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NEW APPEAL SENT TO THE PATHET LAO

Premier, in 3d Note, Urges
Settlement of Problems

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BAN NA KONG, Laos, March 19—With the deadline for forming a new coalition government only four days away, the Laotian Premier, Prince Souvanna Phouma, has sent a third cablegram to the Pathet Lao leader, Prince Souphanouvong, appealing for an urgent settlement of remaining problems.

Prince Souvanna Phouma's Interior Minister and chief peace negotiator, Pheng Phongsavan, disclosed the Premier's new appeal while making a speech to villagers today at this remote settlement near the Laotian border with Burma and Thailand.

The occasion for the visit was the villagers' destruction of their latest crop of opium poppies and their promise to begin cultivating rice instead of the poppies.

Under the peace agreement signed Feb. 21 by Mr. Pheng Phongsavan and the chief negotiator of the Communist-led Pathet Lao, Phoumi Vongvichit a new coalition government was to be formed within 30 days—that is, by Friday.

The two sides were also to have mixed military-surveillance teams in the field by Friday and to have signed a protocol on peace-keeping procedures, including the role of the International Control Commission, consisting of India, Canada and Poland.

Other Truce Provisions

Within 60 days after formation of a coalition government, all foreign troops are to be withdrawn from Laos and all prisoners exchanged, including possibly as many as several hundred Americans.

But until now, Mr. Pheng Phongsavan said, there has been no final agreement.

"As you know," he said in an interview, "my Pathet Lao opposite number, Mr. Phoumi, is still in Samneua," the de facto Pathet Lao capital.

Mr. Pheng Phongsavan went on: "Until he returns to Vientiane we are not going to get much done. Only he has authority to make the major agreements."

Nevertheless, Mr. Pheng Phongsavan said, that he remained optimistic that a settlement would be reached quickly and that in the next few days a military protocol would be signed on peace-keeping procedures.

"There are various possible reasons for Mr. Phoumi's long absence," the Interior Minister said. "One is that there is an important meeting of the Pathet Lao Central Committee going on, and he is secretary general. But another possible reason is that the North Vietnamese may want to induce the Pathet Lao to stall agreements as long as they can. Once a government is formed, the 60-day period begins in which the North Vietnamese will have to leave."

Message From Prince

Mr. Pheng Phongsavan also said that Prince Souvanna Phouma had not yet received a satisfactory reply to his appeals for a speedy settlement in various messages to Prince Souphanouvong, who is his half-brother.

The Interior Minister, who like Prince Souvanna Phouma is a leader of the Laotian neutralists, acknowledged that there was still danger to the peace agreement not only from the Pathet Lao but also from the Laotian right wing, which forms a part of the present Government.

He said that he had heard rumors that the rightists might attempt a coup d'etat against Prince Souvanna Phouma because of its anger with the terms of the peace accord.

"But these are only rumors," he said. "The right knows that such a venture would be suicide, lacking the support of our friends," the Americans.