

Indications of Strain in the Soviet Leadership

1. Vacillation over treatment of Peking. On 12 December 1962, Khrushchev taunted the Chinese with not having solved the Hong Kong and Macao problems, and on 7 January 1963 Pravda editorially laid down a severe anti-Chicom line. Many people expected that when Khrushchev spoke at the East German SED Congress he would make an open break with Mao. But instead, Khrushchev's 12 January speech to that Congress, while full of political gamesmanship against Peking, called for a cessation of inter-Party polemics. A Pravda editorial of 10 February contained a first direct criticism of the Chinese, but also seemed to offer Peking a modus vivendi: a recognition that tactics might vary and an offer of a meeting. The CPSU letter of 21 February was still more clearly conciliatory. Then on 30 March, the CPSU sent another letter, once again taking a very stiff position.

The above series of events represents, of course, half of a two-sided exchange, one moreover in which both Moscow and Peking are maneuvering and feinting; these Soviet zigzags cannot be considered simply the product of a Soviet policy conflict, though they may be influenced by such a conflict. But a more recent incident seems a clearer indicator of Soviet policy differences in this area. In recent months Khrushchev had awarded Yugoslavia the honorific title of "socialist country," although the Chicoms constantly attack that country as "revisionist." Yet while the Soviet May Day slogans published on 8 April described other Communist countries as "building socialism," the Soviets did not use this term in the slogan on Yugoslavia. This omission suggested a certain acceptance of Chicom views. Then on 11 April, the Yugoslav slogan was revised, and that country also became a "builder of socialism." Apparently there had been an attempt to flout the Khrushchev line, and the Soviet chieftain had reimposed his views.

2. Problems of military influence. On 2 February Marshal Malinovsky, the Minister of Defense, published an article on the battle of Stalingrad which was restrained in its praise for Khrushchev's generalship, but which did give credit to Marshal Zhukov, whom Khrushchev ousted in 1957 for putting army ahead of party. On 22 February Malinovsky made a fire-eating Armed Forces Day speech; Khrushchev attended the ceremonies in uniform, but gave no major address. Then on 26 February, Kommunist of the Armed Forces published an article suggesting that on occasion military figures had to be "active conductors of the policy of the state," and saying (with quotes from Engels) that the role of a military leader may be greatest "at the moment of failure, when the army has suffered defeat"; this last might have been a reference to Soviet policy defeat over Cuba, and a claim that the military should take a stronger hand in political affairs. On the other hand, there have been several articles firmly asserting the supremacy of the party in military affairs; this last would be Khrushchev's position.

3. The Question of Priorities. Closely related to the question of military influence is the question of what kind of production should receive most emphasis. The establishment of a Supreme Economic Council on 13 March, with the appointment of defense production specialist D.F. Ustinov, meant (notwithstanding Khrushchev's denial on 25 April) an increase in emphasis on defense production and heavy industry, and may have reflected increased military influence.

An indicator of increased stress on rockets was the appointment of Marshal S.S. Biryuzov, formerly chief of the Strategic Rocket Forces, to become Chief of the Soviet General Staff, replacing Marshal Zakharev, who had a ground forces outlook. There are indeed many indicators, including signs that the last two years of the Seven Year Plan are being revised, showing that the production of advanced weapons is now receiving high priority. This necessarily involves hardships in other sectors, as Khrushchev himself plainly stated on 27 February. Khrushchev's old goals of catching up with the United States in meat and butter, or of overcoming the housing shortage, are bound to recede even further into the future; one might suppose that he would resist such changes of emphasis, or more likely, that others might question whether he was the man to carry them out. We should remember, however, that he has also posed on occasion as the champion of heavy industry, not only when ousting Malenkov in 1955, but also even at the November 1962 CPSU plenum.

4. Indecisive handling of literature and art.
The efforts of writers and artists to gain freedom of expression represent a danger in the eyes of all CPSU leaders; there is no pro-Ehrenburg or pro-Neizvestniy party in the Kremlin. But Khrushchev, though inherently very conservative in this field, unintentionally encouraged the writers and artists by permitting (for political reasons) the publication of Solzhenitsyn's ONE DAY OF IVAN DENISOVICH and Yevtushenko's "Stalin's Heirs." In particular, Frol Kozlov, who has had a heart attack, might well take umbrage at "Stalin's Heirs," which says: "Evidently not for nothing do Stalin's heirs suffer heart attacks." In general, as in the case of stepped-up arms production, other Soviet leaders may question whether Khrushchev is tough enough on the issue of intellectual freedom. Such criticisms might gain strength from the fact that even now, five months after the start of the campaign against artistic freedom, Khrushchev and his cultural lieutenant, Leonid Ilichev, have failed to obtain unqualified self-criticism from the erring intellectuals.

