

Independence Day in Laos: Speeches, Flowers and

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Special to The New York Times

BANGKOK, Thailand, Oct. 12 — With ceremonies in each of her three capitals, Laos today celebrated her 30th independence day.

Senior Communist leaders from the Soviet Union, China and from other parts of Indochina converged on the Pathet Lao capital of Vieng Xay in Sam-neua Province along the North Vietnamese border, as well as the political capital at Vientiane and the royal capital at Luang Prabang. The celebrations symbolized the peculiar divided his-

tory of the country over the last two years.

Each of the nation's major public figures was heard, from Kayson Phomviharn, the Pathet Lao leader, to Prince Souvanna Phouma, who nominally is still Premier.

The Vientiane radio and the Pathet Lao radio, which could be heard here, carried broadcasts of the ceremonies in Vientiane and Samneua.

Speeches and Fireworks

Trucks decked with flowers bore the leaders through the streets of Vientiane to the parade grounds of That Luang Pagoda, on the outskirts of the city, where large crowds of soldiers and citizens listened to speeches and watched fireworks.

Foreign Communist officials had been arriving all last week, chiefly at Viengsay. The delegation from North Vietnam, was led by Truong Chinh, member of the Hanoi Politburo.

Jeng Sary, one of Cambodia's three deputy premiers, in charge of foreign affairs, led the Cambodian delegation.

Huyh Tan Phat, the president of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, headed the South Vietnamese delegation. All were in Vieng Xay, a further indication, if one was needed, where the real power in Laos is being exercised today.



Associated Press
Children joined Pathet Lao fete in Vientiane.

In a speech to the visiting friends in Viengsay, Mr. Kayson Phomviharn repeatedly assailed the United States and

Thailand, for seeking to "sabotage" the Government of Laos.

He was cheered as he added: "The uprisings of the people throughout the country dissolved the United States aid and drove the United States and Thai advisers from Laos."

On Relations With U. S.

He warned Thailand repeatedly against "further provocations along our border." But, in a rare conciliatory note, he added that the country was willing to maintain "diplomatic relations with the United States" on the basis that the United States "must sincerely respect the sovereignty and independence of Laos, must not interfere in the internal affairs of Laos, must cease its support of the ultra rightist reactionaries, and must keep its promise to help heal the wounds of the war in Laos."

Premier Souvanna Phouma, believed to be taking a quiet part in the celebrations in Luang Prabang, made no public appearance today. But in a speech broadcast by the Pathet Lao radio, he praised Laos as a "civilized country with fine culture and religion."

Somewhat more mildly than the Pathet Lao leader had, Prince Souvanna commented "The imperialists," but failed to mention the United States by

name, once, except for reference to "the strongest imperialists in the world."

Retirement in Sight

It may be one of Souvanna Phouma's last major statements. On Thursday the Government spokesman, Ouday Souvannouong, announced that long-awaited national elections would be held next April 4. For two years, the Premier has been telling visitors that those elections would mark his retirement from public office.

The major Communist organs and agencies—Hsinhua, in Peking; Nhan Dan, in North Vietnam; Glat Phong, in South Vietnam—were all issuing editorials in praise of Laos's 30th

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Fireworks

anniversary celebrations.

The anniversary itself is the date of the proclamation of a provisional constitution and of independence from French colonial rule—a date long celebrated in the "liberated zones" of Laos, but until this year never celebrated in the nominally rightist areas, such as Vientiane. There, Independence Day has always been July 19, the anniversary of the formal transfer of power to the Laotians by the French, in 1949.

The celebrations were concluded by Prince Souphanouvong, the royalist symbol of Pathet Lao power, who proclaimed: "The Lao people are genuinely masters of their own country."