

Laotian Premier's Son

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BANGKOK, Nov. 26—The younger son of Laotian Premier Prince Souvanna Phouma staged a dramatic escape from Laos today by swimming across the Mekong River to Thailand.

Police in the northern Thai provincial capital of Nong Khai, contacted by telephone from Bangkok, confirmed that Souvanna's son, Prince Panya, reached the Thai side

of the river at about dawn.

According to the English-language afternoon paper, Bangkok World, Panya told police near Nong Khai that he had his father's blessings. "I told my father and got permission from him before fleeing the country," the paper quoted the prince as saying.

Panya's sister, Moune Stieglitz, wife of a U. S. diplomat based in Bangkok, said she had received word from Nong

Khai that her brother had arrived there.

Mrs. Stieglitz added that of Souvanna's other children, one sister was living in France and one brother remained in Laos.

Panya, 32, wore just a lifebelt and undershorts and carried a plastic bag containing about \$100 in assorted currency and a passport.

The Bangkok newspaper also reported that Panya said his father and King Savang

Swims to Escape

Vatthana were "under the strict control of Pathet Lao" and that the "situation in Laos was very unsafe."

Souvanna and the king have been effectively deprived of all their power since the Pathet Lao took control of the coalition government six months ago.

There have been frequent rumors in Vientiane that the two aging leaders would leave Laos and retire in France. The latest of these rumors is that they will finally leave

following national elections, now expected to be held in April.

Panya's arrival in Thailand may prove embarrassing to prime minister Kukrit Pramoj and his government at a time when relations with Laos are at a new low. Some 50,000 Laotians have already taken refuge in this country and the government is attempting to force them back to Laos by supplying them with only barely adequate rations.