5. The abortive third anti-Stalin campaign.
Khrushchev had used the 20th and 22nd CPSU congresses as platforms for political campaigns, ostensibly aimed at Stalin and actually directed against stagnation and rival elements in the CPSU and the world Communist movement. The publications referred to above, as well as the polemics against Peking, suggested last fall that a third anti-Stalin campaign was getting started. At the same time, there were official claims, supported by a "newly discovered" Lenin document, that economic goals had priority over political goals in Soviet policy. Against this

* This might suggest that the ground forces are being downgraded; on 27 February, in his election speech, Khrushchev stated that future wars would be over in one day, perhaps implying -- as he explicitly stated in 1960 -- that ground forces were becoming superfluous. Yet the Party's chief representative with the forces, General A.A. Yepishev, a man with no military experience and almost certainly a Khrushchev supporter, asserted in one article both that the role of mass (ground) armies grows with modern technology and that "Soviet scholars under the leadership of the Party had solved most military problems -- not the soldiers." There may be other explanations for Zakharov's fall; a news report in the 4 April Evening Star links his name with that of Oleg Penkovsky, soon to face trial for espionage against the Soviet Union.

background, the proposals for reorganizing the Party into industrial and agricultural sectors looked like a scheme for downgrading or dismissing any Party officials unsympathetic to Khrushchev. But the November reforms have been at least partly offset by the creation of the Supreme Economic Council and in his 8 March speech to the writers and artists, Khrushchev partially reversed himself on Stalin, not only claiming that he and other leaders had been ignorant "of Stalin's abuse of power and . . . instances of arbitrariness," but also giving Stalin credit for stamping out opposition groups in the 1920's and 1930's. One could interpret this as a retreat by Khrushchev under pressure from more conservative elements.

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Aside from the zones of conflict described above, there have been other possible indications of instability in the leadership. Kozlov, Khrushchev's heir apparent and most likely competitor, attended a ballet performance together with Khrushchev (and without other leadership personalities) on 8 March; this joint appearance may have been intended as a demonstration of solidarity between the two men, or it may have been intended to show that Kozlov was soon to be joint ruler with Khrushchev. On 1 April, the First Secretary of Sverdlovsk Oblast criticized (in a Pravda article) past performance by the local oblast committee; this has been regarded as criticism of A.P. Kirilenko, former Sverdlovsk Oblast Secretary and now Deputy Chairman of the RSFSR Central Committee. Moreover, in a recent Pravda listing of RSFSR party officials, Kirilenko's name dropped from an alphabetical position to a place below Kozlov and Kosygin. Kirilenko, thought to be a Khrushchev supporter, had become a full member of the CPSU Presidium on 26 April 1962, at the same time that I.V. Spiridonov, believed to be a Kozlov man, was "released from his duties" as a Central Committee Secretary and as First Secretary of Leningrad Oblast. The 1962 Kirilenko-Spiridonov changes were interpreted as meaning a loss of status for Kozlov; present loss of prestige by Kirilenko suggests that this process has been reversed. A plenum of the Central Committee has been scheduled for 28 May, ostensibly to discuss ideological questions such as the future of the arts. Whether or not the rumors are true that Khrushchev will then set a date for his resignation, the plenum is likely to produce new information on the status of the Soviet leadership. In 1957, Khrushchev used a special plenum meeting to become dictator, ousting the "anti-party group"; conceivably the upcoming meeting might either remove him from power or confirm him in it.

COMMUNIQUE
OF CAPTAIN KONG LE
FORMER HEAD OF THE AUGUST 9, 1960 COUP
NOW COMMANDER OF THE NEUTRALIST ARMY

Recently there has been a group of people who tried to stir up trouble within the Neutralist Army-controlled areas intending to cause a split within the Army and making the situation in Laos become more tense again. They do this in order that unification of Laos will be put off indefinitely. They also do this to make the Neutralist Army weaker so that they can do anything they please in extending their influence, in spreading their political doctrine, and building up their own party within our controlled area. This group has received the encouragement and the help of a political party friendly to foreign countries. It has taken the occasion to use the policy of the coup announced in Vientiane on August 9, 1960 as its instrument to deceive some officers and soldiers in the Neutralist Army as well as the people who don't know about such things. The group has done this to build up a separate force to carry out its policy and enlarge its party in preparation for the forthcoming elections or have further fighting if the results of the elections are not satisfactory.

