

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

*HS L 179:88*



Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

Laos - 1960

15 Jan.

- 1. Interoffice memorandum from J. F. Eagers to D.H.

- 3 encl.

UNITED NATIONS  NATIONS UNIES

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: The Secretary-General

Date: 15 January 1960

FROM: J.F. Engers *Engers*

FILE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

SENDER'S TELEPHONE EXTENSION: \_\_\_\_\_

SUBJECT: The situation in Laos

1. There are since my last note no significant developments to report. Sakari's letter of 8 January speaks for itself.

2. During a lunch where I sat next to de Breuvery I heard that the FAO had an "excellent" report on Laos, made by a field team late in 1958. With some difficulty I later was able to obtain a copy and, having given it a preliminary glance, concur in the estimation. Unfortunately very little has been done on the basis of this report. Its main importance, at the present stage, lies in the circumstance that we now might prod the FAO on the basis of their own report. You might mention this to Heurtematte. (The document number is FAO/59/2/938).

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3. Enclosed are a few of the more important newspaper and broadcast reports, together with Heurtematte's statement in Bangkok (TA/830).

4. Though this is outside my proper terms of reference, I thought you might be interested in the following quotation from a long review article about the United Nations by Max Beer in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung of 13 January 1960:

"Und wie lange wird es möglich sein, die Beschlussfähigkeit oder die Unfähigkeit zu nützlichen Beschlüssen in dem einen und dem andern Organ durch das kluge und diskrete Eingreifen eines Generalsekretärs zu korrigieren, dessen guter Wille und diplomatisches Geschick heute die Schwächen der Organisation verdeckt?"

Copied from the Daily Report, Jan. 12, 1960, Far East  
(Foreign Broadcast Information Service)

L A O S

January 12, 1960

LAOS TO CONTINUE POLICY OF NEUTRALITY

Vientiane, Laotian Home Service, in Laotian, Jan. 11, 1960

(Text) Laos announces to her allies that Laos will continue to uphold the policy of peace and neutrality.

According to reliable sources, the new Laotian Government has instructed Prince Khammao, Laotian ambassador in London, to notify the British Government that Laos will continue to uphold the policy of peace and neutrality.

In a letter to be later submitted to the British Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Laotian Government stated that its primary task was to restore peace and order in the kingdom and to the national economy. Regarding foreign policy, the Laotian Government will continue to uphold the policy of neutrality. Laos will cooperate with others within the framework of the United Nations and respect all agreements and treaties concluded by the previous governments including the Geneva agreements. The Laotian Government has also decided to participate as a contracting party (in any international treaty, provided that the countries concerned also respect such treaty?) in order to promote the democratic administration of Laos through peaceful means.

Copied from THE TIMES (London) - January 8, 1960

REVIEW OF FAR EAST POLICY

(From our Diplomatic Correspondent)

Mr. Graham Parsons, Assistant-Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs in the State Department, yesterday called on Mr. Selwyn Lloyd at the Foreign Office. Their talk was largely concerned with the situation in Laos, where a short-lived Government by the Army High Command has just given place to a new provisional Government under the moderate elder statesman, Kou Abhay. As both the British and United States Governments wish the neutrality of Laos to be upheld, the present change is presumably welcome, though British officials were cautious in discussing it yesterday. The new Government in Laos would seem to be a caretaker Government only, but the change diminishes the prospect of stern measures against the former dissident Pathet Lao leaders, who were under arrest in Laos when the High Command took over the Government.

Mr. Parson's visit to London is the first opportunity which he has had since his appointment recently, to discuss Far Eastern questions with United States' officials in the Embassy in London, and with senior British officials concerned with Far Eastern questions. The visit is being followed by a visit to Paris. The discussions have covered a wide field and are understood to have looked into the future. Presumably such questions as relations with the Chinese Nationalists after the Chiang Kai-shek régime comes to an end, have been considered, and other far-reaching problems such as trade with China, and economic aid for Far Eastern and South-East Asian countries.

UNITED NATIONS

Press Services  
Office of Public Information  
United Nations, N.Y.

(For use of information media -- not an official record)

Press Release TA/830  
12 January 1960

UN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMMISSIONER MAKES STATEMENT ON LAOS

(The following was received here from a UN Information Officer in Bangkok.)

At a press conference held in Bangkok today Roberto Heurtematte, United Nations Commissioner for Technical Assistance, made the following statement:

"During the month of November 1959 Mr. Dag Hammarskjold, Secretary-General of the United Nations, accepted the invitation of the Royal Lao Government to visit that country and, during his stay, became more than ever convinced that there was great need to render additional services in order to assist the nation to achieve a stable and self-sustaining economy, and that the United Nations family of organizations could, by exerting maximum effort, play an important role in this undertaking.

