

far east

Reporter

THE TRUTH ABOUT INDO-CHINA

Editor's Note:

In view of increasing U. S. intervention in the war in Indo-China, Far East Reporter is reprinting the timely article of Kumar Goshal in the October, 1953 issue of New World Review with a brief introduction giving current data.



While the people the world over hopefully observed the Berlin Four Power Conference for signs of an easing of tension, President Eisenhower ordered U. S. Air Force mechanics sent into the Indo-China war. The President declared this step will keep us out of the war. What was not explained was how getting deeper in the Indo-China war will keep us out of it. In fact as U. S. News and World Report candidly noted (Feb. 12, 1954): "whether GI's will end up fighting here (Indo-China) as they did in Korea, is the big \$64 question."

The "dirty war" as the French people call it has already taken a toll of over 100,000 dead and many more wounded.

The decision to send U. S. soldiers is not based on intervention by the Chinese or Russians. "So far not one Chinese soldier or one Russian MIG fighter plane

has been found on Ho's (Vietminh) side." (N. Y. Herald Tribune, Feb. 6, 1954). What's more, the French made no headway even from 1946 to 1949 when Chiang Kai-shek controlled southern China. Hanson Baldwin, military analyst, gave the answer: "These forces (Vietminh) have the support of most of the populace" (N. Y. Times, Feb. 6, 1954). There's no great mystery to this support. Like the American people in 1776 the people of Indo-China want and are winning their independence from colonial rule. The majestic overtones of our own Declaration of Independence can be plainly heard in their Liberation Manifesto: "All men are born equal in right and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights that none can violate, among which are the right to live, the right to be free, the right to realize happiness."

THE FRENCH VIEWPOINT

The French want out. Leading columnist Walter Lippmann reported: "There is now an almost unanimous opinion in France that the fighting should be stopped" (N. Y. Herald Tribune, Feb. 11, 1954). Ho Chi Minh, head of the Vietminh government, has offered "to settle the Vietnam problem by peaceful means" (N. Y. Times, Dec. 8, 1953). Pierre Mendes - France recently came within 13 votes of becoming Premier of France on a program calling for a negotiated settlement of the Indo-Chinese war. He declared that "we cannot continue without hope and without aim, to allow our youth to die" (N. Y. Times, Feb. 13, 1954). But some people seem to think that we Americans can.

U. S. INTERVENTION

Actually the U. S. is no stranger to the war in Indo-China. "The U. S. already is paying about two-thirds of the cost of the Indo-China war" (N. Y. Times, Feb. 7, 1954). Three billions of the more than five spent to date on the war were a handout of U. S. taxpayers' money. The new proposal is that we should not only pick up the check for military equipment but supply the blood as well. Walter Millis, well known news commentator stated: "There is no way of bringing the war in Indo-China to success without putting American ground troops into the country in really effective numbers" (N. Y. Tribune, Feb. 11, 1954). That this would involve a major commitment can be seen from the fact that a 500,000 strong French force has been unable to win.

Senator Stennis (Miss.) warned that if U. S. troops are sent, it would then be a "logical move" for the Chinese to send planes and men to the other side (N. Y. Times, Feb. 10, 1954). This would be a repeat of what happened when MacArthur sent U. S. units to China's border. American soldiers killed in Indo-China could die happy knowing they were helping to keep "Night Club" Emperor Bao Dai on his throne. True also they would be helping DuPont's U. S. Rubber Company, American Smelting and Refining Company and many others hold on to substantial rubber, silver, tin, tungsten and zinc concessions. "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 . . ." (N. Y. Times, Feb. 12, 1950). But is this "gamble" worth the life of a single U. S. soldier?

Despite diehard resistance, the worldwide demand for a peaceful settlement in Indo-China, for recognition of China and for trade between all nations can and will have its way.

The Truth About Indo-China

by

KUMAR GOSHAL

SINCE the Korean armistice, the United States has switched priority to the Indo-China war.

Washington spokesmen have indulged in incredible pro-French and anti-Indo-Chinese propaganda to confuse the American public, to gain popular support for the billions of dollars spent to support France's attempt to recover its juicy colony.

The creation of confusion continues to this day, as the U.S. prepares to completely take over the conduct of the war. J. J. Servan Schreiber, the Paris *Le Monde's* top political commentator, recently documented his charge that Bidault has handed over control of the Indo-China war to the U.S., depriving France of any power to negotiate peace as the whole of France wishes to do. The *Wall Street Journal's* Ray Cromley supplied evidence that Schreiber was right when he wrote Sept 15:

Secretary of State Dulles is even

KUMAR GOSHAL, journalist and lecturer, is author of "People of India," and "Peoples in Colonies." He is the UN correspondent for the National Guardian.

more determined to win the Indo-China war than he was to end the Korean war.

