

Laos 1959-1961 - correspondence, official documents, press clippings, chrono...

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Laos - 1959

8 Dec.

Premier scores CONI views on election
- Article in "Le Journal D'Extreme Orient," Saigon

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L A O S

Dec. 9, 1959

F.B.I.S.

9 Dec. 1959

PREMIER SCORES CDNI VIEWS ON ELECTION

Saigon, LE JOURNAL D'EXTREME ORIENT, in French, Dec. 8, 1959--3 (UNCLASSIFIED)

(Text) The decision of the last cabinet council of Laos to extend the mandate of the National Assembly to April, 1960 may cause a governmental crisis. The Committee for Defense of National Interests--CDNI does not approve of this action. The dispute between the CDNI and the Rally of the Lao People appears in an interview Phoui Sananikone, Lao Prime Minister, has given to an AFP correspondent on the problem of the elections.

Mr. Sananikone stated that the Rally of the Lao People was strong and had a good chance to win. "But," he said, "we will not repeat past errors. During the 1958 supplementary elections the united front of opposition candidates was able to score against the divided national candidates. This time we will be united, with a single list of National Union candidates." "Evil-minded persons say the deputies are actually unpopular and are not representative, and that, for this reason, the people anxiously await these elections. There is nothing so dramatic; I think the Assembly contains actually more good than bad. In Laos, as elsewhere, the people always want something new. I am far from being persuaded that the coming assembly will be better than the last."

Questioned finally on the differences between the Rally of the Lao People and the Committee for Defense of National Interests, or the party of the youth, the Prime Minister replied with some acerbity: "I believe the CDNI holds that the present situation calls for dictatorial powers and that we do not need the Assembly. I do not agree."

"I have long been a deputy and am deeply attached to our democratic regime. This government is not as bad as has been said; to replace it with another would be to leave the road being followed by all modern countries. It would be criminal to follow another road. Everyone in the world is trying to progress; it would be abnormal for Laos to retreat."

On this question, about which Mr. Phoui Sananikone appears to feel strongly, he said: "The young people want elections now or not at all. This is antidemocratic." He concluded: "The young say that they are revolutionists. In fact what they want is a revolution of the wrong kind."