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Some years ago my lack of knowledge concerning what I then called, in possibly a supercilious manner, the Smaller Dragon, led me to inflict upon you a review of the early history of Vietnam, from the mythical establishment of the kingdom spawned from a dragon in prehistoric times through its long history, including almost a thousand years of struggle with China, to its conquest by France in the 1880s. At the conclusion of that paper I suggested that, even though the government of this country had been allowed to remain in control of the Ho Chi Minh Communist group, they would have resisted any real conquest of the country by China.

During the subsequent years the Small Dragon has certainly ceased to be a small dragon insofar as we are concerned. Possibly it may be considered to be sort of Siamese tigers, and we are in the unfortunate position of attempting to save the weaker Siamese twin from being devoured by its brother. Even now we are struggling at the same time in Paris to carry out a surgical operation whereby our weaker tiger can be separated from its more boisterous brother.

The clamor of the doves and the hawks in our own country has made me again realize that the earlier study does not entirely explain why this unbelievable inter-family battle has been so fiercely waged since the French were thrown out of Indochina. How does it happen that there are two governments today in this unhappy land? Which one is really the legitimate government? After World War II, how did France recover its power in Indochina, and what were the circumstances that forced us to become the sponsors of the government of South Vietnam? What was decided at the Geneva Conference, and why could not the problems of this country have been settled at that time?

Lacking any background on these matters, I decided to inflict again upon you a resume of the period in Vietnam between the conquest by France and our involvement in place of France, hoping

thereby, if not to become an authority in the field, at least to secure for myself and possibly for you a background glimmer of knowledge, so that in the drawing room I could be a knowledgeable-sounding dove with the hawks and a knowledgeable-sounding hawk with the doves, to the delight of no one and the horror of my host and hostess.

You may remember or know that under the French Vietnam was in three parts, Tongking in the north, Annam in the center, and Cochinchina in the south, which, together with France's protectorates over Cambodia and Laos, constituted what was generally known as Indochina. France's original attack on the Vietnam Emperor had been in the southern area and had resulted in the cession of Cochinchina to France, which became an absolute colony originally run by military governments.

Annam and Tongking, however, were not taken over in this manner, but rather by separate treaties with the Emperor, whose headquarters were in the old imperial city of Hue in the center section of Annam, and each section continued to be treated as a separate entity with a separate French resident in control governing for the Emperor.

It may also be well to remember that the Tongking area, with Hanoi as its capital, and Annam were perpetually over-populated, with insufficient land to support the growing population; that as a result of this situation the Vietnamese had themselves gone south and conquered the Cochinchina area with its abundant lands in the Mekong Delta; and that the Emperors had kept peace among the peasants by providing these southern lands for their use. While the colonial governments sent out by France would have liked to consolidate their administration of these three units, the business interests and bureaucracy, which first grew up in the more prosperous southern area, always resisted any combination of Cochinchina with the rest of Vietnam, recognizing that this would restrict both the profits and the powers which they had secured in the southern area. This continued separation of Cochinchina from the northern Tongking area, as we will see, resulted in separate resistance move-

ments in the two areas and is one of the reasons which resulted in the present separation of South Vietnam from North Vietnam.

The Mandarins, who had run the government up to the time of the French conquest and who resisted both all efforts to modernize the government or to permit Western industrial ideas to come into the country, declined to assist the French in running the government. As a result, the French sent in their own bureaucracy from top to bottom, leaving the Mandarins who did not completely retire only the job of attending the Emperor's own council, which had no power. During the period up to 1900 these Mandarins were the backbone of resistance to the French and led numerous revolts in all three parts attempting to unseat the French conquerors. They, however, failed to enlist any strong support from the peasant class, whom they themselves considered inferior beings and whom they had exploited for centuries. They also failed because they themselves persecuted the Catholic group and also had repressed the ethnic minority groups in the northern mountain areas, thus enabling the French to secure the cooperation of these groups in defeating their efforts, including the betrayal of their leaders.

In the 1890s the French had pretty well pacified the country, but found that, while their colony of Cochinchina was profitable, Annam and Tongking were a heavy drain on the French treasury. Some parties in France thought that France should withdraw from the unprofitable sections; others felt that the operation of the entire government should be reformed. Withdrawal would have meant a lessening of France's position as a great colonial power. The only alternate, therefore, was some reorganization of the entire set-up to enable the country to be self-supporting and if possible to overcome the discontent of the Vietnamese, particularly in the poorer northern areas.

