

SEChronicle JUN 27 1975
Deadline Beaten

U.S. Closes AID Mission in Laos

Vientiane, Laos

The U.S. Agency for International Development mission in Laos closed its doors yesterday, ending a program that spanned more than 20 years and cost more than \$1 billion.

The closing, five days ahead of the June 30 deadline, climaxed a two-month drive by the increasingly dominant pro-Communist Pathet Lao.

U.S. officials said it is unlikely Congress would approve further assistance to Laos, which received more than \$60 million in U.S. military and economic aid over the past year.

"The events of May here have not created a very favorable basis for continued American aid," said Christian A. Chapman, the U.S. charge d'affairs.

The "events" were a wave of harassment and intimidation unleashed at Americans here as the Pathet Lao increasingly gained control over the coalition government. The anti-American demonstrations quieted

down when the United States agreed to end the AID mission by June 30.

The U.S. Embassy said the AID program was ended and its last two officials were flown out ahead of the deadline because of an impasse in talks on the turnover of property.

A spokesman said the Laotians failed to distinguish between AID property, which is earmarked for turnover, and administrative property which belongs to the United States.

Over the past 20 years, total U.S. economic and military aid to Laos totaled more than \$2 billion. The United States paid the Vientiane army, subsidized imports, trained thousands of Laotians and through AID became involved in virtually every faced of life in areas not controlled by the Pathet Lao.

While admitting to the benefits derived from AID, many Laotians resented the power and size of the mission.

Associated Press