hope and pessimism seemed mixed in equal proportions here. More than one official spoke of "a fifty-fifty chance" for an early and peaceful accord. Many viewed the Soviet actions in the United Nations and in the nuclear test talks in Geneva as portents of a negative reaction from Moscow.

British More Optimistic

Diplomatic exchanges with London yesterday and today indicated the British were more optimistic about Premier Khrushchev's reaction to their bid for an immediate cease-fire in Laos and an early political conference among interested governments.

The dominant feeling here seemed to be that the Russians were in no mood for quiet, negotiated settlements—particularly in Laos, where the Communist-supported rebels were doing well in the sporadic jungle fighting.

On Capitol Hill, the President won strong bipartisan support for his stand on Laos—for a negotiated settlement if possible and for stronger measures should the Soviet Union prove adamant.

Nehru Calls Bid 'Helpful'

By PAUL GRIMES

Special to The New York Times.

NEW DELHI, India, March 24—Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru said today he had received a "helpful message" from President Kennedy on Laos.

The message was delivered this afternoon by W. Averell Harriman, Ambassador at Large. He told reporters after a thirty-five-minute meeting with the Prime Minister that President Kennedy had asked for Mr. Nehru's "cooperation."

Mr. Harriman refused to amplify. Mr. Nehru, who accompanied him from the meeting, said he would be "glad to cooperate" with President Kennedy "in any way" he could.

"I think it is a helpful message," he declared.

He said he had received no new communication on Laos from Premier Khrushchev.

SEATO AIDES MAP DEFENSE OF LAOS

25/3/61

Top Military Advisers Agree
on Blueprint for Stand in
Valley of the Mekong

By ROBERT TRUMBULL

Special to The New York Times.

BANGKOK, Thailand, March 24—The top military advisers to the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization agreed today on a blueprint for the defense of Laos.

Their deliberations of the last three days laid the military foundation for any Allied intervention in the strategic Buddhist kingdom, now under the threat of a pro-Communist take-over.

The strategy of the anti-Communist world in Laos will be carried another step forward when the foreign affairs chiefs of the eight SEATO nations meet here Monday for four days, with Secretary of State Dean Rusk representing the United States.

Sources close to the top-secret military conference indicated that the top-ranking Allied commanders in the Asian area had determined that Laos must be defended in the valley of the long, winding Mekong River. The strategic waterway separates troubled Laos from the anti-Communist bastion of Thailand.

All Eight Said to Agree

The principle of drawing the line against the pro-Communists in the Mekong basin, which includes the Laotian administrative capital of Vientiane and the royal seat of Luang Prabang, was understood to have been approved by all eight members.

They are the United States, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines.

However, it was reported that the French delegation, headed by Admiral Paul Ortoli, had stressed the importance of defending South Vietnam against the well-organized Communist-supported guerrilla movement that has cost more lives in recent weeks than all the fighting in Laos.

The French viewpoint, as represented unofficially by close observers, appeared to be that South Vietnam was a more important consideration ultimately than Laos in the defense of Southeast Asia.

However, it was understood that France's delegation had agreed on the necessity for a solid SEATO front in the Laotian crisis as well.

But the French were said to be still convinced that the nar-

row length of South Vietnam with its long seacoast and large areas of flat terrain was more readily defensible than landlocked, mountainous Laos, particularly by the amphibious assault units and ship-based airpower of the United States Seventh Fleet. Such units under American naval command constitute the principal allied striking forces in the Asia-Pacific area.

South Vietnam Rich Target

South Vietnam is conceded in many quarters besides the French to be a richer target than Laos for the Communists. In addition to its strategic value to the anti-Communist world, this beleaguered republic represents an important French cultural and economic outpost in an area recently dominated from Paris.

France's acquiescence on a defensive line in Laos has been interpreted as removing an important obstacle to unity in the alliance. This has been considered one of the principle objectives of the United States.

The military conference ended against a background of widespread United States military movements in the Asian area.

Approximately 300 United States Marines were reported today to have moved into tents at the town of Udorn in northern Thailand with the mission of servicing a new helicopter force to be supplied to the Laotian Government by the United States Seventh Fleet.

Fighting units of the Seventh Fleet, including the giant aircraft carrier Midway, were reported to be moving southward under "alert" orders from Hong Kong and other points.

In Japan 2,000 Marines who were being used as extras in a Hollywood movie entitled "Marines, Let's Go!" have suddenly gone.

Communiqué Cites Danger

The military leaders, including Admiral Harry D. Felt, United States commander in the Pacific, agreed that Communist support to the insurgent Pathet Lao guerrillas in Laos "had created a dangerous situation," the final communiqué of the conference said.

"This had emphasized the need for continued solidarity among the eight nations to safeguard the freedom of the peoples of the non-Communist states," the communiqué continued.

"The military advisers strongly felt that the ability of SEATO's defenses, supported by powerful added air and naval forces, has up to now been an effective deterrent to overt aggression," the document went on.

"They reaffirmed their determination to continue their military cooperation and to improve their armed strength for this purpose."

Renewed point to the military declaration was given by Keith J. Holyoake, Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs of New Zealand, who was the first delegate to arrive for Monday's Council meeting.

Rusk to Visit India

Before leaving New Delhi for the United States tonight, Mr. Harriman said at the airport that Secretary of State Dean Rusk would arrive here next Thursday on his way home from the meeting of Southeast Asia Treaty Organization in Bangkok, Thailand. Mr. Harriman said Mr. Nehru had told him he would be very glad to meet Mr. Rusk.

V LAOS; TRUCE; IN CRISIS

24/3/61

PERIL EMPHASIZED

U. S. Determination Is Voiced by President —Arms Build-Up On

Transcript of news conference
and summary, Page 8.

By W. H. LAWRENCE

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 23—President Kennedy told the people of the United States tonight of the dangers in the situation in Laos and warned the Communist world that "no one should doubt our resolution" to preserve an independent, neutral Laos.

At his nationally televised and broadcast news conference he said that hostilities must cease in Laos and negotiations for settlement of the country's problems must begin promptly.

The United States Government must consider with its allies, primarily those in the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, what further military response from the non-Communist powers is called for, he declared.

No Ultimatum Given

He delivered nothing like an ultimatum and did not fix a time limit for a halt to pro-Communist advances in Laos. But he said that the situation, critical to all Southeast Asia, was becoming "increasingly serious as the days go by."

Significantly, the President avoided a direct response to questions about whether United States military units had been alerted or already were on the move toward Laos. But as he spoke, the United States was reported to be sending its latest types of military equipment for use by the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization should the defense alliance find it necessary to take action in Laos.

The President had a 6-foot-by-8-foot set of three maps of Laos by his side and referred to them in the course of the news conference to show the advances made by pro-Communist forces.

President's Mood Serious

Mr. Kennedy was unusually serious in manner as he began his news conference with a statement on Laos. The conference, postponed from its normal Wednesday time, was broadcast and televised live to the nation.

"I want to make it clear to the American people and to all the world," he said, "that all we want in Laos is peace and not war, a truly neutral Government and not a cold war pawn, a settlement concluded at the conference table and not on the battlefield.

"Our response will be made in close cooperation with our allies and the wishes of the Laotian Government. We will not be provoked, trapped or drawn into this or any other situation, but I know that every American will want his country to honor its obligations to the point that freedom and security of the free world and ourselves may be achieved."

The kind of response the United States Government receives on the Laotian question will help "to tell us what kind of a future this world will have," Mr. Kennedy declared.

Attendance Sets Record

The President's statement on Laos was made at the beginning of the thirty-minute news conference and consumed approximately one-third of the time allotted for the session, which was attended by a record number of 426 reporters.

This was the first time Mr. Kennedy had used visual aids to illustrate his points for the television audience. The huge metal map stand, mounted on small rubber wheels, had been cloaked in white cloth until seconds before he entered the new State Department auditorium. The coverings were ripped off by Lincoln White, the principal State Department press spokesman, and another State Department aide.

25 March

EX-LAOS PREMIER BACKS WEST'S BID

Souvanna Phouma Says in Paris Truce Plan Offers 'Reasonable Solution'

By HENRY GINIGER

Special to The New York Times.

PARIS, March 24—Prince Souvanna Phouma, leader of the neutralist forces in Laos, gave his public support tonight to a Western proposal for a cease-fire in that embattled country followed by a fourteen-nation conference to settle the crisis there.

The former Laotian Premier, who arrived here from Cairo this afternoon, expressed his support for the proposal after a conference with Foreign Minister Maurice Couve de Murville. The proposal was presented to the Soviet Union yesterday by Britain.

In view of Moscow's past support of Prince Souvanna Phouma, French official circles attached extreme importance to his position. It was thought that it could play an important role in obtaining Soviet acceptance of the Western move.

Plan Discussed at Length

The Prince conferred with M. Couve de Murville a short while after he had stepped off the plane. They were understood to have discussed the British cease-fire proposal at length.

Later, the Laotian leader said he thought the proposal presented "the most reasonable solution" for restoring peace to the southeast Asian country.

Americans in Laos Distressed Over Apparent Failures of U. S.

Soldiers and Diplomats Voice Regrets That Aid Has Not Halted Communists —Ties With 'Little People' Urged

VIENTIANE, Laos, March 24 (AP)—"We should be proud of ourselves," one American said. "We have taught them how to kill each other. Pretty soon they'll do it as well as civilized nations do."

"If I had been asked to do it," said another American, "I would have had a different approach. I would have tried, somehow, to reach the little people instead of the big families."

"I'm new here," a third American said, "but why is it that in every country I go to, the other side seems to have the will to fight while we do not?"

These are reactions from Americans who have been sent to this war-torn Asian country to help the easy-going people resist communism and to learn self-help.

Soldier Maintains Planes

The first American is one of about a hundred United States soldiers in mufti who, as part of the Programs Evaluation Office, maintain the planes that supply the 30,000-man Laotian Army. They also teach the Laotians how to use the instruments of war.

The second American is a diplomat who has been here two years, knows the Laotians and likes them. He is disappointed at the ways in which American policy apparently has failed.

The third American is an official of the United States Operations Mission, which, along with the Programs Evaluation Office, has spent some \$300,000,000 in the country. He is inclined to wonder why American ideas have failed to take root. He received a ready answer from some of his own colleagues.

Diplomat Sees Failures

"It's simple," one said, "the Communists work at it. We don't. We do a part-time job." The diplomat sighed and said: "No, I think it is a little deeper than that. We came here to help out. We brought money and goods with us. We were determined to be generous."

"But we gave the money and the goods to the military program. We neglected the economic side. And the money we did give to help the country economically went into the pockets of the rich and corrupt. The Communists made effective propaganda of our failures."

The American in the Programs Evaluation Office is bitter because he works long hours with little help and envisages the possibility that, no matter how much he works, Laos may fall to the Communists.

Like many of the Americans here, he has grown to like the Laotians. He is convinced they are a people who do not want to fight because they are so deeply Buddhist they abhor killing of any kind. Also, he believes they are wonderfully inefficient.

"I have yet to see a country that needed our kind of progress less," he says. "All they need is to be left alone."

Bitter for Personal Causes

Many of the Americans in Laos are bitter for personal reasons. They are exhausted by the oppressive climate and loneliness. They are generally confined to Vientiane, a city of 60,000 that offers little distraction.

Because of the possibility of a fight for the city, American wives and families have been sent to Bangkok.

Other Americans are bitter because they believe there have been too many all-American cocktail parties and too few attempts to get to know the Laotians.

"You almost never see a Laotian at an American party unless he is there for purely policy reasons," said one teacher.

"I'm afraid we have not shown the best face of America here," said a diplomat.

regime. He fled to Cambodia in December, when Right-Wing forces gained control. The United States then supported the forces of Gen. Phoumi Nosavan, a leader of the new Rightist regime.

Washington Is Criticized

The contention that the United States seriously lagged before adopting a policy of neutralism for Laos is being widely expressed here in a series of articles running in the newspaper *Le Monde*. The articles assert that Communist gains in Laos resulted from the failure to back the only popular elements there, the neutralists.

This position appeared to be close to the view held by French officials, who have made it clear that Prince Souvanna Phouma's goal of a neutralist Laos was also their own.

The Prince said his trip to several nations was designed to "seek a peaceful solution and to apply a policy of neutrality finally accepted by the United States."

The British note to Moscow on the cease-fire proposal and President Kennedy's statement have received full backing here. Satisfaction has been expressed that the three Western powers are now in accord on Laos.

In The Nation

The Twisting Path to Our Involvement in Laos

By ARTHUR KROCK

WASHINGTON, March 23—President Kennedy's outline at his news conference tonight of the policy of his Administration toward Laos, and his judgment of the necessity therefor, are the latest products of the failure of the United States to limit the international doctrine proclaimed by President Truman in 1947 to areas where it is vital to the security of the non-Communist world and can be enforced without war of dubious need and prospects. One such extension of this doctrine has led to the acute crisis in Laos on a path of commitments to France in Indochina, retreats from military intervention there under British protest, and assurances given to the Souvanna Phouma regime in Laos and then withdrawn.

The doctrine was stated by President Truman in his message to Congress on Greek-Turk aid, March 12, 1947, in these words: "I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." But, even including South Korea, nowhere has American statecraft led this policy into a deeper morass than in Laos, or one less persuasive as an area where the cold war would be won or lost.

Souvanna Phouma Blames U. S.

In the Jan. 20, 1961, issue of this newspaper an interview was published with Souvanna Phouma in which he blamed the United States and its diplomatic representatives for the present crisis in Laos. That is usual talk by official exiles, but what was unusual in this dispatch were the following reportorial statements:

Many Western diplomats in Vientiane [the Laos capital] agree with Prince Souvanna Phouma * * *. They feel the Communists would have been content to leave Laos alone provided she remained neutral and outside the United States zone of influence * * *. [And] United States sources in Vientiane have confirmed that they gave assurances [to the Prince, who briefly headed a neutralist Laos Government in 1960] but subsequently were unable to restrain General Phoumi Nosavan [who led the Right-Wing rebel movement against the neutralist Government].

The statements made by Souvanna Phouma were that: The United States "planted the seeds of destruction" when it forced the Government which succeeded his to be pro-Western and strongly anti-Communist. He previously had assured North Vietnam and Communist China that he would never allow Laos to become a United States base or permit the entrance of American soldiers. But when, under United States pressure, he granted the diplomatic representation to Taiwan and South Vietnam he had refused to Communist China and North Vietnam, and admitted 100 United States troops to train the Laotian Army (whose one aim was to fight the pro-Communist Pathet Lao), "the present crisis was born." And Laos came under the present Right-Wing Government of Prince Boun Oum, "composed of a group of clowns."

Diversion of Our Arms

The assurance from the United States that he said was given and then violated was that, if he accepted this nation's continued military aid, it would "never be turned against my Government." But, Souvanna Phouma asserted, these arms were sent into a rebel region and then used to depose him "in a blood bath at Vientiane."

The economic commitment of the United States to the French when they were fighting to save their possessions in Indochina began the process which has evolved into military aid to save the present Laos Government from the Soviet-supplied Laotian rebels. This commitment almost led the United States to intervene with force in Indochina in 1954 to save Dienbienphu from the Communist Vietminh troops. But opposition here and among our allies dissuaded President Eisenhower from asking Congress to authorize it, as Secretary of State Dulles had recommended. Even so, the United States had been paying for 80 per cent of the French military efforts in Indochina, though watching with unconcern the loss to the West of as important a Southeast Asian area—Indonesia—and even prodding the Dutch to let it go.

In the course of its slide into a situation from which the tough diplomacy of the new Administration may extricate it, but at least twenty international conferences did not check, the United States also has spent more than \$300 million in aid to Laos.

Wild Laos Suited to Jungle War; Most of People Far From Strife

Although Laos could become a major East-West battleground the vast majority of the nation's 3,000,000 people have never heard of the "cold war." Ninety per cent of them are illiterate farmers who grow rice and cotton and produce the country's main export, opium.

As followers of the Buddhist religion they are inherently passive in nature. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India recently described them as "the most peaceful people in the world."

Only a handful of the entire population know about or are directly involved in the sporadic guerrilla war being waged between the Communist-backed Pathet Lao forces in the North and the Western-supported rightist government in the South.

Communications in the country are virtually non-existent. There is no railroad and the landlocked kingdom has only 3,540 miles of road. Laos is often called "tiny," but is actually 89,000 square miles of rugged jungle, mountains and river valleys covering an area twice the size of New York State.

If the West had to fight in Laos, the war would have to be conducted on the guerrilla level because tanks, jet planes and motorized infantry would be useless in such terrain.

Laos, which became a French protectorate in 1893, formerly was a part of French ruled Indochina, as were Vietnam and Cambodia.

When the Indochina war ended in 1954, Vietnam was partitioned, with the Communists under Ho Chi Minh holding the north. Laos was recognized as independent and was to become neutral and integrate the Pathet Lao into the Royal Army and the national Government. Cambodia, granted independence in 1953, retains her neutral status.

Owing to intense rivalry between the Pathet Lao movement, led by Prince Souphanouvong, and moderate and right-wing factions, the Pathet Lao was never lastingly brought into the army or the government. Off-and-on fighting has

marked the years of nominal truce.

Prince Souphanouvong appears to have the strongest force, estimated at 10,000 men.

The Government in the capital of Vientiane has an army of about 50,000 men, but Western military observers say only one in five are properly trained for combat and 20,000 are not committed to fight away from their home villages.

The United States has put in about \$250,000,000 worth of military supplies to support the forces since 1954. The Soviet Union, using airfields in neighboring Vietnam, is reported to have flown in artillery, small arms and technical advisers, mainly Vietnamese schooled in hit-and-run jungle warfare.

The Pathet Lao has controlled the northern third of the country and has recently penetrated the open Plaines des Jarres, coming within almost howitzer range of the capital.

Because the French have responsibility for military training in Laos, the United States has not had a regular military advisory group. But it has set up a euphemistically titled Program Evaluation Office of about 200 men assigned to teach the Laotians to use American equipment. The French have 400 military advisers, although entitled to 5,000 under the Geneva agreement.

If a cease-fire and some compromise cannot be worked out along the lines of President Kennedy's call for a truly independent and neutralized Laos, military action by Southeast Asian Treaty Organization forces may be necessary.

While Laos has no intrinsic importance, her geographic situation is considered to make the region vital to the security of Southeast Asia.

U.S. RUSHING ARMS TO SEATO DEPOTS

Tight Secrecy Imposed on Build-Up for Possibility of Action in Laos

By JACK RAYMOND

WASHINGTON, March 23—The United States is rushing military support to the Government of Laos and was reported to be placing its latest types of military equipment at strategic depots for possible action by the South East Asia Treaty Organization.

The apparent build-up for possible armed action should diplomacy fail to bring a halt in hostilities between the pro-Communist and Government forces in Laos, was covered by tight secrecy at the Pentagon. But it is believed to include helicopters, heavy artillery, and short-range aircraft.

The restrictions on public information on the supplies compare to conditions in wartime.

However, there was no inclination to deny reports of the delivery of helicopters and other arms. The movement of units of the Seventh Fleet, including the carrier Midway, and the readiness of combat troops at Okinawa for possible intervention also were not denied.

It is understood that the military equipment being sent to supply depots in Southeast Asia could be handled more readily by the better-trained neighbors of Laos in the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization than by the Laotians themselves.

U. S. to Avoid Combat

Particular attention was called here to Thailand, the Philippines and Pakistan. The indications were that United States units, if employed, would fill supply and maintenance needs unless the battle situation finally became desperate.

Close to 5,000 combat men, including paratroopers, were said to be quickly available from members of the alliance to carry out any orders to intervene in Laos.

In addition to the sailing of the Midway from Hong Kong, it is known that the Seventh Fleet has had a sizable task force in the South China Sea.

The unidentified ships in this force include two aircraft carriers, an amphibious transport, a dock landing ship, and several destroyers. About 1,400 marines are normally embarked with the force.

A 2,500-man Commonwealth brigade, made up of British, Australian and New Zealand soldiers, is based in Malaya. It is equipped with propeller-driven transport planes that are suited to the small airfields in Southeast Asia.

One of the most important United States combat forces in the area is based at Okinawa. That is the Army's Second Battle Group of the 503d Infantry, a 1,500-man reinforced paratroop outfit, including medical units, that is prepared to jump into rugged country.

The Okinawa-based paratroopers have enough equipment to carry on extended operations. Also at Okinawa is a special force of about 200 men who have been training for jungle warfare and anti-guerrilla activities for more than two years.

There was no information available as to whether the necessary fleet of transport planes has been dispatched to Okinawa for the 2,000-mile flight from Okinawa to Southeast Asia.

U.S. TO RUSH HELP TO LAOTIAN ARMY

22/3/61
**Kennedy Orders Immediate
Steps—Sees Situation in
'Most Serious Light'**

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN
Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 21—The Kennedy Administration has decided on immediate steps to raise the military effectiveness of the Laotian Army in its fight against Communist-directed rebel forces.

Competent sources that disclosed this decision said that military security considerations prohibited announcement of the details.

These new forms of military assistance to the Laotian Government and the possibility that continued successes by the rebels might necessitate even more forceful action were reported to have been considered at a top-level meeting at the White House today. The President conferred for more than an hour with his leading military and foreign affairs advisers on the Laotian problem.

Soviet Silence Disappointing

The President was reliably reported to be viewing the situation in Laos "in the most serious light." He was also said to be disappointed that repeated expressions of this concern to Moscow and appeals for cooperative steps toward a peaceful settlement in Laos had thus far failed to produce any favorable reaction from the Soviet leaders.

Officials said the Soviet airlift of supplies to the rebels was continuing. So is the flow of military equipment overland from North Vietnam. The President and his advisers are convinced that Moscow could halt the rebel advance in Laos with a word.

Moscow's failure to give that word has produced the decision here to give the Laotian Army more effective means to oppose the rebel advance, sources said.

The pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement is believed aiming at the capture of the royal capital of Luang Prabang and the administrative capital of Vientiane.

SEATO May Offer Aid

If the new United States measures fail to halt the advance of the Communist-supported forces, sources here said, there was a possibility that direct help might be offered by the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. This latter possibility is now being considered in diplomatic talks here and at the alliance headquarters in Bangkok, Thailand.

The SEATO Military Council is scheduled to meet there tomorrow. Secretary of State Dean Rusk will leave Washington Thursday night to attend the alliance's ministerial meeting beginning next Monday, also in Bangkok.

Among those who will accompany Secretary Rusk to the Bangkok meeting will be Admiral Harry D. Felt, Commander in Chief of United States forces in the Pacific, and Paul H. Nitze, Assistant Secretary of

Defense for International Security Affairs.

The Laotian crisis is acknowledged to be the most important item on the conference agenda. Diplomats here saw a possibility that sharp differences among the Allies on this question might threaten the continued existence of the alliance.

