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Internal Affairs and Foreign Affairs

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INTRODUCTION

Social, Economic, and Demographic Sketch

A landlocked nation in the center of the Southeast Asian peninsula, the country that is now the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (LPDR, or Laos) is bordered by Cambodia, China, Burma, Thailand, and Vietnam, neighbors that, to varying degrees, have influenced Laotian historical, cultural, and political development. Slightly smaller than the state of Oregon, Laos is largely mountainous and forested; only about 4 percent of its total land area is arable. The tropical monsoon climate is a major determining factor in agricultural productivity and transportation.

Ethnically diverse, Laos has more than forty ethnic groups. Lao is the distinction for some of the ethnic groups; Laotian is the term used to refer to all people of Laos, or the national population. The Lao, descendants of the Tai peoples who began migrating from China in the first millennium A.D., constitute approximately half the people of Laos. Government favoritism historically was extended toward the “lowland” Lao Loum and discrimination against the “midland” Lao Theung and “upland” Lao Sung. The ethnic minorities were underrepresented in the higher levels of government, the National Assembly, and bureaucracy.

Although the different ethnic groups have different residential patterns, agricultural practices, and religious beliefs, for all groups the village community has a kinship nexus, which may also differ in form. The mountainous topography, which has inhibited road-building and limited exchanges among villages and ethnic groups, has contributed to maintaining distinctions among ethnic groups.

Buddhism was the state religion of the Kingdom of Laos. Theravada Buddhism was predominant among the Lao Loum and some Lao Theung groups, and animist beliefs were widespread among the entire population. The “wat,” the Buddhist temple or monastery complex, was a central fixture of village life and the site of major religious festivals, which occurred several times a year.

The population growth during this period was relatively stable; child and infant mortality was high and life expectancy was less than fifty years. Laos had a relatively low population density, with the vast majority of the population rural, living in small villages. Rural life was tied to the changing agricultural seasons. Of the urban areas, most people lived in the Mekong River valley towns and those of its tributaries. Vientiane, the capital and largest city, was also the center of a very limited industrial sector. The reach of economic modernization—and the changes and opportunities it offered—did not extend much beyond the Vientiane plain.

Education and social services were rudimentary during this time. Limited financial resources and a lack of trained teachers and teaching materials restricted universal educational opportunities. Western “health care” was confined to Vientiane, dictated in part by the difficulties of transportation. Similarly, improvements in health care were constrained by finances, the limited numbers of trained health care workers, and rural religious beliefs.
Laos was (and is) clearly one of the poorest countries in the world. A rural, subsistence, agricultural economy heavily influenced by weather—that is, conditions of drought or flood—Laos was not even self-sufficient in food production. The country needed to make great strides in infrastructure development, increase exports and reduce reliance on imports, and provide opportunities for labor skills to be realized. The almost constant civil war prevented these basic nation-building requirements from being fulfilled.

As elsewhere, foreign and economic relations were linked; for Laos, this was particularly true with regard to Thailand and Cambodia, its primary trading partners. Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand constantly negotiated a variety of political and economic issues, including clearer border demarcation, the status of exiled Lao politicians, and cross-border trade. Trade with Cambodia and also Vietnam was always dependent on Mekong River traffic.

**Political and Military Historical Sketch**

**Laos, Geneva, and the North Vietnamese**

It was as a fully sovereign country that Laos sent a delegation headed by its foreign minister, Phoui Sananikone, to the Geneva Conference on Indochina that put an end to the First Indochina War in July 1954. The armistice agreement for Laos, signed by a French general on behalf of French Union forces and a Viet Minh military official, provided for a cease-fire to take effect at 8:00 a.m. on August 6. Viet Minh forces were to be withdrawn from Laos to North Vietnam within 120 days. The Viet Minh delegation had brought Nouhak and another Pathet Lao member, Ma Khamphitay, with them to Geneva on Viet Minh passports, intending to have a Pathet Lao delegation seated, but they were not recognized by the conference. A provision in the armistice agreement for Laos was nevertheless inserted providing for the “fighting units of Pathet Lao” to be regrouped in Houaphan and Phong Saly Provinces pending a political settlement. The Royal Lao Government (RLG) pledged to take steps to integrate all Laotian citizens into the political life of the kingdom.

The representatives of the other powers at Geneva signed no conference documents but instead subscribed to the Final Declaration taking note of the armistice agreements. U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles lobbied hard to ensure that the Laotians made no unnecessary concessions to the Communists. At the final session, the U.S. delegation declared that it would refrain from the threat or use of force to disturb the armistice agreements and that it would view any violations of them as a threat to peace and security. Chinese premier Chou En-lai stressed the advisability of a coalition government to the Laotians, urging an early meeting between princes Souvanna Phouma and Souphanouvong. He seemed prepared to offer an exchange of diplomats, his main concern being that Laos be free of U.S. military bases.

**Toward Neutrality: The First Coalition, Political Unity, and the Pathet Lao**

After the elections, Souvanna Phouma signaled a renewed effort at negotiations when, presenting his new government to the National Assembly on March 20, 1956, he called the settlement of the Pathet Lao problem “the gravest and most urgent” question before the country. He opened negotiations in Vientiane in August; the Pathet Lao were represented by Souphanouvong. Two joint declarations issued shortly thereafter by the delegations pledged agreement on a foreign policy of
peaceful coexistence, a new cease-fire in the two northern provinces, exercise of democratic freedoms, authorization for the Pathet Lao’s political party to operate, procedures for the RLG’s administration in the two provinces, integration of Pathet Lao units into the Royal Lao Army, the formation of two mixed commissions to work out the above mentioned details, the holding of supplementary elections to an enlarged National Assembly, and the establishment of a coalition government. In preparation for engaging in the politics of the kingdom, the Pathet Lao had formed a front organization, the Lao Patriotic Front (LPF), in January 1956, with an innocuous-sounding platform. Souphanouvong and the other Pathet Lao delegates took the oath of allegiance to the king in the presence of Souvanna Phouma and Kou Abhay, president of the King’s Council. This round of negotiations concluded in a further series of agreements covering a cease-fire, implementation of a policy of peace and neutrality, and measures guaranteeing civil rights and nondiscrimination against Pathet Lao followers.

In late August, Souvanna Phouma visited Beijing and Hanoi, where he was warmly received. Far from committing Laos to the Communist bloc as the U.S. Department of State feared, these visits formed part of Souvanna Phouma’s strategy to neutralize the danger to Laotian independence posed by the Pathet Lao. It was obvious to him that Communism held little appeal to the inhabitants of Laos. Although there were Communists among the leaders of the Pathet Lao—and Souvanna Phouma refused to believe his half-brother was one of them—the Communists depended on the exercise, or at least the threat, of armed force to carry out their “revolution.” Souvanna Phouma’s strategy was intended to separate the nationalists from the Communists in the Pathet Lao. He warned the Pathet Lao’s foreign backers that if they provided sanctuary to armed resistance groups—once the Pathet Lao had been reintegrated into the kingdom’s political life—they would be going back on their pledges of noninterference. At the same time, however, Souvanna Phouma’s ideas for safeguarding Laotian independence differed radically from Dulles’s. Dulles viewed the Pathet Lao as unacceptable coalition partners; in his view they were all simply Communists rather than a front comprising a number of nationalists. The U.S. ambassador in Vientiane, J. Graham Parsons, informed Souvanna Phouma that Washington was implacably opposed to a coalition government. The United States remained unmollified by a secret protocol attached to a November 2, 1956, agreement on a neutral foreign policy that proscribed the establishment of diplomatic relations with North Vietnam and China in the immediate future. On November 22, Parsons was instructed to inform the prime minister that the United States was unable to respond favorably to his appeal for support. Negotiations with the Pathet Lao resumed in February 1957 but were interrupted when Souvanna Phouma resigned in May over an unfavorable vote in the National Assembly. In the interim, Phetsarath had been persuaded to return from Thailand. Unbowed by age, but no longer keen on a role for himself in politics, he returned in March and took up residence in Luang Prabang where, in a gesture of royal reconciliation, he made his obeisance to the king and received back his old title of viceroy.

Souvanna Phouma returned as prime minister in August 1957 following a cabinet crisis and was charged by the king with forming a new government. He reopened negotiations, and on October 22, a final agreement was reached. This agreement called for reestablishing RLG administration over the two provinces, forming a coalition government, and holding supplementary elections to the National Assembly. The government set elections for May 1958. On November 18, Souphanouvong
symbolically returned to RLG authority, represented by Crown Prince Savang, the
two provinces, together with all the troops, civil servants, and war material belonging
to the Pathet Lao. An RLG governor was appointed in Houaphan and a Pathet Lao
governor in Phong Saly, each with a deputy of the opposite camp. Mayoral and other
provincial official positions were equally divided between the two parties. It was
agreed that two Pathet Lao battalions, totaling 1,500 troops, would be integrated into
the Royal Lao Army and the remainder would be demobilized and sent home. The
National Assembly unanimously approved the coalition government. Souphanouvong
became minister of planning, reconstruction, and urbanism, and Phoumi Vongvichit
became minister of culture and fine arts.

Souvanna Phouma visited Washington in January 1958 hoping to persuade U.S.
policymakers, who worried about his having accepted Pathet Lao participation in the
government in advance of elections, that his strategy for dealing with the Pathet Lao
was the best course. He left Washington, however, without gaining unqualified
support for his strategy.

