

A CHRONICLE OF  
PRINCIPAL EVENTS  
RELATING TO THE  
**INDO-CHINA**  
**QUESTION**  
1940 - 1954

PEKING 1954

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## *Preface*

In 1858, a combined French and Spanish Force occupied Tourane, a port in central Viet-Nam.

In 1859, French troops occupied Saigon.

In 1862, France coerced the Nguyen Dynasty of Viet-Nam to sign the Saigon Treaty by which France, besides securing many privileges, seized control of the three provinces in the southern part of Viet-Nam as well as Poulo Condor.

In 1863, France forced the king of Cambodia (Khmer) to agree to a French protectorate over Khmer.

In 1867, France annexed the whole of South Viet-Nam (Cochin-China).

In 1884, France forced Viet-Nam and Khmer to sign treaties by which Viet-Nam and Khmer became French protectorates.

In 1885, France concluded the Tientsin Treaty with the Manchu Government of China by which the Manchu Government was forced to recognize Viet-Nam as a French protectorate.

In 1887, France amalgamated Annam, Tonkin, Cochin-China and Khmer to form French Indo-China and placed it under the rule of a French governor-general.

In 1893, France established its protectorate over Laos (Pathet Lao) and in 1899 incorporated it into French Indo-China. This brought the whole Indo-China peninsula under the French colonial rule. The territory of Viet-Nam was divided into three parts: the southern part became a French colony; the central part became a kingdom under French protectorate; and the northern part was "placed under" French administration.

Under French colonial rule, the Indo-Chinese people were deprived of their most elementary human rights and lived in the most deplorable conditions. Franklin D. Roosevelt, the late President of the United States, once remarked: "The native Indo-Chinese have been so flagrantly downtrodden that they thought to themselves: Anything must be better than to live under French colonial rule!"

During the last eighty years and more, patriots of Viet-Nam, Pathet Lao and Khmer have carried on a resolute and undaunted struggle for freedom. They have held high the banner of national liberation. Many revolts have been organized, one following close upon another. These include the Truong Quyen Revolt in South Viet-Nam and the Po Kum Bo Revolt in Khmer in 1863, the Hue Revolt in 1884, the Khmer people's revolts in the provinces of Kompong-Cham and Kompong-Thom in 1885 and 1886, the Saigon Revolt in 1886, the Phan Dinh Phung Revolt of Viet-Nam in 1893, the long drawn out guerilla war led by Hoang Hoa Tham which started in 1903, the Phu Mi Bum patriotic movement led by Phok Ba Duct in Pathet Lao in 1901, the Aung Keo and Aung Kumadan Revolt of Pathet Lao in 1910 and the guerilla war which followed and lasted 25 years, the Thai-Nguyen Revolt in 1917, and the Yen-Bai Revolt in 1930.

Although all these revolts were brutally suppressed by the French colonialists, they served as an eloquent declaration to the whole world that the Indo-Chinese people will never tamely submit to enslavement and that they would ultimately win freedom and independence.

In 1940, the Japanese imperialists, who had launched a war of aggression against China, demanded of the French Government that Japanese troops be admitted into Indo-China, for the purpose of preparing for their war in the Pacific. The French colonial authorities, which had been notorious for their ferocity and brutality towards the Indo-Chinese people, were completely servile to Japanese fascists.

Thus, a new colonial master—Japanese fascism—was imposed upon Indo-China.

The occupation of Indo-China by Japanese fascism brought to the Indo-Chinese people a deeper and graver national crisis. In face of this crisis, the Indo-Chinese people rallied together in a still broader unity than ever before and waged a struggle for national independence on an unprecedented scale. With the defeat of Japanese imperialism in World War II, the Indo-Chinese people at last won their independence.

However, the French colonialists, who had surrendered to the Japanese fascists, now sought to recover their former positions in Indo-China. They attempted with armed force and U.S. assistance to subjugate the Indo-Chinese people. As a result, shortly after World War II ended, a new war broke out in Indo-China.

The war in Indo-China has now become one of the centres of world tension, one of the points on which all eyes are focussed. All those who are concerned with the Indo-Chinese question will be greatly assisted in getting a true understanding of it by the following sketch of historical developments since 1940.

# 1940

**September 23** Japanese troops marched into Indo-China, the domain of the French colonialists.

Earlier, in June, Japan made a series of demands on the French authorities in Indo-China which included: permission for Japanese troops to pass through Indo-China for an attack on China; closing the border between China and Viet-Nam, and occupying military bases in Tonkin. The French authorities assented to all these Japanese demands and repeatedly notified the Japanese Government that they recognized Japan's "dominant political and economic interests in the Far East" and gave assurance of allowing Japan to acquire "a most favourable position" in Indo-China.

On September 4, France and Japan signed a military agreement which permitted Japanese troops to penetrate the areas north of the Red River. On September 15, France was asked to cede Hanoi, Haiphong and her naval bases in Camranh Bay and Kwangchowwan. France agreed. On September 22, another military agreement was signed between France and Japan which permitted Japan to station troops in Indo-China. All these arrangements opened the way for the subsequent occupation of Indo-China by Japanese troops.

On the same day, the Vichy Government issued a communiqué stating that the Franco-Japanese agreement on the stationing of Japanese troops in Indo-China was aimed at "facilitating the establishment of a new order in East Asia and settlement of the Sino-Japanese Incident." The communiqué also stated that the French authorities in Indo-China were to provide the Japanese Army with facilities to continue its drive against China. In turn, Japan recognized France's "sovereignty and territorial integrity" in Indo-China.

Also on September 23, the people in Bac-Son, Lang-Son Province, Viet-Nam, rose against the French colonialists for their sell-out of Indo-China to the Japanese imperialists. In October, the people liberated Bac-Son and established a people's regime. A guerilla detachment, organized by the insurrectionists, launched an attack against Japanese-occupied Lang-Son. The Japanese accepted the French offer of four French battalions to help suppress the Viet-Nameese people's guerillas. Although this people's insurrection was finally quelled after two months by joint French and Japanese

1940 forces, the armed insurrectionists continued their resistance against the Japanese and French imperialists and gradually grew into the Viet-Nam People's Army.

**November 23** People's insurrections broke out in many provinces of South Viet-Nam. Many places were liberated in My-Tho, Bac-Lieu and Soc-Trang Provinces and people's committees set up in them. During the insurrection in Cao-Lanh, the red flag with a gold star was hoisted for the first time. This flag was later adopted as the national flag of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. The Cao-Lanh insurrection ended in failure as a result of joint suppression by French and Japanese troops. More than 7,000 patriots were arrested and confined in Poulo Condor. Large numbers of people were put to death.

## 1941

**January 13** Uprising of Viet-Nameese soldiers stationed in the area of Do-Luong, Vinh Province.

**May 6** The Vichy Government signed an economic agreement with Japan, granting Japan "most-favoured nation treatment" for her industrial and commercial enterprises and in other economic activities in Indo-China. Japanese goods were to be taxed at the lowest rates and many items exempted from customs duty. The agreement also stipulated that the French authorities in Indo-China export various strategic materials and commodities to Japan.

**May 9** France and Japan concluded the "Protocol on Mutual Guarantee and Political Understanding Between Japan and France." In this Protocol, France agreed not to sign with any third power an agreement on political, economic or military co-operation with regard to Indo-China that might, directly or indirectly, interfere with Japan's interests there.

**May 19** The Viet-Nam Independence League (Viet-Minh) was organized at a joint conference of political parties and groups and social organizations including the Communist Party of Indo-China (predecessor of the Viet-Nam Lao Dong Party), the Socialist Party, the Nationalist Party, the Viet-Nam Workers' National Salvation Association, the Peasants' National Salvation Association, the Na-

tional Salvation Association of Culture, the Women's National Salvation Association, the Young Men's National Salvation Association, the Buddhists' National Salvation Association, the Catholics' National Salvation Association and the Businessmen's National Salvation Association. Ho Chi Minh, leader of the Viet-Nameese people, was elected President of the Viet-Nam Independence League (Viet-Minh). From its inauguration, the Viet-Minh organized guerilla forces in order to develop armed struggle against the Japanese occupation. The Viet-Nameese people's resistance was thus placed under unified leadership. The Viet-Minh was commonly acknowledged as the sole anti-Japanese force in Viet-Nam. The French paper *La Marseillaise* stated on May 15, 1946, "While French high officials were being good little Pétainists, the Viet-Nameese fought with rare courage under the leadership of President Ho against Japanese fascism." *La Rue* said on August 9, 1946, "The Viet-Minh comprised all democratic forces of the country." *France Nouvelle* said on June 8, 1946, "The whole of this resistance is the work of the Viet-Minh."

**July 29** France and Japan signed an agreement on the "joint defence of French Indo-China," by which both countries pledged themselves to military "co-operation" in the "common defence" of Indo-China.

On the same day, the Vichy Government, in a note to the Japanese Government, accorded the latter the right to send land, naval and air forces to southern Indo-China; to make use of eight cities, including Siem-Reap and Phnom-Penh as Japanese air bases, and Saigon and Camranh Bay as naval bases. The French note also granted Japan the right to station troops in Indo-China and their freedom of movement. France agreed to bear the expenses of the Japanese occupation.

**December 8** Japan unleashed war in the Pacific.

**December 9** A local military agreement concerning the "joint defence of French Indo-China" was signed between Decoux, the Vichy Government's Governor-General of Indo-China, and Major General Tyo (Yoshizawa), representing the Japanese Army, by which the French authorities agreed to co-operate, "with all means at their disposal," with the Japanese Army "in the defence of French Indo-China"; to "guarantee public order throughout Indo-China during the Japanese Army's military operations so as to safeguard the rear of the Japanese Army"; and to provide the Japanese Army with all facilities for troop movements, food supplies, etc.

## 1942

October 10 The Viet-Minh issued a statement, calling on French soldiers and French nationals for unity with the Viet-Nameese people to fight against the Japanese invaders. The appeal stated: "We are ready to co-operate with all French people in Indo-China, both civilian and military, who are sincere in their desire to fight with us against the fascist Franco-Japanese military. . . . Let us form an anti-fascist, anti-Japanese Viet-Nam-French front on Indo-Chinese territory!"

From 1941 to 1945, the Viet-Minh advocated on many occasions co-operation with the French authorities in a joint fight against the Japanese aggressors. But the French authorities in Indo-China remained all along on the side of the Japanese Army and perpetrated brutalities against the Viet-Nameese people who resolutely fought the Japanese invaders. The French paper *La Défense* stated on May 10, 1946, "It was the Viet-Nameese who raised the standard in the anti-fascist struggle, calling upon the Free French people to fight for the common cause with them. Decoux and his agents replied with terrible reprisals."

## 1943

March 4 French Governor-General Decoux signed an agreement with the Japanese authorities, modifying the economic agreement of May 6, 1941, to give even more far-reaching economic concessions to Japan. The new economic agreement stipulated: 1. Free participation by Japanese nationals in all enterprises on the same footing as French citizens, and the guarantee of all agricultural, mining and other concessions that Japan might need "for military reasons"; and 2. The French authorities must facilitate the production, distribution and export of all products required by Japan "for military reasons."

December 8 A declaration on the post-war status of Indo-China was issued by the French Committee of National Liberation in North Africa (predecessor of the post-war French Government). The Declaration characterized the surrender and betrayal by the French

authorities in Indo-China as being "imposed" by the Japanese and hinted at continued French control over Indo-China after the war. At the same time, the Declaration promised to give "a new political status" to "those who have affirmed their national sentiments and political responsibilities."

## 1944

September 5 The Viet-Minh issued a proclamation warning the French of Japan's scheme of openly occupying Indo-China. The proclamation saw Indo-China "on the eve of a decisive event" and called on the free and progressive forces in Indo-China to launch a struggle to "prevent the imminent political crisis before it is too late."

The Viet-Minh's warning was ignored by the French authorities in Indo-China.

December 22 The Viet-Nam Liberation Army was formed. To celebrate the birth of the Liberation Army, meetings were held in Hoang Hoa Tham and Tran Hung Dao. Representatives of the Liberation Army stated at these meetings that the Army's aim was to awaken the people to armed resistance and to lay the political and military foundations for future uprisings.

This armed force gradually expanded till it became the Viet-Nam People's Army. December 22 is thus marked as the founding day of the Viet-Nam People's Army.

By the end of 1944, the Viet-Nam people's anti-Japanese armed forces had liberated six provinces in North Viet-Nam, namely: Cao-Bang, Bac-Kan, Tuyen-Quang, Thai-Nguyen, Lang-Son and Ha-Giang. People's committees were established in all these provinces to organize the people's armed resistance against the Japanese and, at the same time, to carry out extensive economic, social and cultural reforms.

**March 9** The Viet-Minh's warning proved correct—the Japanese Army formally occupied the whole of Indo-China. A communiqué issued by the Japanese Army Headquarters stated: "In view of the lack of sincerity demonstrated by the French authorities in Indo-China . . . our forces stationed there have decided to assume the defence of that country and are taking the necessary measures." The Japanese troops disarmed all French forces, except those stationed at certain points in the border area of North Viet-Nam, and liquidated the French organs of control without meeting any French resistance.

**March 11** Propped up by Japan, Emperor Bao Dai of Annam formed a puppet government. In a statement, Bao Dai proclaimed the "immediate abolition of the treaty of protectorate signed with France" and said he was going to follow the "directives of the Joint Manifesto of Greater East Asia." He also expressed his "confidence in Japan's sincerity and his determination to co-operate with Japan towards the stated goal."

**March 24** The Provisional Government of the Republic of France issued the declaration that Indo-China would again come under French control after the war. The declaration recognized that the Viet-Nameese people "have acquired a new qualification for their rightful place" through their heroic struggles against Japanese aggression. The declaration stated that France intended to make Indo-China a "Federation" of "five states." But Indo-China was only to "enjoy its proper freedom within the French Union" and the "external interests" of this Union must be represented by France. The French declaration permitted Indo-China to have its own government, on condition that it be headed by the French Governor-General and "composed of the ministers responsible to him." The declaration called for an assembly to be elected "according to the pattern of elections most appropriate to each state within the Federation of Indo-China" and stated that "French interests must be represented in the assembly."

On March 25, Minister for Overseas France Paul Giacobbi in a broadcast speech expressed "fullest respect for the cultural characteristics of every constituent member of the Federation," but they must all be "closely associated with French culture." He also stated that Indo-China "would have her own land, sea and air forces" which, however, would form "part of the general defence system of the French Union."

**June 4** The liberated areas of Viet-Nam merged formally into one unified whole. A provisional committee was set up in this unified liberated area to guide the people in their struggle for national liberation.

**August 8** The Soviet Union declared war on Japan. On the 9th, the Red Army of the Soviet Union attacked the Japanese army. On the 10th, Japan informed the Allies it was ready to surrender and on the 15th it surrendered unconditionally.

**August 13** The Viet-Nam Independence League formed an Insurrection Committee which ordered the Viet-Nam People's Army into action throughout the country and called on the people to join in this general uprising. At the same time, the General Headquarters of the Viet-Minh told the Japanese Army to lay down arms and hand over the state power to the Viet-Nameese people.

**August 16-17** More than 60 people's representatives of all sections and of the various nationalities of Viet-Nam met in a national people's congress at Tan-Trien Village, on the border of Tuyen-Quang and Thai-Nguyen Provinces. The congress resolved unanimously to mobilize the people throughout the country to seize power and to establish the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam on the basis of complete independence. The congress also decided to carry out the 10-point Viet-Minh programme for national independence and democratic reforms. The congress elected the National Liberation Committee of Viet-Nam which was to exercise the functions of a provisional government, pending the establishment of a formal government.

**August 17** Demonstrations were held by the Viet-Nameese people in Hanoi and many other places. Representatives of the Viet-Minh everywhere called on the people to rise up and seize power.

On August 17, the French Government appointed Vice-Admiral Thierry d'Argenlieu French High Commissioner in Indo-China.

**August 19** The people rose up in Hanoi and established a provisional revolutionary order. August 19 was adopted as the Day of Victory in the August Revolution.

**August 22** The representative of French High Commissioner d'Argenlieu in North Viet-Nam, Sainteny, arrived in Hanoi aboard a U.S. plane.

On the same day, d'Argenlieu's representative in South Viet-Nam, Cedille, was airdropped and taken to Saigon by the Japanese Army.

**August 24** Japanese-supported Emperor Bao Dai of Annam declared he was "determined" to abdicate and to "transfer his powers

1945 to the Democratic Republican Government." In his Act of Abdication, Bao Dai called on the people to "unite as one man and wholeheartedly stand by the Democratic Government." He also stated: "We are happy to be the free citizens of an independent country. We will not allow anyone to abuse our name or the name of the royal family for sowing dissension among our compatriots."

On September 10, Bao Dai was invited to act as adviser to the Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. But he left Hanoi for Chungking and then sneaked into Hongkong in 1946.

**August 25** Big demonstrations were held by the people in Saigon and the cities and provinces of South Viet-Nam, in response to the Viet-Minh's call. People's Committees were set up for South Viet-Nam and for the various provinces and state power was taken over by the people.

**August 27** Cedille, French representative in South Viet-Nam, met with a representative of Viet-Nam and handed him the French Government's declaration of March 24 on French intentions for renewed control over Indo-China. The representative of Viet-Nam expressed the friendly feelings the Viet-Nameese people have for the new France and pointed out that this declaration cannot serve as the basis for discussions on the relations between France and Viet-Nam.

The Viet-Nameese representative made it clear that recognition by France of Viet-Nam's independence was the prerequisite to any agreement that might be reached, and that Viet-Nam was prepared to negotiate with France only on this basis.

**August 28** The Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam (i.e. the National Liberation Committee of Viet-Nam) issued a proclamation to the people, announcing that state power was in the hands of the National Liberation Committee; that, for the broadest representation of the national united front, the National Liberation Committee was to be reorganized, with all patriots participating, to shoulder the tasks entrusted to the Committee by the people before the inauguration of a permanent government. By the end of August, the patriots of Pathet Lao had formed the National Liberation Committee of Pathet Lao, under the leadership of Prince Souphanouvong, to strive for national independence, unity and democracy, and to seize political power.