To achieve this end, the military government was discontinued and Rousseau, who was one of the members of the French government in favor of reform, was sent out as the Governor General. He

found that the Governor General had little power and was continually hamstrung in his efforts by the French colonists and bureaucrats in the South. He returned quickly to France, demanding new powers which would enable him to straighten out the financial conditions in the colonies and become a strong administrator. While Rousseau died before he could do much with his reforms, he was succeeded by Doumer, who was Minister of Finance in the French cabinet and a Deputy in its Parliament at the time Rousseau was sent out and had supported Rousseau.

Doumer, a man of tremendous energy, during his five years as Governor General, solidified the power of Governor General in the two protectorates and secured from France the right to have an independent general budget of his own, thereby ceasing to be dependent on the council in Cochinchina for funds.

Doumer reformed taxation so that the local government units were allowed only direct taxes, and funds were provided for the central government from customs and indirect taxes, chiefly from a state monopoly created by him of the sale of opium, alcohol, and salt. This monopoly system, incidentally, was one of the causes of continued dislike of the French by the peasants. While the opium monopoly did not affect them, they were accustomed to cheap alcohol drinks and salt was a necessity. Monopolies in both these products, particularly in salt, became a serious burden upon the peasant.

Doumer believed that if he provided the transportation means to move the products of Vietnam this would be sufficient to provide a strong economy in the country. He accordingly adopted a grandiose scheme of building two railway lines, one from Haiphong on the Gulf of Tongking to Hanoi and then up the Red River valley into China, and the other one thousand miles long, from Hanoi to Saigon. He thought that these lines could be completed in ten years; they took forty. He evolved this scheme of railways in spite of the fact that the two small lines then in existence had proved completely un-

profitable. At that time there was one line from Saigon which had been intended to spread out through the Mekong Delta valleys, but had only gone fifty miles because of high cost of construction and because even the fifty miles had been of no commercial importance except for passenger traffic. This railway construction was continued by the subsequent Governors at terrific cost in both funds and lives. Their construction was another cause for bitterness by the peasants, who were practically forced into working in the construction under such terrible conditions that, of eighty thousand Vietnamese and Chinese who worked on one three hundred mile section, twenty-five thousand died.

Up through 1930, 62\$ of the general budget was spent on roads, bridges and railways, 19\$ for hydraulic works for agriculture, 7\$ for each of the ports and public buildings, but only 2\$ for sewers. Besides these efforts, the approximately twenty-five men who served as Governors of Indochina up to World War II did little else to directly help the state of the Vietnamese economy, except the establishment of rubber plantations in the South and the opening of mines in the North. They discouraged any major industries in the area, preferring the standard colonial policy of exchange of raw products of the colonies for manufactured products of France. While an aid to the economy, the establishment by the French of rubber plantations in the South, was another cause of dislike by the peasants, who were shipped into the plantations by labor bosses and whose lives on these plantations were worse than on their own peasant farms and almost as bad as the forced labor on the railways.

The French Governors made no effort to follow the historic procedures of the Emperors in providing land, particularly in the South, for the peasants. While they opened up much additional land to agriculture, particularly rice, through their hydraulic operations, they permitted this land to go to the large land owners, a policy which was easier to handle and developed at least, which continued to worsen the condition of the small peasant farmer rather than improve it and was yet another cause of discontent with the French.

Under the colonial Governors, the bureaucracy increased to some five thousand employees, approximately the same number that handled the governmental work of the English in all of India. While this, of course, was a burden which had to be paid for by taxation, it created no jobs for Vietnamese and created no large group of Vietnamese who were in favor of the French. Nearly all positions, even policemen and clerks in the post office, were given to Frenchmen who came out from the home land. If some positions were open to both, the Frenchman was given higher pay. Because many of the positions were of low pay and unimportant, they were, to a great extent, filled by a very low class of Frenchman who could not succeed at home but who once away from home could become important by kicking the natives around.

Like the French governments at home, the continued shifting of Governors of Indochina made it impossible for Paris to have any consistent policy in the colony. Some of the Governors were capable, some were liberal and made an honest effort both to improve government and to grant to the Vietnamese more independence within the French Union; others were for repression of the Vietnamese, so that, in spite of promises from time to time, no real advancement was given by the French to the Vietnamese toward either independence or a possible domain status within the French Union. The only groups that they succeeded in winning to their side were the large land owners, whose existence was dependent upon them, some Mandarins who were given governorships, and the Vietnamese who joined the French army.

