APPENDIX

LAOS PROFILES

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NOTES ON LAOS PROFILES

The materials assembled in this paper consist of biographical sketches as well as interviews with and commentaries by individuals representing diverse aspects of Lao society. The purpose here is not primarily to provide a background on current political problems but rather to give the reader some feeling for the peoples who inhabit Laos, by presenting representative viewpoints and something of the psychological framework out of which opinions emerge.

This paper illustrates reactions to innovations by various segments of the population, especially in fields of government activity such as economic and social development. Another subject treated is interaction among different factions—the older and younger generations, the elite, urban youths, monks, villagers and tribal peoples. One can follow the transmission of ideas as they pass from senior government officials to lower level bureaucrats and ultimately to the rural population.

The table of contents is so arranged that the reader with special interests such as political affairs or rural development can select those profiles which will be of greater interest to him.

The material collected here is mainly the result of two periods of residence in Laos—the year 1957, when the author was the provincial representative of the American aid mission in Luang Prabang, and the summer of 1959, spent chiefly in and around Vientiane, under grants from the University of California and the RAND Corporation. Thus field experience has been concentrated in northern and central Laos, although interviews with officials from southern provinces are also included. Interviews with government officials were conducted in French, and those with villagers were in Lao, with the assistance of an interpreter. Unless otherwise noted in the text, all comments refer to the summer of 1959. Also included are some selections from published but not readily available sources.

It should be emphasized that these profiles are by no means complete in the sense of representing all segments of the population—for example, there are no representatives of the highly important Chinese and Vietnamese communities or of the Pathet Lao, and coverage is inadequate on the diverse ethnic groups.

The profiles are here presented in raw form and with the exception of a few footnotes it is left to the reader to draw his own conclusions. For an analysis and interpretation see the author's "Lao Elites: Tradition and Innovation," where, in addition to presenting certain generalizations about Lao behavior, an attempt is made to interpret through available documentary evidence the political developments which have occurred since 1959. The rapid march of events has obviously dated many of the political statements. Still, I feel that many of the behavior
patterns indicated implicitly or explicitly have strong stability. It is not, therefore, specific comments of individuals which are felt to be significant but rather their general value system and personal orientation, which can be expected to remain fairly constant through successive political crises.

Through no fault or desire of her own Laos has come to occupy a critical position in world affairs. Despite platitudes of the public press in Europe and America the Lao are often surprisingly realistic in expressing their limitations and inadequacies. Many of the attitudes expressed in these pages are "official" in that they are intended for foreign consumption. Others indicate bitterness at a deteriorating political situation and reflect the felt impotency of the Lao to control their own affairs in the face of outside influences. But many also show an ability to be objective in assessing their relationships.

Included here are many controversial and indeed contradictory statements. The author does not pretend to agree with any particular point of view at this time, the idea being to let the peoples of Laos speak for themselves. No attempt has been made to censor remarks, although libelous materials have been deleted and, where appropriate, individuals have been identified in general instead of by name or title. In only a few cases was I requested specifically to conceal identities, and these desires have been followed. In some instances details of the backgrounds of unnamed officials have been slightly altered to protect anonymity while broad characterizations remain valid.

Appreciation is gratefully expressed to the various Lao officials and peoples of Laos who shared their thoughts with an outsider. It is hoped that their frank comments will be received in an atmosphere of sympathy and understanding by those who are interested in the future of Laos.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## I

**TRADITIONAL HEREDITARY LEADERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>King Sisavang Vong: Late King of Laos</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savang Vatthana: King of Laos</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Phetsarath: Late Viceroy of Laos</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Boun Oum of Champassak</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## II

