

U.S. expanding war again in Indochina

By Richard E. Ward

Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird's public claims of splendid progress of the Lon Nol regime in Cambodia were literally exploded by the daring commando raid which destroyed Phnom Penh's whole air force last week. Exploded at the same time were some official myths about U.S. policy in Cambodia.

One of the main purposes of Laird's Southeast Asian trip was to deal with the Cambodian crisis, to step up a U.S. intervention that was being officially denied. Until last week, Washington claimed it had been living up to a statement made by President Nixon last spring shortly after the beginning of the U.S. invasion of Cambodia: "When we come out, our logistical support and air support will also come out." But as Alvin Shuster observed in the Jan. 20 New York Times: "The South Vietnamese remained and so did American air support. The nature of that support, however, remained a mystery—until the last few days."

Last summer, when the press called attention to the continuing use of U.S. aircraft in Cambodia, Washington invented the story that it was merely involved in "interdiction raids" against "North Vietnamese on their way to South Vietnam." This theme and variations on it were embellished until a Jan. 20 press conference, when Laird conceded that the U.S. had been using and would continue to make use of its air power in Cambodia and elsewhere in Indochina. Laird tried to brush aside the inconsistencies with previous administration statements, saying it was a matter of "semantics."

It was not semantics, of course, but a new escalation of air and sea power. (Some of the U.S. combat-support helicopters used in Cambodia are based on U.S. ships in the Gulf of Thailand.) Laird tried to disguise the fact that a new escalation was in progress by insisting that it was merely part of the Nixon doctrine, specifically aimed at saving lives in Vietnam and promoting "Vietnamization."

Opposition in Congress

But that logic was not accepted by numerous members of Congress who are now challenging the administration's policies in Indochina. They have recognized or suspect what is really happening: that, contrary to White House statements, the U.S. is extending intervention in Cambodia and turning it into another Vietnam, intending to maintain at all costs the puppet regime in violation of explicit Congressional wishes.

During its final days, the 91st Congress passed legislation—popularly called the Cooper-Church amendment, after its authors, Sens. Frank Church (D-Id.) and John Sherman Cooper (R-Ky.)—prohibiting the use of U.S. ground forces or military advisors in Cambodia. U.S. ground forces or military advisors in Cambodia

Asked to comment Jan. 21 on reports of

stopped-up U.S. involvement in combat-support operations, Cooper, said: "I certainly think it is a violation of the spirit of the amendment," adding during a CBS-TV interview, that in effect the law itself was being violated in Cambodia. Church stated on the same day that the U.S. air war in Cambodia had gone far beyond "a limited one which we were told represented our policy, to a general and unrestricted air war," reported Murrey Marder in the Jan. 22 Washington Post.

Marder continued: "Laird said on Wednesday [Jan. 20] that if the administration chooses to do so it also can legally add ground communications units, search and rescue teams. 'If that occurs,' said Church, that flouts the clear intent of Congress. . . . This would be a very serious breach of faith."

Originally the Cooper-Church amendment would have barred U.S. air combat support for Cambodian forces, but that provision was dropped in the final version during the Senate-House conference on the measure, primarily because of White House pressure. Evidently the White House told the Congressional conferees that the U.S. operations were of a limited nature.

64 Democrats

Now that it is clear the picture is quite different, legislation was introduced Jan. 21 by 64 Democratic members of the House banning the use of funds to "provide United States air or sea combat support for military operations in Cambodia." Previously, Church and Cooper had called for hearings by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on violations of the Congressional mandate. And 13 Democratic House members, under the leadership of William F. Ryan of New York, introduced a resolution calling for the "immediate halt of all offensive actions by the U.S. in Southeast Asia, demanding the complete withdrawal of all U.S. troops by June.

All signs point to a broader and higher level of Congressional opposition to U.S. aggression in Indochina, than ever before. When the Senators investigate what the U.S. is doing in Cambodia, they will find that there have already been U.S. ground troops and advisors in Cambodia since the "end" of the American invasion last June 30.

A Jan. 21 Reuters dispatch from Saigon in the Jan. 22 Baltimore Sun reported: "The U.S. military command today reversed a previous statement and said there are in fact combat Marines aboard the two copter carriers [at sea] now supporting South Vietnamese and Cambodian forces in the battle for . . . Highway 4." Actually some of these U.S. troops accompanied the helicopters into battle and they had been photographed on the ground by AP. Washington officials insisted that this was not so. AP troops observed by AP were combat "advisors" directing the Saigon and Lon Nol troops.

STATINTL

81 JAN 1971

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-0

Thailand Role In Laotian War Grows Wider

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE

Special to The Star

VIENTIANE — Thailand's involvement in the Laotian war is increasing as North Vietnam and her Pathet Lao allies continue to gain territory, well-informed sources here say.

The sources report there are over 2,000 Thais in Lao combat areas, an increase of two battalions to a total of six.

Four companies of Thai troops are alleged to have participated in recent operations north of Ban Ban and south of Xieng Khouang, towns in northeastern Laos near the Plain of Jars.

The operation, which failed, was aimed at cutting Route 7, Hanoi's supply route from North Vietnam to the plain. The pincers came from north and south, but even the Thai reinforcements proved insufficient the sources said.

Eight hundred Thai troops reportedly are based in the Long Chien area, 75 miles north of Vientiane, but American sources say Thai strength is in fact much less than 800.

Operate Howitzers

Although Long Chien is restricted for American journalists, Thai troops have been seen by other visitors there. The Thais operate a battery of 155mm howitzers. This battery was previously at Ban Khay village outside Muong Soui on the northwest edge of the Plain of Jars but was overrun by North Vietnamese troops using tanks.

To make sure such a thing does not recur, a Thai infantry group has been sent to Long Chien to provide protection for the artillerymen against Communist sappers who already have come close to the town's airstrip on several occasions.

The rest of the Thai troops work inside Laos near the Thailand border. There is one Thai battalion at Xieng Lom in Laos, just north of Nan province in Thailand, one of the northern areas worst hit by growing insurgency in that country.

A second Thai battalion has been involved in operations south of the border town of Thakhek in south central Laos. A third Thai battalion is based in Laos' Champassac province.

Occupy Border Area

Thai troops also are said to be operating in the area where the borders of Thailand, Laos and Cambodia join. By agreement with the Cambodian government, Thai troops may penetrate 5 kilometers into Cambodia. The Communists have an important base area inside Laos in that tri-border area and Thai troops from Ubon province are said to have carried out reconnaissance there.

Besides these regular forces, Thai special forces work in Laos' CIA-run "secret army." Often seen wearing blue jeans and checked shirts accompanying American civilians in Laos, they have been interviewed by correspondents.

These troops in Laos are referred to by the Bangkok government as volunteers but they still draw their Thai army salary as well as a substantial American salary.

All "secret army" casualties in Laos are flown directly to hospitals in Thailand.

Recent Pathet Lao radio claims say Communist forces have killed 300 Thai troops in war action since they were first introduced in Laos in 1964. This compares to over 500 U.S. dead in the same period in Laos, according to well-informed sources.

Intervention Possible

The Thais regard the Laotian Communists as more of a threat to Thailand than those in Cambodia. That's why they are putting more troops in here, diplomatic sources say. Diplomats expect any further large-scale gains in Laos by the Communists will trigger some sort of Thai intervention, particularly if there is any large scale Red incursion into the Mekong Valley bordering Thailand.

The Lao government has no desire to see large numbers of Thai troops here however. Laos fears the Thais are casting covetous eyes at their two provinces on the west bank of the Mekong, Sayaboury and Champassac. These two provinces were taken from the Thais by France when it ruled Indochina and were given to Laos when the French left.

The Laotians, however, hope to offset battle losses — 300 killed each month — by enrolling more northeastern Thais into Laos' army where they would come under Lao control. These Thais' native tongue is Lao and most in fact are ethnic Laos.

Thais resist this because they fear Lao claims to northeast Thailand as part of Laos might be raised again. Lao premier

Souvanna Phouma has spoken to the "18 million Laos in Thailand" who could provide Lao forces with manpower.

Meanwhile, U.S. sources admit that Thai artillery battalions based in Thailand's Chiengrai Province regularly provide fire support for Lao troops fighting Communists at Pak Tha on the Lao bank of the Mekong river.

STATINTL

January 27, 1971

spill containment techniques are adequate for local sea conditions, which findings shall be based upon written recommendations of the Environmental Protection Agency, or successor agency with similar concerns, to which shall be annexed plans of the lessee approved by the U.S. Coast Guard, describing specifically such spill containment techniques;

(4) environmental impact recommendations are filed by appropriate federal agencies or advisory boards in compliance with the reporting requirements of the Environmental Policy Act of 1969;

(5) underwater completion and production techniques have been perfected and will be used so that no apparatus is visible above the surface of the water;

(6) the location of the drilling site offers no navigational hazards;

(7) public hearings on these matters are held in Santa Barbara, California.

Sec. 6. The Secretary, after review, approval, and certification by the Department of Justice, is authorized, consistent with the terms of section 7 of this Act, to negotiate and settle all claims for compensation filed by any lessee of such lands for actions taken under section 3 or under section 9 of this Act.

Sec. 7. (a) The holder of any lease terminated pursuant to the Act may bring an action against the United States for the recovery of just compensation for the lease or leases so terminated and such action shall be brought in the Court of Claims as provided in section 1501 of title 28, United States Code, within one year after the date of enactment of this Act. No part of this Act shall be deemed to divest the Court of Claims from determining whether or not the termination of any such lease is legally compensable.

(b) The amount of any judgment in any such action or of any compromise settlement of such action and any interest accruing thereon shall be certified to the Secretary of the Interior by the Department of Justice. There is authorized to be appropriated out of the Santa Barbara Channel account such amounts as may be necessary to enable the Secretary to pay such judgments and compromise settlements concluded pursuant to this section or section 6 and any interest accruing thereon. In the event the funds in the Santa Barbara Channel account are not sufficient to pay any amount so certified and appropriated there is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of the Treasury for advance to the Santa Barbara Channel account out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated such funds as may be necessary for such payments. The Secretary of the Treasury shall be reimbursed for such advances from funds paid into the Santa Barbara Channel account in accordance with this Act, with interest thereon, at such rates as may be determined from time to time by the Secretary of the Treasury.

(c) There is hereby created in the Treasury of the United States a special account which shall be known as the Santa Barbara Channel account from which the Secretary is directed to cause payments to be made in accordance with the provisions of this Act. In order to provide the funds for the Santa Barbara Channel account, the Secretary is directed to offer for sale on the open market under such competitive bidding procedures as he may establish, the United States share of the oil extracted from such United States petroleum reserves or other federal lands as he may designate excluding therefrom any reserve or lands on the Outer Continental Shelf, pursuant to the provisions of this Act and to pay the funds realized from such sale into the United States Treasury. In each year, sales proceeds equal to the Government's receipts from such reserves or other federal lands due for the twelve months ending

mediately preceding enactment of this Act shall be credited to the general fund and the remaining sales proceeds shall be credited to the Santa Barbara Channel account. Any sums remaining in the Santa Barbara Channel account after the payments authorized by subsection (b) have been made shall be transferred to miscellaneous receipts of the Treasury, and thereafter the funds realized under this subsection shall be paid into miscellaneous receipts of the Treasury.

(d) Without regard to the provisions of chapter 641, title 10, United States Code, the United States official invested with authority over such lands as the Secretary may designate in section 4 (c) of this Act is authorized and directed to produce, by means consistent with other federal and state laws, sufficient oil from the designated lands to fulfill the requirement of this Act. Such United States official is also authorized to renegotiate and modify existing contracts relating to production of oil in such manner consistent with other federal and state laws as may in his judgment be necessary or advisable to enable such increased production.

Sec. 8. (a) The Secretary is authorized to extend the primary term of each lease described in section 4 for:

(1) the period of the suspension provided for in section 4 and;

(2) for an additional period equal to the time remaining on the primary term of that lease at the date of enactment of this Act.

During the period of suspension the Secretary shall waive all of the rentals and drilling deferment payments with respect to each such lease. After the period of suspension is terminated and at the time the holder begins to produce oil on its leased property in paying quantities pursuant to the terms of the lease between such holder and the United States of America, the Secretary shall pay interest to such holder on its total investment in such leasehold for each day of the period of the suspension of such lease, at the rate of six per centum per annum. The total investment in a leasehold shall include the bonus payments for the lease and the expenses incurred in successful explorations on that lease before the suspension began, but shall not include expenses incurred for unsuccessful explorations.

(b) All interest payments referred to in subsection (a) shall be appropriated out of the Santa Barbara Channel account (which was created in section 7(c) of this Act.)

Sec. 9. (a) The Secretary is authorized under such terms and conditions as he may prescribe to utilize all or any part of the following described leases issued pursuant to the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, in the Santa Barbara Channel, offshore of the State of California, if he finds such action is necessary or desirable to prevent or minimize oil spillage, leaks, or other pollution:

P-0241 P-0240 P-0166

(b) The Secretary shall not permit the erection of any further platforms within the leases described in this section unless necessary to prevent oil leakage, not otherwise contained, and where no other methods are feasible. Before any such platforms are authorized, the Secretary shall comply with requirements of section 5 of this Act.

(c) The Secretary shall provide for and require the orderly removal of all platforms within the leases described in this section when he finds that they can be replaced by underwater drilling or production units which comply with section 5 subsection 5 of this Act.

(d) At such time as the Secretary determines that no further drilling or production is required in leases P-0240 and P-0241 to prevent or minimize oil spillage, leaks, or other pollution, he shall report such fact to Congress.

(e) The Secretary shall terminate and include the lease designated as P-0166 within the Federal Ecological Preserve as provided in section 3 of this Act at such time as the State of California terminates the lease designated as PRC-3150, granted by such State, with respect to adjoining lands in the Carpenteria Oil Field.

Mr. CRANSTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to insert a statement by Mr. TUNNEY at this point in the Record.

There being no objection, the statement was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

STATEMENT BY SENATOR TUNNEY

Mr. President, I introduce today, with Senator Cranston, a bill to establish a Federal Ecological Preserve in the Santa Barbara Channel, and to meet an urgent need to deal immediately with a dangerous threat to one of California's beautiful coastal areas.

Tomorrow is the end of the second year during which our Government's policies have permitted the risk of further destruction. Even today, the oil is still leaking into the sea. On this eve of that anniversary, we join in action to protect the Santa Barbara Channel from the despoliation of ocean waters, shorelines and marine life caused by ill-planned oil drilling. The legislation we introduce will also provide a mechanism for fair compensation where loss occurs due to suspended and terminated leases.

On this basis, we can now proceed immediately to protect a vital part of the natural heritage of California which all Americans share. Let us act now to guarantee that the third anniversary of the disastrous blowout near Santa Barbara will be a time of real celebration—not just a reminder of the past.

S. 373—VIETNAM DISENGAGEMENT ACT OF 1971

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. President, I introduce for myself and for Senators HAYFIELD, CRANSTON, HUGHES, BAYL, EGGLETON, GRAVEL, HART, MARTIN, INOUYE, JAVES, KENNEDY, MOHALL, MOSS, NELSON, PROXMIRE, REBIBOFF, TUNNEY, and WILLIAMS, a bill entitled the "Vietnam Disengagement Act of 1971."

The provisions of this act, which would amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, are similar to those of the Vietnam withdrawal amendment considered in the last Congress.

We offer it in the conviction that it remains an urgently necessary alternative to the Nixon administration's so-called Vietnamization strategy.

The earlier version was defeated in the Senate on September 1, 1970, by a vote of 55 to 39.

What has happened since?

Young Americans continue to bleed and die. And their sacrifice is made all the more painful by the knowledge that it will affect not at all the cause that demands it.

Gradual withdrawals of U.S. forces have continued, with each step raising the risk to those who must remain as the war goes on.

Hundreds of Americans still languish in enemy prison camps with no real hope of release. "Vietnamization" is a policy which, even if it could succeed militarily, would leave those prisoners languishing in prisons into the indefinite future. The administration deplores their plight but ignores the course that would return

CIA-Backed Laotians Said Entering China

By Michael Morrow

© 1971, Dispatch News Service International

VIENTIANE, Laos — United States intelligence operations include the sending of armed Laotian reconnaissance teams into China from northern Laos, sources here say. Teams are reported to have gone as far as 200 miles into China, dispatched from a secret CIA outpost 15 minutes' flying time north of the Laotian opium center at Houei Sai.

According to sources close to the Central Intelligence Agency, and confirmed by Western diplomatic sources in Vientiane, the CIA is sending out hill tribesmen armed with American weapons, a three-pound radio with a range of 400 miles and equipment to tap Chinese telegraph lines, watch roads and do other types of intelligence gathering.

"There is always a team in China," sources close to the CIA said.

Staging area for the operation is a small mountain valley airstrip called Nam Lieu (also known as Nam Yu). The strip, which one Air America pilot describes as "difficult as hell to get into," is surrounded by mountains. It is serviced by both Air America and Continental Air Service, and is also a way-station for opium traders from northern Laos and Burma en route to drug factories at Houei Sai.

During 1968, five Chinese functionaries caught up in the purges of the Cultural Revolution defected to a Nam Lieu reconnaissance team. They were treated well by the Americans for a time but eventually were turned over to the Royal Laotian government.

According to sources close to the CIA, the five were thrown into a 12 by 12 by 12 foot pit exposed to the elements. The five were executed.

Like most CIA operations in Laos, the one out of Nam Lieu is directed from a headquarters at Udorn air base in northeastern Thailand. There are several Americans at Nam Lieu, including CIA and military intelligence personnel. Sources close to the CIA report the number has increased recently from four to more than 10.

In addition to activities inside China, the Nam Lieu Americans also help direct a joint operation of "SGU" (special guerrilla units) and the Thai army at Xieng Lom south of Houei Sai on the Lao-Thai border. They also run intelligence-gathering missions on a road being built by the Chinese government (under an agreement reached with the now-defunct coalition government of Laos) in the same vicinity.

Until mid-September of last year, the Nam Lieu operation was headed by a rough-and-tumble veteran guerrilla organizer named Anthony "Tony" Poe. Poe is a legendary figure in Laos known best for his dislike of journalists, disregard for orders and radio codes, capacity for Lao whiskey and expertise at clandestine guerrilla operations.

Poe was removed almost immediately after an article last September by Dispatch News Service International on the Nam Lieu operations, ostensibly because the article "blew his cover." According to sources close to the CIA, however, this reason was an excuse used by the American embassy here to get rid of Poe, whose style has been a source of long-term friction with members of the American mission in Laos including Ambassador McMurtrie Godley.

The September story was reported by the CIA Director Richard Helms

STATINTL

when he visited Laos last fall. Helms was quite upset that there might be a leak within the CIA in Laos, sources close to the CIA report.

Whether by design or coincidence, Vince Shields, in charge of CIA operations at Long Cheng on the edge of the Plain of Jars north of Vientiane, and Patrick Devlin, station chief for the CIA in Vientiane, have both been transferred.

As for the mission into China, sources close to the CIA and Western diplomatic sources both report that to their knowledge the missions are continuing.

Since leaving Nam Lieu, Poe has spent most of his time at Udorn air base, although one source reported that Poe continued to do "odd jobs" on the Thai-Cambodian border. Those who know him say he is unhappy away from Nam Lieu.

Poe is an ex-Marine noncommissioned officer, wounded at Iwo Jima, who remained in Asia after World War II. In the 1950s he helped organize CIA-trained Tibetan insurgents, escorting them to Colorado for training and going back with them into Tibet.

Later he worked in the Thai-Cambodian border area with the Khmer Serei, anti-Sihanouk guerrillas receiving assistance from the CIA, and other parts of Thailand. He has been in and out of Laos since before the Geneva Accords of 1962 and was one of the first Americans involved in arming and training paramilitary groups in Laos.

Poe is considered stubborn and brusque, sometimes going into fits of anger over the radio, his lifeline with the outside world. He is said to prefer working with hill tribes to working with Americans and looks down on most American operations because of their heavy reliance on American personnel.

He has been wounded at least once during his career in Laos, and reportedly a price has been put on his head by the Pathet Lao. He is perhaps the only American legally married to a hill tribesman.

26 JAN 1971

STATINTL

U.S. Trains Cambodians Elsewhere

Defense Department officials yesterday confirmed reports that U.S. Special Forces were being used to help train Cambodian cadres at bases in Thailand and South Vietnam.

Pentagon spokesman Jerry W. Friedheim said he was "not aware of any plans" for a similar U.S. military training program to be carried on inside Cambodia. But he said such a move was not prohibited, in the Pentagon's view, by Congressional legislation barring American ground combat troops or advisers from Cambodia.

Friedheim emphasized that the Green Beret role was to help prepare Cambodians to train their own fledgling army, rather than to accompany the Cambodians in combat.

Nevertheless, Friedheim's remarks added still another category of U.S. military involvement in Cambodian affairs which the Pentagon views as legal under the Congressional restrictions.

Air Activities

At a Pentagon press conference last Wednesday, Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird took the wraps off the use of virtually all types of American air power in Cambodia and said the Congressional restriction did not prohibit sending in such other non-combat units as communications centers, field hospitals or search and rescue teams.

Friedheim, yesterday, said American trainers, as distinguished from advisers, would fall into that same noncombat category, though he stressed "there was no intention or recommendation" to set up training programs inside Cambodia.

He also said the United States was trying to get South Vietnam and Thailand to take over as much of the training as possible.

Military spokesmen said the training was being done outside Cambodia to avoid the appearance of any large-scale U.S. ground combat involvement, and also because bases were already set up in neighboring countries.

Friedheim indicated the training had been going on for several months and was part of the U.S. military assistance program.

U.S. Monitors

Referring to delivery of American military equipment directly to the Cambodians, Friedheim said he "couldn't foreclose the possibility" that some U.S. embassy personnel in Phnom Penh assigned to monitor the aid effort might have to point out "where the on-and-off buttons are."

UPI, citing U.S. military sources, reported from Saigon yesterday that the Green Berets were training 2,100 Cambodians in guerrilla tactics at bases in Thailand, South Vietnam and Laos for use against Communist supply lines in northeast Cambodia.

The operation, these sources said, are being patterned after those of a 25,000-man guerrilla army that the CIA has recruited, financed, armed and operated in Laos for several years.

UPI reported that the United States is planning to drop teams of Cambodians into the underpopulated northeast, where Communist supply lines running into South Vietnam are vulnerable to hit-and-run attacks.

STATINTL

U.S. AIRSTRIP IN LAOS

Hanoi Raids Disrupt
Ho Trail Interdiction

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE

Special to The Star

PS 22, Laos — American ground operations against the Ho Chi Minh trail have been "severely disrupted" by North Vietnamese assaults against this heavily guarded airstrip, sources reported.

PS 22 and its satellite strips, PS 3 and PS 4, are on the east edge of the Bolovens plateau in southern Laos, 5 miles from the network of Communist reinforcement and supply routes to Cambodia and South Vietnam known as the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

Pinpoint B52 Targets

For years, PS 22 has been the home of men of the First Special Guerrilla Unit the 10th Guerrilla Battalion and their American commanders, a handful of military men working for the Central Intelligence Agency.

These units, mostly composed of Lao hillmen with a few Thais, total about 900 men. They have been responsible for harassment raids and pinpointing targets for U.S.

Air Force B52 strikes on the south half of the Ho Chi Minh Trail designated by the CIA as guerrilla zone number one.

Now the guerrillas and their U.S. commanders have had to be replaced by Lao regular troops.

The guerrillas are "demoralized and disorganized," said a Lao military official.

Sent to Mountains

The guerrillas have been sent to Batheng Mountain near the Bolovens town of Pak Song for reorganization, including strengthening by Thai special forces and some Cambodians newly sent to Laos and retraining by Thai advisers.

Few guerrilla teams are still active instead of prowling the Ho Chi Minh Trail complex and seeking North Vietnamese concentrations heading for Cambodia, they are scouring the Bolovens for large North Vietnamese units whose targets are this air strip and Pak Song.

Hanoi's troops already have knocked out the American-run

air strips south of here, numbers 33, 166 and 172.

Twenty-nine guerrillas were killed and 65 seriously wounded here in December. This, combined with the high total of guerrilla deaths in actions throughout the plateau and continued enemy rocket attacks, has driven the guerrillas away, the Lao say.

Now about 1,000 Lao regular troops are digging in here under sporadic rocket attack.

Rolls of barbed wire are being strung around the air strip, foxholes are being constructed, claymore mines are being laid and machineguns set up while armored cars are flown in to provide additional firepower.

Col. Khampen, the government commander here, says his instructions are to defend PS 22 because the Lao government is determined to retain this last foothold on the eastern edge of the Bolovens plateau. His troops are not involved in operations on the trails.

Observation Lost

Site 3, a tiny air strip 1,000 feet higher on the hill above the plateau in a stand of pine trees is seen by the colonel as his key defense position here.

The site provides a resting place for American forward air controllers dodging anti-aircraft fire along the Sekhong Valley.

The collapse of the guerrillas here at Site 22 is undoubtedly having negative consequences for Americans, Cambodians and Lao alike.

American intelligence has been deprived of its eyes on this part of the trail.

The North Vietnamese can now move supplies and reinforcements into Cambodia almost at will.

The Lao government, according to the Lao military, has been forced to commit its last reserves to a fixed defense of the Bolovens.

The fall of PS 22, which is presently extremely likely, would see this reserve force cut off a long way from help and possibly lead to the fall of the Bolovens town of Pak Song resulting in the North Vietnam case completely taking over the Bolovens for a new sanctuary against Cambodian and South Vietnam.

Such a move would severely hinder any South Vietnamese drive into south Laos to smash the trail area.

This results from the failure of the Central Intelligence Agency operation, a failure for which the Americans themselves must take the blame.

American commanders on the Bolovens failed to follow one of the first principles of guerrilla warfare — to hide your base and to be ready to move elsewhere quickly if discovered.

Instead they based on large air strips that were easy for the North Vietnamese to find and attack.

Instead of making air drops to supply guerrillas in the jungle, bases such as PS 22 were used to stockpile munitions and supplies.

Now the North Vietnamese have overrun most of the bases and the guerrilla operation has been smashed.

Crisis in U.S. war policy

By Richard E. Ward

A U.S. secretary of defense does not visit Indochina for pleasure or a picnic. Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird went to Indochina last week because of the serious crises confronting "Vietnamization" and U.S. policies in Cambodia and Laos.

Contrary to the official optimism about "Vietnamization" and other U.S. operations, the picture in Indochina has never been gloomier for Washington. In essence, this is the situation confronting the Nixon administration:

"Vietnamization" is more than a failure; it is now being understood in the U.S. for what it is: merely a word to deceive Americans into believing that the administration was withdrawing and disengaging from Vietnam. To make the deception credible, it was necessary to withdraw some U.S. troops from Vietnam. Now the day of reckoning has arrived. Although troop withdrawals to date have been compensated by stepped-up air attacks, the point is approaching when further troop withdrawals will seriously impair U.S. ability to keep the puppet regimes in Saigon, Phnom Penh and Vientiane from collapsing. Furthermore, U.S. senators and representatives are finally saying openly that they understand Vietnamization means a prolonged, if not indefinite, war in Indochina. This point was specifically stated by senators of the Foreign Relations Committee interrogating Secretary of State William P. Rogers and Defense Secretary Laird on Dec. 10 and 11, 1970. Neither of the two cabinet members could affirm that the U.S. would completely withdraw from Indochina.

Rogers caught in the mire

The situation confronting the U.S. is particularly acute in Cambodia. The administration's difficulties were exposed clearly during the Foreign Relations Committee hearing. The senators asked several times: how could the administration say that widening the war into Cambodia was a step toward peace? Rogers squirmed and engaged in subterfuge, only to mire himself deeper in his own contradictions. The administration's spokesman claimed that the Cambodian invasion and subsequent U.S.-sponsored operations in Cambodia were aiding "Vietnamization" and saving U.S. lives in Vietnam, and thus it was necessary to pour hundreds of millions of dollars into Cambodia so that more Asians could fight to save more American lives. The true picture is quite different.

Perhaps the administration once believed it could make Cambodia into a U.S. bastion for isolating the resistance in South Vietnam. But that strategy failed during the U.S. invasion of Cambodia last May and June. Not only has Cambodia failed to become a U.S. bastion, but the Lon Nol regime installed by the CIA has been on the brink of military collapse since U.S. troops left, despite continuing intervention by Saigon and Thai forces and large-scale U.S. air attacks. One of Laird's main purposes in going to Indochina was to find a way to avoid a final debacle in Cambodia.

U.S. intervention in Cambodia had nothing to do with saving U.S. lives in Vietnam. The reason for lowered U.S. casualties is simply a consequence of deliberately minimizing U.S. ground combat operations in Vietnam. For at least six months, there have been no U.S. ground operations in Cambodia.

Initially, this policy was inaugurated to appease public opinion in the U.S., since casualty and death tolls have served to generate antiwar sentiment. Now it is a serious question whether the U.S. Army in Vietnam itself is an effective fighting instrument. It is no exaggeration to say that the situation borders on mutiny, as attested by reports in Newsweek, Life, the Washington Post and other publications.

In Laos, the U.S.-sponsored mercenaries were unable to mount any significant operation during the 1970-71 dry season. The U.S. answer was to attempt to find a solution in air attacks of unprecedented intensity since autumn, but with negligible results.

New U.S. strategy

Before and during Laird's visit to Indochina, the new U.S. strategy began to emerge. Bombings of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam are again being utilized to salvage a rapidly deteriorating U.S. posture. Washington's scenario appears to be slightly different from that of the Johnson administration. The raids first began dramatically in November (actually there were earlier U.S. attacks on a smaller scale), apparently in a final bid to intimidate the North, to demonstrate U.S. will and to give Hanoi a chance to surrender before more systematic attacks get underway.

These attacks are now beginning on a regular basis and the administration probably is deluding itself into believing it has gained acquiescence of U.S. and world opinion for its "protective reaction strikes." Undoubtedly larger-scale attacks are in the offing before long, because the present level of attacks does not provide much military advantage and the Pentagon still believes that massive attacks against the North can produce results.

Apparently, the White House is operating under greater illusions than during the Johnson administration. When the preceding administration began its aerial attacks, the North's air defenses were in a relatively rudimentary state. Now the North's aerial defense network is the best that has ever been utilized in combat and, even more important, the people of the North are mobilized and fully prepared to defend themselves. Having been tested by the previous raids, they can be certain of the outcome of the new attacks.

The administration seems to be contemplating intensified air attacks in the South as well, thus belying the administration's claims of success in "pacification." Writing in the Jan. 16 Washington Post, Murrey Marder reports:

"A plan to shift large numbers of South Vietnamese civilians from the rugged, northern section of the country to the fertile delta area is being drafted in Saigon, U.S. officials confirmed yesterday. . . . The intended project, still in a formative stage," continued Marder, "is currently designated as the South Vietnamese Land Development and Housing-Building program."

Genocidal scheme

An effort is being made to pretend that this is a Saigon project. More likely it is the latest CIA-invented "pacification" scheme. Conceivably it could involve the forced movement of as many as 1 million people. The project was announced Jan.

MIDDLETOWN, CONN.
PRESS

E - 19,771
JAN 21 1971

Winding Down What War?

President Nixon may be winding down the war in South Vietnam, but he is clearly winding it up in Laos. The U. S. is now conducting one of its most intensive aerial campaigns of the war in Laos, involving B 52 bombers, tactical fighter bombers, gunships, and reconnaissance aircraft.

This represents a marked change from the days when the CIA was basically in charge of Laos air support operations, essentially involving the ferrying of Laotian troops. The CIA's operation was disguised under a variety of civilian names.

Actually, U. S. air forces have been supporting Laotian troops for some time now. The U. S. Command has announced that 13 helicopters have been lost over Laos since last March 10, when it began reporting aircraft losses there. Now losses can be expected to mount because the U. S. is using rocket-firing helicopters in direct support of Laotian ground troops.

As always, the new action is being justi-

fied on the grounds of trying to prevent supplies moving down the Ho Chi Minh trail. This is also the rationale for the use of air support in Cambodia. In addition, Defense Department spokesmen have conceded that American air crews, in addition to flying South Vietnamese into battle in Cambodia, might leave their aircraft while on the ground in the course of moving supplies or troops to support South Vietnamese forces there.

While the massive air attacks in Laos may slow down the Communist troops, there was no evidence provided in Vietnam — even when American air activity was at its peak — that U. S. air force efforts were able to successfully interdict the supply routes. And there is simply no question that the President has now once again expanded the war in Southeast Asia. If there was anything to be gained by this further expenditure of lives and money, there would be some point to it all.

M - 240,275
S - 674,302

JAN 2 1 1971

Mondale: U.S. Aids Thai in Laos

By CHARLES W. BAILEY
Chief of The Minneapolis Tribune
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, D.C. — More than 1,000 Thai troops, operating with "substantial" U.S. support, have been sent into combat in southern Laos, Sen. Walter F. Mondale said Wednesday.

The Minnesota Democrat said that such a development, which would mark the first use of Thai troops in fighting along the strategic Communist supply lines in Laos, "carries the risk of growing American embroilment" and could

jeopardize hopes for the continued withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam.

In a letter to President Nixon asking for "clarification," Mondale said he had received "specific information" that:

U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and military personnel have been training Thai and Cambodian units to "supplement Laotian forces for a sustained multi-battalion operation in southern Laos."

"Several Thai battalions, numbering more than a thousand men, recently went into action in Laos with substantial U.S. logistical support — and that Cambodian units have been trained to join them."

"These operations are part of a 'steadily mounting escalation in the area,' beginning last August with a '12-battalion Lao operation supported by the CIA and American military.'"

Mondale's statement came as news reports from South Vietnam officials in Saigon as saying that U.S. Army, Air Force and Marine helicopter gunships have been flying combat missions in southern Laos in direct support of ground troops there.

The Saigon reports identified the troops being supported as Laotians.

The area of Laos involved in both the operations and the

accounts from Saigon is the so-called panhandle, through which the North Vietnamese move troop reinforcements and supplies for battlefronts in both South Vietnam and Cambodia.

U.S. officials here and in Saigon have reported in recent weeks that the level of Communist traffic — both men and supplies — along the Ho Chi Minh Trail in the panhandle has risen markedly since the end of the rainy season.

A high White House official said last month that the level of traffic on the trail had risen sharply and was about the same as in late 1968 and early 1969 before the last major Communist attack on South Vietnam.

American officials have said they are unsure whether the Communists are planning to use the new men and material in Cambodia or in South Vietnam.

The developments alleged by Mondale would indicate a major setup in allied combat operations in southern Laos. In the past, only Laotian troops trained and supported by the CIA — have been used to attack the Communist supply lines. No Thai troops have been introduced into the panhandle area until now.

Mondale said that "if authentic, these developments could have the most serious implications. A new undertaking of this kind carries the risk of growing American military embroilment in support of the action, as well as the provocation of some escalation by the enemy in response or in anticipation."

He said it "would certainly jeopardize the remaining prospects for a negotiated peace, the con-

tinued withdrawal of our troops and the speedy return of our prisoners."

Mondale added that "we have seen in the past the dangers of such furtive involvement," and asked Mr. Nixon for "clarification of these reports."

His allegations seem certain to add new fuel to already growing congressional concern that U.S. involvement in Cambodia and Laos could rise to a point where it might force at least a temporary halt in U.S. troop withdrawals from Vietnam.

In recent weeks and days, U.S. military spokesmen here and in Saigon have revealed a sharp increase in American air combat activities over Cambodia and Laos. The U.S. command in Saigon said Tuesday that two U.S. Navy helicopter carriers are off the Cambodian coast and the helicopters are providing both troop airlift and combat fire-support in that country.

In addition, U.S. B52 bombers have stepped up attacks on the Laotian sections of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and reports from Saigon have indicated a substantial increase in Laotian operations by Vietnam-based irregular units trained and advised by U.S. Special Forces troopers.

Congressional specialists said yesterday that the kind of operations outlined by Mondale would require substantial U.S. logistical support by planes and helicopters, since neither Thai nor Lao forces of the kind involved are self-supporting in either supplies or transport.

21 JAN 1971

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R000700020001-5

OBYVIOUS INVOLVEMENT

Voices of Americans Fill the Air Over Laos

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE

Special to The Star

MUONG SOU, Northeast Laos—U.S. ground and air involvement in the Laos war is immediately obvious in this dusty position near the Plain of Jars on the Laos frontier.

In a 10-foot deep bunker housing radios, the air is full of American voices: "Cricket calling Papaya," "Come in Lulu, this is Jackrabbit."

"Cricket," which coordinates the chatter, is one of the U.S. Air Force C130s crammed with radio equipment, which hover day and night over government positions around the rim of the Hanoi-held Plain.

Trained in U.S.

"Papaya," "Lulu" and "Jackrabbit" refer to government positions where secret army units of Meo Gen. Vang Pao and his U.S. advisers are based. The Lao military says these places have "American commando leaders."

Laos says U.S. commando

leaders are based at Pak Kao, a 2,000-foot airstrip 3,800 feet high in mountains southeast of a CIA base at Long Chien. A Meo tribesman operator here speaks good English. He says he and two lieutenants at Muong Sou were trained at Ft. Benning in Georgia.

The radio net here extends to Long Chien and Tudorn in Northeast Thailand. The war in Northeast Laos is directed from these bases, Laos says.

Daily the air around Muong Sou is full of American aircraft. Some are transports ferrying troops to new positions and others are forward air controllers searching for enemy positions. South of Muong Sou reporters saw U.S. Skyraiders hammering Communist positions on steep jungle-clothed ridges around a Meo position at Ban Na.

At night U.S. gunships and C130s attack Communist convoys moving supplies for a new offensive against the Long Chien base.

Once reporters saw Commu-

nist .50 caliber guns return the fire. Neutralist troops here no longer wear French camouflage. They all are re-equipped with U.S. uniforms.

Equipped by U.S.

To cook their Thai rations and gain warmth against the cold night mist, they huddle around fires built from U.S. ammunition cases while overhead U.S. jets move on electronic reconnaissance. The most poignant reminder of the U.S. presence, however, is the places at Muong Sou where American soldiers have been killed.

Only a stone platform remains of the quarters where U.S. Army Capt. Joseph Bush was killed by Hanoi commandos in 1969. Near the airstrip is the nose of a U.S. helicopter shot down by Communist gunners.

Last week another American was wounded here when Communist gunners hit his helicopter delivering ammunition to a Lao hilltop position.

Derelict U.S. equipment is

scattered around the airstrip. A forklift belonging to the U.S. Requirements Office sits on rimless wheels. The rubber tires have been taken by North Vietnamese who have overrun Muong Sou twice. They'll be used to make shoes.

STATINTL

ATLANTA, GA.
JOURNAL
E - 257,863
JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION
S - 536,497 0 1971
JAN 20 1971

Tell It Straight

IMAGINE, if you can, hill tribesmen from South America, armed with Russian weapons, long-range radio and dispatched from a secret enemy intelligence outpost, probing as deep as 200 miles into the United States.

Hard to believe.

Rather unlikely with the reputed capability of spy-in-the sky satellites circling the earth. The satellite spies are certainly less offensive.

Now comes a surprise.

Reporter Michael Morrow, in a copyrighted report for Dispatch News Service International, distributed by the Los Angeles Times-Washington Post Service, says that such is the nature of U.S. intelligence operations launched from Northern Laos into China.

According to sources close to the Central Intelligence Agency and confirmed by Western diplomatic sources in Vientiane, Laos, says Morrow, hill tribesmen armed with American weapons are operating in China, tapping Chinese telegraph lines, watching roads and doing other types of intelligence gathering.

"There is always a team in China," a source close to the CIA told Morrow.

This may give some in America a greater feeling of security. But, under close scrutiny, it can be viewed as an unnecessary risk and a dangerously provocative act. There are other more sophisticated ways of intelligence gathering that can serve American needs without endangering efforts to open Western political and economic ties with China.

The time has come when the world's most populous nation, and most dangerous emerging nuclear power, can no longer be ignored and callously provoked.

A good place for Washington to begin is to

work for admission of Peking in the United Nations and to call off the U.S.-backed armed intelligence probe within Chinese borders, if such reports are accurate.

If they are not accurate, the American public should be so informed.

Increasing concern over the extent of indirect American military involvement in Asia demands it.

Cambodia

U.S.

inches in

By Daniel Southerland
Special correspondent of
The Christian Science Monitor

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

United States involvement in Cambodia has reached the point where it would be absurd any longer to speak of it as "low profile."

But it would be equally absurd at this stage to suggest that the United States is edging toward anything like another Vietnam, or even another Laos.

At the U.S. Embassy here, there is an obvious effort to avoid the mistakes of Vietnam, to limit the U.S. presence, and to make sure Americans do not start doing what Cambodians can do for themselves. This is what the "Nixon doctrine" is supposed to be all about.

The embassy has a staff of about 70 Americans, housed in a four-story apartment building on one of Phnom Penh's tree lined boulevards. This is a far cry from a year and a half ago when the United States renewed relations with Cambodia and set up a small embassy staff in a cramped former servants' quarters attached to a modest house rented by the chargé d'affaires. The embassy's profile was so low then many of the city's pedicab drivers had trouble finding it.

But as one official describes it, the present enlarged embassy staff is "still smaller than our mission in Guatemala, not much larger than Burma, and perhaps the size of Kuala Lumpur."

Congress has approved \$255 million in military and economic aid to Cambodia, and U.S. officials say additional personnel will be needed to help administer the expanded aid program. But they say they still hope to keep the total staff here below the 100 mark.

"We can't be low profile here," said the U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia, Emory C. Swank, an expert on the Soviet Union and America's first ambassador to Phnom Penh in five years.

"It has to be at least a medium profile," he said, in an interview. "We do have an important role here. . . . But we hope to keep any increase in personnel to a modest level."

Ambassador Swank said it was hoped that only five or six additional officers specializing in economic affairs would have to be brought in to supervise the projected economic-aid program.

The military-aid program is administered by the embassy's six-man political military section, with backstopping from Saigon. Possibly four more persons are to be added to this section to meet the expanded workload, the Ambassador said.

Program limited

But he said there is no intention at this time of establishing a full fledged U.S. economic-aid mission with aid technicians such as exists in Vietnam, or a U.S. military assistance group with military advisers as has been the procedure in a number of other countries.

"There are inevitable pressures to add to your staff when you have aid programs and must be accountable to Congress for them," said Mr. Swank.

"There is also an inevitable temptation to take things over," the Ambassador said. "Americans are very impatient."

"But I hope we've learned something in Vietnam. . . . The Cambodians want to help themselves."

Of course, the United States is doing a number of things in Cambodia that are coordinated from outside Cambodia and have little to do with the embassy in Phnom Penh.

The most significant of these activities are the air strikes and reconnaissance missions that U.S. planes and helicopters are flying in support of the Cambodians and the South Vietnamese operating in Cambodia. American planes also help fly ammunition, weapons, and other supplies into Phnom Penh daily as part of the military aid program.

During occasional emergencies, American helicopters have flown medical evacuation and supply missions for the South Vietnamese, according to the U.S. command in Saigon.

No advisers in field

Americans are involved, too, in the training of Cambodian troops and copter crews in South Vietnam, and there has been some secret training of Cambodian troops in southern Laos.

[As to airlifting South Vietnamese troops, however, Reuter reported a statement Tuesday by the U.S. Command:

"We wish to clarify a statement from the Department of Defense that ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) troop reinforcements have been lifted by U.S. helicopters in the Route 4 (Cambodia) operation. This has not been done, although it is within the guidelines laid down for U.S. air power to prevent the reestablishment of sanctuaries in Cambodia."]

But the embassy in Phnom Penh will play a key role by running the military aid program and will do the same with economic aid once Washington decides what kind of economic assistance it wants to give.

There are no U.S. advisers with Cambodian military units, and none of the 39-odd members of the defense attaché's office as an adviser to the Cambodians. They are largely doing what military attachés are

STATINTL

STATINTL

20 Jan 70

STATINTL

Deepening Cambodian Commitment

The increased American involvement in Cambodia occurred shortly after Defense Secretary Laird visited the area, so it can be presumed he was aware of the impending escalation if he did not order it. But a different impression was given out after Mr. Laird discussed the Cambodian situation with U. S. commanders in Saigon.

Last Thursday the word from Washington was that Mr. Laird had rejected a request by the Joint Chiefs of Staff that American transport planes and helicopters be permitted to ferry ammunition and South Vietnamese reinforcements to South Vietnamese forces operating in Cambodia. The Chiefs argued this was not specifically barred by the Congressional proscription against the use of American ground troops, but Mr. Laird said it would violate the spirit if not the letter of the ban.

But if the spirit was willing the flesh, apparently, was weak. Eight-jet B-52 bombers had been flying support for South Vietnamese and Cambodian ground troops and they were joined, it was disclosed early in the week, by U.S. helicopter gunships and ships of the U.S. Seventh Fleet anchored in the Gulf of Siam. And the Defense Department claimed U.S. aircraft could properly be used to ferry troops into Cambodia, or from one place to another inside Cambodia.

