

Left Said to Control Laos Road Junction As 3-Day Fight Ends

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VIENTIANE, Laos, April 23 (Reuters)—Three days of fighting between troops of the right-wing and left-wing partners in the Laotian coalition Government have ended with the Marxist Pathet Lao in complete control of a vital road junction north of here, military officials said today.

Pathet Lao troops have also taken over a nearby airfield and two other positions from the right-wing Vientiane forces, according to military sources. A spokesman for the right-wing delegation on a joint peace committee, set up under the 1973 peace agreement, said military committees were meeting today to set up a joint team to investigate the situation.

The Pathet Lao has not publicly admitted taking control of the road junction at Sala Phou Khoun, 92 miles north of Vientiane on Route 13 leading to Luang Prabang, the royal capital.

The right-wing side said two of its men had been killed and

four wounded during the fighting, which broke out on Sunday and ended last evening. It was the most serious clash since the establishment of the coalition Government, in which each side has equal representation, two years ago.

The latest fighting followed other clashes last week, in

which right-wing forces lost five positions to the Pathet Lao along Route 7, from the same road junction east to the North Vietnamese border.

In those clashes 11 Pathet Lao troops were reported killed. The rightist forces had two killed, six wounded and one missing, Vientiane officials said.