



Intelligence Information Cable

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DIST 29 AUGUST 1974

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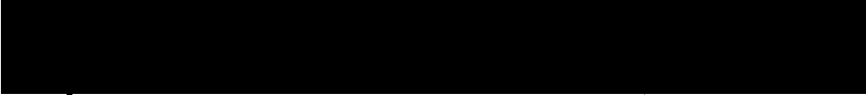
SUBJECT [REDACTED] AUGUST MEETING OF THE VIENTIANE SIDE COMMITTEE FOR STRATEGY DISCUSSION OF UNREST AMONG CIVIL SERVANTS, THE POLICE STRIKE, POW EXCHANGE, PHOUMI VONGVICHIT'S PROJECTED TRIP TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS

SUMMARY: [REDACTED]

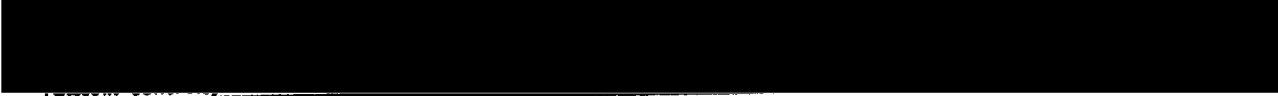
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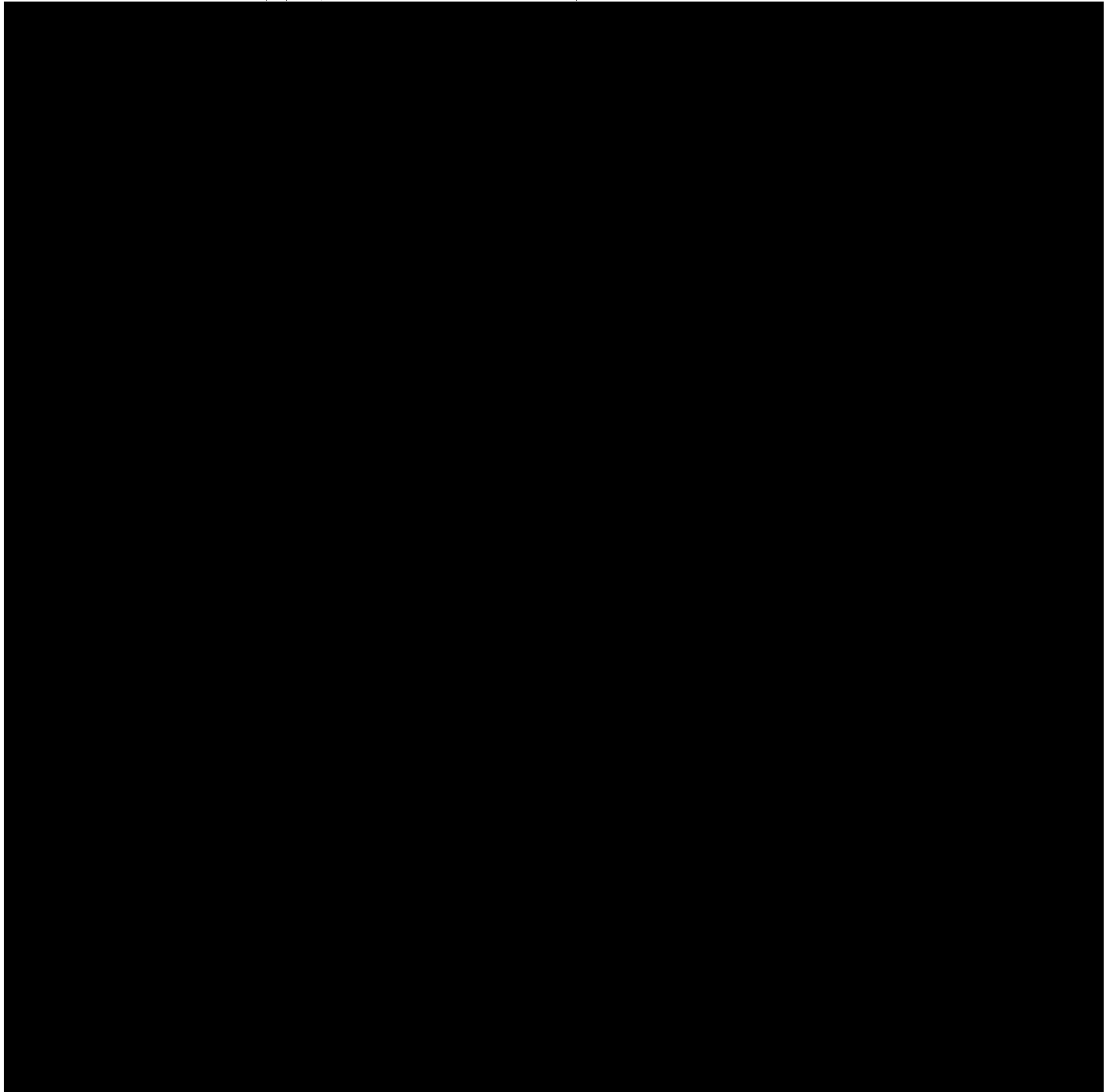
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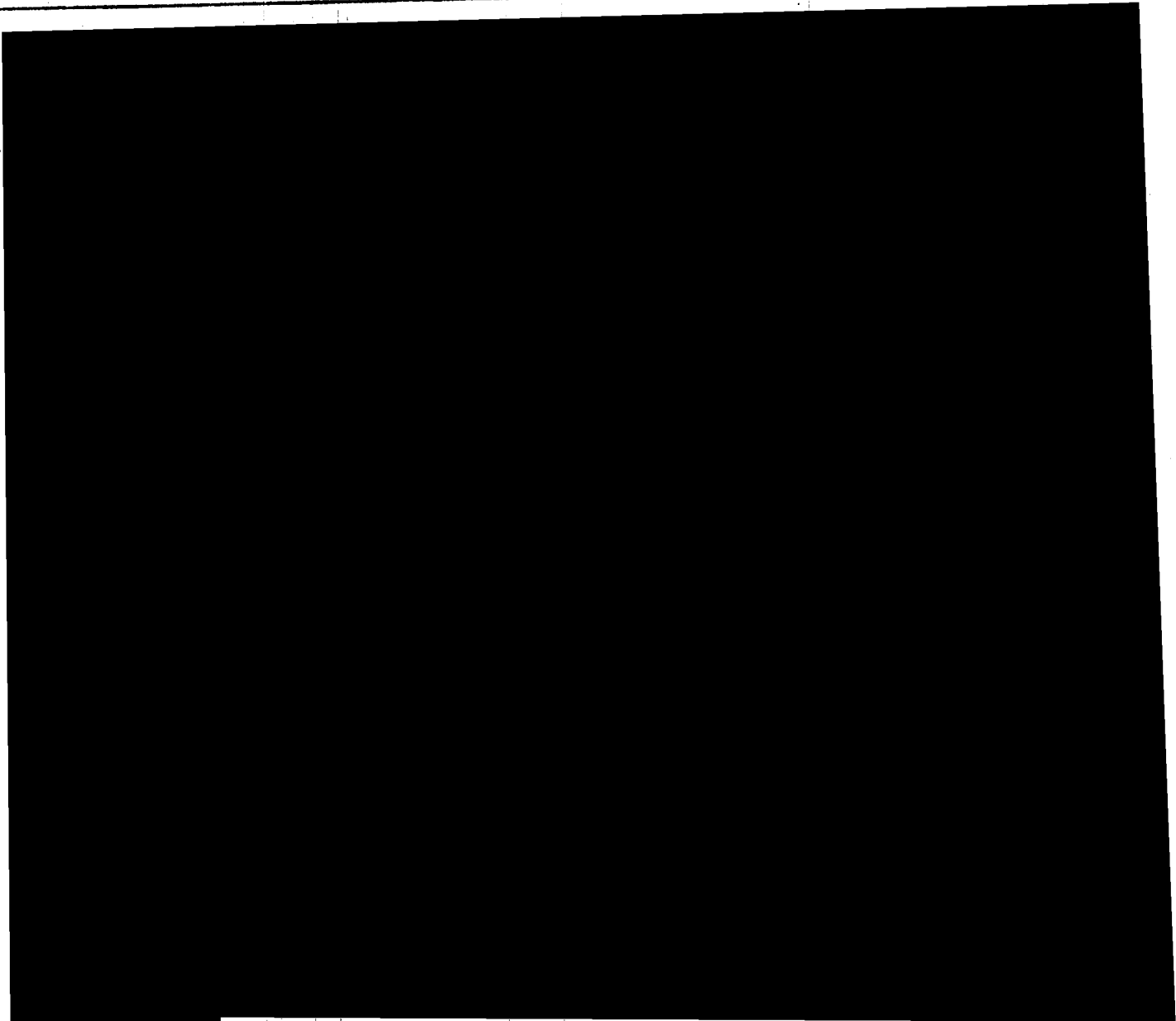


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END SUMMARY.