"The problems of Laos were not new to the United Nations and indeed for many years we have been supporting a technical assistance program there; these activities have not, however, up to the present been able to achieve enduring results that could be considered substantial or important. This does not insinuate that our program has been deficient but rather that there has possibly been a lack of correlation between the magnitude of problems and the over-all dimensions of our effort.

"Accordingly, and in order to start with an exact economic appraisal of the structural problems facing the Lao Government, the Secretary-General selected Mr. Sakari Tuomioja, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and an economist of international renown, to conduct a detailed economic study of the Kingdom of Laos. Mr. Tuomioja's report was submitted for restricted circulation in mid-December and press releases given out at the time contained a resume of seven points for action and a series of recommendations.

"It has been my assignment to initiate discussions with the Royal Lao Government tending to establish a program that would respond to the urgent needs mentioned by the Tuomioja report, both as to the size of the program and the order of priorities for action. The discussions have been very heartening as I have found in the midst

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of Laotian officials, both ministers of states as well as chefs de service, an accurate basic understanding of their problems together with a well-analyzed concept of the type of program that could result in positive, lasting, beneficial effects. I was impressed by the realistic approach of Lao officials at all levels to the real problem of development and self-government and, during my sojourn in Vientiane, I had ample opportunity to engage in detailed discussions with a large majority of these officials.

"It has never been suggested that the United Nations alone can solve all the problems of Laos, nor for that matter is the United Nations an organization that per se solves problems. We do not arrive with any divinely conceived plan that can metamorphose a nation overnight. We can however, because of experience built up over the years, put into the hands of governments the type of analysis that is undoubtedly a useful tool for important policy decisions in coping with the problems of underdevelopment and in establishing a list of priorities for action. We can even do more: we can draw upon the whole world, all member nations of the UN, find experts and technicians and training facilities to assist countries in organizing and directing their development programs. UN technical assistance so conceived can, on occasion has been, a vital factor in improving economic and social levels in some areas. But United Nations initiative cannot by itself hoist a community to higher levels of living; this can only be accomplished by the determined efforts, by the discipline and perseverance of the community itself. The United Nations can because of its experience help avoid false starts, blind alleys, and wasted efforts, but in the final analysis it is the driving force of the community itself that enables it to reach high levels.

"Additionally it has never been suggested that the United Nations alone can act on all the Tucmioja recommendations simultaneously as it is very obvious that the UN has limited resources for technical assistance and can in no event provide capital goods, but must limit its action to advisory service training and on occasion limited amounts of equipment, although new Special Fund development projects of larger scope are possible. The Special Fund, which is already active in Laos having approved a project for the development of the Nam Ngum river, a tributary of the Mekong, will consider an additional request at its forthcoming meetings. There are of course other sources of foreign aid that are making important contributions to the economic infrastructure of the country. As the United Nations moves its program into a higher level of activity there will be a real need to coordinate

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all foreign aid properly to assure that all considerable efforts being expanded complement each other.

"I feel optimistic about the success of the program not only because I believe good coordination to be perfectly feasible and not only because I believe the United Nations can render valuable service, but principally because I have seen in the Laotians themselves a new impetus to coordinate properly all their own internal activities in order to establish a smooth-working team and a desire to make the best use of foreign aid to strengthen their government.

"During my stay I was privileged to make a two-day trip to the upper Mekong provinces in the company of His Highness Tiao Somsanith, former Provincial Governor and now Minister of the Interior. It was an unforgettable experience not only because of the caliber of the man himself but because he has proved with a dedicated sense of patriotism and perseverance that it is possible to knit into a meaningful national whole even the widely varying ethnic groups of the North."

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Later in reply to questions Mr. Heurtematte said that help to Laos from within Southeast Asia itself was essential, as was demonstrated in the Mekong project. He said it was envisaged that some high-level person would be in Laos permanently to implement proposals made in the Tuomioja report and indicated that he had consulted not only with Lao authorities but with all other persons involved in bilateral or multilateral foreign aid programs there, and it was clear that coordination would have to be worked out among all existing schemes.

He said that the change of government in Laos had not affected his negotiations in the least. He declared that he would now consult with United Nations specialized agencies on the scope of the proposed program for Laos and hoped for speedy action by all the United Nations family, since there was no time to be wasted.

The Commissioner was presented to assembled journalists by U Nyun, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, who declared that international and regional aid for Laos was important particularly in view of that kingdom's peculiar circumstances as a land-locked country. Mr. Heurtematte is leaving Bangkok at midnight tonight for Paris.

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