Beginning about 1900 and for the next 25 years, resistance to the French occupation was centered in an intellectual named Phan Boi Chau, who saw that the country, if it was ever to gain freedom, must break with its Mandarin past. He had spent time in Japan and was impressed by the industrial revolution there, which had actually been handled by the Emperor. He thought that a reform monarchy could do the same work in Vietnam. He even picked out a new Emperor, one Cuong De, who was a direct offspring of the great Gia Long, to become the reform

Emperor, and smuggled him out of Vietnam into Japan, formed a new organization called the Association For the Modernization of Vietnam, and attempted to combine the various resistance movements under his leadership. He was hopeful that he might secure support from Japan after its victory over Russia, not seeing that Japan, if it came in, would not be greatly different from France. However, this dream was broken when Japan, needing French support, entered into a treaty with France recognizing French rights in exchange for a loan, which resulted in Chau and his prince being expelled from Japan.

From there, Chau and his prince attempted to develop his revolution in China, where the Chinese revolution had temporarily triumphed in Canton in 1911. With the failure of this revolution, this attempt by Chau also failed and Chau, at the request of the French, was arrested by the Chinese, only to be released when Sun Yat-Sen triumphed in 1917.

By 1925, the Russian revolution had succeeded and Chau again went to Canton, where he met a Russian delegation of advisors to the Chinese revolution. One of the Russian secretaries was a man named Ly Thuy, who it is believed took later the alias of Nguyen Ai Quoc and finally the name of Ho Chi Minh. This Vietnamese Communist had a meeting with Chau and the other Vietnamese exiled revolutionaries and attempted to persuade this Vietnamese to join a new organization being promoted by Russia, as usual with a high sounding name - World Federation of Small and Weak Nations.

During this meeting, in looking around for a means to supply funds for the movement in Vietnam, the Russians proposed, with approval of Ho Chi, that Chau be turned over to the French, with the idea that the French raise a good bounty and that his arrest and trial might bring world opinion to their side. Pursuant to this plan, in 1925 Chau was kidnapped and delivered to the French Concession in Shanghai, for which the abductors allegedly received 150,000 piasters. Chau was tried and given a life sentence instead of death, which sentence was soon commuted to house arrest,

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which, ended his leadership in the resistance movement and marked the failure of movements for liberty based primarily on the educated class without any real effort to bring the peasants to their support.

With the collapse of this movement in the mid-20s, two new organizations arose in the resistance movement. In 1927 in Tongking a non-Communist freedom group known as the Nationalist Party arose among the teachers and other members of the middle class, which differed from the earlier movements in that, though it did not attempt to enlist the support of the peasants, it proposed to win to its support the Vietnamese elements in the army, which would then revolt against the French. This was attempted in 1930 with disastrous results, ending with the entire leadership of the movement being liquidated by the French. This ended for the time being the existence of any major non-Communist group favoring freedom.

About the same time, Ho Chi under his second name, formed a Communist organization at Canton known as the Revolutionary League, which by 1930 he combined with the other Communist movements into the Communist Party. This was the first effective organization which attempted to represent all the people. It denied that it was even socialistic, and claimed to desire the support of all to form a democratic government. Its program was the first to attempt to attract the peasants. It called for the division of large land holdings among the peasants, the taking over of the French colonial enterprises, and the replacement of direct and indirect taxes, most burdensome on the peasants and working classes, by an income tax. At the same time, in documents spread around among the workers and the farmers, it promised to turn over all the factories to the workers and all the rice fields to the peasants. It managed to stir up strikes in the factories and in 1931 a number of uprisings by the peasants, who were particularly hard up because of the depression conditions. The French again with brutality smashed the uprisings with such effectiveness that the Governor General declared in December 1932 that Communism had dis-

appeared from Vietnam, although before he made his speech the Communists had already sent leaders into Saigon to rebuild an underground party.

With the smashing of the major resistance movements and the publicity of the harshness and excesses of the reprisals by the French, the liberal French again attempted to improve the political atmosphere. The young Bao Dai, Emperor of Vietnam (except the ceded Cochinchina), who had been living in France under the watchful eye of the government, was encouraged to return to Vietnam, with the idea that he might be used to promote reforms which would improve the position of the French. Although only eighteen years of age, he was enthusiastic about the undertaking.

He himself removed his council of old Mandarins and assumed the leadership of his government. He appointed as Secretary of a Commission of Reforms, Ngo Dinh Diem, then only 32 years of age and Governor one of the provinces. Unfortunately, nothing was accomplished by this Commission, composed of the Emperor's representatives and French officials, who wanted no real reform. Diem (about whom we will hear more later) resigned in disgust from the Commission, and the young Emperor, recognizing that the French would not or could not adopt any real reforms in the face of the opposition of the resident French, resigned himself to pleasure.

