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SECRET

Washington, D. C.
January 3, 1961.
Tuesday

1-3-61

(S)
[FR] SUMMARY [(WF-987-S*)] (S)

9:33 am
3 - OG
28-28

[CLAUDE LEBEL to JACQUES de BEAUMARCHAIS, French Foreign Ministry, Paris] (S) bringing to his attention the following goof: A memorandum from the [(Foreign) Minister's office] (S) has been received in New York by [the French UN Delegation] (S). The memorandum enclosed an envelope from [the Elysee (Palace)] (S) addressed to [the President of the U. S.] (S) New York. This, [LEBEL] (S) explains, is [de GAULLE's Seasons Greetings to EISENHOWER] (S) and because of the goof has not been received [at the Embassy] (S) until today. [LEBEL] (S) notes that the mistake originally was made by [the Elysee] (S) which thought that [the President of the U. S.] (S) lives at New York, but that does not excuse [the Ministry (of Foreign Affairs)] (S) from forwarding it to New York rather than Washington. [BEAUMARCHAIS] (S) will handle it. (see 11:45 am, 12-31-60, [FR16290] (French)] (S) HLD/hld

11:03 am
9 - OG
12-10

[CLAUDE LEBEL'S secretary to the secretary of Mr. ERNESTO THALMANN, Minister, Charge d'Affaires ad interim, Embassy of Switzerland] (S) saying that in response to [THALMANN'S] (S) request to see [LEBEL, THALMANN] (S) may come to see [LEBEL] (S) now. (S) [(French)] (S) HLD/hld

11:35 am
4 - OG

(S) [Mme DUNCAN] to [Mrs. PHILIPPS, State Department, telling her that [GUBATZ] (chauffeur)] (S) has just called from the airport to report that he is at Customs and that someone has taken off [the seal from a diplomatic bag] (S) which arrives every week containing newspapers. [Mrs. PHILIPPS] (S) will call Customs to clear it, but she asks that [Mme DUNCAN] (S) send her a note on it. [Mme DUNCAN] (S) gives the [ID (ph) number as 175558] (S) (English) HLD/hld

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SECRET

[FR-16297] (S)

[65-1523 Sub I-1787] (S)

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DATE: 11-14-2017

SECRET

Washington, D. C.
January 3, 1961
Tuesday

1-3-61

(S)
[FR] SUMMARY - CONT'D [WF-987-S*] (S)

11:55 am
2 - IC
41-121

EDWARD MORGAN (American Broadcasting Company) to [CLAUDE LEBEL] asking for a clarification of the French position (S) on the Laos situation and noting that even as late as last night, according to (New York) Times reports this morning, the British and the French on one side and (the U.S.) on the other differed as to the need to the need to re-establish the (International Control) Commission and also on the fact that the French and the British up to now have taken the view that a neutralist government is the only thing to do whereas the Americans have taken the view that a pro-Western neutral (Government) is the base (upon which to build).

The question of the Commission, [LEBEL] replies, (S) is something on which the [French] have no (extraordinary hard views) (S) that is to say, [France] (S) considers it a matter of procedure or diplomacy, but it has very little to do with what [France] (S) feels to be the real solution of the problem. [LEBEL] (S) thinks he is right in saying that if everybody agreed to ICC as a matter of procedure [France] (S) would not disagree; [France] (S) is not pressing it, it is not [France's] (S) real preoccupation. But, [LEBEL] (S) continues, it is absolutely true that ((France)) (S) is in favor of a neutralist government, and it has been reaffirmed, /not those terms but very close to it, in an [AFP telegram] (S) of yesterday afternoon, which is quite visibly inspired at the [Quai d'Orsay (French Ministry of Foreign Affairs)]. (S)

[LEBEL] (S) offers to send a copy of this [AFP telegram] (S) to MORGAN, but MORGAN declines because he has seen a dispatch in the Times which probably has the same information.