**HIGH-RANKING LAO OFFICIALS AND DEPUTIES**

### A. High-ranking Officials who are Also Deputies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Katay Don Sunorith: Late Prime Minister</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Souvanna Phouma: Former Prime Minister</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phouxi Sananikone: Former Prime Minister</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Souphanouvong: Leader of the Pathet Lao (Communist) Party</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiao Somsanith: Former Prime Minister</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bong Sounnava: Former Minister and Head of National Union Party</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pan Sisouphanthong: Director of Public Works</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liep Soumphonphakdy: Secretary of State for Agriculture</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiao Nith Nokham: High Commissioner of Xieng Khouang and Sam Neua</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chan Vathanouvong: Leader of the Santiphab Party</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thao Leuam: Minister of Finance</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khoranhok Souvannavong: Secretary of State for the Interior</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tane Chounlamousint: Secretary of State for the Ministry of Justice</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pheng Phongsavan: President of the National Assembly</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ouahheuan Norasingh: High Commissioner of Luang Prabang and Sayaboury</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nowing Ratavong: Lao Ambassador to Cambodia</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### B. Brief Biographical Data on Selected Lao Deputies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deputy</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sisouphan Phounpadith, Khampheng Boupha, Khamphay Boupha, Tiao Souk Bouavong</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ouam Boundarn, Ouam Vinaignha, Nang Khampheng Boupha, Tiao Souk Vongsak, Chanda Ounthuang</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phaya Phoumy Vongvichit, Sisana Sisane, Thongdy Sounthone Vichith, Prince Boun Oum Na Champassak</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bounlap Nhoyvanisong, Maha Kou Souvannamedhi, Kouilly Banchongphanit, Sisant Pholsena</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khamsing Sananikone, Lou Boulavong, Xun Muongmany, Champ Phommachanh, Khameun Duongnaseng</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### C. High-ranking Officials Who are Not Deputies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khampa Panva: Minister of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impeng Suryadhay: Secretary of State for Education</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C. High-ranking Officials Who are Not Deputies (Con't)
Sisouk Na Champassak: Secretary of State for the Ministry of Information, Sports and Youth .......... 57
Oukeo Souvannavong: Director of the Plan and Chairman of the American Aid Committee .......... 57

III UNATTRIBUTED COMMENTS OF LAO OFFICIALS .......... 59
Official A: of Sub-cabinet Rank .......... 59
Official B: With the Committee for the Defense of National Interests .......... 61
Official C: High-ranking Official in Education .......... 66
Official D: High-ranking Official in Religious Affairs .......... 66
Official E: In Education Administration .......... 69
Official F: In Provincial Education Administration .......... 72
Official G: Lao Official of Older Generation .......... 74
Official H: Lao Official of Younger Generation .......... 75
Official I: In Ministry of Social Affairs .......... 75
Official J: Concerned with Religious Affairs .......... 77
Official K: In Ministry of Agriculture .......... 78
Official L: In Education Ministry .......... 80
Official M: Memoirs of a Young Official .......... 83

IV CIVIL SERVANTS .......... 95
Pierre Nginn: Chairman of the Lao Literary Committee .......... 95
Bouavan Norasing: Director of Judicial Affairs .......... 97
Nakkhalo Souvannavong: Director of Sports and Youth .......... 98
Houan Phann Saingasith: Director of the Lao Bureau of Statistics .......... 100
Thip Thammavong: Director of Information .......... 100

V MILITARY .......... 102
Colonel Oudone Sananikone: Secretary of State for Social Welfare .......... 103
Brigadier General Ounn Rathikoun .......... 106
Major General Sounthone Pathamavong: Minister of Defense .......... 107
Colonel Phoumi Nosavany: Secretary of State for Defense and Veteran's Affairs .......... 107
Colonel Kot Venevongso: Assistant Chief of Staff for Psychological Warfare .......... 108

VI LAO STUDYING ABROAD .......... 110
Applicants for Foreign Scholarships .......... 110
Extracts from Reports Written in English, by Lao Teachers Who Studied in the United States .......... 115

VII MONKS .......... 120
Abbot At One of the Larger Wats in Vientiane .......... 120
A Young Monk in Vientiane .......... 121
English-Speaking Monk in Luang Prabang .......... 122
Monk Sent to Study in the United States .......... 124
VIII TOWNSPEOPLE

A Lao Barber in Vientiane
A Samlaw Driver in Vientiane
Another Samlaw Driver
Two Shoeshine Boys
Another Shoeshine Boy
Boy Studying Aviation Mechanics at Vientiane Airfield