Some members, particularly Thailand and the Philippines, were reported to be in favor of the strongest possible action to prevent a Communist take-over in Laos. Others, such as Britain and France, believed that the commitment of outside forces would be militarily ineffective and might produce an expansion of the fighting into a world conflict.

United States officials are acutely aware of these differences, which have been reflected in discussions here for the last several months.

The feeling has grown that Moscow, aware of these differences, may be trying deliberately to make Laos a testing ground of the intentions of the new Administration in Washington.

Laos' Weakening Feared

Meanwhile, officials were concerned by signs of a possible weakening of purpose or the part of the Laotian Government. That was the first interpretation of reports from Vientiane that officials there were thinking more favorably of a multinational peace conference and that they were considering the possibility of a kind of partition of the country.

Sources here said diplomatic pressure was growing for a fourteen-power peace conference, proposed first by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Chief of State of Cambodia, and backed by the Soviet Union and its followers. But United States sources said Washington still regarded the proposal as a stalling device, an effort to prolong discussion while the rebels improve their military position.

Laos to Renew Peace Talks

VIENTIANE, Laos, March 21 (AP)—The Royal Laotian Government, facing what it calls a crucial week of decision, announced today it would renew peace talks with former Premier Souvanna Phouma.

There was no indication of what proposals would be presented or if Prince Souvanna Phouma, a neutralist, had agreed to meet with the right-wing Government.



The New York Times March 22, 1961
COUNTER-OFFENSIVE:
Government troops moved on Muong Kassy (1) in Laos. Fighting was reported at Kam Keut (2).

ON LAOS

U.S. REVISES STAND

22/3/61
**Now Backing Control
Unit—Statement by
Kennedy Due Today**

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN
Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 22—The Western powers will present a new peace plan on Laos to the Soviet Union tomorrow. It is viewed here as probably the final test of Moscow's willingness to work out a peaceful settlement of the Laotian struggle.

President Kennedy is planning to make a major statement on United States policy on Laos at his news conference at 6 P. M. tomorrow. The news conference will be televised.

He is expected to restate the Administration's desire for a negotiated settlement that would guarantee Laotian independence and neutrality. Informed sources said they understood he was also ready to make clear that the United States and its allies were not prepared to stand by and see Laos swallowed by an armed minority supported by the Communists.

Maps and other materials are being prepared for use by the President in his presentation of the policy statement on Laos.

The President is likely to ask Moscow for an early and affirmative response to the new proposal for Laotian peace.

Cease-Fire Urged

The Western proposal will be presented to the Soviet Government tomorrow morning by Sir Frank Roberts, British Ambassador. Its contents have been worked out by the Western powers in cooperation with the Laotian Government during weeks of intense consultation.

The plan is reported to urge that there be an immediate cease-fire in Laos. It also proposes that there be a prompt end to the flow of foreign military supplies and personnel into the country.

The Western plan would revive the International Control Commission for Laos and have it assume carefully defined obligations in helping oversee the pacification program. The commission, composed of India as chairman, Canada and Poland, helped to enforce the 1954 Geneva agreements on Laos. It was disbanded in 1958 at the request of the Laotian Government.

The proposal to revive the group represents a shift in the

United States position. The United States and the Vientiane authorities favored assigning peace-making duties to a neutral commission of Burma, Cambodia and Malaya.

The proposal to be advanced by Ambassador Roberts also accepts the Soviet-backed plan to call a fourteen-nation conference on Laos, but it was understood that the Western powers believed certain conditions should limit the authority of such a conference. It would not be held, in the Western powers' view, while fighting continued or while arms were pouring into Laos from the outside.

It would also leave primary responsibility for working out internal political affairs in Laos to the Laotians themselves, sources here indicated.

Military Action Considered

Should Premier Khrushchev turn a cold shoulder to the Western peace plan, it was understood that stronger military measures would be considered necessary to prevent the loss of the country to the Communists.

Those measures will be considered by the foreign ministers of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization members at a meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, beginning next Monday. It is hoped in allied diplomatic circles that some sign will come from Moscow before then that the new peace plan will be accepted.

Sources here indicated there was no intention of giving Moscow an ultimatum or setting a fixed deadline for acceptance of the new proposal for Laotian peace. On the other hand, it was clear that officials felt that time was rapidly running out for hopes of a negotiated settlement of the Laotian problem.

This, it was believed, will be the central theme of the President's statement tomorrow.

Conference Delayed Twice

The President's news conference had been scheduled originally for today. It was postponed until 4 P. M. tomorrow. The time then was changed to 6 P. M. and it was decided to make it a "live" appearance on television. It was understood the original postponement was made to permit previous delivery of the Western plan on Laos to the Soviet authorities. The second change was apparently to assure the maximum audience.

A clear indication of the mood in which Washington is looking at Laotian developments was given today by Vice President Johnson. Following a special briefing for Congressional leaders by Secretary of State Dean Rusk and others, the Vice President issued a statement in which he said the world should know that "the United States, while it is going to be reasonable and prudent in all of its moves, is not in a mood to meekly permit an independent nation to be gobbled up by an armed minority supported from the outside."

The Vice President declined to disclose details of the report given to the Congressmen by Secretary Rusk, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Allen W. Dulles, and other Administration officials.

"I think I can say, however, that this is a situation which must be viewed, not with alarm, but with great seriousness," Vice President Johnson said.

LAOS PEACE AIMS STRESSED BY U. S.

Capital Hopes Moscow Will Heed Firm Policy Outlined by Rusk to Gromyko

By E. W. KENWORTHY

Special to The New York Times, WASHINGTON, March 19—

The Kennedy Administration hopes that Moscow will heed what Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko was told yesterday by Secretary of State Dean Rusk in their long talk on the crisis in Laos.

Firmly but not belligerently, officials said today, Mr. Rusk sought to convince Mr. Gromyko of the seriousness of American intentions on these points:

“The United States genuinely wants an independent, neutral Laos.

“It fears that large-scale aid to the rebel and Communist Pathet Lao forces might lead to major hostilities.

“It is determined, as President Kennedy said last week, to help the Royal Laotian Government resist the attempts of the rebels, with outside support, to prevent the establishment of genuine neutrality in Laos.

“It regards a satisfactory settlement of the Laotian crisis as a test of the Soviet desire for improved East-West relations and a condition for achieving them.

Views Repeatedly Stressed

In his meeting with Premier Khrushchev at Novosibirsk two weeks ago, Ambassador Llewellyn E. Thompson Jr. stressed President Kennedy's desire for a neutral Laos, and officials here have repeatedly made the same point to Ambassador Mikhail A. Menshikov. The Soviet reaction indicated disbelief.

Therefore, when Mr. Gromyko expressed a desire to come to Washington to talk with Mr. Rusk, there was some hope that the Soviet attitude had changed and that the Foreign Minister had new instructions to explore a settlement.

But yesterday, officials said, Mr. Gromyko merely went over the old Soviet positions. He insisted that the Soviet Union was supplying arms to the legitimate government in Laos. He continued to oppose the United States-backed proposal for a commission of three neutral Asian states to go to Laos to superintend a truce and halt foreign intervention.

Mr. Gromyko continued to press the Soviet-backed proposal for a fourteen-nation conference that was first put forward by Prime Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia, and he accused the United States of stalling.

Since the military position of the royal Government is increasingly precarious and time is so patently on the Communist side, officials here concluded that Mr. Gromyko's mission was to get an indication of the firmness of the stance of the Kennedy Administration.

The Kremlin, officials here observe, is certainly under no illusion about the cards it holds in Laos. The rebels are better armed and better trained than the Government forces, and are willing to fight. Even if the United States decides to match the Soviet arms, there are the questions of whether its shipments could arrive in time and whether they would be put to good use.

Finally, officials believe, the Soviet Union may be counting heavily on a trump card—the knowledge that the last thing

the United States wants is to precipitate more widespread hostilities.

Therefore, in the view of some officials here, Premier Khrushchev has decided to use Laos to test the mettle of the United States' new President.

He is doing this, they add, in a way now grown familiar—by keeping the stakes high and standing ready to take advantage of delay and indecision.

The United States' reply has been to increase its military assistance just enough, officials said today, to convince the Soviet Union of American seriousness without being provocative.

The Soviet leaders, these officials said, have apparently not been convinced by Washington's assurances on desiring a neutral Laos. Immediately after such assurances were given two weeks ago, considerable amounts of Soviet military supplies were delivered to the Laotian rebels.

There was concern here today at reports from Vientiane, the Laotian capital, that Pathet Lao forces had moved artillery within twenty-two miles of the royal city of Luang Prabang. If the military situation continues to deteriorate and if the Soviet Union does not make a positive response to yesterday's talks, it was agreed, the Administration may face some hard decisions in the next few days.

Equally difficult ones, officials said, may face the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization at its ministerial meeting in Bangkok this week. While Laos is not a member of the eight-nation alliance, it can seek military help from the treaty group under a protocol.

U. S. Stand Pleases Laotian

By PAUL GRIMES

Special to The New York Times.

NEW DELHI, India, March 19—Former Premier Souvanna Phouma of Laos declared today that he was “completely pleased” by an apparent shift in United States policy toward his war-torn country.

He hailed a hope expressed by President Kennedy for a “genuinely independent and neutral Laos.” Previously, Prince Souvanna Phouma asserted, the United States had rejected such neutrality.

The neutralist leader belittled any threat to Laos from her Communist neighbors. “I would be the first not to permit my country to become Communist,” he declared.

Prince Souvanna Phouma stated his position at a news conference in his hotel suite here. He arrived in New Delhi last night on a tour that is taking him to Asian and European capitals. He plans to return late next month to his home in exile in Cambodia.

He made clear he had no intention of returning to Laos while the present Rightist Government of Prince Boun Oum was in power. He said that the Government had been approved by a Parliament that had been elected fraudulently under army pressure last year.

“If I go back to Vientiane,” he asserted, “it will mean I accept the policies of the Vientiane authorities. It would be treason.”

He insisted that “90 to 95 per cent of the people of Laos are behind me.”

Prince Souvanna Phouma said the main difference of opinion between the Vientiane Government and himself concerned the method of seeking a lasting political peace. He said such peace would result only from new elections supervised by an impartial international commission.

This commission, he said, should be chosen from among, and be responsible to, the par-

‘Escalation’ in Laos 18/3/61

It has now become clear that President Kennedy meant what he said at his news conference Wednesday when he stated the United States would support the Government and the people of Laos in the maintenance of their independence and neutrality.

The United States has sent additional military equipment into Laos and, according to Vientiane news reports, has increased the number of United States military instructors with the Laotian Government forces from 100 to 250. This action is our response to the recent massive dispatch of weapons, transport and other supplies from Russia and North Vietnam to the Communist-led rebels in northern Laos. Communist North Vietnamese specialists are an additional part of Communist bloc aid going to the insurgents.

“Escalation”—raising the stakes—is thus in full sway in Laos. Increased United States military help for Vientiane has coincided with a slump in prospects for a political settlement of the crisis there. The Communist-led Pathet Lao faction has spurned a program agreed upon between Prince Souvanna Phouma, neutralist leader whom they recognize as Premier, and the Vientiane Government. The program provided for strict implementation of Laotian neutrality under the supervision of a three-nation commission, reconciliation between opposing factions through the mediation of Souvanna Phouma and a fourteen-nation conference to settle the status of Laos on the international level. Faced with the Pathet Lao attitude, the Prince has left to visit world capitals, including Peiping and Moscow, and urge the fourteen-nation meeting as a means of bringing peace to Laos.

The tit for tat now going on in Laos is a dangerous business, but the United States could hardly afford not to meet the challenge there of large-scale Russian intervention. To have acted otherwise would mean meek surrender. Hope that major conflict can be avoided still lies in Russian acceptance of the fact that the United States wants a really neutral Laos and is willing to abide by such an arrangement if the Russians and other Communist bloc countries will do likewise.

Souvanna Phouma's world tour could be a real contribution if he could convince the Russians and Chinese that their non-intervention in Laos could lead to a settlement at least of the international aspects of the Laotian crisis. To do this, however, Souvanna Phouma will have to change the view he has expressed that it is the United States that is the chief obstacle to the neutralization of Laos.

Meanwhile, the proposed fourteen-nation conference which Souvanna Phouma and the Communist bloc have advocated and which the Vientiane Government now accepts, may offer a chance of working out some solution in Laos to reduce the danger of major warfare.

Participants in a fourteen-nation conference proposed by Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia. These participants would be the United States, Britain, France, the Soviet Union, Communist China, the Indochinese states of Laos, Cambodia and North and South Vietnam, India, Canada, Poland, Thailand and Burma.

Laos Rebels Press North In Drive on Royal Capital

By The Associated Press.

19/3/61

VIENTIANE, Laos, March 18—The pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement, its eleven-day-old offensive still rolling, has artillery within twenty-two miles of the royal capital of Luang Prabang, an informed military source said today.

The rebels, some of them Communist-indoctrinated, have advanced thirty-six miles north along the Queen Astrid Highway since they captured the Sala Pou Koun road junction March 7, the source said. But the rebels' largest weapons, two 105-mm. howitzers, are still forty-four miles from the royal city. The 105 is considered effective at ten to twelve miles. Right-wing Premier Boun Oum, his poorly trained, battle-shy troops unable to smash the offensive, has shaken up the front-line command. More changes are expected.

Col. Kouprasith Abhay has taken over field command in the Moung Kassy area. The Luang Prabang military commander, Col. Bouteng, nephew of a Cabinet minister, is reported about to be replaced.

8,000 to 10,000 Troops

The rebels are thought to have thrown 8,000 to 10,000 troops into the central Laos offensive, which gained quick success when Sala Pou Koun fell. Against these well-trained mountain and jungle fighters, the Right-wing Government has employed 30,000 troops.

Western experts consider only one in five of the Government troops as trained in even the rudiments of combat. Their leadership leaves much to be desired. Capping this as the soldiers' natural peaceful tendencies, stemming in part from their Buddhist religion.

Religion does not enter the picture with many of the rebels, especially a hard core of 2,000 to 2,500 who have been Communist-indoctrinated.

The announced increase in United States military aid to the pro-Western Government is being interpreted in Vientiane as the beginning of an arms race to match Soviet contributions to the rebels. The increase also is viewed as a direct United States answer to the current rebel offensive.

The rebels, accused by the Vientiane Government of failing to honor a pledge to open peace talks, appear confident of winning a military decision.

The alternative seems to be arbitration by a proposed fourteen-nation conference that would include the Chinese Communists.

The United States regards this alternative as a foot-dragging "trick to lower the Government's fighting spirit by dangling the prospect of peace and feels months, perhaps years, would go by before anything would be settled.

Rumors are flooding this uneasy capital. Extensive checking usually reduces them about 90 per cent.

But the word yesterday, in any case, was that Government troops reoccupied Muong Kassy north of Vientiane, three days ago. Laotian officers and Western military observers alike seem to agree that the Pathet Lao forces never really seized it.

Laotian in New Delhi

Special to The New York Times.

NEW DELHI, March 18—Former Premier Souvanna Phouma of Laos indicated tonight that he expected little gain from any revival of the International Control Commission for his country.

Premier Khrushchev proposed that the commission, which consists of India, Canada and Poland, should meet in New Delhi. India is expected to support this move.

The exiled Laotian arrived here from Rangoon, Burma, on a tour of Asian and European capitals. He said at the airport he would seek Prime Minister Nehru's support for a Cambodian proposal for a fourteen-nation conference to end the strife in Laos.

Prince Souvanna Phouma said the commission, which was set up under the 1954 Geneva agreement that ended the Indochinese war, might act for the time being. He added, however, that eventually a broader conference would be necessary to achieve what he described as the first priority—to end the fighting.

Mr. Nehru is scheduled to return here Tuesday. He is expected to meet soon afterward with Prince Souvanna Phouma and W. Averell Harriman, United States Ambassador at Large. No meeting between Mr. Harriman and the Prince is expected.

5-HOUR TALK HELD BY RUSK, GROMYKO; LAOS A TOP ISSUE

19/3/61

U. S. Calls on Soviet to Join
in New Peace Efforts—
Warns of Explosion

HOPEFUL NOTE SOUNDED

Joint Statement Says Parley
Goal Is Increased Mutual
Understanding of Views

Rusk-Gromyko statement will
be found on Page 20.

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 18—The United States made a new and earnest appeal today for Soviet cooperation in achieving a peaceful settlement of the crisis in Laos.

A warning that the Laotian situation, if permitted to continue on its present course, could produce a larger conflict was given by Secretary of State Dean Rusk during a five-hour meeting with Andrei A. Gromyko, Soviet Foreign Minister.

The two diplomats and their advisers conferred on a wide range of East-West problems.

Following the meeting, they issued a joint statement expressing the hope that their talk would contribute to better mutual understanding of their governments' policies.

Fear of Major Explosion

The talk was described as "open and frank." The statement said only that "a variety of subjects of mutual interest" had been covered.

The problem of Laos was one of the principal items of business, informed sources said in reporting the United States' call for Soviet cooperation in a settlement.

The United States position is that the chance of a major explosion is great as long as Soviet military aid is flowing in to the rebel forces. The United States feels obligated to increase its military assistance to the royal Government to meet this growing threat.

If attacks by the pro-Communist Pathet Lao forces continue, even more forceful action might have to be considered by the United States and its allies in the light of their commitments in Southeast Asia.

Proposed for Truce Board

The United States wants Moscow to agree to allow a commission of neutrals to go into all parts of Laos to help end the fighting and halt foreign intervention.

There was no indication of Mr. Gromyko's reaction. The presumption was that he promised to communicate Mr. Rusk's views to his Government.

The details in this respect probably would be less important than the tone and mood on the United States side, for the general outlook here was relayed earlier to Premier Khrushchev by the United States Ambassador, Llewellyn E. Thompson Jr., in a note from President Kennedy delivered last week.

The meeting today began at 1 P. M. at a luncheon in Secretary Rusk's dining room. After two hours, the Secretary, the Foreign Minister and their aides moved to the Secretary's office. They concluded their talk at 6 P. M.

The session was a further effort by the new Administration to establish through "quiet diplomacy" conditions favorable to solutions of major issues. It is assumed that a number of others of these issues were discussed.

The joint statement sought to make clear that there was no emergency reason for the session today. The statement said that the Soviet Foreign Minister was in the United States for the United Nations meetings and that the Secretary of State soon would be leaving for a trip abroad.

Mr. Rusk will depart next week for Bangkok, Thailand, to attend a ministerial meeting of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. The meeting will consider the problem of Laos, including the possibility of joint military action there.

The United States would like to see a broadly based regime installed in Laos with the peaceful participation of major political elements. It would also like to see Laos established as a free, independent and truly neutral state.

If these conditions can be met, the United States might then be prepared to enter into the kind of multinational conference that Moscow has long advocated. But Washington feels strongly that such a con-

ference should not be the first step toward peaceful settlement but should be called at a later stage to ratify what has been accomplished by the Laotians themselves and by the neutral commission proposed to Mr. Gromyko.

With regard to other possible items on today's agenda, a number of problems now occupying the United Nations, including the executive structure and country as head of the Soviet United Nations delegation, and Adlai E. Stevenson, the chief United States delegate.

The United States has sought, thus far with little success, to win Moscow's agreement to reduce the number of items on the General Assembly agenda and eliminate as far as possible propaganda-laden issues on which there is little chance of progress.

It was presumed also that the participants took up the problem of negotiating a realistic arms control and disarmament agreement. The United States has offered to resume in August the negotiations broken off by the Soviet Union at Geneva last June 27.

It has been generally agreed that the United Nations is too large and unwieldy an arena for effective work on so complicated a problem. The United States has supported resumption of the talks within the group of ten nations, half from the Communist bloc and half from the West, that worked on the problem last year.

The Soviet Government favors a larger group and has proposed the inclusion of five neutral states.

After a meeting at the White House this morning, Mr. Stevenson said he hoped that "some progress" would be made in the next week in working out with the Russians detailed plans for a renewal of disarmament talks.

President Kennedy, Mr. Stevenson and the President's special adviser on disarmament matters, John J. McCloy, met with other specialists on the disarmament issue for an hour.

Statement by Rusk and Gromyko

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 18—Following is the text of a joint statement issued today by Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Andrei A. Gromyko, Soviet Foreign Minister, following their five-hour talk:

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the U. S. S. R., Andrei A. Gromyko, and Secretary of State Dean Rusk, together with their advisers, had a general discussion of international questions of interest to both countries.

The discussion took place at a lunch in the State Department today and lasted from 1 until 6 P. M. The choice of today's date was determined by the fact that Foreign Minister Gromyko is currently at New York for the resumed sessions of the United Nations General Assembly and that Secretary of State Rusk is departing the United States shortly for a journey of several days' duration.

The Foreign Minister and Secretary of State had an open and frank discussion on a variety of subjects of mutual interest. It is hoped that the discussion will lead to a better mutual understanding of the positions and attitudes of both Governments and may facilitate the consideration of outstanding problems.

authority of the United Nations itself, were thought certain to have been discussed.

Preliminary talks had been going on in New York on these matters between the Soviet Foreign Minister, who is in this

U. S. CONSIDERING RISE IN ARMS AID FOR LAOS REGIME

3/16/61

Allies Also Weigh Move to
Offset Increased Soviet
Shipments to Rebels

SWIFT DECISION HINTED

Kennedy Plea to Khrushchev
for Restraint Is Believed
to Have Little Effect

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN
Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 14—The United States and other countries are urgently considering sending increased military aid to the Government of Laos.

Military supplies have been going to the royal Laotian Army in larger-than-normal quantities since serious fighting broke out in the country and after the steady flow of Soviet equipment to the Communist-directed rebel forces became obvious.

However, the large-scale program of aid from the Soviet bloc has far outdistanced the Western effort, officials here said.

Consultations Are Pressed

Consultations with Laotian authorities and among members of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization have been going on for some time on the threat posed by the Communist program of aid to the rebel forces. The consultations have assumed a special urgency in the last week, it was said.

It had been planned to make this problem a matter of priority at the SEATO meeting of foreign ministers in Bangkok, Thailand, two weeks from now. Diplomats here said a decision might be necessary before then if the pace of rebel military activity is stepped up significantly.

Informants said that decision was being approached reluctantly.

Peace Hopes Dimmed

Hopes for a quick and peaceful settlement in Laos have been dealt a blow by the continuing offensive of the rebels and by the undisguised support they have been getting from the Soviet bloc.

President Kennedy and Secretary of State Dean Rusk both had expressed publicly their hope that Laos could be removed from "cold war" rivalries. A direct appeal to this effect was sent by the President to Premier Khrushchev. Neither the public nor private appeals for Soviet restraint seem to have had an effect, informants here said.

The extent of Communist aid to the rebel forces in Laos has been confirmed in the last week

by visitors to the rebel area, including former Premier Souvanna Phouma. From his place of exile in Cambodia, the Laotian Prince said the flow of Soviet arms to the rebels was twenty times as large as that of Western military aid to the Government in Vientiane, the administrative capital of Laos.