[LEBEL] (S) does not think he can say much more at present except for one point: there have been a number of reports about the [French] (S) position being that [France] (S) favored a coalition government including the [Pathet Lao] (S). This is not, [LEBEL] (S) explains, what the [French] (S) position (emphasizing the past tense) was--it was a coalition government including all tendencies except the Communists, but with an insistence on all except the Communists; that is to say, including those who were in quite friendly terms or neutral terms viz-a-viz the Communists. As to the [French] (S) position today, the last [LEBEL] (S) has is that it has not changed on that line, but with the changes in the political situation [in Laos] (S) as it stands, this is an open question. (S)

SECRET

(Continued)

[FR-16298] (S)

DATE: 11-14-2017

SECRETWashington, D. C.
January 3, 1961
Tuesday

1-3-61

^(S)
[FR] SUMMARY - CONT'D [WF-987-S*)] ^(S)11:55 am
Cont'dEDWARD MORGAN and [LEBEL] ^(S) Continued

MORGAN explains that he was confused by the Times dispatch from London which said that both (U. S. Ambassador) WHITNEY and (British Foreign Secretary) Lord HOME agreed that the revival of the (International Control) Commission was necessary. As he gathers from here, Washington has not taken that view yet. [LEBEL, in reply] ^(S) observes that since this is something which happened between others [he is not the one to give a line on this] ^(S) but he thinks the truth is half-way between--that is, there is agreement on principle, and perhaps there is not yet agreement on how to do it.

MORGAN asks what the [French answer] ^(S) has been to the American argument that to have a coalition government would be too dangerous, that it would bleed the regime to weakness-- MORGAN explains that he is referring to a seemingly illuminating dispatch which the Washington Post reprinted from the London Observer last Thursday in which it was said that many British feel that the Americans threw away a golden opportunity of restoring peace and political equilibrium to Laos when they failed to support SOUVANNA PHOUMA.

That sentence, [LEBEL replies] ^(S) could be transferred one hundred per cent to what [they feel] ^(S) in [Paris] ^(S) SOUVANNA PHOUMA was never really supported here; [the French] ^(S) know the man ^(S) quite well, and if he had been (supported here) he would not have turned to the Left as he was obliged to do to reestablish his balance. [In (France's) opinion, LEBEL] ^(S) continues, he (turned Left) too much, but the point is that he had to do it because he felt there was no support here.

[LEBEL] ^(S) emphasizes that everything he is [saying is for background (and not quotation)] ^(S) MORGAN accepts it as such. ^(S)

There was also, MORGAN continues, a report in the Washington Post by this rather good reporter, WARREN UNNA, in which he said that there had been a hassle between (the U.S.) Ambassador and CIA field people on the one hand and Washington CIA and the State Department on the other, that the field people were urging the support of PHOUMA but that they were overruled. [Useless to say, [LEBEL replies] ^(S) if he were informed on that point he would consider himself a jolly good diplomat] ^(S) but he could not say that what he has seen and heard would urge him to disprove that story; he just does not know any damned thing about it. ^(S)

(Continued)

[FR-16299] ^(S) **SECRET**

SECRET

Washington, D. C.
January 3, 1961
Tuesday

1-3-61

(S)
[FR] SUMMARY - CONT'D (WF-987-S*) (S)

11:55 am
Cont'd

EDWARD MORGAN and [LEBEL] (S) - Continued

MORGAN thinks he can clarify this a little bit more here today; but it makes sense, he observes.

MORGAN comments that he got the impression from BOB last night, [when he saw him at the Embassy] (S) that he took a very lugubrious view of the situation; but (MORGAN) gathers from the papers today that Paris and London still do not think in terms of the word "grave". No, for one reason, [LEBEL] (S) replies that when one is dealing with Laos, one is dealing with Laotians, and what would go for other peoples cannot apply to an absolutely charming people where the notion of hate hardly exists; so that when you read that Communist forces have taken some place, the news is not good, but it is not as bad when it applies to Laos as if it applied to some place else.

The question which puzzles MORGAN is what to do from here (this point), referring specifically to this business of alerting the fleet and all that. [LEBEL's personal] (S) opinion is that alerting the fleet is an excellent thing because two things may happen: either negotiation, and it is always better to negotiate with a fleet behind you; or the opposite, and then you need (the fleet). In any case, that is not bad in itself, [LEBEL replies] (S) the problem is how one would start some form of negotiation, and to what end.

MORGAN gathers, [from having talked with [LEBEL] (S) and from some of these dispatches, that the revival of the (International Control) Commission is the first step toward getting some kind of a neutralist government. This is quite possible, [LEBEL replies] (S) adding that he does not feel that he can commit himself [for his Government] (S) because he is not quite clear as to the best possible procedural angle.

MORGAN, summing up, (S) notes that the [French] (S) objective is a neutralist Government without the [Pathet Lao] (S) but, he asks, is this realistic? A few days ago this was (the French] (S) position, [LEBEL replies] (S) but now he has an interrogation mark in his mind considering what has happened since.

(English) HLD/hld

SECRET

[FR-16300] (S)