

## 'Disengaged'

# Lao Reds Claim Independence

## Vientiane

The Communist Pathet Lao said yesterday it has disengaged itself from an alliance with North Vietnam, the Provisional Revolutionary Government (Viet Cong) and Cambodia's Khmer Rouge because Laos and other nations of Indochina must now solve their own problems "independently and separately."

The announcement was issued by Phoumi Vongvichit, the Pathet Lao's chief negotiator in talks toward political implementation of a peace agreement signed almost three months ago with the Laotian government of Prince Souvanna Phouma.

The disengagement to which he referred was from the alliance known as the Indochina Liberation Front. It includes the PRG of South Vietnam, the Khmer Rouge backing the government-in-exile of Cambodian Prince Norodom Sihanouk in China, and North Vietnam.

## PLAN

"We had conceived and planned the over-all strategic coordination to defeat U.S. aggressors two years ago," Phoumi said in explaining the goal of the Indochinese alliance.

"We decided to disengage because our goal had been attained," he said. "Thus, each Indochinese state will

now solve its own problem independently and separately."

Phoumi had been quoted as saying Sunday that Souvanna Phouma's government was stalling on the talks aimed at fulfilling terms of the peace agreement signed February 21.

The agreement ended the war in Laos between the Pathet Lao and government troops and U.S. supported mercenaries, but there have been a number of truce violations. U.S. planes were called in on occasion last month to bomb suspected Pathet Lao positions, but the bombing was limited and not on the scale of that under way in neighboring Cambodia.

## DEMANDS

Government sources said Phoumi has demanded several key ministries, including the position of vice premier, in a national provisional coalition government that is to be created under terms of the February agreement.

He also has insisted that five battalions of Pathet Lao troops be brought to Vientiane and the royal capital of Luang Prabang to insure maximum security for Pathet Lao personnel, the sources said.

The issues are both part of the negotiations under way with government representatives.

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