Therefore, in my capacity as head of the 1960 Vientiane coup and as Commander of the Neutralist forces, I deem it necessary to make this announcement so that the people will understand the truth as follows:

The coup (which I led) by the 2nd Parachute Battalion in Vientiane in 1960 was to overthrow the government friendly to foreigners and to set up a new government with a policy harmonious with the wishes of the Lao people. I did this to make the Kingdom of Laos peaceful and truly neutral between the two worlds, i.e. the communist and free worlds. I also did this so that the civil war which had lasted over ten years would cease by bringing together as one people under the King the Lao who were divided. After I along with the officers and soldiers of the 2nd Parachute Battalion made our coup, it was the same. I tried in every way to correct the various internal problems peacefully to avoid the shedding of blood. Later on it was necessary to order the Neutralist Army to fight with weapons but on every occasion I tried to use peaceful methods to solve the internal problems. I want to repeat again to make absolutely clear that the 2nd Parachute Battalion's coup in Vientiane was not for the sake of any one party or to create any big shots or to confer ranks but the coup was carried out for the benefit of all 3,000,000 Lao people. Therefore, I am absolutely unwilling for any group to take advantage of that coup as a cover for its own purposes.

In the past two years because of the harmonious leadership of Prime Minister Prince Souvanna Phouma, because of the unified resistance of the officers and soldiers of the National Army as well as the people who are patriots and really want neutrality throughout the country, because of the unity between all patriotic forces, e.g. between the Neutralist Army and the NLHX armed forces, and because of the support of the governments and people of foreign countries which wanted peace and neutrality for the army and people of Laos, we finally succeeded. The Coalition Government was set up which was accepted by various countries in the world. Two sides and thirteen countries let our Kingdom become a peaceful and neutral country with harmony and full sovereignty over its territory. Then the worrisome situation in our country gradually improved and became cleared up in a heart-warming way. But while we Lao people were becoming happy at the wonderful results that we had received, while the Coalition Government under the leadership of Prince Souvanna Phouma was starting to build national unity, restore peace and implement the neutrality which we had just received, something happened which we hadn't dreamed of in the Neutralist Army-controlled areas, i.e., in Xieng Khouang and Phong Saly.

What happened was really not accidental but was started by those who had evil intentions towards our Army and Lao neutrality. A group did this using a definite plan.

At first this group tried to make up malicious reports in order to divide the people. For instance they said that this officer or that officer in the Neutralist Army would start a coup here or there in order to make the people believe them and be afraid. They even announced the hour and date and gave various kinds of evidence. Moreover, they openly tried to make me arrest Neutralist officers. When they saw that their plan would not succeed they made up more malicious rumors to attack various people in the Neutralist ranks again, even including Prime Minister Prince Souvanna Phouma. Their first attack on him which they spread among the people was that he had brought in Japanese to Laos, that he had gone to Thailand where he was bought by the Thais, that he had gone to North Viet-Nam to split Laos off with Viet-Nam and 108,000 other stories. When they saw that these attacks had achieved some results they spread them even wider when the Coalition Government agreed to send Lao Ambassadors to the various socialist countries and when the Prime Minister received special powers from the Assembly. This group mobilized its strength even to forcing (people) to sign their names in opposition to the Government.

Nevertheless, because of the patience of Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma and the steadfastness of every officer and soldier in the Neutralist Army the disturbed situation which this group started intentionally finally clamped down and things returned to normal in this area.

...This group...received their lessons from their communist bases...when Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma went abroad...to destroy the Neutralist forces.

...Afterwards they used tricks to provoke the soldiers and people to overthrow Colonel Ketsana...but they didn't succeed. Then on February 12 they used an assassin to murder Ketsana. Besides this they killed or arrested all the members of the Neutralist party in a savage way until many people lost their lives...