There is no doubt a difference between a soldier walking on the ground and one hovering 50 feet in the air, and when a pilot lands to pick up or discharge passengers he is still not on the ground, only a few feet from it. But this is splitting hairs, and the question is if the Pentagon can so quickly put aside the spirit of the law, how long will it take for the letter to be abandoned?

Or has it already been abandoned? The Army

is making a mystery of a uniformed American photographed in Cambodia. How many more mystery men are there? And what better way to counter the evidence of a photograph than to pose a mystery and start an "investigation."

The pressures may increase, at least until the spring rainy season dampens the fighting. The Cambodians, praised by Mr. Laird for their enthusiasm, are small in number and ineffective. South Vietnamese troops are providing the principal ground opposition to the Communists, but even with American air support they have not been able to free the main road from the seacoast to the capital of Phnom Penh. The situation is so serious that Cambodian Premier Lon Nol scheduled a trip to Saigon for consultations.

The worrisome aspect of the latest Cambodian escalation is that it seems to reflect a determination by the military to intensify the war while claiming to stay within the guidelines laid down six months ago by President Nixon and the restrictions imposed by Congress only last month. When this is coupled with the recent revelation that the Central Intelligence Agency has been sending armed reconnaissance teams from northern Laos into China there is a feeling that the whole thrust of Washington is still toward enlarging the Southeast Asia operation, not winding it down as Mr. Nixon maintains.

Even if accomplished, pulling American troops out of Vietnam (some 248,000 are expected to remain there as of May 1) will be a fraud if the war grows elsewhere; and an intensified war in Cambodia would provide an excuse for maintaining troops in Vietnam. What the American people want is the withdrawal of their troops from Indochina, not new excuses for keeping them there endlessly.

SACRAMENTO, CALIF.
BEE

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-0160

E - 172,411
S - 200,516

JAN 18 1971

Sources Confirm CIA Backs Spy Missions Probing Deep Into China

Times-Post news service

VIENTIANE, Laos — United States intelligence operations include the sending of armed Laotian reconnaissance teams into China from northern Laos. Teams are reported to have gone as far as 200 miles into China, dispatched from a secret CIA outpost 15 minutes flying time north of the Laotian opium center of Houei Sai.

According to sources close to the Central Intelligence Agency, and confirmed by Western diplomatic sources in Vientiane, the CIA is sending out hill tribesmen armed with American weapons, a 3-pound radio with a range of 400 miles and equipment to tap Chinese telegraph lines, watch roads and do other types of intelligence gathering.

"There is always a team in China," according to sources close to the CIA.

STAGING AREA

Staging area for the operation is a small, Luntain-valley airstrip called Nam Lieu (also known as Nam Yu). The strip, which one Air America pilot describes as "difficult as hell to get into," is surrounded by mountains. It is serviced by both Air America and Continental Air Service and is also a way-station for opium traders from northern Laos and Burma en route to drug factories at Houei Sai.

Like most CIA operations in Laos, the one out of Nam Lieu is directed from a headquarters at Udorn Air Base in northeastern Thailand. There are several Americans at Nam Lieu, however, including CIA and military intelligence personnel. Source close to the CIA report the number has increased recently from four to more than 10.

In addition to activities inside China, the Nam Lieu Americans also help direct a joint operation of "SGU" (special guerilla units) and the Thai army at Xieng Lom south of

Houei Sai on the Lao-Thai border. They also run intelligence gathering missions, on a road being built by the Chinese government (under an agreement reached with the now defunct coalition government of Laos) in the same vicinity.

Until mid-September of last year, the Nam Lieu operation was headed by a tough-and-tumble veteran guerilla organizer named Anthony

(Tony) Poe. Poe is a legendary figure in Laos known best for his dislike of journalists, disregard for orders and radio codes, capacity for Lao whisky and expertise at clandestine guerrilla operations.

Poe was removed almost immediately after an article last September on the Nam Lieu operations, ostensibly because the article "blew his cover."

GROUND COMBAT

STATINTL

Laotian Refugees Cite Life Under the Reds

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE
Special to The Star

PAKSE, Laos — Ground combat, higher living costs and poorer living conditions under the Communists provide the greatest incentives to leave their homes, refugees in southern Laos say.

Although American Air Force bombing contributes to the decision to leave home, most villagers in southern Laos say bombing was not the final factor which spurred them to leave their homes, rice fields and buffalo herds.

Most refugees in south Laos are from Saravane and Attopeu or villages around these provincial capitals which fell in April and May of 1970. Most of these people left their homes after the Communist takeover because the fall of the towns was so swift few had time to escape beforehand.

The story of the refugees from Ban Hatsai, a village 7 miles north of Attopeu, is typical of the refugees this reporter interviewed.

Ban Hatsai's men are now building new homes for their families in forest clearings 15 miles north of Pakse. The villagers, who are supplied with saws and nails by the American AID missions, were hammering in the framework of their new houses. The site of their new home is reminiscent of Hatsai, which this reporter visited in earlier years.

The high cliffs of the Bolovens Plateau stand near Hatsai and a long mountain ridge is behind their new home. There is a river behind the new village as there was at Hatsai.

The villagers' only complaint is that they now must carry water more than 1,000 yards instead of 200 or 300 yards.

The new village is being built along Route 13, the road connecting Pakse with the rest of Laos. The cars moving along it are still a source of wonder to the villagers.

The Hatsai refugees say the actual decision to leave home was taken because of ground combat near their homes.

"Soldiers from the government and soldiers from the 'ISSARA' (Communists) were always coming into our village and there was a lot of shooting in the forest," the village leader said as he paused in hammering nails into the crossbeams of his new home. "We could not go and work in the fields and we couldn't go to Attopeu, it was too dangerous".

U.S. Bombing Light

After the Communists took Attopeu, he said, the prices of food soared. A container of salt, enough to fill a 12-ounce beer can, cost 100 kip (20 cents), he said. In Pakse, the same amount of salt costs about 8 cents.

He said ground fighting in his village caused the most casualties, particularly mortar shelling and small arms cross-fire. U.S. bombing around Hatsai apparently was light and the Communist troops showed villagers how to dig bunkers and hide themselves so that the bombing was ineffective.

Ground fighting provides both the reason for leaving and the means of leaving. Hatsai leaders said only the presence of government commandos raiding in the Hatsai area provided the opportunity to leave. The villagers said they contacted the commandos in the forest. The commandos protected their escape route and sent the refugees to the Bolovens Plateau.

Once on the Bolovens, the villagers were directed to a CIA commando base. They were flown out from there to Pakse on American transport aircraft.

Experience throughout Laos has shown that villagers invariably leave their homes once they know government guerrillas are in their area. It is not only a matter of making contact with the government forces, but the continual fighting weakens the Communist hold on the area as the Communists are unable to maintain tight surveillance and fight, too.

Cham, a young government official who spent three years at the Sorbonne in Paris studying law, is now a Lao government refugee official presiding over a two-room wooden hut in the Oudomsouk refugee settlement 20 miles east of Pakse.

Must Report Visitors

He says the Communists forbid the villagers to travel outside their village. If a stranger comes into the village, the villagers must report him. If a villager does not report a meeting with a stranger and the meeting is reported by another villager, the person who didn't report his encounter will be punished, often being sent away.

Cham says many villagers hide in the forest, living in bamboo huts, to dodge conscription by either Communist or government forces. The hiding villagers are unarmed and must move constantly for fear of discovery.

At Oudomsouk I saw four of these villagers arrive, searching for their families. Sun-blackened and dirty after months in the forest, they had fled from the Red-held town of Lao Ngam another 25 miles east of Oudomsouk.

Other factors which result in villagers becoming refugees include fear of conscription into Communist forces, being forced to share their food with Communist troops or to carry munitions and supplies as part of a levy. These, however, can happen to villagers living under government control, too.

The small part played by American bombing in the making of refugees would seem only to apply to south Laos.

26 JAN 1971

Laird's trip are tactical nuclear weapons next?

By Wilfred Burchett
Guardian staff correspondent

Paris

History has demonstrated that whenever U.S. Defense Secretary Melvin Laird travels to Southeast Asia, trouble follows closely behind.

Last week he flew into Saigon. Here is how the Vietnamese view the present visit, in the words of Nguyen Than Le, spokesman for the Democratic Republic of Vietnam at the Paris talks:

"In the beginning of 1969, Laird went to Saigon. The 'Vietnamization' policy followed, [along with] the refusal to totally withdraw U.S. troops from South Vietnam and stepped-up 'search and destroy' operations. A year later, in February 1970, Laird was again in Saigon. The result was the March 18 coup in Phnom Penh followed at the end of April by the U.S. invasion of Cambodia. During his present trip to Saigon and elsewhere, Laird is again carrying with him plans for new acts of war and aggression. . . ."

Laird's visit has little to do with the officially stated pretext of stepping up troop withdrawals and much to do with expanding the war by other means, including trying to save dictator Lon Nol's tottering regime in Phnom Penh.

The question is, by what other means?

Problems with Army

The choice is limited because a major offensive role by U.S. expeditionary forces is out of the question. The badly demoralized U.S. Army in Vietnam has opted for pot rather than combat. It is an army beset with increasing contradictions between white and black and other third world GIs, between GIs and officers, between draftees and "lifers."

What can Laird recommend to avoid a debacle? Everything President Nixon has touched so far in the Vietnam war has decomposed in his hands. Ever since the ill-fated CIA-directed offensive against the Plain of Jars in Laos in September 1969, the Laotian situation has gone disastrously wrong for the Pentagon. Vast areas of southern Laos adjoining the liberated areas of South Vietnam and Cambodia have been completely liberated. The pockets of Meo and Green Beret commandos scattered on mountain peaks over wide areas behind the Pathet Lao lines have been completely eliminated, itself a considerable Pathet Lao victory.

The notorious Vang Pao mercenaries in Laos, trained, paid and officered by the CIA, have been decimated to the point where they are no longer an effective fighting force. Specialists estimate that the end result of forcing these tribespeople into killer bands is that the able-bodied, male Meo population has been reduced by half.

In Cambodia the daily press reports speak for themselves. Lon Nol is confined to an ever-shrinking perimeter around the capital. All land communications with the outside world are cut. His battalions have been cut to pieces or are deserting.

In South Vietnam, "Vietnamization" has proven to be bankrupt. As Mark Frankland reported in the Jan. 10 London Observer, "Urban government [is] weak or nonexistent" and the towns are becoming "more anti-American as more Americans leave."

Limited U.S. options

Nixon's options are limited by all that has gone before. Everything in the way of conventional war has been tried. And South Vietnam has been used as a field of experiment for testing out a vast array of unconventional weapons--the civilian population is used as indiscriminately as guinea pigs for gas and chemical weapons.

Virtually everything in the Pentagon's Arsenal has been tried--and has failed--to crush the resistance of the Vietnamese people and more lately the resistance of the Laotian and Cambodian people.

The more the U.S. Army has refused to fight, the more the air war has been stepped up, but still without success. Xuan Thuy, head of the DRV delegation to the Paris talks, referred to this at the Jan. 8 session:

"Since President Nixon took over, B-52 bombings have greatly increased. From February 1969 to August 1970 the quantity of bombs and other ordinance used in Southeast Asia reached 4,423,459 tons out of a total of 10,819,076 tons used from 1965 to August 31, 1970; in other words, almost equal to that used in Southeast Asia during the four preceding years." He was quoting from official U.S. Department of Defense statistics.

The DRV's Nguyen Than Le pointed out at the press conference later that there were 2600 U.S. violations of North Vietnam's air space in December 1970, compared to 1660 violations the previous month. There were 204 actual air attacks in that month, including 47 B-52 raids compared with 137 B-52 raids during the first 10 months of 1970. The following day an American F-105 attacked a North Vietnamese missile installation because it "fixed" the intruding plane with its radar.

In other words, under the cover of reduced American battlefield casualties and a falling-off in "body count" statistics--to create an illusion of winding down the war--Nixon had been stepping it up with markedly increased air attacks in both halves of Vietnam and in Laos and Cambodia.

The Pentagon, apparently, is asking for even more. On the eve of Laird's arrival in Saigon, the French daily, *Le Monde*, reported that the U.S. command was worried about the "mediocre results of attacks against the Ho Chi Minh trail." This report came just one week after the same command had informed correspondents about 10 days of "most devastating air strikes of the Vietnam war" against the "Ho Chi Minh trail."

Laird Defends Reports on Involvement in Laos

Says U.S. Policy Is to Be Frank About
Activities; Secrecy Remains, However

BY ARTHUR J. DOMALEN

Times Staff Writer

SAIGON — Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird was questioned sharply by newsmen Monday on the Nixon Administration's policy in disclosing the extent of American involvement in Laos.

Laird defended the policy as frank at the news conference which concluded his third Southeast Asia visit.

He said the Nixon Administration had initiated a new policy after the Johnson Administration and claimed "several changes."

Laird pointed out two such changes: The Administration is "telling you about our interdiction campaign" and its "announcing losses in Laos."

Areas of Secrecy

The fact is, however, that there are many other areas of American activity in Laos where the public is being told nothing. It is also a fact that President Nixon's pledge of March 6, 1970, in Key Biscayne that "we will continue to give the American people the fullest possible information on our involvement in Laos consistent with national security," is not being implemented.

One subject that continues to remain under a mantle of secrecy 10 months after President Nixon broke with the Johnson Administration's policy of total official secrecy is the activities of American personnel on the ground in the Ho Chi Minh Trail area.

American military personnel periodically go into the area from bases in South Vietnam and Thailand, accompanied by

Vietnamese, Thai or Laotian irregular troops on missions designed to collect intelligence about North Vietnamese movements and to disrupt these movements as part of the interdiction campaign.

Also in southern Laos, which has become a major battlefield for both the United States and North Vietnam, American aircraft ferry Laotian, South Vietnamese and Thai troops on such missions.

The American casualties incurred in the course of such missions are reported in the weekly totals released by the American military command in Saigon under the heading "Southeast Asia."

Casualty Lists

Another variation of the practice of secrecy by officials in apparent violation of Mr. Nixon's policy statement comes in the weekly listing "U.S. casualties in Laos" by the American military command in Saigon.

This is broken down into two categories: "on ground" and "air operations."

The figures of dead and wounded under "on ground" have stayed at zero since the reporting began on March 10, after the President's speech.

This is so because the U.S. Special Forces and other casualties on the ground in Laos have been men who were not "stationed in Laos," but elsewhere.

The "air operations" casualties are defined by the command as "incident to air operations over Laos" and lump together 7th Air Force, Navy, and Marine operations.

belonging to the air attaché's office at the American Embassy in Vientiane. The latter frequently fly spotter missions over hostile territory in Laos.

The flat ban prohibiting newsmen from interviewing pilots who fly missions over Laos at air bases in Thailand and quoting them by name continues in effect, just as it did under the Johnson Administration.

Veteran newsmen in Saigon who have requested a military briefing on the situation along the trail have got nowhere.

Another area not mentioned by Laird where President Nixon's policy continues to be thwarted by officials is the military assistance program for Laos. This program is administered through complex channels which begin in the Defense Department and extend through an office known officially as Deputy Chief Joint United States Military Advisory Group, Thailand.

It then hops across the Mekong River to the U.S. Agency for International Development mission in Vientiane where a special branch called the Requirements Office supervises the provision of military supplies to forces in Laos.

Not a jot of information about the military assistance program in Laos has been made public since last April, when the transcript of congressional hearings on Laos was published.

Other Areas

Other areas of secrecy about American involvement in Laos are beyond the purview of Laird, such as the financing of irregular Laotian forces, which is handled under the budget of the Central Intelligence Agency, and the operation of the CIA-supported airline, Air America, which continues to be instrumental in the ferrying of irregular forces.

Until exposed by The Times last year, the CIA maintained many of its men in Laos under the cover of the AID mission in Vientiane.

As far as the interdiction campaign is concerned, correct in asserting that the Administration is tell-

ing the fact that B-52 bombers of the Strategic Air Command and smaller tactical fighter-bombers of the 7th Air Force, headquartered in Saigon, and of the Navy and Marine Corps are pounding the North Vietnamese supply routes through Laos known as the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

In addition, the U.S. command in Saigon reports aircraft losses over Laos a few days after they occur, and personnel losses on a weekly basis.

This is the extent of the reporting of the war in Laos by American officials anywhere in Indochina, with the exception of a weekly briefing given by a member of the Army attaché's office of the American Embassy in Laos, the facts of which are restricted to the actions of enemy and friendly troops in that country and are attributable only to "military sources."

The importance of Laos in the current situation was pointed up when Laird described southern Laos as the one region in Indochina where "the enemy threat has increased" compared to a year ago.

Laird disclosed at the news conference just before boarding his plane for Honolulu, where he will confer at American Pacific military headquarters before making his report to the President on the situation in Southeast Asia, that he had dispatched Dep. Secretary of Defense Dennis Doolin to Laos for a firsthand inspection trip during his stay in Saigon.

On the military situation in Cambodia, Laird said U.S. experts were watching it "very closely" and he was "certainly . . . impressed with the steps" made there to "face up to the Communist threat . . . The people of Cambodia are showing that they truly want to repel the invaders."

Discussing the morale problem among U.S. troops, the secretary said he had talked with many GIs in the field, adding:

"I feel it is a problem of the war winding down, but it is a real problem. The unhappiness only applies to a minority, and all

9 JAN 1971

LAOS

Saigon troops may stage a "ground thrust" into Laos, Adm. Thomas Moorer, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said last week. He said this was "one possible course of action" if the "North Vietnamese" step up their use of the "Ho Chi Minh trail," which the U.S. government claims is a supply route running from North Vietnam through Laos to South Vietnam. . . . Washington paid 2500 mercenaries to take over the city of Tchepone in southern Laos last month and the CIA flew the men into the area on its war airplanes. But after heavy fighting the troops pulled out, beaten.

8 JAN 1971

STATINTL

230 MISSING

7-Year Toll in Laos
Put at 400 U.S. Lives

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE

Special to The Star

VIENTIANE — More than 1,000 Americans have been killed or wounded or are missing in action in Laos since the United States began fighting there in May 1964, well informed sources estimate. Well over 400 Americans have been killed, according to the sources.

The Air Force has lost at least 225 killed. The total of American ground dead is estimated conservatively at 1200. This includes 36 men from the Central Intelligence Agency, the Army attaches office and the AID missing.

The remainder of the dead were from units from Thailand and South Vietnam operating in Laos.

Some 230 Americans missing are mostly from the Air Force. American Embassy officials concede, however, that the names of many of the missing eventually will be shifted to the death roll.

Over 500 Wounded

More than 500 Americans have been wounded in Laos, sources said, though many of these did not require hospitalization.

These figures do not agree with figures currently released by U.S. authorities in Saigon, where the casualty figures for Laos are 21 U.S. Air Force dead, 76 Air Force wounded and no ground casualties.

There are three reasons for this large discrepancy. One is that the Saigon figures are dated from March 10, 1970; when President Nixon admitted U.S. military activities in Laos. The deaths from May 1964 until March 1970 are ignored.

The second reason is that the Saigon figures include mostly Americans killed "stationed in Laos." Except for some Air Force personnel, Americans killed while temporarily detached for duty in Laos are not included.

The third reason is that Americans killed in forays against the Ho Chi Minh Trail in southeast Laos are included in South Vietnam casualty figures.

Captain Shot Down

The latest American reported to have died in Laos was Air Force Capt. Park G. Bunker of Matteson, Ill. Bunker was shot down on the Plain of Jars on Dec. 30.

In his last message, he said he was mortally wounded and enemy troops were closing in on him, firing at him as he lay down.

U.S. Air Force rescue helicopters were driven off by intense ground fire.

Bunker's death was reported by embassy officials who said he was on temporary duty here.

Figures given here for U.S. casualties are partly estimates, but sources say these estimates are conservative.

U.S. Embassy officials refuse to give the total of U.S. dead in Laos, particularly American losses on the ground in the Ho Chi Minh Trail area.

They say that the figure for Special Forces dead "are somewhere in the figures for U.S. deaths in Southeast Asia."

TOWARD LEGISLATIVE CONTROL OF THE C.I.A.

STANLEY N. FUTTERMAN*

I. INTRODUCTION

Every few years the C.I.A. is rediscovered. The inspiration is rarely the same: Guatemala in 1954; the U-2 incident in 1960; the Bay of Pigs in 1961; support for the National Students Association in 1967. This year it is mainly Laos.

How far the Nixon Administration has been forced to come in the past year in acknowledging the C.I.A.'s role in Laos may be seen by a comparison of two official reports. In March, 1970, in response to increasingly detailed newspaper reports and rising pressures from Congress, President Nixon issued a 3,000 word statement on Laos, including a nine point description of "the precise nature of our aid to Laos."¹ There was no mention of the Central Intelligence Agency. On August 3, 1971 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee released a staff report on the situation in Laos, cleared for publication by the Administration after 5 weeks of negotiation with the Committee staff. The published report reflects numerous deletions insisted on by the Administration but includes the now officially conceded revelation that "the most effective [friendly] military force in Laos is not the Royal Lao Army, but the . . . irregular forces which are trained, equipped, supported, advised, and to a great extent, organized by the C.I.A."²

There have been revelations about C.I.A. foreign operations before and official or semi-official confirmations of them. What is unusual about the official confirmations of C.I.A. operations in Laos is that they have been forced out of the Administration while the activities are still in progress. The revelations come also at a time when the Congress is heavily engaged in an effort to legislate limits to the President's discretion in foreign affairs.

These events have led to the introduction in the present Congress of several bills which comprise the first proposed legislation intended to bring the C.I.A.'s foreign operations under substantive legislative restraints. It is not that past years were without congressional flurries over the C.I.A. Over the years some 132 bills had been introduced either to establish standing committees to oversee the C.I.A.'s activities or to authorize special investigations of the C.I.A.'s role. Not one passed, and only two ever reached the floor of even one House, where both were decisively defeated by better than two-thirds majorities.³ The remarkable thing is that the activity was all confined to jurisdictional battles within the Congress. The traditional issue has been which small group of Senators and Representatives would be privy to the doings of the C.I.A.

Not until 1967 was the first bill introduced to limit what the C.I.A. could do with its funds: Rep. Ryan's measure to prohibit the C.I.A. from contributing funds to domestic organizations.⁴ The Johnson Administration avoided what surely would have been considerable pressure for such legislation only by announcing that all existing covert financial assistance to the nation's educational and private organizations would be terminated by about the end of the year.⁵ More recently, Congress has compelled the Nixon Administration to terminate covert C.I.A. funding of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty and forced it to seek legislation to provide open gov-

FOREIGN POLICY
WINTER 1970-71

OPINION*

THE PLAIN LESSONS
OF A BAD DECADE

by John Kenneth Galbraith

The decade of the sixties, in the absence of a massively successful revisionist exercise, will be counted a very dismal period in American foreign policy. Indeed, next only to the cities, it will be considered the prime disaster area of the American polity and it will be accorded much of the blame for the misuse of energies and resources that caused the trouble in urban ghettos and the alienation and eruption in the universities. The result was in very dim contrast with the promise.

The promise was bright—"Let the word go forth . . . to friend and foe alike," President Kennedy said in his inaugural address, and no one doubted the power and not many the wisdom of the word. The prestige of foreign policy in 1961 was enormous. No one much cared about who was to run the Treasury. It mattered greatly who was to be the Secretary or Under Secretary or even an Assistant Secretary of State, although there were enough of the latter to form a small union. In the early months of the new Administration, numerous quite marvelous ideas were spawned for strengthening or improving or revising our overseas affairs. There was to be an expanded and reorganized aid program, a Grand Design for Europe (subject to some uncertainty as to what that design might be), the Alliance for Progress, the "Kennedy Round," a Multilateral Force, the Peace Corps, counterinsurgency, an expanded recognition of the role of the new Africa, a dozen other enterprises which did not achieve the dignity of a decently notorious rejection.

*Each issue of FOREIGN POLICY will carry a guest editorial by a distinguished contributor. The editors are pleased to commence this series with Mr. Galbraith's article.

Now ten years later one looks back on—seemingly—an uninterrupted series of disasters. The comic-opera affair at the Bay of Pigs; the invasion of the Dominican Republic to abort a Communist revolution that had to be invented after the fact; severe alienation throughout Latin America; broken windows, burned libraries and more or less virulent anti-Americanism elsewhere in the world; a decade of meddling, meddling, meddling, endlessly bloody, infinitely expensive and now widely rejected involvement in Indochina.

So it seems in retrospect. And at least one of the successes of these years seems a good deal less compelling when one looks back on it. In the Cuban missile crisis President Kennedy had to balance the danger of blowing up the planet against the risk of political attack at home for appeasing the Communists. This was not an irresponsible choice: to ignore the domestic opposition was to risk losing initiative or office to men who wanted an even more dangerous policy. There is something more than a little wrong with a system that poses a choice between survival and domestic political compulsion. The missile crisis did not show the strength of our policy; it showed the catastrophic visions and resulting pressures to which it was subject. We were in luck, but success in a lottery is no argument for lotteries.

II.

Yet not everything in these years went wrong. Our relations with Western Europe and Japan caused no particular pain; these had been the theaters of ultimate misfortune in the twentieth century, always assuming war to be such. And, over the 1960's, relations with the Communist countries improved both in the vision and in the reality.

When the decade began, the official vision of the Communist world was still that of a political monolith (the word was still much used) relentlessly bent on the destruction of what few were embarrassed to call the Free World. If there were divisions within the Communist world, they were presumably on how best to pursue the revolution. Foreign policy vis-à-vis the "Sino-Soviet bloc," as it still was called, was accordingly a facilitating instrument for a larger conflict. During his long tenure as Secretary of State, Dean Rusk was criticized for his conviction that foreign policy was subordinate to military convenience. But if conflict with the Communist world was the great and inevitable fact, the Rusk view was at least consistent. Diplomacy, like truth, is an early casualty of war.

But that vision has now dissolved. True believers are still to be found in the more airless recesses of the Pentagon. Retired Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs; Joseph Alsop, Kenneth Crawford, one or two other aging sages; cold war diplomats solemnly contemplating the world over their martinis in the Metropolitan Club, still evoke the Communist conspiracy on which their fame and fortune were founded. They rejoice in anything that seems to suggest a revival of the conflict; they try to warn a generation that does not share their wisdom. But their audience dwindles, and amusement replaces even nostalgia in what remains. The terrible fact

STATINTL

STATINTL

Continued

H - 240,275
S - 674,302

Unreported U.S. Bases, Aid Disclosed

Senate Unit Says Congress in Dark About Obligations

By CHARLES W. BAILEY
Chief of The Minneapolis Tribune
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The United States in the past decade has built up a worldwide network of military bases and security commitments, to other nations without the knowledge or approval of Congress and the public, a Senate investigating committee said Sunday.

A special panel that spent nearly two years studying U.S. security agreements and overseas military activities said much of what was learned "was unknown to either legislators or voters who have been passing judgment on policies which not only involved their tax dollars but also the lives of their sons."

The report, submitted by Sen. Stuart Symington, D-Mo., cited U.S. commitments — by treaty or executive agreement — to more than 43 nations. It said there are about 75 "major" U.S. military bases abroad, plus about 3,000 "minor military facilities."

The committee said that many of the U.S. commitments have been "creeping" ones, in which original treaty agreements have been expanded by executive action — sometimes secret — without congressional approval.

In addition to formal treaties and executive agreements, the report said, military aid and joint military planning.

Many of the commitments, the committee said, "were not publicly disclosed," and some "were kept from most if not all members of Congress."

It listed as "major problem areas" the Philippines, Laos, Thailand, the Republic of China (Taiwan), Japan, Korea, Ethiopia and Spain.

In the Philippines, the report said, "neither the approval nor the consent of Congress was requested" for the "creeping commitments" which expanded the effect of an initial 1951 mutual defense treaty — "nor, in some respects, was Congress informed until long after the fact."

Congress neither inquired into nor was kept informed of U.S. military activities in Laos, the committee said, though the United States now provides military and economic aid that adds up to "far more than" that nation's \$150-million-per-year gross national product.

In Thailand, the committee reported "incredible duplication and waste" under a U.S. commitment that was gradually transformed by executive action from a multilateral treaty commitment into a direct military relationship.

"At one time the three military services, along with the Agency for International Development, the U.S. Information Agency, and the Central Intelligence Agency, were each operating separate counterinsurgency programs" in Laos, "or were separately training the Thais to operate them," the report said.

"The Thais themselves apparently have never viewed the insurgency problem in the same magnitude as do the Americans," it said.

The committee criticized "the use of excess military equipment and defense repair programs" to keep military aid to Taiwan at a high level while "Congress believed that such aid was being diminished by means of reductions in the regular which it had approved."

The committee criticized the "excessive number" of U.S. military facilities in Japan near Tokyo, calling "military syndrome" that includes four U.S.-run golf courses and a 450-acre area now used as a religious retreat and Boy Scout camp.

The committee reported that \$375 million in military and economic aid has been given to Ethiopia under a 1960 agreement. "Neither the Congress nor the public was informed about the details of the commitment... the facts were only disclosed some ten years later by the investigation of this committee," the report said.

Both the Ethiopian program and the larger one in Spain were criticized in the report on the ground that U.S. military planners have shifted justifications for their continuance as the original ones became obsolete.

"Once an American overseas base is established, it takes on a life of its own," the report said. "Original missions may become outdated, but new missions are developed, not only with the intent of keeping the facility going, but often to actually enlarge it."

The committee said that "to the military, a contingency use can always be found. To the diplomat, a base closing or reduction can always be at the wrong time in terms of relations with the host country and other nations."

The report was sharply critical of some joint U.S. — Allied military exercises and war games. It cited a series

"American military officials who participated in these exercises, and who the committee believes were speaking frankly and honestly, referred to this exercise as 'Chiang Kai-shek's return to the mainland'... The political implications of U.S. participation in actually organizing such an operation are all too obvious."

The report also used some of its sharpest language in criticizing the administration's reluctance to give it — even on a secret basis — information about the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons in foreign countries.

Saying that such deployment "represents a special kind of commitment," it added:

"Most people here are unaware of the fact that U.S. tactical nuclear weapons have been and are stationed in countries all around the world."

"The executive branch has claimed that this subject is of such high classification that it could not be discussed before this Foreign Relations subcommittee under any circumstances."

"The subcommittee believes this position is obviously absurd, is used to cover up questionable policy."



STATINTL

STATINTL

29 Nov 1970

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-016

Little Time, Money

Open Any Door

STATINTL

In recent months, enough heroin has been smuggled into the United States to provide 150,000,000 "fixes" -- enough for every person between 15 and 24 to have had four opies. Hohn Hughes, editor of the Christian Science Monitor, has spent five months tracing the international sources of this drug flow, interviewing opium-growers in Turkey, underworld dealers in France, smugglers in Hong Kong. This is the first in a series on the "drug and narcotics trail."



By JOHN HUGHES

(c) 1970 The Christian Science Publishing Society.

BEIRUT, Lebanon — I have just spent five months exploring the worldwide pipelines down which the illicit narcotics drug traffic flows. In the course of a round-the-world trip I found that with no special entree to underworld circles it was possible, with time and money, to buy every major illegal drug.

In Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Thailand, I came easily to the point of purchase for opium. In Laos I could have bought it by the small planeload.

Sometimes there were difficulties when sellers suspected me of being an undercover narcotics agent or a police officer. But with only a little more effort, I could have bought opium in India, Turkey and Mexico.

In Hong Kong I need walk but a few steps from the Christian Science Monitor office to get the distinctive scent of smoking opium from the neighborhood vendor.

In Beirut a Western diplomat offered me introductions to cocaine sellers in a number of nightclubs.

Second-grade heroin in small doses was easily obtainable in Mexico and Hong Kong. But in Marseille I could have bought top-grade heroin by the kilo (2.2 pounds). It would have taken an advance payment of \$3,000 and several days' isolation in a hotel room while the sellers checked me out. If they were satisfied, I could have been reasonably sure of emerging with a kilo of pure heroin. So skillful and careful are the traffickers, however, that the transaction would have been completed without my ever meeting

The movement of heroin from southern France to the United States was once dominated by the American Mafia. But now the Corsican heroin manufacturers have so much to sell that they meet all the

... opium is the principal cash crop of the non-communist part of the country. Clearly the CIA is cognizant of ... the extensive movement of opium out of Laos...

Mafia's requirements and have plenty to spare. So in addition, they sell to Cuban, American Negro, and Puerto Rican buying rings who have newly set up shop around Marseille, as well as to "independent" purchasers.

As for hashish and marijuana, I could have bought this as easily as toothpaste or candy throughout much of Asia, the Middle East, and parts of Mexico. In Afghanistan, hashish sellers distribute pamphlets advertising their own special brands. Hospitable policemen offer hippies a puff of "hash."

In Nepal, hashish comes cheaper than tobacco. In Pakistan, a police officer opposed to the narcotics traffic told me he had sold a kilo of hashish to make money for his son's birthday present.

For the new synthetic drugs — the amphetamines, the barbiturates, the hallucinogens — the trail started on the

beach in Hong Kong. There the pushers are trying to proposition American children from the international school nearby.

American schools in Bangkok, Thailand and Ankara, Turkey, have encountered similar problems.

A leading Italian psychologist says 30 percent of young people between 14 and 22 in Rome are using some kind of drug. Use of stimulants is so serious in Sweden that the Swedish Government is in the forefront of a campaign for strict new international controls. Deaths from heroin use have startled France.

Even the Soviet Union has admitted some "thefts of narcotic drugs from pharmacies and hospitals." The Soviets say illicit traffic poses "no problems" in their country. Other sources says Soviet officials are quietly concerned about the smuggled inflow of drugs from the West.

Pep pills are in vogue with some Czechoslovakian youths. The Prague weekly Kvety says drug addiction in the capital is reaching alarming proportions. Some addicts have been getting high on cactus extract stolen from Prague's botanical gardens.

In countries like Turkey and Lebanon, the narcotics seller is often an informer, too, particularly upon small-time or ama-

STATINTL

Major U.S.-Lao Operation Against Red Base Reported

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE
Special to The Star

VIENTIANE — U.S. and Lao forces have completed what appears to be a major operation against the main North Vietnamese supply area in northern Laos, the Banban Valley, in what well-informed sources here see as an attempt to stave off new Hanoi offensives in northern Laos.

The valley, according to military sources, is full of military supplies brought by trucks coming down Laos Routes 6 and 7 from North Vietnam and the Reds are preparing to move these supplies to their forces on the southern edge of the Plain of Jars.

Reds Give Only Version

These forces threaten the joint U.S.-Lao base area of Long Chien 75 miles northeast of here.

Neither Lao nor U.S. sources here are willing to discuss the

operation, leaving only the Communist version available. The Communists claim the operation, started several weeks ago, involved strikes by the U.S. Air Force and Lao troops flown in "60 flights" of American helicopters. The Pathet Lao radio called the operation "multibattalioned."

The attack was made near Ban Tha village north of Banban, the Reds say. Banban is at the north junction of routes 6 and 7 northeast of Laos. Lao military sources say they are not discussing the operation publicly as a matter of "high politics." Diplomats believe this means the Lao government fears the Communists will use the Banban operation as an excuse to break off already deadlocked talks with Premier Souvanna Phouma.

Diplomats concede the possible military necessity of the operation but view the timing as

poor as long as some hope for negotiations remained.

Points to Control

The fact the operation was launched, diplomats say, indicates Lao generals run the government, not Souvanna Phouma. Military sources say Hanoi trucks still are moving along Rt. 7, most of them eluding U.S. air strikes and ground strikes led by U.S. advisers.

The military believe that once sufficient supplies reach Hanoi's troops on the south edge of the plain they will launch new attacks to destroy tribal guerrillas in the CIA's private army. Such an attack is predicted for February or March, when heat, dust, smoke and haze hamper U.S. air strikes. No results of the Banban strike are available, as the U.S. military here keeps silent and correspondents are barred from areas of U.S. military activity.

25 DEC 1970

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-0

LAO INTELLIGENCE BAD

5,000 Reds "Disappear"

STATINTL

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE
Special to The Star

VIENTIANE -- Americans and Laotians often lack hard intelligence on North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao plans, troop movements and dispositions in the Lao war. In recent months the CIA and Lao intelligence have lost track of 5,000 troops of Hanoi's 312th Division in the Plain of Jars area in north Laos, military sources say.

Even given the thick jungles, high mountains and numerous caves in the area, it would seem rather difficult to lose such a large body of men. U.S. and Lao military sources were somewhat abashed to admit the intelligence deficiency, particularly since available sources are varied and comprehensive.

Jets Fly Daily

There is daily reconnaissance by U.S. Air Force jets flying from Thai bases and by single-engine piston aircraft flown by American and Lao air force personnel based in Laos; there is ground reconnaissance by teams of mixed nationalities, which often include two Americans and are under American control; there is monitoring of North Vietnamese communications and movements in both Laos and North Vietnam by air and ground sensors and by American equipment at the base at Long Chien, 75 miles north of Vientiane; there is questioning of North Vietnamese prisoners by American, Meo and Vietnamese-speaking Lao interrogators.

The interrogation follows the old carrot and stick routine. Americans offer cigarettes and watches as an inducement to talk while, according to Meo Gen. Yang Pao, the Meos and Lao follow the old French tortures.

Then there is plain old-fashioned spying. Tribes known as the Hmou, the Co, Black Thai, Red Thai, Blue Meo, White Meo and Striped Meo circulate throughout the mountain ridges of Southeast Asia--north Laos, northwest North Vietnam and China's southern province of Yunnan. These tribesmen are met by CIA officials

out of the mountains to escape from the war. At the mountain air strips Americans and Lao question the refugees about the red-held areas they have come from the recruit some of them to return as spies.

Both sides in the war use such people. A favorite pose for spies of both sides is as deaf mutes or salt merchants. There also are villagers, mostly valley and hill Lao, who report to Lao government commanders when they sight Communist troops in their villages or moving in the forest.

Although these methods bring in a great deal of accurate information, the U.S. and Lao intelligence remains in a poor state, partly because of the excellent discipline maintained by the North Vietnamese forces. They pay strict attention to their camouflage and stay well away from their talkative and careless Pathet Lao allies as well as from the civilian population. Lao government troops, without air power to worry about, pay little attention to camouflage and talk their heads off about military affairs to all and sundry.

Yet much of the problem in intelligence gathering is that the villagers the U.S. and Laos have only a simple language, are illiterate and have no sense of time.

Towns and villages far apart from each other may have the same name, further confusing things. Muang Kheing--"Halfway Town" or Midway--is a favorite name and can apply to places close to each other as well as places "halfway" between two other places.

Villagers also, for example, will report a company of enemy troops passed through their village when, in fact, instead of 70 men, there were only 25. Many people cannot count or are very slow at it and they have the human tendency to exaggerate.

Counted More Than Once

Perhaps three different villagers will report sighting enemy troops in three different places on three different days with all three places within walking distance of each other.

Lao intelligence officers, instead of considering the possibility these troops may be the same ones moving in one general area, add all three reports together and come up with a total of 210 or so enemy troops instead of 25.

The result of this sort of exaggeration and poor evaluation can be government forces fleeing needlessly before a mythical superior enemy.

Recently a villager in Vientiane's morning market announced to all within earshot that Pathet Lao troops had just been in his village. While passers-by squatted and lis-

tened, the villager described how the Communists had asked for rice and fish sauce from each family and lectured the villagers on government injustices.

A Lao police major overheard and stopped to get details.

"When did it happen?" he asked the villager.

The peasant, screwing up his face in thought, said: "Before the full moon."

"Which full moon?" the major asked.

"When my second son was born," the villager answered.

"When was your second son born?" pursued the policeman.

"During the water festival," said the villager.

As the water festival had ended only a few days before, the major's face brightened and he commented "Oh, no!" said the villager, "two water festivals ago."

The water festival is an annual Lao event so it had been two years since the Pathet Lao had been in the peasant's village.

"To a villager who does not count time by a calendar, but by important events in his life, the Pathet Lao visit to his village seemed like yesterday and therefore worth telling," a Lao woman explained.

A hurried interrogation could have set government forces on a wild goose chase, as often happens.

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R000

H.R. 1120. Joint resolution authorizing the Honorable JOHN W. McCORMACK, Speaker of the House of Representatives, to accept and wear the Cavaliere di Gran Croce, of the Order Al Merito della Repubblica, an award conferred by the Government of the Republic of Italy.

STATINTL

RETURN TO ESCALATION IN
INDOCHINA

Mr. GOODELL. Mr. President, my term of office in the Senate is drawing to a close.

During my 2 years as a Member of this body, I have devoted much of my energies to seeking a definitive end to the Indochina war.

Fifteen months ago, I stood here and proposed the first legislation requiring the complete, safe, and orderly withdrawal of all American forces from Vietnam by a fixed date. At that time, I stood alone. Less than a year later, 40 Senators went on record in support of the essentially same legislation—the amendment to end the war.

I remain as deeply convinced as ever that the legislation I proposed is the best, perhaps the only way of extricating our Nation with honor and decency from this cruel and unjust war. When I leave the Senate next month, I shall continue to work for its adoption.

Despite our efforts, the war continues without foreseeable end, and the President's words and actions suggest that he is prepared to sacrifice all prospects for peace in order to preserve the existing order in South Vietnam; and that he even contemplates a new course of escalation, perhaps more devastating than ever before.

Many say the war is all over but over. I save for the parting shots. Yet, I fear a new phase of the war is just beginning.

Many say the war is no longer a national issue. Yet, I fear it infects our country like a disease whose outward manifestations may temporarily fade, only to break out again with renewed virulence.

I. AIR ESCALATION OVER THE NORTH

The scenario has now been set by the administration for the resumption of an extended air war over North Vietnam.

This means that the United States is prepared to reescalate the conflict, ignoring the tragic lessons of the sixties.

It means the administration intends primarily to rely upon the direct use of American air power to maintain the military status quo in Vietnam.

It involves still graver risks to peace than the unsuccessful bombing campaign conducted over North Vietnam for 3 years by the Johnson administration.

1. THE ADMINISTRATION'S BOMBING THREATS

President Nixon has decided to use the threat of escalation in the air over North Vietnam in order to prevent the enemy from building its capacity to launch offensives in South Vietnam. He has made this threat explicit in his most recent press conference, saying:

Now if as a result of my conclusion that the North Vietnamese, by their infiltration, threaten our remaining forces, if they thereby develop a capacity and proceed possibly to use that capacity to increase the level of fighting in South Vietnam, then I will order the bombing of military sites in North Vietnam, the passes that lead from North Vietnam into South Vietnam, the military complexes, the military supply lines. That would be the reaction that I shall take.

The President has previously implemented these threats in practice—witness the bombing raids of the North in May and November.

The President has also announced that he will continue U.S. "reconnaissance" flights over North Vietnam; and that he intends to conduct major retaliatory bombing attacks if our planes are fired upon. At the same press conference, he said:

I must insist that there be continued reconnaissance over North Vietnam, because if we are withdrawing our forces I have to see whether or not there is any chance of a strike against those forces that remain. And we have to watch for the build-up.

If our planes are fired upon, I will not only order that they return the fire, but I will order that the missile site be destroyed and that the military complex around that site which supports it also be destroyed by bombing.

The enemy has already stated that it will not be deterred by this threat, and will continue firing upon American reconnaissance planes. This makes the resumption of the bombing on a regular basis a virtual certainty.

The Secretary of Defense has taken the final step—of asserting that the lack of substantive progress at the Paris talks would be reason alone for air escalation over the North. In the last 2 years, there has been no substantive progress whatever at Paris. As long as the enemy insists on the complete American presence, there can be no progress. Thus, the Secretary's theory provides a carte blanche justification for bombing the North at any time and for any purpose.

The President speaks of protecting American lives. This purpose, however, will not be achieved by adopting a new course of escalation: As every expansion of the war places additional lives in jeopardy.

Were the administration's primary concern the safety of American men, it would adopt the course of action we have been urging: The complete withdrawal of all American forces from Vietnam, allowing sufficient time for their removal in a safe, orderly fashion. That is the way to protect American lives—to get our men out of Indochina.

Only one certain result can come from any attempt to conduct renewed air attacks over North Vietnam: The deaths of tens of thousands of Vietnamese civilians.

American airpower in Indochina has always fallen short of expectations, in destroying its intended military targets. It has always exceeded the worst expectations, in its impact on the civilian population. This will hold true if bombing of the North is resumed. Perhaps a limited number of antiaircraft batteries, supply depots, and staging areas will be knocked out. But hundreds of villages and thousands of acres of farmland certainly will be. The civilian "body count"—to borrow a repellent phrase of this war—will be staggering indeed.

To this civilian carnage will be added the loss or captivity of still more American airmen.

ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT
RESOLUTIONS SIGNED

The message also announced that the Speaker had affixed his signature to the following enrolled bills and joint resolutions, and they were signed by the Vice President:

S. 4571. An act to amend the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement Act of 1964 for Certain Employees, as amended, and for other purposes;

H.R. 8933. An act to provide that the lock and dam referred to as the "Jackson lock and dam" on the Tombigbee River, Alabama, shall hereafter be known as the Coffeeville lock and dam;

H.R. 13676. An act for the relief of certain retired officers of the Army, Navy, and Air Force;

H.R. 13906. An act for the relief of Irwin Katz;

H.R. 13862. An act to authorize the naming of the reservoir to be created by the Little Goose lock and dam, Snake River, Washington, in honor of the late Dr. Brooch A. Bryan;

H.R. 19436. An act to provide for the establishment of a national urban growth policy, to encourage and support the proper growth and development of our States, metropolitan areas, cities, counties, and towns with emphasis upon new community and inner city development, to extend and amend laws relating to housing and urban development, and for other purposes;

H.R. 19377. An act authorizing the construction, repair, and preservation of certain public works on rivers and harbors for navigation, flood control, and for other purposes;

S. J. Res. 173. Joint resolution authorizing a grant to defray a portion of the cost of expanding the United Nations headquarters in the United States;

S. J. Res. 249. Joint resolution to extend the time for the proclamation of marketing quotas for burley tobacco for the 3 marketing years beginning October 1, 1971; and

H.J. Res. 1162. Joint Resolution to amend Public Law 403, 80th Congress, of January 23, 1948, providing for membership and participation by the United States in the South Pacific Commission.

HOUSE BILL REFERRED

The following bill was read twice by its title and referred, as indicated:

H.R. 14233. An act to modify ammunition recordkeeping requirements; to the Committee on Finance.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRANSTON). The Senator from New York (Mr. GOODELL) is recognized.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. GOODELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to make a speech on Vietnam.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Green Berets in favor again

By George W. Ashworth

Staff correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

Fort Bragg, N.C.

The star of the Special Forces seems very much on the rise again.

The Army's elite organization, headquartered here at the John F. Kennedy Center for Military Assistance, has emerged from a period of at least partial eclipse with berets intact and prospects excellent.

The raid on the North Vietnamese prison camp at Son Tay helped focus official favor on the Green Berets once again, after a long period in which they were most often thought of, unfavorably, in connection with the alleged slaying of a supposed double agent in Vietnam.

In the wake of Son Tay, a certain air of relief and confidence is evident here. In a matter of weeks, Green Berets have been publicly decorated by the President and Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird has made a trip here to give out more awards.

One senior officer here put it this way: "It is just this sort of thing that helps bring spirits up. People who might have been thinking of going back into the regular Army or getting out might now pause and decide to stick it out longer with the idea that another bit of action might come along."

Although Son Tay failed to yield any American prisoners, it brought very much to official attention the usefulness of Special Forces units in some extraordinary situations.

With their varied talents, the Berets provide the administration with a broader scope of possible responses to military needs. At a time when military capabilities are shrinking rapidly, they help keep options open.

They fit into the current scene for several other reasons:

○ The Nixon Doctrine spells out rather clearly what are at least the administration's intentions as to the sort of help friendly nations in Asia can expect. With some differences, the same concepts can — and possibly will — be applied generally to nations in the so-called "third world." As Mr. Nixon sees it, Americans will provide supplies and advice when national-security interests seem to dictate it, but no American fighting men. There are circumstances where help could logically be given primarily by Green Berets, as has been the case in some instances in the past.

○ The Army itself has never been completely happy with the Green Berets, with their different garb, ways, and doctrine, but there is a growing realization in the Pentagon that they may be a not-very-costly way to be ready when the White House asks the Pentagon to get something done.

○ Because they are an elite unit with a certain attraction for young men with a bent for something different, the Green Berets are being viewed favorably as a way to attract volunteers.

The advent of a volunteer Army is viewed in the Pentagon with a certain degree of trepidation. The Green Berets are strictly volunteer, welcomed by those who have faced the grim statistics showing how very few young men are willing to join the Army in combat roles today.

Now, like everybody else, the Green Berets are being phased out of Vietnam and cut back in strength. From a peak strength of more than 9,000, the Berets appear destined to drop to somewhere between 5,000 and 7,000 men, depending upon how tough the budget strictures get.

Total Army strength is dropping from a total of about 1.5 million at the peak of the war to between 800,000 and 900,000, according to current indications. Thus Special Forces manpower losses appear likely to be less severe than those of the whole Army in terms of percentages.

At present, there are six Special Forces groups. Two are at Fort Bragg. The 5th is in Vietnam, and the 1st is in Okinawa. The 2th is in Panama, and the 10th is divided between Fort Devens, Mass., and Europe. There are also four groups in the reserve forces.

A group varies in size, but it averages around 1,500 men. Special Forces officers say that one group can form the cadre for 4½ divisions.

If the administration decides it is in the security interests of the United States to help out in Asia within limits, it may be that the Special Forces and experts in war of national liberation might be man-for-man the most valuable commodities in the defense establishment.

CIA ties noted

The Green Berets and the Central Intelligence Agency worked often in consort in Laos and in Vietnam. At first in Vietnam, the Special Forces units carried out a broad range of what are often called counter-insurgency tasks. As Army involvement expanded, however, the Green Beret field narrowed.

The Berets have found themselves concentrating in recent years upon training the Vietnamese special force and of Cambodians, montagnards, and other groups to help with border defenses. The civilian irregular defense-group camps have been operated under the aegis of the Berets.

Many elements of the Army have long resented the Green Beret relationship with the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Berets are treated with a certain wariness.

It is significant that a man whose credentials are well based in the regular Army is always named to head the school and center at Fort Bragg.

But, because the Berets are the Army's main experts in guerrilla warfare, intelligence missions, and direct unilateral special operations, such as the attack at Son Tay, it appears that there will always be a place for them.

STATINTL

20 DEC 1970

American Outposts in Laos Threatened by N. Vietnam

By Mark Frankland

London Observer

PAKSE, Laos, Dec. 19— From the back seat of an ancient Laotian air force fighter-bomber, Pakse Site twenty-two does not look much of a place to fight over: a dirt landing strip, the outlines of defensive positions, some huts covered with yellow-brown dust. Yet it is around PS-22 that one of the most important battles of the Indochina war is likely to be fought.

For several years Americans have used Site 22 and other places like it on the edge of the Bolovens Plateau

News Analysis

to spy on and sabotage the North Vietnamese trail system in the mountains that start a few miles to the east. This U.S. operation has been a nuisance to Hanoi, but more or less a tolerable one.

The situation today, however, is quite different. The overthrow of Cambodian Head of State Prince Norodom Sihanouk in March and the loss of the port of Sihanoukville (renamed Kompong Som) for North Vietnamese supplies has at least doubled the importance of the Ho Chi Minh trail to Hanoi.

The North Vietnamese are expanding the trail system to the west, but cannot do so easily as long as American-led guerrillas remain on the Bolovens Plateau.

A few hundred yards east of Site 22, the plateau ends in an abrupt fall of about

3,000 feet to the Mekong River. The fast flowing and treacherous river curves around the plateau's edge and into Communist-controlled Northern Cambodia. But Americans have mined the river, greatly hampering North Vietnamese attempts to develop the upper reaches of the Mekong into a new supply route.

The American sites also limit the extent to which the Communists can infiltrate south across the Bolovens Plateau itself. It is doubtful that the two government-controlled towns on the plateau could hold out if the sites were destroyed.

A few months ago the Communists created panic in Pak Song, larger of the two, just by sending in messengers to announce that an attack was imminent.

Two weeks ago the North Vietnamese tried and failed to take Site 22, which is also a supply and training center for other outposts. It is assumed they will try again and that next time they might succeed.

This puts the Americans in something of a spot, because guerrilla sites on Bolovens Plateau belong to Washington's half-billion dollar a year secret war in Laos. Special guerrilla units on Bolovens Plateau and elsewhere are trained and led by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Accountants from the CIA arrive regularly at the sites in helicopters to pay the Laotian guerrillas three times as much as ordinary Lao soldiers get.

The *armee clandestine*, as the American-led guerrilla force is known here, is scarcely clandestine any more. It has been written about by reporters and investigated by senators. There are even people who claim to have seen some of its football teams wearing shirts with the initials AC.

But since the CIA is, by American standards, anyhow, a secret organization and its agents have under the Geneva agreements no more right to be in Laos than the North Vietnamese, the battle for Bolovens is hidden in clouds of official discretion.

It is only since the North Vietnamese threat to Bolovens developed that the regular Laotian army has had anything to do with the guerrilla sites.

But the Lao army is being pushed into the Bolovens battle by Hanoi's increased pressure and American vulnerability: special guerrilla units were never meant for defensive warfare. It was a regular Lao infantry battalion which helped to save Site 22 two weeks ago and had a very rough time of it.

The Lao army is getting near the end of its human resources. Its recruits include teen-agers.

The effort the Lao army is being asked to make on Bolovens is widely thought to be hopeless. Almost everyone says, "the North Vietnamese can take the Bolovens sites if they're ready to pay the price"—and it is assumed they are.

Laos

The war for the south

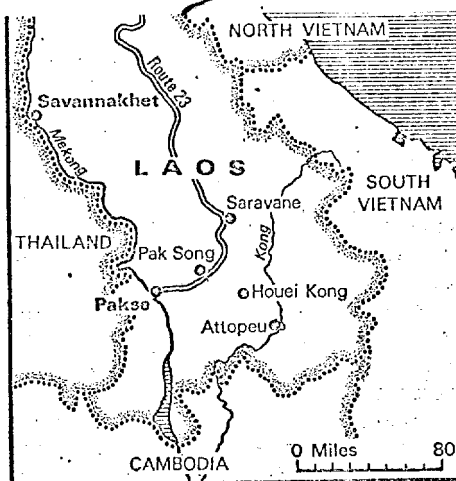
FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT IN LAOS

The North Vietnamese seem to be set for an attempt to tighten their grip on southern Laos. Such a move would protect their one remaining supply corridor into Cambodia and the bottom half of South Vietnam. Their interest centres on the vast Bolovens plateau which rises between the Mekong river and the South Vietnamese border. The Kong river, which runs along the plateau's eastern flank, as well as the vehicle trails across the plateau itself, are useful supply lines into Cambodia and supplement the more important trails farther east. The Bolovens plateau is extremely fertile and could feed two or three communist divisions.

But guerrillas belonging to the Laotian "secret army," trained, directed and paid by the American Central Intelligence Agency, have operated from a score of sites around the northern, and eastern fringes of the plateau for several years. They have been used to gather intelligence and to sabotage the communist trails. They are also well placed to harass traffic down the Kong river. This winter the North Vietnamese said they were going to knock out these sites.

They have already captured four bases on the eastern rim, one near Attopeu. But a fortnight ago three North Vietnamese battalions attacked Site 22, a major training and supply centre. It seems that they were unaware that the government had reinforced this base with a regular infantry battalion from Pakse. The communists were driven off, and suffered heavy casualties. The Laotians say the enemy lost more than 300 men, but they concede that 29 of their own men were killed, and 66 wounded. These figures add up to a big battle by Laotian standards.

It is generally accepted in Pakse that the communists will strike again. Visibility from the air will get worse over the plateau from month to month as the smoke haze grows. The veterans of the "secret army" are not trained to fight defensively, and the Laotian army in the south has had trouble in finding new recruits and is taking in boys of 14 and 15. Pathet Lao propaganda claims that the communists will take the two small towns of Pak Song and Houei Kong on the



plateau before the dry season is out.

The North Vietnamese seem to believe that their military needs outweigh the political dangers of a heightened offensive. Some observers in Vientiane thought that the Pathet Lao were reluctant to attack Attopeu and Saravane earlier this year because neither fell into the communist or neutral zones defined by the 1962 Geneva agreements. But the North Vietnamese judged—the argument goes on—that both towns had to be taken to give them secure access to Route 23 and other roads needed to bring more supplies down from the north.

All this could mean the beginning of a new chapter in the Laotian war. In the old days, the battle for the trails in southern Laos was mainly left to American air power and the "secret army." In the past, Prince Souvanna Phouma, the Laotian prime minister, has spoken of this war for the trails as something separate from the Laotian war, and implied that the latter could be settled without bothering about the former. But at Site 22 regular government troops played a major part for the first time in this "secret war." The Laotians can hardly sit back and watch the Pathet Lao and the North Vietnamese take over the Bolovens plateau. That would leave the government controlling little in the south except the town of Pakse.

But what can the Laotians do about it? They could send in regular troops to attack the trail network at its most vulnerable point: to the southwest of where the two Vietnams and Laos meet. Some South Vietnamese generals would very much like to help with that. One senior Laotian minister declared that any such move would mean "political suicide" for Laos. But the prospect in the south as things stand now is slow strangulation unless the government holds its bases.

19 DEC 1970



WORLD IN REVOLUTION

STATINTL

BURMA

"Nine government battalions stationed [in north eastern Burma near the border with People's China] were forced to abandon a large area ... near the frontier" recently, wrote Jean-Claude Pomonti for Le Monde. Since 1962, he said, "skirmishing has gone on virtually without respite.... The regular army [is] composed of 140,000 battle-hardened veterans equipped by the U.S."... Michael Morrow reported recently from Laos: "Burmese border officials at the Thai-Burma border northwest of here claim there is permanent CIA 'intelligence-gathering activity' going on in Burma near the Chinese and Lao borders. 'White Chinese' guerrillas [remnants of Chiang Kai-Shek's army forced out of China] numbering 2000 men armed with M-1, M-2 and M-16 rifles are also said by the Burmese to be active in the same area".... Illiteracy in Burma is 63% according to the last census: 83% of the women and 44% of the men can neither read nor write.

*Letters to the Editor***New View of Laos**

To the Editor:

Princess Souvanna Phouma's letter of Dec. 5 contains a number of serious factual errors which should be corrected before they add confusion to the already complex Laotian situation.

She argues that while Phoumi Nosavan and Prince Souphanouvong have been belligerent, Prince Souvanna Phouma has upheld the Laotian tradition of nonviolence. Since Nov. 1, 1968, the United States Air Force has conducted between 20,000 and 30,000 bombing sorties throughout Laos, making it one of the most heavily bombed nations in the history of warfare. Yet it is Souvanna Phouma who permitted the bombing to begin in 1964, has allowed it to continue, and even denies that it is happening.

It is this massive bombing of homes and villages which has forced over 600,000 refugees to flee to government camps, not the continued presence of North Vietnamese troops.

The Princess argues that the 1962 Geneva Accords broke down because Souphanouvong kept North Vietnamese troops in Laos. In fact, the agreements broke down over the issue of Air America's arms flights to the C.I.A.'s secret army, which was conducting sabotage operations behind the Pathet Lao cease-fire line.

Nor is it true that Souvanna Phouma has never allowed foreign troops to fight on Lao soil. There are currently over 5,000 regular Thai Government troops in Champassak and Savaboury Provinces, some 1,500 Cambodian soldiers in Champassak, and an unknown number of "retired" U.S. Green Berets advising the C.I.A.'s secret army.

The Princess says that Souphanouvong can end the war simply by taking the Cabinet post which awaits him in Vientiane. However, after his electoral victory in 1958, Souphanouvong was arrested without cause and held for a year until he barely avoided execution by escaping from prison.

In 1963 he left the present Government with good cause after two of his political allies in the Government were assassinated in Vientiane.

ALFRED W. MCCOY

New Haven, Dec. 5, 1970

The author is a doctoral student in the Asian History program at Yale, and national coordinator of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars.

THE PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO KNOW: HOW MUCH OR HOW LITTLE?

A CONFLICT almost as old as democratic government itself is raging anew in Washington these days. The issue is the accessibility of information about Government operations. This conflict often pits the President and the Executive Branch against Congress, regulatory agencies against consumer interests, bureaucrats against environmentalists, Congress against the voter, the courts against the bar and, at times, the news media against all of them. At its highest levels, the pitch of the argument is tuned by public disquietude over the war in Southeast Asia, and by public concern lest new foreign undertakings, veiled in secrecy, lead to new military commitments, if not to new wars.

A current cliché from the political lexicon—"the people's right to know"—marks the battlefield but does not exactly illuminate it. This lofty phrase was first used a quarter of a century ago by the late Kent Cooper, then executive director of the Associated Press. "It means," he explained, "that the Government may not, and the newspapers and broadcasters should not, by any method whatever, curb delivery of any information essential to the public welfare and enlightenment." The Constitution, as it happens, does not provide for any such right. The courts, moreover, have never interpreted the First Amendment—which prohibits Congress from abridging freedom of speech or the press—as requiring the Government to make unlimited disclosures about its activities.

Delicate Activities. Indeed, an uncurbed "right to know" collides dramatically with what might be called "the right not to know." Ever since governments were first conceived by man, public officials have argued that certain delicate activities of the state were best conducted in secrecy—intelligence operations, for instance, or diplomatic dealings. In the U.S., specific provisions for secrecy have quite often been enacted by Congress, as in the acts establishing the Central Intelligence Agency and the Atomic Energy Commission. Congress has also allowed business enterprises the right to hold inviolate their trade secrets, processes and many other internal operations.

In addition, the courts have upheld the validity of legal strictures concerning the substantial privacy of federal income tax returns, the raw investigatory files of the FBI, testimony given to federal grand juries, the confidential nature of the doctor-patient relationship, and a host of other matters. More often than not, Presidents have been able to shield their personal subordinates and the internal papers of their Administrations from investigation by either Congress or the press on the grounds of "executive privilege."

Many historians, philosophers and journalists agree that there have to be certain checks on the unlimited right of the public to knowledge about its government. Clinton Rossiter, a leading historian of the presidency, counted executive secrecy in diplomacy an essential prerogative of a President. Columnist Walter Lippmann, in his classic *The Public Philosophy*, observed that only within an ideal society, where laws of rational order prevail, is there "sure and sufficient ground for the freedom to speak and to publish." Even James Russell Wiggins, former editor of the *Washington Post* and an articulate spokesman for press freedom, takes no unlimited view of "the right to know." While decrying the proliferation of governmental secrecy, he writes: "We can give up a little freedom without surrendering all of it. We can have a little secrecy without having a Government that is altogether secret. Each added measure of secrecy, however, measurably diminishes our freedom."

Secret Details. The question arises whether or not too many measures of secrecy have been imposed upon the conduct of public affairs in America. A case in point is the extraordinary number of military and diplomatic agreements the U.S. has made in recent years with an assortment of allies and satellites. Many of these treaties in disguise involve a vast expenditure of American money, and could commit the U.S. to aiding other countries if war broke out. More often than not, details of the commitments were kept secret

men or equally inquisitive congressional investigators.

Consider Laos. It is no secret any longer that the U.S. is today deeply involved in an undeclared war there, allied with the supposedly neutralist government of Prince Souvanna Phouma against the North Vietnamese and the Pathet Lao. Yet only after Senator Stuart Symington's Foreign Relations Subcommittee looked into the matter, against the wishes of the State Department, did the American public learn in detail how U.S. aircraft based in Thailand were bombing northern Laos, the CIA was guiding the operations of Meo tribesmen, and the U.S. was providing millions in military assistance to Souvanna Phouma—all clear violations of the 1962 Geneva accords on Laotian neutrality.

Among the reasons for secrecy about Laos advanced by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State William Sullivan was that the U.S. wanted to avoid forcing the Russians into taking "official" cognizance of activities about which they knew only unofficially. Plaintively, Senator Symington suggested that the U.S. public had a valid interest in knowing what was going on in Laos, since "we could run into the same kind of escalation as we did in Viet Nam."

Symington's subcommittee also uncovered, for the first time, details of secret agreements with Ethiopia dating back to 1960, under which the U.S. has armed a 40,000-man army at a cost to the American taxpayer of \$159 million. Although the extent of U.S. arms assistance to Emperor Haile Selassie is still cloaked by security, State Department officials admit that U.S. bombs and ammunition have been used against insurgent rebels and that U.S. military advisers supervise the training of Ethiopian troops. In defense of this agreement, Assistant Secretary of State David Newsom told the subcommittee that disclosures about Ethiopia had not been made because of "the great sensitivity" of the Emperor. Presumably, in State Department thinking, the "sensitivity" of the American public and Congress to this major diplomatic undertaking was of lesser importance.

Too Much "Exdis." Occasionally, the Government's concern for secrecy affects not only the public's right to know but its own efficiency of operation. When officials of the Water Pollution Control Administration flew to New Orleans recently to investigate a fire on an offshore oil drilling platform in the Gulf of Mexico, they discovered that the relevant papers had been locked up by the Interior Department's Geological Survey, which was responsible for supervising the drilling. A recent study of the State Department's operations found that too many reports from the field were being marked "exclusive" or "no distribution" ("Exdis" and "Nodis" in State lingo). As a result, so much current information is restricted to senior officials that the judgment of their subordinates is often irrelevant or out of date.

Information gathered at the taxpayers' expense is often kept secret for no better reason than apathy or red tape. When Dr. J.B. Rhine of Duke University, the noted expert on parapsychology, was asked recently to undertake some research for the Department of Defense, he agreed—but at the same time inquired why an 18-year-old study of his on the training of dogs to detect land mines had never been made public. Apparently, no one had bothered to declassify the material. A more pressing case of bureaucratic ineptitude involves the Atomic Energy Commission, which holds literally thousands of research papers and reports in classified storage. The material cannot be released because the commission cannot hire the personnel needed to declassify it—even though the reports would be of significance for the peaceful development of atomic energy.

The Government's predilection to do as much as possible in secrecy also affects domestic issues of fairly direct concern to the taxpayer. Environmentalists opposed to development of the SST, for example, have had difficulty gaining access to information which is critical of the supersonic transport; the Justice Department claims that the report is a "presidential document" and thus not subject to forced release. Preparation of a national inventory

11 DEC 1970

STATINTL

Laotians of Right, Left Say Talks Unlikely Now

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE

Special to The Star

VIENTIANE -- Talks aimed at negotiations between Premier Souvanna Phouma, Laos rightist and Laos Communists have virtually collapsed, high ranking officials here say.

The prime minister sees no hope of talks taking place in the immediate future," a top Laos official said.

The Pathet Lao radio has called the conversations between the Pathet Lao envoy, Prince Souk Vongsak, and Souvanna an "impasse."

Diplomats say the reason the

talks are failing are (A) Communist insistence that Souvanna send a plenipotentiary in his own name and not as prime minister because they say the Lao government is illegal, (B.) Communist insistence on a U. S. bombing halt in northern Laos, (C.) The position of hardcore rightist cabinet members under which Souvanna makes no concessions, particularly on Lao insistence on North Vietnamese troop withdrawal linked to any bombing halt, and (D.) the increased tempo of Lao fighting in the past 19 days.

Claim Supported

Diplomats admit the Communist contention Souvanna Phouma is not the premier following the 1964 rightwing coup has some basis.

"Souvanna can do nothing unless the right-wing members of the cabinet agree," one diplomat said. Diplomats tell of specific instances where Souvanna's wishes were not followed by rightist politicians or generals and refer to generals commanding Laos military regions as "almost warlords."

Diplomats point out, however, the Communists ignore their own attacks against Souvanna and Kongle in 1963 which helped destroy Laos neutrality. Diplomats support the Lao position that a bombing halt should be linked to North Vietnamese withdrawal. Past experience has proven, diplomats say, the Reds will build up supplies if there is an unconditional bombing halt, infiltrate troops to strong positions and attack if talks fail.

Carrot and Stick

"It's the old carrot and stick game," a diplomat said. "They offer Souvanna the carrot of settlement then whump him over the head with military action." Red attacks contributing to the increased tempo of fighting in Laos are now part of the "whump," diplomats say, as the talks collapse.

The Reds desperately want to reneutralize Laos, to give them political protection for sanctuaries now building up on the Ho Chi Minh Trail in the South Laos panhandle to support the Vietnam and Cambodia offensives.

The U.S. is well aware of this. With tight control through the supply of Lao arms and the U.S.-commanded tribal special forces bearing the brunt of fighting while the royal army does virtually nothing, the U.S. is in position to prevent Souvanna making concessions.

Lao officials are not ruling out the possibility the U.S. or Saigon will strike against the present Ho Chi Minh Trail buildup.

CIA's Private Army

U.S. or South Vietnamese strikes against the Ho Chi Minh Trail would undoubtedly be to the U.S. advantage. The trail, under protection of Lao neutrality, has cost thousands of American lives in the Vietnam war.

While such a move may facilitate a U.S. pullout from Vietnam there undoubtedly would be marked deterioration in the Laos situation where the U.S., through a CIA private army thousands strong, has involved itself inextricably.

Despite possible dire consequences for their country should Washington or Saigon move against the trail, many Lao officials say they would welcome it. They expect the Indochina war to burst in full fury on Laos and Cambodia in February or March next year. They fear they will be snowed under by powerful Hanoi forces anyway.

Bombing Fails To Halt

By FRED BRANEMAN
Copyright Dispatch News Service
International

Laos Reds

STATINTL

VIENTIANE, Laos

WHEN ASKED ABOUT the American bombing, a Pathet Lao defector, a former lieutenant, said: "We would move through the forest, in small groups. We had our own methods to hide. But the people had to stay near their villages. For every soldier who was killed, 50 villagers died from the bombing. I never had a man in my company killed or even injured from the bombing."

The comment underscores the essential dilemma of American air power in Laos: though it does extensive damage to the Pathet Lao civilian infrastructure, it is relatively ineffective against military targets.

Despite the massive bombing of the last two years, the United States now finds itself in a weaker position in Laos than at any time since the air war began. In the last two years, Communist forces in northern Laos took the major bases of Na Khang and Moung Soui, rendered Sam Thong inactive as a center for refugee operations, and installed themselves in force southwest of the Plain of Jars for the first time. In southern Laos they captured the provincial capitals of Saravane and Attapeu, and extended their control over most of Laos's six southern provinces.

THE CIA-directed Armees Clandestine has taken high losses, and according to informed sources is no longer capable of carrying out a sustained offensive. The Royal Lao Army, assigned to static defense of major towns and bases, has found its area of control shrinking steadily.

At this writing, the Royal Lao Government controls little more than 10 to 20 per cent of Laos's territory. This consists primarily of small islands of territory around the 12 (or 16) provincial capitals still in RLG hands. Most of the area is supplied by air, and no more than a few hundred miles of roads are considered safe for travel by American or Lao civilian officials. The Pathet Lao control about 60 per cent of Laos. The remainder is a no man's land where small roving bands of Communist guerrillas forestall permanent RLG presence.

The military ineffectiveness of air power was illustrated by the well-publicized battle for the Plain of Jars in February, 1970. Despite some of the heaviest bombing to date, including the first use of B-52s in northern Laos, Communist forces retook the Plain in five days. In May, 1964, before the bombing had begun, the Pathet Lao took the plain in three days.

REFUGEES and defector sources indicate that the bombing increased moral and combat efficiency of Pathet Lao troops, and led to a replacement of losses with men and materiel from North Viet Nam.

A young refugee who fought with the Pathet Lao for five years recently explained: "Before the bombing started, we really didn't know what they meant by 'American imperialism.' Most of us had never even seen an American. But the bombing made us hate the Americans very much. We fought much harder than we ever had before, for our villages and families, homes and belongings."

Refugees from the Plain of Jars say that in 1964 and 1965 volunteerism for the Pathet Lao army was about 26 per cent. But by 1969 almost all young men and women were willing to volunteer to fight. It was "better to die fighting than hiding in a trench," they often said.

In heavily populated civilian areas, moreover, "People's Armies" needed to devote a good deal of their time and resources to working together with the local population. But in such areas as the Plain of Jars, from which the civilian population

The Author

Fred Braneman, a graduate of the University of Chicago and the Harvard School of Education, has spent three and a half years in Laos teaching and researching. His chapter, "The American Executive War in Laos: 1964-1970," will appear in "Laos: War & Revolution," to be released this month by Harper & Row. The three articles of which this is the last were based on his own observations of the American mission operations in Laos and on interviews with more than 1000 refugees and Pathet Lao defectors.

tion was taken down to Vientiane in February 1970, the Pathet Lao were freed for more exclusively military activities. Defectors indicate that this increased combat efficiency.

A KEY to Pathet Lao successes in recent years had been help from North Vietnam. As the bombing of North Vietnam failed in its primary objectives partly because of aid received from the Soviet Union and China, so has North Vietnamese aid sustained the Pathet Lao during the escalated bombing since 1968.

Increased North Vietnamese military units took on major military objectives held by RLG forces. Though Pathet Lao troops far outnumbered North Vietnamese involved in the fighting in Laos, the greater experiences and skill of the Vietnamese gave them a role significant beyond their numbers. Arms, ammunition and rations flowed in steadily to Pathet Lao forces from North Vietnam, making up losses incurred by the bombing.

Although the bombing could not halt the progress of Communist ground forces, it did, in the words of official explanation, "make them pay a price." The air war has taken a heavy toll of the civilian infrastructure.

According to both American and British Embassy estimates, more than 1,000,000 persons presently inhabit Pathet Lao zones. Those who have received the heaviest bombing are the 200,000 to 250,000 people inhabiting Sam Neua and Xieng Khouang provinces in northern Laos, and the quarter of a million people residing in the four southern provinces through which runs the Ho Chi Minh trail.

Interviews with refugees from these areas indicate that the bombing has brought considerable hardship to the civilian population, forcing them literally underground. In 1968 and 1969 most of the villages were evacuated. Tied down by families and belongings, the villagers remained in the forested areas near their villages, hiding in caves and bunkers by day and coming out to farm their rice at night.

NORMAL activities were seriously disrupted. Markets were closed, religious festivals and weddings could no longer be held, health and educational services were curtailed. Normal commerce and trade ground to a halt.

A precise estimate of civilian casualties is not possible. The refugees that were brought out represent only a small part of the population. Many families were either killed or remained behind with the Pathet Lao. Dozens of individuals in refugee camps, however, report the

loss of one or more members of their immediate families, or have been wounded themselves from the bombing. A sample of 25 refugee villages from the Plain of Jars indicated that the casualty rate was between 5 and 10 per cent. This suggests that the over-all number killed and wounded in more heavily bombed areas can be counted in the tens of thousands.

The refugees report that most of the wounded were struck by antipersonnel bombs. Napalm and fragmentation bombs account for a smaller but sizable part. Deaths appear to be caused by the larger 250, 500, and 750 pound bombs. Refugees also report that most of the villages in the areas of heavy bombing have been leveled.

REFUGEES explain that their principal reason for wishing to come on the government side has been to escape the bombing. Though some 50,000 to 100,000 people have come out of heavily bombed areas over the last few years, it is not clear that the Pathet Lao population base has been significantly weakened.

Exact figures are unobtainable but it appears that the Pathet Lao have gained back an equal number of people through new territory taken in recent years. Most of the refugees who have come to the government side, moreover, are the older people and the very young. The young men and women have remained with the Pathet Lao army.

There are many Lao officials in Vientiane who argue that on the whole the Pathet Lao have gained from the refugee movement by being freed of a sizeable number of non-productive citizens. There is fear also that the refugees retain loyalty to the Pathet Lao, and pose a potential threat to the Mekong River towns near which they have been placed.

THE AIR war has yielded decidedly mixed military results as well.

By standard cost-benefit analysis the results have been rather unimpressive. Such expenses as \$100,000 per truck destroyed on the Ho Chi Minh trail show a rather inefficient

STATINTL

Air War Hard-Liners

Win Struggle On Laos

Fred Brantman, a graduate of the University of Chicago and the Harvard School of Education, has spent three and a half years in Laos teaching and researching. His chapter, "The American Executive War in Laos: 1964-1970," will appear in "Laos: War & Revolution," to be released this month by Harper & Row. The accompanying article is based on his own observations of the American mission operations in Laos and on interviews with more than 1000 refugees and Pathet Lao defectors.

By FRED BRANTMAN

Copyright Dispatch News Service International

SECOND OF A SERIES

VIETNAME, Laos.

AN OLD LAOTIAN PROVERB, "when the elephants fight, the grass gets trampled," usually applied to battles between outside powers here. It is equally apt, however, in describing the conflicts among giant American agencies over the use of air power in this small nation.

The history of policy-making in the air war is largely one of conflict between hard- and soft-line elements in the Department of State, Pentagon and Central Intelligence Agency.

Debate has raged over such questions as which villages would be bombed, whether napalm would be used and how many aircraft would be made available for a given operation. Gradually, as control flowed to the Air Force, as the influence of the CIA grew greater, and as a new American ambassador came to rely more and more on air power, the tougher line was taken.

CONTROL OF the air war involves two aspects: targeting and operations. Operational control has always rested with the Air Force. As former Ambassador William H. Sullivan said in Senate hearings last May, "The Air Force does not second the command of its aircraft . . . to the control of the ambassador."

From the very beginning, the Air Force determined how many sorties would be flown, which aircraft and ordnance would be used and when strikes would be made.

From May 1964 until November 1968, however, the ambassador retained a good deal of functional control over the all-important area of targeting. Photo reconnaissance units in Thailand, South Vietnam and Laos and the CIA would submit targets to the ambassador for approval. The authorized list numbered more than 800 by the fall of 1968.

Each week a meeting would be held at Udorn Air Force Base in Thailand, attended by representatives of the ambassador, Air Force and CIA. Twenty to 50 targets would be selected from the over-all list for the week's strikes. These would

then be presented to the ambassador for final approval before being turned over to the Air Force for execution.

Sullivan, the ambassador during this period, was opposed to unrestricted bombing of civilian targets, and imposed other limitations such as forbidding the use of napalm in populated areas. He argued basically that a widened air war could only result in an escalated ground war, and possibly open up a second front for the United States in Laos.

Because he opposed the introduction of American ground troops against the Ho Chi Minh Trail on much the same basis, Sullivan was in frequent conflict with the military and the CIA.

BY 1967 THE CIA had become a forceful advocate of bombing population centers in Pathet Lao territory. Unlike Vietnam, where its main function was intelligence-gathering, the CIA has been intimately involved in operations here.

It directs the 30,000-man Armee Clandestine, which does the bulk of the fighting. With its own team of photo interpreters, control of reconnaissance aircraft and teams of local ground observers, the CIA has played a key role in targeting sessions as well. As the Armee Clandestine began suffering reverses on the ground, the CIA held that heavy bombing of the Pathet Lao civilian infrastructure was necessary.

Its position was in part conditioned by the attitude taken by Meo Gen. Vang Pao, who controls most of the Armee Clandestine's forces. Vang Pao is generally reluctant to launch offensives unless they are preceded by massive American bombing. He is well known in Laos for his periodic

retreats to his base at Long Chang, where he is said to sulk until his requests are granted. The need to keep Vang Pao fighting had much to do with the CIA's hard line on the bombing.

As long as the Air Force placed first priority on the air war over North Vietnam, however, Sullivan was able to enforce a policy of limited strikes. Relatively few aircraft were available for strikes outside the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Through the use of his own photo-interpretation team, Sullivan managed to keep tabs on most of the bombings.

When the bombing began, four photo interpreters were assigned to Vientiane. Although the four were members of the Air Force, they were assigned to the top-secret Project 404 of supplementary military personnel. As such, they were directly responsible to the ambassador. Going over reconnaissance film daily, they provided an independent check on Air Force activities.

THIS MEANS of verification, however, had its limitations. Unlike in North Vietnam, reconnaissance missions were not flown after each strike. Rather, a given target would be photographed by jets of the 432nd Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron once over a period of two weeks to three months. Thus it was often most difficult to assess when a given strike had occurred, or who had been responsible for it. In addition, reconnaissance was rarely done on areas that had not been approved as targets.

The Terrain Following Radar, meant to record the point at which bombs were released, proved equally imprecise. Depending on the wind and angle of delivery, ordnance might land as far as a half mile away from the point over which it was dropped. In addition, it was rarely possible to check back over the tens of thousands of feet of barely distinguishable black blobs recorded on the radar tape.

These restrictions on the ambassador's control over the bombing were dramatically illustrated by the bombing of Sap Nao in September 1967. Sap Nao was a village in northern Laos, about two miles from a Communist off-landing area near Highway 19.

STATINTL

Intense Bombing In Laos Evolved Over Long Period

Fred Branfman, a graduate of the University of Chicago and Harvard School of Education, has spent three and a half years in Laos teaching and researching. His chapter, "The American Executive War in Laos: 1964-1970," will appear in "Laos: War & Revolution," to be released this month by Harper & Row. The accompanying article is based on his observations of the American mission operations in Laos and on interviews with more than 1000 refugees and Pathet Lao defectors.

By FRED BRANFMAN

Copyright, 1970, Dispatch News Service International
FIRST OF THREE ARTICLES

VIENTIANE, Laos

WHO MAKES THE POLICY to bomb Laos?

With the United States conducting one of the largest bombing campaigns in history, involving more than 200,000 bombing strikes a year at a cost of more than one and one-half billion dollars, the answer has not always been clear cut.

Here in Laos the widespread bombing of villages and the displacement of more than 100,000 residents in Pathet Lao zones is an accepted fact. Bombing, accounts by thousands of refugees relocated near Mekong River towns have become common knowledge. Many such narratives collected by the United States Agency for International Development and CIA investigators are on file here.

Although American officials here concede in private that frequent strikes against villages occur, they differ as to who is responsible. Embassy personnel place responsibility with the Air Force, while the military insists that it has simply followed Embassy directives. Relatively little information about policy-making has been made public.

TO SORT OUT the issue, it is necessary to understand the nature of the air effort here, for the roots of the decision to bomb civilian targets lie both in the vastness of the air war and its ineffectiveness against guerrilla fighters.

Bombing in Laos was steady but in small doses from its beginning in May 1964 until November 1968. With the overall focus of American bombing on North and South Vietnam during this period, average daily sorties totaled no more than 300 strikes by 1968. The American Ambassador exercised direct supervision. Most strikes were against the Ho Chi Minh trail, and the number of aircraft available rarely exceeded military needs.

The policy was to avoid civilian targets. When towns or villages were hit, it was usually due to a controlled and limited decision. In May 1968, the Plain of Jars and Sam Neua Province in

Pathet Lao areas of northern Laos were heavily bombed in retaliation for the Communist victory at Nam Bac, two months earlier.

Although a few villages, thought to contain military equipment, were targeted, most of the bombing of villages in this period came by accident, or through the dumping of unexpended ordinance. When bombs could not be dropped because of bad weather, unexpected anti-aircraft fire, or mechanical malfunction, pilots needed to dump their bombs before returning to base. The bombs often ended up in populated regions.

DUMP ZONES in unpopulated regions existed but were rarely used. As one airman put it, "If one dropped one's load in a dump zone, one had to answer questions. The Air Force is not in the business of wasting bombs."

The friendly village of Ban Done in the far north of Laos was bombed twice in this manner in 1967.

Compared to what was to follow, however, such bombing of civilian targets was relatively infrequent.

November 1968 marked a turning point. Planes that had been bombing North Vietnam were diverted into Laos after the bombing halt of Nov. 1. As the war scaled down in South Vietnam, planes were brought in from there as well.

The dimensions of the air war skyrocketed. Average daily sorties soon shot up to 600 or 700, sometimes going as high as 1300. Reliable sources estimate the cost of the air war in 1969 was 1.7 billion dollars. Well over 200,000 sorties were flown, delivering over 500,000 tons of ordinance. Bombing has continued at roughly the same level in 1970.

More than 50,000 American airmen, situated at bases in Thailand, South Vietnam, Guam

and Okinawa, and carriers of the Seventh Fleet.

The air space above Pathet Lao zones was soon filled with well over 1000 aircraft daily: light spotter planes at 2000 feet; A-1E, A-26, and T-28 prop bombers, AC-47 and AC-139 gunships, Hara ships and rescue and gunship helicopters at 5000; F-4, F-105, and B-57 jet fighters and jet reconnaissance aircraft at 10,000; KG-

135 super-tankers at 20,000; C-130s filled with electronic gear designed to co-ordinate the bombing of specific sectors at 25,000; B-52 bombers at 30,000, and C-130s of Hillsboro Control, which co-ordinate all the bombing in Laos, at 35,000 feet.

EXPENSIVE electronic equipment has become standard in this new phase of the air war. Task Force Alpha alone, designed to monitor traffic along the Ho Chi Minh trail through electronic sensors, is estimated to have cost 3 billion dollars, above the expenditure on the bombing.

Available bombers soon outstripped such conventional military targets as known troop concentration, arms depots, trucks and truck parks. As it became necessary to find new targets for the expanded air fleet, dozens of population centers were removed from the restricted target listing.

Reasons for doing so are closely related to the nature of the terrain in Pathet Lao zones. Three factors stand out.

Difficulties of locating military targets in these forested and mountainous regions are formidable. Little can be seen by day except a vast canopy of jungle interrupted by villages that stand out like bald spots. Night observation is limited to that illuminated by flares and dark blobs spotted through a night reconnaissance starlight scope.

THE PATTERN of guerrilla activity also limited effectiveness. Communist guerrillas sleep by day, move by night under the cover of jungle. They are on the move constantly, usually in small squads and hide their ammunition deep in the forest. Arms and supplies are moved in the dark, by columns of porters threading their way through the jungle or by truck.

It is not surprising to learn that informed sources unanimously report that precise intelligence on troops or supply movement was rarely available for the effective use of air power.

But even with good intelligence, effective control of enemy movement has not been possible.

The list of inadequacies of air technology in countering guerrilla armies is a long one: Flares to light up the ground, electronic sensors to record sounds, infrared photography at night to pick up heat emissions from the small trucks used on the trail; radar designed to "see through trees." All were employed, but fell short of their designed intentions. Movement on the Ho Chi Minh trail continued unhindered.

A third decisive factor leading to the bombing of population centers have been Communist strength on the ground.

Supported ground forces were in considerable array. The Communist victory at Nam Bac in January 1968 had been a major

STATINTL

Attacks in Laos Indicate Start of Red Offensive

By TAMMY ARBUCCLE

Special to The Star

VIENTIANE--A Lao military spokesman today called the military situation here grave as fighting flared throughout the country in what appeared to be the start of a Communist dry season offensive.

Communist attacks were directed mainly at Lao special guerrilla units with American advisers.

Three North Vietnamese battalions launched a 36-hour assault on PS2, a CIA air strip on the east edge of the Bolovens plateau.

North Vietnamese who breached the base perimeter were repulsed only after hand to hand fighting.

Seventeen North Vietnamese dead were left inside the perimeter.

Two North Vietnamese companies in a later attack picked up an estimated 100 bodies outside the perimeter.

Government forces suffered more than 50 killed and wounded.

It was not known whether there were any American casualties.

The Red strike on PS2 follows the Communist capture of three CIA guerrilla positions on the southeast edge of the Bolovens plateau.

Informed military sources believe the Communists are trying to wipe out the U.S.-Lao guerrilla positions on the east half of the Bolovens Plateau. These positions are used to harass the Ho Chi Minh trail.

Military sources said the U.S. intelligence gathering operation there was hampered by the Communist offensive and enemy forces overran Muong Moc, an-

other special guerrilla airstrip 100 miles east of Vientiane Saturday in what the military say is a Communist attempt to find a new supply route into the Plain of Jars. The present supply route, Route 7, is under heavy U.S. air attack.

Pathet Lao radio claimed the guerrillas were launching operations against the Red logistic base of Ban Ban on Route 7.

Military sources are evasive about whether such operations are taking place the Reds claimed 35 bombing sorties were flown and 60 helicopter flights ferried four battalions of special guerrillas.

Lao military sources accused the Reds of launching sporadic night attacks on government posts this weekend around the Plain's rim at Muong Soui, Ban Na and Khang Kho. The CIA is sensitive about its ground military role in Laos and is blocking correspondents from travel to the area as both sides make offensive claims.

Premier Souvanna Phouma believes the Reds are exerting "maximum pressure" for conversations with Souvanna at Khang Khay, sources close to the premier say.

The Pathet Lao radio, however, claims the U.S.-Lao effort in the Ban Ban area "created obstacles" to a Khang Khay meeting.

Lao military sources said today that 11 village chiefs have been executed by the Communists in recent weeks in an attempt to influence a future Lao election.

In other weekend fighting, 44 Communists were killed in the northeast central Laos town of Thak Hek.

STATINTL

Eyewitness: Laos under American bombs

By Jacques Decornoy
Pacific News Service

Sam Neua, Laos.

We had come to Sam Neua province from Hanoi. The Soviet-made command car proceeded hiccupping over a road struck by bombs and made slippery by the rain. It took almost two full nights to reach here, after much skidding in the mud and many dangerous encounters with trucks on the small mountain road.

To the very end of the journey, the car had to be navigated between craters left by bombs and rockets. A wooden ladder leaning across the limestone rock gave access to the cave-hotel, a natural hole in the mountain, "improved" with dynamite. A tiny motor distributed that extremely rare commodity in liberated Laos: electricity.

This retreat for hunted guerrillas is managed by Kempeth Pholsens, an anti-French graduate of Moscow University, daughter of Quinim Pholsena, the Laotian Minister of Foreign Affairs and neutralist leader who was assassinated in Vientiane in April 1963.

Life here is very simple. On a rocky platform which forms the entrance to the cave, a wash basin has been set, a dangerous place for anyone to stick his nose too far out; at times it is impossible to finish shaving because of the jets from Thailand prowling about. Then, one lies flat on the floor of the cave, his only view a glimpse of the sky and a few flowerpots attached to the rock by wire. It is a difficult life, but still possible in this season. But when the rainy season begins, water penetrates the chalky mass and drips into the "hotel." It is a silent world, for the surrounding villages have disappeared and the inhabitants also live hidden in the mountains. Some water buffalo and a few pigs wander about at our feet among the craters made by U.S. bombs.