**September 2** At a mass meeting in Hanoi, attended by 500,000 people, Ho Chi Minh, as President of the Viet-Nam Provisional Government, proclaimed his country's independence and issued the Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. The Declaration quoted from the Declaration of Independence

of the United States of America and from the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of Citizens that all men are created equal and endowed with the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. But France was acting contrary to humanity and justice in its colonial rule in Indo-China. After a recital of the brutalities perpetrated by the French rulers in a period of eighty years and the submissive attitude towards Japan in the latter's five-year occupation of Indo-China, the Declaration pointed out: "The truth is that our people have wrested and regained state power from the Japanese and not from the French. . . . Our people have broken the chains of slavery that bound us for nearly 100 years and have won the independence of Viet-Nam. Our people have also overthrown the monarchical regime of the past several thousand years and have established a democratic republic in its stead. Hence, we declare, as the Provisional Government of the new Viet-Nam, on behalf of all the people, that the colonial relationship with France is at an end, that all the old treaties signed between Viet-Nam and France are null and void, and that all special privileges of France in Viet-Nam are hereby abrogated. The people of Viet-Nam stand firmly against all French imperialist intrigues. We are confident that the Allied Powers who recognized the principle of equality among nations at the Teheran conference and at the San Francisco conference cannot fail to recognize the right of Viet-Nam to fight for its liberty and independence." The Declaration concluded solemnly: "A people that has courageously opposed French colonial rule for more than 80 years, a people that has courageously fought fascism by the side of the Allied Powers during the past years, this people will win its freedom and independence. We solemnly declare to the world: Viet-Nam has the right to freedom and independence and has, in fact, become a free and independent country. . . ."

**September 21** The first contingent of French troops, brought by British warships, landed in Saigon. According to an agreement reached between the Allied Powers, Japanese troops in Indo-China north of the 16th parallel were to surrender to Kuomintang troops, while those south of the 16th parallel were to surrender to British troops. The Kuomintang and British forces whose task was to disarm the Japanese forces and send them home, had already entered North and South Viet-Nam.

**September 23** Saigon was occupied by a French landing party assisted by the French troops who had been disarmed by the Japanese and who had been assembled by Cedille, the French High Commissioner's representative in South Viet-Nam. The government offices of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam in Saigon were forcibly occupied. War broke out in South Viet-Nam between France, which

**1945** was attempting to reconquer Viet-Nam, and the Viet-Nameese people, who opposed the French colonialists.

At the same time, French troops renewed their attacks on Khmer. After the surrender of Japan, Khmer proclaimed its independence and established a people's regime throughout the country. One week after their invasion of South Viet-Nam, the French forces occupied Phnom Penh, capital of Khmer. After occupying Khmer, the French ordered the Japanese-supported King of Cambodia, Norodom Sihanouk, to form a puppet government in October. Khmer patriots organized the Khmer Independence Committee to resist the French forces.

**October 5** The main force of the French troops, led by Leclerc, French Commander-in-Chief in the Far East, arrived in Indo-China, together with British troops. An Anglo-French agreement was concluded, illegally stipulating that only French administrative organs were to have civil administrative power over the British-occupied area. After the evacuation of the British forces, the French immediately started military operations in an effort to occupy Indo-China using Saigon as their jumping board. Leclerc boasted that the French could reconquer the whole of Indo-China within three months.

**October 12** The Lao People's Committee was set up in Vientiane and organized the Provisional Resistance Government of Pathet Lao. Pathet Lao proclaimed its independence.

**November 10** King Sisavang Vong of Pathet Lao abdicated and issued a statement saying: "I place myself under the authority of the new government of Pathet Lao, which has been constituted and is the real and legitimate government of Pathet Lao."

## 1946

**January 6** The Viet-Nam Democratic Republic held National Assembly elections on a nation-wide scale. The suffrage was on a universal, direct and equal basis, irrespective of nationality, belief, condition of property or sex. Over 90 per cent of the qualified voters in the great majority of the cities and provinces in the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam took part in the elections. In most

provinces in French-occupied South Viet-Nam, over 90 per cent of the voters also took part in the elections.

The Viet-Minh scored victory in the elections by winning 230 of the 300 seats in the National Assembly.

**February 4** Thierry d'Argenlieu set up a South Viet-Nam Advisory Committee in the French-occupied area, composed of French colonialists and Viet-Nameese puppets.

**February 25** A meeting was held between President Ho Chi Minh and the French negotiator Sauteny on the possibility of holding Viet-Nam-France talks. President Ho Chi Minh reiterated Viet-Nam's policy of independence and co-operation. Sauteny voiced France's willingness to recognize Viet-Nam's right to have its own government, parliament, army and independent finance "within the French Union." Both sides shared the opinion that preliminary conditions for the success of negotiations must assume, firstly, an atmosphere of relaxation and harmony and, secondly, immediate ceasefire on all fronts.

On March 18, 1947, Marius Moutet, Minister for Overseas France, revealed in a speech to the French National Assembly that the aim of the French Government at that time was to facilitate the occupation of North Viet-Nam by French troops through negotiation. Moutet said: "Our troops were not numerous—15,000 men — . . . How heavy were the losses to be sustained, if we were to proceed from Haiphong to Hanoi by force of arms under such conditions? I believe that for the combatants as well as non-combatants, the number of casualties would have been several hundred times higher than those of December 19 (the date Hanoi was re-occupied by French troops—Ed.)."

**February 28** The Kuomintang government reached an agreement with the French Government: The areas of Viet-Nam north of the 16th parallel occupied by the Kuomintang troops were to be taken over by the French troops not later than March 31.

**March 2** The first plenary session of the National Assembly of the Viet-Nam Democratic Republic was held in Hanoi.

**March 3** The National Assembly elected the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam with Ho Chi Minh as President of the Republic.

**March 6** After several months of negotiations, the governments of Viet-Nam and France signed a preliminary agreement in Hanoi. The Agreement stipulated that the French Government should recognize the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam as "a free state having

1946 its own government, parliament, army and finance." As to the reunion of the three "Ky" (Provinces), the Agreement stated that it would be decided by the people through referendum and that the French Government pledged to "ratify the decisions taken by the inhabitants through referendum." The Agreement also stipulated that on ratification, "each of the high contracting parties shall take all necessary measures to bring hostilities to an immediate cessation and to maintain their troops in their respective positions." Both sides agreed to continue talks on the questions of the diplomatic relations between Viet-Nam and other countries, the future status of Indo-China and French economic and cultural interests in Viet-Nam.

March 7 The Preliminary Agreement was breached by the French on the day following its signing. By refusing to dispatch their representative to enforce the ceasefire in South Viet-Nam, the French violated the agreement that both sides should send members on March 7 to form a mixed ceasefire committee for Central and South Viet-Nam. The French even demanded that the Viet-Nameese troops in South Viet-Nam should move to the French positions in order to be disarmed—a breach of the agreement which provided that both sides should bring hostilities to an immediate end and maintain their respective positions. When their demand was rejected, the French troops in South Viet-Nam immediately launched attacks on the Viet-Nameese forces, setting fire to villages and executing Viet-Nameese patriots on the pretext of clearing these areas.

March 12 The French Commissioner in South Viet-Nam, Cedille, openly told the Nam Ky (South Viet-Nam) Advisory Committee that the Preliminary Agreement should apply only to the northern part of Viet-Nam.

March 18 Led by Leclerc, Commander-in-Chief of French Forces in the Far East, French troops entered Hanoi and other areas in North Viet-Nam. Subsequently, the French opened attacks on Pathet Lao.

April 3 A "Staff Officers' Agreement" was signed between Viet-Nam and France. According to this agreement, the number of French troops in areas north of the 16th parallel should not exceed 15,000 and they should be stationed in about a dozen places including Hanoi and Haiphong. Consent should be obtained from the Viet-Nameese side before any movement of French troops.

April 6 In violation of the Agreement, the French Commander-in-Chief in the Far East, Leclerc, issued a directive to his troops,

1946 saying: "It is not purely and simply a question of re-establishing the previously existing French order, it is a question of defending French interests during the course of negotiations in Indo-China and Paris. This defence must be effectuated by the slow method, which marks a steady day-by-day progress, and by force when necessary."

April 10 Valluy, French Commander in North Viet-Nam, ordered his troops to work out "a plan of action for the occupation of cities." In a directive he outlined some main points for this plan and called for: "a series of measures which must have the effect of progressively modifying and finally transforming what is purely a military operation into a 'coup d'etat'."

April 19 The Viet-Nameese and French delegations continued negotiations in Dalat, South Viet-Nam, on the basis of the Preliminary Agreement. The negotiations lasted for nearly a month and ended fruitlessly on May 11 as a result of the French refusal to agree to a peaceful settlement and to the principle of independence for Viet-Nam and their insistence on the partitioning of Viet-Nam. During the negotiations, the demand of the Viet-Nameese delegate for the right of Viet-Nam to independence in diplomatic matters, was rejected by the French. On military questions, though the French side could not but agree to setting up a ceasefire committee, yet they persistently refused to nominate their representatives. On the question of South Viet-Nam, when the Viet-Nameese delegate took a firm stand against partitioning the territory of Viet-Nam, the French side refused to even discuss the question.

April 20 King Sisavang Vong of Laos, who had been abdicated, was restored to his throne by the feudalists while French troops were pressing in on the borders of Pathet Lao.

May 13 The attacking French troops occupied Luang Prabang after taking Vientiane, capital of Pathet Lao. Sisavang Vong begged for French protection and a puppet government was formed with his son at its head.

Patriots of Pathet Lao set up a Liberation Committee in the border regions between Viet-Nam and Pathet Lao to lead the resistance movement of the people.

May 27 The Viet-Nam National United Front (Lien-Viet) was established. This organization united around itself patriotic intellectuals, national bourgeoisie, religious sects and all other patriotic elements prepared to strive for the independence and freedom of Viet-Nam.

**June 1** In violation of the Preliminary Agreement between Viet-Nam and France that the question of South Viet-Nam should be decided through a referendum of the people, the French Commissioner in South Viet-Nam, Cedille, took single-handed action in forming a government of the "Republic of Cochinchina" with Nguyen Van Thinh as the puppet president. In a statement on July 21 President Ho Chi Minh said that the Viet-Nam Government reaffirmed the status of South Viet-Nam as "an integral part of Viet-Nam." He pointed out: "Nam-Bo (South Viet-Nam) is the flesh of our flesh and the blood of our blood. This is borne out by our common racial origin, our common culture and our common historical development. Long before Corsica was French territory, Nam-Bo was already a part of Viet-Nam."

**June 28** Violating the Agreement again, the French troops launched attacks in the highland areas, the southwestern part of Central Viet-Nam.

**July 6** Negotiations were opened between the Viet-Nameese and French delegations on the questions left unsolved by the Preliminary Agreement and the Dalat conference. The negotiations, held at Fontainebleau in the suburbs of Paris, were several times broken off as a result of French obstruction.

During the negotiations, the French side persisted in its refusal to recognize Viet-Nam's independence in foreign relations and proposed in its stead to include Viet-Nameese diplomatic personnel in certain French embassies and legations abroad. On military issues, the French turned their backs on the terms of the Preliminary Agreement providing for an independent Viet-Nameese army and insisted on the setting up of a General Staff headed by a French general for the Federation of Indo-China. The Viet-Nameese side pointed out that this would rob the Viet-Nam Army of its independence. On economic questions, the French scrapped the provisions of the Preliminary Agreement concerning Viet-Nam's independent finance and insisted that the Viet-Nam customs must be put under the control of the so-called Federation of Indo-China. The Viet-Nameese side pointed out that this was in fact depriving Viet-Nam of its sovereign right in regard to financial matters. "It deprives Viet-Nam of its main source of budgetary income," the Viet-Nameese delegation stated.

**August 1** The Office of the French High Commissioner in Indo-China summoned the representatives of the puppet governments of Laos, Cambodia and Cochinchina to a "Federation Conference" at Dalat to draft the "constitution" of the so-called Federation of Indo-China. The aim of the conference was to create an atmosphere

detrimental to the Viet-Nam—France negotiations in progress at Fontainebleau. The Viet-Nameese delegation to the Fontainebleau talks lodged a strong protest against this conference.

**August 3** French troops moved beyond the areas set by the Agreement to perpetrate armed provocations and later occupied Bac-Ninh.

**September 14** A *modus vivendi* was signed between Viet-Nam and France at Fontainebleau after important concessions were made by the Viet-Nameese delegation in the cause of peace. The *modus vivendi* reaffirmed the Preliminary Agreement of March 6 and provided for the resumption of the talks not later than January 1947. Both sides agreed to end all hostilities and acts of violence and to refrain from arresting any Viet-Nameese or Frenchman who was loyal to his own country. The Viet-Nameese side recognized French economic and cultural interests in Viet-Nam and France on her part pledged to respect the rights of democracy and freedom of the people in the southern part of Viet-Nam. Such major issues as Viet-Nam's independence in foreign relations and the sovereignty of Nam-Bo (South Viet-Nam), remained unsolved. President Ho Chi Minh said that although he was not satisfied with the *modus vivendi* yet he held that it was a step forward towards the establishment of normal relations between France and Viet-Nam. Subsequently, both the Viet-Nameese and French sides ordered a ceasefire in Nam-Bo (South Viet-Nam). The French were in fact, however, preparing for a large-scale war. They repeatedly engineered bloody incidents in Haiphong, Hanoi and other cities in North Viet-Nam as a means of provoking the Viet-Nameese side.

**October 15** After forcibly seizing the Viet-Nameese customs and driving away the Viet-Nameese customs officers, the French arbitrarily set up their customs control in Haiphong in contravention of the Preliminary Agreement concerning the establishment of a joint customs committee.

**October 21** The French Command issued a special order to its troops calling on them to be prepared to take the initiative in a war of intervention at any moment and to draw up accordingly plans for attack. The order was intercepted by the Viet-Nam People's Army.

**November 8** The second session of the National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam adopted the Constitution. Chapter One of the Constitution states: "Viet-Nam is a democratic republic. The entire public power rests with the Viet-Nameese people as a whole, without distinction of race, sex, property, class or creed.

1946 The territory of Viet-Nam, comprising the northern, central and southern parts, constitutes an indivisible whole." The Constitution stipulates that the supreme organ of the state authority is the unicameral National Assembly which is elected in accordance with the system of universal suffrage by the method of free, direct and secret ballot. All Viet-Nameese citizens, men and women of 18 years of age and over, have the right to vote. All who are 21 years of age and over and can read and write the national language, are eligible for election. The Government of Viet-Nam is composed of the President, the Vice-President and the Council of Ministers. The President is elected by the National Assembly by a voting majority of two-thirds. The mandate of Presidency is for five years.

**November 20** French troops in Haiphong prevented the Viet-Nameese customs from performing its duty and fired on the Viet-Nameese customs personnel and policemen. When the Viet-Nam troops fired back in self-defence, this was taken by the French authorities as a pretext for their subsequent occupation of Haiphong and Lang-Son.

**December 6** President Ho Chi Minh sent an urgent appeal to the French National Assembly demanding that the French Government order its Command in Viet-Nam to restore conditions in Haiphong and Lang-Son to those prevailing before November 20 and so to implement the *modus vivendi* and establish a foundation for sincere and permanent co-operation between Viet-Nam and France.

**December 9** French troops violated the Staff Officers' Agreement by sending excessive numbers of foreign legionaries, several times more than the quota, to land at Tourane.

**December 12** French troops launched attacks on Mon-Cay, Dinh-Lap and other places. On the same day, President Ho Chi Minh addressed a letter to French Premier Bidault, strongly protesting against the violations of the agreement by the French troops and demanding that the French Government take appropriate measures.

**December 15** President Ho Chi Minh addressed another message to the newly appointed French Premier Léon Blum, demanding that the French troops withdraw from the occupied positions and cease their provocations so as to prevent the situation from deteriorating. President Ho Chi Minh also proposed immediately setting up a mixed commission at Hanoi and another at Saigon for the settlement of the disputes as provided for in the terms of the Preliminary Agreement.

**December 17** French troops attacked the garrison of the Viet-Nameese self-defence corps in the An-Ninh district of Hanoi and

shelled the district. They set fire to the houses and massacred the civilians. The victims included 49 killed and more than 20 injured. **December 18** President Ho Chi Minh again sent a message to French Premier Léon Blum pointing out that acts of provocation committed by French troops were creating an atmosphere of war. He demanded that the French authorities observe the agreements and proposed that a French parliamentary mission should be sent to Viet-Nam to investigate the situation.

On the same day, President Ho Chi Minh cabled Vincent Auriol, President of the French National Assembly, stating that despite the sincere desire for peace on the part of the government and people of Viet-Nam and the fact that Viet-Nam troops and police had been ordered to refrain from any reprisals, French provocations were increasing considerably. He pointed out that "the present situation is the result of a policy aimed at presenting the new French Government with the *fait accompli* of a militarily subdued Viet-Nam." He demanded that the French Government "take urgent steps to bring an end to the present situation."

On the same day, the premises of Viet-Nam's Ministries of Finance and Communications in Hanoi were seized by French troops. Molière, French Commander in North Viet-Nam, issued an ultimatum demanding that the Viet-Nameese side remove all barricades and ramparts, dissolve the self-defence corps and hand over the police administration.

**December 19** President Ho Chi Minh again sent an urgent appeal to Léon Blum and Vincent Auriol pointing out that the situation was seriously deteriorating and demanding an end to the French provocations.

On the same day, President Ho Chi Minh addressed a letter to Sainteny, French Commissioner in Hanoi, requesting steps be taken by both sides to lessen the tense relations. Hoang Minh Giam, representative of Viet-Nam, also called on Sainteny, but was refused an interview.

In the evening, French troops in Hanoi, having completed their preparations, started a general offensive. Since then, the French had torn up all signed agreements and had carried out large-scale aggression against the Viet-Nameese people.

**December 20** President Ho Chi Minh issued a message to the nation calling on the people, irrespective of age, sex, political and religious beliefs, to jointly drive out the French colonialists and save the fatherland. President Ho Chi Minh solemnly declared that in defending their hard-won freedom, the Viet-Nameese people would struggle to the last drop of their blood and that final victory would be theirs.

1946 December 24 Admiral Thierry d'Argenlieu, French High Commissioner in Indo-China, issued a statement in Saigon openly declaring that France would not be "bound" by the terms of the agreements. He said: "France is not disposed either to compromise on or discuss the following points that she considers to be essential: the maintenance and development of her present influence, and of her economic interests . . . and the assurance of the security of the strategic bases within the framework of the defence of the Federation and of the French Union." D'Argenlieu continued that "under the present state of evolution of the peoples of Indo-China, France does not intend to give them total independence unconditionally. . . ." In conclusion, he ordered his troops to carry on the war "with vigour, determination and courage."

