

# Foes in Laos Appear Resigned to Imposition of a Truce by Their Supporters

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Special to The New York Times

VIENTIANE Laos & Jan. 17—There were growing indications today that the Laotian Government and the Communist-led Pathet Lao have resigned themselves to the eventuality of a cease-fire negotiated without them by their respective backers, which could come soon after a settlement is reached for Vietnam.

Officials and diplomats here agree that the Government in Vientiane and the Pathet Lao will be compelled to paper over their differences if pressed to do so by those supporters, respectively the United States and North Vietnam.

In connection with the apparent feelings of resignation, Government sources disclosed today that the Laotian Premier, Prince Souvanna Phouma, planned to visit India for three days starting Jan. 27 to improve relations with that country, which is to play a key role in future peace-keeping efforts here.

## Leaning by India Seen

Under the Geneva agreements of 1954 and 1962 on Laos, India heads the three-nation International Control Commission, which theoretically polices Laos for truce violations.

Despite earlier objections by Prince Souvanna Phouma to

continuation of the commission in its present form, he is now evidently resigned to a probability that it will remain essentially as it is.

The commission is composed of India, Canada and Poland. India, as chairman, is supposed to represent the neutral center. But in recent years, the United States and its allies in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia have considered India diplomatically allied to the Communist bloc, at least in its function on the commission. South Vietnam recently expelled the Indian delegation to the commission there.

In his talks with the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prince Souvanna Phouma is expected to appeal for a more neutral attitude in a future peace-keeping role.

## Premier's View Recalled

Meanwhile, Laotian Government publications continued today to express grave reservations about prospects for peace, even if a cease-fire takes effect.

The Government press agency reminded readers today of a recent statement by Prince Souvanna Phouma that Hanoi's policy "has always been the conquest of all the Indochina Peninsula."

The Lao-language newspaper Steng Seri, presumably reflecting official thinking, noted to-

day that Gen. Alexander H. Haig Jr., President Nixon's special envoy, is scheduled to report tomorrow to Prince Souvanna Phouma on the current state of negotiations in the Vietnam war.

The newspaper said: "We know that North Vietnam is our enemy No. 1. So we fight it. We have been able to do this for tens of years. Whether Gen. Haig arrives here with good news or bad news, whether a cease-fire will come about or not, we must always defend the integrity of our territory."

Among the key issues involved in Laos is the Prince's insistence that North Vietnamese troops leave the country. According to a well-informed diplomat, the departure of such troops fighting in Laos is apparently assured by agreements reached in Paris.

An unsettled issue is what the North Vietnamese troops using the Ho Chi Minh trail through Laos will do. The diplomat believes that North Vietnam will no longer need the Laotian jungle route to supply forces remaining in South Vietnam.

"Presumably the negotiated agreement in Paris will provide that the demilitarized zone separating North and South Vietnam will remain but that North Vietnam may supply its

forces in the South through that zone," he said. "That would obviate further need by North Vietnam to use the trail in Laos and Cambodia."

It is also clear that a cease-fire will not mean a political settlement in Laos and that it may mean only a temporary halt in hostilities. In public statements and private conversations, Government and Pathet Lao officials show no sign of trust in each other or confi-

dence in the possibility of lasting peace in Indochina.

"Any settlement here and elsewhere in Indochina will be basically unenforceable and wholly dependent on the goodwill of the warring parties," an experienced diplomat said. "Obviously, there is no such goodwill, nor has there ever been, nor will there ever be."

## Comment by Cambodia

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, Jan. 17 (Agence France-Presse)

—Any Vietnam settlement that does not also apply to Cambodia and Laos will be "meaningless," the Cambodian Government cautioned today.

The statement came before Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., President Nixon's special envoy, was to fly here from Saigon to inform the President, Marshal Lon Nol, of developments at the Paris peace talks.