Daily bombings

As usual, at 7 A.M. an AD-6 plane prowls overhead. It circles for about 10 minutes, then leaves. At 7:30 the plane returns, makes a pass and drops three loads several miles from the "hotel." At 8 A.M. there is a flight of jets. At 8:30, new jets and bombs. The same operation at 9 A.M.

One of the officials of the Sam Neua district told us that during the first three years of the bombing alone, 65 villages were destroyed. This is a figure impossible to verify for a short report, but it is a fact, that between Sam Neua and a place about 20 miles away, not a single house in the villages and hamlets had been spared. Bridges have been destroyed and fields riddled with bomb craters.

At the other end of Sam Neua the sight is even more painful. Enormous craters are everywhere. Churches and many houses are demolished. In order to be sure of hitting anyone who might be living there, the U.S. dropped fragmentation bombs. Here by the side of the road lies a disembowelled "mother bomb." All around, the earth is covered with unexploded "daughter bombs," containing hundreds of steel pellets. One of them had rolled into a shelter, under a mat, mortally wounding three people who had taken refuge there.

"All Americans must get out of Laos!" This assertion continually comes up in conversations with Pathet Lao cadres who must be met on their own ground in order to appreciate how fundamental this demand is for them. In their minds it is not only a question of stopping the air raids. The Americans themselves must pull out, as well as the "private" air companies (Air America, Continental) which supply provisions, arms and indeed more than 3000 "advisors" (of whom 72 are military attaches at the U.S. embassy) to the CIA-supported Meo secret army of Gen. Van Pao. For the Pathet Lao, Washington's influence on the various aspects of daily life must disappear entirely.

Millions of refugees

Since the bombing of Laos began some five years ago, F-4 Phantom and F-105 Thunderchief fighter bombers which carry 10,000 to 15,000 pounds of bombs and B-52s which carry four to six times that bomb load, have made daily runs. This past year they are reported to have flown over 20,000 sorties a month. This is over Sam Neua and the Plain of Jars area alone, which does not include the saturation bombing of the Ho Chi Minh trail in southern Laos. The result, as U.S. ambassador to Laos G. McMurtire Godley testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, is that almost one-third of Laos' population of 3 million has been made into homeless refugees.

The inhabitants of Sam Neua ask themselves the reason for this deluge of fire and steel. "I don't even know where America is," says a peasant woman whose daughter has just been killed. She has lost everything she had. A peasant remarks, "I understood nothing that was said about American aid and against the United States. After the raids on my village I knew what they meant. Everything American, far and wide, is hated by the people."

STATINTL

WASHINGTON POST
NOV
29 DEC 1970

Cave Is 'Hotel' in Stark Laos

By Jacques Decornoy

The writer is Southeast Asia correspondent for the Paris newspaper *Le Monde* and has made frequent visits to North Vietnam and Communist-controlled areas of Laos. The following article was distributed by Dispatch News Service.

SAM NEUA, Laos—We had come to Sam Neua province from Hanoi. The Soviet-made command car proceeded, hiccupping over a road hit by bombs and made slippery by the rain. It took almost two full nights to reach here.

A wooden ladder leaning across the limestone rock gave access to the cave-hotel, a natural hole in the mountain that had been "improved" with dynamite. A tiny motor distributed that extremely rare commodity in "liberated Laos": electricity.

This retreat for hunted guerrillas is run by Kempeth Pholsena, a graduate of Moscow University and daughter of Quinim Pholsena, the Laotian Foreign Minister and neutralist leader who was assassinated in 1963.

Life here is very simple. On a rocky platform which forms the entrance to the cave, a wash basin has been set, a dangerous place for anyone to stick his nose too far out; at times it is impossible to finish shaving because of the jets from Thailand.

When the rainy season begins, water penetrates the chalky mass and drips into the "hotel." It is a silent world, for the surrounding villages have disappeared, and the inhabitants also live hidden in the mountains. Some water buffalo and a few pigs wander about among the craters made by the American bombs.

On a typical morning at 7 o'clock, an AD-6 plane appears overhead. It circles for about 10 minutes, then leaves. At 7:30 the plane returns, makes a pass and then drops three loads several kilometers from the "hotel." At 8 o'clock there is a flight of jets. At 8:30, new jets and bombs. The same operation at 9 o'clock.

One of the officials of the Sam Neua district told us that during the first three years of bombing alone, 65 villages were destroyed. This is a figure impossible to verify, but it is a fact that between Sam Neua and a place about 30 kilometers away, not a single house in the villages and hamlets had been spared. Bridges have been destroyed, and fields riddled with bomb craters.

At the other end of Sam Neua the sight is even more painful. Enormous craters are everywhere. Churches and many houses are demolished. By the side of the road lies a disemboweled "mother bomb." All around for tens

of meters, the earth is covered with unexploded "daughter bombs" containing hundreds of steel pellets. One of them had rolled onto a shelter, under a mat, mortally wounding three people who had taken refuge there.

"All Americans must get out of Laos!" This assertion continually comes up in conversations with Pathet Lao cadres. In their minds it is not only a question of stopping the air raids. The Americans themselves must pull out, as well as the "private" air companies (Air America, Continental) which supply provisions, arms and indeed more than 3,000 advisers (of whom 72 are military attaches at the U.S. Embassy) to the CIA-supported Meo Clandestine Army of Gen. Vang Pao.

Since the bombing of Laos began some five years ago, F-4 Phantom and F-105 Thunderchief fighter-bombers and B-52s have made daily runs. This past year they are reported to have flown over 20,000 sorties a month. This is over Sam Neua and the Plain of Jars area alone, which does not include the saturation bombing of the Ho Chi Minh trail in southern Laos. The result, as U.S. Ambassador to Laos G. McMurtre Godley testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, is that almost one-third of Laos' population of three million has been made into homeless refugees.

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80

How P.O.W. Camp Raid Was Planned

By WILLIAM BEECHER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 25—

The planners of the commando raid on a North Vietnamese prison camp last weekend had to take into account the position of the moon and Soviet satellites and to gather from all over the world.

Details of the raid on the prisoner-of-war compound at Sontay, which is about 23 miles west of Hanoi, emerged from interviews with knowledgeable officials.

Both the rescue attempt and the air strikes some hours later in the southern provinces of North Vietnam were executed in nearly flawless fashion, the planners said. But both operations fell short of military expectations.

The 50 or so men who landed at 2 A.M. Saturday, Hanoi time, at Sontay soon discovered that the prisoners were no longer at the camp. And the bombing missions were so hindered by bad weather that they were ended after only about 250 strikes—instead of the planned 500—had been made.

"There were so many complex factors that had to be coordinated," one source said, "weather, the phase of the moon, the availability of Navy fighters to provide diversions and to be ready to bail the team out if it got into MIG trouble."

"The factors simply weren't right until last Saturday," he declared.

"We had to wait for just the right weather window and moon window over Sontay," another source said. "The weather had to be open enough to move in our choppers and have visibility for our covering fighters. The moon had to be just right so that it gave our men enough light in which to operate, but very little for the enemy to discover their approach. It was just a coincidence that the rescue effort at Sontay and the air raids in the southern parhandle came during the same weekend."

A waning half-moon was up when the

with about 10 large helicopters from a base in Thailand. Several of the helicopters were empty; they were to have been used to bring out the 70 to 100 prisoners who were thought to have been there.

The sources pointedly refused to say whether any North Vietnamese guards had been captured and brought out for questioning.

Such men might be expected to provide information on when the Americans had been moved from Sontay, the kind of treatment they had received there, and procedures normally followed in moving prisoners from one camp to another.

Men had been taken from assignments all over the world for the Sontay mission, one even from behind a Pentagon desk. The bulk of most, however, came from Fort Bragg, N. C., where the Army Special Forces has its headquarters, and Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, home of the Air Force's special air warfare teams.

Most of the training was conducted at Eglin. The planning was so detailed that a full-scale reproduction of the prison camp—the layout gleaned from reconnaissance photos—was constructed and every phase of the operation rehearsed again and again.

Mock-Up Camp Destroyed

Then the mock-up prison camp was destroyed for fear, however remote, that Soviet spy satellites might pick it up and relay word to Hanoi that Sontay might be a target for some future American raid of some sort.

"We also didn't want to keep it up any longer than necessary in case any prying eyes at Eglin might see what they weren't supposed to," one source said.

Security was so tight that the planners are convinced there was no advance leak of the mission. Rather, they believe, the prisoners were moved to another camp for prosaic reasons, perhaps because Hanoi felt it could save some money by consolidating two camps into one.

The Sontay raid was not the first time Americans have slipped into North Vietnam during the war. In 1965, Col.

Arthur D. Simons, the man who led the raid on the camp, had been in charge of a group

been involved in sending small American and South Vietnamese intelligence teams into the north.

SOG stands for Studies and Operations Group. Its assignment throughout the war has been to move into Laos, Cambodia and North Vietnam to gather military intelligence on such things as location of enemy troops, supply dumps and concentration of air defenses.

Colonel Simons, who is 52 years old, has had a long career of difficult special assignments. In 1961, he was in charge of Operation White Star, a combined Central Intelligence Agency - Special Forces effort to organize Meo tribesmen in Laos to harass and spy on Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese activities.

Because of his special experience, Colonel Simons was the man quickly chosen to lead the raid when the attempt was first seriously discussed early this year by senior military men of all four services.

Decides on Small Team

They were determined that, since Hanoi had shown no disposition to exchange American prisoners for the 8,000 North Vietnamese and 17,000 Vietcong prisoners in South Vietnam, an effort must be made to free them forcibly.

A total of 378 Americans are believed to be prisoners in North Vietnam and 958 more are missing, some of whom also may be in captivity.

Some senior officers even talked among themselves of an amphibious landing by a Marine division in North Vietnam aimed at so unnerving Hanoi's leaders they might quickly sue for peace and release all prisoners.

But these and other officers, convinced that the White House would never permit such a widening of the war, argued that the job could be done by small hand-picked teams, using surprise to overwhelm local guards and extricate the prisoners by helicopter.

They laid this second proposal before Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird in late spring or early summer. In August, he approved assembly and training of a special task force, called Joint Contingency Task Group Ivory Coast.

Brig. Gen. Leroy J. Manor, 49, commander of the Air Force Special Operations Force at Eglin, was picked to command the new group. It in-

cluded about 80 men, sources say, including administrative personnel.

Sontay was one of a half-dozen or so prison camps considered for the mission. It was selected, sources say, largely because it had sufficient flat space around it to permit the landing of enough large helicopters to remove the prisoners thought to be housed inside.

One major concern was that the lumbering helicopters, skimming the treetops on a roundabout route in from Thailand, might be detected and attacked by North Vietnamese MIG fighters, or that the task force might be attacked as it left.

For that reason, a number of diversionary flights were flown by Navy aircraft, dropping flares, jamming North Vietnamese radar and otherwise causing the North Vietnamese to direct much of their air force and attention out to sea during the Sontay raid.

A small force of American jets was kept ready to speed to Sontay if the raiders were attacked by enemy fighters.

STATINTL

TIMES

M - 899,231

S - 1,443,738

NOV 24 1970

Secret War in Laos

To the Editor:

The confusion of many Americans about events in Laos demonstrates Washington's determination to avoid a principal error in Vietnam: letting the public know what is happening.

This is covert warfare, punctuated by occasional accidental glimpses which reveal the thousand bombing sorties per day, the hundreds of thousands of refugees, or the occasional loss of American lives — phenomena only grudgingly admitted after much prevarication.

It is a war controlled not by the Congress but by the Executive and its instruments. The White House has even succeeded in deleting from the 1969 Laos hearings enough information to render the public record virtually meaningless except to a few specialists. It is indeed a Secret War.

Fittingly, a Secret War should have a Secret Army. This the C.I.A. has been running through General Vang Pao for years. But now a hitch has developed—most of Vang Pao's C.I.A.-trained and financed Meo mercenaries have been killed.

Various observers have reported on the small group of survivors, teenage boys and old men. Edgar Buell, the American A.I.D. official closely associated with the Meo, put it bluntly to Robert Shaplen: "In a few weeks 90 per cent of the new recruits will be dead."

Now the Nixon Administration, still without authorization, has found a substitute for the dead Meos: Cambodian soldiers, also trained under the C.I.A., supplied with American arms, and operating in the territory of the semi-independent Prince Boun Oum of Champassak. (News story, Nov. 9). Perhaps because this C.I.A. operation is an illegal intrusion, violating the 1962 Geneva agreements, no one is bothering to inform the Lao Premier, Souphanna Phouma, much less the U.S. Congress.

The cold war goal remains—to "stop Communism," regardless of cost to the target country. Laos provides the newest model for future counter-insurgency operations — plenty of bombing, transportation of civilians, manipulation of mercenaries, negligible American casualties, but above all, secrecy. And, of course, dead Asians.

JONATHAN MIRSKY

Assoc. Professor, History & Chinese

Method, Vt., Nov. 13, 1970

STATINTL

23 NOV 1970

Reds Open Attacks in Laos To Protect Ho Chi Minh Trail

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE
Special to The Star

VIENTIANE—North Vietnamese forces have launched heavy attacks in southern Laos in a major effort to protect the Ho Chi Minh Trail, their main reinforcement and resupply system to South Vietnam and Cambodia, from American-led guerrillas.

Military sources today said an estimated three North Vietnamese battalions captured Royal Mountain and two other airstrips on the southeast edge of the Bolovens Plateau in heavy fighting yesterday.

At one strip, North Vietnamese sappers blew up an ammunition dump with satchel charges. Teak buildings with corrugated roofing sheets containing mortars and other supplies under control of the U.S. were burned down.

Boat Traffic Hit

All three positions were held by special guerrilla units led and paid directly by the Central Intelligence Agency. These units specialize in slipping down the side of the Bolovens Plateau, hitting Communist boat traffic on the Sekhong River—part of the trail complex—and penetrating that part of the trail on the Kas-seng Plateau.

Sources said these guerrilla units long have been a thorn in the Communist side and they believe the Reds now want control of the eastern half of the Bolovens Plateau to eliminate them. These special units are said to be better than regular Lao army troops because they are higher paid, paid on time

by American accountants and have American ex-military advisers with them.

Run by CIA

The operation is run by the CIA, and is not part of the U.S. military.

Lao military sources, though deeply worried by the North Vietnamese push on the Bolovens Plateau, say presence of the special units will be maintained despite the attacks.

The air strips remain in guer-

rilla hands and "we can always go to other places," one source said.

Royal Mountain was the site of fierce fighting earlier this year when the North Vietnamese held it for four months against strikes by U.S. air and guerrilla units.

Fram Royal Mountain airstrips the streets of Attopou, the Communist-held province capital, can be seen in detail on a clear day.

The Red offensive is seen as an attempt to build a south Laos sanctuary for the fighting in Vietnam and Cambodia.

"Hanoi can no longer rule out South Vietnamese or American ground strikes against these areas and they are worried," sources said.

With Cambodia closed off to Communist supplies, Hanoi is more than ever dependent on south Laos for logistics to continue the Indochina fighting.

INTERPRETIVE REPORT

Secrecy Farce Maintained in Laos

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE
Special to The Star

VIENTIANE—The official concealment of American activities in Laos is designed to hide the small U.S. ground combat involvement from critics of administration policy, sources here say.

This combat involvement consists of a few hundred Americans in three groups—military attaches advising in combat, former military personnel working for the Central Intelligence Agency who lead commando teams, and Special Forces units which shift through the Ho Chi Minh trail areas.

The American combat role is directed primarily by the CIA, rather than the U.S. military, and continues despite denials and evasions. Reporters have seen military attaches

giving advice in combat to Lao forces and accompanying Lao troops in field operations.

Policies Not Revised

The secrecy continues in many cases because of the failure of the U.S. Embassy to revise its policies after March 1966 when President Nixon admitted U.S. activities in Laos.

"Only a small percentage of the secrecy involves U.S. national security," sources said, while admitting that the major reason was simply concealment from the American public.

An incident last weekend 65 miles north of here at Long Chien, headquarters for Gen. Vang Pao, leader of the American-supplied guerrilla forces near the Plain of Jars, illustrates the situation.

U.S. officials evicted an American from Long Chien even though the American was there at the personal invitation of Vang Pao. U.S. officials also warned another American visitor to remain in Vang Pao's own compound.

Asians Enter Area

Asian guests, though they lack any security clearance, are not harrassed.

Americans report, in fact, that Asians of all walks of life, including merchants, are free to visit Long Chien without a security check.

"Only Westerners, especially newsmen, are persona non grata up there," a source said.

This security system indicates the U.S. Embassy is more concerned with what is reported to the American people than it is with what Communist spies might see and report.

Yet much of what a reporter would see already has been

admitted by Nixon and has been reported in Senate hearings, including the armed American planes, rescue helicopters, the Air Force mechanics who service Lao dive bombers, the U.S. Air Force reconnaissance planes, the U.S. logistics officers, the civilian American pilots and the troops from Thailand and elsewhere.

Secrecy Farce

Nixon's admission that American military and civilian personnel were engaged in military advisory roles could even cover the armed Americans hired by the Central Intelligence Agency, who lounge around Long Chien in camouflaged fatigue uniforms.

Yet the secrecy farce continues, particularly around Long Chien and Laos Military Region II where U.S. involvement seems the greatest.

Americans run away when a newsmen appears, stopping their work, to the consternation of the Lao military.

U.S. officials in the field appear quite uninformed about what has been said about American activities in Laos by Nixon as well as by State Department and Pentagon aides in Washington.

In Laos the refrain rarely varies. Secrecy, it is said, is necessary for two reasons: to continue support for Premier Souvanna Phouma's position as a neutralist unaligned either with the United States or the Communists and to avoid breaking the cover of CIA employees or to publicize certain details of the agency's operations.

Unfortunately Souvanna's neutralist status is worn thin. Under North Vietnamese military attack his neutralist army dwindled away and he is forced to rely on rightist generals and their armies, the U.S. Air Force, the CIA and Thai troops for support.

A Western diplomat who described Souvanna as "devious," said Souvanna's credibility would be improved if he did not need to make denials of U.S. involvement that nobody believes.

Some CIA operations particularly intelligence gathering, do deserve secrecy. But this is possible without closing off whole regions of Laos to reporters when the U.S. government is spending some \$2 billion annually on the Laos war and Americans are being killed.

BUFFALO, N.Y.
NEWS NOV 14 1970

E - 281,982

Uncertain Role in Cambodia

The report that President Nixon is planning to ask \$250 million in aid for Cambodia is disconcerting because of the rapidly growing pattern of American involvement it seems to fit.

Last June, Mr. Nixon said that one alternative to the U. S. military intervention in Cambodia would have been massive military assistance to that beleaguered nation but that he "did not wish to get drawn into the permanent direct defense of Cambodia." U. S. assistance, he said, would be limited to supplying "small arms and relatively unsophisticated equipment." Total aid then, he said, amounted to about \$5 million. In August, the aid figure rose to \$40 million, and now it reportedly is up to \$250 million.

Likewise disconcerting were the recent reports that the U. S. Central Intelligence Agency and U. S. Special Forces units are training Cambodian troops in Laos and that U. S. ground forces have suffered casualties in the secret Laotian operations. The Pentagon insists there are no "ground combat troops" in Laos, but former Green Berets, working for the CIA, continue to train and guide mercenary tribesmen.

Similarly, the administration maintains that U. S. bombing in Cambodia is for the purpose of interdicting enemy supply lines into South Vietnam, explaining the many reports of combat support by saying that the bombing could have an "ancillary effect" in aiding Cambodian forces. These subterfuges can only

harm the credibility of the administration's policy of a phased withdrawal from Vietnam.

What is worrisome is not the cost of these operations or the handful of casualties involved but the uncertainty about what is really going on and where our policy is heading. In his Guam doctrine speech, Mr. Nixon has warned that we shouldn't make Asian nations so dependent on us that we become dragged into wars through "creeping involvement."

The disaster of another Vietnam seems no immediate threat in Cambodia, as the entire Indo-China war apparently is lowering in intensity, but the potential danger is that our growing, unspoken, open-ended commitment to Cambodia might involve our prestige and power if there were a sudden reversal of fortunes—for example, if the enemy launched a successful offensive.

There is no need for the administration to be plagued by public concern about its operations and goals. It is proceeding slowly but surely to extricate us from Vietnam, and if there are necessary Laotian and Cambodian operations that assist in that end, the administration should say so forthrightly instead of obscuring the issues with half-truths or bureaucratic jargon. At the same time, it should make clear to both the Cambodian government and the American public that there is a definite limit to our military assistance and that we have no commitment to preserve the present Cambodian regime at all costs.

14 NOV 1970

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601

WORLD IN REVOLUTION

STATINTL

BOLIVIA

Gen. Juan Jose Torres, who gained the presidency in a military coup last month, refused to allow former interior minister Antonio Arguedas to return to Bolivia from exile in Cuba. Arguedas, who sent the 1967 field diary of Che Guevara to Cuba, maintains a CIA plot forced him to leave his country. . . . A report in Muhammad Speaks said more than half the children born in Bolivia die before their fifth birthday and more than 40% of the population is stricken with tuberculosis.

THAILAND

The pending transfer of U.S. B-52 bombers from Okinawa to Thai bases was denounced by "The Voice of the People of Thailand" radio. . . . The Bangkok regime has admitted CIA planes presently taking off from Takli base to bring arms, military supplies and provisions to mercenaries in Laos. . . . Time magazine estimates some 280 U.S. "phantom" jets are based in Thailand and South Vietnam and said the U.S. has lost 7316 planes and helicopters in nearly 10 years of war in Southeast Asia. . . . Direct investment by U.S. groups in Thailand has reached some \$2 billion, with over 150 U.S.-owned companies, factories, banks and offices established in the country. Dominated sectors of the economy are finance, oil extracting and refining, tin refining, rubber processing and textiles. "In addition," according to Hsinhua, the China news agency, "U.S. and Japanese monopoly capitalists are dumping large quantities of commodities in Thailand, bringing about an unprecedented deficit in the latter's foreign trade."

A CAMBODIAN BID IN LAOS REPORTED

Troops Would Get U.S. Arms
There for Operations

By HENRY KAMM

Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Nov. 8.—According to informed sources, Cambodian officers are discussing with members of the entourage of Prince Boun Oum, the feudal chief of southern Laos, the possibility of sending sizable numbers of Cambodian troops to Laos to be equipped with United States arms.

These arms, it is said, would be in addition to the limited program of American military aid now granted to Cambodia.

At this stage, the sources said, the United States has not been brought into the discussions, which were initiated by the Cambodians. However, the impetus for the talks arose from the fact that about 1,500 Cambodian soldiers are being trained under the auspices of the United States Central Intelligence Agency in southern Laos.

The Cambodian idea is simply that Cambodia has more troops than arms, and Laos needs soldiers but has found it easy to get weapons and equipment from the United States.

Prince Operates Independently

The Cambodians evidently see no need to raise the issue, with the Government of Premier Souvanna Phouma, of having their troops equipped, trained and operating in the panhandle of Laos.

Not only is Prince Boun Oum's authority in southern Laos almost independent of the central Government, but also, perhaps of more importance, his dealings with the Central Intelligence Agency on military operations run by the agency in the Ho Chi Minh Trail region are direct and do not pass through Vientiane.

The C.I.A. supplies a mercenary army in Laos through funding that apparently has escaped strict Congressional control, while American aid to Cambodia is a limited program with a spending ceiling for the present fiscal year of \$40-million.

Although an additional appropriation is expected by early next year, it would still be easier to escape budgetary restrictions by supplying Cambodian troops through funds for Laos.

5 Battalions Considered

No specific proposals have been made, but Cambodian officers are thinking in terms of five battalions, each of about 600 men. They feel that such a force would be of equal value to Laos and Cambodia and could operate in either country.

At the moment, the Vietnamese Communists control roughly the eastern half of the Laotian panhandle as well as the adjoining Cambodian provinces of Ratanakiri and Stung-treng to the south.

The Laotian Government is worried about Communist attempts to widen the Ho Chi Minh Trail network westward to supply their forces in Cambodia.

Cambodian authorities consider it imperative to introduce at least small military units into the occupied provinces to give the civilian population a rallying point and to counter Communist political influence in the regions they have held since April.

Greater Containment Needed

Intelligence reports of a growing Communist build-up in southern Laos have added urgency to the need for troops to contain the Communists, keep their flow of men and supplies under surveillance and call in American air strikes. Most of American bombing is now concentrated on southern Laos.

According to informed sources, the Communist build-up has already caused an increase in raids across the border into Laos by South Vietnamese irregulars led by American Special Forces troops. It has also led to Thai Government forces in Champasak Province, between the Thai border and the Mekong River.

STATINTL

LAOS

Toward Talks?

When war came in earnest to Cambodia last spring, the capital city of Phnom-Penh was transformed almost overnight into an armed camp. The neighboring kingdom of Laos has been ravaged by war for a quarter-century without letup; yet a visitor would never know it by looking at its capital. Vientiane is an easygoing city of 150,000 with no barbed wire, no bunkers and no nighttime mortar attacks. Chickens and geese cackle and honk in the main street during the day. It is still safe to walk the streets after dark. The primary sources of amusement are a few opium dens and sporting houses. Recently a wedding reception was held in an open-air café next door to one of the brothels, and the unoccupied girls came out to watch the proceedings with wistful smiles.

Out in the countryside, the picture is entirely different. Communist Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese troops hold roughly two-thirds of the country, including the Plain of Jars just 40 miles north of the capital and the Ho Chi Minh Trail in the south. Some 270,000 people—out of Laos' total population of 2,500,000—are jammed into chaotic refugee camps. Pro-government forces have been killed at the appalling rate of 4,000 per year. U.S. B-52s regularly bomb the Laotian section of the Ho Chi Minh Trail. On the ground, the Pathet Lao are in constant conflict with tough, CIA-trained troops from the Meo mountain tribes, who last month seized two key positions on the edge of the Plain of Jars. Last week the Pathet Lao vowed that they would retake the two areas "very soon."

Despite that promise, the diplomatic community in Vientiane is increasingly confident that peace talks will begin as early as next month, between representatives of Premier Prince Souvanna Phouma and his half-brother, Prince Souphanouvong, head of the Pathet Lao.

The last time the country's contending factions formally got together was in 1962, when the Geneva accords placed Laos in the hands of a clumsy, three-headed regime composed of rightists, neutralists and leftists. That arrangement soon broke down, and since then the three factions have struggled with almost ritualistic regularity, advancing and retreating like choreographed troops in a lethal ballet.

A significant break came in June when Souphanouvong suggested that the time had come for "an urgent peace settlement." One of the strings dangling from that offer, however, was a demand for immediate cessation of U.S. bombing, particularly along the Laotian portion of the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Souvanna Phouma rejected the offer, and the

gust, Souphanouvong again called for talks, this time without mentioning a U.S. bombing halt as a precondition.

On his return to Laos last week from a round-the-world swing, Souvanna Phouma again promised to get talks going. In view of President Nixon's five-point peace program involving all of Southeast Asia, the Prince insisted that the Laotian situation be considered separately from Viet Nam and Cambodia.

Although Souvanna Phouma is recognized as the legitimate head of the government in Laos, the Pathet Lao refuse to negotiate with him as such. They insist on meeting him only as the leader of a warring faction. Last week there was promise of a breakthrough. With Souvanna's approval, a letter went out to the Communists referring to a possible meeting between "representatives of the two princes," precisely the wording used by the Pathet Lao.

Double Benefits. Few observers hold any hope that even if talks take place and a settlement is reached, a neutral state would long endure. Caught in the cross-currents of international politics, the country has long been plagued by feuding factions. Perhaps the greatest hope for some kind of settlement is that it would benefit both sides. An agreement would free Communist forces, particularly the North Vietnamese, for use in Cambodia and Viet Nam. Additionally, Laotian supply routes have become even more important for the Communists since the closing of the Cambodian port of Sihanoukville. The Communists hope that peace would bring a bombing halt along the Laotian portions of the Ho Chi Minh Trail. It is extremely unlikely, however, that the U.S. will go along with any such call for a bombing halt.

For Souvanna, a reorganized Laotian government could begin at last to focus attention on the needs of its people. "The Laos are tired; they have been bled white," says a diplomat in Vientiane. Cause for optimism can also be found in the nature of the Laotian people, for whom the war has long been a crippling burden. In the airport at Vientiane hangs a poorly printed sign in English, Lao, Sanskrit and Hindi that touchingly sums up the Laotian view of how the world ought to behave—but rarely does. It says: HATRED NEVER CEASES BY HATRED. INDEED, HATRED CEASES BY LOVE. THIS IS THE ETERNAL LAW.

U. S. Airdrops Rice to Feed Meo Hill Tribesmen in Laos

STATINTL

VIENTIANE, Laos, Nov. 7 (AP)—The mountains seem to grow on all sides as the old C46 slips into its first run down the valley.

Rocks jut from the jungled hillsides a scant 200 yards off the right wingtip, but the pilot's attention is on the target zone, ahead and 300 feet below.

He flips a switch and a bell rings. There is feverish activity in the rear. Two wooden pallets loaded with sacks of rice tumble out of the plane.

Watching safely from a distance as the pallets plummet earthward are Meo hill tribesmen. The Meo are classified as refugees, thus eligible for rice supplied by air until their own crops make them self-sufficient.

Work for U. S.

Pilot Ted Greenlaw of Los Angeles and his copilot, Duane L. Dillard of Santa Barbara, Cal., work for Continental Air Services, one of the two charter lines that fly missions in Laos on behalf of the United States Aid mission.

The tasks of some 200 civilian pilots who fly for Continental and Air America—the so-called CIA airline—range from delivering rice to refugees and the loyal Meo army to ferrying troops on combat assaults. The rice drop is the only kind of mission outsiders are permitted to see in Laos.

It is dangerous work, as tricky as low-level bombing, and frequently in bad weather. There always is the threat of being fired on by North Vietnamese or Pathet Lao troops.

Ex-Military Men

Most of Air America's pilots and a few of Continental's are ex-military men, many with combat flying experience in Viet Nam. In these jobs they earn hazardous-duty pay that

can bring them more than \$25,000 a year in total earnings.

Most of the pilots cultivate a soldier-of-fortune image—sideburns, beer guts and wellington boots—alho many live with wives and children in the big American colony in Vientiane.

Almost to a man, they are taciturn with outsiders and don't talk about their work.

Prestigious Job

The most dangerous job on a rice flight is that of the kickers, who tie themselves to the plane with nylon rope and kick and shove the wooden pallets out the open door.

The 38 kickers employed by the two airlines are all Laotian. The pay is good and the job is considered prestigious among the Laotians.

The U. S. refugee aid program in Laos costs \$18 million and delivers 1,800 metric tons of rice a month to the isolated refugee camps and villages.

Rice drops are based on reports from the field by U. S. aid officials and a handful of Americans who work for International Voluntary Services, a sort of private Peace Corps organization. They visit the villagers and confer on needs with the chiefs.

Laos patriots have upper hand

By Richard E. Ward

Representatives of the Lao Patriotic Front and the Vientiane regime last week agreed on a formula for talks. But a continuing U.S. escalation in Laos makes it apparent that Washington is determined to destroy any possibilities for a negotiated settlement of the conflict in Laos at this time.

Behind last week's development is three years of serious and irreversible military setbacks for the U.S.-controlled military forces of the Vientiane regime, despite massive U.S. bombing and the use of Thai and Saigon mercenaries.

The U.S.-led military forces in Laos, including the CIA's "clandestine army" of mercenary troops, are no longer effective instruments for waging offensive operations. This was demonstrated by the complete failure of the traditional rainy season "offensive" this summer and autumn.

The wet season gives a marked advantage to the U.S.-Vientiane troops because they have the use of air transport while the Pathet Lao forces, which travel only by foot or surface vehicle, are hindered by the rains that wash out bridges and turn roads into mud bogs.

Last year, the CIA's main force in Laos under Gen. Vang Pao occupied the Plain of Jars. Although proclaimed as a great victory in U.S. communiques, it apparently was a desperate last measure. Actually, there had been relatively little fighting until the Pathet Lao regrouped for a counterattack which culminated in a decisive victory in February of this year. Vang Pao's forces were trounced while the U.S. launched the heaviest air attacks in the history of the Laotian conflict. U.S. air power could not make up for the deficiencies already evident in Vang Pao's army.

Big loss for Vang Pao

By last spring, Vang Pao's troops, estimated at 17,000 during the summer of 1969, were down to 6000, as a result of casualties and desertions among the Meo mercenaries. Subsequently, Vang Pao is said to have recruited new troops, mainly untrained youth and possibly even some Thais.

During his "offensive" this year Vang Pao could do no more than "take" a couple of towns of no strategic significance near the Plain of Jars. The towns had previously been left deserted by the Pathet Lao, which held all its important gains made during the first half of this year, including the Plain of Jars and the towns of Attopeu and Saravane in southern Laos. The liberation of these towns and the holding of the surrounding region have strategic significance because they block the U.S. aim of establishing a corridor in southern Laos between Thailand and South Vietnam.

Washington has not abandoned this strategy for isolating the NLF forces in South Vietnam. During most of October, the U.S. command admitted that its entire complement of B-52s based in Thailand have been bombing in southern Laos, ostensibly attacking the "Ho Chi Minh trail." Since this summer, U.S. helicopters have been ferrying Saigon troops and American "advisors" on secret operations, also in southern Laos.

For several months the U.S. command in Saigon has reported weekly losses of helicopters in Laos while saying nothing about casualties among U.S. personnel. But AP correspondent George Esper, in an Oct. 25 dispatch from Saigon, reveals: "U.S. Special Forces troops leading clandestine operations in Laos have suffered scores of casualties that never have been made public. . . . American helicopters from bases in Laos are participating in ground operations in Laos."

Esper notes the ritualistic denial by the U.S. that "there are no U.S. ground troops in Laos." The writer observes, "does not take into account Special Forces troops leading reconnaissance patrols." In one of the largest of these operations in September, according to Esper "about 150

mercenaries and 10 U.S. Special Forces troopers" were sent into Laos in Marine CH-63 troop-carrying helicopters of which two were downed.

Operation Obfuscation

Washington goes to elaborate lengths to conceal its operations in Laos. In an article entitled, "Laos: The Men Who Aren't There," published in the Sept. 19 Far Eastern Economic Review, a Hong Kong business weekly, Nancy Duncan exposes the official pretense that there are only 21 Americans in the Laotian royal capital of Luang Prabang, where there is a base for the CIA's Air America and other aircraft sent on raids over Pathet Lao territory only a few miles distant.

Duncan reports observing first-hand many uncounted Americans in Luang Prabang. She states that the U.S. sends its personnel to Laos on "temporary duty," while recording them as being stationed in Thailand, the Philippines and even the U.S. CIA personnel, Air America employees and "retired" military men are among the Americans "who aren't there."

Further revelations about the CIA's activities in Laos were published in September in a staff report of the Senate Subcommittee on Refugees, headed by Sen. Edward Kennedy. Staff counsel Dale S. De Haan and subcommittee consultant Jerry M. Tinker, who visited Indochina this past summer, write:

"From the outset, the USAID refugee program in Laos has been inextricably tied to and part of, the U.S. paramilitary effort in northern Laos. In fact, from conversations with USAID officials in Vientiane and other sources, it is clear that until relatively recent times the USAID refugee program was simply a euphemism to cover American assistance to persons, mostly hill tribesmen, who agreed to take up arms and support efforts against the Pathet Lao."

U.S. bomb victims

De Haan and Tinker's report, entitled "Refugee and Civilian War Casualty Problems in Indochina," elucidates other aspects of U.S. policy and its failures in Laos. The authors show that there has been a massive increase in the number of "refugees," who actually are persons displaced by U.S. bombing and "strategic movement of people." They state:

"Population control and the strategic movement of people in Laos has been justified on two grounds: First, it denies the Pathet Lao the resources of the local population and second, it secures more of the population under government control. Or, as one observer has said, 'If you can't take the government to the people, then you bring the people to the government.'

"Evidence suggests that this approach has been used extensively in Laos, with perhaps as much as a third of the total refugee movement being created through government sponsored, and sometimes government coerced, village evacuations. This has been particularly true of recent refugee movements from the Plain of Jars."

U.S. bombing of Laos was stepped up markedly following the bombing halt over North Vietnam, according to De Haan and Tinker, who write: "Refugees say, according to one source, that during some of this bombing phase, jets have come daily—dropping napalm, phosphorous, and anti-personnel bombs. They say the jets bombed both villages and forests, that they spent most of their time in holes or caves, and that they suffered numerous civilian casualties. They say that everything was fired on—buffaloes, cows, ricefields, schools, temples, tiny shelters outside the village, in addition to, of course, all people."

The subcommittee investigators also reveal the falsity of the U.S. claim that the Pathet Lao controls the bombing in Laos to restrict it to military targets. In reality, "as critics have long argued, 'free fire' zones are not uncommon in Laos and the

NOV 1970

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R000700020001-5

The Dominoization of Thailand

STATINTL

IN 1861, KING MONGKUT of Siam offered Abraham Lincoln elephants to aid the Union cause in the Civil War. The President politely refused the help, but that was not the end of military relations between the two countries. Thailand is no longer whimsically isolated from world realities; nor does it have a choice in the way it lines up on international issues. Over the past two decades, Thais have watched their country become a giant airstrip, where American B-52s, fighter-bombers and helicopter gunships roar off on missions of death for other Southeast Asian countries. They have seen their own troops become U.S. mercenaries, and their borders used as staging points for Special Forces and CIA personnel on missions of subversion into Laos and North Vietnam.

Thais have watched helplessly as their nation has become an American military base and neo-colony. U.S. Senator Gale McGee stated in a recent speech that "Southeast Asia is the last major resource area outside the control of any one of the major powers on the globe." And the mammoth Chase Manhattan Bank has been even more specific: "Thailand promises to be an excellent investment and sales area for Americans," its Economic Research Division writes, "if rebel insurgency can be contained."

The various minorities that make up Thailand have tried to resist the destruction of their culture and their forcible integration into a U.S.-controlled political economy. But the U.S. military advisors who train Thai troops to fight in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos have also trained them to fight rebels at home. Meanwhile hordes of AID and American university personnel comb the countryside, studying every aspect of Thai life and recommending and implementing programs of counter-insurgency.

Thailand has changed greatly in the century since its king naively offered a U.S. President military aid. Since then America has decided to fight its wars abroad, not at home—wars that make sure countries like Thailand stay in the Free World bank account.

[I]

THE THAI ELITE, whose body and soul is now completely owned, once prided itself on an ability to resist colonial domination. In the 19th century, the Thais closed their country to the probes of imperialism, and tried to modernize by selective contact with the West. This relative independence was validated by a British-French agreement to let Thailand remain a buffer state between their respective colonial empires in Malaya-Burma and Indochina.

Thailand's privileged status was ended by an event which has shaped the course of its history for the last quarter century: the United States' victory over Japan in World War II and its emergence as the dominant power in the Pacific Basin. The U.S. quickly decided that Thailand's position was critical for consolidating an American foothold on the Southeast Asian mainland; by 1950, U.S. military and economic aid began to flow to the Thai government, then headed by General Phibun, a former Japanese puppet whose mili-

tary regime rode to power on a 1948 coup.

Urged on by U.S. money and by the long shadow of the Chinese Revolution, the Thai army and police began an anti-communist crusade in the early '50s. Their campaign was focused on Thailand's Chinese Community, and it began officially in 1952 with the passage of the Un-Thai Activities Act (sic), supposedly aimed at combating "communist subversion," even though the Thai Chinese Community was notoriously apolitical. But if General Phibun's attack could not rid his country of a communist menace that did not exist, it could establish his control over the Chinese Community which had traditionally been the backbone for Thailand's indigenous economy. The Chinese entrepreneurs and businessmen responded to the anti-communist hysteria by paying a kind of "protection" money to the Thai elite—offering them positions on the boards of directors of Chinese corporations and other financial incentives.

Even though it was borne of intimidation, this alliance might have been able to slowly industrialize Thailand by relying on domestic rather than Western capital and thus avoiding the disastrous controls that were always attached to investment. But this last hope for economic autonomy in Thailand was quickly foreclosed by the U.S.

THAILAND'S SMALL MEASURE OF economic independence had rested upon the government's ability to finance the infrastructure for development from export surplus. But after the Korean War, the U.S. dumped large quantities of tin, Thailand's third largest export, on the world market; meanwhile, the price of rubber, Thailand's second largest export, was forced down by the falling off of war-time demand and by American corporations' marketing of new synthetics; the price of rice, Thailand's largest single export, was also plummeting.

As this surplus dried up, the U.S. and its international financial arm, the World Bank, prepared to appear at the moment of Thai financial crisis with offers of financial and technical assistance. All that was asked in return for this subsidy was that the Thai military regime abandon any attempts to create an autonomous economy and allow Thailand to become an object of U.S. corporate expansion.

Since Thailand's status as a bona fide U.S. colony has been guaranteed, American financial commitments—now totaling nearly \$600 million in economic assistance and some \$900 million in military aid—have been accelerated. But the U.S. was not content with being the Thais' guardian. It wanted to be their mentor as well. And thus, while systematically destroying what chance the Thais might have had for economic independence, the U.S. has also set about the task of re-ordering Thai society—from rebuilding its military and government administration, to introducing new agricultural techniques and a Western-oriented educational system. To coordinate and implement this massive cultural onslaught, it has called in the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), which has its own kind of Catch 22: While AID is supposed to help Third World nations help themselves, it in fact helps American businessmen help themselves to the Third World. This is AID's mandate.

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R000700020001-5

by Banning Garrett

28 Oct 1970

STATINTL

THE SECRET WAR IN LAOS

M. HEVINSKY

THE night sky blotted out the lights of receding Hanoi as our plane quickly took on altitude. Only two hours' flight separate Hanoi from the Laotian capital of Vientiane. I have flown this route repeatedly in recent years. The time passes quickly in conversation with the pilot of the plane servicing the International Supervision and Control Commission. The pilot, who makes the Saigon-Pnom Penh-Vientiane-Hanoi flight once weekly, has become a carrier of the latest news. "Yesterday," he told me on this occasion, "the Tan Son Nhut airfield in Saigon was shelled, there was a hurricane in Pnom Penh, an attempt was made on the life of Colonel Phethrasi, the Pathet Lao representative in Vientiane."

I am acquainted with Colonel Phethrasi, have often visited him in his Vientiane residence which is blockaded by government army and police patrols.

"Is Phethrasi all right?" I asked the pilot.

"He wasn't hurt, but one of his bodyguards was. Haven't heard the details of the attack yet."

Vientiane's shabby old Wattay airfield was dimly lit. While a few sleepy officials quickly attended to the formalities I watched a group of about forty men in the uniform of Saigon army pilots board a green bus waiting near a sign saying "Welcome to Vientiane."

"South Vietnamese airmen," a young porter explained. "Come to attend That Louang, our national holiday, as a reward for distinguished service."

A quarter of an hour later my taxi

stopped at the Constellation Hotel. Maurice Cavalier, its owner, was an old acquaintance. The only vacant room he had was next door to the South Vietnam pilots I'd seen at the airfield.

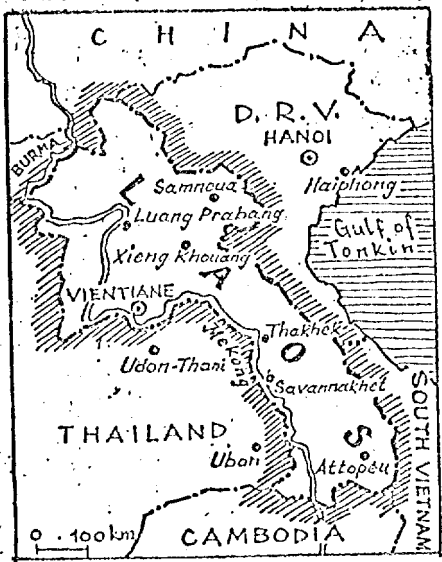
"I hope you don't mind?" he laughed. "One thing, though, they're not likely to bother you. They've been strictly forbidden to talk to foreigners for fear they might spill the beans about their heroic deeds."

The next morning the Novosti Press Agency correspondent in Vientiane, Yuri Kosinsky, and I went to see the That Louang festivities. We drove along the highway hugging the steep left bank of the now shallow Mekong and then along the old dam. A wide road led to the northeast part of the city where stands the kingdom's holy shrine, the That Louang, pagoda, built back in the middle of the 16th century. Its gilded spire rises high above the coconut palms as though to accentuate the majestic landscape. All the notabilities of the country had gathered there for the ceremony opened by King Sri Savang Vatthana.

It was there at the pagoda that I met Colonel Phethrasi. I was glad to see him as hale and hearty as ever. Before entering the pagoda we walked about a while and he told me about the raid on his residence, often referred to in Vientiane as "Pathet Lao House," concluding his story with the comment:

"This wasn't the first and won't be the last act of provocation against us."