And Paris' left-wing but anti-Communist *Combat* recently found

. . . the role assigned to France [was to serve] the grand world strategy of the Pentagon for an anti-Communist crusade, to send our youth to the slaughter in Tonkin for the sake of preserving a base against China.

One of the most important reasons for U.S. interest in preventing Indo-Chinese freedom was expressed by President Eisenhower himself. The Indo-China war, Eisenhower told the Governors' Conference on August 4, has been "described variously as an out-growth of French colonialism" and "a war between the Communists and other elements in southeast Asia." Then he gave his own view of it:

"Now, first of all, the last great population remaining in Asia that has not become dominated by the Kremlin, of course, is the subcontinent of India, the Pakistanian Government.

"Here are 150 million people who are still free. Now let us assume

that we lose Indo-China. . . . several things happen right away. The peninsula, the last little bit of land hanging on down there, would be scarcely defensible. *The tin and tungsten that we so greatly value from that area, would cease coming*, but all India would be outflanked. Burma would be in no position for defense.

"Now, India is front [sic] on that side by the Soviet Empire. . . . You read in the paper. . . . Mossadegh moved toward getting rid of his parliament . . . supported by the Communist Party of Iran. All of that position there is very ominous to the U.S.A., because finally if we lost all that, *how would the free world hold the rich empire of Indonesia?*

"So, you see . . . this must be blocked. . . . So when the U.S. votes \$400 million to help that war, we are . . . voting for the cheapest way that we can prevent the occurrence of something that would be of a most terrible significance to the U.S.A., our security, *our power and ability to get certain things we need from the riches of the Indonesian territory and from southeast Asia.*" (Emphasis added)

The reaction of the Governors to this fabulously confused and confusing survey has not been reported. (The population of the subcontinent of India is about 430 million: 360 million—the most recent estimate—in the Indian Republic, about 70 million in Pakistan. Indonesia is a republic, not an empire—unless Eisenhower considered it a part of the American Empire! Mossadegh's government has been overthrown by the powers behind the Iran Shah, with what seems more and more like U.S. assistance.)

Between the lines of Eisenhower's twisted geography and tortured language, there emerged almost embarrassingly the U.S. colonial

approach with which Asians have become familiar. The President was saying, in his own way, that the main U.S. concern was to maintain southeast Asia as a cheap raw material source for U.S. industry—to Asians, the classic imperialist pattern, which the peoples of Indo-China are fighting to overcome.

Beginning in 1857, either by outright conquest or by establishing protectorates over the Indo-Chinese princedoms, France conquered the whole of Indo-China, began to gnaw at the border of Siam (Thailand), and almost collided with Britain, which had reached the other side of Siam through the conquest of Burma. Conflict was avoided when France and Britain signed their *entente*

THE U.S. GRANT FOR INDO-CHINESE WAR

A JOINT communique issued by the United States and France on September 30 announced support for French General Navarre's plan to use more French troops and to arm more Indo-Chinese to speedily "break up and destroy the regular enemy forces in Indo-China . . . [with] U.S. aid." The "aid" referred to is in the form of an additional U.S. grant of \$385,000,000.

Earlier in the month, the Paris *Tribune des Nations'* astute military analyst, Colonel X, commented (Sept. 4):

"The 'new strategy' of the French expeditionary corps heralds the final act of the Indo-Chinese war. . . . Not a single one of our Indo-Chinese collaborators, this is true of the military even more than of the others, is unaware of the weakness of the regimes maintained by the French and of the inevitability of an accord with the Vietminh."

cordiale in 1904 and each allowed the other to cut off generous slices of Siam on either side; what was left was designated as a buffer state between their respective colonies. Thus came into existence pockets of Thai people in Indo-China and Burma, and also in China, where some of the Thais escaped.

France made huge profits from the rice, coal, rubber, tin, zinc, tungsten and other resources of Indo-China, from the government monopoly of salt and the opium trade. The Indo-Chinese were reduced to being rice-growing farmers, and workers in French-owned mines and plantations, 95 per cent illiterate, with the appallingly low per capita income of less than \$10 a year.

