

that the Communist delegations rejected these points, and stated that the Geneva Conference should be regarded as the political conference referred to in Article 60 of the Korean Armistice Agreement and in United Nations General Assembly Resolution 711 (XVI) of August 28, 1953. The report also specified that the failure of the Geneva Conference to solve the Korean question did not prejudice the armistice in Korea, which remained in effect. After debate, the Assembly adopted by a vote of 50 in favor (including the United States) to 5 opposed (Byelorussian S.S.R., Czechoslovakia, Poland, Ukrainian S.S.R., U.S.S.R.), with 4 abstentions (Burma, India, Indonesia, and Syria), Resolution 811 (IX) December 11, 1954, sponsored by the 15 powers, which approved the report on the Korean Political Conference.

For documentation on the report and its adoption by the United Nations General Assembly, see volume XV.

THE GENEVA CONFERENCE ON INDOCHINA May 8-July 21, 1954

I. INTRODUCTION

A. NOTE ON SOURCES AND PRESENTATION OF MATERIAL FOR THE GENEVA CONFERENCE ON INDOCHINA

1. *The nature of the Conference*

The Indochina phase of the Geneva Conference began on May 8, the day after the fall of Dien Bien Phu, and continued until July 21. Although the line between the two sides was not as clearly drawn as it was in the Geneva Conference on Korea, the Geneva Conference on Indochina was essentially a two-sided affair. France and her allies, Cambodia, Laos, the State of Vietnam, the United Kingdom, and the United States, confronted three Communist Delegations, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the People's Republic of China, and the Soviet Union.

The negotiations which moved at a fairly steady rate of progress were carried out in formal plenary and restricted sessions and at many private meetings and social occasions. In addition to negotiating a settlement to the war in Indochina, the representatives of France, the United Kingdom, and the United States engaged in considerable discussion on the question of collective security in Southeast Asia.

While the plenary sessions were not open to the public, statements and proposals made in these sessions were summarized in press briefings and in most instances the texts were made available to the press. The restricted sessions were closed entirely and only a very small amount of information on the deliberations was made available to the press.

2. *Presentation of the material*

In compiling the documentation on the formal proceedings of the Geneva Conference on Indochina, telegraphic summaries were used to cover the plenary and restricted sessions, with footnote references to the verbatim or summary minutes of each session. Proposals and statements made in the sessions were handled in the same manner.

Except for the presentation of the final Conference documents, the documentation is set forth in strictly chronological order, with no topical breakdowns. Where telegraphic summaries of meetings were transmitted some time after the events, the documents were given an italic heading to show the time of the meeting and have been placed in the compilation at that time.

Because of the close interrelationship between the pre-Conference and Conference deliberations and the events in Indochina, volume XIII, Indochina, must be consulted. Additional relevant documentation is also included in volume VI, Western Europe; volume VII, Germany and Austria; and volume XII, East Asia and the Pacific.

3. Unpublished sources

The principal source of documentation in the Department of State central files is decimal file 396.1 GE (the Geneva Conference file). Some preliminary material is contained in file 396.1 BE (the Berlin Conference file), and additional papers are in the main decimal files for Indochina, 751G.00 and 751G.5.

Several Department of State lot files are important. The large, consolidated Conference file, lot 60 D 627, contains the best single collection of material on the Conference. Also of considerable value is a lot file of the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, FE files, lot 60 D 330, and a lot file of the Policy Planning Staff, PPS files, lot 65 D 101.

In addition, various groups of files, in particular the papers of John Foster Dulles, in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library in Abilene, Kansas, contain considerable material on Indochina and the Geneva Conference.

4. Published sources

The minutes of the plenary and restricted sessions, proposals made by the delegations, and final documents adopted by the Conference on Indochina were printed in *Conférence de Genève sur L'Indochine* (8 mai-21 juillet 1954), issued by the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères of France in 1955. Many of the proposals and statements made in the sessions were printed in two British White Papers, *Documents Relating to the Discussion of Korea and Indo-China at the Geneva Conference, April 27-June 1, 1954* (Cmd. 9186, June 1954) and *Further Documents Relating to the Discussion of Indo-China at the Geneva Conference, June 16-July 21, 1954* (Cmd. 9239, August 1954).

Some materials which appear in this compilation were printed in the "Pentagon Papers"—United States Department of Defense, *United States-Vietnam Relations, 1945-1967* (12 volumes; Washington, Government Printing Office, 1971).

A number of public pronouncements were printed in the Department of State *Bulletin* for 1954 and in the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1954* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1960).

Two unofficial accounts of the Indochina phase of the Geneva Conference are Philippe Devillers and Jean Lacouture, *End of a War: Indochina, 1954* (New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1969) and Robert

F. Randle, *Geneva 1954: The Settlement of the Indochinese War* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1969). In addition, three works which contain considerable information on the Conference are Allan W. Cameron, *Viet-Nam Crisis: A Documentary History, Volume I, 1940-1956* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1971); Anthony Eden's memoirs, *Full Circle* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960); and Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change, 1953-1956* (Garden City, Doubleday, 1963). The Department of State assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of fact or interpretation in these unofficial publications.

B. LIST OF PAPERS PREPARED FOR THE GENEVA CONFERENCE ON INDOCHINA

A Working Group on Indochina was set up to prepare position and background papers for the United States Delegation to the Geneva Conference. The Working Group was composed primarily of Department of State officials, although the Department of Defense was represented. Below are listed the final versions of the papers prepared for the Indochina phase of the Conference. In addition, papers and memoranda prepared for both the Korean and Indochinese phases of the Conference (the GKI series) are listed. Only one of these papers, GI D-7a, is printed in this volume. All of the papers, except GI D-3/1 which has not been located in the files of the Department of State, are in FE files, lot 60 D 330.

Primary Papers

GI D-1a, March 24, Additional Aid for Indochina.—Short of Combat Operations
 GI D-2, April 9, Terms of Reference for the U.S. Members of the Tripartite Working Group
 GI D-3a, March 22, Probable French position at Geneva and the Recommended U.S. Position to It
 GI D-3/1, (date undetermined) Probable French Position on Indochina at Geneva
 GI D-4a, March 24, Probable Soviet and Chinese Communist Objectives and Tactics on Indochina at Geneva
 GI D-5, March 18, U.S. Position on Possible Communist Proposals for Indochinese Settlement
 GI D-7a, March 24, U.S. Position on Participation in the Indochina Phase of the Geneva Conference
 GI D-8, March 22, Probable Position of the Associated States re Geneva
 GI D-9, March 18, Probable U.K. Position on Indochina at Geneva
 GI D-10a, March 24, U.S. Aid in Postwar Reconstruction of Indochina
 GI D-11, May 3, A Program for Cambodia and Laos

Background and Contingency Papers

- GI D-30a, March 25, Summary of the U.S. Aid Program in Indochina
- GI D-31, March 29, Intelligence Estimate including the following:
(a) Maximum information on the level and character of Chinese Communist aid to Vietnam; (b) Possibility of a Vietnam Air Force, including evidence of training and unusual deployment of aircraft in South China; (c) Any other form of Chinese Communist assistance of Vietnam; (d) The effect on the Vietnam war effort of cessation of aid from Communist China.
- GI D-32, April 1, Chronological History of Major Events in Indochina since 1940
- GI D-33, April 7, History of U.S. Policy re Indochina since 1940
- GI D-34, April 12, Implementation of the July 3 Declaration, including Status of Current Franco-Viet Nam Negotiations in Paris
- GI D-36, May 3, The Problems of Implementing any Cease-Fire or Armistice in Indo-China Viewed in the Light of Our Experience in Korea

Papers and Memoranda for Korean and Indochina Phases

- GKI D-2, April 16, Basis of U.S. Policy Toward China
- GKI D-2/1, April 16, Formosa—A Non-Negotiable Subject
- GKI D-2/2, April 16, Mistreatment of Foreign Nationals & Interests in Communist China
- GKI D-2/3, April 16, Basis for U.S. Non-Recognition of Communist China and Opposition to Its Seating in the United Nations
- GKI D-2/4, April 16, Communist China as a Threat to Peace and Security in the Far East
- GKI D-2/5, April 16, Totalitarianism in Communist China
- GKI D-2/6, April 16, Need for Trade Restrictions Against Communist China
- GKI D-2/7, April 16, U.S. Mutual Security Arrangements in the Pacific
- GKI D-2/8, April 19, U.S. Policy and Actions with Respect to Formosa
- GKI D-2/9, April 19, Negotiating for Release of Americans Detained in Communist China
- GKI D-3, March 24, Performance vs. Promise in Communist Bloc Diplomacy
- GKI D-4, March 24, Probable Communist Position and Tactics at the Korean Political Conference at Geneva
- GKI D-4/1, April 9, Probable Soviet and Chinese Communist Objectives and Tactics at Geneva with Special Reference to Indochina
- GKI D-5, April 6, Exploitation of Communist Bloc Weakness at Geneva
- GKI D-5/1, April 6, The Sino-Soviet Relation and Its Potential Sources of Differences
- GKI D-6a, April 17, Possible Communist Proposal for a Far East Security Pact

- GKI D-7, April 14, U.S. Propaganda Policy for the Geneva Conference
- GKI D-8, April 17, American Citizens Detained in the USSR
- GKI D-9, April 30, The "United Front" in Asian Communist Tactics
- GKI D-10, May 4, Possible Interrelation of Communist Proposals in Korea and Indochina
- GKI Memo 1, March 12, Memorandum on Preparations
- GKI Memo 2, March 25, Administrative and Technical Arrangements
- GKI Memo 2/1, March 30, Administrative and Technical Arrangements
- GKI Memo 2/2, April 26, Exchange of Communications with Soviets on Arrangements for Geneva Conference
- GKI Memo 2/3, May 6, Berlin Communiqué, Invitations to Our Side, Exchange of Notes and *Aide-Memoire* with the Soviets
- GKI Memo 3a, April 20, List of Papers Related to Both Phases
- GKI Memo 4, April 14, Reference Documentation
- GKI Memo 5, April 26, Invitations to Geneva Conference and Berlin Communiqué

C. SCHEDULE OF PLENARY AND RESTRICTED SESSIONS ON INDOCHINA

The restricted sessions were less formal than the plenary sessions and thus were more conducive to substantive discussion. There were a few of the lengthy formal statements which were characteristic of the plenary sessions. Principal statements were made in the restricted sessions and these are listed.

May 8. First plenary session, Eden presiding. Statements by Eden (United Kingdom), Bidault (France), Pham Van Dong (Democratic Republic of Vietnam), Smith (United States), Chou En-lai (People's Republic of China), Molotov (Soviet Union), Sam Sary (Cambodia), and Phoui Sananikone (Laos). Convened at 4:35 p. m., adjourned at 7:40 p. m.

May 10. Second plenary session, Molotov presiding. Statements by Pham Van Dong, Nguyen Quoc Dinh (State of Vietnam), Tep Phan (Cambodia), Phoui Sananikone, Eden, and Smith. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 6:40 p. m.

May 12. Third plenary session, Eden presiding. Statements by Tep Phan, Nguyen Quoc Dinh, Chou En-lai, Eden, Smith, Phoui Sananikone, Bidault, Pham Van Dong, Tep Phan, and Molotov. Convened at 3:05 p. m., adjourned at 5:35 p. m.

May 14. Fourth plenary session, Molotov presiding. Statements by Molotov, Bidault, and Tep Phan. Convened at 3:03 p. m., adjourned at 6:05 p. m.

May 17. First restricted session, Eden presiding. Statements by Bidault, Pham Van Dong, Smith, Molotov, and Phoui Sananikone. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 6:15 p. m.

May 18. Second restricted session, Molotov presiding. Statements by Phoui Sananikone, Tep Phan, Pham Van Dong, Bidault, Eden, Smith,

Chou En-lai, Nguyen Quoc Dinh, and Molotov. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 6:15 p. m.

May 19. Third restricted session, Eden presiding. Statements by Smith, Bidault, Pham Van Dong, Tep Phan, Phoui Sananikone, and Chou En-lai. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 6:30 p. m.

May 21. Fourth restricted session, Molotov presiding. Statements by Bidault, Pham Van Dong, Tep Phan, and Molotov. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 7:15 p. m.

May 24. Fifth restricted session, Eden presiding. Statements by Bidault, Smith, Pham Van Dong, Phoui Sananikone, Nguyen Quoc Dinh, and Molotov. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 7:10 p. m.

May 25. Sixth restricted session, Molotov presiding. Statements by Nguyen Quoc Dinh, Pham Van Dong, Bidault, Smith, and Molotov. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 7:15 p. m.

May 27. Seventh restricted session, Eden presiding. Statements by Bidault, Chou En-lai, and Nguyen Quoc Dinh. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 5:15 p. m.

May 29. Eighth restricted session, Molotov presiding. Statements by Pham Van Dong, Tep Phan, Nguyen Quoc Dinh, Smith, and Molotov. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 7 p. m.

May 31. Ninth restricted session, Eden presiding. Statements by Smith, Chou En-lai, Tep Phan, Gromyko (Soviet Union), and Bidault. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 7 p. m.

June 2. Tenth restricted session, Molotov presiding. Statements by Smith, Chou En-lai, Bidault, Eden, Pham Van Dong, and Molotov. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 6:55 p. m.

June 3. Eleventh restricted session, Eden presiding. Statements by Nguyen Quoc Dinh, Bidault, Smith, Chou En-lai, and Pham Van Dong. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 7 p. m.

June 4. Twelfth restricted session, Molotov presiding. Statements by Tep Phan, Eden, Molotov, and Bidault. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 7 p. m.

June 8. Fifth plenary session, Eden presiding. Statements by Bidault, Pham Van Dong, Tep Phan, Molotov, Eden, and Smith. Convened at 3:03 p. m., adjourned at 7:50 p. m.

June 9. Sixth plenary session, Molotov presiding. Statements by Nguyen Quoc Dinh, Phoui Sananikone, Chou En-lai, and Smith. Convened at 3:05 p. m., adjourned at 7:15 p. m.

June 10. Seventh plenary session, Eden presiding. Statements by Eden, Tep Phan, Pham Van Dong, Molotov, Phoui Sananikone, Nguyen Quoc Dinh, and Smith. Convened at 3:03 p. m., adjourned at 7 p. m.

June 14. Thirteenth restricted session, Molotov presiding. Statements by Molotov, Smith, Chauvel (France), Chou En-lai, and Pham Van Dong. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 7:15 p. m.

June 16. Fourteenth restricted session, Eden presiding. Statements by Tep Phan, Phoui Sananikone, Chou En-lai, Pham Van Dong, Chauvel, and Molotov. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 7:30 p. m.

June 18. Fifteenth restricted session, Molotov presiding. Statements by Robertson (United States), Tep Phan, Chou En-lai, Phoui Sananikone, Pham Van Dong, Chauvel, and Molotov. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 7:20 p. m.

June 19. Sixteenth restricted session, Eden presiding. Statements by Chauvel, Tep Phan, Phoui Sananikone, Smith, Molotov, and Eden. Convened at 6:45 p. m., adjourned at 9 p. m.

June 22. Seventeenth restricted meeting, Novikov (Soviet Union) presiding. Statements by Chauvel, Li Ke-nung (People's Republic of China), Johnson (United States), Lord Reading (United Kingdom), Pham Van Dong, Sam Sary, Buu Kinh (State of Vietnam), and Novikov. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 7:20 p. m.

June 25. Eighteenth restricted session, Lamb (United Kingdom) presiding. Statements by Sam Sary, Chauvel, Kuznetsov (Soviet Union), and Li Ke-nung. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 6:30 p. m.

June 29. Nineteenth restricted session, Kuznetsov presiding. Statements by Pham Van Dong, Johnson, Chauvel, and Sam Sary. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 5:45 p. m.

July 2. Twentieth restricted session, Lamb presiding. Statements by Lamb, Chauvel, Kuznetsov, and Pham Van Dong. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 5:40 p. m.

July 6. Twenty-first restricted session, Kuznetsov presiding. Statements by Li Ke-nung, Chauvel, Sam Sary, and Kamphan Panya (Laos). Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 5 p. m.

July 9. Twenty-second restricted session, Lamb presiding. Statements by Johnson, Li Ke-nung, Pham Van Dong, Chauvel, Sam Sary, and Kuznetsov. Convened at 3 p. m., adjourned at 6:15 p. m.

July 18. Twenty-third restricted session, Molotov presiding. Statements by Molotov, Tran Van Do (State of Vietnam), and Smith. Convened at 4 p. m., adjourned at 4:45 p. m.

July 21. Eighth plenary session, Eden presiding. Statements by Tran Van Do, Mendes-France (France), Eden, Tep Phan, Smith, Molotov, Pham Van Dong, Chou En-lai, and Phoui Sananikone. Convened at 3:10 p. m., adjourned at 5:20 p. m.

D. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE GENEVA CONFERENCE ON INDOCHINA
The delegation lists are filed in Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 299 and CF 302.

United States

Headquarters—Hotel du Rhone, Geneva

United States Representatives

April 26—May 3—John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State

May 3—June 20—Walter Bedell Smith, Under Secretary of State

June 20—July 17—U. Alexis Johnson, Ambassador to Czechoslovakia

July 17—July 21—Walter Bedell Smith, Under Secretary of State

Deputy United States Representative

Walter S. Robertson, Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs, Department of State, May 8—June 20 (For the period April 26—May 8 Mr. Robertson was listed as a Special Adviser to the United States Delegation.)

Special Assistants to the United States Representatives

Roderic L. O'Connor, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State
Richard V. Hennes, Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of State

Coordinator

U. Alexis Johnson, Ambassador to Czechoslovakia (For the period July 17-21 Ambassador Johnson was listed as Deputy United States Representative and Delegation Coordinator.)

Special Advisers

Theodore Achilles, Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission, United States Embassy, Paris

Robert R. Bowie, Director, Policy Planning Staff, Department of State

Arthur C. Davis, Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy, Director, Office of Foreign Military Affairs, Department of Defense

Donald R. Heath, Ambassador to Cambodia and Vietnam and Minister to Laos

Douglas MacArthur II, Counselor of the Department of State
Carl W. McCardle, Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, Department of State

Livingston T. Merchant, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, Department of State

Edward Page, Jr., Counselor of Embassy and Deputy Director for Political Affairs in the United States Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and European Regional Council, Paris

Herman Phleger, Legal Adviser, Department of State
George Frederick Reinhardt, Counselor of Embassy, United States Embassy, Paris

Advisers

John Anspacher, Chief, Program Planning Staff, United States High Commissioner for Germany, Bonn

Philip W. Bonsal, Director, Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs, Department of State (In June Mr. Bonsal became a Special Adviser to the Delegation.)

John A. Calhoun, First Secretary and Consul, United States Embassy, Seoul

John Daley, Brigadier General, U.S.A., former Chief of Staff, U.N. Military Armistice Commission, Korea

Robert G. Ferguson, Colonel, U.S.A., Office of Foreign Military Affairs, Department of Defense

Franklin C. Gowen, United States Representative for International Conferences and Consul, Geneva

John Hamilton, Deputy Assistant Director for Policy and Programs, United States Information Agency

Louis Henkin, Office of United Nations Political and Security Affairs, Department of State

Alfred leS. Jenkins, Officer in Charge, Political Affairs, Office of Chinese Affairs, Department of State

John Keppel, Second Secretary and Consul, United States Embassy, Moscow

James F. King, Office of International Security Affairs, Department of Defense

Edwin W. Martin, Deputy Director, Office of Chinese Affairs, Department of State

Robert H. McBride, Officer in Charge of French-Iberian Affairs, Department of State

Charles C. Stelle, Policy Planning Staff, Department of State

Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., Office of Eastern European Affairs, Department of State

Charles A. Sullivan, Chief, American and Far East Division, Office of Foreign Military Affairs, Department of Defense (In May Mr. Sullivan became a Special Adviser to the Delegation.)

Ray L. Thurston, Deputy Director and later Director, Office of Eastern European Affairs, Department of State

Kenneth T. Young, Director, Office of Northeast Asian Affairs, Department of State

Experts (Research and Reference Officers)

Philip E. Barringer, Office of Foreign Military Affairs, Department of Defense

Robert Blake, Office of Eastern European Affairs, Department of State

Chester L. Cooper, Office of Chinese Affairs, Department of State (In July Mr. Cooper became an Adviser to the Delegation.)

Vladimir De Grave, Office of Eastern European Affairs, Department of State

Walter Drew, Office of Northeast Asian Affairs, Department of State

John E. Dwan, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S.A., Office of Foreign Military Affairs, Department of Defense (In June Colonel Dwan became an Adviser to the Delegation.)

John L. Getz, Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs, Department of State (In June Mr. Getz became an Adviser to the Delegation.)

Wilburn N. Huston, Colonel, U.S.A., Joint Staff, Joint Chiefs of Staff

Donald Kallet, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S.A., United States Embassy, Saigon
 Robert C. Taber, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S.A., Assistant Army Attaché, United States Embassy, Saigon
 Joseph A. Yager, Chief, Division of Research for the Far East, Department of State (In June Mr. Yager became an Adviser to the Delegation.)

Press Officer

Henry Suydam, Chief, News Division, Department of State

Assistants to the Press Officer

John P. McKnight, United States Information Agency, Rome
 Edward Savage, United States Information Agency, Stuttgart
 (From June 23-July 17 Mr. Savage was listed as the Press Officer for the Delegation.)

Deputy Coordinators and Secretaries of the Delegation

April 26-June 9—Basil Capella, Executive Director, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, Department of State
 June 9-July 17—Henry F. Nicol, Conference Attaché, United States Resident Delegation to International Organizations, Geneva

July 17-July 21—Jeffrey C. Kitchen, Deputy Director, Executive Secretariat, Department of State

Special Assistant to the Deputy Coordinators and Secretaries of the Delegation

Henry F. Nicol, Conference Attaché, United States Resident Delegation to International Organizations, Geneva

Technical Secretaries

Morris Draper, Jr., Executive Secretariat, Department of State
 Walter Trulock, Executive Secretariat, Department of State
 Christopher Van Hollen, Executive Secretariat, Department of State

Reports Officers

Robert Ekvald, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S.A., Department of Defense
 William H. Gleysteen, Jr., Executive Secretariat, Department of State (In June Mr. Gleysteen was listed as Technical Secretary and Reports Officer to the Delegation.)
 Robert Gordon, Executive Secretariat, Department of State

William P. Harris, Staff of the United States High Commissioner for Germany, Bonn

Administrative Officer

Mason A. LaSelle, Deputy Conference Attaché, United States Resident Delegation to International Organizations, Geneva
 Deputy Administrative Officer and General Services Officer
 Max L. Shimp, Staff of the United States High Commissioner for Germany, Bonn

Documents Officer

Mary Tsouvalas, Division of Foreign Reporting, Department of State

Communications Officers

Earl K. Newton, Office of Communications and Records, Department of State
 William P. Richmond, Regional Communications Supervisor, United States Embassy, Paris

Indochina Working Group

Donald R. Heath, Chairman
 Theodore Achilles
 Robert Blake
 Philip W. Bonsal
 Chester L. Cooper
 John Daley
 Robert G. Ferguson
 John Hamilton
 Edwin W. Martin
 Robert H. McBride
 Charles C. Stelle
 Charles A. Sullivan
 Robert C. Taber
 Ray L. Thurston
 Joseph A. Yager

Cambodia

Headquarters—Hotel des Bergues, Geneva

Tep Phan, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Head of the Delegation
 Nong Kimmy, Ambassador to the United States, Delegate
 Sam Sary, Personal Delegate of the King of Cambodia
 Son Sann, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Vice President of the Council of Ministers and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Delegate

Poc Thieun, Secretary General of the Office of the Cambodian Royal High Commission in Paris, Secretary of the Delegation
 Nhieok Tioulong, General, Minister of Defense and Commander in Chief of the Khmer National Armed Forces, Head of the Cambodian Military Delegation at the Conference

Democratic Republic of Vietnam

Headquarters—Villa "Les Cèdres," Versoix

Pham Van Dong, Vice President of the Council of Ministers and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, Head of the Delegation

Phan Anh, Minister for Industry and Commerce, Delegate

Tran Cong Tuong, Vice Minister of Justice, Delegate and Translator

Hoang Van Hoan, Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, Delegate

Ta Quang Buu, Vice Minister of Defense, Delegate and Head of the DRV Military Delegation

Nguyen Thanh Le, Liaison Officer of the Delegation

France

Headquarters—Villa "Le Bocage," Geneva

Georges Bidault, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Head of the Delegation, April 26-June 18

Pierre Mendès-France, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Head of the Delegation, June 19-July 21. (During

Mendès-France's occasional absences from Geneva in June and July, Ambassador Jean Chauvel was in charge of the Delegation.)

Maurice Schumann, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Deputy Chief of the Delegation

Marc Jacquet, Secretary of State for Relations with the Associated States, July 1953-June 1954, Delegate

Edouard Frédéric-Dupont, Secretary of State for Relations with the Associated States in June, Delegate

Guy La Chambre, Secretary of State for Relations with the Associated States after June, Delegate

Jean Chauvel, Ambassador to Switzerland, Delegate

Alexandre Parodi, Ambassador and Secretary General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Delegate

Guy le Roy de la Tourneille, Minister Plenipotentiary and Director General for Political and Economic Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Assistant Delegate

Roland Jaquin de Margerie, Minister Plenipotentiary and Assistant Director for Political and Economic Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Assistant Delegate

Francis Lacombe, Minister Plenipotentiary, Assistant Delegate

Pierre-Louis Falaize, Minister Plenipotentiary and Director of the Office of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Assistant Delegate

André Gros, Legal Adviser to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Assistant Delegate

Jacques Baeyens, Minister Plenipotentiary and Chief of the Press and Information Service, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Assistant Delegate

Jean Wolfrom, Minister Plenipotentiary, Assistant Delegate

Jacques Roux, Minister Plenipotentiary and Director of the Asian Department, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Assistant Delegate

Raymond Offroy, Ambassador to Thailand, Assistant Delegate

Robert Tezenas du Montcel, Director General, Office of the Secretary of State for Relations with the Associated States, Assistant Delegate

Georges Boris, Counselor of State and member of the personal cabinet of Prime Minister Mendès-France after June 19, Assistant Delegate

Vincent Broustra, Minister Plenipotentiary and Director of the Conference Department, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Assistant Delegate

Francis Lacombe, Minister Plenipotentiary, Assistant Delegate

Pierre-Louis Falaize, Minister Plenipotentiary and Director of the Office of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Assistant Delegate

André Gros, Legal Adviser to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Assistant Delegate

Jacques Baeyens, Minister Plenipotentiary and Chief of the Press and Information Service, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Assistant Delegate

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Raymond Offroy, Ambassador to Thailand, Assistant Delegate

Robert Tezenas du Montcel, Director General, Office of the Secretary of State for Relations with the Associated States, Assistant Delegate

Jean L. Laloy, Counselor to the Delegation

Henri Deltiel, Brigadier General, Counselor to the Delegation and Head of the French Union Military Delegation at the Conference

Michel de Brebisson, Colonel, Chief of the Special Staff of the Secretary of State for Relations with the Associated States, Counselor to the Delegation and member of the French Union Military Delegation at the Conference

Alexandre de Manziarly, Consul General in Geneva, Counselor to the Delegation

Jacques Guillermaiz, Colonel, Counselor to the Delegation and member of the French Union Military Delegation at the Conference

Bernard Toussaint, Representative to the European Office of the United Nations, Expert to the Delegation

Jean Benard, Deputy Director of the Information and Press Service, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Expert to the Delegation

Jacques de Folin, Principal Private Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Expert to the Delegation

Claude Cheysson, Assistant Principal Private Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Expert to the Delegation

Léone Georges-Picot, Assistant Principal Private Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Expert to the Delegation

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Expert to the Delegation

Laos

Headquarters—Villa "Le Lignon," Aire, Geneva

Phoui Sananikone, Vice President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of the Interior and of Foreign Relations, Head of the Delegation

Prince Tiao Khammao, Chief Representative of the King of Laos to the President of the French Union in Paris, Delegate
 Ourot Souvannavong, Minister to the United States, Delegate
 Thao Lenam, First Secretary of the Laotian Delegation in Bangkok, Delegate

Khamphan Panya, Deputy Secretary General to the Council of the French Union in Paris, Delegate

People's Republic of China

Liaison Office of the Delegation—Hotel Beau Rivage, Geneva

Chou En-lai, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Head of the Delegation (During Chou En-lai's absence from Geneva in June and July, Li Ke-nung was in charge of the Delegation.)

Chang Wen-tien, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Delegate

Wang Chia-hsiang, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Delegate

Li Ke-nung, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Delegate

Wang Ping-nan, Director of the Staff Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Secretary General of the Delegation

Lei Jen-min, Vice Minister of External Trade, Adviser to the Delegation

Huang Hua, Counselor in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Adviser to and Spokesman for the Delegation

Chen Chia-kang, Director of the Department of Asian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Adviser to the Delegation

Ko Pai-nien, Director of the Department of American and Australian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Adviser to the Delegation

Shih Che, Member of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, Adviser to the Delegation

Huan Hsiang, Director of the Department of West European and African Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Adviser to the Delegation

Kung Peng, Director of the Information Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Adviser to the Delegation

Lei Ying-fu, Counselor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Adviser to the Delegation

INDOCHINA

Wang Cho-ju, Chief of Protocol, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Adviser to the Delegation

State of Vietnam

Headquarters—Bella Vista, Bellevue—Genthod

Nguyen Trung Vinh, Vice President of the Council of Ministers, Head of the Delegation for part of May

Nguyen Quoc Dinh, Minister of Foreign Affairs until June 16, Delegate (Sometime in May, precise date undetermined, Dinh assumed responsibility as Head of the Delegation.)

Tran Van Do, Minister of Foreign Affairs after June 16, Head of the Delegation, June 16—July 21

Tran Van Chuong, Minister of State for the State of Vietnam after June, Delegate

Nguyen Dac Khe, Minister of Democratization, Delegate and Deputy Chief of the Delegation after June 16

Nguyen Duy Thanh, Counselor to the Delegation

Truong Van Chinh, Counselor to the Delegation

Tran Van Tuyen, Counselor to the Delegation

Buu Kinh, Counselor of the Assembly of the French Union and the State of Vietnam's Official Observer at the United Nations in New York, Counselor to the Delegation

Doan Thuan, Counselor of Foreign Affairs, Secretary General of the Delegation

Nguyen Huu Quy, Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Deputy Secretary General of the Delegation

Nguyen Huu Chau, Official in the Government of Ngo Dinh Diem, Delegate

Le Quang Trieu, Colonel, Armed Forces Attaché at the Embassy of the State of Vietnam in Washington, Delegate

Dinh Xuan Kieu, Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Deputy Secretary General of the Delegation

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

The lists of delegations in Department of State files do not indicate the Soviet delegates' positions at the Geneva Conference with the exception of Molotov, Soldatov, Lavrishchev, and Troyanovsky.

Headquarters—Hotel Metropole, Geneva

V. M. Molotov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Head of the Delegation (During Molotov's absence from Geneva in June and July, V. V. Kuznetsov was in charge of the Delegation.)

A. A. Gromyko, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

Y. V. Kuznetsov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

- L. F. Ilyichev, Member of the Collegium, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- N. T. Fedorenko, Member of the Collegium, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- P. F. Yudin, Ambassador to the People's Republic of China
- S. P. Suzdalev, Ambassador to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- G. N. Zaroubin, Ambassador to the United States
- S. A. Vinogradov, Ambassador to France
- F. F. Molochkov, Minister to Switzerland
- K. V. Novikov, Head of the Southeast Asia Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- A. A. Soldatov, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Secretary General to the Delegation
- F. A. Fedenko, Counselor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- A. A. Lavrishchev, Head of the First European Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Secretary General to the Delegation
- D. A. Zhukov, Head of the Protocol Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- O. A. Troyanovsky, Interpreter for the Delegation

United Kingdom

The lists of delegations in Department of State files do not indicate the British delegates' positions at the Geneva Conference with the exception of Eden and Monckton.

Headquarters—Villa "Les Ormeaux," Geneva

Anthony Eden, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Head of the Delegation (During Eden's absence from Geneva in June and July, Lord Reading and Sir Lionel H. Lamb, Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Switzerland, were in charge of the Delegation.)

The Marquis of Reading (Lord Reading), Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

Harold A. Caccia, Deputy Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for Administration

William Dennis Allen, Assistant Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

Humphrey Trevelyan, Chargé d'Affaires at Peking

Walter G. C. Graham, Minister to the Republic of Korea

Charles A. E. Shuckburgh, Principal Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Assistant Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs after May

Francis A. Vallat, Deputy Legal Adviser, British Foreign Office

John G. Tahourdin, Head of the Southeast Asia Department, British Foreign Office

John D. Priestman, Assistant Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

Donald James Maitland, Private Secretary to the Minister of State, British Foreign Office

James E. Cable, Southeast Asia Department, British Foreign Office

John M. Addis, Southeast Asia Department, British Foreign Office

Julian L. Bullard, Far Eastern Department, British Foreign Office

Richard A. Sykes, Northern Department, British Foreign Office

John F. Ford, Research Department, British Foreign Office

G. W. R. Monckton, Lieutenant Colonel, Military Adviser to the Delegation

Anthony Rumbold, Principal Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

C. D. W. O'Neill, Head of the News Department, British Foreign Office

A. A. S. Stark, Assistant Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

ASSESSMENT OF THE ARMISTICE IN KOREA AND ITS IMPACTS TO THE WAR OF RESISTANCE IN VIETNAM

ASSESSMENT OF THE ARMISTICE IN KOREA

The meaning of the armistice:

The Korean War waged by the US aggressors and the reactionary Syngman Rhee cliques came to an end on June 25, 1950; an armistice agreement was signed on July 27, 1953.

This is a big victory of an enduring, fierce, and heroic struggle by the Korean people and troops as well as that of the Chinese voluntary troops.

This is also a big victory of the democratic and peace-loving front in the world.

In principle, this is also a victory of the Vietnamese people. Because it weakens the enemy's camp, strengthens our camp, frightens the enemy, and makes us more enthusiastic and confident.

The reasons:

This victory has been resulted from:

- 1) The enduring, fierce, and heroic struggle of the Korean people and troops, shouldered with the Chinese voluntary troops: they have inflicted heavy losses in term of human and financial resources. (The United Nations' troops lost more than 1 million lives, out of which 400,000 US troops were killed). The enemy recognized that they could not fight any longer, because if they did so, they would suffer more painful and shameful defeats. This is the main reason for the armistice.
- 2) The world peace movement: the struggle to end the war in Korea has mobilized people in the world. Even the neutral stratum and part of the capitalist class supported negotiations. The American people also opposed the war of aggression in Korea and warmly welcome the armistice.
- 3) Because of these two reasons, especially the first one, many countries taking part in the war do not want to prolong it, fearing that they would be forced by the US to engage in a more expanded war. Britain is a representative of these countries: British want to end the war in Korea to trade with China and the democratic camp, wishing to solve their economic crisis by so doing. There have also been internal contradictions within the ruling class in the US.

The above-mentioned are assessments of the armistice.

From armistice to peace:

How will the signed armistice lead to genuine peace in Korea?

The armistice is the first step to solve the Korean problem through peaceful means.

The US was forced to sign the armistice, but it still displeased, exerting to all means to create obstacles and sabotage the course of realizing genuine peace in Korea. (The agreement of mutual assistance recently signed between the US and Syngman Rhee's South Korea is a case in point.)

As a result, Korea, China, the peace and democracy movement in the world must remain watchful in order to timely defeat the US schemes of sabotage.

With the newly gained victories, the forces of peace grow stronger and will be more determined and vigilant in the struggle to bring genuine peace out of the armistice.

Countries in the US camp, especially Britain, will try to end the Korean War. The American people and troops also want to end the fighting in Korea.

In short, our camp is very strong and vigilant while the imperialist camp is weaker and full of contradictions. We therefore can exploit the situation to solve the Korean problem through peace.

But the chances for peace to be threatened and war rekindled still exist and in large number.

THE ARMISTICE IN KOREA AND THE WAR OF RESISTANCE IN VIETNAM

Intervention by the US:

The armistice in Korea is a victory of the peace and democracy front in the world, a defeat of the imperialist front and of the US aggressors. For that reason, in principle it benefits the war of resistance in Vietnam: for France, the anti-war movement will be stronger, the spirit of their troops will falter while our people and troops will be more enthusiastic and confident. The forces of peace and democracy in the world will support us more, after they have gained victory in Korea.

But on the other hand, the US will further intervene in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, gradually replacing France: the US will increase "assistance" to France and the puppets in terms of arms, war supplies, and finance; the US is trying to develop the puppet armed forces, taking control of the armed forces, and sending military advisors who interfere in the French work of war directing. But the US has limits to its strength. The defeat in Korea makes it weaker.

The US ambition is to turn Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos into a military base so as to control other Southeast Asian countries, prepare for the third world war, and create a springboard to attack China.

Recently, the US intervention has been illustrated by two following examples.

Politically, the US pressure could be detected in the French government's statement on July 3rd allowing a broader "independence" for the puppets, so as to lay the ground for the US to directly control the puppet's army.

Militarily, General Daniel, US military envoy, has come to Vietnam to discuss with Navarre the plan to build puppet armed forces for intensification of the war of aggression. Navarre is one of the pro-US people. The Navarre plan is the US plan.

These two developments show that US interventionists, French colonialists, and the puppets are making preparations as well as building forces and plans to fight us more.

In the future, therefore, intervention by the US will cause us more difficulties, which we have to overcome in order to keep the momentum of progress we have achieved so far in the war of resistance.

The question of peace in Vietnam:

The enemy is intensifying the war of aggression. This is what we have to clearly understand.

But the enemy is very wicked. Recently, propaganda by French imperialists mentioned the solution to the war in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia by peaceful means. But in fact, both US interventionists and French imperialists do not want peace. They have not been defeated and suffered losses to the extent that they cannot maintain the war efforts. To the contrary, they wish to defeat us and are making preparations for expanding of the war. That they talk about peace, in fact, is to deceive the French people and the world public opinion, to weaken our people's fighting spirit, and to win over some dispirited elements among our rank and file.

At present, except the French Communist Party, bourgeois parties and ruling circles are divided into groups with various attitudes toward the war in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos.

The warmongers and reactionaries: within this group, some want to continue the war with the US assistance, but they do not want to give up the control of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos to the US; they are now in the French government. Besides, others want to

internationalize the war, i.e. they want the US and other imperialist countries to send troops to Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos to fight together with French troops. The pacifists want to end the war, which is bad for France, but they still want to retain the French imperialists' interests in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. At present, they are not in the French government.

At present, only the French communist party and working people are having the genuine position of peace. As we fight and get stronger, as the resistance becomes more successful, the peace movement in the world is increasing on the rise, the struggle by the French communist party and people for genuine peace will develop stronger, wider, and succeed further.

In short, at present, although the French reactionary government talks of peace, but in fact it wants war. The talk of peace serves the aim to weaken and defeat us. Together with the US interventionists, French colonialists are making political and military preparations for intensifying the war of aggression in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos.

Our position on the question of peace in Vietnam is this: we must only intensify the war of resistance, annihilate more enemy troops, thus making them no longer unable to fight the war of aggression; genuine peace then will come back to Vietnam. For long, we have understood that our resistance is for national independence and world peace; therefore, if Vietnam enjoys complete independence and unification, complete and genuine peace will exist in Vietnam. Independence, unification, and peace of the Vietnamese people must be won by the Vietnamese people. [We] should not have any illusion about peace, as well as should not rely on anyone else.

IMMEDIATE TASKS

Therefore, our task is to intensify our forces in all aspects, to be determined to overcome all hardships to gain more victories; we must fight harder to defeat all the enemy's schemes.

That is to say [we] must intensify the big tasks that we are carrying out at present: namely mobilization of the mass, political re-education of the cadres and troops, boost of production, struggle in the occupied areas, mobilization of the enemy troops; preparations for enemy fiercer attacks and raids to the liberated areas.

At the same time, [we] must pay special attention to widely and fully explaining the meaning and impacts of the armistice in Korea to our resistance among the party, the armed forces, government offices, massive organizations, and among the people. Especially, [we] must pay attention to the work of explaining it in the occupied areas in order to defeat the fabricated allegations made by the enemy.

The objective of the explaining task is to consolidate the fighting spirit, fix the confusing thoughts, drive away the illusion about peace, unite the view, strengthen the ranks, sharpen the hatred against the enemy, encourage the people to overcome hardships, reinforce our strength in all aspects so as to win more victories, defeat the enemy's attacks in the occupied and liberated areas, as well as advance the prolonged war and the sense of self-reliance. This is our attitude toward the US intervention and the wicked allegations by the French aggressors.

(*Nhan Dan*, 130th issue, on August 16-20, 1953)

PRESIDENT HO ANSWERS A SWEDISH JOURNALIST

On November 26, 1953, a Swedish journalist cabled President Ho some questions, to which He answers as follows:

Question: Debates in the French Parliament show that the majority in political circles in France wants to settle the conflict in Vietnam by peaceful means through direct negotiations with the Vietnamese government. This desire is getting wider among the French people. Do you and your Government welcome this desire?

Answer: The war in Vietnam is waged by the French government. The Vietnamese people must resort to arms, heroically fighting for the last seven or eight years now against the aggressors to defend the independence and the rights to freely live in peace. At present, as long as the French colonialists continue the war of aggression, the Vietnamese people are determined to continue the war of patriotism till the final victory. But if the French government has drawn a lesson in this war, wanting to reach a truce in Vietnam via negotiations and solve the Vietnam problem through peaceful means, then the Vietnamese people and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam government are ready to respond to that wish.

Question: Is a cease-fire or a truce possible, and on what principle?

Answer: A truce in Vietnam will be materialized provided the French government ends the war of aggression. The principle for a truce in Vietnam is that the French government honestly respects the genuine independence of Vietnam.

Question: If a neutral country makes the arrangements for representatives of commanders of the opposing side to meet you, will you accept this? Can Sweden play that role?

Answer: If there is any neutral country wishing to try to initiate efforts to end the war in Vietnam by negotiations, then this country is welcome. But the negotiations on the truce are mainly a matter between the DRV Government and the French Government.

Question: According to you, are there other methods for ending the war?

Answer: The war in Vietnam has brought about disaster for the Vietnamese people and at the same time caused many sufferings for the French people. That is why the French people oppose the war in Vietnam.

I for long have had feelings and respected the French people and peace fighters. At present, not only is the independence of the Vietnamese nation seriously violated, but the very independence of France is threatened as well. The American imperialists on the one hand urge the French colonialists to continue and expand the war of aggression in Vietnam, thus making France further weakened and facilitating the US replacement of French position in Indochina. On the other hand, the US forces France to ratify the treaty on European defense that means the revival of German militarism.

That is why the struggle by the French people for independence, democracy, and peace in France and the struggle by them for the end of the war in Vietnam is one of the important factors contributing to the settlement of the Vietnam problem by peaceful means.

**REPORT BY PRESIDENT HO BEFORE THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

FIRST TENURE, THIRD SESSION

December 1 - 4, 1953

Dear Members of the National Assembly,

On behalf of the Government, I would like to welcome all of you to the special session of the National Assembly.

I would like to send my greetings to the Members who are tied up with resistance activities thus being unable to attend this session.

On behalf of the Government, I would like to bow in deep respect to the memory of the Members who have heroically sacrificed their lives for the resistance and for the Motherland.

Also, on behalf of the Government, I would like to welcome representatives of the Fatherland Front who came to convey greetings to the National Assembly.

Dear Members of the National Assembly,

For the last 7 and 8 years, our greatest duty has been [to conduct] the war of resistance. From now on, we have another central duty, which is [to conduct] land reform.

[We] must intensify the resistance in order to ensure success of the land reform.

[We] must try to realize the land reform in order to ensure success of the resistance.

In this special session, the National Assembly will listen to a report on developments of the resistance over the last few years, discuss the land reform policy, and adopt the land reform law.

Our country is a part of the world. The situation in our country affects the world, while the situation in the world closely relates to our country. Therefore, before presenting a report on developments of the resistance and the land reform policy, I would like to briefly report to you the situations at home and abroad.

WORLD SITUATION

We can say straightforward that our camp is increasingly stronger and the enemy's camp is increasingly weaker.

The Soviet Union, the bulwark of world peace and democracy, is advancing strongly toward communism from socialism. The dream for happiness, long cherished by the mankind, has gradually been coming true on the one sixth of the world territory.

For the sake of keeping peace, the Soviet Union has possessed nuclear and H-bombs, but at the same time constantly proposes to other countries to ban the use of these weapons.

With the whole-hearted assistance by the Soviet Union, democracies in Eastern Europe are trying very hard to build socialism.

China has gained big victories in the course of opposing the US and assisting Korea, repeatedly achieved great victories in the implementation of the first 5-year plan of national construction.

Big victories by the Italian and French communist parties in the national elections, massive labor strikes (in August and September 1953) in these two countries, struggles by working class in countries, region, and the national liberation movement including Malaysia, the Philippines, North Africa, Central Africa, Guyana, etc, show that struggles by people in the world are increasingly on the rise.

The Asia-Pacific peace conference (October 1952) and the World Peace Conference (November 1952) have demonstrated the strong force of the camp of peace and democracy in the world.

Over the past few years, the armistice in Korea has represented the biggest victory for the camp of peace and democracy. The Korean people and troops, together with the Chinese voluntary

troops have fought extremely heroically, killing more than 1 million of US and its allies' troops. The forces of peace and democracy in the world are extremely strong. They combine to form a piner that forced the US to come to the armistice in Korea.

Last October, the Third World Labor Congress, on behalf of more than 88 million workers from 70 countries, decided to mark December 19 this year as "the day of solidarity with the Vietnamese people for the end of the war of aggression against Vietnam." This represents the profound sense of internationalism and the active working class sentiment which make our people more enthusiastically conduct the resistance and stronger believe in the final victory.

That is the brief account of developments in our camp.

What are the situations in the US headed camp? The US and 16 other countries, including France and Britain, have shamefully been defeated in Korea. Since the end of 19th century, the US has many times benefited from war and won the position of supremacy. This is the first (surely not the last) time it suffered a big defeat in term of human losses (with more than 390,000 US troops dead and wounded), financial costs (with more than 20,000 millions of dollar spent), and loss of credibility. The US posture at the United Nations is increasingly weaker, the US camp is increasingly full of internal contradiction and division, and the US economy is in a deeper crisis.

The capitalist countries dependent on the US, such as Britain, France, etc. are facing with graver economic and political difficulties due to their policy of arms race, the struggle by people within these countries, and the national liberation movement in their colonies.

The scheme of the US at present is to wage war so as to become the master of the world.

In Asia, it aims at destroying the convening of a political conference, rekindling war in Korea, and re-arming Japan. It also wants to prevent China from joining the UN, to stronger intervene in the war in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos.

In Europe, it aims at destroying German unification, re-arming West Germany so as to turn it into the pillar for the "European armed forces."

Our camp is increasingly stronger, united in the peace and democracy front headed by the Soviet Union.

Our camp's principal objective is to reduce tension in the world and solve disputes in the world through peaceful means.

The tasks for people in the world are to consolidate the gained victories, be watchful against the US schemes, and to intensify the world peace movement.

The world situation is favorable for us. We support the world peace movement. But we should absolutely not have any illusion that peace is easy to reach. Peace must be gained through hard struggles. While the French imperialist and US interventionists are still pursuing the war of aggression against our country, we must overcome all the difficulties, be self-reliant, and step up the war of resistance until the final victory.

INSTRUCTION BY THE SECRETARIAT

(December 2, 1953)

HOW TO EXPLAIN THE STATEMENT BY THE DRV DELEGATION TO THE WORLD PEACE COUNCIL MEETING IN NOVEMBER 1953

1. The DRV Delegation attending the World Peace Council (WPC) Meeting in Vienna delivered a statement on the Vietnamese people's position with regard to that by the world peace and democracy front to solve all international conflicts by peaceful means and solve the Vietnam problem by peaceful means. The following parts of the statement illustrate our position:

The fact that all the sincere people everywhere are urgently asking for an end to the war in Vietnam is an extremely reasonable thing. To end the war on the basis of peace negotiations is a completely necessary and realizable thing.

The Vietnamese people have for long supported ending the war in Vietnam and solving the Vietnam problem through the means of peace negotiations. This is the common aspiration of the people in the world and is meeting the interests of the Vietnamese and French people.

Over the last 8 years, the Vietnamese people have tenaciously been struggling against the French colonial troops in order to defend their right to independence and freedom, to ensure a peaceful context for our lives and national construction.

If the French and US imperialists continue their old path of war of aggression in Vietnam, the Vietnamese people under the leadership of the DRV Government and President Ho will resolutely continue the struggle for their independence and freedom as we have been doing for long. And the Vietnamese people are always confident in the final victory.

On behalf of the Vietnamese people, the delegation proposed that:

1. The WPC appeal people in the world to denounce the wicked schemes by the French and US imperialists aimed at continuing and expanding the war of aggression against Vietnam.
2. The WPC appeal people in the world to initiate a strong movement with a view to ending the war in Vietnam and asking for a solution to the Vietnam problem through negotiations

The statement must have positively influenced the struggle by people in the world for peace [as it] accused the French and US imperialists and gave an impetus to the struggle by French people to end the war of aggression in Vietnam. Therefore, our course of resistance will enjoy more support from people in the world and in France; as long as we step up the resistance, we will enlist the increased support by and sympathy of people in the world. *Only through resolutely conducting the resistance shall we reach the goal of genuine independence, freedom, and happiness.*

2. At all levels, radio stations, newspapers when introducing this statement should provide commentaries, stressing on the points mentioned above. It is necessary to explain to the people in order to make them understand what President Ho was saying. "The world situation is favorable to us. We support the world peace movement. But we should never have an illusion that peace is easy. Peace must be gained through hard struggles. We have only one path to genuine peace. This path is: to overcome all the hardship, to be self-reliant, to conduct the land reform, and to step up the struggle until the final victory.

When we do the work of propaganda, the followings points should be attended to:

a. Boosting the mood of enthusiasm, heightening the fighting spirit of our people and troops to gain complete and genuine peace for the Motherland; reminding our people and troops of the two central tasks which President Ho and Government have put forward to ensure success of the resistance.

These tasks are *fighting the enemy and conducting the land reform*, resolutely opposing the illusion about peace among part of the population; wiping out the thoughts of compromise and oscillation, especially in the occupied areas.

b. Actively and timely defeating all the fabricated allegations by the enemy who accuse us of prolonging the war while they want peace; showing the people crimes by the imperialists and their puppet who gang up with each other to continue the war of aggression against Vietnam, nurturing the people's hatred against them; heightening the resolution to annihilate them, and stepping up the immediate tasks.

c. Staying watchful and opposing the enemy's distortion of our delegation's statement at the WPC that we propose peace because our forces have been weakened; showing in great detail heavy and uninterrupted defeats suffered by the enemy over the last 8 years as well as recent defeats of the Navarre Plan; highlighting the victories achieved by our people in all aspects and victories gained recently in fighting the enemy and conducting the land reform.

d. Showing the great strength of people in the world (including the French people), especially that of our friendly countries (including the Soviet Union and China) who whole-heartedly support our resistance, thus making our people more confident in the certain victory of the resistance and in the leadership of President Ho, the Party and Government.

3. Party cadres, based on this instruction and the Secretariat's instruction on observing December 12 this year, should start the work of explanation to all party members, members of mass organizations and people at large to help them understand our position at the WPC. We should also link the explanation with the decision by the Third World Labor Union Congress that marks December 12 as "The day of solidarity with the Vietnamese people and struggle for and end to the war of aggression in Vietnam."

If there are questions and queries among cadres, party members, and people, we should report them to the higher levels; if not certain about answering these questions and queries, [you should] ask for instructions from higher levels for correct responses; [you should] not answer them incorrectly.

ON BEHALF OF THE SECRETARIAT
TRUONG CHINH

Workers' Party of Vietnam
Central Committee
No 92 TT/T.W.
Secret

CIRCULAR LETTER
ON THE STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT HO TO SWEDISH JOURNALIST
(December 27, 1953)

To: Central Office of the WPV
Committee, Southern Branch
Cities and Regions' Committees

Late November 1953, President Ho gave his answers to 5 questions posed by a Swedish journalist of the Express newspaper.

In his statement to the journalist, President Ho made clear the just objectives of the Vietnamese war of resistance and exposed the unjust objectives of the war of aggression by the French colonialists supported and urged by the American interventionists.

President Ho clearly stated the position of the Vietnamese people, i.e. we are determined to conduct the war of resistance till the final victory. Yet, our people and Government also agree to negotiate with a view to peacefully solving the Vietnam problem. The French colonialists and their cliques cannot blame Vietnam for prolonging the war and pose themselves as the only ones wishing for "peace." The statement by President Ho has unmasked the French colonialists and their cliques, making the French and the world people clearly aware of false arguments for peace by the French colonialists and at the same time the ardent love for genuine peace of our people.

But President Ho also made it clear that to solve the Vietnam problem peacefully, there is only one way, that is the French colonialists stop the war of aggression against Vietnam, stop killing the Vietnamese people, *respect the genuine independence of Vietnam*, and the two sides hold direct talks with each other. For the Vietnamese people, *peace is inseparable to national independence*.

President Ho also exposed the evil intentions of the US imperialists who assist France to intensify the war of aggression against Vietnam, to use French youth to fight against the Vietnamese people, and to use Vietnamese to fight against Vietnamese, of which the US is benefited.

Through President Ho's statement, we are increasingly aware that the French colonialists are henchmen of the US; the Vietnamese lackeys are the hunting dogs of both the French colonialists and US imperialists. Contrarily, the French people are friends of the Vietnamese people; the Vietnamese and French peoples have common enemies, i.e. the French colonialists and US imperialists. The heroic struggle by the French people to end the war of aggression against Vietnam contributes in an important way to the peaceful settlement of the Vietnam problem. President Ho's statement drives a wedge further into the contradiction between France and the US, further encourages the peace movement of the French people to intensify the struggle to end the war of aggression against Vietnam in order to save France from the present disastrous situation.

Why did President Ho make such a statement to the Swedish journalist?
Among our people and cadres, some think that President Ho's statement only serves the purpose of international propaganda; we in fact do not want peace and we have the only task of wiping out all the French colonialists from our country. It is wrong to think this way. In history, there have been numerous wars that reached truce through peace negotiations. The Korean War is an example. Moreover, the general policy of our camp in the world is to try by all means to bring back and intensify international détente, preserve and consolidate world peace and solidarity among nations. To the contrary, the policy of the imperialist camp is to try by all means to destroy peaceful cooperation among nations, making the international situation tenser, and preparing for the Third World War.

Peace is an ardent aspiration for hundreds of millions of people in the world. Peace can be preserved and consolidated because the world people are united and agreed to actively preserve it against the imperialist warmongers.

Our people struggle against the aggressors for the sake of national independence, but also for the sake of world peace. The French colonialists and US interventionists are the enemies of our nation, and at the same time the enemies of the world people.

President Ho talked of peace not for the purpose of international propaganda, but precisely because the Vietnam problem as well as other disputes in the world can be solved through peaceful means.

Recently, facing a stronger world peace movement, the French colonialists, US interventionists, and their Vietnamese henchmen also talk of "peace." But in fact, they want to cover up their schemes to intensify the war of aggression against Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, deceiving the world and domestic opinions. They do not genuinely want peace. We should not let them use peace as the mask to deceive the public opinion. *The banner of peace must be seized and upheld by us.*

We talk of peace, and if for one reason or another the enemy has to accept negotiations on the basis of "respecting Vietnam's independence" for achieving a truce in Vietnam, then the Vietnam problem will be solved by peaceful means. But if the French colonialists do not accept peace negotiations, then they will unmask themselves before the public opinion of their own country as well as that of the world.

President Ho, however, has warned us: *we should absolutely not have any illusion that peace will come quickly and easily.* Peace, like independence, *must be gained from hard struggle.* At present, the enemies are making great effort to intensify the war of aggression against Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, using Vietnamese to fight Vietnamese, feeding war with war. The enemies only agree to enter peace negotiations when much of their forces have been annihilated and when they come to realize that it is impossible not to enter peace negotiations. Judging the present correlation of forces between us and them, [we think that] the conditions for peace negotiations are not ripe. We must intensify the war of resistance, annihilate more of their force, so that they have to accept negotiations to peacefully solve the Vietnam problem, respect the right to freedom and independence of our nation.

We should not take the press statement by President Ho on our position with regard to peace as a reason to believe that peace negotiations are coming then neglect the immediate central task, i.e. to intensify the war of resistance and land reform.

Thereafter, world public opinion, especially public opinion in France, is debating a lot about the statement by President Ho.

The enemy's camp is put in a defensive position, worrying that the expeditionary forces are demoralized, the henchmen and puppets discouraged. That is why they are resorting to fox arguments to lessen resounding effects by this statement.

At first they said: President Ho has to talk about peace because "the Vietnamese war of resistance gravely fails." But the fact is that we grow stronger as we fight, the enemy become weaker as they fight.

They then said: "President Ho's statement only serves the purpose of international propaganda, therefore it is not official, not sincere." On December 19 when President Ho made an appeal to our people on the occasion of the commemoration of the beginning of the war of resistance, they once again distorted President Ho's statement by saying: His statement to the Swedish journalist is not sincere, because He "continues to ask the people to intensify the war of resistance."

The fact is that in the December 19 appeal, President Ho said: "Because the French colonialists still continue the war of aggression, the Vietnamese people are still determined to continue to fight harder, annihilate more of their forces, and bring the resistance to the final victory. But if the French government wants to reach a truce in Vietnam by peaceful means, then the Vietnamese people and the DRV government will be ready to talk."

They also put forward in an informal manner some conditions: if Vietnam wants peace, Vietnam must propose [talks] to the French government, and the Vietnamese puppets must be

present in the negotiations, etc. The Vietnamese puppets reiterate: they must be present in the negotiations.

In short, the colonialists' and puppets' tone is still shameless. This does not show their strength, but their weakness. They try to play down and distort President Ho's statement because they are afraid that this statement will exert a strong influence among the French people, expeditionary armies, as well as among our people in the occupied areas and among the puppets' government and armies.

Indeed, President Ho's statement has created contradictions among France, the US, and Britain at the Bermuda and North Atlantic conferences and impacted the presidential elections in France as well as the resignation of the Nguyen Van Tam, prime minister of the puppet government.

While the world working class is actively making preparations for the "day of international solidarity with and support to the Vietnamese people," President Ho's statement has made a great effect.

The French people and people in the world heartily welcome this statement, because it represents their ardent wish and thoughts, because President Ho's statement represents justice and peace. It contributes to strengthen the peace movement in France and in the world.

The public opinion of mass organizations and that of political circles in France is like this: while the Ho Chi Minh government wants peace, why does not the French government open negotiations with the Ho Chi Minh government to reach a truce, which is beneficial to the peoples of the two countries as well to the world peace? Peace in Vietnam can be possible if, together with the war of resistance in Vietnam, the French people are more united, have greater consensus, and stronger struggle [for peace]. Truce has been reached in Korea, why not Vietnam? This question has been posed by the French people; and by actions, they are answering it. The determination to force the French colonialists to stop the war of aggression in Vietnam has impacted some French bourgeois as well.

The struggle by the French people to oppose the war of aggression in Vietnam is a force supportive to our war of resistance. Yet, we should not rely totally on the French people. Our carders and people should understand this: *because the French colonialists and US interventionists are determined to continue the war of aggression in Vietnam, our general policy guideline still continue to be that of prolonged war and self-reliance.* We have to intensify all the work related to the resistance. We have to mobilize the people to actively carry out the land reform.

Our armed forces have to compete in fighting and destroying the enemy's war plans.

At the same time, our armed forces and guerrilla units in the occupied areas must resist mopping-up operations, while combining with the work of agitation and propaganda among the enemy. We must distribute President Ho's statement, together with the Vietnam News Agency commentary (carried in *Nhan Dan*, 152nd issue on December 6, 1953), explain it to the soldiers and officials of the puppets' armed forces and government, making them more hateful to the unjust war in Vietnam. Our carders must disseminate and explain the above-mentioned documents to people in the occupied areas, initiate debates on President Ho's statement, leading to a movement to pressure France to open negotiations with our government.

Regional and provincial committees upon receiving this circular letter must build plans to explain the statement to carders and people with a view to correcting the wrong thoughts, such as:

- a) Illusion about peace: some hope that peace negotiations are coming soon. The resistance has entered its 8th year, the sense of tiredness must have existed among some quarter of the people and carders. The sense of tiredness might have a chance to grow.
- b) Wishful underestimation of the enemy: some think that President Ho made such a statement because the enemy has been very much weakened, and we are stronger than the enemy. This kind of thought does not show the understanding of the reality in the battlefield, of the present correlation of force between us and the enemy, and of the enemy's schemes and plots.
- c) Or some have been influenced by the enemy's propaganda and believe that President Ho had to talk about peace because our war of resistance have been defeated, the Navarre Plan succeeds well. They have not recognized our victories and our position with regard to the resistance and peace.

d) Some may think that President Ho's statement only serves the purpose of international propaganda as we in fact never want to negotiate; we only want to fight and drive all the enemy away from our country to secure peace. They do not understand the policy of our camp, which is to bring back international détente, and the significance of our war of resistance to our national independence and world peace.

e) Some may rely on the world movement, especially on the peace movement by the French people, laying their hope on chances from outside. This kind of thinking may result from the misunderstanding of President statement, namely: the struggle by the French people for independence, democracy, and peace for France and the struggle by them for the end of the war in Vietnam is one of the important factors contributing to the settlement of the Vietnam problem by peaceful means.

The above-mentioned wrong thoughts must be fixed timely, otherwise they are sure to negatively impact the war of resistance. Some may render fewer efforts to fulfill their duties, some may be less watchful against the enemy's schemes and plots, or some may be more pessimistic and less confident on the [final victory] of the resistance, or indifferent to President Ho's statement, thus failing to propagandize and explain the statement among the people and the enemy's files and ranks, especially those in the occupied areas.

Party committees off all levels should be timely in reporting the Central Committee the thoughts and opinions of carders inside and outside the party as well as those of the people at large with regard to matters of war and peace in Vietnam (refer to the Cable no10/11 on December 16, 1953 by the Secretariat).

Regional and provincial committees should base on this circular letter to discuss President Ho's statement, review your assessments, thoughts, and plan of actions, and then report to the Central Committee.

Note: This circular letter is disseminated to the provincial and municipal levels. Responsible carders must keep this document

On behalf of the Secretariat
TRUONG CHINH
(Signed)

Secret
Copy № 2

from the journal of
Ya. M. Lomakin
21 February 1954
№ 136

**Record of a Conversation with Nguyen Long Bang, Ambassador of
the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to the Soviet Union,
5 January 1954**

On 5 January I gave a breakfast in honor of Nguyen Long Bang, Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to the USSR, who had returned to Moscow. Over breakfast the Vietnamese ambassador talked about the situation in Vietnam. Nguyen Long Bang reported the following about the military situation.

Having repelled the fall offensive of the French troops in northern Vietnam, in December the Vietnamese People's Army went on the offensive in two sectors. On 11 December the Northern Group of Forces seized the city of Lai Chau, killing more than 2500 of the enemy in the process. At the present time battles are going on for the city of Dien Bien, situated on the border between Vietnam and Pathet Lao [Translator's note: as used here, "Pathet Lao" means "Laos"] and on a strategic road joining North Vietnam with Pathet Lao. The city is surrounded by a dense ring of troops of the People's Army, which has been given the mission of annihilating the approximately 10,000 French troops in the city. With the fall of Dien Bien the French will lose the last support base in the rear of the liberated regions of North Vietnam and the troops of the People's Army will open a path to Pathet Lao.

At the end of December the group of forces of the People's Army in central Vietnam planned an offensive from the city of Vinh in a southwestern direction and, entering Pathet Lao, on 25 December [it] seized the city of Thakhek, situated near the border between Pathet Lao and Thailand. The mission of this group included cutting the communications connecting northern Pathet Lao with Saigon (the city of Thakhek is located on strategic highway № 13, leading from Vientiane to Saigon).

The offensive in the northern and central parts of Indochina were undertaken in accordance with the overall strategic plan of the command of the People's Army, consisting of forcing a war of maneuver on the French army and not allowing them to concentrate their troops in one sector.

Ambassador Nguyen Long Bang reported that regular troops of the Vietnamese People's Army operating under the name of the Pathet Lao People's Liberation Army had been sent to Pathet Lao. The Pathet Lao people's government has in fact a total of only three companies.

The latter circumstance has given the government circles of a number of capitalist countries, chiefly the US, grounds to talk about "Vietnam's aggression against Pathet Lao". Under US pressure the government of Thailand introduced martial law in the country and declared its intention to send troops to defend the eastern borders. In evaluating the current situation, the Ambassador said that even if the Thai government threw its troops against the Vietnamese People's Army it would not achieve real success since, first, the Thai Army is extraordinarily weak and, second, the majority of the population in the border regions of Thailand are Laotian, who would support the Vietnamese People's Army.

Frightened by the successes of the People's Army, the French government has asked the US to provide it with 20 jet fighters to wage war in Indochina. On the other hand, the US is trying to use the event to internalize [internalizatsiya; internatsionalizatsiya, "internationalize", was probably the intended word] the Indochinese problem. Rumors are being spread in the press that the Thai government is preparing to go to the UN with a complaint of Vietnamese aggression. The Vietnamese Ambassador expressed the following opinion about this question: the issue of internalization [SIC] of the Indochinese question was raised back in the spring of 1953 when the Vietnamese People's Army attacked in northern Pathet Lao but this question was not submitted to the UN because of a difference of views between the US and France. At the present time France will also object to presenting this issue to the UN. However it is completely possible that this time the US will seek this and that at their bidding Thailand will address a complaint to the UN.

The Ambassador then touched on the domestic situation in the country.

The most important domestic political event in the People's Republic of Vietnam is the government's publication of the law on agrarian reform in

the country which was developed on the basis of the new agrarian platform of the Workers' Party adopted in November 1953. The Workers' Party of Vietnam proposes to finish agrarian reform in the country by the end of 1955. The agrarian reform law was developed taking into account the specific situation in Vietnam, the main feature of which is the war of liberation of the Vietnamese people against the French colonizers and internal traitors. Agrarian reform will be conducted gradually, depending on how ripe conditions are in a particular region.

The law provides for the transfer to the peasants of all the landholdings of the French colonizers and Vietnamese landowners through confiscation, requisition, and forced purchases. The majority of the landholdings will be confiscated or requisitioned and only a small part purchased. Putting agrarian reform into effect will encounter resistance from the landowners. Right now landowners are already trying to escape agrarian reform by distributing their landholdings to relatives and friends. Land reform will not be conducted in the near future in regions populated by ethnic minorities.

In the conversation the Ambassador touched on the work of the Vietnamese-Soviet-Chinese Friendship Society. A Vietnamese-Soviet Chinese Friendship Month will be held from 14 January to 14 February in all the liberated regions. The CC of the Workers' Party and the people's government will lead this great campaign. The Vietnamese people are displaying great interest in the life of the Soviet people. Soviet films enjoy especially great success in liberated regions. Up to 5,000 people gather at showings of Soviet pictures which are shown outdoors and often there are cases where peasants travel on foot up to 60 km to see a Soviet film.

Travel throughout the USSR by representatives of Vietnamese democratic public play a great role in the cause of popularizing the successes of the Soviet Union in Vietnam.

The reports which the Vietnamese delegates to the 3rd World Congress of Trade Unions who have visited the Soviet Union are making right now enjoy great success at all levels of society.

In the conversation Ambassador Nguyen Long Bang stressed that although the Vietnamese People's Army has been considerably strengthened in the last two years it remains quite weak in weaponry. The equipment of the People's Army cannot be compared to the equipment of the French troops. The People's Army does not have enough artillery and ammunition and the available field guns have to be carried great distances

by soldiers since there are no mechanical means of transport. Soldiers hand-carry one field gun hundreds of kilometers in disassembled form. Almost all the weapons of the People's Army have been captured, seized in battles with the enemy.

Present at the conversation were: on our side, I. I. Saifonov, 1st Secretary of the Embassy and N. K. Chekanov, 2nd Secretary; on the Vietnamese side, Chargé d'Affaires of the Vietnamese Embassy in the PRC Chau Luong and 2nd Secretary of the Vietnamese Embassy in the PRC Hoang Nguyen.

Counselor of the
USSR Embassy in
the PRC

/signed/
Ya. Lomakin

Transcript, Zhou Enlai's speech at a preparatory meeting by the Chinese delegation attending the Geneva Conference (excerpt), 3:00 pm, February 17, 1954

Source: Xiong, pp. 5-6

- (1) The purpose of the Geneva Conference is to reduce international tension; therefore, the conference is of important significance. Our country should actively participate in the conference.
- (2) Because of America's various efforts to block [the discussion], it is estimated that it is difficult [for the discussion] on peacefully resolving the Korea question to achieve big progress, but still we should strive to solve a few issues. On the Vietnam question, there exist contradictions between France and the United States. France wants to have peace, and the United States does not want to have peace; France does not want to let the United States intervene in Vietnam, but the United States is attempting to take over France's command over military affairs and training in Vietnam, which has been rejected by France. Therefore, our general policy-line should be "showing carrot to France while using stick to deal with the United States." In our propaganda, we should concentrate our criticism on America, and should leave France with some hope.

Translated for CWIHP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not cite or quote without permission from CWIHP.

POLITBUREAU DIRECTIVE

February 22, 1954

MAKING GREAT EFFORTS TO SMASH THE FRENCH AND US IMPERIALISTS' SCHEMES FOR INTENSIFYING THE WAR OF AGGRESSION

I. WE HAVE SMASHED A PART OF THE NAVARRE PLAN

After suffering heavy defeats in Vietnam, especially during Autumn and Winter of 1952 and Spring of 1953, French colonialists supported and pushed by US imperialists have introduced the Navarre Plan in order to rescue themselves from their precarious situation. The Plan is aimed at pacifying the occupied areas in the deltas, building bigger force of puppet troops, concentrating mobile forces to initiate attacks to our liberated areas. To date, facts on the battlefields of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos show that the Navarre has in part failed.

1. For our part, our troops proactively launch offensive operations, coordinating all the battlefields and gaining many big victories. Since the enemy's operation in Southwest of Ninh Binh Province in October 1953, Vietnamese and Lao troops have killed about 46,000 enemies, liberated vast territories in Lai Chau, Kon Tum, Upper Laos, Central Laos, and Lower Laos that populate more than one million people. Our guerrilla warfare has strongly developed, spreading across all the battlefields behind the enemy's line, especially in the Northern Delta.

2. For their part, the mobile forces have been dispersed. Not only have they been unable to initiate any battle, they increasingly become reactive in all the battlefields while the occupied areas are more exposed.

