

LAOTIAN EMPLOYEES DENIED U.S. VISAS

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Many Seeking to Emigrate
but Are Ineligible to Get
Refugee Entry Status

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VIENTIANE, Laos, June 4—
Hundreds, perhaps thousands,
of Laotians, many employed
for years by the United States,
are being refused permission to
go to the United States.

American consular officials
here as well as at Udon and
Bangkok in Thailand said to-
day that they had turned away
hundreds of such Laotians,
while at the same time granting
refugee status to hundreds of
other Laotians holding South
Vietnamese or Cambodian pas-
ports.

Many of the Laotians have
told American officials that
they fear for their lives as the
Communist-led Pathet Lao
movement takes over control of
the country.

"It's a scandal," an Ameri-
can consular official said today.

The official referred to au-
thorization for the American
Embassies in Saigon and Phnom
Penh to issue "letters of pa-
role," circumventing immigra-
tion and naturalization restric-
tions.

The authorization allowed
South Vietnamese and Cam-
bodians to enter the United
States as refugees without pro-
ducing documentary evidence
of needed skills or of relatives
in the United States, the usual
ways of gaining immigrant
status.

The authorization allowed
unlimited parole only for hold-
ers of passports from South
Vietnam and Cambodia who
were present in those countries.
It allowed the American Con-
sulate in Laos to issue such
parole letters only to South
Vietnamese and Cambodians
who have "worked for the Unit-
ed States Mission."

All Others Excluded

All other South Vietnamese
and Cambodians as well as
all Laotians, were kept from
obtaining refugee status.

As of this morning, Lee S.
Bigelow, United States Consul
at Udon, Thailand, has turned
away about 300 holders of Lao-

tian passports, while granting
parole letters to about 300 hold-
ers of Cambodian and South
Vietnamese passports.

"It is a regional and an inter-
national problem," Mr. Bigelow
said in a telephone interview.
"We are also encouraging them
to seek assistance from other
countries and from international
organizations such as the
United Nations High Commis-
sion for Refugees."

In Vientiane, the High Com-
missioner's office has thus far
refused to issue travel docu-
ments to would-be emigrants.

Many Laotians with ties to
Americans, as well as a large
number of South Vietnamese
here, are becoming increasingly
nervous about the situation.

Earlier this week, several
young Vietnamese working as
waiters in a Vientiane restau-
rant approached an American
reporter who was eating in
the virtually empty room.

"We every afraid," one began
hesitantly. "How can we get
to the United States?"

Recently, he continued, the
North Vietnamese Embassy
here began summoning all hold-
ers of South Vietnamese pas-
ports to weekly indoctrination
sessions in a meeting hall. The
tone of these evening meetings
has become increasingly
strident in recent days, he said.

"They could ship us back
to Saigon, and then what we
do?" another of the youths ad-
ded.

There are cases like this
throughout Laos, particularly
in the capital. An American
consular official here pointed
to a Laotian secretary who
had worked for the office sev-
eral years.

"What about her?" he asked.
"She is scared, but she is Lao
and I have had to tell her
the law does not allow me
to help her—to parole her
to the United States."

Many Flee to Thailand

Last month, Laos imposed
a total ban on all emigration
by holders of foreign pas-
ports and has virtually elimi-
nated issuance of exit visas
for Laotian nationals.

Thousands of Laotians have
crossed the Mekong River ille-
gally into Thailand and have
begun to appear at the Ameri-
can Consulates at Udon and
Bangkok, only to be turned
away.

The Thai Government, sensi-
tive about relations with Laos,
South Vietnam and Cambodia,
has said that the Laotians may
stay in transit for a limited
time. Many have begun to look
desperately for countries that
will accept them.

It seems unlikely that Thai-
land will compel them to re-
turn to Laos and it is doubtful
that the leaders of the Pathet
Lao particularly want them
back. As a result they are
people without a country.

U. S. Studying Situation

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, June 4—
State Department officials said
today they were aware that
growing numbers of Laotians,
many of them former or pres-
ent employees of the United
States, wanted to come to this
country.

For the moment, the depart-
ment lacks legal authority to
admit them because the parole
authority was limited to South
Vietnamese and Cambodians.