The impending World War II and the entry of Japan into China eventually worked a re-establishment of the power of the Communists. In 1937, while the Allies were confronting Hitler, Japan stirred up the China Incident and commenced her conquest of China, rightly guessing that the Western powers could not spare men or effort to prevent her. By 1938 they had reached Canton, which made Vietnam of immediate importance, both to Japan and to the Chinese, since its railway system now became one of the few supply lines for the defending Chinese.

The French had two policies which they might follow. One was to cooperate with Japan, and the other was to fight her. By 1940 Japan delivered

to General Castreau, the then Governor General under the Petain government, an ultimatum, demanding that he close the Chinese frontier and permit a military mission of Japanese to enter the country to supervise and enforce the closing. This ultimatum was given just one day after France asked for an armistice, and was agreed to by the helpless Governor General. Although Petain's government was surrendering meekly to the Germans in the West, it disapproved of Castreau's lesser surrender to the Japs in the East, and replaced him with Vice Admiral Decaux, who remained in charge until the collapse of Japan. However, the Petain government soon reversed itself, and on August 30, 1940 signed a treaty recognizing Japan's interest in the Far East and giving it the right to station 25,000 men in Indochina, of which 6,000 were to be stationed in Tongking. In return, Japan recognized France's sovereignty over Indochina. Although this treaty had been signed thereby assuring the Japanese that there would be no French resistance, \$ in spite of the desire of some of the colonists and army, the Japanese army crossed the border from South China, attacked two cities, capturing their garrisons, and also rained bombs on other cities for which it later apologized as a mistake. This act had its intended effect. The French collaborated until near the end of the war in return for their being permitted to continue to administer the country under Japan's supervision.

In 1941 a new treaty increased Japan's military control and made the French agree to be a part of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, established by Japan.

The intervention of the Japanese raised hopes among the Vietnamese nationalists that they could throw the French out, and they attempted an insurrection in the North, but the Japanese permitted it to be suppressed by the French army, preferring for their own purposes to permit France to continue the normal administration of the country.

While the Communist party had again been outlawed by the French in 1939 when Moscow joined with Germany, with the attack on Russia, Communists

became friends of the Allies and were again permitted to grow in Vietnam without real resistance by the French. This permitted Ho Chi in 1941, at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, to establish a new national organization, the League for the Independence of Vietnam, which we call Vietminh. Under this new organization, the Communists took the slogan of throwing both the Japs and French out, promised independence and democracy, and even guaranteed the property of all anti-fascist foreigners. They assisted the American fliers and provided intelligence services for the Allies. They even proclaimed that the only enemies were the Japanese fascists. They claimed that they actually had the support of the Allies.

While increasing their strength by these propaganda claim, they at the same time were developing a guerrilla army north of Hanoi in the mountains along the Chinese border, where by their propaganda and by terror tactics they secured control of more area north of Hanoi than the French, their leader was Giap, who later destroyed the French.

In 1944 the Chinese held a conference in China at which a republican government for Vietnam was established, composed of all groups, including only one member of the Vietminh. The representatives of the Vietminh at the meeting offered to return to the underground in Vietnam to represent this government, leaving all the other elements of the new government to wait in exile in China and to return to Vietnam only with the Chinese armies of occupation. This smart maneuver gave the Vietminh another propaganda claim that they were the only representatives of the government-in-exile in Vietnam.

As it became evident that the Americans were gaining strength in the Far East and would eventually beat the Japanese, the French government had two possible courses - one to continue to collaborate and hope that at the end of the war they could take over actual control from the Japanese before the Allies arrived, and the other was to organize resistance against the Japs, in the belief

that peaceful collaboration with the Japs would not give them much bargaining rights after the war. While the Governor General Decaux desired to continue collaboration, Degaulle, supported by many of the French inside Vietnam, ordered resistance.

The Japs, easily learning of the situation, were themselves in a dilemma. If they conquered the French, they would incur their enmity; if they left them alone, they might be in the position of handing the country back to the French at the end of the war, thereby gaining their support at the peace table.

The military felt, however, that the French would certainly attack sooner or later and insisted on making the first move, an ultimatum in March 1945 to put the French army under their command. When the French did not reply, the Japanese marched against them and conquered the army without too much effort, creating a break in the long period of control by France of Indochina.

As a result of this move, on March 10, 1945 the triumphant Japanese, hoping to secure the support of the Vietnamese, called on Emperor Bao Dai and proclaimed the independence of Vietnam, with the understanding, of course, that they would become a part of the Japanese Co-Prosperity Sphere.