Yet, the Navarre Plan's failure is only initial. We should not underestimate the enemy and be subjective. [We] must continue to make more efforts, pushing the enemy into more reactive and receiving end.

II. THE US DIRECT INTERVENTION IN THE WAR OF AGGRESSION AGAINST VIETNAM, CAMBODIA, AND LAOS

In the context of successive and heavy defeats suffered by French colonialists, the US imperialists became very much concerned. They all the more try to encourage French colonialists to continue the war, not letting French colonialists to retreat while making one more step toward intervening in the war in Indochina, starting to provide France with money and plans then to directly intervening in a blatant way in the war in Indochina. The new act of intervention does not show the US and French aggressors' strength, but their weakness and fear of our great victories. The US evil intention is to assist France to save the present situation; on the other hand, it takes advantage of the difficulties that France is facing to encroach French interests in Indochina.

Recently, the US flies warplanes from air bases in Far East to bomb and kill Vietnamese and Lao people and troops. Additionally, they sent more than 200 air force personnel to shoulder with French pilots to shoot and kill Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Lao peoples. That is to say, a portion of its air force based in the Far East has been used to participate in the war in Indochina. They are planning to replace the US Military Aid Mission with the Military Directorate so as to directly take part in the commanding of the war in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos; at the same time, they will send "military trainers" to Indochina to directly control the puppet troops. In addition, they plan to use half of their forces in the Pacific to blockade Vietnam's coasts and use the South Korean and Thai troops to "help" France, thus implementing the wicked scheme of using Asians to fight Asians.

Once again, these US actions have exposed the evil intentions for war and aggression, thus turning the war in Indochina the one of both French colonialists and US warmongers. These actions also show their propaganda about peace is false and make clear the fact that they do not want peace, but are instead stepping up and expanding the war against Indochina. Meetings attended by Plevni, Navarre with their US counterparts are designed to carry out these schemes.

That the US directly intervenes in the war in Indochina has made the Indochinese people more indignant against French colonialists and their US masters. The Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Lao people are more united and determined to annihilate all the enemy, regardless where they have come from.

The act of intervention also further deepens the US-France contradictions and disagreements. It at the same time further unite the people in France, the US, Southeast Asia, and peace loving people in the world in general to fight against French colonialists and US interventionists, forcing them to end the war of aggression against Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos.

III. OUR IMMEDIATE TASKS

Since early Autumn and Winter of 1953, we have achieved numerous victories. Our troops and people must maintain the momentum to make greater efforts to win greater victories. [We] must pay attention to the following tasks:

1. *The focus of our troops' and people's immediate tasks are to be victorious in the coming battles and to annihilate more of the enemy's troops*, thus totally defeating the Navarre Plan (jointly prepared by the US and France); to be determined to mobilize human and material resources (based on the directive coded 61-CT-TW on February 8, 1954) to ensure victory over the enemy, because the victory in this campaign will be of great significance in military and political terms. The whole party and armed forces must understand this well and try our best.

2. *To step up the propaganda against the US intervention in the war in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos*; to timely expose the schemes and acts of intervention by the US. At the same time, we must overcome the wrong thoughts, including (i) being afraid of the US, overestimating the possibility of US intervention, thus less being confident in the final victory; (ii) paying insufficient attention to the US schemes to directly intervene in the war in Indochina, thus being reluctant to oppose and defeat the US schemes and acts in Indochina; (iii) dreaming of peace, being reliant on the world peace movement, thus rendering lesser efforts, especially the after 4-foreign ministers meeting in Berlin announced the decision to convene a Conference in coming April to find ways for peaceful solution to the Korea and Vietnam problems.

3. In the liberated areas that have been selected by the Central Committee, [we] must implement the plan of mobilizing the masses for the reduction of high-rate agricultural rents and for land reform, combining it with the work of supporting the battlefield and boosting the production.

4. In the newly liberated areas, [we] must try our best to consolidate all aspects of our work that include training local cadres, building local armed forces, organizing and educating the masses, strictly follow the Party's and government's policies with regard to ethnic and religious issues; restore production, and solve immediate problems related to people's livelihood.

5. In the occupied areas, [we] must take advantage of the momentum of victories gained by our troops in all the battlefields to expand the propaganda about our victories and those by Lao People's Liberation Armed Forces, thus explaining the queries put by people on the US new acts. [We also] have to combine this with stepping up the guerrilla warfare, mobilizing the people to oppose troops conscription for the puppet army. At the same time [we] must do our best to oppose the enemy's wicked schemes for sham independence, farce of negotiations, democratization, land reform, etc. Especially, [we] must oppose the enemy's troop conscription by mobilizing and forming a massive movement against it.

Good results from fulfilling these tasks will surely help us to win many bigger political and military victories; to the contrary, French colonialists and US interventionists will be more reactive and suffer more shameful defeats.

This directive is distributed to the provincial level. Upon receiving this directive, party executive committees must hold discussions about the immediate tasks of respective localities in order to fulfill their duties timely and correctly.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE
ON BEHALF OF POLITBURO

TRUONG CHINH

Department of State Press Release

No. 84

WASHINGTON, February 19, 1954.

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE QUADRIPARTITE MEETING OF THE FOUR FOREIGN MINISTERS AT BERLIN, FEBRUARY 18, 1954¹

A meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the United States, France, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, Mr. John Foster Dulles, M. Georges Bidault, Mr. Anthony Eden, and M. Vyacheslav Molotov, took place in Berlin between January 25 and February 18, 1954. They reached the following agreements:

(A)

The Foreign Ministers of the United States, France, the United Kingdom and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, meeting in Berlin,

Considering that the establishment, by peaceful means, of a united and independent Korea would be an important factor in reducing international tension and in restoring peace in other parts of Asia,

Propose that a conference of representatives of the United States, France, the United Kingdom, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Chinese People's Republic, the Republic of Korea, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, and other countries the armed forces of which participated in the hostilities in Korea and which desire to attend shall meet in Geneva on April 26 for the purpose of reaching a peaceful settlement of the Korean question;

Agree that the problem of restoring peace in Indochina will also be discussed at the conference, to which representatives of the United States, France, the United Kingdom, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Chinese People's Republic and other interested states will be invited.

It is understood that neither the invitation to, nor the holding of, the above-mentioned conference shall be deemed to imply diplomatic recognition in any case where it has not already been accorded.

[Here follows the portion of the communiqué dealing with disarmament, Germany, Austria, and European security; for the full text of the communiqué, see volume VII.]

¹The communiqué was sent to Washington in telegram Secto 171, Feb. 18, repeated to London as telegram 191, to Paris as telegram 219, to Bonn as telegram 1048, to Vienna as telegram 113, to GINCEUR as telegram 62, and to Moscow unnumbered. (398.1 BE/2-1854)

IV [etc]. *A Settlement in Indochina in the Framework of a General Far Eastern Settlement*

It is conceivable that a settlement free from some of these overriding objections could be reached in Indochina if we were to offer the Chinese Communists or the Viet Minh sufficient inducements outside of Indochina. However, this course seems politically almost impossible for the United States and may lose us more than we stand to lose even in Indochina.

Which of the following would a US administration which has condemned Yalta and the loss of China be prepared to grant?

- a) recognition of Red China
- b) more trade with Red China
- c) scuttling of Formosa
- d) abandonment of EDC
- e) abstention from all arms and matériel aid in Asia
- f) abandonment of thesis of unification of Korea

Merely to cite these questions is to expose the difficulties. Moreover, even if we were to offer China trade and recognition as the price for ending the Viet Minh war, it is by no means certain that they could achieve it.

In one form or another, the present war is an expression of rebellion against white rule which has been going on for some 80 years with intermediate periods of quasi-pacification. If the Communist Chinese undertook to end the war, it would not merely have to close the frontier, but take more active measures against the Viet Minh.

This, of course, would for a time mean that the main menace of Communist China expansion had been exorcised—but it is a necessary corrective to any exaggerated hopes we may cherish.

Moreover, there is no assurance that China would keep this or any other bargain. The situation in South Asia is so fluid that "indigenous" movements would always carry on the struggle for Communism while Peiping and Moscow ostensibly disavow it.

An enlarged frame of reference for the negotiations may include still other possibilities. It is conceivable that the Soviet Union and the Communist Chinese might wish to trade unification of Korea for advantages in Southeast Asia. This might give them as a bonus a chance of splitting France and the United States. The transformation of the Korean stalemate into apparent total victory for the UN through the restoration of the integrity of Korea would be a difficult inducement for this country to resist—and it might be presented in the form of a proposal for free elections in both Korea and Indochina.

Confronted with this perhaps most dangerous of all the hypotheses, we must carefully weigh up the relative importance for us of Korea

PP5 Files, lot 65 D 101 Indochina
 Memorandum by Edward A. Gullion of the Policy Planning Staff to the Director (Bowie)

and Indochina. In my opinion, the loss of Indochina would be much more menacing to the free world than the loss of Korea.

V. *Where do we go from here?*

1. We should arrive in this government at an understanding of the possible consequences of a negotiated peace. Such a consideration should also take up the question of whether we ought to be a party to any negotiated peace in Indochina. It may be better for us for the Conference in Geneva to end inconclusively than to put our signature to a partition or "sell-out" of our Asian allies.
2. At the earliest possible moment we should consult with the French, persuading them to take the initiative in explaining their thinking on the substantive part of the negotiations. Unless they can reveal to us some alternative more feasible than those discussed above, we should make clear to the French our firm opposition to a settlement on any such basis. We should try to persuade the French that the war should go on, using whatever inducements we can.
3. If the French are determined to negotiate, we should decide:
 - (a) whether this should be done unilaterally; or (b) multilaterally, and with what degree of responsibility for ourselves.

My own recommendation would be that the war in Indochina should continue but that we should raise our sights with respect to needs in manpower, and in the political basis for sincere Vietnamese participation. If, in spite of everything the French should decide unilaterally to quit the war (which I for one do not believe they can or will do) I should recommend not a compromise peace on the bases listed above, but an internationalization of the war under the UN, with the participation of US forces, if necessary, recognizing that the Chinese might retaliate massively.

396.1 GB/2-2754 : Circular telegram

*The Secretary of State to All Principal Posts*¹

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, February 27, 1954—1:49 p. m.
 306. Joint State-USIA. Communist propagandists appear making some headway label Geneva Conference "Big Five Conference", unconsciously assisted by some US correspondents use of this as well as term "Five Power Conference". This damaging to US interests since elevates position Communist China, as well as inaccurate description conference which will be attended by many more than five powers on invitation from powers which met Berlin. (See Berlin communiqué

¹ Drafted by Mosman and Poole of FE and by Fisher of USIA.

February 18 contained Wireless File same date.)² Soviet proposal for five power conference was rejected by Western powers at Berlin. In contacts with local press and US correspondents posts and USIS as appropriate requested take whatever action deemed advisable to prevent or correct labeling conference "Big Five" or "Five Power" and to encourage use of "Geneva Conference". Department requesting Embassies London and Paris secure British and French agreement adopt latter term as official usage. Inform subordinate posts.

DULLES

² For the pertinent portion of the Final Communiqué of the Berlin Conference, Feb. 18, see p. 415.

396.1 GB/2-2754

Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Executive Secretariat (Kitchen) to the Under Secretary of State (Smith)

[WASHINGTON,] February 27, 1954.
 The Secretary has designated Douglas MacArthur to coordinate preparations for the Geneva Conference.

The Secretary has also approved a recommendation originally made by David Key that two "Task Forces" be established to begin substantive preparations. It is expected that Mr. Kenneth Young will head the group making preparations on the Korean item and Mr. Philip Bonsal the group making preparations on the Indochina item.

A meeting has been scheduled for today at 12:30 in the Secretary's office to discuss preparations and receive additional guidance from the Secretary.¹ In particular, the following should come under discussion:

(1) MacArthur anticipates that virtually no progress can be expected on the Korean items and the Communist will not concede anything. Therefore, he believes the question of the designation of a senior officer to advise the Secretary on Indochina (and you if you succeed the Secretary at Geneva) is of vital importance. This person must have a balance of experience and knowledge divided between the Franco-EDC complex and the Indochina-Communist military drive complex. It has been suggested that some one like Ambassador Alex Johnson would be ideal on Korea and what is needed is someone comparable to him on Indochina.

(2) The use of UN administrative and technical machinery and the cost of this operation has been discussed by Mr. Key, Mr. Popper and others at USIA. There is agreement that we should make as full use as possible of the UN machinery both because of the magnitude of the Conference and to avoid procedural squabbles between the two "sides".

¹ See memorandum by Kitchen to Smith, Mar. 1, p. 427.

Telegram, Soviet Party Central Committee to CCP Central Committee, via Comrade Yudin,¹ February 26, 1954

Record No: 109-00396-01

CCP Central Committee:

We request that you convey to Comrade Ho Chi Minh the process of the discussion at the foreign ministers meeting in Berlin of the representatives from the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, the United States, Britain, and France and other related countries holding a conference in Geneva on April 26, 1954 (which, in addition to discussing the Korea question, will also discuss the question of restoring peace in Indochina). Previously we already informed you that "other related countries" in Indochina, according to our understanding, should be the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the three puppet states: Bao Dai's Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

We know that the Vietnamese friends are concerned about the convening of the Geneva Conference, and that they will attend the conference. We believe that the CCP Central Committee will agree to our opinion.

As far as the stand of France, as well as that of the United States and Britain, at the Geneva conference is concerned, we do not have much material at the present time. As for how we should use this conference to make it favorable to the Vietnamese people, we are very much willing to learn the opinions of the Vietnamese friends.

Soviet Party Central Committee

Translated for CWIHP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not quote without permission from CWIHP.

¹ Soviet Union's ambassador to China.

The question of whether the entire UN membership, the members participating in the Conference, or just the four host Powers should pay the cost of the Conference has also been considered. In general, Mr. Key is inclined to believe that having the four hosts pay the costs (estimated at approximately \$250,000 or \$300,000 each) would be preferable to an assessment of either participants in the Conference or the UNA membership since the establishment of an assessment against Red China and North Korea is bound to have political implications.

(3) The question of participation in the Conference by small nation belligerents such as the Netherlands and Greece has also been raised. Doc Matthews has reported that the Dutch have indicated they would accept our guidance on this if we desired to reduce participation to keep the Conference more flexible. The Greeks have also inquired as to our attitude.

J. C. K.

396.1 GE/3-154 : Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in France*¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 1, 1954—6:37 p. m.

2986. FYI only. Understanding here is that initiative for organization Indochina phase of Korean political conference is primarily French responsibility just as United States has such responsibility for Korean phase. On specific subject of participants in Indochina phase there is involved (a) agreement between France, US and UK with French views being given major weight and (b) discussion with USSR of tripartite position and resulting quadripartite agreement on invitations to other participants. It would be our hope that the taking of these steps could be deferred until meeting of Foreign Ministers of France, UK, USSR and US at Geneva on April 26. Invitations could then be issued for Indochina discussions to take place some weeks later. A deferment of Indochina discussions until after the end of current fighting season and conduct discussions in atmosphere of what we would hope would be active and effective preparations for decisive phase of Navarre Plan, including especially progress in creating combatworthy Vietnamese units would be highly desirable in our view.

End FYI only.

Department assumes immediate pressures on French Government have been much eased as result of Berlin agreement on Indochina. Department therefore hopes French Government will agree that further discussion Indochina phase by France, UK and US on one hand and by USSR on other be held after Foreign Ministers meet for opening of Geneva Conference. Department interprets Paris 3072 repeated

¹ Drafted by Bonsal of PSA. Repeated to London as telegram 4460, to Moscow as telegram 550, and to Saigon as telegram 1569.

Saigon 337 and London unnumbered as indicating Bidault thinking along these lines. (See numbered paragraph 2.)²

In any case, Department counts on opportunity make known its views on participants in Indochina phase prior any crystallizing of a French position and would anticipate a request from French Government for its views at such time as French Government believes it desirable proceed toward firming up of tripartite position this matter. Discuss matter with Bidault along above lines, stating they represent Secretary's thinking and Secretary has now left for Caracas whence he will return about March 10. Comments other recipients invited.

SMITH

² Paragraph 2 of Paris telegram 3072, Feb. 26, not printed, read: "In response question by Moch (Socialist) as to whether Ho would be present Geneva, Bidault quoted as saying: 'In eyes of France, Ho Chi Minh Government does not represent state and Berlin text (of communiqué) does not make its presence obligatory. That will be discussed at Geneva where it will be question taking up Korea and IC simultaneously.'" (751.00/2-2654)

396.1 GE/3-164

Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Executive Secretariat (Kitchen) to the Acting Secretary of State

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 1, 1954.

In addition to the points covered in this morning's Staff Summary concerning preparations for the Geneva Conference, the following emerged from Saturday's meeting¹ with the Secretary on this subject:

1. The Secretary's basic approach is that this Conference, particularly as it relates to Indo-China, is a holding action in order to provide time for the French to ratify the EDC and to permit a favorable military build-up and execution of the "Navarre plan". For this reason, the Secretary does not wish us to approach the French and the British with a view to settling as many procedural and substantive problems in advance as possible, but rather to merely obtain the views of those governments and indicate that we believe it best for most problems to be settled by direct conversation after the Secretary has arrived at Geneva.

2. Top priority is to be given to consulting with the Government of Korea with a view to the establishment of a mutually acceptable position or line of action on Korea² which we will then discuss with the British and French.

3. The Secretary wants all participating countries to contribute to the cost of the Conference. He does not want the Four Powers to act as "hosts".

¹ Feb. 27.

² For documentation on pre-Geneva Conference discussions between the United States and the Republic of Korea, see pp. 14 ff.

4. The Secretary believes that the group should "hire" the UN physical facilities and secretariat at Geneva for the administration and conduct of the Conference.

5. We do not expect that all smaller nations contributing forces to the Korean fighting will be represented at the Conference nor do we wish to encourage their participation at this time.

In connection with plans for the Conference, Mr. MacArthur indicated that he had considerable doubt as to the desirability of proceeding at this time toward the conclusion of a Mutual Security Pact with the Government of China which had been proposed earlier in the week by Mr. Robertson.³ Both Livy Merchant and David Key had indicated their doubt in writing on the staff study on Friday. The Secretary instructed that this matter be turned over to Bob Bowie for submission to the National Security Council's Planning Board for consideration. He hoped to have the NSC Staff's reaction in ten days upon his return from Caracas.⁴ Apparently his intention was that the State Department should submit the question without a recommendation. He asked that the matter be handled with extreme caution because any leak would cause controversial discussion and many difficulties would arise as a consequence. Mr. Bowie has been informed of the Secretary's instructions.

JEFFERY C. KITCHEN

³ Robertson proposed this pact in a memorandum to the Secretary of State on Feb. 25; for the text, see volume xiv.

⁴ For documentation on the Tenth Inter-American Conference, Caracas, Venezuela, Mar. 1-28, 1954, see volume iv.

396.1 GE/3-254: Telegram

The Chargé in France (Achilles) to the Department of State

SECRET

PARIS, March 2, 1954—8 p. m.
3149. Repeated information Saigon 346. Department telegram 1570 to Saigon repeated Paris 2988.¹ All present indications here are that French position is that question should be avoided at all costs in order avoid undesirable counter-demand that representation of Associated States would have to be balanced by representation of Viet Minh, "free" Laos Government, etc. Government's position has remained

¹ Telegram 1570 to Paris, Mar. 1, read: "If you learn French endeavoring exert pressure have Associated States refrain from participating Indochina phase Korean Political Conference please report at once so Department can consider action appropriate. FYI Department strongly of opinion Associated States should be present as full participants at Geneva. End FYI." (795.00/2-2454)

unaltered that Viet Minh is in no sense a government and no steps should be countenanced which might lend encouragement to Soviet-sponsored fallacy that it is. We are under impression that this position was shared by Associated States Governments and for this reason they are not pressing at moment for participation at Geneva. (Question will undoubtedly be examined at length here after Buu Loc's arrival).

Would appreciate any background information Department could supply explaining reasoning which led to position advocating full participation of Associated States at Geneva and how it is proposed to deal with question of Viet Minh representation there as consequence. When this becomes known as US position, Embassy will be faced with necessity supporting it under attack from French authorities.

ACHILLES

396.1 GE/3-254

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Officer in Charge of Thai and Malayan Affairs (London)

CONFIDENTIAL

[WASHINGTON,] March 2, 1954.

Subject: Korean and Indochinese Conferences in April.

Participants: His Excellency, Pote Sarasin, Ambassador of Thailand
Walter S. Robertson—FE
Kenneth P. Landon—PSA

The Thai Ambassador called at his request and stated that he had been instructed by his Government to inform the Department of State that it accepted the invitation to attend the Korean Conference in Geneva in April and that it desired to know what would be the U.S. approach to the conference in terms of policy objectives. The Ambassador was informed that the Department would pursue the well-known policy objective of achieving an independent, unified, peaceful Korea, which has always been the objective of the United Nations. The Thai Ambassador expressed some doubts as to the possible achievement of this objective and asked if the United States had in mind lesser levels of achievement with which it might be satisfied. He was informed that no lesser objectives were being considered. The Ambassador was further informed that the housekeeping arrangements as to costs and other details were being worked out.

The Ambassador then turned to the subject of Indochina and asked if the participants in the Korean Conference would automatically

“Preliminary Opinions on the Assessment of and Preparation for the Geneva Conference,” Prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (drafted by Zhou Enlai)¹ and Approved in principle at a Meeting of the CCP Central Secretariat (excerpt), March 2, 1954

Record Number: 206-Y0054

The reaching of the agreement of convening the Geneva Conference, is a great achievement by the delegation of the Soviet Union at the meeting of the foreign ministers of the four powers in Berlin. The People's Republic of China's participation in the [Geneva] conference alone has already marked a big step forward relaxing international tension, and therefore has won widespread support by peace-loving peoples and countries all over the world. However, the bloc of the imperialist aggressors, and the U.S. government in particular, has intentionally underestimated the significance of the Geneva conference with the prediction that it, like what happened at Berlin on Germany and Austria, will not achieve any result. But the opinions of the United States, Britain and France are far from identical on the Korea issue, and especially on the Indochina issue and many other issues of international affairs. Sometimes, the contradictions among them are very big, and they are facing many internal difficulties too.

In accordance with the above understanding, we should adopt a policy of actively participating in the Geneva Conference and enhancing diplomatic and international activities, in order to undermine the policy of blockade, embargo, and expanding armament and preparing for war by the U.S. imperialists, and promoting the relaxation of the tensed international situation. At the Geneva Conference, even though the United States will try everything possible to sabotage the reaching of all kinds of agreements favorable to the cause of peace, still we should go all out to strive for some agreements, even agreements only temporary [in nature] and limited [in scope], so as to opening the path of resolving international disputes through discussions and negotiations by big powers.

(2) Regarding peacefully settling the Korea question, our side should tightly hold the slogan of peaceful unification, national independence, and free election, and oppose Syngman Rhee's [policy of] armed unification, the US-South Korea treaty of defense, and the so called free election held when the people have no freedom at all. ...

(3) Regarding Indochina, ... we must try our best to make sure that the Geneva conference will not end without any result, even under the circumstance

¹ Premier and Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China, head of the PRC delegation to the Geneva Conference.

that no agreement could be reached, we still should not allow the negotiation for restoring peace in Indochina to be undermined completely, and should create a situation characterized by “negotiating while fighting,” thus increasing the difficulties inside France and the contradictions between France and America, so that it will be beneficial for the people in Indochina to carry out struggles for liberation. ... On the specific questions related to restoring peace in Indochina, on-site ceasefire is not as good as dividing a demarcation line between the south and north, such as the 16th parallel. However, only through many struggles can such a favorable situation be achieved.

(4) The agenda of the Geneva Conference is set for discussing the Korea and Indochina questions, but it does not exclude discussions about other specific questions possibly to be raised [at the conference]. At the conference, if there is the opportunity, we may put forward other urgent international issues that are favorable for relaxing the tensed international situation.... Therefore, apart from the Korea and Vietnam question, we must prepare other materials and opinions concerning China, the Far East, and peace and security in Asia. In particular, [we must prepare for] effusive measures toward the development of economic relations, trade exchanges between various countries, and for further relaxing the tensed international situation and breaking up the block and embargo by the US imperialists. Outside the conference, the mutual relations between China and Britain, China and France, and China and Canada will be touched upon, and we should have some preparations in this respect.

Translated for CWIHP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not quote without permission from CWIHP.

deliberate on Indochina. The Ambassador was informed that the Department was waiting for the views of the French but that our tentative thinking was that there might be two separate conferences with different nations represented and that the two conferences might be held simultaneously. The Ambassador was reminded that the original statement issued regarding Indochina indicated that "interested states" would participate and presumably by "interested states" was meant not only the principal powers named such as France, the U.K., the U.S., Communist China and USSR but also the Associated States. The Thai Ambassador said that his Government was interested because of its shared geographic boundaries with Indochina and inquired whether the Thai Government might send a representative as an observer. He was assured that this request would be given consideration.

396.1 GE/3-454 : Telegram

The Chargé in France (Achilles) to the Department of State

SECRET PRIORITY

PARIS, March 4, 1954—1 p. m.
3176. Repeated information London 723, Moscow 257, Saigon 352. Reference telegram 2986, March 2 [1].¹ I discussed substance of reference telegram with Maurice Schumann today.

He believed that while early days of Geneva would be soon enough for ministerial discussion on Indochina problems, he thought that there should be preliminary tripartite discussions here both in view of importance of reaching agreed tripartite position and psychologically in France to make clear conference was not really "Korean" one with Indochina being treated only incidentally. He said there was no hurry since Franco-Vietnam talks² would continue through most of March. Perhaps last ten days before Geneva conference met would be sufficient time.

On question of Associated States representation, he reiterated efforts made at Berlin to frame agreement so as to include Associated States and exclude Ho, confirmed Embassy telegram 3175, March 4,³ that definite position would not be taken until after consultation with

¹ Dated Mar. 1, p. 426.

² For documentation on discussions at Paris between representatives of France and the State of Vietnam with a view to arriving at treaties regulating relations between the two countries, see volume XIII.

³ Not printed. (396.1 GE/3-454)

Associated States and US and UK. He cited this as additional reason for holding preliminary discussions before Geneva. He said telegrams from De Jean indicated Vietnamese not too anxious to be represented but that he could understand our desire that they be present to avoid connotation of "five-power conference".

ACHILLES

396.1 GE/3-264 : Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in France*¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 4, 1954—7 p. m.
3035. Your 3149 repeated Saigon 346.² Secretary's position regarding desirability inclusion Associated States in Indochina phase Geneva conference based upon following:

(1) Analogy with Korean situation. South Koreans and North Koreans were included with question "recognition" specifically reserved.

(2) Absence of Associated States would mean conference would be held without major "interested states." US has recognized Associated States along with 35 other countries, has advocated their membership in UN and has stressed defense their independence as equal sovereign members of French Union as objective US support current war effort. Department believes strongly Associated States should participate in any discussion of restoration of peace in Indochina. Effect of their absence on public opinion here and presumably also in Indochina would be highly adverse.

(3) Discussion from which Associated States were absent and which was confined to four Berlin powers plus Communist China would in effect be five power conference on Indochina. We joined with UK and French in rejecting "five power conference" concept at Berlin.

(4) While Department recognizes disadvantages presence Ho's representatives at Geneva, Department considers this more or less inevitable consequence of French acceptance of negotiations without any prior conditions.

(5) It appears essential to Department that there be present at Indochina discussions Asians speaking for people of area fighting against Communist domination. We cannot envisage discussion where Communist China would be only Asian country represented.

Department does not plan make known its position except in context discussions which it is assumed French will initiate.

SMITH

¹ Drafted by Bonsal of PSA. Repeated to Saigon as telegram 1698.

² Dated Mar. 2, p. 428.

Telegram, Zhang Wentian to the Foreign Ministry and report to Zhou Enlai and the Central Committee, Concerning reporting the preliminary opinions of our side toward the Geneva Conference to the Soviet side, March 6, 1954

Record number: 206-Y0054

(Top Secret)

Foreign Ministry and Report to Zhou Enlai and the Central Committee:

I called upon Molotov this afternoon, conveying to him the preliminary opinions of and preparation work for the Geneva Conference on our side. He says that all opinions are very good, and he will forward them to the Soviet Party Central Committee and the (Soviet) Foreign Ministry for discussion. He also welcomes the delegations from China, (North) Korea, and Vietnam to visit Moscow in mid-April, to have discussions and consultations on various issues before (the Geneva Conference). Concerning Ho Chiminh's plan to visit Moscow, he will report to the Central Committee immediately, and will then give us a reply.

During the conversation, Molotov touches upon several questions, and they can be used as reference for us at home.

- (1) At the Geneva Conference, apart from discussing the Korea and Vietnam questions, should such questions as the relaxing tension in Asia (including the Taiwan question, opposition to rearming Japan, and opposition to the US-Pakistan pact) also be discussed? He says that these issues should be considered.
- (2) Concerning plans for settling the Korea issue, whether or not should it be raised that North Korean and South Korea may "organize a provisional government of the whole of Korea on the basis of equal rights"? This should be given further consideration. He says that before 1950 the Soviet Union had used "on the basis of equal rights" toward the German question, but has not used it since then. This is because this statement is likely to cause many new and difficult problems. He says that he has heard that Kim Il-sung does not welcome free election.
- (3) Concerning the participation of foreign ministers from various countries, this was not clearly defined by the Berlin conference. Molotov had consulted with several foreign ministers, and they have shown an interest to attend the conference. But they have attached a condition to it: it is possible that they may only attend the conference's opening ceremony, or may attend only part of the conference.
- (4) At the Geneva Conference, which countries will be invited to participate in discussions of the Korea question has been agreed upon by all in

advance. However, which countries should be invited to participate in discussions of the Indochina question has not been worked out. It is likely that there will be disputes on this issue. Concerning whether India should be invited, Molotov says that he is not interested in this matter at the moment, this is because India's participation may weaken the role played by China at the Geneva Conference.

- (5) Concerning the organization of the conference, according to Hammarstrand the institution of the United Nations can be used. However, Molotov emphasizes that the United Nations should not be allowed to involve, and that members of various delegations should be able to use the institution of their own, just like the situation during the Berlin conference.
- (6) Molotov says that the Soviet Union will start the preparatory work in the near future, and those involved will probably include (Andrei) Gromyko, (Vasilii) Kuznetsov, (Nikolai) Fedorenko, and (K.V.) Novikov, head of the Southeast Asian Department.
- (7) Concerning the procedure question of the conference, he believes that there will be many disputes over it after the beginning of the conference.
- (8) Comrade Molotov will ask Comrade Gromyko and others to make presentations to us on matters needing attention while attending an international conference.

Zhang Wentian
6 March

Translated for CWHIP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not quote without permission from CWHIP.

Secret
Copy No 2

from the journal of
P. F. Yudin
31 March 1954
No 283

Record of a Conversation between P. F. Yudin, Soviet Ambassador to the PRC, with Hoang Van Hoan, Vietnamese Ambassador to the PRC

On 5 March I was visited by Hoang Van Hoan, the Vietnamese ambassador in Peking, who recently returned from Vietnam where he had been for four months. In a conversation the Vietnamese Ambassador talked about the situation in Vietnam and also expressed his point of view about the question of the upcoming conference in Geneva.

At the present time on all fronts in Vietnam the initiative is in the hands of the People's Army, said Hoang Van Hoan. In connection with the fact that with the exception of some points the northern regions of Vietnam and Pathet Lao have been liberated, the command of the People's Army intends to then gradually redeploy their main forces to central Vietnam. The fulfillment of this task entails great difficulties since the People's Army does not have the necessary means of transportation. The strategic plan of the People's Army is to kill as many of the enemy as possible by forcing a war of maneuver on them. For the time being the mission of the People's Army is not to seize large cities such as Hanoi, Haiphong, Saigon, etc. since it does not have enough strength to do this, especially in equipment. At the present time the strength of the People's Army is about 200,000 men and enemy strength is about 300,000 men, of which half are French.] The popular militia and partisan detachments which give great support to the People's Army play a role in Vietnam.

At the present time while the French are still managing to recoup large losses in manpower, nevertheless the newly arrived troops from Europe are weak both in military terms and morale. Recently incidents of defections of soldiers of the French expeditionary corps to the People's Army are observed increasingly often; among the defectors one even encounters Moroccans, whom the French consider the most fit for combat.

As regards the People's Army its high training and morale are constantly increasing and its prestige among the people is also growing. The victories over the French and also the American defeat in Korea have strengthened the confidence of the Army and people of Vietnam in final victory over the enemy.

The influence of the workers' army is also gradually growing in regions occupied by the enemy. The fact that not only do underground organizations of the Workers' Party but also underground organs of popular rule [narodnaya vlast', i. e. a shadow government] operate in many occupied cities and regions is indicative of this. The Bao Dai regime in these regions holds out only thanks to the support of France and the US.

As regards the question of the upcoming international conference in Geneva, the Vietnamese Ambassador said that the CC of the Worker's Party and the government of Vietnam were studying this question. In the opinion of Hoang Van Hoan the formal aspect of the participation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in this conference is unclear, namely whether it will be invited to this conference or whether it ought to make an appropriate statement itself.

The Vietnamese Ambassador then said he allows for the possibility that the French government will enter into negotiations for an armistice in Vietnam. However great difficulties would arise in the course of the negotiations. First, there is no defined front in Vietnam and accordingly it is extraordinarily difficult to set a line of demarcation and a demilitarized zone (up to 80% of the population of the country lives in the liberated regions of Vietnam); second, the French will achieve some sort of status for Bao Dai, to which the people's government cannot agree and; third, the US will try to torpedo the negotiations by increasing pressure on the French government and Bao Dai.

At the end of the conversation Vietnamese Ambassador Hoang Van Hoan asked me to keep him further informed about the progress of preparations for the conference in Geneva insofar as it concerns Vietnam.

N. Chekanov, 2nd Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in the PRC,
interpreted the conversation.

Soviet Ambassador to the PRC

/signature/ P. Yudin

objective has been attained, and under the best conditions, i.e., in full solidarity with our allies, thanks to effective action Foreign Minister".

"Question of IC can be approached at same time as Indochina at Geneva and we have the possibility, which we consider basic, of inviting the Associated States."

Although stressing importance of Geneva in preparing for a general pacification in Asia, Laniel stated "we will not, however, have the right—when men die on the field of battle—of neglecting, if in the interval an occasion presents itself to put an end to hostilities in an honorable and effective manner. On this principle I am in perfect agreement with what has been said at the Tribune. It is not because the war has lasted seven years that we will have the right to neglect a chance to end it one day sooner."

Although paying tribute to Laniel's motives of Nehru in launching his cease-fire proposal, Laniel stated that Nehru's proposal³ could not be considered an offer of mediation but that it did pose a question to which it was necessary to reply. "Our reply is dictated by a main preoccupation, that of the security of our Expeditionary Corps, the French and the friends of France during the perhaps long and [apparent omission] "we consider as unacceptable any proposal, which, under color of an immediate 'cease-fire' would begin by putting in peril our soldiers and our friends without our having obtained sufficient guarantees to assure the development of a normal negotiation and the chances for a durable peace." These guarantees Laniel outlined as follows: "(1) The total evacuation of Laos by troops having infiltrated there; (2) although the military situation in Cambodia different, analogous precautions would be required there; (3) in northern Vietnam a sort of no man's land would have to be created around the periphery of the Tonkin Delta and the Viet Minh units that have infiltrated the Delta would have to withdraw under strictly controlled evacuation; (4) in central Vietnam the Viet Minh units would have to withdraw to delimited zones in such manner as to guarantee security of our troops and the people; (5) in southern Vietnam, the Viet Minh forces should be disarmed or evacuated. To all these guarantees ought to be added other measures of security and control designed to assure that with suspension of fighting our adversaries cannot carry out certain activities, or proceed to reinforcement or regroupment, as was the case in Korea during the long period of conversations."

"A suspension of fighting then will only be the result of carefully conducted negotiations for which we will be ready very shortly when

³ Speaking before the Indian Parliament on Feb. 22, Prime Minister Nehru proposed a cease-fire in Indochina prior to the Geneva Conference. For the statement by the Prime Minister, see India, *Parliamentary Debates, Official Report, House of the People, Part II, 6th sess., vol. I, no. 6, cols. 415-416*. See also telegram 3053 from Paris, Feb. 24, printed in *Foreign Relations, 1962-1964, volume XIII*.

we will have carried out the necessary studies with the Associated States, negotiations which are presented at Geneva under the best conditions possible thanks to the efforts of our diplomacy. If before Geneva we receive a concrete proposal, it would be examined in the state of mind that I have just defined."

In pointing out that he had responded to questions giving rise to debate, Laniel stated he would like to add that today, these polemics ought to cease. We are unanimous in effect in wishing henceforth to settle the conflict by way of [garbled group].

Laniel stated that "it goes without saying that our military effort ought not to be relaxed" prior to Geneva "since it is thanks to it that we have obliged the adversary to change his speech, if not his conduct, since it is thanks to it that we have adversary in a position where he cannot hope for a victory by force."

In emphasizing that it would be necessary to maintain discretion in preparing for Geneva, Laniel concluded by stating that "a peace negotiated respecting national honor, the liberty of individuals and the security of the Expeditionary Corps, is our objective. We are at the hour of hope. In the name of France, I salute all the combatants, of the Associated States and the French army, who, by their sacrifices of yesterday and tomorrow, make possible this hope."

DILLON

396.1 GE/3-854

*Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Bonsal)*¹

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 8, 1954.

NOTES ON A MINIMUM POSITION REGARDING INDOCHINA FOR THE GENEVA CONFERENCE

The U.S. objective for Indochina at Geneva is presumably to avoid Communist control of the area and, as in the case of Korea, to secure the control of the entire area by indigenous non-Communist elements capable of sustaining themselves against internal subversion. Although the U.S. would be pleased with governments in Indochina firmly aligned on the side of the free world, the U.S. would presumably not reject governments of the nature of India or Indonesia the foreign policy of which would be neutralist.

¹ Bonsal in a covering memorandum to Robertson indicated that the attached paper was "designed to serve generally as a working paper in order to stimulate discussion. It will not be considered as representing Departmental views." (396.1 GE/3-854)

The principal obstacle to the achievement of this goal whether by military means or at the conference table is the existence of eight well equipped, trained and undefeated Vietminh divisions of high morale and under complete Communist control. Until and unless these divisions are defeated or disarmed and dispersed, any peace negotiation or cease fire in Viet-Nam can result only in a Communist take-over sooner or later, probably sooner. Any formula of coalition or of territorial division, any procedure of elections or plebiscite would be powerless to deter the overwhelming political and military significance of these eight divisions with their great prestige of years of successful resistance against France, Viet-Nam and the support furnished by the United States.

Our side will not obtain at the conference table a united non-Communist Viet-Nam, any more than we will obtain a united non-Communist Korea unless we make clear to the enemy that, in the event of a breakdown of negotiations, our side is not only able but willing to do what is necessary to secure the objective by force of arms.

In the case of Korea, it is almost certain that we will not obtain a satisfactory basis through negotiation for a united, free Korea. It is perhaps equally certain that the failure of negotiations will not result in a resumption of hostilities. In other words, the Communists will continue to hold North Korea as they have since 1946 while the Republic of Korea holds the South, as it has for the past few years. This *status quo* will probably continue to be guaranteed by the allies and sponsors of the respective Korean governments. Korea, like Germany, will remain a helpless symbol of the world division until a basic change in the dynamics of that division takes place.

In the case of Indochina, there is no *status quo* susceptible of being formalized in the Korean or German manner. Throughout the area, the major centers of political and economic power have remained firmly in French Union hands through seven years of war. On the other hand, the enemy controls perhaps half the population of Viet-Nam militarily and politically. A military defeat or withdrawal of French Union forces would mean sooner or later the control of the country by the indigenous Communist dominated Vietminh army and hence by Communist China. Whether this result was achieved by plebiscite, or through a temporary division of the country with the Communists holding only the North at first or through a coalition government would be of little eventual importance. This particular conflict, because of its very nature, must end with either a winner or a loser; there can be no tie as in Korea.

Therefore, the major trump card in our side's hand at Geneva would be a recognized military ability and *determination* to defeat the

enemy's regular armed forces in the field. To the extent that we and the enemy believe our side possesses that ability and determination, to that extent will successful negotiation be feasible. Conversely, to the extent that the enemy believes that our side's will to fight on to victory is waning, to that extent will negotiation be the equivalent of capitulation.

Our whole policy toward Indochina has been based upon this central objective, that of helping to create, maintain and demonstrate a Franco-Vietnamese ability and will to win this war. Our current efforts in support of the Laniel-Navarre Plan are further steps in a policy steadily followed, in spite of disappointments, since 1950 when the Chinese Communists revitalized the Vietminh and when, but for the magnificent leadership of de Lattre, Hanoi might have fallen to the enemy.

Laniel, Bidault and Plevin would probably agree with this diagnosis. Yet they are confronted in the French Assembly and within their own government with a powerful movement for peace at practically any price. Those who lead this movement argue that even the degree of military progress envisaged by Navarre is unattainable, that France can no longer bear the burden in spite of increased American help, that the Vietnamese non-Communist elements are not making and never will make the necessary effort, that these elements do not support the French Union concept and that some way must be found of ending what they term a hopeless struggle. They do not advocate any particular type of settlement nor do they face the fact that any settlement leaving the Communist army intact would be a victory for the Communists. But they will fall and fall hard for the most specious type of proposal which may be advanced by the Communists at Geneva.

It must be recognized that the agreement in Berlin in February that there should be negotiations about Indochina at Geneva has improved the position of the French Government and made it practically certain that that Government will take measures, including military measures, to improve its negotiating position for Geneva. There should be full agreement in Saigon, Paris and Washington on fullest and most energetic pursuit of the Laniel-Navarre Plan particularly at a time when the enemy may also be expected to do his utmost to improve his military position in anticipation of the Geneva negotiations.

Another element in the situation which must be recognized is the fact that, in French eyes, the decision to discuss Indochina in an international framework represents a considerable triumph for French diplomacy. When the French recall the negative or evasive stand on

this subject taken by the Secretary and by General Smith last summer,² they undoubtedly experience a sense of gratification at their own powers of persuasiveness and a hopeful confidence that those powers may still have some successful scope in directions related to the Indochina problem.

In this connection, there is no doubt that the Communists will exploit to the utmost factors which may divide the United States from its allies and pillory us in the spotlight of war-weary French public opinion as the country whose intransigence is responsible for continued bloodshed. This will be done by suggesting that Communist China's influence could be brought to bear on the side of an honorable peace in Indochina, a peace that would, in appearance at least, maintain the principle of the French Union and hence justify the French in their own eyes, if, in return, France could find a way to support such C.P.R. objectives as recognition, membership in the U.N. and perhaps even support for a formula which would eventually destroy the Chinese Nationalists on Formosa. Neither the French nor the British would be as unwilling to make concessions on these points as we are. Our intransigence on these points could conceivably give the French a basis for assuming a greater liberty of action than we would wish in dealing with the C.P.R. and the USSR in regard to Indochina.

In appraising the French pre-Geneva position, it must be borne in mind that no French Government, regardless of its private opinion, can express public scepticism regarding negotiations to end the Indochina conflict. The concept of negotiations can no more be rejected in Paris than it was in Washington with regard to Korea. A hopeful attitude must be maintained—a willingness to examine proposals made by the other side. Prime Minister Laniel's response to Nehru's suggestion of a cease-fire is a useful indication of the type of action it may be hoped the French will take in regard to proposals for negotiations. Laniel did not reject, in fact, he welcomed the idea of a cease-fire. At the same time, he laid down conditions designed to insure the security of the French expeditionary corps and of the national armies and of friendly elements in Indochina which, if accepted by the enemy, would radically change the military situation in favor of our side.

These conditions for a cease-fire were roughly as follows:

- (1) Withdrawal of Vietminh forces from Laos and Cambodia.
- (2) Establishment of a neutral zone around the Tonkin Delta and withdrawal of Vietminh forces from within the Delta.
- (3) Confinement of Vietminh troops in central Annam to designated points.

² Refers to talks held between Secretary Dulles and Foreign Minister Bidault in Washington during the Tripartite Foreign Ministers meetings, July 10-14, 1953. For documentation on these talks, see volume 7.

(4) Evacuation or surrender and disarmament of Vietminh troops in south Annam.

(5) Other measures of control and supervision.

The Vietminh would probably only accept terms of this kind—particularly the evacuation of the Tonkin Delta and the establishment of a neutral zone around the Delta—if it thought the alternative was military defeat. The acceptance by the Vietminh of such conditions would consequently be the equivalent of an admission of military defeat.

Whether a cease-fire results from an agreement along the above lines or from the carrying out of the Navarre Plan for military decision, the next step would obviously be the establishment of a truly national government based on some sort of popular consultation. It would be neither desirable nor, in all probability, possible for the Bao Dai-Buu Loc governing formula to establish an adequate control of the entire country. A formula of national pacification and union would impose itself. Nevertheless, in order for the necessary transition to take place under the most favorable possible circumstances, it would be necessary to find some sort of interim system. This might be done on a regional basis, drawing heavily on non-Communist nationalists, on fence sitting elements and on loyal Vietnamese not too tied up or compromised in the eyes of their fellow citizens by their relations with the French.

So far as fundamentals at Geneva are concerned, the principal objective should be to convince the French to take a position based firmly on the probability of a military decision favoring our side and crowning seven years of struggle. Our own support for the French military effort must be unstinted and unquestioning. If, at any time at Geneva, there is any prospect that an offer of U.S. support, air, naval or even ground forces to supplement the Franco-Vietnamese military effort will cause the French to refuse to capitulate, we must be in a position to make or not to make such an offer as a result of a firm U.S. policy decision at the highest level. This involves a decision as to whether holding Indochina warrants a sacrifice of American lives and the risk of starting World War III. The following paragraphs from a PSA memorandum of December 18, 1953, are pertinent:

"If the interested agencies conclude that even with maximum quantitative increase in present US financial and end-item assistance the Navarre Plan is not apt to succeed within existing time limits, a recommendation should immediately be prepared for the National Security Council as to additional types of aid to be considered. This recommendation should be formulated even in the absence of any specific request from the French or the Vietnamese. (If the Navarre effort is to fail, our observers should be able to tell us about it before the French and the Vietnamese make up their minds to admit it.)

"The recommendation referred to above would presumably include the furnishing of US service and, if necessary, combat troops who would serve under French command within the general framework of the present strategic concepts. The communication to the French and Vietnamese of an affirmative decision in this respect might well prevent the reaching on their part of a decision to enter into negotiations or to abandon their present military effort in Indochina. Any further US contribution to the holding of Indochina is apt to be both more effective and less considerable the sooner it is made after a conclusion has been reached that current resources are inadequate. The longer we wait the bigger will be the commitment we will be called upon to make."

The point here is not a recommendation that U.S. forces should or should not be engaged in Indochina but rather that a decision, positive or negative on the subject cannot be evaded—unless it is believed that it has already been taken in a negative sense as a result of the President's press conference of February 10th.⁴

⁴ Memorandum by Bonsal to Bowie, Dec. 18, 1953, "Special Annex on Indochina" (appended to NSC 177, "U.S. Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect to Southeast Asia"). (PFA files, lot 58 D 207, "Memoranda on Indochina by Bonsal")

⁵ At his press conference on Feb. 10 President Eisenhower stated that U.S. training and administrative personnel in Indochina, including mechanics who recently had accompanied aircraft shipped there were "only maintenance troops" and would not be used in combat. He said the United States "is supporting the Vietnamese and French in their conduct of the war." The President's remarks are printed in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1954*, pp. 247, 250, 253-254.

PPS files, lot 65 D 101. "Gullion"

Memorandum by Edmond A. Gullion of the Policy Planning Staff to the Director of That Staff (Bowie)

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 9, 1954.
Subject: Laniel Terms for Settlement of Indochina War (Paristels 3238¹ and 3240²).

The terms outlined in the Assembly debate are almost sure to be unacceptable to the Viet Minh and may have been framed for that reason. This is all to the good if one accepts, as I do, the thesis that a compromise settlement on any of the bases now apparent (see my memorandum of February 25³) would be tantamount to opening up Southeast Asia to Communist control. However, if they are taken merely as the opening gambit for further bargaining, they may contain the germ of a dangerous settlement on the basis of territorial division.

¹ Dated Mar. 6. For text, see volume XIII.

² Dated Mar. 6, p. 435.

³ Apparently a reference to a memorandum from Gullion to Bowie of S/P, Feb. 25, not printed, the subject of which was "Comments on Attached Paper ('Indochina' Paper Prepared by Study Group for NSC)." (PPS files, lot 65 D 101, box 638; "Gullion, E. A. Chron.")

More significant than the terms themselves is the apparent effort of the French to present the forthcoming conference as a general Far East conference.

Following are detailed comments:

1. The "terms" (Paristel 3240) in effect outline a solution which would be all the Navarre Plan of military operations might hope to obtain if it were prosecuted to the utmost. With reference to the enumerated guarantees sought by M. Laniel; (a) it is most unlikely that the Viet Minh would evacuate Laos. The position they have gained there may be said to correspond to that reached by the Chinese Communists at the end of the "long march"—i.e., an inexpugnable base to be maintained however Communist fortunes may fluctuate. Moreover, the Laos base is convenient for the exercise of pressures in other areas of Southeast Asia besides Viet Nam, and for the eventual flanking of the Tonkin Delta position; (b) the Viet Minh might for the present evacuate Cambodia and thus gain quite a bit of sympathy in Southeast Asia; but when any eventual flanking movement was begun they would reappear in this vulnerable area; (c) the Viet Minh now controls as much of the area of the Tonkin Delta and almost as many "souls" as do the French. It is hardly likely that they would evacuate upon demand; in fact, between now and April 26 the battle for control of the Delta will intensify; (d) the settlement proposed for Annam is very obscure but would set up a patchwork kind of arrangement which would not seem durable; (e) the Viet Minh is not likely to consent to evacuate Cochinchina unless they gain compensating advantages in the North.

2. Although the Viet Minh would not accept terms as at present drafted, they would not be so forbidding to them if considered as an opening gambit. They could even turn out to be dangerous for our side. These draft proposals tend more to the territorial division of Indochina than to the hypothesis of coalition governments and free elections. In other words, I see in them a possibility that the French might eventually consider withdrawal of French and loyal Vietnamese in Tonkin in exchange for Viet Minh evacuation of the Saigon Delta. This, then, is an important indicator for the French position at Geneva (for the dangers of such a territorial settlement, see my memorandum of February 25). It shows that some French are at least thinking in terms of some kind of partition.

3. It seems to me that these terms will be too harsh, not only for the Viet Minh but also for French parliamentary opinion, which has demanded that the French Government declare itself. I believe they are directed at least as much to the forthcoming talks with the Bao Dai Government at Paris as they are towards Geneva. It would be

very difficult for the French to go to Geneva with the support of the Bao Dai Government unless it had declared a position which the loyal Vietnamese could conceivably—although painfully—accept.

4. Although, as the Paris Embassy suggests, Laniel's speech may have been designed to head off premature offers of a cease-fire or a Nehru intercession, I am not sure it will have this effect. In fact, Laniel's remarks about not prolonging the war if there is a chance to "end it one day sooner" might encourage rather than discourage Nehru.

5. In my opinion the most significant aspect of Laniel's speech is the indication that France continues to think of a settlement for Indochina in terms of a general Far East settlement. (See Ambassador Dillon's comment that "It is not difficult to discern in Laniel's speech that if settlement is to be reached on Indochina at Geneva, it will be up to France's allies to make concessions to Communist China with all that that implies for the United States."⁴)

It seems to me that the working levels in the State Department and elsewhere can hardly prepare position papers for the Geneva Conference until their own government at the highest level determines whether bargaining is to be confined to (a) Indochina; or (b) Indochina and Korea; or (c) Korea, Indochina, the two China's, etc.

Recommendations are that:

- (a) We request officially from the French, perhaps from General Ely, the details and background of the Laniel proposal.
- (b) That further clarification be sought of the French bargaining position at Geneva.
- (c) That we ask for an indication of the relation of this bargaining position to the Laniel-Navarre Plan.
- (d) That the relation of the Geneva Conference to an overall Far Eastern settlement be clarified in our minds as soon as possible.
- (e) That the French be left in no doubt as to our thinking on this score.
- (f) That our position now and at Geneva continue to be on the necessity of continuing the fight.
- (g) That we be no party to a Far Eastern settlement partitioning Indochina or which is likely to hand it over to the Viet Minh.
- (h) That as a final resort we plan for the employment of US force in Indochina, preferably in the framework of an internationalization of the problem.

⁴ Ambassador Dillon's comments are contained in telegram 3238 from Paris, Mar. 6; for text, see volume XIII.

Editorial Note

On March 9 working groups on Korea and Indochina were established within the Department of State as part of the Department's

preparations for the Geneva Conference. One, chaired by Kenneth T. Young, Jr., Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs, was given the responsibility for preparing position papers, etc., with respect to Korea; the other working group, chaired by Philip W. Bonsal, Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs, was given the responsibility for doing the same thing for Indochina.

The position papers prepared by these two working groups are filed in Northeast Asian Affairs files, lot 60 D 330.

751G.00/3-1054: Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Dillon) to the Department of State

TOP SECRET

Paris, March 10, 1954—9 p. m.

3294. Repeated information Moscow 361, Saigon 374. Limit distribution. We are concerned with extent to which hopes for finding Indochina settlement at Geneva are rising in France and with growing belief that United States "concessions" to China will be necessary for such settlement. Laniel's statement in Parliament March 5 (Embassy telegram 3240 March 6¹) reflects this thinking, as did yesterday's debate (Embassy telegram 3293 March 10²). We are constantly stressing in private conversations inadvisability of counting either upon willingness of Russians or Chinese seriously to negotiate or upon United States concessions to China, but so far without appreciable effect.

Of somewhat different character was Pleven's expression to Symington (Embassy telegram 3205 March 5²) of hope that United States would say at Geneva that Communist planes over Indochina would be met by United States planes. In this connection, Bohlen, when here after Berlin, told us he thought Russian worry over possibility of Indochina war spreading might conceivably predispose them to favor its termination. Warning note contained in Secretary's September 2 St. Louis speech³ and declaration at time of Korean Armistice⁴ was helpful and well received here but, between now and Geneva, we should

¹ Ante, p. 437, volume XIII.

² For text, see volume XIII.

³ The text of Dulles' address before the American Legion is printed in Department of State Bulletin, Sept. 14, 1953, p. 339.

⁴ Representatives of the 16 nations which had participated in the U.N. Command met in Washington on July 27, 1953, and issued a declaration stating their support for the Armistice Agreement (signed that same day at Panmunjom), and indicating their belief that any breach of the Armistice would be so grave that it would probably be impossible to restrict the resultant hostilities to the confines of Korea. The Sixteen-Nation Declaration on Korea is printed in *American Foreign Policy, 1950-1955: Basic Documents* (2 volumes; Washington, Government Printing Office, 1957), vol. II, p. 2662. For related documentation, see volume XV.

seek to avoid connotations of A-bomb-rattling or premature States conclusion Geneva can produce no Indochina settlement.

Within narrow limits which we assume will circumscribe United States freedom of action at Geneva, we fear it will be difficult to place blame for failure to reach Indochina settlement squarely upon Chinese or Russians insofar as French and presumably other European opinion is concerned. If British, as appears likely, are reluctant to go along with a rigid United States position, we may find ourselves in uncomfortable isolation. We know that intense consideration of Indochina problem is taking place in Washington and we believe effect at Geneva upon major United States interests will depend to considerable measure upon such answers as may be found within next few weeks to questions like following:

How far are we prepared to go, in terms of United States national interest, to prevent further Communist expansion in Southeast Asia through (a) fighting of (b) negotiation involving United States concessions?

Will United States delegation have sufficient freedom for maneuver to enable it to explore possible differences of interest between Peiping and Moscow and to capitalize upon them if found?

In view of many substantial dividends which thorough tripartite preparation would yield at Berlin and even more difficult situation which we will apparently face at Geneva, we strongly recommend maximum advance tripartite consultation on Indochina as suggested by Maurice Schumann (Embassy telegram 3176 March 4^b).

DILLON

^a Ante, p. 430.

PPS files, lot 65 D 101, "Gullion"

Memorandum by Edmund A. Gullion of the Policy Planning Staff to the Director of That Staff (Bowie)

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 10, 1954.

Subject: Minimum Position for Geneva Conference (Comments on Paper by Bonsal)¹

I am in complete agreement with what appear to be the principal features of this paper:

a) That we must set our face against any compromise peace at Geneva that would leave the Viet Minh army intact.

b) That, as a last resort, we should be ready to use US force to save Indochina. Yet I believe it will be difficult if not impossible to main-

¹ Dated Mar. 8, p. 437.

tain this position. Our paper should, therefore, take account of more detail. I have the following observations to make:

1. Although I realize that the paper is only a basis of discussion, I believe it falls short of defining the US minimum position at Geneva. The prospects of military victory upon which so much of our policy, as well as this paper is hinged, are not convincing even to most Frenchmen, much less so to the Communist conferees. I do not think that we can hope to convince the French that they are going to win after all (even though M. Bidault and M. Pleven believe it) or that the chances of our victory are so certain as to cause the Communists to accept something like the recent Laniel terms. In other words, the "major trump card in our side's hand at Geneva" which is characterized as the "recognized military ability and determination" to defeat the enemy's regular army, cannot be counted on to take tricks.

2. I am afraid that at Geneva or shortly thereafter we will have to contend with a series of proposals, either from the French or from the Communists, looking to a compromise peace; and, therefore, that our "minimum position paper" must deal more in detail with these possibilities.

3. As to the paper's major point—that we be ready if necessary to promise the use of US forces, I fear that we simply cannot make that promise. We have been progressively moving away from it during the period of the "linking" of Korea and Indochina as "two fronts on the same war"; the enunciation of the "New Look" with reliance on atom weapons; the formulation of the "disengagement" policy, and the declaration of a resolve not to become involved in the war, forced upon us by Congressional clamor over the deployment of a few technicians to Indochina.

4. If US forces were to be employed, I believe consideration should be given to whether it should be in the framework of a UN action or some collective action. Presumably, the PSA memorandum of December 18^a does not exclude the collective approach but it appears to be conceived in terms of a Franco-Vietnamese-US action. If US forces were to be engaged, I believe that the prospects of success would be greater, and the chances of Congressional support greater if it were put on the basis of a new deal; i.e., a collective operation. This would also involve a redefinition of the status of the Associated States within the French Union.

5. As a general observation, I do not see how we can settle on a minimum position until the Administration has definitely determined that the negotiation on Indochina will not be linked with deals to be

^a For an extract from the document under reference, see Bonsal's memorandum of Mar. 8, p. 437.

made in Korea, elsewhere in the Far East or Europe. If this determination is made, it should be included in the minimum position paper.

6. It seems to me that before a detailed position paper can be settled, we should urgently examine once more within this Government whether a military solution is feasible, what further support from France, the United States and Vietnam is required for it, and what steps should be taken to furnish that support.

396.1 GE/2-1054

*Memorandum by the Counselor (MacArthur)*¹

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 10, 1954.
 Subject: Meeting at 10:00 a. m. Thursday, March 11,² in Room 5104 New State to discuss the Indochina Phase of the Geneva Conference

I am attaching three papers to serve as guides for our discussion tomorrow morning:

- Attachment A—A list of five Questions on the Indochina Problem at Geneva
- Attachment B—A longer list of Questions on Indochina prepared by Mr. Bonsal
- Attachment C—Possible Advance Tripartite Consultations on Indochina

I urge each of you to give as much thought as possible to the problems raised in the attached papers in order that we can obtain maximum benefit from our exchange of views.

DOUGLAS MACARTHUR II

Attachment A

THE PROBLEM OF INDOCHINA AT GENEVA: SOME QUESTIONS TO BE USED AS A GUIDE FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the U.S. position regarding possible Communist proposals to:
 - a. hold a plebiscite in Indochina as the basis for the formation of a government for the whole country.

¹Addressed to Merchant, Robertson, Key, Bowie, and Vice Admiral Davis.
²In a memorandum to MacArthur, Mar. 11, not printed, Trulock of S/S-O summarized decisions reached at the Mar. 11 meeting that papers would be prepared on the five questions listed in Attachment A. The first of these papers would summarize questions 1, 2, and 3, and would include a summary of the U.S. estimate of the probable Soviet and Chinese Communist intentions regarding the Indochina phase of the Geneva Conference. Trulock suggested that this paper could serve as a basis for either another Assistant Secretary level meeting or for a meeting with the Secretary on this subject. (Conference files, lot 60 D 627. CF 262)

b. establish a coalition government which would include Ho Chi Minh or his followers.

c. cease fire and establish a demarcation line roughly along the 16th parallel with the area north of that line being handed over to the administration of Ho Chi Minh and his supporters.

2. What should the U.S. say and do with respect to the French if the latter are approached by the USSR and/or Communist China with a proposal to cease aid to the Viet Minh in return for French support for Chinese Communist entry into the UN or other steps to legitimize the Chinese Communist regime?

3. What should be the U.S. position in regard to the conditions for a cease fire put forward by M. Laniel on behalf of the French Government on March 5. (See Paris' unclassified telegram 3240, dated March 6.³)

As a tactical matter in our efforts to keep the French in line, if the Laniel conditions are in general acceptable to us, we might be able to hold the French to them whereas we might have great difficulty in holding them to proposals which emanated from us.

4. The U.S. may be confronted with a situation where the French would demand more active U.S. participation in Indochina in return for their rejecting Communist proposals unacceptable to us. How far should we go in giving assurances to the French in such a situation?

5. How far should the U.S. go at Geneva in committing itself to substantial contributions to the reconstruction of Viet-Nam, Cambodia and Laos after the end of hostilities? This might have an important effect in keeping the Associated States (and possibly also the French) in line.

Attachment B

SOME QUESTIONS ON THE INDOCHINA PHASE OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE

1. Until we give the French Government our views regarding the composition and objectives of the Indochina phase of the Geneva conference, we run the risk of a crystallization of French attitudes and particularly the making of undesirable commitments by French leaders to their political followers. What is the latest date at which we should communicate our thinking to the French and British?

2. It is desirable to delay the Indochina discussions at Geneva. The Secretary envisages a discussion at Geneva among the four Berlin powers to determine the participants and the method of issuing invi-

³ *Ante*, p. 435.

tations for the Indochina phase. Can we envisage a date such as June 15 for the start of the Indochina phase of discussions on the basis that agreement on invitations could be reached early in May?

3. Unless we are willing either to make concessions to the Chinese Communists in certain fields or to take a positive stand regarding U.S. participation in the struggle, we will achieve no more through negotiation at Geneva than the Communists believe the Franco-Vietnamese forces have the capacity and will to achieve militarily. To what extent do we still believe that the French and Vietnamese possess the will and the capacity to achieve decisive results in Indochina in accordance with the Laniel-Navarre principles in the event of a breakdown of negotiations?

4. It is possible that a desirable peace in Indochina could be obtained in return for concessions in other fields to the CPR and perhaps to the USSR. We are unwilling to recognize Communist China, to admit the CPR to the UN, to withdraw our support from the Chinese Nationalists on Formosa or to relax current trade embargoes against Communist China. Are there any other items desirable by the CPR or the USSR which we would be willing to consider as entering into a possible negotiating position?

5. It is probable that we could work out with the French and Vietnamese a minimum acceptable position for a negotiated cessation of the Indochina war. Such a settlement might include a cease fire along the lines recently set forth by Laniel,⁴ general disarmament of native troops except for Vietnamese troops needed to maintain order, withdrawal of French Union troops to stated bases pending conclusion of regular Franco-Vietnamese arrangements, provision for a transitional period of political activity looking to eventual elections etc. Such a minimum acceptable position might be accepted by the enemy if the alternative were that the U.S. would consider continuation of hostilities by the Vietminh beyond a certain date as an aggression warranting "massive retaliatory action" against Communist China. Would the U.S. be willing to envisage such a position?

6. Unless the U.S. is willing to take an affirmative position as indicated above or unless the French and Vietnamese are willing and able to carry the Navarre plan to a conclusion, we will be confronted with a negotiated settlement which will leave the eight enemy divisions in Indochina undefeated and armed. This will make it highly likely that the whole area will fall to the Communists sooner or later. Do we agree that in the eventuality of this type of negotiated settlement, a

⁴ See telegram 3240 from Paris, Mar. 6, p. 435.

partition which would turn Tonkin and northern Annam over to the Communists (a bitter loss of hundreds of thousands of friends) but would leave Laos, perhaps Cambodia and southern Annam and Cochinchina within the French Union with French Union air and naval bases (under arrangements similar to those which we have in the Philippines) would be preferable to any other arrangement such as a plebiscite or a coalition government for the entire area?

7. A willingness on our side to contribute substantially to the reconstruction of Viet-Nam, Cambodia, and Laos after the end of hostilities might be an important factor in stiffening the will to resist of the Vietnamese (and possibly the French) and in persuading them to adhere to an acceptable negotiating position. Can we be in a position to make definite commitments at Geneva?

Attachment C

POSSIBLE TRIPARTITE CONSULTATIONS REGARDING INDOCHINA (IN ADVANCE OF GENEVA)

Both the French and the British have posed the possibility of tripartite consultations in Paris concerning the Indochina phase of the Geneva meetings. No definite ideas as to timing have been put forward, this aspect being somewhat complicated as regards the French because of the current talks with the Viet-Namese.

If it is decided that such consultation should take place, a tripartite group might begin work in Paris about April 15 with a view to completing their work in time for the Ministers consideration when they arrive in Paris for the NATO meeting. This would be Apr. 21-22.

The advantage of such consultation is that it would enable the three ministers to concert their tactics in advance of the Geneva meeting. On the other hand, such consultation might result in stimulating the Indochinese question, when our basic purpose has been to gain as much time as possible for the military situation to develop in a favorable manner.

Should we encourage the idea of such consultation or should we maintain our present relaxed attitude and agree to such consultation only if the French push for it?

In any event, the opportunity must be found in Paris, prior to the Geneva meeting, for the Secretary to impress on M. Laniel and M. Bidault in unmistakable terms the U.S. position with regard to the Indochina phase of Geneva.

Telegram, Zhou Enlai to Ho Chi Minh (excerpt), ca. March 11, 1954

Source: *Zhou Enlai nianpu*, 1949-1976, vol. 1, p. 358; Xiong, pp. 12-13

It has been decided that the Geneva will begin to be held on April 26. The current international situation and the military situation in Vietnam are favorable for Vietnam to carry out the diplomatic struggle. No matter what result the Geneva Conference may achieve, we should actively participate in it. Therefore, we hope that you immediately begin the preparatory work, organize a delegation to attend the conference, collect relevant materials, and make all kinds of proposals.... If a ceasefire is to be achieved, it is better to have a relatively fixed line, so that a relatively intact region can be maintained. As a matter of fact, the line for ceasefire today is possible to become the demarcation line in the future. Therefore, this is an issue quite big, and it will also depend upon the development of the military situation in the future. Where should this line be drawn and at which parallel? This should be considered from two aspects: on the one hand, it should be favorable to Vietnam; on the other, it should be acceptable to the enemy side. The more toward the south the line can be drawn, the better. It seems that the question of [drawing the line at] the 16th parallel could be considered as one of the options.... Please come to Beijing at the end of March or in early April, and then go to Moscow to exchange opinions with the Soviet Party Central Committee.... At present, the headquarters should assign some people specifically working for preparing for the negotiation, but the main strength should still be placed on commanding combat operations and mobilizing the masses.

Translated for CWIHP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not cite or quote without permission from CWIHP.

396.1 GE/3-1154

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Officer in Charge of French-Iberian Affairs (McBride)

CONFIDENTIAL

[WASHINGTON,] March 11, 1954.

Subject: Order of Priority of Discussions at Geneva

Participants: Mr. Millet, Counselor, French Embassy
Mr. McBride, WE

Mr. Millet called at Ambassador Bonnet's instruction to state that the Ambassador was concerned over the statements attributed to Mr. Suydam in the daily press conference today. He said that the statement carried in the UP to the effect that the French Government "understood" that the Korean phase would come before the Indochinese discussions at Geneva was not correct, and that the French Government, on the contrary, hoped the talks would take place simultaneously.

I stated that the position of the U.S. Government was, so far as I knew, governed by the Berlin Communiqué from which it would certainly seem clear that in fact it was intended to start talking about Korea before getting to Indochina, which seemed definitely to be item No. 2 on the agenda. Therefore, the AP and UP stories quoting Mr. Suydam did not seem to be out of line, and Mr. Suydam's statements were in accordance with my understanding of the situation.

Mr. Millet concluded that the French Embassy here did not see it that way, and anyway the National Assembly now expected the two subjects to be discussed concurrently. Finally he said statements of this nature would cause harm to public opinion in France. I said I was sorry he felt that way, but did not see what other line we could take in response to queries. I concluded that we were in no way seeking publicity for our views, but pointed out that the Geneva meeting was a subject of great interest, and that accordingly the press would doubtless be following it continuously. I promised to convey the Ambassador's views to Mr. MacArthur as the Ambassador requested.¹

¹The Department of State in telegram 3166 to Paris, Mar. 15, informed the Embassy about this conversation and indicated that the Berlin resolution implied that the Korean discussions would begin first at Geneva. There was no indication as to how soon after the start of the conference the Indochina phase should begin. The Department felt this question should be left open pending further development of the procedural arrangements and the U.S. position regarding Indochina. (396.1 GE/3-1254)

INDOCHINA

396.1 GE/3-1254 : Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy at Saigon*¹

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, March 12, 1954—7:07 p. m.

1661. Cambodian Ambassador² called Department March 11 to inquire regarding Indochina phase Geneva Conference. He was told until Secretary had returned from Caracas, Dept could offer very little additional information.

Apparently on instructions his Government, Ambassador informed Department "informally" that Cambodia desired attend Geneva if invited and desired recognition of her "special position" which he said more similar that of Thailand than Laos or Viet Nam. He also asked about possibility that invitation be issued by United States, stressing that this was not suggestion or expression of preference but purely request for information.

Department representative stated that while Department assumed Cambodia will be invited although no decision yet taken by Berlin powers, invitation to Associated States including Cambodia would presumably be issued by France in accordance with principles developed at Berlin and agreed quadripartitely in case Korean Political Conference.

Department representative stated assumption that Cambodian inquiry regarding conference plans addressed to U.S. also being addressed France. Ambassador gave impression Cambodia would find it difficult discuss this matter with French unless latter take initiative.

Comments of recipients would be appreciated. Above FYI only subject your later recommendation.

SMITH

¹ Drafted by Bonsal and Hoey of PSA. Repeated to Paris as telegram 3139 and to Phnom Penh as telegram 48.

² Nong Kimay.

396.1 GE/3-1254 : Despatch

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Aldrich) to the Department of State

CONFIDENTIAL

LONDON, March 12, 1954.

