

**Laos 1959-1961 -
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Message from Vientiane, Laos
(from UPI)

UPI 111

(LAOS)

VIENTIANE -- LAOTIAN GOVERNMENT FORCES, WHICH ALREADY HAVE HIT COMMUNIST REBEL TROOPS HARD IN DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS, ARE NOW GOING ON THE OFFENSIVE, FOREIGN MINISTER KHAMPHAN PANYA SAID TODAY.

PANYA SAID THE ROYAL LAOTIANS ARMY IS PUSHING "ACTIVE" MEASURES AGAINST THE COMMUNIST PATHET LAO REBELS AND HOPES FOR COMPLETE SUCCESS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. HE SPOKE AT A NEWS CONFERENCE ATTENDED BY ABOUT 30 NEWSMEN IN PRIME MINISTER PHOU SANANIKONE'S OFFICE.

"WE ARE GOING INTO THE ACTIVE PERIOD," PANYA SAID. "FOR SOME TIME OUR TROOPS WERE NOT IN FIGHTING POSITIONS, AND WERE SURPRISED AND OUTNUMBERED. BUT NOW WE ARE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT FUTURE RESULTS."

HE SAID THAT IF THERE IS NO FURTHER EXTERNAL INTERVENTION, THE SITUATION WILL NOT GROW WORSE. LAOS CONTENDS THE REBELS ARE SUPPORTED BY COMMUNIST NORTH VIET NAM AND THAT THERE ARE COMMUNIST VIET MINH TROOPS IN THE COUNTRY.

"IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES WE CAN HANDLE THE SITUATION," HE SAID. "IF THERE IS INCREASED INTERVENTION WE HOPE TO FACE THE SITUATION WITH OTHER MEANS."

HE DID NOT DESCRIBE THE "OTHER MEANS." BUT PRESUMABLY THEY WOULD INVOLVE A REQUEST TO HAVE THE UNITED NATIONS SET UP AND MAN A BUFFER ZONE WITH NORTH VIET NAM SIMILAR TO THAT IN EFFECT IN THE MIDDLE EAST BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT.

PANYA SAID THE KEY NORTHERN LAOTIAN PROVINCES OF SAMNEUA AND PHONGSALY, WHERE THE COMMUNISTS HAVE BEEN MOST ACTIVE, "ARE UNDER OUR CONTROL."

9/1--GD147P