

Sept. 2, 1945 - Ho Chi Minh -
proclaimed independence of Vietnam
from French Rule.

France returned - 1950-54 - to suppress Ho's
revolt. U.S. supported French.

World War II - Japan occupied Vietnam -
allowed French to retain nominal
power -

→ Then Japanese deposed puppet
French government -
March 1945.

→ Americans helped Ho + guerrillas
seize 78,000 men to overthrow
Japanese -

Japanese surrender -
Ho Chi Minh's gov
took over -

Sept 2, 1945.

After war - French tried to regain land.

came back - expelled E Vietnam
from South Vietnam -
for Saigon -

French took over southern part / the country -

Hostilities broke out - between French + Vietminh -

Vietminh - wanted unification of country

French wanted to keep economic interests in south

French shelled Haiphong Harbor - 1946 -

6,000 civilians killed -

This was beginning of many

months years war -

U.S. attitudes:

(a) worried about power of Russia -

decided territory should not be taken away from allies ... world war

- would weaken strength against Russia

1945 - under Truman U.S. promised

France it would support restoration of French sovereignty in

Indochina.

(b) ambiguity - U.S. in a bind.

- worried about Soviet expansionism -

- also saw power of nationalism -

Colonialism holding on (French interests)

vs. growing nationalisms

Structure in France - instability gave French communists
power to new projects entered.

The U.S. fear - that France would
be subject to communist
takeover -

Read: p. 7. "By early 1947 - -
page 8.

New ~~decision~~ U.S. decision in 1950 -
- look like French defeat - so U.S. decided
to support France.

Bigger fear: - China fell to Mao Tse-tung in
1949 -
Chiang Kai-shek banished
- looked like Chinese communists
might collaborate with
Vietnam -

- also: Russia now had atom
bombs -

U.S. fear about Europe - worried about
Soviet expansion -

- U.S. decided to allow W. Germany to
re-arm.

French ~~to~~ were lukewarm about this
French + U.S. struck a bargain.

↳ French support of U.S. in Europe

a fair trade for U.S. support of

France in Indochina

By 1950 - U.S. Asian Policy firm - firm:

Principle: Southeast Asia is vital to
the security of the U.S.

- wished the area not to

be "swamped by communism"

Read p 10 - 11

Secretary of State Dean Acheson said:

"Ho Chi Minh is "the mortal
enemy of nature, independence
of Indochina."

"Domino Theory" (also formulated by 1950):

idea: fall of Indochina would bring about rapid collapse of other nations in the area.

- 1950 AD - U.S. agreed to give French military + economic assistance for the war against Hanoi.

Read Kennedy's appraisal - p13.

Summer 1 of 1950 - Korean War -

North Korea invades South Korea -

Truman sees this as confirmation: Soviet Union wants to conquer all of Asia - even at risk of war -

Then too: China was aiding North Koreans
Truman feared - China will help Vietnam too -

1950 Congress committed \$133 million to help French fight war -

arms, ammunition, naval vessels - aircraft -

By 1952 - U.S. increased aid -
also - 1952 - U.S. said - 7 China comes in,
U.S. would send naval + air units - -

1952 - Eisenhower becomes President -
War has moved into Laos + Ther'
Thailand -

North Vietnamese becoming + very skillful
as fighters -

John Foster Dulles: "Ho Chi Minh = an
instrument of international
communism" -

marked "domino theory"

Dulles: France should bear the burden
of the war -

Eisenhower's major new policy - to
help South Vietnam
develop a real army -
one that would have
pride -

May 1954 - Fall?
Dien Bien Phu -