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American aid to Laos, FY 1955 - FY 1962

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American Aid to Laos FY 1955 - FY 1962

Introduction

Laos, on its emergence as a nation in 1955, was confronted by many problems arising from a minimum of material resources; very few trained administrators or technical personnel; rugged terrain; lack of communications and other facilities; extreme ethnic diversity among its population, (with non-Lao ethnic groups constituting a majority); and severe internal security problems - subversion on the part of the Pathet Lao and the threat of invasion by Communist China or North Vietnam. These conditions called for the establishment of a relatively large armed force and a police force to combat internal subversion, as well as the creation of an administrative framework to unify the nation, and meet basic public needs. These responsibilities and burdens were far greater than the Lao Government's domestic financial resources.

Given these circumstances and the strategic location of Laos between the Communist nations to the north and other Free World nations of the area, the United States, upon the request of the Lao Government, has provided assistance to support the Royal Lao Government in its efforts to maintain its independence and territorial integrity and to assist the Lao economy.

Laos, with U. S. assistance, has been struggling to become a unified country and to resist Communist-led separatist movements and rebellions from the time it gained its independence. Without U. S. assistance this very poor and small country could not have maintained substantial military and militia forces, which effectively contained the Communist rebels until the latter were strengthened by the entry of North Vietnamese troops and advisers.

The United States is continuing its efforts to conclude arrangements that would make Laos a neutral and independent state. Since the conflict in Laos worsened in 1960, our Government has worked to settle the crisis after the Communist-supplied forces scored major military victories and placed themselves in a position to seize the entire country.

Our objectives were set forth by the President on March 23, 1961, namely that the United States strongly supports the goal of a neutral and independent Laos, tied to no outside power, threatening no one, and free from any domination. He also declared in favor of constructive negotiations, among the nations concerned and among the leaders of Laos which would help Laos back to the pathway of independence and genuine neutrality. On July 23, 1962 the United States was one of 14 nations to sign the Geneva agreements on Laos which are designed to bring about a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Laos.

Current U. S. assistance to the Government of National Union, which was formed under the Geneva plan for Lao unity, is part of a Free World effort (including British, French, Australian and Japanese assistance) to help establish an independent and truly neutral Laos and to prevent Laos from coming under

Communist control. Our assistance includes support of projects which benefit the Lao people and increase the influence of the non-Communist Government of National Union. For example, nearly 3,000 rural self-help and rural public works activities have been undertaken since 1959 with our aid and advice. Lao villagers' contributions of labor and local materials have met 50% of the total cost of self-help projects, including the construction of schools, wells, markets, community centers, dispensaries, small irrigation and drainage facilities, bridges and feeder roads. Such assistance counters the Communist propaganda claims that only the Pathet Lao are interested in the economic and social development of Lao villagers. The U. S. and other Free World countries also provide non-project aid to help meet essential Lao import and foreign exchange requirements and thus prevent the collapse of the Lao economy. The denial of such Western assistance to Laos at this time would likely result in internal chaos and a Communist takeover or the collapse of the Geneva plan for a unified Laos.

Administration

A separate United States AID Mission (US AID) to Laos was first established in Vientiane in 1959 to administer U. S. technical assistance, Military Budget Support and economic assistance. Included within the USOM was a Program Evaluation Office (PEO) which carried out the limited military non-tactical training and support activities permitted under the Geneva Agreement. Prior to 1955, the United States had been indirectly operating in the area under a program which provided equipment, supplies and budgetary support, during the Indochina War, administered through the French Government.

Following an evacuation of AID personnel after the Battle of Vientiane in December 1960, the US AID was reorganized with a Task Force in Laos and a Support Group in Bangkok/Thailand to cope with the existing conditions of hostilities and limited security in Laos. The PEO was replaced by an expanded Military Assistance Advisory Group on April 19, 1961. However, under the Geneva Agreements all U. S. military forces were evacuated by October 7, 1962. The US AID Support Group has now returned to Laos. Regional USAID offices, under the guidance of rural development advisors, have been established to coordinate U. S. assistance with local RIG authorities and Lao Provincial Development Councils in areas not under Pathet Lao control.

Program and Funding

From 1955 through June 1962 over \$441 million of economic and military assistance had been obligated or committed for U. S. assistance to Laos. Most of this American aid went to meet the immediate problems of continued existence of the Lao National Government. The Military Assistance Program provided the Lao army with military hardware and training in equipment maintenance and weapons utilization under PEO. Military Budget Support (MBS) is given to finance Lao defense expenditures including troop pay and allowances. Efforts to provide internal security included the establishment of a Lao National Police force and its training, equipment and support. This assistance was terminated subsequent to the Battle of Vientiane when the police were integrated into the Lao army. Civil Budget Support (CBS) has been required to help meet the deficit in the Lao civil budget.

Much of our economic aid through FY 1962 was in the form of cash grants to the Lao Government. The deposit of U. S. cash grant dollars generated local currency required for the military and civil budgets and to support U. S. economic projects in Laos. The sale of these dollars through the Lao National Bank to local businessmen and others, under the system of free convertibility, permitted them to import goods or spend the dollars abroad in other ways. This system had some advantages in that it maintained financial stability and removed incentives for corruption and smuggling, but it also invited wasteful use of resources and flight of capital.

In FY 1963 we have changed the system of financial assistance, curbing use of aid funds for wasteful purposes and putting pressure on the Lao authorities to reduce budgetary requirements for local currency. Our financial aid now is being focused on real import requirements, rather than being determined by Lao budget deficits.

Economic Projects

Meeting the above cited military requirements has limited the amount of aid available for economic project activities, as shown in Attachment A. Economic projects in Laos have been carried out in the fields of Transportation, Community Development, Public Administration, Education, Agriculture, Health and Industry and Mining.

Transportation. Nearly \$20 million has been obligated for projects such as the Development of the Lao National Road System, Improvement of River Harbors and Ferries, and Rehabilitation of the Wattay Airport. These obligations include funds to complete rehabilitation of the Wattay Airport at Vientiane; to complete the Vientiane-Thadeua Road linking the Lao administrative capital with the country's principal point of entry; to cover installation of bailey bridges to permit all-weather use of Luang Prabang-Vientiane Road; and to construct a proposed 100 km Nam Cadinh Road to link North and South Laos.

Community Development. Military operations in various parts of the country forced curtailment of operations such as the pilot rural development project in Xieng Khouang Province, which had been staffed by young American men and women of the International Voluntary Services (IVS). It had been planned to expand this project into eight provinces.

Another project, entitled National Development, provides the core of our current project activities. Under its three segments -- Rural Self-Help, Rural Public Works and Refugee Relief -- we have been able to aid the Lao villagers to construct through their own efforts wells, schools, community centers, dispensaries, feeder roads, village market places and small irrigation and drainage facilities. Over 2,700 of these activities have been completed since the United States assisted in the establishment of Provincial Development Councils in each Lao province in 1959. Since the coup of 1960 US AID efforts have included the organization of Lao village and district development councils in addition to providing in-service training for existing provincial development councils. Rural Public Works projects which affect more than one village have

included provincial roads, markets, regional schools, small dams and landing fields.

The United States is currently providing direct assistance to over 120,000 Lao war refugees. In most cases these refugees, who are normally self-sufficient in their mountain homeland, have been forced to flee without even the barest essentials. While thousands of refugees have reached villages and towns along the Mekong, most of these refugees are scattered in makeshift camps which vary in size from a few hundred refugees to seven and eight thousand. The only means of supply for these camps is by hazardous airlift and airdrops. The refugees have constructed over fifty landing strips, by hand, for use of small planes. Since it was not possible for most of these refugees to return to their homes with sufficient seeds before the end of the April-May 1962 planting season it is expected that refugee relief operations will be required to continue until December 1963, with the next rice harvest. Current hostilities in the Plaine des Jarres area may further prolong the need for this assistance.

Public Administration projects included Civil Police, and assistance in procurement, statistics, customs, banking and economic planning. Of these former projects only customs assistance in connection with the U. S. Import Program is presently active.

Education projects have attempted to meet the basic Lao needs for improved elementary school level education. A Teacher Training Center established near Vientiane has continued to function successfully in spite of the hostilities during the Battle of Vientiane and subsequent armed raids on the campus. Enrollment of elementary teacher trainees has exceeded 900. In addition, regional training centers have been established in two other provinces. All three centers are in year-round operation including in-service summer session workshops.

Agriculture activities included irrigation development, livestock and poultry assistance, crop development, agricultural extension and forestry conservation. These projects were transferred to Civil Budget Support (CBS), although irrigation activities continue under the National Development Project.

Health activities have included yaws control and malaria eradication as well as training of nurses and health workers. Another health project has been Operation Brotherhood (OB), consisting of Filipino medical teams who receive medical supplies through American aid. These OB teams, with their four hospitals and out patient clinics, have treated over 1 million cases since January 1957.

Industry and Mining. Proposed Industrial Development Centers to further handicrafts and essential village industries were never implemented due to the August 1960 coup; however, mineral surveys and training in mining operations practices took place prior to August 1960.

Proposals for future assistance programs are subject to continued discussions with the new Government of National Union to assure that these programs meet essential objectives of the United States and Laos.

Attached are a summary funding statement and several US AID reports providing further details on American Aid to Laos since the December 1960 Battle of Vientiane.

LAOS

Dollar Obligations and/or Commitments
and Local Currency Withdrawals by Type of Program FY 55-FY 62

(in millions of dollars or dollar equivalent)

I.	Total AID Assistance to Laos (\$ obligations)		290.4
A.	<u>Internal Security and Governmental Support</u>		
	Military Budget Support (L/C Withdrawals)		184.4
	Civil Budget Support (L/C Withdrawals)		18.2
	Police Support (\$ project obligations and L/C Withdrawals)		13.7
B.	<u>Economic Project Assistance</u>		
	Dollar Project Aid (\$ obligations - excluding Police)		49.8
	Support of Economic Projects (L/C Withdrawals - excluding Police)		24.3
	<u>Field of Activity</u>	<u>Dollar Obligations</u>	<u>Local Currency (withdrawals)</u>
	Agriculture	1.4	1.9
	Industry and Mining	1.8	0.6
	Transportation	20.5	7.9
	Education	2.4	1.9
	Health and Sanitation	2.5	1.8
	Public Administration	0.9	1.0
	(Civil Police) (1.9)		(11.8)
	Community Development	7.0	5.4
	General Technical Support and Other	<u>13.3</u>	<u>3.8</u>
		(51.7) 49.8	(36.1) 24.3
II.	<u>Total Military Assistance Program (MAP) Aid to Laos</u>		
	(DOD) Programmed Dollar Commitments		150.6
III.	<u>Total Mutual Security Program (MSP) Aid to Laos</u>		441.0
IV.	<u>PL 480</u>		1.2
V.	<u>Grand Total US Assistance to Laos</u>		442.2

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Preparatory Committee
Draft Paper
Contributions Chapter

LAOS

United States aid obligations to Laos were \$39,090,400 in FY 63. Of this total, \$536,000 was for Title III PL 480 surplus agricultural commodities and the rest supporting assistance grants. The supporting assistance funds were divided between project funds (\$20,035,400) and non-project funds (\$18,519,000). The non-project funds financed the import of various essential commodities and related services for which Royal Lao Government foreign exchange was not adequate. \$14.5 million of the local currency generated by these imports will be used for Lao budgetary support and about \$4 million in support of U.S.-financed economic development activities in Laos.

