

designs on all of Southeast Asia, and that it would be a tragedy to permit Laos to fall.

President Eisenhower gave a brief review of the various moves and coups that had taken place in Laos involving the Pathet Lao, Souvanna Phouma, Boun Oum, and Kong Le. He said that the evidence was clear that Communist China and North Vietnam were determined to destroy the independence of Laos. He also added that the Russians were sending in substantial supplies in support of the Pathet Lao in an effort to overturn the government.

President Eisenhower said it would be fatal for us to permit Communists to insert themselves in the Laotian government. He recalled that our experience had clearly demonstrated that under such circumstances the Communists always ended up in control. He cited China as an illustration.

At this point, Secretary of State Herter intervened to state that if the present government of Laos were to apply to SEATO for aid under the Pact, Herter was of the positive opinion that the signatories to the SEATO Pact were bound. President Eisenhower agreed with this and in his statement gave the impression that the request for aid had already come from the government of Laos. He corroborated the binding nature of the obligation of the United States under the SEATO Pact.

President Eisenhower stated that the British and the French did