

TO: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: CLARK CLIFFORD

September 29, 1967

Memorandum of Conference on January 19, 1961
between President Eisenhower and President-elect Kennedy
on the Subject of Laos

The meeting was held in the Cabinet Room with the following men present: President Eisenhower, Secretary of State Christian Herter, Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates, Secretary of Treasury Robert Anderson, and General Wilton B. Persons.

With President-elect Kennedy were the new Secretary of State Dean Rusk, the new Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, the new Secretary of Treasury Douglas Dillon, and Clark M. Clifford.

An agenda for the meeting had been prepared by Persons and Clifford. The subjects on the agenda had been recommended by the parties present at the conference and were arranged under the headings of "State", "Defense", and "Treasury." The first subject under the heading of "State" was Laos.

President Eisenhower opened the discussion on Laos by stating that the United States was determined to preserve the independence of Laos. It was his opinion that if Laos should fall to the Communists, then it would be just a question of time until South Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Burma would collapse. He felt that the Communists had