

## LAOS PEACE TALKS SEEM TO REGRESS

Gulf on Troop Withdrawals  
Appears to Be Wider

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VIENTIANE, Laos, Nov. 28—The Vientiane Government and the Communist-led Pathet Lao held another session of peace negotiations today, but when it ended they appeared further apart than they were seven weeks ago, when the talks began.

Much of the day's procedural argument centered on Pathet Lao objections to the continued presence of the Laotian national flag in the meeting room.

The Pathet Lao also continued to object to the Vientiane delegation's describing itself as the "provisional government" delegation. The Communists insist that Vientiane has no right to call itself a government of any kind.

Furthermore, a major gulf between substantive positions appeared to have widened. Essentially it is that Vientiane demands that all North Vietnamese troops leave Laotian soil while the Pathet Lao side insists that the Americans and the foreign troops employed by them leave.

When the talks, which will continue next Tuesday, began it was assumed by many diplomats that those points and others could be resolved on an even exchange basis. On that assumption the Laotian Premier, Prince Souvanna Phouma, agreed to negotiations based on a five-point Pathet Lao proposal.

Today the two sides issued statements that seemed, at least for the moment, to rule out agreement on the departure of foreign military forces.

### 'Aggressors and Lackeys'

A Pathet Lao statement read by the delegation leader, Gen. Phoune Sipraseuth, asserted that North Vietnam and allies "providing mutual assistance" to the peoples of Indochina could not be compared with "the American aggressors and their lackeys."

"All aerial bombardment and all American military activity throughout the territory of Laos must be ended immediately," the statement said, "American advisers and personnel must be totally withdrawn, as well as regular and irregular that troops and American arms and means of making war. If this

fundamental problem is not corrected. It will not be possible to bring the war to an end or to solve the Laotian problem correctly and preserve peace for long."

In effect, the statement insisted that the allies of the Pathet Lao, notably the North Vietnamese, had the right to stay while the Americans did not.

In a statement read by the Vientiane delegation's leader, Gen. Pheng Phongsavan, the Pathet Lao-controlled zone was described as hellish and totally under the domination of the North Vietnamese.

"While we are talking here," he said, "the troops of Hanoi do not cease intensifying the war by attacking Pak Xeuang, Kengkok and Thakhek, towns that the entire world recognizes as belonging to the Kingdom of Laos."

### New Attack Reported

North Vietnamese troops were reported to have made an attack early today on Ban Dowe, a village 42 miles northwest of here, overrunning the Government position. According to a military source, radio contact with the garrison of about a hundred men was lost before dawn and plane circling the area reported the village in flames.

Other clashes were reported near the royal capital, Luang Prabang, in the northwest, and near Saravane, in the southern panhandle.

American officials here continue to express confidence that peace in Indochina, including Laos, is near. However, the indications are that there are no plans for a significant reduction soon in the large American establishment in Laos.

"I don't see how the Communists could consider it to the advantage of Laos for us to stop feeding 279,000 refugees, to close 200 dispensaries, to stop building three hospitals and many schools, to stop sending food to meet the Laotian rice deficit or to withdraw our economic support of the Government," an American said.

### American View Rejected

"Even after a cease-fire we shall be needed here for such things," he added.

A ranking Communist diplomat said in an interview, however, that a continued American presence would be "absolutely inadmissible" after a cease-fire, "if it ever comes about."

"We, the people of Indochina," he said, "will need all the help we can get, including American aid. But you know perfectly well what we want. We want materiel to rebuild our countries. We do not want American technicians or advisers or counselors or whatever else you want to call them. If the Americans here in Laos are not planning to leave soon, it is a sign the war is far from over."

At the negotiating session the Pathet Lao took note of a statement last week by the Prince Souvanna Phouma that the United States would continue to provide air support to the Laotian army if necessary, even after a cease-fire in neighboring Vietnam.