

## U.S. Aide Says Laos Wants to Keep Ties

By DAVID A. ANDELMAN  
Special to The New York Times

VIENTIANE, Laos, June 3—Assistant Secretary of State Philip C. Habib wound up two days of talks with the Laotian Government leaders today, saying that Laos still wanted to retain her ties with the United States.

"There is no question in my mind that the leadership seeks to maintain relations with the United States," said Mr. Habib, the highest ranking Administration official to visit Southeast Asia since the turnover in South Vietnam and Cambodia. "There have been a number of statements concerning that relationship," he added, "but it is still a matter for discussion and negotiation."

Shortly after Mr. Habib left by plane for Bangkok, senior American officials disclosed that negotiations on American property and projects and on the future aid program had begun, with a committee of 21 Laotian Government representatives from each of the ministries.

These talks will deal with precisely what and how much American property and equipment—expected to run into millions of dollars—will be turned over to the Laotian Government and what shape any aid programs might assume.

Mr. Habib told reporters in a brief airport news conference this afternoon that no specific dollar figures had been dis-

cussed with respect to the aid program, and he declined to discuss what type of aid recommendation the State Department or the Embassy might be making for the 1976 fiscal year.

American officials here have said, however, that it is unlikely that aid will continue in the future at anywhere near the level of more than \$30-million it reached during the last year.

Over several weeks, following repeated anti-American demonstrations throughout the country and the detention of a dozen Americans in the city of Savannakhet, the Laotian Government has said that it wants all American personnel in the Agency for International Development to leave Laos, and for aid to continue only on a straight grant basis. American officials have indicated that this may prove unacceptable to Congress and the State Department.

### Change in City's Rule Cited

Meanwhile, the official Laotian press agency announced that in Savannakhet, where Communist-led Pathet Lao troops took over more than a week ago, a new civilian administration, apparently with Pathet Lao sympathies, had been appointed.

There has been no effective civilian administration in the city—the second largest in Laos—since students first seized the administration cen-

ter there last month and sent the former right-wing administration fleeing, most of them across the Mekong River to Thailand.

In Vientiane, the central bank has ordered that no withdrawals from bank accounts in any private banking facility may exceed 10,000 kip, or about \$8, at one time.

Officially the order is designed to discourage the carrying out of capital from the country by people, chiefly wealthy Chinese and Vietnamese merchants, who are leaving, but most banking officials scoffed at it today.

"It's like locking the barn door when the whole herd has fled," one French banking official said, noting that even in the largest banks at least 50 per cent of the accounts had dwindled away and in some of the smaller Chinese-run banking houses that figure was more than 90 per cent.

In fact, the measure comes so late and can be so easily circumvented that many bankers here believe that it was intended simply as a preliminary signal that soon all currency transactions would be frozen — also called the kip, but on a completely different exchange rate that has never been fully explained here—will soon take over.

This Pathet Lao kip is already in use in the areas of the country that the Communists control.