A total of 10 continuing projects were financed during FY 1963. 117 U.S. technicians were furnished at a cost of \$1,951,837 for the year and 92 participants were trained in the United States or third countries at a cost of \$84,890. In addition, contract services amounting to \$9,973,309 were furnished as well as \$7,496,499 worth of project related commodities and \$528,865 in local expenses.

Technical assistance activities included rural development, transportation teacher training, public health, a power plant and telephone installations in Vientiane and a large element for operations in support of all project activities which included heavy air support costs required by the chaotic political and security situation.

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13 October 1961

TASK FORCE REPORT NUMBER ONE

PART I

On January 10, 1961 USOM/Laos reorganized on a task force basis. The pattern for the new type of organization was set by the Director and the Executive Staff in the days immediately following the December Battle of Vientiane. At that time, USOM, with most of its personnel evacuated to Bangkok but faced with the need to take immediate action on emergency tasks radically different from its traditional function, was forced to approach them as an integrated entity.

The battle had left some eight thousand people in need of relief and assistance, essential public services had been damaged or disrupted and morale in the RLG civil service was at a low level. To cope with these problems, a core of essential USOM personnel remained in Vientiane after the battle and began refugee relief operations, assisted in hospital and medical work, rehabilitated public services (water and power) and generally began consultations and some planning activities with RLG. This period was short lived: a second evacuation became necessary on New Year's Day.

Following this last event, a reassessment of the American position in Laos indicated that an American presence in the shape of a civilian aid effort was required but that it would of necessity have to be different from that in the past. It was necessary to reiterate to the Lao people that the US interest in their country was not purely military or associated with military activities. Therefore, a USOM group was required in the country. On the other hand, the fluidity of the situation itself clearly suggested that a large mission along traditional ICA lines would be largely unemployed, would be difficult to support and cumbersome to protect or evacuate in possible future emergencies.

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Consequently, the mission was cut almost in half and split groups: 1) a volunteer task force, selected on an individual basis, with minimum administrative support activities in Vientiane, and 2) a support group based in Bangkok.

The composition of the task force itself was specifically dictated by the objectives it sought to achieve. Divisional lines were abolished and exports molded together to join with their opposite numbers on the Lao side to attack problems on a geographical basis rather than on a departmental basis. This was to have the effect of bringing greater expertise to bear on the smaller projects which were to become the major activity of the now integrated force. Further it was to bring US and Lao experts in various fields together in hundreds of small villages throughout the countryside. Whereas in the past there had tended to be a dichotomy between the self-help rural development approach to schools, irrigation and access roads, etc. and the divisional approach to doing the same types of things on a large scale, groups of experts would now address themselves to the smaller and somewhat larger projects on the same across the board basis.

It became obvious early in January that the refugee and relief operations would be necessary for some time. Secondly, there was need to make "impact" and to strengthen (and in some cases, re-establish) the American and RIG presence in practically all accessible areas. So the organization and operational pattern of the task force was developed along proven methods evolved in the Rural Development concept. This activity had in the past covered the largest geographic area of any activity in Laos; several field stations had been established and work was closely coordinated with the Lao people at all levels ranging from the central RIG ministries down to the village authorities. Moreover, it had established concepts, techniques and operational methods designed to strengthen "government-to-people" ties, develop the notion of self-help and simplify administrative procedures.

First, refugee and relief activities were made a sub-project. Secondly, because of their proven success in the past and their close similarity to the basic objectives of the task force, rural self-help sub-projects were continued and increased in accessible areas. In the third place, a new group of sub-projects was undertaken. They were the sub-projects of provincial significance.

Sub-projects of provincial significance were determined to be those of a size and significance which would affect more than a single town, village or community. For this type of activity somewhat more sophisticated planning and technical advice were required than could be provided through the traditional self-help methods. They included provincial roads, dams, market places, smaller airfields, provincial teacher training facilities, well drilling, etc.

Finally, 21 of the 23 larger projects planned or in being were either cancelled or transferred to the RIG. The eight retained by USOM were undertakings of longer term significance aimed primarily at building up the social and economic infrastructure of the country and eliminating bottlenecks.

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They include the development of the national road system and the rehabilitation of public works road equipment, the special Thadeua Road improvement and expansion of the Vientiane airport, the national teacher training center in Vientiane and the construction of the Vientiane outside telephone plant.

The need for mass media communications prompted the continuation of the Lao Photo Press, while shortage of medical assistance throughout the secure areas prompted continuation of USOM support to "Operation Brotherhood". Finally, the Police assistance project, while temporarily suspended, should be resumed as soon as the position of the Police assistance project, while temporarily suspended, should be resumed as soon as the position of the Police in the RIG is clarified. All of these major projects were and are, considered of high importance by the RIG. All, with the exception of roads, can be implemented within the restrictions imposed by security.

Eleven projects were reduced in scope and transferred to the RIG. In general, these were projects which covered activities and services normally provided by a host country itself. They also served to defray the cost of civil service salaries which USOM felt should be provided under the Lao Civil Budget.

The task force approach has been in operation for nine months. Certain visible results and trends to date permit a preliminary evaluation of its operations. In general, the task force has been a success. Refugee relief operations are proceeding smoothly, rural self-help sub-projects are being completed satisfactorily, in some cases considerably faster than in the past, and, on the whole, good work has been done on sub-projects of provincial significance. Specifically, relief aid has been and continues to be granted to some 50,000 persons, 500 self-help sub-projects have been completed or are nearing completion and sub-projects of provincial significance have generally passed the "take off" stage. This, despite the problems encountered in procurement, transport and the forced abandonment of certain projects due to security changes.

Procurement, in the first months of the task force's existence was a serious problem. Although ICA/W, at the Mission's request, promptly granted waivers of standard procedures and requirements to permit emergency procurement, a purchasing and contracting office had to be established in Bangkok and source of supply identified in the immediate vicinity of Laos to ensure effective and speedy acquisition of goods and services. This undertaking had its share of troubles and took time, but by July, 1961, it was functioning with reasonable smoothness. The second problem met, related to transport. Ample funds were available to contract for the full time use of aircraft but due to their general scarcity in the area, it was not until July that USOM could count on its own airlift consisting of two contract C-47 and one Beechcraft airplanes. Before this time, it had to borrow and rent planes as best it could. These problems created considerable delay in the implementation of some projects.

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Another factor which affected the degree of success of the sub-projects of provincial significance as a whole, was the mandatory abandonment of certain projects due to security conditions. Work on two partially completed dams in Vang Vieng, and on in Vientiane province had to be discontinued due to the retaking of the areas concerned by unfriendly forces.

Parallel to the material accomplishments described above other significant effects have been obtained by the task force, consistent with its original broad objectives. There is little doubt that the U.S. civilian aid presence has been strengthened by task force activities. When the mission returned in January it found morale in the RLG civil service at rock bottom. This condition had been brought about by some five months of drastically reduced government activity, in a divided camp, limited contacts with USOM and generally by "wait and see" attitudes imposed on it by the coup of August 9 and its aftermath. The return of American technicians, albeit in reduced numbers, plus their vigorous approach to problems at hand improved the outlook considerably. Moreover, with a reduction in the size and number of accessible areas, coupled with the mobility of the task force, more frequent visits to provincial areas than in the past have been possible for task force and RLG personnel. This has further restored some self confidence in RLG officials as well as confidence of the Lao population in their government officials and in the U.S. These attitudes have also been stimulated by the task force's proven ability to select and implement projects expeditiously.

On the side of the RLG operations the work and achievements of the task force have also had beneficial results. Public officials in Vientiane and in the provinces, already experienced in implementation of self-help sub-projects have from the beginning of the period under review participated actively in the selection, planning and execution of the larger sub-projects of provincial significance and in refugee relief activities. As a first result, this has increased their prestige and authority. Also, they have individually and collectively acquired valuable experience in administration and organization and developed a more realistic outlook concerning the capability of a village or community to undertake and absorb certain projects. A practical result has been their requests for aid in the 1962 fiscal year are more rational and modest than they have been in the past.

The RLG itself, in the spirit of the new aid approach, has taken some significant steps to expedite and improve execution of projects. Its most important action in this respect was the Prime Minister's decision to simplify contracting practices in the provinces. Under the new policy, the provincial authorities themselves are permitted to award contracts rather than having the awards made in Vientiane. Further, the waiting period between issuance of invitations to bid and the award of bids has been considerably shortened and the local authorities may also determine the number of bidders which may tender on a specific project. This again has expedited project implementation and raised the standing of local government.

In summation, the task force as a concept and as an operating unit has succeeded in Laos.

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PART II

A detailed narrative and graphic description of task force and other Mission activities from January through August 1961 is given in the following paragraphs:

1. Task Force

The actual organization of the task force with the relevant assignment of terms of reference and responsibilities took place in early February 1961.

