

U.S. Takes New Actions

Vientiane, Laos

The U.S. Embassy and the Communist-dominated Pathet Lao continued negotiations yesterday over the student occupation of the U.S. aid compound where three Americans have been locked in for six days.

U.S. Embassy personnel accelerated the burning of documents and the embas-

sy's Marine guards moved their pistols and riot gas supplies to safer upstairs storage areas.

U.S. officials, their dependents and American businessmen continued their exodus from the country, although there was no special charter flight yesterday as there was over the weekend.

The Americans left aboard

regularly scheduled airlines and aircraft of the defense attache's office and went overland into Thailand, reducing the number of official Americans and dependents left in Laos to about 300.

The U.S. Embassy spokesman said the U.S. mission now is down to the level where it is intended to remain for the time being. The spokesman said all dependents of U.S. aid employees are gone, along with many U.S. aid staff and some embassy employees.

Charge d'Affaires Christian A. Chapman and the acting U.S. aid director, Gordon Ramsey, met with Premier Souvanna Phouma and Pathet Lao leader Soth Pethrasy to discuss the impasse over the occupied U.S. aid compound and the payment of Laotian U.S. aid workers who have been demanding back wages.

Soth, Co-chairman of the joint committee to implement the 1973 Laos peace accords, met with students after the meeting to inform them of the results.

By nightfall the compound was still in student hands and the angry U.S. aid workers had not been paid because the U.S. Embassy says the necessary financial records are inside the compound.

Souvanna Phouma reportedly acted as mediator in the talks between the U.S. officials and the Pathet Lao.

Two U.S. Marines and an American civilian are inside three separate buildings in the compound. The Marines refused to leave their guard posts when the students took over the compound last Wednesday, and the civilian apparently was trapped.

The U.S. Embassy, which has telephone communications with the three, said all are in good condition and have enough to eat and drink. The three have been left alone by the students ex-

in Laos

cept for some verbal abuse.

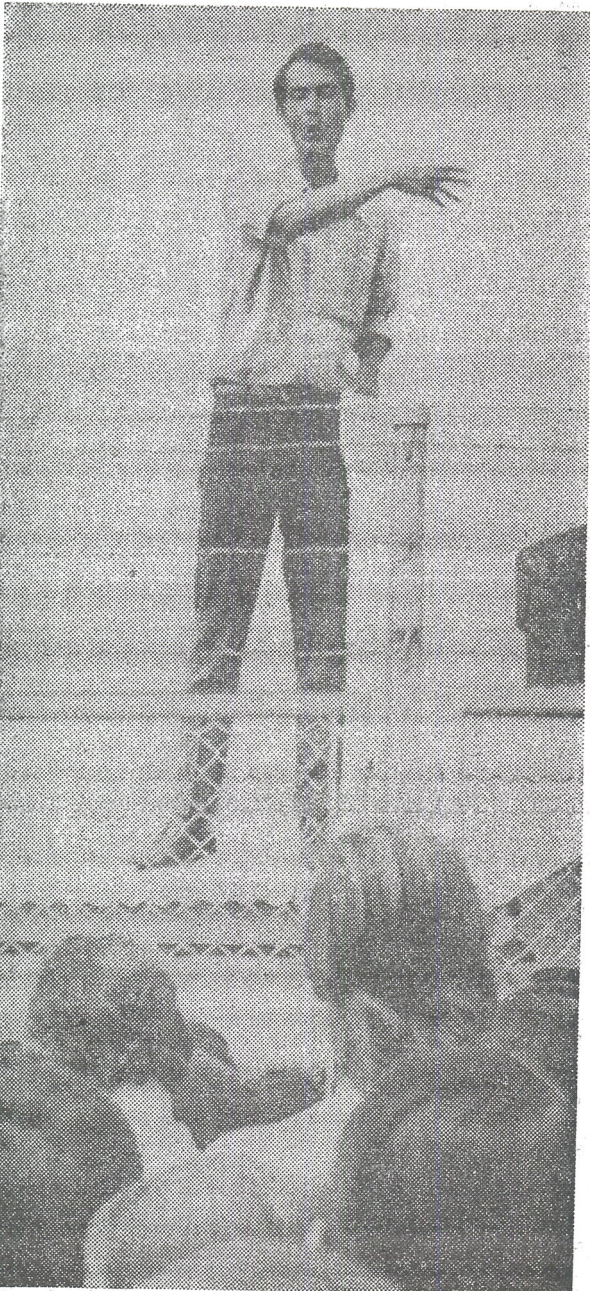
Along with the sharp reduction of American officials many of the 150 private U.S. residents in the country also have left. The embassy spokesman said they may be down to about a dozen.

The U.S. Embassy said private U.S. investment in Laos has been small, and that there were only about

ten resident American businessmen before the evacuation began. They included agents of airline companies, investment counselors, importers of retail goods and

restaurant and bar owners — some of them retired U.S. government or military men who had decided to settle in Laos.

Associated Press



AP Wirephoto

A protest leader addressed students and AID employees in Vientiane yesterday