

# Laotians Threaten to Kill U.S. Diplomat at Library

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Special to The New York Times

VIENTIANE, Laos, July 3 — Pathet Lao soldiers chased an American diplomat from the United States Information Service Library here at gunpoint today.

The diplomat, Lawrence D. Daks, had gone to the library in the center of the capital immediately after the chief Government spokesman had expressed the Cabinet's regret over the seizure of the library by Pathet Lao troops and a group of demonstrators and said the protesters had been ordered to leave two days ago.

When Mr. Daks explained in fluent Laotian to one of the student demonstrators in the hallway that he wanted to remove some property from the library, a Pathet Lao soldier rushed at him. Ramming a clip of bullets into his automatic rifle, he said angrily, "Get out or I'll kill you."

He and a second soldier then marched Mr. Daks, the embassy's information officer, and a cluster of Western reporters to their cars and did not put down their weapons until they had driven off.

### Building Still Occupied

Before Mr. Daks's arrival, the students inside the library told reporters truculently that they had not been ordered to end their occupation and did not intend to do so. They were still there tonight.

In his press briefing, after last night's Cabinet session, the spokesman, Deputy Information of Minister Ouda Souvannovong, explained the seizure of the library as a mistake committed by hotheaded students. He said the Pathet Lao troops were at the library and three other occupied embassy facilities to protect the properties.

"The protesters misunderstood," Mr. Ouday, who represents the non-Communist faction in the Government, said. "They did not know that U.S.I.S. is part of the embassy and under diplomatic immunity. I think the Government gave orders two days ago for the protesters

to leave."

The same explanation was provided this morning by a senior Foreign Ministry official representing the Pathet Lao to the American Charge d'affaires, Christian A. Chapman. Mr. Chapman saw him as part of the embassy's early efforts to put forward the case of the violation of the diplomatic immunity of the library and the other installations, seized overnight last Friday to Saturday.

"Anyone who'll talk to us we'll talk to," said Mr. Chapman in describing the embassy's efforts to persuade the Government to take a stand against the actions of the Pathet Lao troops and demonstrators.

Mr. Ouday Souvannovong was the more surprised at being informed of the Pathet Lao refusal to admit Mr. Daks to the library because, he said it was the chief Cabinet official of the Pathet Lao who argued

the case in favor of the library's immunity.

He said the Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister, Phoumi Vongvichit, had told the Cabinet that the United States Information Service enjoyed the same diplomatic immunity as the cultural centers of the Soviet and French Governments. Mr. Ouday Souvannovong shrugged regretfully at the contradiction and indicated his unhappiness over the present power relationship in the Government.

The spokesman announced also that the Government was still studying the occupation of the General Services compound and the living quarters of some embassy personnel to see whether they were not connected with the American aid mission, which has been dissolved after occupation and its property turned over to Laos.

Mr. Chapman, who has gained the respect of his diplomatic colleagues from other nations for keeping calm in the circumstances, said wearily that he was not planning another official written protest. He said:

The embassy is seeking an explanation of this incident in the light of the statement made by the Government's spokesman and of the assurances received at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that we can return to S.I.S."

The embassy has put the Foreign Ministry on notice that it may be forced to close down because of the lack of administrative support occasioned by the occupation of the General Services facilities. But none of the embassy representations, have drawn a response except for today's affirmation, instantly denied by the Pathet Lao guards, that the library had been freed.

### Leaders Departing

The embassy believes that its efforts will not be facilitated by the departure or imminent departure of the Government's leading personalities. Premier Souvanna Phouma and the leader of the Pathet Lao, Prince Souphanouvong, left this morning for the royal capital of Luang Prabang. Mr. Phoumi Vongvichit and Information Minister Souk Vongsak will leave Friday or later for undisclosed foreign countries for reasons of health. And Minister of the Economy Soto Retorasy is taking a leave of absence to rest.

Moreover, about 170 senior civil servants in all ministries have been ordered to report tomorrow to a military camp near here for a month of "political re-education."

All of the departing leaders except Prince Souvanna Phouma are Pathet Lao representatives. They are the principal personalities in what is said to be the less radical wing of the movement, but the spokesman warned against indulging in speculation about a possible political significance. This did not still speculation.