

Operational Priority Communication from Strategic Services Officer Archimedes Patti, September 2, 1945

Operational Priority

Have had long conference with Prime Minister, Ho Chi Min and he impresses me as sensible, well balanced, politically minded individual. His demands are few and simple namely limited independence, liberation from French rule, right to live as free people in family of nations and lastly right to deal directly with outside world.

He stated that for many years missionary work of propaganda within party, training of youth and preparation for this day has made them ready not necessarily for complete independence but at least the privilege of dying for their ideals. From that I have been these people mean business and am afraid that French will have to deal with them. For that matter will all have to deal with them. French and beginning to recognize this fact and are going to be big about it by offering Viet Minh terms for their independence. On other hand Vietnam is smart enough to see through Machiavellian attitude French here especially Sainteny and have absolutely refused to deal with him.

Annamese are in unique advantage our position in as much as Japs have given them independence so they consider themselves free of any sovereign power and this includes French who have been hiding behind Jap skirts, vichy tactics and passing themselves off as friends of Americans. On whole Viet Minh has full control of situation not only in hands (unreadable) whole of 3 provinces. Their organization is well knit, program clear and their demands on outside world few. They ask they be permitted travel particularly to America particularly for education purposes and that America send technical experts to help them establish those few industries Indochina is capable of exploiting. Prime Minister particularly asked me that American exercise some control over Chinese occupation forces and that Chinese purchase materials and food rather than requisitioning it during occupation period. Furthermore he pointed out and this I have confirmed from other sources Jap and French that due to flood this year famine is imminent and should Chinese depended on Indochinese for their subsistence during occupation period they will all starve plus creating situation where Annamese will be forced to wage war upon Chinese to protect his livelihood and family.

Annamese celebrating Annamese independence day tomorrow with high solemn mass by Catholics and special ritual by Buddhists.

