

Two topics have so dominated the news of recent weeks, and seem of such pressing importance to peace, that this issue of PNL is devoted wholly to them.



INDO-CHINA

AS SEEN IN WASHINGTON

members, is marking time until the results of the Geneva Conference are more clear." FCNL.

AS SEEN IN PARIS

"The war in Indo-China is a major preoccupation of France...."

"The war in Indo-China is generally thought to be at the base of most of France's problems, since it eats up France's resources, occupies France's military forces, weakens France with respect to Germany, and renders infinitely more difficult the solution of the pressing economic questions...."

"The true nature of the military situation in Indo-China is hard to assess. Recent statements by Americans that victory for the French is likely, have been received here with surprise or scorn. No one in France would say as much. ...The Viet-minh cannot take or hold a large city; the French cannot hold any large segment of country. The battles are often staged for political purposes in the hope of headline victories."

".....It is even more difficult to assess the political situation....it is clear that the Viet-minh has a strong popular base, is supported by the rural masses, and is considered by the majority of the population as a national liberation movement. Ho's government has large non-Communist elements in it, but Communist direction is apparently firm...Bao-dai has little popular support...Everyone admits that if there were free elections today in Viet-nam, the Ho regime would win a large majority...."

"The French seem unwilling or unable to grant real independence to the Associated States....The Navarre Plan for a major military effort joined with an intensive training of native troops and a genuine grant of independence has failed, and many here are convinced it was never intended to succeed; only to convince the Americans at Bermuda to give more dollars and perhaps troops...."

"Because of the tragically unimaginative and superior attitude of the French who are in control in Indo-China, the morale is bad on the Viet-nam side; hence the reported frustration of U.S. officers supposed to be working with the French."

"Considering all the above, there is an almost unanimous desire in France to end the war (except on the part of a few who profit from it and have more than their just influence on French policy, and certain of the military, and the French government when it is talking to Americans), by negotiation with Ho-Chih-Minh."

HE'S AGIN IT !

"I am against sending American GI's into the mud and muck of Indo-China on a blood-letting spree to perpetuate colonialism in Asia."

--Sen. Ed. C. Johnson of Colorado (D), April 19.

U. S. Senate  
June 2, 1954

Thanks for your communication on Indo-China. It is going to require everything we can do to keep the Administration from sending American soldiers to Indo-China.  
Sincerely,  
Edwin C. Johnson

It will take EVERYTHING WE CAN DO!

A sampling of Congressional opinion on military intervention in Indo-China last February showed 86% opposed; a comparable sampling in May showed only 57% opposed. The direction is clear. Competent Washington observers confidently expect a Congressional decision before adjournment in mid-summer. What can you do?

1. Support the alternative proposals over page.
2. Express your views to Senator Johnson and your own representatives.
3. Order copies of the full text of Senator Johnson's very informative and important speech from us and distribute them widely. (We shall send you one copy soon.)
4. Send a cash contribution to cover costs.

IT WILL TAKE EVERYTHING WE CAN DO.

"The French government is in a very difficult situation, which forces it into a schizophrenic position where it appears hypocritical. It is accused by its more caustic critics of being treasonably dishonest with the French people; by others as being weak and indecisive. No one publicly defends its conduct."

"The schizophrenia results from the government having to face two strong and opposed wills: that of the French people, and that of the American government. The Americans want the war continued because they see it as an essential holding operation against the spread of Communism into Southeast Asia (a proposition which the French very persuasively sold them at a time when the Americans looked upon the war as a largely colonial one). The French government cannot stand up to the Americans, even when pushed by popular pressure to do so, because its whole economic fabric and system of international alliances are dependent upon American dollars and American support. So they are forced into a form of duplicity where they say one thing to the USA and another to France." (continued over page)



THE HELL- BOMB

American attitudes seem to have been about equally divided between arrogance and apathy. A few strong voices have been heard clearly:

Lewis Mumford: "The worst of all alternatives, submission to Communist totalitarianism, would still be far wiser than the final destruction of civilization. And the best of these alternatives, a policy of working firmly toward justice and cooperation, and free intercourse with all other peoples, in the faith that love begets love as surely as hatred begets hatred --would, in all probability, be the one instrument capable of piercing the strong political armor of our present enemies."

Elmer Davis is quoted as saying that no world--the blotting out of all human life --would be better than a Communist-dominated world.

Norman Cousins: "Would the great religious leaders have preferred to die themselves rather than sanction the use of a weapon that brought the gift of life under total jeopardy? Specifically, what would Christ do? If this question is irrelevant, then nothing in Christianity is relevant to the human situation today."

Worldover Press: "It is hard for Americans to realize the damage done to U.S. world prestige."... For this reason PNL brings you this month a reprint of reactions from other countries.

INDO-CHINA (Continued) "Concerning the internationalisation of the war, or of responsibility for a settlement (toward which the Berlin decision seems to be a long step), one sees advantages and disadvantages:

Pro: It keeps the situation fluid and may provide more opportunities for a termination of the war without such disastrous loss of face for the government of France and France itself.

Con: It provides a way for the French government to escape from the necessity of negotiating, which, if you believe in negotiation and a settlement, even if it would bring the Communists into a dominant position in Indo-China, is a bad thing.

"When Dulles at the Berlin Conference called on Molotov to show his sincere desire for peace by calling off the Indo-Chinese war, he must either have been indulging in hypocrisy to win a propaganda battle, or have been misinformed. The Ho Chih-Minh struggle, with its roots deep in a strong national desire for independence, is not a war started or stopped by a twitch of a string from Moscow or anywhere else. To believe it is, to underestimate the difficulty of settling it.

"There is great fear here that the sending of 250 to 500 American technicians to Indo-China to help speed up the war may provoke the increased intervention of China, or even her active participation in the fighting. One hates to see the United States get even further involved (we already are to the tune of \$600,000,000 per year) in this messy situation, and making it more and more difficult to strengthen the moderate force which want to find some reasonable way 'out of the war.'" - AFSC, Paris Hdq.

ANOTHER WAY 1. "The United States must firmly renounce the concept of military intervention.

2. "The United States must place its faith in a negotiated settlement, both at the the Geneva Conference and afterwards. No progress toward a solution can be made as long as the U.S. position remains inflexible. We urge the United States Government to support the following proposals:

"a. An immediate cease-fire in the present conflict.

"b. Independence for Viet Nam, Laos, and Cambodia.

"c. Universal membership in the United Nations.... effective development of the United Nations as a forum for peaceful settlement of disputes requires the adoption of the principle of universal membership. ...the attempt to make the United Nations an instrument of collective security in the present divided world can only increase the prospect of world war. Therefore, we wish our government to agree to the seating at the Ninth United Nations General Assembly of the Central Peoples Government of the Peoples Republic of China...

"d. Free elections in Viet Nam under neutral Asian supervision. The people of Viet Nam should be permitted to select their own government, and the great powers should abide by the results whatever they are.

"e. Economic assistance. ....The Southeast Asian states need not be 'falling dominoes' if our government takes appropriate economic and social measures promptly and with vigor to strengthen independent forces in the area...

"3. Should negotiations along these lines fail to produce satisfactory agreements in the course of the Geneva Conference, we recommend referral of the remaining problems to the General Assembly of the United Nations which will meet in New York in September."

Sec. 34.66, P.L. & R.  
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