Three categories of sub-projects were made the responsibility of the task force: relief and rehabilitation, rural self-help and sub-projects of provincial significance.

a) Relief and rehabilitation,

The relief and rehabilitation program of USOM really began on a small scale immediately following the battle of Vientiane. At that time some 8,000 persons in Vientiane province (City of Vientiane, Vang Vieng) were assisted in a cooperative program with the RLG Department of Social Welfare. Five hundred sacks of rice, 2,400 blankets, 1,000 sweaters, 850 cooking utensils, 400 cases of milk, 70 cases of soap, 1,000 pieces mosquito nets and other basic items were distributed. As military operations progressed to the south and to the north the refugee relief problem gradually grew. Because most of the areas requiring relief were (and are) inaccessible due to security, the larger part of relief supplies have had to be dropped by air. To establish refugee needs and a system of control in distribution, American task force personnel visited the areas involved for several days at a time, many times arriving by helicopter and then having to walk long distances to cover all the points surveyed. As a result a reasonably smooth working system was developed and as of August 31, 1961, the following relief supplies (excluding the Vientiane distribution mentioned before) had been distributed (mostly by airdeop):

Rice	800 tons
Blankets	7,620 units
Cloth	950 pkgs
Men's suits	2,360 units
Women's suits	2,500 "
Children's suits	7,200 "
Mosquito nets	1,950 "
Soap	12,776 bars (1 lb each)
Canned milk	13,150 cans
Cooking pots (6 qt.)	3,544 units
Rice steamers	2,076 "
Spoons	23,135 "
Forks	23,125 "
Butcher knives	2,860 "
Matches	1,520 boxes

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Candles	6,696 units
Pots (2 qt.)	950 "
Rice bowls	3,000 "
Plates	11,805 "
Sleeping mats	1,250 "
Table knives	1,766 "

In addition to the above distribution, the task force has transported relief supplies provided by CARE and the Missionary Alliance as follows:

CARE

Blankets	2,000 units
Cloth & sewing gear	1,500 pkts.
Hand tools	7,000 units

Missionary Alliance

Blankets	1,000 units
Plastic sheeting	2,000 yards
Black shirting	5,000 "

The recipients of relief aid have been mostly displaced Meo and other tribes people. Refugee relief can be expected to continue and to increase and eventually, the problem of resettlement of displaced persons will have to be faced. A sample of this future problem was experienced in late June, 1961, when approximately 2000 Meo displaced women, children and elders arrived unexpectedly in Vientiane. USOM personnel and the RLG Social Welfare department assisted by American and other volunteers manage to house and feed them and to supply them with basic necessities. They are still being cared for under emergency conditions and their future resettlement has not yet been decided.

b) Rural Self-help

The new Rural Development Project Agreement was signed on March 7, 1961, effective to June 30, 1961. Under the self-help section of the project all small self-help activities were approved and made the subject of sub-project agreements signed by the USOM RD field advisors and the various Provincial Development Councils. Subsequent changes in security conditions forced the dropping of some of the sub-projects planned and the addition of others so that by the end of FY 1961 some 500 were in hand. Of this figure, the majority have been completed. Some reports on progress are still lacking from some areas. Following is a list by province of the Rural Development sub-projects completed - or nearing completion since January.

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APPROVED RURAL DEVELOPMENT SUB-PROJECTS
 NATIONAL SUMMARY
 1960-1961
 PROVINCES

ACTIVITY	HOUA KONG	BUANG PRABANG	SAVANNAKHET	VIETIANG	KHAMMOUANH	SAVANNAKHET	SARAYANE	CHAMPASSAC	ATTAPEU	TOTAL
Schools	49	51	44	27	50	51	5	7	5	269
Dispensaries	3	8	2	4	11	9	6		3	48
Markets	5	5	3	4	3	6				20
Dams	4	5		14						20
Canals	2	6		1						9
Teacher's Quarters				1						1
Salac	13	12	2	3		1		1		22
Reservoir				4						4
Bridges	6			4		4		2		17
Roads				6						6
Comm. Centers		1			2					4
Stairs				1						1
Wells		6	6	31	12	7			20	72
Infirmary Kitchen		1								1
Airport		1								1
Poultry Hatchery		1								1
Nurses Quarters		1				2				3
Midwife School Dining Hall					1					1
ACTIVITIES	80	85	95	300	79	60	11	10	18	500

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c) Sub-projects of Provincial Significance

By August 31, 1961 eighteen sub-projects of Provincial significance had been jointly approved by USOM and RLG. Three of those sub-projects have been completed and work on others has progressed rapidly considering the difficult conditions prevailing in the rainy season and the early delays in procurement and transport. Work on two sub-projects had to be abandoned due to security conditions. The tables given below show progress of the sub-projects and their distribution by province.

Sub-Projects of Provincial Significance

<u>Name</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Under Construction</u>	<u>Completed</u>	<u>Cost (kip)</u>
Roads	3	3		3,573,280
Dams	4		1	126,000
Flumes	1	1	1	60,000
Wells *	31		31	154,000
Schools**	3	1		3,905,185
Airfields	1	1		829,120
Markets	1			1,400,000
Buildings	1	1		2,600,000
School Supplies	1	1		2(\$7000)
UN RD Support	1	1		2,203,300
Tribal Re-settlement	1	1		175,000

* This is the total number of wells drilled under one sub-project.

** Includes two teacher training facilities and one groupe scolaire.

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Geographic Distribution of Sub-Projects of Provincial Significance
by province

	<u>Vientiane</u>	<u>Namtha</u>	<u>Luang Prabang</u>	<u>Sayaboury</u>	<u>Savannakhet</u>	<u>Pakse</u>
Roads		1		1		1
Dams	3			1		
Flumes			1			
Wells*	27				3	1
Schools**			1			2
Airstrips				1		
Markets					1	
Buildings	1					
School Supplies***						
UN RD Support	1					
Tribal Re-settlement		1				

* Number of wells dug under one project

** Included two teacher training facilities and one groupe scolaire

*** Supplies distributed to all accessible provinces

In planning the sub-projects equitable geographic distribution has been of primary consideration.

Brief progress reports on the various sub-projects of national significance are given below.

Roads

Paksong-Thateng road - Pakse. This project is 85% complete. Fifteen kilometers have been repaired and two bridges rebuilt.

Namtha-Houei Sai Road - Namtha. Practically all the road and bridge surveys have been completed. Materials are being assembled to begin construction. The road will be 143 kilometers long. 10% complete.

Sayaboury-KeneTaco Road - Sayaboury. Some grading and realigning completed and small bridges have been built. Survey of entire road is underway. This project is 15% complete.

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Dams

Vang Vieng Dams - Vientiane. One of these dams was finished and two were partially finished when work had to be discontinued because of security conditions.

Paklay Dam - Sayaboury. Surveys and preliminary work was begun on this dam but had to be stopped due to security conditions.

Flumes

Ben Nam Pa Flume - Luang Prabang. This sub-project has been completed. It provides water for irrigation of about 500 acres of land and for the Luang Prabang Teacher Training Center.

Wells

Well Drilling - Vientiane (27), Savannakhet (3) and Pakse (1). This sub-project has been completed. Wells have been drilled to provide water to a refugee village, to schools, hospitals and other public buildings and to urban peoples. Some pumps (both power and hand) have been installed.

Schools

Teacher Training Center - Pakse. Plans and specifications for classroom and housing facilities for 100 students and faculty have been completed and a site has been provided by the province. Construction will begin at the end of the rainy season.

Teacher-Training Center - Luang Prabang. Same progress reported as the sub-project shown immediately above.

Paksong Groupe Scholaire - Pakse. Plans and specifications have been completed. Construction will start at the end of the rainy season.

Airfields

Levelling, surfacing and lengthening of the runway in Sayaboury from 1,300 to 1,700 meters is well underway. Drainage work has been completed. The project as a whole is 50% complete.

Markets

Kengkok Market - Savannakhet. Detailed plans and specifications have been completed and construction should begin at the end of the rainy season.

Buildings

Rural Affairs Training Center - Vientiane. Construction of this building is underway and is presently about 30% complete.

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Provision of School Supplies

This sub-project is completed. Under it, school supplies have been distributed to primary schools in all provinces not under Pathet Lao control.

United Nations Rural Development Support-Vientiane

Under this sub-project the following work has been accomplished; road maintenance and building of three bridges, two schools have been completed and three are under construction, thirteen wells have been drilled and land has been cleared for the establishment of a model farm. The project is about 50% completed.

Tribal Resettlement-Namtha

Under this project animals and tools were provided to 25 displaced hill tribe families. The sub-project has been completed.

1962

In addition to the sub-projects listed above, considerable work was done on two large sub-projects which will be funded and begun in FY 1962.

Market Improvement-Vientiane. This project will cost approximately 17,000,000 kip. It will provide an improved, modern and hygienic market for the city of Vientiane. Engineering and architectural plans have been completed and work should begin at the end of the rainy season.

New Market-Savannakhet. This sub-project will give Savannakhet a totally new market. It will cost 10,000,000 kip. Plans have been completed and await final approval by USOM and RLG. Work should begin at the end of the rainy season.

2. Other Projects

In addition to the activities described in the preceding paragraphs, the Mission has also continued implementation of certain major projects, the progress of which will be described in this section.

a) National Education Center (Teacher Training Project)

After the return to normal operations after the events of December-January described before, the first order of business at the National Education Center was to prepare for the anticipated increase in enrollment (from 550 to 850) in September, 1961. Construction of ten major buildings and several minor ones was undertaken and completed by August 15, 1961.

Construction was performed under the supervision of a USOM architect, making use of the school's labor force and with help of students unable to return home during the vacation period. This resulted in substantial saving of time and funds and in demonstrating better workmanship.

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School furniture was ordered and began arriving early in September. Additional staff was obtained from the RLG (20) and from the French Cultural Mission(24). The Lao contract was renewed and nine teachers had reported for duty by the end of September.

The curriculum of the four year course was re-studied with the result that 50 hours per week will be taught to the various sections of trainees in subjects such as agriculture, public health, arts and crafts, carpentry, masonry, home economics and electricity; then will be taught by teams of American and Lao teachers. The science curriculum is currently being re-orientated by a committee of Lao, French and American teachers to make it more meaningful for a nation such as Laos.

During the summer an in-service workshop was held for 350 teachers, (150 at the Center and 200 in the provinces). The purpose of this workshop was to upgrade teaching skills, especially in the lower elementary teachers and to inculcate some new concepts of community improvement through school leadership. Special materials and courses were prepared for this by the IVS team.

In order to assist in staffing and organizing the regional teacher training center being constructed by the task force, the NEC has undertaken to develop materials, curricula, undertake recruitment of students, etc. A pilot section of sixty students will begin work by October 1, 1961.

Other activities include assistance in the shape of commodity and technical support to a Materials Production Center (UNESCO) and some financial support to the Technical School teacher training project (UN Special Fund project) to increase its classroom, workshop and boarding facilities.

b) National Road System

The first two BPR technicians to return to Vientiane in January, 1961 began the rehabilitation and improvement of the national equipment park of RLG Ministry of Public Works, located seven kilometers outside Vientiane (PK7). Both the equipment pool and repair facilities were in urgent need of attention. A work program was developed with the dual purpose of quickly getting as much equipment off the line as possible and organizing and equipping repair and maintenance facilities. To date, the following work has been accomplished:

Equipment Rebuilt and Overhauled

4 Graders
 2 Electric Plants
 1 Road Wrecker
 8 Tractors (6 Crawler and 2 Wheel)
 3 Elevating grader attachments
 1 Soil mixer
 1 Pressure Water tank trailer
 1 8-ton Roller
 1 Road broom

1 Road Blower
10 Trucks
2 Shovels
1 Crane
1 Super C Scraper

Additionally, the following facilities have been completed and are in use: a warehouse complete with bins and control office; an engine rebuild shop, a machine shop, a shop office, a power house, a water supply system.