U.S. aid failed to blunt the effects of Pathet Lao propaganda and indoctrination in
the villages. The Pathet Lao were masters of political persuasion, exploiting popular
themes of nationalism, anticorruption, and “anti–big family.” There were exceptions,
however, to the general negative perception of U.S. aid. (Tom Dooley, an American
physician, brought health care to the people who needed it most, those in remote
villages. Another American, an Indiana farmer named Edgar “Pop” Buell, devoted the
last years of his life to helping the Hmong, including training the first Hmong nurses
and opening Hmong schools.)

The 1958 Elections and the North Vietnamese Invasion

The stunning success of the LPF and its allies in winning thirteen of the twenty-
one seats contested in the May 4, 1958, elections to the National Assembly changed
the political atmosphere in Vientiane. This success had less to do with the LPF’s
adroitness than with the ineptness of the old-line nationalists, more intent on
advancing their personal interests than on meeting the challenge from the LPF. The
two largest parties, the Progressive Party and the Independent Party, could not
agree on a list of common candidates in spite of repeated prodding by the U.S.
embassy and so split their votes among dozens of candidates. The LPF and the
Peace (Santiphab) Party carefully worked out a strategy of mutual support, which
succeeded in winning nearly two-thirds of the seats with barely one-third of the votes
cast. Souphanouvong garnered the most votes and became chairman of the National
Assembly. The Progressive Party and the Independent Party tardily merged to
become the Rally of the Lao People (Lao Rouam Lao).

In the wake of the election fiasco, Washington concentrated on finding alternatives
to Souvanna Phouma’s strategy of winning over the Pathet Lao and on building up
the Royal Lao Army as the only cohesive nationalist force capable of dealing with the
Communists’ united front tactics. On June 10, 1958, a new political grouping called
the Committee for the Defense of the National Interests (CDNI) made its
appearance. Formed mainly of a younger generation not tied to the big families and
as yet untainted by corruption, it announced a program for revitalizing the economy,
forming an anti-Communist front that excluded the Pathet Lao, suppressing
corruption, and creating a national mystique.
Washington, which was paying the entire salary cost of the Royal Lao Army, was enthusiastic about the “young turks” of the CDNI. This enthusiasm was not altogether shared by U.S. Ambassador Horace H. Smith, who asked what right a group untested by any election had to set its sights on cabinet appointments. Whereas Souvanna Phouma tried and failed to form a government, creating a drawn-out cabinet crisis, Phoumi Sananikone eventually succeeded and included four CDNI members and Phoumi Nosavan in a subcabinet post.

In foreign and domestic affairs, the atmosphere changed in the summer of 1958. Souvanna Phouma announced that with the holding of elections the RLG had fulfilled the political obligations it had assumed at Geneva, and the International Control Commission (ICC) adjourned sine die. Phoumi, less scrupulous about preserving Laos’s neutrality than his predecessor, angered Peking and Hanoi by admitting diplomats from Taipei and Saigon. China and North Vietnam, already upset by the departure of the ICC, which they had seen as a restraining influence, protested. The United States worked out an agreement with France that reduced the role of the French military mission and enlarged that of the PEO, which embarked on a major strengthening of its staff and functions.

The occupation by North Vietnamese security forces in December 1958 of several villages in Xépôn District near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between North Vietnam and South Vietnam was an ominous development. The RLG immediately protested the flying of the North Vietnamese flag on Laotian territory. Hanoi claimed the villages had historically been part of Vietnam. With regard to precedent, this was a decidedly modest claim; nonetheless, it represented a unilateral reinterpretation of the French map used by the Truong Gia Armistice Commission in the summer of 1954 to draw the DMZ and, backed by force of arms, constituted nothing less than aggression. Phoumi received extraordinary powers from the National Assembly to deal with the crisis. But the failure to regain their lost territory rankled the Laotian nationalists, who were hoping for a greater degree of U.S. support.

One of Washington’s major preoccupations was the danger that the Royal Lao Army would integrate the Pathet Lao troops without the safeguard of “screening and reindoctrinating” them. The embassy was instructed to tell the government that it would be difficult to obtain congressional approval of aid to Laos with Communists in the Royal Lao Army. Before the final integration of 1,500 Pathet Lao troops into the Royal Lao Army could take place as planned in May 1959, the Pathet Lao used a quibble about officer ranks to delay the final ceremony. As monsoon rains swept over the Plaine des Jarres one night, one of the two battalions slipped away, followed soon after by the other, near Luang Prabang. The event signaled a resumption of hostilities. In July Phoumi’s government, after protracted cabinet deliberations, ordered the arrest of the LPF deputies in Vientiane—Souphanouvong, Nouhak, Phoumi Vongvichit, Phoun Sipaseut, Sithon Kommadan, Singkapo, and others. Tiao Souk Vongsak evaded arrest.

Fighting broke out all along the border with North Vietnam. North Vietnamese regular army units participated in attacks on July 28–31, 1959. These operations established a pattern of North Vietnamese forces leading the attack on a strong point, then falling back and letting the Pathet Lao remain in place once resistance to the advance had been broken. The tactic had the advantage of concealing from view the North Vietnamese presence. Rumors of North Vietnamese in the vicinity often had a terrifying effect, however. Among the men who heard such rumors in the mountains of Houaphan Province that summer was a young Royal Lao Army captain
named Kong Le. Kong Le had two companies of the Second Paratroop Battalion out on patrol almost on the North Vietnamese border. When they returned to Sam Neua without encountering the enemy, they found that the garrison had decamped, leaving the town undefended.

Direct North Vietnamese involvement in Laos began taking another form wherein aggression was difficult to prove. Two months after the 1954 Geneva Conference on Indochina, the North Vietnamese established a small support group, known as Group 100, on the Thanh Hoa–Houaphan border at Ban Namêo. This unit provided logistical and other support to Pathet Lao forces. In view of the reversion to a fighting strategy, the North Vietnamese and Lao parties decided to establish an upgraded unit. The new unit, known as Group 959, headquartered at Na Kai, just inside the Houaphan border, began operating in September 1959. Its establishment coincided with a major effort to expand the hitherto small Pathet Lao forces. According to an official history published after the war, its mission was “serving as specialists for the Military Commission and Supreme Command of the Lao People’s Liberation Army, and organizing the supplying of Vietnamese material to the Laotian revolution and directly commanding the Vietnamese volunteer units operating in Sam Neua, Siangkhoang, and Viangchan.” These actions were in violation of the obligation Ho Chi Minh’s government had assumed as a participant in the 1954 Geneva Conference to refrain from any interference in the internal affairs of Laos.

The Vietnamese party’s strategy was by now decided with regard to South Vietnam. At the same time, the party outlined a role for the Lao People’s Party (LPP) that was supportive of North Vietnam, in addition to the LPP’s role as leader of the revolution in Laos. Hanoi’s southern strategy opened the first tracks through the extremely rugged terrain of Sépôn District in mid-1959 of what was to become the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

Phetsarath and Sisavang Vong, viceroy and king, died within two weeks of each other in October 1959. Sisavang Vong reigned over Laos for fifty-four turbulent years as a man of honor, and, after his death, his memory was so venerated that when the Communists came to power in Vientiane they left his statue standing. His successor, Savang Vatthana, lacked both his father’s hold on his people and Phetsarath’s charisma. A deeply fatalistic man who foresaw he would be the last king of Laos, Savang Vatthana remained uncrowned for the rest of his reign because a propitious date for the coronation ceremony could not be found.

**The Army Enters Politics and the Attempt to Restore Neutrality**

With the LPF’s deputies in prison, the political scene became increasingly chaotic, even lawless. When Phoui’s mandate ended in December 1959, Phoumi Nosavan and his CDNI supporters began their move to force the king to grant them power by announcing that the supreme command of the armed forces was “handling current affairs.” Their move, however, was too bold and caused the Western ambassadors in Vientiane to present a united front to the king in support of constitutionality. An interim government headed by Kou Abhay was charged with preparing for new elections. Phoumi, temporarily rebuffed, bided his time as minister of defense. The army had entered politics but not quite in the manner Washington had hoped.

In the April 24, 1960, elections, Phoumi found his revenge. By exerting considerable pressure, he had changes made in the electoral law. With financial support from Marshal Sarit Thanarat of Thailand, Phoumi bought off strong or
inconvenient candidates and enlisted civil servants as his campaign workers. Election balloting was fraudulent, and the results, giving rightist candidates large majorities, were totally unbelievable. A new government was formed on June 3, ostensibly headed by Somsanith but in fact controlled by Phoumi acting as minister of defense under the aegis of his new political party, the Social Party (Paxa Sangkhom). Souvanna Phouma, elected without fraud, became the president of the National Assembly. The imprisoned LPF deputies had not been allowed to run for the assembly, but they sent word to LPF supporters to vote for any LPF candidates who had dared run or else to vote for Peace Party candidates. On May 23, however, under darkness and with the cooperation of personnel at their prison, the LPF deputies escaped and disappeared into the countryside.

On August 9, Captain Kong Le led the Second Paratroop Battalion in a virtually bloodless coup d'état that changed the history of modern Laos. In taking over Vientiane, the paratroopers had unwittingly chosen a moment when the entire cabinet was in Luang Prabang conferring with the king. They informed their compatriots and the outside world by broadcasting their communiqués on the radio. In a rally at the city football stadium on August 11, Kong Le expanded on his goals: end the fighting in Laos, stem corruption, and establish a policy of peace and neutrality. Recalling the experience of the first coalition when the country was temporarily at peace, Kong Le asked for the nomination of Souvanna Phouma as prime minister.

