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Cable from the Chinese Foreign Ministry, 'Regarding the Planned Discussion by our Side during Souvanna Phouma's Upcoming Visit to China'

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Please [send to] the Premier [for] Approval. (Already read by [Zhang] Hanfu) - Ji Pengfei 12 April

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China

Regarding the Planned Discussion by our Side [during] [Souvanna] PHOUMA's [Upcoming] Visit to China

[Souvanna] PHOUMA [was] originally scheduled to fly from Moscow to Beijing on April 21st. Currently, because he [plans to] go to the United States for three days [starting from] the 8th, [his arrival time has changed.] [We] have not yet received a new notification from him [as to what day he will be arriving]. It seems likely [that his arrival] shall be postponed by several days. The purpose of his visit to China is to explain his ideas and to seek [our] support and assistance.

When visiting various countries, [Souvanna] PHOUMA published some remarks. [These include his] continuing insistence that he is the Prime Minister of the legitimate government [of Laos] and that the meeting of fourteen countries [must still] take place. However, he also openly stated that he favors the Anglo-Indian solution to Laos's problems. The circumstances of [Souvanna] PHOUMA's visit to the United States [are] worthy of close attention and [further] study.

[In] August of 1956 when [Souvanna] PHOUMA visited our country, we had many doubts [regarding him]. [He] only spoke in general [terms] about friendship [between our] two countries. [He would] not even dare to accept assistance [from] our country. In recent months, he has [begun to have a] better understanding of and confidence in our country's policies [regarding] the Laos Issue. Before [this] trip, he has repeatedly asked our country to give Laos assistance both economic and military. [He has] even established reciprocal economic and cultural relations with our country's representative institutions. [He] also stated that at the time of his visit, [he] would consider signing an economic and cultural agreement with us. Of necessity, this agreement may also include military projects.

With regards to the negotiations with [Souvanna] PHOUMA, we have the following items to consider:

1) The situation in Laos and resolution of the Laos Issue: [We should] resolutely express support for the legitimate [Laotian] government as led by [Souvanna] PHOUMA. With regards to the cease-fire, restoration of the International Control Commission, convening of a larger meeting in Geneva, establishment of a neutral zone between Cambodia, Burma, and Laos, and other issues [regarding] the future of peace and neutrality in Laos, [we should] resolutely express our perspectives and views in order to clarify the stakes. And that we will engage in more work with Phouma [so as to] weaken the impact of the United States, Britain, and India's influence [with him]. [In this way] enabling [Souvanna] PHOUMA to effectively and efficiently deal with Laos's problems.

2) The Problem of Sino-Laotian Diplomatic Relations: If [Souvanna] PHOUMA does not take the initiative to bring [this topic] up, I also cannot (the word "not" was circled and removed [from the text]) take the initiative to mention it. However, views [should be] exchanged between our two countries with respect to permanent representative organizations for economic and cultural exchanges between China and Laos. [It is] also possible for both sides to consider making a mutual exchange of resident journalists.

3. The Question of Aid: Phouma [has] already proposed the following projects to me: the residents of places such as Xiangkhouang and Phongsali are in need of many

supplies; the Kingdom of Laos and Phôngsali are in need of military [supplies and] weaponry; helping reconstruct the road between Xiangkhouang and Vietnam; helping to build the capital at Xiangkhouang . (At the same time this item also requires assistance from the Soviet Union and Vietnam); [and] developing border trade between the two nations. On this visit it is possible that these requests and others will be brought up. In principle all aid programs which are proposed by [Souvanna] PHOUMA can be agreed upon and the relevant documents can be prepared and signed. With regards to the issue of military assistance, [this can also be agreed upon] but it [must] not be included in the published documents. The aid which our country has already given such as assistance to the Gong Le Brigade can be included in the signed agreement and may be entered into our two countries' formal documentation (or as an attachment). ([Notes of Zhou Enlai]: Our country has been providing assistance via Vietnam, but not directly giving aid to Gong Le. This is inconvenient to enter in to our two countries' official documents.) If [Souvanna] PHOUMA expresses that he is only willing to have a verbal agreement or [if he], I can agree to [Souvanna] PHOUMA's requirement. However, signing of the documentation will be discussed later . The USD 80,000 and the one hundred trucks which I have already given Quinim Pholsena do not count as much [aid] and can be considered to be like a gift. They need not be included in the text of the aid program agreement. If [Souvanna] PHOUMA insists on them being entered, I can still agree with this. ([Notes of Zhou Enlai] One hundred trucks were also provided to them by way of the Vietnamese, but [were not] directly provided to Quinim [Pholsena].)

4) In order to fight [against] America and support the Patriotic People of Laos's struggle, we agree to publish a joint statement of clear and strong support with Phouma's government.

Remarks are requested.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
April 1961