IX RURAL LAO

Three Lao Teachers
A Lao Village Headman
Lao Merchant Engaged in Trade with Tribal Groups
Lao Villagers about Sixty Miles from Vientiane

TRIBAL PEOPLE

Toubi Lyfong: Vice-President of the National Assembly and Deputy from Xieng Khouang
Meo Villager
Yao Working for Civic Action
Khmu Christian Pastor
Tai Lu Prisoner
Khmu Village Chief from Luang Prabang Province

Excerpts from Communist Tribal Biographies

LAO WOMEN

Madame Oudone Sananikone: President of the Lao Women's Association
Girl Graduate of College
Pinkham Upavaram: Lao Teacher Who Studied in the United States
Phengsay Manaroth: Lao Teacher Who Studied in the United States
Dara Viravong: Lao School Teacher
Savandari Sananikone: Socialite and Student
Women Vegetable Sellers
Old Lao Woman Vendor
I

TRADITIONAL HEREDITARY LEADERS

The following four individuals, including two recently deceased, are presented because they exemplify some of the characteristics of Lao nobility, a group whose role and function is today rapidly changing.

KING SISAIVANG VONG

The (late) King of Laos was born in 1885 and is a direct descendant of the Khoun Lo dynasty, which goes back over 1,000 years and which came originally from Yunnan Province in China. King Sisavang Vong attended the French Colonial College from 1900 to 1901 and ascended the throne of the Kingdom of Luang Prabang in 1904. He was crowned in 1905, which makes his reign the longest of any monarch. Deposed at the end of 1945 by the Lao Issara, he lived a quiet life until his return to the throne in 1946, when he became King of all Laos. He made many trips to France for medical reasons, the last in 1956.1

Upon his death in October, 1959, a Bangkok newspaper reported from Luang Prabang:

A twenty-one gun salute boomed out over this pagoda-spired royal capital Friday, to proclaim the death of King Sisavang Vong, Monarch of Laos since 1904. The King, seventy-four... had been an invalid for years. He ruled the Kingdom until last August, when he appointed the Crown Prince Savang as Regent...

The King had twenty wives, it was once estimated. He was a fervent Buddhist and refused to budge from his royal capital when Communist Vietminh forces threatened in 1953. His determined and serene faith that Buddha himself would protect the city led a French official to describe him as "stubborn as only a good, proud King knows how to be."2

When Sisavang Vong became King of the small territory around Luang Prabang at the age of nineteen, life remained tranquil and normal, following the traditional calendar, with court etiquette and festivities, until the war with Japan. Its end brought turmoil and aggrandisement. First the King was obliged to abdicate at the bidding of the Free Lao Movement, and then he was made King of all the territory of Laos in addition to Luang Prabang.

1 Briefing Notes on the Royal Kingdom of Laos, Vientiane, United States Information Service, April, 1959, p L-1 (mimeographed).
2 Bangkok Post October 31, 1959.
A visitor to the royal court of Luang Prabang in the early 1920's presents interesting details, picturing the King as a modest, unassuming individual very much under the domination of the French, with whom both he and the Crown Prince sided during the three Lao independence movements.  

Although not a dynamic leader he did lend a sense of symbolic unity to our country, at least as far as the Lao elite were concerned, and an important aspect of his long rule was that no one, not even the Lao Communists, openly attacked the Monarchy and advocated a Republic. Lithographs of his portrait were hung in a prominent place in Lao homes and were felt to protect the house from evil spirits.

SAVANG VATTHANA  

PRESENT KING OF LAOS

Savang Vattbana, the eldest son of the late King, was born in 1907 in Luang Prabang and graduated from the Ecole de Science Politique in Paris, until recently the French diplomatic school. In 1930 he became Secretary General of the Kingdom of Luang Prabang and in 1941 presided at the privy council of the Kingdom. In 1947 he went to Washington as an advisor on the Franco-Siamese Conciliation Commission. In view of his father's illness during the last several years, Savang Vattbana took the primary role in most state functions. In the fall of 1956 he again visited the United States, where he was received by the President and other high ranking officials.