On August 11, General Ouan Ratikoun, as the cabinet’s envoy, arrived in Vientiane from Luang Prabang. After negotiations with Kong Le and Souvanna Phouma as president of the National Assembly, Ouan returned to Luang Prabang with a document in which the coup leaders requested the cabinet to return. They agreed to withdraw their forces to specified points in the city and stipulated that these steps would lead to negotiations on the government’s future. Two days later, however, when Ouan returned alone, it became evident that the cabinet was reluctant to return to Vientiane. Once this news spread, demonstrators gathered outside the Presidency of the Council of Ministers demanding Somsanith’s immediate resignation; they next marched on the National Assembly, where Souvanna Phouma met them and, startled by their vehemence, attempted to moderate their demands. Inside, the forty-one deputies present voted unanimously to censure the Somsanith government. On August 14, a delegation of the assembly carried the news of this vote to Luang Prabang and asked the king to name Souvanna Phouma to form a new government. Fearing violence in Vientiane, Somsanith resigned, and the king named Souvanna Phouma prime minister. The new government was invested by thirty-four deputies on August 16. The next day, Kong Le declared his coup d’état over and vacated the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

On receiving word of the coup, Phoumi flew from Luang Prabang to Ubol, where he informed Thai and U.S. officials of his intention to “straighten things out” in Laos and from where he sent emissaries to Savannakhet and Pakxe. In Bangkok the following day, Phoumi met with Sarit, U.S. embassy counselor Leonard Unger, and the chief of the U.S. military mission in Thailand. He outlined plans for a parachute drop to recapture the Vientiane airport and ferry in additional forces by air to oust the rebels. He requested that Thailand and the United States provide air transport, fuel, salaries for his troops, and two radio broadcasting units. He also asked for a secure channel of communication between his new headquarters at Savannakhet and Bangkok.
These steps, taken in secrecy, received immediate approval in Washington. Orders went out to designate a senior PEO officer as liaison to Phoumi, and a PEO channel was established between Savannakhet and the U.S. military mission in Bangkok, bypassing the embassy in Vientiane. Aircraft of Civil Air Transport, a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) front, were made available to Phoumi, and Laotian troops training at bases in Thailand were to be returned as soon as possible to Savannakhet.

Sarit, Pibul's minister of defense who had come to power in a coup in October 1958, had invested heavily in Phoumi and was not about to let him go. The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, for their part, saw aid to Phoumi as preserving at least part of the anti-Communist forces in Laos from the effects of the split in the royal army. But from this point on, much as U.S. officials tried to separate the two issues, aid to the anti-Communists in Laos was inseparable from Sarit's personal commitment to Phoumi. The U.S. embassy in Bangkok was also alarmed by the possibility that inadequate support for Phoumi might lead Sarit to intervene unilaterally in Laos because he had already imposed a blockade on Vientiane.

**A Deepening Split**

Phoumi enlisted the support of the commanders of four of Laos's five military regions. He also began immediately broadcasting propaganda denouncing Kong Le as a Communist and on August 15 proclaimed the establishment of a Counter Coup d'État Committee. He appealed to all military personnel to rally behind him, guaranteed their salaries, and proclaimed his intention to liberate Vientiane from Communist hands. Forces loyal to Phoumi seized Pakxan.

The United States considered Souvanna Phouma's return to office bad news. A State Department cable stated that the United States sought "to bring about an acceptable power balance of non-communist elements which would eliminate Kong Le and restore authority and stability."

Souvanna Phouma, wanting to avoid civil war, with Phoumi's concurrence convoked the National Assembly in Luang Prabang on August 29. A new government with Souvanna Phouma as prime minister and Phoumi as deputy prime minister and minister of interior was sworn in on August 31. Phoumi announced the dissolution of his Counter Coup d'État Committee. This might have defused the crisis, but the same day, Kong Le made a radio broadcast protesting the presence of Phoumi in the cabinet. Souvanna Phouma convinced him to change his mind, which he did "for the sake of peace and reconciliation" on September 1. Phoumi returned to Savannakhet and waited.

On September 10, Prince Boun Oum, speaking from Savannakhet in the name of the new Revolutionary Committee, announced that the constitution had been abolished, and he and Phoumi were assuming power. In mid-September, two companies of Kong Le's paratroopers routed the two battalions of Phoumi's advance guard from their position at Pakxan and installed a defensive line on the north bank of the Nam Kading. Phoumi made no move to organize his paratroop drop on Vientiane, in spite of the considerable means at his disposal. On the evening of September 21, Sarit made a speech in which he hinted at Thai armed intervention in Laos.

Kong Le's reputation as a giant slayer had by now spread from the capital to the far corners of the kingdom. On September 28, when he dropped a handful of paratroopers near Sam Neua in order to explain the situation to the 1,500-person
garrison that in principle was loyal to Souvanna Phouma, rumors that the garrison’s officers, some of whom had been in contact with Phoumi, might be cashiered created a panic. The garrison abandoned the town to the Pathet Lao, who were accompanied by their North Vietnamese advisers from Group 959. The withdrawing column surrendered its arms to the Pathet Lao near Muang Peun on October 2.

The Pathet Lao now claimed to be supporting Souvanna Phouma. The coup and Phoumi’s resistance with foreign assistance, which the United States and Thailand had difficulty camouflaging, gave the still-secret LPP an unprecedented opportunity to burrow more deeply behind the nationalist mantle, and it lost no time in seizing the occasion. Many Laotians came to see the Pathet Lao as acting to defend the country against U.S.- and Thai-backed aggression. Even in Vientiane, there was growing resentment of the Thai blockade, which caused a shortage of consumer goods and rising prices. Foreseeing an opening for the Pathet Lao to negotiate with the new government, Radio Hanoi and Radio Beijing broadcast support for Souvanna Phouma.

Although Souvanna Phouma’s government was accepted as the legal government of Laos by Britain, France, and the United States, this did not prevent the United States from broadening its support to Phoumi’s forces on the grounds that they were fighting the Pathet Lao. In fact, there is no record of their taking any offensive action against the Pathet Lao. Phoumi had ordered the pullback from Sam Neua. Winthrop G. Brown, the new U.S. ambassador, reported instances where Phoumi refused help to engage the Pathet Lao because it was offered by Vientiane. The only offensive actions taken by Royal Lao Army troops against the Pathet Lao between August and December 1960 were those taken by troops loyal to Souvanna Phouma in Phong Saly and elsewhere.

The “compromise” worked out by the embassy with Souvanna Phouma, in which the prime minister would not object to direct U.S. military aid to Phoumi as long as this aid was not used against his government, was a sham. Whenever the embassy tried to persuade Phoumi to give up his plan and return to Vientiane, Phoumi pleaded fear for his safety and escalated his demands. In Luang Prabang, King Savang Vatthana temporized, hoping to bring the military leaders together at least in a united stand against the Communists and putting off a political solution until later. Failing to achieve his aim, he retreated, saying he was disgusted with all concerned. Brown felt he was waiting for Phoumi’s capture of Vientiane to get him off the hook and avoid the necessity of his taking any categoric action.

Brown cabled Washington on October 5 that in the continued absence of an agreement between Phoumi and Souvanna Phouma, U.S. support of Phoumi would lead to “further disintegration” of the anti-Communist forces and would involve the United States in actions that risked internationalizing the conflict in Laos.

At a meeting on October 11 with a visiting U.S. delegation made up of Parsons, Assistant Secretary of Defense John N. Irwin II, and Vice Admiral Herbert D. Riley, chief of staff to the Commander in Chief Pacific, Souvanna Phouma gave an indictment of the provocative errors committed by his successors after formation of the first coalition. He warned that the only course for Laos was to implement the 1957 agreements before the Pathet Lao—with whom he was in touch and intended to resume negotiations—presented even more far-reaching demands. The first Soviet ambassador to Laos, Aleksandr N. Abramov, arrived as Parsons was leaving.

After conferring with the king, the Parsons-Irwin-Riley team proceeded to Bangkok. On October 17, Irwin and Riley met with Phoumi in Ubol. Although the
State Department at that point was under the impression that U.S. policy required that Phoumi dissolve the Revolutionary Committee, both as a gesture of good faith toward Souvanna Phouma in preserving the unity of anti-Communist forces in Laos and, more practically, in order to avoid the growing impression abroad that the United States was illegally aiding a rebel movement, no mention of this point was made either in Parsons’ instructions to his two colleagues or at the October 17 meeting. Following the formal conversation, Riley took Phoumi aside and told him that the United States had completely lost confidence in Souvanna Phouma and was backing Phoumi to go back and clean up the situation. Irwin similarly told Phoumi that the United States was only supporting him in building up his defenses for the moment; in the long run, the United States was supporting him all the way. The message was not lost on Phoumi. The effect of these unauthorized remarks was to undercut both Souvanna Phouma’s efforts to negotiate a compromise solution with Phoumi and Brown’s bona fides with Souvanna Phouma, already strained by the continuing U.S. aid flowing into Savannakhet in the absence of any matching military action against the Pathet Lao. Phoumi’s intransigence in turn led the State Department to make ever-increasing demands on Souvanna Phouma in the interest of “compromise,” beginning with the charge that the prime minister was not exercising sufficient control over Kong Le, the demand that he take appropriate precautions to prevent Kong Le from launching an attack on Savannakhet, and so forth.

Souvanna Phouma began negotiations with the Pathet Lao on October 18. His position was much weaker, however, than in 1957 when he faced the same set of Pathet Lao demands. Although nothing substantive would come from these negotiations, they provided fuel for Phoumi’s anti-Communist propaganda and heightened nervousness in Washington and Bangkok.