This work has been done with the assistance of locally hired third country personnel. On the other hand, the Lao staff employed at the park have shown remarkable progress in learning the mechanical, electrical and other skills, and it is now possible to send mechanics, trained at the park, to work in the provinces without direct supervision of American or TCS staff.

The second group of BFR technicians returned to Vientiane in March, 1961. Its immediate task was to develop a program (in local currency) for road building in the areas of Laos. In May a project agreement was signed providing \$450,000 in counterpart for work to be done in the accessible areas of of nine provinces. Preparatory work and assembly of materials was begun immediately upon signing of the agreement. Actual construction under this program will begin at the end of the rainy season.

A major road project to be undertaken during the next dry season is the construction of the Vientiane-Thadeua road (19 kilometers). This work will be under the engineering supervision of the Officer in Charge of Construction, Southeast Asia (US Navy). The A & E work is almost completed and invitations to bid will be issued shortly.

c) Vientiane Airport

The contract to build a new runway, taxiways, drainage system at the Vientiane airport has been signed and work will begin at the end of the rainy season. Work will also begin on ancillary facilities such as parting apron, automobile parking, access road and utilities for the new terminal building constructed with French aid funds. A complete A & E for these facilities will be performed and invitations to bid will be prepared.

d) VARDA

One of the admirable contributions to the activities of the task force has been that of the IVS/VARDA group. The refugee relief sub-project in particular owes a large measure of its success to the efficiency and dedication with which these people have performed the tasks assigned to them. They have travelled continuously to remote villages and settlements to evaluate, on the spot refugee needs and to organize a system of distribution and control of relief supplies. Members of the group have visited and lived, sometimes for days on end, in villages surrounded by the enemy. Some of these places are only accessible by foot trail which has meant that they have had to make several two and three day hikes to reach them.

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In arranging for the actual distribution of relief supplies the IVS/VARDA group has selflessly given its time and energies to the supervision of loading of aircraft, to participation in the air drops and to the reception, warehousing, preparation of commodities for distribution. This has at times meant working long hours continuously for several days.

An IVS/VARDA nurse has since January, directed the nursing school of the Vientiane hospital. The first group of nurses trained under her supervision were "capped" early in August. Also, she translated and distributed numerous simple manual instructions on hospital procedures and methods.

In addition to the task force activities described above, IVS/VARDA had engaged in some small projects: demonstration of a small earth block machine which has been adopted in three villages; demonstration of a hand washing machine; experimentation with a long handled hoe that could be made by villagers; construction of a baffle over a drainage culvert to prevent flooding of rice land, etc.

e) Regional Communications

The Laos section of this project was originally to have provided the country with a domestic and international telecommunications system. Because of security conditions the decision was made to suspend implementation of all phases of this project except the construction of the outside telephone plant for the city of Vientiane. Engineering work has proceeded on this phase, commodities have been ordered, recruitment of third country technician personnel is being arranged and actual work should begin by late October.

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Jan. 27, 1962

TASK FORCE REPORT NUMBER TWO

PART I

The USOM/Laos Task Force is one year old and the time is appropriate for taking stock of its first year of life. The first report concerning Task Force activities (TOICA A-378) up to August 31, 1961 was submitted on October 13, 1961; this supplementary presentation will attempt to bring the data contained in that report up to date.

The work of the re-organized Mission generally has proceeded in accordance with the pattern established with reorganization took place. However, with most of the Task Force's "teething troubles" out of the way, and with an appreciation of certain changes in conditions affecting it and other factors, there now emerges a view of its merits, advantages and defects and, to some extent, of its outlook for the future. The original problems of procurement, transport have been received; the personnel situation is improved and generally good progress has been made toward overcoming support and "housekeeping" difficulties.

The problems which were created by the critical emergency conditions that obtained during the first months of the Task Force's existence still exist, but they are now being dealt with by means of methods and situations which have presented themselves in the past months. This has meant that a routine has been established for Task Force operations and that technicians have been able to devote more time and effort to the substantive aspects of the Task Force program. They have been able to make more visits to areas where the various projects and sub-projects are being implemented and to participate more directly therein. This has naturally resulted in accelerated project implementation and in a better quality in the end product.

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As a result of the developments described above, good progress has been made toward achievement of the basic objective of the Task Force, that is, the strengthening of the American civilian presence in Laos. Reports from USOM field representatives and from force technicians clearly indicate an appreciable improvement in the morale and attitudes of RIG officials and the Lao people affected by Task Force activities. Their enthusiasm and dedication in working side by side with USOM technicians is higher than it has ever been in the past. In some cases, RIG officials and employees have risked their personal safety transporting aid materials and equipment through insecure areas to remote villages. Also, upon completion of many sub-projects (sometimes even small ones), villagers have requested that American representatives be present at the completion ceremonies.

The Task Force by its presence and work in Laos has achieved another impact, perhaps more lasting, in the thinking and attitudes of the Lao. The Lao people concerned take the concepts of aid and self-help much more seriously than in the past. This is reflected in a big improvement in their planning, selection of sub-projects and in more realism and awareness of the relative merit of the one possible sub-project over another. Also, the importance of the contribution of the people themselves to "self-help", sub-projects is now taken seriously. (In one area, the local governor has established the policy that no aid materials will be released to a village unless the latter first makes its contribution and formally commits the labor for sub-project implementation).

Another positive effect of Task Force activities on the thinking of Lao officials and people has been the introduction of improved methods and practices in the awarding of contracts, procurement and project supervision and control. In the field of the larger sub-projects of provincial significance particularly, the continued presence of USOM technicians at bid openings and their follow-up visits to work sites has osmotically introduced basic concepts of inspection, control, etc., into the thinking of their counterparts.

To summarize, good material results have emerged the Task Force operations during their first year and the educational and training by-product therefrom has been of an encouragingly high quality.

PART II

The three main areas of Task Force activity have been: (A) Refugee Relief and Rehabilitation; (B) Rural Self-Help Sub-Projects; (C) Sub-Projects of Provincial Significance. In addition, the Mission has continued a number of other projects. Developments in each of these areas is detailed in the following paragraphs.

A. Refugee Relief and Rehabilitation

Refugee aid continues to be a major Task Force function. Despite the "cease fire" conditions, a considerable displacement of Mee and other tribes people has gone on during the year and the problem of feeding and

clothing them has not abated. Many of those folk are in remote isolated areas and their relief has been conducted exclusively by "air drop". USOM aircraft have been almost on daily operations since July, dropping rice, salt and other basic necessities. Direct relief operations will continue for some time and eventually the "rehabilitation" phase of the function will have to be implemented. Toward the end of the year (1961), the first indication of a resettlement demand appeared. Some 480 displaced Meos expressed the wish to settle in Sayaboury province in time to prepare for the 1962 rice crop. The Mission, in cooperation with the RLG agencies concerned, is planning to provide assistance for their resettlement provided helicopters can be obtained to transport the commodities and the refugees. This experiment will provide an idea of the nature and scope of what will have to be faced in eventual resettlement of all refugees.

From September 1, 1961 through December 1961, the Mission provided the following commodities for refugee relief:

Blanket	18,092 Pcs.
Men's clothing	3,486 Sets
Women's clothing	1,945 Sets
Skirt	3,251 Pcs.
Boy's clothing	2,136 Sets
Girl's clothing	2,699 Sets
Mosquito nets	1,487 Pcs.
Sleeping mats	2,280 Each
Candles	11,952 Each
Matches	27,540 Pcks.
Soap	43,960 Pcs.
Milk	13,869 Can
Plates	11,915 Pcs.
Bowls	1,440 Pcs.
Spoons	11,073 Pcs.
Forks	11,073 Pcs.
Knives, table	2,930 Pcs.
Knives, butcher	1,630 Pcs.
6-Qt. Pots	2,473 Pcs.
Sauce pan with lid	831 Pcs.
Lao Steamer pots	1,683 Pcs.
Salt	102,575 Kgs.
Rice, white	640,340 Kgs.
Rice, glutinous	122,168 Kgs.

B. Rural Self-Help

The rate of progress in rural self-help sub-projects has varied among the different provinces. Security conditions, communications and the vigor of local RLG officials are among the factors responsible for the variation. In general, however, progress has been good.

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1. Luang Prabang

The implementation of sub-projects has suffered more because of security conditions in Luang Prabang, Namtha and Sayaboury than in any other area of Laos. To date, no sub-projects agreements for 1962 have been signed in Luang Prabang. Work on sub-projects funded in FY 1961, however, is still going on; they include two dams, one flume, four compost sheds and twelve schools.

It is anticipated that sub-project agreements for 1962 will be signed in January 1962. Present plans are only for four dams and a few other small sub-projects to be approved. Local authorities are reluctant to commit themselves further due to the uncertainty of security conditions in the province.

2. Nantha

Rural self-help sub-project agreements for FY 1962 will be considered in January. In the meantime, work is nearing completion on sub-projects funded in FY 1961. They are: nineteen schools, nine salas (rest shelters), one community center, one irrigation canal, six bridges and one market. Of a total of 80 sub-projects originally approved, 38 had to be dropped due to security restrictions.

3. Sayaboury

No decisions have yet been made regarding rural self-help sub-projects for 1962.

4. Vientiane

In Vientiane province the following sub-projects have been approved in principle: 22 schools (16 new construction, five expansion, one repair), three market places, one community center, 41 wells, one sala and one dispensary. Additionally, requests for six more school sub-projects (two expansion, five new construction and one repair), one community center, five wells and one dispensary have been submitted to the provincial development council. They will be considered later.

It is expected that the pertinent sub-project agreements will be signed in January.

5. Thakhek

Fifteen sub-project agreements covering 141 activities have been signed. They include 55 schools (51 construction, 4 repair), 67 wells, 9 dispensaries, 2 community centers, 2 markets, 6 foot bridges.

6. Savannakhet

Fourteen sub-project agreements have been signed. They cover 46 schools (15 construction, 31 repair), 1 teacher's quarters, 2 bridges, 2 markets, 2 dispensaries (one building, one repair).

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7. Pakse

One agreement conveying 13 sub-projects has been signed. Two more agreements for additional 27 sub-projects will be signed in January. Under these agreements, the following sub-projects will be implemented: 8 small markets, 15 bridges, 30 wells (one sub-project), 3 dispensaries, 8 schools, 5 small dams. Sub-projects funded in FY 1961 have been completed.