Sure enough, less than a month later



Pathet Lao House' was attacked again. The provocateurs who hurled grenades at it were recruited and trained by Laotian reactionaries and CIA agents.

THE CIA IN VIENTIANE

On May 17, 1964, the United States, in gross violation of the Geneva agreements of 1962, savagely bombed Laotian territory. Official Washington continually assured the world that the U.S. was not interfering in Laotian affairs, but towards the end of last year, when American aggression had been escalated to such proportions that it could no longer be concealed, it was forced to admit that it had "a few advisers" in Laos and that the Nixon Administration had sanctioned the bombardment of Laos. In the course of the current year the U.S. flew 500 and more missions daily over Laotian territory.

In March 1970 the White House also admitted that there were 1,040 Americans in Laos (at the end of 1969 the world press had already reported the presence of 12,000 American military and civilians). More, the *Wall Street Journal* wrote that the CIA was employing foreign mercenaries as well

U.S. Advisers Role in Laos Reported

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE

Special to The Star

VIENTIANE — U.S. advisers have been on the ground working in combat situations in Laos since 1964, Lao military sources say.

Lao military sources, commenting on stories Monday that U.S. troops have been leading ground strikes in the Ho Chi Minh Trail area in South Laos said "yes, sometimes there are Americans and South Vietnamese in attacks there. The North Vietnamese have taken over that part of Laos. We have no control over it now. Souvanna Phouma has said the trails are part of the Vietnamese war.

The sources admitted they knew of occasions when U.S. advisers were present during fighting in other parts of Laos.

3 Types of Advisor

U.S. ground advisers in Laos break down into three categories.

Group is composed of advisers belonging to the studies and observation group of the Special Forces. These men, apart from certain special operations, operate against the Ho Chi Minh Trail in the Laos panhandle. Their missions include leading troops of various Asian nationalities in what the Lao military call "2 commando destruction" operations against parts of the trail.

When Americans are killed, they are included in the Vietnam casualty list. In 1967, one such group operated in South Vietnam, near Ke San village south of the Demilitarized Zone. They entered Laos often by helicopter.

The second group of advisers in Laos consists of ex-military men employed by the operations section of the Central Intelligence Agency.

These men, in South Laos work the west flank of the trail and supplement the activities of Special Forces groups working out of Vietnam.

In North Laos they supervise paramilitary groups in combat against North Vietnamese.

Not One Trail

The Ho Chi Minh Trail is not one trail, but a mass of small trails, paths and rivers with truck bypasses all interlocking. The whole thing is split into sections to which North Vietnamese units are permanently assigned. Trucks shuttle back and forth on each section and never cross into other sections.

To monitor and attack this

led by American operatives, are used.

In August 1965 I walked into the western flank of the Ho Chi Minh Trail east of the town of Saravane where I met one agency's paramilitary American operatives.

That morning he had been chased away from a ridge overlooking the trail by Communist troops and escaped after a fire-fight. He was dressed in a one piece green fatigues. He led tribal troops back into the area.

Two such operatives usually are present in 10-man surveillance and harassment teams working North Vietnamese lines of communication in northern Laos, U.S. sources say.

The third group of men are U.S. Army officers and non-commissioned officers assigned to Laos units, usually on temporary duty.

'65 Incident Recalled

These men give advice to Laos commanders under fire. In November 1965, I saw a U.S. Army captain, while under fire from a North Vietnamese unit, give advice to Col. Thao Ly, then commanding paratroop group mobile 21 of the Royal Lao army. The captain advised the colonel to bring up a howitzer to fire down a cave mouth where North Vietnamese troops had taken shelter.

The captain had two U.S. Army sergeants who handled communications further back. Americans continue to carry out those duties.

At Paksane earlier this year, correspondents saw two U.S. Army officers who asked their names not be divulged accompanying the Laos 10th Battalion on what Lao officers said was the start of a military operation.

One officer, a colonel, was regional adviser to the 5th Military Region. The other, a major, was armed with an M16 rifle.

U.S. military men played the part of ground controllers during North Vietnamese attacks on Long Chien this year. At Senate hearings, it was admitted that "validated" U.S. Army personnel may take part as forward air guides. This is extremely dangerous duty involving approaching enemy units and infiltrating past

their patrols to pinpoint Red positions for air strikes.

The U.S. military in Vientiane in testimony before a Senate committee, said U.S. advisers in Laos are not combat advisers.

The U.S. press is restricted in traveling to Laos battlefields to prevent them seeing Americans in action.

The American troops, who number fewer than 300, are working with Lao and tribal guerrillas against thousands of Hanoi troops.

STATINTL

E - 88,749

OCT 26 1970

U. S. Casualties in Laos Reportedly Camouflaged

From Our News Wires

SAIGON -- Highly placed sources in Saigon said U.S. Special Forces troops have suffered scores of casualties in recent months leading secret operations in Laos that have not been made public. Instead the casualties are lumped in with the others in the Vietnam war that are announced every Thursday.

* * *

The sources confirmed that American helicopters from bases in South Vietnam are participating in ground operations in Laos.

* * *

It was also learned that about 150 tribal mercenaries and 10 U.S. Special Forces troops were used as bait to flush out two enemy battalions for American bombers in Laos last month. Informants said more than 500 North Vietnamese troops were killed. A dozen mercenaries were also reported killed and 40 to 50

mercenaries and two Americans wounded in the operation.

AMERICAN DENIAL

American officials in Saigon and Vientiane, acting under orders from Washington, said last March they would announce all casualty figures from Laos. But U.S. casualty summaries since that date list no ground combat casualties for Laos, although a highly placed source said: "American Special Forces troops operating out of South Vietnam are losing one or two killed in Laos every month and anywhere from three to 10 wounded."

The source said the casualties are being incorporated in the weekly summary of "cumulative figures for Southeast Asia," announced every Thursday.

* * *

Asked about this, a spokesman for the

U.S. Command said: "There are no U.S. ground combat troops in Laos."

The U.S. Command also announced that the total number of U.S. troops in Vietnam dropped 1,800 last week, to 377,100. It was the lowest total since December 1966.

6,000-MAN DRIVE

The South Vietnamese Command said today government troops have launched a new 6,000-man drive against Vietcong and North Vietnamese sanctuaries in Cambodia with the end of monsoon rains.

* * *

The idea was to clear Vietcong and North Vietnamese concentrations that had built up since the lull in fighting there.

The new operation brought to 17,500 the number of South Vietnamese troops in Cambodia.

* * *

Reports from provincial officials in Thailand said an American helicopter belonging to Air America, the charter agency which works for the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) exploded and crashed in a rice field yesterday in Pichit Province.

The area is near the Laotian border.

3 YANKS KILLED

Those killed included three Americans and three Laotians, the provincial reports said. The U.S. Embassy in Bangkok and the Air America spokesman in Bangkok had no details.

The reports said the helicopter was en route from Laos to the Royal Thai Air Base at Takli, 110 miles north of Bangkok.

23 OCT 1970

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80

CAMBODIAN FORCE TRAINING IN LAOS

C.I.A. Runs Effort to Build
Group for Possible Use in
Ho Chi Minh Trail Area

By HENRY KAMM

Special to The New York Times

PNOMPENH, Cambodia, Oct. 22—Reliable sources have reported that three Cambodian battalions—about 1,500 men—are at an American Special Forces camp in southern Laos for commando training and possible use in the Laotian-Cambodian border region.

The camp—at Paksong, at the northern rim of the Boloven Plateau in the Laotian panhandle—is a principal base for surveillance of the Ho Chi Minh Trail to the east and for raids on it. Those operations, as well as the training of Laotian and now Cambodian troops to participate in them, are carried out under the direction of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The first Cambodians were reported to have arrived in late spring. About 600 of them are said to have been recruited among refugees who drifted northward to the Mekong River island of Khong, on the Laotian side of the border, as North Vietnamese troops were seizing control of the Cambodian border province of Stung Treng.

Indications are that the deployment of the Cambodian soldiers in neutral Laos was initiated by the intelligence agency in cooperation with some quarters in the Cambodian and Laotian military. There are also indications that none of the Governments involved, not even the United States Embassies here and in the Laotian capital of Vientiane, have been informed.

American officials declined comment on the report, the Laotian Embassy here denied it and the chief of Cambodian military intelligence, Lieut. Col. Kim Eng Kouroudeth, said he could not discuss it.

With the hold of the Vientiane Government over the south almost negligible, informed sources presume that the introduction of the Cambodian troops was arranged with Prince Souvanna Phouma of Champassak, the effective ruler of the portions

of southern Laos not controlled by the Vietnamese Communists.

In this connection it was noted that Prince Sissouk of Champassak, who enjoys the esteem of the United States and is a nephew of Prince Boun Oum, was named Acting Defense Minister of Laos earlier this year. Furthermore, Maj. Gen. Phassouk Somly, who is close to Prince Boun Oum and commands the southernmost military region, has had direct dealings with the intelligence agency for many years.

In Government's Interest

The sources said it would be in the interest of Prince Souvanna Phouma's Government to remain at least officially unaware of the presence of the Cambodian troops because the Geneva accord of 1962 on the neutrality and independence of Laos, which the Premier is striving to make effective, forbids the presence of foreign troops.

Nonetheless, the accords were violated by five powers before Cambodia did so.

North Vietnam has an army estimated at upward of 50,000 men in Laos in support, or effective domination, of the Communist Pathet Lao rebellion. They cooperate with about 6,000 Chinese Communist troops building and guarding a road toward the Thai frontier that the Laotian Government did not ask them to build.

The United States has a large staff of military attachés as advisers to the regular Laotian Army and, through the Central Intelligence Agency, underwrites, supplies, advises and airlifts a clandestine mercenary army in Laos.

That is in addition to extensive air attacks throughout the country, with particular concentration on the Ho Chi Minh Trail, on which North Vietnam moves men and supplies to South Vietnam in circumvention of the Geneva accords of 1954, which ended the Indochina war, and of the demilitarized zone on the border between North and South Vietnam.

Thailand frequently sends troops across the border for brief operations and has recently begun to station units in Sayaboury Province in the north and in Champassak Province in the south, in the areas between the Mekong River and the border.

South Vietnamese units also frequently cross the border in hot pursuit, but Prince Souvanna Phouma is believed to have resisted more long-term operations by Saigon. That is in line with reports and expectations among Laotians that they will have a difficult time under the

best of circumstances in persuading their foreign friends and foes to return their country to them if peace comes to Indochina.

Diplomatic considerations aside, informed sources believe that the use of Cambodian troops in Laotian border area serves the interests of both countries.

Main Staging Area

Laotian strength in the south showed signs of great attrition earlier this year, when the Government abandoned two important towns, Saravane and Attopeu, with little resistance.

Although both had long been accessible only by air, they served as important centers of American-directed guerrilla units in their surveillance and occasional spoiling operations along the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

The two provincial capitals fell as Communist forces mounted pressure on southern Laos in the wake of the outbreak of fighting in Cambodia. With the extension of Vietnamese Communist operations throughout Cambodia and the loss of the border sanctuaries and the supply route from the Cambodian port of Kompong Som, southern Laos became the main depot and staging area.

During the current lull in fighting throughout Indochina, allied intelligence is especially concerned over a reported build-up of the Communists' strength in the southern panhandle. It is believed that to supply their forces in Cambodia they will be obliged to widen the Ho Chi Minh network of trails toward the west and south.

To resist that, as well as to minimize the flow of supplies southward, greater allied strength is said to be needed in southern Laos. But Laos, whose population does not exceed three million and where child soldiers have become a commonplace, is running out of men. Cambodia, on the other hand, has more volunteers than arms.

STATINTL

STATINTL

19 OCT 1970

Royal Laotian Navy Fears River Dragons, Whirlpools and Catfish

Sailors Don't Rule the Waves
But Keep Busy Fighting Rust;
Hand-Painted Nautical Charts

By PETER R. KANN

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

VIENTIANE, Laos—"We are not rich like the American Navy," says Prince Sinthanarong Kindarong, as he fords a mud-puddle and then carefully picks his way past several weed-camouflaged mounds of water buffalo dung. He's on his way across Royal Navy headquarters to show a visitor one of the ships under his command.

The gunboat, minus guns and engine, is resting on the riverbank, awaiting repairs. "It has been here for some time," says the prince, referring either to the boat or to a chicken, which has laid three eggs under the rusted hull.

Prince Sinthanarong—like most prominent Laotians, a cousin of this country's king—is commander of the Royal Laotian Navy, one of the smallest, poorest and least combative naval forces in the world. This is not inappropriate, for Laos would surely be one of the world's least noteworthy nations were it not for the North Vietnamese and Americans. Their conflicting goals in Indochina have long since turned supposedly neutral Laos into a battlefield and many of the nation's decidedly unmilitaristic and apolitical people into war refugees.

The Laotian Army gradually has been drawn into the Indochina war. Thousands of mountain tribesmen, paid and directed by the CIA, serve as intelligence and guerrilla operatives. The Army has increasingly—though not always very willingly—been called upon to defend towns and roads, or at least its own primitive outposts, from Communist attack.

The 700-man Royal Laotian Navy, in its wisdom and perhaps to its credit, has managed to remain largely irrelevant to the war. Unadvised, unequipped and unaggressive, it is the quintessential Asian nonfighting force. It has never been Americanized, which at least means it will never need to be Laotianized.

Who Advises the Navy?

Information on the Royal Navy is not easily come by. French officials here believe that Americans advise the fleet. Some Americans believe it has French advisers. In fact, the Americans have no naval officers at all in Laos. The French used to have one, but he left the kingdom last year. "He has not been replaced, the French economy is in very bad shape you know," says French-educated Prince Sinthanarong.

There is an American Navy captain in Bangkok who is accredited as naval attache to the royal fleet. But he declines to answer any questions because all his information is "classified." Direct benefit to the enemy," he says. The captain also refuses to discuss American aid to the Royal Navy. It appears to be far from

According to Prince Sinthanarong, the Royal Navy has 28 vessels: two 52-foot gunboats called vedettes, a dozen 36-foot vedettes, seven U.S. Navy surplus landing craft and seven transport craft "of local construction in material of wood." The prince notes, however, that the fleet is not entirely operational. According to Jane's Fighting Ships, in which Laos rates an even more cursory mention than Gabon or Guatemala, the Royal Navy has 31 ships, of which 11 are "in commission" and 23 are "in reserve."

A Fearsome Fleet

All these statistics may be somewhat deceptive. Here at naval headquarters there are only five boats afloat. Four are wooden transport vessels, all lacking engines. The fifth is by far the largest ship in the Royal Navy—an 80-foot, iron-hulled monster with a towering black smokestack. The ship is powered by a wood-burning furnace. It was built in 1904. On shore, awaiting repairs, are six vedettes and a landing craft. The Prince explains that it will take some time to clear this backlog: "We can repair only two ships a year," he says.

If Vientiane naval headquarters is a somewhat placid place, the Royal Navy's base at Pak Se, in southern Laos, is a naval graveyard. Of nine vessels on display one recent morning, six were resting ashore in rusted "reserve"; two others were afloat but engineless. The ninth boat was operational and bristled with four mounted machine guns. A young sailor aboard the gunboat was asked if the guns were ever fired. "Yes," he replied, "but only in practice."

What the Royal Navy largely lacks, aside from boats, is water. Laos is nothing if not landlocked. The Navy thus is limited to river operations, mostly along the Mekong, which enters northern Laos from China and Burma and flows out of southern Laos into Cambodia, Vietnam and the South China Sea.

The Mekong is a generally benevolent waterway—wide, muddy and meandering. But there are some hazards, including rocks, rapids, sandbars, 10-foot catfish and—according to most Laotians—river dragons. Prince Sinthanarong, who admits to literary talents, describes some of the dangers in the Royal Navy manual:

"The Mekong, by its hazardous and tumultuous course, its shifting riverbed strewn with sandbars and menacing rocks, the violence of its currents and whirlpools, the dangers presented by its many rapids and by the great seasonal fluctuations of its level, demands, as much from men as from boats, great skill to confront the vicissitudes of navigation which, at all times, constitute a great part of adventure."

The vicissitudes of navigation are not eased much by the Royal Navy's intricate, hand-painted navigation charts. Unfortunately, many of these works of art date back to the 1950s, which means they do not precisely correspond to the realities of the Mekong's constantly shifting riverbed.

The second largest river in Laos is the Sekong, an increasingly important route for North Vietnamese supplies moving from the Ho Chi Minh trail area of eastern Laos down into northern Cambodia. The Royal Navy, however, doesn't operate on the Sekong. This is partly because of the danger of planting mines into the river. These mines are set to explode upon the approach of any metal object—which would include Royal Navy gun-

mostly wooden sampans and bamboo rafts. And, when the North Vietnamese want to ship metal cargo down the Sekong, they generally float empty oil drums down the river first to detonate the mines.

But the Royal Navy would be likely to stay off the Sekong in any case, since confronting the North Vietnamese is not one of its missions. These are listed in the Royal Navy manual as reconnaissance, liaison, transport, fire support and unloading. Loading is not listed though perhaps it's assumed.

In reality, the Navy—when it has ships in commission—mostly seems to carry military supplies and, occasionally, troops. Also, it sometimes escorts convoys of civilian vessels past riverbanks controlled by the Pathet Lao (Laotian Communists). The Pathet Lao has no known navy, except rafts and sampans. This rules out classic naval warfare, Prince Sinthanarong explains.

But the Royal Navy has seen combat. Its major engagement of recent years was the 1960 battle of Pak Beng, in northern Laos, when five sailors were killed and 12 wounded. Asked to describe the battle, the prince simply replies "ambuscade" (ambush). Casualties have since been significantly reduced. Last year only three men were wounded. This year one man was killed in another "ambuscade."

The Navy's most dramatic engagement, however, took place during one of several coups d'etat in 1960. Naval forces sailed up the Mekong and shelled Vientiane. "I don't think they hit anything," recalls Gen. Boun Thien who emerged as a winner in that particular coup. The Navy, however, was on the losing side. As a result, it went into "reserve" for several years until a naval rearmament program began in 1964.

18 OCT 1970

STATINTL

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R000700020001-5

War-Wearry Laos Sees Hope

in Talks

By Laurence Stern

Washington Post Foreign Service

VIENTIANE, Oct. 17—Buddhist Lent has just ended with an orgiastic flourish in this tiny, war-weary kingdom, which awakens Monday to hangovers and a return to unwelcome reality.

Yet there are still stirrings of hope here that the near future may bring a longer respite from war than one weekend of drinking, singing, dancing and boat-racing along the Mekong River.

Such hopes stem from the prospective meeting between plenipotentiary representatives of Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma, who is due back from abroad at the end of the month, and his cousin, Pathet Lao leader Prince Souphanouvong.

They are the rival fireheads in a struggle that has turned nearly a quarter of the nation into refugees and has devastated its large tribal population.

Despite the harsh rhetoric with which the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao greeted President Nixon's Oct. 8 speech, spokesmen here for all sides, Western and Communist, still look with cautious optimism upon the prospective meeting between the two sides at Khangkhai, a village on the eastern edge of the Plain of Jars.

As a high-ranking North Vietnamese spokesman here told me this week: "When you have a tragic conflagration, as in Indochina, it is at least progress to save one house." The house to which he referred was Laos.

Procedural Tangle

At the moment the arrangements for the meeting between representatives of Souvanna and Souphanouvong are snarled in a semantic and procedural tangle whose significance ends at the Laotian border.

In one of two letters to his cousin designating a representative for the talks, Souvanna Phouma said he was acting in "my capacity as Prime Minister" of the Royal Laotian government of union. This angered Souphanouvong.

that he does not regard Souvanna's Vientiane Government as a legal entity but only a rival faction.

But the betting in Vientiane diplomatic circles is that some way will be found to surmount the dispute—perhaps yet a third letter from Souvanna upon his return.

The reasoning, from across the political spectrum, is that a balance has now been reached in the war where it is to the advantage of neither side nor their respective foreign patrons, the North Vietnamese and Americans, to continue it.

American Bombing

From the start the broad outlines of an accommodation at Khangkhai have been visible. It would be an offer by Souvanna to halt the intensive American bombing of northeast Laos in exchange for a cessation of military pressure in that region by the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao forces.

As for the American bombing of the Ho Chi Minh Trail through the southern Laotian panhandle, that would remain a matter for the United States and North Vietnamese to settle separately. The sparsely populated trail area is of no vital strategic interest to Souvanna.

At present the Pathet Lao forces and North Vietnamese are extended further into Laos than at any period in the past 10 years, even the time of the signing of the 1962 Geneva Agreement setting up a tripartite government of right, neutral and left.

Dry Season

And now the dry season, the period of greatest military advantage to the road-bound North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao, is about to begin.

The military imperatives in Laos are exactly the reverse of the ones in neighboring Vietnam. The wet season helps the pro-government tribal guerrillas, who bear the brunt of the fighting. Dry season, with its dense smoke haze, severely hampers aerial operations

unit conventional ground forces of the Communists.

It would, therefore, be to Souvanna's interests, it would seem from here, to stop the hostilities before things get worse—a question of cutting the losses.

From the American standpoint any hope of making new headway in the war would clearly require a greater U.S. military investment, such as the massive bombing of the Plain of Jars in late 1969, but a look at the results in not encouraging.

For taking its size into account, Laos has been the most heavily bombed country in the history of the

world, authoritative military officials here acknowledge. The number of bombing sorties conducted from American bases in neighboring Thailand and South Vietnam—though never formally disclosed—are reliably reported to have reached a level of 700 a day.

In addition, Laos has served as a laboratory for counter-insurgency warfare tactics once fashionable in the early days of the Vietnam war. In Laos, however, the prime U.S. contractor for ground military operations was the Central Intelligence Agency and its armed and trained bands of Meo tribal guerrillas rather than American G.I.s.

Despite all this support, the royal Lao government is in worse shape militarily and territorially now than it was eight years ago at the time of Geneva.

Pro-government cadre are being killed at the rate of 10 to 15 a day, according to military sources here. For a government-controlled population of two million this would be the equivalent of a 1,000 to 1,500 daily death toll in a country the size of the United States.

This excludes civilian and enemy casualties, for which there are no reliable official counts. Investigators for the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on refugees recently estimated that as many as 50 per cent of the men and 25 per cent of the women and children have been killed in

a Meo tribal population that numbered 400,000 10 years ago.

In Pathet Lao eyes, the Khangkhai talks represent an opportunity to convert their military gains into bargaining power at the conference table. They might, in fact, be able to negotiate in a new Vientiane administration to rejoin the Geneva-created tripartite government from which they pulled out in 1964.

The North Vietnamese, too, have reached what would seem to be the limit of their territorial interests in the Laotian panhandle when they and the Pathet Lao captured Saravane and Attopeu in the southern panhandle last summer.

Their consolidation of these two holdings secured for the North Vietnamese the new logistical trail along the Sekong River to replace the one they lost in Cambodia after the estrangement and later downfall of Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

Military officials are currently puzzled over the apparent disappearance from Laos of the 312th North Vietnamese Division, which played an important role last spring in the Communist victories on the Plain of Jars. There is understandable speculation that it may be a signal.

And so there is the smell in Vientiane, however elusive and faint, of a possible deal at Khangkhai, provided the talks survive the present semantic morass. And that is why many members of the Souvanna government and even some members of the American mission here regret that President Nixon never mentioned Khangkhai in his Oct. 8 proposal for an overall Indochina settlement.

In Laos, at least, there may be the possibility of a separate peace.

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R000700020001-5

STATINTL

The CIA in China

MICHAEL MORROW
DISPATCH NEWS SERVICE

HOUEI SAI, Laos (LNS) -- This sleepy Mekong River town is as close as a journalist with any regard for his safety can get to a secret CIA outpost which is the staging area for armed reconnaissance teams being sent by the U.S. into China.

Sources close to the CIA pinpoint the staging area at a small mountain valley airstrip called Nam Lieu (Nam Yu) fifteen minutes flying time north of Houei Sai. According to the same highly reliable sources, "there is always a team in China."

The teams are armed with American small arms, a special three pound radio with a range of four hundred miles, and other special equipment. Their missions are to tap Chinese telegraph lines, watch roads and do other types of intelligence gathering. Teams have gone as far as two hundred miles into China.

Each team is said to consist of about fifteen men, most of who are Yao hill tribesman. Yao are used because this tribe lives in large numbers along the mountainous frontiers of Laos, Burma, Thailand and China. There are approximately two million Yao living inside China, and some of the mercenaries have family connections there. Meo and Lao Theung tribesmen are also used for similar reasons.

The teams are normally flown to a sod airstrip known as "Site 93" of "Moung Moune," about twenty kilometers north of Nam Lieu, near the Mekong River where it forms a border with Burma. Sometimes they are put down right on the banks of Mekong by helicopters. They carry instantly inflatable rubber rafts to use crossing the Mekong into Burma. From Burma they continue northwest, entering China about fifty kilometers from Site 93.

The teams from Nam Lieu are gone three to four months, maintaining contact by radio with Nam Lieu and with airplanes which fly close to the China border in order to pick up their broadcasts.

On at least one occasion an airplane has been almost shot down for straying into China. During July 1968, an Air America "porter" single-engined plane with two aboard crossed the Chinese frontier near the tri-borders of Burma, Laos and China. Parts of both wings were blown away by anti-aircraft fire, but the plane was able to limp back to base.

Several of the teams inserted into China

have been captured, and some have switched allegiance, returning to Nam Lieu as counter-spies.

There has been at least one occasion when a returning team brought Chinese back with them. During 1968, five local Chinese functionaries ousted from their posts by the Cultural Revolution in China defected to a Nam Lieu reconnaissance team. They were brought back to Nam Lieu by the team. There they were well-treated by the Americans for a time but eventually turned over to the Royal Laotian government. According to sources close to the CIA the five were thrown into the Laotian equivalent of a "tiger's cage" -- a twelve-by-twelve-by-twelve foot pit exposed to the elements and without sanitation facilities -- and eventually executed.

Like most CIA operations in Laos, the one at Nam Lieu is directed from a super-secret headquarters at Udorn airbase in Northeast Thailand. There are four Americans in Nam Lieu, however, headed by a veteran clandestine mercenary organizer named Anthony Poe. In addition to activities inside China, Poe and his team also work with hill tribesman in the area, organizing "SGU" (special guerilla units) and Thai Army which they direct at Xieng Lom south of Houei Sai on the Lao-Thai border.

Poe is an ex-Marine non-commissioned officer, wounded in landing at Iwo Jima, who remained in Asia after World War II. In the fifties he helped organize Tibetan CIA-aided insurgents, escorted them to Colorado for training and finally went back with them into Tibet. Later he worked in the Thai-Cambodian border area with the "Khmer Blue" anti-Sihanouk forces receiving assistance from the CIA, and in other parts of Thailand with other mercenary groups for a total of five years. He has been in and out of Laos since before the Geneva Accords of 1962, and was one of the first Americans involved in arming and training hill tribe paramilitary groups in Laos.

There are reasons to believe Poe's operations at Nam Lieu are just the tip of an iceberg of U.S. activities in China and Burma. Take for example:

--Sources close to the CIA report that the CIA is working with Shan mercenary groups moving into China from northern Burma. Ac-

Continued

1 OCT 1970

STATINTL

AID Goods for Laos Vanished, GAO Says

By Ronald Koven

Washington Post Staff Writer

Investigators for the General Accounting Office found serious losses of U.S. relief goods intended for refugees in Laos, according to a report released yesterday.

In two weeks of spotchecking, GAO investigators found that \$109,000 worth of goods shipped from Thailand to Laos had inexplicably disappeared, according to a summary of the report released by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), chairman of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Refugees.

The GAO, an investigating arm of Congress, conducted its investigation of U.S. Agency for International Development programs at the Kennedy Subcommittee's request.

Kennedy alleged that "sloppy management, weak accountability procedures, and a serious loss or diversion of commodities characterized some AID programs in Laos" and that this raises "serious doubts about the efficiency and effectiveness of all U.S. aid programs to Vientiane," the capital of Laos.

AID spokesmen in Washington said they would have no comment until they had studied the GAO report. They said many of the loose practices the GAO had reported to AID personnel on the spot had since been tightened up.

After the GAO's field investigation, conducted in July and August, AID told the GAO it had found documents accounting for most of the missing \$109,000 worth of goods.

But the GAO said it could only conclude that there is still a need for AID to review its procedures and to improve them.

Daniel De Haar, the counsel for the Subcommittee, said a number of obstacles had been placed on the GAO investigation by the Central Intelligence Agency.

He said that an attempt had been made to prevent the GAO investigators from going to Laos on the grounds that no travel funds were available for them and that the CIA had attempted to invoke executive privilege to prevent the investigators from seeing the records for the refugee aid program.

Examples of mismanagement the GAO found included:

- Transportation bills submitted by a military-controlled Thai government agency, Express Transportation Organization, were paid without proof that goods shipped from Thailand had been received in Laos.

- A Thai private company, Ear Peng Chiang, was paid for delivering a shipment of steel bars and axes which was not received in Laos.

- "USAID was not processing most claims against carriers for shortages or damages incurred in transit."

U.S. aid to Laos runs about \$50 million yearly, a third of which is designated for refugees. The GAO investigator's spotchecked programs worth a total of \$14.1 million in fiscal year 1970.

STATINTL

OCT 1970

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R

AF Rescues in Laos Called Cumbersome

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE
Special to The Star

VIENTIANE — U.S. Air Force procedure in rescuing American pilots downed over Northern Laos is too slow, according to well informed sources.

Rescues of Americans there are carried out by Jolly Green Giant helicopters — or "Buffs."

Each is armed with three 7.62 miniguns.

These helicopters are on call near U.S. Meo base of Long Cheng on the Southern portion of the Plain of Jars. Sources said Buff crews, after reaching the rescue point, must first ascertain a pilot's identity, usually by asking very personal questions on the radio.

After a satisfactory answer a Buff radios its control base at Udorn in Northeast Thailand, saying the pilot has been sighted and requests permis-

sion to pick up the pilot. Then there is a pause until the Udorn controller gives the go ahead.

While this transpires North Vietnamese or Pathet Lao troops are closing in on the hapless pilot.

"The crew of the helicopter should be able to decide if they should go in. They are on the spot and not the controller at Udorn" an informant said.

Other sources defending Air Force procedure said Communists often try to trap rescue copters after capturing the pilot by putting out false "day-glo," yellow sheet-markers and by using the captured crewman's radio. They said the Buff helicopter arms are better able to drive away approaching Communist troops. Air America operates in the area on behalf of the Central Intelligence Agency and other U.S. government customers.

STATINTL

New Details in U.S. Strafing Of Lao General Are Reported

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE
Special to The Star

VIENTIANE — Informed sources have supplied further details on an incident during which U.S. jets attacking the Plain of Jars, nearly hit Meo Gen. Vang Pao.

According to these sources, the incident occurred during Operation About Face in late August or early September 1969 while Vang Pao was standing on high ground observing Air Force attacks before his troops assaulted enemy positions on the plain.

Two firing passes were made at the general and a group standing with him by Air Force 105s which were returning to their bases. The planes fired Vulcan 20-millimeter high explosive cannon shells.

The first shells landed some 200 yards from Vang Pao and the second about 150 yards away on the other side. According to the sources, Vang Pao was accompanied by members of the Central Intelligence Agency and other officials.

AF Issues Denials

The Air Force on Saturday and again yesterday denied that Vang Pao was strafed by Air Force planes and insisted "there have been no reports of indiscriminate bombing or strafing" in Laos.

However, sources who decline

to permit use of their names, reported Friday that U.S. pilots flying bombing missions over northern Laos are hitting targets not officially approved. The Vang Pao incident was cited as an example.

An official denial here said "there is no evidence that Gen. Vang Pao was strafed during so-called nonofficial strikes."

Some official American sources suggest the emphasis of the denial is on the incident having taken place during a nonofficial strike, and that the incident occurred during an official strike.

The sources suggest that after an officially authorized strike, ammunition remaining in the planes was directed on a "target of opportunity" rather than an "unofficial target."

May 'Play Games'

But if a "target of opportunity" is chosen by the pilot rather than by his commanders, then it is easy for the pilot to "play games" as reported on Friday and denied by the Air Force. An Air Force denial yesterday said Maj. Gen. Games F. Kirkendall, commander of Air Force units in Thailand, "has thoroughly investigated" allegations that pilots are hitting nonapproved targets and "there is no substantiation whatsoever" to the allegations.

"The rules of engagement are very stringent and do not permit targets of choice," the Air Force said. "All air strikes are carefully controlled. There is no way in which an indiscriminate attack could go unreported."

Sources say this denial is obviously rubbish or the United States is officially engaged in wiping out the Laos civilian population.

Refugee Accounts

Recent refugees from northern Laos tell of their villages being bombed by U.S. aircraft.

Towns and villages such as Xieng Khowang on the Plain of Jars have been destroyed. The Plain of Jars area is a free fire zone.

In hearings last year before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Col. Robert F. Tyrell, U. S. air attache in Vientiane, testified that there are prohibitions against bombing villages, even in a free fire zone.

But if villages are not official targets, the question is raised as to how Air Force planes destroyed them.

Politically Dangerous

Perhaps the answer is that they are "targets of opportunity" which have given rise, well informed sources, say, to pilots "playing games" and hitting politically dangerous targets.

U.S. Ambassador to Laos G. McMurtrie Godley, who has the responsibility for Air Force targeting, is making a genuine effort to show such games are not possible by asking the Air Force to tell correspondents how the monitoring system works.

But an explanation was refused yesterday at the U.S. base in Udorn in northeast Thailand.

U.S. Air Force planes are not the only ones bombing nonauthorized targets. The Lao air force does too.

A newsman who flew in a Lao air force T28 dive bomber from Luang Prabang reported his pilot fired rockets at a Chinese-built road, a target prohibited by Premier Souvanna Phouma to either Lao or U.S. planes.

The pilot fired rockets from a distance of 5,000 yards because of anti-aircraft fire.

LAOS:

WASHINGTON
20 SEPTEMBER 1970

THE 'PROFILE' LEAPS TO VIEW

STATINTL STATINTL

ELIZABETH MARTINEZ

Miss Martinez (Elizabeth Sutherland Martinez) is editor of *El Grito del Norte*, a newspaper of the Chicano movement, published in northern New Mexico. She is the author of a book on Cuba, *The Youngest Revolution* (Dial Press), and editor of *Letters from Mississippi* (McGraw-Hill).

The Settha Palace Hotel in Vientiane, capital of Laos, is a strange hodgepodge of colonialisms and cultures. Parked in the entrance driveway between well-kept lawns stands a white Triumph convertible, its top down and red leather seats gleaming. The dark paneled walls behind the hotel's front desk are decorated with old KLM posters; at the desk itself stand one or two polite young clerks of Indian origin; the air-conditioned bar offers Muzak pop tunes in French, Spanish and English; the restaurant is called a Rathskeller and serves pizza. Laos is almost nowhere to be found.

As for the clientele, the hotel at first seems to have very few guests, but slowly more begin to be noticeable, very early in the morning and after dusk. They are all of a kind: stocky, crew-cut, blond and blue-eyed American men in their 30s or early 40s, keeping very much to themselves, without women or children. They are, it turns out, pilots for Air America. And it is the American colonial presence which dominates in Laos above all.

Like other Americans in the country in April 1970, the pilots were trying to keep what this Administration's jargon calls "a low profile." But that month, the profile leaped into view. The secret war being waged by the United States against the Lao people, the war in which Air America plays a key part, was no longer a secret. From the release of testimony given in hearings of a Senate subcommittee last fall, the folks at home learned that the United States had been waging war in Laos since 1962; that it was costing taxpayers some billions of dollars a year; that U.S. pilots were carrying out as well as directing bombing raids against almost exclusively civilian victims, with the U.S. Ambassador in Laos approving in advance each target selected.

But the impact of that information was not felt at the time in the United States. Key sections of the testimony were deleted from the version released, and then the invasion of Cambodia followed so quickly that Laos became dimmed from view. But in a long-range way, those revelations in the Senate may have been more important than the Cambodian action. For the "nonwar" in Laos suggests a pattern that the United States may follow—in Latin America, Africa, wherever—more often than it does the direct involvement of American ground troops, as in Vietnam and Cambodia. It has the huge advantage of costing only American dollars—and very few American lives—so that no storm of protest is likely to mount.

The Senate subcommittee testimony, together with information gathered elsewhere, forms a picture of one of the most inhuman and senseless adventures in American foreign policy to date. It appears, for example, that bombings of Lao civilians increased immensely after the air

attack in North Vietnam halted in November 1968. Why? "Well," the U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission has told a journalist, "we had all those planes sitting around and couldn't just let them stay there with nothing to do."

U.S. presence in Laos, like its presence throughout Indochina, began before the French were finally defeated and left in 1954; after that year, however, it grew quickly. Laos was never considered a prize plum of the French empire, as can be seen by the neglect of Vientiane—a small, carelessly laid-out town with none of the broad avenues, massive stone buildings and pretty parks that the French put down in such favored centers as Hanoi. Though Laos exports wood and tin, it has never been plundered in the classic colonial way; the importance of the country to the imperialists has been mainly as a buffer between Thailand and Vietnam.

Laos is a nation of hungry peasants, but land is not the central point of popular discontent—only about 25 per cent of it is in the hands of big landowners. The ruling class is supported by trade and royal lineage—the commercial interests being tied first to the French and now to the Americans. Import duties are the main source of national income—and plenty of personal income, too. Corruption, nepotism, favoritism and abuse of power by the military were until recently the main grievances in town and country—Vientiane is said to have more whorehouses and opium dens than it has schools and hospitals combined. But during the past decade, a new factor in the oppression of the Lao people has been added: the American bombings.

The 1962 Geneva Accords recognized for Laos a coalition government of Right, Center and Left. The Pathet Lao (meaning "nation of the Lao") as the revolutionary forces are commonly called, were given four seats in the cabinet and the right-wing clique of royal, military and commercial elements another four seats. The balance of power lay originally with a group of "neutralists," but it soon lost all importance as the United States threw its support to the Right.

From 1964 to 1968, the Royal Lao Government and the Pathet Lao fought for control, with power swinging back and forth several times. About 40 per cent of the country came under Pathet Lao control. It was for the purpose of supporting U.S. forces in Vietnam and of keeping as much Lao territory as possible under its influence that the United States began to build up its military power and institutionalize its civil role in Laos. The Ho Chi Minh Trail (a narrow supply route running through southeastern Laos to the National Liberation Forces in South Vietnam) and the supposed presence of North Vietnamese troops in Laos served as excuses. But if there are such troops in Laos, President Nixon and other officials have at least quadrupled their numbers. Non-Communist observers estimate perhaps 5,000 Vietnamese troops in Laos—Nixon, in his March 1970 statement on Laos, said 67,000. Not only did he far exceed the estimates of even the U.S. military attachés

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R00

Meo Guerrillas Worn Out, Senate Is Told

By GENE OISHI

[Washington Bureau of The Sun] Washington, Sept. 26—The Meo tribe of Laos, which the United States molded into an anti-Communist guerrilla force, has been decimated and demoralized after more than ten years of fighting, according to Senate investigators.

The tribe numbered 400,000 members in 1960 but about half of the men and a quarter of the women and children have died in the clandestine war in Laos.

Report By Subcommittee

This is one of the findings contained in a staff report which the Senate subcommittee on refugees released today. The report paints a grim picture of the human toll of the war in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, where literally over a million persons have been made homeless, according to staff investigators.

The report was written by Dale S. de Haan and Jerry M. Tinker, staff members of the refugee subcommittee, who recently completed a three-week field study of the refugee problem in Indochina.

In releasing the report, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, the subcommittee chairman, said it was part of the subcommittee's continuing effort "to document the devastating impact of the Indochina war on the civilian population."

500,000 In South Vietnam

The report states that more than 500,000 refugees remain on the books in South Vietnam alone, with thousands more being made homeless by the war every month.

In Laos, the refugee population is reaching the 300,000 mark, while in less than six months the war in Cambodia has created nearly a million refugees in addition to the estimated 400,000 ethnic Vietnamese who have been made homeless, the report said.

As for the hill tribes of Laos, which were armed and trained first by the U.S. Special Forces and later by the Central Intelligence Agency, the report states: "After long years of fleeing and fighting, of moving and dying, their ranks today are demoralized and tragically thin."

Many Fear Risks

"Some observers feel," the report said, "that many Meo would probably prefer the risks of accommodation with the Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese to the continued loss of life and limb in a conflict, which, for them, is endless."

A history of the Meo involvement in the war was given last May at a subcommittee hearing by Ronald J. Rickenbach, a former official of the Agency for International Development (AID) who served in Laos.

When the North Vietnamese began moving into northern Laos in the late 1950's, he said, the Meo, who have historically been suspicious of outsiders, saw their cause as an effort to protect their highland home from outside incursion.

Guerrilla Force Formed

At this point, Mr. Rickenbach said, Special Forces teams began arming, resupplying and advising the Meo along with the other hill tribes, the Lao Teung

and the Yao. What resulted, he said, was an anti-North Vietnamese guerrilla force in northern Laos.

After the 1962 Geneva accords, which banned overt U.S. military involvement in Laos, the CIA took over the role of advising and funneling aid to the guerrilla forces.

In the process, Mr. Rickenbach said, the Meo and the other hill tribe guerrillas "became unwitting pawns of the U.S.," serving the greater American interest of countering the North Vietnamese presence in Laos and thereby hindering their war effort in South Vietnam.

"Decimation" Of Tribe

Mr. de Haan and Mr. Tinker of the subcommittee staff say in their report that "the cost to the Meo for this service has been nothing short of the decimation of their tribe."

The tribe, the report states, repeatedly has been driven out of its mountain villages in the waves of offensives and counter-offensives staged in Northern Laos by government and Communist forces almost annually since 1962.

"U.S. AID officials estimate," the report says, "that during a long move, such as last spring's

evacuation from the hills along the Plain of Jars, one out of every family of five dies en route."

"They Have Had It!"

The report also included a recent internal memorandum of the U.S. mission in Vientiane, the administrative capital of Laos.

The memorandum states in part: "We must recognize that in as much as a great measure of the effectiveness of the military force lies in its fighting heart and its numbers, as well as leadership and equipment, the Meos and Lao Teung are no longer the military asset they were in the past . . . In other words, they have been used to the hilt and as many of them are expressing—they have had it!"

The memo recommends a reassessment of U.S. policy toward the hill tribes. It suggests that in the future humanitarian factors ought to predominate over military considerations.

"We could, in effect," the memo states, "give them a fond thanks for their services and cast them adrift to shift for themselves, faced with the specter of starvation and-or being absorbed (with increasing bitter memories of our abandonment) into Communist-dominated areas. This, of course, would not be humanitarian or strategically sound considering U.S. objectives in Laos."

The subcommittee staff report states that another aspect of the refugee problem in Laos is that until relatively recently, the U.S. aid program was essentially a cover for the CIA.

According to the subcommittee's findings, the report says, about 50 per cent of the Agency for International Development's total public health budget for Laos went toward financing the paramilitary operations of the CIA.

No Improvement

In South Vietnam, the investigators reported, the refugee problem has not improved and, if anything, has worsened, particularly in view of the influx of 200,000 ethnic Vietnamese from Cambodia.

According to the report, most of the "successes" in the resettlement programs have been accomplished through statistical

reclassification of certain groups of refugees as having been resettled.

About 300,000 refugees, the report says, have been statistically resettled by the U.S. mission in Saigon, but their actual condition remains the same.

As for civilian casualties in the Vietnam war, the report says, nearly 5,000 persons a month fell victim to the war last year, according to government hospital records alone.

But this figure does not include persons treated at private hospitals, rural dispensaries, Special Forces and Viet Cong hospitals, nor those who are killed outright or die before they reached a treatment facility.

If these additional numbers were added, the report said, the total civilian casualties over the past year would be about 150,000, including as many as 35,000 deaths. These figures would bring the total civilian casualties since 1965 to more than a million, including 300,000 deaths, the report said.

27 SEP 1970

STATINTI

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R

Lao Guerrilla Units Capture Strategic Hill From Reds

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE

Special to The Star

VIENTIANE — Special Lao guerrilla units have captured a strategic mountain position on the edge of the Bolovens Plateau in southern Laos after three days of fierce fighting.

The victory yesterday gives government forces control of the area overlooking the provincial capital of Attopeu and threatens to cut Hanoi's Sekhong River infiltration and supply route to Cambodia.

The hill, called Royal Mountain, was taken with the aid of daily attacks by U.S. jets and Lao piston-engined dive bombers.

Heavy Casualties

Casualties were reported heavy on both sides. Lao guerrilla units numbered about 800 men.

"Artillery pieces up there can shell anything that moves," government sources boasted.

The capture of Royal Mountain is the first Lao victory since the government quietly launched an offensive against the Communists a month ago.

Government casualties from the battle began arriving here last night.

Drive Was Halted

Friday, the Lao guerrillas were stopped 1,000 yards short of their objective by North Vietnamese troops in machine gun nests and bunkers. The North Vietnamese had foiled air strikes dodging over the plateau edge then returning to positions during infantry assaults. "Delayed action bombs were used to crater the area" and aided in the final victory, sources said.