Next, Phoumi forced the commander of the Luang Prabang garrison to declare for the Revolutionary Committee. This was an important move, for it placed the king within Phoumi’s territory. In Bangkok, Sarit’s first reaction on hearing the news was to ask the U.S. ambassador, U. Alexis Johnson, whether now would be a good time for the Revolutionary Committee to “establish itself as a government.” General Ouan Ratikoun quickly defected to Savannakhet. Phoumi captured another general, Amkha Soukhavong, at Siangkhoang and gained the support of General Sing Ratanassamay. Phoumi’s troops had been paid without Brown’s having been consulted. Ambassador Johnson, without consulting Brown, assured Sarit that the United States would pay Phoumi’s troops, an action that Brown protested.

When Phoumi finally launched his offensive on the Nam Kading on November 21, Souvanna Phouma vainly attempted to contact him. With badly needed supplies to Vientiane, especially fuel, still cut off by the Thai blockade, Souvanna Phouma’s forced acceptance of a Soviet offer of aid lent Phoumi’s imminent attack “to drive out the communists” a semblance of legitimacy. On December 11, Phoumi led the forty National Assembly deputies who had gathered in Savannakhet over the preceding weeks to vote no confidence in Souvanna Phouma’s government. The king accepted the vote as legal the next day when he signed Royal Ordinance No. 282, dismissing Souvanna Phouma’s government and giving powers provisionally to the Revolutionary Committee. Royal Ordinance No. 283, approving a provisional government formed by Prince Boun Oum, who acted as front man for Phoumi—the king had scruples about naming a general to be prime minister—was signed on December 14. The State Department notified its acceptance of the new regime and said it was acting to meet its requests for assistance “to restore peace to the
country. At this time, neither the deputies nor the court were free agents—and Souvanna Phouma had not resigned.

The capital braced for Phoumi’s attack. A last-minute and temporary switch of sides by Colonel Kouprasith Abhay, commander of the Vientiane military region headquartered at Camp Chinaimo on the eastern outskirts, was quickly neutralized by Kong Le, but tension heightened. The Pathet Lao delegation hurriedly left town. More of Souvanna Phouma’s ministers disappeared and reappeared. The situation was becoming ungovernable. Souvanna Phouma viewed battle as inevitable and, accompanied by his ministers Boun Om (Boun Oum’s nephew), Tiao Sisoumang Sisaleumsak, and Inpeng Suriyadhay, flew to Phnom Penh on December 9, having delegated his powers to the military. The following morning Quim Pholsena, the minister of information whom Souvanna Phouma had left behind, flew to Hanoi accompanied by Phoumi Yongvichit, the chief Pathet Lao negotiator, and Lieutenant Deuane Sunnalath, Kong Le’s deputy, on a mission to seek Soviet and North Vietnamese military aid, which began arriving the following day on Soviet aircraft.

Phoumi began his attack on December 13. From his command post near the airport, Kong Le had positioned his men at key points on the outskirts, intending merely to fight a delaying action to allow the safe evacuation to the north of his men and their equipment. The regional command post of the Pathet Lao, situated at Na Khang, sixty kilometers north of the capital, disposed of three guerrilla groups but did not take part in the battle of Vientiane. A massive display of firepower by Phoumi’s troops resulted in the deaths of 400 to 500 civilians in the town, mostly Vietnamese residents, and the wounding of another 1,000 to 1,500 civilians. Kong Le’s troops only lost seventeen killed. Phoumi’s armor rolled into town on December 16.

Kong Le retreated slowly northward toward Luang Prabang, while Soviet aircraft parachuted badly needed supplies—rice, salt, sugar, blankets, light arms, ammunition, and radios. With new recruits, his ranks had swelled from 800 to 1,200 men. On December 23, at Phôn Hồng, about sixty kilometers north of the capital, Kong Le was visited by Kaysone, who had come to settle the details of distribution of Soviet aid and coordination of Neutralist and Pathet Lao troops in future operations. On January 1, Kong Le’s troops took control of the Plaine des Jarres and Khang Khay after skirmishing with some of the 9,000 Phoumist troops and an equal number of Hmong guerrillas in the vicinity and recovered large quantities of supplies. The following day, the Neutralists occupied Siangkhoang, and U.S. advisers and Phoumist troops were evacuated from the Muang Phônsavan airfield.

Quimim and Tiao Sisaleumsak established themselves at Khang Khay and urged Souvanna Phouma, who was in Cambodia, to join them. Souvanna Phouma said that he was still legally prime minister but would resign at once if Phoumi’s government were validated in accordance with the constitution. Souvanna Phouma argued that the National Assembly’s vote of no confidence on December 11 was not valid because it had taken place in neither the royal capital nor the administrative capital. He regarded the king’s dealings with the Revolutionary Committee as beyond the king’s authority. When the National Assembly met in Vientiane and voted confidence in the Boun Oum government on January 4, Souvanna Phouma ignored the action.
The Widening War, International Pressure and the Advent of the Second Coalition

The Soviet airlift, which continued despite U.S. protests to Moscow, transformed the Plaine des Jarres into a vast armed camp, fully resupplying Kong Le. For the first time, the Pathet Lao were equipped with heavy weapons, allowing them to play a major role in their military alliance with Kong Le’s troops in support of Souvanna Phouma’s government. There was, moreover, another and more important factor: the commitment of significant numbers of North Vietnamese troops to the fighting, exactly what Souvanna Phouma and Brown had feared. Kong Le requested four battalions of North Vietnamese troops on January 7. Two of these linked up with his forces on Route 7 and down Route 13. The third was engaged in military action at Tha Thom, a key defense point south of the Plaine des Jarres. The fourth took up position north of the plain.

In Siangkhoang, the Hmong once again blew up the bridges on Route 7 in a desperate effort to interfere with North Vietnamese truck convoys rolling westward. The Royal Lao Army had been quietly supplying arms to the Hmong since at least March 1957 to enable them to resist the Pathet Lao, but the North Vietnamese influx created a sudden need for arms far in excess of what the Laotians could supply, even with the help of Thailand. The Hmong, under their military leader Vang Pao, had taken up positions in the mountains surrounding the Plaine des Jarres and asked to talk to U.S. officials. Vang Pao requested quick delivery of arms, but U.S. officials were concerned that the Hmong would not fight, and the arms might fall into Communist hands. Vang Pao said all 7,000 volunteers would fight, but they needed the arms in three days or they would have to fall back to less exposed positions. U.S. airdrops of arms from stocks in Okinawa began three days later, signaling the beginning of a heroic Hmong resistance.

Souvanna Phouma reaffirmed his position that his was the legal government of Laos. In an interview, he spoke bitterly about his nemesis, Parsons, and said that “the Savannakhet group” was committed to the policy of military confrontation that had failed in the past. He believed Laos should conserve its ancient traditions and monarchy and urged a political settlement along the lines negotiated in 1957.

Phoumi’s failure to advance on the Plaine des Jarres made a deep impression on the new administration of President John F. Kennedy. If Phoumi had his difficulties with Kong Le’s outnumbered battalion, he was no match for the North Vietnamese. The North Vietnamese–Pathet Lao counteroffensive that opened in January drove Phoumi’s poorly motivated troops and their U.S. military advisers back—a retreat that irrevocably changed the balance of forces in Laos.

The U.S. embassy in Vientiane had accurate intelligence of the numbers and movements of North Vietnamese military units in Laos, as opposed to the alarming reports emanating from Phoumi’s headquarters. Central Laos and the entire length of the road from the Sala Phou Khoun junction south to Vangvieng was in North Vietnamese–Pathet Lao hands by mid-March.

Contact between emissaries of the two sides was finally made by officers under a truce flag at the village of Ban Hin Heup on the Vientiane–Luang Prabang road. Tripartite truce talks opened in the nearby village of Ban Namone, with the ICC, reconvened by the cochairmen of the Geneva Conference, Britain, and the Soviet Union present. The three negotiators were Nouhak, Pheng Phongsavan, and General Sing Ratanassamay. A cease-fire declared on May 3 did not prevent the Pathet Lao from capturing Sèpôn, an important crossroads on the Ho Chi Minh Trail,
or put an end to the fighting in the Hmong country. As part of the plan to find a settlement, an enlarged Geneva Conference convened on May 16.

There were thus two rival royal governments in Laos from the beginning of 1961, the Boun Oum–Phoumi Nosavan government at Vientiane and the Souvanna Phouma government at Khang Khay. The Pathet Lao, protected by the presence of thousands of North Vietnamese troops, constituted a third faction in what became a rightist-Neutralist-leftist division.

The idea of neutralism had been expressed by Kong Le in his earliest speeches in Vientiane, which described the goals of his coup d’etat as stopping the fighting among the Laotians and enacting a policy of friendship with all foreign countries, especially Laos’s neighbors. At Khang Khay, Soviet diplomats mingled with officials of missions from Beijing and Hanoi, with which relations had been established on May 5. Kong Le’s troops readily adopted the unofficial name Neutralist Armed Forces. Souvanna Phouma seized the opportunity of having a sizeable number of adherents on hand at Khang Khay, including many Lao students returned from abroad, to form the Neutralist Party. He was confident the party would outpoll the Pathet Lao’s LPF in a free election.

Although publicly deferring to Souvanna Phouma on matters of government policy, the Pathet Lao secretly extended their influence at the grassroots level, using their proven methods of propaganda and organization. In villages under their control, the Pathet Lao installed their own personnel alongside the existing administration. Access to the Pathet Lao–administered areas was forbidden to outsiders, even after the formation of the coalition government.