Now when we see the situation in our country is moving towards peace and the three forces which had been fighting each other before are now together starting to understand one another, the communist followers are taking even more risks by using tricks to stir up and buy off the Neutralist officers and soldiers. They are getting them to violate the discipline of the Neutralist officers and soldiers. They are getting them to violate the discipline of the Neutralist forces by disobeying the orders of the Neutralist headquarters or having them cut off the Neutralist forces using soldiers and economic (blockade). At the same time the foreigners who are their bosses are creating 108,000 different kinds of trouble. They are holding up various goods from all the countries with good intentions to aid Laos. They are not letting them reach the hands of the Neutralist forces and people in the areas under the control of the Neutralist Army. They are stealthily sending soldiers, weapons and war equipment in order to help a group which opposes a neutral policy for the nation.

Recently they increased their propaganda to divide the Neutralist ranks and the people. They did this to conceal from the criticism of people throughout the country and the world their tricks to bring in foreign forces to Lao territory.

Nevertheless, the truth is the truth. Even though they try to use money and goods to buy off the soldiers and people to come over to them, our army and people every day see clearly into their terrible tricks to make the Kingdom of Laos a new kind of

colony of international communism. They hope to make Lao territory their base to disturb the peace of all the countries in Southeast Asia and spread their evil policy among the people in various countries.

Our army and people see this clearly and absolutely affirm that we are really neutral, not leaning left or right. (We want) the Kingdom of Laos we love to be peaceful and harmonious. If they use the Neutralist policy as a cover, we firmly believe without doubt that one day they will be punished by all the people.

As Commander of the Neutralist Army and former head of the 1960 Vientiane coup I call on all our brother officers and soldiers in the National Army, in the NLHX armed forces and in the Savannakhet forces together with our brothers throughout the country to unite closely together and join to support the Coalition Government and preserve the neutrality of our country....

I call on all our brothers to stand firmly for peace and not believe the propaganda of foreign lackeys who are working to destroy peace and national harmony. I believe firmly without any doubt that under the wise and harmonious leadership of Prime Minister Prince Souvanna Phouma, our beloved leader, our Kingdom of Laos must have peace, neutrality, and national harmony.

Khang Khay March 30, 1963

Captain Kong Le
Commander of the Neutralist
Army and Head of the August 8,
1960 Coup

Civil War in Laos

Neutrality Attacked

1. Beginning of the Problem

It is well-known that in Phong Saly, Xieng Khouang, Vang Vieng, Kassy, Muong Hiem, Mahaxay, and Nhommarath, instead of peaceful cooperation in accordance with Neutralist policy and the wishes of the Prime Minister, these places have become the stage for continual encroachments and one side's taking advantage of the other. The heads of the two sides went to run the government in Vientiane with the head of the right faction. The deputy head of the left faction, the NLHX, used his forces to try in every way to divide the Neutralist forces and weaken them. They used propaganda to attack the Neutralists and the branch executive committees and members of the Lao Pen Kang (Neutralist) Party in the villages and provinces. They divided, threatened, arrested, and killed until everyone was suspect. Besides provoking dissension, they infiltrated the ranks of the Neutralist army and tried to divide the Second Military Region under the command of Col. Ketsana Vongsouvanh in order that left-leaning Neutralist officers would take over. They provoked the Chao Anou Artillery Regiment to shoot down a plane which the Prime Minister ordered to take food to the Neutralists. They designated an assassin to kill Col. Ketsana Vongsouvanh. They incited Col. Deuane and Major Thiep to resist the commander and split their forces off to stir up trouble in the Neutralist ranks. Finally Kong Le had had enough and ordered the arrest of officers who had stirred all this, but Col. Deuane escaped and the NLHX sheltered him.

Our Neutralists who had been pressured politically, militarily, and economically were not dissolved as the leftists had expected. Instead they were able to solve their own situation with continuing patience and were unwilling to submit to the control of the leftists in any way.

2. Creating The Problem

After Deuane and 210 followers split off and joined the NLHX on March 12 the situation in Xieng Khouang became more tense. The Neutralist soldiers were continually attacked by the opposition, but the Neutralist headquarters did not consider this significant until March 31 at 2 p.m., when Cpl. Kong Sy, stationed with the 5th Battalion Headquarters (Khang Khay), took his wife to dig up insects near his camp. He was shot and killed immediately by soldiers of an NLHX anti-aircraft unit. They freed his wife who found her way back to camp and asked the officer in charge to send someone to look for her husband's body. The commander ordered his followers to investigate immediately. When the soldiers left the camp, they were shot by machine guns of the opposition along the way. When they saw they could not resist they ran back to their camp.