No. 3094

Subject: British Preparations for Geneva Conference

The following is a distillation of information obtained in a series of conversations with desk officers in the Foreign Office immediately concerned with planning for the Geneva Conference.

[Here follows Section A, dealing with Korea, which is not printed.]

B. *Indochina*.

1. In conversations with the Foreign Office, the French Embassy has explained that French willingness to continue the struggle in Indochina depends on the following factors in the order of their importance: (a) Pleven's report on his findings in Indochina, (b) the outcome of the conversations with Buu Loc in Paris, and (c) the trend of public opinion in Paris. If the military situation in Indochina is not too bad and if the probabilities are that the fighting qualities of the Vietnamese troops will soon show a marked improvement, then the French Government might be willing to brave an increasingly impatient and pessimistic public opinion and carry on at about the present scale for another year. Any indication that Buu Loc's demands are reasonable and that he is not out to jettison the French Union will, of course, be helpful. The French are increasingly concerned over the new Communist propaganda attack on United States military assistance to the French and Vietnamese forces in Indochina, as it will make it difficult for the French at Geneva to call on the Chinese to stop military assistance to the Vietminh.

2. In replying to the French, the Foreign Office has taken the position that it is primarily up to them and to the Americans to decide on what position to adopt at Geneva, although the British will, of course, wish to be consulted. In the British view, it will be difficult to keep the participation down to the Five Powers. It would be expected that the Associated States would wish to be represented and if they send delegates it would be difficult to oppose Vietnamh representation. If other than the Five Powers are to be present, Australia and New Zealand will wish to have representatives there.

C. *Make-up of British Delegation to the Conference*.

1. The Foreign Secretary will, of course, attend the opening sessions of the Conference, and other sessions as needed. In his absence, the Delegation will be headed by Lord Reading. Assistant Under-Secretary Denis Allen, with the experience gained from participation in the Berlin Conference behind him, will head the working party. John Addis, the assistant to the head of the Far Eastern Department and specialist on Korean and Sino-Soviet relations, will do the spade work on Korea; he will be assisted by Julian Bullard. John Tahourdin, in charge of the South-East Asia Department, will do the spade work on Indochina.

2. On March 5th, the Foreign Office telegraphed Humphrey Trevelyan, in charge of the British diplomatic mission in Peiping, asking him unless he perceived objection to make arrangements to be present

at the Geneva Conference with the understanding that he would return to his post after the Conference was over. Having received no reply from Trevelyan, the Foreign Office assumes that he is prepared to go to Geneva and is conducting negotiations with the Chinese authorities to obtain the necessary exit and re-entry permits. It was the Foreign Office thought that Trevelyan's experience in Peiping would be of value to the British Delegation, that he himself would be helped by a change of scene . . . and that the Foreign Office representatives could benefit by an opportunity to discuss at first hand problems confronting him in Peiping.

For the Ambassador:
ARTHUR R. RINGWALT
First Secretary of Embassy

896.1 GE/8-1254

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Assistant Secretary of State for United Nations Affairs (Key)*¹

CONFIDENTIAL

[WASHINGTON,] March 12, 1954.
Subject: Netherlands Acceptance of Invitation to Korean Political Conference

Participants: Mr. J. G. de Beus—Netherlands Minister
Mr. David McK. Key—UNA
Mr. Ward Allen—EUN
Mr. David H. Popper—UNP

Mr. de Beus came in to present the attached note² accepting on behalf of the Netherlands Government the invitation to the Korean Political Conference. He stated that a public announcement to this effect would be made at 4:00 p.m. today in The Hague.

In response to queries from Mr. de Beus, I indicated that we would not get our consultations with other governments fully in train on the Korean question until we had responses to all of the invitations. I also indicated that we expected the French, generally speaking, to take the lead on Indochina.

Mr. de Beus told us his Ambassador had already informed FE that the Soviet Ambassador³ had told the Dutch Ambassador⁴ here that the Communists intend to suggest India, Indonesia, Burma and Thailand as "other interested states" for inclusion in the Indochina phase of the Conference. The Soviet Ambassador apparently also stated that the Communists would not initially propose that Ho Chi Minh attend

¹ Drafted by Popper of UNP.

² Not printed. (896.1 GE/8-1254)

³ Georgi N. Zarouhin.

⁴ Dr. J. H. van Roijen.

precisely what Secretary refused to be party to. The Korean Political Conference was called for in the Armistice Agreements and the United Nations Resolution of August 28, 1953.⁴ It is exactly what we endeavored unsuccessfully for six weeks to arrange at Panmunjom. It is a clear-cut conference between the two sides engaged in the fighting uncluttered by neutrals. The sole objective is to negotiate a peaceful agreement for a unified independent Korea. Geneva was agreed upon last August between Secretary and President Rhee as one of the places which would be acceptable. Recognition *de facto* or otherwise for CPR is neither involved nor implied. ROK and those nations under the United Nations Command are negotiating with the Soviet Communist side as the enemies responsible for the aggression. Berlin Communiqué and other data sent you in our opinion made this abundantly clear. Conference on Indochina to be held simultaneously with Korean Political Conference will include USSR and CPR as quasi belligerents. Obviously no agreements could be effective which did not bind the perpetrators of the conflict. If our Chiefs of Mission are confused by communists propaganda about Geneva it is small wonder that our Asian allies are more so.⁵

SMITH

⁴ Paragraph 60 of the Armistice Agreement, signed on July 27, 1953 at Panmunjom, contained a recommendation by the military commanders of both sides to the governments concerned that a political conference be held to settle the questions of the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea, the peaceful settlement of the Korean question, etc. Text printed in *American Foreign Policy, 1950-1955: Basic Documents*, vol. I, p. 742.

⁵ UNGA Resolution 711 (VII) welcomed the holding of the proposed political conference recommended in the Armistice Agreement; the text is printed *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 2676.

⁶ In telegram 512 from Taipei, Mar. 16, not printed, Ambassador Rankin took issue with the Department's comment that the Chief of Mission was "confused by Communists' propaganda." (396.1 GE/3-1654) The Department, in telegram 789 to Taipei, Mar. 22, not printed, informed the Embassy in Taipei that confusion had been general in high levels at home and abroad on this subject. (396.1 GE/3-1654)

396.1 GE/3-1854

Memorandum by the Counselor (MacArthur)

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 13, 1954.

Subject: Questions Relating to the Geneva Conference

1. *Proposed letter from Secretary to Bidault*

Our Paris Embassy is increasingly concerned with the extent to which hopes for finding an Indochina settlement at Geneva are rising in France, with the growing belief that U.S. "concessions" to China will be necessary for such a settlement. Pleven's most unfortunate briefing

of five American correspondents is indicative of the attitude of certain allegedly friendly members of the French Government. If the French Government is not now given clearly to understand the way the U.S. views the Indochina aspects of the Geneva Conference, the situation in Paris can get completely out of hand. Accordingly, it is believed that the Secretary should send a personal message to Bidault.

2. *Composition of the U.S. Delegation*

The composition of the U.S. Delegation is of great importance for it is manifestly impossible for the Secretary to remain at Geneva for the duration of the Conference. If the Under Secretary is to head the U.S. Delegation at Geneva after the Secretary's departure, it seems imperative that he be at Geneva with the Secretary from the opening of the Conference. It is also important that the Under Secretary have the best possible support we can give him, and it is suggested that his principal advisers throughout the Conference be Ambassador Dillon, Assistant Secretary Robertson, Ambassador Heath, and presumably Admiral Davis of the Department of Defense. It is recommended that Ambassador Johnson from Prague act as Coordinator and "Chief of Staff" of the Delegation, assisted by Mr. Young (for Korea) and Mr. Bonsal (for Indochina). The foregoing individuals would be supported by lower level advisers from the Department and the field as appropriate (Mr. Gibson of the Paris Embassy should be included in this group).

3. *Duration of the Secretary's stay at Geneva*

It is suggested that the Secretary might wish to stay at Geneva for a period of not more than ten days or two weeks. If the Conference develops the way we want it to, beginning with Korea, the Secretary might actually not be at Geneva when the Indochina item comes up. (It is recognized that the French will wish to have parallel discussions on Korea and Indochina from the very beginning of the Conference.) There are advantages in not having the Secretary deeply involved in the Indochina discussions at Geneva. Furthermore, it seems most important because of the hazards and problems connected with Indochina aspects of the Geneva Conference, that the Secretary be in Washington where he could lay before the U.S. Government and congressional leadership, first-hand, certain problems and alternatives which the Geneva Conference may pose. The U.S. Delegation in turn would then receive instructions on the position it should take. In this connection, it would be logical that the Secretary return to Washington if he and the Under Secretary both were at Geneva, since it could be pointed out that they both could not be absent for more than a relatively short period of time.

4. Tripartite Coordination

Both the British and the French have asked our views on preliminary tripartite coordination regarding Indochina. On the one hand, there are disadvantages in beginning tripartite coordination very far in advance of the Geneva meeting. Too early preparation could lead to pressures from the French to get out invitations to participants in the Indochina part of the Conference so that such participants could be at Geneva on April 26. On the other hand, if the French are permitted to develop their own position with respect to Indochina, without benefit of U.S. guidance, we might find ourselves faced with a frozen French position at Geneva with which we could not live and which would in part be based on concessions which France would expect the U.S. to make to Communist China. Also, refusal to have any tripartite coordination could lead the French to adopting a fixed position and then saying we were responsible because obviously France had developed a position and we had been unwilling to cooperate with her and therefore she had been obliged to prepare a position without our advice and views.

In the light of the above dilemma, the following schedule for tripartite coordination is suggested:

April 15-20, tripartite working group in Paris. The U.S. Principal member would be Ambassador Dillon, with an appropriate deputy and such supporting personnel as necessary.

April 21, 9 a. m., Secretary and Under Secretary arrive in Paris. Afternoon, tripartite meeting with Bidault and Eden.

April 22, tripartite meetings of the Secretary, Bidault, and Eden.

April 23, NATO Council meeting.

April 24, Proceed to Geneva.

DOUGLAS MACARTHUR II

751G.00/8-1554 : Telegram

The Ambassador at Saigon (Heath) to the Department of State

TOP SECRET

SAIGON, March 15, 1954—noon
1688. Repeated information Paris 523 seems most probable that at Geneva the Communists will confront us with a proposal for a ceasefire followed by genuinely free elections for a national assembly—possibly under UN supervision—for all of Vietnam. They must know that if such elections were held today with a slate of Ho candidates camouflaged as genuine nationalists riding on the peace wave lined

INDOCHINA

463

democratic, West oriented Germany in exchange for a probably Communist dominated Indochina.⁶

HEATH

⁶In telegram 1708 to Saigon, repeated to Paris as telegram 3220, Mar. 18, the Department replied that it would welcome any successful manifestations of political vitality in Vietnam including the holding of national elections prior to the Geneva Conference if these were feasible and asked if the Embassy recommended any action by the Embassy or by the Department. The Department stated that it did not believe it was possible to contemplate countering a Communist proposal to hold free national elections in Vietnam with demands that such elections be held simultaneously in Vietnam and Germany. The Department felt that such a counterproposal would involve an implicit admission that the Western position with respect to Vietnam was roughly equivalent to the Soviet position regarding East Germany. (751G.00/8-1554)

751G.00/8-1554

*Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Bonsal) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson)*⁷

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 15, 1954.

Subject: Indochina Discussions at Geneva.

Before becoming immersed in the position papers and working groups which will characterize our preparations for Geneva, I would like to set down, with a view to securing your concurrence, certain principal guidelines which, if you agree, I should like to use as defining FE's position:

(1) A substantial part of US aid to and support of France and the Associated States is predicated on French determination and ability to carry out a military plan described in Bidault's note of September 29, 1953,⁸ to Ambassador Dillon in the following terms: "... the strategic plan of the French Command consists essentially of retaking the offensive with a view to breaking up and destroying the regular enemy forces. Convinced that the military problem in Indochina can be settled only in conformity with such a plan, the French Government confirms that it intends to carry forward vigorously and promptly the execution thereof".

⁷Under an intradepartmental reference slip, Mar. 16, Bonsal forwarded a copy of his memorandum to MacArthur with the following comment: "The attached memorandum is designed to attempt to clarify the substantive outline of our position at Geneva with regard to Indochina. Mr. Robertson tells me that he goes along with the first seven paragraphs but has reservations regarding the 8th and 9th paragraphs." (751G.00/8-1554)

⁸For text, see volume XII.

(2) There is growing evidence of a waning determination, if not ability, on the part of the French to carry through to a conclusion the plan above described. Regardless of the reasons for this changed attitude or of its justification, we are not currently in a position to draw any practical consequences from this apparent falling away from the Franco-American understandings of last September. In other words, we cannot currently alter our policy of financial and military end-item support for the French in Indochina even though the French appear to be altering the concept on which that support has been based. The maintenance and, to the extent possible, the improvement of the present military position and the avoidance of anything which might contribute to its deterioration are essential elements of our policy.

(3) Our side will not obtain at the conference table, whether in Korea or in Indochina, any more than the enemy believes our side has the ability and determination to achieve on the field of battle. At best, if we can convince the enemy that we have the ability and determination to achieve a given result, we may be able to avoid having to demonstrate them practically.

(4) We will maintain at Geneva our firm position regarding non-recognition of Communist China by the US, US refusal to admit Communist China to the UN, US support of Nationalist China and the non-lifting of the embargo on trade with Communist China.

(5) It appears unlikely that we will be in a position to bolster the French with assurances of US military intervention in Indochina in order to prevent a settlement unacceptable to us or to insure military victory for our side. We will probably not be in a position to use the threat of massive retaliatory action against China to enforce an acceptable solution in Indochina.

(6) Thus, assuming that we do get to a point of actually discussing Indochina at Geneva, we will be able to achieve a negotiating result no more favorable than is warranted by Franco-Vietnamese capacities and will power at the time. We have no fresh political or military contribution to make to a settlement.

(7) Every effort will be made by the enemy to divide France and the United States, to contrast a peace-loving, reasonable France anxious to stop the death of her sons with a warmongering United States eager to continue a slaughter in which American soldiers are not engaged.

(8) Since France, the UK and the US will be unable to present a strong, united front in the matter of China policy or of the stepping up of the military potential of our side, it is particularly important that they do present such a front with regard to a proposal for peace in Indochina to be submitted as a French initiative at Geneva with the

full support of Vietnam, the US and the UK. I conceive of agreement on such a proposal as a major task in the preparations for Geneva. A proposal of this kind should involve the acceptance of the principle that a country divided by eight years of bitter civil war needs a cessation of hostilities, a radical reduction of armed forces and a fairly lengthy period of political and economic reconstruction before it can achieve a reunited national existence. The necessary controls for the operation of such a proposal could be supplied by the UN or in some other mutually agreed manner. Some major elements in a specific proposal might be the following (submitted purely for illustrative purposes):

(a) A cease-fire based on the conditions recently set forth by Lanier and presumably including also return of all prisoners.

(b) Arrangements for reciprocal reduction of native armed forces and armament under controlled conditions.

(c) Concentration of non-native armed forces at stated bases and their reduction in accordance with a timetable geared to the reduction of native forces. (Substantial non-native forces should remain until final establishment of representative native government in order to guarantee the lives and property of the French residents and their native supporters.)

(d) No change in *status quo* of Vietnamese Government or of Democratic Republic of Vietnam so far as international relations are concerned. This would mean in effect that the question of Vietnam's definitive membership in the French Union would not be settled until the formation of a unified national government in 1957 (see below), although present and prospective constitutional and treaty relationships between France and Vietnam would continue in force as long as the present Vietnam Government endures.

(e) Provisional arrangements for local administration including an allocation of provinces more or less on a *status quo* basis. This would amount in effect to a continuation for a couple of years of the patchwork which has characterized the eight war years. Provision for a gradual restoration of freedom of movement throughout the country would also be required although in the case of outstanding political or military leaders this would be a delicate matter and might be considerably delayed.

(f) Provisions for the prompt restoration of major roads, railroads and communications throughout the country. France and the US might announce a willingness to devote a substantial portion of the money they are now spending on fighting the war to the intensive reconstruction of Vietnam.

(g) Provisions for the political reconstruction of the country including the announcement of January 1st, 1957 (for example) as the date for nation-wide elections to a national assembly which would draw up a definitive constitution for Vietnam.

(9) The above is of course far from being even an outline of a complete proposal. I am not convinced myself of the workability of all the suggestions made. But I do think that our side can and should work

out a proposal, which, if accepted by the enemy, we could live with. It should also be one which, if refused by the enemy, would at least give us the "conference" advantage of having taken, at the opening of the discussions on Indochina, a comprehensive and reasonable attitude. Furthermore, the fact of having made a real effort to find a workable solution through negotiations should improve the position of the three governments most concerned on our side (France, Vietnam and US) with their own public opinions should it prove necessary and feasible to develop further military assets in order to seek a solution through military means.

396.1 GE/2-1754 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Dillon) to the Department of State

CONFIDENTIAL

PARIS, March 17, 1954—5 p.m.
 3402. Repeated information Moscow 272, London 787. In what may be beginning of Neutralist and Leftist campaign to change that US will endeavor postpone or call off Geneva conference on any possible pretext as result reluctance make necessary concessions Communist China, Leftist and Communist press slant Secretary's reported statement to press at Washington yesterday to direct Geneva conference might possibly be delayed as result dilatory tactics on part of Soviets and Chinese Communists as follows:

Leftist *Combat* headlines its comments "Asiatic Conference Would be Postponed at Request USA" and states that it is not a question of any differences between Moscow and Peking but question of who will first pay "agreed price". It is stated that the USSR will ratify EDC before US makes concessions Peking in view ending IC war or will US make concessions in hope Parliament will ratify EDC? Secretary Dulles "in waving bogey of postponement" risks casting aside carefully drafted, French timetable.

Communist *L'Humanité* states Secretary has confessed openly will of leaders at Washington to sabotage Geneva conference and, if possible, prevent its convocation. "This is what Secretary meant in saying that it was inconceivable that Geneva conference might be delayed beyond April 26."

DILLON

Editorial Note

For the text of the Soviet reply, dated March 17, to the proposals concerning preparation for the Geneva Conference, see telegram 1086, March 17, page 38.

396.1 GE/2-1754 : Telegram

The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bohlen) to the Department of State

SECRET NTAAC

MOSCOW, March 17, 1954—8 p. m.
 1087. Repeated information niact London 158, Paris 217. Report of my conversation with Kuznetsov follows (Embtel 1085¹):

Kuznetsov read and then handed me *aide-mémoire* given in my immediately preceding telegram.²

I told him I would of course, communicate it immediately to my government but, with reference to statement in first paragraph concerning consultation with Chinese Communist Government, I wished to remind him that in accordance with Berlin decision the four powers and the four powers alone were responsible for organizing the conference and that while Soviet Government of course had the right to consult with any government it wished, this could not be interpreted as indicating that CPR had any special right whatsoever as compared with other invited countries nor any role to play in the organization of the conference.

Kuznetsov said that Soviet Government of course had right to consult as it desired and considered that was useful to know the views of the parties in the conference.

I repeated that that would apply equally to any other countries invited to attend and read to him the pertinent paragraphs from the Russian text of the Berlin agreement which made it plain that the four Foreign Ministers of the four countries were proposing the Korean political conference at Geneva and hence were responsible for the arrangements, repeating that CPR was an invited country on the same basis as all others invited.

Kuznetsov did not attempt to argue the point. He did not contest my interpretation of the Berlin agreement and in fact stated that we (meaning, I presume, officials) had no right to alter an agreement reached by the four Foreign Ministers.

I believe it would be important in replying to this *aide-mémoire* the point that the Chinese Communists were consulted by Soviet Government by its own desire and not by any right should be reemphasized. It will be noted that Soviet reply raises in substance certain points not contained in my *aide-mémoire* of March 5 based on Deptel 548³

¹ Not printed. (396.1 GE/2-1754)

² Telegram 1086, Mar. 17, p. 38.

³ For the text of the *aide-mémoire* of Mar. 5, see p. 28. Telegram 548 to Moscow not printed. (396.1 GE/2-2754)

such as official and working languages at the conference and method of interpretation which I read to be similar to system used at Berlin ACC Building. Apart from this and reference to Chinese consultation, Soviet reply accepts most of our suggestions. Suggestion that French should speak for four powers in dealing with SYG is part of current Soviet attempt to play up to French sensibilities and is clearly designed to get away from the idea of four in order not to underline the absence of Communist China. Contents of document would appear to confirm fact that delay was due to discussions with China and reference to consultation and suggestion that Chinese would be official and working language is probably result of compromise designed to create appearance that Communist China if not fully on parity with four powers is at least not quite on same level as other invited powers.

BOHLEN

396.1 GE/3-1764 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom*¹

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, March 17, 1954—7:39 p. m.

4792. Re Moscow's 1086 rptd London 157 Paris 216.² Seek concurrence FonOff that tripartite coordination of views should take place Washington to reach agreement on arrangements to be made with UN re facilities and services to be provided at Geneva for Korean Political Conference. Results of tripartite consultation could then be transmitted to Soviets at Moscow in reply to Soviet *aide-memoire* set forth in refel. Since UN has been pressing us almost daily re use Palais des Nations bldg, we have informally letting UNSYG know tripartite agreement has been reached with Soviets on use that building and that as agreement on related matters is reached he will be kept informed by one of the three governments.

DOLLAS

¹ Drafted by Eddy of UNA and Thurston of EEE. Repeated to Paris as telegram 8209 and to Moscow as telegram 582.

² Dated Mar. 17, p. 88.

396.1 GE/3-1954 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom*¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 19, 1954—10:45 p. m.

4850. British Embassy has approached Department re possibility Soviet may raise European questions at Geneva. They have showed us copy Foreign Office cable summarized below and requested Department's views.

Begin summary. Nothing to be gained by reopening Berlin discussions on Germany and Austria unless Russians prepared to modify their position. While they would seem to have no interest in resuming discussions they have given increasing attention recently to security proposals tabled by Molotov at Berlin. Already agreed composition and agenda for Geneva should preclude discussion such European items and we should "presumably" refuse consideration on these grounds.

If Soviet suggest further talks re European matters by *Four Foreign Ministers* (without Communist China) Western powers should point out views of four governments fully expressed at Berlin and no useful purpose served by further negotiation unless and until Soviet government prepared to agree to free elections in Germany and withdrawal of additional demands re Austria. We would then meet at time and place mutually agreed but not at Geneva conference, task of which already sufficient.

Another possibility is Soviet attempt at Geneva to obtain agreement to (A) Five Power conference to consider international tension or (B) reconvening Four Power conference to consider European matters. Re (B) we should not commit ourselves to hold conference unless and until we feel it can serve a useful purpose. Re (A) "Our final attitude must to some extent be dependent, so far at least as the Far East is concerned, upon whatever progress is made at Geneva over Korea and Indochina." *End summary.*

We have informed Embassy we think it unlikely European issues will be raised by Soviets at Geneva. In event they are we would agree with British position outlined above with exception (A) quoted in preceding paragraph. We have informed Embassy our position re Five Power conference was clearly set forth by Secretary at Berlin

¹ Drafted by Elbrick of EUR. Repeated to Paris as telegram 3237 and to Moscow as telegram 586.

AVP RF, Fond 100, opis' [list] 47, papka [folder] 389, delo [file] 107, p. 1

to Cde. V. M. Molotov

I present to you the draft outlines of the directives about the Korean and Indochinese issues for the Soviet delegation at the Geneva Conference

The materials were prepared by the Departments and examines at the Commission.

V. Kuznetsov

17 March 1954

Sent to:

Cdes: Gromyko
Zorin
Fedorenko
Sobolev
Novikov
Soldatov
Lavrishchev

AVP RF, Fond 100, opis' 47, papka, 389, delo 107, pp. 5-7

Top Secret

OUTLINE OF DIRECTIVES
ON THE ISSUE OF THE RESTORATION OF PEACE IN
INDOCHINA

The following are provided in the directives on the issue of the restoration of peace in Indochina:

1. Before and during the Conference defend the right of the representatives of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to participate in the Geneva Conference.
2. If the Western powers agree to our proposal about the participation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the Geneva Conference the Soviet delegation ought to allow the Vietnamese and Chinese delegations to display the initiative of offering proposals about the

conditions for establishing an armistice or the restoration of peace in Indochina.

3. The main task of the Soviet delegation should come down to achieving the establishment of armistice conditions in Indochina acceptable to the Government of Ho Chi Minh and the opening of negotiations between the Vietnamese Democratic Republic [SJC] and France about further steps to restore peace in Indochina. While supporting and insisting on the legitimate interests of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam at the Conference, the Soviet delegation should at the same time pursue the goal of strengthening relations between the Soviet Union and France.

First position (maximum agenda)

- a) A complete cessation of military operations in the entire territory of Indochina.
- b) Recognition by France of the complete sovereignty and independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.
- c) The withdrawal of all French troops from the territory of Vietnam in no more than six months.
- d) The creation of a French-Vietnamese commission to discuss all questions of the restoration of peace in Indochina and to observe the fulfillment of the armistice conditions.
- e) A mutual exchange of prisoners of war.
- f) Recognition of the existence of the economic and cultural interests of France in Vietnam (the use of the French merchant fleet, trade, etc.) by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on conditions subject to agreement between the governments of France and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.
- g) A declaration by the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam that it will not subject people who collaborated with the French expeditionary corps in the war against Democratic Republic of Vietnam to persecution.
- h) A cessation of US interference in the affairs of Indochina.

Second position

If an agreement is not achieved on the basis of the conditions described above, offer the following proposals as a second position:

- a) A complete cessation of military operations in the entire territory of Indochina.
- b) The withdrawal of all French troops from the territory of Vietnam north of the 16th parallel in no more than six months and the withdrawal of French troops from the territory of Vietnam south of the 16th parallel at a time established by agreement of the parties.
- c) The creation of a French-Vietnamese commission to discuss all the questions of the restoration of peace in Vietnam and to observe the performance of the armistice conditions.
- d) A mutual exchange of prisoners of war.
- e) Recognition of the economic and cultural interests of France in Vietnam (the use of French merchant fleet, trade, etc.) by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on conditions subject to agreement between the governments of France and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.
- f) A declaration by the governments of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and France that they will not subject people who collaborated respectively with France or with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the war against the other side to persecution.
- g) A cessation of US interference in the affairs of Indochina.

Third position

- a) If it also does not seem possible to achieve agreement on the basis of the proposals envisioned by the second position try to get military operations halted on condition that French troops withdraw to specified locations in Vietnam determined by agreement of the parties.
- b) After an armistice is reached form a commission of representatives of France and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to work out conditions ensuring a peaceful settlement of the Vietnamese problem. This commission should be entrusted with observing the armistice conditions.

c) Provide a recommendation that both parties solve contentious issues by peaceful means, without resorting to a resumption of military operations.

If no agreement is reached about the Indochina problem submit [this] proposal for the Conference's consideration: recommend that France and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam [engage in] immediate negotiations between both governments about the conditions for restoring peace in Indochina.

FROM THE JOURNAL
OF V. M. MOLOTOV

SECRET

and we are fundamentally opposed to Five Power concepts regardless of developments on Far Eastern issues at Geneva.

Above for your information and use in discussions the subject with British officials.²

DULLES

² In a memorandum dated Mar. 19, Elbrick reported to Merchant, MacArthur, and McConaughy that he had informed Adam Watson, First Secretary of the British Embassy, of the Department's views substantially as set forth in the first paragraph of the above telegram. (396.1 GE/3-1954)

396.1 GE/3-2254: Telegram

The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Aldrich) to the Department of State

SECRET PRIORITY

LONDON, March 22, 1954—5 p. m.
4072. Repeated information Paris 552, Saigon 16. Deptel 4818 March 18¹ and Embtel 4053 March 20,² both repeated Paris, Saigon. Geneva Conference.

1. Embassy officer asked call this noon at Foreign Office where he given oral statement UK position as follows:

(a) We agree (i) We must do all we can prevent principle from being established at Geneva that the five powers are recognized as being in a special position as a kind of inner directing group, and (ii) before substantive talks can begin on Indochina procedural question must first be settled as to which are the "other interested states" to be invited.

(b) But we think that to insist too formally and rigidly that this procedural question is a matter for decision by the four powers might merely compel Communists press thesis it is matter for the five; moreover in practice the procedural question cannot be settled without consultation of some kind with the Chinese.

(c) Therefore, our best hope of making progress without precipitating the five-power issue lies in maintaining principle that all powers at Geneva are there on same footing, in avoiding formal establishment of any inner group whether four power or five power and in keeping all consultations outside the conference meetings as private and informal as possible and our procedures reasonably flexible.

¹ The Department in telegram 4818 to London, Mar. 18, asked for confirmation that Britain agreed that after opening of the conference, four Foreign Ministers at Geneva would take up and decide the questions of (1) participants in the Indochina phase, (2) issuance of invitations, and (3) the date on which substantive discussions could begin. (396.1 GE/3-1854)

² In telegram 4053 from London, Mar. 20, the Embassy informed the Department that the Foreign Office had offered the tentative view that the U.S. position might be too rigid and that "while we can avoid substantive talks on Indochina beginning concurrently with substantive talks on Korea, it may prove quite impossible avoid procedural talks on Indochina beginning immediately conference opens." (396.1 GE/3-2054)

INDOCHINA

2. In telegram sent Washington yesterday evening Foreign Office outlines for British Embassy its thinking on number of related points. Foreign Office believes we will have difficulty in preventing use of Chinese as official language, especially as Chinese is recognized as official language in UN. If Soviets insist on use of Chinese as official language, we might initially counter by proposing English, French and Russian as official languages and Chinese and Korean (and perhaps others) as unofficial languages. We must not however let ourselves be maneuvered into a position where conference could break down merely over relatively minor question of procedure, and in event strong opposition from Communists should be prepared give in on language question. As might be expected, Foreign Office concerned not so much over issue of prestige (including whether or not Chinese Communists gain qualified recognition as great power) as over necessity of having western position at Geneva defensible in eyes of as many nations as possible.

ALDRICH

396.1 GE/3-2354

The Secretary of Defense (Wilson) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 23, 1954.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: Pursuant to a recommendation of the Under Secretary of State, the Department of Defense has considered the military implications of a negotiated settlement to terminate the hostilities in Indochina. The views and recommendations of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on this matter were submitted to me in a memorandum dated 12 March 1954. These views, together with the views of General G. B. Erskine, USMC (Ret), Chairman of the Subcommittee of the President's Special Committee, were submitted to the Special Committee in a memorandum dated 17 March 1954.¹ It is understood that the Department of State is presently considering General Erskine's report.

I am fully in accord with General Erskine's recommendations and the views and recommendations of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in this matter. Accordingly, there is forwarded herewith for your information a copy of the aforementioned documents which represent the views of the Department of Defense. It is recommended that these views be carefully considered in preparation of the United States position on Indochina for the forthcoming conference at Geneva.

Sincerely yours,

C. E. WILSON

¹ Both memoranda were listed as enclosures to the source text but were not attached. Copies printed here are in PPS files, lot 65 D 101, box 592. Letter and enclosures are printed in *United States-Vietnam Relations, 1945-1967*, Book 9, pp. 276-290.

[Enclosure 1]

Memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson)

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, 12 March 1954.

Subject: Preparation of Department of Defense Views Regarding Negotiations on Indochina for the Forthcoming Geneva Conference

1. This memorandum is in response to your memorandum dated 5 March 1954, subject as above.

2. In their consideration of this problem, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have reviewed *United States Objectives And Courses of Action With Respect To Southeast Asia* (NSC 5405),² in the light of developments since that policy was approved on 16 January 1954, and they are of the opinion that, from the military point of view, the statement of policy set forth therein remains entirely valid. The Joint Chiefs of Staff reaffirm their views concerning the strategic importance of Indochina to the security interests of the United States and the Free World in general, as reflected in NSC 5405. They are firmly of the belief that the loss of Indochina to the Communists would constitute a political and military setback of the most serious consequences.

3. With respect to the possible courses of action enumerated in paragraph 2 of your memorandum, the Joint Chiefs of Staff submit the following views:

a. Maintenance of the status quo. In the absence of a very substantial improvement in the French Union military situation, which could best be accomplished by the aggressive prosecution of military operations, it is highly improbable that Communist agreement could be obtained to a negotiated settlement which would be consistent with basic United States objectives in Southeast Asia. Therefore, continuation of the fighting with the objective of seeking a military victory appears as the only alternative to acceptance of a compromise settlement based upon one or more of the possible other courses of action upon which the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have been specifically requested in your memorandum.

b. Imposition of a cease-fire. The acceptance of a cease-fire in advance of a satisfactory settlement would, in all probability, lead to a political stalemate attended by a concurrent and irretrievable deterioration of the Franco-Vietnamese military position. (See paragraph 27 of NSC 5405.)

c. Establishment of a coalition government. The acceptance of a settlement based upon the establishment of a coalition government in one or more of the Associated States would open the way for the ultimate seizure of control by the Communists under conditions which might preclude timely and effective external assistance in the prevention of such seizure. (See subparagraph 26*b* of NSC 5405.)

² For the full text of NSC 5405, Jan. 16, 1954, and related documentation, see volume XII.

d. Partition of the country. The acceptance of a partitioning of one or more of the Associated States would represent at least a partial victory for the Viet Minh, and would constitute recognition of a Communist territorial expansion achieved through force of arms. Any partition acceptable to the Communists would in all likelihood include the Tonkin Delta area which is acknowledged to be the keystone of the defense of mainland Southeast Asia, since in friendly hands it cuts off the most favorable routes for any massive southward advance towards central and southern Indochina and Thailand. (See paragraph 4 of NSC 5405.) A partitioning involving Vietnam and Laos in the vicinity of the 16th Parallel, as has been suggested (see State cable from London, No. 3802, dated 4 March 1954³), would cede to Communist control approximately half of Indochina, its people and its resources, for exploitation in the interests of further Communist aggression; specifically, it would extend the Communist dominated area to the borders of Thailand, thereby enhancing the opportunities for Communist infiltration and eventual subversion of that country. Any cession of Indochinese territory to the Communists would constitute a retrogressive step in the Containment Policy, and would invite similar Communist tactics against other countries of Southeast Asia.

e. Self-determination through free elections. Such factors as the prevalence of illiteracy, the lack of suitable educational media, and the absence of adequate communications in the outlying areas would render the holding of a truly representative plebiscite of doubtful feasibility. The Communists, by virtue of their superior capability in the field of propaganda, could readily pervert the issue as being a choice between national independence and French Colonial rule. Furthermore, it would be militarily infeasible to prevent widespread intimidation of voters by Communist partisans. While it is obviously impossible to make a dependable forecast as to the outcome of a free election, current intelligence leads the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the belief that a settlement based upon free elections would be attended by almost certain loss of the Associated States to Communist control.

4. The Joint Chiefs of Staff are of the opinion that any negotiated settlement which would involve substantial concessions to the Communists on the part of the Governments of France and the Associated States, such as in *c* and *d* above, would be generally regarded by Asian peoples as a Communist victory, and would cast widespread doubt on the ability of anti-Communist forces ultimately to stem the tide of Communist control in the Far East. Any such settlement would, in all probability, lead to the loss of Indochina to the Communists and deal a damaging blow to the national will of other countries of the Far East to oppose Communism.

5. Should Indochina be lost to the Communists, and in the absence of immediate and effective counteraction on the part of the Western

³ The Embassy in London reported in telegram 3802 to the Department, Mar. 4, that "if US and France object to an amalgamation of Vietnam and Viet Minh administrations, they can agree to a division along 16th parallel. Some such solution would tend to guarantee China's southern frontier." (3896.1 GE/3-454)

Powers which would of necessity be on a much greater scale than that which could be decisive in Indochina, the conquest of the remainder of Southeast Asia would inevitably follow. Thereafter, longer term results involving the gravest threats to fundamental United States security interests in the Far East and even to the stability and security of Europe could be expected to ensue. (See paragraph 1 of NSC 5405.)

6. Orientation of Japan toward the West is the keystone of United States policy in the Far East. In the judgment of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the loss of Southeast Asia to Communism would, through economic and political pressures, drive Japan into an accommodation with the Communist Bloc. The communication of Japan would be the probable ultimate result.

7. The rice, tin, rubber, and oil of Southeast Asia and the industrial capacity of Japan are the essential elements which Red China needs to build a monolithic military structure far more formidable than that of Japan prior to World War II. If this complex of military power is permitted to develop to its full potential, it would ultimately control the entire Western and Southwestern Pacific region and would threaten South Asia and the Middle East.

8. Both the United States and France have invested heavily of their resources toward the winning of the struggle in Indochina. Since 1950 the United States has contributed in excess of 1.6 billion dollars in providing logistic support. France is reported to have expended during the period 1946-1953, the equivalent of some 4.2 billion dollars. This investment, in addition to the heavy casualties sustained by the French and Vietnamese, will have been fruitless for the anti-Communist cause, and indeed may redound in part to the immediate benefit of the enemy, if control of a portion of Indochina should now be ceded to the Communists. While the additional commitment of resources required to achieve decisive results in Indochina might be considerable, nevertheless this additional effort would be far less than that which would be required to stem the tide of Communist advance once it had gained momentum in its progress into Southeast Asia.

9. If, despite all United States efforts to the contrary, the French Government elects to accept a negotiated settlement which, in the opinion of the United States, would fail to provide reasonably adequate assurance of the future political and territorial integrity of Indochina, it is considered that the United States should decline to associate itself with such a settlement, thereby preserving freedom of action to pursue directly with the governments of the Associated States and with other allies (notable the United Kingdom) ways and means of continuing the struggle against the Viet Minh in Indochina without participation of the French. The advantages of so doing

would, from the military point of view, outweigh the advantage of maintaining political unity of action with the French in regard to Indochina.

10. It is recommended that the foregoing views be conveyed to the Department of State for consideration in connection with the formulation of a United States position on the Indochina problem for the forthcoming Geneva Conference and for any conversations with the governments of the United Kingdom, France, and, if deemed advisable, with the governments of the Associated States preliminary to the conference. In this connection attention is particularly requested to paragraphs 25 and 26 of NSC 5405; it is considered to be of the utmost importance that the French Government be urged not to abandon the aggressive prosecution of military operations until a satisfactory settlement has been achieved.

11. It is further recommended that, in order to be prepared for possible contingencies which might arise incident to the Geneva Conference, the National Security Council consider now the extent to which the United States would be willing to commit its resources in support of the Associated States in the effort to prevent the loss of Indochina to the Communists either:

a. In concert with the French; or
b. In the event the French elect to withdraw, in concert with other allies or, if necessary, unilaterally.

12. In order to assure ample opportunity for the Joint Chiefs of Staff to present their views on these matters, it is requested that the Military Services be represented on the Department of Defense working team which, in coordination with the Department of State, will consider all U.S. position papers pertaining to the Geneva discussions on Indochina.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

ARTHUR RADFORD
Chairman

[Enclosure 2]

The Chairman of the Subcommittee of the President's Special Committee (Erskine) to the Special Committee of the National Security Council

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, 17 March 1954.

Subject: Military Implications of the U.S. Position on Indo-China in Geneva

1. The attached analysis and recommendations concerning the U.S. position in Geneva have been developed by a Sub-committee consisting of representatives of the Department of Defense, JCS, State and CIA.

2. This paper reflects the conclusions of the Department of Defense and the JCS and has been collaborated with the State Department representatives who have reserved their position thereon.
3. In brief, this paper concludes that from the point of view of the U.S. strategic position in Asia, and indeed throughout the world, no solution to the Indo-China problem short of victory is acceptable. It recommends that this be the basis for the U.S. negotiating position prior to and at the Geneva Conference.
4. It also notes that, aside from the improvement of the present military situation in Indo-China, none of the courses of action considered provide a satisfactory solution to the Indo-China war.
5. The paper notes that the implications of this position are such as to merit consideration by the NSC and the President.
6. I recommend that the Special Committee note and approve this report and forward it with the official Department of State views to the NSC.

G. B. ERSKINE
General, USMC (Ret.)

[Subenclosure]

MILITARY IMPLICATION OF U.S. NEGOTIATIONS ON INDO-CHINA
AT GENEVA

I Problem

To develop a U.S. position with reference to the Geneva Conference as it relates to Indo-China, encompassing the military implications of certain alternatives which might arise in connection with that conference.

II Major Considerations

A. The Department of Defense and the JCS have reviewed NSC 5405 in the light of developments since that policy was approved from a military point of view and in the light of certain possible courses of action as they affect the Geneva Conference. These are:

1. Maintenance of the *status quo* in Indo-China.
2. Imposition of a cease-fire in Indo-China.
3. Establishment of a coalition government.
4. Partition of the country.
5. Self-determination through free elections.

B. The Department of Defense and the JCS have also considered

the impact of the possible future status of Indo-China on the remainder of Southeast Asia and Japan and have considered the effect which any substantial concessions to the Communists on the part of France and the Associated States would have with respect to Asian peoples as a whole and U.S. objectives in Europe.

C. Indo-China is the area in which the Communist and non-Communist worlds confront one another actively on the field of battle. The loss of this battle by whatever means would have the most serious repercussions on U.S. and free world interests, not only in Asia but in Europe and elsewhere.

D. French withdrawal or defeat in Indo-China would have most serious consequences on the French position in the world; the free world position in Asia; and in the U.S. on the domestic attitude vis-à-vis the French. It would, furthermore, constitute a *de facto* failure on the part of France to abide by its commitments in U.N. to repel aggression.

E. Unless the free world maintains its position in Indo-China, the Communists will be in a position to exploit what will be widely regarded in Asia as a Communist victory. Should Indo-China be lost to the Communists, and in the absence of immediate and effective counteraction by the free world (which would of necessity be on a much greater scale than that required to be decisive in Indo-China), the conquest of the remainder of Southeast Asia would inevitably follow. Thereafter, longer term results, probably forcing Japan into an accommodation with the Communist bloc, and threatening the stability and security of Europe, could be expected to ensue.

F. As a measure of U.S. participation in the Indo-Chinese war it is noted that the U.S. has since 1950 programmed in excess of \$2.4 billion in support of the French-Associated States operations in Indo-China. France is estimated to have expended during the period 1946-1953 the equivalent of some \$5.4 billion. This investment, in addition to the heavy casualties sustained by the French and Vietnamese, to say nothing of the great moral and political involvement of the U.S. and French, will have been fruitless for the anti-Communist cause if control of all or a portion of Indo-China should now be ceded to the Communists.

III Facts Bearing on the Problem

A. NSC 5405, approved 16 January 1954, states U.S. policy with respect to Indo-China.

B. The French desire for peace in Indo-China almost at any cost represents our greatest vulnerability in the Geneva talks.

IV Discussion

For the views of the JCS see Tab A.*

V Conclusions

A. Loss of Indo-China to the Communists would constitute a political and military setback of the most serious consequences and would almost certainly lead to the ultimate Communist domination of all of Southeast Asia.

B. The U.S. policy and objectives with respect to Southeast Asia as reflected in NSC 5405 remain entirely valid in the light of developments since that policy was approved.

C. With respect to possible alternative courses of action enumerated in paragraph IIA above, the Department of Defense has reached the following conclusions:

1. *Maintenance of status quo in Indo-China.* It is highly improbable that a Communist agreement could be obtained to any negotiated settlement which would be consistent with basic U.S. objectives in Southeast Asia in the absence of a very substantial improvement in the French Union military situation. This could best be accomplished by the aggressive prosecution of military operations.

2. *Imposition of a cease-fire.* The acceptance of a cease-fire in advance of a satisfactory settlement would in all probability lead to a political stalemate attended by a concurrent and irretrievable deterioration of the Franco-Vietnamese military position.

3. *Establishment of a coalition government.* The acceptance of a settlement based upon this course of action would open the way for the ultimate seizure of control by the Communists under conditions which would almost certainly preclude timely and effective external assistance designed to prevent such seizure.

4. *Partition of the country.* The acceptance of this course of action would represent at the least a partial victory for the Viet Minh and would constitute a retrogressive step in the attainment of U.S. policy and would compromise the achievement of that policy in Southeast Asia.

5. *Self-determination through free elections.* Many factors render the holding of a truly representative plebiscite infeasible and such a course of action would, in any case, lead to the loss of the Associated States to Communist control.

IV [VI] Recommendations

A. That the U.S. and U.K. and France reach an agreement with respect to Indo-China which rejects all of the courses enumerated

above (except No. 1 on the assumption that the *status quo* can be altered to result in a military victory) prior to the initiation of discussions on Indo-China at Geneva. Failing this, the U.S. should actively oppose each of these solutions, should not entertain discussion of Indo-China at Geneva, or having entertained it, should ensure that no agreements are reached.

B. If, despite all U.S. efforts to the contrary, the French Government elects to accept a negotiated settlement which fails to provide reasonably adequate assurance of the future political and territorial integrity of Indo-China, the U.S. should decline to associate itself with such a settlement and should pursue, directly with the governments of the Associated States and with other Allies (notably the U.K.), ways and means of continuing the struggle against the Viet Minh in Indo-China without participation of the French.

C. The Special Committee has reviewed the findings and recommendations of the Department of Defense and considers that the implications of this position are such as to warrant their review at the highest levels and by the National Security Council, after which they should become the basis of the U.S. position with respect to Indo-China at Geneva. The Special Committee recognizes moreover that certain supplementary and alternative courses of action designed to ensure a favorable resolution of the situation in Indo-China merit consideration by the NSC. These, and the Special Committee recommendations with respect thereto, are:

1. *The political steps to be taken to ensure an agreed U.S.-U.K.-French position concerning Indo-China at Geneva.* That the NSC review the proposed political action designed to achieve this objective with particular attention to possible pressure against the French position in North Africa, and in NATO, and to the fact that discussions concerning implementation of course 2 and 3 hereunder will be contingent upon the success or failure of this course of action.

2. *Overt U.S. involvement in Indo-China.* That the NSC determine the extent of U.S. willingness, over and above the contingencies listed in NSC 5405, to commit U.S. air, naval and ultimately ground forces to the direct resolution of the war in Indo-China with or without French support and in the event of failure in course 1 above. That in this connection the NSC take cognizance of present domestic and international climate of opinion with respect to U.S. involvement and consider the initiation of such steps as may be necessary to ensure worldwide recognition of the significance of such steps in Indo-China as a part of the struggle against Communist aggression.

3. *The development of a substitute base of operations.* That the NSC consider whether this course of action is acceptable as a substitute for 1 and 2 above and recognizing that the hope of implementation thereof would be one of major expenditure and long-term potential only.

* Printed as Enclosure 1 above.

396.1 GE/2-2454

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of British Commonwealth and Northern European Affairs (Raynor)

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 24, 1954.

Subject: Geneva Conference

Participants: Ambassador Spender, Australian Embassy
Minister Blakeney, Australian Embassy
Mr. Robert Murphy, Deputy Under Secretary
Mr. H. Raynor, Director, BNA

Ambassador Spender called this afternoon at his request accompanied by Minister Blakeney. He handed Mr. Murphy the attached *Aide-Memoire*¹ indicating that Australia considered itself an "interested State" in so far as the Indo-China phase of the Conference is concerned and would desire to participate in that phase of the Conference if participation is extended beyond the Four Powers, Communist China and the Associated States.

Mr. Murphy received the *Aide-Memoire* and indicated that the matter of the composition of the Indo-China phase of the Conference had not yet been determined; in fact might possibly not be determined until Geneva itself.

Ambassador Spender then asked a number of questions attempting to ascertain what position the United States and also the French intended to take on Indo-China at the Conference. He expressed the view that while probably agreement could not be reached with the Communist at the Conference that it was important that the Western participants develop a firm position prior to the Conference and also emerge from the Conference with a united Western position. He expressed the view that the Communist side would probably hold out for one or more of the three following concessions from the West: (a) recognition of Red China; (b) admission of Red China to the United Nations and (c) relaxation of trade barriers with Red China.

The Ambassador expressed some concern at waiting too long for the development of a French position being apprehensive that the French might desire to go to Geneva without a position and thus have full maneuverability at the Conference. The Ambassador also inquired about the military situation in Indo-China but agreed that more serious factors were the political situation in Paris and also the political problem vis-à-vis the Associated States.

Mr. Murphy indicated that although we were keeping in close touch with the French we did not yet have any indication of what their position

¹ Not printed. (396.1 GE/2-2454)

tion would be at Geneva. He indicated that we have not thus far been pressing the French too hard as we were not anxious to expedite the beginning of the Indo-China phase of the Conference. He indicated to the Ambassador that we hoped the Conference would open on Korea and exhaust that subject before beginning on Indo-China although he admitted that events might not work out in that manner. He admitted that a French desire for maneuverability at Geneva might be a contributing factor in their delay in developing a position but he thought also that there were many diverse opinions in Paris and that the government might be having real difficulty in developing a government position.²

¹ In a staff meeting on March 26 attended by the Secretary, Murphy, Robertson, Merchant, MacArthur, Spender and others, the Secretary reported on the conversation with Ambassador Spender. He said the Ambassador was very concerned that the Allies be organized in order to take action quickly if the situation in Indo-China deteriorated. The Secretary inquired how many votes could be obtained in the United Nations if the United States proposed action on the Indo-China problem. He remarked that it would have to be clear to every country in the world that the Associated States were truly independent. MacArthur suggested that it might be useful to ask Ambassador Spender to discuss the matter with the British, indicating that the rather indifferent U.K. attitude tended to support the French desire for peace at practically any cost.² MacArthur thought "it would be very useful if the Australians would ram home the hard facts of life as to what else would happen in Southeast Asia if Indo-China fell." (Secretary's staff meetings, lot 63 D 75)

FE files, lot 60 D 380, "Position Papers"

*Position Paper Prepared for the Indo-China Phase of the Geneva Conference*¹

SECRET
GI D-7a

[WASHINGTON,] March 24, 1954.

US POSITION ON PARTICIPATION IN THE INDOCHINA PHASE OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE

Background

At Berlin, the four Foreign Ministers agreed, so far as the Indo-China phase of the Geneva Conference is concerned "that the problem of restoring peace in Indo-China shall also be discussed at the conference to which representatives of the United States, France, the United Kingdom, the USSR, the Chinese People's Republic and other interested states will be invited." The four Foreign Ministers did not agree as to what the "other interested states" would be or as to how the invitations would be issued to the participants when agreed.

¹ A cover sheet indicated that this position paper was prepared by Bonsal of PSA and that it was revised and approved by the working group on Mar. 23.

Timing of Four-Power Agreement on Participants

It is considered desirable that the question of participation in the Indochina phase of the Geneva Conference be decided by the four Foreign Ministers at Geneva after April 26. No sentiment has apparently yet developed either on our side or in Moscow for a more rapid solution. (This may well mean that substantive discussion of the Indochina problem cannot begin at Geneva until some weeks after the date scheduled for the Korean discussions.) It is important, however, that US, UK and French agreement as to the position to be assumed be reached prior to the Geneva meeting.

Participation in the Indochina Discussions

Since the definition "other interested states" is extremely vague, there are several possible formulas. The following appear to be the principal ones:

Formula A—Restriction of conference to four inviting powers plus Chinese People's Republic.

This formula has the obvious disadvantage of a five-power discussion of the Indochina problem and hence is totally unacceptable to the U.S. However, it might conceivably be supported by the French on the basis that it is desirable to prevent Ho Chi Minh's government from being represented at Geneva. The French would then represent the interests of the Associated States and the Chinese People's Republic would represent the Viet Minh. Our position should be contrary to such a formula and in favor of one which would include the Associated States as participants at Geneva.

Formula B—Inclusion, in addition to the four Berlin powers plus the Chinese People's Republic, of the States of Indochina including on our side Viet-Nam, Cambodia and Laos and on the other side the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam (we should resist inclusion of the negligible Communist-controlled nationalist movements in Cambodia and Laos).

This formula has the advantage of being in close approximation to the formula already accepted in the case of Korea since it would involve in addition to the four Berlin powers only those states directly involved in the conflict. It would have the disadvantage that outside of the four Berlin powers and Communist China, there would be no other states participating in both the Korean and the Indochina phase of the conference. This could be taken to mean a partial acceptance of the five-power concept so persistently and unsuccessfully advanced by Molotov at Berlin.

Formula C—Inclusion in addition to the states included under Formula B of others having land boundaries with Indochina, i.e., Thailand and Burma.

This formula would have the advantage of obviating any five-power nucleus for both phases of the conference since Thailand is already included in the Korean phase. Furthermore, the Thai interest in developments in Indochina has been frequently expressed, having almost resulted in a Thai presentation to the UN. The "land boundary" con-

cept seems to offer a good factual limitation on the "interested states" definition. I believe that we could live with the Burmese and that we might in fact reasonably hope that Burmese participation could be useful at Geneva and educational in its end results.

Formula D—Inclusion in addition to the states included under Formula C of a number of other states in the general area of South and Southeast Asia.

Certainly the interest of states in the general area in the restoration of peace in Indochina cannot be denied. There would be included in this formula such friendly countries as the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand (in addition to Thailand) and such neutralist countries as Indonesia and India (in addition to Burma). Pakistan might also be included. This formula would produce an unwieldy conference "cluttered" with neutralists especially India and Indonesia. It would permit countries rejected by us from the Korean phase to be present at Geneva and would undoubtedly therefore produce some of the disadvantages which we are seeking to avoid.

Recommendation

On the basis of the above considerations, Formula C best serves the interests of the U.S. Under this formula, the four Berlin powers, the Chinese People's Republic, the three Associated States of Indochina, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, Thailand and Burma would participate in the Indochina phase of the conference.

986.1 GB/8-2554 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Dillon) to the Department of State

SECRET

PARIS, March 23, 1954—4 p. m.

3532. Repeated information London 888 Moscow 278. Limit distribution. Bidault this morning gave me at some length his general impression of what the Soviet position would be at Geneva. He said that yesterday Vinogradov had called on him, accompanied by a counselor of Embassy and had talked for about an hour. Three quarters of an hour had been devoted to the Geneva Conference and 15 minutes had been devoted to the EDG subjects. Bidault had the impression whatsoever to connect the two subjects. Bidault had the impression that Vinogradov was really and sincerely concerned with Geneva and that his representations regarding EDC were merely for form's sake.

On Geneva, Bidault said his personal impression was that the Soviets were really frightened of their Chinese ally. He felt that the Soviets for their own reasons sincerely desired a period of peace, and that they were deeply afraid that their Chinese friends might drag them into an adventure which they themselves did not at all desire.

INSTRUCTION BY THE SECRETARIAT (March 26, 1954)

Taking advantage of our victories to step up the work in occupied areas

I. SOME ASSESSMENTS OF THE NEW SITUATION

1. The Geneva Conference will convene to discuss a peaceful solution to the Korea problem and an end of the war in Indochina, with the participation by the Soviet Union, China, and big powers concerned to these two problems. This is a victory of democracy and peace forces led by the Soviet Union, and that of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.
2. This victory, together with big victories in the military field, is making our people in the occupied areas happy, and the puppet puzzled.
3. French imperialists, US interventionists, and their puppets are trying their best to continue the war of aggression, performing a farce of negotiations between governments of France and Bao Dai/Buu Loc cliques, and making distorted accounts of the Geneva Conference. They are trying to hold on in Dien Bien Phu, raiding the occupied areas, attacking the liberated zones in the 5th Region, intensifying the efforts at building puppet armed forces, and further robbing our people in the occupied areas.

II. OUR TASKS FOR THE PRESENT IN THE OCCUPIED AREAS

The new military victories gained by us, the convening of the Geneva Conference, enthusiasm of people in the occupied areas, and the puzzlement by the enemy represent very good opportunities for us to propagandize, mobilize, and organize the people from all walks of life in the occupied areas to stand up for the struggle against the war of aggression, troop conscription, forced labor, and robbery of people's assets, and at the same time to support the DRV Government led by President Ho demanding for genuine peace, as well as support the DRV Delegation's position at the Geneva Conference.

III. SOME MAIN WORK IN THE OCCUPIED AREAS

1. To oppose troop conscription: This is the central work at present in the occupied areas. Other work must contribute to the successful implementation of this work. To oppose the enemy's conscription plan is to closely coordinate with the fighting by our troops in the battlefields, thus contributing in an important way to totally defeat the Navarre Plan. This is a practical act of supporting our Government at the Geneva Conference.
2. To step up the mobilization of the puppet troops in a broad basis to break up their ranks; to turn the mobilization into a mass movement attracting the participation of people from all walks of life, especially the puppet troops families.
Together with opposition to the conscription, [we] must oppose the enemy's efforts at exploitation, especially with regard to robbing taxation schemes.
3. To pay a special attention to the work of *propaganda, mobilization, and organization of people in the occupied urban areas*.
[We] must propagandize, mobilize, and organize workers, petite bourgeoisies, [puppet] civil servants, well known personalities to oppose the war of aggression that French colonialists, US interventionists, and their puppet are trying to maintain and expand, to support President Ho and the DRV Government for genuine independence and peace, to oppose the farce of negotiations between

the French Government and the Bao Dai clique, and to support the position of the DRV delegation at the Geneva Conference.

The above-mentioned work must be closely linked with the struggle for the every day's interests of people. By so doing, the movement will go deep and wide.

IV. SOME ATTENTION MUST BE PAID ON THE FOLLOWING

1. To avoid being isolated. We must take advantage of this opportunity to win over the people at large, all the social strata and patriotic personalities wishing for genuine independence and just peace. We must win over the majority of people, especially those enjoying great popularity and influence among social strata, so as to build a massive and energetic movement opposing the aggressors and traitors as well as supporting President Ho and the DRV Government.
2. With regard to the forms of organization and struggle, [we] must take into consideration of specific contexts, level of awareness of people, and actual state of strength of the movement to propose suitable policies. In general, [we] must take advantage of all the legal and quasi-legal ways to conduct the struggle, and gradually step up it. [We should] avoid inflexible and hasty manner to do big jobs when conditions are not ripe, mobilize the people in the struggle, but at the same time protect our organizations and cadres; [we] should not harvest and forget the long-term gains. At the same time, [we] must stay watchful, without letting the provocatonists to spoil the movement.

V. SOME SLOGANS TO BE USED IN THE PROPAGANDA AND MOBILIZATION OF PEOPLE

1. To oppose troops conscription
2. To oppose heavy taxation
3. To oppose the US increased intervention in the war in Indochina and the US pressure for an expansion of the war
4. To demand for genuine independence and unification, as well as just peace
5. To support the DRV Government led by President Ho

When the Geneva Conference commences and the DRV Delegation takes part in it, we propose the following slogans:

6. To actively support the position by the DRV Delegation

Local executive committees in the occupied areas should closely study this instruction and coordinate with the office of Propaganda and Training as well as mass organization to discuss and adopt specific work of each locality. The Secretary or the Deputy Secretary of local executive committees in occupied areas must directly lead and supervise this work as well as make monthly progress report to the Central Committee.

ON BEHALF OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

TRUONG CHINH

For this reason, Bidault said, he felt that the Soviets were really desirous of achieving peace, or at least a cease-fire in Indochina. He felt that the Soviets at Geneva, in spite of any position they might feel they had to take publicly, would be hoping for US assistance in controlling Communist China. Bidault said that this was his strong personal impression which he had gathered at Berlin and which had now been reinforced by his conversation with Vinogradov.¹ He asked that his views be conveyed personally to the Secretary.

DILLON

¹ Marginal notation on source text read as follows: "French and Soviets in same position for different reasons."

Editorial Note

For the text of telegram 597, March 25, to Moscow containing the proposed reply to the Soviet *aide-memoire* of March 17, see page 56.

396.1 GB/3-2764 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 26, 1954—7 p. m.
4982. Re London's telegram 3072² and despatch 3094.³ We have made it crystal clear to British Embassy here that we do not consider procedural matters re Geneva Conference as unimportant and unconnected with substance. On contrary our position which we have stated firmly and categorically to UK and French Embassies here is that we will not agree to any procedural arrangement which gives or implies that Communist China has some special position different from other participants. In particular we would not agree to any proposal that Communist China would be consulted by US, UK, France or USSR re composition of Indochina phase of Geneva Conference. As practical matter we would expect that Soviets on their part would in fact consult China but tripartite agreement at Berlin clearly would preclude any consultation with China by Western Big Three since in fact such consultation would give China a special status.

To sum up we would reject any proposal, procedural or otherwise, which would give Communist China a special place or imply a "Five Power" concept.

¹ Drafted by MacArthur of C and McConaughy of CA. Repeated to Paris as telegram 3840 and to Moscow as telegram 605.

² Dated Mar. 22, p. 470.

³ Dated Mar. 12, p. 458.

In any discussions with FonOff on subject Geneva you should make clear our position as set forth above. After tripartite agreement we are coordinating procedural, administrative and technical matters in Washington and will keep Paris and London fully informed.

DULLES

396.1 GB/3-2764 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Embassy in France¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 27, 1954—1:24 p. m.

3853. For the Ambassador. I am seriously concerned by what appear to be growing expectations in France that Geneva will produce a settlement for Indochina as a result of US concessions to Communist China. Apart from our estimate that, given present military and political situation in Indochina, any settlement negotiated in immediate future could only result in ultimate complete control of all Indochina by Communists, there is no possibility whatsoever of concessions by US to Communist China in return for any promises or agreements they might indicate their willingness to enter. Long experience has taught us that exchange of US performance for Communist promises is a swindle and we will have no part in it.

I cannot believe that France with its great history and its understandable desire to continue in a role of world leadership with the US and UK could contemplate acceptance of a settlement which under existing conditions would abandon millions of loyal Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians to the mercies of a cruel and ruthless enemy. This would be incompatible with the high moral purpose which has characterized France's long history. To do so would result not only in the loss by France of her position in the Far East but in an abrupt decline in French prestige throughout the world with almost incalculable consequences.

I have no doubt of Bidault's comprehension of this matter and I know that his resolution is shared by many Frenchmen in and outside the government. I believe, however, that you should lose no effective opportunity to make the foregoing points forcefully with individual French leaders and particularly with those who show signs of wavering. I believe that the full text of the speech I intend to make before the overseas writers March 29² can be usefully distributed and dis-

¹ Drafted by Merchant of EUR. Repeated to London on Mar. 31 as telegram 5078.

² Secretary Dulles' address made before the Overseas Press Club of America at New York City on Mar. 29. See editorial note, p. 487.

creetly emphasized in France. It will deal with the problem of Indochina and Communist China. We must at all costs avoid the tragedy which would spring from French misunderstanding or wishful thinking concerning the fundamental position of the United States.

DILLON

300.1 GE/9-2754 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Dillon) to the Department of State

SECRET

PARIS, March 27, 1954—p. m.
3573. Repeated information London 852, Saigon 406. Chauvel and Lacoste advised us this morning that they were just beginning organized substantive preparation for Geneva although still without any definite Cabinet guidance. They said they would welcome any indications, however informal or preliminary, as to US thinking with respect to Indochina phase of conference as of assistance to them in formulating recommendations as to French position.

There are certain questions, partially procedural and partially substantive, on which they would particularly welcome our thinking. One was stated to be included for Indochina phase. If, as they thought might be desirable west wished Thailand and Australia included, and USSR wished to have India and Indonesia, participants would be numerous. In these circumstances what would be US view concerning some sort of working sessions limited to representatives of five powers? Chauvel said one possible way of meeting problem of Associated States-Viet Minh representation would be to follow UN procedure of having anyone of them called by chairman to participate on *ad hoc* basis rather than full participation at all sessions. He would welcome our reaction.

They have made similar approach to British.

In view of present fluid nature and early stage of French thinking, believe it would be to our advantage communicate as much preliminary US thinking as we can as soon as possible without waiting for such tripartite talks as may be agreed upon.

DILLON

Editorial Note

For the text of telegram 1161, March 29, from Moscow, reporting on delivery of the response to the Soviet note of March 17, see page 67.

Editorial Note

On March 29, 1954, Secretary Dulles delivered an address on "The Threat of a Red Asia" before the Overseas Press Club of America at New York City. The Secretary outlined the position of the Eisenhower Administration with respect to Indochina and reaffirmed the support of the United States for the struggle being waged there by the French Union forces. Secretary Dulles referred to recent statements made by himself and President Eisenhower "designed to impress upon potential aggressors that aggression might lead to action at places and by means of free world choosing, so that aggression would cost more than it could gain." He sought to clarify further the United States position by stating: "Under the conditions of today, the imposition on Southeast Asia of the political system of Communist Russia and its Chinese Communist ally, by whatever means, would be a grave threat to the whole free community. The United States feels that the possibility should not be passively accepted but should be met by united action. This might involve serious risks. But these risks are far less than those that will face us a few years from now if we dare not be resolute today."

For the full text of the address, Department of State press release 165, see Department of State *Bulletin*, April 12, 1954, pages 539-542.

For documentation related to Secretary Dulles' call for united action, see volumes XII and XIII.

110.11 DU/2-3054

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State*¹

SECRET

[WASHINGTON, March 30, 1954.]

Ambassador Makins asked me at Eden's request how long I expected to be at Geneva. I said I expected to be there only for the first week. The Ambassador said he thought that Eden had hoped that he and I might be there for a fortnight, but that "we might deal with the Indochina matter". I said I was very skeptical that Indochina would come up in a serious way in the first fortnight; that I foresaw procedural difficulties in this matter and was anxious myself, as I had indicated at Berlin, to get back shortly.

JFD

¹Memorandum directed to Merchant and MacArthur; copies sent to Robertson and Johnson.

*Draft Position Paper Prepared for the Indochina Phase of the Geneva Conference*¹

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 29, 1954.

U.S. POSITION WITH FRENCH

In developing a US position on Indochina to be taken with the French, we should use as a point of departure the understandings reached at Berlin where it was clearly understood that neither the US nor France would countenance a solution leading directly or indirectly to a turnover of the area to the Communists. Prevention of such a development is of course our essential objective at Geneva. Therefore, we should attempt to obtain British agreement to the position in Section I below, and then present it to the French in an effort to get tripartite agreement before the Geneva talks on Indochina start. The position in Section II, which implies a French sliding from their Berlin commitment, should remain purely a US position for later use if necessary. (It should be borne in mind throughout the paper that the term "French" refers to the elements of the Laniel cabinet who have heretofore opposed immediate negotiations with the Viet Minh. Any "French" decisions and conclusions at Geneva are probably valid only to the extent they can obtain Assembly support.)

I. POSITION TO BE TAKEN WITH FRENCH IN FIRST INSTANCE

1. At Berlin it was understood with Bidault that we, and presumably the French also, would retain full freedom of action at Geneva and were committed to nothing. We are confident France will not take any step at Geneva which will jeopardize our Berlin understanding.

2. There is no possibility whatever of extending any concessions to Communist China (such as recognizing the regime, favoring UN admission, liberalizing trade controls or altering our Formosa policy) in exchange for promises or agreements they might indicate willingness to enter. Long experience has taught us that exchange of our performance for Communist promises is a swindle and we will have no part of it.

3. We consider it highly unlikely that Communist agreement can be obtained at Geneva to a negotiated settlement which would meet the basic conditions for the protection of the US position and interests

¹ A covering memorandum indicated that this paper was prepared by McBride of WEI and that it was revised to reflect comments on an earlier draft.

in Southeast Asia (as stated in NSC 5405).² However, we likewise consider it desirable to have a positive basis for our own planning and thinking.

4. We are of course fully cognizant of the French domestic situation, the pressures to end the war in France, and the warweariness of the French people after eight years of warfare. We also realize the Vietnamese also strongly desire the end of the war.

5. We agreed to having Indochina discussed at the Korean Political Conference at Geneva for the purpose of helping the French Government to resist these domestic pressures, and in order thus to assist France to get ahead with the Navarre Plan.

6. If the French are determined to carry on the war in the absence of a settlement at Geneva, we will of course continue our policy of assisting the French war effort and even of seeking for additional means to help within the general scope of our present arrangements.

7. We believe in the worldwide interests of France that it is essential she continue the struggle to a satisfactory conclusion if no progress is made at Geneva. If France were to abandon Indochina and the millions of anti-Communist Vietnamese her whole position in the world would suffer irreparable harm.

8. Finally, France should reiterate its commitment to carry on under the Navarre Plan in the absence of a settlement emanating from the Geneva talks. From present indications we believe that the French Government will probably agree to giving us a commitment to carry on the struggle if it can be demonstrated convincingly that failure to make progress at Geneva is clearly due to Communist intransigence. If so, we can adopt at Geneva a position based on the above points, with the further understanding with France that this represents a firm position. We should not tell the French that they should consult with us prior to changing their position, if they find it necessary to shift, since this would imply we admitted the French might in fact weaken. Nevertheless, we would certainly become aware immediately of a shift in position, and, in this event, we should consider other courses with the French as follows:

II. POSITION TO BE TAKEN BY U.S. IF FRENCH POSITION WEAKENS

A. *If US Decides to Intervene Directly*

1. If there are no concrete results at Geneva, the US should make an offer of prompt US intervention beyond that envisaged in NSC 5405. This of course requires new NSC action, and it is understood this entire question is now under discussion in the NSC. We should com-

² For the text of NSC 5405, "United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect to Southeast Asia," Jan. 16, 1954, see volume XII.

communicate this decision to the French in case of necessity, as appears most effective from a timing and tactical viewpoint. A favorable NSC decision in this sense would of course greatly strengthen our position with the French and make continuation of their own effort much more likely.

2. If the French, even upon being informed that the US has decided to participate directly in the war, say they must negotiate in disregard of US security requirements, we should then take the position as follows: (a) we are not prepared to abandon the area; (b) we will proceed in collaboration with the Associated States (if such a course is possible) and other states which might be willing to go along with us, in trying to prevent the loss of Southeast Asia to the Communists. Presumably this course of action would involve departure not only of the US but of the Associated States from Geneva. This would obviously be the most extreme course, and would presuppose that every other possibility had been tried with the French and failed.

B. If US Decides Not to Extend Scope of Its Involvement in Indo-chinese War

1. In the absence of a favorable decision of the NSC to broaden US direct participation, we should still expect the French Government to carry out its commitment of September 1953 to press forward under the Navarre Plan. We should make sure that the French have taken into account the following possible results stemming from a renegeing of their commitment:

(a) If France through one means or another countenances a Communist takeover in Indochina, it will mean far more than the end of France's position in the Far East. Rather it will be a public exhibition of France's inability to carry on any longer as a member of the three-power alliance in which she has placed such great stock.

(b) The effect of abandonment would be so severe in North Africa as to have serious repercussions not only on the French position there, but also on the nature of the relationship between France and the US in that area.

(c) If the Indochina war ends on terms not offering the minimum essential guarantees, US dollar aid to France would of course automatically cease. If, however, a satisfactory armistice were arranged, and we entered a reconstruction period, France could plan on continued dollar expenditures as a major part of our contribution to the common cause. We know the present favorable French dollar position is due to the Indochina aid program.

(d) Beyond these points, conclusion of negotiations by France resulting in Communist domination of Indochina, an area of extreme strategic interest to us, would result in consequences which we cannot envisage now in Europe as well as elsewhere.