Diplomatic sources say that the build-up of Communist-supplied arms and the offensive moves by rebel forces in recent weeks are clear evidence of the Communists' intention. They believe that the rebels and their supporters want to capture all of Laos, or as much of it as possible, before any peace talks are launched.

Diplomats said the United States and other governments had to decide whether to watch that happen or to take steps to prevent it. The alternative of meek surrender to the rebel forces has been ruled out here, competent sources said.

J. Graham Parsons, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, appearing on Capitol Hill in connection with his appointment as Ambassador to Sweden, was asked today about United States policy toward Laos. He said "the responsibility of the United States in Laos is indeed a very great one and I hope there will be no misunderstanding of our firmness and steadiness and desire for a non-bellacose solution."

Firm Stand by U. S.

That is the tone the Administration as a whole is trying to maintain. Informants here said the question of new military assistance to the Laotian Government was being considered as a painful necessity.

Hopes for some kind of peaceful approach to a settlement had been buoyed in recent days by an agreement between the Government in Vientiane and Prince Souvanna Phouma on the desirability of establishing a neutral commission to encourage an end to the fighting and to foreign intervention.

But diplomats here said the good effects of the Prince's recent statements—on the peace plan and on the extent of Soviet arms aid—was likely to be lost if the former Premier carried out his intention to take a trip abroad.

Diplomats had hoped that the Prince could be encouraged to take a post in the Laotian Government and to help work out a formula for peaceful settlement that would produce a neutral and independent Laos. The Prince is recognized by the rebels as the leader of the "legitimate" Government.

Informants here said that only a decisive action of some kind could bring hope for a negotiated settlement into the present situation. They saw the former Premier's departure for Paris, London, Moscow and Peiping as a serious blow to that hope.

Britain Reported Hopeful

Special to The New York Times
LONDON, March 14—Britain is hopeful that recent efforts to bring peace to Laos by bridging the hostile factions with neutralist Prince Souvanna Phouma will produce a stable Government free of foreign influence.

The Government, it is understood, has not abandoned its aim of getting the International Control Commission of Canada, India and Poland back into operation. But it intends meanwhile to give the latest developments a careful scrutiny before pressing again for the commission's return.

Britain remains firm in her belief that there will be no real solution to the Laotian problem until the foundation has been laid for a broadly based, representative Government. Broadly based, in the British view, means at least some forces neither pro-West nor pro-Communist.

Neutrality in Laos? 3/16/61

If a compromise between anti-Communist, neutralist and Communist elements is to be reached in Laos, it is Prince Souvanna Phouma who has generally been regarded as best suited to serve as a catalyst in bringing this about. He is recognized as the Premier by the Communist and neutralist rebels and has in the last few days been accepted by the Vientiane Government as the prospective head of a new coalition regime embracing all political factions.

Prince Souvanna Phouma, somewhat surprisingly, has agreed to the main points of a recent peace program put forward with the approval of the United States by King Savang Vathana and the Vientiane Government. The King's program called for reconciliation between hostile groups and supervision of Laotian neutrality by a commission made up of Malaya, Cambodia and Burma.

United States spokesmen have indicated that Washington would construe the new program to mean the eventual elimination from Laos of all foreign bases, military missions and arms aid. Prince Souvanna Phouma still wants a fourteen-nation conference favored by Moscow, Hanoi and Peiping to help settle the Laotian situation, and the United States, long opposed to such a meeting, now appears ready to agree to this conclave even though it means negotiating over Laos with Communist China.

Unfortunately, Prince Souvanna Phouma seems to think it is the United States that is the chief obstacle to a really neutral status for Laos. This is not the case. The United States has made it clear that genuine neutrality for Laos is earnestly desired. Indeed, according to indications from Washington, the United States would become so little involved in the protection of Laos from the Communists under King Savang Vathana's program that it is difficult to see how the Communists could fail to take advantage of the situation and achieve eventual control of the country.

The gravest danger to Laotian neutrality comes, in fact, from the Communist bloc. Striking evidence of this is provided by the Communist rejection of the King's program and even of the agreement just reached between Prince Souvanna Phouma and the Vientiane authorities. Moreover, while Vientiane and United States leaders seek some compromise that would avoid a test of strength between the Communist bloc and the free world in Laos, Communist-led forces there go vigorously ahead building up their military potential and pushing their offensive against Vientiane troops. Prince Souvanna Phouma himself said yesterday in Phnompenh that aid from Russia to Communist-led forces in Laos has been "twenty times more" than the military aid given by the United States to Vientiane troops.

Prince Souvanna Phouma appears to have illusions about the Communists that seriously impair prospects for a compromise settlement in Laos. Meanwhile, the military power and area of occupation of Communist-led forces increase, and likewise their capacity to get what they want from a Laos peace conference, if one ever takes place.

Laos Troops Regain Town

VIENTIANE, Laos, March 14 (AP)—A key point on the road to Vientiane was reported recaptured today by advancing Government troops, encouraging hopes of bringing the Communist-backed rebels into peace talks. Laotian military sources reported that the pro-Western government's forces had moved into Muong Kassy, about 100 miles north of here, without serious opposition.

LAOS RIVALS BACK NEUTRAL POLICY TO END CIVIL WAR

11/3/61
Agree in Cambodia Parley
on Commission to Halt
Foreign Interference

TALKS CALLED SUCCESS

Rightist Affirms Confidence
in Souvanna Phouma—
U. S. Officials Hopeful

By Reuters.

VIENTIANE, Laos, March 10 —The Right-Wing Government of Laos announced today its willingness to accept a policy of "strict neutrality" to end the nation's civil war.

Gen. Phoumi Nosavan, Deputy Premier, flew back from Phnompenh, Cambodia, after having reached an agreement in principle with former Premier Souvanna Phouma, who favors a policy of neutrality.

The general, strong man of Prince Boun Oum's pro-Western Government, said at Vientiane Airport that the two days of talks with Prince Souvanna Phouma had been "a great success."

A second delegation is scheduled to go to Phnompenh before the Prince leaves Wednesday on visits to New Delhi, Cairo, Paris, London, Moscow and Peiping.

Commission Favored

A joint communiqué, issued here and in Phnompenh, said the two sides had agreed on the need for a three-nation commission—to be made up of Cambodia, Burma and Malaya—to halt foreign interference in Laos, including the supplying of arms.

But the communiqué said this would depend on the willingness of Cambodia and Burma to drop their original opposition to serving on the commission.

The commission was proposed last month by King Savang Vathana of Laos. The proposal gained the immediate support of President Kennedy.

[President Kennedy, in his message delivered to Premier Khrushchev Thursday, assured the Soviet leader that the United States favored a truly neutral and independent Laos.]

Cambodia View Changes

Economics Minister Ngon Sananikone, who accompanied General Phoumi Nosavan to Phnompenh, said upon his return that Cambodia had reached "a clearer understanding" of the three-nation plan.

There was surprise in both the Left-Wing and Right-Wing forces over the joint announcement. Advance predictions from the Laotian Government and the Leftists had given little hope of agreement.

The communiqué said without qualification:

"The two parties are agreed that a policy of strict neutrality and a neutralization of the country by treaty are fundamental bases to restore peace and national concord."

It added: "The two parties are agreed that foreign interferences must cease to allow the restoration of a climate of mutual confidence for national reconciliation."

The statement declared that General Phoumi Nosavan had affirmed his confidence in Prince Souvanna Phouma as "the only Laotian statesman" able to serve as a link with the country's pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement.

The Prince, who visited the Pathet Lao movement's leaders in northern Laos last week, declined for the present the general's invitation to return to Vientiane.

Prince Souvanna Phouma fled from Vientiane in December when the Right-Wing forces seized the administrative capital. Only four months earlier, Leftist forces took over the city and set up the Prince's neutralist regime.

Today's statement proposed a peace parley in Phnompenh of the Rightists, neutralists and pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement after "foreign interferences have ceased."

It also suggested a fourteen-nation conference to arrange a final peace treaty for Laos. This proposal was made earlier this year by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, head of state of Cambodia.

Leftists Launch Offensive

VIENTIANE, March 10 (AP) — Pro-Communist rebels launched a heavy offensive in central Laos today, casting a shadow over the peace plan drawn up by the Government and former Premier Souvanna Phouma.

A Laotian Army source said nine Pathet Lao battalions—said to be equipped with light tanks—had been thrown into the attack in a pouring rain on the key road junction of Sala Phou Khoun and two connected strongholds.

The outcome of the battle was in doubt, he said. At stake were control of the vital north-south Queen Astrid Highway, which links Vientiane with the royal capital of Luang Prabang, and perhaps the Government's plans for a long-promised offensive into the central Plaine des Jarres.

Report Goes to Kennedy

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 10—President Kennedy has urged Premier Khrushchev to help demonstrate that the big powers can reach peaceful and mutually acceptable agreements on disputes such as those in Laos and the Congo.

The President's bid for a new era in United States-Soviet relations was delivered to the Soviet Premier yesterday at the Siberian city of Novosibirsk by Ambassador Llewellyn E. Thompson Jr. It was reliably reported that the President's views received a careful hearing by the Soviet leader during the four-hour meeting.

On the Laotian situation, officials here believed that an important, if small, step may have been taken toward settling the dispute. The cautious optimism was prompted by the report from Cambodia that former Premier Souvanna Phouma had thrown his support behind a plan for three neutral nations to try to restore peace in Laos.

The Laotian rebels and the Communist bloc have opposed the plan for such a commission. It was believed there that if Prince Souvanna Phouma now is supporting the plan, it may have some chance of success.

Ambassador Thompson's report on the meeting was received here this afternoon and was immediately sent to the White House. The President and his top aides were said to be giving the long account priority.

Officials were guarded in their reaction. It was felt that disclosure of details of the meeting would destroy the effectiveness of the Administration's efforts to develop normal diplomatic channels between Moscow and Washington into an effective route for discussing and settling differences.

The hope is that it will be possible to remove serious problems from the arenas of propaganda and invective.

Evidence of Optimism

Although officials declined to discuss the Thompson report, particularly as it touched on Premier Khrushchev's reactions, there was evidence of guarded optimism in Administration circles. The first reaction here was that the quiet approach to East-West problems might hold some promise.

On Laos, the Administration has given Premier Khrushchev assurances that the United States has no intention of making that country a military ally or of setting up military bases there. The United States is prepared to channel any military or economic aid it gives to Laos through any acceptable international or neutral group, providing the Soviet bloc will do the same.

A truly neutral and independent Laos is the goal of the United States, Mr. Khrushchev was told.

British Hail Laos Accord

LONDON, March 10 (Reuters) — A British Foreign Office spokesman "warmly welcomed" tonight the agreement between the neutralist and Right-Wing leaders of Laos to seek neutrality for their country.

KENNEDY PLEDGES SUPPORT TO LAOS; WARNING IS SEEN

11/3/61
Declaration Believed Aimed
at Halting Intervention by
Reds on Rebels' Side

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 15 — President Kennedy promised support today to the Government and people of Laos in the maintenance of their independence and neutrality.

At his news conference the President blamed a small minority in Laos, "backed by personnel and supplies from outside," for the failure of plans to make the small Southeast Asian state a "genuinely neutral and independent country."

[Question 7, Page 20.]

Officials interpreted the President's words as a frank but nonbellicose warning to Moscow and the Communist bloc that their continued intervention on the side of the Leftist rebels in Laos would produce new countermeasures by the United States and others.

Laos a Testing Ground

Laos is a testing ground of Moscow's professed desire for peaceful settlements of East-West issues, in the view of the Kennedy Administration.

Some steps already have been taken to increase the military effectiveness of the Laotian Army, informants here said. Additional and more extensive moves in that direction are under serious study by the United States and other interested governments.

The President made his new pledge of support when he was asked whether an increase in military aid was being considered. He said the Administration was watching the situation in Laos "with the closest attention."

President Kennedy said it was the hope of the United States Government that negotiations, particularly those involving former Premier Souvanna Phouma, might produce "a genuinely independent and neutral Laos which is the master of its own fate."

Concern Is Deepening

"However," he added, "recent attacks by rebel forces indicate that a small minority backed by personnel and supplies from outside is seeking to prevent the establishment of a neutral and independent country. We are determined to support the Government and the people of Laos in resisting this attempt."

Behind the President's brief remarks was a deepening concern over the deterioration of the Laotian situation. The President and some of his top advisers have been giving serious attention to what can now be done to prevent a total defeat in the country.

The possibilities that have been considered range from increasing the flow of military supplies to open intervention—at the invitation of the Laotian Government—by forces of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. The latter possibility has been vigorously opposed in informal discussions by most of the SEATO partners, particularly by Britain, France, Australia and New Zealand, diplomats said.

There was undisguised disappointment here today at the news from Phnompenh, Cambodia, that Prince Souvanna Phouma had decided to go ahead with plans for a world tour. It had been hoped by the United States Government and others that the Prince might revise his plan at the last minute and take an active role in restoring peace in his country.

The Laotian Government and Western diplomats also had hoped that the Prince would use his influence to induce the Cambodian Government to take an active part in a proposed peace commission for Laos. King Savang Vathana of Laos suggested last month a neutral commission of Cambodia, Burma and Malaya try to halt the fighting in his country and to help bring an end to unauthorized foreign intervention.

Cambodia and Burma declined to serve.

MASSIVE ASSAULT BY LAOS LEFTISTS GAINS KEY POINTS

Pathet Lao Troops Seize
Strongholds on Highway
—Cut Rightist Defense

VIENTIANE REMAINS CALM

Effect of Offensive Unclear
on Peace Plan Drafted
at Cambodia Parley

By The Associated Press.

VIENTIANE, Lao, March 11 — Assault troops of the pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement burst through Government defenses in central Laos today, severing the main highway link between this administrative capital and the royal capital of Luang Prabang.

The attackers fanned out to exploit the break-through at the strategic road junction of Sala Phou Koun, a Government military source said, and captured Muong Kassy, a stronghold twenty-two miles to the south.

Government troops fled in two directions, he said, giving the rebels their biggest victory since January and a stranglehold on the Queen Astrid Highway forty miles south of Luang Prabang and less than 100 miles north of Vientiane.

Troops Defend Third Point

At last report, Government defenders, supported by heavy artillery, were making a stand on high ground surrounding Sala Pou Keng, eight miles north of the road junction and the third key point in Government defense plans for the highway.

Vientiane sources said the outcome of the battle would be in doubt for several days. They said systematic destruction of the highway had made it useless to the advancing rebels.

The Government made no announcement of the battle or casualties. The rebel radio reported that about 300 Government troops had been killed or wounded and "one battalion completely wiped out" during the month-long skirmishing that preceded the attack yesterday by nine battalions of the Pathet Lao movement.

Vientiane Remains Quiet

The rebels were quoted by Hsinhua, official Chinese Communist press agency, as having asserted that four Government armored cars, a tank and many trucks had been destroyed and that three United States-supplied planes had been shot down or damaged.

Rumors of the rebel advance flew through Vientiane, but the city remained quiet.

Government sources said the Leftist success was a result of a massive airlift of supplies to the rebels in recent weeks by Soviet-built transport planes. They also said Soviet trucks had been used to rush rebel troops into the fighting.

Still uncertain is the effect the offensive will have on the peace plan drawn up yesterday by Gen. Phoumi Nosavan, military commander and Deputy Premier of the pro-Western Laotian regime, and former Premier Souvanna Phouma, a neutralist who is regarded by the rebels as Laos' "legal" head of government.

They met in Pnompenh, Cambodia, and agreed that Laos should adopt a policy of neutrality to end the civil war. They also agreed that national elections should be held to form a new government. Prince Souvanna Phouma was given the task of getting rebel support for the plan.

But the Prince, who has been in exile in Pnompenh since fleeing Vientiane in December, announced that he intended to leave on a world tour Wednesday. He said he would not return to Laos.

"I would even go to the United States if invited," he said with a laugh.

The United States has fully supported the Vientiane Government of Premier Boun Oum. But it also has endorsed the peace plan that would neutralize Laos.

Tass Sees Rightist Setback

MOSCOW, March 11 (AP) — The pro-Western Laotian Government failed to gain its objectives in the Cambodia conference with former Premier Souvanna Phouma and "suffered a diplomatic defeat," Tass, official Soviet press agency, said today.

The agency, in dispatch from Pnompenh, said Gen. Phoumi Nosavan had failed to sway Prince Phouma from his insistence that a fourteen-nation conference be held to settle the Laotian civil war.

This plan has met with disfavor in the United States because it would seat Communist Red China, as well as the Soviet Union, at the negotiating table.

General Phoumi Nosavan agreed with Prince Souvanna Phouma that Laos should be neutral, Tass said, because of tactical considerations. This apparently was an allusion to the newly opened rebel offensive in central Laos.



The New York Times March 12 1961

A MILITARY SETBACK:
Laotian troops lost the Sala Phou Koun crossroads (cross) to a Leftist attack.

Hope Seen by U. S. For a Neutral Laos

By E. W. KENWORTHY

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 13 — State Department officials expressed "guarded hope" today that a truly neutral Laos with a broadly based Government might emerge from negotiations between former Premier Souvanna Phouma and the Right-Wing regime of Premier Boun Oum.

Last Friday, after talks in Pnompenh, Cambodia, Prince Souvanna Phouma and General Phoumi Nosavan, Deputy Premier in the Boun Oum Government, announced agreement that the country should be neutralized and that a three-nation commission of Cambodia, Malaya and Burma should act to halt foreign interference and the importing of arms.

King Savang Vathana proposed the three-nation commission last month. President Kennedy has given full backing to the plan and, according to reliable reports, has urged Premier Khrushchev to support it in the letter that Ambassador Llewellyn E. Thompson Jr. handed to the Soviet Premier last Thursday.

Both Cambodia and Burma have been reluctant to participate in the commission. However, officials here have attributed their reluctance to a feeling that the commission could not be successful unless the pro-Western Prince Boun Oum and the neutralist Prince Souvanna Phouma could reach agreement on the principle of neutrality and a broadly based Government.

In the view of officials here, there is now some hope of such agreement when a three-man Cabinet delegation flies to Pnompenh tomorrow for further talks with Prince Souvanna Phouma.

This afternoon, Sir Harold Caccia, the British Ambassador, and Hervé Alphand, the French Ambassador, went to the State Department for a meeting with Secretary of State Dean Rusk. J. Graham Parsons, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, and Charles E. Bohlen, special adviser to the Secretary on Soviet affairs.

Control Group Opposed

According to informed sources, Secretary Rusk told the British Ambassador that the United States could not now accept the idea of reactivating the International Control Commission that was established in 1954 to superintend the carrying out of the Geneva accord ending the Sino-Chinese war. The members of that commission were India, Canada and Poland.

Mr. Rusk is understood to have expressed hope that Britain would make no move to reactivate the control commission while there was hope that the Burmese-Cambodian-Malayan neutral nations commission could be formed.

The neutral nations commission could be set up coincidentally with the establishment of a new Government, or even before, officials here said. It could then call for a cease-fire between the Government troops and the Left-Wing and Communist forces that have been driving southward toward Vientiane, the capital, with the help of Soviet-supplied arms.

Thereupon, the neutral commission could determine the extent of foreign intervention in Laos and set conditions for tranquilizing and neutralizing the nation.

Such a solution, officials said, would obviously depend upon the willingness of the Communist Neo Lao Hak Xat party and its military arm, the Pathet Lao movement, to end the fighting and accept a political truce. In recent months the Pathet Lao movement, backed by the Soviet Union and Communist North Vietnam, has shown no interest in either peace or a neutral Laos.

Laotian Says U.S. Holds the Key

PNOMPENH, Cambodia, March 13 (AP) — Former Premier Souvanna Phouma of Laos said today that peace in his war-torn homeland depended on whether the United States Government would truly support genuine neutralism in Laos.

Prince Souvanna Phouma, who agreed last week with a representative of the Western-backed Government of Prince Boun Oum to try to obtain a truce between the pro-Communist rebels and the Laotian Government forces, was critical of United States policy toward Laos.

He said the United States had had a chance to support neutralism for several years in Laos, including the period last year when he was premier. However, Washington was cool to the Prince's efforts to form a coalition of the rebels and anti-Communist forces.

President Kennedy, in a message to Premier Khrushchev last week, asked the Soviet leader to cooperate in making Laos a completely neutral nation, with military aid screened by a commission of neutral nations.

Rebels Said to Press Advance

VIENTIANE, Laos, March 13 (AP) — Pro-Communist rebel troops were reported to be advancing toward the road junction of Vang Vieng today as efforts were intensified to bring their leaders into peace talks.

The rebels, liberally supplied with Soviet arms, seized the Sala Pou Koun road junction last week and drove southward toward Vientiane, capturing Muong Kassy, about eighty miles from the capital.

Now they are heading for Vang Vieng, about sixty miles north of Vientiane. Leftist troops and Pathet Lao rebels were pushed out of Vang Vieng in January after using the town as a receiving point for the Soviet arms airlift. Every able-bodied man in Vang Vieng, a town of 3,000 people, has been pressed into military service.

The series of Government setbacks has spurred the search for a political truce. The Government named a delegation of three Cabinet ministers to fly to Pnompenh tomorrow for more talks with Prince Souvanna Phouma.

The Cabinet also approved the joint communiqué issued last Friday by Prince Souvanna Phouma and General Phoumi Nosavan. The peace program outlined by the communiqué included a neutral policy Laos and a meeting in Pnom Penh of representatives of the Boun Oum Government, Prince Souvanna Phouma and of the pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement.

Text of the Laotian King's Declaration on Neutrality

Following is the text of a declaration made yesterday in Vientiane by King Savang Vathana of Laos:

In behalf of our people and on the request of the Royal Government, we, Sri Savang Vathana, King of Laos, appealing to the conscience of humanity, address the following solemn declaration to the countries of the world:

Laos is a peaceful country and the Lao people are dedicated to peace; yet Laos for more than twenty years has known neither peace nor security.

Laos is a sovereign country, independent and a member of the United Nations; yet its existence and its sovereignty have many times been threatened, its territorial integrity placed in doubt.

Political quarrels and personal ambitions have been fostered; divisive tactics have been abetted and encouraged from without so that the country is torn by discord.

Laos is firmly resolved to preserve its territorial integrity and its sovereignty. It is determined to defend its freedom and its independence.

Raising our voice above individual and party quarrels, we declare that Laos enters



The New York Times Feb. 20, 1961

A NEUTRALITY PLEDGE:
Laos (1) wants Cambodia (2), Malaya (3) and Burma (4) to confirm peace policy.

tains no feeling of hostility whatsoever toward any country in the world but, on the contrary, aspires to live in an atmosphere of friendship, understanding and peace.