December 31 The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam set a memorandum to the French Government, exposing all French criminal manoeuvres since March 6. After citing fact after fact, it stated: "It indisputably proves the determination of the colonialists to re-establish their domination in this country, to systematically sabotage the signed agreements, and thus to render impossible all sincere and amicable collaboration between France and Viet-Nam." The memorandum finally proposed concrete steps for a peaceful settlement: that both sides should order a ceasefire and withdraw their troops to their original positions, and that the French side should stop sending reinforcements. It also proposed that both sides should send their competent representatives to discuss all unsolved issues in Paris so as to draft a formal treaty between Viet-Nam and France.

## 1947

January 8 President Ho Chi Minh appealed to the Government, the National Assembly and the people of France, reiterating the Viet-Nameese people's demand for independence and unity, their hope for a genuine peace and their willingness to co-operate with the French people on the basis of equality and sincerity. He pointed out that the Viet-Nameese people had been dragged into a difficult defensive war by the policy of armed conquest pursued by France in Viet-Nam. In order to restore peace, President Ho Chi Minh once more put forward the following three proposals: immediate

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cessation of hostilities, setting up of mixed commissions for the implementation of the September 14 *modus vivendi* agreement and immediate resumption of negotiations between Viet-Nam and France.

January 10 Answering questions at a press conference, President Ho Chi Minh said that the Viet-Nameese people were always ready to negotiate, always ready to make peace, but they preferred death to enslavement.

January 18 President Ho Chi Minh sent a letter to Vincent Auriol, the new French President, appealing for immediate realization of peace.

March 2 French forces launched a large-scale offensive and occupied Ha-Dong (Tonkin) and other places.

March 12 The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam promulgated the Labour Regulations, establishing the eight-hour working day, providing free medical service for workers, prohibiting children under 12 from working and granting eight weeks' maternity leave to women workers. These facts prove that while leading the country in an arduous war of resistance, the Viet-Nameese Government was doing everything possible to improve the living conditions of the people.

March 18 Marius Moutet, Minister for Overseas France, delivered a speech before the French National Assembly, evading French responsibility for the war. In his speech, Moutet slandered the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, accusing it of having launched the war, and tried to drive a wedge between the various nationalities in Indo-China. Moutet said that the object of the French Government, past and present, remained unchanged, namely "to affirm the necessity to maintain the presence of France" in Viet-Nam and "the defence of its interests."

Moutet openly denied the agreement signed by the French Government. He said that the agreement between France and the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam was "the source of misunderstanding between Viet-Nam and us." He rejected the proposal to resume negotiations put forward by the Viet-Nameese Government and talked about France's "superiority" in an effort to frighten the Viet-Nameese people.

March 24 Answering questions put forward by Viet-Nameese correspondents, President Ho Chi Minh pointed out that since December 10, 1946, he had appealed eight times to the French Government and people, asking for the restoration of peace, but that the French Government all along had refused to give an answer. President Ho Chi Minh said: "If France still hopes to restore the old colonial regime,

1947 our people will wage this war of resistance until complete independence and national unity has been won."

April 1 Emile Bollaert succeeded d'Argenlieu as French High Commissioner in Indo-China.

April 25 The Viet-Nameese Government sent a message to the French Government proposing cessation of hostilities and negotiations to settle peacefully the issue.

May 12 In reply to the peace proposal made by the Viet-Nameese side Bollaert sent his representative Paul Mus to the northern part of Thai-Nguyen Province to put before President Ho Chi Minh and Foreign Minister Hoang Minh Giam French conditions for a ceasefire. They were: 1. that the Viet-Nameese side must surrender its arms; 2. that the French army should freely move about or station its troops in all localities throughout Viet-Nam. The negotiations broke down because the French side insisted on the above-mentioned preposterous demands as prerequisites for a ceasefire.

May 26 President Ho Chi Minh sent an appeal to the French people. He pointed out that the French colonialists, blinded by superficial and ephemeral successes, advanced humiliating and unacceptable conditions, thus making rapprochement between Viet-Nam and France impossible. The responsibility for the continuation of the war rested entirely with the French colonial militarists.

September 10 French High Commissioner in Indo-China Bollaert delivered a speech in Ha-Dong (Tonkin) on behalf of the French Government. Bollaert's speech revealed the French Government's new scheme in its aggression in Viet-Nam. Having failed to rapidly conquer Viet-Nam by force of arms, the French Government, at the instigation of the United States, began to urge Viet-Nameese traitors to come to the fore and organize a puppet government, attempting thus to weaken the position of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam.

In his speech, Bollaert again put forward the old "proposal" that France was ready to grant "independence" to Viet-Nam "within the French Union" but that she must control the diplomatic, military and economic affairs of Viet-Nam. Bollaert said that the French Government had lost its "faith" in the Viet-Nameese Government and indicated that it was willing to discuss the above-mentioned "proposal" with persons outside the Viet-Nameese Government. Bollaert stressed that those who came to negotiate on the traitorous conditions must accept his proposal in its entirety. Because, he said, the proposal "constitutes an indivisible whole which it is necessary to accept or reject in toto. We cannot indulge in any bargaining. . . ."

September 18 Ex-emperor Bao Dai of Annam issued a statement in Hongkong in connection with Bollaert's "proposal." Bao Dai in-

1947 dicated that he would serve as a "representative of the Viet-Nameese people" in "conducting negotiations" with France.

On the previous day, President Ho Chi Minh issued a statement saying that Bao Dai had taken an oath of allegiance to the Viet-Nameese Government and people. "Consequently Mr. Vinh Thuy can only consider himself qualified to negotiate if he is duly authorized by the Government of the Viet-Nam Republic," he said.

September 22 William Bullitt, former U.S. Ambassador to France, arrived in Indo-China to confer with Bollaert before proceeding to Hongkong to meet Bao Dai.

According to Jobez, French Consul in Hongkong, Bullitt gained a "favourable impression" of Bao Dai and thought it was possible "to arrive at a solution" by making use of Bao Dai.

Another task of Bullitt was to explore the possibility of acquiring Indo-Chinese resources by the United States. In his cable to the French Government, Bollaert stated: "Mr. Bullitt seems to show special interest in economic questions. . . . I have asked my economic personnel to give Mr. Bullitt the information he has asked for."

September 28 President Ho Chi Minh replied to questions submitted by Viet-Nameese correspondents on the negotiations between Bao Dai and France. He said: "This is another manoeuvre of the French imperialists, made in the hope of dividing our people, to set us against each other. . . . However, the Viet-Nameese people have learnt from their bitter experiences and will not be duped by the French."

October 8 France set up a puppet government in south Viet-Nam with Nguyen Van Xuan, a French citizen of Viet-Nameese origin, as "premier."

October 10 The French military authorities threw 15,000 army, navy and air force men (the number was increased later) from different parts of Indo-China, into an attack in the mountainous areas in North Viet-Nam. They occupied Dai-Thi and Tuyen-Quang. This was what the French called winter offensive. The Viet-Nam People's Army launched extensive guerilla warfare to resist the French forces. This campaign lasted more than two months and the Viet-Nam People's Army scored great successes.

November 2 President Ho Chi Minh denounced Bollaert's scheme to grant false independence to Viet-Nam. He pointed out that France had been reduced to the status of a U.S. satellite and warned Bao Dai that if he became a puppet of France he would spell his own doom.

1947 December 6 Aboard a French warship in the Ha-Long (Along) Bay, Bao Dai and Bollaert began discussions on the formation of a puppet government.

December 23 The Viet-Nam People's Army smashed the French winter offensive and wiped out more than 7,500 French troops. The Viet-Nam People's Army recovered Dai-Thi and Tuyen-Quang and advanced as far as the outlying areas of Hanoi. Valluy, Commander-in-Chief of French armed forces in the Far East, was replaced by R. Salan. In the one year since December 1946, when the French forces launched their all-out war, they had lost more than 60,000 troops in killed or wounded. Although the French forces had occupied Hanoi, Hue and other cities, most of the territory were still in the hands of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. The Viet-Nameese national war of liberation passed from the defensive stage to a stage of stalemate.

## 1948

January 29 The French police in Paris illegally arrested Tran Ngoc Danh, head of the Viet-Nameese delegation in France. The nation-wide protest of the French people finally forced the French authorities to set him free.

February After the defeat suffered by the French forces in their offensive in the Dong-Thap-Muoi Plain, a base of the People's Army in South Viet-Nam, Salan, acting Commander-in-Chief of the French armed forces in the Far East, was removed and replaced by Blaizot.

May 20 France reorganized the puppet government of South Viet-Nam into the "provisional central government of Viet-Nam" with Nguyen Van Xuan as chairman.

June 5 Bollaert and Bao Dai signed the "Agreement of the Ha-Long Bay" aboard a French warship in the Ha-Long Bay. According to the agreement, France "recognizes the independence of Viet-Nam" but Viet-Nam must "proclaim its adhesion to the French Union" and must "respect the rights and interests of French nationals." France now formally began to foster the puppet Bao Dai regime in the hope of achieving her hitherto unsuccessful colonial plan by pursuing a policy aimed at making "the Viet-Nameese fight the Viet-Nameese." But even the Paris paper *L'Aurore* questioned

whether these men, handpicked by France, are representative. 1948  
"What are they other than puppets?" the paper asked.

June 7 President Ho Chi Minh issued a statement on the "Agreement of the Ha-Long Bay (Baie d'Along)." He declared: "We will never recognize any treaty signed by the puppet government with any foreign power." He also declared that the Viet-Nameese Government and people would punish the traitors according to the laws of the state.

June 8 Paul Coste-Floret, Minister for Overseas France, made a statement before the French National Assembly, saying that the Agreement of the Ha-Long Bay did not signify immediate restoration of peace or French recognition of the unity of Viet-Nam. The status of Cochinchina would remain unchanged, he declared.

June 15 The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam denounced Bao Dai and Nguyen Van Xuan as traitors.

September At the end of the month, Bao Dai met Bullitt in Geneva. Bullitt urged Bao Dai to come to terms with France and promised him U.S. aid.

November 22 The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam applied, through its delegation in France, for membership in the United Nations Organization. It undertook to accept unreservedly the principles of the United Nations Charter and to fulfill the obligations defined by the Charter.

December Commenting on the desperate situation of the French forces, the *Union Francaise*, organ of the French colonial authorities, said: "We continue to hold the major cities while the Viet-Minh controls the countryside of Cochinchina (South Viet-Nam) and the forest areas in the east. In Annam (Central Viet-Nam), most of the coast is in the hands of the Viet-Minh. . . . In Tonkin (North Viet-Nam), we can only control Haiphong and the coast along the Ha-Long Bay. . . . In the hinterland, we still remain in the cities and hold some of the highways and let the Viet-Minh occupy entirely the fields and woods on both sides of the highways. They attack our convoys and kill our troops."

**January 17** Guy Mollet, Secretary-General of the French Socialist Party, wrote to French Premier Henri Queuille asking the French Government to negotiate with the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam in order to end the Indo-China war. Speaking of the French attempts to conquer Viet-Nam by force and to make use of Bao Dai, Mollet said: "These two attempts have failed." Mollet pointed out: "No military solution has been achieved and everyone knows now it can never be. . . . Negotiations with Bao Dai cannot bring about an agreement with the people of Viet-Nam. The former emperor does not have any authority in this country . . . it is absurd to put confidence in such a man." Mollet declared: "If we want peace, we must deal with those who are waging the war, not with those who do not represent anything in the enemy camp." Mollet finally warned the French Government: "The policy, if it is continued, will lead to the loss of Indo-China under the most humiliating conditions."

**January 26** The U.S. Government, through its embassy in France, informed the French Government that the United States indirectly favoured French efforts to set up a Viet-Nameese government under Bao Dai.

**March 8** French President Vincent Auriol and Bao Dai signed a "Franco-Viet-Nam Agreement" in Paris. The agreement stipulated that the diplomatic activities of the puppet Viet-Nameese regime must be "co-ordinated with" those of the French and that Viet-Nam might send diplomatic missions to certain foreign countries but only with the consent of France. Before conducting diplomatic negotiations, Viet-Nam must submit plans to France to be "examined" by the French High Council, and should maintain "contact" with the French embassy. Agreements concluded by Viet-Nam might come into force only after having been "approved" by the High Council of the French Union. In the military field the Viet-Nameese forces should be organized on the French pattern and their weapons should be ordered from France. French troops might be stationed in Viet-Nam and might freely move between the various bases. In time of war, Viet-Nameese troops should be put under French command. On judicial questions, "mixed courts" should be established to deal with cases involving the non-Viet-Nameese. If a French national was involved, his case must be dealt with according to French law. In the cultural field, France might "freely" set up schools in Viet-Nam and Viet-Nam should ensure that French was taught in most of the

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Viet-Nameese schools. On the economic and financial questions, the legal status of the enterprises and properties of French nationals in Viet-Nam "cannot be altered" without the agreement of the French Government. France could "freely invest in Viet-Nam." Before introducing new taxes involving French nationals, Viet-Nam must "consult their commissioners."

A spokesman of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam issued a statement on the agreement signed by Bao Dai. He said that the agreement signed by Bao Dai was a traitorous treaty and that this farce concocted by France was absolutely useless. The Viet-Nameese Government and people would follow the path shown by President Ho Chi Minh and would fight with redoubled effort until complete independence and unification of Viet-Nam were achieved.

**March 10** The Assembly of the French Union ratified the "Franco-Viet-Nam Agreement," the Communist members of the Assembly rose and shouted "Down with the shameful war of aggression against Viet-Nam" and walked out of the hall in protest. Some non-Communist progressive members of the Assembly joined this protest.

Jacques Mitterand, member of the Assembly of the French Union, opposed the "Franco-Viet-Nam Agreement" in a speech before the Assembly on the 9th. Mitterand pointed out that the French Government's policy of using Bao Dai did not change the essence of the war policy followed by France and could only serve the purpose of making "Viet-Nameese fight Viet-Nameese for interests other than those of the Viet-Nameese." Mitterand pointed out that this policy "has suffered defeat, more defeat and always defeat." He warned the French Government to be "careful" and asked it immediately cease hostilities in Indo-China and conduct negotiations with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. He said: "The French people know and deeply appreciate the intellectual honesty, rigorous patriotism and rigid loyalty of Ho Chi Minh."

**May 8** The Hanoi military tribunal of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam decided to indict Bao Dai on the charge of jeopardizing the independence of the country.

**June 14** In Saigon in the French-occupied zone Bao Dai became puppet emperor and began to form a government.

Bao Dai's assumption of the puppet role evoked widespread opposition of the Viet-Nameese people in the French-occupied zone. More than six thousand students in Saigon went on strike in protest. Meanwhile, more than four hundred intellectuals in Saigon pledged their support of the legal Viet-Nameese Government led by President Ho Chi Minh.

U.S. and British bourgeois press made no scruples about speak-

1949 ing of the puppet nature of the Bao Dai regime. The British magazine *New Statesman and Nation* said that Bao Dai could exist only with the support of French bayonets. Another British weekly *Economist* said that there was nothing to prove that the Bao Dai government could exist without French military support. The American bi-weekly *Reporter* said that the Bao Dai government could in no way be called independent as even the conduct of its foreign relations was controlled by France. . . . In fact, the magazine said, Bao Dai had never had any popular support. . . . Ho Chi Minh had been and was still the country's indisputable leader and the U.S. Government was trying in vain to turn back the irresistible tide.

**July 19** In Paris, Sisavang Vong, puppet king of Laos, signed a treaty with French President Vincent Auriol. The treaty stipulated that France was entitled to station troops in any bases it considered useful on the territory of Pathet Lao; that, with certain exceptions, relations between Pathet Lao and other countries would be handled by French embassies abroad; that France could exploit the natural resources of Pathet Lao and that the puppet Lao government must supply French nationals with travelling and housing facilities.

**July 20** The Bao Dai government subjected the people to a reign of terror. From July 7 to 20, about one hundred innocent Viet-Nameese were arrested in South Viet-Nam alone.

**August** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam issued a statement declaring null and void all the treaties signed by the Bao Dai government with foreign countries.

**August 7** The Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam withdrew its delegation from France.

**October 2** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam issued a statement on the attempt of the Bao Dai government to send a delegation to the countries in Southeast Asia to negotiate the establishment of diplomatic relations with them. The statement pointed out that the Bao Dai government was not qualified to represent Viet-Nam and that the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, established through general elections, was the sole legal government of Viet-Nam.

**October 31** The Permanent Committee of the World Congress of the Defenders of Peace adopted a resolution calling for "immediate and direct negotiations under international auspices to bring about the ending of current wars, especially in Greece, Viet-Nam, Indonesia and Malaya."

**November 8** A "Franco-Cambodian Treaty" was signed in Paris by a representative of Norodom Sihanouk, puppet king of Cambodia, and a representative of France. The treaty stipulated that the Indo-

1949 Chinese piastre would be the only currency in Khmer which was in the franc zone; that French troops might be stationed on the territory of Khmer; that Khmer must secure French consent to establish diplomatic relations with foreign countries; and that the French would receive the same "treatment as the nationals" of Khmer.

**November 19** Over one hundred French soldiers surrounded the Thank-Link and Luu-Cuong overseas Chinese farms in Vinh-An Province in Viet-Nam. Breaking into the farms, the French soldiers brutally beat up men (Chairman Li Hai of the Overseas Chinese Association, an old man over 60 years of age, received injuries all over his body), raped women by turns, ransacked trunks and looted. When they withdrew they took away all the fowls, ducks, cows and pigs and burned or destroyed all barns and furniture. The victimized overseas Chinese were made destitute.

**November 29** Chou En-lai, Foreign Minister of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China issued a statement pointing out that while the Chinese People's Liberation Army was daily approaching the southwest frontier of China, the Kuomintang brigands hoped to get to Viet-Nam and other places, attempting to turn them into their bases from which to stage a comeback at an opportune moment. He solemnly declared that wiping out all the armed forces of the reactionary Kuomintang is the unshakable policy of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China. No matter where the Kuomintang forces might flee, the Central People's Government reserved the right to raise the matter, while the government of any country which gave shelter to the Kuomintang armed forces must be held responsible for its action and bear full responsibility for the consequences.

**December 14** Hoang Minh Giam, Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, issued a statement on the defence of the northern borders of Viet-Nam. It pointed out that with French assistance the Kuomintang bandit troops had fled to the northern part of Viet-Nam and might possibly collaborate with the French forces in military actions against the Viet-Nameese people. The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam protested against the collusion of the Kuomintang clique and France and ordered the Viet-Nameese forces to defend Viet-Nameese territory.