1. ON [REDACTED] AUGUST, FOLLOWING THE WEEKLY CABINET MEETING,
FINANCE MINISTER N G O N SANANIKONE COMMENTED THAT THE

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MEETING OF THE VIENTIANE SIDE LEADERS ON [REDACTED] AUGUST WAS EVIDENCE OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER L E U A M INSISIENGMAY'S INTENTION TO FOCUS THESE MEETINGS ON ISSUES LIKELY TO BE DISCUSSED AT CABINET MEETINGS. NGON SAID THAT ONLY VIENTIANE SIDE CABINET MEMBERS WERE INVITED AND THAT THERE WERE NO REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE LAO ARMED FORCES (LAR) OR THE JOINT NATIONAL POLITICAL COUNCIL (JNPC) PRESENT.

2. NGON SAID THAT LEUAM OPENED THE MEETING BY REQUESTING THAT INTERIOR MINISTER P H E N G PHONGSAVAN REPORT ON CONTINUED UNREST AMONG CIVIL SERVANTS. NGON SAID THAT PHENG REPORTED ON THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE UNREST WOULD SPREAD TO ALL MINISTRIES AND THAT SUCH PROTESTS, IF LEFT UNCONTROLLED, WOULD SERIOUSLY THREATEN THE STABILITY OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNION (PGNU). NGON SAID THAT PHENG RECOMMENDED, WITH ALL PRESENT AGREEING, THAT DURING THE CABINET MEETING THE NEXT DAY, LEUAM REQUEST THAT THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT (LRF) JOIN THE VIENTIANE SIDE IN ISSUING A DECLARATION ON BEHALF OF THE TWO SIDES, URGING CIVIL SERVANTS TO CHANNEL THEIR GRIEVANCES AND PROTESTS VIA THEIR RESPECTIVE MINISTRIES AND TO REFRAIN FROM DEMONSTRATING OR

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COMMITTING ACTS WHICH WOULD UPSET CURRENT EFFORTS BY THE TWO SIDES TO ACHIEVE NATIONAL UNION AND RECONCILIATION, PARTICULARLY WHILE THE PRIME MINISTER IS ABSENT FROM THE COUNTRY. NGON SAID THAT THE MATTER WAS, IN FACT, RAISED AT THE [REDACTED] AUGUST CABINET MEETING BUT THAT THE LPF REFUSED TO ISSUE SUCH A DECLARATION ON BEHALF OF THE TWO SIDES. INSTEAD, THE CABINET AGREED THAT A SIMILAR STATEMENT WOULD BE ISSUED BY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INFORMATION O U D A Y SOUVANNAVONG TO THE PRESS ON BEHALF OF THE PGNU. THE STATEMENT WOULD STRESS THAT CIVIL SERVANTS SHOULD REFRAIN FROM DISRUPTING CURRENT EFFORTS OF THE GOVERNMENT TO ACHIEVE PEACE DURING THE ABSENCE OF THE PRIME MINISTER.

3. ACCORDING TO NGON, PHENG NEXT REPORTED ON THE SITUATION WITHIN THE POLICE FORCE. PHENG SAID THAT HE HAD APPOINTED (CHAO) S I H A R A T H PHASOUK AS AD INTERIM DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL POLICE UNTIL CURRENT PROBLEMS ARE RESOLVED. PHENG STRESSED THAT ALTHOUGH THE STRIKE HAD BEEN CONFINED TO THE TRAFFIC POLICE, THERE ARE INNUMERABLE GRIEVANCES AMONG POLICE OFFICERS AND MEN THROUGHOUT THE POLICE FORCE AND THAT A TOTAL REORGANIZATION OF THE POLICE FORCE IS NOW

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CALLLED FOR. PHENG SAID THAT HE IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON A REORGANIZATION PLAN WHICH HE WILL SUBMIT TO THE CABINET. NGON COMMENTED THAT HE WOULD OBJECT TO THE NOMINATION OF Siharath AS POLICE DIRECTOR AND WOULD HAVE TO TAKE ISSUE WITH THE NOMINATION IF IT IS PRESENTED TO THE CABINET. PHENG SAID THAT THE CURRENT APPOINTMENT WAS TEMPORARY.