We further declare that

within its borders Laos pursues an ideal of justice, freedom and brotherhood. It is only on this basis that Laos can fruitfully manage its own affairs and offer its people a better standard of living in proportion to the possibilities of today's world.

Consequently we desire to proclaim once more the policy of true neutrality that Laos has always sought to follow. Laos will not join in any military alliance. Within the framework of this neutrality, Laos will not have on its territory either foreign forces or military bases.

It intends to exercise the sovereign right of every independent nation to insure the defense of its national territory and to maintain within it order and respect for law. Laos will also honor the international agreements into which it has freely entered.

Once again I appeal to all countries to respect the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and neutrality of Laos.

We ask them to renounce all intervention in the internal affairs of the kingdom, even in the form of aid, if the latter has not been sanctioned by international agreements entered into by Laos. We further ask them to make such intervention impossible.

Proposals Examined

We have examined the various proposals which have been advanced for the peaceful settlement of the difficulties which our country is facing. We have appreciated the great value of the initiative taken by our neighbors, the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Union of Burma, in behalf of Lao neutrality.

We are convinced that these

proposals, made by countries that have gone through the same experience as ourselves, will lead to the solution of the problems that now exist.

This is why, in accordance with the aspiration of the Lao people, we hope that our very close neighbors, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Union of Burma, and the Federation of Malaya, whose impartiality in the sphere of foreign affairs and whose devotion to the cause of universal peace are recognized and respected by all countries, will form a commission, which would come to Laos in order to establish that this country threatens no one and aspires solely to peace.

This commission would have as its mission the denouncing of all foreign intervention, direct or indirect, open or camouflaged, which would result in the imperiling of the kingdom's independence, integrity and neutrality.

Finally, we ask the Secretary General of the United Nations organization to bring this declaration to the attention of all members of this organization. We hope that the nations of the world recognize the legitimate aspirations of the Lao people and that they will agree to sanction the proposals we have made here in behalf of peace.

U.S. URGES SOVIET TO SUPPORT LAOS ON NEUTRAL STEP

21/2/62

Asks Backing for Inquiry by 3 Asian Lands—Rusk Confers With Menshikov

By DANA ADAMS SCHMIDT

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20 —

The United States sought Soviet support today for the declaration of neutrality made yesterday by King Savang Vathana of Laos. It urged the Soviet Union to agree to cooperate with a neutral commission composed of representatives of Cambodia, Burma and Malaya, which the King suggested should be sent into his country.

According to diplomatic informants, Secretary of State Dean Rusk called Ambassador Mikhail A. Menshikov to the State Department to convey the United States appeal.

As he left Mr. Rusk's office after a twenty-minute meeting, the Soviet Ambassador said that the discussion on Laos had been "preliminary." Lincoln White, State Department press officer, confirmed that a "preliminary" talk had taken place.

Soviet Airlift Halted

Mr. Menshikov evaded questions on whether the Soviet reaction to the Laotian proposals was favorable or unfavorable. He maintained that he had not yet read the King's statement. "I will just inform my Government," he said.

Earlier in the day, Mr. White said that the Soviet airlift of supplies for forces of the pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement had been interrupted for several days. He said this might have been a result of unfavorable weather, but added that he hoped the King's appeal "would have some effect."

Soviet acceptance of the King's declaration of neutrality would entail halting the airlift, which began in December. A State Department announcement Jan. 3 said that there had been more than 180 plane trips from Dec. 15 to Jan. 2, in which military supplies of all types and North Vietnamese personnel in substantial numbers were dropped.

Speculation on Chinese

Since then the department has not made public further information about the airlift. The Laotian King, in his statement yesterday, envisaged an end of all "foreign intervention."

Some diplomats here have speculated that one motive for the Soviet airlift to Laos was to exclude the Chinese Communists from a role there. The Russians were said to fear that Chinese Communist participation in overt aid to Laotian Communists might get out of control and lead to international warfare. However, the Soviet Union has at no time publicly acknowledged the existence of its airlift to Laos.

The United States' warm acceptance of the King's initiative may have implied willingness to end or to limit United States military aid to the kingdom.

Some observers believed that the King's allusion to "camouflaged" aid might have been aimed at the United States practice of using Army personnel in civilian clothes to train the Laotian Army. These advisers have been sent to Laos

without uniforms to avoid contravention of the truce agreements reached at the 1954 Geneva conference on Indochina.

The King's statement, renouncing all foreign bases, also foreshadowed liquidation of the French military base at Seno, which was authorized by the Geneva agreements.

Britain Welcomes Laos' Plan

Special to The New York Times.

LONDON, Feb. 20—Britain warmly welcomed today the declaration by King Savang Vathana that Laos was a neutral country and was opposed to foreign intervention in her affairs.

A Foreign Office spokesman said Britain had always felt that the proper status for Laos was neutrality.

Welcoming the King's proposals, he said they might provide an opportunity for a new start. He also voiced hope that the "genuine and conciliatory nature" of the King's appeal would be noted by the pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement and its international supporters.

The British spokesman said the King's plan contained all the elements required to give

Laos a genuine and internationally recognized status of neutrality.

Pathet Lao Leader in Cambodia

Special to The New York Times.

PHNOMPENH, Cambodia, Feb. 20—A Communist diplomatic campaign is under way here to persuade Prince Souvanna Phouma, former neutralist Laotian Premier, to visit areas of Laos controlled by pro-Communist forces.

A Soviet Iluyshin-14 plane arrived here today, bringing a top Pathet Lao leader to confer with the former Premier, Prince

Souvanna Phouma has been living in exile in Cambodia since December, when he fled from Vientiane, the administrative capital of Laos, as Rightist forces prepared to attack the city.

The visitor is Phoumi Vongvichit, Secretary General of the Neo Lao Hak Xat, the pro-Communist party that serves as the political arm of the Pathet Lao movement. He was met by a Soviet Embassy automobile and whisked off to Prince Souvanna Phouma's residence.

Mr. Phoumi Vongvichit's visit came on the same day that Gen. Phoumi Nosavan, Deputy Premier in the Rightist Laotian Government of Prince Boun Oum, was due here, but the general did not arrive as scheduled. He was expected to try to persuade Prince Souvanna Phouma to return to Vientiane to participate in a new broad-based Government proposed yesterday by King Savang Vathana.

Laos Proclaims Neutrality; King Suggests an Inquiry

Asks Mission by Burma,
Cambodia and Malaya
to Note Aim of Peace

Text of the declaration by
King of Laos, Page 12.

By The Associated Press.

VIENTIANE, Laos, Feb. 19—King Savang Vathana proclaimed today that war-torn Laos was a neutral land seeking peace and he asked that three neutral neighbors send investigators to confirm it.

He said Premier Prince Boun Oum's Government aimed to adopt a policy of nonalignment.

[The United States welcomed the King's program as "constructive and promising."]

"We hope that our very close neighbors, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Union of Burma, and the Federation of Malaya, whose impartiality in the sphere of foreign affairs and whose devotion to the cause of universal peace are recognized and respected by all countries, will form a commission, which would come to Laos in order to

King Savang Vathana spoke in French at his Vientiane residence before the pro-Western Premier, Cabinet ministers and foreign diplomats. He asked that his declaration be brought before all members of the United Nations through Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld.

Ignoring a Communist contention that Prince Souvanna Phouma is the legal Premier, the King said Premier Boun Oum's regime was the only recognized Government, "properly invested by the National Assembly in accordance with constitutional rules and which we ourselves designated by royal ordinance."

Prince Souvanna Phouma, deposed in the battle of Vientiane last December, is a refugee in Cambodia.

The King, wearing a dark tunic and traditional Laotian trousers, read his message through gold-rimmed glasses.

"Raising our voice above individual and party quarrels," he said, "we declare that Laos entertains no feeling of hostility whatsoever toward any country in the world, but on the contrary, aspires to live in an atmosphere of friendship, understanding and peace."

Refugees in Cambodia

The King said Laos would honor international agreements into which she had "freely entered." Presumably this includes the continued acceptance of millions in United States funds that finance the Laotian army.

The King said this jungle nation of 2,000,000 people had not known peace or security for more than twenty years. Laos was occupied by the Japanese in World War II and then went through the southeast Asian upheaval that led to the Indochina War.

Under the Geneva settlement of 1954, a three-nation truce commission operated for about four years in Laos. Re-activation of the commission, made up of India, Canada and Poland, was proposed by the West in the current crisis, but the Communist powers lean toward a new international conference as the first step.

Move Welcomed by U. S.

By DANA ADAMS SCHMIDT

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 19—The United States welcomed as "constructive and promising" today the move by the King of Laos to establish his country's neutrality and end all forms of intervention by East and West.

The move by King Savang Vathana, who rarely takes public positions, followed consultations in Washington between Winthrop G. Brown, United States Ambassador, and President Kennedy and subsequent talks between the Ambassador and the King.

It appears to be an attempt to break the East-West impasse over proposals to bring about a settlement of the Laotian conflict.

The commission proposed by the King would perform some of the functions of the Indian-Polish-Canadian international control commission, whose operations were suspended in 1958 and which India and Britain have been trying to revive.

A Cambodian proposal for a fourteen-nation conference aroused no enthusiasm in Washington or London. A possibility favored by Britain is the reconvening of the participants in the 1954 Geneva conference.

Diplomats here saw evidence in the warm United States welcome of a distinct shift in policy since the first days of January, when United States forces in the Pacific and strategic air units were alerted for possible action.

The shift, amounting to a decision not to be drawn into a Laotian jungle war, appears to have been made about Jan. 6.

It appears to have been based on the reluctance of Britain, France and other United States allies to go along with a hard line and doubts as to the practicability of waging a campaign in landlocked Laos.

The King's statement, according to diplomats here, sets forth a line that could have been endorsed by Prince Souvanna Phouma, a neutralist, and that implied concessions by the West as well as the East.

Laos, the King said, will join no military alliance and will not have on its territory "either foreign forces or military bases." This, the diplomats said, may mean the end of the base at Seno that France was permitted to retain under the Geneva agreements.

The King appealed to all countries to refrain from intervention "even in the form of aid, if the latter has not been sanctioned" by agreement with the Laotian Government.

Lincoln White, State Department press officer, said the United States would respect the wishes the King had enunciated.

"All of Laos' friends, including the United States," Mr. White said, "have given and will give the Lao authorities every encouragement to work out their difficult problems around this concept of true neutrality."

"The United States, for its part, welcomes the position taken by the King and gives assurances that it will respect the wishes enunciated by his majesty on behalf of the Lao people."



The New York Times
King Savang Vathana

establish that this country threatens no one and aspires solely to peace," the King said.

"This commission would have as its mission the denouncing of all foreign intervention—direct or indirect, open or camouflaged—which would result in the imperiling of the kingdom's independence, integrity and neutrality."

The 54-year-old monarch thus opened the way for a new international approach to an issue on an issue on which big powers of which big powers of the East and West have dead-locked. The issue is the mechanics of inquiry and pacification to end a six-year conflict.

PULL-OUT BY WEST IN LAOS FORESEEN

All Military Advisers and
Troops Might Be Removed
Under King's Peace Plan

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 21—Diplomats here said today that a peace settlement in Laos along lines advanced by King Savang Vathana could result in the withdrawal of all Western military advisers and forces from the kingdom.

Officials stressed that a number of conditions would have to be met first, including an end to the intervention in Laos by the Communist bloc. If the neutrality and independence of Laos were assured, however, the small contingent of United States advisers—about 100 military technicians—and the several hundred French troops stationed in the country would probably be pulled out, sources here said.

Hopes for a settlement as outlined by the Laotian King in a speech last Sunday dropped sharply, however. The growing pessimism among Western diplomats was based on developments of the last few days, particularly of the last twenty-four hours. These developments pointed to opposition from the Soviet bloc to King Savang Vathana's peace plan.

Soviet Favors Conference

The Soviet Government told the British Ambassador last Saturday that it still supported an immediate peace conference on Laos to be attended by all interested parties.

The Soviet Union insists that such a conference precede any on-the-spot efforts to halt the fighting in Laos. Moscow maintains that a meeting of all interested parties must set the terms of reference for any fact-finding or pacifying commission.

The Western powers, particularly the United States, and the Laotian Government regard a multi-national conference as a likely source of wrangling and propaganda exchanges that would delay, not hasten, a solution.

There were other reasons for the pessimism that prevailed in diplomatic circles here today. One was the sharp attack on King Savang Vathana's peace proposal by Prince Souphanouvong, key figure in the Communist-directed Pathet Lao movement.

Commission Proposed

The King suggested that a commission composed of representatives of Cambodia, Burma and Malaya be sent to Laos to confirm his country's desire for peace and neutrality. He called for an end of "foreign intervention" and of foreign military bases.

The Hanoi radio in Communist North Vietnam quoted Prince Souphanouvong as having said that the King's plan was "an American plot" forced on him by "imperialists" and "Right-wingers" in the Laotian Government. The Prince also denounced the King's appeal for United Nations support and attacked Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld in terms used repeatedly by the Soviet Union and its followers.

Another reason for the diplomats' pessimism today was the report from Phnompenh, Cambodia, that former Premier Souvanna Phouma had flown from there today to the rebel-held area of Laos. He was reported to have been accompanied by two advisers of the Pathet Lao movement.

The former Premier's move diminished hope that he might be drawn into the Laotian Government in a responsible position as part of a program to broaden the political base of the Vientiane regime. A Laotian delegation had planned to visit Prince Souvanna Phouma in Cambodia to discuss this possibility.

The rebel forces and the Communist bloc maintain that Prince Souvanna Phouma, who went into exile in December, is still the head of the legitimate Government of Laos, despite the denials by that country's King and Parliament. If he joins the rebel forces, it will reduce any chance of reconciliation and settlement, diplomats here said.

Two small sources of optimism remained, however, as Western diplomats here viewed the situation. One was that Moscow might reconsider its position on the basis of a report by Ambassador Mikhail A. Menshikov following a talk with Secretary of State Dean Rusk yesterday.

It was believed here that two factors in that report might produce a change in Moscow's stand. One was an assurance that Washington clearly was prepared to accept the complete neutrality of Laos, including the eventual withdrawal from the country of Western military advisers.

A second element that might influence the Soviet leadership was the fact that Washington was looking to Moscow's reaction on this particular problem as a measure of the Soviet Union's willingness to avoid crises and to reach fair and amicable agreements.

The second source of modest hope was the possibility that Burma, Cambodia and Malaya might respond to King Savang Vathana's appeal and send a commission of observers. Such a commission could have a broad influence on world opinion, it was felt.

Officials here said the matter of Western withdrawal of military advisers and other measures were dependent on a number of conditions. First, they said, peace would have to be restored in Laos. Then enforceable guarantees against foreign intervention would have to be adopted. Finally, they said, the withdrawals would depend on the desires of the Laotian Government itself.

If all the preliminary conditions could be achieved, the Western powers seemed ready to consider channeling their military and economic aid to Laos through some form of international group, possibly under United Nations sponsorship.

Souvanna Phouma Visiting Rebel

Special to The New York Times.

PNOMPENH, Cambodia, Feb. 21—Prince Souvanna Phouma, former neutralist Premier of Laos, left here today in a Soviet plane to visit Xiengkhouang Province, now held by Capt. Kong Le, a rebel leader.

Prince Souvanna Phouma described his trip as "a means of visiting those troops in Laos who are still loyal to me and my neutralist ideas."

The former Premier is traveling by way of Hanoi, the capital of Communist North Vietnam. But he indicated that he would not visit areas of Laos held by the pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement.

Prince Souvanna Phouma's trip, which will probably take three days, is his first since he came here in December seeking political asylum after his neutralist Government crumbled in the struggle between Leftists and Rightists in Laos.

The Prince said he intended to confer with Captain Kong Le and other former members of his Cabinet who set up a "neutralist" Government in Xiengkhouang last month.

Prince Souvanna Phouma's trip is regarded here as a victory for Communist diplomacy. For ten days Communist diplomats here have been exerting heavy pressure on him to visit Xiengkhouang. The Russians have ignored the Laotian Government set up in Vientiane by Prince Boun Oum and have continued to recognize Captain Kong Le and Prince Souvanna Phouma's ministers in Xiengkhouang as the legal government and to send arms to them.

Observers here said that Communist-bloc diplomats had exploited Prince Souvanna Phouma's bitterness with the Eisenhower Administration's foreign policy and that the United States had done little since the start of the Kennedy Administration to explain any new policy moves to him. The Prince's trip is also regarded here as a gesture of contempt toward King Savang Vathana's speech last Sunday.

Pro-Red Denounces King's Plan

Special to The New York Times.

HONG KONG, Feb. 21—Prince Souphanouvong, leader of pro-Communist elements in Laos, denounced today King Savang Vathana's proposal that a three-nation Asian commission investigate the country's aspirations to neutrality.

The King was compelled to make his speech Sunday against his will, Prince Souphanouvong alleged. The proposal that Cambodia, Burma and Malaya form a commission to investigate the country's aspirations to neutrality was aimed at strengthening the "isolated position" of the Right-wing Government of Prince Boun Oum, the leftist leader added.

In his statement, which was broadcast by the Hanoi radio, Prince Souphanouvong declared that "United States imperialists" and the Vientiane Government had "put pressure" on the King and "forced him to make the speech according to their will."

Supply Plane Reported Downed
VIENTIANE, Laos, Feb. 21 (AP)—A Chinese Nationalist commercial transport plane chartered by the Laotian Army is reported to have been shot down by pro-Communist rebels while parachuting supplies to Government forces south of the Plaine des Jarres, airline officials said today.

The plane carried a crew of six Chinese. They were believed dead or prisoners of the rebels.

The twin-engine C-47 was the property of a Chinese airline. The Laotian Army frequently charters civilian planes to supplement its insufficient transport fleet.

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RED CHINA SCORES U. S. ON LAOS PLAN

Foreign Chief Says King's
Request for Commission
Is a Washington Plot

Special to The New York Times.

HONG KONG, Feb. 22—Marshal Chen Yi, Chinese Communist Foreign Minister, assailed the United States today for its support of the plan to establish a commission on Laos.

He declared that the establishment of the commission was part of an American scheme to turn Laos into a second Congo and a United States colony.

King Savang Vathana proposed that a commission composed of Burma, Cambodia and Malaya determine the legitimacy of the Government in Vientiane and whether Laos is truly neutral.

The pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement has declared that the King made his proposal under duress.

Speaking at a United Arab Republic Embassy reception, which was also attended by Premier Chou En-lai, Marshal Chen said that the United States was attempting to bury the Geneva agreements on Laos and to use the prestige of neutral countries to "legalize the rebel clique" in Vientiane.

He cited three steps that he said represented the only way to solve the Laotian question peacefully. They were the convening of an "enlarged conference" along the lines of the 1954 Geneva meeting on Indochina, the return of the International Commission for Supervision and Control to Laos and "firm recognition" of the neutralist Government of Prince Souvanna Phouma.

The Soviet Union and Britain were co-chairmen of the 1954 Geneva conference at which an armistice was signed ending the French Indochina war.

Souvanna Phouma in Laos

Under the Geneva agreement, an International Control Commission composed of India, Pakistan and Canada was set up to supervise Laos as a neutral state.

The commission was disbanded in 1958 after the Laotian Government had declared that it had fulfilled its obligations under the Geneva agreement.

Meanwhile, Prince Souvanna Phouma, former Premier of Laos, flew into territory held by the Pathet Lao rebels and his Left-Wing supporters today after two months of self-exile in Cambodia.

The Laotian leader had previously resisted efforts of the Leftist forces and also of the Right-Wing pro-Western Government of Prince Boun Oum to have him return to their respective areas. By his arrival in Leftist territory, he appears to have thrown his support behind the rebels and against the government.

His arrival in Laos was reported by the Hanoi radio from Communist North Vietnam, which said he had landed at an airfield on the rebel-held Plaines des Jarres this afternoon.

Cambodia Seen Cool to Plan

PNOMPENH, Cambodia, Feb. 22 (AP)—Informed Government sources said tonight Cambodia did not favor a proposal by King Savang Vathana of neighboring Laos for a commission of neutral nations to supervise Laotian neutrality.

King Savang Vathana had suggested that Cambodia join with Burma and Malaya in the watchdog commission.

The sources said Cambodia felt that only an international conference as proposed by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodia's chief of state, could halt foreign intervention in Laos.

Rusk Confers With Envoys

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22—Secretary of State Dean Rusk met at his office for forty minutes today with the British and French Ambassadors. A department spokesman said the three men had discussed the situation in Laos.

Sir Harold Caccia, the British Ambassador, and Hervé Alphand, the French Ambassador, entered the Secretary's office a few minutes after noon. The meeting had not been announced in advance.

It was believed that the Secretary of State may have informed the envoys of the approach toward Laos and other problems that Ambassador Llewellyn E. Thompson Jr. of the United States will take in talks with Premier Khrushchev and other Soviet officials.

Kennedy Weighing Appeal To Cambodia on Laos Plan

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23—President Kennedy may take a hand in diplomatic efforts to win support for King Savang Vathana's peace plan for Laos. It was reported today that

consideration was being given to a suggestion that the President address a direct appeal to Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodian head of state, to cooperate in the Laotian King's program.

The King's plan called for formation of a commission from three neutral states—Cambodia, Burma and Malaya—to help supervise the restoration of peace in Laos and promote an end of foreign intervention there.

The Cambodian Government issued a statement today in Phnompenh, its capital, questioning the value of the proposed commission unless it could operate in areas controlled by Laos' Left Wing rebels as well as those controlled by the pro-Western Government of Premier Boun Oum.

U. S. Still Hopeful

Diplomats here said they did not regard the Cambodian statement as an outright rejection of the Laotian King's proposal. They also expressed the opinion that a direct appeal to Prince Sihanouk by President Kennedy could bring about a reconsideration in Phnompenh.

The Administration hopes that Cambodia will take part in the proposed commission. If she does, there is hope here that her representatives can influence the rebel forces in Laos and win their cooperation.

Thus far, anti-Government elements in Laos and their international Communist supporters have indicated strong opposition to the Laotian King's program. Prince Souphanouvong, leader of the pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement fighting against the Royal Laotian Army, has branded the King's plan "a United States plot." Communist radio commentaries from North Vietnam and China have taken the same line.

The hope here is that this attitude would change if Prince Sihanouk agreed to take part in the three-power commission's work. Prince Sihanouk follows a neutralist policy, maintaining friendly relations with both Communist and non-Communist Governments.

Diplomats in Washington view the plan advanced by the Laotian King as an effort to open a new approach to certain international problems. It is an attempt to promote a solution for a potentially explosive problem through the efforts of small countries acting on a regional basis.

The diplomatic efforts begun by King Savang Vathana have two primary goals: to prevent Laos from becoming a "cold war" battleground and providing a possible spark that could set off a world conflagration, and to permit Laos to exist in peace, with her security and independence assured.

Neutrality Accepted

It is recognized here that the King's program would produce a neutral Laos. The Administration has accepted that as a realistic outcome.