This disarming of the French again helped the Vietminh in the North and enabled it to create a liberated zone, comprised of the six provinces north of Hanoi. The offer of Japan to capitulate, on August 13, 1945, gave Ho Chi the opportunity to order a general insurrection without risk and enabled him to take over control of Hanoi on August 19, 1945.

While the Vietminh was working in the North, with the consent of the Japanese, the Emperor appointed the same Diem who he appointed to make reforms earlier, as the leader of his government, which Diem accepted, only to find that the Japanese had changed their minds and would not allow the appointment. As a result, the Emperor appointed a conservative history professor named Kim, who

was a protege of the Japanese, as the head of his government, which undertook an impossible task, with no funds, no civil service, and no army to support the government. Just before the Japanese surrender, Kim's government resigned, leaving no government at all - again of assistance to the Vietminh, not only because of the vacancy but because the nationalists who had attempted to support this government could be attacked by them as pro-Japanese.

On August 16, 1945, Ho held a congress north of Hanoi, at which was created the National Liberation Committee and at which the guerrilla army was renamed the Army of Liberation.

From there, Ho went to Hue to see the Emperor, Bao, who offered to have him form a new government. Apparently, Ho was willing to accept the offer to avoid conflict but a mass rally in Hanoi shouted down the proposition and demanded Bao's resignation as Emperor which he did on August 25th.

By August 29 Ho had formed his first government, most of whom had been on the National Liberation Committee formed in China, and on September 2 made his own proclamation of independence.

The Japanese did nothing to prevent these moves by the Vietminh, even though given an ultimatum by the Vietminh to turn over their armies. Ho, knowing that a battle with the Japanese could be disastrous to his guerrilla forces, carefully avoided any attack on the Japanese who refused to disarm and even permitted them to continue to hold the French Bank of Indochina, which controlled most of the finances of the country.

But the French, even in their darkest moments in Europe and even though engaged in their own resistance movement in France, had no intention of giving up in Indochina. Even in 1943, DeGaulle from Algiers announced that France intended to give a new political order in Indochina and that, under the framework of an Indochinese federal organization, freedoms would be extended. Even

at the time they were surrendering the country to Japan they elaborated on this same theme of establishing a federal government for the five states, including Cambodia and Laos, each with its own assembly with a right to vote on the budget, requiring, however, that the government be responsible not to this assembly but to the Governor General, whose name would be changed to High Commissioner. A military organization for the recapture of Indochina was established at Calcutta, with English cooperation.

At Potsdam, however, it was decided that upon the defeat of Japan the British would occupy the southern portion of Vietnam up to the 16th Parallel, and that the Chinese would occupy the northern section. While this denied the natural French desire to be the occupying party, which, of course, would make their re-establishment easier, it at least also denied the Chinese request that it be the sole occupying force.

By reason of the decisions at Potsdam, together with the fact that the Vietminh army and government was located in the North, France's reoccupation of Indochina took two separate courses. In the South the Vietminh while establishing control in the North organized an Executive Committee for the South to take control, was itself split between followers of Trotsky and followers of Stalin. The Trotskyites desired to resist any re-entry by France, while the Stalinites preferred to negotiate, recognizing that they could not fight the French without also fighting the British occupying forces. It was not able to take control in the South before occupation as was done in the north.

The British mission entered Saigon on September 6, 1944 and demanded that the Vietnamese be disarmed, and compelled a reorganization of the Liberation Committee so that only four of its members were still of the Vietminh party. At the same time the British General refused to recognize the Committee as the provisional government. To attempt to force recognition, they called a general strike on September 24, crippling the power plant

and resulting in serious disorders which were put down by the British with considerable use of the Japanese troops which were still there.

On October 2 the first units from France arrived, and with the help of the British and Japanese forces conquered Saigon, and on October 9 the British government recognized France as the only authorized civil government south of the 16th Parallel.

By February 5, 1946 General LeClerc announced that the reconquest of the South had been completed, although actually only the towns were under real French control.

In the North, the Chinese naturally favored the Vietminh rather than the French. They permitted no French to take control in the area, and also kept in prison the French troops which had been captured by the Japanese. With the Chinese who arrived in September came the anti-Communist national leaders representing the government established during the exile in China. The Chinese war lord general of Chang Kai Chek attempted to put the exile government in power, but the anti-Communist nationals were afraid to go along, foreseeing that they would be accused of being pro-Chinese by the Communist Vietminh and that they would eventually become powerless. Finally, on February 28, 1946, France negotiated a treaty with China under which it gave up all its old extra-territorial rights in China, and granted to China the use of Haiphong as a free port in return for permission to return the French army to northern Vietnam. During the period between March 1 and March 15 the French moved in and the Chinese commenced to move out.

