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**Pathet Lao  
Oust King,  
Government**

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HONG KONG, Dec. 3—The pro-Communist Pathet Lao today abolished the 600-year-old Laotian monarchy, ousted the 19-month old coalition government headed by Prince Souvanna Phouma and installed a "peoples democratic republic," Vientiane Radio announced.

A yet to be named president will be the titular head of government in the new republic, but real power will reside with the pro-Communist and highly nationalistic Pathet Lao. The leftists have been consolidating their power since last spring when the rightists collapsed following the Communist victories in Cambodia and Vietnam.

(Washington Post special correspondent Bruce Palling, in a dispatch from Bangkok, quoted Vientiane reports as saying that the 68-year-old King Savang Vatthana had already left his palace in the royal capital of Luang Prabang and was staying at his farm 20 miles to the northeast. Western diplomats in Vientiane, reported that the

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palace guards had been sent to Pathet Lao headquarters in northeast Laos for re-education seminars.

(Palling said Bangkok observers believe the American embassy in Vientiane will be permitted to remain for the time being. The number of American official personnel in Laos has shrunk to less than 30 officials, all confined to Vientiane, from a maximum of 1,200 at the peak of American involvement in the late 1960s.)

According to press reports, the decision to abolish the coalition government and the monarchy was made by the Central Committee of the Lao Patriotic Front. Vientiane radio said an "historic" national people's congress had accepted the abdication and

Souvanna Phouma's resignation.

The moves came after a series of well-planned rallies called for abolition of the monarchy and the coalition government. Realizing what was happening, some 40 members of the royal family, including Prince Souvanna's son, fled across the Mekong to Thailand.

Diplomats in Bangkok, were quoted as saying King Savang was expected to leave Laos unless he receives assurances that he will be treated with the "minimum dignity."

Reports from Bangkok said Souvanna Phouma planned to go to France. Friends there were quoted as saying he had abandoned any hope of playing his traditional moderating role.

The day's developments had been in the works for some time.

In recent months, Souvanna, the neutralist prime minister and cousin to the king, has been little more than a figure-head leader of a coalition which, the Pathet Lao chose to keep in power only as window dressing.

The monarchy, although its origins go back to the 14th century, has not been a major factor in the lives of most Laotians in modern times.

Unlike the Thai monarchy, which holds considerable sway over the emotions and loyalties of the neighboring Thais, the Laotian king is not revered. This important difference is largely due to the fact that the Laotians for generations have been overrun by or subservient to Cambodians, Thais, Burmese, Vietnamese, French and lastly Americans.

The ex-monarch's family is connected to the ancient kingdom of Luang Prabang - only one of several old and often rival kingdoms that are to be found within the present borders of Laos.

Nearly half the 3 million people of modern Laos are highland peoples who are ethnically different from the Lao of the Mekong River Valley. There are more ethnic Lao living in Thailand today than in Laos itself.

Therefore, although the pro-

Communist Pathet Lao have always pretended to respect the king, the monarchy was not a vital factor in promoting the nationalism that they preach today. Savang Vatthana never had the nearly God-like role which Prince Sihanouk once played in Cambodia.



**KING SAVANG VATTTHANA**  
... yields to Pathet Lao

From 1953, when it gained independence from France, until early 1973, Laos was in an almost constant state of civil war, with coalition after coalition failing largely because of the rivalry of outside powers. The United States and the North Vietnamese were the last outside powers to play out their rivalry in the nearly defenseless kingdom. The major U.S. involvement, during which the United States ran the government's war effort against the Communists, end with the U.S. pullout from Indochina last spring.

It remains to be seen whether the nationalistic Pathet Lao can form an identity for their people's republic immune from the influence of their more powerful neighbors, the Vietnamese.