In no sense can King Savang Vattbana's role be compared to that of Prince Norodom Sihanouk in neighboring Cambodia, who appears to have completely dominated political life in that country. However, during 1959 when he was still Crown Prince, he did seem to take a more active role in government affairs. The extent of his influence is hard to determine, since he is at least formally consulted on all governmental changes. He appears to be a pleasant, fairly mild-mannered sort of person. As indicated earlier, he has been strongly influenced by French culture. Unlike his father who spoke rather halting French, the new King's French is fluent and he has a considerable knowledge of English. Most of his children have received extensive education in France.

Some observers contend that his French sympathies have had a rather negative effect on many Lao. Certain Lao officials have claimed he is

1 Harry A. Frank East of Asia: Ramblings in the Five Divisions of French Indo-China, New York 1926.
2 Briefing Notes on the Royal Kingdom of Laos, p. L-1.
unable to read and write his own language well, and that his speeches in Lao are not as good as those in French. There appears to be some truth in these statements, although his knowledge of his native language is said to have improved in recent years. A number of the inhabitants of Luang Prabang feel that both he and his father abused them during the period of French rule. In fact, some candidates for the National Assembly running for election in Luang Prabang Province have attempted to garner votes by criticizing the late King and the present King.

King Savang has traveled throughout the country, but only along the main routes and to those areas which can be easily reached by plane. He has not, like the late Prince Phetsarath, done much hiking through the back country. Nor does he appear to be a very dynamic figure having a great deal of popular appeal. It is, however, quite possible that he may assume more initiative in leadership in the future. So far no one has questioned his traditional prerogative of ascension to the throne as manifested in the Constitution. Although he appears frequently in public on ceremonial occasions, his contact with the general population is somewhat limited. This seems to be a matter of personal preference. For example, during the Lao New Year celebration, the King makes a traditional visit to a Buddhist shrine at the grotto at Pak Ou on the Mekong some fifteen miles upstream from Luang Prabang. The nature of the ceremonies are such that he has preferred to spend the night there rather than return to Luang Prabang. He does not stay in the village but in an encampment especially set up on an island in the Mekong. There is no doubt that traditionally there has been great social distance between Lao royalty and their subjects. However, considerable modification appears to be possible, depending on the personality of the individual. The continuation of the monarchy in Laos would not seem to be determined by the wishes of the population at large, but rather by the attitudes of the governing political elite.

In this connection his performance during the 1960-61 Civil War is highly significant. In theory remaining above the conflict he failed to resolve differences during the initial stages. Although the Pathet-Lao have not yet begun to attack the person of the King or the Monarchy as such they have ignored or opposed the King's pronouncements when they have run counter to Communist policy, as in the case of recognition of the government of Prince Boun Oum.

In February 1961, King Savang's proposal for a plan for a neutral Laos indicated the possibility of his assumption of a more dynamic role in the future.

PRINCE PHETSARATH

Prince Phetsarath was born in Luang Prabang in 1890, a son of the Viceroy who was an uncle of Sisavang Vong. After studying in Hanoi and Saigon, he went to Paris in
1905 where he attended the Colonial College for French Administrators. He also spent one year at Oxford and returned to Laos in 1918. After a brilliant career in the civil administration for Laos, where he attained a reputation as a hard-working and effective administrator, he was elevated to the rank of Viceroy of Luang Prabang in 1941. In 1945, following the Japanese coup-d'état, Luang Prabang under the leadership of Phetsarath declared its independence, and he became the Prime Minister of the newly independent country. However, when the Japanese surrendered in August of that year, the French returned to Laos and re-exerted their sovereignty over the country. Phetsarath opposed the French re-occupation and in October, 1945, organized the Lao Issara provisional government. He went into exile in Bangkok in 1946, where he remained the leading power in the Free Lao Movement until 1948, when most of the Lao Issara returned to Laos, including his half-brother Souvanna Phouma. Phetsarath remained in Bangkok until March, 1957, when he returned to Laos. Soon thereafter he was made Viceroy for the entire Kingdom. Since his return he has not taken an active part in Lao political life.1

King Sisavang Vong and Prince Phetsarath grew up in similar circumstances but had opposite personalities. Prince Phetsarath was a rather dynamic individual who traveled widely and took a lead in his country's fight for independence from France.