2. If the NSC decision on US participation is negative, and we are confronted with a weakening of the French position, we are faced

with a most difficult dilemma. This is a situation which in fact may arise. Under these circumstances, we can either continue the talks or break them off. In the latter event (presupposing a US refusal to participate directly), breaking off the talks would not achieve our objectives, since we have assumed the French are determined and feel it necessary to have negotiations which would not meet US requirements. In this circumstance our interests would best be served by attempting to hold the French to ways and means of continuing the anti-Communist struggle. In this case we might have to take a position on negotiations at variance with NSC 5405 (which rules them out). The best initial approach would doubtless be to take the line that France held a heavy moral responsibility for the millions of loyal Vietnamese who have been on her side not to mention the safety of the French Expeditionary Corps. Furthermore, Laniel was committed to his proposals to the National Assembly on March 5 (see attachment A.¹) on which we might comment as follows:

(a) We regard the Laniel six-point program as a firm position and cannot permit erosion thereof. While the French may wish to bargain from this position, we can note that Laniel did obtain a vote of confidence on this basis. On the other hand, we realize that we cannot go further. This is his maximum position (and our minimum) so we all must stick to it.

(b) Laniel's Point 6, which bars Viet Minh reinforcements during negotiations, should be spelled out to provide for additional controls by permitting inspection by a specified organism, preferably international. In addition there should be international control of all points covering the means of communication between Communist China and Viet Minh territory.

¹ Attachment could not be located in Department of State files. Laniel's conditions were outlined in telegram 3240 from Paris, Mar. 6, 1954, p. 435.

396.1 GE/8-2754: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Ambassador in France¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 31, 1954—2:21 p. m.

3401. Re Embtel 3573 rptd London 22 Saigon 406.² You may inform Chauvel and Lacooste along following lines on our preliminary thinking on Indochina phase General Conf:

1. On procedural matters, certain questions have already been discussed with French here, and Paris presumably informed thereon. On important question participation, our thinking has not progressed

¹ Drafted by McBride, WE and MacArthur of C. Repeated to London as telegram 6067 and to Saigon as telegram 1814.
² Dated Mar. 27, p. 33.

**"A Comprehensive Solution for Restoring Peace in Indochina" (Draft),
prepared by the Vietnam Group in the Chinese delegation attending the
Geneva Conference, April 4, 1954**

Record number: 206-00055-04 (1); original Record number: 206-C0008

In order to end the war in Indochina, to restore the national independence and rights of freedom of the peoples in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and to establish perpetual peace in Indochina, a comprehensive solution on restoring peace in Indochina is presented here as follows:

- (1) The two sides involved in activities of hostility in Indochina have agreed to an armistice. In order to realize the armistice and to guarantee the stability of it for the purpose of further restoring peace in Indochina, the two sides agree that negotiations should be held immediately, and necessary and proper adjustment will be made on the current zones of military operations.
- (2) The United States, Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and the People's Republic of China will jointly guarantee:
 - (a) That from the day of the armistice, no combat plane, armored vehicle, weapons or ammunition, other military materials, or any armed force and military personnel should be allowed to enter Indochina.
 - (b) No measures should be taken to harm the implementation of the armistice in Indochina.
- (3) Within six months after the armistice, all foreign navy, ground force and air force, and military personnel should complete withdrawal from Indochina.
- (4) The government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the government of Republic of Vietnam, the resistance government of Laos and the government of the Kingdom of Laos, Committee of National Liberation of Cambodia and the government of the Kingdom of Cambodia, with the participation of democratic parties and organization in the three countries, should establish a provisional joint committee, which should be in charge of the preparatory work for achieving peaceful unification, national independence, and democracy and freedom in the three countries in Indochina. The tasks of the provisional joint committee should be:
 - (a) To guarantee that the people in the three countries of Indochina should be able to have the rights of democracy and freedom, including the rights of freedom for all democratic parties to conduct activities in the whole territory of the three countries;

- (b) To discuss and decide on plans for achieving disarmament in the whole of Indochina;
 - (c) To discuss and decide on plans for restoring transportation, trade, cultural relations in the whole of Indochina;
 - (d) To hold, respectively in each country, general elections in the whole of Indochina after the completion of withdrawal of foreign troops, and to establish a unified government in each country.
- (5) The French government recognizes Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia as three sovereign states with full independence; the three countries enjoy full power of self-determination in politics, economy, military, diplomacy, and culture.
- (6) After the establishment of the unified governments in the three countries in Indochina, they are entitled to carry out consultations and, in accordance with the desire of the people in the three countries, to form a Federation of Indochina.
- (7) The unified governments in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia should, on the basis of equality and mutual benefits, sign with France agreements on economic, cultural, and technological cooperation for the purpose of developing the economic and cultural relations between the three countries in Indochina and France.

Translated for CWIHP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not quote without permission from CWIHP.

Telegram, Zhang Wentian³ to Li Kenong⁴, Concerning the Soviet suggestion on propaganda work at Geneva, April 6, 1954

Record number: 206-0004-04 (1)

Top secret

Comrade (Li) Kenong at the Foreign Ministry:

When Vice Minister Kuznetsov of the Soviet Union received me on the 3rd, he hoped that our delegation at Geneva should more effort to conduct more propaganda work for the purpose of expanding the New China's influence and coordinating with diplomatic activities. Such work could include showing movies, organizing speeches, small-size exhibitions, and cultural performances. The Premier instructs that you should consider immediately work on this.

Zhang Wentian

April 6

Translated for CWIHP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not quote without permission from CWIHP.

³ Chinese ambassador to the Soviet Union, Vice Foreign Minister of PRC.

⁴ Vice Foreign Minister of PRC, a member of the PRC delegation to the Geneva Conference.

896.1 GE/4-654

*Memorandum by the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Aldrich) to the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Eden)*¹

SECRET

[LONDON, April 6, 1954.]
The position of the United States Government with reference to certain matters arising out of preliminary discussions of the Indochina phase of the forthcoming conference at Geneva is as follows:

1. The United States delegation at Berlin clearly understood from the French Foreign Minister that the agreement to discuss the question of Indochina at Geneva was on the condition that France would not agree to any arrangement which would directly or indirectly result in the turnover of that area to Communist control. The United States presumes that the United Kingdom, because of its vital security interests in the area as well as its role in the free world, would solidly support this position. For the French to agree to any arrangement leading to the surrender of the area would result not only in the loss by France of her position in the Far East but in an abrupt decline in French prestige throughout the world with almost incalculable consequences.

2. The United States is seriously concerned by what appears to be growing expectations in France that Geneva will produce a settlement for Indochina as a result of United States concessions to Communist China. The basic position of the United States on Communist China has been set forth in Secretary Dulles' speech of March 29.² Especially pertinent was Secretary Dulles' statement that "We shall not, however, be disposed to give Communist China what it wants from us merely to buy its promises of future good behavior." Apart from the United States estimate that, given the present military and political situation in Indochina, any settlement negotiated in the immediate future could only result in ultimate complete control of all Indochina by the Communists, there is no possibility whatsoever of concessions by the United States to Communist China in return for any promises or agreements they might indicate their willingness to enter. Long experience has shown that the exchange of performance for Communist promises is a swindle; the United States will not participate in any such arrangement.

3. With reference to any special position for Communist China at Geneva, the United States has already made clear its position that it

¹ Memorandum sent to Eden in accordance with instructions contained in telegram 5090 to London, Apr. 1; for text, see volume xii. Copy transmitted to the Department as enclosure to despatch 3887 from London, Apr. 6, not printed.

² 896.1 GE/4-654
³ Printed in Department of State *Bulletin*, Apr. 12, 1954, pp. 539-542. See also editorial note, p. 487.

does not consider procedural matters as unimportant and unconnected with substance. It is the firm position of the United States that it will not agree to any procedural arrangement which gives or implies that Communist China has some special position different from other participants. In particular, the United States would not agree to any proposal that Communist China would be consulted by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, or the U.S.S.R. with reference to the composition of the Indochina phase of the Geneva Conference; nor would it agree to the French proposal to constitute a five-power working group on Indochina. As a practical matter, the United States would expect that the Soviets, on their part, would in fact consult China, but the tripartite agreement at Berlin³ clearly would preclude any consultation of China by the Western Big Three, since in fact such consultation would give China a special status. In summary, the United States remains unalterably opposed to any proposal, procedural or otherwise, which would give Communist China a special place or imply a "five power" concept.

4. On the important question of participation in the Indochina talks, the United States at present envisages that the following states would be present: the United Kingdom, France, the United States, the U.S.S.R., Communist China, and the Associated States. The United States is giving further thought to this matter in preparation for tripartite discussions at Geneva.

5. The United States believes it to be essential at this time that the three Western Powers have complete understanding on the above basic points, and the United States would hope for the strong support of the United Kingdom in discussions on these matters with the French Government.

³ For documentation on the tripartite agreement, an informal understanding between France, the United Kingdom, and the United States with respect to the status of Chinese Communist representation at the Geneva Conference, see volume vii. For text of the pertinent portions of the Berlin Conference Final Communiqué, issued Feb. 18, see p. 416. For additional information pertinent to this matter, see telegram Dulite 87 from Berlin, Feb. 18, in volume xiii and telegram Dulite 88 from Berlin, Feb. 18, p. 15.

896.1 GE/4-754

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of Chinese Affairs (McConaughy)

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] April 7, 1954—3:45 p. m.

Subjects: 1. Chinese *Aide-Mémoire* Regarding Geneva Conference
2. Consultations Regarding Security of Southeast Asia
3. Postponement of Consideration of Proposed Sino-American Security Pact

Participants: Dr. Wellington Koo, Chinese Ambassador
Mr. Robertson, Assistant Secretary, FE
Mr. McConaughy, Director, Chinese Affairs

Ambassador Koo called at Assistant Secretary Robertson's request. Amb. Koo said he was about to request an appointment with Mr. Robertson when he received the call from Mr. Robertson's office. Mr. Robertson asked Amb. Koo to state his business first.

1. *Chinese Aide-Mémoire Regarding Geneva Conference*¹

Amb. Koo said that he had been instructed by the Chinese Foreign Office to inform the Department of the substance of an *Aide-Mémoire* as to the Geneva Conference which was being delivered immediately to the American Embassy at Taipei. Amb. Koo said he anticipated that we would receive the full text shortly from our Embassy at Taipei. Amb. Koo summarized the *Aide-Mémoire* as follows:

As to the Geneva Conference, the Chinese Government felt it desirable to indicate its attitude and expectations. At the same time the Government wished to express its appreciation for and admiration of the Secretary's excellent speech of March 29² setting forth the U.S. position with regard to the non-recognition of the Chinese Communist regime, and its non-admission to the UN.

The Chinese Government felt that the scope of the Geneva Conference should be strictly limited to the two specified items:—Korea and Indochina.

The Chinese Government would not consider itself bound by any decision affecting it which might be reached at the Conference, since the Chinese Government would not be a party to any agreements reached.

The free world side should avoid any agreements which would not be in keeping with UN principles:—there should be unconditional withdrawal of Chinese Communist troops from Korea and unconditional cessation of Chinese Communist aid to the Viet Minh in Indochina.

If the discussions should prove fruitless, the Conference negotiations should not be protracted indefinitely. Prolongation of the Conference would only serve Communist propaganda objectives.

¹ Dated Apr. 7, not printed. Transmitted to the Department as an enclosure to despatch 576 from Taipei, Apr. 8, not printed. (896.1 GE/4-854) Subsequently sent to the Department as an enclosure to a note from Ambassador Koo to Secretary Dulles, Apr. 20, not printed, requesting that consideration be given to the points presented in the memorandum. (896.1 GE/4-2064)

² The Department responded to Ambassador Koo in a note dated May 15, not printed, indicating that the U. S. views with respect to the Geneva Conference were given to him by Robertson on Apr. 7 and were contained in Secretary Dulles' speech of Apr. 28 at Geneva (see footnote 2, p. 158). (896.1 GE/4-2064)

³ Printed in Department of State *Bulletin*, Apr. 12, 1954, pp. 539-542. See editorial note, p. 497.

As to Indochina as well as Korea, a definite time limit for the discussions should be fixed.

There should be no departure from the original UN objective of a unified, independent and democratic Korea.

The three Associated States of Indochina should be invited to the Indochina phase of the Conference, but the Viet Minh should not be allowed to participate in the Conference.

Chinese Communists action in training and supplying the Viet Minh forces constituted in itself an act of aggression and a threat to the peace. Therefore, the UN should take some collective action. Communist China was carrying out covert aggression. Covert aggression was as bad as overt aggression. Communist China is responsible for aggression in Indochina, regardless of whether the Peiping Regime has actually sent Chinese Communist armed forces to participate in the fighting.

The free world side should agree that no regime fostered and supported by the Communists will be recognized as a legitimate government. This principle is a logical outgrowth of the Secretary's speech of March 29 in which he said that the free world could not be indifferent to the grave threat which would result from the imposition by force of the Communist political system over the States of Southeast Asia. Finally, the embargo on strategic war material to Communist China should not be abandoned or relaxed.

Mr. Robertson said that he was glad to have this exposition of the views of the Chinese Government. The *Aide-Mémoire* would be considered carefully when the full text arrived. He said that he hoped the Ambassador would make it clear to his Government that the arrangements for the Conference were ideal from the Allied standpoint. There appears to have been some misunderstanding on this score in Taipei. The Geneva Conference will not be a general conference on Far Eastern issues with Communist China playing the role of an accepted power. It is necessary for Communist China to be there, since it is impossible to settle a dispute without talking to one's opponent. It is necessary to talk to the other side in order to seek peace.

It would make no sense to talk to representatives of countries having nothing to do with the fighting while ignoring the aggressors who are responsible for the breach of peace. The Korean Political Conference is set up exactly in the form which we have been striving for since last September and October. It is the sort of conference Mr. Dean had sought unsuccessfully at Panmunjom. It was clear after Mr. Dean broke off the talks at Panmunjom pending the receipt of a Chinese Communist apology that no agreement would be reached at Panmunjom, because the Chinese Communists do not make a practice of apologizing. Mr. Dulles had picked up the ball at Berlin and had seized an opportunity to get precisely the kind of conference we had

envisaged as best suited to our purposes.³ The Conference would be uncluttered by neutrals; it would be a two sided Conference; the Russians would be present as a responsible participant on the Communist side along with Communist China and the North Korean Regime; the agenda was limited to the two essential questions of Korea and Indochina; all the countries who fought on the UN side were invited; it was expressly provided, in the face of strong Soviet opposition which had been maintained until 6 PM on the last day of the conference, that no diplomatic recognition was implied. Mr. Robertson said that the terms of the Resolution represented a very considerable diplomatic triumph for Mr. Dulles. He felt that the criticism of the resolution was based largely on a misreading, or actual neglect to read, the text of the resolution.

As to the composition of the Indochina phase of the Conference, the French were entitled to take the lead on the Allied side. They would take the principal initiative in setting up the Indochina phase. We certainly felt that the Associated States should be at the Indochina phase of the Conference. Under the principle which he had just enumerated, of the necessity for talking with your enemy in order to make peace, it might also be necessary for the Viet Minh to be present in some capacity. However, the composition of the Indochina phase was not yet determined, and nothing conclusive could be said on the subject.

In response to a question from the Ambassador, Mr. Robertson said that the Conference would not be a round table one and that decisions binding on all participants of course could not be taken by Conference vote.

Mr. Robertson said that Communist China would not be at the Conference as a recognized Asian power, but, in the Secretary's words, as a culprit brought before the bar of justice.

Ambassador said that he was very glad to hear the Assistant Secretary's exposition which gave him a better understanding of the nature and purpose of the Conference. He said he would transmit the substance of the explanation to the Foreign Office.

2. *Consultations Regarding Security of Southeast Asia*

Mr. Robertson said it was the conviction of the Department that if Vietnam should be lost to the Communists, all of the rest of Southeast Asia would eventually be lost. The actions of Communist China in supporting the Viet Minh approached very closely to outright aggression. In the face of the grave threat to all the free community of the

³ See editorial note, p. 414.

Pacific Area, there was a need for united action to meet the threat. Consultation among the States of Southeast Asia was a necessary prelude to united action and the Secretary was in the process of discussing with the diplomatic representatives here of the various Governments what might be done to reach agreement on political action to meet the threat.

The Ambassador inquired if some sort of a joint declaration was contemplated. Mr. Robertson said that something of the sort might be considered. The Secretary had called in the Ambassadors of all the Governments particularly concerned and was reviewing the problem with them.

The Ambassador asked about possible action which might follow if a joint warning by a community of free nations were not heeded by the Communist side.

The Assistant Secretary said that agreement of course was prerequisite to any sort of action, political or otherwise, and that the current consultations were to explore the possibility of agreement as to what should be done under various circumstances.

3. *Postponement of Consideration of Proposed Sino-American Security Pact*

Assistant Secretary Robertson said in reference to the proposal of the Chinese Government for a bilateral security pact,⁴ that we had made a recommendation that such a pact be negotiated, and that negotiations be opened before the Geneva Conference convened.

However, there was much detailed spade work to be done before authorization to negotiate such a pact and agreement as to the provisions it should embody, could be obtained throughout all the interested quarters of the Executive Branch of the Government. Furthermore, members of both Houses of Congress had to be consulted. The Secretary felt that it was a physical impossibility to complete this process in the short time remaining before the Geneva Conference. Many of the officials who would be involved in obtaining clearance for a pact were deeply involved in preparations for Geneva.

The Ambassador asked if it would be correct to say that the matter had been placed before the Secretary; that the Secretary had not made a decision on the policy question involved, but had decided that consideration of the matter would have to be postponed in view of the lack of opportunity to examine it adequately before Geneva?

Mr. Robertson said he thought this was a reasonably accurate description of the situation.

⁴ For documentation on the proposed security pact between the United States and the Republic of China, see volume XIV.

396.1 GE/4-764

Memorandum of Conversation, by Walter Treumann of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, April 7, 1954.

Subject: Soviet *Aide-Mémoire* of April 5 regarding the Geneva Conference.¹

Participants: Mr. Joy of the British Embassy
Mr. Millet of the French Embassy
Mr. Young, NA
Mr. Treumann, NA

Mr. Joy and Mr. Millet dropped in on their own initiative after today's meeting of "the sixteen." They wished to discuss the Soviet *aide-mémoire* of April 5 regarding arrangements for the Geneva Conference.

Mr. Millet outlined his government's reaction to the Soviet *aide-mémoire* as follows:

1. With regard to the second paragraph of the Soviet *aide-mémoire*, the French Government believes that the Berlin decision implied that the four powers invite all other interested governments to Geneva. Whereas the invitation itself was made by the four major powers, the participation of all governments at Geneva would be on an equal basis. There had never been the implication in the Berlin decision that "representatives of all five indicated powers shall take part on an equal basis in examination of all questions relating to the conference." Rather, it was the implication that all nineteen participating delegations at Geneva should be on an equal basis.

2. With regard to paragraph three of the Soviet *aide-mémoire*, the French Government wishes to reserve its position on languages used in the Indochina phase of the Geneva Conference until this question comes up. When it does, a decision should be reached at Geneva.

3. With regard to paragraph five of the Soviet *aide-mémoire*, the French Government believes that the question of interpreters should be decided at the conference itself. In the meantime, we should let Moscow know that we will use UN and our own interpreters.

Mr. Joy expressed agreement with the French interpretation of the Berlin decision, but offered no other comments concerning the Soviet *aide-mémoire* at this time. He said that the UK would offer formal comments on this matter after a draft U.S. reply is received.

Mr. Young, Mr. Millet and Mr. Joy then discussed the question of expenditures for common services by the participants. It was decided that alternative formulas would be put before the next meeting of the sixteen nations for their comments.²

¹ For text, see telegram 1196 from Moscow, Apr. 5, p. 70.

² For a memorandum of this meeting, Apr. 20 see p. 119.

396.1 GE/4-764

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs (Young)

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, April 7, 1954.

Subject: Views of the United Kingdom Foreign Office on Soviet *Aide-Mémoire* of April 5, 1954.¹

Participants: Mr. M. G. L. Joy, First Secretary, British Embassy
Mr. Kenneth T. Young, Jr., Director, Office of Northeast Asian Affairs

Mr. Joy called Mr. Young to inform him of the following Foreign Office views on the Soviet *aide-mémoire* of April 5, 1954:

1. It is hoped that the State Department will not think it is necessary to argue further about the position of the Chinese. The Soviet note is not inaccurate, even if misleading. Therefore, the Foreign Office suggests that we ignore paragraph 2 in our reply.

2. It is suggested that we simply note agreement on 5 languages for the Korean phase and settle languages for Indochina at the Conference itself.

3. Soviet *Aide-Mémoire* is vague and inconclusive on enlistment of qualified interpreters, which must be decided before Conference meets.

4. Soviet *Aide-Mémoire* does not reply to the suggestion to send an administrative officer to Geneva to discuss details. A prior condition is to send a Soviet officer.

Mr. Young told Mr. Joy that the Department of State could not accept point 3 above, but that it would agree in principle on the other points.

¹ For text, see telegram 1196 from Moscow, Apr. 5, p. 70.

396.1 GE/4-764

*Memorandum Prepared in the Department of State*¹

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] April 7, 1954.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE PARIS WORKING GROUP ON
INDOCHINA PHASE AT GENEVA

1. *Objectives and Tactics of Working Group*

a. The objective of the Working Group is to shore up the French so that they do not adopt a position at Geneva which would mean, directly or indirectly, the loss of Indochina to the Communists. Its

¹ Drafted by Bonsal of PSA, Stelle of S/P, and McBride of WE.

role would be to conduct a holding operation pending the arrival of the Secretary in Paris on April 21 or 22. The Working Group, which will include a representative of the Department of Defense, will commence talks with the British and French on Tuesday, April 13, in Paris. A brief press statement to this effect will be released then, although the Paris press already has this information.

b. The tactics of the Working Group are to advance no general position but rather to listen to the French proposals. Our representatives should express their views along the following general lines:

2. *US Position To Be Presented by Working Group*

a. At Berlin it was understood with Bidault that France would not agree to any arrangement that would directly or indirectly result in the turnover of the area to the Communists, while we would retain full freedom of action to refrain from any agreement at all at Geneva. We are confident France will not take any step at Geneva which will jeopardize our Berlin understanding.² This is our point of departure.

b. Insofar as the possibility of US concessions to the Chinese Communists is concerned, the US position was made clear in the Secretary's March 29 speech,³ and we should stand firmly on this position. This point should be made to the British and French, with especial reference to the following paragraph:

"The United States Delegation will go to Geneva in an effort to bring about a united and independent Korea, from which Communist China will have withdrawn its army of invasion. Also, we hope that any Indochina discussion will serve to bring the Chinese Communists to see the danger of their apparent design for the conquest of Southeast Asia, so that they will cease and desist. We shall not, however, be disposed to give Communist China what it wants from us, merely to buy its promises of future good behavior."

c. We are of course fully cognizant of the French domestic situation, the pressure to end the war in France, and the warweariness of the French people after eight years of the struggle. We agreed to having Indochina discussed at the Geneva Conference for the purpose of helping the French Government to resist these domestic pressures by exposing the real Communist position. We realize that because of these pressures the French Government must give the appearance of exploring every possibility for reaching a settlement which would safeguard France's interests, responsibilities and commitments with regard to the Indochina war.

² The informal understanding between France, the United Kingdom, and the United States with respect to Chinese Communist representation at the Geneva Conference. See footnote 3, p. 497.

³ Printed in Department of State *Bulletin*, Apr. 12, 1954, pp. 539-542. See editorial note, p. 487.

d. The Working Group should set forth and endeavor to secure French and British agreement to the general principles which the US believes must be firmly adhered to in any solution of the Indochina problem. The general principles which should be established are that the US, the UK, and the French have common obligations to see to it that any settlement with the Communists would not: (1) Result in or tend to result in a turning over of the politically important and strategic area of Indochina to Communist control; (2) Jeopardize the security of the French Union forces; (3) Jeopardize the freedom of the peoples of Indochina who have been loyally supporting the anti-Communist effort; (4) Endanger the prestige and status of France or her allies.

e. Having established these general principles the Working Group should explore with the French and British whatever types of settlements the French or British might propose (such as plebiscite, partition, coalition government, etc.), drawing out the French and British on how such settlements might work out in practice, testing the possible results of such settlements against the established general principles, and indicating how such settlements fell short of meeting the general principles. The Working Group should be prepared to question the French on the Laniel proposals and to raise, through questioning, the various guarantees and safeguards which would be necessary to make such a plan conform to the general principles.

f. The Working Group should be authorized to express the hope that before Geneva, or at least before substantive discussions at Geneva with regard to Indochina are begun, it will be possible to announce the conclusion of current Franco-Vietnamese negotiations since an announcement to this effect will have favorable repercussions in Vietnam and therefore in the other free-world countries most directly concerned.

3. *Procedural Questions*

a. *Participation*

(1) Emphasize strongly the quadripartite aspect of the decision agreed to at Berlin regarding participation and the US firm opposition to any five power discussion of this issue. The decision as to who will participate in the Indochina discussions in addition to the four Berlin powers and Communist China must be made by the four Berlin powers.

(2) Convey the Secretary's view as stated above again, repeating our position on participation so far as definite only for the US, UK, France, USSR, Communist China, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, and that our position on further participants is not yet firm. Australia, the Philippines and Thailand have expressed an interest in participating to us.

INSTRUCTION BY THE SECRETARIAT

April 7, 1954

To:

- Executive Committees of Viet Back, III, IV, V, and North West Regions
- Hanoi Party Committee
- Central Office for South Vietnam

Recently, France has been suffering heavier defeats; the ruling circles in the US have openly and directly been intervening in the war of aggression in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. They have sent to Indochina an additional number of B26 bombers and US pilots have conducted rescue and supply flights for France in Dien Bien Phu. They have appointed O. Daniel as "head of the military advisors' group" in Indochina. On March 20, they called Ely, French General Chief of Staff to the US to place an order to continue the war in Indochina. On March 29, Dulles, US Secretary of State announced the refusal to let France stop fighting in Indochina, etc.

Yet, our work of propaganda against the US intervention has not been deep and wide among the people. Therefore, we should implement the February 22, 1954 Instruction by the Central Committee. For the occupied areas, we should actively implement the 69th Instruction, dated March 26, 1954, by the Central Committee

With regard to the work of propaganda, [we] should take advantage of the meetings by mass organizations and other meetings to report our victories, expose the intervening schemes and plans by the US, boost the hatred by our cadres, troops, and people of the US imperialists, consolidate the determination for the resistance, and step up all the work under implementation.

The contents of our explanation should be based on the *Nhan Dan* commentary on the 167th issue released on February 25, 1954. [We] should expose crimes by the US, but not make the people afraid of the US.

All the meetings and conferences should produce appeals to the National Committee of Lien Viet and Vietnam Committee for Preserving World Peace.

All the committees must closely direct the work of propaganda against the US and turn the opposition to the US intervention into a mass campaign with good results.

ON BEHALF OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

LE VAN LUONG

(3) Under any circumstances we insist on a formal invitation by the four inviting powers to Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. If the French inquire whether this means inviting the Associated States even if it means also inviting Ho Chi Minh, the group should reply in the affirmative.

(4) We will find it easier to make our own decisions when the French and British have given us their definite views which the Working Group will transmit to Washington.

b. *Other Procedural Questions*

(1) Details of technical arrangements should be referred to the group already working on these questions in Geneva.

(2) Other important procedural points (seating arrangements, chairmanship, western secretary-general) can hardly be settled until the participation question is decided. These points accordingly should await determination at Geneva.

396.1 GE/4-354

*Memorandum of Conversation, by John I. Getz of the Office of
Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs*

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Participation in the Indochina Phase of the Geneva
Conference

Participants: Nong Kimny, Ambassador of Cambodia
Tran Van Kha, Ambassador of Viet-Nam
Ourot Sovannavong, Minister of Laos
FE—Mr. Drumright
PSA—Mr. Getz

The representatives of the Associated States remained to talk with Mr. Drumright following the meeting at which they were informed, along with the Ambassador of Thailand and the Counselor of the Philippine Embassy, of the Secretary's departure for London and Paris.¹

The Cambodian Ambassador took the initiative in expressing his great distress that the Associated States had not yet been invited to participate in the Geneva Conference, and pointed out that only eighteen days remained before the Conference opened. For his part,

¹ Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs Drumright called in the representatives of Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, and the Philippines at 12:30 p. m. to inform them that Secretary Dulles expected to leave on Apr. 10 for conversations in London and Paris "to explore further the question of united action and the steps which might be taken to assure the defense of Southeast Asia against Communism." Memorandum of conversation by Getz of PSA, Apr. 8, not printed. (396.1 GE/4-854)

he stated, he could say that it was Cambodia's firm desire to participate as a full member and not as an observer which would have unfavorable repercussions on the people of his country.

Mr. Drumright replied that two considerations were involved. In the first place, France was expected to take the initiative in this question, and we had as yet heard little from the French. It was possible that this would be discussed in Paris next week. Secondly, it appears that the question of participation can be decided finally only by the four Berlin powers in meeting together, and this would probably not occur before the actual opening of the Conference. The Ambassador acknowledged this explanation but gave the strong impression that he was not satisfied. He referred to the Berlin communiqué and its reference to the participation of "interested states" in the Indochina talks at Geneva; he asked if any states could be more interested than Cambodia, Laos, and Viet-Nam.

The Ambassador of Viet-Nam and the Minister of Laos volunteered nothing, but confirmed to Mr. Drumright that their Governments had not made known their position on the subject of participation in the Conference.

PPS files, lot 65 D 101, "Indochina"

Memorandum by Charles P. Stelle of the Policy Planning Staff

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] April 9, 1954.

Subject: Formula for an Indochina Settlement

Problem: To formulate a position on an Indochina settlement which would be acceptable to the United States and which although unacceptable to the Communists would appear reasonable to world opinion, and which in the unlikely event that the Communists were willing to sacrifice their position in Indochina, would provide some face-saving elements to facilitate their capitulation.

Elements of the formula:

From the point of view of the United States a settlement in Indochina should provide for a disarmament of the Vietminh forces, and a cessation of all Chinese Communist assistance to the Vietminh forces. These two provisions, if carried out, would in effect provide for a French and Associated States victory in Indochina. From the point of view of the United States free elections, or the withdrawal of

¹ Directed to Bowie who forwarded the memorandum to the Secretary, stating in a memorandum for the Secretary (Apr. 9, not printed, attached to source text) that he was attaching an outline prepared as a basis for discussion of a formula for a settlement "from our point of view." A handwritten notation on Bowie's memorandum indicates that the Secretary saw it.

French forces, should occur only after the disarmament of Vietnam forces and the cessation of Chinese Communist assistance. Nevertheless from the point of view of world opinion any formula for an Indochina settlement should provide at some stage for free elections and the withdrawal of French forces. To be acceptable to world opinion the formula should also provide for full freedom of the Associated States, amnesty for the disarmed Vietnam, and international supervision of free elections. The following formula attempts to incorporate these elements in a manner which will assure that elections will be carried out only after disarmament of the Vietnam has actually occurred.

Formula:

1. France affirms the independence and sovereignty of the Associated States of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and declares that as an instance of their sovereign equality they are completely free to elect for themselves whether to remain in or to depart from the French Union.

2. All parties to the agreement (including the U.S.S.R., Communist China, and the Vietnam), in the interest of establishing those conditions of peace and order which are the prerequisites for the full and free expression of the popular will of the peoples of the states of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, agree to cease all hostile acts or support of such acts against the present governmental authorities of the three states, and to call on all individuals and groups who have hitherto been undertaking hostile action against these authorities to lay down their arms and cooperate in the establishment of peace and order, and to cooperate with the authorities of the three states in the establishment of peace and order.

3. The Governments of the Associated States agree that individuals and groups who have hitherto been conducting hostile acts against these Governments but who now lay down their arms and cooperate with these Governments will be granted amnesty for their previous acts against these Governments and will be assured of personal safety and freedom.

4. The parties to the agreements agree to invite the United Nations to constitute a Peace Commission to assist in the establishment of peace and order in the Associated States and to grant to this Commission all facilities, privileges, freedom of movement and assistance which the Commission may deem necessary to ensure:

a. That all acts of hostility against the Governments of the Associated States cease, and that all those individuals and groups who have hitherto been conducting such hostilities lay down their arms and

cooperate with the Governments of the Associated States in the establishment of peace and order;

b. That all assistance of any kind to individuals or groups who fail to lay down their arms or fail to cooperate with the Governments of the Associated States cease, including the provision of supplies, military advice, or military training or assistance in areas within or outside the territories of the Associated States.

c. That all individuals or groups who lay down their arms and cooperate with the Governments of the Associated States in the establishment of peace and order receive adequate guarantees of personal safety and freedom.

5. At such time as the United Nations Peace Commission is able to report that all hostile acts or support of such hostile acts against the Governments of the Associated States has ceased; that all individuals and groups who have hitherto been conducting hostile acts against these Governments have laid down their arms and are cooperating with these Governments in the establishment of peace and order, and that all such individuals have received adequate guarantees of personal safety and freedom, the Governments of the States of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia agree to invite the United Nations to send Electoral Commissions to their territories and to grant to these Commissions all facilities, privileges, freedom of movement, and assistance which the Commissions may deem necessary to ensure:

a) Preparation of electoral laws acceptable to the Commission including guarantees, among others, of freedom of movement, freedom of presentation of candidates, immunity of candidates, freedom from arbitrary arrest or victimization, freedom of association and political meetings, freedom of expression for all, freedom of the press, radio, and television and free circulation of newspapers, periodicals, etc., secrecy of voting, and secrecy of polling stations and ballot boxes;

b) Holding of free elections;

c) Effective supervision by the Commissions of such elections to insure that the elections take place in genuine freedom and in strict conformity with the provisions of electoral laws.

6. France agrees that following the holding of free elections, or at such time as the United Nations Electoral Commissions may recommend as advisable to ensure complete freedom of the elections in the three States of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, it will undertake the withdrawal of French forces from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Nothing in this agreement, however, shall be held to debar France from providing such military assistance and advice as any one of the three States may request.

7. All parties to the agreement agree to respect the political independence and territorial integrity of the three States of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and undertake to give support and assistance to

the three states, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations, and in accordance with their own constitutional processes, should there be any attack against the political independence or territorial integrity of any of these states.

Editorial Note

For information regarding a United States note and a tripartite *aide-mémoire* in response to the Soviet note of April 5, see pages 88-91.

396.1 GE/4-1054: Telegram

The Ambassador in Japan (Allison) to the Department of State

SECRET

Tokyo, April 10, 1954—4 p. m.

2468. 1. In examining implications Geneva conference for Japan, important to note at outset that government has brought representation. When Right Socialist Diet spokesman raised question early March Prime Minister stated flatly government would not attempt seek participation. This not due lack of interest, but realistic appreciation that having received no invitation, any bid for participation would not be favorably received and to make such a bid would only embarrass US and result in public snub.

2. Beyond this general motivation, probably lies feeling Japan stands gain little or nothing from participation since conference is not expected by most Japanese to produce any basic or lasting settlement Far Eastern problems. Continuation of Japanese policy planners is probably that Far East will remain fluid state for considerable period and Japanese interests therefore best served by waiting until nation strong enough to play more independent role than now possible due Japan's political and economic dependence on US.

3. In spite of above, little doubt that Geneva proceedings will be followed with keen interest here in contrast Berlin conference which in their minds was concerned with problems relating to another world. There is wide recognition here that Geneva deliberations will have potentially vast significance for Japan even though no change in Far Eastern *status quo* likely result from conference. Japanese feel US statements indicate no room for compromise and Communists not likely retreat from present positions of power in North Korea and India unless high price paid.

4. Few Japanese in responsible positions expect unified Korea or any other kind of Korean settlement to emerge, but most Japanese continue indulge in good deal of wishful thinking on subject. Japanese

Government and people would probably welcome idea of unified Korean "buffer state", neutralized under effective international guarantee by great powers, including Japan due general feeling it would eliminate primary source of tension in Far East between USSR and Communist world, reduce to minimum danger of clash, which Japan might become involved, and facilitate establishment of normal diplomatic and economic relations between Japan and Communist USSR. (Danger Communist infiltration and eventual control under such circumstances unfortunately not taken seriously; many Japanese in fact think danger greater under present circumstances than with inefficient and corrupt ROK Government providing "hothouse" for Communist growth.) Also hopefully believed unified neutralized Korea under new government might be easier for Japan to deal with than present ROK Government. In this connection it has been suggested Japan go slow on negotiation settlement with ROK until dust settles and Korean situation "stabilized".

5. Looming behind Korea and Indochina issues and of overriding importance to Japan is question of what kind of relationship between Japan and Chinese mainland can be achieved. Japanese press and official reaction to Berlin decision to hold Geneva conference characterized by strong feeling status of Peking regime greatly enhanced, that US agreed to what in essence was a five-power conference, and that ability of Chinese Communists to speak on Asian problems increased. Press also speculated that regardless of Geneva outcome, Chinese Communists now convinced need for foreign trade to carry through their program of national development, and this offers possibilities which Japan cannot ignore.

6. In order consolidate regime's internal control and develop nation's industrial and military power, Chinese Communists might conceivably agree at Geneva to settlements of Korean and Indochinese struggles embodying major concessions to free world positions those areas. One respected Foreign Office source has expressed fear such conciliatory compromise of action on Communists' part, presumably resulting in major relaxation of tension in Far East, could have disastrous effect in Japan. With threat of Communist aggression apparently removed, emotional Japanese people would be strongly inclined to throw down their guard and "buy" Communist peace offensive. Japan's embryonic rearmament effort might then receive setback, disposition toward neutralism would be strengthened here, and pressure increased to remove controls on China trade and establish diplomatic relations with Peking. In move toward latter step Japan might be tempted to Soviet move to seat Japan and Communist China in UN "bank basis."

¹ For documentation on this matter, see vol. III, pp. 620 ff. and 802 ff.

INSTRUCTION BY THE SECRETARIAT

April 10, 1954

With regard to the celebration of May 1, 1954

To: Regional and Provincial
Executive Committees

I. MEANING AND OBJECTIVE OF MAY 1, 1954

This May 1, according to the policy adopted by the Third World Labor Union Congress, working people in capitalist, colonized and semi-colonized countries will stand up against the oppressors and exploiters to "win and protect the labor rights, liberty, and democracy," in close coordination with the struggle for reduction of international tension, national independence, and preservation of world peace.

On this May 1, working people in the Soviet Union, China, and other people's democracies will show their great force of construction for the consolidation of peace and good life under socialism and communism.

The Vietnamese working people celebrate May 1 when:

- Our troops and people are gaining victories after one another, especially those in Dien Bien Phu; the resistance in Cambodia and Laos are also gaining glorious victories.
- Peasants in the liberated areas, under the leadership of the Party are struggling for reduction of taxation and land reform with a view to abolishing the whole landlord class, smashing the force supportive to the imperialist aggressors, and providing peasants with land.
- The US is stepping up its intervention in the war in Indochina and at the same time urging France to conscript troops and exploit our people with all methods in order to implement the policy of "using Vietnamese to fight Vietnamese, feeding war with war."
- Under the pressure by people in the world, because of the policy of peace by the Soviet Union and victories gained by the Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese people, the imperialists have to accept the Soviet proposal to convene the Geneva Conference late this April to seek ways to peacefully solve the Korea problem and end the war in Indochina.

Therefore, for people in the world as well as in Vietnam, this May 1 is of a great significance. People in the world will initiate a broad movement to stop the warlike imperialists, demand for the solution of conflicts in the world through peace negotiations, and reduce tensions in the world situation. With regard to Vietnam, May 1 this year must be a day of encouraging and educating people and workers across the country about patriotism in combination with internationalism in order to step up the immediate tasks that include:

- Fighting the enemy and assisting the fronts
- Sustaining people's movement for tax reduction and land reform
- Supporting the Geneva Conference and opposing the US intervention in the war in Indochina.

Especially in the occupied areas, [we] should mobilize the people to step up the guerrilla warfare, struggle against troop conscription, forced labor, mobilize the enemy troops, and fight against the enemy's raids, so as to contribute to the efforts by people of the whole country to defeat the Navarre Plan and the US plan of intervention.

May 1 should not only be celebrated among the working people, but also among people of other social strata. It is necessary to make all the strata to believe in the leadership by President Ho, the Party and Government, in the great force of the working class and peace loving people in the world, to boost the solidarity at home and abroad to fight for genuine national independence and just peace.

III. SOME FOCAL POINTS FOR THIS YEAR'S CELEBRATION OF MAY 1

1. This year's celebration should closely combine with the movement of emulation in fighting against the enemy, boosting production, assisting the front, reducing taxation, and conducting the land reform. We should boost the spirit of international solidarity of May 1 to encourage and educate our troops and people to step up the emulation for fulfilling the immediate tasks.
2. At the local level, meetings should be held to celebrate May 1, but big meetings should be avoided not to create obstacles to the work being carried out. In specific:

- Factories should hold meetings within their premises, or factory workers hold celebrating meetings together with local people
- In the countryside, meetings should be held on the commune level so that they can be short, thus not making people tired
- Workshops or military units should celebrate separately. Fighting units should base on their conditions to celebrate in the way that would not interfere with the fighting plans
- Schools should hold meetings separately or together with local people; or several offices should organize joint meetings

[We] should resolutely prevent the thoughts of subjectivity and underestimation of the enemy by organizing big events in the daylight with lots of flags and banners such as observed in many places during the month of solidarity with the Soviet Union and China earlier this year.

With regard to timing, it is not necessary to fix the date on May 1. Decision on timing will be dependent on the work requirement and actual conditions.

3. In the meetings, it is necessary to disseminate the appeal by the World Labor Union, to review the work of emulation and the peace movement at the local level, i.e. people's participation in the movement and implementation of the assigned tasks in this regard. This is a necessary thing to do, because on April 20, people in the world observed the 5th anniversary of the Conference of Champions of World Peace for the first time met in Paris to give birth to the world peace movement. Therefore, May 1 would be celebrated with in linkage with April 20.

In these meetings, we should instruct the people to adopt petitions submitted to H.E. Ton Duc Thang, chairman of Lien Viet National Committee with the following points:

- Opposition to the US intervention in the war in Indochina
- Support to the Geneva Conference with a view to finding ways to peacefully solve the Korea problem and end the war in Indochina
- Emulation in production and fighting in the heroic spirit of May 1.

In the villages where land reform is conducted, the point about implementation of the Party's land reform policy should be included.

4. In the occupied areas, we should base on specific situations and conditions to determine suitable forms of celebration.

III. THE MAIN SLOGANS FOR MAY 1 THIS YEAR

- Long live the spirit of solidarity and struggle of May 1
- Long live peace and democracy in the world
- Long live the Soviet Union and China, the pillars of world peace
- Strongly oppose the US blatant intervention in Indochina
- Support the Geneva Conference
- Applause to the fighting spirit of the French people to end the war in Indochina
- Applause to the Cambodian and Lao people's struggle for national independence
- Render best efforts to support the front line and the soldiers
- Step up the fight to abolish the landlord class, provide tillers with land

- Emulate in production
- Long live the solidarity among Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos
- Long live the independent Vietnam
- Long live the world labor union
- Long live the Vietnamese Labor Union
- Long live the Workers' Party of Vietnam
- Long live President Ho
- Long live Chairman Mao
- Long live Chairman Malenkov

In the occupied areas [we] should raise the following banners:

- Down with the French warmongers and US interventionists
- Opposition to troops conscription and the use of Vietnamese to fight Vietnamese
- The French government must negotiate with the Ho Chi Minh government
- Peace in Indochina
- Long live the independent and unified Vietnam
- And other slogans demanding every day interests for the mass

In short, the nature of this Instruction is that [we take advantage of the May 1 occasion] to step up the immediate tasks, especially those related to fighting the enemy, supporting the front line, conducting the movement for tax reduction and land reform in combination with the tasks of supporting the Geneva Conference and opposing the US intervention in Indochina.

Upon receiving this instruction, executive committees of all levels must - based on specific conditions in the locality and in coordination with labor union and the Fatherfront organizations - adopt implementation plans and report them to the Central committee.

ON BEHALF OF THE SECRETARIAT

TRUONG CHINH

friendly elements. On military situation, French hazarded present military equilibrium might become somewhat more favorable to French union particularly if Associated States forces developed as planned. French pointed out that they thought the following elements might favor negotiations for a cease-fire and for an eventual settlement: (a) Soviets may not care see IC in these hands or care risk generalized war (French attach considerable importance to expressions of goodwill and of a desire to be of service which they have received from Soviet Ambassador here); (b) Chinese fear possibility US intervention; and (c) both Vietnamese and Viet Minh do not care see extension Chinese influence in Vietnam. Although admitting extreme nature difficulties involved in attempting find political settlement IC, French indicated that was conceivable that there could be a cease-fire in IC without self to settlement as in Korea.

US delegation limited itself to statement regarding necessity keep IC out of Communist hands and expression of interest in French military study of model cease-fire conditions in view extreme importance of control and guarantees.

DILLON

Editorial Note

For the text of telegram 1253, April 14, from Moscow, concerning delivery of the United States and tripartite replies to the Soviet *de-mémoire* of April 5, see page 96.

Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 263

The Director of the Office of Foreign Military Affairs of the Department of Defense (Davis) to the Coordinator for the United States Delegation to the Geneva Conference (Johnson)

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, April 15, 1954.

DEAR ALEX: This Department is becoming increasingly concerned regarding the lack of a U.S. position in preparation for the Indochina phase of the Conference to be held at Geneva. I fully appreciate the difficulties which, up until this time, have made it very difficult to draft a position on Indochina. However, in view of the short time remaining until the Conference convenes at Geneva, it is essential that consideration be given to the U.S. position.

It appears to me that ample guidance is available to provide the basis for an initial draft of a U.S. Government position on Indochina

for Geneva. NSC 5405¹ as well as reports of the Special Committee set forth, in positive terms, U.S. policy with respect to Indochina and Southeast Asia. At the meetings of the Indochina Working Group the need for a U.S. position on Indochina has been discussed at considerable length, but to date no progress has been made. In order to initiate action on a draft position, the Defense representatives at the working level submitted an outline of views to the State members of the Indochina Working Group. A copy of this paper is attached for your information.

In view of the foregoing I strongly recommend that immediate action be taken to draft a U.S. position paper on Indochina for the Conference at Geneva. I would be glad to discuss this matter further at your convenience or at a meeting of the Assistant Secretaries.²

Sincerely yours, For the Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA):

A. C. DAVIS

[Attachment]

DRAFT

UNITED STATES POSITION ON INDOCHINA TO BE TAKEN AT GENEVA

Assumptions

1. NSC 5405, approved 16 January 1954, continues to be the policy of the United States with respect to Southeast Asia.
2. It is highly improbable that Communist agreement could be obtained to a negotiated settlement which would be consistent with basic United States objectives in Southeast Asia. (JCS memorandum, 12 March 1954).³
3. At Geneva, the French Government under continued domestic pressure will favor a negotiated settlement of the fighting in Indochina at almost any price.

¹ For the text of NSC 5405, Jan. 16, 1954. "United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect to Southeast Asia," and related documentation, see volume XII.

² President's Special Committee on Indochina of the National Security Council. For a memorandum prepared by a subcommittee of the Special Committee titled "Military Implications of the U.S. Position on Indochina in Geneva," with a covering memorandum of Mar. 17 by Gen. Graves B. Erskine, Chairman of the working group of the Special Committee, see p. 475.

³ A meeting scheduled for Apr. 20 between Admiral Davis and Johnson, Merchant, Robertson, MacArthur, Bowie, and Phleger to consider this letter was cancelled at the request of the Department of Defense. It was not rescheduled. For additional documentation on Admiral Davis' letter see Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 263.

⁴ *Antic.* p. 472.

Discussion

The French Government has been under considerable domestic pressure to terminate the hostilities in Indochina. In order to forestall a showdown prior to Geneva, M. Laniel, in a public statement, proposed six points as conditions for a cease-fire in Indochina.⁵ These six points would unquestionably be unacceptable to the Communists, particularly if reinforced by additional conditions to assure enforcement of the armistice terms. However, domestic pressure on the French Government to terminate hostilities is expected to increase during the course of the Geneva Conference, rather than decrease. In view of this, it would be extremely difficult for the French Government not to accept an agreement which would be less than the conditions of the Laniel proposal. It should be noted that although the above factors make it almost certain that the French Government will seek agreement at Geneva at practically any price, there has been no indication that this "price" has been considered realistically by the French Government or public.

Communist tactics at Geneva are likely to follow closely those tactics employed by Communist negotiators at Panmunjom. Communist intransigence and other tactics, short of actually breaking off negotiations, led to prolonged discussions which worked to the disadvantage of our side. As a result, the Korean Agreement in its final form produced an armistice bringing about a cease-fire but with which it has been impossible to assure Communist compliance.⁶ On the other hand, in Korea the United Nations Command is required to live up faithfully to the terms of the armistice. It should be noted that this problem would be considerably more complex and disadvantageous to the French in Indochina.

The Department of Defense has considered the military implications of terminating the fighting in Indochina under conditions less than a military defeat of organized Viet Minh forces. It was the conclusion of the Department of Defense, as indicated in Assumption No. 2 above, that inasmuch as it is highly improbable that Communist agreement could be obtained to a negotiated settlement which would be consistent with basic United States objectives in Southeast Asia, a continuation of fighting with the objective of seeking a military victory appears as the only alternative in Indochina. (JCS memorandum, Tab A.7)

⁵ See telegram 3240 from Paris, Mar. 6, p. 435.

⁶ For documentation on the Panmunjom negotiations and the Korean Armistice Agreement, see volume xv.

⁷ Dated Mar. 12, p. 472.

Conclusions

If the Communists follow the same tactics they employed at Panmunjom, they will be prepared for a long and difficult negotiation. The French will find it almost impossible to withstand pressures for a weakening of their position (the Laniel proposal) and will most likely give way under these pressures. Further, the French, once engaged in a negotiation, will of necessity be required to seek every possible means of settlement.

The United States should not join with the French in any Indochina negotiations at Geneva unless there is prior French commitment not to accept terms leading directly or indirectly to the loss of Indochina. This commitment should be positive and definite, for it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the United States to disassociate itself from the negotiations once they had begun. Thus, if the negotiations result in a settlement leading to the ultimate loss of Indochina, the United States would have participated in this loss.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- a. The United States adopt the position that it is highly improbable that the Communist agreement could be obtained to a negotiated settlement at Geneva which would be consistent with basic United States objectives in Southeast Asia;
- b. The United States position for Geneva be positive and definite that we will agree to no settlement which would in any way compromise our objectives with respect to Southeast Asia;
- c. The French Government be informed of the United States position (a and b above) at the earliest possible date;
- d. Concurrently with informing the French of the United States position, consideration should also be given to the following pressures to be brought on the French if circumstances dictate:

(1) If France through one means or another countenances a Communist takeover in Indochina, it will mean far more than the end of France's position in the Far East. Rather it will be a public exhibition of France's inability to carry on any longer as an equal member with the United States and the United Kingdom of the Big Three;

(2) The effect of abandonment would be so severe in North Africa as to have serious repercussions not only on the French position there, but also on the nature of the relationship between France and the United States in that area;

(3) If the Indochina war ends on terms considered unsatisfactory by the United States, our dollar aid to France would, of course, automatically cease.

(4) Beyond these points, conclusion of negotiations by France resulting in Communist domination of Indochina, an area of extreme strategic interest to the free world, would result in consequences in

Europe as well as elsewhere whose seriousness would have no apparent limitation.

e. If the French Government refuses to agree to the United States position, the United States Government should not participate in the Indochina discussions at Geneva;

f. The United States immediately determine whether in the event of (e) above, we should approach the Governments of the Associated States and our allies with a view to continuing the struggle in Indochina either jointly with the French, in concert with our allies, or, if necessary, unilaterally.

396.1 GE/4-1654 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Dillon) to the Department of State

SECRET PRIORITY

PARIS, April 16, 1954—1 p. m.

3919. Repeated information Saigon 441. Following tripartite analysis participation question United States element working group Indochina phase Geneva conference recommends US adopt following position:

1. US, UK, France and USSR are inviting powers.
2. Communist China was designed [*designated*] by four powers as power to be invited at Berlin and will attend. Under no circumstances, however, will Peking be considered inviting power or take part deliberations at Geneva to discuss other participants.
3. France should invite formally Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos attend as full participants.
4. Formula restricting conference to adjoining countries should be adopted and accordingly France should convey invitations Burma and Thailand. France should convey these invitations same as United States has done in Korean phases.
5. We do not favor presence Viet Minh and presumably case against such presence will be made by French. However, if Soviets insist neither we nor French would presumably break on this point. If Soviets insist on presence Viet Minh, they should do the inviting.
6. If Soviets propose invitation to Pathet Laos and Khmer Issaraks we should strongly oppose on grounds they do not exist and have not been recognized even by Soviets.
7. Australia, Philippines and Ceylon who have expressed interest in attending should be informed (Australia and Ceylon by United Kingdom, Philippines by United States) participation limited to big four Governments of Indochina and bordering states (of which Communist China of course one). Other inquiring states could be given same answer. From what British tell us they could probably explain this formula to satisfaction Commonwealth states.
8. Above would be conveyed by working group to French and British representatives Paris on Tuesday April 20 as United States position.

tion which we hope is acceptable to them as tripartite one to be taken by Foreign Ministers with Russians when question discussed with them at Geneva.

In reaching above recommendations working group feels position generally acceptable British and French though former would find it easier have Commonwealth nations present. On balance therefore it is probably good compromise. We feel it highly desirable have non-Communist Asian States other than Associated States present since then even if Communist propaganda attacks legitimacy these states and disparages their presence, conference would still have seven other participants including two Asian states whose legitimacy they can hardly question. In addition there are obvious psychological and other advantages accruing our side from presence Burma and Thailand. We would not favor other participants because there is no other formula which would prevent India, Indonesia and others from applying for membership. Therefore although we realize Australia for instance would be most helpful, we inclined attempt restrict participants to eleven indicated above.

We would appreciate Department's comments above proposed position. We realize considerations Washington working party united action Southeast Asia may cause Department adopt position including ANZUS powers and Philippines as well, from viewpoint working group discussions, however above formula appears most easily acceptable on tripartite basis.

DILLON

751G.00/4-1654 : Telegram

The Ambassador in France (Dillon) to the Department of State

TOP SECRET

PARIS, April 16, 1954—1 p. m.

3921. Repeated information Saigon 443. Press Defense and JCS. Limited distribution. Reference Embassy telegram 3897 to Department repeated Saigon 440.¹ In tripartite conversations April 15 French discussed further their tentative views (paragraph 4 reference telegram) re desirability approaching Indochina problem at Geneva on military plane first. As possible first move this direction and one designed limit ultimate consideration Indochina problem to Vietnam, French indicated that they were considering possibility proposing that Viet Minh withdraw from Laos and Cambodia and offering in return that French Union forces withdraw entirely from Cambodia and from all of Laos except bases of Xieng Khouang and Seno provided for in

¹ Dated Apr. 14, p. 517.

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SECRETTripartite Meeting in Paris
on
Indo-China.

INDEXED

I spent Thursday, April 15, in Paris for discussions with French and American representatives. I had separate talks with M. Chauvel, the French Ambassador in Berne, who is co-ordinating plans for Geneva on the French side, and with Mr. Achilles, the United States Minister in Paris, and Mr. Brossat of the State Department. They both gave me full accounts of Mr. Dulles' talks with M. Bidault. Both sides seemed reasonably satisfied with the way they had gone and with the final Paris communique, which was closely modelled on that issued in London. Mr. Dulles had pressed his point about the importance of early agreement on full independence within the French Union for the Associate States and M. Bidault had given assurances that he understood the importance of not selling out to Communism in Indo-China. There seems to have been no question of immediate American intervention in Indo-China and nothing of special significance seems to have passed. The Australian Ambassador in Paris, whom I also saw, was likewise satisfied with the agreements reached in London and Paris. The Americans seem to have regarded the London visit as the more important part of the journey.

2. We also had two full tripartite meetings, which were useful but inconclusive. On the main question of the proposals to be put forward at Geneva for a possible settlement in Indo-China the French had still not worked out their ideas. A further meeting is to be held in Paris on Wednesday, at which Her Majesty's Embassy will represent us and at which the French hope to produce a plan for an opening position, which we all agreed to be desirable to forestall possible Communist initiatives. The French are thinking of a proposal for the withdrawal of Vietminh forces from Laos and Cambodia, in return for which French Union forces in Laos (there are none at present in Cambodia) would withdraw to the two bases, Xieng Khonang and Seno, provided for in the Franco-Laotian Treaty. This would prepare the way for a further proposal for the regrouping of forces in Viet Nam on the lines indicated in M. Laniel's conditions for a cease-fire indicated in his speech to the French National Assembly. This further proposal would be presented as a necessary preliminary to the re-establishment of political order in Indo-China. The French said they were unwilling to take the initiative in making proposals for a political settlement. They were bound to base themselves on the position that the Government of Viet Nam was the only legitimate Government and must be enabled to exercise its authority throughout the whole country. They mentioned again to me, but not in the tripartite meetings, the idea of transit rights for China in Tongking and rights in the port of Haiphong. They were not to be drawn at this stage on ideas for an eventual political compromise, though they admitted that French opinion would demand a very serious effort to reach a settlement. The Americans showed themselves suspicious of French ideas and anxious for details of the safeguards to be demanded to ensure that the proposed military withdrawals were in fact carried out. We both pressed the French to complete their current negotiations with Viet Nam on Vietnamese independence. But the French had nothing of interest to impart and seemed doubtful whether agreement would be reached before Geneva.

3. On the question of the participation of "other interested States" in the discussions on Indo-China at Geneva the French were at first inclined to argue that the Vietnamese themselves did not

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want full participation. However, after he had lunched with some of the Viet Nam representatives now in Paris, M. Chauvel admitted that they did but that they were concerned to ensure that the Vietminh were not accorded equal status and to insist that the Viet Nam Government must be fully consulted before this was done. It was agreed that an initial attempt must be made to resist full participation for the Vietminh but that it would probably be impossible to prevent it. It was considered that it should be possible to resist Communist demands that the puppet administrations in Laos (Patet Laos) and Cambodia (KHmer Isserak) should attend.

*we must
be*

*Yes -
I have
also off
wanted
this.*

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4. Both the French and the Americans were inclined to consider that both Siam and Burma should be asked to attend as States bordering on Indo-China. I pointed out that it might be difficult for us, if these countries were asked, to exclude Australia and Ceylon, both of whom had expressed interest. But the French and Americans argued strongly that if these were asked then the field might have to be widened to include the Philippines and others (possibly India and Indonesia who would be unwelcome) and that it would become very difficult to refuse Communist proposals for bringing in their friends. I undertook to consider whether we could agree to limit participants to the two limitrophe States and to let Her Majesty's Embassy have instructions, if possible for next Wednesday's meeting. I think that we should try to persuade Australia and Ceylon (as well as New Zealand and Canada) to accept the idea and be guided by their reactions.

5. The Americans produced a paper on possible Communist tactics at Geneva (of which copies are coming from Paris by Bag). The French and I agreed to provide any comments we might have and any further evidence we might be able to contribute, especially any clues we might have gathered from Peking. I said our information was scanty but that we would see if we could provide any.

6. We agreed that it would be most desirable that the Secretary of State, Mr. Dulles and M. Bidault should, if at all possible, find time during the N.A.T.O. meeting in Paris for a discussion about Geneva. I was asked whether there was any change that the Secretary of State might be able to arrive in Paris earlier than the afternoon of Thursday, April 22. I said I thought there was none. (Mr. Dulles is arriving on Wednesday, April 21.)

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7. It was also agreed that it would probably be necessary for the three Ministers to arrange a meeting with M. Molotov as soon as possible after arrival in Geneva in order to agree about such procedural matters (chairmanship, seating arrangements, etc.) as might still remain unsettled at that time. I pointed out that care would be needed about such "Great Power" meetings in view of Australian and Canadian susceptibilities.

8. We had some discussion about whether any further approach should be made to the Soviet Government to impress upon them again the necessity of their sending a representative to Geneva in advance of the meeting to try to settle outstanding procedural questions; and whether this approach should be used to remind them that the four Powers had a responsibility, arising out of Berlin, to decide

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which were the "other interested States" to be invited on Indo-China. But it was agreed that we must give the Russians a few more days to reply to the Notes addressed to them earlier this week on the technical arrangements for the Conference and on the question of four-Power responsibility before addressing them again.

W.D. Allen

(W.D. Allen)
April 16, 1954.

Secretary of State

Copies to:-

Lord Reading
Sir I. Kirkpatrick
Far Eastern Department
South-East Asia Department
Mr. Mayall, Paris.

W.D. Allen

You may want to ring me up about all this.

*I have always favoured
Siam & Burma only. I said
at the Conference, I think.
We can get away with
that. Once we range
bides, the outcome will
be chaos.*

Received April 21. *W.D. Allen*
I have informed Mr. Reilly in Paris of the S. of S.'s views.

Telegram, Mao Zedong to Huang Kecheng and Su Yu, April 17, 1954

Source: *Mao wengao*, vol. 4, p. 480

Huang (Kecheng) and Su (Yu):

- (1) The opinions of Wei Guoqing and Su Yu should be adopted; the telegram by Peng Dehuai should not be dispatched. (2) Given that it is possible that an armistice could happen in Vietnam, it is not proper for the training of the newly established artillery units to be carried out on the territory of our country, and it is desirable for the cannons to be transported into Vietnam at an earlier time. Please ask Wei Guoqing to make new plans.

Mao Zedong
April 17

Translated for CWIHP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not cite or quote without permission from CWIHP.

and it was essential for us also to have a retreat position. The three Ambassadors expressed great appreciation to the Acting Secretary for the briefing which they had received.

Eisenhower Library, Dulles papers, "Meetings with the President"

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State*¹

[Extract]

TOP SECRET
PERSONAL AND PRIVATE

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA, April 19, 1954.

1. I first went over with the President the draft of a statement which might be issued either by him or by me. I said that Mr. Hagerty was of the opinion that it would be better if I made the statement as The President made a few verbal changes and he proposed what became the final paragraph.²

2. I reported on my trip to London and Paris,³ with which the President was already familiar so far as the main lines were concerned. I added a little "color" with a view to giving a more vivid impression with reference to Churchill and Eden and Laniel and Bidault. I said that our trip had been useful not only in regard to Indochina, but also in regard to EDC, where the talks which MacArthur and I had had with Laniel had, I thought, played a decisive part in helping Laniel to make up his mind in announcing the date for debate in the Chamber on the EDC Treaty.⁴

¹ Secretary Dulles accepted an invitation from President Eisenhower to visit with him at Augusta, Georgia (telegram 3546 to Paris, Apr. 14, 110.11 DU/4-1454) by letter of Apr. 16. In his letter to the President the Secretary wrote: "I would like to have this chance to tell you of the results of my present trip and obtain your guidance before I leave for the NATO Meeting and Geneva Tuesday evening [Apr. 20]. I had useful meetings with Bidault and Laniel in Paris yesterday, which I think will help in moving forward some of our objectives in Indo-China and EDC." (Eisenhower Library, Dulles papers, "Meetings with the President")

² For documentation on the meeting of the North Atlantic Council held at Paris on Apr. 23, see volume v.

³ The Secretary's statement made at Augusta, Georgia on Apr. 19 following his meeting with the President was issued as a White House press release and is printed in the Department of State *Bulletin*, May 3, 1954, pp. 668-669.

⁴ James C. Hagerty wrote in his diary: "He [the Secretary] had prepared two statements: one by himself and another by the President—asked for my advice—recommended that he as Secretary make statement for prestige purposes since he was leaving for NATO and Geneva meetings Tuesday night." (Eisenhower Library, Hagerty papers, Hagerty Diary, Apr. 19, 1954)

⁵ See the extract of telegram 4523 from London, Apr. 13, and editorial note, pp. 514 and 517, respectively.

⁶ For documentation on the proposed establishment of a European Defense Community, see volume v.

The President expressed some chagrin that the Senators had publicly stated that they had not been consulted. It seemed that they had forgotten.⁵

3. I referred to the fact that Mr. Eden had insisted upon calling off the prospective meeting of the 10 Southeast Asia countries to make a beginning on creating the collective defense. I explained that we had compromised on an arrangement which "fuzzed" the matter by combining the 10 with the 16 Korean countries.⁶ I said that I thought this was probably largely due to pressure from Nehru.⁷

4. I told the President that there was still some risk that the Geneva Conference might fail because of Soviet insistence that it should be organized as a "Five Power" conference, including Red China. I said I felt that the Russians, who had vainly fought for this at Berlin, were trying to take advantage of the buildup of world hope in the Geneva Conference to repudiate their Berlin agreement and to put us in a position of either having to accept the five-power concept or be responsible for breaking up the conference. I said I regarded it as vital that the five-power concept should not be accepted. The Berlin understanding was to the contrary and was the "charter" of the Geneva Conference and I saw little use in going into a new conference with the Communists if they started out by repudiating the agreement on which the conference was based. I added that American public and Congressional opinion would be deeply resentful of our throwing away the principle which we had defended, and the acceptance of which we had won at Berlin.

The President was in entire agreement. He suggested that I should hint in my going-away statement that there was still a possibility of

⁵ Senators Leverett Saltonstall of Massachusetts, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and Mike Mansfield of Montana, member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, stated on Apr. 16 that President Eisenhower had not consulted with them on the preparation of his message of Apr. 15 to the Prime Ministers of the six nations signatory to the European Defense Community (Belgium, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands). (*The New York Times*, Apr. 17, 1954, p. 2) The President's message was issued as a White House press release and is printed in the Department of State *Bulletin*, Apr. 26, 1954, pp. 619-620.

⁶ Ambassador Makina called on Secretary Dulles on Apr. 18 and showed him a telegram from Eden which said in effect that the British would not participate in the scheduled meeting of the "Ten on Indochina" called for noon on Apr. 20 with the Secretary. Instead of calling off the meeting the Secretary proposed that representatives from the Southeast Asian nations meet with the 16 nations concerned with Korea and that he would make a report and discuss the Geneva Conference in general terms. For the full text of the memorandum of conversation of this meeting and a previous meeting between Makins and Under Secretary Smith, Apr. 18, see volume xiii. For Eden's reply, see *in/r/c*.

⁷ A news release from Bombay on Apr. 15 suggested that Prime Minister Nehru might take countermeasures against the collective organization for Southeast Asia at the forthcoming conference of the Colombo nations, scheduled to meet on Apr. 28. (*The New York Times*, Apr. 16, 1954, p. 2)

the conference breaking on the "five-power" issue. I indicated I would not want to deal with this on other than a very delicate basis before consulting with the British and French, who so far had stood fast with us.

The President asked what the position would be if we refused to attend and if the others went on without us. I said I felt this was unlikely to happen in relation to the initial, i.e. Korean phase, of the conference because I was confident that the ROK would follow us in this matter, and that any conference about Korea which was not participated in by both the ROK and the United States would be a farce. I said as regards the Indochina conference, that was different because France was principally concerned. However, this phase of the conference had not yet been arranged and the invitees had not been designated.

396.1 GE/4-1954

The British Ambassador (Makins) to the Under Secretary, State (Smith)

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, April 19, 1954.

My DEAR BEDELL: I put to the Foreign Secretary the suggestion which was made when I called on the Secretary of State and you that the meeting tomorrow at the State Department should be a meeting of the "Sixteen" and regarded as a general briefing meeting before the Geneva Conference.¹ The Associated States will be added in view of the Indo-China item on the Conference agenda. It could if necessary be explained that the Secretary had seen all the Ambassadors separately before he left for London and Paris and was seeing them together on account of the time factor.

I have now heard that Mr. Eden agrees to this proposal. He suggests that it might be best to lay the main emphasis on Korea, and that the Indo-China question might rest on the substance of the communiqués issued in London and Paris. In this way any implication that the meetings to begin the work of constituting the proposed South East Asia Conference arrangement would be avoided.

Yours sincerely,

ROGER MAKINS

¹ See footnote 6, *supra*.

396.1 GE/4-2054

Memorandum of Conversation, by Elizabeth Brown of the Office of United Nations Political and Security Affairs

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, April 20, 1954.

Subject: Special Briefing Meeting, April 20, 1954

[Here follow the list of participants, Secretary Dulles' opening remarks, and that portion of the briefing concerned with the Korean phase of the Geneva Conference; for text, see page 1119.]

Turning to Indochina, the Secretary said no decision had as yet been reached as to who would be invited to the Indochina phase of the conference. Five states were indicated by name in the Berlin communiqué, together with "other interested states". Who those other interested states were had not yet been determined and no invitations sent. He expected that the four sponsoring powers would hold early conversations in this regard. He had already had an informal exchange of views with M. Bidault; the matter had not arisen in his discussions with Mr. Eden. He assumed, however, that the Associated States would be invited if they wished to attend, and he recalled that they had been present at the Japanese Peace Conference and had signed the resulting treaty. He would think they were equally concerned in this case. It was easy to think of other states who might also be regarded as "interested".

Noting the language in the Berlin communiqué on this point, Mr. Dulles recalled that there had been some controversy at Berlin as to whether other interested "states" should be invited or other representatives of the region. As he recalled, the USSR had originally proposed "representatives", but the Western powers had insisted upon "states" on the ground that it would be more difficult to bring in Ho Chi Minh on this basis. He repeated that there was no agreement among the three Western powers, much less with the USSR, as to the composition of this phase of the conference.

Referring again to the connection which the Berlin communiqué made between a Korean settlement and peace in Asia, the Secretary said that there was also a strong inference that what happened on the Korean phase would have a bearing on what happened in Indochina. Nobody desired to give priority to Korea over Indochina from the standpoint of importance and urgency, but it was generally recognized that peaceful intentions on the part of the Communists would probably be developed positively or negatively with respect to Korea, before they could be developed on Indochina. He also thought that the

conference would probably discuss Korea first since the composition of the Indochinese phase of the conference was still undecided.

Mr. Dulles said he assumed that those present who were particularly concerned with Indochina and Southeast Asia would be interested if he also reported briefly on the talks he had just concluded regarding the creation of a defense coalition to protect Southeast Asia from possible conquest by international Communist forces.¹ The origin of our thinking on this proposal derived from the feeling that if we entered the Geneva Conference, and more particularly its Indochina phase, without greater cohesion and strength, the Communists could legitimately entertain the hope and expectation of being able to take over Southeast Asia piece by piece. If they thought they could do so, there was no reason why they would not proceed on that basis.

