

Pathet Lao Says Government and U.S. 'Sabotage' the Truce

by Malcolm W. Browne
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VIENTIANE, Laos, March 6—The Communist-led Pathet Lao accused the Vientiane Government and the United States today of trying to "sabotage" the cease-fire agreement reached two weeks ago.

The Pathet Lao spokesman, Sot Petrasay, charged that during the first week after the Feb. 22 cease-fire the Vientiane Government and the United States Air Force committed 230 violations, 68 on the ground and 162 involving aircraft.

"We are aware," Mr. Sot Petrasay said, "that certain politicians and military officers are talking openly about their unhappiness with the peace accord, and this is why Vientiane is not respecting the accord. Furthermore, the violations are continuing."

He also charged that Vientiane had so far failed to broadcast specific cease-fire instructions to its troops and population.

Two Communist Violations

The Vientiane Defense Ministry, meanwhile, reported only two violations by the Pathet Lao during a 24-hour period ended at 10 o'clock this morning, bringing the total Communist violations charged by Vientiane to 173.

As Mr. Sot Petrasay spoke to correspondents, the President of the Vientiane Government's National Assembly, Phoui Sananikone, held a news conference in which he seemingly confirmed part of the Pathet Lao accusations.

Mister Phoui Sananikone told correspondents that he and other Deputies had sent a letter to Prince Souvanna Phouma, the Premier, asking for clarification of a number of legal complexities in the peace accord.

He said he was not actually challenging the peace agreement, but in his speech he presented a number of arguments to show that the accord might be unconstitutional. The National Assembly should have been consulted before it was signed, he said, and added that it creates a national political consultative council that will have legislative powers legally held by the National Assembly.

21st Meeting Held

His criticism added National Assembly opposition to the major terms of the peace accord. A majority of Prince Souvanna Phouma's Cabinet and nearly all the armed forces commanders have already expressed opposition.

Commenting on this situation, Mr. Sot Petrasay said: "There's a certain group that wants to continue the war and does not approve of the accord. But we of the patriotic forces will not permit them to sabotage the accord, which we intend to defend with all our energy."

Despite the harsh Pathet Lao charges, the Vientiane Government and the Communists held their 21st weekly negotiating meeting today in an atmosphere described as cordial.