In addition to his political role, he was a renowned hunter and interested also in writing a history of his country. During his lifetime he produced two books, one on hunting techniques and the second on the Lao methods of reckoning time. After his return from Thailand in 1957, instead of participating actively in government he played the role of elder statesman, spending considerable time consulting with many of the senior government officials, including his brother Souvanna Phouma who was at that time Prime Minister.

He also took an interest in the local villagers and tribal groups, for he had a strong feeling of responsibility to his people in the traditional sense of noblesse oblige. His family had acted as intermediary for certain tribal peoples in their contacts with the government, and his ancestors had resettled some Lu (tribal Tai) people in the area of Luang Prabang. In addition he assumed responsibility for the villagers near his own estate, some of whom served as household servants and others as laborers on his land. With his own funds he bought seed potatoes,

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1 Briefing Notes on the Royal Kingdom of Laos, p. L-1
Inglenook chickens and Hampshire hogs and bred these on his estate, later distributing them to villagers. For mountain people who wished to re-settle on the plains, he provided funds to buy buffalo and plows. Some of these people he met on his frequent tours; others came in delegations to his home. The effectiveness of some of these measures is questionable, but they are significant in that they indicate a type of traditional benevolence. Certain of these attitudes are also evident in the behavior of Lao-elected officials, who tend to treat the people as subjects rather than as constituents but without a feeling of noblesse-oblige.

In the autumn of 1957 the author made a four-day trip with Prince Phetsarath. This tour combined ceremonial, economic and religious functions in a unique way characteristic not only of Lao culture and relationships between villagers and the royal elite, but also reflecting quite clearly the personality of the Prince himself. The trip began at sunrise, departing from the Prince's estate on the outskirts of Luang Prabang. We were accompanied by various local officials, some of whom were relatives, plus several servants and his personal police bodyguard. The party also included fifteen Khuu tribesmen recruited (probably corve'ed) as coolies.

We set off up the Mekong in a traditional Lao pirogue (dugout canoe) powered by a modern outboard motor. Our first stop was at the village where a landing platform and a bamboo and palm frond arch had been especially prepared for his welcome. The villagers, all in their best clothes, were lined up along the embankment. The young girls held up silver bowls with floral offerings which they presented in the traditional squatting posture of respect to the Prince. He accepted the offerings, handing them over to an aide who carried them on a large tray and afterward presented them to the local pagoda.

The brief village visit concluded, the trek through the jungle began at the edge of the rice fields. Paddy fields lay fallow, the Prince explained, because the villagers had no dam to provide water for irrigation. He said he intended to help them build one. Later—he asked if I could recommend a book on modern irrigation principles—since it had been some time since he had designed dams.

After an hour's walk the Prince called a halt and rested on a foam rubber cushion carried by one of the porters. The trail became fairly steep in places, although it had obviously been prepared for this trip, as evidenced by small bamboo bridges over several streams. The entourage stopped frequently to allow the Prince to make notes for a route map he was preparing. He carried a compass and pedometer, noted the readings and sketched the terrain.

After several hours we arrived at the village that was our destination, where the Prince received the same traditional welcome. A special house had been constructed for him to sleep in. It had a tin roof, bamboo sides and a raised sleeping platform, the Prince's quarters being screened off by curtains. Another section was supplied for the officials,
including the Chao Muong or district chief. Protocol was not an involved procedure: the Prince made all decisions and his retinue followed accordingly, whether it was a question of time of departure or food for dinner. Anyone wishing to speak to the Prince did so on bended knee. This included his relatives and the provincial officials as well as the villagers. The district chief and the Deputy Inspector of Schools (also his cousin) ate at the same table as the Prince and the writer, all of us sharing a common bowl in customary Lao style. In almost all cases it was left to the Prince to initiate the conversation.

