

L A O S

Cabinet at its meeting in Melbourne considered in detail all aspects of the Laotian situation in which it received a comprehensive report from the Acting Minister for External Affairs. It had before it analyses and reports received from Australian diplomatic missions abroad and the views of Australia's allies and Commonwealth partners. In the course of the meeting teletyped reports of the then current meeting of the security council and of the most recent reports of events in Laos were received.

Cabinet studied all this material and considered the likely development of events including courses which might be taken in the absence of prompt action on the part of the United Nations.

Cabinet endorsed the view that the resolution for a fact-finding mission propounded in the Security Council by Mr. Lodge on behalf of the United States and supported by so many countries including in the Council itself the United Kingdom, France, The Republic of China, the Argentine Republic, Canada, Italy, Japan, Panama and Tunisia was most timely and welcome, and if carried by the Council and promptly implemented would constitute a distinct advance in the resolution of a situation which had become acute for the Royal Laotian Government.

Cabinet decided that Australia's representatives overseas should be instructed to give any support within their means to any United Nations effort which resulted from any such resolution.

At the conclusion of the Cabinet meeting advice was received that the resolution for the appointment of a four-nation sub-committee of the Security Council to investigate and report on the situation in Laos had been carried by the Security Council and that the members to form the Sub-Committee are Argentina, Italy, Japan and Tunisia.

The day to day developments of the situation will be kept under constant review by the Ministers concerned and dealt with by them in the light of the Cabinet discussions which took place. Appropriate communication and consultation with our overseas posts and with our allies in SEATO and Commonwealth partners will of course continue.

Melbourne,
8th September, 1959.