8. Saravane

An agreement for 13 sub-projects has been signed and a second agreement for 10 more will be signed in January. They will provide assistance for building 3 schools, 2 markets, 10 wells (one sub-project) and 17 bridges.

9. Attapeu

Because of uncertain security conditions, only 10 sub-projects are presently being considered for 1962. They are: 8 bridges and 2 schools. Additional sub-projects may be considered later in the year.

10. Muong Khong

This is one of the new provinces created by RIG last year. No agreement has been signed yet, but it's expected that some 35 sub-projects will be undertaken during FY 1962. They will include six schools, five markets, 20 bridges and some wells.

11. Bassac

This is another new province. There is yet no agreement, but probably six schools, 10 bridges, 2 markets and some wells will be approved.

C. Sub-Projects of Provincial Significance

The following sub-projects of provincial significance were funded in 1961 but work on them has carried on to FY 1962.

Roads

Paksong-Thateng Road, Pakse. This project is 99 per centum completed; one kilometer remains to be repaired.

Namtha-Houei Sai Road. This road (185 kms) is presently open for jeep traffic in its entire length and for truck traffic for 54 kilometers. A total of 305 meters of major bridges and 175 meters of small bridges (three to six meter class) has been built and materials are on site for an additional 115 meters. With the completion of the latter, approximately 50 per centum of the bridge requirements of the entire road will have been

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met and the entire length of the road will be open to truck traffic. The project is approximately 50 per centum complete and will be continued with FY 1962 funds.

Sayaboury-Kenethao Road. This route (242 kms) is open for jeeps for 177 kilometers and for trucks for 75 kilometers. One hundred and seventy meters of major bridges, 150 meters of small bridges and 8 box culverts have been completed. The sub-project is about 40 per centum complete.

Schools

Teacher Training Center - Pakse. Work on this sub-project (which will provide accommodations for 100 students and faculty) was begun in December and is about 20 per centum complete.

Teacher Training Center - Luang Prabang. Work on this school began two months ago and is presently at 40 per centum of completion mark.

Groupe Scolaire - Paksong. This project was completed in mid-December.

Airfields

Sayaboury Airfield. Work has continued on this sub-project and it is presently 60 per centum complete. The strip should be ready for use by C-46 aircraft by the end of the dry season; presently it can accommodate aircraft up to the C-47 class only.

Markets

Kengkok Market. Plans have been completed, the agreement has been signed and work should begin in about one month's time.

Buildings

Rural Affairs Training Center, Vientiane. This sub-project is about 60 per centum complete.

United Nations Rural Development Support

This sub-project, which included road maintenance, construction of three bridges, some small schools, land clearing and some well drilling, has been completed.

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Up to the present time, seven sub-projects of provincial significance have been approved for funding in FY 1962.

Roads

Namtha-Hovei Sai Road. Additional funds are being provided to continue work begun in 1961.

Schools

Ban Phone Sat School, Luang Prabang. The sub-project agreement has been signed but construction has not yet begun.

Ban Khay School, Luang Prabang. This sub-project is in the same status as the one above.

Markets

Namtha Market. The agreement has been signed but construction has not yet begun.

Vientiane Market. The plans and specifications for this market have been completed. The agreement should be signed within one week and bids will formally be invited on January 20, 1962.

Savannakhet Market. The same status as the above sub-project.

Rural Survey, Sayaboury

The agreement for this sub-project has been signed and work began on January 3, 1962.

D. Other Projects

1. National Education Center

Classes opened at the National Education Center in Vientiane in September with an enrollment of approximately 800 students. There are four programs now in progress: a four-year elementary teacher training course, a three-year secondary school teacher training course, a four-year English teacher training course and a one-year rural elementary teacher training course.

The last, a pilot section for the rural teacher training program to be undertaken in regional centers, opened October 1, 1961 with 67 students of whom nine are from minority ethnic groups. Curriculum and materials for teaching are virtually complete.

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Two special training programs have been undertaken: recruitment and training of staff for the regional centers to be completed soon and a special course in teacher education and school administration. Also, special instruction has been given to two classes of Lao Army "civic action" teams, who will operate in areas of doubtful security.

Additional construction at the NEC to permit the accommodation of 1,000 students will be considered if the necessary funding can be obtained. This work should be completed by July 1962. Through the National Development Project, expansion of the facilities at the Trades School in Savannakhet is being undertaken. The French and Lao armies are cooperating in this project.

School construction and supply in provincial areas have been closely coordinated with other provincial development activities and two IVS education specialists are to be stationed in the northern and southern regions early in 1962.

2. National Road System

The project agreements for the road construction work for FY 1962 have not yet been prepared. Work financed with FY 1961 funds, however, has proceeded at a good pace. A summary report of the status in each province as of December 1, 1961 follows.

- Iuang Prabang - RLG 138, PK 2+500- 7 KM
Stockpiling of stone at the crusher at PK-14 continues.
Subgrade is completed.
Project is considered to be 78% complete.
- Nam Tha - Repair of 2 bridges and light improvement of 22 km
of Houei Sai route.
Materials purchased. Project 52% complete.
- Sayaboury - 9 bridges on Sayaboury-Thadeua route.
Project is complete.
- Vientiane - RLG 138 - PK 20 to PK 40 = 20 km.
Subgrade is 30% complete. Project is 17% complete.
Ban Hom Road - PK 12+300 = 26+000 - 13.7 km
Project is 22% complete.
- Savannakhet - RLG 13N - PK 864-969 5 Km
This project has been completed with FY 60 funds.
- Thakhek - RLG 13S, PK 22-29 - 7 KM
RLG 13N, PK 0.5-3.5 = 3 km
Subgrade 85%, base course 85%, asphalt 70%
Project is 85% complete.

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- Pakse - RLG 10W - PK 8-24 = 16 km
Subgrade 50%. base course 45%
Project is 46% complete.
- Attopeu - Work could not be performed on programmed section because of security. Alternate streets in Attopeu are being improved by reshaping and placing clay - gravel base course.
40% of the work has been completed.
- Saravane - NR, OK 134-138
Estimate 50% complete.

Work on the completion of the National Equipment Park of the Ministry of Public Works in Vientiane (PK-7) and the repair and rehabilitation of road construction equipment has proceeded at a very rapid pace. Since September 1, 1961, the following facilities have been completed at the Park: electrical shop, paint shop, equipment storage shed, showers and toilets, 2,500 gallon water tank, automotive repair shop, service station and materials storage shed. In addition, the following pieces of equipment have been completely overhauled and rehabilitated:

- 2 Graders
- 1 Electric plant
- 2 Water tank trucks
- 7 Dump trucks
- 2 Model "D" Tournapulls
- 3 Rotary compressors
- 2 Super "C" Tournapulls
- 3 LW 16 Dozers
- 1 75 B shovel
- 1 Crushing and screening plant
- 1 Sheepsfoot roller
- 1 Road broom
- 1 TD 9 loader-tractor
- 1 Ross fork lift.

A new pay scale has been set up for all employees and trainees and the training of Lao technical personnel has progressed very well.

The contractor selected to build the road from Thanaleng to Vientiane (19 kms) arrived in Vientiane in December. Work has proceeded very rapidly on this sub-project and it is presently about 2 per centum complete.

3. Vientiane Airport

The contractor selected for this project began work in November 1961. He will build a new runway, taxiways, drainage system and other major facilities at the Wattay airfield in Vientiane. This phase of the Project

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is about 2 per centum complete. The A & E work on the ancillary facilities for the airport is being done and is at present about 20 per centum complete.

4. Regional Communications

Engineering work on this project has continued. Materials for the outside telephone plant for Vientiane will arrive in Vientiane on February 15, 1962. It is hoped that third country technicians will be available at that time to begin the actual construction work.

5. Other Activities

The Mission has continued advisory and support activities in the fields of public health, finance and public safety.

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Attachment D
April 28, 1962

TASK FORCE REPORT THREE

The basic structure of Lao-American contact outside Vientiane was and still is centered on a Rural Development Advisor who operates as a quasi-official link between the provincial government, the national government, and USAID, as well as being a general US good-will ambassador before the local people. Previously, when a technician assigned to an operating division visited the field, he was provided food and lodging and certain local administrative amenities by the RD Advisor, but the Technician's major orientation was with his counterpart Ministry and his Division Hierarchy. Contacts with local people were limited, except in the case of the Agricultural Technicians.

In the Task Force, all Technicians work through and with the local RD Advisor. They tend to work on more, albeit smaller projects, to which they bring a higher level of technical competence than had been the case for pre-Task Force rural self-help sub-projects. The net result has been to put civil engineers Ardin, Cummins, Ridgeway, and Wimbich; agriculturists Lewis, MacQueen, and Matthews; education advisor Freeman, and medical doctor Platt, into the field more often and with wider contact with local Lao.

This has meant that more mature and experienced technicians have had wider contacts at the provincial and village level. This has impressed these officials and others with our presumed greater interest in their problems and has, in effect, given these activities higher status in their eyes.

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Sub-Projects

(a) The following Rural Self-Help Sub-Projects (mentioned in Ref. A) were completed during the calendar year 1961 (1st January 1961 to 31 December 1961).

1. Luang Prabang

Schools -- 11 new; 2 repaired; Dispensaries -- 1;
Irrigation canals -- 1; Bridges -- 2; Dams -- 1; Flumes --
7; Rice fields -- 4.

2. Namtha

Schools -- 22; Dispensaries -- 3; Irrigation canal -- 1;
Bridges -- 6; Community centers -- 6; Ricefields -- 5;
Markets -- 1.

3. Sayaboury

Schools -- 29: new; 14 repaired; Dispensaries -- 2; Wells --
3; Flumes -- 2.

4. Vientiane

Schools -- 16 new; 16 repaired; Dispensaries -- 2; Irriga-
tion canals -- 2; Wells -- 55; Roads -- 3 new; 1 repaired;
Markets -- 6; Bridges -- 1; Community Centers -- 17 new;
10 repaired; Reservoir -- 1.

5. Thakhek

Schools -- 22 new; 2 repaired; Dispensaries -- 4; Wells --
12; Markets -- 3; Bridges -- 1; Community Centers -- 2;
Water reservoir -- 3.

6. Savannakhet

Schools -- 3 new, 5 repaired; Dispensaries -- 1; Wells --
1; Markets -- 3; Bridges -- 2; Community Centers -- 3.

7. Pakse

Schools -- 35 new, 25 repaired; Markets -- 1; Bridges -- 2;
Community Centers -- 2.

8. and 9 No up-to-date information available now for
Saravane and Attopeu due to insecure conditions in these
areas.