Without cohesion for defense it had seemed likely to the United States, Mr. Dulles said, that the Geneva Conference would encourage rather than discourage Communist ambitions which presumably embraced the entire area. The best hope for peaceful solution seemed to lie in creating such conditions that the Communists would realize their ambitions would encounter an obstacle so formidable as to oblige them to write off the area. He recalled that this was what happened in Greece when the Communists finally realized they could not succeed there. We knew from the Greek experience that the Communists were without scruples when it came to writing off an adventure that was not paying off.

Therefore, Mr. Dulles believed that the first thing necessary for a possible peaceful solution was to take whatever steps were necessary to make it perfectly apparent that the Communists would not be able to succeed in their presumed grandiose plans in Southeast Asia. For this reason it seemed wise to make some preliminary arrangements to this end before the conference began; otherwise what we did would not have the same impact upon the Geneva Conference.

Observing that he had had discussions along these lines with a number of those present, the Secretary said that it had seemed useful to supplement those conversations with personal discussions with Messrs. Eden and Bidault in order to ensure mutual understanding. For that purpose he had gone to London and Paris last week.² Noting the two communiqués from London and Paris covering these discussions, the Secretary stated that the essence of both was the recognition that the Communist threat in Southeast Asia constituted a danger to the vital interests of many countries in the area, and that this situa-

¹ For documentation on the establishment of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), see volume xii.

² See the extract of telegram 4523 from London, Apr. 13, and editorial note, pp. 514 and 517, respectively.

tion made it desirable to explore the possibilities of united defense measures to create a collective defense arrangement within the framework of Article 51 of the UN Charter.

The Secretary went on to say that in the Paris conversations considerable emphasis was placed upon the desirability of the independence of the Associated States, as forecast in the July 3 statement by the French Government.³ All, including France, recognized that collective defense in the area would have to be defense of genuine freedom and independence and not the defense of colonialism which the French had taken the initiative in beginning to end in the area.

Mr. Dulles informed the group that no final conclusion regarding the ultimate composition of the defense system had been reached. There were certain countries so closely in the path of the present Communist threat that they obviously would be necessary and proper parties to a defense arrangement; other countries in the general neighborhood might also be useful parties. He thought, and he believed Mr. Eden shared this view, that the question of composition could not be settled hurriedly.

In this connection, Mr. Dulles recalled that the original concept of collective defense in Europe was a grouping of the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and the Western continental powers. The question of adding the Scandinavian states then arose, later Portugal and Italy, and still later Greece and Turkey were added, although both of them were far away from the North Atlantic area.

This experience, Mr. Dulles indicated, showed that the problem of composition had to be solved in an evolutionary process, taking account of varying needs and the measures that states were willing to take to meet the Communist threat. The important thing was that this concept had been launched and had found a good reception among countries in the immediate area. In the Secretary's judgment, the idea had already taken hold sufficiently to make clear to the Communists before the Geneva Conference that Southeast Asia was not going to be a push-over that they could take bit by bit. They now knew that if they persisted in their present tactics they would meet united opposition.

The Secretary said that, in discussing this situation in Augusta yesterday with the President,⁴ he had recalled the fact that past ag-

³ Declaration made on July 3, 1953 by the French Government concerning the relationship between France and the Associated States. France felt the time had come to perfect the independence and sovereignty of the Associated States and invited each of the three governments to come to an agreement with France on the settlement of various questions. For the text of the declaration transmitted from Paris to the Department in telegram 52, July 3, 1953, see volume xiii. (751G.00/7-353)

⁴ Apr. 19. For a memorandum by the Secretary of State concerning his meeting with the President, see p. 532.

gressive Communist moves had brought reaction from the free world. NATO, for example, was due perhaps more than anything else to the takeover of Czechoslovakia which brought new fears into Europe. The original concept of NATO had not, he thought, included its implementation by supplementary defense arrangements. He recalled that when it was discussed in the Senate, both he and Senator Vandenberg had thought the pledges in the treaty were sufficient.

However, after the conquest of China and the Communist aggression in Korea, the fears of the free world led to its increased strength. The US, the Secretary observed, began to create a system of collective security in the Far East through mutual security treaties with Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines and Japan.⁵ If instead of collapsing in fear we were spurred to more vigorous measures of collective self-defense, Mr. Dulles considered that there was a fair chance that the ambitions entertained by the Communists would be written off, and there might be an opportunity to enlarge the area of peace in the world and to bring an end to the fighting in Indochina where so far the forces of the French Union had made a valiant contribution.

The Secretary repeated that the problem was to achieve a peace that would be secured not by surrender or retreat, but by a demonstration that peace for free men meant strength, unity, cohesion and the pooling of our strength to protect the freedom of each of us. He believed that if it became clear that the nature of the threat in Indochina would arouse such a united response, in that fact lay the best hope for all of us, not only those interested in the area, but for all free countries because otherwise the threat of aggression would become so menacing that it might plunge us into general war.

The Secretary suggested that the group should agree upon the text of a statement for the press. In his view it was of the utmost importance that there should be no discussion of any questions of strategy or tactics because this would defeat our own purposes at the conference. This group must be able to discuss such matters frankly and confidentially knowing that there would be no leaks, for if there were, it would not be possible to have such discussions in the future. Mr. Dulles suggested that the press should be told simply that there had been an exchange of views preliminary to the Geneva Conference and that he had reported to the group for information purposes on the discussions which he had carried on last week in London and Paris. He added that he would indicate that there had been present at the meeting representatives of the sixteen states participating in the Korean phase of the Conference, together with representatives of the three Associated States.

⁵ For documentation on these defense pacts, see volume xii.

751G.00/4-1954

*Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Day) to the Coordinator of the United States Delegation at the Geneva Conference (Johnson)*¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, April 19, 1954.
Subject: Philippine participation in Indo-Chinese phase of the Geneva Conference

1. In his conversation with Mr. Robertson on April 15, 1954, Philippine Chargé, Emilio Abello, stated that if the Philippines were asked to participate in a defensive coalition to deter Communist aggression in Southeast Asia but were not invited to participate in the Indo-Chinese phase of the Geneva Conference, very strong and unfavorable reactions could be expected from Philippine political leaders. Mr. Abello anticipated that such a development would be continuously exploited by the ultra-Nationalist element in the Philippines which is attempting to seize control of Philippine foreign policy and to drive a wedge between the Magsaysay administration and the United States.

2. The Embassy, in a telegram of April 19, stated its agreement with Abello's warning and added that the Philippines, including President Magsaysay, would understand our position regarding the Philippines to participate in a coalition but not in the Communist alliance.²

3. Recent developments in the Philippines with respect to the Bases Agreement, the Trade Agreement, and reparations from Japan, and demands for an "Asia for the Asians" foreign policy are all indicative of the vigorous ultra-Nationalist opinion and a climate of opinion in which the Magsaysay administration might find it impossible to obtain the necessary political and economic support for participation in any defensive coalition, if at the same time they were denied an opportunity to attend the Indo-Chinese phase of the Geneva Conference.

4. It is most likely that if the Philippine Mission, which has already left Manila to participate in the Korean discussions, is not invited to participate in the Indo-Chinese discussions, the Philippine government will be obliged to reject the proposal to participate in the coalition. It

¹ Drafted by [redacted] of PSA.

² Notation of source text by Drumright: "Cleared with questions indicated in margin [question marks for paragraphs 4 and 5]. It would be desirable from our point of view for Philippines to participate in Indochina discussions, but overriding external considerations may make it impossible. I believe we could explain this to Philippine Govt. EFDJ"

³ For a summary of this conversation, see telegram 2642 to Manila, Apr. 15, 1954, printed in volume xii. (751G.00/4-1554)

⁴ In telegram 2303 from Manila, Apr. 19, Ambassador Spruance reported that "I strongly second Abello's warning. Not only would Recto's opposition exploit situation, but no Filipino, including President, would understand our asking Philippines to participate in coalition, but not including them in conference." (751G.00/4-1954)

Transcript, Zhou Enlai's presentation at the meeting of members of the Chinese delegation attending the Geneva Conference (excerpt), 5:00 a.m., April 20, 1954

Source: *Zhou Enlai nianpu*, 1949-1976, vol. 1, p. 361; Xiong, pp. 19-20

Although we had experience in domestic negotiation in the past, and we had experience in quarrelling with the Americans, that was a performance without restrictions, and at that time we denied laws human and divine. We were afraid of nothing. If the negotiation completely failed, it was not really such a big matter [then]. Of course, we conducted negotiation not for failing it. But at that time, the scope of the negotiation we conducted was quite small. We had only one tone, and we can make it either high or low, and we would say whatever we had in mind. This was the case during the armistice negotiation in Korea. China is a big country, and we go to Geneva to attend a formal international conference. We will step on to the international stage. Therefore, we should present a civilized performance, and "civil" should also be mixed with "military." Overall, however, this is a formal performance, and a performance on the stage. Several fraternal countries will participate in the conference too, so we need coordination, we need rhythm, we need orderliness, and we should keep harmony [with the other comrades]. This is the first time for the performance, so we should go there with the spirit of learning [from others].

Translated for CWIHP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not cite or quote without permission from CWIHP.

Secretary's memoranda of conversation, lot 64 D 199

*United States Minutes of a Tripartite Foreign Ministers Meeting*¹

SECRET

PARIS, April 22, 1954—4 p. m.

U.S.

The Secretary
Ambassador Johnson
Ambassador Heath
Mr. Merchant
Mr. Robertson
Mr. MacArthur
Admiral Davis
Mr. Bowie
Mr. Achilles
Mr. McBride

U.K.

Mr. Eden
Mr. Caccia
Ambassador Jebb
Mr. Allen
Mr. Reilly
Mr. Nutting

France

M. Bidault
M. Schumann
General Ely
M. Parodi
Ambassador Chauvel
M. de Latournelle
M. de Margerie
M. Baeyens
M. Lacoste
M. Cheysson
M. Folin
M. Andronikoff
(interpreter)

Reply to Latest Soviet Note on Geneva

M. Bidault² opened the meeting by stating that there was no fixed agenda and as the host he would make the first statement. Referring initially to the tripartite reply to the Soviet Note regarding the inviting powers for the Indochina phase of the Geneva Conference, M. Bidault read a U.S.-French draft of a reply (See Tab A).³ He stressed the need to reply clearly to the false Soviet allegations regarding composition of the Geneva Conference. He stressed that it had always been understood that special responsibility devolved on the four Berlin powers, and that in any event we should not open the Geneva Conference by violating the basis of the understanding on which the meeting was set up.

Mr. Eden suggested that the last sentence of the draft be put in the positive rather than the negative sense and that it should stress the fact that the Geneva Conference must be held on the basis under which

¹ Telegraphic summary of minutes transmitted to the Department of State in telegram Secto 6 from Paris, Apr. 23. (PPS files, lot 65 D 101, "Indochina"; copy also in Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 239)

On Apr. 19 Secretary Dulles in personal messages contained in telegrams 3749 to Paris and 5508 to London suggested to Bidault and Eden the possibility of meeting at Paris on Apr. 22 to discuss preliminaries regarding Geneva. (110.11 DU/4-1954)

For the portion of these minutes pertaining to the Korean phase of the conference, see p. 127.

² In telegram Dulite 5 from Paris, Apr. 22, Secretary Dulles informed Acting Secretary Smith that for "background you should know that at tripartite meeting this afternoon Bidault appeared totally exhausted mentally and unable to preside coherently. He is obviously under great strain as a result of developments reported in my earlier telegram to you today [French leaders considered Dien Bien Phu situation hopeless; see Dulite 2, Apr. 22, in volume XIII,] and infirmity due to this rather than other causes." (PPS files, lot 65 D 101, "Indochina")

³ Tab A is printed with the portion of these minutes pertaining to the Korean phase; for text, see p. 130.

it was established at Berlin. M. Bidault and the Secretary agreed with this thought.

Participation in Indochina Phase

M. Bidault then passed to the question of participants in the Indochina phase of the Conference, and said that we might consider as a formula the four Berlin powers plus the three Associated States and the limitrophe states of Communist China (already invited), Thailand and Burma. He said that there was a problem which did not involve the French Government but rather the Vietnamese Government in the presence of the Vietnam. He said that Vietnam was, of course, an independent Associated State within the French Union and whose Government would strongly prefer that Ho Chi Minh not be present. Therefore the French position will be to oppose the presence of the Vietnam and to propose an invitation to the three Associated States. If the first French position is rejected by the Soviets, the second French position would be to accept Vietnam presence in some restricted capacity. If the Soviets insist on the same status for Ho as for Vietnam, the French Government will consult the Bao Dai Government before taking a position. Therefore, the French position, after proposing full participation for the Associated States, if the Soviets press the point, will be to seek some formula which will give the appearance of avoiding Vietnam participation at the same level.

The Secretary commented that there was one question not bearing on the substance of this problem but on the Note we had agreed upon. He said that the sentence which stated that all participants should be equal after the Korean and Indochinese talks had got underway might block the French search for some different status for Ho, which could give the appearance that he was not on the same level as the Vietnamese Government. The Secretary noted that perhaps we could claim that the Vietnam delegates did not represent a state, while the Berlin communiqué had specified that invitations would be extended to representatives "of other interested states", but he did believe that the sentence in question might make it more difficult to create any special and subordinate status for the Vietnam.

M. Bidault stated that France does not consider the Vietnam a state though the Soviet Union, which has recognized the Ho regime, and the Communist Chinese who help it do. He noted that France considers the three governments of the Associated States which received thirty-three votes for admission to the UN and with whom France maintains diplomatic relations as the only legitimate governments of the area. He said that, by the French definition, the idea that only states should participate would exclude the Ho regime. However, he would accept the presence of Ho if it would facilitate the end of the

Indochina war, even though he could not be considered a representative of a state. He was particularly anxious to avoid the *de facto* acceptance of Ho which we had avoided at Berlin.

French Reaffirmation of Independence of Associated States

M. Bidault continued stating that the text of the Note which he had read seemed to reject clearly the Soviet proposal, and reaffirmed the special status of the four powers. He then said he was making a separate supplementary proposal, and read a statement regarding French reaffirmation of the independence of the three Associated States. The statement, after reaffirming the full independence of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, stated the resolve of the French Government to safeguard the freedom of the Indochinese peoples, and guaranteed that France would do everything possible so that they could exercise this independence, and live at peace. France also was resolved to safeguard the territorial integrity of the Associated States, and to prevent all attempts at disrupting the status of independence which had been freely accorded them. M. Bidault concluded that this declaration by the French Government would supplement the declaration of July 3, 1953.⁴ He said that this had not been shown to the French Government yet, but he felt the Cabinet would approve it.

The Secretary inquired whether the statement which M. Bidault had just read would be appended to the Note to the Soviets which we had agreed upon earlier in the meeting. M. Bidault said that the statement which he had read regarding the independence of the Associated States was, of course, intended only for the French Government to make, and that this was just a rough draft, not intended to be issued right away.⁵

M. Bidault continued stating that insofar as the Indochinese phase of the Geneva Conference was concerned, Communist China was so far the only invited power, though she was clearly not an inviting power. He said we were sure to have a long and difficult fight on this issue with the Soviets at Geneva. He noted that the French position was in entire agreement with the U.S. stand.

Reverting to the draft note which he had read at the opening of the meeting, M. Bidault stated that the essential word in the sentence regarding the equality of all participants after the talks got underway was the word "commence". The Secretary stated that we might want to have some states as observers, so it would be preferable to omit the sentence entirely. Mr. Eden indicated that it would be better to stick as closely as possible to the terms of the Berlin agreement to avoid creating other problems, and thus he also favored deleting the sen-

⁴ See footnote 3, p. 537.

⁵ See telegram 3985 from Paris, Apr. 21, p. 541.

tence. M. Bidault agreed to omit the sentence and the text of the Note was amended accordingly.

M. Bidault stated that it was essential that there be Tripartite agreement on various problems before the opening of the Geneva Conference and accordingly he asked for a frank expression of the views of his colleagues, stating that he would later give his own frank opinions.

Collective Defense in Southeast Asia

The Secretary stated that last week in Paris and immediately before in London we agreed that our Governments and other interested States in the area would study a collective defense of Southeast Asia. In the view of the U.S. Government, these talks should now proceed as exploratory conversations as soon as practical without delineating initially the scope of the exact final number of participants in advance. He compared the situation with the initial talks which led to the formation of NATO, noting at first a small group of countries had been involved, that the framework had later expanded and had continued to expand ever since.

The Secretary added that some States were so obviously involved that they could be easily identified while others, such as the United States, were not so immediately threatened but realized the danger in the long run. Whether other States not immediately threatened recognized the danger as we did was not clear as yet. None of this precluded initial talks as laid out in the London and Paris communiqués. The Secretary noted that Thailand, the Philippines and Australia had confirmed their willingness to proceed with talks, while he was under the impression that New Zealand had also accepted. The Secretary said we envisaged initially talks by our political representatives possibly receiving advice from their military advisers as desirable. He was well aware of the delicacy of the task but believed it was essential regardless of the outcome at Dien Bien Phu, and of the campaign in the Tonkin Delta though the situation would, of course, be more urgent if these battles were lost.

The Secretary concluded that the knowledge by the Soviets that a common defense system was in prospect would strengthen our hand at Geneva and help convince the Soviets that they should come to a reasonable agreement. He said this was not for action within a matter of days, but that he would like to hear from the British and French Governments along the lines of last week's communiqués. The Secretary said that he reserved the right to talk later on details of the Geneva Conference. In view of the NATO meeting tomorrow⁶ which we all had on our minds, and over which M. Bidault must preside, the

⁶ Apr. 23.

Secretary suggested that we meet again on Saturday morning¹ to discuss the Geneva Conference.

M. Bidault stated that unfortunately he had a meeting of the Cabinet on Saturday morning, and that he was obliged to meet with the Ministers to fill them in before the opening of the Geneva talks. The Secretary suggested that in this event that they meet on Saturday afternoon.

[Here follows the remainder of this document; for text, see page 127.]

¹ Apr. 24.

PSA files, lot 88 D 207, "Bonsal Memos"

*Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Bonsal)*¹

SECRET

[PARIS,] April 22, 1954.

INDOCHINA PHASE

PROSPECTS FOR "UNITED ACTION" IN INDOCHINA²

The purpose of this paper is to examine the political prospects and implications of a military "united action" in Indochina which would add sufficient military assets to the present Franco-Vietnamese forces to ensure a defeat at least of the Vietnam regular divisions.

The Franco-Vietnamese effort in Indochina has to date been based upon the following factors:

(1) A military strategy³ involving the destruction of the Vietnam regular divisions during the 1954-55 fighting season by a Franco-Vietnamese striking force to be built up eventually to some 20 Groupes Mobiles or regimental combat teams. About half these units would be constituted by the French expeditionary corps and the remainder would be the best elements of the Vietnamese National Army. (The proportion of Vietnamese soldiers involved would, however, be considerably in excess of 50% owing to the large numbers of Vietnamese included in French expeditionary corps units). The assumption has been that once the Vietnam regular divisions had been defeated or dispersed, the Vietnamese military and civil authorities would be able to handle the remaining rebel elements and restore peace and security throughout the country.

(2) A political strategy involving the creation of an independent Vietnamese Government with all the attributes of sovereignty and the association of that Government in a French Union conceived of as a group of sovereign states freely banded together to further their

¹ Bonsal was an adviser to the United States Delegation to the Geneva Conference and was traveling with Secretary of State Dulles on the way to Geneva.

² For documentation on "United Action", see volumes XII and XIII.

³ The Navarre Plan.

mutual interests. This French Union concept has probably been the major factor in keeping French parliamentary support for the war effort in Indochina above the danger point.

The impact of an application of "united action", i.e., effective US air and naval support for the Franco-Vietnamese forces would be as follows:

1) On the military plane, a recognition of the failure of the earlier strategy. In other words, a demonstration of the fact that the French expeditionary corps of 180,000 men and the Vietnamese army of perhaps 200,000 men plus massive U.S. end-item assistance are not strong enough to defeat a purely Vietnamese Vietnam army of 300,000 (of whom about 100,000 are regulars), supported by considerable but nevertheless comparatively small Chinese Communist assistance in end-items. Not only is the Navarre plan for decisive military results in jeopardy, but it also appears from recent indications that General Navarre may not even be able to maintain a stalemate. In other words, "united action" will be not only designed to achieve an early victory in this eight years war but also to avoid a very possible defeat of the Franco-Vietnamese forces.

2) On the political plane there will be three major implications:

(a) From the point of view of France, a demonstration of the fact that France is either unable or unwilling to do what is necessary to defend the French Union against aggression;

(b) That the attempt to form, in accordance with the Bao Dai formula, a strong nationalist Government and army in opposition to the Vietnam has failed;

(c) That whatever regime may be established in Vietnam depends for its existence less on its own political force and military power or on that of the French Union than on the factor of US willingness to intervene forcibly when and as necessary. The possibilities open to the Vietnam and the Chinese Communists for an infinite variety of guerrilla, terrorist, sabotage and generally subversive activities with a strong nationalistic appeal would be infinite.

Conclusion: Every effort must be made to convince the French and the Vietnamese that a failure to achieve success within the present framework, a failure to furnish all the means necessary to that end (including French conscripts and a major stepping up of American material aid) would be suicidal from the point of view of French interests generally, of the interests of the current Vietnamese regime and of free world interests in the Far East. The "united action" alternative, useful as it may be in improving the chances of a negotiated settlement, is a very poor second choice, if carried to the action stage. Its ultimate political success seems highly dubious both in terms of Indochina and in terms of South and Southeast Asia and the Far East generally.

PHILIP W. BONSAI.

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SECRET

FROM PARIS TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTF

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET

AND

WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Sir G. Jebb
No. 247
April 22, 1954.

D. 2.15 a.m. April 23, 1954.
 D. 2.20 a.m. April 23, 1954.
 DF1071
 282

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 247 of April 22

Repeated for information to:-
Singapore
Washington
Saigon

Following from Secretary of State.

Beth Sir G. Jebb and I had some talk with M. Bidault tonight at dinner of Brussels Powers. He was still very exhausted and obsessed with the fate of the battle at Dien Bien Phu where he declared that the flower of the army in Indo-China was in peril.

It is pretty clear that what happened this morning was that Dulles at once asked the French to subscribe to his project for South East Asia defence and that Bidault was irritated by Dulles' insistence on immediate negotiation to that end. He appears to have retorted that the fact was of no immediate significance when everything depended upon the battle. If that went wrong then France would probably not join the proposed alliance anyhow.

This may well account for the extreme pessimism of American reports.

Bidault told me tonight that it was quite impossible for him to declare his hand about Indo-China before he got to Geneva. I think that he is right in this and is exasperated by American insistence that he should tell them exactly how he is going to play his hand in advance.

Bidault thanked me warmly for Her Majesty's Government's contribution to E.D.C. which he said was all he could have asked for. He is having a hard time on that front too with a Cabinet which is sharply divided on the issue. However, he assures me that Laniel and he will not give up.

Foreign Office please repeat to Washington, Singapore, Saigon as my telegrams Nos. 107, 8, 10.

[Repeated to Washington, Singapore and Saigon].

ADVANCE COPIES:-

Sir F. Roberts
Private Secretary
Mr. Harrison

Head of South East Asia Department
Head of Western and Southern Department

F0371/112055

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SECRET

FROM PARIS TO FOREIGN OFFICE

DF1071 248

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND
WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Sir G. Jebb
No. 250
April 23, 1954

D. 4.58 p.m. April 23, 1954
R. 5.11 p.m. April 23, 1954

PRIORITY
SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 250 of April 23.

Repeated for information to: Singapore Saigen
and Saving to: Washington

Geneva Conference - French Policy on Indo-China.

At our tripartite meeting on afternoon of April 22, M. Bidault at one stage read out a document, which it appeared, was intended as a unilateral statement of French policy. He was far from clear what was the precise nature or purpose of the document and did not pursue the matter. French delegation declined to give us copies of the document after the meeting. At meeting which Allen attended on April 23 with M. Chauvel and with Mr. Johnson of United States delegation, M. Chauvel gave us copies of the document (text of which is in my immediately following telegram) and explained its purpose.

2. He said that as we had already been told the French Government were trying to work out proposals based on the conditions for a cease-fire outlined by M. Laniel to the French Parliament, to be put forward at the opening stage of the Geneva discussions on Indo-China. General Navarre had been asked for his views on the manner in which such proposals could be framed, so as to cause the the least prejudice to the position in Indo-China. His views were expected very shortly. The intention was that, if such proposals could be worked out, M. Bidault in introducing them should preface them by a brief statement of the French Government's existing policy so as to provide some indication of the political framework within which the proposals would be set. The text in my immediately following telegram was the first draft of such a policy statement. It was only tentative at this stage and might well be expanded or modified. It was the French Government's hope that if such a statement were made the United Kingdom and the United States delegations would be able to state that it enjoyed their support.

Foreign Office pass to Singapore and Saigen as my telegrams Nos. 9 and 11 respectively.

[Repeated to Singapore and Saigon].

APR 24 1954

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Enter soon

BRITISH EMBASSY,
PARIS.

D

CONFIDENTIAL

April 23, 1954.

Dear Willie,

You will see from Paris telegrams Nos. 244 to 247 and from the record of yesterday afternoon's tripartite meeting, which will be coming to you separately, that we had a somewhat confusing and inconclusive day yesterday on Indo-China and Pacific defence.

The Secretary of State made his point about the importance of hastening slowly in order to give Asian opinion time to accustom itself to our ideas on Pacific defence. Dulles took the point that we should at least wait and see how the Colombo Conference developed and said that it did not matter vitally whether the proposed exploratory consultations began this week or next. However, we must expect some continuing impatience on the American side. In order to deal with this it will, I think, be important that we should be kept promptly informed, both here and at Geneva, of the way things are developing at Colombo and of the reactions, if any, of the five participating Governments to the various approaches that we have made to them. If you have not already done so, perhaps you would concert arrangements with the C.R.O. to ensure that as far as possible we receive prompt information of what is going on.

You will also have seen that under the influence of a depressing conversation with M. Bidault in the morning, Mr. Dulles was again much preoccupied with the danger that the French might pack up altogether in Indo-China and with the consequent necessity of our taking very urgent steps, possibly without French participation, to concert our joint policy in that event. At one stage he seemed to be thinking in terms of something very similar to the joint consultations on measures to strengthen Siam which we were on the point of proposing a month ago before the Pacific defence proposals emerged. Judgment is suspended for the moment on this idea, at least pending a further tripartite meeting tomorrow. But it may well be that something of this sort may be decided upon either as an alternative to the immediate opening of wider talks on the Pacific defence plan or in addition to such consultations. I imagine that if it were by any chance decided to hold such secret joint discussions, we should be able to begin fairly promptly on the basis of the preparatory work which the Chiefs of Staff have already done.

The idea of immediate intervention in Indo-China in an attempt to save the military situation seems to have been receding into the background.

Dulles at one point yesterday was still talking in terms of possible sea and air intervention but did not press it very actively and he made it pretty plain the United States would not be prepared to intervene with

/ground forces.

W.J.M. Paterson, Esq.,
South East Asia Department,
Foreign Office S.W. 1

Telegram, Zhou Enlai to Mao Zedong⁵, Liu Shaoqi⁶, and the CCP Central Committee, concerning Malenkov's conversation with Zhou Enlai about the Vietnam issue, April 23, 1954

Record number: 206-00048-08 (1); original Record number: 206-Y0054

Top secret

Chairman (Mao), Comrade (Liu) Shaoqi, and the Central Committee:

- (1) Yesterday Malenkov, Molotov, Khrushchev, Suslov discussed the Vietnam question with Comrade Ding⁷, as well as I and (Wang) Jiaxiang⁸.
 - (a) They express complete agreement to "Opinions on the situation in Indochina and our strategies and policies," and they believe that the opinions present in this document are all correct. Comrade Khrushchev emphasizes that the document should be made confidential, and that when explanations are made to our cadres, it should be conducted in a way that is as undisguised as in the document, and should be made more skillfully.
 - (b) The requests of Comrades Ding can be satisfied.
- (2) They agree to inform us about their opinion of China's draft constitution in four months.
- (3) Comrade Ding will return to Beijing in two days, and he hopes to go back to Vietnam immediately after meeting with the Chairman and Comrade (Liu) Shaoqi.

Zhou Enlai
23 April 1954

Translated for CWIHP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not quote without permission from CWIHP.

⁵ Chairman of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, and Chairman of the People's Republic of China.

⁶ Vice Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee.

⁷ Alias for Ho Chi Minh, chairman of the Vietnamese Workers Party.

⁸ Vice Foreign Minister of PRC, a member of the PRC delegation attending the Geneva Conference.

Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 265

*Memorandum on Tripartite Talks in Paris, April 21-24, 1954*¹

SECRET

RÉSUMÉ OF INFORMAL US-UK-FRENCH PREPARATORY TALKS IN PARIS
ON INDOCHINA PHASE OF GENEVA CONFERENCE

1. *Participation*

The French indicated that their preliminary thinking does not favor formal participation of the Associated States. If they participate, the French do not see how the Viet Minh could be excluded, although the presence of the Communist puppet governments of Cambodia and Laos could probably be resisted. France feels the problem could best be handled by giving the Associated States and the Viet Minh (and perhaps the Laotian and Cambodian puppet governments) a special status as limited conference participants deriving in essence from the immediacy of their conflict of interests. They would be neither full participants nor observers but their representatives would be readily available for participation as the occasion required, thus avoiding any discussion of the legal basis of these governments and confrontation across the conference table. In order to avoid the Five Power connotation and to keep the Conference as small as possible the French are inclined to favor the Big Four, Communist China, Burma and Thailand as the participating powers.

The Vietnamese Foreign Minister, now in Paris, told the French he fully expected the French to propose Vietnamese participation but to object to the expected Soviet proposal for Viet Minh participation and to try instead to get the Ho government considered under a different status from Vietnam. We and the UK stated our hope that the Associated States would not only be invited but would accept. The UK prefers keeping participation down to the Big Four, Communist China, the Associated States and the Viet Minh only, citing the anticipated pressures from Commonwealth countries and others if participation is extended beyond Indochinese borders. All agreed it would be difficult to keep out the Viet Minh, the French adding that they would accept the Viet Minh presence only under the Berlin formula that it did not involve recognition.

2. *Possible Military Settlement*

In general terms, the French position is apparently in the direction of finding, as the first step, some basis for a cease-fire on purely military grounds with political negotiations to follow. The French military

¹ Initials "UAJ" [U. Alexis Johnson] found on top right corner. first page of source text.

experts are studying Lanier's March 5 cease-fire conditions (Attached) to determine the needed guarantees and safeguards which could achieve Lanier's objective of guaranteeing the security of the French and Associated States forces and other friendly elements. The French believe, however, that Lanier's conditions would be viewed by the Communists as too harsh and would, therefore, not permit sufficient latitude for negotiating purposes. Hence, the French are thinking of securing the psychological initiative by first offering to disengage Laos and Cambodia from the military scene (i.e. by mutual withdrawal of all forces from the two countries except for the basis of Xieng Khouang and Seno which the French are permitted to garrison under the terms of the Franco-Laotian treaty. They emphasize that French Union forces could be moved by air within little more than an hour to any point endangered in Laos if the Royal Army was unable to cope with the situation.) Then consideration would be given to a possible cease-fire in Vietnam.

The British were not too concerned and thought it might at least give the French a talking point initiative in the negotiating process.

The French seemed to think there could be a cease-fire in Indochina without a political settlement, as was the case in Korea. They apparently attach considerable importance to recent expressions of goodwill and a desire to be of service from the Soviet Ambassador in Paris. They emphasize their thinking on the subject, however, is tentative only.

3. *Timing of Indochina Phase*

All agreed that timing (and participation) must be resolved by the Big Four Ministers. The French hope the issue will be raised as soon as possible at Geneva.

[Attachment]

LANIER CONDITIONS²

In his speech of March 5, Prime Minister Lanier laid down certain conditions or guarantees which would have to precede negotiation, as follows:

1. Total evacuation of Laos by Viet Minh.
2. Total evacuation of Cambodia by Viet Minh.
3. Evacuation by Viet Minh of Tonkin Delta and creation of no-man's land around its periphery.
4. Withdrawal by Viet Minh from central Viet Nam area to certain specified and restricted areas.

² Prime Minister Lanier's conditions were outlined in telegram 3240 from Paris. Mar. 6, p. 435.

5. Disarmament or evacuation of Viet Minh forces in southern Viet Nam.
6. Other measures of security and control providing assurances that suspension of fighting would not enable Viet Minh to reinforce itself or strengthen its position during conversations.

Laniel stressed that the actual cease-fire would only be the result of negotiations incorporating these safeguards, and that a cease-fire of the kind proposed by Nehru would be unacceptable since it would not afford the minimum tolerable security guarantees for the French Expeditionary Corps and Viet Nam troops.

396.1 GE/4-2454: Telegram

The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bohlen) to the Department of State

OFFICIAL USE ONLY PRIORITY MOSCOW, April 22, 1954—4 p. m.
 1313. Repeated information priority Paris, April 22, 1954, priority Geneva 8. Embtel 1304, repeated information Paris, April 22, 1954, priority Geneva 7, April 23.¹ Soviets have sent us following note to note given them yesterday re Geneva conference.

"In connection with note Government United States of America 23 April: Government USSR considers it necessary to state it confirms its position on the question of composition Geneva conference as set forth in note April 22, 1954."

With reference to invitations interested states to participate in discussion present re-establishing peace in Indochina, it goes without saying that this question is matter for consideration of representatives those states whose participation on basis equality is directly provided for in Berlin communiqué".

¹ Not printed.

² See Annex A to the minutes of the meeting of Apr. 22, p. 130.

³ Text in telegram 1289 from Moscow, Apr. 21, p. 126.

396.1 GE/4-2454: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State

GENEVA, April 24, 1954.
 Secto 1. For Phillips from MacArthur. Following is Secretary Dulles' statement made on arrival at Geneva, April 24, 1954:

"We come to Geneva on a mission of peace made necessary by communist aggression in Asia. We shall be working on behalf of the Republic of Vietnam and the Associated States of Vietnam, Laos and

Cambodia, whose lands have been invaded and whose peoples have been ravaged by war. We think of the courageous forces of the French Union at Dien Bien Phu who, under the gallant leadership of General DeCastries, are at this very moment suffering heroically because ambitious rulers seek to extract some profit which they can use at this Geneva conference.

"We hope to find that the aggressors who are here in a mood to purge themselves of their aggression, and who know it will thus be possible to achieve a durable peace which will restore to the brave Korean people their unity and independence, and to the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia to enjoy and protect the political freedom which is now theirs.

"I take this occasion to express the friendship which is felt by the American people for the people of Switzerland and their appreciation of the manifold services which Switzerland has rendered throughout its history for the cause of peace and humanity".

DULLES

Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 287

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

Participants: UK

Mr. Eden

Mr. Shuckburgh

Mr. Caccia

US

Secretary Dulles

Mr. MacArthur

Time: 10:15-11:00 p. m., April 25, 1954

Place: Hotel Beau Rivage, Geneva

I sent word to the British Delegation that I would be glad to see Mr. Eden upon his arrival in Geneva this morning if he thought it would be useful. At 10 p. m. I received word that Mr. Eden had just arrived and would be very glad to see me. I called upon him in his quarters at the hotel Beau Rivage immediately thereafter.

Mr. Eden opened the conversation by saying he was very glad to bring me up to date on the results of his trip to London. He had met with the Prime Minister, the Cabinet, and the British Chiefs of Staff. He said he would be glad to hear the news which he had for me would not be exactly what I wanted to hear. However, he did have certain positive proposals to lay before me.

He then said that the British Chiefs of Staff were certain that air intervention at Dien Bien Phu would have no decisive effect on that

¹ Drafted by Dulles and MacArthur. Conversation was summarized in telegram Dulite 5 from Geneva, Apr. 25, not printed. (751G.5/4-2554) Text of telegram Dulite 5 is printed in *United States-Vietnam Relations, 1945-1967*, Book 9, pp. 388-389.

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TOP SECRET
FROM PARIS TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTF

PRISEC

Sir G. Jebb
No. 257
April 23, 1954.

D. 1.25 a.m. April 24, 1954.
R. 1.40 a.m. April 24, 1954.

EMERGENCY
TOP SECRET

DF1071

305

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 257 of April 23
Repeated for information to:- Washington

Following for Prime Minister from Secretary of State.

Dulles drew me aside before official dinner this evening to tell me that a telegram had arrived from Navarre to French Government to the effect that only a powerful strike by the American air force in the next 72 hours could save the situation at Dien Bien Phu, and therefore Dulles feared in Indo-China. I said that I found it hard to believe that any intervention from fleet carriers at this stage could have such an effect on the situation. Plevin had just told me that it was not true that the best French troops were all locked up in Dien Bien Phu. There were 100,000 troops in the Tonking delta, of whom the greater part were French Union forces. I feared that intervention could not save Dien Bien Phu and it might have far-reaching consequences. At this point Gruenther came up and said that he had never known French morale at so low an ebb. Could we do anything to revive it? He feared that a collapse in Indo-China would be followed by the fall of the Government here, and its successor might be neutralist. (Others share this fear). Dulles repeated his thesis about the vacuum created by the collapse of France as a world Power. He appeared to share my doubts as to whether intervention by air would be decisive, but said that if I felt able to stand with him he was prepared to recommend to the President to ask Congress for "war powers". (I am not sure that this is right technical phrase, but this was its effect, for it would give President special powers of the widest character to move armed forces).

2. Dulles then read me extracts from telegram from President which expressed concern at military news from Indo-China and also contained some phrases which seemed to imply that we were somewhat indifferent in the matter. I said that this was certainly not so, but that I frankly did not believe that conditions in Indo-China could be remedied by outside intervention alone at this hour, even
/if help

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TOP SECRET

Paris telegram No. 257 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

RECEIVED IN C.P.
28 APR 1954

if help were immediately available. It was all too reminiscent of French demand for our last R.A.F. squadrons in 1940. On the other hand, if Americans were ready to discuss with us on military basis possibility of coming to the help of Siam in the event of a total collapse in Indo-China, I was prepared to recommend this to you. Dulles agreed. I think it would be valuable to offer such secret talks between us two in Washington. If French morale is really crumbling and they are going to pack up in Indo-China, it is worth considering a joint Anglo-American guarantee of Siamese frontier, and this, in their present mood, I believe that Americans might give.

3. At the conclusion of our talk I told Dulles that I trusted no action would be taken in response to French appeal without consultation with us. It might have far reaching consequences for us all, and we must have an opportunity to consider these in advance. Dulles reassured me on this point.

4. I shall be grateful for your views on all this. I need hardly emphasize its extreme secrecy.

5. I had a chance of a word with Pug later this evening. He knew nothing of these happenings, but his reaction was exactly the same as mine.

6. I should add that Pleven told me that when in Indo-China recently, he had come to the conclusion that the local conditions were such, including proximity of Chinese frontier, that position could not be held much beyond date of Geneva meeting.

7. All of this does not mean that French cannot be encouraged to hold ports and other areas even if Dien Bien Phu falls, though Americans clearly expect complete collapse. Her Majesty's Ambassador will tomorrow morning seek direct information from French as to latest situation. In the light of this and later talks with Bidault and Dulles I will telegraph my view of these American judgments and possibility of encouraging the French to maintain at least some resistance.

Foreign Office please repeat emergency to Washington as my telegram No. 110.

[Repeated to Washington].

[Copies sent to the Prime Minister].

F0371/12056

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TOP SECRET

FROM PARIS TO FOREIGN OFFICE

*Albany entered
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Cypher/OTF

Sir G. Jebb
No. 262
April 21, 1954.



5.2 p.m. April 21, 1954.
7.31 p.m. April 21, 1954.

EMERGENCY
TOP SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 262 of April 21.
Repeated for information to Washington.

My telegram No. 257.

Following for Prime Minister from Secretary of State.

I have just come from further talk with Mr. Dulles and Admiral Radford. Mr. Dulles began by saying he was now convinced there was no chance of keeping the French in the fight unless they knew "that we would do what we can within the President's constitutional powers to join them in the fight". The French had said that it would not be enough if we were to assure them that we would join them in defending the rest of Indo-China in the event of the fall of Dien Bien Phu; unless we had participated (by an air strike) in the battle for the fortress itself, that would be "their last battle". Mr. Dulles wished to make plain that there was no (repeat no) possibility of United States participation in the Dien Bien Phu battle, both because the President had not the power to act with such speed, and because it was perfectly clear that no intervention could now save the fortress. (He quoted from report of conversation with General Navarre today which showed that the situation was desperate). Mr. Dulles went on to say, however, that he believed that if the French were confident that we would join in the defence of Indo-China, they might not capitulate altogether on the fall of Dien Bien Phu. He admitted it was only a possibility, and not perhaps a very good one, that assurances to this effect would keep the French in the fight. Nevertheless the United States Government would be willing to offer such assurances, contingent upon British participation and upon Congressional approval.

2. I asked Mr. Dulles what measures he had in mind. Admiral Radford replied that there must be some military effort to assist the French without delay. He suggested that British

/participation

TOP SECRET

Paris telegram No. 262 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

participation might take the form of sending R.A.F. units into Tongking from Malaya or Hong Kong. He also enquired whether we had not an aircraft carrier in the area. Neither he nor Mr. Dulles gave any more explicit account of the joint military action they contemplated.

3. Admiral Radford went on to say that he thought it most likely when Dien Bien Phu fell, that the whole military situation in Indo-China would get out of control within a few days. There might be riots in Saigon and Hanoi, and the whole population might turn against the French. They would have to take desperate security measures to safe-guard their citizens. The only way he saw of preventing this was to demonstrate that France now had powerful allies in the fight. This, though it could not be guaranteed in any way, might have the necessary psychological effect. He added that it would involve forcing many unpleasant decisions upon the French, including certainly the removal of General Navarre and insistence upon a voice in the planning of the high command, the training of Viet Nam troops, etc.

4. I made the following points in reply:

- (I) the French had not painted anything like so desperate a picture to us. On the contrary, the French Government's line with Her Majesty's Ambassador this morning had been that the situation of Dien Bien Phu was very bad, but that they would fight on elsewhere if it fell;
- (II) did the Americans really think that air intervention by the United States and United Kingdom could decisively alter the situation?
- (III) had they thought what would be the effect on world opinion and how the Chinese would react? I assumed they had not forgotten the Russo-Chinese alliance. Was it not possible that if we went into Indo-China we should find ourselves fighting Viet Nam as well as Viet Minh, and heading in addition for a world war?

5. In reply, Admiral Radford said that he had never thought the Chinese would intervene in Indo-China. Nor had

/they the

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(314)

TOP SECRET

Paris telegram No. 262 to Foreign Office

- 3 -

they the necessary resources available (unless there were Chinese troops in the territory of which we had knowledge). If they attempted air action, we could eliminate this by bombing the Chinese airfields which were very vulnerable. As regards the Viet Nam, Mr. Dulles said he had spoken this morning to Bao Dai, who had said that if the French quit, he would hope for cooperation from the United States. Admiral Radford said that the chief cause of the disastrous situation had been the incompetent French military leadership, which had become quite obvious to the Viet Nam and French Union forces, (the implication being that once it were known that the Americans were to take over, there would be a revival of fighting spirit).

6. In reply to my doubts as to whether it would be possible to stabilize any line by military action in Indo-China, Mr. Dulles said that the trouble was that the same applied to Thailand and even Malaya. The Chinese would take their time. They would not attempt an early attack on either of these territories. Once having established a Communist régime in Indo-China, they would start a process of infiltration and subversion which no military guarantee by us could halt. Admiral Radford asked whether our Chiefs of Staff would not agree with this. I replied that they certainly considered Indo-China of decisive importance for the defence of Thailand and Malaya. But I did not know what hopes they had from military intervention in Indo-China now. Personally I had gravest doubts. Certainly from the political point of view Mr. Dulles was confronting British opinion with about as difficult a decision as it would be possible to find.

7. In conclusion I said that I would at once consult Her Majesty's Government. I would probably fly home to London tonight for the purpose. Admiral Radford said he was going to London himself in a day or two, and would like to see the Chiefs of Staff. As we were leaving, Mr. Dulles produced the draft of a letter to M. Laniel, for which he is seeking President Eisenhower's approval, and which contains the following passage:-

/"It is our

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TOP SECRET

Paris telegram No. 262 to Foreign Office

- 4 -

"It is our belief that on the assumption, which we believe to be reasonable, that a collective defence can be quickly organised along the lines of the communiqués referred to [i.e. the London and Paris communiqués of last week] the position in Indo-China can be held by the collective action of the free Nations having vital interests in this area".

8. I am, of course, taking immediate steps to clear up the discrepancy between what the French have said to us and what they have said to the Americans.

9. Later.

It is already clear French do not accept Mr. Dulles' account in its entirety. I am telegraphing separately an account of a conversation I have since had with Bidault and Dulles together.

Foreign Office pass Emergency to Washington as my telegram No. 113.

[Repeated to Washington].

~~[Copies sent to the Prime Minister].~~

*Distributed to:-
South East Asia Dept
Far Eastern Dept.*

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TOP SECRET

FROM PARIS TO FOREIGN OFFICE

*Departmental or
Whitall sent*

Cypher/CTP.

~~SECRET~~ OFFICE 11/3/54 G

(P 40 7)

Sir G. Jebb
No: 274
April 25, 1954.

D: 4.26 p.m. April 25, 1954.
R: 4.41 p.m. April 25, 1954.

EMERGENCY
TOP SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No: 274 of April 25
Repeated for information to: Washington.

My immediately preceding telegram.

Following is text.

Begins:

You showed to me yesterday a message from General Navarre which suggested that the only alternative to his seeking a cease-fire in Indo-China would be immediate and massive air support by the United States which General Navarre estimated could save Dien Bien Phu. This would involve active United States belligerency.

We have given this suggestion, as I promised you, our most urgent consideration.

It is necessary for me to inform you that the situation as regards the United States belligerency in the area remains as I explained it to you last week when we conferred on April 14. War action under such circumstances as now prevail should be preceded by a Congressional authorization. Such Congressional authorization is, in no event, obtainable within a matter of hours, nor in my opinion is it obtainable at all except within the framework of a political understanding which would embrace the other nations directly and vitally interested in South-East Asia.

Our views in this respect were expressed in the joint communiqué which you and I issued on April 14, and so far as the United Kingdom is concerned in the communiqué which was issued by Mr. Eden and myself the day preceding in London.

The Government of the United States adheres to the understandings therein expressed.

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TOP SECRET

Paris telegram No: 274 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

Apart from the constitutional aspect of the matter, I have taken military advice, and the information which I received is that even the massive air attack which you proposed could not at this juncture assure the lifting of the siege of Dien Bien Phu.

Additionally, in the opinion of our military advisers there is no reason why the fall of Dien Bien Phu, should it fall, should be regarded as materially and vitally altering the military position in Indo-China. Already the gallant defence of the defenders of Dien Bien Phu has cost the attackers so much in casualties and exhaustion of equipment that whatever the outcome, the balance from a purely military stand-point would remain favourable to the French Union. It is our belief that on the assumption, which we believe to be reasonable, that a collective defence can quickly be organized along the lines of the communiqués referred to, the position in Indo-China can be held by the collective action of the free nations having vital interests in the area. It is not apparent to us from any military reason why the fall of Dien Bien Phu should require a plea for a cease-fire which, under present conditions, would seriously impair the defensive possibilities of the area and gravely affect the morale of the Governments of the Associated States and their adherents.

I wish to state that the issues of the hour are of the utmost gravity. So far as we are concerned, they evoke a determination to combine ever more closely and more vigorously with our trusted Allies, among which we include France as the country with which as stated in our communiqué of last week, we have cooperated in intimacy for nearly two centuries.

It is our belief that it is the nature of our nations to react vigorously to temporary setbacks and to surmount them. That can be done in relation to the present situation if our nations and people have the resolution and the will. We believe that you can count upon us, and we hope that we can count upon you.

Ends.

Foreign Office please pass immediate to Washington as my telegram No: 120.

[Repeated to Washington]

~~[Copies sent to the Prime Minister].~~

*Distributed to:
S. P. Asia*

TOP SECRET

07/07/12/54

FROM PARIS TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/CAT

DEPARTMENTAL AND WHITEHALL SECRET
DISTRIBUTION

Sir G. Jebb
No. 275
April 25, 1954

D: 5.15 p.m. April 25, 1954
R: 5.26 p.m. April 25, 1954

EMERGENCY
TOP SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 275 of April 25,
Repeated for information to Washington.

My telegram No. 273.

Following is American translation of M. Bidault's reply to Mr. Dulles' letter. Reply was received at American Embassy at 8 a.m. this morning.

[Begins]

I have just received the letter that you have addressed to me after our conversations this afternoon.

2. I confine myself at present only to the observations that you present on the military consequences of the intervention that we have asked of the Government of the United States.
3. The opinion of our military experts, confirmed today even by a general officer who has established himself at Dien Bien Phu and knows well the terrain, is that a massive intervention of American aviation would still be able to save the garrison. It is also the opinion of our command that the Viet Minh has effected, for the attack of the fortress, an exceptional concentration of forces and material engaging there the essential of his battle corps. This accumulation of means accomplished for the first time by the Viet Minh provides an occasion which will likely not be found again to destroy by air action a large part of the enemy forces. Finally, taking place when the rainy season begins, this action could interrupt the supply of the Viet Minh under conditions which would put in danger the remainder of its forces.
4. It is not excluded that a situation presently difficult be thus transformed into perhaps a decisive blow against the Viet Minh.
5. Comments follow shortly.

/ Foreign Office....

TOP SECRET

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO GENEVA CONFERENCE
(U.K. DELEGATION)

*Departmental
Whitehall
Secret*

Cypher/OTP.

SECRET

No: 5
April 25, 1954.

D: 6.55 p.m. April 25, 1954.

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EMERGENCY
TOP SECRET

Following personal for Secretary of State.

Following are salient points made during discussion by Ministers today for which you asked before leaving London.

(a) The proposal to use United States and naval aircraft in Indo-China arises out of Radford's conviction that this is the time for a show-down with China.

(b) Although there were long range aircraft available in the Philippines in addition to carrier borne aircraft, intervention could not possibly be effective in the battle of Dien Bien Phu.

(c) Intervention would almost certainly lead to action by Chinese aircraft and to demand to bomb Chinese airfields. Your colleagues agreed that the Russians could hardly contemplate China becoming engaged in war with United States and not themselves intervene. There would be a grave risk of a third World War developing.

2. It was agreed that Her Majesty's Government was being asked to make a general declaration in order to help secure the approval of Congress to an operation which could not be effective, and that you should speak to M. Bidault and Mr. Dulles on the following lines.

"Our military advice does not give us any confidence that the method you propose to employ would effectively save the fortress. In any case, we have no forces which we could contribute".

It was agreed you should then follow the lines indicated in the Memorandum "Attitude of Her Majesty's Government" approved by your colleagues this morning.

JJJJJ *Distributed to:-*
S. P. And. Dep

5. Disarmament or evacuation of Viet Minh forces in southern Viet Nam.
6. Other measures of security and control providing assurances that suspension of fighting would not enable Viet Minh to reinforce itself or strengthen its position during conversations.

Laniel stressed that the actual cease-fire would only be the result of negotiations incorporating these safeguards, and that a cease-fire of the kind proposed by Nehru would be unacceptable since it would not afford the minimum tolerable security guarantees for the French Expeditionary Corps and Viet Nam troops.

396.1 GE/4-2454: Telegram

The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bohlen) to the Department of State

OFFICIAL USE ONLY PRIORITY MOSCOW, April 24, 1954—4 p. m.

1313. Repeated information priority Paris 282, priority Geneva 8, Embtel 1304, repeated information Paris 279, Geneva 7, April 23.¹

Soviets have sent us following reply to note given them yesterday re Geneva conference.

"In connection with note Government of United States of America 23 April² Government of USSR considers it necessary to state it confirms its position on question of composition Geneva conference as set forth in note April 20.³

With reference to invitation interested states to participate in discussion problem re-establishing peace in Indochina, it goes without saying that this question is matter for consideration of representatives those states whose participation on basis equality is directly provided for in Berlin communiqué."

BOHLEN

¹ Not printed to the minutes of the meeting of Apr. 22, p. 130.
² See Annex A to the minutes of the meeting of Apr. 21, p. 126.
³ Text in telegram 1289 from Moscow, Apr. 21, p. 126.

396.1 GE/4-2454: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State

Geneva, April 24, 1954.
Secto 1. For Phillips from McCardle. Following is Secretary Dulles' statement made on arrival at Geneva, April 24, 1954:

"We come to Geneva on a mission of peace made necessary by communist aggression in Asia. We should be working on behalf of the Republic of Korea and the Associated States of Vietnam, Laos and

Cambodia, whose lands have been invaded and whose peoples have been ravaged by war. We think of the courageous forces of the French Union at Dien Bien Phu who, under the gallant leadership of General DeCastries, are at this very moment suffering bravely because ambitious rulers seek to extract some profit which they can use at this Geneva conference.

"We hope to find that the aggressors come here in a mood to purge themselves of their aggression, and that it will thus be possible to achieve a durable peace which will restore to the brave Korean people their unity and independence, and enable the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia to enjoy and perfect the political freedom which is now theirs.

"I take this occasion to express the friendship which is felt by the American people for the people of Switzerland and their appreciation of the manifold services which Switzerland has rendered throughout its history for the cause of peace and humanity."

DULLES

Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 287

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State*¹

TOP SECRET

GENEVA, April 25, 1954.

Participants: UK US

Mr. Eden Secretary Dulles

Mr. Shuckburgh Mr. MacArthur

Mr. Caccia

Time: 10:15-11:00 p. m., April 25, 1954

Place: Hotel Beau Rivage, Geneva

I sent word to the British Delegation that I would be glad to see Mr. Eden upon his arrival in Geneva this evening if he thought it would be useful. At 10 p. m. I received word that Mr. Eden had just arrived and would be very glad to see me. I called upon him in his quarters at the hotel Beau Rivage immediately thereafter.

Mr. Eden opened the conversation by saying he was very glad to bring me up to date on the results of his trip to London. He had met with the Prime Minister, the Cabinet, and the British Chiefs of Staff. He said he was afraid that the news which he had for me would not be exactly what I wanted to hear. However, he did have certain positive proposals to lay before me.

He then said that the British Chiefs of Staff were certain that air intervention at Dien Bien Phu would have no decisive effect on that

¹ Drafted by Dulles and MacArthur. Conversation was summarized in telegram Dulles 5 from Geneva, Apr. 25, not printed. (751G.5/4-2554) Text of telegram Dulles 5 is printed in *United States-Vietnam Relations, 1945-1967*, Book 9, pp. 388-389.

battle; therefore, since such action would be ineffective, it would be a great mistake in terms of free world opinion to undertake it since nobody could foresee where it would lead. Mr. Eden added that until it is clear what kind of action can be undertaken, it seemed better to wait and be sure where we are headed. He said that under the British proposals, which he would give me, the Communists would be kept guessing as to what we would do if Geneva failed, since they knew already we were considering the possibility of united action. He then said, the UK position resulting from his trip to London was as follows:

1. The British would give the French all possible diplomatic support at Geneva to keep them firm with a view to reaching a satisfactory settlement on Indochina.
2. If such a settlement is reached, the UK will be willing to join with the US and other interested countries of Southeast Asia in guaranteeing that settlement.
3. The UK is prepared at once to study secretly with the US the military measures which might be undertaken to defend Thailand and the rest of Southeast Asia if the French capitulate at Geneva.

Eden said that this latter US-UK exercise excluded Indochina but would deal with the remainder of the area. I asked Eden if the proposed US-UK secret study excluded all of Indochina or just Vietnam. He replied that it excluded all of Indochina. He went on to say that if the Geneva negotiations did not lead to a settlement the British would of course examine urgently with us what should be done about united action. Mr. Eden said that the British Government felt that the foregoing suggestions were not negative, but positive in character. This course of action in the British eyes was infinitely preferable to intervention in the present battle in Indochina. He repeated that under the British proposal the Communists would be kept guessing and might be led to be fairly reasonable since if they were not, and the conference failed, some other course of action might be adopted by the non-Communist states with vital interests in Southeast Asia.

He said that he had two points to add in connection with the foregoing. The British had recently reassessed the situation in Malaya. They had at present 22 battalions (one-third UK, one-third Malaya, one-third Gurkhas) and 100 thousand well armed and trained native policemen. If Indochina collapsed the British felt confident that the situation in Malaya would be in hand. He said there was no parallel between the situations in Indochina and Malaya.

I said to Eden that the British position was most disheartening. I was very skeptical that there was much in it for the French and I doubted that it would be sufficient to keep them in fight. It seemed to me that the prospects of French capitulation were increased in the light of the British position.

Mr. Eden replied "None of us in London believe that intervention in Indochina can do anything". I repeated my belief that if the French did not have some hope that they would have new allies in the Indochina war that they would be unwilling to continue on themselves.

Mr. Eden said that he had stopped at Orly on his way to Geneva (to pick up Mrs. Eden) and had a brief meeting with Bidault. He said that he had outlined for Mr. Bidault in less detail the position of the British Government and had specifically told him that it was as follows:

1. The UK will give the French all possible diplomatic support at Geneva with a view to aid them reach a satisfactory settlement on Indochina.
2. If such a settlement is reached, the UK will be willing to join with the US and others in some form of guarantee for that settlement.
3. If Geneva fails, the UK will be prepared to join with others to examine urgently the situation to see what best should be done.

I said to Eden that I had some reservations myself about immediate air intervention at Dien Bien Phu because we did not believe Dien Bien Phu could be saved by it, and also because our responsibility would be engaged without a sound and adequate political basis for carrying on military action there. In other words, it would seem to involve us very deeply on an unsound basis. However, if we could not give the French some hope for future support, I did not believe that they would be able to stand the loss of Dien Bien Phu. In this connection, I thought it a serious error to write off the loss of all of Indochina and assume that the rest of Southeast Asia could be held. It would have a vital effect on Thailand, Malaya, and Indonesia which was balanced precariously. Its long term result could lead to the loss of Japan. I said I believe the non-Communist states having vital interests in the area, which certainly included Britain, should concert now to work out a joint defense and one which would at least attempt to hold the maximum part of Indochina. This would of course require assurances from the French that they would hold on and also a real guarantee from them regarding the full independence of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. I mentioned that in thinking about the problem of the defense of Southeast Asia, President Eisenhower had commented that to defend the area after the loss of Indochina with its 300 thousand native troops would make the task infinitely more difficult.

While it seemed manifestly impossible to intervene militarily in Indochina before the loss of Dien Bien Phu because of the necessary political arrangements which would have to be made, the French should feel that there was the real prospect of getting more support

after the loss of Dien Bien Phu than they had had before. If they did not have such a feeling, I feared that they would throw up their hands in despair.

Mr. Eden said there was obviously a "gap" between the US and UK views but that the British Government had gone just as far as it possibly could. He mentioned that the British Chiefs of Staff looked forward to discussing the situation in Indochina and Southeast Asia with Radford in London on Monday with a view to getting a better understanding of the differing estimates.

I asked Eden whether the British envisaged a partition in Indochina. Mr. Eden replied that this was a possible course which might save a substantial part of the area. He then produced a staff study map of Indochina prepared by the British Chiefs of Staff which Lord Alexander had given him. The map indicated by red lines that virtually all of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia is under, or subject to, imminent Vietnam control. He said to clear Indochina up the British believe that a strong force must be committed to the Hanoi Delta and that it would have to work gradually outwardly in concentric circles. As it advances, the area it freed of Vietnam control would have to be consolidated by loyal and effective Indochinese administrators. The British believe that this was a "tremendous project involving lots of time and considerable ground forces". I commented on a broken black line at about the seventeenth or eighteenth parallel which ran from the coast of Vietnam across to the border of Thailand. Mr. Eden indicated that this was a possible line of partition, although such a line might have to be bent a little to the south in Vietnam because of the strong control which the Vietnam had over one area on the coast through which this line ran. (Caccia subsequently confirmed that in a partition solution the UK is thinking about a partition of Vietnam and not also of Laos.)

Mr. Eden reiterated that the UK could give no commitment in advance of Geneva guaranteeing Indochina, or implying its defense. If no settlement were reached, the British would join with the allies to consider urgently what should be done. When he had explained the British position at Orly earlier in the evening, Bidault had not raised any question and had seemed resigned.

I said that I feared the French were being put in a position where they might go for what almost amounted to an unconditional surrender. Mr. Eden simply stated "We think this Indochina business is a very big operation in terms of soldiers, time, and commitments." I said that there was no reason why we could not develop the Vietnam forces so that they matched in quality and spirit the Vietnam forces which were receiving infinitely less in the way of supplies. This would

of course require real independence but that I felt was understood. To develop the Vietnam forces and a real spirit that they were fighting for their independence would take time. Mr. Eden replied that unfortunately the Vietnam forces seemed to have faith, whereas the Vietnam did not.

In conclusion, Mr. Eden said that he realized the British position was not what we would have wished, but that the position outlined was just as far as the UK Government felt it was possible to go.

Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 287

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson)

TOP SECRET

Participants: The Rt. Hon. R. G. Casey, Australian Minister for External Affairs
 GENEVA, Apr. 25, 1954.

John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State
 Walter S. Robertson, Assistant Secretary of State

Place: Geneva

Subject: Indo-China

Minister Casey called on the Secretary at 12:20 p. m. (April 25). He opened the conversation by saying that Mr. Eden, before leaving Paris for London the evening before, had conveyed to him the gist of his conversation with the Secretary the Saturday afternoon.¹

The Secretary then read Casey the letter he had written M. Bidault on April 24 and Bidault's reply.² Casey asked that if Dien Bien Phu should fall, would the Secretary feel that the pressure of public opinion in France would force the French to "check in"? The Secretary then summarized his talk with Laniel Saturday night just before leaving for Geneva.³

Laniel had stated that the fall of Dien Bien Phu would in all probability cause the fall of the French Government and would mark the end of French resistance. It was therefore necessary that the United States take immediate action to prevent such a catastrophe. The Secretary said he had explained to Laniel that (1) the United States

¹ For the memorandum of conversation between Secretary Dulles and Foreign Secretary Eden, Apr. 24, see volume XIII.

² The text of Secretary Dulles' letter of Apr. 24 to Foreign Minister Bidault was transmitted to the Department in telegram Dulite 1 from Geneva, Apr. 24; Bidault's reply of Apr. 24 was transmitted from Paris to the Secretary in telegram 121 to Geneva (telegram 4068 to the Department of State), Apr. 24. For the texts of both documents, see *ibid.*

³ For an account of the Dulles-Laniel conversation, see telegram Dulite 17 from Paris, Apr. 24, *ibid.*

preoccupation with immediate, daily problems which was occupying their minds so that there was not quite as much opportunity to develop their long-range planning as would have been otherwise desirable.

Q. Is there no way in which that Asiatic pact could be applied to their day-to-day problems?

A. Well, not until it is brought into being.

Q. Generally assuming, Mr. Secretary, that the negotiation of such a pact would be a very prolonged procedure, do you share that view—a matter many months?

A. No, I do not share that view. You see, if you will check back with the statement which I made, the two communiqués that were issued in London and Paris, there is no reference made there to a pact.⁷ Now, it might take the form of a formalized treaty, but not necessarily. You will see that I referred to the organization of what I call a 'common defense'. That does not necessarily mean that one would have to await all the processes of the negotiation of something like the Pacific NATO. That was done deliberately because of our awareness of the fact that the situation might not permit of that leisurely processing.

Q. In that form, how would Congressional participation or assent be gained, by resolution?

A. It would, presumably, be in terms of a joint resolution rather than a treaty ratified by the Senate.

Q. Could I just check one brief statement I have in my notes. I believe you said we had already taken all steps short of actual belligerency in Indochina.

A. Perhaps 'all steps' is a little bit more comprehensive than the facts warrant. But broadly speaking, we have done everything that the French have asked us to do short of acts which would involve belligerency. That is not literally true. They have once or twice asked for things which did not make sense on consideration. They have asked for planes which they did not have any airfields to handle, and things of that sort. But, within reason, we have met every request of the French short of doing what would be involved in an act of belligerency.

Q. Didn't they ask for anything which would be an act of belligerency, Mr. Secretary?

A. I would say on that, that they do not have perhaps the same experience as we have on constitutional problems, and know just where the limit of authority in the President lies. Possibly, some of the things they ask for overstep what we would think could be done by the Presi-

⁷ For information on the two communiqués, see footnote 3, p. 514 and the editorial note, p. 517.

dent without committing an act of war, but it has just been in the 'twilight zone', you might say.

Reporters: Thank you, Mr. Secretary."

DULLES

Editorial Note

The Korean phase of the Geneva Conference, documented in the first portion of this volume, began on April 26 at 3:10 p. m., Geneva time, at the Palais des Nations. It concluded with the final plenary session on June 15. The Indochina phase of the Conference, after some continued discussions on arrangements, procedures, and participants, began on May 8.

790.5/4-2854: Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Secretary of State, at Geneva*¹

TOP SECRET EYES ONLY WASHINGTON, April 26, 1954—12:28 p. m. Tedul 7.

[Here follows discussion of a possible meeting between President Eisenhower and British Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill. For documentation on Prime Minister Churchill's visit to the United States in June, see volume VI.]

I will see the President this afternoon and am arranging for a Congressional briefing either this afternoon or tomorrow morning.² The President covered things pretty well with the Republican leaders this a. m.³ However, reports that the French asked us to intervene actively in Indochina have already appeared in the papers and will undoubtedly leak with considerable accuracy either in Paris or here. The President will probably have to cover this matter in his press conference on Wednesday, as he will undoubtedly be questioned; so we are preparing a statement for his possible use. If you have any suggestions please wire me.⁴

Bonnet came again last night but he had nothing new to offer, simply to re-urge the importance of direct and immediate intervention at Dien Bien Phu, not to save the place but for the general effect on French morale in Indochina. Reports this morning indicate that the French were able to get additional ammunition in both yesterday and the day before.

¹ Drafted by the Acting Secretary of State. Secretary Dulles arrived in Geneva on Apr. 24 from Paris to attend the Geneva Conference.

² He'd that afternoon in Washington. See telegram Tedul 13, Apr. 26, p. 574.

³ For a summary of the President's meeting, see telegram Tedul 16, Apr. 26, p. 599 and extracts from James Hagerly's diary, Apr. 26, in volume XIII.

⁴ For a summary of the President's remarks on the Geneva Conference during his press conference on Thursday, Apr. 29, see editorial note, p. 604.

You will be pleased to know that on the day before the President sent his personal message⁵ to you he spoke at New York,⁶ and during this speech gave as glowing and touching a tribute to you as I have ever heard him accord anyone.

SMITH

⁵ In this message to Secretary Dulles (telegram Tedul 5, Apr. 23, in volume XIII) President Eisenhower reassured the Secretary that he had the President's complete support for "efforts to get the French to ask for internationalization of the war, and to get the British to appreciate the seriousness of the situation at Dien Bien Phu and the probable result on the entire war of defeat at that place." The President instructed the Secretary to "make sure the British Government fully appreciates the gravity of the situation and the great danger of French collapse in that region. The British must not be able merely to shut their eyes and later plead blindness as an alibi for failing to propose a positive program." (751G.00/4-2354) For the Secretary's reply, see telegram Dulte 8, Apr. 23, in volume XIII.

⁶ President's speech made on Apr. 22 before the American Newspaper Publishers Association at New York City is printed in the Department of State *Bulletin*, May 10, 1954, pp. 699-702.

751G.5/4-2654: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State

TOP SECRET

NIACT

GENEVA, April 26, 1954—2 p. m.
Dulte 7. Repeated information Paris 113, London 67. Eyes only for Acting Secretary from Secretary. Repeated information eyes only to Ambassadors London and Paris. Reference: Dulte 5.¹ Following is conversation I have just had alone with Mr. Eden:

I asked Mr. Eden where we stood on our joint communiqué of April 13.² He said that they were not prepared to examine the possibility of a collective defense which might commit them to fight in Indochina. It was definite that they were not prepared to fight in Indochina, and they were not willing to have any conversations which assumed that as a premise. The idea which they are prepared to help defend would have to exclude Indochina. I said that it seems to me that the communiqué of April 13 clearly implied at least a collective examination of the possibility of a collective defense which would include Indochina. Mr. Eden said that subsequent study had already brought them to the conclusion that this was unacceptable if it involved their fighting, but if there was a peaceful settlement at Geneva which par-

¹ Telegram Dulte 5, Apr. 25, contained summary of discussion between Secretary Dulles and Foreign Secretary Eden on Apr. 25. For text, see volume XIII.

² For a summary of Dulles' Apr. 13 meeting with Eden, see the extract of telegram 4523 from London, Apr. 13, p. 514. For the text of the communiqué, sent to the Department of State from London in telegram Secto 2, Apr. 13, see volume XIII. The communiqué was issued as Department of State press release 192 of Apr. 13 and was published in the Department of State *Bulletin*, Apr. 26, 1954, p. 622.

tioned Indochina, then they might be prepared to include a non-Communist portion in the defense area.

I said that there were at least many critical military problems arising out of Indochina which need to be explored and I thought explored with the French. I pointed out that there are vast stores of military supplies which the US might want to recapture and that quite possibly many of the French forces would seek to pass from Indochina into Siam. All of this would bear upon the defense of the area even assuming all or part of Indochina area excluded. Mr. Eden promised to think further about this matter, and I mentioned that Radford would be discussing this today with the British Chief of Staff.³

DULLES

³ For Admiral Radford's report, contained in telegram 4725 from London, Apr. 26, see volume XIII.

751G.00/4-2654

*Memorandum by the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (Heath) to the Secretary of State*¹

TOP SECRET

[GENEVA,] April 26, 1954.

At the Delegation meeting in Paris on April 24 you asked my opinion of General O'Daniel's report and recommendations (Dept. telegram to Paris 3818 of April 23).²

I. General O'Daniel in effect recommends that training of the Vietnamese Army for combat be taken away from the French, whose training concepts are insufficient and turned over to the United States. If this were done he feels sure nine Vietnamese divisions could be organized for combat by next November.

Comment: I naturally believe that if we went ahead full steam we could train a better Vietnamese Army faster than the French. However, since our policy continues to be to keep the French fighting in Indo-China in good spirits, we should not raise with them at this moment the controversial question of taking away their training function in Indo-China. In any case O'Daniel's ideas are merely in "concept" stage. Before we throw the idea at the French, he should have completed a real staff study of his project provided that he can prepare

¹ Handwritten notation on the source text by Roderic L. O'Connor, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State, indicated that the Secretary had not seen this memorandum.

² Not printed. (751G.00/4-2854). Regarding General O'Daniel's report and McClintock's comments on it, see telegram 2072 from Saigon, Apr. 21, in volume XIII.

such a study without its coming to the knowledge of the French. If the latter knew he were doing it, it would have a serious effect both on U.S. relations with Navarre and on French will to continue fighting. He might be instructed to prepare his study but at the same time instructed not to take it up with the French until authorized. O'Daniel's personal relation with Navarre and the French command are not yet good and we don't wish to increase tension and provide any additional fuel to the French tendency to turn the whole defense of Indo-China over to us.

