

Letter to Aust. P.M.

24.3.61

This policy was supported by a mass meeting of 15,000 at Vientiane. After this statement the New York Herald Tribune Aug. 11, stated

"If Kong Lae consolidates his revolution, a neutralist wedge will have been driven right through the S.E.A.T.O. area America is hardly likely to allow themselves to be EVICTED by a new regime."

Captain Kong Lae called on Prince Souvanna Phouma to become Prime Minister Prince Souvanna Phouma proclaimed neutrality for Laos and set up a "Peace and neutrality committee."

The Government's policy supported by the majority of Laotians was overthrown by Nosavan who is supported by the U.S. to the last bootlace and placed in power. Prince Boun Oum "who has been established in power by the American backed General Phoumi Nosavan" - "Age 20.12.60."

AUSTRALIAN TROOPS MAY BE INVOLVED

We note with concern "Age" 21.3.61 - "Australian Troops could, if the necessary political decisions were taken, by S.E.A.T.O., begin moving into Laos within a matter of hours, Vice Admiral Sir Roy Dowling said today." Sir Roy Dowling goes on to say, "As far as military people are concerned, the Laos situation is serious and we are crossing our fingers and hoping a solution will be found."

It is precisely this solution that we are concerned about.

The Governments of both Laos and Cambodia have called for a fourteen nation Geneva like conference to solve the problems of Laos. This Conference is backed by Burma, U.S.S.R., China and other countries.

The Australian Peace Council supports the idea of calling 14 nations together in conference to preserve peace in Laos, indeed the peace of the whole world.

We urge you, Mr. Prime Minister, that your deliberations in Bangkok will be guided by the principle of a just and peaceful solution with no intervention by S.E.A.T.O. in the internal affairs of South East Asia which would certainly involve Australia.

Yours faithfully,

AUSTRALIAN PEACE COUNCIL

(Signed) Rev. F.J. Hartley
Joint Hon. Sec.

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UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE ARCHIVES
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*Vic
Peace,
Conrad
Wolcott*