The question diplomats are asking themselves now is whether the kind of regional approach inherent in the King's plan can work. If it does, diplomats said, it could point the way to similar efforts in other parts of the world.

This concept, now being discussed with increasing seriousness, puts the problem of Laos in a different and larger context than most people have given it. Diplomats said it gave heightened importance to the success of the King's efforts and to any steps President Kennedy might take to support them.

Soviet Attacks King's Proposal

Special to The New York Times.

MOSCOW, Feb. 23—The Soviet Union declared today that King Savang Vathana of Laos lacked power to negotiate an international settlement of the civil war dividing his kingdom.

The Soviet statement in effect rejected the King's proposal for formation of a commission composed of delegates of Burma, Malaya and Cambodia that would bar all foreign intervention in Laos.

King Savang Vathana made his proposal Sunday in Vientiane, Laos' administrative capital, in a statement proclaiming the Indochinese kingdom a neutral land.

The Soviet position was stated in an article in Pravda, the Communist party newspaper, under the signature "Observer," which generally indicates a high degree of authority.

The article acknowledged that King Savang Vathana was the supreme head of state but contended that he did not, under the Laotian Constitution, possess the executive powers to deal with an international commission.

The article insisted that the only executive body competent to cooperate with any international commission was the Government set up by Prince Souvanna Phouma, who fled from Laos to Cambodia last December. It said that King Savang Vathana, who is in Vientiane, where the pro-Western Government of Prince Boun Oum is now in power, was "actually a prisoner in the hands of rebels."

Prince Boun Oum's Government was invested by the King and the National Assembly in December after Right-wing forces occupied Vientiane and Luang Prabang, the royal capital. It is recognized by the Western powers, while the Communist bloc supports the regime set up in Prince Souvanna Phouma's name in rebel-held territory.

The Pravda article did not refer to the King's proposal but reiterated Moscow's demand for an international conference on Laos similar to that held in Geneva in 1954. The Geneva meeting, at which Britain and the Soviet Union served as co-chairmen, ended the Indochina war.

"The course of events in Laos demands concrete deeds aimed at eliminating the hotbed of war in that country," the article said.

"The important thing today is to convene an international conference on Laos without any further delay."

The United States was not attacked directly, as it has been in the past for its support of the Boun Oum Government, but the article declared:

"The continued interference of certain powers—members of the aggressive Southeast Asian Treaty Organization—in the

internal affairs of Laos on the side of the rebels is aggravating the danger of the conflict's being extended."

Plan Held Still Feasible

Special to The New York Times.

VIENTIANE, Laos, Feb. 23—Cambodia's decision not to join the proposed three-nation neu-

trality commission for Laos has set back the plan but not wrecked it, according to informed sources here.

The Government of Prince Boun Oum has not yet received formal replies from Cambodia, Burma or Malaya to King Savang Vathana's appeal that they form a commission to help maintain Laos' independence, integrity and neutrality.

However, according to information reaching here, Malaya has indicated her willingness to join such a commission while Cambodia has turned down the proposal.

Laotian spokesmen were inclined to withhold comment pending formal replies from all three invited countries.

The King's proposal was flexible enough to allow the substitution of another neutral Asian nation for Cambodia. It is thought possible that India, which is reported to have endorsed the King's proposal, might be invited to join the commission and perhaps accept the chairman's role.

Meanwhile official and diplomatic circles in Vientiane were speculating about the meaning of the trip taken by Prince Souvanna Phouma to the headquarters of the Laotian rebel forces in Xiengkhouang, north-east of here.

Some quarters here have viewed the Prince's trip as reflecting a decision to cast his lot with the rebels, while others saw it as a reluctant succumbing to pressure.

MENZIES CONFERS WITH PRESIDENT; LAOS KING BACKED

25/2/61
Australian, on White House
Visit, Also Joins Pledge
on U.N. Congo Effort

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24 — President Kennedy and Prime Minister Robert Gordon Menzies of Australia joined today in public support for King Savang Vathana's peace plan for Laos.

They also "deplored" efforts by the Soviet Union to "twist" the tragic events in the Congo into an attack upon the United Nations itself.

Answering Moscow's bitter attacks on Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld, the two leaders pledged joint support of the United Nations official's efforts to bring peace to the Congo.

The President and the Australian Prime Minister conferred for more than two hours at the White House. Their meeting included a luncheon at which Mr. Menzies was the President's guest.

Soviet Policy Reviewed

The White House talk covered a broad range of foreign-policy issues, including an exchange of views on current Soviet policy and on Communist China. But the continuing strife in Laos and the threat to the Southeast Asian country's independence and stability were believed to have occupied the most important place in their conversation.

The United States and Australia are members of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. If the crisis in Laos continues, the SEATO Council might have to consider new steps in support of the Government there when the eight-power group meets in Bangkok, Thailand, next month.

In a joint communiqué, the American and Australian statesmen repeated their countries' "strong faith" in the eight-nation defense alliance and in a defense agreement joining Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

Intervention Is Opposed

The Laotian peace plan supported by the President and the Prime Minister was made public earlier this week by King Savang Vathana. He announced Laos' intention to follow a neutral course and opposed any unauthorized foreign interference in Laotian affairs.

The King called on neighboring Burma, Cambodia and Malaya to organize a commission to help restore peace to Laos and to end all foreign intervention.

President Kennedy and Prime Minister Menzies said they hoped the King's efforts would "bear fruit."

However, Mr. Menzies said in a talk with newsmen that the future of the King's proposal was uncertain because definite

responses had not yet come in from interested governments.

Diplomats here said attacks on the King's suggestions by the Laotian rebels and by Communist China and North Vietnam left little room for a favorable response from Moscow. An article in the Communist party newspaper Pravda already has indicated Soviet disapproval of the plan.

Rusk Attends Talk

Secretary of State Dean Rusk met with President Kennedy before the luncheon session with Mr. Menzies and attended the conference of the two leaders. Later in the day the Secretary returned to the White House for another meeting with the President.

The later session was hastily called and forced cancellation of the Secretary's scheduled news conference. However, both the White House and the State Department insisted that this did not indicate that any serious crisis had developed.

The White House would say only that the President and the Secretary of State were discussing "a number of matters," but no details were given.

After the President and Mr. Menzies had met, the two leaders took advantage of the balmy Washington weather to stroll on the White House lawn. The President escorted the Prime Minister to a group of waiting reporters and left him to talk with them.

The Prime Minister said his talk with the President had gone "very well." He recalled that he had met Mr. Kennedy only once before, at Harvard last year when the Australian leader received an honorary degree.

In talking about Laos, Mr. Menzies reflected some of the pessimism on the crisis found in diplomatic circles. He said "a lot of patience" would be needed in the search for a solution.

Mr. Menzies also said the revival of a Soviet airlift in Laos, following a spell of bad weather, had not destroyed chances for peace but had made them "more difficult."

The Prime Minister also reflected Western policy when he said Laos provided a test of the sincerity of Soviet statements that it wanted to achieve a closer relationship with the United States.

President Kennedy emerged again from the White House and escorted Mr. Menzies to a car. The President said his session with the Prime Minister had been "very cordial and very satisfactory."

It was clear that Moscow's current foreign policy had been discussed at the White House meeting. The Australian leader said he had been encouraged by the "mild tone" of Soviet statements about the new Administration in Washington. He expressed hope there would be improvement in United States-Soviet relations.

On the issue of Communist China, however, Mr. Menzies said: "We can only guess." He said it was not clear whether "the Soviet Union and Communist China play in the same orchestra."

Laotian Regime Warns Leftists

VIENTIANE, Laos, Feb. 24 (AP)—The Government said today that hostile Leftist reaction to King Savang Vathana's peace plan "could have grave consequences" for its policy of reconciliation with the rebels.

The announcement was issued after a special cabinet meeting conducted by the pro-Western Premier, Prince Boun Oum. The statement did not enlarge upon what the consequences might be.

New Tack in Laos 23/2/61

A new program announced by King Savang Vathana calling for an end to foreign intervention in Laos and reconciliation between the kingdom's warring factions does not offer very promising prospects of keeping Laos out of Communist control.

The program, proposed with the approval of the United States and allied countries, would establish a commission of representatives from Burma, Cambodia and Malaya to denounce all foreign intervention that would imperil the independence, integrity and neutrality of Laos. Laos would not join any military alliances nor have any foreign forces or military bases on its territory. The Government of Prince Boun Oum has invited Prince Souvanna Phouma, still recognized as Premier by the Communist powers, to joint with Vientiane leaders in working out a political settlement. But he has flown instead to join the rebels.

The program would appear to entail France's giving up the air base it now occupies at Seno and withdrawing French military personnel from Laos. There have also been indications the United States is prepared, under the new plan, to consider terminating the services in Laos of American military men now assisting in the training of Laotian armed forces, although the King's declaration apparently leaves the Royal Government free to accept foreign military aid.

Secretary of State Dean Rusk has sought Russian cooperation in the new program, but it is doubtful if the Communists are prepared to give it. In Laos the Communist-led Pathet Lao rebels and their allies are today in a much stronger position than they were in 1957. They probably would gain decided advantages and possibly the eventual domination of Laos from the political compromises and reduced United States role that would be involved in implementation of the new plan. They may believe, however, their purposes would be better served by rejecting compromise and aiming for full control of Laos through continued direct action.

For the United States the new initiative in Laos represents an effort to get the best out of a negotiated settlement and avoid international conflict in Laos. The success of the new proposals may well depend on whether Mr. Khrushchev will reciprocate the attitude of the United States and forgo an aggressive policy in the interest of achieving a general rapprochement with the new Kennedy Administration.

RUSSIAN ARMS GO TO REDS IN LAOS IN HUGE BUILD-UP

3-3-61

Artillery, Armor and North
Vietnam Technicians Help
Strengthen Pathet Lao

COMMUNIST GRIP IS FIRM

Souvanna Phouma, Visiting
3 Rebel Provinces, Finds
Powerful Political Allies

Special to The New York Times.

PHONGSAVAN, Laos, March 1—This small tribal village, a former opium market, is now the focal point for a massive Communist arms build-up in northern Laos.

Hundreds of tons of Soviet armament and ammunition and many supplies from Communist North Vietnam have been pouring into northern Laos, accompanied by North Vietnamese technicians.

The Soviet arms include the latest 85-mm. and 105-mm. artillery pieces and some armor.

The so-called neutralist Government set up in the name of Prince Souvanna Phouma in Xiengkhouang Province in January in opposition to the Right-Wing Government of Prince Boun Oum in Vientiane appears to be a front for a powerfully backed group of Laotian Communists intent on taking over the entire country either by war or by political maneuvering.

From his recent statements Prince Souvanna Phouma appears to have aligned himself with the Xiengkhouang group.

Reds Tighten Control

It seems evident that the Communists have taken control of much of northern Laos and are busy turning it into an impregnable armed camp with little or no opposition from the West. The northern provinces of Samneua, Phongsa and Xiengkhouang seem to be in a firm Communist grip.

It thus appears that Communist propaganda for a peaceful settlement in Laos and for a fourteen-nation conference to deal with the country's problems may be only a time-saving device to consolidate the Communists' armed hold on this area.

The military situation in Laos appears to be stalemated for the time being. The Communist forces are busy consolidating their gains and digging in for the coming rainy season.

Prince Souvanna Phouma, who yielded the Premiership of Laos last December and fled to exile in Phnompenh, Cambodia, gave in last week to increasing Communist diplomatic pressure to visit his "government" in the "liberated" areas of Laos.

He was whisked off to Hanoi, North Vietnam, and from there to the Plaines des Jarres airfield in Xiengkhouang, in a Soviet

Ilyushin-14 plane provided by Aleksandr N. Abramov, the Soviet Ambassador to Laos and Cambodia.

Much to the Russians' annoyance, Prince Souvanna Phouma insisted that two Western reporters should accompany him as evidence of his goodwill toward both blocs. [These reporters were Michael Field of The Daily Telegraph of London and James Wilde, representing The New York Times.]

Observers in Phnompenh believe that recent events by no means indicate that Prince Souvanna Phouma is a Communist or even a pro-Communist. Some observers regard him as perhaps the best friend the West has in Laos, in that he can be the most effective instrument to rally the Laotian people.

Prince Souvanna Phouma, who feels he was betrayed by the United States, has been strongly wooed by the Soviet Union. The Prince says United States officials made no attempt at any time during his stay in Phnompenh to explain what the policies of the Kennedy Administration would be.

What the former Premier found in Xiengkhouang was strength. He found a powerful army as well as a party willing to back him.

14-Nation Parley Favored

Although Prince Souvanna Phouma has aligned himself with the Xiengkhouang group, he insists on a fourteen-nation conference to deal with Laotian problems, which he believes would lead to disarming by both sides and a Laotian Government of national union. He feels that Laos will not go Communist provided she is left to herself.

Prince Souvanna Phouma was returning to Phnompenh today and intends to leave soon on a world tour that will include Burma, India, the United Arab Republic, France, Britain, the Soviet Union, Communist China and North Vietnam.

His visit to Xiengkhouang is considered in Phnompenh as a great victory for Soviet diplomacy that the West did not try very hard to prevent. However, his coming-world trip is regarded by observers as an opportunity for the Western powers to show goodwill toward him.

To Prince Souvanna Phouma, the present temporary alliance with the pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement is no worse than dealing with Gen. Phoumi Nosavan, the right-wing Deputy Premier and Defense Minister in Prince Boun Oum's Government.

Prince Souvanna Phouma's main object is still to bring the two sides together and, in the opinion of observers in Phnompenh, he would be the choice of a fourteen-nation conference as Premier of Laos because he remains the only man capable of uniting the country.

When Prince Souvanna Phouma arrived at Hanoi on his way here, he was met by Pham Van Dong, North Vietnamese Premier, and an entourage of flower girls. He was put up with much pomp at an official guest house, even though his short stopover had no official status.

The Prince subsequently made several trips back and forth by way of Hanoi from Xiengkhouang and Phongsa, and each time Mr. Pham Van Dong met him. Gen. Vo. Nguyen Giap, North Vietnamese Defense Minister, also went to the airport, and Prince Souvanna Phouma may have conferred at length with both men, as well as with President Ho Chi Minh.

Prince Meets Half-Brother

On his arrival in Xiengkhouang, the former Premier was met by his half-brother, Prince Souphanouvong, leader of the Pathet Lao movement. Capt. Kong Le, leader of the coup that overthrew the Laotian Government last Aug. 9 and brought Prince Souvanna Phouma to

power, and members of the northern Laos neutralist government. Fourteen Communist-bloc reporters also were on hand.

Despite Prince Souvanna Phouma's contention that Captain Kong Le is in command, it is obvious that the Communists have taken over.

Last December Captain Kong Le's forces retreated from Vientiane under severe pressure from General Phoumi Nosavan's troops. Captain Kong Le's forces were not under Communist control then, but after they captured Xiengkhouang, the Pathet Lao forces in Samneua poured down into this area and "converted our comrades."

The Pathet Lao's supreme military commander, Colonel Sinkapo, now runs the military forces. Supporting him are many North Vietnamese technicians, some of whom take an active part in the fighting against General Phoumi Nosavan's troops.

Recently Pathet Lao forces replaced Captain Kong Le's men on all three fighting fronts. For the first time the Pathet Lao are engaged in regular frontal warfare instead of their usual guerrilla tactics.

Phongsavan now has a "people's store," Soviet propaganda movies and North Vietnamese cigarettes. All the mail goes out through Hanoi and is censored. Soviet technicians make sound recordings for the Pathet Lao radio in Samneua. All the troops here seem to use Communist-style jargon in their talk.

After inspecting the area, Prince Souvanna Phouma called on all Laotians "to fight side by side to liberate Laos." Speaking at a news conference, he said: "It is now necessary for forces of the neutralist government and the Pathet Lao to form a single bloc."

At least once a week a convoy of fifty Soviet-built trucks arrives in Phongsavan from Vinh, North Vietnam, with Soviet weapons. The truck drivers are all Vietnamese. The Russians already have said they were sending forty-five tons of military equipment daily to Xiengkhouang by plane. They have delivered at least fifty artillery pieces.

Several Laotian officers acknowledged that the Vietnamese operated most of the artillery pieces, but said Laotian forces were being trained for this duty. The Vietnamese also man communications, work as engineers, help keep the airfield running and lay mines. They serve in the Pathet Lao police force for Phongsavan and help run the Pathet Lao newspaper and radio station in Samneua.

The Vietnamese Red Cross also runs a tent and shack hospital, which was filled with more than 200 wounded men.

At least six Soviet armored cars, with heavy, twin-barrel machine guns, have been seen here. More than fifty Soviet-built trucks were jammed with troops carrying assault rifles, carbines, submachine guns and machine guns. The forces here have at least forty Soviet-made jeep-type vehicles and about thirty Soviet command cars.

The Communist forces are extremely well dug in. There are no guns on the fifty-mile-wide Plaines des Jarres. All are carefully hidden on the surrounding hills.

The general feeling here is that General Phoumi Nosavan will never be able to take Xiengkhouang unless he receives an enormous increase in United States aid.

Prince Exhorts Troops

Prince Souvanna Phouma apparently shares this opinion. After a Cabinet meeting in Phongsavan, he said:

"We have officially recognized all areas liberated by the army and have discussed measures for extending the authority of the government into other areas. The government exhorts its troops to increase their activities to liberate the whole

country from the rebels. We have decided to set up reception committees to administer the aid received from friendly countries."

In Hanoi, while waiting to see Prince Souvanna Phouma, several Soviet officials spoke with unusual frankness on the situation here.

"If we wanted to, our side could take all Laos in three days with four battalions of Viet Minh [North Vietnamese]," he said. "One Chinese battalion would be sufficient to walk all over Laos. But we are patient, despite the aggression committed by American imperialists in Laos."

"It is only a matter of time before our side wins, but if there should be a world war over Laos, we would win," he added.

General Phoumi Nosavan's troops tried nine times in the last ten days to advance on the Plaines des Jarres and were driven back each time. However, about 4,000 Meo tribesmen are now actively resisting the Pathet Lao in Xiengkhouang. During Prince Souvanna Phouma's visit, at least seven Pathet Lao soldiers were wounded when they were ambushed in broad daylight by tribesmen.

Prince Asks U. S. Withdrawal

PNOMPENH, Cambodia, March 2 (Reuters)—Prince Souvanna Phouma proposed today the withdrawal of "American troops" from Laos and the establishment of a coalition government, including pro-Communists.

The Prince said there were "only three possible solutions" for settling the conflict in his country:

"1. Creation of a coalition government including representatives of the Pathet Lao. This solution rests on the withdrawal of American troops.

"2. Creation of an entirely neutral, nonpolitical government.

"3. The convening soon of a conference of fourteen nations which would organize and carry out a new general election strictly controlled by a large commission appointed by this conference. Then a new Parliament would invest a new, truly neutral government."

LAOS REPORTS ENTRY
OF CHIANG TROOPS

3-3-61

VIENTIANE, Laos, March 1 (AP)—Gen. Phoumi Nosavan said today Chinese Nationalist troops under attack in Burma had fled into Laos and created a delicate problem for his country.

The Vice Premier and Minister of National Defense did not say how many Nationalist soldiers crossed the Mekong River, but informed sources put the number at 5,000.

In an interview General Phoumi Nosavan said the presence of these troops on Laotian soil was embarrassing and that steps were being taken to resolve the problem. The soldiers are part of Chinese Nationalist forces who fled to Burma before the Communist Chinese in 1949.

Communist China charged Monday that the United States was trying to enlarge the war in Laos by using "remnant Kuomintang [Nationalist] bandits."

PHNOMPENH, Cambodia, March 1 (AP)—Prince Souvanna Phouma, former Premier of Laos, returned to exile in Cambodia today after a week's visit to areas in Laos held by pro-Communist rebels.

The Soviet press agency Tass said heavy fighting had been going on between Laotian Government forces and the rebel Pathet Lao movement in Phou-sung at the approaches to the Plaines des Jarres.

BRITISH SEE LAOS AS TEST OF SOVIET

Lord Home Says Reply on
Control Unit Will Measure
Desire for Coexistence

By **DREW MIDDLETON**

Special to The New York Times.

LONDON, Jan. 31.—The British Government considers that the Soviet reply to the West's proposal that the International Control Commission return to Laos will be a test of Moscow's desire for "really peaceful" coexistence.

The Earl of Home, Britain's Foreign Secretary, elevated the Soviet answer to the status of a test of the Soviet Union's good intentions in a speech at Milan, Italy, yesterday.

Commenting on the West's conviction that the best chance for a cease-fire and a "constructive peace" in Laos was for the return of the commission, Lord Home said he very much hoped Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko would "agree to support" the Western plan.

"If he will agree," Lord Home continued, "I think we have a chance to show that coexistence can be really peaceful."

Soviet Reply Awaited

The passage was inserted into the Foreign Secretary's speech at a moment when the British were becoming restive over the Soviet Government's delay in answering a British note suggesting reconstitution of the commission, made up of India, Poland and Canada. The Soviet Union and Britain were co-chairmen of the 1954 Geneva conference under which the commission was established.

Soviet diplomats, during exchanges with the British in Moscow, have avoided any firm answer on the return of the commission. Instead they have suggested that the commission needs new terms of reference and that a conference of the powers involved, including Communist China, might be necessary to write those terms.

The Soviet delay is interpreted as a sign that Moscow wants to put off acceptance of the commission until it sees whether the Communist-led Pathet Lao movement in Laos can solidify its hold on Xiengkhouang Province.

Should the province fall under complete Communist domination, the Pathet Lao movement will control three provinces. Phongsoaly, the northernmost province in Laos, and Samneusa, just to the south of it, are already held by the Communists.

Control of Xiengkhouang would enable the Communists to inhibit the work of the commission in the three provinces and provide a better bargaining position for the Communists in negotiations with the pro-Western Government of Prince Boun Oum.

Pro-West Troops Push On

Special to The New York Times.

VIENTIANE, Laos, Jan. 31.—About 100 miles north of here troops of the pro-Western Government are grinding toward the town of Sala Pou Kuon.

Sala Pou Kuon is the last town held by pro-Communist rebels on the Vientiane-Luang Prabang Road. It is situated at the juncture with the road that leads to the East and the base of the pro-Communist forces in the Plaine des Jarres region.

It is expected that the town will fall within the next few days.

Meanwhile, Prince Boun Oum, most members of his Cabinet and many important Government functionaries are 300 miles southeast of here attending a three-day Buddhist festival at Wat Phou in the Premier's home province of Champassac.

The absence of the Premier and other officials, however, is only part of the reason for the general wait-and-see attitude of Vientiane. An even bigger factor is the absence of the United States Ambassador, Wintrop G. Brown, who left here for Washington Saturday.