Unless we made a really remarkable effort it is to be doubted that O'Daniel could have nine Vietnamese divisions combat-ready by November. It is the opinion of Lt. Col. Taber, assistant military attaché, now detailed to the conference, that it is doubtful that U.S. training advice would have much impact on the Vietnamese battle field in less than one year. A copy of Taber's written comments to me on O'Daniel's training idea is attached.

II. O'Daniel also submits a battle plan of using these nine "combat-ready" Vietnamese divisions for a sweep from the South to the North beginning next November.

Comment: This is only a "concept" unsupported by a detailed study or plan. I may add that this is a very controversial concept. I believe that General Trapnell, who was Chief of MAAG until General O'Daniel arrived ten days ago and General Cogne, commanding the French forces in North Vietnam, believe efforts should be concentrated in the North as soon as possible and not follow a complete clean-up of the South and Center. General O'Daniel might be asked to prepare a detailed study of his plan.

III. O'Daniel believes that sending U.S. troops or other reinforcements would be wasteful under the present French command set-up because of the latter's inability to handle large scale operations and its stubbornness in resisting outside advice and help. Lt. Col. Taber and I concur that it would be confusing and frustrating as well as wasteful but we both believe that limited combat support may be necessary on a short range basis in order to get the French to remain and fight long enough to give us time to train the Vietnamese national army.

IV. O'Daniel concluding statement is that General Navarre does not have the requisite ability to wage war in Indo-China on a scale that is necessary to win. I must regretfully agree with that conclusion. Navarre did quite well up until his decision to dig in at Dien Bien Phu when he underestimated enemy supply capabilities and the strength of

his own forces and position there. He has certainly, in the last few days, shown defeatism.

I suggest that it might be desirable to detail Major General Trapnell to act as a special adviser on the military situation in Indo-China. Trapnell has the best and broadest view of that situation and a sound optimism that the battle can be won without massive increase of the forces now present there plus the new Vietnamese units whose formation is already programmed. Trapnell enjoys the liking and respect of the French military.

Vice Admiral Davis is in general agreement with this memorandum except my comment on Point III. Admiral Davis observes that O'Daniel's report was sent to the JCS and is probably receiving intensive consideration there and at the White House.

DRH

[Attachment]

Lt. Col. TABER'S COMMENTS ON O'DANIEL'S REPORT

Concur with statement "feel that Vietnamese Army must be gotten underway at once. This can be done if American methods are applied but are beyond French concept." However, do not concur with statement "... the first increment of nine Vietnamese divisions could be organized and employed by November." Assuming that by "organize" General O'Daniel means to activate and train Division Headquarters and build remainder of division by merely regrouping existing Vietnamese National Army battalions into regiments, I believe his time schedule unrealistic. Nine divisions would require 27 Regt. (Mobile group) Headquarters and service companies. Only 6 now exist in VNA. Schools would have to be expanded, training areas established, interpreters and leaders selected. These problems can be solved but in my opinion not in time to put nine combat-ready divisions in the field "by November", 6 months from now. It might be possible to have one or two divisions combat-ready if work could be started immediately. I doubt that U.S. training and advice could have much impact on the battlefield in less than one year. The lack of strong political leadership in Vietnam and the lack of a real will to fight make the training and advice problem much more difficult than it was in Korea with the ROK troops.

Ref. statement "This type operation gotten underway without delay I believe can save the situation and solve the problem". True only if the French Regular Army (F.T.E.O.) stays in Indo-China in present strength and continues to fight.

751G.00/4-2654 : Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Secretary of State, at Geneva*¹

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, April 26, 1954—6:48 p. m.
Tedul 13. Just completed briefing session as you suggested. Following were present: Senators H. Alexander Smith, Hickenlooper, Langer, Fulbright, Gillette, Mansfield; Representatives Chipperfield, Vorys, Fulton, Smith of Wisconsin, Carnahan, Zablocki and Burleson; Clerks of Committees Francis Wilcox and Boyd Crawford.

I was actually surprised by the restrained gravity of all who participated. With no carping questions or criticisms, there appeared to be full realization of the seriousness of the situation, and among the Congressional group there was open discussion of the passage of resolution authorizing use of air and naval strength following a declaration of common intent, with, or possibly even without, British participation. All concerned waiting with great interest developments of next two days.

SMITH

¹ Drafted by the Acting Secretary.

396.1 GE/4-2654 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State

CONFIDENTIAL PRIORITY

GENEVA, April 26, 1954—8 p. m.

Secto 11. Repeated information London 72, Paris 120, Moscow 28. At meeting this afternoon with Eden and Bidault called at latter's request at his villa, Bidault informed us that he had received a reply to his letter to Molotov suggesting that the three of us meet with him to consider composition of conference on Indochina. Gist of reply was that this matter should be discussed by Foreign Ministers of five powers. In final sentence, however, Molotov expressed willingness to see Bidault alone. Bidault suggested 11 morning April 27 and Molotov has agreed to call on him then. At that meeting he will seek avoid five power issue by suggesting that he deal with Molotov for procedural matters for Indochina conference in same fashion Eden represented three Western powers in arranging procedural set up for Korean Conference here today. Bidault said that he planned confine any discussion to procedural matters and would base his proposals on paper trip tentatively agreed by experts.¹

DULLES

¹ Not printed.

751G.5/4-2654 : Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Department of State*¹

TOP SECRET NIACT

GENEVA, April 26, 1954—9 p. m.
Dulte 9. Repeated information London 73, Paris 122. Department eyes only Acting Secretary from Secretary. Paris and London eyes only Ambassador. I met for about an hour this afternoon with Eden and Bidault at latter's villa. Meeting was called at latter's request with no indication its purpose.

After some discussion procedural problems Indochina conference (reported separately²) discussion turned to Bao Dai's declaration in Paris and current attitude. Bidault told us that he understands Bao Dai named as his personal representative and observer a former member Ho Chi Minh's cabinet but that Bidault has not been able to confirm observer's arrival at his station in Evian.

Bidault then launched into rather confused discussion of problem his government faces with regard to establishing position for Indochina negotiation which he said was extremely difficult during progress of Dien Bien Phu battle. He touched lightly on whole range of possibilities including collective defense, cease-fire and partition. He mentioned further deterioration in political situation in Associated States.

Eden picked up the question of cease-fire and encouraged further discussion by Bidault this subject with cryptic remark that a month ago British had felt cease-fire due to general infiltration was dangerous but that now without having any clear view they were not so sure. I pointed out that cease-fire at Dien Bien Phu locally would be in fact surrender and that cease-fire generally would involve serious risk of native peoples' rising with resultant massacre of French. Side conversations later made it clear French believe with support of their military authorities in Indochina that general cease-fire lacking any control or safeguards would make it impossible for French Union forces to resume fighting once cease-fire established. Bidault said that the French Government had queried French High Command in Indochina and had received a reply that there would either have to be a final cease-fire or further reinforcements would have to be sent to Indochina during the conference.

As indicative of Bidault's continuing courage, he said that when he saw Molotov tomorrow he intended to stand on Laniel's statement of March 5³ and attempt to draw Molotov out without ceding ground

¹ Deputy Assistant Secretary for European Affairs James C. H. Bonbright in a handwritten notation on the source text indicated that he had discussed this telegram with Deputy Under Secretary for Political Affairs Robert Murphy on Apr. 27 "who agreed [there was] no action we could usefully take at this end now."

² Telegram Secto 11, Apr. 26, *supra*.³ Reported in telegram 8240 from Paris, Mar. 6, p. 485.

himself and without getting involved in detailed discussions of substance on an Indochina settlement.

In my judgment, Eden has arrived with instructions actively to encourage French into almost any settlement which will result in cessation of hostilities in Indochina. My guess is that behind this lies British fear that if fighting continues, we will in one way or another become involved, thereby enhancing risk of Chinese intervention and possibility of further expansion of war. This estimate of mine is confirmed by fact that Chauvel told MacArthur that French believe Eden's instructions are to press actively for a cease-fire.

I made clear to Bidault privately that we would have no part in settlement at Geneva of Indochina war which constituted surrender of Indochina to Communists, and that France has better chance by fighting on rather than by attempted withdrawal which would be under most difficult conditions. I intend to see Eden alone tomorrow morning to talk with extreme bluntness to him expressing my dismay that British are apparently encouraging French in direction surrender which is in conflict not only with our interest but what I conceive theirs to be.

DULLES

7516.00/4-2754: Telegram

Dulles-Eden Meeting, Geneva, April 27, Morning: The Secretary of State to the Department of State

SECRET

NTACT GENEVA, April 27, 1954—midnight.

Dulce 13. Repeated information London 77 Paris 127. Eyes only Acting Secretary. Eyes only Ambassadors. I saw Eden and his immediate advisors for a few minutes before his luncheon April 27. I opened by saying that I wanted to speak frankly concerning our own immediate affairs. I said I considered it a great mistake to push French in direction cease-fire which I believed would be a disaster. I said I considered it of utmost importance that we both keep French in mood to fight on in Indochina. If that mood is lost surely disaster would follow with little chance of limiting its scope and indeed little chance of French extricating themselves.

Eden replied with some heat that he was not advocating a cease-fire though he admitted that he had told Bidault that he was less sure today than a month ago that a cease-fire was out of the question. He insisted that all he had been thinking of had been a cease-fire with adequate safeguards and controls. His purpose he said had been to concentrate French thinking on latter points.

I interjected that I did not think three of us were presenting a very impressive or cohesive position. I reminded him that I wanted im-

mediate *ad hoc* plans covering Southeast Asia including Indochina if Geneva failed but that British were against this. French I said had in effect no government and were at a loss as to what to do. They were drifting toward disaster. I was concerned that we were not doing all possible between us to shore up French resolution. I said there was a basic difference between us in that British seemed to think that plans for a joint defense were more apt to spread conflict than absence of any plans.

Eden said that what worried them in London apart from political aspects was that they felt military intervention could be "terrific business", a bigger affair than Korea, which could get us nowhere. They just did not believe that it was a realization of military exercise considering the military means available. Moreover Eden said it would be most unpopular in Asia let alone with British home opinion.

Eden then asked if our tripartite position was really as bad as I had painted it. He said he felt that other side was properly worried.

I agreed but said in all frankness they were more worried about United States than British.

Eden did not deny this, and said that we must see how things go here in next few days and do what we can to buck French up particularly if Dien Bien Phu falls.

I said I was deeply worried over French situation not alone in its relation with Indochina. NATO was directly affected. The fall of Laniel might result in a left-of-center government coming to power which would exist by Communist suffrage, thereby increasing Communist influence domestically in France and by contagion in Italy which country was also a source of serious concern. I said EDC would be affected, and our entire defense structure in Europe. At this point Bidault arrived and we broke off our conversation.

DULLES

Conference files, lot 60-627, CF 287

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (Merchant)

SECRET

[GENEVA,] 27 April 1954.

Participants: Sir Harold Caccia
C. A. E. Shuckburgh
Livingston T. Merchant

Following the Secretary's talk before lunch with Mr. Eden, the three participants listed above adjourned for luncheon for the purpose of further discussing what specific steps the British and we

¹ Reported in telegram Dulles 13, Apr. 27, *supra*.

F0371/12057

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TOP SECRET

1) E1071 DF1071/360

Word of a conversation at dinner at Chequers, Monday, April 26, 1954.

Present: The Prime Minister
Admiral Radford, U.S.N.
Captain George Anderson, U.S.N.
Mr. J.R. Colville.

Admiral Radford said that the fall of Dien Bien Phu, and failure by the United States and Great Britain to take appropriate action would be a great victory for the Communists and a turning point in history. The French Government would collapse and be replaced by a new Government with neutralist tendencies. E.D.C. would not be ratified and NATO itself might well be destroyed. He had been present at a meeting of Congressional leaders at which it was made clear that Congress would approve action to save Indo-China but only if England was willing to co-operate. He believed that if Indo-China fell and there was Communist infiltration elsewhere in S.E. Asia, not only would the food supplies of Japan and other Asiatic peoples in Siam and Burma be lost but Australia and New Zealand would be threatened. Japanese thoughts would turn towards Asiatic Communism with which they would believe the future to lie. The nationalists in Morocco would rise against the French, and would be harshly suppressed. This would spread disquiet and disorder into Africa and the Middle East. This was the critical moment at which to make a stand against China and he did not think that the Russians, who were frightened of war, would go openly to the aid of the Chinese. The situation would however be much worse in five years and indeed every day that passed meant a proportionate gain for the Communist powers at our expense. He said that if we co-operated over this the United States would be willing to help us in other spheres and that he thought that there would be no difficulty in revoking the present American policy of aloofness with regard to our difficulties in Egypt.

The Prime Minister said that he admitted the fall of Dien Bien Phu might be a critical moment in history. It reminded him of the situation at Warsaw in 1919 when the Russian revolutionary armies, under the command of a former Lieutenant, were sweeping westwards and were halted by Pilsudski with the help and advice of General Weygand and Lord d'Abernon. The tide had been checked and rolled backwards.

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This was another such point in history, but how to roll back the tide in this instance was a very different problem. The British people would not be easily influenced by what happened in the distant jungles of S.E. Asia; but they did know that there was a powerful American base in East Anglia and that war with China, who would invoke the Sino-Russian Pact, might mean an assault by Hydrogen bombs on these islands. We could not commit ourselves at this moment, when all these matters were about to be discussed at Geneva, to a policy which might

danger of war on the fringes, where the Russians were strong and could mobilise the enthusiasm of nationalist and oppressed peoples. His policy was quite different: it was conversations at the centre. Such conversations should not lead either to appeasement or, he hoped, to an ultimatum; but they would be calculated to bring home to the Russians the full implications of Western strength and to impress upon them the folly of war. Conversations might or might not be fruitful but they would be understood by people in this country far better than fighting in S.E. Asia and were indeed already supported by

(360)

resolution of the House of Commons. It might be true, as Admiral Radford had said, that we could not be sure the Russians would support the Chinese, but it was evident that in entanglements on the fringes of the Communist world the Soviet had everything to gain without the loss of a single Russian soldier.

The Prime Minister thought nothing more important than the close alliance of the English-speaking peoples and the continued effective co-operation of Great Britain and the United States. He had devoted a great part of his life and strength to this end. But we could not allow ourselves to be committed against our judgment to a policy which might lead us to destruction, the more so when we believed that the action which the Americans now proposed was almost certain to be ineffective. We could do nothing to save Dien Bien Phu and the French must realise that they had not the strength to hold down all Indo-China with the forces at their disposal. The loss of the fortress must be faced. The sensible policy for the French was to withdraw to such areas as they could securely hold and on that basis, after we had seen what came out of the Geneva Conference, the Cabinet would be willing to consider the situation in the closest consultation with their American allies.

Admiral Radford and Captain Anderson both said that they understood the British point of view, but they still felt that the risks were not as great as we supposed and that postponement of effective resistance could only bring upon us further misfortunes. The Admiral would be seeing President Eisenhower on the following day and would certainly report to him all that Sir Winston had told him. Co-operation with Great Britain was the keystone of his policy and he was certain that without it both the United States and the United Kingdom would drift to disaster.

Telegram, Zhou Enlai to Mao Zedong and Others, Regarding Speeches at the Conference and the Situation at the First Plenary Session, April 26, 1954

Records No: 206-Y049

(Top Secret)

Chairman Mao, Comrade Shaoqi and the Central Committee:

(1) We have made an agreement with the Soviet comrades in the last two days that we should let the Korean delegation speak first. Also, the Korean delegation should present in their first speech the plans to reunify Korea by peaceful means, withdraw all foreign troops, and oblige major countries (who are directly involved in the war) ensure and help to bring about Korea's peaceful reunification. China and the Soviet Union should, in turn, express their support of the Korean delegation's positions one day after they speak. Therefore, I should also make a comprehensive statement myself. Right now I am reorganizing the drafts of the opening speech and two statements supporting the Korean delegation, and making changes based on several suggestions from the Soviet comrades. We will also present the principles for the Asian peace charter. However, we will not emphasize the Indochina issue for the moment since we hope to concentrate on the Korean issue in the first discussion. It will also demonstrate that we are not the people who are eager to negotiate.

(2) Regarding the issue of the chairman of the conference, we have already consulted with the Soviet Union and Britain in advance and decided that Thailand, the Soviet Union and Britain should take the chair in turn. Thailand already acted as the interim chair when this afternoon's meeting started at 3:00 p.m. Afterwards, the United States proposed that the above three countries take turns as chair. It was instantly put to vote and adopted. The meeting was adjourned thereafter. This meeting took only 15 minutes. Speeches and discussion will start tomorrow.

(3) Today Molotov introduced Eden to me at the meeting, who shook my hand and greeted me.

Zhou Enlai
April 26

Translated for CWIHP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not quote without permission from CWIHP.

TOP SECRET

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO GENEVA CONFERENCE (U.K. DELEGATION)

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and by bag

DEPARTMENTAL AND WHITEHALL
SECRET DISTRIBUTION

No. 28

April 27, 1954

OUTFILE

D. 12.48 p.m. April 27, 1954

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET

Addressed to Codel Geneva telegram No. 28 of April 27.
Repeated for information to Washington [Priority]
and Saving to Paris No. 1008

Following is record of conversation between Chiefs of Staff and Admiral Radford yesterday. The conversation was very frank and friendly.

[Begins]:

(a) Radford said that the fall of Dien Bien Phu would create a very grave situation. It would be a serious military loss; for the garrison, although numerically only ten per cent of the French strength in Indo-China, represented at least twenty five per cent of their best fighting men. Senior French officers, with whom he had spoken, feared that the fall of the fortress might be followed by wholesale mutiny of Vietnam forces and even by Vietnam attacks on the French; and that large scale riots and massacres of French citizens might follow.

(b) Radford agreed that air intervention now could not save Dien Bien Phu and would not be decisive militarily. He admitted that the effect of intervention would be mainly on morale. He felt, however, that immediate intervention, coupled with the rapid formation of a coalition, was the only step which might prevent a complete French collapse and encourage them to go on fighting. He felt that it was essential to take action now, before Geneva. If we did not do so, we should be faced with a gradual deterioration of the situation in South East Asia and ultimately with a much more serious military commitment.

/(c) ...

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TOP SECRET

Foreign Office telegram No. 28 to Geneva Conference (U.K. Del.)

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(c) He agreed that intervention would involve not only air support but the build-up of substantial land forces: but said that he did not foresee the United States providing the latter. The majority of the land forces would come from Asian countries who had plenty of manpower. He was evidently thinking of building up the Vietnamese forces in the same way as the South Koreans.

(d) Chiefs of Staff argued that there was not a direct parallel between the two. Not only were the Vietnamese not such tough material as the South Koreans: but they had no national faith and no national leader in whom they had confidence. Radford said that he thought much could be done with the Vietnamese if similar methods were employed under American supervision as with the South Koreans.

(e) Radford did not rate high the chances of Chinese active intervention. He said that photographic reconnaissance had shown no build-up of air forces nor construction of airfields in Southern China. He did not believe that it would be in Chinese interests to intervene, nor that the Russians would come to their assistance, even if asked. He said that, in his view, Russia and the Communist Bloc are going to get relatively stronger, and that it was in our interests to take a risk now. He emphasized the serious effect which a collapse of the French in Indo-China with possibly a change of government in France would have on N.A.T.O. and on the prospects for E.D.C.

2. Chiefs of Staff emphasized to Radford the great importance of our being able to reduce our commitments in the Canal Zone, so as to build up a strategic reserve which would be available to fight against Communism anywhere in the world. They said that they believed that, with American support, it should be possible to get a sound and reasonable agreement with Egypt which would ensure the maintenance of the Allied position in the Middle East. Radford was clearly /unfamiliar ...

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TOP SECRET

Foreign Office telegram No. 28 to Geneva Conference (U.K.Del.)

3.

unfamiliar with the failure of the Americans to give us their full support in the earlier negotiations which took place before he took office. He agreed that it was important that we should maintain our position in the Middle East, and was clearly sympathetic.

[Ends].

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CONFIDENTIAL

DF 1071/341

FROM GENEVA CONFERENCE (U.K. DELEGATION)
TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/GTP.

DEPARTMENTAL AND
WHITEHALL SECRET
DISTRIBUTION

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Mr. Eden
No: 24
April 27, 1954.

D: 5.44 p.m. April 27, 1954.
R: 5.53 p.m. April 27, 1954.

PRIORITY
CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No: 24 of April 27
Repeated for information to: Singapore, Saigon,
U.K.H.Cs. New Delhi, Colombo,
Karachi, Washington.
and Saving to: Paris.

Your telegrams Nos: 20 and 21.

DF 1071/341

Nehru's statement is not helpful. It could no doubt have been worse but the less we comment upon it the better.

2. As you suggest, both the Americans and French are likely to react unfavourably to the Indian proposals. I should therefore prefer to avoid, as far as possible, committing myself to support and to continue my present efforts to bring Mr. Dulles and M. Bidault round to a realization of the advantages on its own merits of a solution which does not diverge so widely from that suggested by Mr. Nehru (i.e. a negotiated settlement backed by some subsequent guarantee). Moreover, it is possible that the Russians or Chinese may themselves come out in support of Mr. Nehru's proposals and it would be embarrassing if I had meanwhile espoused them. Also at this stage it would be tactically desirable to wait until the Communists have given some indication of their hand before saying more about our own attitude. In view of the present military and political weakness of the French and Viet Namese, I am doubtful about the advantages of any negotiations which excluded direct participation of the United States and China.

3. If we.....

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Geneva Conference (U.K. Del.) telegram No. 24 to Foreign Office

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3. If we have to comment publicly I think we should therefore not go beyond the line that Mr. Nehru's proposals deserve serious study. In particular we should avoid associating ourselves with the proposal for an urgent "cease-fire" until we are clearer as to the political conditions in which these might be achieved.

4. I am most anxious to keep the five Colombo Powers in close touch with developments and my immediately following telegram contains a message which I should like to have delivered to them from me in Geneva.

Greenlee

Foreign Office please pass to Washington, Singapore, UKHCS, New Delhi, Colombo, Karachi as my telegrams Nos. 10, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, [sic] respectively and Saving to Paris as my telegram No. 1 Saving.

[Repeated to Washington, Singapore and Saving to Paris. Copy sent to C.R.O. for repetition to New Delhi, Colombo, Karachi.]

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South East Asia Department
Far Eastern Department

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might jointly take to shore up the French will. I told both of them that the British abandonment of the terms of the communiqué of April 13² had cut the legs out from under the Secretary's project for an *ad hoc* coalition. I said they did not seem to appreciate that it was intended as a deterrent, which by creating restraints on the other side would reduce the risk of our being forced to intervene. They both denied that this would have been its effect. I replied that the fact the failure to create the coalition was actually increasing the risk of intervention. We argued this back and forth for a time.

With regard to the French we agreed that both our delegations should take every occasion to buck up the French side to attempt to get them to see Dien Bien Phu in proper perspective. They felt strongly, and I was inclined to agree, that the best course would be to get on with the Indochina negotiations rather than delay. They admitted that in the absence of their willingness to consider intervention there was little in the way of concrete support they could offer.

² For text of the communiqué issued following talks between Dulles and Eden on Apr. 13, see telegram Secto 2, Apr. 13, in volume XIII of press release 192 in Department of State *Bulletin*, Apr. 26, 1954, p. 2.

751G.5/4-2754: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State

TOP SECRET

GENEVA, April 27, 1954—noon.

Dulte 11. Eyes only Acting Secretary from Secretary. Re Tedul 9.¹ If you think wise, please explain to the President that I withheld delivery his message to Laniel² during my talk with Laniel last Saturday evening, because I felt that delivery approximately coincident my oral appeal would bring reaction of overpressuring France, and also make it seem that what I had said was prearranged rather than informal and spontaneous. French officials as well as public are extremely sensitive over whatever might seem to be an effort on our part to keep France fighting, while we ourselves are unwilling to join the fighting by air measures which the French believe would be limited and would save Dien-Bien-Phu. Also, it would be doubtful wisdom to

¹ In telegram Tedul 9, Apr. 26, Under Secretary Smith informed the Secretary that the President had "approved and accepted your redraft of message to Coty to be sent immediately following fall of Dien Bien Phu, both as to context and timing." (Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 264) For the text of the President's letter to President Coty of France, May 7, see volume XIII or *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1954*, p. 463.

² For the President's message to Laniel, transmitted to the Secretary in telegram Tedul 7 to Paris, Apr. 24, see volume XIII.

put either President of Republic or President of Council in a position where if he publicly urged continuance of the struggle, this could be represented as being done not spontaneously but under pressure from the United States.

As you know, I do not share French official or popular estimate of the situation, but that estimate is a fact which I know the President would want us to take into account.

DULLES

751G.00/4-2754: Telegram

*Dulles-Molotov Meeting, Geneva, April 27, Noon: The Secretary of State to the Department of State*¹

TOP SECRET PRIORITY

GENEVA, April 27, 1954—9 p. m.

Dulte 15. Repeated information Moscow 16. Eyes only Ambassador. Eyes Only Acting Secretary. Molotov called on me at noon April 27 at his request. He was accompanied by Zaroubin and Troyanovsky. Merchant was with me.

Molotov opened immediately by handing me single copy in Russian of eight page note which he described as Soviet reply to US note of March 19 containing our atomic energy agency proposal.² He said that it contained Soviet Union views on this proposal and also dealt with Soviet atomic proposal of December 21. It was agreed that after I had read note in translation we might usefully meet again before my departure for Washington.

When this matter concluded, Molotov made no move to raise other subjects with me (as I had rather expected he might). I inquired if he would object to my speaking on Indochina. He indicated he would be most interested.

I said that whereas neither of us were belligerents, matter was of direct concern to both. I recalled my suggestion to him at Berlin that I was fearful of chain of events starting in Indochina with far-reaching consequences which United States did not desire and assumed Soviet likewise did not desire. I said that my concern had not been diminished by events since Berlin, and that there had been created in our minds growing fear that large aggressive movement might be under way vitally affecting our interests. I said I did not myself see clearly any solution, but hoped Molotov might see a possible solution

¹ Memorandum of conversation, Apr. 27, is filed in Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 287.

² For documentation on atomic energy matters, see volume II.

which would avoid undesirable consequences to which I had alluded. I said that I hoped we could find ways of avoiding a growing sense of crisis and the belief that enlarged struggle was almost inevitable.

Mr. Molotov replied with great seriousness that Soviet Union had but one interest in this case which was to contribute to establishment of peace in Indochina. He felt first step was to hear both sides. Molotov said no country, including far away Soviet Union, wished enlargement of Indochinese war and he stated his belief that in this respect a great deal depends on United States policy. He said it should be possible by serious attention at Geneva to find solution.

Molotov then briefly reported his talk with Bidault an hour earlier on composition conference (which talk is being reported at length in separate telegram³).

In summary, he stated his view that participants should be Big Four plus Communist China plus three Associated States plus Viet Minh and these nine delegations might agree later on adding other Asian nations with India notable possibility as country particularly interested in Indochina and in position wield conciliatory influence.

I replied that I thought it indispensable that some at least, and perhaps, all of the Indochinese authorities he had mentioned should have opportunity to participate. I hinted that Indochinese perhaps lack sufficient experience in international affairs to be able alone to find proper solution. I concluded by saying that I would be happy to have the benefit of any idea regarding substance of an acceptable solution before I returned to Washington, and suggested that he might pursue matter at a later meeting when I had had opportunity to study note he had just given me.

After some further inconclusive discussion of subject, Molotov took his leave having failed to rise to any of the flies I had cast.

This, however, does not mean that visit had no significance. Obviously, Molotov would not have to come to see me merely to be a messenger boy to deliver Russian text note. I gather he was anxious for opportunity to see whether I had any substantive suggestions to make to him.

Compared to his appearance at Berlin, Molotov appeared tired and unwell.

At luncheon with Eden and Bidault following this talk, I gave them both gist of this conversation and Bidault reported in full his earlier talk with Molotov on composition Indochina conference.

DOLLARS

³Telegram Duitre 16, Apr 27, p. 591.

PPS files, lot 65 D 101. "Geneva Conference"

Memorandum by the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (MacArthur) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

[GENEVA,] April 27, 1954.

I had a long and private conversation with Chauvel after luncheon today on a personal basis. He gave me his own estimate of the French situation as follows:

The news which the French received the middle of last week that Dien Bien Phu would probably fall in a few days caused an emotionalism in Paris bordering on hysteria. The fact that Dien Bien Phu has not yet fallen has given a little time for further reflection on the part of those French officials who believe that capitulation would be a disaster for France. The problem, as these officials see it, is, in essence, that of gaining time. However, when Dien Bien Phu falls, there is apt to be a wave of emotional defeatism in the parliament and among certain members of the Cabinet which will result in sweeping the Laniel-Bidault team out of office and the formation of a new government dedicated to the proposition that its single mandate is to get out of Indochina. Mendes-France might head such a government. Such a government would also probably be unwilling or unable to push ahead with EDC.

Chauvel said that quite frankly the only hope that Bidault and Laniel see is in rapidly getting on with the Secretary's proposal for united action in Southeast Asia. He asked whether anything was being done in Washington in the way of consultations or otherwise to get on with the project. He stressed when Dien Bien Phu falls the present French Government must have something to point to offset the loss of Dien Bien Phu. In other words "There must be something on the fire even if it isn't entirely cooked." If there is something in prospect, the present government could point to it and would be much more able to prevent the French parliament and certain leaders being swept away by an emotional wave which would lead them to decide quickly and immediately to abandon Indochina. While obviously armed intervention would be the best thing to be able to point to as evidence that France had gained support from the US, and possibly others, in Indochina, he understood that this was probably not possible because of the attitude of the UK. The next best thing to point to would be a declaration of common purpose such as was envisaged by you. This declaration, as he understood it, would proceed by setting up *ad hoc* machinery for political and military consultation looking to see what might be done with respect to the defense of Southeast Asia, including Indochina. If it were not possible to get such a decla-

ration, it would still be useful if a public announcement that representatives of the states who have vital security interests in Southeast Asia were consulting with a view to the defense of Southeast Asia. Obviously this latter device would have less appeal than the first two, but it was still something which the French Government could point to. If they had nothing to point to, he did not know what would happen. He said very frankly that neither Laniel nor Bidault knew what the effect of the fall of Dien Bien Phu would be, although the atmosphere in Paris yesterday and today was substantially better than it had been last week during our visit. This however could change with dramatic suddenness with the loss of Dien Bien Phu. When Dien Bien Phu falls, a sudden and violent reaction leading to the disappearance of the Laniel-Bidault Government must be avoided if at all possible. French leaders must weigh the advantages of getting out of Indochina against the great disadvantages in terms of France's long term interests, but to have time to reflect, they must have hope, and such hope can only come from the prospect of some form of united assistance to France in Indochina, and the US alone can supply this.

He said that Bidault and Laniel's efforts now are to exercise a calming influence on the situation in Paris. Bidault's terms of reference at Geneva which the Cabinet approved last Saturday were that outwardly at least the French should treat Geneva like any other international conference. They should stand pat in the first instance on the Laniel cease fire proposals of March 5¹ and should not go running helter-skelter to the Communist side with a series of new proposals. This would simply lead the Communists to believe that they were on the run and would cause them to raise their ante. In other words, they should wait for the Communists to come to them with propositions and then weight [*weigh*] these propositions rather than leading with their chins. The Cabinet agreed to the foregoing on the basis that the U.S. was the key to the situation and that there was considerable hope that U.S. aid would be forthcoming.

Chauvel said that when the Secretary visited Paris two weeks ago the French had been apprehensive that he would ask them then to agree to certain specific courses of action which would give the appearance that France, prior to Geneva, committed itself to a course of action which made any negotiated settlement of Indochina impossible. They were therefore not only relieved but very pleased with his proposal and with the communiqué which was issued.² They felt that the communiqué would indicate to the Russians and the Chinese that

¹ See telegram 3240 from Paris, Mar. 6, p. 437.

² The communiqué released on Apr. 14 was issued as Department of State press release 187 of Apr. 14 and was published in the Department of State *Britfrfr*, Apr. 26, 1954, p. 622.

courses of action were being studied, although not definitively decided upon. This was why they had agreed to the establishment of a working group of interested states in Washington. Since the Secretary's visit two weeks ago, the situation had evolved very considerably and now that the Geneva Conference had begun, the French felt that it was possible and understandable in terms of their own public opinion to proceed ahead with the establishment of some form of *ad hoc* international machinery to examine the possibility for outside action in the defense of Southeast Asia. He recognized that the British were opposed to doing anything but hoped that he could persuade them or [*to*] do something of some kind that could be pointed to by Bidault and Laniel even if the British would not come along. He emphasized repeatedly that it was desperately important to have something to point to before the time when Dien Bien Phu had fallen.

He said that he had recommended to Bidault and the latter had agreed that in any talks he has with Molotov dealing with a solution to Indochina, he should continue to stand pat on the Laniel proposals and wait for a Communist counter-proposal. Such a counter-proposal would be examined on its merits and would of course have full consultation with us and the British. He said that Bidault believed that if Molotov could be led to expect that if the Communists did not let up in Indochina the war would be expanded, this would be one of the best means of keeping pressure on the Communists. I gathered that Bidault is toying with the idea in some future conversation with Molotov with remarking that if Dien Bien Phu falls, a situation will arise involving additional outside support for France in Indochina with the inevitable possibility of extension of conflict. In other words, to imply that if the Communists do not wish to expand the war and have the U.S. and possibly others join France, they should not try to carry Dien Bien Phu by assault.

Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 287

Memorandum by the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (MacArthur) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

[GENEVA,] April 27, 1954.
I asked Chauvel today what he thought the British position was. He said that the British are unwilling to join in united action in Southeast Asia, and what they are really hoping for is some kind of negotiated solution at Geneva. They would expect that any solution agreed to would be guaranteed by all the participating powers, which would involve guarantees not just by the UK and our side but guaran-

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SECRET

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

F107/135

DEPARTMENTAL DISTRIBUTION

Cypher/OTP

Sir R. Makins
No. 825
April 28, 1954.

D. 7.17 p.m. April 28, 1954.
R. 2.40 a.m. April 29, 1954.

PRIORITY
SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 825 of April 28.
Repeated for information to Codel Geneva.

Codel Geneva telegram No. 19, paragraph 6: Geneva Conference

My guess is that Mr. Dulles is thinking a great deal about the political situation here.

2. This is extremely confused, especially as the extraordinary antics in the McCarthy hearing are holding first place in the attention both of politicians and the public.

3. Having taken the decision that Indo-China must be held at all costs, the Administration had been influencing public and Congressional opinion quite successfully to accept a strong policy based on united action to prevent a French surrender in negotiation. Now that the policy of united action for this immediate purpose is seen to have failed, at least until the Geneva Conference is over, there is a general sense of bewilderment.

4. Mr. Dulles is in a difficult position because he has virtually no room for manoeuvre in any negotiation except on the basis of united action, on account of the feeling here about the Chinese Communists. Publicly, therefore, he has ostentatiously taken a back seat.

5. In this situation, with the prospect of further American involvement postponed, and of a negotiation which is likely to be unpalatable to United States ideas, the opinion is expressed that if the Viet Nameese and the French and the British are not willing to make the effort, why should the United States? There is a discernable sense of relief at the postponement of a decision, and the support which was certainly building up for a policy of intervention seems to be ebbing. This would make it all the more difficult for the Administration to mobilise enough

/Congressional



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SECRET

Washington telegram No. 825 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

7/11/57/324/1000
Congressional and popular support, if as suggested in my telegram No. 801 they ultimately came to the conclusion that they would have to act without the United Kingdom.

6. It is extremely difficult to judge the future trend of public sentiment here. In the present confused position I propose to send daily reports on American reactions to the events at Geneva, and I hope the delegation will let me know if they are not the kind of thing they find useful.

Foreign Office pass to Codel Geneva as my telegram No. 9.

[Repeated to Codel Geneva]

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South East Asia Department
American Department
Far Eastern Department

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396.1 CE/4-2854

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (Merchant)

TOP SECRET

GENEVA, April 28, 1954—10:15 a. m.

Participants:

*France*Mr. Bidault
Mr. Chauvel
Mr. Roux
Mr. de Margerie*UK*Mr. Eden
Sir Harold Caccia
Mr. Merchant*US*Secretary Dulles
Mr. Robertson
Mr. Merchant

Time: 10:15 a. m., April 28, 1954

Place: Bidault's Residence, Joli Port, at Versoix

The meeting was called at Mr. Bidault's request in advance of his eleven o'clock engagement with Molotov. Mr. Bidault opened by saying that he had received no instructions from Paris nor any word of the official attitude of the Vietnamese Government on the question of participation in the Indochina conference.

Mr. Bidault said that he was increasingly concerned over the effect in Vietnam of the presence at the conference table of Vietnam representatives, and he was searching for some formula to depreciate their role. In his talk with Mr. Molotov this morning,¹ he intended to raise the question of a cease-fire at Dien Bien Phu in order to permit the evacuation of the French wounded. A refusal by the other side of this request he believed would harden public opinion in France and Indochina. The formula which he is considering is to have invitations issued to the US, UK, USSR, France, China, and the three Associated States, making an initial conference of eight. This conference of eight would then invite the Vietnam to appear. Presumably they would participate fully thereafter, but at least a distinction would have been drawn in the matter of precedence.

Mr. Bidault also mentioned his desire to get on with the Indochina talks.

The Secretary referred to the ground we had lost in Indochina since the Berlin Conference. He also mentioned our intelligence advice that two prominent Vietnam political figures had arrived at Geneva. Neither Mr. Bidault nor Mr. Eden had any confirmation but both were obviously interested.

Mr. Bidault made the point that he would not consider a general cease-fire, and that when the French used this term, what he had in

¹For a summary of Eden's meeting with Molotov, see telegram Dnite 20, Apr. 28, p. 602.

mind was a formal armistice with all the necessary controls, safeguards, and machinery.

The three Ministers noted that no speakers had been inscribed so far except the Secretary. There was some general discussion of how to advance the work of the conference in this situation. Mr. Eden proposed that thought might be given to a restricted meeting which each member of the conference would attend with a single adviser for a frank discussion of advancing the work of the conference.

Mr. Bidault then read the tabulation of casualties in Indochina for the first three months of this year. The total figure, which was 12,600, was about equally divided between Vietnamese and non-Vietnamese French Union Forces, including Africans and the Foreign Legion. The losses constituted deaths, missings in actions, desertions, and permanently crippled. Of the Vietnamese losses, 2,022 were listed as defections.

The meeting broke up at about 10:45, and it was understood that Mr. Bidault would report the results of his conversation with Mr. Molotov to Mr. Eden and the Secretary at the latter's luncheon for the three of them today.

761G.00/4-2854: Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Secretary of State, at Geneva*¹

TOP SECRET PRIORITY WASHINGTON, April 28, 1954 12:59 p. m.

Tedul 15. Radford and I had a long meeting with the President this morning and Radford gave a full report of the discussion with Churchill. He is obviously greatly depressed by British attitude. I discount the natural military reaction to lack of cooperation. However, the President's decision is that all requests made by Pleven will be met in so far as it is possible to do so without undue risk.² Am sending you later transcript of President's session with Congressional leaders on subject of Indochina taken down by Cutler.³ The President is trying his hand on a draft to Churchill generally in form of final appeal couched "more sorrow than in anger". When received will transmit to you for suggestions. He does not anticipate much by way of results, nor does he believe it is worth trying. There is ob-

¹Drafted by the Acting Secretary.

²Reference is to Pleven's requests for military assistance to France: on this matter, see telegram Tedul 14, Apr. 27, p. 588.

³For the transcript, see telegram Tedul 16, Apr. 28, p. 590.

Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 288

*Memorandum of Conversation*¹

CONFIDENTIAL

GENEVA, April 28, 1954.

Participants: Prince Wan, Thailand Foreign Minister
 Ambassador Pote Sarasin
 Secretary Dulles
 Walter Robertson
 U. Alexis Johnson

Place: Geneva

Prince Wan asked to see the Secretary today following the Conference session.² He opened the conversation by expressing appreciation of the Secretary's nomination of him as one of the three rotating Presidents of the Conference. The Secretary replied that Prince Wan well knew the esteem with which he is regarded by the United States, and that the Secretary hoped it would in some very small measure make up for our inability to support Prince Wan for the Presidency of the last General Assembly.

Prince Wan referred to the prompt Thai response to the united front concept in S.E. Asia, and the Secretary expressed great appreciation of the U.S. therefor. The Secretary stated that the matter is not moving as rapidly as we had hoped because the UK was inclined to wait until it sees what happens at Geneva with respect to Indochina. France is also confronted with a very difficult situation and their Cabinet is so badly divided on this issue that there is virtually no government.

In reply to the Secretary's query as to whether Prince Wan had any information with regard to consultations in Washington with the Thai government, Prince Wan replied in the negative. The Secretary stated he thought things would develop much more rapidly after his return to Washington, which would probably be on Sunday;³ that immediately upon his arrival he would consult with Congressional leaders and in general be in a better position to carry forward the concept.

Prince Wan stated that Thailand wondered whether it would not be possible to concert at least on military plans in the area, mentioning that at present Thailand has its own defense plans and the British had their plans in Malaya, but there was no coordination. He stated

¹ Copy of this memorandum of conversation in CF 264 indicates that it was drafted by U. Alexis Johnson. Summary of the conversation was transmitted to the Department of State in telegram Secto 31, Apr. 28. (396.1 GE/4-2854)

² Reference to the Korean phase of the Geneva Conference which began on Apr. 26.

³ May 2.

that Thailand stood ready to conclude a pact because of public opinion in Thailand and the "many lawyers in Parliament". He felt it would be desirable to have a more formal arrangement.

In reply the Secretary pointed out that the drawing up of a formal defense pact was very time consuming. He stated that in the conversations in London, leading up to the communiqué by Mr. Eden and himself, there had been very considerable discussion of the phrase in the communiqué now reading "consider the creation of a common defense"; the word "assistance" having been deliberately left out. The situation which had to be faced in the area was such that it would probably not permit the time-consuming procedures for drawing up and ratifying a pact.

Upon Prince Wan's expressing the opinion that consultations should be undertaken, the Secretary inquired whether there was anyone in the Thai Embassy in Washington with whom at least the quasi-military aspects of the situation could be discussed, agreeing that talks should start quickly. Ambassador Sarasin replied that the Chargé in Washington was available for consultations, and that on the military level, the military attachés were also available.

Prince Wan stated that in reply to press inquiries he had answered he did not believe that proceeding with the united front concept would in any way prejudice the Geneva Conference. The Secretary stated that he fully agreed and expressed appreciation for Prince Wan's having taken this stand. The Secretary stated that he would immediately telegraph Washington in regard to the undertaking of consultations there with Thai representatives.

In reply to Prince Wan's question as to whether France would keep on in Indochina, the Secretary pointed out that it is one thing to talk about quitting, but another thing actually to quit. If faced with responsibility, the present leaders in France who are urging withdrawal from Indochina would probably find that it is not easy to do so. If such persons came into power and found that the situation would in fact not permit a withdrawal, the people of France would probably be more inclined to accept the fact than they are at present. The Secretary stated that he was inclined to think that there would be no hasty French retreat from Indochina; however, if there was a change of government, it might well attempt to obtain a cease fire with no conditions, which he compared to entering into an agreement with a burglar in your house not to shoot.

In reply to Prince Wan's inquiries regarding the Indochinese phase of the Conference, the Secretary stated that no agreement had yet been reached on the composition of the Conference. He explained the French attitude toward participation of Ho Chi Minh; their attempt

to find some status for him other than a full participant in the Conference. However, the Soviets have refused a second-class membership for Ho. At the moment Bidault is trying to get in touch with Bao Dai. Bidault is also anxious to get agreement regarding evacuating the wounded from Dien Bien Phu. Molotov has told him that no such agreement can be reached until the question of composition of the Indochina phase of the Conference is decided.

396.1 GE/4-2854

*Memorandum for the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (Bowie)*¹

SECRET

[GENEVA.] April 28, 1954.

Subject: Consequences of the Fall of Dien Bien Phu

In response to your recent request CIA and State Department intelligence have prepared the following joint estimate of the consequences in France of the early fall of Dien Bien Phu.

1. We believe that the fall of Dien Bien Phu alone would not cause the collapse of the Laniel government or a radical change in French policy in Indochina so long as the Geneva conference offers some prospect of a settlement in Indochina. However, it would reduce the willingness of the Laniel government to continue the war. To the French public and parliamentary opinion this military defeat would represent the failure of the Navarre plan. It would strengthen the French belief that France cannot win in Indochina, and it would increase parliamentary pressure upon the French government to reach an Indochina settlement at Geneva. It would also reduce support for US policies in France, particularly if the Laniel government in its explanation of the military defeat should emphasize US refusal to provide air support for Dien Bien Phu and if the US stand at Geneva should appear intractable to the French.

2. The French people and government have concentrated their hopes upon Geneva for a settlement in Indochina. They have almost certainly abandoned hope that the threat of US involvement would force the cessation of hostilities or that a settlement might be obtained through US recognition of Communist China or Communist Chinese admission to the UN. The failure of these hopes and the fall of Dien Bien Phu might impel the Laniel government to press for US-UK approval of an Indochina settlement based upon a partition of Indochina or a cease-fire which would necessarily involve such a partition.

3. Following the fall of Dien Bien Phu, we believe that the French government would announce that it was sending additional forces from France to Indochina, but that this announcement would be designed primarily to impress the Communist states at Geneva with

¹ Drafted by Joseph A. Yager and Chester L. Cooper. Research and Reference Officers to the U.S. Delegation.

French resolution. For the same purpose of strengthening the French hand in the Geneva negotiations, the French would continue to press the US for further support of the Indochina war, including commitment of US troops. On the other hand, we believe that the Laniel government fears the internationalization of the conflict in Indochina, because it would increase the risks of general war. However, if the Communists refused to negotiate an "honorable" settlement and demanded immediate French withdrawal from Indochina, we believe that the French government would probably accept, as a last resort, internationalization of the conflict in Indochina.

4. State and CIA feel strongly that the delegation has the best interpreters of the French political scene plus vastly greater detailed information. Hence, we express no opinion on a possible successor Prime Minister or the party line-up if the Laniel government falls. We see no reason to dispute Paris views that such a government would be neutralist and nationalist re European as well as Southeast Asian issues.

The above estimate was to have been discussed at today's meeting of the IAC. We have been promised further word if this discussion reveals any differing views on the part of the other intelligence agencies.

7610.00/4-2854: Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Secretary of State, at Geneva*¹

TOP SECRET PRIORITY WASHINGTON, April 28, 1954—4:43 p. m.

Tedul 16. Following is R. Cutler's summary of principal points made by the President in his talk with Republican leaders, April 26, 1954.

"(1) The United States would not intervene with combat forces in the Indochina conflict, except as part of a grouping of interested nations formed to prevent the spread of communism in Southeast Asia. The forming of such a grouping would provide a basis to ask Congress for the necessary authority to intervene.

"(2) The United States is doing everything to get concerted action in Southeast Asia. At first, it was thought that the U.K. would be likely to join in such concerted action, but more recent news indicates a negative position on Britain's part. Today the outlook seems pretty grim.

"(3) There does not now appear to be any great need for the United States to provide ground troops, for it should be possible adequately to train the large indigenous population for ground combat.

"(4) If there was to be intervention in Southeast Asia, such intervention should come before the French and indigenous troops are defeated. It will be a harder job to intervene later on. But it would be

¹ Drafted by Kitchen of S/S. For another summary of this meeting, see extracts from James Hagerly's diary, Apr. 26, in volume XIII.

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M/S
 M: Speaight
 M: Dean
 S.E.A.D.

ms 307 DF 1071/454
 10, Downing Street,
 Whitehall.

April 28, 1954.

Dear Kirkpatrick

There were three things which Admiral Radford said the other night at Chequers which I forgot to mention in the rather hurried record I made in the early hours of the morning. Two of them at least he has already said to the Chiefs of Staff and elsewhere, but they may be worth repeating.

The Admiral said he held no brief for the way the French are conducting their operations in Indo-China and thought that General Navarre had been a disaster. However, he thought things would be quite different if an efficient American Commander (and as far as I can remember he mentioned General Van Fleet) were on the spot and if the Americans were given a chance of training the Vietnamese in the same way that they trained the South Koreans. I asked him afterwards whether he thought the Vietnamese were comparable to the South Koreans in this respect and he said that if Viet-minh could be welded into such an efficient fighting force he thought that the same should go for their fellow-countrymen outside the Communist zone. I asked him whether the difference was not due to the fact that the Viet-minh thought they had something to fight for, and he seemed to imply that the Americans could give the Vietnamese something to fight for and, what is ~~is~~ equally important, something to fight with.

Secondly, Admiral Radford emphasised that the President meant the Associated States to have real independence. The French had got to mend their ways in this respect as well as in others. I take it that this is what he meant by saying that the Americans would give the Vietnamese something to fight for.

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S.F.A.D.

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL.

April 28, 1954.

DF1071/3356

OUTFILE

Thank you for your telegram No. 812 of April 27 requesting information about Sunday's decisions.

I am puzzled by your statement that your Canadian colleague on Monday received the text of the Cabinet decisions of April 25. I only received the text myself yesterday evening and so far as I can discover no texts were handed to the Canadian High Commissioner in London. Certainly none was given to him by us. Robertson did however see Liesching on Monday, and Liesching told him that at the meetings of Ministers which were held on Sunday, it was decided that -

- (a) We are not prepared to give any undertakings now in advance of Geneva concerning United Kingdom military action in Indo-China.
- (b) If a settlement is not reached at Geneva, we are ready to join in guaranteeing that settlement and in setting up a collective defence to make that guarantee effective.
- (c) We cannot give any assurance now about possible action in the event of failure to reach agreement at Geneva for a cessation of hostilities in Indo-China, but we are ready to join with the United States Government now in studying measures to ensure the defence of Siam and the rest of South-East Asia, including Malaya, in the event of all or part of Indo-China being lost.

For your strictly personal information, the record of Sunday's events was as follows:

An emergency meeting of Ministers was held in the morning to discuss the situation in Indo-China. At this meeting it was agreed that the United Kingdom Government should not associate themselves with any immediate declaration of intention to afford military assistance to the French in Indo-China and the Secretary of State was invited, in his further discussions on this question at Geneva, to be guided by the principles embodied in a paper prepared by him, a copy of which is attached for your personal background information.

Shortly after the end of this ministerial meeting the French Ambassador saw the Secretary of State as recorded in F.O. telegram No. 924 to Paris

A second ministerial meeting was held in the afternoon to consider this French approach. The meeting reaffirmed the decisions taken in the morning.

You will have seen the Prime Minister's statement as well as the line the Secretary of State is taking in Geneva from telegrams repeated to you. As you know, he is most anxious to do nothing which might prejudice the chances of reaching a satisfactory settlement at Geneva.

YOUR MINISTER

Sir Roger Makins, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.

Telegram, Mao Zedong to Peng Dehuai and Huang Kecheng, 28 April 1954

Source: *Mao wengao*, vol. 5, p. 90

Comrades Peng Dehuai and Huang Kecheng:

It seems that the biggest possible danger in Vietnam now exists not in areas south of Dien Bien Phu, but in the transportation line in our rear area. If the enemy uses two parachute battalions to land at the most crucial points in the transportation line in our rear area, and construct strongholds to defend these point and thus interrupting the whole of our transportation system; and if our troops cannot eliminate the enemy quickly and allow the fight to become a prolonged one, it is possible that our troops at Dien Bien Phu might be forced to withdraw. The telegram by the Military Commission has noticed the possibility of the enemy occupying our transportation line, but the emphasis of this issue is not sufficient, and this question is only listed together with (the problem existing) in the Luang Prabang direction. Please give this issue reconsideration, and ask the Vietnamese side to quickly deploy the force that is needed in the proper area, which should be specifically for dealing with such a sudden change of development, so that the operations at Dien Bien Phu will not fall short of success because of lack of sufficient effort.

Mao Zedong
April 28

Translated for CWIHP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not cite or quote without permission from CWIHP.

**Telegram, Zhou Enlai to Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, and CCP Central Committee (excerpt),
April 28, 1954**

Source: *Zhou Enlai nianpu*, 1949-1976, vol. 1, p. 363

- (1) According to the situation of the first three days of the conference, the discussion on the Korea question has already entered a deadlock, and this is because the United States does not intend to solve the question, France is not in a convenient position to discuss this issue, and Britain has made it clear that it does not want to cast its opinion on this issue either.
- (2) Bidault is eager to discuss the Indochina question. He already approached Molotov and expressed the desire to meet us [the Chinese] by the introduction of the Soviet side, Outside the conference, Bidault and other members of the French delegation have showed a keen interest in contacting members of the Chinese delegation.... Therefore, the discussion on the Indochina question could begin ahead of the [conference's] schedule.

Translated for CWIHP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not cite or quote without permission from CWIHP.

396.1 GE/4-2854 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State

SECRET

GENEVA, April 28, 1954—11 p. m.

Dulte 20. Repeated information London 86, Paris 137, Saigon 8. London, Paris information Ambassador; Saigon information Chargé. For Acting Secretary from Secretary. Reference Dulte 16.¹ Bidault and Margerie gave following account of former's meeting with Molotov this morning:

Bidault began by saying that UK and US reaction to yesterday's discussion not unfavorable but that he had not had opportunity to consult Associated States. He then alluded to his appeal for truce for evacuation of wounded from Dien Bien Phu and expressed hope Viet Minh would show goodwill by granting it as French had done earlier on Viet Minh appeal. Molotov replied that he sympathized with wounded but that this matter could be discussed by Vietnamese and Viet Minh once both were at Geneva. Bidault said matter urgent and one for discussion between commanders in field rather than between diplomats at Geneva and he reiterated importance of Viet Minh showing goodwill. At this point, Molotov appeared to become angry and accused Bidault of attempting to introduce precondition to admission of Viet Minh Government as interested state which he considered incompatible with Berlin agreement. Bidault denied he was making precondition. Both parties reiterated their arguments at length, Molotov several times stressing importance of direct contact between Vietnamese and Viet Minh at Geneva. Bidault finally terminated acrimonious discussion with statement they were getting nowhere and he would consult further with his associates.

Molotov then hastily called press conference and gave his account of interview.

Bidault is furious. He had previously invited Molotov for dinner this evening but plans to refuse to discuss any matters of substance with him pending satisfaction on wounded and to tell Molotov there is no point in discussing business when latter immediately thereafter calls in press to receive his version.²

DULLES

¹ Dated Apr. 27, 1954.² Secretary Dulles reported to the Department of State in telegram Dulte Apr. 29, that "as advised that at dinner last night Bidault and Molotov reiterated position given in referenced telegram [Dulte 20], that neither had any impression of other and that nothing else of substance was discussed. Atmosphere described as heavy and chilly." (396.1 GE/4-2854)

396.1 GE/4-2854 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State

SECRET

GENEVA, April 28, 1954—11 p. m.

Secto 30. Repeated information Saigon 7, Paris 137. Bidault and French delegation concerned at Bao Dai's attitude and action in going off to Cannes at this point without delegating authority for decisions to any of his people in Paris, or sending any representative to Geneva. Jacquet, who was to have come here this afternoon, has been despatched to Cannes to talk with Bao Dai en route.

Margerie states French, in view of their agreement to discuss participation further with Vietnamese, should Communists insist Viet Minh attend in same status, cannot now discuss participation further with Molotov without talking to Bao Dai. Jacquet is to inform him of developments and ask his views, adding that unless he has definite views to express either immediately in person, or almost immediately, through representatives in Paris, or Geneva, French will feel free to take such position on participation as they think best (i.e., Associated States and Viet Minh).

Margerie commented that Bao Dai was blithely confident that French would continue to defend his country with Americans paying for it and that if French stopped, he could look to America to take over this defense.

Bidault made suggestion Ambassador Heath talk with Bao Dai and we are endeavoring to arrange this.

DULLES

396.1 GE/4-3054 : Telegram

Heath-Bao Dai Meeting, Cannes, April 29, 7:30 a.m.: The Secretary of State to the Department of State

SECRET

GENEVA, April 30, 1954—3 p. m.

Secto 47. Repeated information Paris 150, Saigon 15, London 96. Following is Ambassador Heath's report to the Secretary of his talks with Bao Dai yesterday at Cannes:

I went to Cannes yesterday on the same plane as Falaize, Bidault's Chief de Cabinet. Falaize had asked me to let him see Bao Dai before I did. However, Bao Dai sent for me shortly after my arrival at 7:30 a.m. and saw Falaize only later.

Bao Dai told me very promptly that he had independently arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary for the Vietnamese to take part in the conference and not interpose objections to Viet Minh being

present. He would send his Foreign Minister to head a delegation to Geneva. He was not afraid of encountering the Viet Minh in international conference and his delegation would know how to reply forcefully to Communist lies and impertinences. I had planned to take the noon plane back, but he asked me to stay over to see his Foreign Minister Dinh, arriving later that morning.

Unfortunately, Dinh rather complicated Bao Dai's outright acceptance of both Vietnam and Viet Minh participation by insisting there must be some precedence and differentiation in invitation to Vietnam. Accordingly he suggested procedure set forth in Secto 35, April 29,¹ to which Falaise readily agreed and said he would recommend by telephone to Bidault.

I thought it better not to discuss my trip on the telephone and that the Secretary's decision could await my return this morning. Bao Dai had refused to give assurances on Vietnam participation to Jaquet when the latter was there two days ago. Bao Dai was evidently awaiting word from American delegation and possibly from Bidault through Falaise, before finally making up his mind.

Bao Dai explained the declaration he made last week,² to the consternation of French official opinion, as motivated by the refusal of French President to call a meeting of High Council of French Union. Bao Dai said that under previous agreements any Associated State had the undoubted right to call a High Council meeting. Bao Dai, without criticizing Navarre, said he understood latter's recall was imminent and if it occurred, he planned to recommend General Cogy be appointed to High Command. I observed that Cogy had already spent three and one half trying years in French expeditionary force. Bao Dai had talked with Cogy a few weeks ago and Cogy had said only time he had suffered from over-fatigue was the year he had spent as head of LeLattre's military household. Bao Dai thought it would be a mistake to send General Guillaume since it would take latter months to learn how to wage war in Indochina. It would be the Navarre experience repeated over again. He praised Cogy's military ability, tact and loyalty.

In Paris I recall Admiral Radford suggesting to me that Cogy would be a good successor to Navarre.

DULLS

¹ Post, p. 608.

² Reference is to the Apr. 25 statement by the Bao Dai cabinet. See footnote 1, p. 584.

Editorial Note

At his news conference on April 29, 9:30 a. m., the President received numerous questions on the subject of Indochina. In his replies

he stated that the United States would not become involved in the war "except through the constitutional process which, of course, involved a declaration of war by Congress." He indicated that United States involvement in Indochina had been conducted within the limits of the Mutual Assistance Pact by providing technical assistance, funds, and equipment. The President said in response to whether it would be desirable to have a *modus vivendi* in Indochina that it "wouldn't be acceptable, I should think, to see the whole anticommunist defense of that area crumble and disappear." The President indicated on the other hand that the United States "certainly cannot hope at the present state of our relations in the world for a completely satisfactory answer with the Communists," and that "the most you can work out is a practical way of getting along." With reference to reports that the French had asked the United States for air intervention and whether the request had been refused at British urging, the President commented that "no British advice or counsel whatsoever has entered in any conversations between the British and ourselves as to what we should do in any specific instance, of the kind of help we should give to France." He refused to answer whether or not the French Government had asked the United States Government for air assistance and whether the United States had turned down such a request. The President said he had no objection to answering that question at an appropriate time, but that "right now we have got a conference going on in Geneva" and that the United States was trying to get a solution there. He said "I think it is a good time not to say too much about it."

For the record of the news conference of April 29, see *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1954*, pages 427-438.

751G.00/4-2954: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State:

TOP SECRET

GENEVA, April 29, 1954—10 a. m.

Dulte 21. Eyes only Acting Secretary for President from Secretary. Developments have been so rapid and almost every hour so filled with high-level talks that evaluation has been difficult. My present estimates follow:

(1) Indochina: Delay in fall of Dien Bien Phu has resulted in some French discounting of this development. Nevertheless, it must

¹ Internal evidence indicates that this telegram was drafted on Apr. 28, but not dispatched to Washington until Apr. 29.

day⁴ lead me to rate more highly than heretofore the probability that any open US intervention would be answered by open Chinese intervention with consequence of general war in Asia.

(2) UK attitude is one of increasing weakness. British seem to feel that we are disposed to accept present risks of a Chinese war and this, coupled also with their fear that we would start using atomic weapons, has badly frightened them. I have just received a note from Eden referring to my paper read before NATO restricted council where Eden again urges necessity of consultation before any use. He says, "You know our strongly-held views on the need for consultation before any decision is taken."⁵

(3) General: The decline of France, the great weakness of Italy, and the considerable weakness in England create a situation where I think that if we ourselves are clear as to what should be done, we must be prepared to take the leadership in what we think is the right course, having regard to long-range US interest which includes importance of Allies. I believe that our Allies will be inclined to follow, if not immediately, then ultimately, strong and sound leadership. In saying this, I do not underestimate the immense difficulty of our finding the right course in this troubled situation. Nor do I mean to imply that I think that this is the moment for a bold or war-like course. I lack here the US political and NSC judgments needed for overall evaluation.

DULLES

⁴ A reference to Chou En-lai's speech made in the Third Plenary Session of the Geneva Conference (Korean phase), Apr. 28; for a summary, see p. 153. For a speech made by Molotov in the Fourth Plenary Session of the Korean phase, Apr. 29, see p. 157.

⁵ Eden's concern for consultation was in reference to the use of nuclear weapons. Eden's note to the Secretary was transmitted to the Department in telegram Dulite 24, Apr. 29, not printed. (Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 264) For documentation on the use of atomic weapons and nuclear energy, see volume II.

396.1 GE/4-2954: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State

SECRET

GENEVA, April 28, 1954—11 a. m.

Secto 32. Sent Saigon 10, repeated information from Paris 139, London 88, Bangkok 2, Manila 5, Saigon's 7, repeated Paris 706, London 42, Bangkok 153, Manila 212, Department 2110.¹ USDel believes most important immediate measures to counteract political and military consequences of fall of Dien-Bien-Phu will be those taken by French

¹ For the text of telegram from Saigon to Geneva, Apr. 25, which contained an outline of the immediate political consequences of the fall of Dien Bien Phu and possible remedies, see volume XIII.

be assumed the French will not continue in any long-range operation unless it will definitely relieve the strain on French manpower in Indochina. Present French Government holding on because their Parliament in recess and probably no one eager to take over at this juncture. Bidault given considerable discretion because present Cabinet cannot make up its mind on any course. Therefore, we do not have anyone on French side with whom we can make any dependable agreements. After deputies return and Dien Bien Phu falls, there may well be a change of government, probably to the left, committed to liquidate Indochina. However, this is more easily said than done and it is possible that as this fact develops a French Government might be prepared to sit down with us seriously and consider some joint program which is something that so far they have evaded.

I do not know whether from military standpoint it would be deemed feasible to end the scattering and exposure of military forces for local political reasons and withdraw present forces to defensible enclaves in deltas where they would have US sea and air protection meanwhile retain enough territory and enough prestige to develop really effective indigenous army along lines suggested by O'Daniel.² This might, I suppose, take two years and would require in large part taking over training responsibility by US. Also full independence and increased economic aid would probably be required to help maintain friendly governments in areas chosen for recruitment.

I do not have any idea as to whether this is militarily feasible and Admiral Davis inclines to view that it is not. However, from political standpoint this type of program appears to offer best hope of France staying in war. If France and US agree on such a plan, there would be fair chance of Australia and New Zealand coming along. However, this estimate can be improved in next day or two after I have conferred further with Foreign Minister Casey and Prime Minister Webb. It is unlikely that the UK would initially participate and would probably use its influence to prevent participation by Australia and New Zealand. The UK situation would be difficult internally and externally, and there would probably be undesirable repercussions upon other NATO partners. Thailand could be expected to cooperate if we act promptly. Foreign Minister Wan gave further assurance today and urges quick military conversations.³

The attitude here of Molotov and Chou En-lai's statement yesterday

² General O'Daniel's report is contained in telegram 3818 to Paris, Apr. 28, not printed. (751 G.00/4-2357) For a commentary on the report, see the memorandum, p. 571.

³ For a memorandum of conversation between the Secretary and Wan, Apr. 28, see p. 586.

790.00/4-2954 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Ceylon (Crowe) to the Department of State

TOP SECRET PRIORITY

COLOMBO, April 29, 1954—4 p. m.

339. Repeated information Geneva priority 1. For Secretary of State. Prime Minister Ceylon¹ as token of personal esteem has shown me copies of official transcript yesterday's sessions South Asian Colombo conference. He told me these not shown anyone else and I therefore request greatest secrecy use and source information. Summary is as follows:

Conference² agreed discuss Indochina and hydrogen bomb as first two topics.

Nehru explained his six point proposal re Indochina³ as follows:

(1) "Climate of peace". Cease-fire necessary sooner or later and the sooner the better. Military situation Indochina has now worsened but there also indications that belligerents had begun giving serious thought cessation fighting.

(2) Cease-fire. Obvious first step was cease-fire. Burma, Indonesia, Canada, and even France, as well as several other nations had agreed to this. Cease-fire should have priority Geneva agenda.

(3) Independence. France and US have agreed complete transfer of sovereignty in Indochina.

(4) Negotiations. Nehru then quoted stating he did not say to whom and in what form sovereignty should be transferred. This matter of agreement between parties concerned. He did not say French should withdraw their forces immediately and leave vacuum in Indochina. These matters to be discussed by principal parties to conflict which was substance his fourth point. He did not say settlement of issue should be completely divorced from Geneva Conference but visualized machinery for direct negotiation between French and Indochina might proceed, as it were, through Geneva Conference as "sort of subcommittee of Geneva Conference."

(5) Non-intervention. He called for non-intervention in Indochina in any form by the great powers, UK, US, USSR and China. There was no doubt that both US and China were intervening in Indochina and they have in effect not denied this. He felt that if problem could be localized by reducing all possibilities of intervention of outside powers the onus of finding a settlement could be thrown on the parties in conflict themselves.

(6) UN. He explained it was intended to bring UN into picture as there might be need for broad supervision by UN of implementation of any settlement.

¹ Sir John Kotelawala.² The Colombo Conference. The meeting of Prime Ministers of Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan, took place in Colombo, Ceylon Apr. 28-May 2. For the text of the final communiqué, see *Documents on International Affairs, 1954* (issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 166-169.³ Made on Apr. 25 in New Delhi.

Prime Minister Burma⁴ stated afraid of vacuum being created in Indochina. He recommended there must be careful approach so that neither side could derive any advantage from it. He thought that conference should be quite explicit on this point and that whatever agreement was reached there should also be statement elaborating desire Asian countries to avoid giving an advantage to one side or the other.

Prime Minister Indonesia⁵ agreed with Nehru's approach but wished get two points clear.

(1) He saw situation Indochina as being directly related to power politics of great powers and Geneva Conference was bound become forum of power politics. Recent increase in violence of fighting in Indochina was proof of power politics where each side was striving build up position of strength in Geneva through Indochina. China actively supported Ho Chi Minh. China known to be pressing demand for admission to UN. He therefore thought acceptance cease-fire by Viet Minh would be more likely if some indication given that China's demand would soon be satisfied. Conference therefore should consider cease-fire in relation admission China to UN.

(2) He was concerned over question of sovereignty and wished to know to whom independence would be given, either to Ho Chi Minh or Associated States. What guarantee would there be for independence? Ho Chi Minh has been branded as Communist but to his followers he is national leader.

Rest of session devoted discuss these points. Mohammed Ali⁶ argued strongly that cease-fire in itself not sufficient, that if there was a choice between colonialism and communism former was less dangerous since it could be persuaded by pressure at world opinion to foster nationalism and would eventually lead to independence, that on other hand Communist occupation was a means to an end and brought danger to world peace closer to home, that conference should do nothing to prejudice or anticipate results of Geneva Conference, that he was against any "accusation of intervention"; that he would accept first three points Nehru's plan, i.e., climate of peace, cease-fire, and independence but not points four and five re conference calling for direct negotiations between forces in Indochina and non-intervention agreement. Indonesian Prime Minister insisted on his view of linking admission Communist China to UN with cease-fire but Nehru, Mohammed Ali and Kotelawala opposed. (Nehru added that China's admission UN would however go long way toward relieving existing tensions.)

⁴ U Nu.⁵ Ali Sastroamidjojo.⁶ Prime Minister of Pakistan.

There was unanimous approval of Prime Ministers on Nehru's first two points and it also was agreed that conference should not embarrass Geneva Conference.

Discussions continue on topics today.

Crowe

Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 288

*Memorandum of Conversation*¹

CONFIDENTIAL

[GENEVA,] April 26, 1954.

Participants: Carlos P. Garcia, Vice President of the Philippines and Head of the Philippine Delegation
Congressman Cuenco, Member of the Philippine Delegation

The Secretary of State
Philip W. Bonsal

Subject: Participation in the Indochina Phase of the Geneva Conference

Vice President Garcia called to ascertain the situation regarding participation in the Indochina phase of the conference and to state the Philippine point of view.

The Secretary described the recent exchanges of views on this subject between Bidault and Molotov² and indicated that at present the French are consulting with Bao Dai regarding the Soviet insistence that the Viet Minh participate as well as the Associated States.³ He referred to the Soviet attempt at blackmail in the matter of the wounded at Dien Bien Phu.⁴

The Secretary stated that our position on further participation was not yet firm. He described various possible solutions of the problem. He indicated that we were fully aware of the Philippine interest in and claim to participation and said that we would of course be very glad to have the Philippines present. He added, however, that in order to get the conference under way without delay agreement might be reached on a limited participation formula (for example the four Berlin powers, Communist China and the four belligerents in Indochina) with a later expansion to be envisaged. A limited conference

¹ Drafting office not indicated; presumably it was Bonsal.

² For summaries of these exchanges, see telegrams Secto 11, Apr. 26, Dulte 15, Apr. 27, and Dulte 16, Apr. 27, pp. 574, 578, and 581, respectively.

³ See telegram Secto 35, Apr. 29, p. 608, and telegram 4137 from Paris, Apr. 29, 1954.

⁴ This exchange between Molotov and Bidault is reported in Dulte 20, Apr. 28, p. 602.

might deal with military aspects while the broader political aspects would be considered by an enlarged group. The Secretary described the problem involved in enlarging the group in view of the fact that not only the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand who would be welcomed by us, but the claims of Thailand and of Burma together with India, Indonesia and possibly Pakistan would have to be considered.