**December 15** The Executive Bureau Meeting of the Permanent Committee of the World Congress of the Defenders of Peace adopted an appeal for the cessation of the aggressive wars against the peoples, especially the aggressive wars in Indonesia, Malaya and Viet-Nam. It called for "direct and immediate negotiations under international auspices."

**1949** December 28 From December 14 to 28, twenty-seven thousand Kuomintang bandit troops under the command of Pai Chung-hsi, who had been routed by the Chinese People's Liberation Army, fled to Cao-Bang, Lang-Son, Nam-Quan, Dong-Dang and other places in the French-occupied zone in Viet-Nam. The French side claimed that these bandit troops had been disarmed and detained. It also guaranteed that these bandit troops would not be returned to the Kuomintang clique, nor that they would be integrated with the French forces or the puppet Bao Dai troops.

In reality, however, the French side had concentrated part of these bandit troops in the Tien-Yen and Chin-Thuyen Hoa areas along the coast of Viet-Nam and had sent them in groups to China's Hainan Island (which was then still in the hands of the Kuomintang clique) to be handed over to the Kuomintang gang leaders to continue their war against the Chinese people. Part of the Kuomintang bandit troops had been secretly integrated with the French and puppet Bao Dai forces stationed in Lang-Son, Loc-Binh and An-Chau. Other units of the bandit troops had been turned into "Viet-Nameese volunteers" under the command of Vo Hong Khanh, a member of the Viet-Nameese Nationalist Party, who co-operated with the French forces in attacking the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam.

December 30 In Saigon, Bao Dai and Léon Pignon, French High Commissioner, signed an agreement for the "transfer of administrative power." The agreement confirmed the colonial status of the areas under Bao Dai's control. It stipulated that in the military field, the number of puppet troops would be determined by the French, that French instructors would be employed in time of peace, and that the puppet forces would be under French command in time of war; in the field of finance and economy, the Viet-Nameese currency would be included into the franc bloc and any change in the exchange rate between the Viet-Nameese currency and the franc would have first to be approved by France.

## 1950

January 9 More than two thousand students in Saigon sent a petition to Bao Dai's "Ministry of Education" and "the Premier's office" of the "South Viet-Nameese government," demanding the release of the five secondary school students illegally arrested in Nov-

ember 1949. The French authorities and the puppet police authorities gave the order to machine-gun the unarmed students. As a result, scores of students were killed or wounded. Prior to this, Viet-Nameese students in the French-occupied areas had carried out extensive strikes in November and December of 1949, in protest against the action of the French authorities in arresting the students.

January 12 Workers, students and shopkeepers in Saigon and Cho-Lon went on strike to mark the funeral of the students massacred on the 9th. One hundred and thirty thousand people joined in the funeral demonstration. The first national congress of the Union of Viet-Nam Youth decided to fix January 9, as the day of struggle against French colonialism for all Viet-Nameese youth and students.

January 14 President Ho Chi Minh issued a statement declaring that the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam was prepared to establish diplomatic relations with any government which desired to co-operate with it on the basis of equality, and mutual respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

January 15 The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam recognized the Government of the People's Republic of China and expressed its willingness to establish diplomatic relations with the latter and exchange ambassadors.

January 18 The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China recognized the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam as the lawful government representing the will of the Viet-Nameese people and expressed willingness to establish diplomatic relations and exchange ambassadors.

On the same day, Foreign Minister Chou En-lai of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China sent a note to Robert Schuman, French Foreign Minister, protesting against the slaughter and persecution of overseas Chinese in Viet-Nam by French forces. The protection of the legitimate rights of overseas Chinese, the note stated, was the unswerving policy of the Chinese Government. The atrocities perpetrated by French armed forces against overseas Chinese in Viet-Nam could not be tolerated by the Chinese people and the responsibility for these atrocities should be fully borne by the French Government. The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China reserved all rights to raise demands in connection with the above-mentioned and similar incidents.

January 24 Philip C. Jessup, U.S. Ambassador at large, arrived in Saigon on an "inspection" tour. After meeting French officials and officials of the puppet Viet-Nameese government, he arrived in Hanoi on the 27th to see Bao Dai. Jessup handed to Bao Dai a letter

1950 from U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson expressing great satisfaction over the French transfer of "administrative powers" to Bao Dai.

January 27 The Political Bureau of the French Communist Party adopted a resolution, pointing out that only the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam headed by Ho Chi Minh truly represented the Viet-Nameese people who were struggling for freedom and independence and that the founding of this Republic was the outcome of the liberation movement against the Japanese aggressors. It stated that the French colonialists were fighting against the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and were fostering a puppet regime which was repudiated by the masses of the Viet-Nameese people.

January 30 The Government of the Soviet Union recognized the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and decided to establish diplomatic relations with it. After this, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam was recognized by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on January 31, by Czechoslovakia on February 2, by Rumania on February 3, by Poland and Hungary on February 4, by Bulgaria on February 8, and by Albania on March 13.

The Political Bureau of the French Communist Party issued a statement hailing the recognition of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam by the Soviet Union, China and the People's Democracies as giving expression to the policy of respecting the legitimate aspirations of the various peoples for freedom and national independence.

February In early February, more than seven thousand fugitive Kuomintang bandit troops in the French-occupied areas in Viet-Nam, aided and abetted by the French, raided Kwangsi Province in China and occupied Shuikoukuan, on the southwest border of Kwangsi. Prior to this in mid-January, some Kuomintang bandit troops had occupied Chiuteh, in Szelo County, southwest Kwangsi Province, in co-ordination with French troops.

February 7 U.S. Government recognized the puppet Bao Dai government and the puppet governments of Laos and Cambodia.

February 13-15 U.S. diplomatic representatives in the Far East held a conference in Bangkok. It was presided over by U.S. Ambassador at large Jessup who had just visited Viet-Nam. At this conference it was decided to give military and economic aid to Bao Dai. Later the United States announced that \$20 million out of the \$75 million slated for aid to the Chiang Kai-shek bandits would be given to Bao Dai as urgent military aid.

An article carried in the February 12 issue of the *New York Times* revealed the true intention of the United States towards Indo-

China. The paper said: "Indo-China is a prize worth a large gamble. In the north are exportable tin, tungsten, zinc, manganese, coal, lumber and rice; and in the south are rice, rubber, tea, pepper, cattle and hides. . . . Indo-China and Burma are Southeast Asia's rice bowls. . . . From the military standpoint Indo-China is equally important, forming an 800-mile-long land bridge between Communist China and British Malaya and with a common frontier with both Burma and Thailand. Its two main harbours of Haiphong and Saigon are excellent bases. . . ."

The *Wall Street Journal* stated in its February 27th issue: "Acheson's advisors told him that backing Indo-China would be practical." The journal also quoted an American "Far East authority" as saying, "It's going to be a long, hard and expensive job. If it works it will be worth the cost."

March 6 A U.S. economic mission headed by Robert Allen Griffin arrived in Saigon. The purpose of this mission was to investigate the possibility of U.S. investment in Indo-China and the feasibility of economic aid by the U.S. Government to Bao Dai.

March 16 Under the command of Arleigh Burke, Commander of the U.S. 7th Fleet, U.S. aircraft carrier "Boxer" and two cruisers sailed into the port of Saigon. At the same time, 71 American planes flew low over Saigon to intimidate the Viet-Nameese people. On the 19th, thousands of people in Saigon, holding national flags of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, demonstrated at the harbour where the American warships lay at anchor in protest against the infringement of the territorial air and waters of Viet-Nam by U.S. warships. The French and puppet troops opened fire on the demonstrators. Four persons were killed, several hundred injured and many arrested. On the following day, workers and students in Saigon went on strike. Protests by the infuriated masses against the outrages lasted more than a month. The British magazine *New Statesman and Nation* carried a commentary on this incident. It said: "American policy in Asia today is now so unpopular that the arrival of their fleet or of military supplies is unlikely to be welcome in any part of East Asia. . . . The Viet-Nameese, warned of American plans to support Bao Dai in a desperate effort to hold Cochin-China, which they now believe to be the only potential military and naval base on the mainland of Asia, naturally oppose such plans. For the past four years their resistance has defeated the efforts of 150,000 French troops to reoccupy the country, and American support for Bao Dai, as in the case of Chiang Kai-shek, will chiefly have the effect of increasing their determination to fight for the independence of their country."

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**March 30** Because of the universal unwillingness of intellectuals in the French-occupied areas in Viet-Nam to work for the Bao Dai government, Bao Dai authorized his ministers to pressgang persons into the puppet civil service. Those who refused to comply with the ministerial order would be fined from 500 to ten thousand Viet-Nameese piastres or sentenced to imprisonment.

**April 6** In an appeal to the French people, the 12th Congress of the French Communist Party demanded the cessation of the dirty war of aggression against the Viet-Nameese people. The appeal condemned the French ruling clique for forcing Frenchmen to shed their blood in the criminal war in Viet-Nam for the interests of the Banque de l'Indochine and for the establishment of a strategic outpost for the U.S. war provocateurs.

**April 19** The Khmer People's Congress elected the Khmer Central People's Liberation Committee and the executive committee of the United Front of Free Peoples. Son Ngoc Minh was elected chairman of the Khmer Central People's Liberation Committee. At the same time, the Central Committee issued a declaration of independence for free Khmer, calling on the people throughout the country, irrespective of their religious beliefs and political affiliations, to rise unanimously to oppose French imperialism and strive for the genuine freedom and independence of their motherland.

**May 8** After secret talks held between U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson and French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman in Paris, a statement was issued to the effect that the United States had decided to grant "economic aid and military equipment" to France and its puppet regimes in Indo-China.

**May 9** Answering questions submitted by Léo Figuères, General-Secretary of the Union of Republican Youth of France and director of the French paper *Avant-garde*, President Ho Chi Minh said that the open intervention in the affairs of Viet-Nam by the United States was anti-democratic, bellicose and doomed to meet with the same fate as U.S. intervention in China. President Ho Chi Minh pointed out that the prerequisite for the restoration of peace in Indo-China was the total withdrawal of French troops. Dwelling on the future relations between the peoples of Viet-Nam, Pathet Lao and Khmer, he said that such relations should be fraternal relations based on absolute equality and that there should be mutual respect for national independence.

**May 12** Léon Pignon, French High Commissioner in Indo-China, in an interview with the correspondent of the French paper *L'Aurore* expressed dissatisfaction with the United States for taking advantage

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of its "aid" to foster its own interests in Viet-Nam. Pignon said: "The arrival of a number of Americans in Viet-Nam has perhaps induced some Viet-Nameese politicians to turn their eyes towards Washington, and away from Paris. We must not hide the fact that the presence of more Americans will cause difficulties for us if we are not careful." Pignon stressed that "Frenchmen alone should be responsible for" the U.S. aid.

**May 30** The U.S. economic mission headed by Robert Blum arrived in Saigon. Blum's mission was to stay in Viet-Nam to control the use of U.S. aid. Blum declared that the United States would grant \$23 million as the first year's economic aid to Indo-China.

**June 19** Inauguration ceremony of Khmer Central People's Liberation Committee (i.e. the Khmer National Resistance Government) and the Khmer United Front of Free Peoples. Enthusiastic celebrations were held in the various liberated areas of Khmer. The liberated areas in north, southwest, west and southeast Khmer had been expanded to one third of the territory of the country with a population of more than one million constituting more than one fourth of the population of the country.

**June 27** U.S. President Truman declared that he had ordered the U.S. navy and air force to participate directly in the aggressive war in Korea and had ordered the U.S. navy to occupy Taiwan. Truman declared: "I have similarly directed acceleration in the furnishing of military assistance to the forces of France and the Associated States in Indo-China and the dispatch of a military mission to provide close working relations with those forces."

**June 29** Representatives of the French Government and the three puppet governments of Viet-Nam, Cambodia and Laos held an economic conference in the French city of Pau. Letourneau, Minister for Overseas France, said at the opening meeting that "France does not intend to abandon Indo-China to itself." Letourneau specially stressed that France should control Indo-China's economy. He said: "It would be paradoxical that one of the essential elements of the wealth of Indo-China before the war and one of the most dependable bases of her future—economic and monetary community—should completely disappear with the advent of the independence of the three states."

**July 4** President Ho Chi Minh made an appeal to the American people on American "Independence Day," calling on the American people to "condemn the French colonial war waged under the aegis of the American Government" and pointing out that this war "is

1950 greatly prejudicial to the interests and the reputation of the people of America."

July 15 A U.S. military mission headed by John Melby, head of the Office of Philippines and Southeast Asian Affairs of the U.S. State Department and Major-General Graves B. Erskine, Commander of the First U.S. Marine Division, arrived in Saigon. The task of this military mission was to investigate the "value" of French troops, to examine the "inventory" of U.S. military aid requested by France and to investigate what bases in Indo-China could be used. During its three weeks' stay in Indo-China, the mission visited the front-line, Khmer, Pathet Lao and the frontier areas of China and Viet-Nam. At the press conference held on the 20th, Erskine declared that the U.S. aid programme to Indo-China was well under way. Erskine said that the French army in Indo-China was not a strong enough force to fight communism in Southeast Asia. He stressed the importance of training puppet Bao Dai troops.

July 16 President Ho Chi Minh, in an interview granted to a correspondent of the *Voice of Viet-Nam*, spoke on U.S. intervention in Indo-China. He condemned the United States for supplying arms to France and its puppets to slaughter the Indo-Chinese people and for buying up more lackeys to conquer Indo-China. President Ho Chi Minh pointed out that the United States had further exposed itself in its scheme to drive France out and occupy Indo-China by itself. He declared: "The united strength of the peoples of Viet-Nam, Pathet Lao and Khmer will suffice to wipe out the French colonialists and U.S. interventionists. As the U.S. imperialists have been defeated in China so will they be defeated in Viet-Nam. We will meet with many difficulties, but we are sure to win in the end."

July 31 A spokesman of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam stated that on the basis of humanitarianism and friendship towards the French people, the Viet-Nameese Government was ready to release all prisoners of war of the French side. Moreover, the Viet-Nameese Government asked the French people to urge their government to release all Viet-Nameese patriots held in custody.

August 10 The first consignment of U.S. war materials arrived in Indo-China.

August 13 The People's Congress of Pathet Lao opened, attended by more than one hundred representatives of all strata and nationalities and of various religious beliefs from the liberated areas and the French-occupied areas. The meeting decided to establish a national united front—the Pathet Lao United Front of Free Peoples. It elected the Central Executive Committee of the United Front and

organized the National Resistance Government of Pathet Lao with Souphanouvong as Premier. After analysing the home and international situation, the congress submitted 12 revolutionary policies including: driving out the French colonialists and opposing international imperialist intervention, forming an independent, united Pathet Lao and establishing a coalition government; realizing democracy and freedom, realizing the equality of nationalities; formally establishing the national army of Pathet Lao; implementing the national united front; developing industry, agriculture, and commerce; reducing taxes and rates of interest, wiping out illiteracy, developing national culture and uniting with the peoples of Viet-Nam and Khmer. By 1950, the liberated areas of Pathet Lao had been expanded to one third of the territory of the country, with a population of 360,000, about one fifth of that of the whole country.

August 19 President Ho Chi Minh issued an appeal to the people on the anniversary of the August Revolution and Viet-Nam's Independence Day. After recalling the victories of the Viet-Nameese people in their struggle against aggression during the last five years, he pointed out: "Since the start of war in Viet-Nam the American imperialists have been giving all-out assistance to the French colonialists. Now they have gone a step further by intervening directly in Viet-Nam's internal affairs. That means that besides our arch enemy—the French colonialists—we have now another enemy—the American interventionists."

September 15 Hoang Minh Giam, Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, in a statement denouncing U.S. aggression against Korea, China and Viet-Nam, emphatically pointed out that the Viet-Nameese people would certainly eliminate the Bao Dai puppet regime and the French colonialists; and that the Viet-Nameese people warmly supported the Korean people and hoped that they would win a quick victory.

September 18 The Viet-Nameese People's Army liberated Dong Khe near the northern boundary wiping out a French battalion and two French squads, of some six hundred men. The French defence line between Lang-Son and Cao-Bang crumbled.

October 1 More than 200 representatives of overseas Chinese workers and students in Saigon and Cho-Lon gathered in Cho-Lon to celebrate the first anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Many of them were arrested on the spot by police dispatched by the puppet Bao Dai government. Three days later, puppet police raided the Chih Yung Middle School of Cho-Lon and arrested several Chinese students who were subsequently tortured by the police.

**October 3** French troops were forced to retreat from Cao-Bang. The Viet-Nameese People's Army encircled the retreating French troops and their reinforcements, which totalled about 5,800 men, put out of action some 5,500 of them and captured their commanders, Colonel Le Page and Lt. Colonel Charton. The Viet-Nameese People's Army liberated Cao-Bang and That-Khe.

Commenting on the French failure on the north Viet-Nam battlefield, *The Times* (London) observed on October 13 that the defeat "is even more serious than earlier reports indicated." It described the People's Army as being "much superior" in number. The paper said that "the welcome prospect of American help" was "suddenly" shattered. It continued: "The prestige of the Government will be affected by the shock now felt throughout the country."

**October 4** U.S. Defense Department announced the appointment of Brigadier-General Francis L. Brink as head of the U.S. military aid advisory mission in Indo-China, to "assist" the French and puppet troops "in an advisory capacity," to "receive and use" the U.S. military aid materials.

On his arrival in Saigon on the 10th, Brink announced that U.S. arms would be delivered "as soon as possible."

**October 9** The Viet-Nameese Red Cross Society, in a letter to the French Red Cross Society, asked the latter to send over its liaison staff to discuss arrangements for returning captured French wounded soldiers and bodies of the French dead. Earlier, 228 French and North African prisoners of war and interned personnel had been released by the Viet-Nam People's Army, at the request of the French people.

**October 13-17** A U.S. State Department statement on the talks between Minister of Defense Jules Moch and Minister of Finance Maurice Petsche, representing the French side, and Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Secretary of the Treasury John W. Snyder and Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall, for the U.S. side, which concluded on October 17, said: "In addition the United States Congress has appropriated for military assistance in the Far East approximately one-half billion dollars. In view of the importance of the operations in Indo-China, the major part of this sum is being used to provide military equipment, including light bombers, for the armed forces both of France and of the Associated States of Indo-China. This assistance will provide a very important part of the equipment required by the forces contemplated for activation in 1951 in France and for current operations in Indo-China. Deliveries of equipment are being expedited and, with respect to Indo-China, a particularly high priority has been assigned."

