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Pullout

From Laos

Vientiane, Laos

The United States has decided to step up its withdrawal of officials following a top U.S. diplomat's visit to Laos, informed sources said yesterday.

"The intent is to reduce the number of potential hostages here to as small a number as possible," an American source said.

By the time of Assistant Secretary of State Philip C. Habib's visit this week to the tiny Indochina kingdom that has come under increasing Communist control. More than 80 per cent of the approximately 850 U.S. employes and their dependents had been withdrawn in the face of anti-American demonstrations.

United Press