The official explanation for the Ambassador's trip was that "it is normal for an Ambassador to critical countries to report personally to a new Administration." But many informed persons here believe Mr. Brown's visit to Washington may be a prelude to a new United States policy in Laos.

ARAB STATES VOW MORE ALGERIA AID

10 Nations in League Agree
to Speed Arms and Men—
Asks Anti-French Steps

By **RICHARD P. HUNT**

Special to The New York Times.

BAGHDAD, Iraq, Feb. 1.—Ten Arab states agreed today to speed more arms and volunteers to the Algerian Provisional Government in its struggle against France.

They also promised to give new consideration to breaking economic, political and diplomatic relations with France if the six-year-old war in Algeria continues.

These pledges, made presumably to increase the pressure on France to negotiate with the Algerian nationalists' Provisional Government, were included in an eleven-point resolution adopted at a meeting of the Arab League foreign ministers here.

Delegates from all ten member states of the Arab League raised their hands in assent when the resolution was put to a vote in the Hall of Mirrors in the Flower Palace, a former residence of Iraqi royalty.

The Algerian nationalist leaders offered on Jan. 16 to negotiate with France, following a French referendum that authorized President de Gaulle to grant limited regional autonomy and ultimate self-determination for Algeria.

For the last two days, Belkacem Krim, Deputy Premier in the Algerian Provisional Government, has been closeted with the Arab Foreign Ministers here to seek ways of strengthening the Algerian hand.

He gained a resolution expressing full support for the Algerian nationalists' course so far and hinting at more drastic action if efforts to negotiate with France should fail.

In addition to promising more money and, "at the earliest possible time," more arms, the league's foreign ministers pledged that citizens of all their countries would be permitted to volunteer for service with the Algerian Liberation Army.

In declaring that they would help volunteers and technicians reach Algeria, the foreign ministers did not specify "Arab" volunteers. This left the way open for the Algerians to ask for volunteers from the Communist countries. Communist China has offered such volunteers.

The resolution did not specifically mention a boycott of French commerce, or nationalization of French properties in Arab countries. These steps have been publicly demanded by backers of the Algerian Moslems.

In fact, only five of the league's member states are in a position to consider breaking diplomatic relations with France. They are Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Sudan and Tunisia. The Sudan still has formal relations with France although she recalled her ambassador from Paris a few weeks ago.

The other five league members, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Republic and Yemen, broke diplomatic relations with France in 1956, at the time of the French-British invasion of Suez, and have not resumed them.

22 Jan.

Laos Council To Meet on Defense Plan

Premier Flies to King For 'Routine' Parley

VIENTIANE, Laos, Jan. 21 (AP).—Laotian Premier Prince Boun Oum and Gen. Phoumi Nosavan, the main military supporter of his pro-Western regime, flew to Luang Prabang today for a meeting of the high defense council with King Savang Vathana.

Amid reports of a stepped-up offensive by the pro-Communist rebels, Information Minister Bouavan Norasing told newsmen that the council meeting will be "routine." He declined to say whether the military situation has grown worse.

The United States is stopping shipment of weapons any more advanced than the six single-engine armed training planes which have arrived here. The T-6 Harvard trainers, one of which has been shot down by the rebels, make up the Royal Laotian Air Force.

Reds Aiding Rebels

R. J. Boyle, a former brigadier general who heads the American program evaluation office here, said Washington does not want to introduce more sophisticated weapons "unless Russia ups the ante." The Soviet Union has been parachuting supplies to the rebels.

There are no plans to fly in more planes for the Laotian Air Force, Mr. Boyle said, except that "we are prepared to replace the one they have lost."

The P. E. O. is composed of former American military men who say they give to the Laotians only technical training in use of American weapons. They are not supposed to give any tactical advice in the field, although they go out with government units fighting the rebels.

Rebels Advance

The information minister confirmed earlier reports and said the rebels have advanced against Tha Thom, forty miles southwest of Xieng Khouang. He said government troops recaptured Tha Thom Saturday morning. They were driven out of it last week by a rebel attack which scattered government troops and broke up plans for a counterblow against the rebel concentrations in the central Plaine des Jarres.

[At Moscow, Britain proposed to the Soviet Union that the international conciliation commission be revived. The group, composed of India, Canada and Poland, went to Laos in 1954 to oversee the Geneva agreements which ended the Indochina war. It left in 1953.

[The Cambodian chief of state, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, indicated he is withdrawing his proposal for a fourteen-nation meeting to deal with the Laotian situation. The United States and Thailand oppose the plan, he wrote to Chinese Communist Premier Chou En-lai, and for that reason it inevitably would fail.]

U.S.-BACKED PLAN FOR PEACE IN LAOS GIVEN TO SOVIET

Briton Presents Firm Offer to Revive Control Unit and Deal With King

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN
Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 21—A firm United States-backed plan for the revival of the International Control Commission in Laos was handed to the Soviet Union in Moscow today by the British Ambassador.

The new proposal for reviving the three-power control commission suggests that the body act in close cooperation with King Savang Vathana of Laos.

This provision sidesteps the controversial problem of whether the commission should "recognize" the United States-supported regime of Premier Boun Oum or Soviet-sponsored Prince Souvanna Phouma, now in exile in Cambodia.

Diplomats said the United States had agreed to drop its resistance on this point. During much of the negotiating, the Government insisted that the international commission would have to work through Boun Oum, whom Washington recognizes as the sole legal authority in Laos.

Kennedy Approves Step

President Kennedy and his principal foreign policy advisers were fully informed of the Western proposal and approved its being advanced today, sources here said.

The plan was delivered to the Russians in Moscow by Sir Frank Roberts, the British Ambassador, called at the Soviet Foreign Office today to deliver an oral reply to the Soviet note of Dec. 22 on Laos.

Moscow had urged the convening of a conference on Laos similar to the one that met in Geneva in 1954, which ended the Indochina war.

It was understood that Sir Frank, who conferred with Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily V. Kuznetsov, did not endorse the Soviet proposal.

He presented instead a plan for the return to Laos of the International Supervisory Commission composed of India, Canada and Poland. This commission was set up under the 1954 Indochina accord to keep the peace in the Laotian kingdom.

The Soviet Union and the United States have in general terms approved the reactivation of the truce commission, but they differ on the terms under which this should be done.

Laos Reports Red Strength

By JACQUES NEVARD
Special to The New York Times.

VIENTIANE, Laos, Jan. 21 — The Laotian Government charged today that 7,000 troops, including 5,000 from Communist North Vietnam and 2,000 Laotian pro-Communists, controlled nearly all of northeast Laos.

Other pro-Communist and Communist troops, including three regiments of the 325th North Vietnamese Division, were said to be operating in the south in Savannakhet and Saravane Province.

Although the Government's figures on both the number of men involved and the proportion of North Vietnamese appeared to most Western observers to be highly inflated, the announcement pointed up the deteriorating military position of Prince Boun Oum's regime.

The new head of the United States military training mission here, meanwhile, said the United States had no intention of giving the Laotian Army bigger or more advanced weapons unless "Russia steps up the ante first."

in his expressed hope for better relations with the Kennedy Administration.

Western diplomats understand the Soviet preference for Prince Souvanna Phouma. As Premier, he advocated improved relations with the Soviet bloc and sought through negotiation to bring pro-Communist Pathet Lao representatives into the Government as a means of restoring peace to the country.

The Soviet airlift of military supplies to the rebels in Laos has been defensed by Prince Souvanna Phouma and the Pathet Lao as being aid to the "legal" government.

But Allied diplomats consider the Soviet backing of Prince Souvanna Phouma unconvincing. The King and Parliament have supported Premier Boun Oum. Moreover, there is no real "government" led by Prince Souvanna Phouma. Most of his ministers have dispersed and some have joined the Boun Oum regime.

The plan advanced in Moscow would have the group return to Laos to see, first of all, whether the commission felt it could perform a useful function. This would depend on the kind of reception it got—from the King, the authorities in Vientiane and the rebels.

Meanwhile, Dean Rusk, the new Secretary of State, has been studying all aspects of the Laotian problem. He is scheduled to provide President Kennedy with a review of the situation Monday.

Briton Presents Plan

Special to The New York Times.
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Andrew J. Boyle said the United States was using all its efforts to bring peace to Laos without permitting the situation here to develop "into a major war or even a Korea."

Mr. Boyle, a 49-year-old West Pointer, resigned as a brigadier general of the armored forces to succeed John A. Heintges as chief of the United States program's evaluation office here. The agency is composed of about 235 men, almost all former soldiers, whose responsibility is to teach the Laotian Army to use equipment and weapons turned over by the United States. A smaller French military mission handles the actual tactical training.

Meanwhile, Premier Boun Oum and Gen. Phoumi Nosa-van, Deputy Premier and Minister of Defense, flew to Luang Prabang to attend a "high-level" defense meeting at which the King presided. The Information Minister declined to answer when asked if the meeting had to do with the deteriorating military situation.

Cambodian Shift Reported

HONG KONG, Jan. 21 (Reuters) — The Communist New China press agency said today that Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodian head of state, had modified his proposals for an enlarged version of the Geneva Conference that ended the eight-year Indochina war.

In a message Jan. 1, he suggested that fourteen nations take part in a new conference as a result of civil strife in Laos. Communist China, however, wanted the conference limited to the participants in the 1954 Geneva talks.

The agency said that Prince Sihanouk had agreed to the Chinese viewpoint in a message yesterday to Premier Chou En-lai.

U.S. ANSWERS PLEA FOR TALKS ON LAOS

Cambodian Bid for 14-Land Meeting Not Accepted or Rejected by President

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 18 — President Eisenhower has replied to a Cambodian suggestion for a fourteen-nation conference on the problem of Laos.

The State Department withheld details of the answer. It was understood, however, to be neither acceptance of the plan nor flat rejection.

The United States, it was reported, feels that a conference could be used by the Communists merely to delay a settlement in Laos while the Communist-supported rebels become stronger.

The United States wants to revive the three-power International Control Commission of India, Canada and Poland to end the fighting in Laos. The Western powers are insisting, however, that the commission accept the government of Prince Boun Oum as the legal authority, a condition that the Communists have rejected.

Several other governments, including that in Laos itself, are believed to be opposed to the conference plan unless steps are taken first to end Communist intervention and the air-dropping of supplies to the Laotian rebels.

Nehru Rules Out Move

Special to The New York Times.

NEW DELHI, India, Jan. 18 — Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru ruled out today a revival of the three-nation Control Commission on Laos unless specifically requested by Britain and the Soviet Union.

He repeated India's view that revival was "urgent" to end the fighting in Laos. But he insisted that India, the commission chairman, could not summon it unless told to do so by the co-chairman of the conference that created the unit. Britain and the Soviet Union were co-chairmen of the conference in Geneva in 1954 that ended the fighting in Indochina.

The Geneva agreement provided that the truce in Laos, an Indochinese kingdom, be supervised by a commission consisting of India, Canada and Poland.

The commission adjourned indefinitely in July, 1953, at the request of the Laotian Government.

French Deny Part in Coup

Special to The New York Times.

PARIS, Jan. 18—Frenchmen familiar with the situation in Laos denied today that French officials had been involved in the original coup by Capt. Kong Le that led to the overthrow of the pro-Western government of Premier Tiao Somsanith.

Laotian Plane Shot Down

VIENTIANE, Laos, Jan. 18 (AP) — Pro-Communist forces have shot down one of the four United States-made trainer-fighters of Premier Boun Oum's small air force, a Government source said today. The chance of getting a replacement appeared remote.

In the ground war, the Government kept the upper hand in the north while Captain Kong Le's leftist paratroops and Pathet Lao guerrillas threatened Paksane and Tha Thom, garrison towns near the country's center.

The Leftists cut the road between the two towns, moving to a point about 100 miles northeast of this administrative capital. They struck in two columns.

Soviet Is Sincere on Disarming

Wadsworth Feels

Asserts He Believes Moscow
Would Keep Agreements

By KATHLEEN TELTSCH
Special to The New York Times.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Jan. 17—James J. Wadsworth said today that he thought the Soviet Union intended to keep any agreement it would make for a suspension of nuclear tests or on broader disarmament issues.

Mr. Wadsworth gave his opinion at his "good-by" news conference, ending his eight years as a United States delegate to the United Nations.

To his successor, Adlai E. Stevenson, who takes over after Friday's Presidential inauguration, he offered no advice but a wish for "the greatest store of patience that he could possibly imagine."

Mr. Wadsworth, who holds the rank of ambassador, submitted his resignation in accordance with the tradition that the incoming Administration chooses its own officials for key posts.

Mr. Stevenson's appointment is to come up for Senate confirmation probably Friday, and he is expected to make his formal call here soon thereafter.

The inquiry as to Soviet sincerity was put to Mr. Wadsworth as the man who has negotiated with Russian representatives in 240 meetings in Geneva on the question of a treaty for a ban on nuclear-weapon testing.

"I think generally, by and large, that the Russian Government has every intention of living up to any agreement they may make from the standpoint of nuclear tests or the larger areas of disarmament," he answered. "Nobody in the world, including the Russians themselves, can guarantee what a successor government might do."

Mr. Wadsworth was inclined to doubt that Moscow was conducting secret underground nuclear experiments at this time. The United States, Britain and the Soviet Union have observed an unofficial embargo on such tests since Oct. 31, 1958.

While conceding that such tests technically could go undetected, Mr. Wadsworth maintained there was no evidence to support reports that they have been conducted. He added that he had discussed this possibility only a few days ago in Washington with persons who have been involved in recent test ban negotiations.

Ranging over a wide area of topics, Mr. Wadsworth said he felt that the attitude of the American public toward the United Nations had been "on the upgrade" during the last eight years.

He called for alertness against any obvious or oblique attack on the principles and ideals of the United Nations and he insisted that "the United States needs the United Nations just as much, if not more, than the United Nations needs the United States."

Mr. Wadsworth declined to make any on-the-record statement whether Communist China must be included in future disarmament negotiations.

Highly placed United States officials, however, have expressed the view that there can be no disarmament operation without Peiping's participation. Moreover, they believe that Communist China's absence from the negotiating table makes chances for reaching a quick agreement not impossible but more difficult.

Mr. Wadsworth acknowledged that time would eventually run out on the type of disarmament efforts that have been made in the past.

"We have been talking at cross-purposes," he continued. "We have been, perhaps, not listening to each other as much as we might. But at the same time I think almost everybody who is familiar with disarmament realizes that the possibilities are so frightful that we have to get moving again."

Mr. Wadsworth, who has headed the delegation since September when Henry Cabot Lodge resigned to campaign for the Vice-Presidency, said his only personal plans were to take a two-month holiday in Florida. He came to the United Nations in 1953 as Mr. Lodge's deputy.

EXILED LAOS CHIEF LAYS WAR TO U. S.

Souvanna Phouma Says Its
Stand Hindered His Effort
—Denounces Parsons

Special to The New York Times.

PNOMPENH, Cambodia, Jan. 19—Former Premier Souvanna Phouma of Laos bitterly blamed the United States, particularly J. Graham Parsons, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, today for the warfare in Laos.

In an exclusive interview, Prince Souvanna Phouma, who headed a neutralist Government briefly last year, derided the present Right-Wing, pro-Western Government under Prince Boun Oum as illegal. He said it was composed of "a group of clowns."

Prince Souvanna Phouma fled to Cambodia after Right-Wing forces gained ascendancy in Laos in the recurrent struggle with pro-Communist forces headed by the Pathet Lao movement. After a short period of uncertainty, Prince Boun Oum took control and has since been confirmed by the National Assembly.

Prince Souvanna Phouma dismissed proposals for the return of the International Control Commission to Laos as a stopgap measure. The commission, disbanded in 1958, was set up under the 1954 truce agreements that ended the Indochina war.

Instead, Prince Souvanna Phouma advocated ideas advanced by his host, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodian head of state, to the effect that the big powers should agree to form a neutral buffer zone of both Cambodia and Laos, placing the area outside the realm of international politics.

He said categorically that he would not resign as Premier despite the fact that the Soviet Union was exploiting his failure to do so by supplying arms to the rebels.

He said he had no intention of joining either Prince Boun Oum in Vientiane or Prince Souphanouvong, his Leftist-leaning half-brother in Samneua Province, which is held by Pathet Lao forces.

He said it was up to the big powers to solve the Laos situation because the Laotians themselves had lost control of the situation.

He is staying in the Villa of Mango Trees, which is owned by the Cambodian royal family and is tucked away in a back street. He continued digging in the garden as he spoke.

The 59-year-old Prince, who also enjoys chopping wood, and playing chess, bridge and politics, let the full weight of his fury fall on Mr. Parsons.

'Understood Nothing'

"He understood nothing about Asia and nothing about Laos," the Prince said. "The Assistant Secretary of State is the most reprehensible and nefarious of men."

"He is the ignominious architect of disastrous American policy toward Laos. He and others like him are directly responsible for the recent spilling of Lao blood."

"What I shall never forgive the United States for, however," he added, "is the fact that it betrayed me, that it double-crossed me and my Government."

After patting home the last in a row of gladiolus plants and proudly surveying the lines of freshly dug beds, he summed up the "tragic mistakes of United States policy in Laos" as follows:

From the start the United States has opposed the only real solution possible for Laos, namely the formation of a government of national unity including the Pathet Lao movement, he said.

"It did everything possible to prevent the integration of the Pathet Lao into the Government in 1957, and when, despite their efforts, I succeeded, United States continued sabotage me," he declared.

He said the United States was responsible for his resignation as premier in 1958 that it "planted the seeds of destruction" when it forced Government of Phoui San Kone, who succeeded him, to pro-Western and strongly a Communist.

Previous to 1958, Prince Souvanna Phouma said, he turned down both North Vietnamese and Chinese Communist requests for embassies. He said he assured them he had no intention of recognizing the Nationalist Government on Taiwan or of permitting South Vietnam to have any more than a consulate in Vientiane.

He said he also had assured the two Communist countries that he would never allow Laos to become a United States base or allow American soldiers to set foot on her soil.

He said that when, under United States pressure, Laos permitted Taiwan to install a consul general, raised the South Vietnamese mission to embassy status and signed an agreement to permit 100 United States military men in to train the army, the Chinese Communists and North Vietnamese were irked and "the present crisis was born."

Many Western diplomats in Vientiane agree with Prince Souvanna Phouma on these points. They feel the Communists would have been content to leave Laos alone provided she remained neutral and outside the United States sphere of influence.

The Prince, pulling viciously at the weeds, remarked that in the last six months there were several United States actions that had "shocked" him.

He said the United States

had plotted with Gen. Phoumi Nosavan, head of the Right-Wing forces, to achieve the overthrow of the Government and allowed him to use arms despite solemn assurances to the contrary. United States sources in Vientiane say they were unable to restrain Gen. Phoumi Nosavan.

Prince Souvanna Phouma dismissed United States fears that a government of national unity would eventually mean a Pathet Lao takeover. He said the people were behind him and he would prevent such an outcome.

He concluded by saying he was certain the big powers would save Laos.

Vientiane Accuses Souvanna

VIENTIANE, Laos, Jan. 19 (AP)—The pro-Western Government of Premier Boun Oum today accused Souvanna Phouma, exiled former neutralist Premier, of siding with the pro-Communist rebels by refusing to recognize the Government.

Charges Are Discounted

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 19—State Department officials denounced today charges against Assistant Secretary Parsons by former Premier Souvanna Phouma of Laos as the words of a "disappointed and bitter man who has discredited himself."

Except for saying that he had heard it all before and that the charges were untrue, Mr. Parsons, who is a former Ambassador to Laos, declined to answer the personal attacks against him.

Other officials said the United States had cut off aid to the troops of General Phoumi Nosavan when Prince Souvanna Phouma asked it.

These officials charged that Prince Souvanna Phouma's great service to the Soviet Union was that, by refusing to resign, he was providing it with the legal excuse for sending supplies to pro-Communist forces.

U. S. Defends Assistance

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 16 — State Department officials asserted today that the United States had "every right" to supply aircraft and weapons to the legal Government of Laos.

They took this stand in reply to the Soviet protest, delivered in Moscow today, against the United States supplying of training planes to the forces of Prince Boun Oum.

While officials here would not confirm that the United States was giving F-84's to Laos, as alleged in Moscow, they maintained that there would be no legal obstacle to doing so.

The Soviet protest was thought here to be meant as a counter to the charges of "extensive participation" by the Soviet Union in the Laos fighting, made by the United States Jan. 3. This was accompanied by a detailed listing of Soviet aircraft that had dropped supplies to the pro-Communist forces.

Moscow says that Laos is committed to neutrality by the Geneva agreements of 1954. The agreements say that Laos may not join a military alliance and may import only defense arms.

Although the United States has never asserted that the 1954 agreement no longer applied to Laos, it has implied this, in the opinion of diplomats here. It indicated approval of the Laotian Government's declaration in 1958 that it had fulfilled its obligations under the Geneva agreements and that the International Control Commission had therefore completed its mission.

Reconvening of Group Urged

LONDON, Jan. 16 (AP) — Prime Minister Macmillan urged today quick recall of the International Control Commission on Laos.

Mr. Macmillan's position was outlined in a letter to Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodian head of state, who recently called for a meeting of fourteen nations on the Laos crisis.

Canada Warns Big Powers

Special to The New York Times.

OTTAWA, Jan. 16 — Howard C. Green, Secretary of State for External Affairs, warned the big powers today against intervention in Laotian affairs. Such interference, he said, "would impair not only Laos' sovereignty but the peace and stability of all of Southeast Asia."

Rebels Encircle Tha Thom

THA THOM, Laos, Jan. 16 (Reuters) — Laotian Government forces dug in today for a last-ditch stand in this rebel-encircled town, site of the last Government-held airstrip in Xiengkhouang Province.

Government Force Advances

VANG VIENG, Laos, Jan. 16 (AP) — A Laotian Government column supported by rocket and machine-gun fire from United States-supplied trainer-fighter planes, fought its way today into this rebel base on the road to the royal capital of Luang Prabang.

LAOTIANS DEMAND SOME FRENCH GO

Relax Request for Complete Withdrawal of Advisers Under U. S. Urging

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 17 — The Laotian Government of Premier Boun Oum has demanded that some French advisers be withdrawn from the country.

According to diplomatic sources, the Boun Oum regime originally insisted that all French advisers be removed, but modified its position under urging from some of its supporters, notably the United States.

The Government in Vientiane has agreed to accept less than total withdrawal and, instead, to have the French Government reassign the advisers whom the Laotian Government deems objectionable.

It is understood that one of those subjected to the Laotian Government's disapproval was Maj. Gen. Jean d'Arrivère, commander of the French military mission. The general has already left Laos, according to one report.

Anti-French feeling continues strong in the Government of Premier Boun Oum, diplomatic reports disclose. The French, in turn, are said to be irked in the extreme by Premier Boun Oum's position.

The Laotian-French dispute has complicated the already complex situation in Laos and has contributed to the inability of the Allied powers to arrive at a unified stand, diplomats acknowledge.

