

discussed by the Assembly. The supporters of the resolution argued that what was at issue was a violation of human rights which the Assembly could not ignore.

The resolution was adopted by a vote of 45 in favour (Canada), 9 against, with 26 abstentions.

Laotian Crisis in the United Nations

On September 4, 1959 the Government of Laos appealed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for "the assistance of the United Nations . . . in particular . . . that an emergency force to halt aggression and to prevent its spreading should be despatched with the greatest possible speed". Early in August 1959 when the Laotian Government first received reports of fighting in the north-eastern province of Sam Neua between the Communist-orientated Pathet-Lao and Government forces, it had informed the Secretary-General. The Government had stated at that time that the Pathet-Lao were being given active assistance by North Vietnam but it had not made a specific appeal for United Nations action.

Following consultations with the member Governments and at the request of the Secretary-General, the President of the Security Council, Mr. Aegidio Ortona of Italy, called a meeting of that body on September 7, 1959 to consider a "Report by the Secretary-General on the Letter Received from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Royal Government of Laos, transmitted by a Note from the Permanent Mission of Laos to the United Nations, September 4, 1959". The Representative of the Soviet Union opposed consideration of the matter on technical grounds and on the grounds that the situation in Laos was the result of the violation of the Geneva and Vientiane Agreements by the Laotian Government. (The Geneva Agreement of 1954 had established a cease-fire ending the Indochinese war and providing for a political settlement which was achieved by the Vientiane Agreement between the Government and the Pathet-Lao in November 1957). He stated that the situation could be normalized only through a return by the Laotian Government to the implementation of those Agreements. The agenda was adopted, however, by a vote of 10-1.

In presenting his report to the Security Council, the Secretary-General noted that various communications concerning the difficulties in Laos had been received previously and that as a result informal studies and consultations had been instituted on the possibilities for assistance by the United Nations without impairing the Geneva Agreements or interfering with the arrangements based upon them. The Secretary-General noted that the appeal of the Laotian Government necessitated consideration of further steps to render assistance.

Following the Secretary-General's report, the United States Representative introduced a draft resolution sponsored by the United States, France and the United Kingdom to the effect that, "the Security Council, decides to appoint a sub-committee consisting of Argentina, Italy, Japan and Tunisia, and instructs this sub-committee to examine the statements made before the Security Council concerning Laos, to receive further statements and documents and to conduct such inquiries as it may determine necessary and to report to the Security Council as soon as possible". All members of the Security Council except the Soviet Union supported the resolution. The Canadian Representative, speaking in favour of the resolution, stated that as a member of the International Commission* Canada had been particularly

*The Commission, consisting of India, Poland and Canada had been set up to supervise the implementation of the Cease-Fire Agreement and had been adjourned *sine die* in July 1958, at the request of the Laotian Government.