

WXPost  
**Laotians**  
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**Seek Pay**  
**From AID**

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VIENTIANE, May 24—Hundreds of angry Laotian employees of the U.S. Agency for International Development, which is swiftly dismantling its operations here, demonstrated outside the American embassy today demanding their salaries.

Embassy officials insisted that the workers could not be paid until another group of anti-American demonstrators who are occupying the AID office and warehouse compound evacuate the property.

Negotiations among the workers, AID officials, top embassy representatives and government leaders continued throughout the day, but proved futile.

"The situation is fairly stalemated," an embassy spokesman said.

The AID workers, who were to have been paid three days ago, refused to believe embassy officials who told them Prince Souvanna Phouma, the prime minister, and Foreign Minister Phoumi Vougvichit had ordered the demonstrators out of the AID compound.

"Americans are liars," several of them shouted.

The AID employees are the latest group to turn against the United States since the Communist Pathet Lao have taken effective control of what is still termed Laos' coalition government.

Like other Laotians, the AID workers realize the Communists are now running the country and that America's days here are numbered.

Although the Pathet Lao leaders in the coalition insist that they want to maintain diplomatic relations with the United States and to continue receiving U.S. economic assistance—although without the AID presence—it is clear to

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everyone that being anti-American is the right thing to do.

The embassy appeared to be preparing for further rapid deterioration of security for U.S. personnel and property in Vientiane. About 170 AID personnel, members of their families and some embassy personnel left today for Bangkok.

The evacuation of AID people began yesterday and the agency intends to remove all but a handful of personnel in the next few days. AID has been the primary target of anti-American demonstrators here who see the organization as a front for the Central Intelligence Agency.

In addition to moving out large numbers of Americans, the embassy began destroying what one source termed "non-essential documents." Dark smoke rose over the white, blockhouse-like embassy building throughout the day and fine ashes drifted down on the protesting AID workers as documents were burned.

From outside the nearby

barricaded AID compound, which demonstrators seized three days ago, smoke could be seen rising from a chimney. Two U.S. Marine guards and an electrician on contract to AID are virtually imprisoned inside the compound and the Marines reportedly had been ordered to destroy documents there as well.

Although the embassy has not officially begun contingency arrangements to evacuate Vientiane, one source said plans to abandon this last remaining U.S. mission in former French Indochina are being considered."

Embassy Charge d'Affaires Christian Chapman met with Souvanna and Phoumi in hopes of getting the demonstrators to give up the compound.

AID employs some 1,400 Laotians in Vientiane. It also employed another 1,200 in provincial towns before it acceded to government wishes earlier this week and shut down its operations.

The embassy's position is that the demonstrators occupying the compound are contravening the Vienna conven-

tion on the immunity of diplomatic personnel and property. The demonstrators contend that they have "captured" the sprawling compound of white concrete buildings with their forest of telecommunications antennae and that they will not budge until the two Marines inside are removed.

The Marines have telephone communications with the embassy and are supplied with C-rations. The electrician, an employee of the Federal Electric Corps., is reportedly not as well supplied.

With the crumbling of the right wing in the last two weeks, most Vientiane-side troops and police have aligned themselves with the Pathet Lao. "Some of them seem to be more radical than the Pathet Lao themselves," a U.S. embassy official commented with a trace of annoyance.

Today's protest by AID workers ended late in the afternoon, shortly before a monsoon downpour burst over the city. A Foreign Ministry official succeeded in disbanding the demonstrators, about 200 strong, by assuring them that Chapman had promised they

would be paid on Monday, "whether the demonstrators remain inside the AID compound or not."

Chapman, however, denied that he had given this assurance. "We cannot and will not do anything until they leave the compound," he said. However, he cautioned newsmen as he spoke to them through the embassy's high green iron gate that the government may have simply been trying to placate the workers in order to gain some time. "Let's see what happens in the next day," he added.

Most embassy officials are convinced that even the most strident anti-Americans in the government realize Laos needs some sort of U.S. economic assistance.

In addition to bilateral aid, which this year totalled \$32

million plus another \$30 million in military aid to the Vientiens-side army, the United States is the principal donor to the Foreign Exchange Operations Fund, a multinational organization which is this impoverished kingdom's main source of foreign exchange. This year, it provided \$35 million in hard currency with which the country conducted foreign trade.

This agreement is funded through the end of June and if relations with the United States break down completely, this basic source of economic contact with the outside world would dry up."

"Even the most ardent Communists in town realize the implications," said one U.S. source, "and they know their friends in Hanoi can't come to their rescue."

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