

US asks Pa het Lao for

PRESIDENT via AWP
gpm
FYI

by T.D. ALLMAN

prisoner

VIENTIANE, Fri — American officials met here this week with a representative of the Pathet Lao in an attempt to secure the release of an Air America employee who was captured by the communists in September 1963.

The prisoner, identified as Eugene DeBruin, a British resident of Hong Kong, was captured at Sapons, a Pathet Lao outpost near the Vietnamese border in southeastern Laos, when he parachuted from an Air America C47. Such aircraft are usually used to ferry rice and military supplies to remote government outposts.

DeBruin was reportedly in the company of four other men,

three of them Americans, when the plane went down.

In an interview today, Sot Pethrasai, the Vietnamese representative of the Pathet Lao, said that United States had shown interest in securing De Bruin's release for some time, and that the British Embassy had also contacted him regarding the matter.

American diplomats meet irregularly with Pethrasai usually to discuss matters related to US losses on bombing missions over Laos.

The United States Govern-

ment, working through the Red Cross, has given the Pathet Lao the names of 71 Americans missing in the communist zone of Laos. These are mostly officers of the US Air Force whose planes have crashed during missions over Laos.

Earlier this week, the US Embassy here arranged a meeting with Arthur J. Heaford's brother, Lt Peter Dean Heaford of the US Air Force, who was lost over Laos in March this year.

According to well-informed sources, the release of American prisoners held in the communist zone of Laos probably cannot be expected until the Paris peace talks move closer to the subject of Laos.

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