The villagers tendered the Prince a baci, the traditional Lao ceremony designed to bring prosperity to the person in whose honor it is given. The Prince was seated on his portable deck chair with all the villagers squatting down around him. Cords were tied to his wrists and blessings given in the customary manner. After the ceremony a few of the elders remained to discuss some of the problems of their village.

That evening we spent considerable time discussing the political future of Laos. Prince Phetsarath appeared to be quite cognizant of the Communists but also emphasized the fact that the future flexibility of the Lao government and its foreign policy was limited by the presence of China to the north and Vietnam to the northwest; he stressed the long common border Laos shares with both these Communist states. He severely criticised the corruption in the Lao government, which at that time was at its height. He indicated that he would clean up corruption in short order if he were heading the government but did not think the National Assembly would permit such thorough house-cleaning, implying many officials would be afraid of his direct methods. The Prince lamented the low state to which he said the moral climate in Laos had fallen. "Most of the young people in Laos now value money more than honor," he claimed, indirectly relating this to the American aid program, but limiting his criticism of the program to the way in which it was administered, since he was definitely in favor of Laos receiving aid.

When I asked if there were any solutions to this moral decline, he frankly acknowledged that he had no answer. His hope was that Laos might become self-sufficient in several years and might not require any more foreign aid. He thought this might be done by developing both the agricultural potential as well as mineral resources which he claimed were present in the northern part of Luang Prabang Province and other areas. Roads and communications, he felt, were important since some areas produce surplus rice and other products but have no way of taking their goods to market.

One of the desires of the particular village in which we were staying was a school. The village leaders put their proposal to the Prince, and although he made no direct reply, later that evening after he had retired, there was a conference among the Chao Muong, Thaveng (chief of a group of villages), Hai Ban (village chief), and the Deputy Inspector
of Primary Schools, at which it was decided to build a school for about sixty pupils for three neighboring villages, evidently with government funds.

The following morning we were up at 5 o'clock. The Prince excused himself, saying he was usually up by 4. By 6 a.m. we had breakfasted and were ready to continue our hike up the mountain. Our objective was a cave 1,300 feet above the village, where a skull and other archeological remains had reportedly been found. Boards had been placed across small streams so the Prince would not wet his feet, and the villagers sometimes leaned over for him to put his hand on their backs. Although he had some difficulty in ascending the steep trail (he was sixty-seven at the time) it was evidently not permissible to touch his person directly. I alone was able to offer him a helping hand.

Unlike the previous day's march, this trail had not been prepared in advance, and it was with some difficulty that our guides picked their way through the dense brush. The trail soon became quite steep approximating a sixty degree grade. In the course of our climb, the Prince stopped every hundred yards or so to take a compass reading as he continued with his mapping. As the ascent progressed we rested every half hour, and while the Prince calmly smoked a cigarette, I tried to catch my breath. The final 150 feet below the cave involved climbing a sheer rock face. This was no easy job for the Prince because of his short legs. Nevertheless, he set the pace for everyone. Two and a half hours after the trip had begun, we reached the cave located in a limestone outcrop. A surface collection of skeletal materials and pottery was made.

The following day we descended to visit a second cave where the Prince had meditated as a monk, upon his return from ten years of study in France some forty-two years ago. He said he had spent twenty days alone there. The cave itself was not particularly interesting except for a pool of water the Lao consider to be holy, some of which was brought back to Luang Prabang to consecrate coronations. There were, however, a number of inscriptions in the cave, which he had his cousin copy.

Unlike many of his countrymen, he had a great desire to express himself precisely. This was shown not only by his map-making, but by the fact that he would quote to me the exact numbers of tigers or wild oxen he had shot, with the shoulder heights of the largest ones. His interest in Lao astronomy is also a reflection of this attitude. I asked him how his Buddhist belief correlated with his hobby of hunting. He acknowledged that in this respect he was not a very good Buddhist.

