

Chronology of U.S. Role

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 8—Following is a chronology of events and decisions that marked the increasing United States involvement in Laos:

1954

JULY 21—Agreement was reached at Geneva conference to end Indochina war and establish Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam as independent, neutral countries. The United States took note of conference declaration but declined to sign.

1960

DEC. 31—After breakup of coalition Government threw Laos into three-way leftist-neutralist-rightist conflict, President Eisenhower asserted, "We cannot let Laos fall to the Communists even if we have to fight."

1961

APRIL 19—President Kennedy authorized dispatch of United States military assistance advisory group of about 300 to Laos.

1962

JULY 23—The United States was one of 14 nations to sign agreement in Geneva recognizing neutrality of Laos. The United States later withdrew more than 600 military men from mission in Laos. However, neutrality agreement was regularly violated by both sides.

1964

MAY 19—The United States began reconnaissance flights over southern Laos; after plane was shot down, armed escorts were sent.

1965

JANUARY—The United States disclosed it had started bombing Ho Chi Minh Trail. Later in the year the United States opened a "requirements office" staffed by retired military personnel to

supervise military aid to Laos and training of Laotians in neighboring Thailand. The extent of American involvement then was described in a series of articles in The New York Times Oct. 26-28, 1969. They disclosed that the United States was supplying, training and directing a 40,000-man secret army of Meo hill tribesmen commanded by Maj. Gen. Vang Pao.

1970

MARCH 6—President Nixon, explaining American involvement, said "air interdiction" and bombing of the Ho Chi Minh Trail were intended "to protect American and allied lives in Vietnam." He said no American ground troops were in Laos and none of 1,040 Americans stationed there, including 320 military advisers and 323 logistics personnel, had been killed.

1971

JAN. 19—Officials reported that American helicopter gunships were flying combat missions in direct support of Laotian ground troops, attacking enemy troops and supply convoys along Ho Chi Minh Trail. Other informants said B-52's, tactical fighter-bombers and specially outfitted reconnaissance aircraft were also being used. The United States reported that 13 helicopters had been lost since last March 10, 1970.

FEB. 5—After six days of a blackout on news, the United States command in Saigon announced that 9,000 American troops were supporting 20,000 South Vietnamese poised in northwestern South Vietnam to cross into Laos to attack enemy supply routes.

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Excerpts From the '62 Geneva Declaration on Laos

Following are excerpts from the declaration signed at Geneva on July 23, 1962, by 13 nations including the United States, North Vietnam and South Vietnam:

[1]

[The participating nations] solemnly declare, in accordance with the will of the Government and people of the Kingdom of Laos, that they recognize and will respect and observe in every way the sovereignty, independence, neutrality, unity and territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Laos.

[2]

Undertake, in particular, that:

(a) They will not commit or participate in any way in any act which might directly or indirectly impair the sovereignty, independence, neutrality, unity or territorial integrity of Laos;

(b) They will not resort to the use or threat of force or any other measure which might impair the peace of Laos;

(c) They will refrain from all direct or indirect interference in the internal affairs of Laos;

(d) They will not attach conditions of a political nature to any assistance which they may offer or which Laos may seek;

(e) They will not bring Laos in any way into any military alliance or any other agreement, whether military or otherwise, which is inconsistent with her neutrality, nor invite or encourage her to enter into any such alliance or conclude any such agreement;

(f) They will respect the wish of Laos not to recognize

the protection of any military coalition or alliance, including SEATO;

(g) They will not introduce into Laos foreign troops or military personnel in any form whatsoever, nor will they in any way facilitate or connive at the introduction of any foreign troops or military personnel;

(h) They will not establish nor in any way facilitate or connive at the establishment in Laos of any foreign military base, foreign strongpoint, or other foreign military installation of any kind;

(i) They will not use the territory of Laos for interference in the internal affairs of other countries;

(j) They will not use the territory of any country, including their own, for interference in the internal affairs of Laos.

[3]

Appeal to all other states to recognize, respect and observe in every way the sovereignty, independence and neutrality, and also the unity and territorial integrity, of the Kingdom of Laos and to refrain from any action inconsistent with those principles or with other provisions of the declaration.

[4]

Undertake, in the event of a violation or threat of violation of the sovereignty, independence, neutrality, unity or territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Laos, to consult jointly with the Royal Government of Laos and among themselves in order to consider measures which might prove to be necessary to insure the observance of these principles and the other provisions of the present declaration.

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