Mr. Garcia thanked the Secretary for his statement of the situation. He then said that the Philippine position would be one of accepting the absence of the Philippines from the Indochina phase if that phase were to be limited only to the four inviting powers, Communist China and the four belligerents in Indochina, but that the Philippines believed that if any other states were invited then the Philippines should be included.⁵

⁵ In a conversation on Apr. 29 between Bonsal and Felino Neri, former Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the Quirino government and a member of the Philippine Delegation, held prior to the conversation between the Secretary and Garcia, Bonsal reminded Neri that the United States and the Philippines had been in agreement as to the desirability of keeping neutrals out of the Korean phase of the Geneva Conference and that so far as Bonsal was aware the same reasoning would apply in the case of the Indochina phase. Neri agreed but said that it was very important from the point of view of Philippine internal politics that, if states other than the Berlin Four, Communist China, and the belligerents were included, the Philippines also be asked to participate. (Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 288)

751G.00/4-2954 : Telegram

The Ambassador in Paris (Dillon) to the Department of State

SECRET

PARIS, April 29, 1954—5 p. m.

4137. Repeated information Geneva 152, Saigon 484. Jacquet who returned last night from seeing Bao Dai in Cannes expects proceed Geneva later in day report results to Bidault.

They are that Bao Dai received argument that Viet Minh be present at Geneva without less objection than had been feared. Although His Majesty dwelt at length on disadvantages from standpoint Vietnam public opinion and insisted on need consult ministers before making final decision, Jacquet convinced he will come around in day or two after oriental disabilities have been assailed. He believed Ambassador Heath's visit to day should help accelerate process.

Jacquet's argument was that failure agree present plan for participation nine countries in Indochina phase Geneva might result in inclusion India, Indonesia and other undesirables. Bao Dai was impressed. Opinion of Vietnam ministers now in Cannes, including Dinh, Vinh

and Dac Khe, will influence ultimate decision, but not likely in Jacquet's opinion divert Bao Dai from agreement in due course.

Jacquet delighted final signing Franco-Vietnamese declaration and took obvious pleasure reporting that in light present serious adversities facing both partners and part because of theme relations between French and Vietnam Governments, at least as presented by officials both countries in France and Geneva, are unusually cordial.

DILLON

¹ France and the State of Vietnam issued a declaration on Apr. 28 undertaking to conclude two treaties, one affirming Vietnamese independence, the other defining relations between the two countries. The texts of the treaties were initiated in Paris on June 4 but were never ratified.

FRS files, lot 65 D 101, "Indochina"

Memorandum by the Adviser to the United States Delegation (Bonsal) to the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (Robertson)

TOP SECRET

[GENEVA,] April 29, 1954.

Subject: Current Indochina Situation

Here are my views on the Indochina situation.

- 1) The Franco-Vietnamese military effort (which we have supported) and the Franco-Vietnamese political effort to create a stable Vietnamese Government with effective popular support are bankrupt or nearly.
- 2) A further application of force from the outside against the purely Vietnamese Viet Minh army, supported as it is with Communist Chinese material aid, would not produce political results with which we could live, i.e., a victory through the application of overwhelming outside force would not bring about a satisfactory Western-oriented government in control of Indochina enjoying the consideration of other Asian nations and able to maintain itself in power without an almost indefinite commitment to the area of outside force.
- 3) Nevertheless, our best card at Geneva is uncertainty as to whether we and other likeminded countries will in fact take measures to intervene effectively with armed force in Indochina should no acceptable solution be found at Geneva. It is essential that that uncertainty be kept alive just as long as possible.
- 4) Using that uncertainty as a major asset, we must support a solution at Geneva which would involve as its major features the following:

a) A cease fire in Cambodia and Laos and withdrawal of outside forces (except possibly as provided in Franco-Laotian military treaties) and the installation in these countries of peace observation machinery, perhaps under UN auspices, to see that their territorial integrity and internal security are respected.

b) A cease fire in Viet Nam, as nearly as possible along the line of the Laniel proposals. Since these do not reflect the relative military position of the two parties we may have to be flexible here. The question of controls is of course vital. We should be able rapidly to develop our thinking on this point when we receive the plans and views of the French Government which have been promised us on an urgent basis.

c) Provision for a rapid disarmament under international control of the armed forces of both sides in Viet Nam to a point where they will be within the means of Viet Nam to maintain.

d) A phased reduction of foreign forces in Viet Nam over a stated period of time (perhaps three to four years) with their eventual status to be determined in agreement with the definitive government of the country.

e) A period of transition for the restoration of political normality. During this transition period there would be in fact a political division of the country corresponding very roughly to the present military division.

f) A reconstruction program for Viet Nam to be conducted both directly by France, the US and the UK and perhaps also through the UN.

g) An announced date for the holding of national elections to form a definitive government for all Viet Nam. We might propose July 1, 1957.

The purpose of this program is to see whether we can not, under the threat of further armed intervention, create conditions under which our side could continue the struggle against Communism under relatively peaceful conditions with some chances of success.

751.G.5/4-2954: Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Secretary of State at Geneva*¹

TOP SECRET PRIORITY WASHINGTON, APRIL 29, 1954—7:01 p. m.

Tedul 20. Eyes only Secretary.² Following brief of discussion this morning³ will be helpful until I give you a fuller account personally: Meeting terminated with briefing by me on developments at Geneva during which I read extracts from your most recent and informative

¹ Drafted by the Acting Secretary of State.

² Accompanying message from the Department of State contained an instruction that telegram of April 20 "should be handed only to the Secretary, Mr. Merchant or Mr. MacArthur and to no other persons on direction of the Acting Secretary."

³ The 194th meeting of the National Security Council, Apr. 29, 1954, 10:00 a. m. For extracts from the memorandum of discussion at the 194th meeting of the National Security Council, see volume XIII.



Mr. Deans
 Mr. Speaight
 S.E.A.D.
 Seen by Sir I. Kirkpatrick
 DF1071
 April 29, 1954.
 DF1071/455
 D. sept.
 WASHINGTON.

TOP SECRET

My dear Ivone,

1368
 D.C.

According to reliable information, Radford returned depressed and disappointed from his talks in London. Though pleased by the manner of his reception, he was quite unconvinced by what we had to say to him, and he believes the British Chiefs of Staff are unrealistic in thinking that Malaya can be held if Indo-China goes.

I am sure he is a strong advocate of going ahead without us but plus the South Koreans, the Formosans and hoc genus omne.

You must reckon with the distinct possibility of an American decision on these lines. I need not expatiate on its consequences for ourselves and for the Commonwealth.

J. M. S.

 Roger Makins

Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.,
 Foreign Office.

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108

TOP SECRET

FROM: U.K. N.M.R. SHAPE
 TO: MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, LONDON

Minister of State 20/4
Sir I. K. ...
M. ...
S.E. ...

OPERATIONAL IMMEDIATE

IZ 4010
 TOO 291000Z
 WOR 291229A

EC 51

29th April, 1954.

FOR U.K. EYES ONLY

War Office for VCIGS from CIGS .

1. At his request I called on General Ely yesterday evening and we had a full discussion on the situation in Indo-China under three main headings

- A. The position at Dien Bien Phu
- B. The present situation in Indo-China as a whole and
- C. The future.

Throughout our talk Ely was very friendly and frank and at considerable pains to explain away the fact that the French had failed to take us into their confidence earlier on the military side particularly in regard to the proposals for American air intervention which had been going on longer and been worked out in more detail than I had realised.

2. In his remarks about Dien Bien Phu, Ely claimed that American air action of the type proposed taken ten days ago would have saved the situation and that now it would still help to that end but could not be decisive because the enemy had meantime replenished his stocks of ammunition and supplies. He explained the present strength and difficulties of the garrison and the strength and quality of the besiegers on the lines we already know. He obviously had little hope that the small relief operation would have much effect but said that Navarre was thinking of reinforcing it with three parachute battalions which would have to come presumably from the reinforcements now being flown out to Indo China. He concluded his remarks on Dien Bien Phu by saying we must be prepared for its fall and stressing the serious effect that would have on the morale of both French and Vietnamese in Indo China and in France. He did not give me the impression that he thought it would be followed immediately by wholesale uprisings and massacres in Indo China but by a steady deterioration ending with an enforced general withdrawal by the French.

3. As regards the general situation in Indo China Ely spoke at length of its global importance. He recognises

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109

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that the problem is more political than military and gave instances of cases in which successful military operations had proved to be political failures. He added nothing new to what we already know but his outlook struck me as being considerably more realistic than the French official attitude has ever been before.

4. In discussing the future Ely made the following points

- A. The vital importance of American-British-French unity over Indo-China at and after Geneva.
- B. The very serious situation that would exist if no settlement came out of Geneva.
- C. The need to establish a firm line of resistance to Communist expansion in South East Asia which was related to practical capabilities and
- D. The impossibility for the French who had guaranteed the territorial integrity of the associated states to suggest a solution on the lines of partition.

5. Although he would not say so Ely obviously believed that partition offers a possible solution provided that it is accepted and guaranteed by the three Western Powers and that we jointly produce the resources needed to maintain it. He would not discuss any line of partition and said that if it were proposed he would be obliged to oppose it for reasons of French honour and prestige. None the less he gave me the impression he would accept it under protest. He referred to the difficult position in which the Americans had got themselves by their earlier public statements and expressed the view that we were in the strongest and best position to put forward a compromise solution. I said that however that might be we could not add to our military commitments in the Far East and that our best contribution lay in continuing to develop Malaya as an area of strength and stability and in guarding Hong Kong. I thanked him warmly for giving me such a full and frank exposition and expressed our great admiration for the magnificent resistance of the garrison of Dien Bien Phu.

6. My main conclusions are

- A. That the French General Staff believe partition offers a possible solution but that their Government finds itself unable to propose it publicly and would like us to do so and
- B. That they have at last come to recognise that an answer can only be found through British as well as American agreement and support.

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110

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7. Please arrange with Brownjohn for the distribution of this signal. I have given a copy to MacNab. And please make sure that the views Ely expressed to me are not quoted to the French or Americans as having come from him.

CIRCULATION

TOO 291000A

- Prime Minister
- Minister of Defence
- Minister of State, Foreign Office
- First Sea Lord
- C.A.S.
- V.C.I.G.S.
- General Brownjohn
- C.C.S. Secretariat

TOP SECRET

Eisenhower Library, Dulles papers. "Indochina."

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State*¹

TOP SECRET

GENEVA, April 30, 1954—12:15 p. m.

PERSONAL AND PRIVATE

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. EDEN

I said to Mr. Eden that I was greatly disturbed over the present position and its bearing upon the cooperation of our two countries. We had, I thought, agreed to sit down with other directly interested countries to try to work out a common defense for the southeast Asia area, but now the British were unwilling to go ahead with the agreement which Mr. Eden and I had reached at London.² On top of that was the fact that in the face of the vicious attacks by Molotov, Chou En-lai and Nam II on the United States for what it had done in Korea,³ there was not a single Western European power which was prepared to get up and say a word in defence of the UN or United States position. The only speakers on the non-Communist side had been South Korea, Colombia, the United States and Australia, and no one else was inscribed to speak.

I said it was particularly galling to the United States to have to accept this attack on it as being an "imperialist" power. I said that the United States was eager to beat the Communists at their own game and to sponsor nationalism in the independent colonial areas, which was in accordance with our historic tradition, but that we were strained from doing so by a desire to cooperate with Britain and France in Asia, in North Africa and in the Near and Middle East. This, however, did not seem to be paying any dividends because when the chips were down there was no cohesion between us. Here at Geneva we were presenting a pathetic spectacle of drifting without any agreed policy or purpose. The United States had presented a program which, after it had been apparently accepted, had been repudiated and there was no alternative offered.

I said as far as the Korean problem was concerned, we were being forced by our western allies to abandon our original position of backing the UN resolutions so that western leaders could show how generous they were at south Korea's expense. I thought, however, that it was rather pathetic that we had to make our concessions to our

¹ Memorandum of conversation transmitted to the Department of State in telegram Dulke 83, Apr. 30, 1954. (Conference files, lot 60.D 627, CF 204).

² Apr. 18. For a résumé of their final meeting, see the extract of telegram 4523, p. 514.

³ Reference to speeches made by Nam II, Chou En-lai, and Molotov in the Second, Third, and Fourth Plenary Sessions of the Geneva Conference (Korean phase), Apr. 27, 28, and 29; for summaries, see pp. 148, 153, and 157, respectively.

allies before even starting to negotiate with the Communists, where the concessions might have some negotiating value. If the effort to develop a united position with reference to southeast Asia collapsed, we would be faced by the problem of going it alone. This would probably mean increasing the close relations with Syngman Rhee and Chiang Kai-shek, who, whatever their defects, were at least willing to stand strong against the Communists. I mentioned that there was considerable pressure for the United States to complete a mutual security treaty covering Formosa.⁴ This had been deferred and I felt that its negotiation at the time of the Geneva conference and after my proposal for a united defense of southeast Asia might be embarrassing. However, if there was to be no united defense for southeast Asia and no agreed program for Geneva, then we would have to consider who there was upon whom we could depend.

I emphasized that despite what I gathered the British might have inferred from Radford's talks,⁵ the United States was not seeking either war with China or a large scale intervention in Indo-China. In fact these were the two things we were seeking to avoid and thought could be avoided if we had a show of common strength.

I greatly feared that if I return to Washington under present conditions and had to meet with the Congressional Committees and give explanations as to what had happened, the consequences would be disastrous for the close UK-US relations which we wanted to maintain.

Mr. Eden then handed me the memorandum, a copy of which is annexed. He said that they had been working very hard to prevent the Colombo Conference from taking a strong anti-Western position, particularly in relation to Indochina, and he felt that they had been quite successful.

I referred to the paragraph in the UK memorandum calling for immediate and secret joint examination between the US and the UK. I said that this might be useful, but certainly it would not be useful if that was all there was, because we had already invited other countries such as Thailand, the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand to share in creating a southeast Asian defense; and the two first had definitely agreed and the two latter were interested. I also said I was confident we could not now rebuff them without serious consequences for the future. They would have to be brought in on some discussions, although probably not those of the intimate nature which were customary between the US and the UK. I referred to the fact that the

⁴ For documentation on this pact, see volume XIV.

⁵ For information on Admiral Radford's discussions with British officials on Apr. 24 and 26, see volume XIII. See also McCordle's memorandum to Dulles, Apr. 30, p. 629.

North Atlantic Treaty had developed progressively, the first conception being the Brussels Pact, then the addition of the US and Canada, then the addition of Scandinavian countries, then the addition of Portugal and Italy, and most recently the addition of Greece and Turkey. I said that surely any southeast Asian arrangement would have to include at least Thailand, the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand, as well as the US, the UK and France, and the Associated States; and I did not see why we could not get started with that nucleus and let it develop as seemed natural. Mr. Eden made no reply.

Mr. Eden then said that he felt that the Western Powers had not participated in the general debate because they did not want to get tied to the South Korean election formula. I said that the issues in the general debate far transcended this rather minor technical point,—that the burden of the speeches of Molotov and Chou En-lai had been that Asia was for the Asians, and that all Western influence should be eliminated, particularly that of the US. Also, they had viciously attacked the UN, and made the most grotesque falsifications of history. Surely, I said, that presented issues to which the Western Powers could address themselves if they believed in the UN and believed that the principle of solidarity extended beyond Europe. Mr. Eden said he would give thought to the possibility of his making some speech.

We then discussed the details of the Korean matter. I said I was not hopeless of the possibility of an agreement, because we had an asset to use that we had not had in Berlin. At Berlin we could not pull out US and UK troops because this would collapse the forward strategy of NATO. In Korea there was no general allied strategy, and US troops could be pulled out in exchange for a united Korea, which would have sufficient demilitarization in the North so as to constitute no threat to Vladivostok and Port Arthur. Mr. Eden suggested that we might have a restricted meeting of the Four Inviting Powers plus China and North Korea and South Korea to try to get into this matter before I left. I said I would not be indisposed to have such a meeting on Saturday afternoon.*

I told Mr. Eden that I was seeing Molotov at 11 on Saturday morning on the atomic energy matter. I was disposed not to seek a joint communiqué which would indicate that the President's Plan had been rejected. I felt that to throw this into the present international situation would greatly aggravate and deteriorate affairs, and would particularly cause a deep resentment in the US. Mr. Eden agreed to this handling of the matter.

* May 1.

I reminded Mr. Eden that I had had no reply from him with reference to our economic aid to Egypt. He said he would talk to me about this before I left.

JOHN FOSTER DULLES

[Annex J]

SECRET

SOUTH-EAST ASIAN DEFENCE

1. Communism in Asia cannot be checked by military means alone. The problem is as much political as military; if any military combination is to be effective, it must enjoy the widest possible measure of Asian support.
2. We should aim to get the support of Burma as well as Siam as the immediate neighbours of Indo-China. But Burma will not come in unless the project commands some sympathy from other Asian countries, particularly the Asian members of the Commonwealth.
3. If we cannot win the active support of all the Asian countries of the area, it is important that we should, at the very least, secure their benevolent neutrality.
4. To secure this widely based Asian support, we must prepare the ground carefully for what is, in any case, intended to be a lasting defensive organisation, not a hastily contrived expedient to meet the present crisis.
5. This does not mean that we desire to delay. On the contrary, we have already been actively using our influence, particularly with the Asian members of the Commonwealth, with encouraging results. Pakistan and Ceylon have already promised not to oppose a South-East Asian Collective Defence on the lines we envisage, and we have succeeded in diverting Mr. Nehru from his original intention of condemning it root and branch. We have thus averted the danger that the Asian Prime Ministers at Colombo would unite in condemning our project, and have grounds for hoping for the actual support of some of them.
6. Mr. Nehru's latest statement¹ shows that his ideas have moved closer to our own. With persistence, we may even secure his endorsement of the kind of negotiated settlement in Indo-China that would be acceptable to us.

¹The U.K. memorandum was transmitted to the Department in telegram Dute 30, Apr. 30. (780.5/4-3064)

* Made on Apr. 25 in New Delhi; see telegram 839 from Colombo, Apr. 29, p. 610, and memorandum from Stalle to Bowle, Apr. 30, p. 635. For Prime Minister Nehru's proposals transmitted to the Department of State in telegram 1596 from New Delhi, Apr. 25, see volume XIII.

7. While we do not believe that a French collapse in Indo-China could come about as rapidly or as completely as the Americans appear to envisage, this danger reinforces the need to lay the foundations of a wider and viable defence organisation for South-East Asia.

8. We propose therefore that the United States and the United Kingdom should begin an immediate and secret joint examination of the political and military problems involved in creating a Collective Defence for South-East Asia, namely:

- (a) nature and purpose;
- (b) membership;
- (c) commitments.

This examination should also cover immediate joint measures to stiffen Siam.

APRIL 30, 1954.

SEA 1 GE/4-3054

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (Merchant)

SECRET

Participants: Mr. Pearson, Secretary of External Affairs of Canada.
Mr. Livingston T. Merchant, US Delegation

Time: 1 p. m., April 30, 1954

Place: Hotel de la Paix, Geneva

I called Mr. Pearson this morning and asked if I could see him for a few minutes. He invited me to luncheon, which I accepted, at his hotel. We talked for about one hour and a half.

I opened by saying that I came to Geneva not under instructions or in fact officially, but for the primary purpose of seeking his views on several subjects which were increasingly troubling to us. I said that I had not seen since the war our chances so weakened, or the Russians so close to their objective of totally isolating the US from its allies. For example, I said it was to me incredible but nevertheless true that on the fifth day of the Geneva Conference during the entire course of which the US (and only incidentally the UN) had been the object of vicious attack by the Russians, Chinese, and the North Koreans, there had not been raised in the conference hall the voice of a single one of our European allies. I said no American would think of asking to be defended by his friends, but that I would have thought someone would have come to the defense of the UN and that some effort would

PSA files, lot 58 D 207, "Bonsai Memoranda"

Memorandum by the Adviser to the United States Delegation (Bonsai)

TOP SECRET

[GENEVA,] April 30, 1954.

GENEVA CONFERENCE, APRIL 1954
INDOCHINA PHASE

POSSIBLE WESTERN PROPOSAL FOR "RESTORING PEACE IN INDOCHINA"

The purpose of this memorandum is to examine a possible Western proposal for "restoring peace in Indochina" which might be made at the Geneva Conference either in anticipation of or as a reply to an expected Communist proposal. The Western proposal must be acceptable to the United States and appear reasonable to world opinion. Also, in the unlikely event it was seriously considered by the Communists, it should provide some face-saving elements (not of substance) to facilitate acceptance by them. The Communists will, it is expected, make a proposal of their own including such features as the withdrawal of foreign troops, the holding of "free elections" and the recognition of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The negotiating position of the two sides at Geneva will depend upon the following major factors:

(1) The military situation and prospects, including especially the outcome of Dien Bien Phu and its effect on French and Vietnamese official, public and military opinion.

(2) Franco-Vietnamese relations including the result of current negotiations and their impact on French and Vietnamese official and public opinion.

(3) The degree to which the United States is successful in forging a "united action" concept which the Communists as well as the French and the Vietnamese believe gives promise of contributing overwhelming added military assets on our side in Indochina in the event of a breakdown at Geneva.

(4) Development of US position regarding intervention in Indochina.

(5) The extent to which the Russians and the Chinese Communists are ready to risk World War III in order to hold the Communist position in Indochina.

(6) The risks which our side is willing to take to preserve Indochina from the Communists.

The following considerations seem basic to the formulation of our position:

(1) Any settlement which leaves Ho Chi Minh's regular divisions intact and undefeated will result in a turn-over of the country sooner or later to the Communists.

(2) It is essential from the point of view of French public and official opinion that our side at Geneva make what appears to be a constructive and united attempt to end the fighting in Indochina. If such an attempt is made sincerely, and fails, the chances that the Franco-Vietnamese military effort will be continued will at least be improved.

(3) It is also essential from the point of view of French public and official opinion that nothing be done or said at Geneva to indicate that we do not understand that the French Union concept as a free association of equal, sovereign states is what justifies the heavy French contribution to our common objective of keeping Indochina from Communist control. (There appears to be no need to insist on a spelled out right of withdrawal at a time when the very existence of the new states is being assured *only* because of their membership in the French Union; the relationship between them will be an evolving one in accordance with circumstances.)

(4) In the case of *Cambodia* and of *Laos*, all that is required is a withdrawal of Vietnamese invading forces in order to leave the administration of their countries to governments enjoying a satisfactory degree of popular support. Neither elections nor plebiscites are needed except as provided by the functioning constitutional machinery in the two states. We should emphasize our own sense of the "separateness" of Cambodia and Laos from Vietnam by promptly appointing a resident Ambassador in Phnom Penh and a resident Minister in Vientiane.

In view of the above summary analysis, a program for restoring peace to Indochina might be envisaged which would include:

(a) *On the military side*, (1) In *Cambodia* and *Laos*: a withdrawal of Vietnamese troops and the establishment, perhaps under UN auspices of peace observation machinery which will guarantee the security and territorial integrity of these two states. (2) In *Vietnam*, a cease fire followed by progressive demobilization of indigenous forces and a phased withdrawal of foreign forces to specified areas and their gradual reduction. The current French concept of a cease fire first with all other military and political factors in an eventual settlement to be deferred until later, seems a highly dangerous one. (The question of the impact of a demobilization proposal in Indochina on the situation in Korea would require careful consideration, nevertheless, where, as in Vietnam, the opposing armed forces and zones of influences are inextricably mixed and confused, the urgency of demobilization immediately following a cease fire is very much greater than in Korea, where there is one accepted dividing line between the opposing forces.)

(b) *On the political side*, a plan for the restoration of normal conditions looking toward the holding of elections after a transitional period of perhaps three years.

(c) *On the economic side*, the undertaking of prompt and energetic measures for the restoration of war damaged roads, railroads, other utilities and for general reconstruction activities on a large scale. This program should be so designed as to have a major political impact.

The rationale for any plan which our side might propose would be that, in view of the eight years of civil war which have taken place, it is essential that a transition period of *military deflation*, *political pacification* and *economic restoration* occur before there can be envisaged the creation of a responsible representative regime for the entire area. The details of any plan would obviously have to be worked out by the French and the Vietnamese. International controls would be an essential feature. Some of the major points to be covered would be the following:

(1) *Military*

The cease fire should be based on the Laniel proposals of March 5 with provision for international controls, including control of the Chinese frontier. The nature of the international control mechanism, the extent to which it would include Communist and neutral representation would be delicate and difficult problems, especially in view of our Korean experience. Presumably provisions would be made for a return of all prisoners and for a general amnesty for all those on the Vietnamese side guilty only of bearing arms in the rebellion. (See separate memorandum for an analysis of the Laniel proposals.)¹

The cease-fire phase should be closely tied to a demobilization phase to be administered by the same apparatus of international controls as the cease fire. The stated purpose here would be to reduce the Vietnamese and the Vietnamese armed forces to proportions related to the ability of the country to support them without outside help and to return to peaceful occupations the bulk of the 700,000 natives now under arms. (Taking into account the relative populations of Vietnam and of the United States, these 700,000 men in Vietnam would correspond to over five million in the United States.) The arms recovered might be held by the international control mechanism and be eventually disposed of for the benefit of the new national Vietnamese Government to be constituted at the end of the proposed period of transition. (The U.S. might, however, wish to reclaim some or all of the arms it has furnished under MDAP.)

This disarmament phase would not result in the complete disarmament of the Vietnamese National Army or of the Vietnamese. It would be designed, however, to produce a situation readily controllable by the government which we recognize in the event of further Vietnamese aggression.

Closely tied in with the disarmament phase would be the gradual withdrawal, under international control, of foreign forces (French expeditionary corps), to specified positions. A gradual reduction of their numbers might also be contemplated. Their definitive status

¹ Not printed.

provide for a gradual restoration of freedom of the legal movement of people and goods throughout the country.

The culmination of this period of political reconstruction would be the holding of nation-wide elections to an assembly which would draw up a definitive constitution for Vietnam. A date for such elections (July 1st, 1957) might be announced at the outset of the transitional period. The elections themselves should be under international supervision. They would result in the creation of a single government for the entire country. Even with the safeguards and delays contemplated, an appreciable number of Communists and anti-free world elements would presumably be elected although it is to be hoped they would be a manageable fraction of the total.

(3) *Economic*

An important part of our proposal would be an economic restoration program designed to have the greatest possible popular impact. France and the U.S., as well as the Government of Vietnam, might effectively announce a willingness to devote a substantial portion of the money they are now spending on fighting the war to the intensive reconstruction of Vietnam. In those parts of the country controlled by Bao Dai's Government this program could be conducted directly by France and the U.S.; in other areas, provisions for international control and supervision could be worked out. Such a program, which would cover a period of years, perhaps as much as ten years, could if successfully devised and initiated, be a major factor in ensuring that the proposed elections returned a majority favoring a free world, Western orientation rather than one wishing membership in a Communist Chinese satellite system.

The initial purpose of this program would be to restore the roads, railroads and communications as a prerequisite to the reunification of Vietnam after the interruption of eight years of civil war.

PPS files, lot 65 D 101, "Indochina"

*Memorandum by the Adviser to the United States Delegation (Stelle)
to the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (Bowie)*

TOP SECRET

[GENEVA,] April 30, 1954.

Subject: The Nehru Proposal on Indochina¹

Substance of Proposal

Nehru, speaking in the House of People on April 24, made a proposal with regard to Indochina as follows:

1. A climate of peace has to be promoted and the atmosphere of threats that prevails ought to be dissipated. To this end the govern-

¹ See footnote 8, p. 625.

would be at first as set forth in current Franco-Vietnamese agreements although in the long run the new national Government to be formed after the proposed transition period would make a definitive arrangement on this matter. At all times, these troops should continue to be available in numbers and in positions sufficient to guarantee their own safety, that of foreign residents and that of the non-Communist Vietnamese against a renewal of aggression.

(2) *Political*

Bao Dai's Government with French Union military help controls the key cities and some other areas of Vietnam including half the population while the other half is controlled by Ho Chi Minh's Government and its indigenous forces. Ho's Government is recognized by Peking, Moscow and presumably by a number of the satellites. In view of the present equilibrium of military and political forces in the area, it is hard to conceive of an arrangement under which Ho would straightway relinquish his political control to Bao Dai. In fact, the essence of Ho's position has been one of willingness to negotiate a cease fire and a withdrawal of foreign forces with the French while at the same time he has completely ignored Bao Dai and his government.

Since the military and political situation of Bao Dai's Government is inferior, comparatively speaking, to that of Syngman Rhee's, it is probably not feasible, no matter how desirable it would be, to include in the proposal to be made by our side (except perhaps as an initial bargaining position), a complete submission to Bao Dai's regime on the part of Ho and his supporters. In fact, the acceptance of a cease fire in the absence of complete surrender would probably presuppose the continued existence of the Ho regime during the ensuing transitional phase.

It is probable therefore that the relative positions of the two governments, complicated as they are by the absence of any frontiers between their two jurisdictions which in fact overlap and fluctuate, will have to be continued (in the absence of complete victory for our side) with all the attendant disadvantages through a transitional period. This would, however, be preferable to the immediate formation of a single government through elections or a coalition, an eventuality which most observers believe would be highly favorable to the Communists.

While neither government would be required to recognize the other during the transitional period, it is clear that some sort of an arrangement for an allocation of territory, perhaps based roughly on the cease fire disposition, would have to be worked out. As the disarmament and demobilization of native forces as described above was being carried out, it would be desirable, also under international control, to

ment of India appeals to all concerned to desist from threats and to the combatants to refrain from stepping up the tempo of the war.

2. The item of a cease-fire should be given priority on the Indochina conference agenda. The cease-fire group should consist of the actual belligerents, that is, France, the three Associated States, and the Vietminh.

3. The Conference should decide to proclaim that the essential solution to the conflict is the complete independence of Indochina and that termination of French sovereignty should be placed beyond all doubt by an unequivocal commitment by the Government of France.

4. The Conference should initiate negotiations between the parties directly and principally concerned and should give them all possible assistance. Such direct negotiations would assist in keeping the Indochina question limited to the issues which concern and involve Indochina directly. These parties would be the same as would constitute the cease-fire group.

5. A solemn agreement of non-intervention, denying aid direct or indirect with troops or war material to the combatants for purposes of war, to which the United States, Soviet Union, United Kingdom and China shall be the primary parties, should be brought about by the Conference. The United Nations, to which the decision of the Conference shall be reported, shall be requested to formulate the convention of non-intervention in Indochina embodying the aforesaid agreement and including provisions for its enforcement under United Nations auspices. Other states should be invited by the United Nations to adhere to this convention of non-intervention.

6. Nehru stated that the United Nations should be informed of the progress of the Conference.

Analysis of Proposal

a. The Indian proposal does not provide for any particular type of political settlement to follow a cease-fire. At Colombo Nehru has said that he carefully avoided saying to whom and in what form French sovereignty should be transferred, feeling that this should be left for negotiation among the parties concerned.²

b. The Indian proposal is ambiguous as to whether the "Conference" on Indochina should be conducted at Geneva or separately from the Geneva Conference. Nehru, at Colombo, has said that he was not advocating that a settlement in Indochina should be completely divorced from the Geneva Conference but that he visualized the machinery for direct negotiation between the belligerents as being a sort of subcommittee of the Geneva Conference.

² For a summary of Prime Minister Nehru's statement at the Colombo Conference, see telegram 889 from Colombo, Apr. 29, p. 610.

c. The Indian proposal pointedly excludes both the United States and Communist China as parties at interest in negotiations for an Indochina settlement. Nehru rationalizes this on the grounds that only by limiting participation to actual belligerents can the Indochina issue be separated out from other Far Eastern issues. Nehru thus arrives at a recommendation for direct negotiations between the French and the Vietminh which has been repeatedly urged by the Russians and the French Communists for some time.

d. A primary element of the Indian proposal is that there should be an immediate cease-fire. According to the proposal this cease-fire should be arranged by the actual belligerents as a matter of priority. In this respect Nehru also echoes earlier Communist recommendations. He does not, however, call for immediate withdrawal of French troops, an item which has hitherto been a constant element in Communist propaganda. The Indian proposal does not provide for any external enforcement of a cease-fire.

e. Another primary element of the Indian proposal is the advocacy of agreement by the U.S., USSR, UK and Communist China to abstain from intervention in Indochina or from rendering any help of a military nature to any of the belligerents. The proposal does provide that this agreement should be enforced by the UN.

Disadvantages of the Indian Proposal

The Indian proposal has been picked up by parts of both the British and French press and will probably have to be dealt with in some form at Geneva. From the U.S. point of view it has the following disadvantages:

a. Given the obvious eagerness of the French to reach some sort of an agreement and the disinclination of the French to reckon the costs too carefully, exclusion of the U.S. from negotiations for an Indochina settlement would undoubtedly tend to weaken the Western position in the negotiations. On the other hand, since the Vietminh are apt to be more interested in immediate complete victory than either the Russians or the Chinese exclusion of the other Communists from the negotiations would tend to harden the Communist negotiating position.

b. An immediate cease-fire, without any agreed terms for a political settlement, would redound greatly to Communist advantage. The local population would understand this to be a clear victory for the Vietminh and a signal that the Communists were about to achieve political control. Accordingly such local support as the French now have would quickly disintegrate. The French would be in no position to renew hostilities again, even in the face of utmost recalcitrance on the part of the Communists in political negotiations.

c. The absence of any provisions for enforcement of a cease-fire would also work to the advantage of the Communists. The French, being so inclined, would probably observe an agreement fairly strictly,

while the Communists would undoubtedly continue to exert forceful measures, if not against the French, at least against the local population.

d. The provisions for a cessation of all outside military assistance would clearly be disadvantageous to the U.S. and the French. The French Union forces depend completely on U.S. military assistance and would be drastically weakened by its cessation. Although the Vietnamese are importantly assisted by Chinese Communist matériel, the quantity does not compare with what the U.S. is providing the French, the Vietnamese are not nearly as dependent on outside assistance as are the French, and in any case, on the basis of Korean experience, there could be no expectation that Chinese Communist assistance would in fact cease, regardless of any UN enforcement machinery.

In sum the Indian proposal picks up those items of the Communist position—direct negotiation, cease-fire, and non-intervention—which have a dangerous appeal to the French public, and which in themselves would be damaging to the Western position, and neglects any of the safeguards—political settlement, and controls—which might be calculated to make the non-Communist position in Indochina tenable.

751G.00/4-3054: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State

TOP SECRET PRIORITY

GENEVA, April 30, 1954—9 p. m.

Dulte 34. Eyes only for Acting Secretary for the President from Secretary. Bidault saw me alone after this afternoon's meeting. He spoke clearly and concisely. Eden subsequently joined us and Bidault went over more briefly in his presence what he had told me. Gist was as follows:

Our tactical position, and particularly his own, had deteriorated sharply as result of dissipation of uncertainty as to possibility of international and particularly US intervention. Moderation of recent US statements, notably French interpretation of President's press conference,¹ coupled with Churchill's speech² and obvious reluctance British carry through on Eden-Dulles communiqué,³ removed most

¹ For a message to Secretary Dulles from President Eisenhower, May 1, regarding the President's press conference of Apr. 29, see p. 640.

² Prime Minister Churchill delivered a policy statement on Indochina and the Geneva Conference in the House of Commons on Apr. 27, which included the following remarks: "Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to give any undertakings about United Kingdom military action in Indo-China in advance of the results of Geneva. We have not entered into any new political or military commitments. My right hon. Friend [Eden] has, of course, made it clear to his colleagues that if settlements are reached there Her Majesty's Government will be ready to play their full part in supporting them in order to promote a stable peace in the Far East." For the complete statement, see *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 5th series, vol. 526, cols. 1485-1486.

³ Not printed, but see footnote 3, p. 514.

of Communist uncertainty as to possible Western intentions. Pre-mature publication of Bao Dai's willingness to attend had incidentally further removed any possibility of bargaining with Viet Minh on their participation. He felt he had little solid support at home.

As things now stood, he saw nothing to prevent a Communist victory throughout whole area. There was nothing to stop or moderate them. If this disaster happened, effects would not be limited to Indochina or even to EDC but would threaten whole NATO structure. Next French Government would give lip service to NATO but no more and might not even give that very long. He was going to Paris Tuesday⁴ to appear before the Assembly but would refuse to answer any questions and state merely that they could either express confidence in him or remove him as Foreign Minister.

I said that as far as US was concerned, situation would not be finalized until after I returned. I was not without hope that UK could be brought with others into discussions which would at least revive Communist doubts as to Western intentions. Also, I said I was not confident that the military had completely exhausted the possibilities in the situation. They did not seem to me to be very ingenious. Something might be done short of total surrender to get the war on to a basis which would reduce expenditure of French manpower and not involve bringing in US and UK manpower, by permitting certain positions to be held and indigenous people to be trained to resume the struggle. Bidault said this thinking was not without merit.

After Bidault's departure, I told Eden I thought we should at least announce the beginning of discussions on what would be done if the conference failed to produce a satisfactory solution. He reacted rather negatively, but said he would think about it.

DULLES

⁴ May 4.

396.1 GE/4-3054: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State

SECRET

GENEVA, April 30, 1954—10 p. m.

Secto 54. Repeated information Paris 15, Saigon 18. French advise us of receipt from De Jean of his estimate on current overall situation. In De Jean's opinion it was correct to envisage only two alternatives of internationalization of war or negotiation of cease-fire with Ho. Re latter, he would regard anything less than Laniel's conditions as calamitous.¹ He inclined toward increased American participation short of direct intervention but felt it essential French retain top con-

¹ For a report on Laniel's conditions of Mar. 5, 1954, see telegram 8240 from Paris, Mar. 6, p. 535.

control militarily, financially and politically. He would not yet admit fall Dien Bien Phu inevitable but felt that its fall would have very serious repercussions on Vietnamese military and civilian morale. He also felt that longer Geneva discussions continued, the worse would be effect on Vietnamese opinion.

DULLES

110.11 DUJ/5-154: Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Secretary of State, at Geneva¹

TOP SECRET NIACT

WASHINGTON, May 6, 1954—9:44 a. m.

Tedul 26. Dept has received following message from President for immediate transmission to Secretary:²

"My Friday evening paper indicates that great distortion occurred in the reporting in Geneva of a statement I made at Thursday's press conference."

"I was emphasizing the complexities and difficulties of your task at Geneva. In doing so, I pointed out that you had to steer a course between the unattainable and the unacceptable. The former I defined as a general Asian peace in which the free world could have real confidence. This I said was too much to hope for at present. The unacceptable I did not attempt to define because in it could be described an almost infinite number of hypothetical arrangements. Consequently I said that if any arrangements whatsoever was made at Geneva, it could scarcely be viewed as more than a *modus vivendi* or something of that sort. I then stated that because of the delicacy and difficulties of your task, I would not comment further on the Geneva Conference and its aims or on this government's suggestions and proposals. However, another question did not occur to me to state that any division or partition of Indo-China was not included in what I considered acceptable."

"The New York Times" reported this part of my press conference accurately, so I am at a loss to understand why it should have been so completely twisted in the reports sent to Geneva.

"I am sure that you and this Administration are correct in the approach we have taken to the Indo-China problem. I have heard that New Zealand, Thailand and the Philippines agree with us. They are

¹ Drafted by Gilmore on 5/8.
² Secretary Dulles in turn on May 1 passed the President's message to Eden and Bidault, stating that he had received a telegram "from the President which expresses concern about the misinterpretations given to his last Thursday's press conference." (Eisenhower Library, Dulles papers, "Korea—Political Conference—Geneva 1954") In an additional note to Bidault the Secretary enclosed a transcript of portions of the President's press conference dealing with Indochina and stated that "You will see that it does not in any way bear out the press interpretation which in some quarters were placed upon it." (Eisenhower Library, Dulles papers, "Korea—Political Conference—Geneva 1954")

Chauvel subsequently informed the U.S. Delegation that "Bidault encouraged Bidault's clarification of April 29 press conference given in Secretary's letter of May 1." Telegram Secto 120 from Geneva, May 6. (398.1 GE/5-654)

more realistic and possibly more courageous than those who are apparently willing to accept any arrangement that allows them by preference and for such time as may be permitted by the Chinese Reds to save a bit of face and possibly a couple of miserable trading posts in the Far East.

"With warm regards to you and all members of your party, As ever,
D. D. E."

MURPHY

Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 288

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (MacArthur)

SECRET

GENEVA, May 1, 1954.

Participants:

France

Mr. Bidault
Mr. Chauvel

US

Secretary Dulles
General Smith
Mr. MacArthur

UK

Mr. Eden
Lord Reading
Mr. Shuckburgh

Time: 12:15 p.m., May 1, 1954

Place: Bidault's Residence, Joli-Port, in Versoix

The Secretary opened the discussion by outlining his talk with Molotov this morning on the peaceful uses of atomic energy. After giving them a full account of his talk with Molotov this morning, the Secretary read to Messrs. Eden and Bidault the paper which he had read to Molotov this morning. Both Eden and Bidault asked if they could have copies, and the Secretary said that he had only his reading copy with him but would send them copies.

Mr. Bidault then said that Molotov has something on his mind. When Bidault saw Molotov yesterday, Molotov asked him when he (Bidault) was leaving. Mr. Bidault replied that he probably would be going to Paris sometime Monday evening so that he could be there when the Assembly reconvenes on Tuesday, but would of course be returning to Geneva. Molotov had then said that Secretary Dulles was leaving on Monday and complained that this was supposed to be a Foreign Ministers meeting. Mr. Bidault said that in his judgment Molotov thinks that his only peer and equal is the Secretary, and he is probably saying to himself, "How can I stay on with inferiors when my only equal, the American Secretary of State, is leaving?" Mr. Bidault said that Molotov does have a problem of how long he remains in Geneva in the form of Chou En-lai. However, he felt Molotov's unhappiness about Secretary Dulles' leaving was because

¹ For related documentation, see volume II.

² May 8.

Molotov "does not like to negotiate with persons whom he considers inferior in status to himself".

Mr. Bidault then said to the Secretary that he had sent the new note to Bao Dai regarding Vietnam participation at the Geneva Conference and that the original letter which he, Eden, and the Secretary had signed had been retrieved.³ He said that Bao Dai's Foreign Minister would be arriving at the Swiss frontier at about 2:30 or three o'clock this afternoon with, he understood, Bao Dai's approval for the Vietnamese to participate in the Geneva Conference even if the Vietnam is present.

Mr. Bidault then said that it was important to try to get the Indochina phase of the conference started on Monday or Tuesday. With Bao Dai's approval of Vietnam participation, either he (Bidault) would approach Molotov today, or Chauvel would see Gromyko, to inform them that the Vietnamese accepted Vietnam participation. Mr. Bidault said that it was Molotov's turn to come and see him, but he was somewhat reluctant to ask him to come to see him so quickly. The Secretary asked Bidault if he meant that he might invite Molotov to dinner tonight, and Mr. Bidault replied that he would not invite him because it was too soon after Molotov's dinner for him. If he invited Molotov tonight, Molotov would invite him back tomorrow for another meal, and he did not wish to get involved with him in too many bilateral dinners.

Mr. Bidault said that when they communicated Bao Dai's positive reply to Molotov later today, two questions would come almost at once. The first was chairmanship of the Indochina phase and the second was composition. Regarding chairmanship, Mr. Bidault hazarded that Molotov might propose an Indian chairman, and would probably have in mind Krishna Menon. After some discussion, it was agreed that India would be very unsuitable under almost any circumstances, although Mr. Bidault said that Madame Pandit would not make a bad chairman, if it was to be an Indian. However, he reiterated that India was unsuitable. Mr. Bidault said that the only chairman of the three rotating chairmen of the Conference that might be acceptable would be Eden. Mr. Eden immediately interjected saying that he really did not want to be the chairman. He had thought about suggesting the idea of having Mike Pearson⁴ as permanent chairman for the Indochina phase but if this were done Molotov would immediately reply that this was an Asiatic conference and would then probably suggest an Asian, such as Krishna Menon. Mr. Eden said another possibility which had occurred to him was to ask the chairman of the Colombo

³ Regarding these two notes, see the memorandum by Achilles, p. 620.

⁴ Lester B. Pearson of Canada.

Conference (the Prime Minister of Ceylon)⁵ to chair the meeting. Secretary Dulles said he did not see why the present three chairmen could not continue for the Indochina phase. He had worded his proposal for chairmanship carefully so that it could be construed that the three present rotating chairmen were chairmen of the conference rather than just of the Korean phase. Mr. Bidault and Mr. Eden were both enthusiastic and said this was a good idea. They had not been aware of the way the Secretary's proposal, which the conference had accepted, had been worded.

Mr. Bidault said that Molotov had suggested that "the two permanent chairmen" chair the Indochina phase. This meant the UK and the USSR. He was not happy about this idea as he did not like the thought of having the chairmen rotate on a 50-50 basis. He mentioned preferring the two-for-one basis which would result if the present chairmen were continued. Mr. Eden became somewhat confused and raised a question as to Prince Wan's continuing as one of the rotating chairmen if Thailand was not a participant. The Secretary pointed out that Eden's proposal for the chairman of the Colombo Conference to chair the Indochina phase called for an outsider whose country would not participate in the discussions. With respect to chairmanship, it was agreed that when the French see the Russians later today, they would put forward the position that the three present rotating chairmen should continue. If the Russians refused this, consideration should be given to having a single chairman, but no definite agreement on who that chairman should be was reached. The Prime Minister of Ceylon as chairman of the Colombo Conference was a possibility which should be kept in mind. It was also agreed that Prince Wan or Mike Pearson would be acceptable in the role of a single chairman.

The discussion then turned to composition of the Indochina phase of the conference, and it was agreed that Bidault would stand fast on the proposal that there be 9 participants (US, UK, France, USSR, Communist China, the three Associated States, and the Vietnam). It was agreed that this should be the initial composition of the conference, although the possibility was not excluded that this group might add additional members later. However, for the purposes of the French discussion with Molotov later today, the French should stand on the nine.

Mr. Bidault then inquired what the purpose of this afternoon's restricted meeting on Korea at 3:30 p. m. was. The Secretary explained that he planned to table a paper containing four points which were

1. Elections to be under UN auspices
2. The scope and character of the elections

⁵ Sir John Kotelawala.

⁶ For a summary of the meeting, see telegram Secto 69, May 2, p. 174.

3. Disposition of foreign troops
4. Provision to protect Korean independence, including demilitarized border areas.

The Secretary indicated that he did not expect there would be substantive discussion this afternoon of these points and believed that the discussion this afternoon would cover the procedural aspect of how the conference would deal with such points. For example, should they be discussed in plenary or restricted sessions, etc.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Bidault said that he would endeavor to get Molotov's acceptance today that there should be 9 participants for the Indochina phase which had been agreed above and that the present chairmen should continue to chair the Indochina discussions. He promised to keep both the Secretary and Mr. Eden fully informed. The Secretary and Mr. Eden indicated approval of this position, and the Secretary said that while we recognized that France had primary responsibility in connection with the Indochina discussions, the US would find it very difficult to accept an Indian chairman such as Krishna Menon. Mr. Bidault reiterated that an Indian chairman would certainly not do, although if deadlock were reached on the Western proposal for the present chairmen to continue, there was merit in having an outside chairman, such as the Prime Minister of Ceylon or Prince Wan or Mike Pearson. Mr. Bidault concluded by saying that he did not exclude the possibility that Molotov might even suggest that France and Communist China alternate in the chair for the Indochina discussions or that even the Vietnamese and Vietnam alternate the chair. This was just a possibility which had occurred to him while the present discussion was going on and one that possibly might be put forward by the Soviets.

396.1 GE/5-154: Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State

TOP SECRET

GENEVA, May 1, 1954—2 p. m.

Dulles 37. After concluding my discussion this morning with Molotov on atomic energy matter, he noted as I prepared to go that my departure Monday would prevent my participation in Indochina phase of Geneva Conference. I indicated again I would be interested in any information regarding his thinking on problem. He failed again to offer anything of significance, reverting to his statement earlier in the week that it was important to seek road to peace Indochina at Geneva and that we should pay attention to the interests and the views of both sides.

DULLES

FPS files, lot 65 D 101, "Indochina"

Memorandum by the Adviser to the United States Delegation (Stelle) to the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (Bovise)

TOP SECRET

[GENEVA,] May 1, 1954.
Subject: U.S. Participation in an Unsatisfactory Indochina Settlement

If negotiations on Indochina reach a point where it is clear that the French are willing to enter into arrangements which are going to be unsatisfactory from the U.S. point of view, and if at that time the U.S. concludes that it does not have sufficient leverage to prevent the French from concluding such an agreement, the U.S. will have to decide whether it should at that time disassociate itself from the negotiations or continue to be a party to them. Such a decision would obviously have important U.S. domestic political implications. The following analysis, however, does not deal with domestic U.S. political aspects.

Disadvantages of U.S. Participation

1. U.S. participation in an unsatisfactory Indochina settlement will be taken as evidence throughout Asia and the rest of the world that the U.S. has in effect backed down in the face of the Communist threat in a critically important area. As a result there will be an unavoidable loss of U.S. prestige.
2. U.S. acquiescence to and participation in an unsatisfactory settlement will probably have particularly acute effects on U.S. prestige in the remainder of Southeast Asia—notably in Thailand. The Thais may well feel that the U.S. has marched up the hill and back again on the question of Indochina, and be tempted to believe that the U.S. would behave in similar fashion if a showdown came with respect to Thailand. Consequently the value of U.S. promises of protection and assistance may be severely depreciated in Siamese eyes.
3. U.S. readiness to participate in an unsatisfactory settlement might amount to relinquishment of the last available card that the U.S. has to play against French acceptance of such a settlement—French fear of provoking a profound breach between France and the United States.

Advantages of U.S. Participation

1. U.S. participation in negotiation of a settlement would keep the U.S. in a better position to play off the Associated States against the French, to stimulate the Communists to overreaching themselves, and in general to attempt to whittle down the degree of unacceptability of an Indochina settlement.

2. U.S. participation in an Indochina settlement, despite the undoubted loss of prestige involved, would place the U.S. in a better position to insert itself into the protection and shoring up of whatever remained of a Western position in Indochina and Southeast Asia after an unsatisfactory settlement. This would be particularly true in the case of a settlement involving territorial partition.
3. U.S. participation in an unsatisfactory Indochina settlement would assist in dispelling that fear of U.S. intransigence and suspicion of U.S. eagerness for drastic action against Communist China which has quite evidently contributed to present U.S. difficulties both with its Allies and with the neutralist countries.
4. U.S. participation in a settlement would lessen the possibilities of a severe breach between the U.S. on the one hand and the British and the French on the other, and would make more promising the possibilities of united action to counter the damaging effects of the settlement in Southeast Asia, as well as improve prospects for Allied cooperation in Europe.

Conclusion

Unless there are good grounds for estimating that a U.S. threat to withdraw from the negotiations would in fact have the effect of preventing French acceptance of an unsatisfactory settlement, it would seem, on balance, that it would be in the U.S. interest to stay with the negotiations whatever might be the outcome.

Conferences files, lot 60 D 627, CF 265

*Memorandum by the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (Heath) to the Coordinator of the United States Delegation (Johnson).*¹

SECRET

[GENEVA,] May 1, 1954.

Subject: The Indochina Phase of the Conference

1. Participation

At Bidault's meeting with Molotov on April 27,² there appeared to be agreement that the participants—at least in the first instance—should be: The U.S., U.K., USSR, France, the Associated States, Communist China and Viet Minh. Bao Dai's acceptance of the second letter³ would seem to pave the way for an invitation from the French to the 3 Associated States.

¹ Ambassador Heath also served as Chairman of the Indochina Working Group.

² For a summary of the Bidault-Molotov meeting, see telegram Duite 16, p. 591.

³ For an informal translation of the letter to Bao Dai, see footnote 1, p. 620.

Recommendations:

- (1) That the U.S. position on participation be that the 9 Powers listed above should be the only participants.
 - (2) That invitations shall be extended to the Associated States by France and to the Viet Minh by the USSR.
 - (3) That we absolutely reject any attempt by the Soviets to include their puppet regimes in Laos and Cambodia.
 - (4) If the Soviets insist on the participation of India, Indonesia and Burma (or any combination thereof), we should insist on having Thailand, Philippines and Australia.
- If it seems tactically wise in order to settle the question to have one state from each group included, we should accept Burma and Thailand on the limitrophe principle.

2. Opening Date of the Indochina Phase

While we should not be in the position of attempting to delay the Indochina Phase of the Conference, it is recommended that the Indochina discussions not begin before Monday, May 10 in order to avoid conflict with next week's Korean sessions.

3. Chairmanship

If the participants are limited to the 9 listed above, it is recommended that our position on chairmanship be that the chair be rotated by the U.K. and the USSR. If Thailand is included as a participant in the Indochina Phase then our position should be that the chairmanship follow the procedure of the Korean Phase, rotating among the U.K., Thailand and the USSR.

4. Seating

It is recommended that once the participants are finally decided upon, the French Deputy Secretary-General of the Allied Secretariat take the initiative in working out with his Soviet counterpart an auditorium-type seating plan similar to the one now in use for the Korean Phase.⁴

5. Languages

As a practical matter we see no alternative to French, English, Russian and Chinese (the Associated States will use French and the Viet Minh will use Chinese) as the official language for the Indochina Phase.

This is the disadvantage of having only the languages of the Berlin Powers plus Communist China.

⁴ Handwritten notation by Johnson to paragraph 4: "The Secretary believes we need not be rigid on this point. With only 9 a table arrangement would be practicable. Chauvel told me tonight they were thinking of an individual desk arrangement in an ellipse. I said would be OK with us. U. A. J."

Reference	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	3	4	5	6
FO 371/112060	31041				
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Copy of a record of a talk with a member of the Soviet Delegation

CONFIDENTIAL

I lunched today as the guest of Mr. Borisov of the Soviet Delegation. He had previously approached me in the Palais des Nations, apparently on instructions.

As Mr. Borisov does not appear in our Personalities Report, I questioned him about his background and functions. He told me that he was a radio engineer by profession, having joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs only in 1946. He explained (to my surprise) that most officials in the Ministry were chosen from various walks of life like himself, and were not career officials. He served in the Soviet Delegation to the United Nations in New York until 1950 and was subsequently seconded to U.N.E.S.C.O. He is now apparently working in the U.N. Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mr. Borisov speaks good English and seemed at pains to adopt a disarming attitude. On at least two occasions in the course of our conversation he admitted, without any apparent ado, that the Soviet Government had pursued a mistaken policy, i.e. over their failure to reintroduce arrangements for tourist travel after the war, and their refusal to release the Soviet wives (which he admitted had done harm in the West out of all proportion to the issue involved). When he complained about the rise of McCarthyism in the United States and I observed that if this was an evil, one only had to blame the counter-evil responsible for it, making quite clear what this was, he did not demur in the slightest.

After various pleasantries, he asked me the inevitable question about our policy in Indo-China. I said that, as he would know, we had nothing to be ashamed of in our record of dealing with Asia. To this again he readily assented. I said that, applying the principles which had governed our policy in India and Burma etc., we wished to see the emergence in Indo-China of a political system which corresponded to the aspirations of the Indo-Chinese. When he attempted to argue that "French colonialism" was outmoded, he put up little resistance to my observation that there was no longer any question of this. He observed, however, that we were no doubt closely concerned with the outcome of the Indo-China question in view of our position in Malaya, and mentioned that he had seen reports from London suggesting that if Indo-China were lost, the loss of Malaya would inevitably follow. He went on to say that he thought that partition appeared to be the only possible solution to the problem, but thought that H.M.G. were opposed to this. I countered this by reiterating again the principle of self-determination, and asked him what he thought would be the attitude of China. He replied, as expected, that he could not answer for China, but that "in his opinion" partition would be the right solution.

(Signed) J.G. TAHOUDIN.
May 1, 1954.

For some time the Russians have been showing interest in partition and I believe they regard it as a possible solution.

(Signed) W.D. ALLEN
May 1, 1954.

Secretary of State.

I regard this as encouraging, for it is better than the amalgamation which I feared that they would want.

(Signed) A.E. May 2, 1954.

Telegram, Zhou Enlai to Mao Zedong and Others, Regarding a Meeting with British Foreign Secretary Eden, May 1, 1954

Records No: 206-Y049

Chairman Mao, Comrade Shaoqi and the Central Committee:

Comrade Molotov invited me to meet with Eden yesterday afternoon, and we discussed the following questions:

(1) The Korean issue. There is no meeting today on May 1st, and the conference will reopen on May 3rd. Only the Turkish and Thai delegations made speeches yesterday morning. The meeting was adjourned in less than thirty minutes. Eden suggested holding a restricted session and said that "[the members should be] the five of us plus North and South Korea." Eden said that he had already talked to Dulles about this, and he assumed that Bidault would not oppose it either. Molotov and I both agreed to hold the restricted session. We also asked what subjects would be specifically discussed in the restricted session. However, Eden did not answer this question. It is the British and Americans who are taking the initiative and sounding us out, and we should not react too positively except to agree to hold the meeting. From the general situation, I assume that Eden's proposal for a restricted session is related to Dulles's return to the US next week. Up to now, there is no North Atlantic country except Turkey spoke to support Dulles yet during the discussion of the Korean issue. Although the United States fired many blank cartridges on the Indochina issue, they could not scare anyone but themselves. The United States is attempting to form an alliance of invaders of Southeast Asia. However, Britain is still hesitating. On the other hand, France's request for more air support is being refused by Britain and the United States. In sum, it is impossible for the United States to stop the negotiations on the Indochina issue now. Eisenhower's recent words showed his retreat and embarrassed Dulles. Therefore, Dulles decided to run away [from the conference], and leave the problems to the Under Secretary of State, [Walter Bedell] Smith. Eden said that Dulles had already decided to return to the US next week. Molotov responded that "it will increase the responsibilities of the four of us." The current situation shows that Eden will stay, and so will Bidault since [Marc] Jacquet of the De Gaulle group and [Roland] Jacquin de Margerie, who insists on the ending of the Indochina war, came to Geneva from France to pressure him. However, it is still not clear whether or not an agreement on the Korean issue can be reached.

(2) The Indochina issue. Eden said that "I will not use this as a condition for the issue of membership [of countries which should be invited to join the discussion], nor do I require you to answer me. I just want to ask if the Soviet and Chinese side can push for the withdrawal of the wounded from Dien Bien Phu."

Molotov said: "It can be solved if you discuss this with the Vietnamese delegation." I said: "It is better to have the two belligerent parties discuss this directly. The two belligerent parties in the Korean War used to discuss directly the issue of exchanging wounded and sick POW's before the armistice in Korea." Regarding the issue of membership, I said: "Five countries have already been invited to join the discussions on the Indochina issue. It is odd that the decision on the invitation of related countries on both sides has not yet been made. Obviously someone is preventing both sides from attending the negotiations." Eden said: "I am not preventing it." It seems that it will take another two days to solve the problem of membership.

(3) The issue of Sino-British relations. When Molotov mentioned that China was complaining about unfairness in international affairs, Eden said: "Britain does not recognize China. However, China does not recognize us." I said: "It is not China which does not recognize Britain. It is Britain which does not recognize us in the United Nations." Eden said: "Britain is also dissatisfied with China on some things, but I do not want to mention these things when we are dining together today." Talking about the improvement of Sino-British relations, Eden said: "I brought the British Charge in the People's Republic of China, [Humphrey] Trevelyan here this time [to let him] meet with the Chinese delegation." I said: "I also brought the director of the Department of West European and African Affairs Huan Xiang here." Eden said: "Well, we have some thoughts in common." Trevelyan came to see us immediately after the meeting and had already arranged to invite Huan Xiang to dinner next week.

(4) The issue of British-American relations. Molotov said: "The United States is intentionally creating tension, and it makes the American people very sensitive. This kind of situation does not exist in the Soviet Union. I assume that Britain does not like that, either." Eden said: "Although the United States [Government] speaks a lot, the American people are peace-loving." Molotov then said: "Britain is an influential country in the West, and shares the same language with the United States. Britain should not underestimate its role in improving relations between the East and the West." Eden said: "You are flattering me. Industrial development in the United States exceeded ours after World War Two. It also replaced Britain as the world's leader. Although we are not jealous, the United States is too impatient." Eden then cited a playwright that: "We have nothing in common with the United States except the same language." I said: "Since the United States is not reconciled to the loss of China, it uses every means at its disposal to threaten and massacre people, especially the Chinese people. However, the Chinese people are not afraid of these threats. The US way of doing things only made its own people nervous." Eden said: "The Americans have some reason to be dissatisfied. The Americans kindly helped China during its war against Japan."

However, China repaid kindness with ingratitude." I said: "The United States helped Chiang Kai-shek oppress and kill Chinese people. How couldn't it lead to the Chinese people's resistance?" Eden said: "In fact, the British loss in China was greater than that of the United States." I said: "If we do accounts in history, Britain did not lose anything."

(5) The issue of the Five Powers. Eden said that he does not care if it is Four or Five- Power, the subcommittee should be composed of seven countries. Molotov said: "This is a good attitude. However, some people do not want to talk about the Five Powers."

Foreign journalists spread the rumor after the dinner that Eden had met with Dulles before his meeting with me. It was said that Dulles was very dissatisfied with Eden's action. Trevelyan invited Lei Renmin for dinner last night. The Deputy Under Secretary for Administration in the British Foreign Affairs [Harold] Caccia, and the Assistant Under Secretary [Denis] Allen were also present at the dinner. Trevelyan stated that three British trade organizations were willing to do business with China. Lei said that the representatives of the three organizations could first come to meet with [the Chinese] at Geneva in order to find out detailed information. Trevelyan agreed with him. Trevelyan also invited Lei to come to Britain and visit the industrial exhibition. The Indian ambassador to Switzerland came to see me and asked for information about the Geneva Conference yesterday in the morning.

Zhou Enlai
May 1

Translated for CWIHP by Chen Jian. Draft. Do not quote without permission from CWIHP.

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SECRET

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FROM GENEVA CONFERENCE (UNITED KINGDOM DELEGATION) TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

DEPARTMENTAL AND WHITE HALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Eden
No. 113
May 2, 1954

D. 11.30 p.m. May 2, 1954
R. 11.41 p.m. May 2, 1954

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

DEF 11/379 G

(P.W.H.)

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 113 of May 2.
Repeated for information to Washington and Paris.

My telegram No. 110.

My view is that we cannot give the Americans the moral support they seek for their plans as at present conceived. It still seems that they have not worked out their ideas at all clearly and we must know exactly what it is they propose to do and under what authority they intend to proceed.

2. I discussed the situation fully over luncheon today with my three Commonwealth colleagues before Casey and Webb went to the Anzus meeting with the Americans. They all agreed with my views.

3. I am conscious of the effect of our differences over this question upon Anglo-American relations. But I am sure our only wise course is to follow a consistent line. This means we must refuse, pending the outcome of negotiations here, not only to allow ourselves to be drawn into the Indo-China war but also to promise our moral support for measures of which we do not yet know the full scope. On the other hand we can continue to assure the Americans, as we have done already, that we are eager to work with them in building a collective defence with the widest attainable Asian support to guarantee and support whatever settlement can be achieved in Indo-China and to assure the security of the rest of the area.

4. I shall be seeing Bedell Smith tomorrow in order to go over the whole situation again with him.

Foreign Office please pass Washington and Paris as my telegrams Nos. 46 and 19 respectively.

[Repeated to Washington and Paris]

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from Canberra for election campaign. I assumed it was for purpose of friendly explanation some Australian current press speculation re UK, Australia, and US lack of complete agreement. After press interviews he launched into sub SEA crisis. He said government proposals foundly appreciated importance of Geneva conference to Australia future but that pendency of general election embarrassed it respecting any major moves in international affairs. Said the election would have the move which he might otherwise have taken if himself leading the Australian delegation to Geneva, in which case he would have requested "Winston" to go and would have hoped President Eisenhower might have considered it.

He then described several recent conferences with UK High Commissioner in which High Commissioner had complained about Australian press suggesting Australia not following UK, to which Prime Minister said he replied that Australia was not an authoritarian state and did not control its press but pointed he had already made a statement deploring suggestions of any rift between UK and US which he said still did not seem to satisfy High Commissioner.

Re Indochina, Prime Minister then said "of course the people have to be prepared for these things. If US invaded UK and Australia should invade Indochina now neither the white nor the yellow people would understand us." He referred to division of opinion in US as well as elsewhere. He said it was obviously important to get other countries associated, mentioning particularly Thailand and Burma.

I told him of UK High Commissioner's conversations with me April 11, reported despatch 347 April 13, in which High Commissioner had referred to UK thoughts of making some territorial concessions in Indochina. At this Prime Minister declared emphatically his "personal, unalterable opposition to anything of that kind." He referred rhetorically to the obvious desirability if it were possible of drawing line between those who really want to be Communists and those who do not, but indicated that this was not feasible geographically.

I then referred to brief Australian press statements which had just appeared suggesting possible Casey-Dulles divergence re Korean elections, saying I knew nothing except press reports and was not disturbed. Prime Minister replied knew nothing but press reports either but that press always gave only half story and that he assumed, interpolating with some emphasis "unless Casey is completely deviating from Cabinet policy," that what Casey had said was that "of course everybody would be glad to see such general elections if that would bring a solution to the problem" and that Casey had then gone on to point out obstacles and difficulties.

I referred to other press reports that Casey will return shortly to Australia and that there may be further Cabinet discussions and

asked whether Casey was needed generally in election campaign. He replied Casey not needed but if does not participate he might be in his district.

In course of foregoing discussions Prime Minister referred to UK leadership difficulties "Winston's failing health" and "Winston's demonstrated incapacity for getting along with his US opposite numbers, including both Acheson and Dulles," according to Prime Minister. There was also discussion of possible future election of Prime Minister personally in international discussions after election if government returned. Prime Minister said his personal acquaintance our President only one short interview.

There are some indications of confusion in Australian press re Casey's Geneva speech.² Today's *Melbourne Telegraph*, for example, sets forth as contrasting parallel columns the Reuter dispatch headed "Reuter says the speech was part of British Commonwealth bid to change tactics at the talks" and the other column headed "Rohan Rivett asks, is Australia's role simply that of a supporter and echo of Washington?"

Consul General Robbins, Melbourne, reports recent talk with Cabinet member Kent-Hughes (which parallels similar information re [off?] other Cabinet members) in which Kent-Hughes said Dulles position on Indochina expressed exactly his own point of view, though he felt US had been somewhat late in realizing seriousness of situation.

PEASLEE

made in the Fourth Plenary Session on Korea on Apr. 29 and reported in tele- Secto 41, Apr. 28, p. 157.

PPS files, lot 65 D 101, "Chronological file"

Memorandum by the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (Bowtie) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

GENEVA, May 2, 1954.

Regardless of how things develop in Indochina, one of our primary objectives is to protect and preserve as much of the area as feasible. In particular, it is highly desirable to prevent any debacle in Vietnam from spreading to Cambodia and Laos. One device for this purpose might be the designation by the UN of a peace observation commission for Cambodia and Laos which might serve to block Vietminh invasion of those two states. Moreover, if Asians such as India, Pakistan, or Burma could be named for such a commission, this would tend to engage them, at least to this extent, in shoring up the area.

This approach would be especially useful if the French decide to give up some or all of Vietnam. But it would not seem to be prejudicial even if the defense of Vietnam can be kept going.

To take this step would presumably require action by Cambodia and Laos with the approval of the French. The events of the past few weeks may have changed the attitude of the French on such a proposal. It is hard to see how they can properly object under present conditions.

[Attachment]'

ACTIONS TO PREPARE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF ALTERNATIVE U.S. POLICIES IN INDOCHINA

Problem

Consideration is herewith given to those actions which the U.S.:

(a) should take to strengthen its position in Southeast Asia before resolving the question of whether it would, if necessary, be prepared to commit its forces to prevent Indochina from succumbing to communism;

(b) should not take, until this question has been resolved, at least tentatively or conditionally, and whose nature will depend on that resolution.

Discussion

The present position is obscure, since it is not known what course the French will adopt after the probable fall of Dien Bien Phu. It is unknown to what extent the French will desire and be able to continue resistance in Indochina and whether hostilities may not be terminated by a cease fire and the eventual partition of Indochina at the Geneva Conference.

The French have asked for immediate and direct U.S. air intervention to save Dien Bien Phu. This has been rejected by the U.S. on grounds that constitutional procedure prevents the U.S. from entering into a state of belligerency in the present case without congressional approval. The French were further informed that the Administration would not be able to seek such authorization until plans had been developed for Indochina's defense by united action.

The Secretary in his background press conference at Geneva April 25² stated that the U.S. is assisting the French in Indochina by all feasible means short of belligerent action. The Secretary seemed to have intended to imply that the U.S. would continue with such

¹ Prepared by Jacob D. Beam of S/F, Apr. 26, 1954.

² For the transcript of the Secretary's press conference, see telegram Secto 6, p. 558.

assistance by special measures, such as the airlift from France, over and beyond the aid agreement concluded last September.

The proposal that the U.S., U.K., Australia, New Zealand and Thailand hold secret military talks to devise measures to bolster Thailand's defense if French resistance should collapse in Indochina has been shelved for the reason that it would produce an adverse reaction on the French if it became known.³ It is now proposed instead that the present Five Power Military Staff Planning Organization (U.S., U.K., France, Australia and New Zealand) meet in Bangkok, with Thai representation, to engage in planning which will include measures for a defense of Indochina also.

Nehru has indicated that he will oppose the U.S. proposal for united action for Asian defense and he has suggested instead that the countries participating in the Ceylon meeting opening April 28 put forward a plan for a cease fire in Indochina as a preliminary to a solution for the independence of all of Indochina and which would be guaranteed against outside interference.⁴ Nehru apparently envisaged prohibiting intervention by the U.S. and Red China but seemed not to have excluded further French action, on the presumption that the French had committed themselves to Indochina's independence.

Initial Measures Required

Lacking the certainty that the French will maintain their stand in Indochina, the measures suggested in paragraph (a) of the problem statement should initially be of an immediate and contingent nature designed to do the utmost to ensure that the French will keep up their resistance. They should take the following form:

(1) The U.S. should insist with the French that the grant of sovereignty to the Associated States involves a commitment to defend the integrity of these States.

(2) Extraordinary aid short of belligerency should be continued and the British should be urged to participate.

(3) As a first step towards implementing the concept of united action, an effort should be made to obtain commitments from as many free world states in the area as feasible that they support independence for the Associated States and the maintenance of that independence against threats from any outside quarter.

(4) Voluntary contributions should be requested from the interested countries in support of the extraordinary assistance which the U.S. is furnishing the French short of belligerent action.

(5) To match any increase in effective assistance supplied by the above means, the French should be urged to send conscript levies to Indochina.

³ Regarding this matter, see footnote 3, p. 595.

⁴ Prime Minister Nehru's proposals made on Apr. 24 were transmitted to the Department of State in telegram 1696 from New Delhi, Apr. 25; see volume XIII.