A hierarchy of politico-military participation and responsibility tied the villagers to a chain of command. All resources in villages under Pathet Lao control were mobilized into both a horizontal and a vertical structure that included organizations of women, youth, and monks. Villagers were easily susceptible to Pathet Lao control, making a Pathet Lao village a world unto itself. Children acted as couriers and lookouts; young people joined the village self-defense units, the lowest level of guerrilla organization; adults acted as porters for the regular guerrilla units; and women made clothing, prepared food, and looked after the sick and wounded.

At the reconvened Geneva Conference, the Neutralists were represented by Quinim, the rightists by Phoui Sananikone, and the Pathet Lao by Phoumi Vongvichit. The separate delegations served until they agreed on forming a unified government to sign the final agreement. All Laos’s neighbors were represented, as were the three ICC member countries and their co-chairmen, and the United States and France.

The summit meeting between John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khruschev in Vienna on June 3–4, 1961, coincided with the crisis over the North Vietnamese–Pathet Lao cease-fire violations at the besieged Hmong outpost of Padong. The Hmong abandoned Padong in early June and established a new base at Long Chieng. Kennedy protested North Vietnam’s involvement to Khruschev and pointed out that the United States was supporting Laos’s neutrality. Both leaders agreed that the conflict in Laos should not bring their two countries into confrontation. The idea of neutralizing Laos had been suggested to Kennedy as early as January.

For the next year, an enormous effort of persuasion involving all the great powers went into getting the Laotian parties to agree to form a coalition government. The effort included meetings among princes Souvanna Phouma, Boun Oum, and Souphanouvong in Zurich and Vientiane and protracted diplomatic consultations in Vientiane, Siangkhoang, Rangoon, Moscow, Paris, and Geneva.
Phoumi finally had to be disabused of the notion that he could count on unqualified U.S. and Thai support. Sarit favored supporting the negotiation policy. Phoumi favored peace but felt that Souvanna Phouma was the wrong choice to lead a new government. W. Averell Harriman, the intermediary, and a U.S. delegation held a tense and acrimonious meeting with Phoumi and his cabinet at the general’s office in Vientiane. Phoumi repeated his opposition to Souvanna Phouma, and Harriman warned him he was leading his country to disaster. The meeting ended inconclusively. Phoumi further demonstrated his intransigence by building up his forces at Nam Tha, a town in northeastern Laos without strategic importance, thereby inviting attack. When the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao attacked, camouflaging their violation of the cease-fire with the usual propaganda about mutinies in the opposing ranks, the defenders fled toward the Mekong, leaving most of their weapons behind. Phoumi may have hoped the debacle would precipitate Thai or U.S. armed intervention, but it did not. In the end, he agreed to the coalition.

Souvanna Phouma’s new government took office on June 23, 1962, the second coalition in Laos’s modern history. In accordance with the principle of tripartism, seven cabinet seats were allocated to the Neutralists, four seats each to the rightists and Pathet Lao, and four to nonparty people. The rapprochement between Souvanna Phouma and Kennedy was manifested by the former’s visit to Washington in July at the conclusion of the Geneva Conference. Unlike in 1954, representatives of each of the fourteen participating nations signed the final document, the “Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos” and its Protocol.

The strains imposed on the Neutralists by their alliance of convenience with the Pathet Lao were now manifested. In addition, the presence of the North Vietnamese army that this alliance implied did nothing to support neutralism. As if to confirm their doubts, the Neutralists were subjected to Communist propaganda. Deuane Sunnalath, Kong Le’s subordinate, allowed himself to be subverted by this political influence and started publishing his own newspaper, Khao Pathan Van (Daily News), full of anti-United States propaganda. Most of Kong Le’s followers remained fiercely loyal, however, and the dissidents, who called themselves Patriotic Neutralists, remained a minority.

Less than a year after the Geneva agreement, following a series of incidents in which one of Kong Le’s closest aides was assassinated and a U.S. plane on a supply flight to Kong Le authorized by Souvanna Phouma was shot down by Deuane’s troops, fighting broke out in the Neutralist camp. Kong Le pulled his men back from Khang Khay and set up a new command post at Muang Souy on the western edge of the Plain of Jars. Kong Le was running short of supplies, however, because the Soviet airlift had ended, and the North Vietnamese were in a position to block supplies by road.

An estimated 10,000 North Vietnamese were still present in Laos, despite the stipulation their government had signed at Geneva that withdrawal of all foreign troops be completed by October 7. In preparation for a massive escalation of the conflict in South Vietnam, North Vietnam had expanded the Ho Chi Minh Trail through eastern Laos and garrisoned it with support troops. North Vietnamese troops also were present in northern Laos, where they were engaged almost continuously in pressuring the Hmong guerrillas. All U.S. military advisers had been withdrawn by the deadline, but clandestine operations continued, and supply and reconnaissance flights still were conducted over such heavily contested areas as the Plain de
Antiaircraft fire took its toll on such flights, and as a result, the planes began attacking targets on the ground in Laos.

**Sources**


**Time Line**

**October 22, 1953**

Franco-Lao Treaty of Amity and Association transfers remaining French powers to RLG—while retaining control of military affairs—and completes independence of Laos.

**May–July 1954**

Laos participates in Geneva Conference on Indochina; under armistice agreements signed by French and Viet Minh on July 20, Viet Minh agree to withdraw from Laos, and Phong Saly and Houaphan provinces are designated regroupment areas for Pathet Lao; RLG pledges to integrate Pathet Lao fighters; International Control Commission established to implement agreements.
March 1955
Phak Pasason Lao (LPP, Pathet Lao) established.

December 14, 1955
Laos admitted to the United Nations (UN).

1956–1957
Negotiations between RLG and Pathet Lao.

January 1956
Pathet Lao congress establishes LPF.

September 1956
Constitution amended to allow formation of a coalition government.

November 1957
First coalition government formed.

May 1958
LPF and allies win partial elections for National Assembly.

July 1958
Souvanna Phouma government resigns following cabinet crisis caused by rightists.

August 1958
Rightist government of Phoui Sananikone formed, excluding LPF.

July–August 1959
Fighting breaks out in northern Laos; UN subcommittee investigates charges of North Vietnam’s involvement; LPF deputies arrested.

October 1959
King Sisavang Vong dies; Savangvatthana succeeds to the throne, rules until 1975.

January 1960
Kou Abhay forms provisional government following coup attempt by army.

April 1960
Elections for National Assembly believed rigged.

August 9, 1960
Kong Le carries out successful Neutralist coup d’état against rightist government of Prince Somsanith; General Phoumi Nosavan forms countercoup committee in Savannakhét and declares martial law; Kong Le hands over power to Souvanna Phouma’s third government.
December 1960
Phoumi Nosavan captures Vientiane; Soviet airlift begins to Kong Le and Pathet Lao troops.

January 1961
Souvanna Phouma government recognized by Communist bloc; Prince Boun Oum’s Vientiane government recognized by West; heavy fighting breaks out; North Vietnamese troops involved.

May 1961–June 1962

July 1962
Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos and its Protocol signed in Geneva.

1963–May 1964
Laos increasingly linked with developments in Vietnam; North Vietnamese troops fail to withdraw; Ho Chi Minh Trail expanded; second coalition government collapses; Pathet Lao offensive against Neutralists on Plaine des Jarres; ICC proves ineffective; bombing by United States begins.
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Confidential U.S. State Department Central Files, 1960–January 1963

The U.S. State Department Central Files are the definitive source of American diplomatic reporting on political, military, social, and economic developments throughout the world in the twentieth century. Surpassing the scope of the State Department’s Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) series, the Central Files provide extensive coverage of all political, military, social, and economic matters relating to a particular country and/or world event.

The State Department Central Files for 1960–January 1963 cover a crucial period in U.S. and world history. Each part of the 1960–1966 series contains a wide range of primary materials: special reports and observations on political and military affairs; studies and statistics on socioeconomic matters; interviews and minutes of meetings with U.S. and foreign government officials and leaders; legal and claims documentation; full texts of important letters and cables sent and received by U.S. diplomats and embassy personnel; reports, news clippings, and translations from journals and newspapers; and countless high-level/head of state government documents, including speeches, memoranda, official reports, aide-mémoire, and transcripts of political meetings and assemblies.

In addition, these records offer new insights into the evolution of American foreign policy toward both allies and adversaries and into the shaping of the policies of these countries toward the United States. Of even greater importance for the study of individual countries is the comprehensive manner in which the Central Files illuminate the internal affairs of foreign countries. There are thousands of pages arranged topically and chronologically on crucial subjects: political parties, unrest and revolution, human rights, government administration, fiscal and monetary issues, labor, housing, police and crime, public health and works, national defense, military equipment and supplies, foreign policy making, wars and alliances, education, religion, culture, trade, industry, and natural resources. On these subjects and more, the Central Files offer authoritative, in-depth, and timely documentation and analysis.
SOURCE NOTE

Microfilmed from the holdings of the National Archives, College Park, MD, Record Group 59: Records of the Department of State, Central Decimal Files, decimal numbers 751J, 851J, and 951J (Laos internal affairs) and decimal numbers 651J and 611.51J (Laos foreign affairs) for the period 1960–January 1963. All available original documents have been microfilmed.
From 1910 to 1963 the Department of State used a decimal classification system to organize its Central Files. This system assembled and arranged individual documents according to their subject, with each subject having a specific decimal code. The decimal system from 1950 to January 1963 consists of ten primary classifications numbered 0 through 9, each covering a broad subject area.