**October 19** French Prime Minister René Pleven stated in the National Assembly: ". . . our troops are carrying out an action at the same time military and political. . . . It is out of the question that this policy should be reversed. . . ." He pinned his hope on the formation of Bao Dai's puppet troops to save the French troops from ultimate defeat, and said that the Indo-Chinese puppet governments should have "ardour" and even "fanaticism." He added: "But the forces of the French Union must be strengthened by the Viet-Nameese army, to which we will supply instructors and, with American aid, arms."

**October 21** The U.S. Defense Department announced that 18 U.S.-made landing crafts and 6 support landing ships were en route to Indo-China to be used there against the increasing manoeuvrability and striking force of the Viet-Nam People's Army.

Two days later, it again announced that 40 Wildcat naval pursuit planes had been turned over by the United States to the French.

**October 24** The Viet-Nam People's Army Headquarters issued a communiqué which stated that the People's Army, after putting out of action the greater part of the French troops who had fled from That-Khe to Nasam and liberating Nasam, had liberated Lang-Son, a key post on the northern borders of Viet-Nam, and the neighbouring Dong-Dang and Loc-Binh.

**November 1-2** The Viet-Nam People's Army drove out the French troops from Lao-Kay and Hoa-Binh.

**November 11** The French paper *l'Humanité* carried the joint communiqué of the General Confederation of Labour, the Union of French Women, the Union of the Young Women of France, and the Union of the Republican Youth of France. The communiqué said that, as President Ho Chi Minh had given concrete peace proposals to Léo Figuières, General Secretary of the Union of the Republican Youth of France, these democratic organizations declared themselves ready to be the intermediary for peace talks between France and Viet-Nam. They had decided to ask for an interview with Letourneau, French Minister for the Associated States, on this problem. They would hold the Government fully responsible for the shedding of blood, the communiqué said, if the Government decided to continue the inhuman war against the interests of France.

**November 22** The conference of the National United Front of Viet-Nam, Pathet Lao and Khmer issues a declaration which pointed out that an alliance of the peoples of the three countries should be formed, on a basis of equality and mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; and that the peoples of the three countries

should be helped to eradicate the national prejudices inculcated by the French imperialists, and oppose the French scheme of setting up puppets. The declaration called upon the peoples of the three countries to unite still more closely to fight. The unity of the peoples of the three countries, the declaration stated, was the most important prerequisite of an early victory and the building up of independent, free, democratic, prosperous and strong countries.

On the same day, the Second World Peace Congress, in its appeal to the United Nations, called for an end to the war against the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, pointing out that the war was fraught with threat of a world war.

**November 23** A spokesman of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China made a statement protesting against the constant intrusion into Chinese territory and air, acts of armed provocation and strafing and bombing of Chinese troops and civilians by the French ground and air forces in Viet-Nam, in the regions of the three provinces of Kwangtung, Kwangsi and Yunnan bordering on Viet-Nam since November and December of 1949. After enumerating the various facts, the statement pointed out: These actions of the French ground and air forces during the past 11 months constituted an encroachment on the territorial sovereignty of the People's Republic of China, causing great losses in lives and property of the troops and civilians along China's borders. These actions revealed a premeditated hostility on the part of the French imperialists towards the Chinese people. The French Government must bear full responsibility and all the consequences of these actions. Besides ordering its national defence forces to continue to firmly defend the borders and to deal heavy counterblows to the provocateurs, the Central People's Government lodged a serious protest with the French Government and reserved full rights to demand payment for the losses and make other relevant demands.

On the same day, René Pleven, French Premier, in a speech made in the French National Assembly, on the one hand tried to defend the French defeat in the battle of Cao-Bang, and, on the other, admitted: "A solution obtained exclusively by force was impossible, for to reconquer Indo-China would need from 300,000 to 400,000 men." However, "... we intended to carry out our policy without reservation," he said. "Such a policy would also guarantee us the maximum support from our Allies."

**November 28** Wu Hsiu-chuan, representative of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, made a statement before the U.N. Security Council, in which he pointed out:

"The U.S. armed aggression against Taiwan is inseparable from its interference in the internal affairs of the Viet-Nam Republic, its support of the French aggressors and their Bao Dai puppet regime, and its armed attack on the Viet-Nam people. The people of the entire world know that France is the aggressor against Viet-Nam and that the Bao Dai regime is a typical puppet regime which cannot possibly win any confidence and support from the Viet-Nam people. In supporting this aggressor and this puppet regime against the people of Viet-Nam, the U.S. Government aims not only at aggression against Viet-Nam, but also at threatening the borders of the People's Republic of China. The Chinese people cannot but be deeply concerned with the unfolding of the aggressive plot of the U.S. Government against Viet-Nam."

**December 6** Léon Pignon, French High Commissioner in Indo-China, was dismissed from office. General de Lattre de Tassigny, French Chief of the General Staff, was appointed by the French Government French High Commissioner in Indo-China. The French Government also appointed him to succeed Carpentier as Commander-in-Chief of the French Forces in Indo-China, in an attempt to save France from its disastrous position in Indo-China.

**December 23** The United States signed treaties of military assistance with the three Indo-Chinese puppet governments. Since in pursuance of these treaties, the United States had the right to supervise the use of U.S. aid materials, and U.S. experts were entitled to the right of "inspection," it acquired extensive rights to the control of Indo-China.

## 1951

**January 27** French Premier René Pleven left for the United States to seek aid from President Truman, in order to save the French forces from their predicament in Indo-China.

**January 30** Pleven concluded his talks with Truman. In a joint communiqué issued after the talks, France pledged to support the United States in continuing the aggressive war in Korea and agreed to the inclusion of West Germany in the North Atlantic bloc. France also promised not to relax stepping up her rearmament.

According to the communiqué, the United States would continue to give military aid to France and her puppets in Indo-China, and "the increased quantities of material to be delivered under the programme authorized . . . will be expedited."

Agence France Presse commented on the talks on January 30 that, as a result of France's willingness to surrender a reasonable part of her sovereignty, her harshest critics on the other side of the Atlantic were taking a more tolerant view of her.

**February 1** The U.S. aircraft carrier *Windham Bay* arrived in Saigon, with 48 fighter planes and a large quantity of aircraft spare parts. This was part of the U.S. military aid agreed upon by Truman and Plevin in their talks at the end of January. The number of U.S. planes in Indo-China had by then increased to 126.

**March 3** The establishment of the Lao Dong Party of Viet-Nam was proclaimed. From February 11 to 19, a National Congress was held for the establishment of the party, attended by two hundred representatives including Ho Chi Minh, Truong Chinh, Hoang Quoc Viet and Vo Nguyen Giap. The Congress adopted a manifesto, a programme and party constitution, and elected a Central Executive Committee. Truong Chinh was elected General Secretary.

On the same day, the two national united fronts of Viet-Nam: the Viet-Minh (Viet-Nam Independence League) and the Lien-Viet (Viet-Nam League of National Union), merged into the National United Front of Viet-Nam. A National Congress was convened for the merger. It was attended by representatives of various parties and people's organizations, by workers, peasants, public leaders, national capitalists, enlightened landlords, as well as by representatives of the Viet-Nameese people in the French-occupied areas and by representatives of overseas Viet-Nameese. The Congress adopted a 12-point programme for accomplishing national liberation, consolidating and developing the people's democratic rule, and for launching national construction. Ho Chi Minh was elected Honorary President and Ton Duc Thang President.

**March 11** The conference for the alliance of Viet-Nam, Khmer and Pathet Lao opened, attended by representatives of the National United Front of Viet-Nam, the National United Front of Khmer and the National United Front of Pathet Lao. A manifesto and a resolution were adopted. The resolution pointed out that the fundamental task of the revolution of the three countries was to drive out the French colonialists and U.S. interventionists, so as to achieve complete independence and to build up the three new countries of Viet-Nam, Pathet Lao and Khmer. The conference decided to establish the alliance of the people of the three countries on the principle of

voluntariness, equality, mutual assistance and mutual respect for each other's sovereignty. The Viet-Nam-Khmer-Pathet Lao People's Alliance Committee was formed, composed of representatives of the three countries' national united fronts.

**March 16** The Dutch paper *De Waarheid* reported that the National Council of French Industrialists had submitted a memorandum to the French Government, pointing out that the U.S. "Economic Mission" led by Robert Blum had openly intervened in the internal affairs of Viet-Nam and, with the distribution of U.S. aid as an excuse, had often compelled Indo-Chinese officials to issue directives favouring U.S. manufacturers. The Americans had established their control over tin mining, rubber and rice production in Indo-China. As a result, trade between France and Indo-China had dropped considerably, while the volume of trade between the United States and Indo-China had greatly increased. The memorandum pointed out that all these data showed the increasing encroachment by U.S. capitalists upon the French manufacturers' interests in Indo-China.

**July 25** Thomas Dewey, former Republican presidential candidate, and Governor of New York State, arrived in Saigon for secret talks with Bao Dai and puppet premier Tran Van Huu. Dewey gave as the purpose of his visit a study of the "possibility of military and economic aid being speeded up for Indo-China in the light of the Korean armistice talks."

**July 27** The puppet government of Bao Dai issued a decree "calling to arms sixty thousand men for a two-month training period."

**September 4** Hoang Minh Giam, Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, issued a statement on the Bao Dai government's dispatch of delegates to the San Francisco Conference to draft a so-called "peace treaty" with Japan, declaring that Bao Dai had no right whatsoever to conclude a treaty with any foreign country on behalf of the Viet-Nameese people and that a traitor's signature was invalid.

**September 7** General de Lattre de Tassigny, French High Commissioner in Indo-China, went to the United States to ask for aid.

On the same day, the United States concluded an "Economic Cooperation Agreement" with the Bao Dai government which allowed the former further economic expansion in Viet-Nam. According to the agreement, the United States promised to give "economic and technical assistance" to the Bao Dai government, while the Bao Dai government pledged to use this aid in ways considered appropriate by the United States. The Bao Dai government's use of this American aid was subject to approval by the U.S. Government. The

1951 Bao Dai government also promised to "eliminate restrictive practices" on the importation of foreign goods. The Bao Dai government further agreed to "provide the detailed information necessary for carrying out the provisions of this agreement," and "other relevant information which the Government of the U.S.A. may need." Besides, the Bao Dai government also agreed to receive a special U.S. mission to Viet-Nam to supervise the use of this assistance.

On September 8 and 9 the United States concluded similar agreements with the puppet governments of Cambodia and Laos.

September 18 General de Lattre de Tassigny declared at a press conference in Washington that what he sought from the United States was, primarily, to equip the four puppet divisions that were being set up and another four divisions that were being planned. According to a *New York Times* correspondent, de Lattre de Tassigny also demanded that U.S. military supplies given to France for her war in Indo-China should rate the same priority as military supplies sent to U.S. troops in Korea.

September 20 General de Lattre de Tassigny stated in a speech before the U.S. National Press Club that to the war in Indo-China France "is devoting now more than one billion dollars a year; she keeps over there permanently half of her career soldiers and more than one-fourth of her officers' corps." He gave the Americans his "word" that "if you put at the disposal of my soldiers arms and war equipment ... you will be losing neither time nor money."

Paul Reynaud, a former French Premier, said, in a speech to the Americans in August 1951: "You Americans obtain from Indo-China 89 per cent of the natural rubber and 52 per cent of the tin you consume. Consequently, it is more your interests than ours we are defending in Indo-China."

September 21 De Lattre de Tassigny concluded his talks with the U.S. Government. In the communiqué issued after the talks, the United States declared that "the programme of military aid to Indo-China has been reconsidered: at the same time, the tempo of delivery of a great number of categories of material will be considerably improved." The U.S. Government was making a study of the "increase of aid to the French and Viet-Nameese forces in Indo-China within the framework of the programme of the fiscal year of 1952."

The Viet-Nam News Agency commented on this on October 6 by stating that, no matter what aid the American imperialists might give the French colonialists, "the tendency of the war in Viet-Nam will never be changed. With the sympathy and support of the power-

ful camp of peace and democracy, the Viet-Nameese people will win final victory if only they fight on with redoubled effort." 1951

November The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam issued a statement condemning the French for their policy of "feeding war with war," and of "using Viet-Nameese to fight Viet-Nameese." The statement pointed out that the French colonialists and U.S. interventionists were making every effort to carry out such a policy in areas under their control. They were striving to set up a puppet army to fight against the Viet-Nameese people. Such a policy consisted in imposing the most barbarous oppression and exploitation on the Viet-Nameese people, as well as in hoodwinking the Viet-Nameese people by every possible means. The statement pointed out that the adoption of such a policy by the French testified to the fact that they were already unable to cope with the resistance of the Viet-Nameese people by their own strength. This policy was doomed to failure. It was arousing the hatred of all the Viet-Nameese people, first of all of those in occupied areas, and strengthening their determination to fight. The statement called upon the Viet-Nameese people to concentrate their efforts, so as to defeat the enemy's brutal plan of "feeding war with war," and "using Viet-Nameese to fight Viet-Nameese."

November 7 The Second Session of the World Peace Council adopted a Resolution on Viet-Nam and Southeast Asia which pointed out: "Among the conflicts in progress in Southeast Asia, the World Council of Peace notes that the development of war in Viet-Nam, which involves Laos and Cambodia, is increasing the danger of a new world war. The World Council of Peace calls for an immediate ceasefire in Viet-Nam and demands that there should likewise be negotiations for a general settlement of the conflict, a settlement which makes obligatory the withdrawal of foreign troops."

November 19 Georges Bidault, French Defence Minister, declared at a press conference that the war in Indo-China cost France one thousand million francs a day, and that 40,000 French officers and non-commissioned officers were serving in Indo-China, representing one-third of French cadres. Each year, he said, a full promotion of officers was wiped out there. "If it were not for Indo-China," he said, "I think we would have nothing to ask."

November 22 Daladier, a former French Premier, wrote in the French paper *L'Information*: "In 1951 alone, the official figure of our military expenditure in Indo-China reached 330,000,000,000 francs. Owing to the rise in prices and also to the constant increase of the effectives of the French Expeditionary Corps, which now amount to 188,000 men, we must expect, for the fiscal year of 1952, an augmenta-

1951 tion of expenditure of some 100,000,000,000 francs. We realize that the Indo-China war has the most serious repercussions on our financial situation and also on our military situation.... We cannot see a speedy and victorious conclusion to the war, which has lasted already five years, and which is very similar to the Spanish war in the time of Napoleon and to the Mexico expedition under the Second Empire."

December 29 Jean Letourneau, French Minister for the Associated States, told the French National Assembly, which was then debating the 1952 budget for the Indo-China war, that France had suffered heavy losses. "There is no purely military solution," he said. "But we need military strength which may lead to a political solution." He said that, in 1950 and 1951, the United States had delivered 73,000 tons of material, 60,000 million francs in value. Under the 1952 U.S. military aid programme, 45,000 million francs had been allotted up to June, when the American fiscal year ends. "This amount," he said, "was expected to be increased."

According to a report on the French military budget for Indo-China presented by Frédéric Dupont of the Finance Commission of the French National Assembly, the 1952 Indo-China military budget amounted to 326,093 million francs (the 1951 budget had been 189,098 million francs, while actual expenditure amounted to 283,327 million francs); the military personnel estimate for 1952 was 173,000 men.

However, Daladier, a former French Premier and leader of the French Radical Socialist Party, estimated that the 1952 military expenditure for the war in Indo-China would amount to 430,000 million francs. He said that France had become a prisoner to the paddy fields of Indo-China.

Pierre Courant, Minister of Budget, told the National Assembly in February 1952 that the 1952 military expenditure for the war in Indo-China would amount to 450,000 million francs and the needed military personnel would reach 202,000 men.

## 1952

February 9 The French paper *Le Monde* carried the last of a series of articles on France's aggressive war in Indo-China by Robert Guillaïn. In the series, Guillaïn admitted that American aid could only "sustain" the war, but not help "defeat the Viet-Minh." "The

1952 example of Korea has shown..." he said, "that aviation does not constitute a decisive superiority for the Americans."

Guillaïn said that the formation of an Indo-Chinese puppet army "needs a long time. It will immobilize a great number of French cadres.... The war will remain 'our' war: we alone shall pay the price of the sacrifices, an excessive price as regards the capabilities of France as well as her needs in Europe, and furthermore a price which will not be sufficient for obtaining a decisive victory." Guillaïn demanded that the French Government make a careful study, as soon as possible, of the question whether to remain in Indo-China or leave it.

February 23 The Viet-Nam People's Army liberated Hoa-Binh, capital of Hoa-Binh Province.

February 24 General Vo Nguyen Giap, Commander-in-Chief of the Viet-Nam People's Army, issued a statement saying that de Lattre de Tassigny's attempt to regain the initiative in the war had failed. The battle for Hoa-Binh, he said, had shown that neither de Lattre de Tassigny nor the U.S. interventionists could avert failure in their war of aggression against Viet-Nam.

March 13 In testifying before Congress, U.S. Secretary of Defence Robert Lovett said: "The strategical, geographical position of the area, as well as the vitally important raw materials, such as tin and rubber, which it supplies, makes it important for us to maintain an effective support of the French Government."

March 15 The French paper *Le Monde* carried an article entitled "Indo-China and France," which pointed out that the war in Indo-China was "exhausting our living forces.... France is bleeding. Her forces are declining...." "The remedy is to stop the hostilities in Indo-China," the article concluded.

April 1 The French Government appointed Jean Letourneau High Commissioner in Indo-China to succeed de Lattre de Tassigny who had died of illness in France. At the same time, General Salan was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the French forces in Indo-China.

June 3 Tran Van Huu, Premier of the puppet Bao Dai government, was succeeded by Nguyen Van Tam, former Minister of the Interior. The Viet-Nam News Agency, commenting on the resignation of Tran Van Huu on June 11, motivated it by Tran Van Huu's failure to help the French and American imperialists establish a puppet army, and carry out the policy of "feeding war with war," and "using Viet-Nameese to fight Viet-Nameese."

The new puppet Premier Nguyen Van Tam who acquired French citizenship in 1927 had been puppet Minister of Defence, Minister of

1952 Public Security and Minister of the Interior. His son Nguyen Van Hinh was chief of the general staff of the puppet army. Thus, father and son were considered suitable men to carry out the U.S.-French plan of expanding the puppet army.

