

Woodson

EDUCATION DIVISION USAID/LAOS
MONTHLY CONFERENCE
January 10, 1967

The conference convened at 0800 in the home of Dr. Andrus, with Dr. Andrus presiding. Those present were:

- Dr. J.R. Andrus
- Dr. Harry A. Little
- Dr. Ralph Hall
- Miss Bligh DesBrisay
- Miss Lee Engler
- Mr. Frank Gillespie
- Mr. Norman Green
- Mr. Dewey Brumbaugh
- Mr. Douglas Harris
- Mr. Myron Thomas
- Dr. Martin Little
- Mr. Bernie Wilder
- Mr. Patrick Basler
- Mr. Larry Woodson
- Mr. Mike Dwyre, O.P.
- Mr. Trevor Wilson, British Cultural Mission

Dr. Andrus opened the meeting by explaining the agenda, which had been prepared by Dr. Martin Little and sent out in advance. Dr. Andrus said he hoped all would participate and would feel free to bring up any other topic which seems important.

Dr. Andrus summarized the recent study by the Education Division on projected school costs as follows:

1. Elementary school enrollment has increased an average of about 13.2% the past few years and all indications are that this kind of an increase will continue at least four years.
2. Secondary school enrollment has increased even faster, and the same thing seems to be true for technical education and for teacher training.
3. If the same costs per-pupil continue by 1980 Laos must have 4 1/2 to 5 times as much school money as at present. If the population increases at the present rate, this means that school expenditures will be three times as much per-capita as at present.
4. The present Lao school budget is about 22% of the national budget, excluding the military and the police. This is about as high a percentage as education can expect, considering the many governmental needs of Laos.
5. This means that if school needs are to be met, more funds must be found to go into the budget. It was suggested these might come from local taxes.
6. It was also suggested that the self-help principle might be extended to more schools both for facilities and for staff.
7. It was also suggested that if sufficient taxes are not found, the Ministry might have to impose tuition on pupils and charge pupils for textbooks and school supplies.
8. It was emphasized that these are Lao problems which the RLG officials must solve, and that USAID officials are discussing them with different Ministries concerned.

It was announced that after about 30 months of efforts, a Pro-Ag for construction of a secondary school in Vientiane has been signed. This will be a comprehensive-type school taught primarily in the Lao language. Dr. Andrus will leave January 12, 1967 for Washington to help in negotiating a contract with some university for operating this school. USAID Public Works Division is drawing the plans for buildings and they should be ready for bids in about a month. It is hoped to open the school with 100 pupils in the 7th grade in October 1967.

Dr. Hall announced that the Teachers' Manual for Grade 1 has been completed and will go to press this month, and that the Manual for Grade 2 has been started. He was asked if the Elementary Department of the Ministry had approved them and if this department has written a statement to be printed in them asking the teachers to use them. He replied that this had not been done, but was a good idea and would be followed-up. The CEAs said that such a statement would make it much easier to get the manuals used. It was pointed out that the PSIs meeting in Khong Island next week have this as one topic for discussion.

Dr. Hall said that the writing of good manuals is a slow process due to lack of experience on the part of the writers.

The suggestion made by memo earlier that each CEA work with a Lao counterpart in preparing a Teachers' Manual for one subject in the third grade was brought up. It was agreed this would be helpful and that such could be included later in the comprehensive manual for the third grade. Some CEAs protested that they do not have sufficient time to do this justice and that their counterparts are also busy. It was finally decided that this is important enough to justify taking the time to do it. It was decided:

1. That each CEA would work with a counterpart, generally a PSI or Groupe Scolaire Director, in writing, in Lao, such a manual to submit to the Ministry for approval and for printing.
2. That in practice, the CEA would probably write it and have it translated into Lao, for revision by the counterpart. It is to be published under the name of the counterpart.
3. It was emphasized that they must be very simple, and that they are not supposed to reproduce subject matter. They should be written from the Lao viewpoint, not from the American, keeping in mind the limited training and experience of teachers who will use them.
4. It is unimportant whether they be long or short, just so they help teachers to do better teaching. They should be practical, not theoretical.
5. Two copies are to be submitted, in English or Lao. The Education Division will take care of getting approvals and printing.
6. Some copies of English translations of textbooks were given out and it was reported that others are being typed. Each CEA will have both an English and Lao copy of the book for which he is writing a manual.
7. It was asked if the writing committees could not help write the manuals, but they have more to do than can be done and by spreading the work among various CEAs and PSIs, more interest will be created in using the manuals.