The French rulers of Indo-China meekly surrendered to the Japanese in 1940, happily collaborated with the conquerors in squeezing "from Indo-China the last possible pound of rice, ton of coal, sack of cement to help Japan win the war" (*N. Y. Times* correspondent Foster Hailey in *Half of One World*, p. 107). The Indo-Chinese under Ho Chi Minh organized an effective underground movement, cooperated with Maj. William Donovan's American OSS and saved the lives of many Americans parachuting from damaged planes. When the war was over, the resistance movement was in de facto control of a great part of Indo-China.

On August 19, 1945, four days after Japan's surrender, the Viet Minh (the democratic coalition party of Indo-China) proclaimed the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam (the ancient name of Indo-China) with Ho Chi Minh as President; set up regional governments throughout Viet Nam; and asked for admission to the UN and requested a UN commission to supervise a plebiscite and

national election in the Republic.

Soon after this, citizens of the other states of Cambodia and Laos held plebiscites, renamed their territories Khmerland and Pathet Lao, repudiated the French protectorates and set up free governments closely tied with their Viet Nam neighbor.

The Indo-Chinese were bitterly disillusioned when British Gen. Douglas Gracey—on behalf of the French—arrived to take charge on September 13, 1945. French Col. Cedile immediately rearmed the French troops released by the Viet Minh from Japanese internment camps and, with the assistance of British and Japanese troops, attempted forcibly to recover the colony for France. Foster Hailey has reported (*Half of One World*, p. 110) that soon "British and American ships were unloading shiploads of French soldiers, many of them in American uniforms they had worn in France, at Indo-Chinese ports." Thus, the U.S. intervened in the Indo-China war from the very beginning—long before the present Chinese government, then confined to North China, sent any assistance to the liberation forces—and has continued at an accelerated pace ever since.

For a long time Ho Chi Minh patiently attempted to negotiate an understanding, agreeing to maintain political and economic ties with France. In a long resume of the Indo-China war, Claude Bourdet (*L'Observateur*, July 9) bitterly pointed out that

"on March 6, 1946, the French government signed an agreement with Viet Minh leader Ho Chi Minh, recognizing the Republic of Viet Nam as a free state . . . forming a

part of the Indo-China Federation and of the French Union.

"After the atrocious massacre [by the French troops] at Haiphong, war began again on Nov. 23, 1946, and continued despite Ho's repeated appeals for stopping hostilities and resuming negotiations. . . .

"While there were recent signs of a willingness [on the part of France] at last to negotiate with Ho—the only real power—this could not be done because of dollars needed to plug a hole in France's budget; the decision must now come from America, the America of McCarthy, I had almost written the America of Syngman Rhee.

In his major policy speech before the UN general assembly on September 17, U.S. Secretary of State Dulles blandly declared that Indo-China was no longer a colony, having been assured complete independence by France on July 3; and that "the Communist-dominated armies in Indo-China have no shadow of a claim to be regarded as the champ-

ions of an independence movement." Dulles said this after nearly all the French newspapers and most French political leaders had admitted otherwise. Even the *N.Y. Times* conceded on Sept. 13 that

Communist forces, inferior to the French in numbers and material, are sustained by peasants who tend their paddies by day and turn guerrilla at night. . . . [French] promises of self-government for Indo-China have not materialized.

The *N.Y. World-Telegram* of Sept. 14 admitted that the Indo-China "conflict began in 1946 as a war for independence from France and it remains that in the eyes of most Asians despite the Communist affiliations of the . . . leaders," and remarked: "Why our policy-makers should be so anxious to pin an American label on this war is beyond all understanding."

In an article bitterly denouncing France's failure to recover Indo-

U.S. ECONOMIC INTEREST IN INDO-CHINA

IN AN ARTICLE entitled "American Interest in Indo-China," the *Tribune des Nations* (Sept. 11) reported that the U.S. has exacted a series of advantageous economic concessions in Indo-China in return for aid to France. The New Market Manufacturing Company and the American Metal Company secured important concessions at the end of 1951 to exploit Indo-Chinese tin and tungsten; the Chibuluma Mines Company and the Oliver Manufacturing Company gained tin and zinc exploitation rights; the American Smelting and Refining Company now controls the Indo-Chinese silver mines; in 1952 DuPont's U.S. Rub-

ber Company secured 65 per cent of the Michelin Company, Goodrich Company took over rubber enterprises in Laos and Cambodia. Americans thus have taken over 72 per cent of Indo-China's non-ferrous metals exports and 20 per cent of its natural rubber exports.