Ten U.S. advisers were in-

involved in the earlier phase of the attack, according to military sources.

Advisers mostly have civilian status and are employed by the Central Intelligence Agency.

They are stationed on airstrips on eastern edge of the plateau where they run guerrilla teams into the Ho Chi Minh Trail area under instructions from the agency's Mekhong substation in the town of Pakse.

Part of the assault on the hill is General Lao rainy season offensive to retake ground lost

during Hanoi's dry season offensive this year. Until yesterday, the offensive failed against stubborn North Vietnamese opposition. Gen. Meo Vangpao's forces were repulsed in a attempt to take the key position of Ban Na on the rim of the Plain of Jars in North Laos this week.

Backed by U.S. air support Vangpao reached the hill overlooking Ban Na. Then a North Vietnamese infantry counter attack sent his force reeling with "moderate" casualties.

31

Kennedy Criticizes U.S. On Indochina Refugees

By DANA BULLEN
Star Staff Writer

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., warned yesterday that the plight of refugees in Indochina is critical and criticized the United States for a "business-as-usual attitude toward the problem.

"With the spreading of war into Cambodia, fear has now gripped almost the entire population of Indochina, vastly increasing human misery, the flow of refugees, and the occurrence of civilian war casualties," he said.

Kennedy, chairman of the Senate subcommittee on Refugees, called for greater efforts to help war victims yesterday as he released a report by staff members who recently visited Cambodia, Laos and South Vietnam.

The report, prepared by Dale S. de Haan, subcommittee counsel, and Jerry M. Tinker, a consultant, called for high priority United Nations' actions to alleviate refugee and civilian casualty problems.

In Cambodia, Kennedy said, thousands of persons live in squalor and filth in overcrowded refugee centers, while hospitals and dispensaries are over-burdened with thousands of civilian war casualties.

"The situation is growing so critical in Cambodia that international relief agencies in Geneva are now preparing for the possibility of famine next year, since many Cambodian peasants are not planting this year's rice crop due to the insecurity of the countryside," he said.

In Laos, Kennedy said saturation bombings and forced evacuations have helped create "untold agony" for hundreds of thousands of villagers. He said his subcommittee was "distressed" by a "continued lack of urgency or active concern" by Washington and Saigon for the social well-being of South Vietnamese.

"A business-as-usual attitude continues to pervade much of our view of what needs to be done, and a false sense of optimism pervades much of our view on what has been done," Kennedy said.

"It is a regrettable fact that the problems of the people are as overwhelming today as they have been in the past and in some ways even more so," he said.

The staff study found that well over 500,000 refugees remain on the books in South Vietnam, while thousands more are falling victim to the war every month. The report said at least three million refugees, not "on the books" also remain in camps or urban slums to which they moved in recent years.

In 1969, the study asserted the U.S. mission in Saigon "undertook a deliberate campaign . . . to eliminate the refugee problem by systematically classifying it out of existence."

The report said that many refugees were "statistically resettled" while remaining in their old conditions.

In Laos, the report asserted, officially recognized refugees approach 300,000 but "low priority" attached to refugee problems by the United States has limited efforts to deal with the problem.

Its findings asserted that the "formal" United States refugee program has been a principal "cover" for CIA-sponsored paramilitary activities rather than directed primarily at social or economic problems.

And, in Cambodia, the study found that an official Cambodian view of "unconcern" over refugee problems is shared by U.S. officials.

STATINTL

26 SEP 1970

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601F

Pathet Lao Wins support of minorities

STATINTL

By Richard E. Ward

Last of a series of six articles on Laos

Adjacent to some flooded ricefields, Sam Neua, capital of the province of the same name, lay below us as we climbed one of the mountains completely surrounding the town on the way to a village of the Meo minority.

The valley was a scene of pastoral beauty. But what looked like buildings from a distance were only empty shells in a ghost town, remnants of the destruction wrought by Barrel Role, the code name of the U.S. program of indiscriminate bombing of the northern part of the liberated zone of Laos, which is still unacknowledged publicly by Washington.

More has been known about U.S. activities among the Meo who inhabit mountain uplands. Since the 1950s, the CIA, U.S. Army Special Forces, U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) and other American agencies have energetically tried to promote Meo separatism.

Migrating from southern China in the 18th century, the Meo are one of the principal national minorities of Laos. In attempting to foster a bogus nationalism among the Meo who comprise about 15-20% of the three million Laotian population, American agents have made vague promises about establishing a separate Meo country if the people allied themselves to the U.S.

Gen. Vang Pao's mercenary army was recruited from the Meo and it has been one of the main vehicles of the U.S. intervention. But there are reliable reports that many of Vang Pao's troops have been forcibly pressed into the army.

Uprooted from land

Despite its claims of being the protector of the Meo, the U.S. has forcibly uprooted them from liberated areas and moved large numbers into the other zone. Meo areas have also been the target of U.S. aircraft. According to published estimates by U.S. officials, about 100,000 Meos have lost their lives from war-related causes and a larger number have become part of Laos' hundreds of thousands of refugees. What the U.S. does not admit is that most of these displaced persons have fled U.S. bombs.

After more than an hour's climb up a slippery, muddy path, we reached the summit where there were tiny hamlets, each with 10-15 houses with cleared areas for crops such as dry rice and maize, grown on the steep slopes.

We stopped at one hamlet where about half of its 70 inhabitants listened to the discussions. Conditions were not easy but they were better than in the other zone, one of the village leaders stated. Although he did not try to make direct comparisons, it was obvious that education and medical care had been one of the main concerns of the Pathet Lao.

Ninety percent of the adult population in the cluster of hamlets were participating in the literacy program and 60% had already learned to read. There were three schools for the children and nurses trained to care for the sick. Before the Pathet Lao came, illiteracy in such areas ranged upwards from 95% and there were no schools or medical care.

Since 1960, I was told, 150 persons from the area had been forcibly taken to the other zone. By the end of last year, however, 700 of them managed to return to their villages. The U.S. shifted to other tactics in 1967 when a bombing raid destroyed

30 houses and killed two persons. Since the beginning of 1969, said the village spokesman, 20 people had been killed by U.S. mines while working in their fields.

Under CIA-directed programs, agents also try to recruit spies or "volunteers" for service with Vang Pao. A man of 48 related that he had been lured to leave in 1967 by promises of high pay and an important position. Instead of traveling by a promised helicopter, he found himself on a forced march with about 40 similar "volunteers" with insufficient food, water and clothing. They were then held at a base that was occasionally visited by Americans. One man who tried to leave was shot. After three months, the jungle march resumed, but Pathet Lao attacks diminished the number of guards and most of the 40 men used the opportunity to flee.

American pawns

A former AID refugee relief officer in Laos, Ronald J. Rickenback, has explained the consequences of U.S. protection of the Meo, testifying that they have been merely American pawns. At a May 7 hearing of the Senate Subcommittee on Refugees, whose transcript was just published, Rickenback stated:

"In the late 1950s we began to arm, resupply and advise the Meo, and their hill tribe peers, the Lao Theung, and the Yao. What resulted was the anti-North Vietnamese guerrilla forces of north Laos.

"Initially this program was masterminded under the auspices of the U.S. Special Forces 'white star' teams that were attached directly to field units and coordinated guerrilla activities.

"Then, after the restrictions placed on overt U.S. military involvement in Laos by the Geneva Accords of 1962, the role of advising the guerrilla forces fell under the operational wing of the CIA. It was also at this time that AID became directly and officially involved with the paramilitary aspects of the program.

"Here, the obvious must be pointed out. Our Government's interest in helping the Meo defend themselves was not a case of pure altruism.

"In so doing, the Meo and other hill tribe guerrillas became unwitting pawns of the U.S. Government. . . . In the overall sense, the Meo have only served the greater interests of U.S. policy.

"They fought because we armed them, because we told them we thought they had a 'just' cause. As things got worse, we even told them that they had a 'stake' in a free Southeast Asia.

"What makes this situation even more distasteful, as I have already mentioned, is that we did so to serve our own interests as much as anything else—to let them fight a war, which was really our war, by proxy. And moreover, to fight, and die, for the ethnic Lao and Thai who did not feel it was worth doing so for themselves; strange, indeed, since it was their defense that this war was supposedly all about.

"The net result of the war has been death and destruction. Virtually every inhabitant in the contested zones of Laos has been forced to flee at one time or another from his home in the face of intensive combat activities. This would be bad enough if it were not for the fact that because of the cruel nature of this war, evacuations and refugee movements become a recurring theme.

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R000700020001-5

22 SEP 1970



Mankiewicz

Frank Mankiewicz and Tom Braden

Some Questions for Gen. Ky



Braden

UNLESS he experiences a last-minute change of heart, Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky of South Vietnam will be in our midst within the week, to speak at a far-right "victory" rally at the Washington Monument grounds.

The rally is sponsored by the Rev. Carl McIntyre, a fundamentalist radio pitchman who has characterized the Nixon administration this year as "soft on communism" and has termed the President's Vietnamization policy a "sellout." In Saigon, officials close to President Thieu are writing their American friends that Ky's motives in speaking here are "to undermine both Presidents, Nixon and Thieu."

If Ky makes himself available to U.S. journalists, here is a suggested list of questions that might be asked, all based on material previously made public, either in the United States or Vietnamese press:

1. Mr. Vice President, how do you account for the \$15,000 per week you personally

receive from the receipts of the Saigon race track? You have told us your people are fully mobilized for this war; if that is the case, just who goes to the races every day so as to enable the track to show a profit sufficient to pay you? (In 1967, Ky admitted he was receiving this money, and said he used it from time to time to pay disabled veterans. He had, up to that time, paid out the total sum of \$65 for this purpose.)

2. Your protege, Gen. Do Cao Tri, has been much praised this year as the "Tiger of Cambodia" for his leadership of your troops there. What was his final explanation for the package he sent to Hong Kong earlier this year which was unexpectedly opened in customs and found to contain 71 million piasters in cash (official U.S. equivalent: \$600,000)? Why would anyone want to send that many piasters out of the country, where they were practically worthless, unless to be used illegally--or by the enemy--for pur-

chases back in South Vietnam?

3. Mr. Vice President, your old comrade, Gen. Dang Van Quang, is back in office as chief of intelligence. When you and he shared power as members of the "Military Revolutionary Council," he was the commander of IV Corps until dismissed for corruption. Did he ever make restitution for the money he took from his own soldiers?

4. What about your other colleague from the old days of the council, Gen. Cao Van Vien, now the South Vietnamese chief of staff? Do he and his wife still lease government-owned real estate to Americans? Do they still own bordello hotels at the recreation center at Nha-Trang?

5. Mr. Vice President, why was your mother-in-law, Mme. Hoang, who owns a string of "resorts" in Saigon, permitted to be the sole bidder on a construction contract at an air base to be used by the United States?

6. Finally, Mr. Vice Presi-

dent, what about that old smuggling rap? Back in 1964, when the CIA had set you up as the "commander" of a fictitious airline to fly South Vietnamese agents into the North, you were fired for using the planes to smuggle opium and gold from Laos. What ever happened to the 250 pounds of gold and the 450 pounds of opium which were seized? And your collaborator, Gen. Loc, who was fired as a result of the exposure from his post as director general of customs in Saigon--did he ever get his old job back?

These questions may seem light-hearted, but Gen. Ky is not. He has grown rich and powerful from this war, not from plundering his own people--whom he has more than once betrayed--but ours. He will stand in the shadow of the monuments to Lincoln and Washington, and lecture us on our responsibilities. Americans, to our shame, will applaud him.

© 1970, Los Angeles Times

20 SEP 1970

Laos Talks Stalemated In 'Dialogue of Deaf'

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE
Star Staff Writer

VIENTIANE—Lao talks are stalemated in what the official Lao press calls "a dialogue of the deaf" as both sides jockey for positions of political supremacy.

"Both sides want to be counted as representing the neutralists," is how one diplomat summed it up.

Pheng Phonseven, Laos interior minister who has been nominated head of the government delegation, says he is the "plenipotentiary representative of Souvanna-Phouma in his capacity as premier of the government of national union.

Diplomats say the Souvanna stance is that the pro-Communist Pathet Lao are rebels being asked to return to the government fold—the government being neutralists and rightists with Souvanna at their head.

Pathet Lao Broadcast

But the Pathet Lao radio, in a broadcast by Gen. Pheum Sipsrath, a central committee member, and delegate Red Prince Souphanouvong, has made clear they intend to represent both leftists and neutralists.

Sipsrath said, "One must lay bare that Prince Souvanna-Phouma wants to negotiate from a superior position, that of a government delegation with a political party. But the fact is Souvanna-Phouma is only representative of a single party, that of the rulers of Vientiane."

He said the opposition comprises two political forces with legal status, "namely the Lao Peoples party and the patriotic Neutralist Front, united in alliance since 1960."

Both sides are on shaky ground legally, especially the Reds. Their Neutralist party was not formed until 1964 after Laos neutralists split two factions. The neutralists of 1960 are China have embassies to Sou-

But unfortunately Souvanna's neutralist army has dwindled to a mere 4,000 troops despite paper claims to the contrary. Souvanna himself and exiled Gen. Kongle.

Even the Soviet Union and Souvanna has been forced to depend on a 60,000-man rightist army plus 500 advisers employed by the CIA and close support from the U.S. Air Force to fight North Vietnamese supporting the Pathet Lao.

This has worn Souvanna's claims of neutrality somewhat thin.

Fighting Continues

Meanwhile as talks flounder over who gets the all-important neutralist mantle and with it in the case of the Reds a stronger claim to a greater share in Laos tripartite government, Laos fighting continues.

Both the Lao government and U.S. Embassy officials cover up the fighting for fear it could lead to an official breakdown of talk-feelers.

But U.S. aircraft are hitting Route 7 in the northern Plain of Jars in an attempt to stop Hanoi convoys stockpiling for a Communist offensive in the dry season, expected if the Communists fail to force Souvanna to give them a greater share in the Laos government at talks.

Western diplomats say that if the Communists succeed in gaining greater control in the Lao government, the U.S. position in South Vietnam will have been weakened.

Laos: behind today's struggle

STATINTL

By Richard E. Ward
(Fourth of a series on Laos)

During discussions in the liberated zone of Laos early this summer, Pathet Lao officials outlined military developments over the past several years, which make clear that subsequent offers to talk with representatives of the Vientiane regime are founded on Pathet Lao military successes, besides their continuing willingness to settle the Laotian conflict by political means.

Military events in Laos can only be understood in historical perspective, of which a few essential points are outlined here. During the late 1950s, the CIA engineered a coup, overthrowing a government of national union in which the Pathet Lao participated in accordance with the 1954 Geneva settlement on Indochina.

Together with other Pathet Lao leaders in Vientiane, prince Souphanouvong was imprisoned, but they made a dramatic escape after converting the prison guards to their cause. After a long jungle trek, the Pathet Lao escapees were reunited with their associates in resistance bases. By 1961-62, a small resistance zone had grown into a large liberated area, comprising about two-thirds of the whole country. During part of the struggle against CIA-backed rightist forces, the neutralist elements were united with the Pathet Lao.

Tripartite government

With its position rapidly disintegrating, the U.S. reluctantly allowed a political settlement and finally signed the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos which guaranteed respect for Laotian neutrality. The Laotians had established a tripartite government of national union a month earlier, which functioned briefly until being undermined by the CIA.

The nominally neutralist premier, prince Souvanna Phouma, agreed to cooperate with the U.S. shortly after the government was installed. In violation of the 1962 Geneva accords on Laos, Phouma allowed the U.S. to channel military assistance to Laos, mainly through rightist elements.

In 1963, prominent neutralists including Foreign Minister Quinim Pholsena, an ardent opponent of U.S. intervention, were assassinated. One of the aims of the killings was to discredit the Pathet Lao members of the government, whose lives were also threatened, by charging them with deserting it. The tripartite government still exists in name but in reality since 1963 it has become increasingly under U.S. control.

American retainers in Vientiane gained a stronger hold on the government after another CIA-sponsored coup in April 1964. Even Souvanna Phouma was briefly ousted until it was assured that he would cooperate with new U.S. plans for Laos.

The U.S. had previously instituted ground operations against the Pathet Lao, but within a month of the coup, on May 19, 1964, the U.S. began a secret campaign of bombing the liberated zone of Laos. The bombing, the incorporation of Thai mercenaries within the Royal Laotian Army and the introduction of heavy military supplies initially resulted in some setbacks for the Pathet Lao.

However, according to Pathet Lao central committee member Sisane Sisana, the U.S.-Vientiane forces have been on the defensive since the 1967 dry season, despite a continuing U.S. escalation. It appears that Pathet Lao gains have been most impressive over the past year when the scale of bombing sometimes exceeded the peak level of attacks against North Vietnam.

In mid-1969, the Pathet Lao took the strategic town of Muong Soui on the northwest edge of the Plain of Jars. In April and June of this year, they captured the strategic town of Thakhek in Southern Laos, following an important victory at the Plain of Jars and Xiengkhouang region in February.

Americans claim victory

In mid-September 1969, U.S. officials had boasted that the American-backed forces had achieved a great victory in the region, which had been part of the liberated zone for years. As explained by the Pathet Lao the story is somewhat different.

After questioning Oun Heune Phounsavath of the Pathet Lao information office in Hanoi on what had happened at the Plain of Jars, he explained that there were not two separate battles but rather one long campaign. Phounsavath frankly admitted that U.S.-backed forces moved onto the Plain of Jars and into Xiengkhouang beginning in August 1969. But he also pointed out that the counterattack by the Pathet Lao and Patriotic Neutralist forces began in October, within several weeks, not months, after the rightist "victory," as the U.S. version goes.

If Pathet Lao success was not achieved until February, the would be comprehensible in view of the sizeable operation that the U.S. had mounted. During the long battle, Phounsavath had earlier stated the U.S. used 50 battalions of Laotian forces, 5000 Thai troops and many American "advisors." The U.S. Air Force intervened daily in combat support of the rightist troops and U.S. helicopters were used to transport men to the battleline, he said.

One U.S. tactic, the forced removal of the population, had been justified at the time as a means of protecting the people. Another Pathet Lao representative explained that the real U.S. aim was to empty the region of people who could aid the liberation forces.

Phounsavath stated that "the U.S. intended to convert the Plain of Jars and Xiengkhouang into a 'white' zone. More than 300 persons were massacred," he said, "for not wanting to leave the liberated zone while hundreds more were killed by the bombing. For ages the Plain of Jars had been a rich region, but the U.S. destroyed croplands and all its villages," he noted. Despite all the U.S. efforts, the U.S. operation was completely checked and large numbers of the CIA-directed Laotian special forces were killed, he emphasized.

Crisis for Washington

Apparently these successive U.S. setbacks have created something of a crisis for Washington and presumably until new tactics are fully set in motion, the U.S. will not veto talks between Vientiane and the Pathet Lao. Already the Pathet Lao proposal for talks has underscored Phouma's alliance with the pro-U.S. rightists by his agreement to a single Vientiane delegation. (Actually, the only organized neutralist forces in Laos now are allied with the Pathet Lao.)

The planned talks could also help clarify other aspects of the situation, well-known to the Pathet Lao, but virtually unknown in this country because most U.S. activities in Laos are "secretly" conducted by the CIA.

Pathet Lao officials told me, for example, that Saigon units were often sent on espionage missions into Laos, but this fact was only confirmed by U.S. sources less than three weeks ago following Pathet Lao charges that there had been a new escalation in the use of Saigon troops. In the Washington Post of Aug. 19 Murrey Marder wrote:

"Officially, the State Department last night 'reserved comment pending further inquiry.' Administration sources earlier said they were prepared to deny that any Cambodian-like major allied border crossing into Laos was underway, or contemplated. But no U.S. spokesman was ready to rule out publicly some penetration of the Laotian-South Vietnamese border.

"Reported losses of U.S. Army UH1 Huey helicopters, which are designed to carry troops, have been unusually heavy in the Pathet Lao charges of penetration."

Super-Secret Missions

CIA's Spy Teams

Inside Red China

STATINTL

Tribesmen On Roving Patrols

By Michael Morrow
Chronicle Foreign Service

Houei Sai, Laos

This sleepy Mekong river town is as close as a journalist with any regard for his safety can get to a secret CIA outpost which is the staging area for armed reconnaissance teams being inserted by the United States into China.

Sources close to the CIA pinpoint the staging area at a small mountain valley airstrip called Nam Lieu (Nam Yu) 15 minutes' flying time north of Houei Sai. According to the same highly reliable sources, "there is always a team in China."

The teams are equipped with American small arms, a special three-pound radio with a range of 400 miles, and other special gear. Their missions are to tap Chinese telegraph lines, watch roads and do other types of intelligence gathering. Teams have gone as far as 200 miles into China.

Each team is said to consist of about 15 men, most of whom are Yao hill tribesmen. Yao are used because this tribe lives in large numbers along the mountainous frontiers of Laos, Burma, Thailand and China. There

are approximately 2 million Yao living inside China, and some of the guerrillas have family connections there. Men and Lao Theung tribesmen are also used for similar reasons.

The teams are normally flown to a sod airstrip known as "Site 93" or "Moung Moune" about 20 kilometers north of Nam Lieu, near the Mekong river where it forms a border with Burma.

Sometimes they are put down right on the banks of Mekong by helicopters. They carry instantly inflatable rubber rafts to use crossing the Mekong into Burma. From Burma they continue northwest, entering China about 50 kilometers from Site 93.

The teams from Nam Lieu are gone three to four months, maintaining contact by radio with Nam Lieu and with airplanes which fly close to the China border in order to pick up their broadcasts.

On at least one occasion an airplane has been almost shot down for straying into China. During July 1968, an Air America "porter" single-engine plane with two aboard crossed the Chinese frontier near the tri-borders of Burma, Laos and China. Parts of both wings were blown away by anti-aircraft fire but the plane was able to limp back to base.

Several of the teams inserted into China have been captured, and some have switched allegiances, returning to Nam Lieu as counter-spies.

CHINESE

There has been at least one occasion when a returning team brought Chinese back with it. During 1968, five lo-

cal Chinese functionaries caught up in the purges of the Cultural Revolution in China defected to a Nam Lieu reconnaissance team.

They were brought to Nam Lieu by the team. There they were well treated by the Americans for a time but eventually turned over to the Royal Laotian Government.

According to sources close to the CIA the five were thrown into the Laotian equivalent of a "tiger's cage," a 12 by 12 by-12 foot pit exposed to the elements and without sanitation facilities, and eventually executed.

DIRECTED

Like most CIA operations in Laos, the one at Nam Lieu is directed from a super-secret headquarters at Udornthaburi in Northeast Thailand. There are four Americans at Nam Lieu, however, headed by a rough-and-tumble veteran clandestine guerrilla organizer named Anthony Poe.

In addition to activities inside China, Poe and his team also work with hill tribesmen in the area, organizing, training, equipping and resupplying them. There is also a joint operation between the "SGU" (special guerrilla units) and Thai Army which they direct at Xieng Lom south of Houei Sai on the Lao-Thai border.

Poe is a legendary figure in Laos, known best for his dislike of journalists, disregard for orders and radio codes, capacity for Lao whistle and expertise at clandestine guerrilla operations.

He is an ex-Marine non-commissioned officer, wounded in World War II. In the '50s he helped organize Tibetan CIA-aided insurgents, escorted them to Colorado for training and finally went back with them into Tibet.

World War II. In the '50s he helped organize Tibetan CIA-aided insurgents, escorted them to Colorado for training and finally went back with them into Tibet.

Later he worked in the Thai-Cambodian border area with the "Khmer Blue" anti-Sihanouk guerrillas receiving assistance from the CIA, and in other parts of Thailand with other guerrilla groups for a total of five years.

He has been in and out of Laos since before the Geneva Accords of 1962, and was one of the first Americans involved in arming and training hill tribes paramilitary groups in Laos.

He refuses to have his picture taken, and once literally threw a journalist's camera away for taking a picture of him. He has refused to obey higher orders commanding him to commit his paramilitary guerrillas to large-scale attacks away from their home area, and often disregards radio procedures.

Those who know him say his drinking stems from the dangerous life he leads, paring, particularly the flying he does through the treacherous mountains of northern Laos. Poe is highly respected by some but hated by others involved in secret operations in Laos for his brusque and stubborn manner. He is said to prefer working with the hill tribes to working with Americans and looks down on most American operations because of their heavy reliance on American personnel.

Poe is said not to have been back to the U.S. in 15 years. He is perhaps the only married to a woman of the hill tribes who remained in Asia after

August 31, 1970

Evidence that the largest American corporation, such as Lockheed, the Penn Central Railroad, General Dynamics, and LTV, are susceptible to failure under certain circumstances has surfaced recently. This fact, in my opinion, makes highly questionable the wisdom of placing too large a percentage of our defense dollars in the hands of a single corporate entity.

The country's economy has taken a serious downswing which makes it more important than before to balance our defense spending geographically.

The Nixon administration's Blue Ribbon Defense Panel, headed by Mr. Fitzhugh, has within weeks recommended that huge defense contracts be divided where possible to avoid overconcentration and to maintain a reasonable mobilization base. If the report of this team of experts had been made 6 weeks earlier and if the Department of Defense had heeded the advice of this committee, it is probable that the Navy would have divided the DD-963 contract. And the contract should be divided now.

I yield to my distinguished colleague from Maine, Senator SMITH.

Mrs. SMITH of Maine. Mr. President, I listened with interest to the distinguished Senator from Mississippi when he stated that the Navy had told him that the increased cost would be \$225 million. I think this is somewhat suspect, since Admiral Sonenshein increased that from \$225 million to \$600 million in about 6 weeks' time.

AMENDMENT NO. 862

Mr. MUSKIE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BYRD of West Virginia. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. EAGLETON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, the Chair now lays before the Senate amendment No. 862 which the clerk will state.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Sec. (a) In accordance with public statements of policy by the President, no funds authorized by this or any other Act may be obligated or expended to maintain a troop level of more than two hundred and eighty thousand armed forces of the United States in Vietnam after April 30, 1971.

(b) After April 30, 1971, funds herein authorized or hereafter appropriated may be expended in connection with activities of American armed forces in and over Indochina only to accomplish the following objectives:

(1) the orderly termination of military operations there and the safe and systematic withdrawal of remaining Armed Forces by December 31, 1971;

(2) to secure the release of prisoners of war;

(3) the provision of asylum for Vietnamese who might be physically endangered by withdrawal of American forces; and

(4) to provide assistance to the Republic of Vietnam consistent with the foregoing objectives.

Provided, however, That if the President, while giving effect to the foregoing paragraphs of this section, finds in meeting the termination date that members of the American Armed Forces are exposed to unanticipated clear and present danger, he may suspend the application of paragraph b(1) for a period of not to exceed sixty days and shall inform the Congress forthwith of his findings; and within ten days following application of the suspension the President may submit recommendations, including (if necessary) a new date applicable to subsection (b) (1) for congressional approval.

Mr. HATFIELD. Mr. President, I yield 30 minutes to the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HUGHES), one of the cosponsors of this amendment.

Mr. HUGHES. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Oregon for yielding me this time.

Mr. President, as we move to consider the end the war amendment, we get to the target center of what is the overriding issue before the American people today.

Shall we, at long last, take the decisive steps to end American military involvement in Southeast Asia?

Or, shall we continue present policies, which, whatever their merits may be, give no real assurance of total military disengagement?

Whatever else we are accomplishing by this debate, we are keeping faith with the American people by bringing this central issue to a vote.

The debate on our military policies has been long and impassioned between responsible elected Representatives of the people, Representatives who are alike in their devotion to the national interests but deeply divided on exactly what our national interests are and on the policies that will most effectively implement those interests.

I am deeply grateful to the distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee, the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. STENNIS), and his colleagues of both parties, who have carried the administration's side of this issue, for the fair and high-minded plane on which they have conducted the debate.

To question the motives of the dedicated men in this Chamber, who have fought the uphill battle against traditional public attitudes to bring about this vote on a definite plan to end the war, would be an incalculable disservice to a free people.

We disagree in matters of judgment—not in fundamental objectives nor in devotion to our country.

I have never met more devoutly patriotic men than the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. MCGOVERN), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. HATFIELD), and the other sponsors of the amendment to end the war.

If I am convinced of anything about the American people, it would be that every responsible American wants to support his President, in time of war, regardless of party differences.

The optimum solution for ending our involvement in Indochina would be for the President to take the necessary moves to get all of our troops out and to create the necessary preconditions for giving

peace negotiations a credible chance of success.

I do not question that this is what the President wants.

But one after another of the current news reports tell us the familiar story of increasing involvement, as the dispatch of yesterday that said:

Fresh evidence that American planes are carrying out direct bombing missions in support of the Cambodians came through a Cambodian radio at a government stronghold near Phnom Penh yesterday.

We are repeatedly told that the only way we can safely withdraw our troops is by extending our engagement.

The pronouncements of the Vice President in his recent trip to Southeast Asia give little solace to those who believe we should get out of Southeast Asia as soon as it can be safely and systematically done.

Although Mr. Nixon acknowledges that the settlement in Indochina must be political, not military, our policies, in point of fact, continue in hot pursuit of a military victory.

The President continues to refer to peace negotiations, and his appointment of Ambassador Bruce to the Paris peace talks was a commendable and statesman-like move. But at the same time, Mr. Nixon pledges our country to the perpetuation of the Thieu-Ky regime in Saigon. Flatly, this objective and the objective of realistic peace negotiations in Paris are mutually incompatible.

In this country, the pendulum of public opinion about the Indochina war has swung back and forth between deep concern and apathy—or despair. For a number of months, following last November, an almost unbelievable amnesia enveloped the Nation—a lapse of memory about the on-going horror of the killing, maiming, and destruction in Vietnam. Then, for a time, the fog lifted.

The revelations of My Lai shocked us into awareness of how this war is brutalizing our own people. The discovery by news correspondents of the extent of our Government's involvement in Laos aroused new doubts and apprehensions. The invasion of Cambodia was the straw that broke the camel's back.

In the heat of the national concern over the Cambodia invasion, I believe that the passage of the amendment to end the war would have been assured.

Now the cutting edge of the public protest has somewhat dulled, although I am convinced that the deep-lying sentiment is as strong as ever.

In my own State, the untold story, as I see it, is of the peace movement that has emerged in the small communities of middle America—not among the youth, who were already with it, but among the calm and established adult citizens of these communities.

The on-going story of the Indochina war is one of abstract comparatives. There were "fewer casualties" this week than the week before—or than 6 months before. We tend to lose sight of the fact that the men killed are flesh-and-blood people, not statistics, and that for each one killed there are many others horribly maimed or otherwise incapacitated.

But I am convinced that an increasing

U.S. forces here have been obliged only to inform Spain of their intentions. The new arrangement in Spain's favor is sure to put to the test the mutual understanding on which military cooperation will depend in the next five years.

MATERIAL LISTED

Spain has come out of the negotiations very well indeed. The Spanish armed forces are to acquire from the U.S. 36 secondhand Phantom jets, more than 100 tanks and halftracks, 25 helicopters, heavy artillery, two KC-130 and six C-130 transport planes, and a variety of other equipment.

The Spanish Navy will be given, technically on loan, two conventional submarines, five destroyers, four minesweepers, three landing craft, a munitions ship, and an oil tanker.

The U.S. will help modernize the Spanish arms industry and train Spanish military personnel. The 485-mile fuel pipeline built across Spain by the U.S. will be handed over to the Spanish. The U.S. will thereby lose a source of revenue estimated at \$1 million a year.

The new agreement is a package containing many nonmilitary items. The United States is to give aid for Spanish educational reform and agricultural development, cooperate in fields of scientific and technological development, and help with environmental and urban development problems. Trade relations between the two countries and U.S. economic investments in Spain will receive special attention.

The cost burden for America of the new agreement, in terms of dollars and cents, has not been spelled out here, but estimates mentioned in the U.S. fluctuate between \$200 million and \$400 million spread over five years.

Mr. CHURCH. Mr. President, before the new agreement was signed, however, the Committee on Foreign Relations strongly felt that it should be submitted to the Senate in the form of a treaty. It was the desire of committee members to explore the language and ramifications of the agreement thoroughly. We wanted to question administration witnesses, along with other authorities, as to the merits of the many important items contained in the proposal, and to probe in depth the interpretation placed by the Executive on certain ambiguous passages. The Washington Post made this point strongly in an editorial on August 12:

The basic situation is that the administration, in order to gain continued use of military bases of questionable worth, entered secretly into a five-year pact to provide Spain with an arms-and-aid package worth hundreds of millions of dollars and with some kind of a security guarantee as well. What kind of guarantee? Was it necessary? Was the price right? These are precisely the questions the Senate wanted to ask and the administration chose to duck.

Had the procedure we requested been followed, the committee would have been examining the precise meaning of the new agreement, in accordance with our constitutional responsibilities.

To this end, it was suggested, within the committee, that a sense-of-the-Senate resolution be introduced, asking that the agreement with Spain be submitted in the form of a treaty. But action on that resolution was postponed, because Under Secretary of State U. Alexis Johnson was scheduled to appear before the committee on Friday, July 24, to discuss the terms of the agreement. It was

felt proper to delay action on the suggested resolution as a matter of courtesy to the Department of State.

The committee met as scheduled in executive session with Under Secretary Johnson and Deputy Secretary of Defense David Packard. At that time, the chairman of the committee, Senator FULBRIGHT, asked Secretaries Johnson and Packard to consult with their principals and to determine whether they would submit the agreement in the form of a treaty, or, if not, whether they would at least discuss the terms of the agreement in public prior to signing it. They agreed to do so.

On the following Tuesday, July 28, the committee was informed that the agreement, which was to have been signed on Thursday, July 30, would be delayed.

Nothing further was heard on this subject until the chairman was informed on Tuesday, August 4, that the agreement would be signed as an executive agreement 2 days later, on August 6.

I have given this short chronology in order to make the point that the Committee on Foreign Relations delayed action on a resolution not only as a matter of courtesy to the Department of State, but also in the hope that the Congress and the American people would know of the agreement's contents before it became binding. Yet, as the Washington Post pointed out:

So uncertain was the administration of its case . . . that it refused to make it publicly. The agreement commits each country to "support the defense system of the other"—language so vague it cries out for the kind of amplification only a Senate hearing could produce. The agreement also creates a joint defense committee whose American member is the supreme commander of NATO—again, an arrangement that raises any number of delicate questions about the obligations of the United States.

Nevertheless, without prior disclosure of its contents, our Secretary of State, Mr. William Rogers, and the Spanish Foreign Minister, Senor Lopez Bravo, sat down on August 6 and signed the new executive agreement into effect between the two countries.

I ask unanimous consent that editorials from the Washington Post and the Rexburg, Idaho, Standard, plus analytical reports by William C. Selover of the Christian Science Monitor and James Doyle of the Washington Evening Star be inserted in the Record at this point.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Aug. 12, 1970]

A CHALLENGE TO THE SENATE OVER SPAIN

The matter of extending American base rights in Spain would not have become the bitter Executive-Legislative issue that it is had not the administration used trickery to slip the extension through. To be sure, its trickery was successful, at least in the short run. The State Department did fake the Senate out badly, refusing to testify publicly and candidly, throwing Mr. Fulbright off balance with an allegation that he was leaking confidential information to the press, and then rushing through the signing of an "executive agreement" before it could either be discussed publicly or specifically approved by the Senate in terms of a treaty. In the

longer run, the administration may regret the clever little coup, if not for some contingency that may arise over Spain, then surely for its impairment of Senate-administration trust.

The basic situation is that the administration, in order to gain continued use of military bases of questionable worth, entered secretly into a five-year pact to provide Spain with an arms-and-aid package worth hundreds of millions of dollars and with some kind of a security guarantee as well. What kind of guarantee? Was it necessary? Was the price right? These were precisely the questions the Senate wanted to ask and the administration chose to duck. By grating contrast, even as it was refusing to submit this highly important measure for Senate consideration, it was submitting an American-Mexican treaty for—wow—"Recovery of Returned or Stolen Archeological, Historical and Cultural Property."

The administration contends, of course, that the extension agreement contains no "commitment" to Spain's defense such as would justify embodying in treaty form. Perhaps. So uncertain was the administration of its case, however, that it refused to make it publicly. The agreement commits each country to "support the defense system of the other"—language so vague it cries out for the kind of amplification only a Senate hearing could produce. The agreement also creates a joint defense committee whose American member is the supreme commander of NATO—again, an arrangement that raises any number of delicate questions about the obligations of the United States. It is no comfort to learn some Spaniards believe that in effect Washington will be paying Spain—handsomely—to receive a NATO security guarantee, one that the Franco regime could not hope to receive directly at NATO's hands and one that it would have to pay for if it did. Can there be a more alarming signal on this agreement than that Mendel Rivers congratulated the State Department for making it?

Senator Fulbright has now called upon the State Department to testify on the agreement before the Foreign Relations Committee. He reserves the possibility of undertaking to amend the pending defense procurement bill so as to cut off funds for implementing the agreement. He can scarcely do less and maintain any pretense of recovering for the Senate its constitutional function of approving or disapproving foreign commitments which have a vital bearing on war and peace.

[From the Rexburg (Idaho), Standard, Aug. 11, 1970]

THE AGREEMENT WITH SPAIN

There are strong arguments on both sides of the running controversy over presidential and senatorial power in the conduct of foreign affairs. Neither the administration or Chairman Fulbright and other members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee have all truth by the tail in this many-faceted dispute.

Having noted this, we come down on the side of Fulbright and like-thinkers in the matter of the new military agreement with Spain. This extends for five years the U.S. right to air and naval bases in that country, in return for loans and grants which may total as much as 400 million dollars.

Such an arrangement, we believe, should have been made in the form of a treaty requiring the advice and consent of the Senate. It is not palatable that, instead, the extension is embodied in a mere executive agreement on the basis of prolonged negotiations in which the Senate played no part.

The administration maintains that no stated or implied commitment to defend Spain against attack is involved, and that

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R0

U.S. fearful of gain made by Laotian patriots

STATINTL

By Richard E. Ward

*Guardian staff correspondent
(Second of a series on Laos)*

Recent reports from Laos note that meetings have been held between prince Souvanna Phouma, premier of the U.S.-backed Vientiane regime and an envoy from Prince Souphanouvong, head of the Lao Patriotic Front (Pathet Lao).

Some Western journalists suggest that Souvanna Phouma and Washington are guardedly optimistic over these meetings as an indication that the Pathet Lao and possibly even the North Vietnamese are finding the war in Laos too costly and are anxious to make a settlement or a partial accommodation. Contradicting themselves, the same journalists have reported more accurately that it is the Vientiane-Washington alliance which is in 2 shambles, following a series of major Pathet Lao victories—at the Plain of Jars this winter and then at Attopeu and Saravane in southern Laos this spring.

What is really happening in Laos? And what are the prospects for talks between the Pathet Lao and Vientiane?

If as the Aug. 7 Washington Post reported, the Pathet Lao has proposed negotiations or talks between Laotians, this is completely consistent with the Pathet Lao position that Laotians are fully competent to settle their own affairs and should be allowed to do so.

Quarter-century of war

But outside parties, first France and now the U.S. have maintained a state of war in Laos, paralleling the struggle in Vietnam, for more than a quarter of a century.

The present situation cannot be understood without reference to its roots in this long conflict in Laos. The essential point to recall (which continues in the present) is that both Paris and Washington have utilized Laos as a strategic base without the slightest regard for the interests and the wishes of the Laotian people.

Paris' primary interest was to use Laos as a base for crushing the revolution in Vietnam. Paris regarded this as part of the natural order of things but screamed "North Vietnamese intervention" when the Pathet Lao and its predecessors, that is to say, when Laotians began fighting the French occupiers of their country.

Washington tries to maintain this old lie, that the Pathet Lao are proxies of the North Vietnamese. Now the liberated zone of Laos is larger than North Vietnam itself. That doesn't bother White House or State Department speechwriters, but no false rhetoric can conceal certain basic realities.

U.S. aims are more complex than those of the French. The main U.S. purpose is still the same, using Laos as a base for attacking the Vietnamese revolutionaries.

Springboard for aggression

But it should be remembered that landlocked Laos borders on the People's Republic of China, Burma, Thailand and Cambodia as well as Vietnam—all countries against which the U.S. has strategic designs. Without discussing each separate case, it is obvious that another major aim of U.S. policy is to crush the Laotian revolution itself, so that all Laos could be a strategic springboard for the U.S. in Southeast Asia.

That is why the U.S. has been engaged in aerial warfare against the liberated zone of Laos for more than six years and why the U.S. has supported all counter-revolutionary movements in Laos since the anti-French Resistance War (1945-54). Today the U.S. finances a number of Laotian armies, the most important being the "neutralist" Royal Army of Vientiane and the avowedly mercenary troops of the CIA under the command of Gen. Vang Pao.

However, the liberated zone held by the Pathet Lao and its allies, the Patriotic Neutralists, has withstood all American-backed attacks, including bombing as intense as any ever utilized in Vietnam.

Fear of "contagion"

Moreover, the recent military successes of the Pathet Lao have created a new spectre in the eyes of Washington—a common border between a liberated Laos and Thailand.

Although the U.S. has used Thai mercenaries in Laos for years and Thailand has been and remains the principal base for U.S. aerial attacks against the Pathet Lao and the liberated zone (as well as against Vietnam), no one suggests that the Pathet Lao would ever invade Thailand. The great fear of Washington is that the "contagion" of national liberation would spread like a prairie fire if there were a common Thai border with a liberated Laos. For there are close cultural and ethnic ties between the Thai and Lao peoples and actually more ethnic Laos live in Thailand than in Laos itself.

A more immediate concern of Washington is the internal rivalry among Laotians in the U.S. camp, who spend greater efforts at in-fighting than on behalf of U.S. policy. Another significant fact is that Souvanna Phouma, who had been playing Washington's tune for years, has recently demurred at the idea of a U.S.-backed Bangkok-Saigon-Phnom Penh alliance.

This was the first show of independence from Phouma in a long time and immediately there was coup talk in Vientiane. Actually Phouma is little more than a figurehead for various rightist elements controlling the Vientiane regime and contending for power and influence and graft among themselves.

No "strongman"

Normally this show of independence would be put down rather quickly by some of the CIA's retainers

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R000700020001-5

Continued

TFXARKANA, ARK.
GAZETTE

M - 26,390

S - 30,314

AUG 22 1970

In Laos And Cambodia

In spite of the administration's well publicized moves to reduce American troop commitments in Southeast Asia, certain disturbing aspects of the situation have not been satisfactorily explained. The reference is to what is going on in Laos and Cambodia, which tends to undermine heartening action elsewhere.

Troop withdrawals are steadily under way in South Vietnam and can be expected to continue; the administration has committed itself to deadlines. In South Korea, the announced pullout of troops appears likely to be made, even in the face of objections by the Seoul government.

A disturbing situation continues, however, in both Laos and Cambodia. In the former, there is no longer much of an attempt to hide the CIA's activities through its Air America operations. Television network newsmen have filmed Air America

planes supplying American-paid troops. Support for an army of perhaps as many as 10,000 is reportedly being financed by the CIA. There seems little doubt that the Central Intelligence Agency not only is functioning in Laos, but enjoys behind-the-scenes administration support.

In Cambodia, it now is clear that United States aircraft are aiding the Cambodian army. Though the Defense Department offers half-hearted denials of this, newsmen on the scene report that U.S. planes are carrying out more than their officially sanctioned missions to cut supply lines. Most such "interdiction missions" seem to occur close to where Cambodian troops happen to be in trouble.

There is nothing new about contradictions between official policy positions and what is reported by newsmen. In the past, such discrepancies have for the most part worked to the disadvantage of long-range American interests. The benefit of troop withdrawals from South Vietnam and South Korea may be nullified, or at any rate made less significant, by continued involvement in Laos and Cambodia.

Troops Skirt Laos Hills As Border Base Closes

KHAMDUC, Vietnam, Aug. 21 (AP)—“No, no, my men have never gone into Laos,” giggled the South Vietnamese colonel. Then he turned to a U.S. commander and said: “Not my battalion. Maybe your battalion?”
“Not mine,” the American laughed.
“You see,” said the Vietnamese officer, Lt. Col. Pham Van Nghin, “one time we make contact with the Vietcong maybe one click (kilometer) from the border. But they refuse to fight us and run back to Laos. We don't need to follow.”

That action, just over half a mile from the frontier, was, according to Nghin, the closest any troops of his Sixth Regiment, Second Division, or the two long-range reconnaissance companies attached to it had ever been to Laos.

But some crewmen of U.S. helicopters that have ferried government troops in the high and densely jungled hills of this frontier region say that as large a South Vietnamese force as a battalion—about 400 men—has crossed the border.

They said their helicopters recently carried the troops into landing zones just short of the frontier, and that the South Vietnamese walked across a short distance and returned a few days later. They were looking for enemy supply caches, the pilots said.

The helicopter landings were so close to the border, they said, that some aircraft could not help being carried across the frontier by their flight patterns as they arched up and away from the dropoff zones.