In the meantime, in November of 1945 Ho Chi, to avoid the claim that his government was not representative of the entire nation but only of the Communist group, dissolved the Communist Party and held so-called "general elections" to establish a new government, with a provision that seventy of the 380 seats would go to the opposition parties, regardless of who won, and, foreseeing

the re-entry by France, commenced negotiations with the French. Without waiting for his new Assembly, he reorganized his government so that half of the members were of the opposition party.

Thereafter, in March, the new Assembly met, with the seventy opposition members, adopted a new constitution, and voted this new government into office. On March 6, this new government negotiated a new agreement with France, declaring Vietnam a free state with its own government, parliament, and army but still under the French Union. But France agreed that a referendum would be held on the question of reuniting the country, and that the French troops would be limited to twenty-five thousand men, including 10,000 natives and that their military occupancy would end by 1952. In return for these concessions, France was permitted to bring its troops into Annam and Tongking and the Vietnamese pledged to end their guerrilla war.

This treaty benefited the French by permitting them re-entry into the country without a fight. It benefited Ho Chi since it permitted him a period of peace during which he could consolidate his hold on the country by eliminating all opposition. Also he could use this treaty to claim that his regime was the only native authority in the country.

This treaty had been signed by General LeClerc as the acting High Commissioner, while the new High Commissioner, Admiral d'Argenlieu, was in France. It was opposed by this new High Commissioner, who actually spoke out against it in France shortly after it was made, which made it evident that no real support would be given to the treaty by the colonial government.

Although the treaty contemplated the possibility of reuniting the country, the French under this High Commissioner took steps to assure that it was not in fact extended south to Cochinchina, and on March 26, 1946 the old Advisory Council in Saigon (composed of four French members,) four Vietnamese who were French citizens, and one

Vietnamese who was not a French citizen) suddenly demanded the formation of a new provisional government for Cochinchina, and at the same time the French refused to permit representatives to come from Hanoi into Saigon to negotiate the end of the guerrilla war.

In the meantime, in the North continued negotiations between Ho Chi and the French brought no agreement as to the amount of freedom the new regime was to have. In desperation, Ho Chi requested a conference in Paris, which the French agreed to provided there was a preliminary conference at Dalat, which was held between April 17 and May 11 with no results. The Dalat conference was probably unimportant, but its leader was Ho Chi's righthand military man, Giap, and many believe that the disappointments he had at this conference led him to the conclusion that war was the only answer.

Ho Chi left for the Paris conference on May 31, and on the very next day the High Commissioner, without authority from Paris, announced that France had recognized the Republic of Cochinchina, which had been set up as requested by the Advisory Committee in March. The Paris conference, which for France was headed solely by the colonial bureaucrats with none of the French leaders in attendance, dragged on, with the French unwilling to give the symbols of freedom which the Vietnamese desired, and ended on September 10 with the French refusing to consider the promised referendum.

Suddenly, again Ho Chi reversed himself and signed an agreement with the Ministry of Overseas Territories recognizing the overall control which the French wanted. Here again, Ho Chi probably had given in because he was not yet ready for an all-out war and needed more time to solidify his own position and eliminate the opposition.

During his absence Giap had pretty well eliminated the opposition, in many instances, queerly enough, with the assistance of the French, who thought that it would be easier to overthrow

one party than several parties.

Within the framework of the various organizations in Vietnam there had earlier grown up three religious orders known as the Hoa Hoa, the Cao Dai, and the Benh Xuyen, which had moved from purely religious sects to political organizations controlling parts of the country with their own guerrilla forces. These organizations did not favor the Vietminh, since to do so would eliminate their own powers. They were attacked by Giap and many of the leaders murdered, forcing these organizations to later join with the French against the Vietminh.

On October 28, Ho Chi recalled his Assembly, with many of the opposition members missing, adopted a new constitution for the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and formed a new government with the Communist elements in control.

Two incidents then occurred in north Vietnam which finally resulted in the take-over of the cities of this area by France to somewhat the same extent as they had done in the south. In November at Haiphong a French harbor patrol had seized a Chinese junk with contraband goods. Vietnamese militia then captured the French patrol, resulting in a French attack on the city, including bombardment by a French cruiser. In spite of attempts at peace, fighting and rioting continued for a week until the French had thrown out all the militia.