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10 and 11. No Sub-Projects agreements were made in either of these two new provinces (Kuong Khong and Bassac).

The following additional Rural Self-Help Sub-Projects are already funded for FY '62 and are underway.

1. Luang Prabang

Dams -- 5

2. Namtha

Schools -- 8; Bridges -- 1; Community center -- 1

3. Sayaboury

Schools -- 14; Wells -- 1; Community center -- 1

4. Vientiane

Schools -- 6; Community centers -- 2; Wells -- 3; Water Reservoir -- 1; Dispensaries -- 1 new, 1 to be repaired.

5. Thakhek

Schools -- 17 new, 1 to be repaired; Wells -- 3.

6. Savannakhet

Schools -- 18 new, 1 to be repaired; Wells -- 12; Technical school -- 1.

7. Pakse

Schools -- 21; Markets -- 2; Community centers -- 1.

8. Saravane

Schools -- 4; Dispensaries -- 2

9. Attapeu

No sub-projects for FY '62 due to insecure conditions.

10. Sithandone (Muong Khong)

Schools -- 2; Bridges -- 3

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11. Champassac (Muong Bassac)

No sub-projects yet submitted

12. Borikhane (Muong Paksane)

School -- 1; Dispensary -- 1; Community center -- 1;
Wells -- 3.

(c) All Provincial Sub-Projects for FY 1961 (mentioned in Ref. A) are completed except for the following:

1. Teacher Training Center in Pakse (90 per cent complete).
2. Kengkok Market (90 per cent complete).
3. Sayaboury-Kenethao Road (60 per cent completed).
4. Sayaboury Airfield (80 per cent completed).

(d) Progress on Provincial Sub-Projects for FY '62 (mentioned in Ref. A) is as follows:

Roads

Namtha-Houai Sai Road 70 per cent completed when work suspended due to hostilities.

Schools

Ban Phone Sat, and Ban Khay schools, Luang Prabang, construction not yet started.

Markets

Namtha, no construction due to security conditions.
Vientiane, work started 25 April 1962.
Savannakhet, work to start week of 30 April 1962

Rural Survey, Sayaboury

Completed.

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(c) Progress on additional FY '62 Provincial Sub-projects is as follows:

1. Supplementary work for Rural Affairs Warehouse in Luang Prabang completed;
2. Thahine Market (Pakse) underway;
3. Champasac Market underway;
4. POL for Namtha-Houei Sai Road cancelled due to hostilities
5. POL for well-drilling project completed;
6. Namtha Airfield Improvement halted due to hostilities;
7. Purchase of cement for projects 2 and 3 completed;

Attachment E

August 18, 1962

RURAL SELF-HELP SUB-PROJECTS FUNDED AND/OR COMPLETED

JANUARY 1, 1959 to JUNE 30, 1962

	<u>TOTAL FUNDED</u>	<u>TOTAL COMPLETED</u>
Village Schools.....	981	838
Vocational Schools.....	1	0
Dispensaries.....	88	81
Irrigation Canals.....	118	118
Barrages.....	7	0
Dams.....	40	36
Reservoirs.....	5	3
Wells.....	414	336
Roads.....	215	213
Bridges.....	45	41
Markets.....	21	15
Community Centers.....	554	542
Community Gardens (Nam Tha only).....	17	17
New Rice Fields.....	74	74
Airstrips.....	7	7
Creamitories.....	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
TOTALS	2589	2323

The total U.S. contribution toward these projects was 77,609,830 kips. The U.S. contribution was matched by villagers in the form of labor primarily. On projects such as roads, bridges, irrigation canals, gardens, rice fields, etc., villagers contributed more than 50 per cent of the total cost; on other projects such as schools and community centers, their contribution was no more than half.

Rural Self-Help Activities Funded
 During FY '62
 Kip 12,649,830

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Attch. No. 3

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USAID/LAOS/VIENTIANE TOAID A-134

	<u>Schools</u>	<u>Mar- kets</u>	<u>Wells</u>	<u>Dispen- saries</u>	<u>Bridges</u>	<u>Commu- nity Cen- ters</u>	<u>Roads</u>	<u>Water Reser- voir</u>	<u>Dam</u>	<u>Barr- ages</u>	<u>Tech- nical School</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Vientiane	26	3	36	2	-	4	2	1	-	-	-	74
Khanmouane	23	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
Savannakhet	23	-	18	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	44
Sedone	44	2	1	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	50
Wapikanthong	4	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	5
Sithandone	6	-	13	2	3	-	-	-	-	7	-	31
Champassak	7	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Saravane	4	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Luang Prabang	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3
Nam The	4	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	6
Borikhane	1	-	3	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	6
Sayaboury	<u>15</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>17</u>
TOTAL	157	6	78	7	4	12	2	2	4	7	1	280

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PROVINCIAL DEVELOPMENT SUB-PROJECTS

UNDERWAY AND COMPLETED SINCE MARCH 1, 1961

A. March 1, 1961 to June 30, 1961

Underway Completed

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Repair of Paksong-Thateng Road (15 kilometers)..... | x |
| 2. Teacher Training Center, Pakse..... | x |
| 3. Teacher Training Center, Luang Prabang..... | x |
| 4. U. N. Rural Development Support..... | x |
| 5. Paksong School..... | x |
| 6. Sayaboury Airport Extension (First Project)..... | x |
| 7. Flume in Ban Na Luang (Luang Prabang)..... | x |
| 8. Market in Kengkhet (Savannakhet)..... | x |
| 9. Rural Affairs Training Center (Vientiane)..... | x |
| 10. Nam Tha-Houei Sai Road (First Project)..... | x |
| 11. Well-Drilling (Various Areas)..... | x |
| 12. Nam Tha Tribal Resettlement..... | x |
| 13. Sayaboury-Ken Thao Road (First Project)..... | x |

TOTAL	1	12
TOTAL U.S. CONTRIBUTION -	25 Million K	

July 1, 1961 to the Present Time

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Phone Saat School (Luang Prabang)..... | x |
| 2. Ban Khoy School (Luang Prabang)..... | x |
| 3. Rural Affairs Warehouse Addition (Luang Prabang)..... | x |
| 4. Nam Tha-Houei Sai Road (Second Project)..... | x |
| 5. Nam Tha Market..... | |
| 6. Sayaboury Provincial Survey of Rural Needs..... | x |
| 7. Sayaboury-Ken Thao Road (Second Project)..... | x |
| 8. Champassac Market..... | x |
| 9. Thahine Market (Pakse)..... | x |
| 10. Sayaboury Airport Extension (Second Project)..... | x |
| 11. Well-Drilling (Various Areas)..... | x |
| 12. Cement for P. D. 7 and P. D. 8..... | x |
| 13. Sayaboury Airport Extension (Third Project)..... | x |
| 14. Sayaboury-Ken Thao Road (Third Project)..... | x |
| 15. Vientiane Market..... | x |
| 16. Savannakhet Market..... | x |
| 17. R. A. Warehouse Sayaboury..... | x |
| 18. Thakhek Junior High School..... | x |
| 19. Repair Paksong Market..... | x |

TOTAL U.S. FUNDS OBLIGATED FY 62 32,688,091 K.

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STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

Protracted civil strife in Laos has given rise to strong emotions and deep suspicions which are not easily forgotten. The Government of National Union, under the leadership of its Prime Minister, His Highness Prince Souvanna Phouma, was formed nearly seven months ago. During this period, many of these emotions have begun to cool, and a beginning has been made toward achieving the cooperation and mutual confidence needed to unify Laos once again. The United States fully supports His Highness Prince Souvanna Phouma and his Government and has manifested this support by providing substantial assistance for education, roads, village development, agriculture and other development projects; and by contributing the cost of a large part of the Kingdom's needs for imported commodities. The United States will continue to do whatever possible to assist His Highness Prince Souvanna Phouma and his Government.

One of the problems facing his Government --- and, in humanitarian terms, one of the most important --- is that of the refugees who temporarily require relief supplies in order to survive. An estimated 125,000 to 150,000 men, women, and children, members of the Lao, Miao, Lao-Loung, and other ethnic groups, in northern, central, and southern Laos, have had their livelihood disrupted during the fighting. Many thousands sought refuge in isolated mountain areas, defending themselves when attacked. Others fled to populated centers in the valleys. Like the other people of Laos, they wish to return to useful lives in a peaceful and united Kingdom. In order to do so, they need tools and seeds to plant new crops, and food to sustain them until their harvest is sufficient once again. Those in the northern mountains, in the provinces of Mieng Khouang, Sam Neua, Luang Prabang, and Nam Tha, who constitute a majority of the total number of refugees, pose an especially difficult problem. The rugged and roadless terrain precludes ordinary transport, and they must depend on air supply or face starvation within a few weeks. This requires a large and expensive operation, involving the air transport of about 1,500 tons of relief supplies per month.

It would be expected that no one would oppose a program to feed refugees until they were able to feed themselves. It is regrettable that the Pathet Lao have, in fact, appeared to seek to put an end to refugee relief. The Pathet Lao mounted extensive military operations against the hill people before the formation of the Government of National Union and have made occasional attacks since. The Pathet Lao have also concentrated their efforts against the air supply on which a majority of the refugees depend. The hill people have persistently held out in the areas which have been their homes for generations. The Pathet Lao claim however that these refugees are in their "zone". The Pathet Lao charge that the United States

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has been violating the Geneva Accords, alleging that arms and ammunition have been dropped and that one of the contractors providing air services, Air America, Inc., is a "paramilitary organization." They assert that the agreement signed by the Royal Lao Government and the United States Government to continue refugee relief was "illegal." Finally, the Pathet Lao have consistently fired upon aircraft carrying relief supplies to refugees, and have shot down such aircraft.

The United States, in cooperating with the Royal Lao Government to provide sustenance to people in need, has been the object of repeated accusations, misrepresentations, and calumny. Under these circumstances, it is appropriate to make the United States position entirely clear.

The United States has traditionally offered help to the victims of war and disaster all over the world. This has been true in Laos. Successive Lao Governments have asked the United States to assist their relief programs, and the United States has gladly provided supplies, ground and air transport, and technical assistance. On October 1, 1962, the Prime Minister wrote to the American Ambassador, requesting that arrangements be made for U. S. help to the relief program to continue under the Government of National Union. This was provided for in a formal agreement signed on October 7, 1962, by representatives of the Royal Lao Government and the United States Government. Under this agreement, the United States has continued its assistance to refugees, and is prepared to continue to do so as long as there is a need.