June 11 Letourneau left for the United States to seek aid.

June 18 Letourneau concluded his talks in the United States. The communiqué issued after the talks stated that "the United States, for its part, will, within the limitations set by Congress, take steps to expand its aid to the French Union," and that this increased assistance "would be especially devoted" to the establishment of the Indo-Chinese puppet army. The French Government pointed out, the communiqué said, that the puppet regimes in Indo-China "now exercise full authority except that a strictly limited number of services related to the necessities of the war now in progress remain temporarily in French hands." Thus France made concessions to the American demand for further penetration into Indo-China. The French Government also acknowledged, according to the communiqué, that the puppet regimes were "free" to negotiate trade treaties and agreements of all kinds "subject only to whatever special arrangements may be agreed between members of the French Union."

U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson stressed at a press conference that he was "particularly impressed" with the work done to establish Indo-Chinese puppet armies. So far 150 ships bearing American arms and munitions had arrived in Indo-China, he said.

The British paper *Observer* on July 13 commented on the result of Letourneau's visit to the United States. The paper said: "Military experts do not believe these (the puppet armies) can be relied on... either to replace the French or alternatively to reinforce them sufficiently to permit offensive action." The paper also stated: "High French officials themselves privately concede that, given free elections, the majority of the country would probably vote for the Viet-Minh leader, Ho Chi Minh."

September 1 William O. Douglas, U.S. Supreme Court Justice, said that the Bao Dai government was unpopular. Later, in the December 1952 issue of *Look* he wrote: "The Viet-Nameese intellectuals, tired of the French regime and not sure that Bao Dai, their emperor, can manage the crisis, live day by day without hope.... Miserable peasants ... more often than not look north to Viet-Minh for their salvation.... Attitude of the people towards the French undercuts all others. Measure of popularity of a man in government or out is the degree of his independence from the French."

September 18 Hoppenot, French delegate to the United Nations, at a meeting of the Security Council, demanded the admission of the

1952 three puppet regimes of Viet-Nam, Cambodia, and Laos to the United Nations. Hoppenot, on the one hand, declared that the French Government "has never withdrawn its recognition" of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, while, on the other, he slandered the latter calling its resistance to French aggression as "underground activities." Hoppenot tried to represent the Bao Dai regime as a "free and independent sovereign state." Nevertheless, the Bao Dai regime, even in its application for admission to the United Nations, had to admit that it had not been able to "set up such representative assemblies as it would have wished."

September 19 In the Security Council, Yakov Malik, Soviet delegate to the United Nations, supported the repeated application of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam for admission to the United Nations. Malik pointed out that the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam was the expression of the time-honoured aspirations, will and supreme right of the Viet-Nameese people to be free and independent, to liberate themselves from domination and oppression by foreign colonialists. The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam was the only legal government in the country and was willing to undertake and fulfil the obligations contained in the U.N. Charter.

Malik further pointed out that to admit to the United Nations the Indo-Chinese puppet regimes, set up by France with the support and assistance of the U.S.A., would be an insult to the national sentiments of the Indo-Chinese people who were waging a heroic struggle for their freedom and national independence. It would constitute an absolutely unjust international action. Therefore, the Soviet delegation would vote against their admission to the United Nations, and proposed the admission of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam to membership in the United Nations.

The Soviet proposal was rejected by the U.S.-controlled U.N. majority. At the same time, on account of Soviet opposition, the French proposal for the admission of the Indo-Chinese puppet regimes was not carried.

October 4 Le Dinh Tham, leader of Viet-Nam delegation to the Peace Conference of the Asian and Pacific Regions, made a report to the conference. He pointed out that the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam had not only scored successive victories on the battlefield but had also made brilliant achievements in the field of national construction. The People's Government of Viet-Nam, he said, paid great attention to the improvement of the people's living conditions and encouraged them to produce more. In 1952, the Viet-Nameese people were striving to fulfil the plan for increasing production and practising economy. Agricultural production had risen by 10 per cent. Neither famine nor epidemics had occurred in the liberated areas dur-

1952 ing the seven years of war. Since August 1945, 14 million people had learned to read and write. In 1952, he said, 70 per cent of the population would be able to read and write as compared with 10 per cent under the French colonial regime.

Le Dinh Tham stressed that the Viet-Nameese people loved peace. In Viet-Nam, the Stockholm Appeal was signed by 5 million people and the Berlin Appeal by over 9 million. He demanded to put an immediate end to armed intervention in Viet-Nam, Pathet Lao, Khmer and Malaya and the withdrawal from these countries of all foreign troops. He demanded that all the peoples be given the right to national independence and the right to manage their own affairs.

October 12 The Peace Conference of the Asian and Pacific Regions adopted an Appeal to the Peoples of the World calling for "Immediate peace in Korea on a just and reasonable basis, an end to the wars in Viet-Nam, Malaya and other regions, and the withdrawal of all foreign troops from these regions."

October 13 Brigadier-General W. H. Trapnell, head of the American Military Aid Advisory Group in Indo-China, said that the U.S. "has speeded up considerably" the delivery of military equipment to the French aggressive forces in Indo-China. General Raoul Salan, Commander-in-Chief of the French forces in Indo-China, declared that, in the preceding four months, 42,000 tons of new equipment had arrived in Indo-China from the United States.

October 17 The Viet-Nam People's Army liberated Nghia-Lo, a key city in the province of Yen-Bai. Nghia-Lo was the site of one of the four sub-zones of the "Northwest War Zone" of the French forces. During the attack on Nghia-Lo, General Gonzales Linares, Commander of the French forces in northern Viet-Nam, directed the fighting from an aeroplane, and gave orders for the first day-and-night bombing raid since the start of the war of aggression against Viet-Nam. In spite of all this, Nghia-Lo was liberated by the Viet-Nam People's Army after three days' fighting.

The spokesman of the French Command declared that the loss of Nghia-Lo situated on the road to the country's rich rice paddies was the worst defeat suffered by the French army in the past nine months.

In a report to the National Assembly on October 24 on the battle for Nghia-Lo, René Pleven, French Defence Minister, said the loss of Nghia-Lo was "a painful blow to French prestige."

October 25 French President Vincent Auriol declared in a speech: "Doubtless the Marshall Plan has helped us and we have often referred to its benefits with gratitude. But alas! the defence of freedom in Indo-China has cost us materially about double of what we have

1952 received under this plan and under military aid programme—1,600,000 millions compared with 800,000 millions. And should we have to remind, too, that justice be done us for our irreplaceable human losses? And for whom were these sacrifices of our officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers? For our own interests? No!"

November 19 The Viet-Nam People's Army pressed forward victoriously and liberated Moc-Chau, gateway to Son-La Province. More than two thousand French troops were put out of action.

November 22 The Viet-Nam People's Army liberated Son-La, capital of Son-La Province.

On the same day the French Communist Party issued a statement which said: "The French Communist Party ... solemnly reaffirms that the only policy consistent with the interests of France is to make peace, by recognizing the legitimate aspirations to freedom and independence of the Viet-Nameese people who are rallying around ... President Ho Chi Minh." The French Communist Party pointed out: "Only such a policy would allow France to establish friendly relations based on equality of rights with the people of Viet-Nam and to develop economic and cultural relations with the Viet-Nameese people in the interests of the peoples of the two countries."

November 23 A spokesman of the Viet-Nam People's Army pointed out in a statement that in the forty days beginning October 14, the Viet-Nam People's Army put 8,500 enemy troops out of action on the northern Viet-Nam front alone.

November 24 A U.S. spokesman announced that the airlift between the U.S. West Coast and Indo-China would be doubled from December 1. It had been established, the spokesman said, to speed up the delivery to Indo-China of certain urgently needed materials. The U.S. Mutual Security Agency on November 14 allocated 11,529,000 dollars as aid to France in the Indo-China war. Thus, from the second half of 1950 till then, total American aid had increased to 64,321,000 dollars. An A.P. report of November 11, 1952 said: "These figures do not include direct military aid, which is far larger, although the figures are secret."

December 17 Pierre de Chevigne, French Vice-Minister of Defence, declared that the Indo-China war had cost France dearly in manpower and that this was most painful to the French. He said that the material cost was more than three times greater than U.S. aid. If France had only her own interests in mind, he declared, she could have given up both U.S. aid and Indo-China.

December 18 U.S. Mutual Security Agency announced the allocation of 30,500,000 dollars for the military expenditure of the three

1952 puppet regimes in Indo-China. The same organization on December 17 authorized the three puppet regimes to buy military supplies worth 11,178,000 dollars.

**December 19** The Congress of the Peoples for Peace adopted a resolution appealing for "the immediate ending of hostilities in Viet-Nam, Laos, Cambodia and Malaya, with unqualified respect for the right to independence of the peoples concerned."

On the same day the *Washington Post* carried an article by the Alsop brothers, which said that after the inauguration of Eisenhower, it was almost positive that a new bold plan for winning the Indo-China war in two years would be adopted. This new plan would call for further French reinforcements to Indo-China, the article said, while the U.S. would agree considerably to increase military supplies. France would be urged to make a definite promise to give "independence" to the Indo-Chinese puppet regimes within a certain time-limit.

*The Times* (London), in a commentary dated December 22, 1952, on the conditions for further American aid to France, said: "There can be little doubt, in fact, that greater American involvement in Indo-China would be accompanied by political intervention."

## 1953

**January 2** The *Manchester Guardian* of Britain noted in an editorial that the "plan" being discussed between the United States and France was for increased U.S. military aid on the condition that more French troops were dispatched to Indo-China, and that there was "a declaration of co-responsibility." The paper added that if France were to agree to any such "plan," it would clearly be only after "pretty hard bargaining."

Commenting on the French position in Viet-Nam, the paper admitted: "Independence itself is still a pretence in Bao Dai's Viet-Nam, as it is bound to be while French armies occupy the country." And "It is always hard for a population to feel that an army of occupation is its friend."

**February 18** John Foster Dulles, U.S. Secretary of State, told a press conference that the principal object of U.S. policy in Indo-China was to train "local armies." He declared that American experience in

Korea in this respect might be useful for Indo-China and the United States prepared to give the French the benefit of it. 1953

Earlier, on February 3, *New York Post* columnist Robert Allen wrote that Dulles was "bluntly telling France that it is not doing enough" to settle the Indo-Chinese question. He also revealed that Dulles demanded that the training of Indo-Chinese puppet officers "be done by the U.S."

Marshal Alphonse Juin of France arrived in Tokyo at the invitation of Mark Clark, Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Forces in the Far East, to discuss "matters of mutual interest." In a statement issued before his departure on February 24, Juin declared that France would continue to work for the formation of a "native army" of Viet-Nam to fight the Viet-Nameese people.

**February 21** The U.S. State Department announced that U.S. military aid to France and its puppets in Indo-China had had a "priority" second only to arms for the Korean fighting. Commenting on this announcement, the French paper, *Le Combat*, stated on February 24 that this American decision to give "priority" to arms shipments to Indo-China constituted "the most disastrous kind of internationalization" of the struggle in Viet-Nam for France and "it made even the most stubborn Frenchmen see that their role in Indo-China was no longer an important one."

**February 22** Hanson Baldwin, writing in the *New York Times* on the U.S. "new policy" in Indo-China, said that Washington's plan was to "enlist Asians" and "build up the native Viet-Nameese Army." He continued: "Other elements in the plan must include more arms aid for Indo-China from the United States, and perhaps a Southeast Asia command.... Even more dramatic measures such as United States naval and air support for the French and the Viet-Nameese (Bao Dai) are possible."

**February 24** The French-Bao Dai "High Military Committee" met at Dalat, and announced in a communiqué that it had decided on the creation in 1953 of 54 Viet-Nameese puppet battalions and that the Bao Dai government "would proceed with the conscription of numerous classes of citizens."

**March 3** Son Ngoc Minh, President of the Khmer Central People's Liberation Committee, in a cable to President Ho Chi Minh and the National Committee of the Lien-Viet Front, stated: "The Khmer people will with redoubled efforts strengthen their solidarity and friendship with the Viet-Nameese people. They pledge to stand closely united and, with determination, to carry on their fight against the French imperialists and the American interventionists until the Khmer"

and Viet-Nameese people get real freedom and happiness, no matter how long and how hard the resistance war of Khmer will be."

**March 18** Jean Letourneau declared in Saigon that the United States had the right to inspect the use of American supplies in the Indo-China war, "but I am running French policy here." He added: "Because of the charges she (France) assumes in Indo-China, she insists on full responsibility of command as America does in Korea."

**March 19** Mark Clark, U.S. Far East Commander, arrived in Saigon. Meanwhile, the French Secretary of State for the Navy Jacques Gavini and Secretary of State for the Air Force Pierre Montel had also arrived in Viet-Nam. The *Washington Evening Star* described Clark's visit as aimed at establishing an "Anti-Communist Front in Asia." The paper observed that Clark was ostensibly paying Juin a return visit, but that he had been instructed to study ways and means to establish overall military co-operation on the battlefronts in Korea and Indo-China. During his stay in Viet-Nam, Clark consulted with the French authorities and the Bao Dai puppet clique. At a press conference in Hanoi on March 23, he described the wars in Korea and Indo-China as "a single fight." He said that the plan mapped out at the Dalat meeting to set up 54 puppet battalions was "a good first," but that the "Viet-Nameese army should be developed still further."

**March 20** U.S. Ambassador to the Indo-Chinese puppet states, Donald Heath, said at a press conference in Paris that he believed that "a military solution not only is possible, but probable" for the war in Indo-China and that the French would win.

**March 24** French Premier René Mayer left for the United States to exchange views with President Eisenhower. The talks ended on March 28. A communiqué on the talks stated: "The French Government reasserted its resolve to do its utmost to increase the effectiveness of the French and Associated States forces in Indo-China, with a view to destroying the organized Communist forces." It stressed the "interdependence" of the Korean war and the Indo-China war. The French also agreed to the U.S. ban on the transport of so-called "cargoes of strategic materials" to China.

Commenting on the U.S.-French talks, the London *Sunday Times* stated that the United States, while assuring the French of its desire to "contribute" to the war in Indo-China, nevertheless made its aid conditional on the French submitting "detailed strategic plans" for victory within about two years. Regarding this two-year "strategic plans," Jean Letourneau, who had accompanied René Mayer to Washington, told American reporters on April 4 that he was afraid that the "plan" could not be carried out in that time and that he would

rather have a much longer time for the execution of the "plans," otherwise the "plans" would be deceptive.

**March 25** The French Government concluded its talks with puppet Cambodian king Norodom Sihanouk in Paris. In a communiqué issued after the talks, the French Government announced its recognition of the "sovereignty" in domestic affairs of Cambodia "within the French Union." Other questions regarding the financial, economic and judicial rights of Cambodia remained unsettled.

**April 1** Adlai Stevenson, former presidential candidate of the U.S. Democratic Party, arrived in Saigon on an inspection tour. He declared: "War had to be won first." Writing in the American magazine, *Look*, after his return to the United States, Stevenson stated: "If the U.S. is to bear more and more of the burden, both France and Viet-Nam should welcome greater American participation in policy-making."

**April 13** The Lao People's Liberation Army entered Sam-Nua, an important post in northern Pathet Lao and, subsequently, liberated the whole province of Sam-Nua. Sam-Nua was a reservoir of manpower and material resources and had been the biggest French military bastion in Pathet Lao. The Lao People's Liberation Army, which formed its first contingent at the end of 1949 and, with the support of the people, had repeatedly defeated French "mopping-up" operations, had now become a powerful force.

**April 17** The National Resistance Government of Pathet Lao pointed out in a statement that the liberation of Sam-Nua was a great victory in the protracted, hard-fought war of resistance of Pathet Lao.

A U.S. State Department spokesman said: "The government of the United States is following the developments in Laos with the closest attention." "The United States," he added, "will continue to provide and will study ways and means of making more effective its assistance" to "destroy" the Lao People's Liberation Army.

**April 18** John Foster Dulles, in a speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, said that the United States had told the French Government and the Indo-Chinese puppet states that "we would be favourably disposed to giving increased military and financial assistance to plans realistically designed to suppress the Communist-inspired civil war."

**April 19** Souphanouvong, Premier of the Pathet Lao Resistance Government, stated during an inspection tour of the upper Pathet Lao front that the Lao people must eliminate the French colonialists, U.S. interventionists and the Lao traitors. He declared: "The Na-

1953 tional Resistance Government of Pathet Lao elected by the People's Congress is the only legitimate government of Pathet Lao."

May 2 John Foster Dulles, in a statement on the situation in Pathet Lao, said that the United States was "maintaining close contact with" the French Government and the puppet Lao government "regarding the special requirements of the situation. We have already taken steps to expedite the delivery of critically needed military items" to the French and puppet Lao troops.

Ray Cromley, writing in the *American Wall Street Journal* the previous day, had observed that "Secretary of State Dulles and his men are going to try to make a deal with the French to 'drop everything' and rush all the new troops they can to Indo-China as quickly as possible" to fight the Lao People's Liberation Army. He added that the United States would promise the French that it would "back them up with a rapid flow of more weapons, more ammunition and more planes."

May 4 Alexander Wiley, Chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, stated at a news conference in Chicago that the United States should turn the atomic bomb over to the French for use in the Indo-China war.

May 5 Jean Letourneau, arriving in Saigon from Paris, stated that the French had "the firm intention" of not abandoning any one of the states which were associated with them. He said that the United States was determined to help France carry on the Indo-China war.

May 7 French Foreign Minister Georges Bidault handed to U.S. Ambassador in Paris, Douglas Dillon, a memorandum containing French objections to submitting the question of Pathet Lao to the United Nations. Earlier, a U.S. State Department spokesman disclosed that the U.S. Government had consulted with France over the possibility of bringing the Indo-Chinese question before the United Nations.

On April 18, the American Scripps-Howard papers pointed out editorially that the French opposed U.N. interference for fear that this would internationalize the war and impair French prestige in Indo-China.

The British weekly, *New Statesman and Nation*, urged France to "make the best terms she can with the popular movement." The weekly saw immediate danger in the "Western world" taking part in a war which was "as futile as it is unjust" to save "this outpost of French colonialism." It said that France's decision to fight the independence movement of the Indo-Chinese people, instead of coming to terms with it, was from the beginning both morally wrong

and politically suicidal. It continued: "To the people of Indo-China, as well as to the rest of Asia, this is a colonial war. The issue at stake is whether the French will withdraw or be thrown out by the rising of a colonial people." The weekly noted that the "peoples who were backward under French rule are now encouraged to build up their country's economy and to raise their living standards." The British weekly *Tribune*, commenting on the attempt to submit the question of Pathet Lao to the U.N., stated on May 8: "If it is claimed that Indo-China is to be made a field for United Nations action, the way would be opened for turning every civil war and every colonial war into a world contest."