He claimed that it was only in recent years that he has acquired an interest in archeology. He was currently preparing a book on the history of Laos and intended to publish it in both Lao and French. He expressed regret that his English was not adequate to the task of producing in that language
senting his writings in that language as well.¹

We returned to the village in time for lunch. I found it almost as difficult descending as ascending, but I noticed that the Prince, long used to mountain climbing, walked slowly and did not once stumble or falter.

That evening a villager approached the Prince on bended knees and asked him to chase the phi² from his house. His family had had bad luck and his daughter was now ill. The Prince mounted the steps of the house and entered, not bothering to remove his shoes as is Lao custom. Perhaps he deemed it beneath his dignity. He took one look at the girl, diagnosed her illness as malaria and gave the father some quinine tablets. Then through an intermediary, a former civil servant now retired, he addressed the phi and requested them to depart.

Previously I had heard many tales of the Prince's "magical power," some of these told me by western-educated government officials. One asserted that Prince Phetsarath had the power to change himself into a fish and could swim under water for long distances. It was said that bullets could not harm him. He was also reputed to have the ability to change his form, so that at a conference with the French at the time of the Free Lao Movement, he became angry with them, changed himself into a fly, and flew out the window. The Prince laughed when I related these stories. He said that for the past thirty years or so villagers have been asking him to chase away the phi. People from many parts of the Kingdom often write to him requesting his picture, and some of them place it in their rice fields to keep away malevolent spirits. As far as I know similar powers have not been attributed to either the former or present King. Although no other officials are reputed to have magical powers, some Deputies of the National Assembly have told me that during the election campaigns, the villagers have asked them to exorcise the phi³.

The following morning a delegation of villagers came to the Prince to ask him to drive all the phi from the village. Their request was prompted by the fact that he had asked the villagers to cut down the brush surrounding the settlement in a radius of several hundred yards, thereby destroying the breeding places of mosquitoes and at the same time

¹ As far as I am aware this was not completed before his death.
² This refers to a series of beliefs in animism and nature spirits, antedating Buddhism. The two religions co-exist, not only in Laos but in Thailand and Burma as well.
³ Some claim that Prince Boun Oum has similar powers.
providing cleared land for gardens. The people said they wanted to comply but feared that the phi of the forest would object.

Through an intermediary the Prince then addressed the phi and told them to depart, emphasizing his belief that Lord Buddha was stronger, and invoking the power of the Prince, the Chao Muong and the American. A police aide went into the forest and fired a few volleys, after which the spirit shrines, in the form of miniature houses, were set on fire and villagers began to hack at the trees in a gesture of defiance of the spirits (en route to the next village at which we stopped, our party paused briefly at a large rock where the phi inhabiting this boulder were literally told to move over and make room for the phi which had been ordered out of the previous village).

The third day was spent visiting more villages and ridding them of spirits. At one stop the Prince was asked to bless the children. Each household gave him a roll of white cord, and when a large amount was collected he placed his hands over it and blessed it. Then the cord was cut into suitable lengths and parents brought their children forward to receive a necklace of the sacred string. This was to prevent evil spirits from entering the body and so keep the child in good health.

When I last saw Prince Phetsarath in the summer of 1959, he seemed to have withdrawn almost completely from any direct interest in political affairs and did not care to comment either on Lao foreign policy or the American aid program. Most of his efforts appear to have gone toward the upkeep of his estate. He was still in the process of writing his book on Lao history, and most of our discussion centered around this topic.

A few months later, in October, 1959, Prince Phetsarath died in Luang Prabang of a cerebral hemorrhage.

PRINCE BOUN OUM OF CHAMPASSAK

Prince Boun Oum is the last surviving member of the Kingdom of Champassak one of the original four kingdoms that make up the present state of Laos.¹ He has been given the honorary title of Inspector

¹ The Kingdom of Xieng Khouang and the Kingdom of Vientiane were in effect defunct before the arrival of the French. Champassak became an independent Kingdom in 1713 but endured only to 1778 when it became a tributary to Siam. Champassak, Vientiane and Luang Prabang were all originally part of the traditional Lao Kingdom of Lan Xang which split in 1698.
General of the Kingdom of Laos. When not serving as a government minister he has devoted much effort to various business interests and is reputed to be one of the wealthier men in the country. He is closely related to a number of officials who have played important roles in government affairs. There has been some friction in recent times between the northern and southern parts of Laos, and the awarding to him of this title and his ceremonial position at all state occasions appears to be an attempt to offset the designation of the King of Luang Prabang as the ruler of all Laos.

