

Laos Aid Asked By 3 Americans

Vientiane

Three Americans held in a southern Laotian town appealed to the U.S. embassy yesterday to have top Laotian government ministers sent there to negotiate their release, "Otherwise nothing is going to move. The longer the situation waits, the tenser it becomes."

The Americans — employees of the Agency for International Development — have been under loose house arrest since leftist student demonstrators took over the town of Savannakhet on Wednesday. A U.S. embassy spokesman said they are not in any danger, are living in their own homes, and "we are not going to do anything to tip the balance."

The spokesman said AID had received a radio message from Sanford Stone, the senior American in Sa-

vannakhet, that said, "We have been requested to use our best offices to get senior coalition government officials in Savannakhet . . ."

Two high-ranking ministers were to have flown to Savannakhet yesterday but were unable to leave because air force units were demonstrating at the Vientiane airport, calling for the removal of all rightists from positions of power. Most of the rightists leaders have already fled the country, leaving the coalition government virtually in the hands of the Communist-led Pathet Lao.

The demands of the demonstrators in Savannakhet were not clear, but initial reports said they were holding the Americans hostage until allegedly corrupt officials and right-wing officers in the government are removed.

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