

5. In my opinion, the question of Laotian forces should be dealt with in the Laotian declaration and the question of a Commission function in this regard should be handled through (a) our current effort to obtain some sort of role for the Commission vis-à-vis the declarations, or if this effort fails, through (b) a provision in the agreement for the Commission to assist the government at the request of Souvanna Phouma (who reacted positively when Mayrand put this idea to him).

6. After the last meeting of the Six, mentioned above, Pushkin told MacDonald that the Western delegations would get no repeat nowhere by insisting upon discussing private armies in meetings of the Six and that shouting between Harriman and Chang would make more difficult, if not repeat not impossible, any agreement. Pushkin had agreed to call the last meetings of the Six only to pacify Chang who, in his frustration at being left out of active negotiations, had been trying to get a formal plenary session of the whole conference. MacDonald and also Harriman have no repeat no doubt that Pushkin is anxious to reach an agreement at the earliest possible date. It was significant that Pushkin, who had prepared compromise drafts on voting and inspection teams, (see my telegram 1924 November 25) did not repeat not submit these drafts in the meeting of the Six but waited until he had an opportunity to hand them to MacDonald privately. He explained that the atmosphere of the meeting was not repeat not conducive to logical and reasonable thinking.

7. On the question of SEATO, Pushkin and Chang continued in the last meeting of the Six to maintain that specific mention of SEATO must be made by the SEATO powers in their statement accepting Laotian wishes respecting military pacts. The Communists say they will not repeat not accept a general reference. Harriman insists that the Zurich statement by the Princes did not repeat not specifically mention SEATO and that therefore it need not repeat not be specifically mentioned in the proposed statement. Communists say that Harriman had previously said that there could be a specific mention of SEATO (MacDonald, Roux and Lall verify that Harriman did say this at a meeting of the Six but that he may have changed his mind when Washington disapproved.) Chang and Pushkin therefore accuse Harriman of bad faith. Denying this charge, Harriman taunted Chang about his professed fears of SEATO while at the same time denouncing it as a paper tiger. Chang in turn became furious and sensible negotiations came to a stop.

8. Harriman has also had serious clashes with Lall – most recently on the interpretation of reporting as outlined in the two relevant articles (role of Co-Chairmen and investigations). Harriman requested Lall to accept a written interpretation which stipulated that if one Commissioner refused to sign a report, it would be incumbent upon the other two to submit a report. In other words, no repeat no one Commissioner could stop the submission of a report. While Lall agreed that in this hypothetical case, two commissioners would of course give this information to the Co-Chairmen, they could not repeat not, in conformity with the relevant articles, submit a formal report. Harriman then accused Lall of bad faith, saying that not repeat not only he but also MacDonald and I had all assured him some time ago that his interpretation was correct. On the basis of that interpretation, Harriman said he had persuaded the President of USA to accept the articles relevant to reporting. Since Lall now refused to accept this interpretation, Harriman said he would have to inform the President of this changed position and the articles concerned could no repeat no longer be accepted and there would be no repeat no agreement.

9. Harriman seemed to attach sufficient importance to his interpretation to make it an issue upon which the Conference could be broken up. MacDonald and I therefore saw Lall immediately and persuaded him that, since there was no repeat no basic difference between him and Harriman in substance, he should meet Harriman's legal adviser, Czyzak, to work out a mutually acceptable interpretation. Lall, however, refused to agree to a formal written