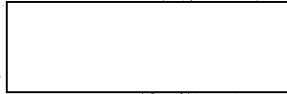


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STAFF NOTES:

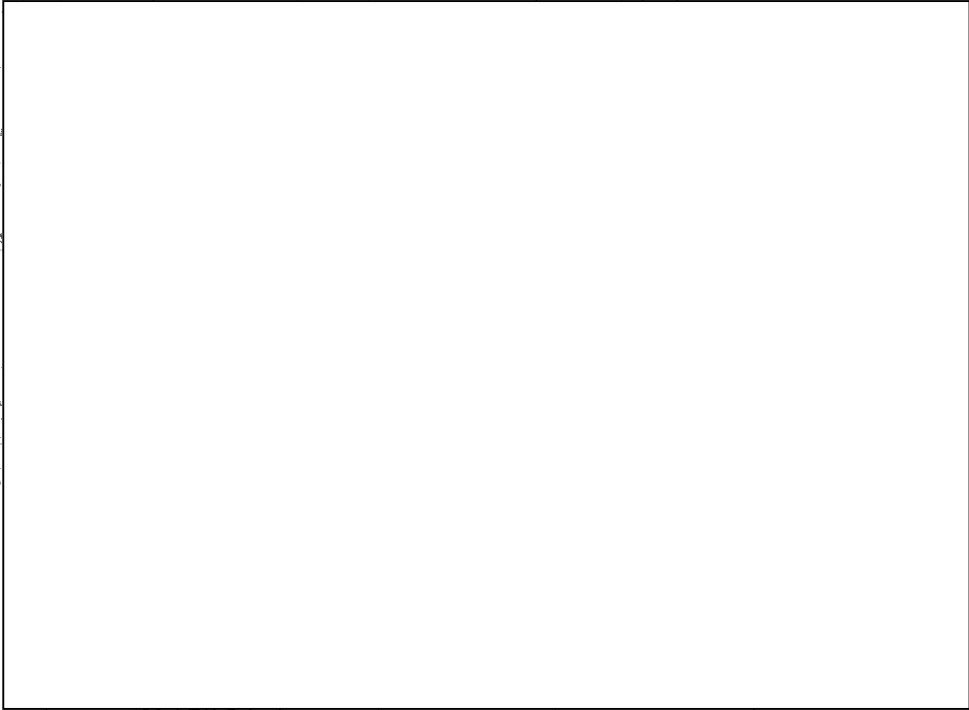
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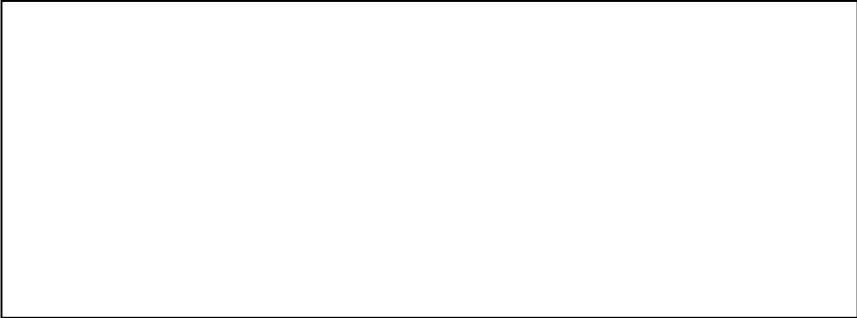
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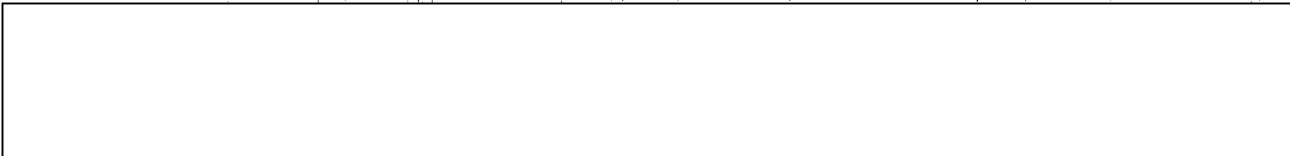


DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the [redacted] Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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NR

LAOS

POWs as Political Hostages

[redacted]

The Lao Communists have again emphasized that they presently have no intention of releasing any US or Thai prisoners. The [redacted] visited several [redacted] Pathet Lao officials and has reported that his hosts maintained they would continue to hold such prisoners "until all agreements are fulfilled and guarantees are implemented." One of the Communist officials also said that the Pathet Lao have no plans at this stage to release Emmet Kay, the US civilian contract pilot who is the only American known to be held by the Communists. The official claimed that Kay, captured in May of last year after the cease-fire, was "obviously spying." In addition, he stated that Kay's release "depends very much on what happens between us and the Americans in the future." Although Kay reportedly is being held near Sam Neua, no one [redacted] was allowed to talk to him.

[redacted] the Communists exhibit [redacted] and expressed extreme concern about US air bases in Thailand. They also complained about US "spy flights" and alleged that Thai troops are still in Laos. The Pathet Lao officials denied the presence of any North Vietnamese troops in Laos.

[redacted]

[redacted] a Pathet Lao [redacted] to link the release of US and Thai prisoners--particularly those captured after the cease-fire--to the cessation of US aerial reconnaissance flights over Laos, to the

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disbanding of [redacted] intelligence organizations in Vientiane and Luang Prabang, and to the dissolution of [redacted] bases. The Pathet Lao [redacted] argues further that personnel captured after the cease-fire agreement constitute proof of continued US and Thai aggression, and that this argument should be used to counter allied demands for the withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops from Laos.

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