There was no way to go in and get the soldier's body so they asked the Neutralist MPs to help them, but the MPs feared that it was too big for them to deal with. In order to avoid fighting they took the group to see Kong Le at the PDJ. Kong Le was informed of the affair, he ordered Lt. Col. Sabap to take a force and bring back the body without fail. Col. Sabap took his troops to the place of the incident immediately. About 15 minutes after Col. Sabap's car passed Phonesavan on the way to Khang Khay, Capt. Done of the NLHX came to report to the MPs that the NLHX had shot and killed three government soldiers at Nong Sedet. This report made the MPs wonder whether it was the same matter as the previous one or a new incident, because there were two Nong Sedets, one Khang Khay and another one between Phonesavan and Khang Khay. In order not to lose time the MPs and the NLHX immediately went to investigate. But in a short time they saw Col. Sabap's car returning with the body. They said that while they were bringing back the body, the NLHX had ambushed them along the way. After Col. Sabap had related this matter to the MPs he took the soldier's body back to the PDJ. After hearing the PDJ report, the MPs went to Nong Sedet for information. When they reached Nong Sedet they saw nothing

unusual and went up to Houei Kham which is about one km. from Nong Sedet on the way to Khang Khay next to the NLHX camp.

When the MPs reached Houei Kham they saw the NLHX troops pull three bodies out of the water and bury them. When they saw this the MPs got out of their cars and ran straight over. When they got there they saw the bodies were clothed only in loin cloths. Our policemen took the bodies back to Phonesavan. On investigation they learned that the three bodies were Sgt. Somkith of the 2nd Company of the Third AA Battalion, Cpl. Kan of the 2nd Company of the Third AA Battalion and Cpl. Kong of the Tank Battalion. Six civilians who had been interrogated by the NLHX were freed and told our police the following story: We went fishing at Houei Kham, unaware that area was forbidden. We understood that it was all Lao territory and we thought that at Houei Kham there were fish and went there. As we were fishing in the stream there we saw one company of NLHX soldiers with firearms who surrounded us and threatened us. They asked "don't you know this is our area? Why do you dare to trespass?" They rushed to the bank of the stream and pointed, saying: "Who are soldiers and who are villagers?" The three soldiers said nothing though the red hats on their heads said they were soldiers. Kham One, the commander of the NLHX Company, pulled out his gun and shouted: Are you a follower of Neutralist Gen. Khamlome? We will kill all of Khamlome's and Kong Le's followers. You know well that no matter who I am, you will remember that we're communists, fighting for national independence. When he finished speaking, they shot the soldiers wearing red hats in the head and they died immediately. When the NLHX started to leave, they saw four guns on the bank of the stream and knew there must be four soldiers. They threatened again: Who else is a soldier? Come out. Those who had not been killed were afraid and pleaded that they were civilians. But since the soldiers had brought four guns, they were seized and imprisoned in the camp.

The three bodies were sent to the PDJ, the Neutralist headquarters on the same night. That night the soldiers from all of our units went on the alert to await new incidents. The soldiers were very angry and wanted to take revenge for their dead companions, but Kong Le appealed to them to hold off so this matter wouldn't spread and urged his men to seek a peaceful solution. This incident took place March 31.

3. Incidents Spread

On April 1 at 6 p.m. after the situation became temporarily calm, the Neutralist MPs at Phonesavan received a report from 1st Lt. Sit, commander of the 2nd Company at Khang Khay, that his Company was surrounded. The MPs sent a light tank to investigate. When the tank reached Khang Khay, Deuane's soldiers fired at it with heavy artillery. One soldier in the tank died and 5 were injured. About 30 minutes later, fearing that the 1st tank was in danger, the Tank Company at Ban Ngoi sent another tank after it with 2nd Lt. Boun Ma, 1st Sgt. Kong Chai and another 5 men. When the tank reached the curve at Ban Houei Kham where Col. Sabap had been ambushed the previous day, a NLHX soldier blocked the road but the tank did not stop and the NLHX who were waiting in ambush shot a bazooka at it. Lt. Boun Ma, the driver, Lt. Done, and Sgt. Kong Chai died immediately and the others were seriously wounded.

