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Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

Laos. 1959

18 Nov.

"U.N. Chief drinks Laos Tribal Wine"

- press clipping from Washington Post.

WASHINGTON POST

18 November 1959

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## U. N. Chief Drinks Laos Tribal Wine

Reuters

VIENTIANE, Laos, Nov. 17  
Dag Hammarskjold settled down with a remote tribe of opium-smoking hunters today for diplomacy on a simple scale.

The Secretary General of the United Nations visited a Meo tribal village during a helicopter outing with Laotian Premier Phoumi Sananikone and Foreign Minister Khampan Panya.

The outing, which followed week-long talks on U. N. aid for this rebellion-torn kingdom, developed into a picnic at a mountain resort about 50 miles northeast of here.

The three men then dropped into a nearby village of Meo tribesmen, who hunt wild game with crossbows and flint-lock muskets and grow opium on the side.

The 54-year-old U. N. trouble shooter declined a bowl of opium, but joined the tribesmen in a congenial drink of rice wine through a straw in a tall jar.

He also took part in a traditional Meo welcome ceremony known as "the baxi," in which strings are tied around a visitor's wrists to bind 32 "good spirits" to the body.

Hammarskjold returned here later in the day in time to greet Sakari Tuomioja, Finnish undersecretary to the U. N. who will be his personal representative here after the Secretary General leaves on Thursday.

Tuomioja, a former Finnish Premier, arrived here to make an economic study of Laos and keep Hammarskjold in touch with political developments.

The mission is considered the first stage of a plan to reinforce stability in Laos and possibly Southeast Asia as a whole.

The Laotian government has asked for a U. N. "presence" in the tiny Indochinese kingdom because it fears that neighboring Communist North Viet-Nam is aiding the 4-month-old Pathet Lao revolt.