CLASS 0: Miscellaneous.
CLASS 1: Administration of the United States Government.
CLASS 2: Protection of Interests (Persons and Property).
CLASS 3: International Conferences, Congresses, Meetings, and Organizations.
CLASS 4: International Trade and Commerce. Trade Relations. Customs Administration.
CLASS 7: Internal Political and National Defense Affairs.
CLASS 8: Internal Economic, Industrial, and Social Affairs.
Internal Affairs

For this section of the U.S. State Department Central Files, University Publications of America (UPA) has microfilmed the documents contained in Classes 7, 8, and 9. Within these classes each subject is defined by a decimal file number. The decimal file number is followed by a slant mark (/). The number after the slant mark (/) refers to the date on which the document was generated. Documents within each decimal file number are arranged in chronological order. The entire decimal file number is stamped on the right side of the first page of every document.

These classes are concerned almost exclusively with the internal matters of individual countries. The class number (7, 8, or 9) is followed by the country number. The number following the decimal point indicates subtopics within the major classifications. The date after the slant mark (/) identifies the individual document.

In a small number of instances, documents were assigned erroneous or incomplete decimal numbers. UPA has included, in brackets, corrected decimal entries. In addition, misfiled decimal number documents have also been included in brackets.

CLASS 7. Example, 751J.13/6-162

Class of Records—Internal Political and National Defense Affairs

Subject—Executive Branch of Government—Cabinet; Ministry

751J.13/6-162 indicates a document dated June 1, 1962, relating to the cabinet of the executive branch of government (13) in Laos (51J).

CLASS 8. Example, 851J.411/1-460

Class of Records—Internal Economic, Industrial, and Social Affairs

Subject—Social Matters: People—Refugees

CLASS 9. Example, 951J.40/4-1161

951J.40/4-1161 indicates a document dated April 11, 1961, relating to radio (40) in Laos (51J).

Note: For the convenience of the researcher, wherever a specific classification number totals more than one hundred pages, a breakdown of the material by month and year is provided. Where applicable, major subjects have been included with the month and year breakdown.

Foreign Affairs

For this section of the U.S. State Department Central Files, UPA has microfilmed the documents contained in Class 6. Within this class, each subject is defined by a decimal file number. The decimal file number is followed by a slant mark (/). The number after the slant mark (/) refers to the date on which the document was generated. Documents within each decimal file number are arranged in chronological order. The entire decimal file number is stamped on the right side of the first page of every document.

In this publication, records classified 651J deal with the foreign policy of Laos and its political relations with other nations. Due to the State Department’s arrangement of these records, countries assigned numbers below 51J will not be found in this file. UPA, however, has included files dealing with the political relations between the United States (country number 11) and Laos (51J) in this publication. In order to find the political relations between Laos and countries other than the United States that have a number lower than 51J, the researcher should check the Class 6 records for that country. These records can be found either at the National Archives, College Park, Maryland, or, for many countries, in microform publications that UPA has made available for libraries.

In a small number of instances, documents were assigned erroneous or incomplete decimal numbers. UPA has included, in brackets, corrected decimal entries. In addition, misfiled decimal number documents have also been included in brackets.
CLASS 6. Example, 651J.51K/11-2061

Class of Records—
International Political
Relations; Bilateral Treaties

651J.51K/11-2061 — Document Date—
November 20, 1961

Country Number—Laos

651J.51K/11-2061 indicates a document dated November 20, 1961, relating to the bilateral relations between Laos (51J) and South Vietnam (51K).

CLASS 6. Example, 611.51J/12-260

Class of Records—
International Political
Relations; Bilateral Treaties

611.51J/12-260 — Document Date—
December 2, 1960

Country Number—United States

611.51J/12-260 indicates a document dated December 2, 1960, relating to the bilateral relations between the United States of America (11) and Laos (51J).

Note: For the convenience of the researcher, wherever a specific classification number totals more than one hundred pages, a breakdown of the material by month and year is provided. Where applicable, major subjects have been included with the month and year breakdown.
NUMERICAL LIST OF COUNTRY NUMBERS

00  THE WORLD (Universe)
01  Outer Space (Aerosphere)
01a Moon
02  Antarctic
03  Arctic
10  THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE
11  United States
11a Hawaii (Ocean or Kuré Islands and Palmyra Island)
11b U.S. Possessions in the Pacific Ocean
11c Puerto Rico
11d Guam
11e American Samoa (Tutuila, Manua Islands, etc.)
11f Canal Zone (Panama Canal Zone), Perido, Naos, Culebra, and Flamenco Islands
11g Virgin Islands of the U.S. (St. Croix, St. John, and St. Thomas)
11h Wake Island
12  Mexico
13  CENTRAL AMERICA
14  Guatemala
15  Honduras
16  El Salvador
17  Nicaragua
18  Costa Rica
19  Panama
20  SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA (South of the Rio Grande River)
21  Colombia
22  Ecuador (Galapagos Islands)
23  Peru
24  Bolivia
25  Chile
31  Venezuela
32  Brazil
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| 0375  |       | Election law; Laotian position on coexistence with North  
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| 0539  |       | Election law; UN role in Laos; preparations for April elections;  
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751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]

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0164 July 1960
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0232 August 1960
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0957 September 1960
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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]

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[Laotian Civil War]
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0470 March 1961

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0857 April 1961

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[Laotian Civil War]

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]

0001 April 1961 cont.

International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; U.S. military aid to Boun Oum regime; Soviet policy regarding Laos; U.S. economic aid proposals; fall of Muong Sai to Pathet Lao forces; PRC policy regarding Laos; Pathet Lao activities; military situation reports; British and French views on Laotian situation; ICC operations in Laos; operations of Chinese Nationalist irregulars in Laos; Pathet Lao shoot down U.S. C-47 aircraft; possible UN Security Council action on Laos; proposal for introduction of SEATO standing force in Thailand.

0457 May 1961

Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; British and French views on Laotian situation; Soviet policy regarding Laos; International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question arrangements; proposed federation solution to Laotian question; U.S. military aid to Boun Oum regime; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; possible UN Security Council action on Laos; Pathet Lao activities; ICC operations in Laos; proposal for SEATO intervention in Laos; military situation reports; W. Averell Harriman’s meetings with Boun Oum and Phoumi Nosavan and with King Sri Savang Vatthana; PRC policy regarding Laos; Laotian representation at international conference; Souvanna Phouma’s views on Laotian situation; position paper on Regional Economic Development Agency.

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]

0001 May 1961 cont.

International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; U.S. military aid to Boun Oum regime; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; military situation reports; British and French views on Laotian situation; PRC policy regarding Laos; proposal for SEATO intervention in Laos; ICC operations in Laos; U.S. opposition to seating of Pathet Lao delegation at International Conference; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; Laotian representation at International
Conference; Soviet policy regarding Laos; operations of Chinese Nationalist irregulars in Laos; proposed joint talks between Boun Oum, Souvanna Phouma, and Souphanouvong; proposal for creation of Southeast Asian neutral zone made up of Laos, Cambodia, and Burma; declarations on the neutrality of Laos; U.S. contingency plans for possible breakup or withdrawal from Geneva Conference.

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00  Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]
May 1961 cont.
Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; ICC operations in Laos; Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; British, French, and Soviet views on Laotian situation; Laotian representation at International Conference; proposal for joint talks between Boun Oum, Souvanna Phouma, and Souphanouvong; Laotian declaration of neutrality; military situation reports; proposals for a reorganized Laotian coalition government; PRC policy regarding Laos; proposal for international control machinery to protect Laotian neutrality; U.S. plans for military intervention if cease-fire fails; U.S. military aid to Boun Oum regime.

0486 June 1961
Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; ICC operations in Laos; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; British and French views on Laotian situation; Soviet policy regarding Laos; military situation reports; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; U.S. military aid to Boun Oum regime; U.S. troop deployments in Southeast Asia in response to continuing cease-fire violations; proposed SEATO military intervention in Laos; proposed joint talks between Boun Oum, Souvanna Phouma, and Souphanouvong; proposal for international control mechanism to protect Laotian neutrality; discussion regarding Laos during Kennedy-Khrushchev summit in Vienna; PRC policy regarding Laos; Pathet Lao demand for inclusion in coalition government; psychological warfare in Laos; future French role in Laos; Pathet Lao attack on and capture of Ban Pa Dong.
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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]
0001 June 1961 cont.
Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; ICC operations in Laos; proposed joint talks between Boun Oum, Souvanna Phouma, and Souphanouvong; future role of France in Laos; British and French views of Laotian situation; U.S. military aid to Boun Oum regime; declaration on the organization of the Laotian army; military situation reports; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; Souvanna Phouma’s views on Laotian situation; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; Soviet and PRC policies regarding Laos; proposals for international economic aid for Laos; proposed SEATO military intervention in Laos; proposal for international control mechanism to protect Laotian neutrality; draft agreement on withdrawal of foreign military forces from Laos; U.S. opposition to partition of Laos; joint communiqué issued by Boun Oum, Souvanna Phouma, and Souphanouvong regarding formation of national union government; Meo refugee situation; U.S. efforts to influence Souvanna Phouma; Souvanna Phouma and Phoumi Nosavan invited to visit United States; Phoumi Nosavan’s views on Laotian situation.

