

not want SEATO to intervene in Laos, and he indicated that they would probably continue to maintain that attitude. President Eisenhower said that if it were not appropriate for SEATO to intervene in Laos, that his next preference would be the International Control Commission. He was sure, however, that the Soviet Union did not want the ICC to go into Laos. President Eisenhower stated that if this country had a choice as to whether the task should be assumed by SEATO or the ICC, that he personally would prefer SEATO.

Secretary Herter stated that we possibly could work out some agreement with the British, if they could be persuaded to recognize the present government in Laos. The chances of accomplishing this, however, appeared to be remote.

Secretary Herter stated, with President Eisenhower's approval, that we should continue every effort to make a political settlement in Laos. He added, however, that if such efforts were fruitless, then the United States must intervene in concert with our allies. If we were unable to persuade our allies, then we must go it alone.

At this point, President Eisenhower said with considerable emotion that Laos was the key to the entire area of Southeast Asia. He said that if we permitted Laos to fall, then we would have to write off all the area. He stated that we must not permit a Communist take-over. He reiterated that we should make every effort to persuade member nations of SEATO or the ICC to accept the burden with us to defend the