Headquarters then sent two tanks and another troop carrier to help the 2nd Company which had been surrounded. The vehicles reached Houei Kham and saw the damaged tanks and bodies of the three soldiers and took them to the 2nd Company at Khang Khay. After they took them there they returned to pick up the one wounded man. They didn't see the other four men and got the impression they were captured. On the morning of 3 April, the Neutralist MPs got in touch with the NLHX security unit at Phonesavan and requested them to contact their headquarters at Khang Khay to ask for discussions. The NLHX were unwilling to come to Phonesavan and our side was unwilling to leave. Finally the NLHX agreed to send Col. Chamnien as representative. Discussions started in the Muong Pek muong office. The Neutralists had Col. Soulyivanh as a representative. They agreed to let them go in to take out the dead soldiers with officials of the two sides going together. When they reached the place of the

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Houei Kham along with the three from the tanks, making eight altogether. They learned that the five bodies which they saw afterwards were the soldiers who had gotten out of the damaged tanks but who were killed afterwards by the NLHX.

On the evening of 3 April, the 2nd Neutralist Company which had been surrounded in the middle of Khang Khay tried to break out. The NLHX and Deuane's sides shot at them for about 40 minutes but fortunately our side had no casualties and successfully rejoined its compatriots.

The tense situation got worse and showed signs of becoming a savage war between the two sides. The NLHX asked for discussions again on 4 April, but the Neutralists refused because whenever they sent people they were shot at by the NLHX. They thought that there was no safety and asked the NLHX to come discuss things at Phonesavan, where the Neutralists would guarantee security. The NLHX believed this promise and the Neutralists sent soldiers from their security unit together with NLHX soldiers to bring back the NLHX representative at Khang Khay.

At the discussions on April 4 the Neutralists had Lt. Col. Sabap and Lt. Col. Phannola and the NLHX had Lt. Col. Chamnien as representatives. At the discussion they agreed that there would be no fighting for 48 hours; no movement from their former strongpoints; no reinforcements; and the NLHX would not encourage Col. Deuane's forces.

4. Fighting

The three points that we have related up till now are in great detail because these events occurred at Khang Khay and Phonesavan where we followed them throughout. But there was also fighting in widely scattered other areas. We therefore will not discuss the details, but only review the general situation.

Reports from the PDJ say that 1 April at Khang Khay and Phonesavan was dull and there was no serious fighting. Three truckloads of NLHX mixed with North Vietnamese moved from the PDJ/Phonesavan towards Xieng Khouang to reinforce the NLHX and the forces of Major Thiep, the rebel to the forces there. Kong Le indicated on 1 April that Xieng Khouang would probably be attacked and if anything serious happened it would be the NLHX and North Vietnamese who were responsible. A report on 1 April indicated that the NLHX and Major Thiep's group had tightly encircled the town of Xieng Khouang and would absolutely not let civilians or neutralist troops out of the city. This made the situation there much more tense. Another instance, the NLHX seized Lo Chou, a Lao Soung (Meo) Nai Kong in Xieng Khouang and a committee member of the Lao Pen Kang (Neutralist) Party in Muong Khoun. They killed him and his son at the Xieng Khouang market in front of the population in a most horrible and savage manner. The situation in the town was tense until April 5. The NLHX and forces of Major Thiep, the rebel, initiated their attack on the strongpoints of the Neutralists within and around Xieng Khouang. There was a heavy attack all day on 5 April. Our Neutralists had fewer forces but they fought bravely and patiently with their full strength. The enemy side had North Vietnamese reinforcements at a strongpoint in the caves of Kap Kai. Mixed with the enemy forces they moved from there to attack our Neutralists throughout the evening from April 5. The North Vietnamese controlled the heavy artillery which shelled our strongpoints and controlled the NLHX and forces of Major Thiep, the rebel, advancing towards our Neutralist forces on the battlefield of Xieng Khouang. Altogether there were 4 battalions. Finally we had to withdraw from Xieng Khouang itself and set up a new line outside the city. The city itself fell to the opposition on 5 April.

Since it was clear that there were North Vietnamese helping the NLHX, Kong Le appealed to the ICC to come investigate the North Vietnamese who had invaded Laos in various points in Xieng Khouang and elsewhere. The ICC went up only to the PDJ on 6 April and got the report of Kong Le and it returned to Vientiane the same day. On 10 April the three Commissioners to the ICC again went to the PDJ and returned the same day.

To summarize, the discussions between the representatives of the two sides and between Kong Le and Singkaps on 4 April brought no results at all because the NLHX, supported by the North Vietnamese, acted contrary to the agreement and did not respect it in any way. Moreover, the NLHX kept encroaching on the strong points of our Neutralists at Ban Ngoi near Phonesavan on 5 April.