

briefs Pathet Lao seize total power in Laos

From the wires of United Press International

BANGKOK, Thailand—The Communists completed their conquest of Indochina Wednesday when the Pathet Lao seized complete power in Laos, forced the abdication of King Savang Vatthana and abolished the 19-month-old coalition government of neutralist Premier Prince Souvanna Phouma.

The action ending the 600-year-old monarchy in the Buddhist kingdom known as the Land of One Million Elephants brought all of Indochina—Laos, North and South Vietnam and Cambodia—under Communist domination.

An official Radio Vientiane broadcast, monitored in Bangkok, announced that the Neo Lao Hak Sat People's Central Committee had accepted the abdication of the 68-year-old king, fired Souvanna and is appointing a new government to be known

as "The People's Democratic Republic of Laos."

The whereabouts of the king and Souvanna, 74, were not disclosed. But in recent weeks Souvanna has been in the royal capital of Inang Prabang with the king.

The Communist takeover was not unexpected. Rumors here and in Vientiane had said the king was being forced to abdicate. Several members of the royal family and of former neutralist and rightist leaders already had fled to Thailand.

Cambodia was the first of the Indochinese states to fall to Communist forces, when the Khmer Rouge captured Phnom Penh last April 17.

On April 30, the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong captured Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam.

Following the fall of the two neighbor

states, Souvanna Phouma negotiated an agreement ending the years-long civil war and giving the Pathet Lao a foothold in the Vientiane government.

Robert Kennedy authorized phone tap

WASHINGTON—Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy authorized a "trial" telephone tap on Martin Luther King Jr. in 1963 because of FBI fears that King was under communist influence, a former top FBI official testified today.

Courtney Evans, former assistant FBI director in charge of the special investigating division, told the Senate intelligence committee the tap authorization was only for 30 days. But earlier testimony showed the FBI watched King until the civil rights leader's assassination in 1968.

Another former FBI official testified today that the animosity between King and former FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover was strong and it apparently continued even after the two men held a "love feast" peace meeting.

Evans confirmed the authenticity of letters and memoranda read to him by committee staff investigators relating to surveillance of King.

One memo, written by Evans on Oct. 7, 1963, said that Kennedy gave approval "on a trial basis" for telephone taps on King

because of Hoover's suspicion of communist influence.

Intelligence directors deny conspiracy

WASHINGTON—The outgoing civilian directors denied Wednesday there was a conspiracy to downgrade Communist troop strength in Vietnam prior to the 1968 Tet offensive.

CIA Director William E. Colby told the House intelligence committee that the CIA insisted at the time the Viet Cong had 500,000 or more men, compared to a military estimate of 292,000.

Lt. Gen. Daniel O. Graham, who is seeking early retirement as head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, testified that U.S. military leaders were not surprised by the intensity of the Tet attack which killed 2,200 Americans and destroyed 58 aircraft.

Both men took issue with statements by former CIA agent Samuel A. Adams, who told the committee in September that the CIA and the military deliberately falsified Communist strength to make it appear the allies were winning the war.

Colby, in prepared testimony, said the CIA prepared a special assessment for Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara in May, 1967, which concluded "the overall strength of the Communists organized force structure in South Vietnam is probably in the 500,000 range and may even be higher."

"The 500,000 figure presented by the CIA in this report could be compared with an official military number at that time of 292,000," Colby said. "I believe that these quotations from official CIA publications show clearly that the CIA did not shrink from pushing the case for higher figures and made no attempt to produce 'politically acceptable' estimates."

Adams testified that the Viet Cong had 600,000 troops at the time, along with 30,000 spies in the South Vietnamese military, and that this fact was concealed from the public by the CIA and the military. Colby and Graham said that testimony was erroneous and misleading.

N.Y. aid bill narrowly passes Senate

WASHINGTON—President Ford's bill to avert bankruptcy in New York City weathered its first test vote in the Senate Wednesday after its narrow escape from the House. Backers said it could pass as early as Friday despite a filibuster.

By a vote of 57 to 23, which was seen as a test of sentiment, the Senate rejected a proposal by Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., to send the bill to the Banking Committee for study.

Over Helms' opposition, Senate Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield filed a cloture petition to force a vote on Friday on limiting debate, curtailing the filibuster threatened by Helms and other opponents.

"If this is the way the Senate is going to be run, the senator from North Carolina is going to remember it," said Helms.

The bill would provide up to \$2.3 billion in loans for 30 months to keep the nation's largest city from defaulting on its debts, with New York City compelled to repay the loans by the end of each fiscal year.

The bill passed the House 213 to 203 Wednesday—a margin so close supporters were disappointed.

Supporters expected by Friday to have the 60 votes required to limit debate through cloture. They said it was possible opponents bowing to the inevitable would allow the bill to pass.

But further filibustering still was possible against a required appropriation bill to supply the loans.

Import cars have bad month of sales

DETROIT—Surging November sales of U.S.-built cars—up 35 per cent over depressed year-ago levels—pushed imports to their lowest share of the American market in more than two years, reports from the automakers showed Wednesday.

Detroit auto companies sold 654,979 cars in November, slightly lower than analysts had predicted, compared with 505,511 a year ago when sales were heading to their low points.

American Motors was up 70 per cent, General Motors 35 per cent, Ford 34 per cent and Chrysler nearly 29 per cent.

November sales were the second best for any month since June of 1974. There were 24 sales days this past November compared with 25 a year ago and the percentages are computed on the number of cars sold each day.

The industry journal Ward's Automotive Reports predicted the higher year-end sales will be backed up by production increases in the first three months of 1976—12 per cent above the final quarter of this year—that could whittle down long-term industry layoffs which still stand at 68,000 workers.

The foreign car share of the market, which had been at a record 20 per cent through September, slipped to below 13 per cent for a second straight month and was expected to be the lowest since October of 1973 when final sales reports are made.

Police seize 300 pounds of grass

RALEIGH, N.C.—Police seized almost 300 pounds of Mexican marijuana and arrested three persons in the biggest marijuana bust ever in Wake County, officers said Wednesday.

Detective K. Norris Privette said the street value of the marijuana is estimated at \$100,000.

Charged with possession of marijuana and possession with intent to sell were David J. Campisi, 19, of Omaha, Neb.; Gordon R. Greenburg, 22, of Phoenix, Ariz.; and James G. Saunders, 25, of Raleigh.

Greenburg is being held on \$50,000 bond and Campisi and Saunders are being held on \$35,000 bond each.

Privette said detectives had been working on the drug case for weeks and arranged a transaction with Greensburg Tuesday night. Privette, working undercover, purchased 100 pounds of marijuana from Greenburg, the officer said.

Privette said Saunders was arrested later at his home, where 37 pounds of marijuana allegedly was found. The rest of the marijuana was stored in a storage bin at a commercial facility.

Chairman Mao: still in charge

PEKING—President Ford's visit to Mao Tse-tung left no doubt among onlookers that the aged Communist Party chairman is still "a man in charge."

Mao's alertness and vigor in his nearly two hours of talks with Ford Tuesday dispelled rumors his health problems had turned him into a virtual cripple.

"Mao Tse-tung was right on top of it—there is not question about it," George Bush, head of the U.S. liaison office, said.

Bush, who accompanied Ford to the meeting, said "For an hour to an hour and a half during the discussions, Mao Tse-tung was a man in charge."

The Communist Party chairman showed no signs of weakness, Bush said.



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