Three factors are apparently behind the anti-French stand of the new Laotian Government.

First, it inherited the long-standing antipathy toward the French as the former colonial power in Indochina.

Secondly, the Laotians are reported to have felt for at least the last five or six years that they were receiving only scant attention from the French, less-than-intensive military training and outmoded equipment.

Finally, it is reported, the present Laotian Government suspects that the French played an active role in, or at least raised no opposition to, the coup last August that ousted a pro-Western Government and installed a neutralist, Prince Souvanna Phouma as Premier.

Under the 1954 Geneva accord that ended the Indochina war, the French were authorized to station 3,500 troops in Laos as well as 1,500 others for training purposes. Sources here indicated French strength was far below the authorized levels.

Ouster Would Hurt Army

The move to have all the French advisers leave Laos met with strong objections from other governments. They pointed out that such a step would deal a heavy blow to Laos' military efficiency, for it is the French who have the responsibility for the tactical training of the Royal Laotian Army.

It also was suggested that a demand for the withdrawal of all the French advisers would throw the operations of much of the Laotian Government and its financial institutions into chaos. French advisers long have directed the work in many important sectors of the Government and the economy.

Perhaps most impressive to the Boun Oum Government, diplomats indicated, was the realization that withdrawal of the French would imperil the existence of the small United States Military Advisory Group in Laos. This group, it was said, is in Laos only under agreement with the French, ostensibly to instruct the Laotian Army in the use of arms and equipment supplied by the United States.

Sources here said that the



The New York Times Jan. 18, 1961

Vang Vieng (cross) fell to a Laotian Government force.

Laotian-French friction has contributed to the inability of the Western powers to reach a unified stand on settling the crisis in Laos. It inclined the French farther from any proposals for a tough stand, through the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, for example.

Diplomats said these and other differences among the Western allies have prevented agreement on any formula for a Laotian settlement, even one that the Soviet Union might reject out of hand. This inability to assume a common position has placed the non-Communist powers in a defensive position almost from the outset of the Laotian crisis, they said.

That position was illustrated today when a spokesman for the State Department again had to deny allegations emanating from Moscow against the United States.

It was not true, the spokesman said, that the United States Government had given the Laotian authorities F-84 jet fighter planes, as Moscow alleged. Nor was Moscow's charge true that United States pilots were flying the four T-6 training planes this Government delivered to Laos last week.

The spokesman was answering charges made yesterday in Moscow by Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily V. Kuznetsov in a talk with the United States Ambassador, Llewellyn E. Thompson Jr.

Communists Urge Parley

Special to The New York Times.

MOSCOW, Jan. 17 — The Soviet Union and Communist China joined today in insisting on the urgent convening of an international conference to settle the civil war in Laos.

The Communist allies intensified their propaganda campaign charging United States intervention in Laos just three days before President-elect John F. Kennedy is to be inaugurated.

The renewed demand for a conference was put forward in exchanges of messages by Premier Khrushchev and Premier Chou En-lai with Prince Souvanna Phouma, ousted Laotian Premier now in exile in Cambodia.

In a message to the Prince, Premier Khrushchev declared:

"The peace-loving peoples cannot but be gravely alarmed by the fact that the United States lately has been taking measures aimed at direct intervention against Laos to take away its independence and convert Laos into a SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization) base."

Mr. Khrushchev then restated his proposals for "the urgent convocation" of a conference on Laos similar to the 1954 Geneva conference.

Tass, the Soviet press agency, published extracts from the Khrushchev message with a similar message sent to Souvanna Phouma by the Premier of Communist China.

Premier Chou noted the exiled Laotian leader's desire for an international conference and said that Peiping would welcome it.

U.S. Planes Aid in Capture

VIENTIANE, Laos, Jan. 17 (Reuters) — Aircraft supplied by the United States helped Government forces to recapture a strategic town sixty-five miles north of here, according to reports reaching Vientiane today.

The four rocket-firing T-6 trainer planes, delivered to the regime of Prince Boun Oum a week ago, were used in their first effective strike yesterday to recapture Vang Vieng from the pro-Communist Pathet Lao movement.

NEHRU HIDES RED CHINA

Says India's Status in Sikkim Is Apparently Not Accepted

Special to The New York Times

NEW DELHI, India, Jan. 18 — Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru said today that it appeared that Communist China no longer accepted India's "special position" in the Himalayan states of Sikkim and Bhutan. Under treaties, Sikkim is an Indian protectorate and New Delhi guides Bhutan's foreign affairs.

The Prime Minister also said at a news conference that there was "no foundation at all" for a recent statement by Premier Chou En-lai of Communist China that India was using her boundary dispute with Communist China as "capital for obtaining foreign aid."

Britain Urges Neutralist Laos; France Opposes Military Move

Reds Seen Timing Offensive

Report U. S. Is Still Ready To Move Forces Into Laos

By Marguerite Higgins

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13.—

Despite the imminent change in administration, the United States is still prepared to go ahead and move militarily in Laos rather than risk losing the whole area to the Communists.

This was learned tonight amidst speculation that the Communists were deliberately timing their offensive build-up in Laos to try and catch the United States off balance in the interregnum between administrations.

Worry About French, British

Although the United States and the anti-Communist Laotian government, plus the SEATO allies, are working on an attempted political solution, it is certain that pro-Western Premier Prince Boun Oum would appeal to the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization if the military situation in Laos was seriously going against it.

It has been pointed out in official circles that SEATO could respond even if certain allies—such as British and the French, for example—were to refuse to go along. There is some worry that British and French pressure for a negotiated peace at an undetermined price could result in de facto Communist seizure of Laos'ist buffer state.

while the anti-Communist are talking among themselves.

I. C. C. Return Considered

It is understood that officials of the incoming Kennedy administration have been more intensively briefed about Laos than on any other subject. The new administration will have all the facts and the where-withal with which to make a sudden move if they should deem it wise and necessary.

The diplomatic move that would take heat out of the Laotian situation would be the return of the International Control Commission into the Kingdom. As of tonight, the terms of reference under which the I. C. C. made up of Canada, Poland and India, might operate had not yet been resolved as between the United States and its European allies.

As to the fourteen-nation conference, proposed by Cambodia, President Eisenhower is expected to take a cautious position that, however, definitely stops short of slamming the door. It is a question of composition and timing. Some form of international conference would be in the cards if there are signs that the Soviet Union, Red China, Communist North Viet Nam, had any interest in implementing Cambodia's suggestion that the Laotian kingdom be turned into a neutral-Communist seizure of Laos'ist buffer state.

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By Don Cook

From the Herald Tribune Bureau

PARIS, Jan. 2.—The French government today broke a strained official silence on the Laotian situation and made it clear that it is against any Western military venture in its old Southeast Asian colony.

"France's policy," a spokesman at the Quai d'Orsay said, "remains faithful to the Geneva protocol which stipulates that the Laotian government should be representative of the widest possible coalition of national opinion—this in order to save Laos from being divided in civil war between opposing Communist or pro-Communist factions against the non-Communists."

The spokesman at the same time emphasized that there was "no confirmation of a Viet Minh invasion of Laos territory," and added, "it is rather difficult to make a sharp distinction between Pathet Lao (pro-Communist Laotian) troops and Viet Minh forces since the common border between Laos and North Viet Nam makes infiltration easy."

Apart from these official on-the-record comments, which are the first the French Foreign Office has made since the crisis began moving to the forefront two weeks ago, French officials are inclined to take a somewhat cynical view of the situation. They recall a similar Viet Minh invasion outcry from Laos in 1959, which did not exactly stand up to United Nations scrutiny.

The French feel, therefore, that increased American pressure in Laos can only worsen a situation which is more likely to be solved if caution is used.

This, of course, confronts the Big Three Western powers with their recurring diplomatic dilemma—whether to be tough against a Communist probing operation, or be flexible and fall back on conference diplomacy.

Reds Attack Laos Army's Staging Area

Seek to Avert Drive On Rebel Stronghold

VIENTIANE, Laos, Jan. 14 (AP).—A pro-Communist unit of undetermined size is attacking Ta Vieng, one of the staging areas for the Laotian government's promised attack on rebel-held Xieng Khouang Province, advices from the front said today.

There was an unconfirmed report that Ta Vieng had fallen to the Reds, who seized two villages in a sweep southward from Xieng Khouang. But most other information indicated Ta Vieng was still held by the government.

Responsible Western military experts here said it is impossible to determine just now whether the attack is the start of a major Communist push from strategic Xieng Khouang or simply a series of isolated clashes.

Limited Aim Seen

If paratroop Capt. Kong Le and his pro-Communist Pathet Lao allies have begun an offensive south, they said, it probably has the limited aim of knocking off balance the major attack for which Premier Prince Boun Oum's regime has been preparing in the Ta Vieng-Tha Thom area, northeast of Vientiane.

At last reports, the government had from 1,000 to 1,500 troops at Ta Vieng and an even larger force massing at Tha Thom. Both places are north of Paksane, on a big bend in the Mekong River.

Pro-Communist forces captured Xieng Khouang, with its strategic complex of airstrips on the Plaine des Jarres, in their year-end offensive.

Seek to Clear Road

Far to the west, loyal columns are striving to clear rebels from the road between Vientiane, the Laotian administrative capital, and Luang Prabang, the royal capital, 140 miles to the north.

A 600-man force headed by Col. Kouprasith Abhat has forced a way across the Nam Lik River near Ban Hin Heup and forged on northward toward a linkup with royal troops moving southward from Luang Prabang.

The immediate goal is Vang Vieng, a rebel-held village midway between the two capitals. With thirty rugged road miles still to cover, Col. Kouprasith said last night: "I hope to take Vang Vieng in two days—sooner if there is no major resistance."

A union between Col. Kouprasith's men and the royal column from Luang Prabang would permit both to swing east for a flanking drive into Xieng Khouang Province when the promised major offensive starts from the south.

Britain Asks Reds to Call Laos Board

Wants Accreditation To the King Alone

By Richard C. Wald

From the Herald Tribune Bureau

LONDON, Jan. 20.—The Foreign Office dispatched today to Moscow a note inviting the Soviet Union to reconvene the International Control Commission.

Britain made the move as co-chairman with the Soviet Union of the 1954 Geneva Conference which originally set up the commission.

In addition, Dr. Witold Rodzinski, the Polish Ambassador here, was given an indication of the terms of the approach when he was asked to call this morning on Foreign Secretary Lord Home. Poland, Canada and India are the three members of the commission.

Accredited to King

The terms are understood to be that the commission be accredited to the King of Laos. This would solve the problem posed by the fact that the Soviet Union will not recognize the pro-Western government of Premier Prince Boun Oum. The Western allies recognize Boun Oum as the legal government.

The British approach to the Russians was discussed in Washington over the last two weeks in talks among Britain, the United States and Canada. France was kept informed of the talks.

Although the United States has given its consent to the British move, diplomatic circles report, this does not mean the United States is involved in it. The United States position has been based on a desire to protect the interests of the legitimate Boun Oum government and it plans to continue doing so in any future negotiation.

Loyalists Near Hub

VIENTIANE, Laos, Jan. 20 (AP).—A Laotian government column today pushed to within ten miles of the important Phou Khouang road junction commanding the western approach to the rebel-held Plain des Jarres.

The column had advanced north from Vientiane. It captured the rebel base at Vang Vieng Monday and has driven thirty more miles north, reports from the front said.

But the advance of the column from Vientiane was a mixed blessing for Premier Boun Oum's government. As it advanced, pro-Communist forces from Vang Vieng were retreating north. And as they retreated, the rebels pushed back another government column from Luang Prabang trying to link up with the column from Vientiane.

Villagers returning from the guerrilla-infested countryside north of Vientiane reported Charles (Jim) Duffy, forty-five, of Watkins Glen, N. Y., was captured by pro-Communist Pathet Lao forces on a hunting trip last week.



Letters to The Times

Lodge's Work Praised

His Achievements at U. N. Said to Have Enhanced Our Success

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

I read with interest and close attention the series of articles by Thomas Hamilton entitled "The Changing United Nations" and was surprised to observe that Mr. Hamilton gave so little attention to the work of Henry Cabot Lodge as United States Representative to the United Nations during almost eight of the organization's most difficult years. Indeed almost the only notice Mr. Hamilton took of Mr. Lodge's role was contained in a paragraph which could be read to imply that Mr. Lodge tailored his activities so as to advance his political fortunes.

During all of Mr. Lodge's term of office at the U. N. I was closely associated with him. Never during this time was he motivated by considerations of personal political advantage. Aside from my own testimony to this fact, I suggest to those who might hold other views that they study the record of Mr. Lodge's actions during the lengthy period of Arab-Israeli conflict from 1953 through 1957. This record—as well as his record on other issues—shows a consistent effort to act impartially on the merits.

But quite aside from the question of Mr. Lodge's motivation, the fact remains that the United States was represented at the United Nations for the past eight years by an unusually forceful, decisive and intelligent man. My own experience in public life has left me with no greater conviction than that public servants of such authentic merit are rare indeed and should be encouraged and cultivated for the general welfare.

Role Outlined

There are several points which, it seems to me, ought in justice to be made in connection with Mr. Lodge's role at the United Nations.

The position of United States Representative to the United Nations is now universally accepted in this country as our second most important diplomatic assignment—next only to that of the Secretary of State. This was not the case when President Eisenhower appointed Mr. Lodge to the post in 1953, conferring Cabinet rank on him at the same time.

The United Nations today is taken seriously as a force in international affairs. There are many reasons for this but not the least of them is Mr. Lodge's recognition of the organization's potentialities as an instrument for mobilizing public opinion throughout the world. During all his term in office Mr. Lodge fought for clear and enlightened United States policies in the U. N. and at the same time spared no effort to see that the American people and Congress understood and approved what the United States was doing in the United Nations.

Mr. Lodge's popularity in the recent campaign was, I believe, a sign of his success. I well remember the pains he took, especially in his first years in office, to travel throughout the United States seeking out those who were not disposed to support the U. N. and explaining to them his own conception of the importance of the organization for the United States.

Specific Achievements

A simple listing of Mr. Lodge's accomplishments at the U. N. would not in itself take into account the intangible qualities of leadership and style which he contributed in such uncommon measure. I would, however, like to mention a few specific achievements for which Mr. Lodge can certainly be given a large share of credit. These are:

The establishment of the United Nations Emergency Force in Palestine, which stands as a monument to Mr. Lodge as much as to the other able and dedicated figures who are more publicly associated with it; the creation of the U. N. Special Fund which under Paul Hoffman's direction is making a genuine contribution toward economic development; the U. N. operation in Lebanon by which a most dangerous situation was brought to a conclusion which enhanced the international reputation of the United Nations and of the United States; the constructive U. N. reaction to the explosive Congo situation, which indeed was of such potential effectiveness for African stability that it triggered the ruthless attack on the U. N. by Khrushchev and his associates.

Mr. Hamilton observes with considerable justice that Secretary General Hammarskjöld has exercised influence "virtually equivalent to that of a great power." This reflects tremendous credit on Mr. Hammarskjöld. But it suggests also an equally striking fact which Mr. Hamilton has not, I think, adequately brought out in his articles: that is, that the United States has exerted strong, sustained and—more often than not—constructive leadership at the U. N.

I for one am tremendously proud of this record and of Mr. Lodge, who was for so long the guiding spirit in this worthy effort. The chances of United States success at the U. N. in the future have been enhanced immeasurably by what he has achieved. JAMES W. BARCO, Deputy Representative of the United States to the United Nations. New York, Dec. 31, 1960.

ASIANS TO CONFER IN MANILA ON LAOS

Special to The New York Times.

MANILA, Jan. 16—Major powers have been deliberately left out of consultations scheduled among seven Asian nations on the deteriorating situation in Laos. The first of the talks are to be held Wednesday.

Foreign Secretary Felixberto M. Serrano said today that the conferences would include "only small states." "Nobody need be alarmed about these talks," he said, in a statement apparently aimed at the Communist bloc.

The foreign ministers of three anti-Communist states, Nationalist China, South Korea and South Vietnam, are scheduled to arrive here tomorrow for the first phase of the meetings. Separate talks will be held by Mr. Serrano with the foreign ministers of Thailand, Pakistan and Malaya "at a later date," it was reported.

Mr. Serrano said the consultations, which were called by the Philippines, had nothing to do with the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization.

PROBLEM IN LAOS AWAITS KENNEDY

U. S. Decision in Situation Expected to Be Deferred at Least a Week

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 14—Western diplomats now expect that any major move to settle the problem of Laos will be taken only after the Administration of John F. Kennedy assumes power.

Barring a sudden shift in the military situation in the southwest Asian kingdom, there will be no disposition to move hastily, they say. With Inauguration Day less than a week off, the inclination in foreign ministries is to hold off any significant gestures in the direction of a confrontation between East and West.

The feeling has grown that much of the haggling and indecision evident in diplomatic negotiations can be attributed directly to the fact that a new Government is about to take office here.

Summit Pressure Expected

There is every expectation among Western diplomats that the Kremlin plans to use the situation in Laos to exert additional pressure on the new Administration here for negotiations. This expectation is based on the assumption that the Soviet leadership, for its own reasons, will seek to force a summit meeting on President-elect Kennedy fairly early in his term of office.

For many diplomats, particularly those of the United States, perhaps the most discouraging feature of the Laotian crisis has been the evidence it has produced of divergence and conflict within the allied camp.

The fundamental difference among the Allies concerns the extent of the Communist threat in Laos. United States officials regard the danger as real and obvious. British and French diplomats consider the American view of the danger exaggerated and emotional.

National pride is the source of further conflict. France, long dominant in Laos as it was, in all Indochina, is not happy with the growing United States influence there. With French power waning, Laos has turned increasingly to the United States for support and this has riled the French, diplomats say.

Political Question an Obstacle

Differing opinions regarding the future political complexion of the Laotian Government have been another area of difference. The United States Government has reluctantly accepted the necessity for what diplomats call a "more broadly based government." Washington sees this, however, as a government that would include pro-Western and neutralist elements but not representatives of the Pathet Lao movement, which is considered dominated by the Communists.

The British, French, Indians and other interested parties tend to feel that exclusion of the Pathet Lao forces guarantees continued internal strife in Laos.

These and other areas of difference have delayed the formulation of a unified Western position on Laos. They have produced interminable wrangles, for example, over the terms of reference under which the International Control Commission, composed of India, Canada and Poland, might operate in Laos.

Moscow Opposes Revival Of Laos Control Agency

By WILLIAM J. JORDEN
Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5—Diplomatic sources said here today that the Soviet Union had rejected proposals to revive the International Control Commission on Laos.

Preliminary soundings, said to have been made in Moscow by the British in the last three days, produced the negative reaction by officials in the Kremlin. Apparently the most important objection concerned the demand of Premier Boun Oum that his pro-Western regime be recognized as the legal Government.

Moscow has insisted that it would recognize only the government of the former Premier, Prince Souvanna Phouma, now in exile in Cambodia. In sending military supplies to the anti-Government rebels, the Soviet Union has said that it is aiding the legal regime.

Differences in SEATO

The extent of that aid, and of Communist intervention in the Laotian situation, was said to be causing sharp differences of opinion among Western allies and military men at the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization headquarters in Bangkok, Thailand.

Officials here said there apparently was some confusion between the statements made on Communist intervention by the United States Government and earlier reports made by the Laotian Government.

The Laotians said that as many as seven battalions of troops from Communist North Vietnam had crossed the Laotian border to assist the pro-Communist Pathet Lao guerrillas and other anti-Government forces.

This was never substantiated by United States sources. The State Department had said that it had "hard evidence" of numerous Soviet airlift flights into Laos and that "substantial numbers" of North Vietnamese had parachuted into Laos.

The department has not been willing to specify what it meant by "substantial numbers." Nor has it been willing to disclose any of the evidence it has accumulated on North Vietnamese intervention.

It was presumed here that much of the data collected on this activity would have been gathered by intelligence agents whose reports would not be available immediately to diplomats or military men in the field below the highest level.

Noting the growing skepticism regarding its reports, the State Department said today that it had "received no information which would cause us to retract anything we have said."

In the face of this, Western diplomatic circles hoped that the Soviet Union's rejection of the International Control Commission was merely a preliminary maneuver. They held some hope that the formal investiture of the new Laotian Government, now completed, and the resignation of Prince Souvanna Phouma, expected soon, might change Moscow's view.

Many Western diplomats see revival of the control commission as the only reasonable hope for ending the fighting in Laos and the danger that the conflict there could expand into a major war.

They hoped that the elimination of the claim to legality behind the Soviet airlift to the rebels would open the way to an early cease-fire.

Sources here said it was becoming clear that if Moscow continued to send military equipment in to the rebels it would mean that the Soviet Union had decided to make the small southeast Asian kingdom the site of a test of Western firmness.

In proposing to accept a revived control commission, the Laotian Government set two conditions. One was the acceptance by the commission of Premier Boun Oum's regime. The other was that all signatories of the 1954 Geneva accord on Laos would have to be in agreement that the commission could serve a useful purpose.

Seven Nations Signed

The Geneva accord was signed by Britain, France, Communist China, Cambodia, Laos, North Vietnam and the Soviet Union.

It was reported here that the Boun Oum Government proposed that the initiative in bringing the control commission to life again should be taken by the co-chairmen of the Geneva meeting, Britain and the Soviet Union.

The members of the Control Commission were India, as chairman, Poland and Canada.

Meanwhile, the United States and some of its allies were reported going ahead with a program of increased military assistance to the Laotian Government. The nature of that aid was not disclosed, but it is known that the Laotian authorities had expressed a need for additional air support.

There is as yet no agreement among the members of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization on possible military measures in support of the Vientiane Government.

The dispute involves those who believe that a strong and unequivocal stand by SEATO in defense of the Laotian Government would bring an end to open Soviet interference and those who think any military moves by the non-Communist states would produce an equal and possibly larger reaction by the Communists and make of Laos a new and possibly more dangerous Korea.

The United States takes the former view with some modest support within the alliance. The majority appear inclined to the second view.

CHINESE REDS WIN BURMA GOODWILL

Peiping Strives to Set Up a
Coexistence Showcase to
Woo Other Asians

By TILLMAN DURDIN

Special to The New York Times.
RANGOON, Burma, Jan. 7—

The settlement of a half-century-old boundary dispute between Burma and China has brought about a state of good feeling between Rangoon and Peiping that observers here believe will continue indefinitely.

Premier Chou En-lai of Communist China and his mission of more than 400 officials, gymnasts, football players, military men and stage artists now on a goodwill trip to Burma have created a good impression. They have behaved discreetly, and while their reception by the Burmese has not been wholly enthusiastic, it has been mostly favorable.

The propriety being displayed by Premier Chou and his colleagues will probably continue to mark Communist China's relations with the Burmese.

Burma's Government and nearly all of the important political factions in the country are prepared to be cooperative with the Chinese and there is no reason why Peiping should do anything to provoke Burmese ill-feeling, at least for some time.

