

n Town Before a Cease-Fire

Souvanna Sees Laos Truce Later

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UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Oct. 26 — Prince Souvanna Phouma, Premier of Laos, said today that no cease-fire had been worked out yet for Cambodia or Laos.

"Up to now the only cease-fire that is being arranged is in Vietnam," Prince Souvanna said. "Laos and Cambodia will come afterward."

Then he added after a moment's pause, "perhaps—there may be some changes. I will know tomorrow when I go to Washington."

The Laotian leader was interviewed after he had met with Secretary General Waldheim. He said that he had discussed Laos and the general situation in Asia with Mr. Waldheim.

In Washington Prince Souvanna is scheduled to meet with William P. Rogers, Secretary of State, and possibly President Nixon.

Length of War Cited

The Premier said that he welcomed the proposed Vietnam cease-fire plan.

"I'm very happy that the war will end soon," he said. "We wish very much for peace because we've been at war for more than 20 years. That's why all peace propositions, from wherever they may come, are welcomed with much gratitude."

Prince Souvanna said that although the proposed plan for a cease-fire in Vietnam did not call for a simultaneous cease-fire in Cambodia and Laos, it was still acceptable to his Government "because a cease-fire in Laos actually depends on the Laotians themselves."

"We are, in fact, carrying on discussions on the matter in Vientiane right now," he said.

As for his visit to the United Nations and Washington, Prince Souvanna said that these involved discussions of the 1962 peace agreement concerning Laos, which he said had been violated by North Vietnam troops using Laotian territory to pass from north to south.

"As a result, the Laotian problem is tied to the Vietnam problem," he said. "North Vietnam must withdraw its troops from Laos. That is an important question for us."

"We hope that a cease-fire

in Vietnam will mean the end of the use of Laos as a transit point for North Vietnamese troops," he said.

Questioned on whether his Government would be willing to accept the kind of cease-fire being negotiated for Vietnam, Prince Souvanna said that Laos was a special case not comparable to Vietnam.

'Much Destruction Prevented'

"You must remember that we achieved the status of neutrality in 1962 as a result of the agreement at that time. Laos is a kingdom and all Laotians—even those on the other side—recognize the authority of the king," Prince Souvanna said. "Laos has only one Government and thus the problem is not at all the same."

The Laotian premier said that his country had been spared a great deal because of its policy of neutrality.

"Much destruction has been prevented," he said. "If you compare the damage caused by war in Laos to the damage suffered in Cambodia and Vietnam, you will see that we have suffered very little from the war—all things being equal."

Nevertheless, he recalled that in June he had addressed a letter to the Secretary General calling attention to what he termed the "very serious situation" in Laos brought about by North Vietnamese troops attacking in the Plaine des Jarres and in the southern part of the country.

Prince Souvanna said that he "hoped" that a cease-fire in Vietnam would result in the complete withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops from Laos.

"That is what I am going to ask of Washington," he said, "and that is what I asked of the Secretary General as well."