4. ACCORDING TO NGON, CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION ENSUED OVER THE PRISONER/(POW) EXCHANGE QUESTION, PARTICULARLY CONCERNING THE NORTH VIETNAMESE (NVA). NGON COMPLAINED THAT PRIOR TO ANY AGREEMENT OF THIS NATURE, S O U K A N VILAYSAN, VIENTIANE SIDE CHIEF DELEGATE TO THE JOINT COMMISSION TO IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENT (JCIA), SHOULD CONSULT WITH THE ENTIRE VIENTIANE SIDE LEADERSHIP BEFORE COMMITTING HIMSELF. [REDACTED] COMMENT:

[REDACTED] SOUKAN CAME UNDER ATTACK FOR HIS AGREEMENT WITH LPF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE REPATRIATION OF POW'S TO BE HELD IN SEPTEMBER BECAUSE HE HAD MADE THE AGREEMENT WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULATION WITH HIS VIENTIANE SIDE CONFEREES. AND BECAUSE HE HAD AGREED TO INCLUDE NVA POW'S IN

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THE EXCHANGE. THE VIENTIANE SIDE ARGUED THAT NVA PRISONERS SHOULD BE HELD UNTIL THE HANOI GOVERNMENT ACKNOWLEDGES THEIR STATUS AS NVA TROOPS AND AGREES TO THEIR REPATRIATION. THESE TROOPS WOULD ALSO SERVE AS AN ARGUING POINT FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL NVA TROOPS FROM LAOS. THERE ARE LIKEWISE HUMANITARIAN REASONS WHY ALL THESE PRISONERS SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED IN THE EXCHANGE, INASMUCH AS SOME WERE RALLIERS TO THE VIENTIANE GOVERNMENT WHILE OTHERS HAD MADE STATEMENTS DURING THEIR IMPRISONMENT ON THEIR STATUS AS NVA TROOPS. IF SUCH PRISONERS ARE EXCHANGED AND SENT BACK TO NORTH VIETNAM BY THE LPF, THEY MAY BE KILLED. SOUKAN DEFENDED HIMSELF ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE JCIA IS COEQUAL WITH THE PGNU AND THE JNPC AND THAT HE, AS THE VIENTIANE SIDE CHIEF JCIA REPRESENTATIVE, HAS THE RIGHT TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS WITHOUT THE CONCURRENCE OF EITHER HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE PGNU OR THE JNPC.) ACCORDING TO NGON, PHENG SUPPORTED THE FORMER ON THIS MATTER. SPECIFICALLY, NGON, SAID THAT ON THE MATTER OF RETURNING NVA POW'S, THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS SHOULD BE ASKED TO INTERVIEW THE POW'S TO DETERMINE WHETHER THEY WANT TO RETURN TO NORTH VIETNAM, SOUTH VIETNAM OR ELSEWHERE, IN

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ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW. SOUKAN AGREED TO REVIEW THIS MATTER AT THE NEXT JCIA SESSION.

5. ON A RELATED MATTER, NGON SAID THAT HE PROTESTED SOUKAN'S AGREEMENT WITH LPF JCIA CHIEF DELEGATE S O T H PHE TRASY ON PLACING JOINT POLICE (JPF) PERSONNEL WITHIN THE AIRPORT GROUNDS. NGON SAID THAT SINCE IT IS AN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, FOREIGNERS, ON ARRIVING AT THE AIRPORT, RECEIVE AN UNFAVORABLE IMPRESSION OF THE PGNU WHEN THEY ARE CONFRONTED BY LPF SOLDIERS CARRYING AK-47'S. SOUKAN SAID THAT JPF POSTS WERE LARGELY CONFINED TO AREAS OUTSIDE THE TERMINAL. NEVERTHELESS, NGON SAID, HE HAD RECEIVED COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF LPF PERSONNEL WITHIN THE TERMINAL AND WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST, FOR THE LAST TIME, THAT MAJOR ISSUES SUCH AS THIS ONE FIRST BE CLEARED WITH THE VIENTIANE SIDE. ALL PRESENT AGREED IN PRINCIPLE.

6. SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS T I A N E - T H O N E CHANTHARASY REPORTED THAT DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER P H O U M I VONGVICHIT IS LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT TRAVELING TO NEW YORK FOR THE OPENING SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (UNGA). TIANETHONE OPINED THAT AT THE LAST MOMENT PHOUMI WOULD WITHDRAW FROM THE DELEGATION.

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TIANETHONE FELT THAT PHOUMI DOES NOT WANT TO BE AWAY FROM LAOS DURING THE PRIME MINISTER'S ABSENCE. ON THE MATTER OF THE DELEGATION TO THE UNGA, TIANETHONE SAID THAT HE WOULD ADVOCATE THAT THE DELEGATION CONSIST OF AN EQUAL NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE TWO SIDES AND THAT DURING DISCUSSIONS AT THE UN, THE TWO SIDES REACH UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT ON ISSUES PRESENTED BEFORE STATING AN OPINION OR CASTING A VOTE. SHOULD THE DELEGATION FAIL TO REACH UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT, THE DELEGATION SHOULD REFRAIN FROM PARTICIPATING IN THE DEBATE OR VOTE. ALL AGREED WITH TIANETHONE'S SUGGESTION.

7. TIANETHONE ALSO MADE A REPORT ON THE REQUEST OF THE FAMILY OF P H O U M I NOSAVAN FOR LAO GOVERNMENT AUTHORIZATION TO TAKE HIM FROM SONGKHLA TO BANGKOK FOR TREATMENT. THOSE PRESENT AGREED THAT IF THE THAI GOVERNMENT JUDGES THAT IT IS PROPER AND NECESSARY, IT MAY AUTHORIZE HIM TO GO TO BANGKOK FOR TREATMENT.

A. NGON REPORTED THAT SECRETARY FOR FINANCE B O U T A B O N G SOUVANNAVONE HAS NOT YET SUBMITTED A BUDGET FOR THE LPF.

IF THE LPF DOES NOT TURN IN A BUDGET BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER, NGON SAID, HE WOULD REFUSE TO PAY

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LPP MINISTERS.

9. NGON REMARKED THAT IN THE DISPATCH OF THE TWO AID-SEEKING MISSIONS, THE VIENTIANE SIDE MUST BE CAREFUL THAT IT NOT BE LULLED INTO EXPECTING TOO MUCH FROM SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. NGON REPORTED THAT SO FAR ONLY PROPAGANDA HAS RESULTED FROM THE PROMISE OF LARGE-SCALE ASSISTANCE FROM SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. NGON SAID THAT HE REMAINS UNIMPRESSED BY SOTH'S EFFORTS, CALLING ATTENTION TO SOTH'S HAVING PROCRASTINATED A GREAT DEAL IN FORMING HIS DELEGATIONS AND IN DRAWING UP LISTS OF REQUIREMENTS. NGON ADDED THAT ANY ASSISTANCE WOULD BENEFIT LAOS, HOWEVER SMALL, BUT THAT HE WISHES TO COUNSEL CAUTION ON THE PART OF THE VIENTIANE SIDE IN THIS MATTER.

10. JUSTICE MINISTER K H A M K I N G SOUVANLASY, ACCORDING TO NGON, ASKED LEUAM WHETHER THE PRESENT GROUP WOULD BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE SELECTED FAR OFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DECLARATION ISSUED ON THE FORMATION OF THE VIENTIANE SIDE. KHANKING NOTED THAT ON MILITARY AND POLITICAL ISSUES, THIS SMALL GROUP, NOT ELECTED BY THE PEOPLE, CANNOT EXPECT TO REPRESENT FAR AND THE POLITICAL PARTIES. LEUAM RESPONDED

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THAT FOR THE TIME BEING, PARTICULARLY DURING THE ABSENCE OF THE PRIME MINISTER, IT WOULD NOT BE ADVISABLE TO EXPAND THE PRESENT COMMITTEE TO INCLUDE THESE OTHER GROUPS. LEUAM SUGGESTED THAT THE MATTER BE POSTPONED UNTIL A LATER, UNSPECIFIED DATE. THE MATTER WAS NOT FURTHER DISCUSSED.

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