Earlier this week, the Vietcong's clandestine propaganda radio claimed the South Vietnamese had launched a major operation across the frontier into Saravane province in the southern Laotian panhandle—the same area where five U.S. helicopters were shot down this month, three of them on Aug. 15.

The Laotian premier, Prince Souvanna Phouma, denied the claim. American officials said they had seen no evidence of South Vietnamese troops entering Laos but added that South Vietnamese units have some-

although none have done so during the Kam Duc operation.

Sources in Saigon also confirmed again that South Vietnamese reconnaissance units sometimes operate in Laos, observing enemy movements along the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

In any case, joint U.S.-South Vietnamese force may pull out of Kham Duc in the next several weeks, ahead of the monsoon rains that begin in this area in October.

Firebase Dak Rose, halfway between Kham Duc and the frontier, has been closed and its men were moved elsewhere.

The mission of the Sixth Regiment, said Nghin, was to cut off enemy supplies flowing in from Laos.

He said his troops so far had killed about 200 North Vietnamese while losing 24 men killed and 128 wounded; U.S. losses were put at four killed and 25 wounded seriously enough to be evacuated.

Caches uncovered have not been huge. The finds, in addition to some weapons and ammunition, have included a small North Vietnamese hospital and 150 bicycles.

U.S. Admits Possibility Of Laos Incursion

The State Department officially acknowledged yesterday that South Vietnamese troops with American advisers “may” have crossed the Laotian border in “protective reaction missions” early this month.

That indirect and qualified concession to Pathet Lao charges of allied incursions was first reported by The Washington Post on Thursday. That account also said allied sources unofficially conceded that clandestine “reconnaissance” units often enter Laos, and sometimes raiding parties also.

Other published reports yesterday said covert reconnaissance and commando operations directed by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency have been carried out in Cambodia as well. The general area of these intensified operations is the tri-border sector of Laos, South Vietnam and Cambodia. It is

Ho Chi Minh infiltration trail from North Vietnam through Laos, which branches out into South Vietnam and Cambodia.

The State Department's official acknowledgment of “possible” allied thrusts into Laos were carefully limited yesterday to what spokesman Robert J. McCloskey reiterated as “the inherent right of self-defense” invoked by troops under attack.

He said: “Allied forces of course may engage in protective reaction missions which might at times involve some American equipment and advisers.”

Secret U.S. Action Rises in Cambodia

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE
Special to The Star

VIENTIANE—The United States is drifting towards a secret war in Cambodia.

Central Intelligence Agency operatives based in Southern Laos are running Laotian intelligence gathering and commando teams into Northern Cambodia, well informed military sources here say.

This, combined with denials of what is obviously close U.S. air support for the Cambodian Military puts U.S.-Cambodian operations on a similar footing as secret operations in Laos, though perhaps not on quite so large a scale on the ground.

Sources said the CIA ground operation into Cambodia is run by the agency's substation in the Mekong River town of Pakse in Southern Laos. Laos troops from the 2nd Special Guerrilla Unit based on Bolovens Plateau in Southern Laos are used in their operations. They are led by ex-U.S. militia on hire to the agency.

A smaller group of Kha Lave tribesmen is based in Laos at a location which cannot be disclosed for reasons of military security. They operate into Northeast Cambodia against parts of a Communist base area known as 609. Most operations to date have been in Cambodia's Stung Treng Province where the local Cambodian population speaks Lao as their primary language.

Stung Treng was part of Laos before French rulers in 1904 shifted it under the administration of Phnom Penh. Common language plus Lao and local populace feeling that Stung Treng belongs in Laos anyway has helped Laotians in their military operations there.

Teams of eight or ten men, sometimes including two Americans, survey new Communist infiltration routes into Northern Cambodia leading from Southern Laos toward Communist headquarters near the Cambodian town of Rovieng, sources said.

Teams have attacked trucks, ammunition and rice caches by calling in U.S. air strikes.

These air strikes are part of the interdiction operations which President Nixon already has admitted.

KHA tribal teams operate in

the Seesa River area of Cambodia's northern "Green Triangle" of Labansiek, Bokod and Lumphat. Teams are supplied by air drops made by Continental Airlines' aircraft flown by American pilots. Continental carries out similar missions in Laos for the agency.

Sources said these Lao special guerrilla units operating from light airstrips in the Bolovens plateau now are responsible for surveillance of Ha-

noi's traffic all the way from Ban Bac on the Sekhong river to Rovieng in Cambodia.

These American operations are "vital," according to well informed sources, to achieve some success in interdicting the reinforcement and resupply routes Hanoi has pushed through Southern Laos to Northern Cambodia in recent months.

These Communist supply routes support Communist attacks against hard-pressed eastern Cambodia into South Cambodian defenders at Kompong Thom and Siem Reap and convoys moving across Northeastern Cambodia into South Vietnam.

Reds are expected to further improve these routes and perhaps launch new attacks against Laos to do this. The secrecy policy, however, is not carried out on military grounds. Sources admit that the Reds already know the locations of Lao guerrilla airstrips and have clashed with teams inside Cambodia.

Protects Laos Stance

Secrecy in part protects the official Laos stance of neutrality and partly avoids public

pressure in the United States against U.S. involvement in Laos and Cambodia.

Also because the Central Intelligence Agency, and not the military, is carrying out the operation, secrecy is naturally excessive.

Sources believe that if dovish senators and other segments of the U.S. public understood how necessary these operations are to relieve pressure on Cambodians and South Vietnam, there would be less problems in both funding and secrecy.

STATINTL

21 AUGUST 1970

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R

Secret U.S. Action Rises in Cambodia

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE

Special to The Star

VIENTIANE—The United States is stepping up secret operations in Cambodia with guerrilla teams directed by the Central Intelligence Agency, well-informed sources here say.

The teams move into northern Cambodia on intelligence gathering and commando raids from a base in southern Laos, the sources say.

Combined with denials of what is obviously close U.S. air support for the Cambodian military, the increased activity puts U.S.-Cambodia operations on a similar footing as secret operations in Laos, though perhaps not on quite so large a scale on the ground.

Sources said the CIA ground operation into Cambodia is run by the agency's substation in the Mekong River town of Pakse in Southern Laos. Laos troops from the 2nd Special Guerrilla Unit based on Bolovens Plateau in Southern Laos are used in their operations. They are led by ex-U.S. militia on hire to the agency.

A smaller group of Kha Lave tribesmen is based in Laos at a location which cannot be disclosed for reasons of military security. They operate into Northeast Cambodia against parts of a Communist base area known as 603. Most operations to date have been in Cambodia's Stung Treng Province where the local Cambodian population speaks Lao as their primary language.

Stung Treng was part of Laos before French rulers in 1904 shifted it under the administration of Phnom Penh. Common language plus Lao and local populace feeling that Stung Treng belongs in Laos anyway has helped Laotians in their military operations there.

Teams of eight or ten men, sometimes including two Americans, survey new Communist infiltration routes into Northern Cambodia leading from Southern Laos toward Communist headquarters near the Cambodian town of Rovieng, sources said.

Teams have attacked trucks, ammunition and rice caches by calling in U.S. air strikes.

These air strikes are part of the interdiction operations which President Nixon already has admitted.

KHA tribal teams operate in Cambodia's northern "Green Triangle" of Labansiek, Bokod and Lumphat. Teams are situ-

Continental Airlines' aircraft flown by American pilots. Continental carries out similar missions in Laos for the agency.

Sources said these Lao special guerrilla units operating from light airstrips in the Bolovens plateau now are responsible for surveillance of Hanoi's traffic all the way from Ban Bac on the Sekhong river to Rovieng in Cambodia.

These American operations are "vital," according to well informed sources, to achieve some success in interdicting the reinforcement and resupply routes Hanoi has pushed through Southern Laos to Northern Cambodia in recent months.

These Communist supply routes support Communist attacks against hard-pressed eastern Cambodia into South Cambodian defenders at Kompong Thom and Sich Reap and convoys moving across Northeastern Cambodia into South Vietnam.

Reds are expected to further improve these routes and perhaps launch new attacks against Laos to do this. The secrecy policy, however, is not carried out on military grounds. Sources admit that the Reds already know the locations of Lao guerrilla airstrips and have clashed with teams inside Cambodia.

Protects Laos Stance

Secrecy in part protects the official Laos stance of neutrality and partly avoids public pressure in the United States against U.S. involvement in Laos and Cambodia.

Also because the Central Intelligence Agency, and not the military, is carrying out the operation, secrecy is naturally excessive.

Sources believe that if dovish senators and other segments of the U.S. public understood how necessary these operations are to the U.S. posture on Cambodians and South Vietnam, there would be less problems in both funding and

STATINTL

16 Aug 1970

STATINTL

INTERPRETIVE REPORT

Laos Talks Could Affect U.S. Role

By TAMMY ARBUCKLE

Special to The Star

VIETNAME — A whole new situation with far reaching effects on the U.S. role in Southeast Asia is being opened up in the Indochina war as Lao factions rush headlong towards talks.

With a meeting site agreed on and other problems being thrashed out, diplomats expect the talks to take place in about six weeks.

The diplomats say these talks — if they succeed in the aims of a limited truce and formation of a new tripartite coalition government—will hasten U.S. withdrawal from the Asian mainland, but be

fraught with pitfalls for the American position in Vietnam.

In this view, a limited truce would mean a halt to U.S. bombing in northern Laos and probably withdrawal of the American ground presence there.

U.S. aircraft presently fly more than 300 combat missions some weeks in northern Laos.

Some of these missions are in close support of the guerrillas forces commanded by Gen. Vang Pao.

Some missions seek to interdict North Vietnamese logistic routes which supply Hanoi troops fighting the Lao government.

Some 200 Americans under CIA-control play a military role with Vang Pao's troops.

The war in northern Laos is a war for control of the Laotian government and is not directly concerned with the Vietnam war.

A settlement of this part of the war with an attendant cessation of U.S. combat activities in the area would free American planes and men for South Vietnam and could pave the way for a drastic cutdown in U.S. bases in Thailand where many of the Laos sorties originate.

"It's certainly to our benefit to cool it in north Laos," U.S. Embassy officials here said.

The problem for the United States however, is that while a cessation in the fighting is desirable, the talks themselves are almost certain to lead to a stronger Communist presence in the Laos government.

The last Laos peace agreement at Geneva in 1962 saw a formula in which there were eight rightist ministers, four neutralists and four Reds in the cabinet.

The rightists promptly tried to lock up the Communists. "The Communists want greater representation with more security this time," diplomats said. A new formula likely might be six rightists, four neutralists and six Communists.

"It's then the U.S. problems begin," diplomats said.

They say the four neutralists may split between the rightist and Communist sides, instead of maintaining the cabinet power balance.

"They may be influenced by power or money. It's happened before, in 1958 and 1962. It led to fighting then. It would lead to fighting again and continuation of the U.S. involvement," a diplomat said.

The second possibility—more ominous for the United States—is that the Reds would sweep the board in a general

election which must take place 18 months after the coalition government is formed.

Political Organization

This is a likely possibility, for the Pathet Lao have the only organized political party in Laos and have many village pathizers.

This would mean a Red government in Laos with dire consequences for the United States in South Vietnam as the Red sanctuaries would be vastly improved.

"I have always wondered why the Pathet Lao follow the military road to power instead of settling down to politics where they can win," a Western diplomat said.

The diplomat said he believes Hanoi would rather fight for control, and that there is now a rift between Hanoi and the Pathet Lao because the Pathet Lao lack the will to fight now and prefer to talk.

The diplomat said that Hanoi, faced with the new war in Cambodia, may have asked the Pathet Lao to carry the brunt of the fighting in Laos—and the Pathet Lao refused.

Other informed sources believe, however, that the talks were inspired by Communist fears that South Vietnam will hit their Laos sanctuaries. The Red plan is to put a new coat of "neutralist paint" on Laos to prevent this.

Premier Souvanna Phouma is trying to separate the trails and sanctuaries from the talks, saying it's an affair for Hanoi and Washington to settle.

This, of course, means the allies could hit the sanctuaries at will without infringing on the new neutrality.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE—AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION AND CONSERVATION SERVICE, FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF ALL ASCS PRODUCER PAYMENTS EXCLUDING PRICE SUPPORT LOANS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1969

OREGON

| Range of total payments | | Number of payees | Percent distribution | Total amount dollars | Percent distribution | Range of total payments | | Number of payees | Percent distribution | Total amount dollars | Percent distribution |
|-------------------------|------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| From | Through | | | | | From | Through | | | | |
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Less than..... | \$100.00 | 3,422 | 21.77 | 146,884 | 0.62 | \$7,500..... | \$9,999.99 | 245 | 1.56 | 2,113,624 | 8.91 |
| \$100..... | \$199.99 | 1,792 | 11.40 | 261,695 | 1.10 | \$10,000..... | \$14,999.99 | 232 | 1.43 | 2,792,350 | 11.77 |
| \$200..... | \$499.99 | 3,049 | 19.40 | 1,016,080 | 4.28 | \$15,000..... | \$19,999.99 | 80 | 0.51 | 1,370,770 | 5.78 |
| \$500..... | \$999.99 | 1,198 | 7.62 | 714,078 | 3.01 | \$20,000..... | \$24,999.99 | 43 | 0.27 | 959,547 | 4.05 |
| \$700..... | \$999.99 | 1,254 | 7.98 | 1,050,599 | 4.43 | \$25,000..... | \$49,999.99 | 40 | 0.25 | 1,262,449 | 5.32 |
| \$1,000..... | \$1,999.99 | 2,077 | 13.22 | 2,942,582 | 12.41 | \$50,000..... | \$99,999.99 | 6 | 0.05 | 381,102 | 1.61 |
| \$2,000..... | \$2,999.99 | 681 | 5.61 | 2,150,054 | 9.07 | | | | | | |
| \$3,000..... | \$3,999.99 | 522 | 3.32 | 1,813,950 | 7.65 | | | | | | |
| \$4,000..... | \$4,999.99 | 370 | 2.35 | 1,663,165 | 7.01 | | | | | | |
| \$5,000..... | \$7,499.99 | 505 | 3.21 | 3,078,974 | 12.98 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | Total..... | | 15,716 | 100.00 | 23,717,303 | 100.00 |

v 0.005 percent or less.

Note.—The above statistics show the number of farmers in Oregon receiving over \$20,000 in subsidy payments to be 89. This figure is slightly different from an earlier report which shows the

same category to be 86. The difference stems from the fact that the 85 comes from a State report and the 89 is a sum of the county reports. (Bi-county farmers result in the higher figure in the county report.)

THE JUNK MERCHANTS

Mr. BROOKE. Mr. President, we are all becoming more aware of the pressing drug problem facing the Nation and in fact plaguing much of the world at an ever-increasing rate. It is of the utmost importance that we have knowledge of the situation—a knowledge based on concrete facts that can be used by the United States and other nations in a united effort against this booming industry which is baffling our law-enforcement efforts and corrupting our youth.

We do not have to go very far to see the impact of illegal drug distribution. It is becoming increasingly more visible and alarming. A recent series of articles entitled "The Junk Merchants," written by John Hughes, and published in the Christian Science Monitor gives a clear picture of the scope and the complexity of drug operations on the international level. The illegal nature of the problem and the difficulty in obtaining facts make this series of particular importance. It is my hope that through such thorough studies we will be more prepared to recommend action and to support the international efforts which are presently being initiated at the United Nations and

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the articles be printed in the RECORD in various countries.

There being no objection, the articles were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

WORLD "JUNK" TRAFFIC: "WE ARE DEALING WITH AN EPIDEMIC"

BEIRUT, LEBANON.—During the past few months enough heroin has been smuggled into the United States to supply 150 million individual shots for addicts. In other words, enough for all the young people in the U.S. between the ages of 15 and 24 to have at least four 'fixes.' Staff correspondent John Hughes has followed the narcotics trails round the world. In the first of 10 reports he spells out the international drug situation.

A five-month investigation by this newspaper into the international narcotics traffic reveals that illicit drugs are swirling like a floodtide down the clandestine channels that lead to the addict user.

To the United States, the principal consuming country, the flow is massive, and increasing.

True, seizures are up. Heroin seizures by American customs agents have increased 1,200 percent over the past five years.

The Nixon administration is devoting major effort to disrupting the traffic. At home and abroad, American narcotics agents are doing a yeoman job. Whether shooting it out with opium traffickers in Turkey, or penetrating the heroin factories of Marseille, France, they are often men of remarkable courage, working undercover for long periods at considerable risk.

But the market for narcotics has expanded phenomenally, too. Some believe it has doubled in the past six months. It now caters to 11- and 12-year-olds. President Nixon says 180,000 Americans are addicted to heroin. Each requires several "fixes" a day of the white powder that has brought death to hundreds and so-called "living death" to thousands more.

So far as "soft" drugs are concerned, more than 6 million Americans are using marijuana, according to a United States congressional committee of inquiry.

FLOW INCREASED

Ironically, increased governmental attention to the drug traffic has boosted the current flow. Traffickers fear that traditional sources and channels may be sealed off. So they have been moving large consignments while they can.

Narcotics agents believe 3,500 kilos of heroin have been hastily funneled down the pipeline from Turkey to the United States in the past few months. When diluted, that is enough to supply more than 150 million individual shots of heroin to addicts.

Turkey is the largest grower of illegal opium. France is the major converter of opium into heroin. The process is dominated by a tough Corsican underworld ring operating in Marseille. From these two countries originates 80 percent of the heroin used in the United States. Much of the balance comes from Mexico. Two other countries with booming opium production—Iran and Afghanistan—are likely to cause trouble.

But even if production could be wiped out overnight, enough has been stockpiled to meet world demand for several years. Buried in remote areas of Turkey are several hundred tons of opium. It is guarded by fierce hill folk for whom defiance of authority is practically a point of honor. They can dispose of their caches at leisure. Neither opium, nor morphine (its next stage), nor heroin (the end product) deteriorates with age.

The United Nations says the drug traffic is snowballing and that it is "imperatively urgent" to find ways to cope with it.

A top American narcotics agent puts it more bluntly. "We're dealing," he says, "with an epidemic."

The United Nations estimates illegal production of opium at 1,200 tons a year. Many experts find that calculation conservative. As

for marijuana, it grows untended like a weed in dozens of countries.

Last year a startled London housewife found two stands of it growing 6 feet high in her back garden. In New Orleans, agents plucked up a college professor and his wife found growing 250 marijuana plants. Across the Mexican border alone, authorities believe, some 1,000 tons of marijuana flow into the United States each year.

For the past several months I have been exploring the pipelines down which this illegal traffic flows and the men who control them. In the course of a round-the-world trip I found that with no special entrée to underworld circles it was possible, with time and money, to buy every major illegal drug.

In Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Thailand, I came easily to the point of purchase for opium. In Laos I could have bought it by the small plane-load.

Sometimes there were difficulties when sellers suspected me of being an undercover narcotics agent or a police officer. But with only a little more effort, I could have bought opium in India, Turkey, and Mexico. In Hong Kong I need walk but a few steps from my office to get the distinctive scent of smoking opium from the neighborhood vendor.

In Beirut a Western diplomat offered me introductions to cocaine sellers in a number of nightclubs.

Second-grade heroin in small doses was easily obtained in Mexico and Hong Kong. But in Marseille I could have bought top-grade heroin by the kilo (2.2 pound). It would have taken an advance payment of \$3,000 and several days isolation in a hotel room while the sellers checked me out. If they were satisfied, I could have been reasonably sure of emerging with a kilo of pure heroin. So skillful and careful are the traffickers, however, that the transaction would have been completed without my ever meeting the deliverer.

The movement of heroin from southern France to the United States was once dominated by the American Mafia. But now the Corsican heroin manufacturers have so much to sell that they meet all the Mafia's requirements and have plenty to spare. So in addition, they sell to Cuban, American Negro, and Puerto Rican buying rings who have newly set up shop around Marseille, as well as to "Independent" purchasers.

As for hashish and marijuana, I could have bought this as easily as toothpaste or candy throughout much of Asia, the Middle East, and parts of Mexico. In Afghanistan, hashish sellers distribute pamphlets advertising their own special brands. Hospitable policemen offer foreign hippies a puff of "hash." In Nepal, hashish comes cheaper than tobacco. In Pakistan, a police officer opposed to the

Congress's Right to Know

By STUART SYMINGTON

STATINTL

WASHINGTON.

EXECUTIVE secrecy surrounding the conduct of our foreign policy and its associated military operations is, I am convinced, endangering not only the welfare and prosperity of the United States but also, and most significantly, the national security.

This is a conclusion I have reached slowly, reluctantly, and from the unique vantage point of having been a Pentagon official and now being the only member of either branch of Congress to sit on both the Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees.

The practice of either editing or

STUART SYMINGTON (D., Mo.) has been a member of the U. S. Senate since 1952.

wholly withholding military information from Congress and the public is not new; the present Administration is no better or worse than its predecessors. In recent years, the need for immediate reaction to a possible nuclear attack has made it necessary to transfer more authority to the executive branch, but this additional authority has apparently been carried over into the conventional military and foreign policy field. As a result, key foreign policy activities have not been properly debated in Congress, for we simply have not known enough to play our traditional and constitutional role in the formulation of foreign policy and the direction of the country.

A particularly heavy veil of secrecy has been drawn over one especially important and dangerous aspect of the foreign/military policy field: the production and deployment overseas of United States nuclear weapons. While some secrecy in the nuclear field is justified, much of it is a carry-over from the past and deserves the most searching review within the Government as well as more public disclosure and debate.

No one seriously concerned about the future can deny that our current worldwide military posture could be interpreted by a possible enemy—including the other superpower—as unnecessarily threatening, and in any

case belying any real interest on our part for achieving, through the current SALT talks, a permanent peace by means of an agreement about the control of nuclear arms.

It seemed to me axiomatic that the American public should know and understand as fully as possible the implications of our current worldwide military deployment and the foreign policy commitments which this deployment presumably enforces. Yet the public in this country often knows less than much of the rest of the world. As a ranking Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee observed recently, "Our problem is that we don't take the Hong Kong newspapers."

My personal feeling of alarm began to stir in 1963, with the defense budget mounting toward \$80-billion, and keen awareness based on personal experience that high cost and duplication are characteristic of our enormous military presence abroad. (Today, we have overseas more than 1,000,000 men in some 384 facilities and 3,000 minor installations, along with 300,000 at sea.) At best, an examination of this vast military position could point up waste and inefficiency; at worst, it presents—because of its high dollar cost and its direct relations to issues of war and peace—a serious present danger to the continued vitality of our free and democratic institutions.

IT was against this background that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee decided to undertake a study of just what this nation's foreign policy commitments are. Senator Fulbright asked me to serve as head of the new subcommittee and we began work in February, 1969.

Seventeen months of investigating confirmed our already deep concern about executive branch secrecy surrounding much of our foreign policy and the military undertakings incident to those policies; secrecy which has now developed to a point where military activities often are created and then dominate foreign policy responses.

I do not refer to the concealment of military details which could aid the enemy, nor to the publication of the precise terms of negotiations or specific agreements which could frustrate their successful consummation. I do refer, however, to the continuing failure to reveal, explain or justify the true dimensions of our activities abroad, dimensions which are far better known by our adversaries than by the American public—and in some cases, by the American Congress.

As recent evidence, last month, for the first time in the history of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, an ambassador refused to testify about United States activities in a country in which we are waging war, unless specific regulations laid down by the State Department were adhered to, including retention by the executive branch only of any written record.

Accordingly, rather than agreeing to State's stipulation that the written record of the testimony of G. McMurtrie Godley, the United States Ambassador to Laos—where he directs all military as well as political activities—not be retained by the committee, the committee elected to receive a briefing from the Ambassador, with no record being kept on either side.

Publicity, I know, may be occasionally inconvenient to those who supervise the functioning of a bureaucracy. The "system" works more smoothly if unexposed to questioning. But public disclosure is a truly vital safeguard against government adoption of positions and policies of unknown and potentially dangerous implications. And when it comes to issues which involve actual survival (even more than mere prosperity and the question of whether so much of our money should be spent for military rather than domestic social needs), there is obvious examination.

continued

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R000700020001-5

Burchett's new book on Indochina

THE SECOND INDOCHINA WAR, by Wilfred Burchett;
New York: International Publishers, 1970; \$5.95 cloth,
\$1.95 paper.

For at least twenty years, Wilfred Burchett has been bird-dogging the depredations of the U.S. (and lesser Western powers) in the Far East. His name first came to be known to Americans during the Korean War, a war that to almost all Americans then (as still) was a contest between the forces of light (ours), and of darkness (theirs). If there were any American journalists—except I.F. Stone, whose "Hidden History of the Korean War" is better reading with every passing year—who saw that war for what it was, I've forgotten their names.

Burchett, as a man of the Left, was assiduously ignored or put down in this country during that war, except in the National Guardian; for who could believe that Americans would kill and die for anything but a cause most just?

In the intervening years Burchett has stood fast, nor—except to live out its logical implications—has U.S. foreign policy changed. What has changed is the belief that if the U.S. is doing it "must be OK. Indeed, and especially among the young, it is increasingly believed that if the U.S. is doing it, it must be wrong. So, over the past few years, one sees Burchett quoted, even interviewed, in the "straight press." He is a commanding authority, because of his close knowledge of both events and men in the Asian theater; so much so that it is not uncommon for those preparing to meet with, say, the North Vietnamese or the NLF, to meet first with Burchett for a knowledgeable briefing. This has been true for Western diplomats (secretly, of course) and straight journalists, as well as movement types. Burchett knows more than any other journalist about what's what, when there's a war going on in the Far East.

All that shows up in this, the latest of his many books on the struggle for Southeast Asia. That struggle has taken on the name of "the war in Vietnam" for almost all Americans. But from its inception it has been a struggle for control over Southeast Asia and thus fought out in different ways throughout the entirety of Indochina.

The public war came to be fought in Vietnam, but only because there it could not be kept secret, after the nature and scope of our involvement became impossible to hide. What is truly remarkable is that the enormity of American intervention in Laos and Cambodia has remained so well-concealed until very recently.

This small book serves the important purpose of telling the story of Laos and Cambodia, with the war in Vietnam proper brought in only when—as is frequently so—that part of the story is necessary if the whole story is to be comprehended.

The U.S. entered the lists in Indochina when it was French Indochina, and it entered to preserve Indochina (not just South Vietnam) as a Western outpost. And so, from the beginning, our intervention in the politics and the warfare of Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam was undifferentiated. Conditions in the three parts of Indochina differed; but our intentions were unitary—and all this is documented and made plain in the book.

The book operates on two levels, as it deals separately with Cambodia and Laos. The first level is almost primer-like in its

quality, as it treats the early history of both countries. Unfortunately, given the almost systematic ignorance of almost all Americans on those two societies—to mention no others—a primer treatment is all too appropriate. But as Burchett moves into the period since World War II, the level moves swiftly toward a type and amount of information and analysis that is hard to match, in sophistication or familiarity.

The American war against Indochina is no mistake, of course, but it is a war we cannot win, which is to say that our policies there, political and military, have come out to a series of blunders piled on blunders, one series interacting with the others, all taken together pushing us deeper into the mire, while increasing the resistance of those we would destroy.

Our support of the Lon Nol regime in Cambodia, and the necessary invasion that followed that support, brought forth the kind of opposition it did in the U.S. (and the world) not because it was new, or more egregious than previous actions of the same sort in Laos and Vietnam, but because it revealed so clearly the meaning of our policies in Southeast Asia: seeking no wider war there is no way for us to avoid an ever-wider war. In mid-April, Premier Pham Van Dong characterized U.S. support of Lon Nol as "probably the major blunder of the U.S.A. in the Indochinese War, but a blunder that had to be made."

Thus we acted in South Vietnam, when we created and supported Diem and his successors up to Thieu-Ky. Thus we acted in Laos when, preaching coalition governments but overthrowing each one that existed almost from the moment of its birth, we made it clear that only one form of government could survive in Laos, a government that would allow the U.S. to use Laos as a combination aircraft carrier, radar station, invasion route, and pretext for continuing the Indochina War—as, in one way or another, we have used Thailand, as we now use Cambodia, as we will use any other country that gets in the way of our "civilizing" mission.

Burchett takes us through the cast of characters and political forces in Laos and Cambodia, and makes them as familiar and understandable as those in Vietnam have become for the careful newspaper reader. We watch as prince Souphanouvong moves from being a bright and patriotic engineer to becoming the undeniable and courageous leader of the independence forces of Laos; and as Souvanna Phouma moves from being a charming and apparently decent Laotian to becoming a pimp for the CIA. (So far has he gone that when we spoke to him in early April of 1970 he was able to say that anyone killed by American bombs in Laos was North Vietnamese; just as the Pentagon says that anyone killed by American bombs in South Vietnam is ipso facto "V.C.")

Neither Laos nor Cambodia has the kind or the degree of economic or strategic reality or potential possessed by Vietnam; but they are contiguous to Vietnam, and to Thailand, and to China. In their deep pasts, all these countries have found their destinies moving rhythmically with each other, if in changing tempos. And as each month passes, it appears that the U.S. will see to it that the future will be even more of the same.

Burchett shows why and how this is so, and he shows also how very fierce and strong is the determination of the Lao, Cambodian and Vietnamese peoples to see that whatever common and whatever separate destinies they may have, that they will be destinies presided over by themselves, not by outsiders.

But if it is true that the Indochinese peoples will never be defeated by Americans and their clients in Southeast Asia, it is equally clear that the war will never be ended, unless, as Mr. Agnew has correctly said, we end it here at home. For the generation of American destruction in Indochina has proved beyond a shred of doubt that there are no ends we will not go to—so long as the American people put up with it—to avoid defeat in Southeast Asia.

Douglas Dowd

Douglas Dowd is a professor of economics at Cornell University and has recently returned from a visit to Laos and North Vietnam.

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R000700020001-5



On the spot report from liberated Laos

By Richard E. Wert
Guardian Staff correspondent
(First of a series on Laos)

In mid-June as the late afternoon sun was reflected from flooded ricefields in a valley far below the winding mountain road, I entered Sam Neua province, stronghold of the Lao Patriotic Front (Neo Lao Hak Sat), commonly known as the Pathet Lao.

Travelling through this area, known to the Pathet Lao and its neutralist allies as the liberated zone, I met and spoke with soldiers, peasants, medical workers, students and officials, including prince Souphanouvong, whose "office" is inside a mountain cavern.

Allowed to photograph freely, the climate and American bombing imposed the main limitations on the trip. It was the rainy season and some roads had already become mud bogs. With a little more rain we could become stranded for weeks, said the Laotians, which was probably no exaggeration since unimproved earth road predominated.

U.S. planes flew overhead daily although there were no attacks in my vicinity. Once leaflets were dropped. The message on one of them promised the bearer safe conduct if he reached the lines of the other zone. However, there were numerous fresh bomb craters where I travelled, confirming Laotian statements that U.S. bombings occurred up to several times a month in these areas. The Pathet Lao could not let us take the risk of going into areas where the bombing occurred with much greater frequency.

Most of the territory I saw was mountainous. There were jungle-covered mountains, whose rounded slopes merge into each other; here travel is difficult and often possible only by footpath. Nonetheless, some of these slopes are inhabited by Meo or other minority peoples, who cultivate rice, maize, beans and other crops by their mountainside villages.

There was also another sort of mountain, a stark, rocky outcropping, rising fairly abruptly from the plain or plateau, somewhat like a mesa of the American southwest but surrounded and often covered by heavy vegetation.

Deep within these mesa-like formations, I saw that the Pathet Lao have enlarged natural caves into huge caverns, sheltering hospitals, workshops, headquarters of their leaders, and even the hostel lodging foreign journalists. There are thousands of these mountains, each suitable for the construction of a cavern nearly invulnerable to American bombs because its destruction would require leveling a mountain. Our hostel occasionally reverberated with the sound of dynamite blasting out a new cavern nearby. A score or so workers outside loaded newly blasted rock onto trucks.

The resulting installations can be relatively complex with concrete-walled rooms, although the spartan cave-like character is never lost. Some of the caves have corrugated metal or plastic sheeting overhead to deflect dripping water. Within these caves, sometimes sheltered from the outside by as much as ten yards of solid rock, I gained the impression that moisture, not bombs, was the main enemy.

Starting out from Hanoi, there were four of us in the Soviet-built jeep fitted with heavy-treaded Chinese tires. Besides an Italian correspondent and myself, there was a Vietnamese driver and a Pathet Lao guide. At the Laotian border checkpoint a Pathet Lao soldier with a carbine joined us. In Laos, we shifted to a jeep driven by a Meo. We left Hanoi without a few guards, who numbered more than a dozen once during a two-hour climb up a mountain path to a Meo village.

The guards were there to protect us from a possible encounter with commando units of Gen. Vang Pao's special forces who are frequently sent into the liberated zone performing missions for the CIA. These U.S. activities have been enshrouded in secrecy, but what the Pathet Lao told us is consistent with the limited information in the American press and with similar U.S. programs in South Vietnam.

Commanding the second military district and nominally under the jurisdiction of the Vientiane government, Gen. Vang Pao is actually quasi-independent of Vientiane, being advised and maintained directly by the CIA.

According to the Pathet Lao, units of Vang Pao's forces are brought into the liberated zone by American helicopters and sometimes succeed in establishing mountain bases, which are used for spying and reconnaissance, for assassinating Pathet Lao cadres, for recruiting agents and encouraging separatist tendencies among the minorities, especially the Meo. Vang Pao himself, like most of his 17,000 troops, belongs to the Meo minority.

Within Laos our party was enlarged to include guides, an interpreter, a cook and a doctor. The latter was a young woman, carrying a bag of medical supplies, who each day asked if we felt sick and gave us chloroquine to prevent malaria, which is still prevalent in the country. Our interpreter was a genial man of 30, wearing a Smith & Wesson revolver, who understood English and spoke French and Russian, having studied in Moscow for five years after finishing the lycee in Vientiane.

During extensive conversations, Sisana Sisane, composer and member of the Lao Patriotic Front central committee, outlined the Pathet Lao view of the war. Speaking in French, he stated that besides trying to check the growth of Lao revolutionary forces, the United States is treating Laos as a strategic pawn. The Nixon administration, explained Sisane, is trying to use Laos to save the situation in South Vietnam and Cambodia, hoping to occupy all of southern Laos to make a corridor between Thailand and South Vietnam.

Sisane observed that the Nixon administration had intensified the war, increasing the bombing in the liberated zone. There were 400 to 500 American sorties per day at the end of 1968, he told us; since 1969 the daily total has been 600 to 700, sometimes as many as 1000.

Sisane also stated that the Johnson administration had used the Vientiane troops to attack the liberated zone, whereas Washington now relies on the special forces of Vang Pao and is also "Thailandizing" the war, while using the Vientiane troops in the rear for such purposes as pacification.

Actually U.S. aircraft have been systematically bombing the liberated zone since May 1964. Disguised for years under the name of "armed reconnaissance," these raids were only officially acknowledged by Washington publicly last year, and then described as attacks against military targets or North Vietnamese forces.

In the town of Sam Neua, once the largest population center of the province, there used to be about 20,000 persons living in the town and adjacent villages. Of the villages, hardly a trace now remains, the jungle already having reclaimed their sites. Today not a soul lives in the town; not a single dwelling in it was spared by the American bombing. It is a completely dead city; only a few shacks remain. The destruction was more thorough than any I had seen in wide travels in North Vietnam. Laos is a small country of about three million people. Devastation on a scale comparable to Sam Neua in

E - 5,552

AUG 8 1970

In Laos And Cambodia

In spite of the administration's, well publicized moves to reduce American troop commitments in South-east Asia, certain disturbing aspects of the situation have not been satisfactorily explained. The reference is to what is going on in Laos and Cambodia, which tends to undermine heartening action elsewhere.

Troop withdrawals are steadily under way in South Vietnam and can be expected to continue; the administration has committed itself to deadlines. In South Korea, the announced pullout of troops appears likely to be made, even in the face of objections by the Seoul government.

A disturbing situation continues, however, in both Laos and Cambodia. In the former, there is no longer much of an attempt to hide the CIA's activities through its Air America operations. Television network newsmen have filmed Air America planes supplying American-paid troops. Support for an army of perhaps as many as 10,000 is reportedly being financed by the CIA. There seems little doubt that the Central Intelligence Agency not only is functioning in Laos, but enjoys behind-the-scenes administration support.

In Cambodia, it now is clear that United States aircraft are aiding the Cambodian army. Though the Defense Department offers half-hearted denials of this, newsmen on the scene report that U. S. planes are carrying out more than their officially sanctioned missions to cut supply lines. Most such "interdiction missions" seem to occur close to where Cambodian troops happen to be in trouble.

There is nothing new about contradictions between official policy positions and what is reported by newsmen. In the past, such discrepancies have for the most part worked to the disadvantage of long-range American interests. The benefit of troop withdrawals from South Vietnam and South Korea may be nullified, or at any rate made less significant, by continued involvement in Laos and Cambodia.

NEWS AUG 8 1970

E - 9,526

Our Point Of View

In Laos And Cambodia

In spite of the administration's well publicized moves to reduce American troop commitments in Southeast Asia, certain disturbing aspects of the situation have not been satisfactorily explained. The reference is to what is going on in Laos and Cambodia, which tends to undermine heartening action elsewhere.

Troop withdrawals are steadily under way in South Vietnam and can be expected to continue; the administration has committed itself to deadlines. In South Korea, the announced pullout of troops appears likely to be made, even in the face of objections by the Seoul government.

A disturbing situation continues, however, in both Laos and Cambodia. In the former, there is no longer much of an attempt to hide the CIA's activities through its Air America operations. Television network newsmen have filmed Air America planes supplying American-paid troops. Support for an army of perhaps as many as 10,000 is reportedly being financed by the CIA. There seems

little doubt that the Central Intelligence Agency not only is functioning in Laos, but enjoys behind-the-scenes administrative support.

In Cambodia, it now is clear that United States aircraft are aiding the Cambodian army. Though the Defense Department offers half-hearted denials of this, newsmen on the scene report that U. S. planes are carrying out more than their officially sanctioned missions to cut supply lines. Most such "interdiction missions" seem to occur close to where Cambodian troops happen to be in trouble.

There is nothing new about contradictions between official policy positions and what is reported by newsmen. In the past, such discrepancies have for the most part worked to the advantage of long-range American interests. The benefit of troop withdrawals from South Vietnam and South Korea may be nullified, or at any rate made less significant, by continued involvement in Laos and Cambodia.

AUG 5 1970

An American inside Red Laos

Leftist newsmen visits leader, prince in cave headquarters finds signs of many U.S. raids, insistence that they stop

By Richard E. Ward

SAM NEUA PROVINCE, Laos--Traveling for eight days in this region, called the liberated zone by the Communist Pathet Lao, I spoke with soldiers, peasants, medical workers, students and officials, including Prince Souphanouvong, whose permanent headquarters is inside a huge mountain redoubt.

I was allowed to take photographs freely, even in the cavern of Souphanouvong. Other Pathet Lao officials occupy separate caves scattered through the province.

U.S. planes flew overhead daily, although there were no attacks in my vicinity. Once leaflets were dropped.

They promised the bearer safe conduct if he reached the zone controlled by the Vientiane government of Premier Souvanna Phouma.

There were, however, numerous fresh bomb craters where I traveled, supporting Laotian statements that American bombings had occurred up to several times a month in these areas. The Pathet Lao would not take us into areas where bombing had occurred more frequently.

MOST OF THE TERRITORY I saw was jungle mountain, sparsely inhabited by the Meo, a Laotian minority, who cultivate rice, maize, beans and other crops by their villages.

There was another sort of mountain, a stark and rocky outcropping rising fairly abruptly from the plain, somewhat like a mesa of the American Southwest but surrounded and often covered by heavy vegetation.

Deep within at least nine of these mesalike formations I saw, the Pathet Lao have enlarged natural caves into huge caverns, sheltering hospitals, workshops, headquarters of their leaders, and even lodging for foreign journalists. There was the occasional sound of dynamite blasting out a new cavern nearby. A score or so workers outside loaded newly blasted rock onto trucks.

Insight

Richard E. Ward, a University of Chicago graduate and ex-U.S. serviceman, wrote this article for United Press International after recently returning from North Vietnam and Communist-controlled parts of neighboring Laos. An editor of the Guardian, a radical weekly published in New York, he says he is an "independent leftist." The article contains some little-known information about Laos, now an arena of the Indochina war.

Some of the installations were relatively complex with concrete-walled rooms, although the spartan cavalike character was never lost. Some of the caves had corrugated metal or plastic sheeting overhead to deflect dripping water. Within these caves, sometimes sheltered by as much as 10 yards of solid rock, the main enemy is moisture -- not bombs.

FOUR OF US left Hanoi in a Soviet jeep fitted with heavy-treaded Chinese tires. In the group were an Italian correspondent, a Vietnamese driver and a Pathet Lao guide. At the border checkpoint, a Pathet Lao soldier with a carbine joined us. In Laos we shifted to a jeep driven by a Lao and we were never without guards, who numbered more than a dozen once during a 2-hour climb up a mountain path to a Meo village.

Our guide said the guards were to protect us from a possible encounter with units of Gen. Vang Pao's U.S.-assisted forces, which are frequently sent into the Pathet Lao zone.

Commanding the second military district and nominally under the jurisdiction of the Vientiane government, Vang Pao is actually quasi-independent of Vientiane, being advised and maintained by the Central Intelligence Agency.

According to the Pathet Lao, Vang Pao's forces are transported by American helicopters. Sometimes his forces succeeded in establishing mountain bases, which are used for reconnaissance, for assassinating Pathet Lao cadres, for recruiting agents and for encouraging separatist tendencies among the Meos. Vang Pao, like most of his 17,000 troops, belongs to the Meo.

Malaria pills

In Laos our party added an interpreter, a cook and a physician, a young Laotian woman who carried a bag of medical supplies. Each day she asked us if we felt sick and gave us chloroquine to prevent malaria.

Our interpreter was a genial Lao man of 30, carrying a Smith & Wesson revolver. He understood English and spoke French and Russian, having studied in Moscow.

In an interview, Sisana Sisane, a composer and member of the Pathet Lao Central Committee, said the United States had increased its bombings of Laos.

There were 400 to 500 American air sorties a day at the end of 1968, he said, and since then the daily total has been 600 to 700, sometimes rising as high as 1,000.

IN MID-JUNE, I WAS in the town of Sam Neua, once the largest population center of the province in northern Laos. There used to be about 20,000 persons living in the town and adjacent villages. Today not a soul lives in the town; not a single dwelling was spared from American bombs. It is a completely dead city; only some walls and empty shells of buildings remain.

The destruction was more thorough than any I had seen in North Vietnam.

Most of the population of Sam Neua survived, having gone into the jungle when the planes came. The mayor said villages along the roads to the town suffered even more during the heavy daily attacks.

INTERPRETIVE REPORT

Senators Pushing Foreign Policy Fight

By JAMES DOYLE
Star Staff Writer

A year ago the Senate Foreign Relations Committee announced it would conduct a series of "country-by-country hearings" on U.S. commitments abroad.

The aim, Sen. Stuart Symington said at the time, was "to present the American people with as much detail as security will permit" on the subject of how we get committed to entangling alliances.

The hearings proceeded smoothly at first. They were held in executive session so that all concerned could speak freely and in detail, as the committee members insisted, about U.S. arrangements with foreign powers.

The Central Intelligence Agency witnesses were allowed to come and go without being identified, and their testimony was kept secret in its entirety.

Much Deleted

But when it came time to release the remainder of the testimony on various countries, the State Department took a broad view of what is in the national security.

In the case of Laos, for instance, the government deleted much testimony about the

cost and techniques of our support for regular and irregular Laotian forces, matters which were being discussed fully in the press through the dispatches of American correspondents in Vientiane.

Committee Counsel Walter H. Pincus alluded to some of these deleted areas of testimony in a letter to Symington when the cleansed transcript was released.

"Though the possibility exists that this information might be embarrassing either to past administrations, present government officials or to other governments, this does not, per se, imply harm to our national security and therefore automatically necessitate deletion," Pincus said.

The real effect he noted, was to deny the public information needed to judge the government's actions, and a cavalier disregard for Congress.

Fuller Record

It may not be possible to evaluate the government's performance fully in the case of the Laos hearings, because the information remains secret. But in the most recent case, concerning American commitments to Spain, the is fuller.

For more than a week the controlled press in Spain has

been debating the merits of the pending new agreement between that country and the United States on the use of military bases there.

The Spanish legislative body, the Cortes, has been briefed on the agreement by Spain's foreign minister. And American correspondents in Madrid have supplied to the American press some of the details of how many jet fighters and other military items Spain will receive in return for a renewal of the air base leases.

But the State Department has refused to comment on the subject and has indirectly criticized Sen. J. William Fulbright, D-Ark., for using the reports from Spain to call for public disclosure of the arrangement.

Wait for Completion?

"We understand the rules of the committee require confidentiality of executive sessions," a State Department spokesman has said. "We intend to respect that and therefore believe it would be most inappropriate to have a public discussion of this matter at this time."