The United States has been glad to examine with the Royal Lao Government the problems raised by the needs of the refugees in Laos and to help the Royal Lao Government to continue supply them with the necessities of life. The American Ambassador has frequently discussed the question of such supply with His Highness the Prime Minister. He has repeatedly reminded the leaders of the Pathet Lao that the American-chartered aircraft which provide supplies to refugees are open to inspection at all times. The Ambassador has reiterated that the United States has fully observed its obligations under the Geneva Accords and will continue to do so, and that no arms or ammunition have been supplied in violation of the Accords. He has also pointed out that the air service contractors are civilian companies which in no way violate the Accords.

The Ambassador has, furthermore, suggested adoption of means which would eliminate any suspicion that these are other than legitimate relief flights, and which would put an end to attacks on unarmed civilian aircraft flying humanitarian missions. He has made it clear that the United States would accept special markings for relief aircraft, liaison officers from the

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three factions in Laos to accompany the flights, verification by the International Commission for Supervision and Control, or any other reasonable method. Regrettably, the Pathet Lao leaders have as yet shown no interest in considering these suggestions.

The United States is now discussing with the Royal Lao Government means for placing aircraft at that Government's disposition. If the current discussions reach agreement, this could provide assistance to the Royal Lao Government for its general air transport needs as well as a method for supplying the refugees with the seed, tools, and food they require. It is sincerely hoped that, once these arrangements are concluded, the Pathet Lao would not continue to seek to put an end to the refugee program.

The unification of Laos is one of the principal objectives of the Geneva Accords and of the Government of National Union. By virtue of their participation in the Government of National Union, and their signature of earlier agreements among the three factions, the Pathet Lao have declared their commitment to the goal of reunification. Up to the present, however, the Pathet Lao's actions have implied that they are attempting to shift the balance of forces in Laos in their favor by seeking to cut off food supplies to the isolated refugees, imposing their will on the hill peoples, and consolidating what they claim to be the Pathet Lao "zone." It is obvious that these actions are not in keeping with the objectives which have been declared by the Government of National Union, and that they violate all accepted humanitarian principles. It is to be hoped that the Pathet Lao will agree to reasonable arrangements for continued relief supply, and that they will join whole-heartedly in the work of unifying Laos.

This is a question of simple human need. It is also a matter of grave importance to the Government of National Union and to the Geneva Accords. If it is indeed the intention of the Pathet Lao to attempt to alter the status quo in their favor and to consolidate their "zone" rather than to work toward reunification, the future of the Government of National Union and of the Geneva Accords may be in peril.

The attached Memorandum, "The Refugee Problem in Laos," provides further information on this subject.

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MEMORANDUMTHE REFUGEE PROBLEM IN LAOSI. Scope, Nature and Causes of the Problem

There are no precise statistics about refugees in Laos: basic population data are inadequate and outdated, and the frequent movements of many refugees make it difficult to keep records. The best available estimates place the total number of refugees between 125,000 and 150,000.

Most are members of ethnic minorities, an large part because much of the fighting in Laos was concentrated in mountainous areas where the minorities predominate. The refugee problem in Laos has frequently been described as one principally or exclusively concerned with the Lao, but they constitute only 50% to 60% of the overall total, and 60% to 65% of the refugees in the northern provinces of Kiang Khouang, Sam Neua, Nam Tha, Luang Prabang, and Sayaboury. The numbers of refugees belonging to each major ethnic group are roughly as follows:

- Mao: 65,000 to 75,000; primarily in the northern provinces just mentioned;
- Lao-Thoung: About 50,000; in Saravane, Attapeu, Sam Neua, Savannakhet, Thakhek, Sayaboury, and Sedone provinces;
- Ethnic Lao: 10,000 to 15,000; primarily in Sam Neua, Kiang Khouang, and Luang Prabang provinces;
- Other ethnic groups, including Yao and Thai-Deng: about 5,000; in several northern provinces, especially Nam Tha and Luang Prabang.

These people, from widely-separated parts of Laos and belonging to many distinct tribes and sub-groups, nevertheless share certain common characteristics and experiences. Many lived at the higher altitudes of Laos' many mountain ranges, using the slash-and-burn technique to grow dry rice and other crops on the hillsides. It has always been at best a difficult and precarious living, but they have wished to live in their own way on their high ridges, which they prefer to the climate of the lowlands.

A large proportion of those who are now refugees in Laos had earlier experience with the Pathet Lao. In 1953 and 1954, when Viet Minh units, accompanied by Pathet Lao troops, invaded Laos, many upland people defended their homes. Following the 1954 Geneva Accords, Pathet Lao units and guerrilla bands sought to influence and dominate the hill peoples in both southern and northern Laos. They employed persuasion, propaganda, promises, intimidation, exactions of food, and conscription for labor and military service. In some areas, especially among the southern Lao-Thoung living near the border with South Viet-Nam, the Pathet Lao established control. For the most part, and

especially in the north, the hill people came to dislike the Pathet Lao and Pathet Lao efforts simply strengthened their desire to avoid Pathet Lao domination. Many villages and districts formed local Home-Defense Companies (ADC's) in order to put up an organized resistance against Pathet Lao pressure.

After large-scale fighting broke out again in 1958, the Pathet Lao concentrated their forces and were joined once again by large numbers of Viet Minh. The Pathet Lao reestablished themselves in the area around Saa Neua town, moved into the Plains des Jarres, and increased their activity in other areas, including the South. Much of this strength was directed against the mountain peoples, which the Pathet Lao sought to bring under complete control.

Remembering their earlier treatment by the Viet Minh and Pathet Lao, large numbers of hill people left their homes and sought to reestablish themselves in or near Vientiane, Luang Prabang, Pakse, and smaller towns. A larger number defended their home areas, using their existing Home Defense organizations, locally-made muzzle-loaders, and obsolete rifles. In cases where resistance could not be continued, they withdrew deeper into the mountains to more secure areas. Others remained behind, decided later to flee Pathet Lao control, and reached the refugee areas. Continued defense was still necessary, however, and many groups moved again and again as Pathet Lao pressure continued. The Royal Lao Army provided better weapons and equipment, and the Home Defense organization was broadened and improved. The United States Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG), at the request of the Royal Lao Government, assisted in the equipping and training of the hill peoples' Home Defense Units, just as it assisted other units of the Royal Lao Army at that time. United States advisors assisting these people were, along with other United States military advisors, withdrawn from Laos by October 7, 1962, in full compliance with the Geneva Accords.

Pathet Lao attacks and harassment continued even after May 3, 1961, when the Pathet Lao declared their acceptance of the cease-fire. In June, 1961, for example, the Pathet Lao attacked Ban Padong, about 50 kilometers south of the Plains des Jarres, where Home Defense Units were protecting several thousand women and children. All were forced to withdraw. There were many other attacks on less well-known locations. Military pressure on the refugees in mountain areas has declined sharply since the formation of the Government of National Union, but the refugees report Pathet Lao probas. mortar bombardments, and continuing small-scale attacks.

The Pathet Lao, who had failed to win the allegiance of the mountain peoples, also failed to impose their will on them through military force. The upland people lost a number of areas to Pathet Lao attacks, but the Lao

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Lao, and Lao-Thoung mountaineers retained control over more than half the total area of Niong Khouang Province, between one-quarter and one-third of Sam Neua province, and other extensive areas in what the Pathet Lao claimed to be their "zone." The southern Lao-Thoung in the Bolovens Plateau area succeeded in sharply reducing Pathet Lao harassment of their villages.

Conditions in the refugee villages vary widely. Morale, social cohesion and the will to continue are at different levels in different villages, but officials of the Ministry of Social Welfare, newsmen, U.S.A.I.D. technicians, foreign diplomats, and others who have visited refugee areas have been impressed by their spirit and determination. It must be borne in mind that most refugees suffered great losses: it is difficult to estimate the total, but it is believed that on the average the refugees lost, in addition to their houses, crops, and fields, 80% to 90% of their cattle and pigs and 70% to 80% of their clothing, cooking pots, tools, and other possessions. They have managed, nevertheless, to build new homes and begin farming again. Groups and tribes which formerly regarded one another with some suspicion or even hostility found that they could live close together and work in co-operation. Thus the war has moved the hill peoples closer toward a sense of unity in the Lao nation.

The experiences of the refugees in Laos can best be understood by a review of the history of several refugee villages. Brief accounts of four villages, one primarily Meo, another composed of Northern Lao-Thoung, one principally a refuge for ethnic Lao, and a fourth inhabited by two tribes of southern Lao-Thoung, may be found in the Appendix to this Memorandum. These accounts show sacrifices made by the refugees, and their efforts to live decently, building their own schools---where the textbooks and subjects are the same as in other village schools in Laos---and operating simple dispensaries to care for the wounded and sick.

Since the formation of the Government of National Union, the refugees in the mountain areas have taken advantage of the return of relatively peaceful conditions and are clearing more land for planting. With very few exceptions, they would prefer to return to their original villages, where they would have familiar surroundings and, in most cases, better land. They are afraid to leave their refuges, however, until they can be sure of freedom from Pathet Lao retaliation or interference. The war has led to suspicions and bitter memories. When free movement is permitted, and military and civil integration provide a basis for confidence, it can be expected that these feelings will dissipate. Then the hill peoples will

be able to play a useful part in a unified Laos. Until this occurs, there is a need to assist them in achieving self-sufficiency and to sustain them until they can support themselves.

In the provinces of Sam Nua and Kiang Khouang, for example, the refugees who have been able to farm despite adverse conditions have saved enough rice-seed to sow over half the area they need for cultivation. Requirements for cooking-pots, cloth, and similar goods are only 25% of their initial level. It is expected that the quantity of rice supplied per month, now nearly 1500 tons, can be reduced to 500 tons per month by the end of 1963. This level of 75% overall self-sufficiency in basic foodstuffs can be achieved if the refugees receive tools, materials for making tools, and seed to supplement their own stock. Using these supplies, they will be able to clear more land, sow, and harvest. This assumes, of course, that the refugees will not be subjected to further Pathet Lao attacks or harassment. Equally promising possibilities are present for the refugees in the South.

These objectives cannot be achieved overnight, and until this effort is completed, the refugees will need further food supplies. The need is particularly acute for refugees in the northern provinces who depend upon air supply. Depending upon local opportunities for farming, many villages would be reduced to starvation within ten days if air supplies were suspended, while all isolated villages would face starvation within two months.

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II: THE REFUGEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS OF THE ROYAL LAO GOVERNMENT AND UNITED STATES HELP TO THESE PROGRAMS

The refugee programs of the Royal Lao Government have been aimed at providing support until self-sufficiency becomes possible. Specifically, this program has been administered by the Ministry of Social Welfare. The International Committee of the Red Cross, working in conjunction with the Lao Red Cross, private organizations such as C.A.R.E., and a number of friendly governments have offered assistance which has been accepted by the Royal Lao Government.