Ho Chi, in accordance with his past practices, kept negotiating with the French while at the same time commencing the withdrawal of his troops from the cities into the mountains and the building of barricades ready for use in the cities, even tearing holes in the walls from building to building so that his guerrillas could move without appearing on the streets.

On December 17 the Hanoi incident occurred. To revenge an attack on a French truck by the militia, the French liquidated the militia post, killing many nearby civilians. They sent in troops

by parachute, demanded that all barricades be removed from the city, and that the militia be disarmed. A general uprising probably planned of the militia followed in Hanoi and spread to a number of other cities, also put down with the vengeance by the French. These incidents resulted in the occupation of the northern Vietnamese cities by the French by the end of the year 1946.

By this time Blum, the Socialist, had come to power with a real desire for a liberal settlement of the Vietnamese problem. After trying to get LeClerc, who had negotiated the abortive March settlement, to become High Commissioner, he sent him to Vietnam on an inspection of the country to determine what should be done. LeClerc reported that the conquest of Vietnam by force would take many years, and recommended negotiating an agreement with all political factions, which, of course, would include the Communists.

The French government, now under Ramadier instead of Blum, was in a dilemma to decide with whom these negotiations should be made. The more radical elements wanted negotiations with the Communist Ho Chi; others wanted negotiations with all factions, including Ho Chi; and others with all national factions other than Ho Chi.

From this situation arose what came to be known as the Bao Dai solution. The idea developed (and indeed may have been originally thought of by Admiral d'Argenlieu, the colonial High Commissioner) to rally all of the non-Communist national elements behind the Emperor Bao Dai, even though he had resigned, who was then living in Hong Kong, let him form a government and then negotiate a peace with this government. It was thought that the formation of such a front might force the Communist group to a settlement with the French which would be favorable to the French; that if such a settlement could not be made France would have a Vietnamese government on its side and it could use this government to assist it in defeating the Communists. In such an event the war would cease to be a colonial war and would

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become a civil war - a crusade against Communism.

Not only did the French think that such a set-up would help them with the Communists, they also thought that by threatening to negotiate and negotiating with the Communists they could keep the Non-Communist government in line.

Representatives met with Bao in Hong Kong. Bao was receptive to a return, but insisted that Vietnam must be free. He demanded as much freedom as the Communists had demanded.

We do not have time here to go through the complicated negotiations which then ensued. A united front was formed organized in China, composed of the remnants of the non-Communist organizations which had been liquidated by Giap with French assistance. Another united front was organized in Cochinchina, mostly composed of the two religious organizations which the Vietminh had fought.

Finally, in March 1949 letters passed between the Emperor and the French President, known as the Elysee Agreement, which reaffirmed the independence of Vietnam and its status as a free state within the Union, with the French keeping control of defense, foreign relations, and the national army. In this document the French finally spelled out terms for liquidating the Cochinchina government and surrender of its control of Hanoi and Haiphong to the Emperor's government.

This agreement, because of the French Union set-up, required approval of the French Assembly and also of the Cochinchina Assembly, which occurred, and Bao in April 1949 received the formal resignation of the Cochinchina government, thus establishing a second government claiming to represent all of Vietnam.

As a political entity, the new government was weak and could not secure any real support of the Vietnamese, even in Saigon. For any such support France would have had to make bona fide efforts to establish its freedom. This France

was never willing to do. Bao's nationalist premiers could get nowhere, and he was finally forced to appoint as Prime Minister one Van Tan, who was known to be a protege of France, thereby making it clear to the Vietnamese that this was no independent government.

During this time the United States was giving the French aid without enthusiasm. The victory of the Chinese Communists, made a tremendous change in the entire picture. The Communist states then recognized the Vietminh government. This resulted in our recognition of the government of Bao, Cambodia and Laos in February 1950 and the agreement by Truman to provide military aid in addition to economic aid to France and these associated states, with, of course, a military mission to see that things were done right. While Washington recognized that the French were not advancing the Vietnamese freedom as they thought necessary, it could not insist that absolute freedom be given since if freedom were given there would be no further reason for French involvement to stop Communism in Indochina.

In spite of increased American aid and several campaigns which the French thought would clear out the guerrillas, they were never able to catch the Vietminh army and were forever battling guerrilla units which faded before them. These military failures finally resulted in the siege of Dien Ben Phu by Giap, which commenced on March 13, 1954 and the final recognition by the French that they could not win.

In the meantime, in November 1953, while the French were marching to defeat, there was published answers of Ho Chi in Peking to certain questions asked by a Swedish newspaper reporter. Ho Chi indicated that, in spite of their increasing strength, they would be willing to negotiate a cease-fire.