(6) Common negotiating position vis-à-vis the communists should be developed which would envisage an ultimate solution safeguarding the southern frontier of Red China by the possible establishment of a neutral zone to be placed under the control of a UN peace observation committee. This would cut off further intervention by Red China and at the same time would assure world opinion that united action was aimed to protect Indochina and not to overthrow the Peking Regime.

(7) United action support should be given to Thailand for the building up of its defenses as a precautionary measure.

Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 333

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Adviser to the United States Delegation (McBride)*¹

SECRET

Participants:

United States

The Secretary
The Under Secretary
Vice Admiral Davis
Asst. Secretary
Merchant
Mr. T. K. Critchley
Asst. Secretary
Robertson
Mr. McBride

Australia

The Hon. R. G. Casey,
Foreign Minister
Mr. A. S. Watt, Commis-
sioner in Malaya
Mr. T. K. Critchley
Mr. J. R. Rowland

New Zealand

The Hon. T. C. Webb,
Foreign Minister
Mr. A. D. McIntosh
Mr. F. H. Corner

GENEVA, May 2, 1954.

The Secretary opened the meeting stating that he had asked his Australian and New Zealand colleagues to meet with him under the terms of reference of the ANZUS Pact which provide for such consultation when any part of the area is threatened. The Secretary said he felt the situation in Southeast Asia was such that it required consultation as called for in the ANZUS Pact. Furthermore, since all three Ministers were present in Geneva, he thought it would be useful to exchange views again, especially since the present situation requires a broad unified front.² He said he had discussed the situation with the Philippines under the terms of our pact with them and also with the French and the Associated States, and with the United Kingdom because of her interest in Malaya. He said that he had also talked with the Thai, and because of their special concern had held military conversations with them in Washington. Finally, he had talked on the general subject of the Southeast Asian situation with the Ambassadors of India, Pakistan, Burma, Indonesia, Ceylon, Japan, Na-

¹ Summary of conversation transmitted to the Department of State in telegram Secto 73, May 3. (396.1 GE/5-354)

² For documentation on the "United Action" concept, see volumes XII and XIII.

tionalist China and the Republic of Korea. Conversations with the latter group of Ambassadors in Washington had been merely for the purpose of keeping them informed.

The Secretary continued saying that the present situation was due in large part to the lack of any strong French Government and the French failure to put the situation on a sound basis politically in Indochina earlier. He noted that for the Western powers to appear to be engaged in Southeast Asia in helping France preserve a colonial regime would certainly not win us support from the Asian states. The Secretary said he was, however, fully aware of the problem in France where public opinion insisted that the French effort in Indochina be in support of the French Union, and pointed out that it was somewhat difficult to reconcile full independence with the French Union concept. He added the French had made some progress along the lines of the British Commonwealth although their concept was not quite so liberal. He said that the Governments of the Associated States were feeble, and that Bao Dai and the King of Cambodia had hardly demonstrated qualities that would inspire people enthusiastic about dying for them.

The Secretary continued that some progress on achieving a united front in Southeast Asia had been made, but the situation remained unsatisfactory. He stressed that the peoples of the area were uncertain as to what issues were involved and that it was difficult to obtain their support until the issues had been made clearer.

The Secretary then passed to the question of United States aid which he said had been unanimous, and had stopped short only of acts which we felt could be considered as open belligerency. He said we could not pass to action of this type without Congressional approval, and that it was undesirable to request such action from Congress when fundamental questions remained unanswered.

The Secretary stated that Bidault was extremely disheartened, felt that he had no remaining assets and was ready for virtual unconditional surrender. He continued that no one had yet devised any compromise that would save the situation. Partition is undesirable because it would be followed by large scale Communist infiltration south of any line that might be drawn, and furthermore the situation was unlike that in Korea because the Communists were all over the country. The solution of the problem of how to keep the south non-Communist in the event of partition had not been answered. If elections were held now the Communists would probably win, and in any event it was difficult to envisage holding elections under present circumstances, and finally, if a coalition government were established, the Communists would probably quickly take it over. Therefore our nego-

110.11 DU/6-464 : Telegram

Dulles-Dinh Meeting, Geneva, May 2, Evening: The Under Secretary of State (Smith) to the Department of State

SECRET

GENEVA, May 4, 1954, 11:01 a. m.

Dulte 50. Repeated information Saigon 25, Paris 18, Secretary, evening May 2nd received Vietnam Foreign Minister Dinh presented by Ambassador Heath. Dinh stated that Bao Dai had arrived at decision that Vietnam must participate in conference and would interpose no objection to Viet Minh being invited to Geneva. Vietnamese Government could not expose itself to accusation of sabotaging an international effort to find a peaceful solution of Indochina war by refusing to participate in negotiations although his government had no great hopes of their success. His government was definitely resolved to resist any proposal of partition whether at 16th, 20th or any other parallel. It would likewise refuse any proposal affecting integrity of regime, i.e., coalition government with Viet Minh. If such proposals were agreed upon by other participants, Vietnamese delegation would withdraw from conference. Secretary inquired whether that meant Vietnamese Government would prefer to have conference break up without reaching agreement, regrettable as that would be, rather than accept a proposal which would not really bring a lasting peaceful settlement. Dinh replied emphatically in affirmative. Secretary then inquired as to will of Vietnamese Government and people to continue fight if a peaceful solution were not reached in Geneva, observing that any nation determined in decision to preserve its independence would find friends and allies but would find none if there was no will to continue struggle. Dinh replied that government and people were resolved to continue fight.

Reverting to question of partition, Secretary observed that there was hardly case in history where people of country had themselves proposed or agreed to territorial partition. Partition proposals came from foreigners. He inquired whether Ho Chi Minh could logically propose partition since allegedly he was fighting for independence and territorial integrity of Viet Minh. Dinh replied that Viet Minh could not logically recommend partition.

Dinh went on to say that one Vietnamese hope was that discussions at conference would tend to induce non-Communist elements of Viet Minh to break away from Ho Chi Minh.

Dinh expressed regret at Secretary's departure and Secretary explained that he had been absent most of this year and it was necessary to renew his consultations with Congress. Dinh remarked that while American executive might have difficulties with Congress, Vietnamese Government was in even a more difficult position because there was

no Congress. It was obliged before inaugurating new measures to consult opinion of numerous political groups who were without organizational responsibility or legal standing.

SMITH

Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 289

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (MacArthur)

SECRET

GENEVA, May 2, 1954.

Participants:

France

Mr. Chauvel
(Mrs. Chauvel)
(Mr. Bidault joined
the group later)

US

Secretary Dulles
General Smith
Ambassador Luce
Mr. MacArthur
(Mrs. Dulles)

Time: 8 p. m., May 2, 1954

Place: Secretary Dulles' dinner, Restaurant du Nord, Geneva

Mr. Chauvel outlined for the Secretary this evening the discussions which the French have had today with Mr. Dinh (Vietnamese Foreign Minister) and the conversation he had with Mr. Gromyko as follows:

In the course of the discussions with Mr. Dinh, the latter pressed very strongly for a formal letter from Mr. Bidault indicating that the French would not agree to any settlement in Vietnam involving a partition of that country. Mr. Chauvel said that Mr. Bidault had already given formal verbal assurances that France would not agree to a territorial division of Vietnam and that if now a new written assurance had to be given and carried back to Bao Dai, time would be consumed and the discussions on Indochina could not begin. Mr. Chauvel said that after some discussion (and we gathered a telephone call from Mr. Dinh to Bao Dai), it was agreed that the formal note requested by Mr. Dinh would not be a necessary precondition for the French to inform the Soviets that the Vietminh could participate in the conference. Mr. Chauvel indicated that the French had agreed that some form of letter regarding French non-acceptance of a division of Vietnam would subsequently be given to Mr. Dinh. The Secretary said that he had talked to Mr. Dinh this afternoon² and the latter had made the point that neither the Vietminh nor the Vietnam could agree to a division of their country. Whichever side first agreed to this or suggested it, would put themselves in an impossible position. The

² See telegram Dulte 50, May 4, *supra*.

Secretary made the point that this was true of Vietnam as it was in the case of Germany and North Korea where the division of the country had been imposed by occupying powers and not by the peoples of the country themselves who would not have agreed to their being divided.

Mr. Chauvel said that on the basis of the agreement with Dinh he had seen Gromyko at six o'clock this evening. He had informed Gromyko that the French and the Vietnamese Governments agreed to the participation of the Vietnam and had proposed that the invitations be sent out tomorrow morning at ten o'clock. The Soviets would invite the Vietnam and the French would invite the governments of the three Associated States to attend the conference. Mr. Gromyko replied that there might be a more formal way of inviting the Associated States and the Vietnam to participate. (Mr. Chauvel believed that he was suggesting that the invitations go out in the name of the US, UK, USSR, France, and Communist China.) Mr. Chauvel replied that there seemed to be no more need of formality with respect to the invitations to the Indochina phase of the conference than there had been at Berlin with respect to the participants of the Korean phase. Mr. Gromyko did not argue the point. After some discussion it was agreed in principle that the French would issue the invitations to the three Associated States at 10 a. m. tomorrow morning, at which time the Soviets would invite the Vietnam. Mr. Gromyko said that he would have to consult, but it was left that if he did not inform Chauvel to the contrary by 10 a. m. tomorrow the invitation would be issued on the above basis. Mr. Chauvel then said that it was important from the very beginning of the Indochina phase of the conference to separate the question of Vietnam from that of Laos and Cambodia. He had in mind that in their opening statements the representatives of Laos and Cambodia would make a statement clearly indicating that they were separate from the discussions on Vietnam. The Secretary said that he felt it was important to bring the UN to the support of this position and the thought was put forward that one possibility was to have a UN peace observation committee proposed to see that aggression did not occur against Laos and Cambodia. Mr. Chauvel said he had no clear ideas but that this was a definite possibility and one worth thinking about immediately. When asked whether the Cambodian and Laotian Governments had representatives readily available, Mr. Chauvel said that he frankly did not know. They did have representatives in Paris and one of the two governments had a high level representative at the WHO meeting at Geneva who might serve as representative, but he did not honestly know the views of the two governments as to their representation at Geneva.

He then said that in the opening statement by the French on Indochina they might make it clear that Laos and Cambodia were excluded from the area of negotiation. It was suggested to him that if the French made the opening statement in this sense, the Communist side might reply with charges that the French could not speak for the Laotians and Cambodians and at the same time the Communist side might introduce counter claims or suggestions that the problem of Vietnam could not be separated from that of Laos and Cambodia. With this possibility in mind, it would seem preferable to endeavor to arrange procedural questions so that in the first instance, the Laotians and Cambodians could speak for themselves and say that the discussions involved Vietnam and not either of the other two Associated States. Mr. Chauvel said that he felt there was merit in this idea and it should be kept in mind when the procedural arrangements regarding the order of speakers were negotiated with the Communist side.

In conclusion, Mr. Chauvel indicated a strong desire to keep in very close touch with the American Delegation, and particularly General Smith.

110.11 DU/4-454: Telegram

Smith-Eden-Bidault-Dinh Meeting, Geneva, May 3, Morning: The Under Secretary of State (Smith) to the Department of State

CONFIDENTIAL

GENEVA, April [May] 3, 1954—1 a. m.

Dulte 49. Repeated information Saigon 24, Page 181. Upon Vietnamese request, Eden, Bidault and I met with the Vietnam Foreign Minister Dinh morning May 3 in Bidault's office.

Dinh expressed Bao Dai's thanks for the invitation to the conference. He said Bao Dai had naturally hesitated before accepting the invitation because it involved meetings with the Viet Minh and the Communist powers. He remarked it would be necessary for him to have frequent meetings with the three of us. We replied individually that we would keep in touch with him and would undertake no important action without prior consultation with him.

Bidault said that we had a moral interest, particularly in view of the plight of the wounded at Dien-Bien-Phu, in getting the Indochina phase of the conference promptly under way and not let it bog down in procedural and organizational differences. He observed there had been agreement in Berlin that Russia would invite the Chinese and the Viet Minh while the Foreign Ministers of the free countries would invite the Associated States. He suggested that the oral invitation extended at this meeting should be sufficient but Dinh replied that Bao Dai preferred written invitation. We agreed.

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GENEVA CONFERENCE

RECORD OF MEETING AT THE FRENCH DELEGATION OFFICES AT
10 A.M. ON MAY 3, 1954

Present: M. Bidault
Mr. Eden
Mr. Bedell-Smith
M. Dinh
And advisers

1071/457

M. Dinh expressed thanks for the invitation he had received to come to Geneva to express the views of the Government of Vietnam on the question of participation in that part of the Geneva Conference relating to Indo-China. His Government had hesitated long before agreeing. As a state which was still in process of formation Vietnam had reason to doubt the wisdom of a meeting with the Communists who were their opponents in the battle field. But they had concluded that the balance of advantage lay in their accepting the invitation to come. They could only justify their presence in Geneva if they lost no opportunity of defining the legitimate aspirations of Vietnam to democratic principle and territorial unity. At the same time the restoration of peace in Indo-China must be the principal object of the present Conference. And this had provided and added reason for Vietnam's attendance. He also hoped that the opportunity of the Conference might be taken to arrange a truce for the evacuation of the wounded from Dien Bien Phu.

M. Bidault said that the latest reports showed that there had been very severe fighting at Dien Bien Phu during the night with extremely heavy losses but that no ground had been yielded. The French Delegation agreed that the closest contact and consultation should be maintained with the Delegation of Vietnam at every stage of the discussion.

Mr. Eden and Mr. Bedell-Smith agreed.

M. Bidault stressed the importance of beginning discussions with the Soviet Delegation on participation as

/soon as

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RECEIVED IN C.R.
6 MAY 1954
VIETMINH
7 MAY 1954

soon as possible. It would be left to them to invite the
Vietminh. If we were to face realities we must recognise that
in view of the insistence of the Soviet Delegation on inviting
the Vietminh, it would be necessary to admit them to the Conference
if any negotiation were to take place.

Mr. Bedell-Smith agreed that since we could not eliminate
the Vietminh on the battle field we were bound to have them at
Geneva if a start were to be made with negotiation.

Mr. Eden said that the Government of Vietnam regarded the
Vietminh as rebels but in view of the facts of the situation,
agreed to meet with them at Geneva on an equal footing. But it
must be made quite clear that there was no question whatever of
accordng them recognition as a state or in any other way.

This was agreed.

There was then some discussion of the chairmanship of the
Indo-China phase of the Conference and it was agreed that when
M. Bidault met M. Molotov the same afternoon to discuss arrange-
ments with him he should suggest that the three rotating chairmen
of the Korean phase of the Conference should be asked similarly
to preside over the Indo-China phase. The delegate of Siam being
brought in simply in his capacity as a co-chairman and not as a
participating delegation.

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FROM PARIS TO FOREIGN OFFICE

En Clair

DEPARTMENTAL AND
WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Sir G. Jebb
No. 303
May 3, 1954

BF1071 / G
398

D. 3.23 p.m. May 3, 1954
R. 4.45 p.m. May 3, 1954

IMMEDIATE

(P.W.A.)

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 303 of May 3
Repeated for information to CODEL Geneva
Washington

My immediately preceding telegram.

Aron starts off by regretting that the Prime Minister and Secretary of State had not couched their "refusal to associate themselves, even morally, with an American intervention" in terms "less disagreeable for France". (You will remember that this was the point made to me by M. Schumann the other day - see my telegram No. 172 Saving). But Aron goes on to criticise American policy much more severely. In the first place the Americans could not or would not play the card of a possible recognition of the Government of Peking and in any case they did not seem either to want to help the French to negotiate a peace which would imply some kind of compromise with Viet Minh or, alternatively, to take part in the battle, which in itself might result in the achievement of better conditions. The French too were themselves seriously to blame for not having given full independence to Viet Nam long ago.

2. In these circumstances there seemed to be only two practical possibilities.

- (1) A cease fire without a political settlement entailing the "regroupment of troops in certain regions" and an undertaking by the Great Powers to intervene if hostilities were resumed, or
- (2) a cease fire implying some kind of partition on the 18th or 20th parallel with the promise of future elections.

3. At the moment it looked as if Washington was incapable of reaching any positive decision approving either a partition or any concession to the Communists. This being so France was

/forced



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(398)

Paris telegram No. 303 to Foreign Office

-2-

forced to negotiate in the worst possible conditions and would probably have to try for some kind of partition. It would be much better if Washington could still throw her weight on to the scale. There was still time for the Americans either to agree to "a limited intervention" which would "alleviate the local situation with a view to a negotiation" or to make it clear that, while she would not intervene militarily, she would give her active diplomatic support, in spite of the cries of "Munich" that would be heard, in connexion with any scheme for partition. If the Americans did neither of these things but simply continued their present attitude of "rhetoric, intransigence and inaction", this, combined with the "cynicism or wisdom of the British," might even in the long run result in the advent to power of a neutralist government in Paris and thus endanger the entire Western alliance.

Foreign Office pass to Codel Geneva and Washington as my telegrams 18 and 133 respectively.

[Repeated to Codel Geneva and Washington]

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TOP SECRET

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FROM PARIS TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

DEPARTMENTAL AND WHITE HALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Sir G. Jebb
No. 302
May 3, 1954.

D. 4.27 p. m. May 3, 1954.
R. 4.45 p. m. May 3, 1954.

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 302 of May 3
Repeated for information to Codel Geneva and Washington.

RECEIVED IN C.B.
- 4 MAY 1954
SENT TO DEPT

Guard.

DFIO 1 / 37041

Codel Geneva telegram No. 110. D/G

Robertson, as we all know, is mad and Merchant I should think is a yes-man so the controversy seems to boil down to a dispute between Dulles and Bagell-Smith and this I suppose in its turn reflects a profound difference of view in American public opinion.

2. As seen from this post I can only hope that the Bagell-Smith point of view will prevail. French as a whole are certainly waiting for some strong and sympathetic lead to be given them by their Western friends acting together, and any Anglo-American divergence will not help. They are like a dog in a trap and are counting on their Allies to do something about extricating their paw. While this process is on they may be inclined to bite, that is only to be expected. Nevertheless we must continue to try to get them loose.

3. Raymond Aron in this morning's "Figaro" has intelligent article, which is summarised in my immediately following telegram. (You will see that in the first sentence of this summary. Aron makes the same point as was made to me by M. Schumann - see my telegram No. 179 Saying) I think there is a good deal in this analysis, particularly in its criticism of American policy, paralysed as it is by what has been rightly called the stinking albatross of Chiang Kai Shek and the China lobby. I suppose it is impossible that we could now persuade the Americans to play at some suitable moment the card not necessarily of the recognition of Peking, but of Peking's admission into the United Nations? If this is impossible, then in order to help the French in their difficult negotiation for some kind of cease fire or armistice which in default of United States intervention seems to be almost inevitable, could we and the Americans not perhaps come a little further than we have done so far in the direction of hinting that the war may very well be generalised and extended if the Communists for their part cannot agree to some reasonable basis for a cease fire? I realise that the first paragraph of the London communique of April 13 went some way in this direction but I think that

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TOP SECRET

Paris telegram No. 302 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

more explicit statement of the dangers which the Communists may be encountering if they remain quite intransigent might possibly do some good at this very critical moment.

4. What I suppose we want to do is to steer between the Scylla of accusations by the Americans that we have let them down the same way as Sir John Simon is supposed to have let down Colonel Stimson and the Charybdis of being involved in a hopeless jungle war and possibly in a world war by madmen like Walter Robertson. To this end we must somehow or other try by bringing such pressure as we can to bear on the "other side", either to effect a partition as far to the North as possible, or to arrive at some sort of armistice based on defined areas of occupation, which I suppose could only be a modification of M. Laniel's conditions.

5. Since drafting the above I have seen the Codel telegram No. 113, personally I agree, if I may respectively say so, with the view expressed in paragraph 1 from which I observe that your Commonwealth colleagues were in agreement. Nevertheless I still feel that there is room for some further statement by the Prime Minister or by you to the general effect that unless the Communists, whether Chinese or Indo-Chinese, agree in the near future to some cease fire on not unreasonable terms, we for our part will not be able to answer for the consequences. I think that an implied threat of this description, while it would after all not commit us to anything very much, would:-

- (a) Please the Americans of the Bedell-Smith school;
- (b) hearten the French; and
- (c) quite possibly have an effect on the Chinese and Indo-Chinese Communists and reinforce Mr. Molotov in any efforts which he may be making to induce his new protégé to adopt a realistic attitude.

Foreign Office please repeat to Codel Geneva and Washington as my telegrams Nos. 17 and 132.

[Repeated to Codel Geneva and Washington.]

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396.1 GE/6-354 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State

SECRET

GENEVA, May 3, 1954—Noon.
Secto 74. Sent Paris 171, repeated information London 111. Limit distribution. I urged Bidault last night to obtain French agreement for us to reply in next day or so to Soviet note re European security and NATO.¹ I pointed out that by delaying our reply to Soviets early this week we would give to world an indication of Western solidarity and strength of purpose and time when such an indication is much needed.

Bidault indicated that there was great reluctance in Paris to send reply at this juncture. After further urging he said he would do his best to obtain French agreement so that it could be dispatched later this week. I have strong impression French are unwilling to move until after French Parliament reconvenes and possibly discusses foreign policy and will after conversations on Indochina have begun at Geneva. The press, moreover, suggest Dillon press the French on this later this week.

DULLES

¹ For documentation on European security and NATO, see volume v.

396.1 GE/6-354

*Memorandum by the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (Heath) to the Under Secretary of State (Smith)*¹

TOP SECRET

GENEVA, May 3, 1954.

Subject: Outline of U.S. Position and Tactics on Indochina Question at Geneva

Presently Approved U.S. Policy

1. Approved NSC policy applicable to the Geneva Indochina negotiations is as follows (NSC 5405, para. 25-29 approved by the President January 16, 1954):²

25. "Employ every feasible means to influence the French government and people against any conclusion of the struggle on terms inconsistent with basic U.S. objectives. In doing so, the United States should make clear:

- a. The effect on the position of France itself in North Africa, in Europe, and as a world power.

¹ Drafted by Charles C. Stelle, Adviser to the U.S. Delegation.² For the full text of NSC 5405, "United States Objectives and Courses of Action with Respect to Southeast Asia," and related documentation, see volume XII.

- b. The free world stake in Indochina.
- c. The impact of the loss of Indochina.

26. Reiterate to the French:

- a. That in the absence of a marked improvement in the military situation there is no basis for negotiation with any prospect for acceptable terms.

- b. That a nominally non-Communist coalition regime would eventually turn the country over to Ho Chi Minh with no opportunity for the replacement of the French by the United States or the United Kingdom.

27. Flatly oppose any idea of a cease-fire as a preliminary to negotiations, because such a cease-fire would result in an irretrievable deterioration of the Franco-Vietnamese military position in Indochina.

28. If it appears necessary, insist that the French consult the Vietnamese and obtain their approval of all actions related to any response to Viet Minh offers to negotiate.

29. If the French actually enter into negotiations with the Communists, insist that the United States be consulted and seek to influence the course of the negotiations."

The Present Situation

2. With discussions on Indochina imminent at the Geneva Conference the essential elements of the present situation appear to be:

- a. The military situation in Indochina is unfavorable. The fall of Dien Bien Phu though not in itself militarily catastrophic, will have an unsettling effect on the morale of French Union and particularly Vietnamese forces, and will expose the Delta to intensified Viet Minh activity.

- b. The French Government, wobbly at best, is under heavy pressure to stop the fighting in Indochina and will spare no efforts to achieve this end. The Government may not survive the fall of Dien Bien Phu. If the present Government falls, a successor government will probably be even more willing to agree to unfavorable terms. The degree to which French concern with the French Union and France's position as a world power, the value the French place upon U.S. cooperation and assistance, French interests in North Africa and Indochina, French pride, and the technical difficulties of arranging an armistice or withdrawal may operate to inhibit the French from entering into a disastrous agreement remains to be seen. At present there are indications that certain French elements are leaning toward the idea of a coalition government as a means of stopping the fighting although as yet the French have probably reached no firm position.

- c. The British are obviously firmly opposed to military participation in Indochina at this stage, and appear to be most concerned to end the fighting in order to avoid any possibility of its expansion. The British appear to be in favor of partition of Indochina as a form of settlement, although there are indications that they also would not be averse to a simple cease-fire, particularly since the British are making every effort to work out a joint position with the Asian Commonwealth powers.

d. The degree to which the Vietnamese can or will effectively oppose French inclinations cannot be accurately foretold. They are obviously concerned over the Geneva negotiations and the likelihood of French weakness in these negotiations. They have tended to look to the United States to bail them out of any situation which such French weakness might lead them to. In the absence of evidence of U.S. willingness to undertake such a rescue it is possible that they may feel that they have no choice but to fall in with French inclinations. Thus far there is no firm evidence as to what type of settlement the Vietnamese would prefer, and it is clear that there may be differences of view between the Northern Vietnamese and the Bao Dai government.

e. It appears that the Communists, although aware of the local superiority of their military and political position, are still apprehensive over the possibilities of U.S. intervention, and the possibilities of a spreading of the war. Accordingly, while sacrificing nothing of their long term interests, it is possible that they will attempt to shift from a military to a political pursuit of their objectives in Indochina, and may in fact be willing to agree to some sort of settlement in the expectation that they will in any case eventually secure control of all the area.

f. The U.S. has thus far been unsuccessful in attempts to organize an effective *ad hoc* coalition for the defense of Southeast Asia. The U.S. position also suffers from widespread foreign feeling that the U.S., in the absence of such a coalition, will not use its own forces in Indochina. There remains, however, a valuable residue of uncertainty as to U.S. intentions, particularly on the part of the Communists.

U.S. Tactics

3. U.S. tactics in the first instance should be directed toward influencing the course of the negotiations to the end that no agreement will be reached which is inconsistent with basic U.S. objectives. Toward this end the U.S. should adopt the following tactics:

a. Increase as feasible Communist and Allied uncertainty as to U.S. intentions with regard to U.S. action in Indochina, and exploit whatever successes may be achieved in the organization of U.S. and Allied cooperative action in Southeast Asia.

b. Continue to make it clear to the French that we will retain full freedom of action to refrain from any agreement at Geneva.

c. Continue to set forth and endeavour to obtain French, British and Associated States agreement to the general principles which we believe must be firmly adhered to in any solution of the Indochina problem, namely that any settlement with the Communists must not (1) result in or tend to result in a turning over of the politically important and strategic area of Indochina to Communist control; (2) jeopardize the security of the French Union forces; (3) jeopardize the freedom of the peoples of Indochina who have been loyally supporting the anti-Communist effort; (4) endanger the prestige and status of France or the U.K. or ourselves.

d. Be prepared to demonstrate to our Allies, and for that matter to the Communists, the ways in which various types of settlement that

may be proposed by the Communists or by our Allies are incompatible with these general principles. To this end the Working Group is preparing detailed arguments on how such various types of proposals as (1) cease-fire, (2) partition, (3) coalition government, (4) plebiscite, or (5) immediate elections, would fail to meet our general principles and are therefore unacceptable.

e. Endeavour to place the French and the Associated States in the forefront of any negotiations with the Communists, toward the end that the French may experience to the fullest degree the difficulties, frustrations, and exacerbations of such negotiations.

f. Endeavour to stimulate the Communists to the adoption of harsh negotiating tactics and inflexible positions. The Working Group is preparing detailed suggestions of fruitful ways of playing on Communist and particularly Chinese Communist sensitivities.

g. Cultivate Associated States resistance to a sellout.

h. Wherever possible make use of possible British assistance in strengthening the resistance of the French to an unacceptable settlement.

4. The U.S. should decide whether or not it is desirable for the U.S. to put forward a proposal of its own. There can be points made for and against the U.S. putting forward a plan of its own. On the one hand the U.S. would gain something in initiative and leadership if it came forward with a concrete proposal. On the other hand a foolproof proposal which would have any chance of appearing reasonable to the French and the British is difficult to devise; the U.S. might have less freedom of action if its own proposal were made the basis for discussion; and the tactic of keeping the French in the forefront might be rendered more difficult by the U.S. making its own proposal. The Working Group is attempting to prepare a possible U.S. proposal so as to be prepared in the event it is decided to put one forward.

5. If the negotiations on Indochina reach a point where it is clear that an agreement is likely to be reached which is going to be unsatisfactory from the U.S. point of view, the U.S. will have to decide whether it should at that time disassociate itself from the negotiations or continue to be a party to them. Since such a decision would obviously have important U.S. domestic political implications, guidance from the highest level would be required. Some of the pros and cons, purely from the foreign affairs point of view, are listed below:

A. Disadvantages of U.S. Participation

1. U.S. participation in negotiations which seemed clearly to be leading toward an unsatisfactory Indochina settlement will be taken as evidence throughout Asia and the rest of the world that the U.S. has in effect backed down in the face of the Communist threat in a critically important area. As a result there will be an unavoidable loss of U.S. prestige.

2. U.S. participation in the negotiation of an unsatisfactory settlement will probably have particularly acute effects on U.S. prestige and influence in the remainder of Southeast Asia—notable in Thailand. The Thais will feel that the U.S. has marched up the hill and back again on the question of Indochina, and be tempted to believe that the U.S. would behave in similar fashion if a showdown came with respect to Thailand. Consequently the value of U.S. promises of protection and assistance may be severely depreciated in Siamese eyes.

3. U.S. readiness to participate in the negotiation of an unsatisfactory settlement might amount to relinquishment of the last available card that the U.S. has to play against French acceptance of such a settlement—French fear of provoking a profound breach between France and the United States.

B. Advantages of U.S. Participation

1. U.S. participation in negotiation of a settlement would keep the U.S. in a better position to play off the Associated States against the French, to stimulate the Communists to overreaching themselves, and in general to attempt to minimize the undesirable features of an Indochina settlement.
2. U.S. participation in the negotiation of an undesirable Indochina settlement, despite the undoubted loss of prestige involved, might place the U.S. in a better position to insert itself into the protection and shoring up of whatever remained of a Western position in Indochina and Southeast Asia after an unsatisfactory settlement. This would be particularly true in the case of a settlement involving territorial partition.
3. U.S. participation in the negotiations of an unsatisfactory Indochina settlement would assist in dispelling that fear of U.S. intransigence and suspicion of U.S. eagerness for drastic action against Communist China which has quite evidently contributed to present U.S. difficulties both with its Allies and with the neutralist countries.
4. U.S. participation in the negotiation of a settlement would lessen the possibilities of a severe breach between the U.S. on the one hand and the British and the French on the other, and would make more promising the possibilities of united action to counter the damaging effects of the settlement in Southeast Asia, as well as improve prospects for Allied cooperation in Europe.

Summary

Decisions required

1. Whether or not the U.S. should put forward its own proposals.
2. Whether or not the U.S. should disassociate itself from the negotiations if they seem likely to lead to an unsatisfactory agreement.

396.1 GE/5-354 : Telegram

The Secretary of State to the Department of State

SECRET

GENEVA, May 3, 1954—2 p. m.
Sectio 75. Repeated information Paris 169. Chauvel tells us that violent attacks against Dien Bien Phu have suddenly stopped. French

are not certain what this means since they believe Viet Minh has capability of carrying the fortress by storm. They suspect that attacks against Dien Bien Phu are being orchestrated with Geneva negotiations with signals being called from Geneva.

396.1 GE/5-354

*The Secretary of State to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs (Bidault)*¹

GENEVA, May 3, 1954.

DEAR MONSIEUR BIDAULT: I leave today for Washington with regret. You will recall, however, that I said to you, Mr. Eden and Mr. Molotov at Berlin that it would only be possible for me to stay in Geneva for the first days of the Conference. As it turns out, I think that I can perhaps contribute more at Washington than at Geneva to the success of the Conference. It will be difficult to achieve an Indochina peace here unless there is some alternative which can be pursued if the Communists do not make honorable proposals. The United States can, I hope and believe, make a contribution to that alternative. So far, there has been no clear decision in that respect, because the elements of the problem have been rapidly changing. I feel confident, however, that if no honorable peace is available by agreement, you and we with others can find ways whereby we can win it by our efforts and resourcefulness; and this very fact will make more likely the possibility of an acceptable negotiated settlement.

I assure you that I return to Washington animated by a desire to contribute there to the continuing cooperation of our nations and peoples and close contact between our Governments which have been so rich in rewards both to you and to others so long as we have pursued them with fidelity.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN FOSTER DULLES

¹The text of this letter was transmitted to the Department of State in telegram Dulte 46, May 3, 1954. (Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 244)

396.1 GE/5-354

*The French Minister for Foreign Affairs (Bidault) to the Secretary of State*¹

GENEVA, May 3, 1954.

I was very greatly touched by the message which you took the trouble to transmit to me before leaving Geneva, and also by your

¹The text of this letter was transmitted to the Department of State in telegram Dulte 47, May 3, 1954. (Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 244)

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INDEXED

BRITISH EMBASSY,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

May 3, 1954.

DF107/112060

AIR BAG
SECRET
10712/1/80/54
No. 207 ✓

Sir,

I have the honour to report on the recent history, up to the time of Mr. Dulles' departure for Europe on the 20th of April, of the American approach to the problem of Indochina, and to attempt some estimate of the background to Mr. Dulles' attitude at Geneva.

2. The United States is not the Western Power principally engaged, or most immediately interested, in the outcome in Indochina. Although the public has been apathetic the Administration has followed, sometimes with the closest attention, the various phases of the battle, and American financial assistance to the French has risen steadily to the present high level of a billion dollars yearly. But until this year Indochina was regarded more as the potential than the actual key area in the East-West conflict. In the space of a few months, however, under the lead given by the Administration, American thinking developed with extraordinary rapidity; and when Mr. Dulles left for Geneva the attention of all thinking elements in the nation was directed towards the forthcoming Conference and towards the vital issues for America which they believed to be at stake.

3. The addition of domestic pressures to the international issues placed the United States Administration in a position of difficulty. Before dealing with domestic considerations however I will trace briefly what appeared to be the development within the Administration of their strategic approach to Indochina and South-East Asia.

4. In my Annual Review, I noted that the Administration's major achievement in 1953 was the negotiation of a truce in Korea. Throughout that year, and indeed into 1954, the emphasis was on American disengagement from local struggles. The so-called "New Look" in strategic thinking, presented by Admiral Radford in December, was described by Mr. Dulles on the 12th of January as a policy of "massive retaliation at places and by means of our own choosing", the counterpart of this being the aid given to native forces to enable them to undertake local engagements. In the case of Indochina, French officer cadres were the essential foundation on which depended the efficiency of these native forces, though the financial burden was largely borne by America. Doubts were expressed, in public and in private, whether the Vietnamese and French Union forces could wrest the initiative from Ho Chi Minh. In their public statements the Administration did their best to still these doubts. They bent every effort to see that the French kept on fighting hard enough to win and hoped, perhaps longer than was wise, that they would never be confronted with the present dilemma.

5. But of the potential explosiveness of the

The Right Honourable Anthony Eden, M.C., M.P.,
etc., etc., etc.,
Foreign Office

/ situation

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- 2 -

situation they were well aware. At the beginning of 1954 alarm began to mount both in the Pentagon and in the State Department at the course affairs were taking. In the first place, unlike his predecessor, the new chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Radford, was a "Pacific" man, and tended to direct his energies westwards rather than eastwards. He had visited Indochina several times and had not been impressed by the annual French assurances that the road to victory would be open in another eighteen months or two years at the most: the Pentagon had no confidence whatever in French generalship. This increasing irritation at French performance in Indochina was, moreover, but one facet of American frustration with the French in general. Continued Parliamentary instability and irresponsibility, the successive obstacles placed by the French in the path of the ratification of E.D.C. - and the fulfilment thereby of America's policy for the defence of Western Europe - led to the conclusion that the French could no longer be trusted to carry out the rôles allotted to them by Western strategy. The Berlin Conference increased American apprehensions. Staunch as M. Bidault himself proved, he was forced by domestic pressures to agree to the discussion of Indochina at Geneva without any prior condition that some progress should be made over Korea; and Mr. Dulles accepted this situation.

6. The certainty that the Indochinese problem would have to be faced squarely on the 26th of April, or shortly afterwards, hastened the Administration's completion of a full-scale assessment on which much work had already been done. The first step was to examine how to give the French even more help short of open armed intervention. In the view of the Pentagon, the training of native Indochinese troops left much to be desired. There was shortage of French Air Force mechanics and this prevented the full utilisation of their Air Force. To solve the training problem, Admiral Radford had for long urged the despatch of a full-scale American training mission. French opposition killed this project. As for the maintenance problem, the Administration decided early in February to lend the French 200 United States Air Force technicians. The Alsop brothers' premature revelation of this decision, which had been taken without consulting Congressional leaders, caused a sudden storm in Congress, but did not in any other way influence the development of the Administration's thinking.

7. The strategists in the Pentagon remained convinced that since the French were losing ground with increasing speed, measures of still wider scope had to be considered. Early in the year the planners had concluded that the long-term effects of Vietnam falling under Communist control could be none other than the ultimate extension of this control to the whole of South-East Asia. The defence of the free world in that area would, in a few years' time, rest with India on the West and the Philippines on the East. South-East Asia per se, however, had not traditionally been considered an area of cardinal importance to the United States. Despite growing American interest in the defence of South-East Asia, it was in the context of China, Japan, and the island chain that Americans tended to view the area. I shall return to China later. As far as Japan is concerned, the



planners' conclusion must have been that since a large part of Japan's trade is of necessity with the Asian mainland, a Communist South-East Asia would mean that Japan would be sucked inevitably into the Communist orbit. The pivot of American defences in the West Pacific being Japan, this was something to be avoided at all costs. It is to be assumed that when President Eisenhower invited General MacArthur to lunch with him on the 18th of March this aspect of the Indochina problem was closely examined; and it must have been about this date that the National Security Council at last took their basic decision, on strategic grounds, to block the advance of Communism into South-East Asia.

8. Ways in which this might be done had of course been concurrently examined. It was natural that the closest attention should be devoted to China. Here the Joint Chiefs of Staff started from the proposition that Chinese aid was essential to the Vietminh conduct of the war on its present scale. Sufficient pressure on the Chinese alone could therefore defeat the Vietminh. It is widely held that an implied American threat to carry the war into Manchuria was responsible for Chinese agreement to a truce in Korea. Might not the same stratagem work in the case of Indochina? Opinion within the Administration was split on whether American involvement in Indochina would necessarily lead to Chinese intervention; but this issue became irrelevant if the United States threatened action against China herself. The theory in fact had two attractions. The first was primarily military. Even if America were to be forced into action, the United States would not have to commit ground forces: Admiral Radford would be able to limit himself to employing air and naval units - with Chinese Nationalist troops if necessary. This was preferable to a bloodier Korea in Indochina. The other attraction was political. Mr. Dulles, when he mentioned that the Chinese were "coming awful close" to active participation in Indochina was not only reminding the Chinese of his earlier warning that in such a case retaliatory action might not be confined to Indochina, but also directing the attention of the American public to China. Many Americans, and not only those in the China Lobby, are more prepared emotionally for action against China, if action has to be taken somewhere, than for action in Indochina.

9. Thus, when Mr. Dulles outlined his ideas to me on the 2nd of April, he spoke in terms of action against China if the Chinese reacted to the idea of the formation of the coalition. Two days afterwards he was speaking to my Australian and New Zealand colleagues in terms of action confined to Indochina. Admiral Radford spoke on similar lines to Sir John Whiteley. The Admiral is of course firmly convinced that the Chinese would not react.

10. These apparent contradictions must be regarded chiefly as evidence of the indecision in the minds of the Administration when Mr. Dulles delivered his "united action" speech on the 29th of March. I quote his words:

" Under the conditions today, the imposition on Southeast Asia of the political system of Communist Russia and its Chinese Communist ally, by whatever means, would be a grave threat to the whole free / community.



community. The United States feels that that possibility should not be passively accepted, but should be met by united action. This might involve serious risks. But these risks are far less than those that will face us a few years from now, if we dare not be resolute today. "

11. At that time he seemed to have accepted three propositions, all negative:

- (a) South-East Asia must be denied to the Communists;
- (b) the French must be prevented from capitulating either politically at Geneva or militarily in Indochina;
- (c) the substitution of American for French troops was impracticable for military, international and domestic political reasons.

One other and decisive consideration was his conviction that it was useless to try to buy peace in Indochina (or anywhere else) by offering concessions to the Communists in return for promises over the fulfilment of which there was no control. Indeed, in the face of Senate opposition, the Administration had no choice.

12. I have already referred to the significance of Korea to the present Administration. They gained electoral victory with the help of President Eisenhower's promise that he would end what Taft called this "unnecessary" war, and redeemed this promise in the summer of 1953. It might be legitimate to argue therefore that involvement in another war on the Asian mainland, at Republican instigation, would prove fatal politically. The same exasperation with apparently endless and inconclusive warfare on the periphery of the Communist empire, which drove the Administration to conclude an armistice in Korea, still dominated the public mood when Mr. Dulles left for Geneva. The Democrats have however also been charged with letting China go by default. Were Indochina - and more - to be allowed by the Republicans to slip behind the bamboo curtain for the want of effective American support, similar charges would lie against the Republicans. Perhaps because they were aware of this, the contribution of influential Republicans to the various impromptu debates and speeches in the Senate was meagre. Democrats, conversely, were not subject to the same restraints.

13. It was the despatch of Air Force technicians which provoked, on the 9th of February, the first major Senate debate on Indochina. It was largely conducted by Democrats, led by Senator Stennis, and the Senators' main concern was lest this first step might lead to American intervention. At that time the Administration were equally determined to avoid admitting this possibility, and though the Senate remained suspicious discussion died down with assurances by the President and the Secretary for Defense. President Eisenhower took the firm line that everything he did was calculated to prevent



United States involvement in war in that region: "No one could be more bitterly opposed" to this than he was. The Secretary for Defense promised that no more American technicians would be sent and that those already sent would be out by the 12th of June.

14. The second significant date was the 29th of March, when Mr. Dulles made his call for "united action". In the interval opinion, partly under the impulse of the dramatic defence of Dien Bien Phu, had moved a long way. Thus the first speech in the Senate, by Senator Douglas (Democrat of Illinois), asserted the Senator's belief that the people would stand behind the President in doing whatever might be necessary to meet the crisis if the situation in Indochina deteriorated. Outright support of the Administration was further than most speakers were prepared to go, but an analysis of the major contributions to debate in the Senate during the first half of April - notably those of Senators Kennedy and Mansfield - shows what a significant shift had taken place. Neither in or out of Congress was any enthusiasm whatever displayed for the idea of committing American troops in Indochina. The public, with less understanding of the vital significance of this area to the free world, were more resolute in their opposition to intervention than some of the Senate. But many Senators seemed to have reached the reluctant conclusion that the security interests of the United States were so deeply involved that armed intervention would have to be undertaken if the worst came to the worst. Many speakers therefore started from the assumption that some form of involvement was increasingly likely, and, guided to some extent by Mr. Dulles, concentrated on what they considered to be the conditions precedent to such intervention. These were:-

- (a) It must be free from all taint of colonialism: France must grant full independence to the Associate States or at least set a definite date for this;
- (b) action must be taken with the moral authority of the United Nations;
- (c) other interested powers, including the United Kingdom and South-East Asian nations, must shoulder their share of the burden.

15. It may be significant that in these debates many powerful, conservative Senators were silent. The main theme of Senator Knowland's contribution was inevitably that the omission of Korea and Formosa from any plan of united action was "unrealistic". But the majority of the Republican leaders held their fire. It is therefore difficult to decide whether, in the last resort, Congressional support for American involvement, even on the conditions set out above, would, on the eve of the Geneva Conference, have been forthcoming. Many believe it would not. I am inclined to think, however, that President Eisenhower's great prestige in matters of this sort would have been enough to carry the Senate with him.



16. President Eisenhower's rôle in the Indochina debate has been of considerable interest. As in so many other cases, notably the McCarthy issue, he has recently been content to steer a middle course, leaving it to the Secretary of State and the Secretary for Defense and their assistants (with one embarrassing sally by the Vice-President) to make most of the running. It is now forgotten that as early as August last year, when addressing the Annual Governors' Conference, the President explained the enormous expenditure of American dollars in Indochina as being needed to "prevent the occurrence of something that would be of a most terrible significance to the United States of America" - and its security. It would, I think, be proper to regard this statement, clearly written by the President himself, and delivered to an audience whose personal attachment to him was undoubted, as the first trial balloon designed to start the process of educating the public. It was public evidence of the importance attached to Indochina not only by officials but by President Eisenhower himself.

17. Since then the President has been mainly concerned to reassure Congress that the United States would not get involved except through constitutional processes. The "transcendent" importance of Indochina was, however, a continuing theme of his comment, but to its consequences for American policy he had given no clear guide at the time of Mr. Dulles' departure. Perhaps he thought the time not yet ripe to add his weight to the scales on one side or another. Perhaps he was keeping an open mind. Although the Executive as a whole must have given their support to the strong line Mr. Dulles took prior to the Geneva Conference, there was some evidence of continued divided counsels. Very little is, for instance, yet known of the views of Mr. Humphrey, the Secretary of the Treasury, but it is probable that he, with others concerned in redeeming Republican promises of a return to sound Government budgeting, are opposed to intervention. And even within the Joint Chiefs of Staff there was not complete unity: General Ridgway expressed both publicly and privately his conviction that America could not afford to be the gladiator of the free world.

18. Four days before Mr. Dulles left, the Vice-President, in off-the-record remarks, had alluded to the possibility of American troops being sent to Indochina in the last resort. Though this remark was drawn from him in response to a question, it could scarcely have been made unless armed intervention had been under discussion in the National Security Council. Nevertheless, when Mr. Dulles left on the 20th of April, though he enjoyed the backing of the Administration, the fundamental reluctance of the American people to become involved had not been overcome. His freedom of action was further circumscribed by the uncertain winds of Congressional opinion and by his dependence on the concurrence of other countries in his policy. Only his aim was clear: to prevent the loss of Indochina to Communism.

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- 7 -

19. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Paris, Moscow, Tokyo, Singapore, Saigon and Peking.

I have the honour to be, with the highest respect,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(for the Ambassador)

R. H. Scott

(R.H.Scott)

Reference:-

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FROM GENEVA CONFERENCE (U.K. DELEGATION) TO
FOREIGN OFFICE

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Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND
WHITEHALL SECRET
(CABINET) DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Eden
No. 161
May 6, 1954

D. 1.01 p.m. May 6, 1954
R. 1.34 p.m. May 6, 1954

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 161 of May 6.

RECEIVED
- 6 MAY 1954

Repeated for information to: Washington Moscow
Paris

SENT TO DIST

M. Molotov dined with me last night. He was accompanied by M. Gromyko, M. Zarubin and M. Kuznetsov, until recently Soviet Ambassador in Peking. I had invited Lord Reading, Mr Allen and Mr Vallat to meet them. We had a friendly and useful talk. M. Molotov was in an unusually relaxed mood, and talked freely on a number of subjects unconnected with the present conference, such as the coronation film, the development of the Commonwealth and the workings of the French Chamber. On matters concerning the conference itself he was also most amenable. I do not think that throughout the evening he disagreed with anything that I said in the course of a frank discussion of our problems here, nor did he ever seek to make a merely debating point. His whole attitude was in contrast to our experience of him in Berlin. He seemed genuinely anxious that the conference should succeed, and also considerably worried over the situation in Indo-China.

2. In the course of the conversation, I said that the Geneva Conference seemed to have gone quite well. M. Molotov said that he noticed that I had "activated" it, and I replied that I had only tried to enlist the support of those taking part in it for any settlement that we might reach here on Indo-China. M. Molotov said that he had not been able to make out what had happened about the Indo-China resolution at Colombo, and I said that I had not seen any detailed report of the discussions, but that I thought that they had avoided making too definite recommendations in order not to embarrass us in Geneva.

/I said

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Geneva Conference (U.K. Del.) telegram No. 161 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

I said that I had read in the paper that Mr. Krishna Menon was coming here. M. Molotov said that Mr. Krishna Menon was always full of plans, but he soon forgot all about them and brought up some new ones. Neither M. Zarubin nor Mr. Grayke seemed very pleased at the news of Mr. Krishna Menon's forthcoming arrival.

3. At an early stage I said that I was very anxious to get on with the Indo-China side of the conference, but that we had not yet solved the problem of the chairmanship. M. Molotov at once suggested that he and I should alternate. He was not in favour of bringing in Prince Wan, as Siam would not be a member of the conference and there might anyhow be objections to him as a Siamese by the Viet-Minh. This was a much smaller conference than the Korean one, and the two of us could perfectly well handle it. I said that the French were known not to like this proposal, but I would consider putting it to them again. The Americans had said that they were ready to accept it. M. Molotov said that he could see no other possibility except that the head of each of the 9 delegations should preside in turn which was clearly impracticable. There was, I think, a significance in M. Molotov's insistence that the chairmanship should alternate between us two. Throughout the evening he seemed to be developing the theme that the success of this conference largely depended upon him and me, and that it was our task to bring, in his case the Chinese, and in mine the Americans, into line. He did not seem greatly interested in the French position.

4. At one point I said that I thought that this was the most difficult conference in which I had ever taken part, and M. Molotov said that he shared my opinion.

5. I said that I thought it essential that we should get on with the Indo-China talks as I was afraid of the consequences if matters were allowed to drift. I did not think Korea was so urgent. After all there was no fighting there, and matters could be allowed to remain for the time being in their present state if we could not agree on further steps. But the Indo-China situation had very dangerous possibilities.

/M. Molotov

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SECRET

Geneva Conference (U.K. Del.) telegram No. 161 to Foreign Office

-3-

Mr. Molotov fully agreed. I said that it seemed to me that the first thing to work for was an armistice which was not the same as a cease-fire. If we could get the fighting stopped through an accepted armistice, we should then have a chance to sort the position out under less pressure. M. Molotov again agreed, but said that conditions must be attached to the armistice, though he thought that these could be devised. I said that that was also my view.

6. It was noteworthy that M. Molotov never once made reference to a cease-fire in this connexion. I mentioned the wounded at Dien Bien Phu, but M. Molotov made no positive reply. We then discussed various other procedural matters in connexion with the Indo-China Conference, and I made suggestions in regard to them, to all of which M. Molotov assented without hesitation.

7. At a later stage in the conversation, I said that I was going to speak very frankly. If the Indo-China situation was not effectively handled here there was real danger that the supporters of each side would go on increasing the degree of their participation until finally there was a clash between them, and if that happened it might well be the beginning of the third world war. M. Molotov agreed, and added that he was greatly puzzled by the attitude of the Americans towards the Chinese. He had told Mr. Dulles in Berlin that by their refusal to acknowledge the facts of the situation the Americans were putting themselves in an impossible position in which they only stood to lose. I said that I thought the explanation lay largely in their emotional approach to the question of China. In the past we had only been in that country to trade, but the Americans had felt that they had a mission there, and had spent great sums and much energy on charitable and educational work of all kinds. And they could not now suddenly reconcile themselves to the fact that the whole picture had changed and that the Chinese no longer had any use for them. They were deeply hurt and this was not surprising. There was, of course, also the powerful China lobby. During the war Chiang Kai-shek had probably been more popular in the United States than we were. M. Molotov said that in the past they had also thought well of Chiang Kai-shek. They had considered that in the course of time Mao Tse-tung would probably establish himself in power, but had not expected that it would happen so quickly. Chiang Kai-shek had however lost his hold, and it was useless to try to build him up again. The Americans must really face the realities of the situation. M. Molotov said that he had observed that Mr. Dulles had succeeded during his stay here in never once recognizing Mr. Zhou En-lai's existence.

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Geneva Conference (U.K. Del) telegram No. 161 to Foreign Office

-4-

8. As regards Korea, I said that I was sure that the Americans were sincerely anxious to be able to withdraw their troops but only, of course, if acceptable terms could be reached. We were waiting to hear from the Americans whether they had been able to persuade the South Koreans to agree to all-Korean elections. If so, such a step forward might serve to bring the north and south closer together, but hitherto they seemed very far apart. M. Molotov said they had only recently been fighting each other and it must take time before they could become reconciled.

9. At the end of the conversation, I returned to the subject of Indo-China, and said that if we could bring about an agreed armistice there on acceptable conditions we should have already achieved a great deal, and with the sentiment M. Molotov warmly agreed. It is too soon to put this evening into its proper perspective: we shall be able to form a more accurate judgment when the discussions on Indo-China are actually in progress. It may of course have been no more than an extremely subtle and adroit exercise in "wedge-driving", but we all formed the impression that there was more substance to it than that. Taken at its face-value it was certainly not without promise.

Foreign Office please pass to Washington, Moscow and Paris as my telegrams Nos. 58, 14 and 33 respectively.

[Repeated to Washington, Moscow and Paris].

ADVANCE COPIES:

- Sir I. Kirkpatrick
- Private Secretary
- Mr. Selwyn Lloyd
- Mr. Speaight
- Head South East Asia Department
- Head Far Eastern Department
- Head Northern Department

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TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

May 6, 1954

DF1071/4160

You will have seen my short telegram commenting on your telegrams Nos. 137 and 138.

I need hardly say that I am very glad that you are now probably going to propose something of this kind to the Americans, and it is clear that, if the declaration is made, it should to some extent strengthen Bidault's hands during his coming difficult negotiations. I still feel, however, that if it is not our (Anglo-American) **intention** to intervene physically in Indo-China in order to restore the situation supposing any arrangement which Bidault comes to with the Communists is violated by them, then that fact will soon become clear as a result of interrogations by intelligent and insistent

The Right Honble.
Anthony Eden, M. C., M. P.,
GENEVA.

/Frenchmen.

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Frenchmen. It was partly for this reason that I ventured to suggest something rather vaguer by way of a declaration.

Naturally I do not think that this is in itself any reason for not going ahead with the present proposal - far from it. And it is I suppose even possible that if some "settlement" should be torn up by the Communists in Indo-China, or even if Dien Bien Phu should fall, there might be an American demand for physical intervention in that country even if it is "over the dead body" of Bedell Smith! But I hope you will agree that the aspect to which I have drawn attention merits careful consideration.

I went to see Maurice Schumann yesterday morning about the Saar and he immediately began talking about Geneva. What he said is relevant. It was to the general effect that unless Bidault could be provided with some substantial card to play

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with the definite impression that unless the French Government believed that we and the Americans were prepared to say something indicating that in the last resort we should be prepared to intervene in Indo-China itself they would not regard any move by us as completely satisfactory.

After all, if you will permit a personal reflection, is it not possible that the Communists may argue that if, as seems probable at the moment, there is no prospect of the United Kingdom and America intervening in Indo-China, there is no necessity for them to agree to anything except, broadly speaking, on their own terms. For if there is no "settlement" with the French we, on our own showing, cannot do anything except tell them to look out if they go any further; whereas if the "settlement" is one which would, over a shorter or a longer period, result in Communist domination of Indo-China, it would not be one which we would care to enforce anyhow. Consequently, they might

/say

a letdown. It might be just as well to proceed quietly and unostentatiously with the action contemplated and avoid any public statement.

SMITH

110.11 DU/5-884: Telegram

Smith-Bidault Meeting, Geneva, May 7, Afternoon: The United States Delegation to the Department of State

SECRET NIACT

GENEVA, May 8, 1954—11 a. m.
Duke 54. Repeated information Paris 220. Had long talk yesterday afternoon with Bidault. He was dog-tired but thoroughly lucid and wanted to cry on somebody's shoulder. Told him that Dien-Bien-Phu, while tragic loss,¹ was not military disaster and need not be psychological one. Question now was what could be saved in Indochina and what any of us could do to help.

Bidault said it was hard to forecast psychological reaction in France. He had asked his government to give him instructions to be firm but his draft proposals were being made vaguer and he was seriously disturbed by word Jacquet had brought back (Secto 133, repeated Paris 215²). He would be talking with Laniel by phone and if he did not get the instructions he wanted, he would be much tempted to go to Paris to try to get them by personal persuasion. He felt it would be easier to get a firm position from government on Saturday than on Monday³ but was not sure whether his trip to Paris at this time would produce instructions he wanted or be straw that would break government's back. Man in street in France was beginning to count hours until cease-fire could be arranged.

I asked him how nearly alone he was in his fight. He said others felt the same way but he was almost only one to speak out. He had been accused in press at least three times of having imposed his will on Cabinet and was not sure he could do it fourth time. He would under no circumstances surrender but he might lose his hide. Pressure would be very strong to agree to a cease-fire and then see what could be done. Even if he could get government to reject this approach, pressures would develop for worse solutions.

I agreed present moment was critical but thought that if he could persuade the government not to capitulate immediately, things would shortly get better. I hoped he would be able to propose something we could support. He interjected that if French position was something we could not support, he would not himself present it. I reiterated that

¹ At 10: 30 a. m., Paris time, May 7, the central position of Dien Bien Phu fell.

² *Infra.*

³ May 8 and 10.

if he could steer his government through this immediate period, future would be much better. He remarked on difficulty of trying to fight Indochina and EDC battles at same time. Obtaining support for continuing fight in Indochina required appeals to elementary patriotism, whereas support for EDC required rejection of simple patriotism. EDC required support of Socialists who were in entirely wrong camp on Indochina.

I reiterated fall of Dien-Bien-Phu should not mean loss of all of Vietnam let alone southeast Asia. US was seeking additional ways to help and possibilities of more active support. I told him that you were making good progress since your return and that US was more determined than ever to organize some form of collective security in southeast Asia. We were convinced that some form of southeast Asian NATO was necessary but that would take time. Could French provide it? Bidault said he would gladly give us time but was not sure his colleagues would give it to him. Proposals for partition could not be entertained. He thought we would probably have to accept military conditions under which Vietnamese would not be in control of all Vietnam territory but we could not tolerate establishment of Communist state in any part of Vietnam.

I remarked that tragic as was loss of Dien-Bien-Phu, its loss had at least deprived Communists of powerful lever upon French opinion. Bidault said he would do his best to obtain firm instructions.

I told Eden of foregoing talk and he is considering what British can do to encourage Bidault and strengthen his position.

SMITH

386.1 GE/5-754: Telegram

The United States Delegation to the Department of State

SECRET

GENEVA, May 7, 1954—3 p. m.

Secto 133. Repeated information Paris 215. Reference: Secto 132.¹ In giving us proposal contained reference telegram last night Lacoste stated that while Cabinet approval not yet obtained, delegation had been advised from Paris that as result of preliminary consideration first four numbered paragraphs could be considered firm and only minor changes expected in remainder. This morning however he and Chauvel advised Allen and Acheson that despite yesterday's vote, situation inside Cabinet was explosive and that Jacquet, who returned from Paris last night, had told Bidault that French delegation could not possibly reject Communist proposal for immediate unconditional cease-fire without causing immediate disintegration of Cabinet and

¹ *Infra.*

fall of Laniel. He also said if Bidault made some proposal including statement that cease-fire could occur only after armistice terms agreed, he would risk being disavowed by other members of Cabinet and precipitating crisis. Bidault was very much disturbed and is considering returning to Paris tonight for personal discussion with his Cabinet colleagues. I am not certain of extent to which Jacquet was speaking personally or reflecting Cabinet view.

SMITH

398.1 GB/5-754 : Telegram

The United States Delegation to the Department of State

SECRET

GENEVA, May 7, 1954—4 p. m.
Secto 132. Repeated information Paris 214, London 132, Saigon 37. Re Secto 106 from Geneva, 5 May.¹ Following is informal translation of paper given us last night containing French proposals as sent Paris by Bidault. In giving it to us, Lacoste stated that delegation had considered adding proposal based on "Eden plan" for Germany with respect to future elections but was currently inclined not to do so on grounds it would be merely needless complication. Chauvel discussed paper with Vietnamese representatives last night and reports their agreement to it.

"(1) It should be pointed out first that what is presently called 'the Indochina problem' is essentially a problem of internal order. Thus neither the existence of the state of Vietnam nor its territorial integrity are at stake. What is involved, during the hostilities in progress, is the allegiance of the population of that state to this or that regime.

"(2) It is only recently, and somewhat as a side issue, that a new element has been introduced into the Indochinese question, the fact of the invasion of the other two states of the peninsula, that is to say Laos and Cambodia, by armed forces foreign to those two states.

"(3) As a result, however, of that extension of hostilities to Laos and Cambodia, the establishment of peace in Indochina envisaged by the Berlin communiqué should include the termination of hostilities in the territory as a whole of each of the three states.

"(4) This being the goal—re-establishment of peace in one country, Vietnam, ravaged by a war whose primary characteristic is that of being a civil war, and in two countries, Laos and Cambodia, victims of an external aggression, a foreign aggression, there remains to be settled the conditions under which peace should be re-established.

"The cease-fire which must necessarily mark the beginning of the first step of the return to peace cannot in itself suffice to insure peace. It must be accompanied by the immediate and effective putting into operation of provisions of both a military and administrative nature destined on the one hand to insure the security of the troops on the

¹ *Anti*, p. 684.

spot and the population, and on the other hand to guarantee each of the two parties in conflict against an abusive utilization of the cessation of combat by the other party.

"(5) It follows that the cease-fire can take place only following the signature of armistice conventions in which would be included clauses whose purpose has just been defined and whose coming into effect should coincide with the cease-fire.

"With the aim of avoiding the risks of hostilities breaking out again accidentally or otherwise, partially or generally, other stipulations should be written into the armistice conventions having the effect of regrouping in separate noncommunicating and strictly delimited zones the military forces of both parties.

"(6) Finally, the armistice conventions should establish an international control which would become effective at the same time as the conventions themselves. The particular situation in Vietnam, in Laos and Cambodia being different in each of these states, separate conventions should be concluded for each of them.

"(7) Once hostilities are terminated by the entry into force of these different conventions, the political and economic problems whose settlement would be necessary to insure a stable character to the peace, can be examined."

SMITH

Conference files, lot 60 D 637, CF 286

Memorandum of Conversation, by the Special Adviser to the United States Delegation (Thurston)

CONFIDENTIAL

GENEVA, May 7, 1954.

Subject: Turkish Views on Korean and Indochinese Questions

Participants: Ambassador Acikalin, Turkish Delegation

Mr. Benler, Turkish Delegation

General Smith, US Delegation

Ray L. Thurston, US Delegation

[Here follows the first portion of the conversation dealing with the Korean phase of the Geneva Conference.]

After a preliminary remark to the effect that Turkey was not a participant in the Indochinese discussions, Acikalin asked General Smith how things were going on that side. General Smith emphasized that the problem at this stage was primarily one for the French and the Associated States. The US has not yet formulated a definite position, but it was our thought that we might be able to save Laos and Cambodia in any event. In his remarks the Turkish delegate took a very pessimistic line on Indochina and with fervent gestures to a map of the Far East on the wall asked how he could contain the Communist march on Southeast Asia once a Communist state obtained control of a part of Indochina. He was critical of the French on the colonial

aspect and talked about the importance of the free Asian nations having a role to play. He referred to the color consciousness of the Asians as a factor we had to take into account.

RAY L. THURSTON

7515.00/5-764: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Embassy in France*¹

WASHINGTON, May 7, 1954—6:02 p. m.
3979. Please forward following message immediately to Bao Dai:

"Your Majesty: On behalf of the American people I should like to express to you and the people of Viet-Nam our admiration for the gallant men of the Vietnamese forces who, together with their comrades of the French Union, for two months so heroically defended Dien Bien Phu against insuperable odds. It is sad indeed that the fortress and its brave defenders have fallen to the enemy, but we can be heartened in the knowledge that their sacrifice has not been in vain. Not only have they taken a terrible toll of the enemy, but, I think more important, their heroic resistance to the evil forces of Communist aggression has given inspiration to all who support the cause of human freedom. Those brave men made their sacrifice in order that individual freedom and national independence for the people of Viet-Nam should not be lost to Communist enslavement. We of the Free World are determined to remain faithful to the causes for which they have so nobly fought. With expressions of my personal regard, Dwight D. Eisenhower."

Saigon, deliver courtesy copy to Government of Viet-Nam and arrange appropriate local publicity. This message and message to Pres Coty² released by White House this afternoon.

DULLES

¹ Drafted by Poole of FEI. Repeated to Saigon as telegram 2216, to Hanoi as telegram 617, to Geneva as telegram 95.

² The text of the President's letter to French President Coty, May 7, 1954, was as follows:

"My Dear President Coty: The entire free world has been inspired by the heroism and stamina displayed by the gallant garrison at Dien Bien Phu. Their devotion and the quality of their resistance have been so great that that battle will forever stand as a symbol of the free world's determination to resist dictatorial aggression and to sustain its right of self-determination and its dedication to the dignity of the human being. France has in the past suffered temporary defeats, but always she has triumphed in the end to continue as one of the world's leaders in all things that tend to bring greater richness to the lives of men. Those who fought and died and suffered at Dien Bien Phu should know that no sacrifice of theirs has been in vain: that the free world will remain faithful to the causes for which they have so nobly fought.

"With expressions of my personal regard, Dwight D. Eisenhower"

Text from the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1954*, p. 463. For President Coty's reply, released May 13, see *ibid.*, p. 463n.

396.1 GE/5-764

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Adviser to the United States Delegation (Getz)*¹

SECRET

GENEVA, May 7, 1954.

Participants: Ambassador Heath
Mr. McBride
Mr. Getz

Mr. Dac Khe—Minister of National Democratization
Member of Vietnamese Delegation
Mr. Buu Kinh—Adviser to the Vietnamese Delegation

Subject: Vietnamese Views on the Indochina Phase of the Conference.

Mr. Dac Khe entertained the above members of the US delegation at dinner.

Dac Khe opened the conversation by expressing to Ambassador Heath the very strong Vietnamese view that they did not want this conference; they expected and wanted the conference to be a failure; but they would do nothing to "sabotage" the gathering.

Dac Khe and Buu Kinh, apparently as a result of the story in the *Herald Tribune* this morning,² expressed some anxiety over the possibility of the US "writing off" Viet-Nam and concentrating on saving Cambodia and Laos from the Communists. They were assured that this was not the intention of the US.

The main point upon which Dac Khe dwelt for most of the evening was that the Vietnamese delegation firmly believes that a military solution to the Indochinese problem cannot be separated from a political settlement. He is afraid that the French are so taken up with the serious military problem that they might accept a cease fire without political guarantees. He returned time and time again to this subject, and stated that this was the firm view of Bao Dai.

The Vietnamese "plan" would be:

1. The French proposal must include the negotiations of an armistice as part of a complete military-political program.

2. The Laniel program³ was acceptable as a basis provided it was expanded providing for UN inspection teams along the Chinese border. The Viet-Minh forces would disarm [*disband?*] and lay down and surrender their arms to the Vietnamese Government under an amnesty declaration which would be guaranteed and supervised by a

¹ Summary of conversation transmitted to the Department of State in telegram Secto 144, May 8, (896.1 GE/5-854)

² A reference to press reports of the Secretary's meeting with Congressional leaders on May 6. See telegram Tedul 97, p. 106.

³ Laniel's proposals made on Mar. 5. See telegram 3240 from Paris, Mar. 6, p. 438.

United Nations Commission. Sometime after the armistice had been concluded national elections would occur under United Nations supervision. If the elections so resulted a coalition Government might then occur, but not before. He said that he had discussed in general terms this Vietnamese "plan" with the French but had not mentioned the United Nations supervision which he feared was unacceptable to the French.

When asked by Ambassador Heath as to Vietnamese [views?] on UN action, both Buu Kinh and Dac Khe [stated?] the belief that this would be desirable, but that it should be under the Security Council rather than the General Assembly. In the Security Council, they said, they could count on the veto of the US or Nationalist China to block any undesirable Russian proposals, and would not risk the possibility of Indian leadership in General Assembly with probable unfavorable results. Mr. McBride pointed out that because of this veto power the Security Council had become a rather sterile organization, and that the necessary majority in the Assembly for any desirable proposal could probably be attained with very little risk. The prestige would be much greater in this forum. The Vietnamese, however, persisted in believing the Security Council offered the greater insurance.

The discussion then turned to tactics in the conference. Dac Khe stated that the Vietnamese delegation was of the opinion that they should let the Viet-Minh representatives speak first; in this way, the Vietnamese, twenty-four hours afterwards could both rebut and attack in their first speech. This would also permit them to let the Viet-Minh take the blame for initiating name-calling and the abuse, to which they would have no hesitation in responding. Dac Khe agreed that it might be best to let either the Cambodians or the Lao lead off for our side.

Ambassador Heath stressed the importance of having good English translations of their speeches ready to hand out to the press immediately after they speak, and said that members of the US delegation would be pleased to assist in this work. Dac Khe said that he had translators, but hoped that we would be able to check their work.

396.1 GB/5-764 : Telegram

The United States Delegation to the Department of State

SECRET PRIORITY

GENEVA, MAY 7, 1954—8 p. m.

Secto 136. Repeated information Paris, London 134, Moscow 51. Following agreement between Bigdant and Molotov regarding issuance invitations to Indochina phase Geneva Conference, US, UK and French delegation heads joined in invitations to Vietnamese,

Cambodian and Laotian representatives. Soviets, presumably taking as pretext fact invitations our side had not been issued by single state was case in Korean phase, issued invitation to Viet Minh (name of USSR and Chinese People's Republic (as reported by press). This obviously violation of Four-Power Berlin Agreement.

We have discussed matter with French and British delegations making suggestion that French delegation as Berlin power on our side chiefly interested in Indochina, should make statement for the record to the effect that form of invitation to Viet Minh violated Four-Power accord. There would be no question of contesting right of Viet Minh to be present or of demanding that correct invitation be forwarded.

French and British have now indicated their unwillingness to make such a statement on matter which they apparently regard as purely procedural. They believe that while Soviet violation exists, our side has not accepted or agreed to such violation and in any case they do not see utility of raising issue at this point. They apparently wish avoid any risk of debate or loss of time on this issue which their public opinions would regard as very minor in context major Indochina problems.

We believe we should not let this incident pass unnoticed although we do not believe that critical importance should be attached to it. We would not wish to be put in position that because we have not raised issue in case of invitation to Viet Minh, we are obliged to accept Five-Power principle in event additional invitations are issued. Furthermore, passing mention of this violation of agreement by USSR would serve again highlight Secretary's success in completely blocking manifold Soviet attempts to secure acceptance Five-Power principle at Geneva.

US delegation believes matter could be handled either (a) through brief statement for the record at opening meeting on Indochina or (b) through statement by General Smith at press conference. Choice of methods would seem to depend in part on extent to which issue has been played in American press. (We have seen only editorial mention *New York Times* May 4.) We would wish to avoid strong reaction by USSR which would be designed put US in position of having raised purely procedural issue on which we would have little support from our friends and which would delay cessation of fighting in Indochina generally.

If statement on this point is made by US delegation at plenary meeting, it would follow a general expression of the US delegation's satisfaction that the Indochina phase of the conference has now opened and of the delegation's determination to work with other delegations