American pilots began taking a direct part in the Indo-China war and air-dropping supplies to the puppet Lao troops. A French command spokesman described the air-dropping as "a trial run to give the Americans the feel of the country."

On May 11, Claire Chennault's air transport line announced that its pilots had been flying U.S. Air Force C-119 military cargo planes to supply the French and puppet Lao troops.

May 8 The French government appointed Henri Navarre to replace R. Salan as Commander-in-Chief of French armed forces in Indo-China.

May 9 John Foster Dulles disclosed at a press conference the eagerness of the United States to intervene in the Indo-China war. Within 24 hours of the French request for assistance, the United States had agreed to dispatch aircraft to Indo-China. Within another 24 hours the aircraft had been transferred to the Far East Command, and within another 24 hours American pilots had been found to fly the planes. He also revealed that the United States was sending to Thailand "certain amounts" of ammunition. In reply to questions, Dulles said that the French felt it disadvantageous to bring the question of Pathet Lao before the United Nations, but American and French officials were "continuing to exchange views on the object." He added that if Thailand took the question to the United Nations, he would sympathize with this action.

Discussions between the French Government and the delegation led by the puppet Cambodian Premier, Penn Nouth, ended with the initialling of a "provisional agreement" under which the puppet king of Cambodia was given the title of Commander-in-Chief of the puppet Cambodian Army and would "assume responsibility for security and the maintenance of order within his kingdom." The agreement provided that the puppet Cambodian Government would be accorded "jurisdictional competence" but it must "take all necessary measures to safeguard French interests in Cambodia." "In the economic and financial fields," the agreement said, "certain clauses"

1953 of the "Pau Conventions" would "be modified," subject to the consent of the two other puppet governments in Indo-China.

Norodom Sihanouk, puppet king of Cambodia, commenting on this "provisional agreement" in Tokyo on May 11, admitted that there was still a long way to go before the "political independence" of Cambodia was attained.

June 6 Bao Dai promulgated a conscription law under which all men under the puppet regime must serve two years in the army.

June 13 Norodom Sihanouk, puppet king of Cambodia, fled to Thailand. In a statement on June 14, he attributed his action to France's reluctance to grant "independence" to Cambodia, although this was only an "independence within the French Union" aimed at "effective military co-operation" with France. After an 8-day stay in Thailand, Sihanouk returned to Cambodia on June 20. On July 2, he issued a message to the people which revealed that his so-called "independence" was to place Cambodia under direct U.S. control to pursue the U.S.-French policy of using Indo-Chinese to fight Indo-Chinese. Sihanouk urged in this message that the size of the Cambodian puppet army be increased from five to ten times. "In that way," he said, "we will be able to forge a proof to present to the big nations which sponsor anti-Communist enterprises" of the possibility of obtaining "independence" for Cambodia. By "big nations which sponsor anti-Communist enterprises," Sihanouk meant, in fact, the United States.

June 18 Dwelling on the relation between the puppet Cambodian king's demand for "independence" and the United States, the French weekly, *l'Observateur*, said that the ulterior motives behind U.S. encouragement to Cambodian "independence" were: (1) economically, the construction of a port on the Cambodian coast would have great significance for future investment in Cambodia; (2) strategically, as the Gulf of Tonkin was too exposed, a neutralized Gulf of Siam would be very advantageous to U.S. strategy in Southeast Asia; (3) politically, since Cambodia bordered on pro-American Thailand, with the help of Cambodia it should be easier to form a "confederation" including Thailand, Laos and the Malayan peninsula. At the same time, the United States was afraid that France, when defeated in Viet-Nam, would seek peace without the approval of the United States; thus it became necessary to retain Cambodia as a means to bring pressure to bear upon France.

June 20 The World Peace Council, in a resolution calling for the opening of a world campaign for peace, urged the immediate signing of a Korean armistice agreement and pointed out: "In the same

1953 way an end must be put to all the other wars and aggressive actions now in progress against the independence of the peoples."

A United States Military Mission headed by John W. O'Daniel, Commander of U.S. Land Forces in the Pacific, arrived in Saigon. A communiqué issued by the French Foreign Ministry said that "the purpose of the mission was to hold conversations with General Henri Eugene Navarre, French Supreme Commander in Indo-China, with a view to discovering in what ways material and financial assistance from the U.S. could more efficiently contribute to the defeat of Communist forces. It was essential to ensure a closer adaptation of U.S. assistance to the plans established by the French and associated states authorities." In a broadcast speech on July 9, when he was about to leave, O'Daniel declared: "I do not doubt that the combined efforts of French Union forces and the associated states forces could win their war... I am also certain that the Eisenhower government will do whatever is within its power to furnish the indispensable equipment for development of this army."

June 27 The French National Conference for Negotiations and Peace, sponsored by the National Peace Council of France, took place in Paris on June 27 and 28 with the participation of 1,870 representatives from all walks of life of over 80 departments. The Conference unanimously adopted a resolution on the Indo-Chinese question, calling for the cessation of war and advocating negotiations. It stressed that the cessation of the war against the Viet-Nameese people had become a "recognized national necessity" for France.

In June, peace rallies and demonstrations took place all over France. According to a *l'Humanité* report, 102 mass rallies for peace and cessation of the Viet-Nam war were held in 42 provinces of France.

July 2 The U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee adopted a resolution authorizing the loan of the aircraft carrier *Belleau Wood* to France for use in Indo-China. The carrier was turned over to the French Navy on September 5 at San Francisco.

July 3 The French Government issued a declaration granting "independence" to the three puppet states in Indo-China. The declaration said that the French considered it fitting that these states had "complete independence and sovereignty" but that they should "associate themselves with France in the French Union." The French Government had decided, the declaration continued, to discuss with each of the three puppet regimes separately "the settlement of questions which each of them feels should be raised in the economic, financial, judicial, military and political domains." At the same time,

1953 it was stressed that the discussions should be carried on "with respect for, and protection of, the legitimate interests of" France.

Commenting on this French manoeuvre, the Viet-Nam paper *Nhandan* (People) said that this grant of bogus independence to France's puppets was designed to extract from them under false pretences more manpower and material resources for aggressive war. The paper exposed the role the United States played in this deal, stating that France was forced to make this "concession" not in the interests of the Indo-Chinese people, but to bring the three puppets actually under direct U.S. control and to give the U.S. greater power in Indo-China.

The French Government appointed its Ambassador to Japan, Maurice Dejean, High Commissioner in Indo-China. According to a French Government announcement of April 27, Dejean would have authority over the French commissioners in the three Indo-Chinese puppet states. Dejean declared his first task to be continuation of the war in Indo-China.

July 14 The conference between the foreign ministers of the United States, Britain and France concluded. A communiqué issued after the conference, in referring to Far Eastern affairs, described the French aggressive war on Indo-China as "essential to the free world" and stated vaguely that the three foreign ministers had "exchanged views on various measures to hasten... the restoration of peace in Indo-China." But the French paper, *Le Monde*, pointed out on July 21 that at this conference Dulles had laid down two conditions before Bidault as the prerequisites for further U.S. aid to France, namely: (1) France must carry out the "Navarre Plan" to step up the Indo-China war; and (2) the United States would henceforth discuss economic and military aid directly with the Bao Dai government. Bidault accepted these two conditions. In essence, the "Navarre Plan," so enthusiastically supported by Dulles, means the concentration of troops for an attack on the northern Viet-Nam plain; tighter control of French-occupied areas; pursuing the policy of "feeding the war with war"; increasing and reorganizing the French troops and, especially, expanding the puppet troops in time with the policy of "using Viet-Nameese to fight Viet-Nameese." The "Navarre Plan," as laid down, was to be carried through within 18 months.

July 17 John Foster Dulles, in a speech to the people of the United States on the world situation, stressed that "in Indo-China it will save us from having to spend much more money to protect our vital interests in the Pacific."

July 27 French public opinion welcomed the signing of the Korean

1953 Armistice Agreement, in the hope that the war in Indo-China would also be brought to an end. The French paper, *Le Combat*, asked why Paris could not negotiate with Ho Chi Minh, just as Washington had negotiated with Kim Il Sung. Mitterand, Chairman of the Democratic and Socialist Union of Resistance, declared that the armistice in Korea should lead to negotiations in Indo-China.

July 31 The U.S. Congress, in a joint session of the Senate and the House of Representatives, approved the appropriation of 400 million dollars demanded by the U.S. Government for support of the war in Indo-China.

August 3 Bao Dai arrived in Paris to confer with the French President on the grant of "independence" to the Viet-Nam puppet regime. The protracted talks went on without results. On September 4, Bao Dai's puppet premier Nguyen Van Tam went to France to confer with the French Premier Joseph Laniel.

August 4 Eisenhower, in addressing U.S. Governors at Seattle, expressed his determination to continue the Indo-China war and stressed the importance of Indo-China in his plan for aggression in Asia. He stated that if the United States lost Indo-China, the whole of Southeast Asia would be lost and "the tin and tungsten that we so greatly value from that area would cease coming."

August 9-10 Under the powerful pressure of the Viet-Nam People's Army, the French troops had to evacuate Na-Sam, an important strategic post in northwestern Viet-Nam.

August 18 The U.S. State Department issued a pamphlet entitled "Indo-China: the War in Viet-Nam, Cambodia and Laos," which outlined the aid which the United States had given to French and puppet troops in Indo-China during the past one and a half years. The pamphlet stated: "The U.S. contribution... now amounts to about one-third of the cost of the war in Indo-China. Thus far we have supplied the French Union forces and the national armies of Cambodia, Laos and Viet-Nam with more than 170 million rounds of small-arms ammunition; 16,000 transport vehicles and trailers; 850 combat vehicles; 350 military aircraft; 250 naval craft; 10,500 radio sets; 90,000 small-arms and automatic shells."

August 19 President Ho Chi Minh addressed a message to all Viet-Nameese troops and people, on the occasion of the eighth anniversary of the Viet-Nam August Revolution and Independence Day. He pointed out in this message that the Korean Armistice had strengthened the French people's movement against the French aggressive war in Viet-Nam, caused further deterioration of the

1953 morale of the French invading forces, and struck fear into the hearts of the puppet troops and puppet rulers. The French colonialists, the U.S. interventionists and their puppets had therefore, President Ho Chi Minh continued, tried to deck themselves out with make-believe olive branches and talked about "independence," so as to lessen the Viet-Nameese people's determination to resist, while, at the same time, stepping up their preparations to extend the aggressive war. President Ho Chi Minh stressed the Viet-Nameese people's stand for peace, but said that peace would come only with the real unification and independence of the country. In conclusion, he urged all the troops and people of the country to be ready to crush the enemy's aggressive schemes.

September 2 John Foster Dulles, speaking before the National Committee of the American Legion at St. Louis, Missouri, asked the public to support the U.S. Government's continued intervention in Indo-China. He declared: "In Indo-China a desperate struggle is in its eighth year. The outcome affects our own vital interests in the Western Pacific, and we are already contributing largely in material and money to the combined efforts of the French and of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia." Dulles admitted that the "program" to paint the Indo-Chinese puppets in false colours of "independence" was "along lines which the United States has encouraged." He said that "increased U.S. aid" was justified, provided it would "assure" that the war in Indo-China was carried on with "vigor."

September 7 The French High Commissioner in Indo-China, Maurice Dejean, told reporters in Hanoi that there was "no possibility of negotiations with Ho Chi Minh."

September 8 Nguyen Van Tam, "premier" of the Bao Dai government, concluded his talks with French Premier Joseph Laniel in Paris. A communiqué on the talks reiterated in general terms the French Government's willingness to negotiate at an early date the question of "independence" of the Bao Dai government "within the French Union." The French Government was said to hope that agreement reached in the negotiations would induce Bao Dai to throw all his military strength into the war against the Viet-Nameese people. Nguyen Van Tam also expressed the hope that the negotiations would enable the Bao Dai government to serve the French better in the war.

The Viet-Nam News Agency, commenting on the Paris visits of Bao Dai and Nguyen Van Tam for negotiations, pointed out that France was obviously not willing to renounce her privileges, though she had, on July 3, announced her intention to wrap the Indo-Chinese

puppet regimes in the mantle of sham independence. The news agency continued that the French had summoned Bao Dai and Nguyen Van Tam to Paris in order to pull them away from American influence and to make them announce that they would remain in the French Union and do their best, together with France, to carry on the aggressive war.

September 10 The Standing Committee of the World Peace Council adopted a resolution, calling on the peoples of the world to fight for cessation of the war in Indo-China. The resolution stated that the violence used against the independence and security of many nations in Asia and Africa had to be stopped, if peace was to be secured.

September 23 President Ho Chi Minh warmly congratulated the troops and people of southern Viet-Nam, in a message issued on the occasion of the eighth anniversary of the war of resistance in the region. He pointed out that Viet-Nam's protracted war of resistance was heading towards certain victory. But he also stressed that, the greater defeat the French invading forces suffered, the more savage they would become. He called for the closest unity of all Viet-Nameese troops and people; for emulation drives in production; for active participation in the fighting; for a strengthened network of guerilla bases and for continued readiness to strike at the French and puppet troops.

The French mustered 17 mobile battalions, supported by artillery, warships and aircraft, in a three-pronged attack on the areas north of Loc-Giang on the left bank of the Red River. This was the biggest offensive carried out by the French troops in accordance with the "Navarre Plan" to "pacify" the northern Viet-Nam plain, and was called "Operation Pike." The French troops suffered casualties of 1,793 men within ten days and were finally forced to retreat. In early August, French troops had already begun frantic "mopping up" operations in the northern Viet-Nam plain. They staged several attacks against areas south of Nam-Dinh Province and the My-Duc area of Ha-Dong Province in August, and against the Tien-Lang area of Kien-An Province in early September. All these attacks were repulsed and more than 1,500 French troops put out of action in the campaign south of Nam-Dinh Province alone.

September 30 A joint U.S.-French communiqué concerning additional U.S. aid for French aggression in Indo-China was issued in which the United States promised to allot an additional sum not exceeding 385 million dollars to France prior to December 31, 1954. This further U.S. aid brought to a total of 785 million dollars U.S. aid granted to France up to the end of 1954. In this communiqué

the French Government declared also that it was "determined to make every effort" for carrying on the war in Indo-China and promised to increase the number of French troops in Indo-China, in complete disregard of the anti-war feelings of the French people. The French Government promised also to increase the Indo-Chinese puppet forces and to continue the policy of sham independence for these regimes.

Commenting on this French Government decision to line up behind Washington in order to continue the war in Indo-China, the French paper, *Le Combat*, wrote on October 2: "The situation is clear: the government obeys Washington's orders and wants to continue the struggle." The newspaper *Paris-Normandie* observed that the French people wanted that exhausting and largely fratricidal war to cease as soon as possible and that "they would condemn any French Government that did not seize the chance of negotiating when such a chance presented itself."

**October 15** Twelve mobile battalions of French troops under the direct command of Henri Navarre, and René Cogny, French Northern Front Commander in Viet-Nam, started the invasion of the liberated areas in the Ninh-Binh and Thanh-Hoa Provinces. This was the so-called "Operation Seagull" of the "Navarre Plan" which the French had bragged about as the biggest offensive since the outbreak of the Indo-China war. But in the first five days of the offensive against the southwestern part of Ninh-Binh, fourteen French companies were wiped out.

**October 17** The National Congress stage-managed by the Bao Dai government closed after it began its sittings on the 12th. The Bao Dai government had calculated that the holding of this congress would enable it to cover up the hypocrisy in negotiating for "independence" with the French, by a show of "listening to public opinion." The result of the congress, however, proved to be just the opposite. On the 15th, the congress adopted a resolution refusing to join the French Union and announced the nullification of all previous agreements between Bao Dai and France. Nevertheless, through French interference, the resolution was modified the following day to read that the Bao Dai government would not join the French Union under present conditions, but sign with France a treaty of alliance on the basis of equality.

The proceedings of the puppet National Congress and the resolution it had passed caused great dissatisfaction within the French Government. Marc Jacquet, French State Secretary for the Associated States of Indo-China, who arrived in Viet-Nam on the 15th, warned officials of the Bao Dai government that such unacceptable resolutions might cause severe repercussions in France.

The French continued their policy of using the Indo-Chinese fight Indo-Chinese and signed a military agreement with the puppet regime of Cambodia. The agreement provided that operations in areas along the right bank of the Mekong River would be under the command of the puppet army of Cambodia, while areas along the left bank of the Mekong River would be under the direct control of the French troops.

**October 21** The Third World Trade Union Congress adopted a resolution to mark December 19, 1953, the Viet-Nameese people's national resistance day, as a day of active solidarity with the Viet-Nameese people, a day of struggle for the termination of the colonial war in Viet-Nam.

**October 22** In Paris, France and the puppet government of Laos signed the "French-Laotian Treaty of Friendship and Association" under which France recognized the puppet Lao regime as "a fully independent and sovereign state" while the latter "reaffirms its adherence to the French Union."

**October 23** The French National Assembly began its debate on the Indo-China question. Many members of the Assembly demanded that the Government embark on negotiations with the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam so as to end the war in Indo-China. The Communist Party of France put forward a resolution asking that "negotiations be opened without delay with the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam to put an end to the fighting and bring about a peace treaty." The resolution also asked the Assembly for a vote of non-confidence in the Government. The French Socialists tabled a motion demanding that the Government "undertake with the shortest possible delay and with firm determination" to start international negotiations and negotiations with the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam in order to end the war. Edouard Daladier, a former French Premier and a Radical Socialist, also proposed that the Government embark on negotiations "which could lead to an armistice." The Radical Socialist parliamentary group decided to support Daladier's proposal.

**October 27** Premier Joseph Laniel delivered a speech at the National Assembly, in which he admitted that the war waged by the French Government in Indo-China was unpopular. He added, however, that great power was necessary for either negotiations or fighting and that the military aid from the U.S.A. would strengthen the military position of France.