9. It was asked if any money is available to get extra help in writing the manuals. The answer was "no".
10. It was asked who will write the next set of manuals. The answer was that we will try these to determine how useful they are and then decide on future actions.
11. The following subjects were selected by CEAs:
 - DesBrisay - Reading
 - Green - Hygiene
 - Engler - Arithmetic
 - Gillespie - History of Buddha
 - Brumbaugh - Science or Gardening
 - Little - Geography
 - Costantino - To be assigned when he returns.

Dr. Hall reported he had received no material from the field to use in a Teachers' Newsletter. Mr. Gillespie said that the Southern Provinces want to issue such a newsletter for that region. He was told they should attempt it and see if they can make it a success. He said they already have such a newsletter in Saravane. CEAs were asked to try to get material sent in for use in a national Teachers' Newsletter or Bulletin.

From 0900 to 1015 a discussion on "Education of Teachers for Laos" with representatives of the cultural missions of France, Thailand, Australia, Great Britain, and Canada participating. For some reason only Mr. Trevor Wilson of the British Cultural Mission appeared. He discussed aid being given by Colombo Plan Countries, although he said he did not have at hand a recent report. Some of the things mentioned were:

1. Help with offices for Lao Information Service.
2. Radio Stations with British, German, and Australian assistance.
3. School supplies from Australia, mostly chalk, slates and notebooks.
4. Scholarships for study abroad in English Speaking Countries.

Mr. Wilson said that they feel Thailand offers much for the training of Lao teachers, due to the similarity of languages. He was encouraged over the increase in the numbers of Lao who can pass the English Language tests. He offered to make these tests available to ESP English section.

At 1015 Mrs. Andrus served delightful refreshments.

There was a discussion on problems at the EMIs. This centered mostly on problems of maintenance and space utilization.

It was reported that Dr. Somphou is working on a source of water for irrigation at ESP, and ways to beautify the grounds.

The PSI conference to be held at Khong Island beginning January 16th was discussed. All CEAs and Dr. Hall will attend January 16 to 20. Two cars will be provided, one from Pakse and one from Savannakhet. CEAs will stay at the Dooley Guest House. It was noted that among other things to be discussed there are:

1. The writing and publication of teachers' manuals.
2. The planning for in-service training for 1967. Each CEA was given a list tentatively approved courses to discuss with his particular PSIs.
3. Financial problems facing the schools of Laos. Each PSI will be given a copy of the unclassified part of the recent study on education costs in Laos up to 1980.

Mr. Harris discussed the need for education in arts and crafts as a part of general education, as pre-vocational training, and in vocations. He said that there is a need for the development of attitudes in the Far East which would make it easier to educate children to work with the hands. He said that this has been neglected in Laos, but there is an interest in such education, and he is finding encouraging signs that progress will be made.

The next Education Division Conference will be held February 14, 1967 from 0900 to 1200 in Dr. Andrus' home. Mr. Green is to prepare an agenda for the meeting.

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Dwyre gave a luncheon for the entire group in their home, at which informal discussions continued.

The CEAs held a meeting on special problems in Community Education in the office of Dr. Little from 1430 to 1630. Some of the topics discussed were:

1. Improving the quality of schools
2. In-service training
3. Participant training
4. School Statistics
5. Activity Plans
6. Progress reports
7. Distribution of textbooks
8. Mr. Bruce Rattenbury of USIS met with the group to request aid in publicity.

Dist:
OD/DD
AD/MD
AD/RD
OP
CON
USIS
EMB/POL
C&R 3
EDU 30