Also, Atlas Contractors and Morrison-Knudson of U.S. have monopolized all strategic road, airport and port construction in Indo-China; and the Morgan-controlled International Telephone and Telegraph Company has taken over Indo-Chinese communications development by securing control of the French Materiel Telephonique Company.

China even with lavish U.S. aid, *Life* correspondent David Duncan reported on August 3 that Ho Chi Minh's liberation army

is led by Communists and supplied from Red China but inspired by deep nationalist feelings of the Indo-Chinese. . . . If the Indo-Chinese must fight—and die—they prefer to fight and die for Indo-China, not for France. . . .

Duncan quoted former Tuskegee star tackle Herman Holiday, working in Indo-China for the U.S. Mutual Security Administration, as remarking about the French puppet governments of Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos:

We are supporting a government here which does not represent the majority of the people. It is difficult to be on a losing team . . . worse to be on a losing team and know it . . . unforgivable to be on a losing team and to know it and to do nothing about it.

But the Eisenhower administration did something about it; it added another \$375 million to the \$400 million already earmarked for 1953 for the Indo-China war, issued another blast at China while the U.S. practically took over the conduct of the Indo-China war, and sent Senate Majority leader William Knowland (R-Calif.) to coerce the French puppets who were wavering in their loyalty to France and the United States.

While the United States was building the Indo-China war into a second Korean war, the socialist world was recommending ways to peace in Indo-China. The Peking radio suggested Sept. 14 that the "same power [that brought about a Korean truce] can be used in Indo-China to force the

imperialists to abandon their weapons in the same way." Moscow's *Pravda* advocated direct negotiations between Indo-Chinese leader Ho Chi Minh and the French, "rightly describing this as the only way to end this disastrous war" (London *New Statesman*, Sept. 12.) But Ray Cromley revealed (*Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 15):

The U.S. is going to act fast to head off Red moves to 'end' the war in Indo-China. U.S. diplomats are mustering all their arguments to convince the French they shouldn't accept the Chinese. . . offers. . .

No wonder the London *New Statesman* distrusted Dulles' Asian policy, and described it Sept. 19 as a doctrine

to keep Asians fighting Asians . . . in Indo-China and Formosa as well as in Korea. Indeed, as though to advertise this intention to the Chinese, [Dulles] has chosen this moment to persuade a tottering French Government to send another 15,000 metropolitan troops to Viet Nam and to disregard the plea from M. Renaud and M. Mendes-France for an effort to end the hopeless war by negotiation with Ho Chi Minh. . . . It is American policy to close any road which could possibly lead to a negotiated settlement or even a relaxation of tension. . . .

But the U.S. was counting without that deep, worldwide feeling for peace and freedom, for the settlement of conflicts by peaceful negotiation, that resulted in halting the slaughter in Korea. In Indo-China, as in Korea, American policy of maintaining docile puppet régimes, of controlling the destinies of the Indo-Chinese and exploiting their resources, is doomed to failure.

AVAILABLE

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. "What Path India?"
32 pages | 20¢ |
| 2. "China's Five Year Plan Is Under Way"
8 pages | 5¢ |
| 3. "¼ Of Humanity Builds A New World"
8 pages | 5¢ |
| 4. "Your Questions About New China"
8 pages | 5¢ |
| 5. Set of 3 pamphlets (48 pages) the set
"Whither Japan?"
"Asia Tells The World"
"How the US Curbs National Independence" | 20¢ |
| 6. Set of four-page leaflets on China
Trade Flood Control Industry
Letter From An American | 10¢ |
| 7. "Who Started The Korean War?"
32 page documentary | 25¢ |
| 8. "Conflict in Indo-China"
36 pages - historical & analytical | 25¢ |
| 9. Portfolio of Japanese Woodcuts
15 woodcuts each 14" x 8½" ¾" | \$1.50 |
| 10. Correspondence cards 6" x 3¾"
One dozen with 12 envelopes
6 Chinese-embroidery-pattern designs
red-on-white or black on yellow
(no mixed packets) | 60¢ |
| 11. FAR EAST REPORTER Subscription
For 12 issues | \$1.00 |

FAR EAST REPORTER	Maud Russell	Publisher
P O Box 1536	GC Station	New York 17 NY



THE TRIAL OF FRENCH COLONIALISM

-o-

(Speech delivered by Madame Jeannette Vermeersch,
French M.P. and Secretary of the
Union of French Women ,
at the French National Assembly)

VIET NAM NEWS SERVICE
Rangoon - Burma