Early next morning, after an all-night session, the French National Assembly adopted the Government-backed resolution tabled by

1953 Kuehn by 315 votes to 251. The resolution dealt generally with the search for a "generalized peace in Asia by negotiation." But it called for a policy to "develop" the puppet troops in Indo-China, to "assure... a just balance of the efforts and sacrifices" of the western countries and to "insist" that the puppet states of Indo-China achieve their independence "within the structure of the French Union." French public opinion pointed out that whereas, in 1948, only five non-Communist members of the National Assembly had voted against the war in Indo-China, at this time 151 non-Communist members voted against it.

**October 31** U.S. Vice-President Richard Nixon arrived at Saigon on his visit to Asian countries. Before his arrival at Saigon, he had stated at Bangkok that it was "essential" to continue the war in Indo-China which, he declared, was "the key to the situation in Southeast Asia." After his arrival in Viet-Nam, he went to see Bao Dai at Dalat on November 1 to ask for greater efforts in continuing the war. When he arrived at Hanoi on November 3, he told French and puppet Bao Dai army officers that "under no circumstances should there be negotiations." He declared that he would advise Eisenhower to send "all the equipment which can be absorbed and provided" to the French and puppet Bao Dai troops.

**November 6** French troops participating in "Operation Seagull" in northern Viet-Nam were forced to withdraw all their units from Ria and Highway No. 59 as a result of their failure, for the second time, to take Phunhoquan.

The Viet-Nam People's Army on this front wiped out one battalion and over 11 companies of French and puppet troops. At the same time, the People's Army operating in the enemy's rear wiped out two battalions and five companies of French and puppet troops. The "Navarre Plan" again suffered a fiasco, losing three battalions and more than 16 companies of French and puppet troops.

**November 8** The Seventh National Congress of the French Democratic and Socialist Union of Resistance adopted a resolution drafted by its Foreign Affairs Committee calling for immediate cessation of the war in Indo-China.

**November 12** French Premier Joseph Laniel told the National Assembly during a debate on the Indo-China issue that: "France is disposed to seize every occasion to negotiate, every chance to make peace." "If an honourable solution" were in sight, he added, "at the local or international level, France . . . would be happy to welcome a solution to the conflict by diplomatic means." But, Laniel added: "We have the means to continue the war with vigour." He

1953 demanded that the puppet governments in Indo-China "exert the necessary effort" to carry on the war and threatened them that if they failed to do so, "France would consider herself no longer bound by her obligations" and the French Government "would be capable of fundamentally revising its policy."

The American *Christian Science Monitor*, commenting on the 18th on Laniel's attitude towards a peaceful settlement of the Indo-Chinese question, stated: "French officials below the level of Premier Joseph Laniel are reluctant to talk of a negotiated settlement for several reasons. First, it appears to contravene existing understandings with the United States on how the war should be run." The French paper, *Le Monde*, carried an article saying that "the war in Indo-China appears more and more to be a task for which we are being paid on behalf of foreign interests."

**November 20** U.S. Senator Alexander Wiley (Rep.), Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, issued a statement urging France to step up the Indo-China war so as to win a "decisive victory." He said that a decisive victory would be "cheaper in the long run than to do a little bit, piecemeal, and have the war drag on and on."

**November 22** A national conference for negotiations with Viet-Nam was held in Paris. Present at the conference were many parliament members, departmental councillors, municipal councillors, professors, representatives of religious circles and representatives of different organizations. The conference adopted a resolution demanding the French Government to conduct peace negotiations and calling on the entire French people to struggle for the cessation of the Indo-China war.

**November 23** Le Dinh Tham, Chairman of the Viet-Nam Peace Committee, said at the Vienna session of the World Peace Council that the scheme worked out by the U.S. and French imperialists to continue and extend the Indo-China war is doomed to failure. He pointed out that the Viet-Nameese people yearn for peace and want to end the war in Viet-Nam through negotiation so as to settle the Viet-Nam issue by peaceful means. Finally, Le Dinh Tham proposed: 1) that the World Peace Council call on people throughout the world to condemn the crimes of the U.S. and French imperialists in their attempt to continue and extend war; 2) that the World Peace Council call on people throughout the world to launch a campaign to end the war in Viet-Nam through negotiation and to settle the Viet-Nam question by peaceful means.

**November 26** President Ho Chi Minh declared in his replies to the questions submitted by executive editor Carl-Adam Nycop of

1953 the Swedish paper *Expressen* on the settlement of the Viet-Nam issue through negotiation: "Now, if the French colonialists keep on waging their war of reconquest, the Viet-Nameese people are determined to fight their patriotic war to a victorious end. But, if having learned the lesson of these years of war, the French Government wishes to have an armistice and settle the question by negotiations, the people and Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam will be ready to meet the French proposal." Replying to the question on what conditions an armistice could be reached, President Ho Chi Minh said: "The French Government has to stop hostilities, then an armistice will be a reality. The basis of such an armistice is: the French Government really respects the independence of Viet-Nam."

November 28 The World Peace Council adopted a general resolution, which stated: "For the last seven years there has been a war between France and Viet-Nam which can only be ended by direct negotiations between the belligerents. The World Council of Peace welcomes the proposal made in this direction by the Viet-Nameese delegation supported by the delegation of the Chinese People's Republic. This proposal, to which the French delegation made a favourable reply, could serve as a basis for a settlement."

November 30 The French Communist deputy Kriegel Valrimont introduced a motion at the National Assembly calling for a government explanation of its failure, despite obvious opportunities, to enter into negotiations over the Indo-China issue.

The French paper, *Franc-Tireur*, said that President Ho Chi Minh's reply to the executive editor of the Swedish paper, *Expressen*, should be considered seriously. The paper stated that the question of an armistice was at last brought up for deliberation and this created favourable atmosphere for negotiations which had been absent for a long time.

The French paper *Le Combat*, in its December 2 editorial entitled "We Must Negotiate with Ho Chi Minh," declared that "the country anticipates that the government will take appropriate action, since a clear conclusion can be drawn from the interview given to the *Expressen*, namely that negotiations with Viet-Nam can be conducted, and this fact cannot be denied by any person of good will."

Le Van Hoach, acting "Premier" of the Bao Dai government, opposed the ending of the war through negotiations with the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. The Bao Dai government prohibited the publication of President Ho Chi Minh's talks in the newspapers in French-occupied areas.

December 1 The National Assembly of the Democratic Republic

of Viet-Nam held its Third Session. The assembly approved the land reform law drafted by the Lao Dong Party, calling for the carrying out of the land reform in the course of the war of resistance and for the abolition of the imperialists' land monopoly in Viet-Nam and the feudal land system so as to ensure land to the tillers. The National Assembly decided the land reform law will come into effect in 1954.

December 2 Arthur W. Radford, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, made a speech at Saigon, urging the stepping up of the Indo-China war. He declared: "With our programmes of assistance, we hope that increased military operations in Indo-China will defeat the Communist military forces of Ho Chi Minh."

The French cabinet held a meeting. The communiqué issued after the session rejected negotiations with the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam on the basis of President Ho Chi Minh's proposal to end the Indo-China war.

December 3 Nguyen Van Tam, "Premier" of Bao Dai's government, openly asked France to step up the war in Indo-China.

December 8 The Bermuda Conference of the government leaders of the United States, Britain and France ended. Eisenhower asked France to keep waging the Indo-China war and promised further aid.

Commenting on the conference, the Indonesian paper *Abadi* of Djakarta observed that as a result of the Bermuda Conference, France appears to have been further encouraged by the United States to carry on its tough policy in Indo-China, and is declaring that it will continue the war there.

December 10 The Secretariat of the World Federation of Trade Unions issued an appeal to workers all over the world on the occasion of the "International Day of Solidarity and Struggle for the Ending of the Colonial War in Viet-Nam," urging the working people everywhere to demand an end to the colonial war in Viet-Nam, strive for the withdrawal of the French expeditionary forces and struggle for the recognition of the legitimate rights of Viet-Nam to freedom and independence.

Viet-Nam People's Army liberated Lai-Chau, the provincial capital of the northwestern Viet-Nam province of Lai-Chau, wiping out and routing twenty-four French companies. The Viet-Nam People's Army had thus liberated the entire province of Lai-Chau with the exception of the isolated stronghold of Dien-Bien-Phu.

December 12-13 The French National Peace Conference met in Paris. The Conference cabled to the Viet-Nam Peace Committee, hailing President Ho Chi Minh's reply to the Swedish paper *Expres-*

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*sen.* The cable said that the French people were exerting every effort to achieve peace and were willing to negotiate. It added that the French peace movement would fight with redoubled effort for a reasonable solution of the Indo-China question and for the establishment of friendly ties between the two countries.

**December 14-19** The French people held a "struggle-for-peace-in-Viet-Nam week." Paris workers held a meeting on the 18th. The meeting adopted a resolution urging parliament deputies to demand that the National Assembly and the Council of the Republic consider President Ho Chi Minh's statement. The meeting also proposed to the French Government to start negotiations.

**December 17** Nguyen Van Tam, "Premier" of Bao Dai's government, resigned. Prince Buuloc, Bao Dai government's High Commissioner in France, was ordered to form a new government. Nguyen Van Tam, notorious pro-French politician, was removed as a result of the attacks against him by the pro-Americans in the Bao Dai clique.

**December 19** President Ho Chi Minh issued a statement to the Viet-Nam people and army on the eve of the seventh anniversary of the national war of resistance. In the statement, President Ho Chi Minh stressed the growing strength of the Viet-Nam people and the enemy's increasing weakness and announced once again: "If the French Government wants to have an armistice in Viet-Nam through negotiations, and to settle the Viet-Nam problem by peaceful means, the people and Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam will be ready to talk with the French Government." President Ho Chi Minh urged the army and people to make all-out efforts to carry out the two central tasks before them: waging the war of resistance and implementing the land reform, so as to bring about real independence and peace.

General Vo Nguyen Giap, Commander-in-Chief of the Viet-Nam People's Army, in an Order of the Day on the seventh anniversary of Viet-Nam's national war of resistance and the ninth anniversary of the founding of the Viet-Nam People's Army, announced that more than 320,000 enemy troops had been put out of action during the seven years of war against aggression.

Earlier, the Viet-Nam News Agency put the enemy losses in the seven years of war as follows: (1) from December 19, 1946, to September, 1950, when the Viet-Nam People's Army launched its offensive in the northern frontier areas, the enemy had been losing an average of 2,460 men a month; (2) from September, 1950, to November, 1951 (the Hoa-Binh campaign), enemy losses amounted to 4,736 men a month; (3) between the Hoa-Binh campaign and the

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Northwest campaign in October, 1952, the figure rose to 5,164 men a month; and (4) from the Northwest campaign to November 20, 1953, enemy casualties reached 6,132 men a month.

In response to the call of the Third World Trade Union Congress, working people throughout the world carried out various activities on the occasion of the "International Day of Solidarity and Struggle for the Ending of the Colonial War in Viet-Nam." Working people in the People's Democracies held mass meetings in support of the Viet-Nam people. The French Confederation of Labour held a "struggle-for-peace-in-Viet-Nam week." Hundreds of meetings, big and small, were held and brief strikes were called by workers and office employees in all parts of France, demanding the cessation of the colonial war in Indo-China.

**December 22** Lao People's Liberation Army launched a large-scale offensive against French positions in Cam-Mon Province in Central Pathet Lao. Up to the 24th, 2,200 French troops were put out of action.

**December 24** The U.S. Navy Department announced that the United States would turn over to France early in 1954 five LSM's and two LSSL's to bolster up the French forces in the Indo-China war.

**December 25** Lao People's Liberation Army liberated Tha-Khek, the provincial capital of Cam-Mon in Central Pathet Lao.

**December 26** The National Resistance Government of Pathet Lao issued a proclamation to the people, pointing out that the liberation of Cam-Mon was a great victory, a victory which inspired the Lao army and people with confidence to fight for the final victory and dealt a heavy blow to France and her puppets.

**December 28** The Paris Municipal Council adopted a resolution demanding that the French Government end the Indo-China war through peaceful negotiations.

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**January 1** At a press conference held on January 1, a spokesman of the General Headquarters of the Viet-Nam People's Army reviewed the Indo-China war situation in the autumn and winter of 1953. He

1954 pointed out that in the period from May 1953, when Navarre came to Indo-China, up to the end of 1953, the French and puppet troops suffered losses totalling 44,000 men. The "Navarre Plan" had sustained a serious defeat.

January 5 A spokesman of the Thailand Mission at Phnom-Penh in Khmer, told an AFP correspondent that Thailand, Khmer and Pathet Lao should join in organizing a so-called Buddhist bloc so as to take a common stand in opposing the Indo-Chinese people. Earlier, in December 1953, Thailand had supplied a consignment of weapons to the puppet government of Cambodia. On December 15, the general headquarters of the Thailand army again sent four battalions including armoured units and paratroops to the borders of Khmer. The Thailand Government also decided on December 11 to despatch twenty army officers to stay at strategic points in Pathet Lao "with a view to studying the war situation in Pathet Lao."

January 7 French Prime Minister Joseph Laniel issued a statement in which he again refused to negotiate with the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam for the purpose of ending the Indo-China war.

January 8 The American weekly *U.S. News and World Report* carried an article stating, "It was to forestall a French pull-out from Indo-China that the U.S. had agreed to step up its aid." The article declared: "The United States is taking a more and more direct interest in this war, now that the fighting in Korea is halted. American arms have been pouring into the battle area—not only small arms and ammunition, but planes, helicopters, tanks. Some naval vessels, including an aircraft carrier, are en route (to Indo-China). This direct military aid, promised or delivered, comes to about 1 billion dollars. In addition, the U.S. has promised the French about 800 million dollars for 1954, much of it for training and equipping native armies." The article added that "Americans, in fact, are underwriting the anti-Communist war in Indo-China, leaving the French and their native allies to furnish the man power."

January 10 The Lao People's Liberation Army freed Ba-La in the northern part of Pathet Lao.

January 16 The newly-appointed "Premier" Buuloc of the Bao Dai government formed his cabinet. Marc Jacquet, French State Secretary for the Associated States of Indo-China, admitted after an inspection tour in Indo-China that the Buuloc cabinet could neither live up to the hopes of the Viet-Nameese nor satisfy the hopes of the French. Bao Dai declared in his speech at the inaugural ceremony for Buuloc that the main function of the Buuloc cabinet was to expand the puppet army to the "maximum extent." Bao Dai noted

that the puppet army must be expanded to 300,000 men by the end of 1954. 1954

January 25 The Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Soviet Union, France, Britain and the United States opened in Berlin. The first item on the agenda, proposed by the Soviet delegation and adopted by the Conference, was to discuss measures for lessening international tension and the convening of a conference of Foreign Ministers of France, Great Britain, the United States of America, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

January 27 The American embassy at Saigon announced that from 1950 to December of 1953 the United States supplied more than 400,000 tons of military materials to "aid" France in the Indo-China war. They included 1,400 tanks, 340 planes, 350 warships, 15,000 transmitters, 150,000 light arms, 240,000,000 rounds of small arms ammunition and 15,000,000 shells.

February 1 The Lao People's Liberation Army liberated Attopeu, the provincial capital of Attopeu in the southern part of Pathet Lao.

The National Resistance Government of Pathet Lao released a communiqué on the 12th stating that between January 31 and the first days of February, the Lao People's Liberation Army mounted an offensive against French and puppet troops along the Namhou River. It put out of action 2,200 French and puppet troops and liberated a huge area more than 200 kilometres long in the Namhou River Valley. From January 31, the Lao People's Liberation Army launched an offensive against French and puppet troops in the province of Attopeu, liberating the southeastern part of the Bolovens plateau including the provincial capital of Attopeu, and putting out of action or routing some one thousand French and puppet troops.

February 3 U.S. President Eisenhower at his press conference admitted that "an important factor" of the "critical" Indo-China situation "was the heart and soul of the country's population" and that the situation was critical in the sense that the people showed "lack of enthusiasm in it."

February 5 The *New York Times* carried an article which said: "We have put a considerable degree of pressure upon the French to keep up the resistance to the Communists in Indo-China rather than to negotiate with them." The paper said that the Americans would extend their "aid" but that it would be for the French to do the fighting.

February 6 The U.S. Defense Department issued a statement announcing the despatch of two hundred technicians of the U.S. air

1954 force to take a direct part in the Indo-China war. The statement added that the United States was rushing B-26 bombers to the French air force in Indo-China.

**February 7** The Viet-Nam People's Army liberated Kontum City, capital of Kontum Province in Central Viet-Nam. In the course of the campaign which liberated Kontum Province, the Viet-Nam People's Army put out of action or routed more than two thousand French troops.

**February 9** French Minister of National Defence René Pleven and Chief of the General Staff Paul Ely arrived at Saigon from France. On the day of his arrival in Indo-China, Pleven immediately hastened to Luang Prabang in Pathet Lao to inspect the war situation there. Afterwards, he called high-ranking French officers to a conference in Hanoi on the 16th to discuss ways and means of dealing with the people's forces of Viet-Nam and Pathet Lao.

U.S. Secretary of Defense Wilson said at a press conference that he thought a military victory, rather than a negotiated peace, "would be perhaps both possible and probable" in the Indo-China war. Wilson admitted that the United States has "a proper influence" upon France in not conducting negotiations. The American magazine *Time* carried an article on the 15th which said: "The Joint Chiefs believe, professionally, that the war is being lost because the French tactics have been poor. From a strictly military viewpoint, the chiefs would like to 1) install a U.S. commander, 2) support him with U.S. air power and a naval blockade of the China coast, 3) give him money and men to develop independent native armies."

**February 15** Commander of U.S. Far East Air Forces Weyland announced that a dozen American B-26 bombers and 250 American airmen and officers were posted at two coastal air bases in Indo-China. Weyland also declared that the American air forces had extended their Far East area courier service to include Indo-China.

**February 17** A spokesman of the Viet-Nam People's Army General Headquarters told press reporters that the VPA had gained a series of victories on all fronts in Viet-Nam during the Winter-Spring Campaign and the Lao People's Liberation Army had also achieved brilliant successes in northern, central and southern Pathet Lao. He said that enemy casualties in Viet-Nam and Pathet Lao in the past two months amounted to 28,000 men.

**February 18** The Berlin Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the Soviet Union, France, Britain and the United States closed. The agreement reached at the Conference called for the convocation

of a conference at Geneva on April 26 by the representatives of the Soviet Union, the United States, Britain, France, the People's Republic of China and other interested countries so as to seek for a peaceful solution of the Korean question. In addition, the Geneva Conference will discuss the restoration of peace in Indo-China with the participation of the representatives of the Soviet Union, the United States, Britain, France, the People's Republic of China and other countries concerned. 1954