But the rules of the committee were adopted because the State Department would have

refused to tender the information at all in public session. And if this is not a proper time for a public discussion of a pending military agreement, the critics ask, must the country wait until the agreement is concluded and it is too late for reaction to have an effect?

The Constitution gave Congress a full role in the formulation of foreign policy, but the executive branch has denied Congress the information to perform its role, Fulbright and fellow critics maintain.

Through the use of executive agreements, the investment of military aid and the construction of American bases, the United States has committed itself to the support and defense of governments throughout Asia and Europe.

Why, Fulbright asks, does Spain, "a country at war with no one whose territory borders on two allies," need 36 Phantom jets, five destroyers, two submarines, four minesweepers, three landing craft and unnumbered helicopters, tanks and armored personnel carriers?

One reason he suggests is so the Franco dictatorship can be secure against a future internal crisis. That is also an effect of similar aid to Greece and South Vietnam.

STATINTL

2 AUG 1970

STATINTL

A Visit to the Pathet Lao Leader

AMERICAN TOURS CAVES

(Richard E. Ward, 37, a University of Chicago graduate and U.S. Army veteran, has returned to the United States after travel in North Vietnam and Communist-controlled parts of Laos from May 22 through June. It was his second trip since 1965 to North Vietnam. A specialist on Indochina, Ward says that he is not a Communist but "an independent leftist.")

By RICHARD E. WARD

(Written for UPI)

IN SAM NEUA PROVINCE, Laos — Traveling for eight days in this region, called the Liberated Zone by the Communist Pathet Lao, I met and spoke with soldiers, peasants, medical workers, students and officials, including Prince Souphanouvong, whose headquarters are inside a huge mountain redoubt.

I was allowed to take photographs freely, even in the cavern of Souphanouvong, which is his permanent quarters. Other Pathet Lao officials occupy their own separate caves scattered through the province.

U.S. planes flew overhead daily although there were no attacks in my vicinity. Once leaflets were dropped. The message on one of them promised the bearer safe conduct if he reached the zone controlled by the Vientiane government of Premier Souvanna Phouma. There were, however, numerous fresh bomb craters where I traveled, supporting Laotian statements that American bombings had occurred up to several times a month in these areas. The Pathet Lao would not take us into areas where bombing had occurred more frequently.

Most of the territory I saw was jungled mountains, sparsely inhabited by the Meo, a Laotian minority.

There was another sort of mountain, a stark and rocky outcropping rising fairly abruptly from the plain or plateau, somewhat like a mesa of the American Southwest but surrounded and often covered by heavy vegetation.

Deep within at least nine of these mesa-like formations that I saw the Pathet Lao have

enlarged natural caves into huge caverns, sheltering hospitals, workshops, headquarters of their leaders, and even a hostel lodging foreign journalists. There was the occasional sound of dynamite blasting out a new cavern nearby. A score or so workers outside loaded newly blasted rock onto trucks.

Some of the installations were relatively complex with concrete-walled rooms, although the spartan cavelike character was never lost. Some of the caves had corrugated metal or plastic sheeting overhead to deflect dripping water. Within these caves, sometimes sheltered from the outside by as much as 10 yards of solid rock, moisture—not bombs—was the main enemy.

Starting out from Hanoi, there were four of us in the Soviet-built jeep fitted with heavy-treaded Chinese tires: An Italian correspondent, a Vietnamese driver and a Pathet Lao guide. At the border checkpoint, a Pathet Lao soldier with a carbine joined us. In Laos we shifted to a jeep driven by a Lao and we were never without guards, who numbered more than a dozen once during a two-hour climb up a mountain path to a Meo village.

Our guide said the guards were to protect us from a possible encounter with units of Gen. Vang Pao's U.S.-assisted forces which are frequently sent into the Pathet Lao zone.

Commanding the second military district and nominally under the jurisdiction of the Vientiane, being advised and maintained directly by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

Within Laos our party added an interpreter, a cook and a physician—a young Laotian woman who carried a bag of medical supplies.

Tells of Bombing Rise

In an interview, Sisana Sisane, a composer and member of the Pathet Lao Central Committee, said the United States had increased the bombing.

There were 400 to 500 American air sorties per day at the end of 1968, he said, and since

then the daily total has been 600 to 700, sometimes as many as 1,000.

In mid-June, I was in the town of Sam Neua, once the largest population center of the province in Northern Laos. There used to be about 20,000 persons living in the town and adjacent villages. Today not a soul lives in the town; not a single dwelling in it was spared by the American bombing. It is a completely dead city; only some walls and empty shells of buildings remain.

The destruction was more thorough than any I had seen in North Vietnam.

Most of the population of Sam Neua survived, having gone into the jungle when the planes came. The mayor said that villages along the roads to the town suffered even more during the heavy daily attacks.

Pathet Lao soldiers and members of the Lao civilian militia were responsible for the defense of Sam Neua Province. The North Vietnamese presence, which was not hidden from me, appeared mainly confined to providing aid, such as in road building.

In the communities that I saw, there was no evidence of Vietnamese intervention in the social organization. The Laotians make no secret of Vietnamese assistance, but clearly appeared to be directing the affairs of their own country.

Downed Planes Claimed

From May 17, 1964 to mid-June, 1970, about 1,500 U.S. aircraft were shot down in Laos, the Pathet Lao claim. Some U.S. pilots have been captured but I gained the impression that the number being held is not very large. Pathet Lao officials admit that the United States often rescue downed pilots who managed to parachute.

Asked about American pilots held in Laos, Sisana Sisane said they were being treated well, that Prince Souphanouvong insisted on this, and that they were receiving double or triple the food rations allotted Laotians.

However, the Pathet Lao would not say how many downed pilots are being held or identify them or allow any exchange of mail. Present conditions, Sisane said, made it

STATINTL
AUGUST 1970

WASHINGTON

A key reason for President Nixon's decision to invade Cambodia, according to a number of government officials, was that as things were coming unglued in Cambodia, and as the Communists were being troublesome, and as the Lon Nol government was asking for help, Mr. Nixon felt impelled to *do something*.

At some point the pressures mount, and the impulse says, *do something*: send advisers to Vietnam; send the Marines to the Dominican Republic; send more troops to Vietnam and bomb the North; invade Cambodia. Some officials here are concerned that even though the United States is trying to extricate itself from Southeast Asia through troop withdrawals, it is also becoming, as they put it, "intricated." They worry that we are becoming more "intricated" than extricated.

Too public

Just how "intricated" in other nations' destinies the United States can become, and how it can become so, has been illuminated in hearings by the Senate Subcommittee on United States Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad. The subcommittee, headed by Senator Stuart Symington (Dem., Missouri), grew out of a concern on the part of a number of senators, particularly Symington and J. William Fulbright (Dem., Arkansas), at the rather loose use of the term "commitment" to justify what the executive branch wanted to do in foreign policy. A staff of two able men—Walter Pincus, an investigative reporter, and Roland Paul, a lawyer—has produced a devastating record over the last year and a half.

It is a record of arrangements

made with various nations, in secrecy, *ad hoc*, without regard to their implications or to the all-but-natural law that one commitment leads to another. It is a record of deception of the American public.

The hearings brought out, for example, that the "Free World Forces" of Thailand, Korea, and the Philippines that had "volunteered" to fight in Vietnam—bearing witness, we were told, to the importance they too attached to an independent South Vietnam—were having their way paid by the United States. All three countries, in fact, resisted sending troops to Vietnam until the United States agreed to buy their presence there. The price, beyond payment of the troops, included fringe benefits in weapons for the governments and private gain for government officials. After these arrangements were made, in secret, our government said that one reason we could not disengage from Vietnam was that we could not let down our free world allies. It appears that even the government began to believe this, turning the exercise of deceiving the public into one of self-delusion as well.

The senators discovered from the hearings that the American bombing in Laos, which had been portrayed as interdiction of the movement of men and supplies over the Ho Chi Minh Trail into Vietnam, was also taking place, heavily, in northern Laos as part of the Laotian war. They had not known that the CIA was running a military-assistance program in Laos, supporting and training a large Laotian irregular force. They had not known the extent of American military participation in the bombing by the Laotians themselves.

Following, for example, is a colloquy as it emerged after censorship by the Administration:

Mr. Paul. Do they [American air attachés in Laos] have great influence with respect to the day-to-day operation of the Laotian Air Force?

Colonel Tyrrell [Air Force Attaché in Vientiane, Laos]. Well, as far as assisting them, maintaining their equipment, and showing them how to do things properly. But as far as the combat sorties are concerned, target directions, they do not.

Senator Symington. Where do our pilots and their pilots get instructions as to what to hit?

Colonel Tyrrell. As to what they are hitting?

Senator Symington. As to what to hit?

Colonel Tyrrell. Their targets are generated at the joint operations center, and the military region commander and his staff and members of our staff and ARMA [Army Attaché] staff sit in on these meetings, and, at this time, targets are developed.

Senator Symington. Your people are in there at that time also?

Colonel Tyrrell. Yes, sir; they are.

And then the hearing brought out the versatility of the secret bombing in Laos:

Mr. Paul. Now, with respect to American aircraft, we have had a considerable amount of testimony with respect to strikes of the bombing types. Are there other flights such as reconnaissance and defoliation types also flown by American aircraft over Laos?

Colonel Tyrrell. Yes, sir; on occasion.

Mr. Paul. Is defoliation a rare event, speaking mainly of Northern Laos, not the trail?

Colonel Tyrrell. Is it a rare event?

Mr. Paul. Yes.

Colonel Tyrrell. Well, I believe since I returned to Laos in June of last year we have had four defoliation missions. . . .

Mr. Paul. Do American aircraft ever drop napalm over Northern Laos?

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

No End Seen to Hidden War in Laos

By Jack Anderson

At an all-day session so secret that no transcript was kept, Ambassador G. McMurtrie Godley told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last week that he could foresee no end to the "hidden war" in Laos.

This remote Buddhist kingdom, beloved by its gentle people as the Land of the Million Elephants and the White Parasol, has been devastated by a war no one wants to mention. Any acknowledgement would be a diplomatic embarrassment to Washington, Moscow and Hanoi, alike, all bound by a 1962 Geneva pact to uphold Laotian neutrality.

Yet Godley reported behind closed doors that the fighting already has made refugees of 700,000 luckless Laotians, people who by nature would rather make love than war. This is nearly one-third of the nation's 2.6 million population.

He also admitted that the U.S. is financing this unpublicized, unhappy war to the tune of half-a-million dollars a year. An aggrieved Senator Frank Church (D - Idaho) pointed out that the cost of destruction in Laos was close to \$500 per capita — five times the \$90 per capita income that the people live on.

Hassle Over Secrecy

The hearing opened with a 30-minute hassle over the secrecy restrictions. The State

Department insisted that only one transcript be made, that it be kept under lock at the department and that the short-hand tapes be destroyed.

Chairman J. W. Fulbright (D-Ark.) and Senator Stuart Symington, (D-Mo.) protested vigorously. This would set a precedent, they contended, that would erode the committee's right to question U.S. officials. In the end, they decided to keep no transcript at all but to treat the hearing as an informal briefing.

The bluff, affable Godley acknowledged that the U.S. was paying almost all the bills, military and civil alike, in Laos. Between \$25 million and \$35 million, he said, goes to support the Royal Lao government. This helps to cover even the palace expenses of King Savang Vatthana, who presides over both sides in the civil war.

The huge American military investment gives Godley the right, he explained, to veto any military operations. He assured the senators that Premier Souvanna Phouma not only sanctioned the devastation that has been wreaked upon his poor country but had sought even more air raids than the Americans had been willing to fly.

Poor Battle Record

Godley admitted that the Royal Lao army, despite all its expensive American equip-

ment, has a poor battle record.

He was much more proud of the CIA-subsidized guerrilla army of Meo tribesmen, led by General Vang Pao, a foul-mouthed former sergeant in the French army. The U.S. has more control over Van Pao's 14,000-man army, which is trained by American combat veterans now on the CIA payroll.

Senator Church recalled an amendment he and Senator John Cooper (R-Ky.) had pushed through Congress last year, barring the use of American ground troops in Laos. He asked Godley whether the amendment had been violated.

The ambassador replied that no ground troops had been requested by the Royal Lao government and that none had been introduced.

He acknowledged, however, that the U.S. is conducting most of the air war. Villages occasionally were hit, he said, to deny the use of the facilities to Communist troops. The villages were supposed to be empty and civilians were never intentionally killed. But he admitted that civilian casualties are higher than the world realizes.

Fulbright asked for the number of refugees the war had "generated" in Laos and got the 700,000 figure out of Godley. When senators expressed their shock, the ambassador said he regretted the heavy suffering of the Laotian people but claimed this saved

American lives in South Vietnam.

Hampering Hanoi

Church asked why the North Vietnamese, if they were suffering such damaging blows in Laos, didn't simply take over the country. He pointed out that Hanoi has 400,000 regular troops who haven't been committed beyond North Vietnam's borders.

Godley agreed that North Vietnam probably had the military power to conquer Laos, but suggested that the U.S. would make it too costly.

Church asked how long the strange war in Laos was likely to last.

Unless a settlement for all Indochina should be worked out in Paris, Godley replied, he foresaw no end to the fighting.

Pressing, Church asked whether any cutbacks were planned. Godley said there was "no planned reduction, no phaseout" in the works.

Senators who listened all day to Godley said he was fired up with enthusiasm. One senator described him as "exhilarated" over the experience of running the war in Laos.

Meanwhile, the passive Laotian people, more than most others, have no interest in fighting and, no doubt, would quickly settle back to their peaceful ways—if only the North Vietnamese and the Americans would go home and leave them alone.

© 1970, Bell-McClure Syndicate, Inc.

30 JUL 1970

STATINTL

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R000700020001-5

THE BOOK REPORT

American Folkhero Makes It in Laos

BY JOHN WEISMAN

MISTER POP: The Adventures of a Peaceful Man in a Small War by Don A. Schanche (David McKay; illustrated. \$7.95).

There is a whole lot about our involvement with Southeast Asia that we cannot be proud of. The specter of American imperialism is never a pretty image to conjure up, and despite protesta-

Robert Kirsch, Times book critic, is on vacation. Today's guest columnist is John Weisman, a regular book reviewer for Calendar magazine.

tions from the Nixon Administration, a lot of people have been doing some embarrassing conjuring these days.

Yet there is another side to the American story; one that should make us all prouder to be Yankees. It's "Mister Pop," the story of Edgar Buell, a retired farmer from Indiana who, to "get away from it all," found himself a job as an agricultural adviser in Laos, for \$65 a month.

Learned Meo

Unlike most American advisers in Indochina, Buell didn't live in an air-conditioned headquarters, venturing among the people once or twice a month doling out funds to the local bureaucrats to squander on the black market. The tough little man from Indiana learned to speak Meo, the local Laotian dialect, and truly got to know the "folks" in the backwoods.

He ate chicken brains with them, drank their local brand of rotgut rice whiskey, walked and stank with them. He wore torn trousers and ragged tennis shoes, usually had a week's growth of stubbly,

gray beard on his face, and suffered from malaria and jungle pneumonia. But more than just existing on the same level as the Meo tribesmen, Buell gained universal respect by being one of the few Americans to keep his word to the people. And to do so, he fought with the policies of the CIA, OSS, AID and other alphabetically oriented secret organizations that represented U.S. "interests" in Laos. He often went unarmed into Pathet Lao-held territory, trusting that he, a peaceful man, would be protected by "his" tribesmen. And he was.

Laotian Title

In short, he earned a hundred times over his honorific Laotian title of "Tan Pop," which, roughly translated, means "grandfather who descends from above."

Don Schanche's book is a fast-moving, well-written account of Pop Buell's experiences in Laos. Schanche brings Buell to life, following his treks through the wild backcountry, eavesdropping on minor conversations, drinking bouts and a lot of hard, country cussin'.

Buell emerges as the kind of American folkhero that we need more of these days. A pragmatist who trades in opium when he has to, the American grandfather who cared enough about human beings to act out his concerns, brings a kind of humanism to the American character we haven't seen much of in recent years.

In his unique person-to-person dealings with the Laotians, "Mister Pop" makes his own small step for man, and as well, gives a universal leap forward for mankind.

JUL 1970

*Letters to the Editor of The Times***Illegal Actions**

To the Editor:

Recently the United States Ambassador to Laos testified about military activities in that country before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Several Senators afterward expressed shock and dismay over what they had heard about our country's involvement there. But the American public was not permitted to hear a single detail because the Administration had forbidden any record of the hearing to be made or disclosed.

A day or two later, on July 23, the Columbia Broadcasting System did, however, disclose in a regular news program some of what the Ambassador must have been talking about. From movie film made by an airplane mechanic formerly employed by Air America, it showed large-scale training, logistical, and deadly combat operations in Laos conducted by mercenaries—Americans and others—in the pay, directly or indirectly, of the C.I.A., which also exclusively funds Air America through a straw Delaware corporation. These operations are not ordinarily reported in our news media, it was explained, because newsmen and photographers are not welcome in neighborhoods where they are going on.

Is there some authority on constitutional law who can explain under what provision of the United States Constitution, an agency of our Government conducts military operations in a foreign "neutral" country out of sight of, and unaccountable to, the public whose taxes pay for them?

It is the illegality, moral enormity, and total secrecy of actions like these, which we show no more intention of discontinuing than of revealing, that discount virtually to zero all professions by spokesmen of our Government, including the highest, that we are sincerely seeking "an honorable peace" in Indochina.

L. H. BUTTERFIELD
Cambridge, Mass., July 24, 1970
*The writer, a historian, edited
The Adams Papers.*

26 JUL 1970



Wright in the Dayton Daily News

"There he is again."

A Special Supplement: A VISIT TO LAOS

STATINTL

Noam Chomsky

I

I arrived in Vientiane in late March, 1970, with two friends, Douglas Dowd and Richard Fernandez, expecting to take the International Control Commission plane to Hanoi the following day. The Indian bureaucrat in charge of the weekly ICC flight immediately informed us, however, that this was not to be. The DRV delegation had returned from Pnompenh to Hanoi on the previous flight after the sacking of the Embassy by Cambodian troops (disguised as civilians), and the flight we intended to take was completely occupied by passengers scheduled for the preceding week. Efforts by the DRV and American embassies were unavailing, and, after exploring various farfetched schemes, we decided, at first without much enthusiasm, to stay in Vientiane and try our luck a week later.

Vientiane is a small town, and within hours we had met quite a few members of the Western community—journalists, former IVS workers in Laos and South Vietnam, and other residents. Through these contacts, we were able to meet urban Laotians of various sympathies and opinions, and with interesting personal histories on both sides of the civil war. We were also able to spend several days in the countryside near Vientiane, visiting a traditional Lao village and, several times, a refugee camp, in the company of a Lao-speaking American who is a leading specialist on contemporary Laos. Officials of the Lao, American, North Vietnamese, and other governments were also helpful with information, and I was fortunate to obtain access to a large collection of documentary material accumulated by residents of Vientiane over the past few years. Many of the correspondents, both French and American, had much to say, not only about Laos but also about their experiences in other parts of Southeast Asia. Unfortunately, most of the people with whom I spoke (most forcefully, the Laotians) do not wish to be identified, and I must be especially discreet in citing sources of information.

It doesn't take long to become aware of the presence of the CIA in Laos. The taxi from the airport to our hotel on the Mekong passed by the airfield of Air America, a theoretically private company that has an exclusive contract with the CIA.¹ Many of its pilots, said to be largely former Air Force personnel, were living in our hotel. If you happen to be up at 6 A.M., you can see them setting off for their day's work, presumably, flying supplies to the guerrilla forces of the CIA's army in Laos, the Clandestine Army led by the Meo General Vang Pao. These forces were at one time scattered throughout Northern Laos, but many of their bases are reported to have been overrun. These bases were used not only for guerrilla actions in the Pathet Lao-controlled territory, but also as advanced navigational posts for the bombardment of North Vietnam and for rescue of downed American pilots. There are said to be hundreds of small dirt strips in Northern Laos for Air America and other CIA operations.

After watching Air America parade by on my first morning in Vientiane, I decided to try to find out something about the town. Behind the hotel I came across the ramshackle building that houses the Lao Ministry of Information, where one office was identified as the Bureau of Tourism. No one there spoke English or even French. In another office of the Ministry, however, I did find someone who could understand my bad French. I explained that I wanted a map of Vientiane, but was told that I was in the wrong place—the American Embassy might have such things. I left by way of the reading room of the Ministry, where several people sat in the already intense heat, waving away the flies and looking through the several Lao and French newspapers scattered on the tables.

Across the street stands the modern seven-story building of the French

Cultural Center, whose air-conditioned reading room is well stocked with current newspapers and magazines from Paris. French plays and lectures are advertised on posters. On another corner is Vientiane's best bookstore, which sells French books and journals.

The contrast between the Lao Ministry of Information and the French Cultural Center gives a certain insight into the nature of Laotian society. For a European resident or a member of the tiny Lao elite, Vientiane has many attractions: plenty of commodities, a variety of good restaurants, some cultural activities (in our hotel a placard announced a reading of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*), the resources of the French Cultural Center. An American can live in the suburbs, complete with well-tended lawns, or in a pleasant villa rented from a rich Laotian, and can commute to the huge USAID compound with its PX and other facilities.

For the Lao, however, there is nothing. Virtually everything is owned by outsiders, by the Thai, Chinese, Vietnamese. Apart from several cigarette factories (Chinese-owned), lumber, and tin mines, one of which is owned by the right-wing Prince Boun Oum, there seems to be little that is productive in the country. After decades of French colonialism and years of extensive American aid, "in 1960 the country had no railways, two doctors, three engineers and 700 telephones."² In 1963 the value of the country's imports was forty times that of its exports:

Economic development has been virtually non-existent and the attempts by the Americans to stabilize a right-wing and pro-Western regime by lavish aid programmes led merely to corruption, inflation and new gradients of wealth within the country and so played into the hands of the extreme left, the Pathet Lao.³

In 1968, 93 percent of the exports were tin, wood, and coffee, while 71 percent (of the total value) were food, gasoline, and vehicles.⁴

continued

Administration Trap Feared by Doves On Foreign Relations Committee

By Murrey Marder
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee balked sharply Tuesday at what its dovish members claim is a blatant attempt by the Nixon administration to erode its power to question U.S. officials.

Senate Democratic leader Mike Mansfield said yesterday that "grave constitutional questions" arise from stringent rules invoked by the State Department for Tuesday's testimony by C. McMurtrie Godley, U.S. ambassador to Laos.

At issue is a strong suspicion among some committee members that the administration was trying to trap them in a damaging precedent. Only part of the sequence has been publicly disclosed so far.

On May 27, for the first time, the committee hesitantly deferred to the State Department's insistence upon unusual ground rules for a briefing on American nuclear weapon deployments around the world.

The State Department agreed to provide the witness, Ronald I. Spiers, director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs. But David M. Abshire, assistant secretary of state for congressional relations, wrote that Secretary of State William P. Rogers wanted special precautions to protect Spiers' secret testimony.

State called for the special arrangements used for receiving confidential information from Central Intelligence Agency Director Richard Helms. This means that only one transcript would be made of the testimony, it would be retained in the Executive Branch, and the

committee could examine it only upon request.

Chairman J. W. Fulbright (D-Ark.) wrote Rogers on May 27 that the committee agreed because of the extraordinary secret nature of the information. "But," wrote Fulbright, "this is not a precedent for further briefings on this subject or any other subject."

The nuclear information was especially desired by Sen. Stuart Symington's (D-Mo.) subcommittee on U.S. security commitments abroad. The Spiers testimony remains highly classified; Symington subsequently said publicly only that "we have (nuclear) weapons not a foot from the Soviet Union."

Symington's subcommittee for months has sought to question Ambassador Godley on U.S. commitments in Laos. Last April, after a six-month struggle with the Executive Branch, the subcommittee released a highly censored transcript on U.S. activity in Laos with Godley's testimony still to come.

The Laos hearings showed that beginning in 1964, the United States secretly began major, direct military involvement in the Laotian war.

All Details

Deleted from that transcript were all details on CIA financing of an army of Meo tribesmen. But in the case of Laos and other hearings, committee sources protest that not only "secrets" are censored, but also facts that would only embarrass U.S. officials or conflict with U.S. claims.

On July 20, Abshire wrote Symington that Ambassador Godley could testify only with special ground rules, to avoid prejudicing "important discussions" in prospect

for negotiations between the Royal Lao government and the pro-Communist Pathet Lao.

Abshire offered two choices:

"... It must be understood that only one transcript will be made (of Godley's testimony), the tapes destroyed, and the transcript retained by the (State) Department."

As an alternative, Abshire suggested, "no transcript of Godley's testimony" would be made.

Initially, the subcommittee indicated it would take the first option — one State-retained transcript. But when subcommittee members assembled Tuesday, the more they thought about that, the worse they thought of it — as they recalled Fulbright's earlier never-again letter.

Progressive Eroding

To avoid being drawn into what they saw as a progressive eroding pattern, the subcommittee members technically shelved the Godley hearing, and labeled his all-day testimony a "briefing."

Fulbright protested afterward that "I have no doubt the administration's real intent was to neutralize, if not destroy, the influence of the Committee on Foreign Relations." Fulbright claimed Godley actually provided no "substantive, significant" new information. Symington challenged abuse of the public's "right to know." Mansfield saw it yesterday as a "grave constitutional question." He said "We can't operate on the basis of the State Department, or any department, laying down the terms of the hearing."

Vietnam and Laos: Determined to struggle, determined to win

By Richard E. Ward
Guardian staff correspondent

Hanoi

As we approached the Gialam airport near Hanoi, the bright green ricefields interspersed with squares of flooded fields and the wide, muddy Red River all appeared familiar. It was difficult to believe that nearly five years had passed since I had previously viewed that scene, yet there was the unmistakable, welcome feeling the traveler experiences when arriving at a well-known destination after a long voyage.

In August 1965, I had come to Hanoi with the first group of Americans to travel in the zones of North Vietnam under U.S. attack. At that time most of the press of the western world echoed White House and Pentagon briefings: the U.S. was bombing nothing but "military targets" and not seeking a wider war; and Hanoi would surely come to terms with the U.S. or succumb to the U.S. bombings which were steadily being escalated in scope and intensity.

While Lyndon Johnson was lying to the world that the U.S. was destroying nothing but "concrete and steel," I had seen numerous demolished homes, hospitals and similar "military targets." In these attacks, many civilians had been killed and others, some of whom I interviewed, had been seriously wounded or maimed for life. (Guardian readers, of course, knew of these things from the reports of Wilfred Burchett.)

To anyone who visited North Vietnam during the U.S. attacks, it was clear that the U.S. was seeking a military victory in South Vietnam by isolating it, after forcing the North to its knees, and that the attacks against civilians were a deliberate part of this policy.

After returning from Vietnam in 1965 I wrote: "The people of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam are now defending their own country and the achievements of their revolution. Thus the U.S. is confronting the deepest loyalties of the Vietnamese. . . . There is no evidence that either cessation of the bombing or more intensive bombing will stop the North's assistance to the NLF. When I was in Vietnam there were no illusions as to the strength of the U.S. forces. The people recognize that the struggle will be difficult and possibly very long, they recognize that Hanoi and other major industrial centers may be bombed. . . . Realizing all the hardships that confront them the Vietnamese face the future with confidence.

"Vietnamese base this confidence in the ultimate outcome of the war on the fact that their struggle has the support of the overwhelming mass of the people." I emphasized that the strength of the Vietnamese was rooted in the popular character of the war, in which the revolutionary society was able to mobilize the resistance of the whole people and I concluded that the U.S. could never succeed in Vietnam.

Met with skepticism

This report was viewed with skepticism by most persons I knew. Then many people in the antiwar movement seemed to believe that Vietnam was another Spain, a good cause doomed to defeat and that U.S. strength would eventually be decisive. Of course, our movement has come far since 1965 and now most Americans understand that the military victory sought by the warlords of Washington will never come to pass.

Yet there are still some who fear that Washington might try some desperate new escalation that just might turn the tide. There is ample reason to suspect new acts of aggression by the Nixon administration, which has already invaded Cambodia, intensified the war in Laos and stepped up "pacification" and repression in South Vietnam. But the lesson of history is that by these acts prolonging the war, the U.S. like France before, will only bring upon itself humiliating defeats.

In the present situation, it is necessary to understand the other side of the picture, actually the most important one, the history of the heroic Vietnamese resistance.

Today, when anyone with the slightest sense of humanity recognizes the justness of the Vietnamese cause, we in America still know virtually nothing of the millennial fight of the Vietnamese people for independence, of the long Vietnamese revolutionary struggle against imperialism, which is perhaps the greatest epic of all human history.

During five weeks in North Vietnam and in the liberated zone of Laos, I traveled extensively, talked with leaders at the highest level, officials, fighters, intellectuals, workers and peasants, trying to gain as complete a picture as possible of the Vietnamese resistance and the struggles of the other Indochinese peoples.

In Vietnam, I traveled through the province of Thanh Hoa, whose coastal lowlands contain rich ricefields, the scene of heavy fighting during U.S. bombing. Since I had visited Thanh Hoa in 1965, the provincial capital of the same name had been virtually levelled by U.S. bombing. The wanton destruction was even greater at the city of Vinh, more than halfway between Hanoi and the 17th parallel.

U.S. strategy defeated

Despite the widespread devastation left by U.S. attacks, which I expected to see, I also anticipated that the people themselves would have exhibited the effects of the bombings. But the U.S. attempt to disrupt the economy had totally failed; agricultural production, the mainstay of the economy, had been maintained, even augmented in some regions during the U.S. attacks. In Vietnam, there was nothing comparable to that mass starvation and malnutrition suffered by the people of Europe during and after World War II, even though the tonnage of bombs dropped on the North alone exceeded the bombing of all Europe.

I was strongly impressed by the health and vigor of the people of North Vietnam, particularly the youth in the countryside, where the ricefields were dotted with pockmarked by bomb craters and where the peasants

1 2 JUL 1970

STATINTL

Allies May Use Guerrillas To Hit Foe's Supply Lines

By WILLIAM BEECHER
Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, July 11 — Allied strategists are planning to use the enemy's own tactic—guerrilla warfare—to try to frustrate North Vietnam's efforts to develop an alternate supply route for its forces in Cambodia and southern parts of South Vietnam.

Since the fall of Prince Norodom Sihanouk as Cambodia's Chief of State on March 18 and the allied incursion into former Communist sanctuary areas along the Cambodian-Vietnamese border, North Vietnam has taken several steps to open a new route for ammunition, weapons and food.

The first step, on April 29, was to seize the town of Attopeu, in southern Laos, commanding the upper reaches of the Se Kong, which flows southwest into the Mekong River. Since then, North Vietnamese and Vietcong troops have taken a number of towns and villages along the Se Kong and further south along the Mekong River in Cambodia.

United States, Laotian and Cambodian officials, in an effort to prevent this waterborne route from becoming a successful substitute for land routes closer to the Vietnamese borders with Laos and Cambodia and the former sea route providing access through the Cambodian coastlines, have been developing plans on a number of possible actions.

Recent interviews with well-

placed sources in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, indicate serious consideration of the following allied counter-moves:

¶An expansion of so-called irregular-force activities in southern Laos to ambush and harass North Vietnamese truck parks, transshipment centers and barge and sampan movements along the Se Kong. These operations would be carried out by Kha tribesmen and Laotians trained by the Central Intelligence Agency and already operating from bases in the Boloven-Plateau in southern Laos.

¶Formation of similar irregular forces in northeast Cambodia to conduct comparable harassing actions. Presumably the guerrilla units would be drawn from among soldiers of Cambodian extraction who were trained by the United States Special Forces in South Vietnam and are currently fighting for the Lon Nol Government around Phnompenh. There are now roughly 3,000 such troops in Cambodia from whom volunteer guerrilla fighters could be drawn.

¶Employment of such special units to provide detailed radio reports for American bombers based in South Vietnam and Thailand when lucrative targets are spotted by small teams of trail-watchers.

¶Extension of South Vietnamese river patrol activities up the Mekong River at least to Kratie in Cambodia and perhaps as far north as Stung-treng, only about 30 miles from the Laotian border. Scores of fast, heavily armed patrol

boats have recently been turned over to the South Vietnamese by the United States. They now operate primarily in river and canals that criss-cross the Mekong Delta area in South Vietnam.

Roles Sometimes Reversed

"None of us feel that these steps will close the enemy's new routes to logistics traffic," said one ranking American planner. "But they will make it very costly for the enemy and make it difficult for him to compensate for what he has recently lost."

In the early stages of the war here the enemy was the master of guerrilla warfare while the United States, with its slow-moving infantry divisions, tanks and artillery, thrashed about in search of the elusive foe.

But in some aspects of what has become the Indochina war, the roles have at times been reversed.

In Laos, for instance, American sources in Vientiane say the war has been "North-Vietnamized" over the last two years. More and more, unaggressive local Communist troops of the Pathet Lao movement have been relegated to the mission of supplying and supporting two conventional North Vietnamese divisions, the 312th and 316th.

With their tanks and artillery, these divisions have been bound to the roads in Laos, while Meo and Laotian guerrillas serving under Maj. Gen. Vang Pao, trained and supported by the American C.I.A., have been the principal opponent in northern Laos, protecting the approaches to Vientiane and Luang Prabang.

Other guerrilla forces have operated against the North Vietnamese complex of roads and trails in southern Laos, known as the Ho Chi Minh Trail, to call in American bomber strikes and to stage hit-and-run attacks against logistical units. Many of the Central Intelligence Agency specialists in this work are former members of the American Special Forces who learned their trade in South Vietnam.

STATINTL

Rushed to Press!

The Second Indochina War

Cambodia and Laos

by WILFRED G. BURCHETT

Another great book of reportage, responding to the urgent need to understand the new stage of the war opened by Nixon's invasion of Cambodia.

Out of his rich knowledge gained as an on-the-spot reporter for over 25 years, Burchett shows how the CIA maneuvered the coup which overthrew Sihanouk, and then provided its own Special Forces to sustain the puppet regime in Cambodia.

He was there when the Summit Meeting of the Indochinese Peoples (Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians) set up a program and a new strategy of unity in the war; and when the new Government of National Unity for Cambodia was formed. He shows why

10 JUL 1970

STATINTL

Credibility of the Government

BY D. J. R. BRUCKNER

The Administration was making so much noise in San Clemente last week that the nation might not have been able to hear what was happening in Washington. Presumably that was, in part, the reason for all those reports, briefings and discussions on the Cambodian venture which went up from the Western White House like ponderous rockets; they tended to drown out the thunder from Capitol Hill where the Senate approved the Cooper-Church amendment, the clear sense of which was a warning to the President not to try any more precipitous ventures on his own authority. Some in the White House staff might have felt it desirable, then, to demonstrate that there is still a President.

We must expect more such demonstrations in the future; in a sense, they are built into the President's position. He had the chance when he first took office to end the war in Indochina, but he did not take that chance. It is important to the nation that his viability as leader survive during his term; and it is apparent now that explanation and justification are to be the vehicles of that leadership.

The Cooper-Church amendment may never become law anyway; it faces a long and probably destructive discussion in the House. But it represents the first time in our history that either side of Congress has attempted to discipline the Commander-in-Chief during a war.

The Senate has been moving in that direction since last autumn when it began to place geographical limits on the funds in some military spending measures. Now that movement has reached a critical junction. It can lead to some systematic changes in the way foreign policy is made and conducted. Or it could become a power struggle between two branches of government. And it is not hard to imagine a situation in which a President could seriously compromise Congress in such a struggle; it is not even hard to imagine a President creating an advantageous situation of that kind, just to save his own skin.

There must be some way to restore the value of reason to political discourse in this nation; such a restoration is vital in the area of foreign policy. There have been too many shocks recently for people to absorb without a loss of trust: in a brief time we have all found out that the Central Intelligence Agency has been controlling and paying for a big army in Laos, that some of our foreign aid programs have peculiar purposes, that Southeast Asian allied forces in Vietnam are supported at a premium by U.S. funds, and that Washington is about to give Saigon another \$100 million to shore up the regime there.

Every day, it seems, something comes to light which illustrates the terrible need for much better public articulation of foreign policy, and there is still enough hidden to furnish revelations for a long time.

Among many opponents of the war there is a tendency to mindless moralizing and expressions of personal superiority, a tendency to assume that all decision-makers are wicked and that the system does not work. On the other side, perhaps even in the White House, there seems to be some contempt for that part of the system called Congress. Such posturing is a symptom of the disease that cripples us.

★

In Congress there is at least a little hope for something much better. On the House side there have been hearings for several weeks on a bill that would limit the President's military authority. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is preparing public hearings on a better bill, offered by Sen. Jacob Javits (R-N.Y.) which would require Congressional review of any Presidential commitment of troops within 30 days.

The concept of systematic, automatic Congressional review is important. Debate, such as that over the Cooper-Church amendment, is not enough; in-depth committee work, and staff work, is needed. In the past Congress has been, and it could be again, the best means of the public articulation of national policy.

In that sense, the hearings on the Javits bill could be as important as any legislation they produce. One would even hope they would be televised, whole, and live. Congress has a pretty strong case for asking for equal time now and the Javits bill is not a bad vehicle to move the nation towards much fuller public discussion of policy and its consequences.

There is no guarantee of wisdom from the public if it gets much more deeply involved in open consideration of foreign policy, but there is not much apparent wisdom in the present method either. The object of the struggle over foreign policy now should be not to decide who has power over this or that, but whether the government of the United States can be made credible again to its own people, responsive and responsible to them.

✓

Senate Acts To Curb Nixon on Power to Wage War

WASHINGTON — The Senate has taken what may prove to be a historic step in redressing the balance of warmaking powers between the Presidency and the Congress, in an era of undeclared wars.

After 34 days of often confusing constitutional debate, the Senate last week adopted by a vote of 58-37 the Cooper-Church amendment that would restrict the President's authority to use funds for future military operations in Cambodia. Using the power of the purse-strings—the ultimate power of Congress—the amendment specified that after July 1 the President, in the absence of Congressional approval, could not retain American troops in Cambodia, provide military advisers or hire mercenaries for the Cambodian Government, or supply air support for Cambodian forces.

Significant Step

Never before during the course of a shooting war had either branch of Congress so attempted to place restrictions on the warmaking powers of the President as Commander in Chief. The vote marked a significant step in Congressional reassertion of the powers that in the past three decades, largely through Congressional acquiescence, have gravitated to the executive branch.

In all probability, the Cooper-Church amendment will never become law. It still must be approved by the House, and from the start the Administration has relied on the more hawkish House to save it from the leash of a preponderantly dovish Senate. Nevertheless, the Senate's action will have lasting political force even if not followed in the House, thus bringing about some readjustment in the warmaking powers on a pragmatic basis.

Passage of the amendment represented a serious rebuff to President Nixon's decision to order the Cambodian intervention without so much as consulting with Congressional lead-

ers. The only political solace for the Administration was that it was able to delay the Senate vote until the day that President Nixon announced the withdrawal of all American forces from Cambodia, thus submerging the Senate action in a Presidential report on the success of the Cambodian operation.

The day is now gone when the President can go to war on the basis of some ambiguous Congressional resolution that is used to justify decisions made or not yet made by the Commander in Chief. War by ambivalent resolutions went out the Congressional window with the bitter experience over the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin resolution, which was repealed by the Senate 10 days ago during the constitutional debate.

Also gone is the day when the President can fight an undeclared war on the basis of consultations with a few mandarins in Congress. In fact, it was a reaction against the past practice of war by consultation that led to the Cooper-Church amendment.

The President may have told a privileged few in Congress that the Central Intelligence Agency was financing a mercenary army in Laos, that the Air Force was bombing in northern Laos in support of the Royal Laotian Government, that munificent allowances were being paid to Thai, South Korean and Philippine troops sent to South Vietnam. But these actions came as a surprise to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which is why the committee decided to impose prohibitions when it came to Cambodia. If the prohibitions are to be lifted, it will be only by consulting Congress as a whole and openly.

Imprecise Definitions

In redefining the division of warmaking powers, the Cooper-Church amendment is admittedly imprecise. In its operative sections, it lays down specific prohibitions on the President; but then in its statement of principles, it reaffirms the constitutional powers of the Commander in Chief, including his power to take steps to protect the lives of American troops "wherever deployed." To that extent, the amendment enshrines a principle that is increasingly being invoked by the executive branch to justify foreign military action.

It was this principle that President Nixon cited in justifying his Cambodian intervention. The amendment now relying to justify a continued American military presence in

Vietnam. If the authority is that broad, then the question arises whether the President could not invoke that power to circumvent the prohibitions in the Cooper-Church amendment on the grounds he was only acting to protect the lives of American troops in Cambodia.

Relying on his powers as Commander in Chief, the President may choose to ignore the restrictions in the Cooper-Church amendment. In his conversation with three television commentators Wednesday night, Mr. Nixon refused to say categorically that he would not reintroduce American troops to Cambodia but emphasized "We do not plan on it." But if he did send troops back to Cambodia, he would do so at considerable political risk.

The Cooper - Church amendment is part of an evolutionary process in which the Senate has been engaged for over a year. Preceding it last year was the National Commitments Resolution calling upon the President not to engage in foreign hostilities without the affirmative approval of Congress. Then last December, the Senate incorporated an amendment in the Defense Appropriations Bill specifying that no funds were to be used by the President to introduce ground troops into Laos or Thailand. That amendment was accepted by the Administration with no complaints that it was tying the hands of the Commander in Chief. It was only when Senators John Sherman Cooper, Republican of Kentucky, and Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, presented their amendment that such complaints were voiced by the executive branch.

From the standpoint of the Cooper - Church forces, their amendment does not tie the hands of the President, but rather, as Senator Church put it at one point in the debate, "helps to untie the knots by which Congress has shackled its own powers."

In essence, the Senate has told the President that his powers as Commander in Chief are not unlimited, to be defined as he sees fit. The next step in this evolutionary process will be an attempt by the Foreign Relations Committee to define by law how the President may use his authority as Commander in Chief in the absence of a declaration of war by Congress.

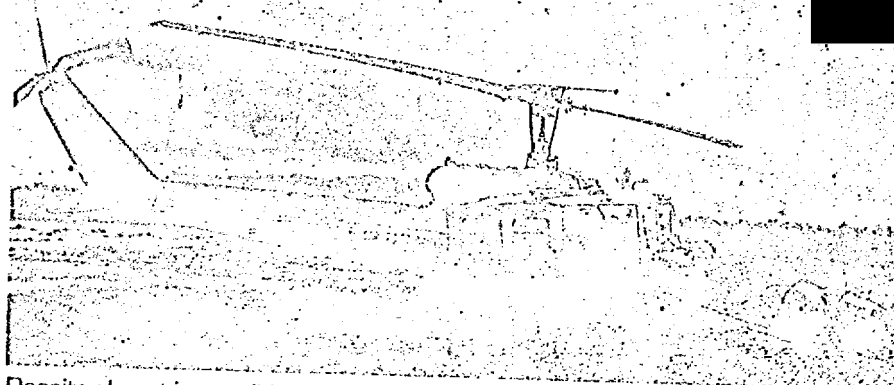
One approach suggested by Senator Jacob K. Javits of New York and being considered by the committee, is to recognize that the President as Commander in Chief may take cer-

tain emergency actions; but then specifying that such military actions cannot be continued longer than 30 days without obtaining Congressional approval.

—JOHN W. FINNEY

ROTOR & WING
July 1979

STATINTL



Despite almost impossible conditions, STOL aircraft fly constantly in Laos.

Air America Huey copter loads fuel for use by STOL's in forward combat zones.

'Secret War' In Laos

As told to:
Alex Bartimo

By H. P. Harper

Laotian Survival Depends On STOLs And Helos

SCANNING THE VAST void and barren Plain of Jars in the rugged and mountainous terrain of northern Laos, Pilot Jim Cutler spotted a brilliant flash on a hilltop 7,000 feet below the wing of his STOL Pilatus Porter.

A T-28 attack bomber of the Laotian Air Force wheeled in, belching a fiery trail of rockets; then dropped a load of 250-pound high explosive bombs onto a concentration of advancing North Vietnamese troops moving towards the strategic town of Sam Thong, an American refugee center and hospital.

Two Huey helicopters hovered over an area with sparse trees and then settled on the parched red earth. Out of the underbrush scrambled a rash of olive drab figures in bedraggled army fatigue uniforms, firing as they ran for the helicopter.

Jim Cutler shrugged.

down there. Look at 'em scramble out of there. Wish we could help them, but business as usual I guess."

The loudspeaker overhead crackled, then blared:

"Tango 1, this is Tango 2. How do you read me?"

"Go ahead Tango 2. I read you five-by-five," Jim replied.

"Got a hot mission for you at Site 62. Go in and evacuate General Van Pao. His forward position is about to be overrun by the 'bad guys' (North Vietnamese), and we can't afford to lose the little tiger, the only General in Laos winning this 'secret war'."

"Look buster, you've got to be kidding. I finished my combat missions in Korea. I play it cool from now on."

"Tango 1, there's \$1,000 bonus in the pot for this one!"

"OK, I heard you. Why didn't you say 'cabbage' was involved? Will do."