At about the same time that these answers were being published, Russia suddenly consented to a conference which had been requested some time previously with the other three powers occupying

Germany to seek a solution of the German question. While nothing came out of this conference insofar as Germany was concerned, England and Russia led it into a discussion of the Indochinese problem, which resulted in a decision to call a conference at Geneva to settle this question, although the American government under Dulles opposed such a conference because Communist Chinese would be permitted to attend.

This conference was held at Geneva between April 26 and July 21, 1954. Nine states attended - the Big Four, also China, Ho Chi's Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and Bao Dai's State of Vietnam, together with Cambodia and Laos.

As in the conference now in session in Paris, there was a seating problem. Ho's government had not been recognized by any of the Western states, and Bao would do nothing which could be construed as a recognition of that government. As a result of the negotiations at this conference, two agreements were made. First, there was an agreement signed by the military representatives of France and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam for cease-fire. It provided for a provisional division of Vietnam at the 17th Parallel, a concession by Russia, with all French forces withdrawing below this line and all North Vietnamese forces above this line. Civilians who desired to change their allegiance were to be permitted to move freely from one area to the other. There were to be no reprisals, and an international control committee was set up to supervise the cease-fire. It was specifically provided, however, that the 17th Parallel was not to be considered as a political or territorial boundary, but only a provisional line for the purposes of cease-fire. In addition to this agreement, there was a final declaration announced by the conference which was not signed by South Vietnam or U.S.A. This declaration provided that there should be general elections after two years, but did not specifically state the purpose of such elections. It also provided for consultations between competent authorities from both zones during the year preceding the elections, but did not designate who the competent

authorities were.

In 1950 Ngo Dinh Diem, who had twice refused to become head of the government in South Vietnam, left Vietnam and, after a short stop in Japan, spent the months of September and October in the United States, on his way to Rome with his brother, the Vietnamese Catholic Bishop. While in the United States he preached an end of colonialism and the establishment of the nationalist government as the only way to defeat the Vietminh. Here he met Cardinal Spellman, who became his supporter. After meeting the Pope and a trip through Europe talking with Vietnamese nationalist exiles, he returned to the United States, where he remained for two years, residing at Mary Knoll Seminaries. While here he lectured in a number of universities and became known and liked by John Kennedy and, on the other hand, also by Walter Judd. In 1953 he returned to Europe and established his residence in a Belgian monastery, moving to Paris during the Geneva Conference. At this time he commenced talks with Bao Dai concerning the future government of Vietnam.

While these talks were continuing, France on June 3 made a separate treaty with Bao's State of Vietnam, recognizing it as a fully independent state, and on June 19, while still in Paris, Diem accepted appointment as head of the government, after forcing Bao to confer upon him full civil and military powers as head of the government.

While the French never liked Diem because of his strong nationalist policies, they had no objection to the appointment. Some have said that the appointment was dictated by Washington. Certainly he had strong supporters in America, but also he had no competitors favored by the American government. Because of his foresight, he was practically the only candidate for the post of whom Washington had any knowledge.

Thus commenced the government of a man who was the son of a Mandarin who had early espoused the Catholic religion, and who was himself a strong Catholic; the man who felt that he and his family

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were the only ones who could save Vietnam; the man who was incorruptible himself but did not hesitate to use corruption to establish his control of the government; the man who established, over tremendous difficulties, a strong central government, but who did not even try to secure the support of the common people under him; the man whom the United States supported blindly long after he was clearly a liability; the man who was finally deposed and murdered, thereby saving, at least for the moment, collapse of the State of Vietnam.

At the commencement of this paper it was my hope to give you a simplified history, tracing the origin of the state which we are now supporting and the state with which we are fighting in effect an undeclared war, a state which we have been taught to detest as nothing but a symbol of Communism, dominated by the Communism of China.

I will not go further into the struggle whereby Diem downed all opposition and became to all intents and purposes another Franco. Within approximately one year after his appointment Diem announced a national referendum to be held in October 1955 to decide the future form of government. This referendum, a well-organized operation in the best authoritarian tradition, resulted in 98% of the vote being for the establishment of a republican government under Diem, and only 1% of the vote for the continuation of the empire. Four hundred fifty thousand voters in Saigon cast six hundred fifty thousand votes for Diem. Favorable votes poured in even from the areas where anti-Diem guerrilla fighters were in full control. On October 26, 1955, Diem proclaimed himself as the President of the new Republic of Vietnam, our present ally.

John H. More

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