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]
0001 July 1961
ICC operations in Laos; military situation reports; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; Phoumi Nosavan’s views on Laotian situation; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; joint communiqué issued by Boun Oum, Souvanna Phouma, and Souphanouvong regarding formation of national union government; Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; U.S. efforts to influence Souvanna Phouma; proposal for international control mechanism to protect Laotian neutrality; future role of French military mission in Laos; Souvanna Phouma’s views on Laotian situation; Soviet policy regarding Laos; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; British and French views on Laotian situation; U.S. economic and military aid; refugee relief problem; Laotian declaration of neutrality;
proposals for withdrawal of foreign military forces; U.S. contingency planning in event of unsatisfactory coalition government; U.S. opposition to partition of Laos; proposed meeting of Boun Oum, Souvanna Phouma, and Souphanouvong at Luang Prabang or Phnom Penh, Cambodia; efforts to amend Laotian constitution to install king as prime minister; efforts to secure release of U.S. prisoners from Pathet Lao.

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]
0001 July 1961 cont.

ICC operations in Laos; Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; Laotian declaration of neutrality; efforts to secure release of U.S. prisoners from Pathet Lao; efforts to amend constitution to install king as prime minister; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; military situation reports; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; refugee relief problem proposed meeting of Boun Oum, Souvanna Phouma, and Souphanouvong in Phnom Penh, Cambodia; PRC demand for abolition of SEATO.

0147 August 1961

Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; proposed meeting of Boun Oum, Souvanna Phouma, and Souphanouvong in Phnom Penh, Cambodia; ICC operations in Laos; Laotian declaration of neutrality; refugee relief program; U.S. efforts to influence Souvanna Phouma; efforts to amend constitution to install king as prime minister; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; future role of French military mission in Laos; military situation reports; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; Souvanna Phouma and Phoumi Nosavan’s views on Laotian situation; British and French views on Laotian situation; Soviet policy regarding Laos; Falaize mission; proposals for withdrawal of foreign military forces; conditions for Western acceptance of a coalition government headed by Souvanna Phouma.
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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]
0001 August 1961 cont.
  Interviews with Pathet Lao prisoners; Laotian cease-fire and
  verification procedures; Falaize mission; Geneva
  International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian
  Question; proposals for withdrawal of foreign military forces;
  ICC operations in Laos; proposals for reorganized Laotian
  coalition government; proposals for reconstitution of Laotian
  army and dissolution of Pathet Lao irregular forces; Laotian
  declaration of neutrality; U.S. efforts to influence Souvanna
  Phouma.

0373 September 1961
  Proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government;
  Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the
  Laotian Question; ICC operations in Laos; Laotian
  declaration of neutrality; Laotian cease-fire and verification
  procedures; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; U.S. efforts to
  influence Souvanna Phouma; proposals for reconstitution of
  Laotian army and dissolution of Pathet Lao irregulars; U.S.
  contingency planning in event of renewal of civil war; Laotian
  attitudes toward Meo participation in civil war; USIS reports
  on conditions in southern Laos; proposed meeting between
  W. Averell Harriman and Souvanna Phouma; Communist
  propaganda; conditions for Western acceptance of coalition
  government headed by Souvanna Phouma; proposals for
  withdrawal of foreign military forces; Souvanna Phouma’s
  views on Laotian situation; possibility of partition of Laos;
  Harriman–Souvanna Phouma talks.

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]
0001 September 1961 cont.
  Harriman–Souvanna Phouma talks; ICC operations in Laos;
  Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the
  Laotian Question; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition
  government; proposals for reconstitution of Laotian Army and
dissolution of Pathet Lao irregulars; Laotian cease-fire and
verification procedures; Souvanna Phouma’s views on
Laotian situation; U.S. contingency planning in event of
renewal of civil war; Harriman talks with King Sri Savang
Vatthanava and with Boun Oum and Phoumi Nosavan; plans
for possible SEATO military intervention; future role of French military mission; possibility of partition of Laos; U.S. plans for possible replacement of Phoumi Nosavan with more compliant general; Phoumi Nosavan, Boun Oum, and Souvanna Phouma suggested as possible candidates for next prime minister; North Vietnamese propaganda; USIS report on conditions at Pak Lay; proposed meeting between Boun Oum, Souvanna Phouma, and Souphanouvong at Ban Hin Heup; refugee relief program.

October 1961

Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; Laotian declaration of neutrality; ICC operations in Laos; proposals for organization of Laotian police; meeting of Princes Boun Oum, Souvanna Phouma, and Souphanouvong at Ban Hin Heup; U.S. military aid to Boun Oum regime; Phoumi Sananikone’s views on Laotian situation; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; refugee relief program; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; proposals for reconstitution of Laotian army and dissolution of Pathet Lao irregulars; Soviet policy regarding Laos; U.S. contingency planning in event of renewal of civil war; USIS report on conditions in Muong Sanakham; agreement that Souvanna Phouma will be the sole candidate suggested as new prime minister; SEATO’s relationship to a neutral Laos; complaints regarding use of Laos for infiltration of South Vietnam.

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

October 1961 cont.

Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; SEATO’s relationship to a neutral Laos; agreement on nomination of Souvanna Phouma as new prime minister; ICC operations in Laos; proposals for withdrawal of foreign military forces; meeting between Souvanna Phouma and the king; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; future of French military mission; proposals for reconstitution of Laotian army and dissolution of Pathet Lao irregulars; Laotian neutrality declaration; complaints regarding use of Laos for infiltration of South Vietnam; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; Phoumi Nosavan’s views on Laotian situation.
November 1961
Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; ICC operations in Laos; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; proposals for reconstitution of Laotian army and dissolution of Pathet Lao irregulars; SEATO’s relationship to a neutral Laos; mortar attack on Xieng Khouang by Boun Oum forces; Phoui Sananikone and Phoumi Nosavan’s views on Laotian situation; alleged Pathet Lao–Viet Minh buildup on South Vietnamese border; Laotian neutrality declaration; proposals for withdrawal of foreign military forces; proposed meeting of Boun Oum, Souvanna Phouma, and Souphanouvong at Plaine des Jarres; U.S. efforts to influence Phoumi Nosavan and Souvanna Phouma; proposals for Laotian police organization; allegations of CIA support for Phoumi Nosavan; failure to reach agreement on security arrangements for proposed meeting of Laotian princes in Vientiane; Soviet policy regarding Laos.

December 1961
Proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; U.S. efforts to influence Phoumi Nosavan and Souvanna Phouma; ICC operations in Laos; Phoui Sananikone’s views on Laotian situation, negotiations relating to meeting of three Laotian princes in Vientiane; Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; Laotian neutrality declaration.

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]

Negotiations relating to meeting of three Laotian princes in Vientiane; U.S. efforts to influence Phoumi Nosavan; Phoumi Nosavan’s views on Laotian situation; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; UN study of public administration in Laos; Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; Laotian neutrality declaration; ICC operations in Laos; U.S. efforts to influence Souvanna Phouma; U.S. contingency planning in event of renewal of civil war; SEATO’s relationship to a neutral Laos; proposals for withdrawal of foreign military forces; meeting between Boun Oum and Souvanna Phouma and Souphanouvong at Plaine des Jarres; Phoumi Nosavan’s plans to have king form new coalition government with king serving as prime minister; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; U.S. offer of economic aid; Pathet Lao activities
and propaganda; refugee relief problem; British and French views on Laotian situation; breakdown of three princes' talks in Vientiane.

0519 January 1962
Proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; U.S. efforts to influence Phoumi Nosavan; U.S. threatens to cut off military aid to Boun Oum regime; Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; three Laotian princes invited to meet in Geneva, Switzerland; Laotian National Bank temporarily suspends sale of U.S. dollars and French francs; SEATO's relationship to a neutral Laos; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; ICC operations in Laos; refusal of Phoumi Nosavan and Boun Oum to give up demand for Defense and Interior ministries in new Souvanna Phouma government; U.S. contingency planning in event of renewal of civil war; British and French views on Laotian situation; Souvanna Phouma's views on Laotian situation; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; Laotian neutrality declaration; possible U.S. military aid to a Souvanna Phouma government; report on accomplishments of Boun Oum regime; refugee relief program; Boun Oum and Phoumi Nosavan announce refusal to accept Souvanna Phouma as new prime minister; Soviet policy regarding Laos; Souvanna Phouma's views on Laotian situation.

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]
0001 January 1962 cont.
ICC operations in Laos; meeting of three Laotian princes in Geneva, Switzerland; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; Laotian neutrality declaration; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; refusal of Boun Oum and Phoumi Nosavan to give up demand for Defense and Interior ministries in new Souvanna Phouma government; Souvanna Phouma's views on Laotian situation; Boun Oum and Phoumi Nosavan announce refusal to accept Souvanna Phouma as new prime minister; Thai and U.S. military aid to Boun Oum regime; Boun Oum, Souvanna Phouma, and Souphanouvong agreement on composition of new Laotian coalition government; Phoumi Nosavan's views on Laotian situation; refugee relief problem; British and French views on Laotian situation; Pathet Lao attack on and capture of Nam Tha; U.S. efforts to influence Phoumi.
Nosavan and threat to break with him if he fails to negotiate in good faith; military operations by Boun Oum regime.

