

Laos Restricts Traveling And Orders All to Register

MAY 20 1975

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Special to The New York Times

VIENTIANE, Laos, May 19—The Laotian Government announced today a series of regulations restricting travel within the country and abroad and requiring every Laotian to register with the national police.

At the same time, the government asked all neighboring countries not to grant asylum to any Laotians—a demand aimed directly at Thailand, where most of the people who have left Laos have sought sanctuary.

The regulations appeared designed to stem the flight of Laotians abroad, a drain that is embarrassing to the country and damaging to the economy.

The regulations were promulgated in the Lao language only by the official national radio and the Laotian press agency. They were not translated into French, as has been traditional with government orders, stemming from the period until 1954 when Laos was a French colony.

The failure to translate emphasized that the regulations were for the attention of the country's citizens.

The regulations require that all Laotians obtain permission of the national police before traveling from Vientiane to any other area of Laos and before traveling abroad.

They also require that all Laotians report to the national police within 30 days with passports if they have them. It was not clear whether the police intend to confiscate any passports when such a visit is made.

In recent weeks, and particularly since the Communist takeover of South Vietnam and Cambodia, Thailand, long a firm ally of the United States, has repeatedly expressed a desire for neutrality and for friendship with her neighbors.

Now, with the Communist-led Pathet Lao assuming an even more dominant role in the Laotian coalition Government, Thailand is being asked for concrete proof of a desire to coexist with Laos.

Thailand has allowed limited

Laos radio and the Pathet Lao press agency. The Laotian press agency, which once carried a good deal of domestic news and information, has been reduced to three or four pages of government pronouncements each day.

All the new edicts and the changes in the government information system have come about since the resignations nearly two weeks ago of right-wing cabinet ministers after a series of anti-American and antirightist demonstrations here and in other Laotian cities. Both the Communist and non-Communist sides in the Government have declared their intention to continue the coalition arrangement, and Premier Souvanna Phoum has promised replacements soon for the ministers who resigned. It is clear, however, that the Communist-led Pathet Lao is ascending.

The American Embassy, meanwhile, issued a formal statement today that said: "The United States Government is prepared to enter into discussion with duly appointed representatives of the PGNU [Laotian Government] to modify, reduce or eliminate the U.S. economic assistance program to Laos in accordance with the policies of the PGNU and the United States Government."

The statement was issued as student demonstrators continued to control the southern Laotian town of Savannakhet, allowing only restricted movement by the Americans there, believed to number at least 14. The Americans have apparently been allowed to leave their houses, where they had been detained, but embassy officials in Vientiane said that students were still accompanying the Americans into town.

Sanford J. Stone, the chief official in Savannakhet of the United States Agency for International Development, reported on the student-controlled radio today that all the Americans there were well. He said, however, that "some people in Vientiane have been talking too much"—a statement that some here understood to refer to Voice of America broadcasts that told of new freedoms granted the Americans in Savannakhet.

New Air Force Chief

VIENTIANE, May 19 (Agence France-Presse)—The new Defense Minister of Laos, Gen. Khamouane Boupha, has dismissed the rightist chief of the air force, Gen. Bouathong Phothivongsa, and placed the air force under the direct command of the Defense Ministry.

stays to refugees from South Vietnam and Cambodia, but has demanded that they move on—generally, to the United States.

In other statements today, the Laotian national radio and press agency denounced persons who had fled the country, demanded their return and praised "recent protests to castigate and get rid of reactionary elements."

Both the radio and the press agency have recently grown increasingly strident in beginning to mirror the pronouncements of the clandestine Pathet