

AUSTRALIAN PEACE COUNCIL

259 Collins Street, Melbourne.

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24th March, 1961.

Prime Minister of Australia,  
Rt. Hon. R.G. Menzies,  
S.E.A.T.O. Council Meeting,  
BANGKOK. THAILAND.

Sir,

The Australian Peace Council is concerned with newspaper reports of the deterioration of the situation in Laos, even to the point of becoming a second Korea.

We are, in fact, concerned with all situations that are a threat to the peace of the world. We seek to ensure that the problems are settled by negotiation in a just and peaceful manner.

The history of the Laotian problem, as we understand it is as follows:-

The Nine year war in Indo-China ended with the Geneva Agreement of 1954.

- The Geneva Agreement -
1. Recognised the Independence of Laos.
  2. Bound Laos to pursue a foreign policy of neutrality.
  3. The introduction of armaments and military supplies to be illegal.
  4. Laos not to have foreign bases on her soil, nor to join any military bloc.

The International Supervisory Commission.

This Commission was set up to see that the Geneva Agreement was carried out. The U.S.S.R., Great Britain (Co-Convenors of the Conference), India, Poland and Canada made up the Commission.

After the Geneva Conference the Laotian People began to consolidate their independence and pursue a neutral foreign policy. The Geneva Agreement clauses that prohibited the introduction of armaments and military supplies has been violated and the International Supervisory Commission has been dismissed.

Under the Terms of the Geneva Agreement, the following events took place, according to Australian Press Reports:

Nov. 19, 1957 - A Coalition Government called the Laotian Government of National Unity was set up including Prince Souphannovong, leader of the Pathet Lao. This new Government proclaimed peace and neutrality. Prince Souvanna Phouma was Prime Minister. At this time supplementary elections were held in Laos.

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