

# Air Force Confirms Laos Recon Flights

UDORN AIR FORCE BASE, Thailand, Jan. 12 (AP) — The U.S. Air Force has acknowledged flying regular reconnaissance missions over Laos, which diplomatic sources in Vientiane say violates the country's Feb. 21 cease-fire agreement.

The unarmed flights, designed to gather information on North Vietnamese troop and supply movements in Laos, have been bitterly denounced by the Communist-led Pathet Lao.

Brig. Gen. James Hildreth, commander of the Air Force's 13th Advance Echelon at Udorn in northeastern Thailand, said this week that unarmed Phantom jets from his base carry out regular photo reconnaissance missions over Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam.

Ouday Souyannavong, the Royal Lao government's spokesman, said ending the flights is completely up to the Americans. "We ignore completely what the United States Air Force is doing over Laos or over anywhere else," he said.

"These flights are permitted under the Vietnam cease-fire agreement," said Col. Robert Clement, commander of the 432d Tactical Reconnaissance Wing. The agreement on ending the war in Vietnam says there shall be no reconnaissance flights over North Vietnam but is vague about South Vietnam. There is no cease-fire agreement in Cambodia.

Diplomatic sources in Vientiane said there were no provisions for reconnaissance flights over Laos under the terms of the separate Laotian protocols. The protocols were signed by the two Laotian factions Sept. 14, and diplomats in Vientiane claim that the American flights should have ended more than three months ago.

The U.S. embassy yesterday refused comment on the reconnaissance flights, but the embassy in Vientiane is

known to have pushed hard for a continuation of aerial reconnaissance over Laos following the cease-fire. The embassy was concerned when the Royal Lao government gave way to the Pathet Lao on this point in writing the protocols.

## VC Charges Saigon Bombed ICCS Post

From News Dispatches

SAIGON, Jan. 12—The Vietcong charged Saturday that South Vietnamese planes had bombed a field station of the International Commission of Control and Supervision (ICCS) and a planned site for the release of prisoners of war.

A Vietcong spokesman said the government planes attacked Ducco, 215 miles north of here, for four-and-a-half hours Friday, although "Saigon knows very well there is an ICCS team there."

He said two members of the ICCS team were wounded and a number of buildings and vehicles destroyed.

South Vietnam's high command confirmed it had flown a large number of missions Friday against an airstrip at Ducco, but said that the ICCS had moved out of the "insecure" area some time ago.

In Cambodia, government troops launched a one-hour artillery barrage early Saturday against an estimated 3,000-man Communist force threatening Phnom Penh from the northwest.

A former Cambodian premier, Son Sann, Saturday urged President Lon Nol to leave the country in order that a peace accord might be reached.

Son Sann, 62, who served under exiled Prince Norodom Sihanouk, said he had sent Lon Nol a letter three days ago urging him to go to the United States for "medical treatment," removing himself as an issue in the struggle. Lon Nol suffered a stroke in 1971.