

which has already been adopted on items 6, 7(a)(b) and (c) (see paragraph 11 Laos Document 31 October 27) does meet our requirements on access making unnecessary a separate article.

9. Due to the critical stage in negotiations (upon which I am reporting separately) which has now been reached, I would appreciate receiving your comments by emergency telegram as soon as possible.

10. With further reference to voting article you will note that Pushkin has agreed in the second sentence of paragraph 2 of his draft article that questions relating to the initiation and carrying out of investigations shall be adopted by majority vote. This reference to article on investigations may make unnecessary the reference to the voting article in last sentence of article on investigations (see paragraph 9 our telegram 1912 November 18).† MacDonald will nevertheless try to retain this reference if possible.

[C.A.] RONNING

716.

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*Note du sous-secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures  
pour le secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures*

*Memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs  
to Secretary of State for External Affairs*

CONFIDENTIAL

[Ottawa], November 27, 1961

LAOS CONFERENCE – NEGOTIATIONS

It is clear from Ronning's telegram No. 1924 of November 25 (attached) that the Laos Conference is now very close to agreement on the terms of reference of the Commission. This telegram reports on three important subjects which are not yet fully agreed: voting (paras 1-5 and 10), co-chairmen (paras 6-7) and teams (para 8). I attach comparative tables showing the texts of these articles which you have earlier approved and those now proposed by the Western delegations. You will see that in some respects the changes are actually an improvement. The following additional comments may be helpful.

*Voting*

2. There are two substantive changes:

(a) *Cease-fire*

It has already been agreed that the Commission's supervisory functions with regard to the cease-fire will be carried out with the concurrence of the Government of Laos, in full co-operation with the Government, and within the framework of arrangements made by the Government. The question is whether unanimity shall apply to decisions on questions relating to violations of the cease-fire arrangements or to decisions on questions relating to provisions of the cease-fire article. The first formula is slightly more restrictive and therefore preferable; however, the practical difference is so small that either appears acceptable. In any case, it is clear that in this field the Commission can act only as desired by the Laotian Government.

(b) *Investigations*

Pushkin has agreed to include, among the questions to be decided by majority vote, a specific reference to the initiation and carrying out of investigations. This is a definite improvement, since it strengthens the corresponding provision in the article on investigations.