The United States Government has also been glad to offer assistance. It had long been meeting requests from successive Lao Governments for help to refugees, and when fighting was renewed in 1960 the need became more acute. Working closely with Social Welfare officials, the United States provided food, blankets, medical supplies and other needs to those who had suffered during the fighting in Vientiane. Similar assistance was later provided in Vang Vieng, Luang Prabang, Muong Kassy, Pakse, Ban Koud Sai, and other areas. At the request of the Royal Lao Government and on the basis of agreements with the Ministry of Social Welfare, increasing quantities of food and other relief supplies were provided, usually by air, to isolated refugees in the mountains. This assistance continued following the formation of the Government of National Union, with United States officials continuing to work with their counterparts in the Ministry of Social Welfare.

On October 7, 1962, following an exchange of letters between the Prime Minister and the American Ambassador, a new agreement governing the program for assisting refugees was signed by representatives of the Royal Lao Government and the United States Government. A communique issued by the Ministry of Social Welfare and published on October 15, 1962, in Lao Presse, the official bulletin of the Information Ministry, described this agreement: "In conformity with the wishes expressed by His Highness the Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of National Union in his letter of October 1st, 1962, to His Excellency the Ambassador of the United States, an increase in assistance to refugees has been arranged in the form of an addition to the initial program of the Social Welfare Ministry. This

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assistance consists of the provision of imported goods, technical and administrative advice, or personnel qualified for the purchase, gathering, packing, and distribution of relief articles, and transport by air or other necessary means." The communique added that 3,115,800 kip (equivalent to about \$39,000) in counterpart funds and \$786,500 in dollars were to be provided by the United States for local expenses and the purchase of seeds, rice, and other necessary supplies. It stated that "The project is administered by the Ministry of Social Welfare."

Procedures for implementing this agreement have varied in accordance with problems involved in supplying different refugee groups. In many areas, requirements are met by provincial Social Welfare officers, operating under the direction of provincial Governors and in consultation with regional USAID representatives, drawing on stocks provided to the Ministry of Social Welfare by USAID. Specific needs for clothing, cooking utensils, and similar items are certified jointly by representatives of the Ministry and U.S.A.I.D. and filled by the Ministry from stocks in its warehouses which were supplied by U.S.A.I.D. Rice is provided by U.S.A.I.D. on the basis of estimated monthly requirements for refugee areas, which are drawn up on the basis of requests by refugees to U.S.A.I.D. and Royal Lao Government representatives. Where air transport is necessary, U.S.A.I.D. makes it available through contracts with private American firms, including Air America, Inc., meeting all costs for fuel, maintenance, and other expenses. Flight schedules are filed with the appropriate officials of the Directorate of Civil Aviation.

Air supply to refugees is a complex and large-scale operation, involving 14 aircraft making over 1,000 flights per month, carrying about 1500 tons of cargo. Whenever possible, cargo is landed at airstrips and unloaded. Rice is usually dropped free-fall, while medical supplies, cooking utensils, school materials, and similar items are parachuted or taken to refugee areas in light aircraft, which also carry out medical evacuation missions and transport the Social Welfare and U.S.A.I.D. technicians who verify requirements and supervise distribution. As officials of the Ministry of Social Welfare have become more familiar with the techniques and procedures involved in the refugee program, the requirement for United States technical assistance and advice has been reduced.

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III. The Pathet Lao Attitude Toward Refugee Relief

The Pathet Lao have long faced a situation which must cause them acute frustration and embarrassment. Since the early months of 1961, they have claimed that most of northern Laos and a wide area of the South contiguous to Viet Nam constitute their "liberated zone." They are well aware, however, that the peoples of very extensive areas of the North and substantial parts of the southern mountains have resisted Pathet Lao domination; attempts at persuasion, intimidation, and conquest have failed. In the North, effective Pathet Lao control has been limited to the towns, the areas along major roads, some of the valleys, and a few other areas which they seized. Realizing that the people in the mountains of the North, cut off from normal transport and unable to support themselves in peace, depended upon air supply for their survival, the Pathet Lao appear to have made a deliberate effort to starve the hill people into submission by bringing this air supply to an end.

Beginning early in 1961, the Pathet Lao alleged that they were engaged in a police action against "bandits" who had been "airdropped" by the United States into the "zone" claimed by the Pathet Lao. This propaganda line was also adopted in an attempt to justify Pathet Lao attacks on the hill people following the cease-fire. The Pathet Lao appeared to have forgotten that these people had resisted them in 1953 and 1954 and had avoided Pathet Lao domination ever since. The absurdity of the "air-dropping" contention is apparent if one wonders how, and why, anyone would parachute 100,000 or more men, women, and children into the rugged mountains of northern Laos. The hill people were there, they freely chose to defend themselves, and the Pathet Lao had to search for some way to explain it.

Throughout 1961 and 1962, however, this remained a frequent theme of Pathet Lao propaganda. Following the formation of Prince Souvanna Phouma's Government, the Pathet Lao representatives sought to achieve the cessation of relief supplies through manipulation of their position in the coalition. They claimed that the agreement on refugee relief signed by the Royal Lao Government and the United States Government was "illegal," although it had been worked out on the basis of a request from the Prime Minister that refugee relief continue under the Government of National Union. After the fact, Pathet Lao officials said that the agreement was not valid because they had not assented to it. Propaganda from the Pathet Lao radio became more intense, and General Singkazo, Pathet Lao commander in the Piane des Jarres area, told newsmen that a special effort had been made to emplace anti-aircraft weapons. Relief aircraft were fired upon frequently, and an American aircraft on a refugee relief mission was shot down in Nam Tha

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province on January 5, 1963, resulting in the death of a cargo handler. The Pathet Lao radio has since indicated that they would shoot down other aircraft whenever possible.

The Pathet Lao have also sought to cut off supplies to Neutralist forces in the Plaine des Jarres area. At the specific request of the Prime Minister, American aircraft carrying rice and other foodstuffs made drops to Neutralist units and unloaded at the Plaine des Jarres airstrip. The Pathet Lao radio, quoting General Singkazo, announced in November that American aircraft taking supplies to Neutralist forces would be shot down. On November 27, 1962, an aircraft loaded with rice was shot down while preparing to land at the Plaine des Jarres. Although it is reported that the shots were fired by members of a Neutralist unit who had forsworn their loyalty to the Prime Minister and to General Kong Le, the Pathet Lao's responsibility is clear.

The Pathet Lao have sought to justify these attacks on unarmed relief flights by asserting that the aircraft drop arms and ammunition, that alleged arms drops originate outside Laos, and that Air America, Inc., is a paramilitary organization which violates the Geneva Accords.

These accusations are entirely false. The United States is not introducing arms, ammunition, or other military supplies into Laos in violation of the Accords. No United States aircraft are making arms drops in violation of the Accords. All flights to destinations in Laos by American-chartered aircraft, including relief flights, originate in Vientiane. The companies providing air services under contract to the United States are entirely civilian, and their employees are not, to use the language of the Accords, "foreign civilians connected with the supply, maintenance, storing and utilization of war materials."

If the Pathet Lao wish to satisfy themselves that the refugee program in Laos is a legitimate relief operation, they can easily do so by inspecting the aircraft and their cargo. If any doubts remain, the Geneva Accords provide an international mechanism for verification: the International Commission for Supervision and Control. The Pathet Lao have not, however, made any official complaint about air supply to the Commission.

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APPENDIX

FOUR REFUGEE VILLAGES

PHOU CUM:

Phou Cum, in Luang Prabang Province, about 60 kilometers southeast of Luang Prabang city, and 35 kilometers northwest of Sala Phou Khoua, is now the refuge for about 2500 persons who have had to move three times since Pathet Lao pressure forced them to leave their home area east of Khang Khay in early 1961. Through careful cultivation of the good soil in their former home, they had become relatively prosperous, but only eleven of their more than 2,000 cattle had survived when they reached Phou Cum, about ten days' steady walk from their original area. The soil in their new area is poor, but if they are not attacked again they hope to clear land nearly one day's walk away and produce 50% of their food by the end of 1965. They have built two village schools, where the textbooks and subjects taught are the same as in other schools in Laos, a small dispensary-hospital, and several blacksmith shops.

BAN NA:

At Ban Na, in Kiang Khouang province, approximately 700 Lao-Thuong have established themselves after fleeing their original village at the southwest corner of the Plaine des Jarres, about three days' walk to the east. In early 1961, Pathet Lao troops threatened the Naiben (village chief). The villagers escaped, taking nothing with them, to Luong Phout. Continued Pathet Lao pressure forced them to move again to Ban Na, where they built a new village which was accidentally destroyed by fire. They rebuilt again, including a school and hospital-dispensary. Some facilities are shared with Mao and Lao villages nearby. Their new land is good, and they hope to become entirely self-supporting by the end of 1965 if not harassed.

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Most of the refugees at Houa Mong, in southwestern Sam Neua province about three days' walk (60 kilometers) from Sam Neua town, are ethnic Lao. Some Meo and Lao-Thoung also live in the village, which has suffered extensively from Pathet Lao harassment. They fled into the hills during the Viet Minh-Pathet Lao invasion of 1954 and were attacked again in late 1961. The Pathet Lao occupied the area and burned all the surrounding villages except Houa Mong itself. Two months later, the villagers reoccupied their area, resisting renewed Pathet Lao attacks. There are now about 8,000 persons in the Houa Mong area; the village is a center of refuge for people from the burned settlements. A hospital and school have been constructed, and the outlying villages are now being rebuilt. They had lost all their pigs, but were able to save most of their cattle, and if left alone the people of Houa Mong hope to be able to grow four-fifths of their food by the end of this year, despite the added need to feed 2,000 persons who have come into the area since early 1962 from the valleys and other places under Pathet Lao control.

LONG PILIANG:

Long Piliang, in Saravane Province, about 15 kilometers east of the provincial capital, is now the refuge for 70 families belonging to two southern Lao-Thoung tribes, the Dta-Ci and the Nge. Their former villages in the mountains northeast and southeast of Saravane had been dominated by the Pathet Lao, who confined the people to their villages, took food without payment, and forced the young men to become soldiers, giving them weapons but no clothes. The villagers slipped away, leaving all their belongings behind. Although the members of the two tribal groups speak somewhat different dialects, the eight small refugee settlements around Long Piliang have decided to work together. They plan to build a road to Nong Bua, the nearest town, and with tools and seeds will be able to grow their own rice, raise cotton, and weave their clothing.

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