

APPROVED FOR RELEASE - Historical Programs Staff 30 August 2018



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EUROPE

1. GERMANY: USSR may take more German specialists--US Political Adviser Murphy has been informed by a "usually very reliable source" that Soviet authorities are planning another removal of German skilled workers and engineers from the Soviet Zone in the near future. (See Daily Summary of 4 December, item 3).
2. AUSTRIA: Soviet repatriation mission to enter US Zone--US Minister Erhardt reports that General Clark and the Soviet Commander in Austria have reached an agreement which will permit a Soviet repatriation mission to enter US Zone Austria under stipulated conditions. Last April General Clark expelled such a mission from the US Zone because it engaged in military intelligence and other unauthorized activities.

FAR EAST

3. FRENCH INDOCHINA: 26,000 French reportedly oppose 175,000-- According to a report prepared for Embassy Paris by the US Naval Attache, French land and air forces in Indochina number only 26,000. (As of 1 December MID estimated French ground forces alone at 56,000.) These are opposed by a heterogeneous Vietnam force, including Vietnamese, Chinese and Japanese, estimated by the French at 175,000 of which only about 50,000 are continuously under arms. The French forces are scattered among many small garrisons throughout the country and are outnumbered 5-1, 6-1 and as high as 20-1 in each engagement. French efforts to reinforce their troops are greatly hampered by lack of shipping.

The Vietnam force is fighting in classical guerrilla style. The French are seeking to exploit the fact that the Vietnamese have a very miscellaneous collection of arms. The French are making feints at as many places as possible in order to encourage the Vietnamese to expend ammunition, and they consider the Vietnamese will be unable to solve the supply problem presented by the diversity of their weapons.

Anxiety in Paris over whether the principal garrison in Hanoi could hold out or not was somewhat alleviated on 26 December by reports from Hanoi that the Vietnamese had been beaten back for the present.

Document No. 004
 NO CHANGE in Class.
 DECLASSIFIED
 Class. CHANGED TO: TS S 6
 DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77
 Auth: DDA REG. 77/1763
 Date: 16 MAR 1978 By: 011

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French troops continue to clear Hanoi--US Consul Hanoi reports that the French, although hampered by lack of troops to garrison captured areas, continue to clear Hanoi. The Vietnamese are reported resisting with "unforeseen courage and stubbornness reminiscent of Japs." French civilian deaths so far are about 200 with an unknown number taken as hostages. The US Consul saw bodies of 155 French who had apparently been burned alive. Vietnamese deaths "runs to hundreds" with many killed in the suburbs by French artillery fire.

THE AMERICAS

4. MEXICO: Effects of probable US ban on cattle imports--US Ambassador Thurston reports that US and Mexican veterinarians have independently diagnosed an outbreak of disease affecting Mexican cattle as foot-and-mouth disease. The matter has been reported to the US Department of Agriculture which is expected to issue an embargo against further importation of Mexican cattle. Thurston adds that a US quarantine measure will have serious economic and political repercussions in Mexico and recommends that the US explain in a public statement or a note to the Mexican Government that such action is mandatory and inescapable as a means of protecting the US against the spread of the disease.

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