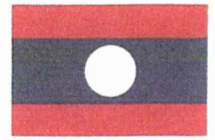




1961

THE INSURRECTIONIST ISSUES OF LAOS 1961 AND 1974



1974

PURPOSE: A single frame exhibit of the two Laotian insurrection movements and their stamps.

BACKGROUND:

- The history of Laos since independence in 1950 was marked by constant political tension between pro-Western Royalists; Neutralists; and the pro-Communist Pathet Lao.
- Attempts to form coalition governments in 1957, 1962 and 1973 ultimately failed.
- A military *coup d'état* in the administrative capital Vientiane on 9 August 1960 put Neutralists in power. Routed by pro-Royalist forces in December, the Neutralists fled to Northeast Laos and established an alternative government. Eight stamps were issued in 1961 (the "Neutralist" issues) that were accepted for use throughout the Kingdom of Laos.
- From 1963 to 1975, Laos became an extension of the war in Vietnam and, by 1973, the Pathet Lao controlled half the population and 60 percent of the country. In 1974, they issued seven stamps (two follow-on stamps were also issued although not available to the public).

SCOPE: This exhibit contains all Neutralist and Pathet Lao issues. As the Neutralist issues were printed in China, the existence of any pre-production material, proofs and errors is unknown. Such material is available for the 1974 Pathet Lao issues printed in Hanoi. Internal usage of both sets was limited and the existence of any covers going through the mail is because of the efforts of foreign philatelists both within and outside of Laos.

IMPORTANCE:

- Both insurrectionist issues were attempts to legitimize their claim to power by providing government postal services to the public.
- They complete the philatelic narrative of a country once viewed as the original key to halting Communist expansion Southeast Asia.



Neutralist, 1961
Armed Forces on the
Plain of Jars - Xieng Khouang



Pathet Lao, 1974
Proof with printer's guidelines
Battle of Xieng Khouang



Map courtesy of National Geographic Society
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EXHIBIT PLAN:

1. Neutralist Issues
2. Pathet Lao Issues
3. Epilogue

Key items are outlined in Red