The two countries began what appears to be a new era of goodwill by formally putting into effect this week a treaty defining their common borders.

Coexistence Showcase

Communist China is eager to keep its relations with Burma in a harmonious state to show other Asian countries that friendly coexistence is possible between Communist China and non-Communist countries.

There is thus no evidence at the moment of Chinese Communist machinations in Burma damaging to the U Nu Government, such as any surreptitious support to the Burmese Communist rebels.

The Burmese, although wary of Peiping's intentions, feel almost helpless before the strength of Communist China and have no desire to provoke their colossal neighbor.

Besides, solid economic reasons exist to reinforce the political factors favorable to good China-Burma relations: Burma produces rice and other primary products that Communist China needs and Communist China is becoming increasingly able to supply Burma with the manufactured goods that she requires.

Peiping and Rangoon have just concluded a deal for the sale of Burmese rice to Communist China—for a reported 150,000 tons. Burma's grain will help the Communists make up shortages they are experiencing because of last year's crop failures.

The sale comes at a time when Burma's purchases of Chinese Communist manufactures—textiles, hardware and household utensils—are markedly increasing. Imports for 1960 reached a value of \$25,000,000. Communist China now ranks as the third biggest supplier of manufactures to Burma, after Japan and Britain.

Trade Was Lopsided

Trade between Burma and China had been lopsided until Peiping's purchase of Burmese rice wiped out a two-year deficit situation, in which Burma had bought more than she sold of Communist China.

Burmese officials believe that Peiping may hereafter be a regular and increasingly heavy purchaser of Burmese rice in view of Communist China's booming population and the possibility of a repetition of China's poor farm yields of 1959 and 1960.

Thus, Rangoon officials are not unduly perturbed by reports that Peiping will send to Ceylon 100,000 tons of rice bought in Burma. The shipment, in exchange for Ceylonese rubber, would cut into Ceylon's purchases of rice from Burma. But the Burmese believe that, in the long run, Communist China might be a bigger regular buyer of rice than Ceylon.

Trade with China also has taken on increased importance as a result of Japan's new self-sufficiency in rice, eliminating the Japanese demand for Burma's biggest export product.

The Chinese and Burmese therefore appear to have many reasons for getting along together.

CHINA-BURMA PACT ON BORDER IN FORCE

Special to The New York Times.

RANGOON, Burma, Jan. 4—A final step was taken here today in settling the long-standing boundary dispute between Burma and Communist China.

Premier Chou En-lai of Communist China and Premier Nu of Burma exchanged ratified copies of the treaty between the two countries that defines their common border.

The exchange, which took place as part of the celebrations of Burma's thirteenth independence anniversary, brought the treaty formally into effect.

Except for minor modifications, the boundary defined in the treaty follows roughly the line of Burma's mountainous northern frontier fixed by the British when they ruled the country.

Burma had to give to Communist China a small patch of territory in her far northern Kachin state, but in exchange for another bit of jungle-covered hills farther south she obtained title to a piece of Chinese territory across which Burma's main northern highway runs.

As part of the boundary settlement, which has been under negotiation for more than a year, Communist China dropped her claims to a section of northern Burmese territory taking in most of the Kachin state.

LONDON BIDS U. S. BACK LAOS PANEL

Asks Resuming of 3-Nation Control Commission

By DREW MIDDLETON
Special to The New York Times.

LONDON, Jan. 2.—The British Government urged United States support today for the re-establishment of the International Control Commission in Laos as the first step toward peace in the Southeast Asian kingdom.

The Foreign Secretary, the Earl of Home, who returned to London a day early from his vacation in Scotland, talked with John Hay Whitney, United States Ambassador, at the Foreign Office this afternoon.

United States and British diplomats reported that the two officials had concluded that the International Control Commission offered the best chance of halting the Laotian fighting.

Two other courses were also discussed. One was an examination of the situation in Laos by a fact-finding commission that might be authorized by the Security Council of the United Nations. The other was the reconvening of the Geneva conference of 1954.

The creation of a fact-finding commission is regarded as a useful position for diplomats if Premier Boun Oum of Laos rejects the re-creation of the control commission. There is little enthusiasm here and apparently none in Washington for a general international conference on Laos.

British and European diplomats predicted that the situation in Laos would be used by the Soviet Union to promote an East-West conference. Premier Khrushchev has been given, in their view, a valid reason for demanding talks among the foreign ministers and ultimately between the heads of government.

The Soviet Premier's proposal tonight at the Cuban Embassy in Moscow for a conference similar to that held in Geneva in 1954 on Indochina was regarded here as the opening of a Russian propaganda campaign.

Graver View Taken

The British Government has taken a graver view of the Laotian situation than it did during the last week. After Mr. Whitney had seen Lord Home, the Foreign Office took the unusual step of issuing a brief statement. It said:

"Her Majesty's Government naturally keep in the closest possible touch with the American Government over the difficult and complicated situation which has been created in Laos by external support to the rebels. The Secretary of State and the United States Ambassador discussed possible political situations."

The British Government, diplomats noted, did not describe the Laotian situation as "grave" which is the State Department's description. It did, however, mention "external support" for the rebels.

The British Opposition agrees with the Government's seeking to re-establish the International Control Commission, composed of Indian, Polish and Canadian representatives.

Hugh Gaitskell, leader of the Labor party, and Denis W. Healey, the party's spokesman on foreign affairs, called on the Foreign Secretary. They apparently received assurance that Parliament would be recalled before any question arose on the use of British forces in Laos.

Paris Awaits Confirmation

Special to The New York Times.

PARIS, Jan. 2.—The French Foreign Ministry said today it had received "no confirmation of an invasion of Laotian territory" by military forces of Communist North Vietnam.

A ministry spokesman explained that it was "rather difficult" to distinguish between Communist Laotian forces, known as the Pathet Lao, and North Vietnamese troops "because of the permeability of the frontier" between Laos and North Vietnam.

The official recalled that the Geneva accords that ended the war in Indochina in 1954 had sought the formation of a Laotian Government of national union in which the Pathet Lao leaders would have a legal status.

"The present political situation does not answer to these objectives," the spokesman said in a reference to the anti-Communist Government of Prince Boun Oum, who is supported by the United States.

"It proves more than ever how much it is to be hoped that an end be put to the present fighting, which could degenerate into an international conflict," the official declared.

SEATO Role Stressed

The cautious French attitude seemed reinforced by stress the Foreign Ministry official put on his remark that the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization Council was "an organ of consultation and not of decision."

The French representative to SEATO will meet with and exchange information with the seven other partners in the organization and "notably with the representative of the United States," the spokesman said. He observed that Washington, Paris and London were in continuous contact over the Laotian crisis.

"Fidelity to the letter and spirit of the Geneva accords of 1954, the creation of a Laotian Government of national union and the desire to avoid a civil war between Communist and non-Communist elements" make up the policy of the French Government, the spokesman said.

SEATO Chief Says He Lacks Proof of Red Invasion of Laos

Nothing Definite, He States, on Charge That North Vietnam Attacked

Special to The New York Times.

BANGKOK, Thailand, Jan. 4.—Pote Sarasin, Secretary General of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, said today there was "nothing definite" on charges that Communist troops from North Vietnam had intervened in Laos.

But he said it was "unquestionable" that Soviet planes had been dropping arms to rebels opposing the pro-Western Government of Prince Boun Oum.

The SEATO chief made these comments after a two-hour meeting here of the organization's Council.

The Council decided "every effort" should be made for a peaceful solution of the crisis in Laos. But it expressed determination to "continue to develop and maintain" the alliance's readiness to fulfill its obligations.

The United States representative at the meeting was Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson. He presented documents the United States believes support Laos' charge that the Soviet Union is sending military supplies and North Vietnamese troops into Laos by air.

At the last Council meeting Mr. Johnson submitted photographs that showed Soviet planes dropping arms into Laos.

Mr. Pote said today that it "takes time to get positive proof of allegations" because of the terrain and lack of communications in Laos. Asked if there had been any improvement in the situation, Mr. Pote said, "No, sir!"

But he said the Council welcomed the meeting of the Laos National Assembly called to make Prince Boun Oum's Government constitutional.

"The problem is not one of legality, but to bring peace and stability to Laos—to stop the fighting," Mr. Pote declared.

"It is always SEATO's aim to find peaceful means and we hope they can be found."

A communiqué issued by Mr. Pote after the meeting said the Council "noted with concern reports of increasing supply of war material by Soviet aircraft from North Vietnam to Communist rebel elements engaged in operations against the Royal Laotian Army and the people of Laos."

The communiqué said further that the Council was "convinced that the continuance of such intervention could only serve to promote division and civil war in Laos and lead to a situation that would imperil not only the integrity of the Kingdom of Laos, but also the security of neighboring countries."

The Council warned that the crisis "could pose a grave threat to international peace and security."

Mr. Pote recalled a statement made Nov. 9 that all members of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization remained determined to continue to develop and maintain their readiness to fulfill their obligations anywhere in the treaty area.

No Evidence is Found

VIENTIANE, Laos, Jan. 4 (AP)—United States, British, French and other diplomats and military experts here said today there was no evidence of an in-

vasion of Laos by Communist troops from North Vietnam.

Western intelligence sources, they said, have found no North Vietnamese troops in Laos.

North Vietnamese cadres operate, however, with units of the Communist-led Pathet Lao movement. These cadres sometimes cross the Laotian border, but slip back into North Vietnam after the start of a Pathet Lao operation.

United States officials here said the choice between an all-out war and a continued stalemate depended on the Soviet Union and whether it was prepared to risk another Korea to gain its ends in Laos.

The United States recognizes the Boun Oum regime. The Soviet Union recognizes the exiled neutralist government of Prince Souvanna Phouma, who fled to Cambodia last month.

The present crisis in Laos fol-

lowed a Laotian announcement last week that seven battalions of Communist troops from North Vietnam had invaded Laotian soil.

Boun Oum Regime Installed

VIENTIANE, Jan. 4 (Reuters)

—The National Assembly installed the Government of Premier Boun Oum today by a unanimous vote of 41 to 0.

Gen. Phoumi Nosavan told the Assembly the Boun Oum Government would try to solve the crisis in Laos by its own means as soon as possible.

The general said the Government would ask for outside help only if an invasion from Communist North Vietnam continued.

Such an appeal, he said, would be made to the United Nations or "other" organizations. He did not mention the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization.

CHOU AND 450 AIDES ARE HAILED IN BURMA

RANGOON, Burma, Jan. 2.—Premier Chou En-lai of Communist China received a colorful welcome and was hailed as a "well-wisher of Burma" on his arrival here today for a week's goodwill visit.

He headed a delegation of more than 400 persons.

Premier Chou is returning a visit made to Peiping for Communist China's National Day, Oct. 1, by 300 Burmese, including Premier Nu.

Later this week Chinese and Burmese officials will exchange papers ratifying a treaty settling the dispute on the demarcation of the border between China and Burma.

Under the terms of settlement Communist China gave up claims to a large section of northern Burma and recognized, with minor adjustments, the boundary for Burma drawn by the British when Burma was British colonial territory.

CUBAN URGES U. N. BAR U.S. 'INVASION'

Roa Asks Security Council Meeting on His Charge of Impending Aggression

Special to The New York Times.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Dec. 31—Cuba asked tonight for an immediate meeting of the Security Council, to consider charges that the United States had "aggressive" intentions against the island republic.

The Cuban request was delivered first to Valerian A. Zorin of the Soviet Union, president of the Council for December. Mr. Zorin succeeded tomorrow by Omar Loutfi of the United Arab Republic.

Later the request went to the secretariat accompanied by a long Cuban memorandum charging the United States with aggression.

The new Cuban document will be circulated among Security Council members tomorrow after it has been translated and "processed" through Secretariat channels. The members must then decide whether they wish to hold a meeting on the Cuban charges.

The gist of the complaint, which was presented by Foreign Minister Raul Roa, was that the United States was contemplating an invasion of the island. The pretext, it was stated, was that the United States must wipe out alleged Cuban rocket-launching pads.

The letter indicated that Cuba expected an attack in January.

The Cuban complaint paralleled similar charges made against the United States last fall in the United Nations by Premier Fidel Castro's regime.

At that time, the Security Council after debating the issue, took no action. The same Cuban charges against the United States still are pending in the General Assembly's Political Committee. They are scheduled to be considered when the Assembly resumes in March.

Pretext Is Charged

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Dec. 31 (AP)—Dr. Roa said in his letter to the Security Council that the "mendaciously invoked pretext for this typical act of international piracy is 'the construction in Cuba of seventeen Soviet rocket-launching sites' which has been alleged with unequalled cynicism in a confidential note from the United States Government to the governments of Latin America."

Dr. Roa contended that his Government possessed the "threads of the sinister plot contrived by the Central Intelligence Agency, in close co-operation with the Pentagon and North American monopolies."

RED CHINA CAUTIONS ON SPREAD OF WARS

Special to The New York Times.

HONG KONG, Jan. 1—Communist China warned today that world wars could result from local wars.

The warning came in an article summing up the outlook in 1961 for the "struggle of the world's peoples" in the New Year issue of Hung Chi, a fortnightly journal published by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist party.

The article said that some people among the "ruling circles" in the United States strongly "advocated a brush-fire war in which 'only so-called conventional weapons, or at worst, tactical nuclear arms are used.'"

The Crisis in Laos

There is what the State Department called on Saturday "a grave situation" in Laos. Some kind of invasion from North Vietnam is under way. The Chinese Reds and the Soviet Union are helping the pro-Communist Pathet Lao rebels under Captain Kong Le. The United States is helping the Rightist Government of Premier Boun Oum, which has asked for help. The mechanism of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization is being put in motion in defense of the present Vientiane Government under Prince Boun Oum.

No one can deny the gravity of the situation. At the same time, what Clausewitz called "the fog of war" hangs over Laos. We do not yet know just what is happening and what forces are involved. We in the United States have an Administration that is going out of office in less than three weeks. While the State Department has said that it is in close consultation with other members of SEATO, it is a fact that there have been criticisms of United States policies toward Laos in London and Paris.

This is a time for caution, calm and as much patience as the urgency of the situation will permit. The Eisenhower Administration presumably is keeping in the closest touch with President-elect Kennedy and his incoming aides. They are the ones who will have to carry out any policy decisions now taken. Moreover, it is clearly essential that the United States take no action of a unilateral nature. We must make every effort to act through and with SEATO and above all in agreement with Britain and France.

The ideal arrangement for Laos was the neutralist, coalition Government brought about by the International and Joint Commissions which got to work after the French were driven from Indochina in 1954. Before the end of 1957, Laos was a neutral, buffer state under Prince Souvanna Phouma. Internal coups upset this balance and led to the present dangerous international conflict.

REBELS ASK BOYCOTT OF POLL ON ALGERIA

TUNIS, Dec. 31 (Reuters)—The Algerian rebel regime will conduct a campaign calling for a boycott of the referendum in France and Algeria next month, a spokesman for the rebels' Provisional Government said here today.

The spokesman said the boycott campaign had been decided on at a two-day meeting of insurgent leaders here.

President de Gaulle of France has called the referendum, to be conducted on Jan. 6, 7 and 8 in Algeria and Jan. 8 in Metropolitan France for the French and Algerian people to decide whether they back his program for more self-government for Algeria—the first stage on the road to self-determination.

The spokesman said Premier Ferhat Abbas of the rebel regime would address the Algerian people before leaving Monday for Casablanca, Morocco, to attend the Pan-African conference opening there Tuesday.

SOVIET DENOUNCED BY LAOTIAN AT U.N.

Note of Protest Assails Airdrops to Rebels as Violation of Agreements

Special to The New York Times.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Jan. 1—Laos has accused the Soviet Union before the United Nations of flagrant violation of Laotian sovereignty and interference in her internal affairs.

The charges were made known here today with the circulation to members of a protest lodged yesterday with Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld by the Laotian representative, Sisouk Na Champassak. The Laotian delegate said at the time that he had not asked for any specific action on the accusations except the distribution of his protest.

This asserted that within the last fortnight at least five Soviet planes had been detected air-dropping military supplies, including heavy artillery, to rebel forces in the region near the border of North Vietnam. The protest requested the Soviet Government to "discontinue immediately its unfriendly, illegal and unauthorized activities."

THE LAOTIAN PROTEST

The text of the Laotian protest, as translated from the French, is:

For the past two weeks the Royal Government has been duly kept informed of the open intrusion of the Soviet Union into the internal affairs of Laos. Soviet aircraft bearing the marks CCPL 52042, 61799, 52051, 61797 and NR 52065 have parachuted war materiel to pro-Communist rebel troops in the neighborhood of Phon Hong and Vang Vieng.

These activities by the Soviet Union are deemed incompatible with normal diplomatic relations and also constitute a flagrant violation of the Kingdom's sovereignty and a direct breach of the Geneva agreements of 1954 which stipulate that in their relations with Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam each signatory undertakes to respect the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of those states and to abstain from interfering in their internal affairs. More over the continued large-scale supply of the rebel forces by the Soviet Union renders more serious the internal situation in Laos and leads to further useless massacre of its citizens.

The Royal Government has also been informed that Soviet aircraft have violated the territory of Laos and have delivered large amounts of war materiel including heavy artillery. This occurred after the flight of the former Prime Minister to Phnompenh and after the announcement by His Majesty the King of the end of the government presided over by Prince Souvanna Phouma. The parachuted equipment was immediately used by the rebels against His Majesty's legal government in order to massacre the population of Vientiane.

Sole Aim for Peace

The Royal government expected the Soviet Government to adhere strictly to the Geneva agreements and the United Nations Charter in the same manner as the United Kingdom. The Royal Government in its determination to pursue a policy of non-alignment and of friendship with all nations has only one wish: To live in peace in order to reconstruct the country and promote the welfare of its people.

The Royal Government therefore protests vigorously against the activities of the U. S. S. R., which constitute flagrant intervention in the internal affairs of the Kingdom of Laos. Such actions are incompatible with accepted diplomatic relations between two sovereign and independent states, both members of the United Nations. The Royal Government accordingly requests the Soviet Union to discontinue immediately its unfriendly illegal and unauthorized activities and to adhere strictly to its undertakings under the Geneva agreements and the United Nations Charter.

Britain and the Soviet Union were co-chairmen of the Geneva conference of 1954 that made the agreements ending the Indochina war.

30 Dec 1960

BRITAIN SUPPORTS LAOS AS NEUTRAL

Officials Silent but Press
Calls U. S. Responsible
for Continued Fighting

By THOMAS P. RONAN
Special to The New York Times.

LONDON, Dec. 29—The British Government is convinced that Laos can remain neutral between East and West with a broadly based government that represents the various Laotian political elements.

This is a point of difference between Britain and the United States, which is supporting the present regime in Laos, the strongly pro-Western Government of Premier Boun Oum.

British officials declined today to discuss the differences with the United States but it was apparent that they existed.

Several British newspapers have asserted that the United States is responsible for the fighting in Laos because it has refused to support a stable neutralist government.

Premier Informed

Through John M. Addis, Britain's Ambassador in Laos, the Government has informed Premier Boun Oum that it strongly favors formation of a broadly based government that would include all those political factions "willing to cooperate."

When the Foreign Secretary, the Earl of Home, informed the House of Commons of this recently, he said Britain believed that Laos should be "genuinely unaligned" internationally.

The British concede that it would be difficult for many nations to maintain their neutrality without being subverted by Communist pressures. But they are convinced that this is possible in Laos and that neutralism would be the best guarantee against the outbreak there of a conflict involving the great powers after the pattern of Korea.

These officials are seriously concerned that a conflict might occur through mischance, but they doubt that Communist China plans an invasion of the area.

In contending that Laos can remain neutral, the British say that Laotians do not want to become involved in the struggle between East and West.

Rightist Schism Feared

The British also fear that a Right-wing, pro-Western government would fail to win the united support of many anti-Communist Laotians and would have the effect of dividing the anti-Communists.

The foreign office is studying a note from Foreign Minister Chen Yi of Communist China, suggesting that Britain and the Soviet Union, as co-chairmen of the 1954 Geneva Conference on Indochina, convene the powers of that conference to discuss Laos.

The note, made public yesterday by the official Chinese press agency Hsinhua, also calls for reconvening the international Control Commission named to supervise implementation of the Geneva agreement that ended the fighting between



The New York Times Dec. 30, 1960

Soviet-built planes were named Red reinforcements said to be ferrying Viet- to the Laotian rebel bas- tion at Vang Vieng (cross).

the French and rebel forces in Indochina.

The British feel that it may be necessary to convene the powers that met in Geneva in 1954, but they would prefer to avoid it. They have passed on to the Laotian Government the suggestion of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India that the control commission, which adjourned indefinitely in 1958, be reconvened.

U. S. Confirms Differences

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29—The State Department confirmed today that there were differences between the United States, Britain and France on dealing with the crisis in Laos.

Lincoln White, the department press officer, refused to define the differences. He said they were not regarded here as "serious" and were concerned largely with "means and methods" of dealing with the complex situation in Laos.

The department spokesman emphasized that the Western Allies were united in "the basic and fundamental objectives of helping to preserve the integrity, independence and sovereignty of Laos."

Asked about reports that armed troops from Communist North Vietnam had been seen landing in Laos from Soviet aircraft, the spokesman said the State Department was not in a position to confirm them.

He said such actions would not be surprising.

An incident in Laos involving an unarmed United States transport plane two days ago illustrated the potential danger of explosion there. The plane was shot at while photographing a Soviet plane engaged in dropping military supplies to the rebels.

The basic disagreement among the Western Allies concerns the future government of Laos. There is another division of opinion among the non-Communist governments. India has urged that the three-power International Control Commission composed of herself, Canada and Poland be revived to investigate the situation in Laos and, if possible to encourage an end to the fighting.

The United States has serious reservations about the Control Commission. It believes that Communist representation through Poland's membership means that any investigation

that might expose the Soviet Union or other Communist states to censure would be impossible.

Vietnamese Reds Sighted

VIENTIANE, Laos, Dec. 29 (UPI)—Communist North Vietnamese troops were ferried to the Vang Vieng stronghold of the Leftist leader, Capt. Kong Le, by planes built in the Soviet Union, according to reports here today.

A Laotian member of a Western embassy staff who escaped from Vang Vieng said he saw "more than 100" Communist North Vietnamese troops there.

Gen. Phoumi Nosavan, Laotian Defense Minister, flew to the royal capital of Luang Prabang today to check on that city's defenses. In the field, his troops continued to press small gains in a two-column drive north toward Captain Kong Le's refuge.

It was over Vang Vieng that a United States Embassy plane was machine-gunned Tuesday while watching a Soviet Ilyushin-14 transport drop supplies to the pro-Communist forces. Embassy sources said the plane opened fire from a window with a machine gun and raked the United States C-47 with bullets.