Like both the late Prince Phetsarath and the present King, Prince Boun Oum maintains a residence in Vientiane as well as a local one (near Pakse). In common with other traditional Lao figures, he has his own retinue and a full staff of household servants.

In the past years he has been quite critical of the policies of the government, particularly the misappropriation of aid funds. When interviewed in the summer of 1959 he said he wanted to be constructive in his criticism and was quite forthright and direct in his statements. He felt that since Laos was bordered by the vastly superior states of China and Vietnam, and since the country had such a small population, her independence was something of a joke. If she had to have rulers, the French would be much better than either the Chinese or the Vietnamese. (Like the present King, he appears to have strong French sympathies).

He felt that the rural program of the government was not yet effective, and that officials did not have direct contact with the population. Although he thought that American aid was a good thing, it was not well used. Things had improved since the exchange rate was revised, but economic assistance was not being sufficiently utilized. He mentioned effective administration as the most critical problem of Laos. (This is a crucial point and a foreigner observing would be inclined to agree with this statement in a most emphatic way. Perhaps most significant, of the many top-ranking Lao officials who were interviewed by the writer, Prince Boun Oum was the only one to refer to the critical deficiencies in this area, although many appeared to be conscious in a general way of their government's lack of trained personnel.)

Prince Boun Oum also mentioned that favoritism is shown in promotion in the Army, and because of this the mass of soldiers were not content. He felt that both the army and the police force were too large for the needs of Laos and could be reduced.

In common with other politicians who assume public office, Prince Boun Oum is capable of drastically changing his publicly expressed ideas. As the Premier of the "pro-western" splinter government during the Civil War in 1960-61 he has had strained relations with the French and does not appear to have succeeded in forming a very dynamic administration.
II

HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS AND DEPUTIES

This unit is divided into three sections:

A. High-ranking officials who are also Deputies
B. Brief biographies of other Deputies
C. High-ranking officials who are not Deputies

Biographic data on the following officials is taken from Briefing Notes on the Royal Kingdom of Laos, pp. L-2 - L-8.

Katay Don Sasorith, Prince Souvanna Phouma, Phoui Sananikone, Prince Souphanouvong, Bong Souvannavong, Thao Leuam, Khamphan Panya, Impeng Suryadhay, Sisouk Na Champassak.

A.

KATAY DON SASORITH

Unlike most of the Lao elite, Katay had rather humble origins. His father was proprietor of a bistro in Pakse which was a gathering place for the local French community. Despite his role as a leader in the Lao independence movement he retained a profound sympathy for individual French and for French culture in general. This attitude is reflected in his memoirs.¹

Katay played a leading part in the organization of the Nationalist, or Progressive Party. Though at the beginning the party was organized on a national rather than a regional level, his political stronghold has been in the south around Pakse. In addition to political activity he was active in social and sports affairs. He personally promoted the Association Sportive de Pakse, was President of the Cercle Lao of Vientiane and General Secretary of the Lao Scout Society. He also headed the Lao Theater Committee as well as the Association of Lao Civil Service Officials. He wrote extensively, many of his articles appearing in his newspaper Voix du Peuple issued in both Lao and French editions. In addition to reminiscences of his life in Pakse, published in French, he wrote articles on the Lao alphabet and writing, the history of the Lao national independence movement and a book on the political evolution of Laos. These have appeared as separate publications as well as in the Journal "France-Asie".

He is reputed to have derived large profits during the period of fixed currency transactions and to have vehemently opposed the devaluation

¹ Souvenirs d'un Ancien Ecolier de Pakse, Editions Lao Sédone, 1958.