February 1962
Pathet Lao attack on Nam Tha; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; U.S. efforts to influence Phoumi Nosavan and threat to break with him if he fails to negotiate in good faith; refugee relief program; USIS reports on conditions in southern Laos; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; U.S. efforts to influence Souvanna Phouma; Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; military situation reports; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; refusal of Boun Oum and Phoumi Nosavan to give up demand for Defense and Interior ministries in new Souvanna Phouma government; ICC operations in Laos; Soviet policy regarding Laos; possible request by Phoumi Nosavan for SEATO military intervention; U.S. decision to negotiate directly with Souvanna Phouma; Boun Oum and Phoumi Nosavan announce refusal to accept Souvanna Phouma as new prime minister; British and French views on Laotian situation; U.S. refusal to allow Phoumi Nosavan to reinforce Nam Tha; Laotian neutrality declaration; Souvanna Phouma’s audience with the king at Luang Prabang; negotiations between Souvanna Phouma and Phoumi Nosavan at Luang Prabang; Souvanna Phouma and Phoumi Nosavan’s views on Laotian situation; Souvanna Phouma admits inability to control Pathet Lao troops; tentative cabinet proposals by Souvanna Phouma; proposals for civic action programs.

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

Political Affairs [General] cont.
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February 1962 cont.
Proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; tentative cabinet proposals by Souvanna Phouma; refusal of Boun Oum and Phoumi Nosavan to give up demand for Defense and Interior ministries in new Souvanna Phouma government; U.S. efforts to influence Phoumi Nosavan and threat to break with him if he fails to negotiate in good faith; Boun Oum regime military communiques; Soviet policy regarding Laos.

March 1962
Proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; Laotian neutrality declaration; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; ICC operations in Laos; refusal of
Boun Oum and Phoumi Nosavan to give up demand for Defense and Interior ministries in new Souvanna Phouma government; tentative cabinet proposals by Souvanna Phouma and U.S. rejection of them as unacceptable; U.S. efforts to influence Phoumi Nosavan and threat to break with him if he fails to negotiate in good faith; British, French, and Thai views on Laotian situation; Boun Oum and Phoumi Nosavan announce refusal to accept Souvanna Phouma as new prime minister; Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; King Sri Savang Vatthana’s support for Boun Oum regime; anti–United States propaganda by Boun Oum regime; U.S. withdrawal of financial aid for Boun Oum regime; refugee relief program; representatives of Boun Oum regime in Geneva ordered to return home; Pathet Lao attack on Nam Tha; military situation reports; proposed Harriman–Phoumi Nosavan meeting; king’s opposition to Pathet Lao participation in coalition government; Boun Oum regime military communiqués; Souvanna Phouma’s decision to return to Paris.

Souvanna Phouma’s decision to return to Paris; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; military situation reports; ICC operations in Laos; refugee relief program; Boun Oum and Phoumi Nosavan announce refusal to accept Souvanna Phouma as new prime minister; proposal that National Assembly grant full powers to king and that king form coalition government; U.S. efforts to influence Phoumi Nosavan and threat to break with him if he fails to negotiate in good faith; Thailand’s views on Laotian situation; U.S. economic and military sanctions against Boun Oum regime; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; anti–United States propaganda by Boun Oum regime; USIS reports on conditions in southern Laos; Boun Oum regime’s efforts to obtain foreign economic and military support; military situation reports; Phoumi Nosavan’s views on Laotian situation; Boun Oum regime requests assurances from Souvanna Phouma if they yield on issue of Defense and Interior ministries.

Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

Boun Oum regime decision to reinforce Nam Tha; ICC operations in Laos; Boun Oum regime requests assurances from Souvanna Phouma if they yield on issue of Defense and Interior ministries.
Interior ministries; U.S. efforts to reopen negotiations between Souvanna Phouma and Phoumi Nosavan; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; British and French views on Laotian situation; U.S. efforts to influence Phoumi Nosavan and threat to break with him if he fails to negotiate in good faith; U.S. economic and military sanctions against Boun Oum regime; Nam Tha and Muong Sing fall to the Pathet Lao; king’s views on Laotian situation; military situation reports; Soviet policy regarding Laos; President Kennedy orders elements of U.S. Seventh Fleet to Gulf of Thailand; Pathet Lao plans for military offensive; USIS reports on conditions in southern Laos; Pathet Lao attack on Ban Houei Sai and evacuation of town by Boun Oum forces; U.S. military deployment measures and contingency planning in response to Pathet Lao offensive; U.S. efforts to reestablish Laotian cease-fire; reorganization of Boun Oum regime military forces; U.S. efforts to force Phoumi Nosavan to resign as defense minister and deputy prime minister and return to status as full-time military commander; complaint to UN by Boun Oum regime regarding Pathet Lao offensive; reoccupation of Ban Houei Sai by Boun Oum forces; United States withdraws support for Phoumi Nosavan; refugee relief program; U.S. efforts to influence Phoumi Sananikone and to encourage him to join reorganized Laotian coalition government; PRC propaganda.

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.
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0001 May 1962 cont.
U.S. military deployment measures and contingency planning in response to Pathet Lao offensive; proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; Souvanna Phouma’s return to Laos; U.S. withdrawal of support for Phoumi Nosavan; Pathet Lao and Viet Minh attack on Ban Houei Sai and military buildup against Saravane; ICC operations in Laos; military situation reports; Soviet policy regarding Laos; USIS report on conditions in southern Laos.

0193 June 1962
Proposals for reorganized Laotian coalition government; ICC operations in Laos; military situation reports; negotiations by three Laotian princes at Plaine des Jarres; U.S. refusal to restore economic aid until new Souvanna Phouma government installed; U.S. efforts to influence Souvanna Phouma; U.S. contingency planning in event of breakdown in negotiations for new coalition government and resumption of
hostilities; British and French views on Laotian situation; agreement on formation and composition of new coalition government of national union headed by Souvanna Phouma; U.S. opposition to designation of Quinim Pholsena as foreign minister in new government; Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; United States resumes economic aid to new Souvanna Phouma government; U.S. negotiations for release of POWs held by Pathet Lao; Thailand’s reservations regarding Souvanna Phouma government; Laotian neutrality declaration and cease-fire proclamation; Laotian National Assembly approves new Souvanna Phouma government; Boun Oum’s resignation as prime minister; Communist propaganda; Souvanna Phouma’s foreign and domestic policy programs; proposals for integration and demobilization of Laotian armed forces; SEATO’s relationship to a neutral Laos.

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.

[Laotian Civil War]

June 1962 cont.

Souvanna Phouma’s foreign and domestic policy programs; Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; French military mission to Laos; installation of new Souvanna Phouma coalition government; proposals for integration and demobilization of Laotian armed forces.

July 1962

Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; military situation reports; U.S. negotiations for release of POWs held by Pathet Lao; Laotian neutrality declaration; proposals for integration and demobilization of Laotian armed forces; Souvanna Phouma’s decision to recognize PRC and North Vietnam; SEATO’s relationship to a neutral Laos; French military mission to Laos; proposals for UN economic aid programs; Laotian cease-fire and verification procedures; Soviet policy regarding Laos; ICC operations in Laos; USIS report on conditions in southern Laos; plans for withdrawal of U.S. military advisers; Phoumi Nosavan’s views on Laotian situation; proposals for withdrawal of Viet Minh forces from Laos; signing of Geneva Agreements on Laos; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; Souvanna Phouma’s visit to United States and discussions with Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara.
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regarding continued presence of Chinese Nationalist irregulars in Laos; comments of other delegations to the Geneva International Conference on the Settlement of the Laotian Question; increasing Pathet Lao and neutralist opposition to Souvanna Phouma government.

0896 November 1962

Investigations of Viet Minh violations of troop withdrawal agreement; Phoumi Nosavan’s views on Laotian situation; French military mission to Laos; proposals for integration and demobilization of Laotian armed forces; Souvanna Phouma threatens to resign as prime minister if impasse over coalition government continues; U.S. economic aid to Souvanna Phouma government; ICC operations in Laos; U.S. efforts to influence Souvanna Phouma and Kong Le.

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Internal Political and National Defense Affairs cont.

751J.00 Political Affairs [General] cont.
[Laotian Civil War]

0001 November 1962 cont.

Investigations of Viet Minh violations of troop withdrawal agreement; Pathet Lao opposition to Souvanna Phouma government; ICC operations in Laos; French military mission to Laos; proposals for integration and demobilization of Laotian armed forces; Phoumi Nosavan’s visit to USSR; complaints regarding continued presence of Chinese Nationalist irregulars in Laos; proposals for recruitment of Laotian civil police force; U.S. military presence in Thailand; U.S. efforts to influence Souvanna Phouma and Kong Le; shooting down of Air America plane by Pathet Lao at Plaine des Jarres; Mansfield mission to Laos; U.S. military aid to Kong Le neutralist military forces in Laos.

0134 December 1962

Shooting down of Air America plane by Pathet Lao at Plaine des Jarres; proposals for integration and demobilization of Laotian military forces; ICC operations in Laos; Pathet Lao cease-fire violations; French military mission to Laos; Deputy Under Secretary of State U. Alexis Johnson’s discussions with members of Souvanna Phouma government; investigations of Viet Minh violations of troop withdrawal agreement; Souvanna Phouma’s views on Laotian situation; tensions between Kong Le neutralist forces and Pathet Lao at Plaine des Jarres; Souvanna Phouma’s plans for cabinet reorganization; U.S. military aid to Kong Le neutralist military forces in Laos.
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| 0839  |      | January 1962  
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| 0845  |      | February 1962  
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| 0852  |      | March 1962  
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| 0879  |      | July 1962  
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| 0883  |      | August 1962  
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| 0901  |      | January 1963  
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| 751J.14 |      | Political Affairs: Executive Branch of Government—Civil Service  
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| 0902  |      | July 1960  
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| 0670  |      | February 1962  
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| 0737  |      | May 1962  
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0856 June 1962
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0874 July 1962
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0886 August 1962
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0938 September 1962
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0057 November 1962
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