

Students Seize U.S. Facilities In Vientiane

From News Dispatches

VIENTIANE, June 28—Student protesters seized three U.S. government facilities today, and the pro-Communist Pathet Lao demanded that the United States withdraw all military personnel and cease alleged spying in Laos.

There was no apparent violence as students took the U.S. Information Service library, the embassy's general services support compound and a vacant housing area known as "Silver City."

A Swedish employee of the general services department was reported being detained in the compound.

In a six-page declaration, the Pathet Lao central committee called on the United States "to remove its military personnel, totally dissolve its espionage organizations in Laos, like the CIA, and at the same time . . . contribute to healing the wounds of war."

One student in front of the USIS library was armed with an M-16 automatic rifle and others had walkie-talkies.

The Pathet Lao-backed students occupying the U.S. facilities may be protesting the unilateral American abandonment of the U.S. aid mission here Thursday.

After month-long negotiations, U.S. Agency for International Development officials and the Lao government reached an impasse. The last two American AID officials left Laos without signing an agreement. The move, ordered by Washington, signaled the abandonment of the multi-million-dollar AIR compound, all assets and the remaining personal property of Americans who were evacuated. U.S. sources said there are now only 42 U.S. officials in the country.

U.S. embassy sources said

a team from Washington may come in the future to handle negotiations. The negotiations impasse centered on the difference between AID project-funded assets, which were to be given outright to the Lao government, U.S. government property and personal property.

Lao committeemen would not distinguish among the various types of assets while the United States only wanted the Lao to agree "in principle" that the United States had the right to non-project assets. Embassy officials say all equipment and facilities would have been turned over the Lao government anyway.

U.S. Charge d'Affaires Christian Chapman called on Laotian Prime Minister Prince Souvanna Phouma today to inform him of the latest incident. U.S. sources said the premier expressed surprise at the news.

Pathet Lao officials, who now dominate the government, called the occupation an uprising by local staff. However, an embassy spokesman said no staff were seen among the demonstrators.

At a news conference today, Pathet Lao Economics Minister Soth Phetrasy read out a central committee statement attacking "American imperialists" and calling on the United States "to cease all interference in the internal affairs of Laos."

In private conversations afterwards, Pathet Lao officials were vague on the reason for the demonstration, and indicated that they do not consider U.S. embassy installations outside the main mission compound to be part of the embassy.