

PSF

Indo-China

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1944, volume 3, pp. 778-780.

Indo-China folder 1-44
file
personal

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 3, 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

I have yours of November second, enclosing memorandum on recent developments in relation to Indo-China. I wish you would make it clear that:

1. We must not give American approval to any French military mission, as it appears we have done in the first sentence of the first paragraph.

2. Referring to the third paragraph, it must be made clear to all our people in the Far East that they can make no decisions on political questions with the French mission or anyone else.

3. We have made no final decisions on the future of Indo-China. This should be made clear.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

-2-

4. In the final paragraph it is stated the British and Dutch have arrived at an agreement in regard to the future of Southeast Asia and are about to bring the French into the picture. It should be made clear to all our people that the United States expects to be consulted with regard to any future of Southeast Asia. I have no objection to this being made clear to the British, the Dutch or the French.

F. D. R.



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

November 2, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

INDOCHINA

In order that you may be kept fully informed on developments in relation to Indochina, there has been prepared the memorandum attached hereto.

E. A. Tamm



PSF: Indo-China

November 2, 1944

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN RELATION TO INDOCHINA

The following are recent developments in relation to Indochina:

Colombo has reported that:

The British staff at headquarters of SEAC has protested to the British Chiefs of Staff in London against the inclusion of Indochina in the theatre under the new United States Army Commanding General in China, urging that Indochina be included in the SEAC theatre.

The French Military Mission, which is large, has arrived in Ceylon and has received American approval and is now recognized openly and officially. Apparently, General Blaizot has not yet arrived. Baron de Langlade who parachuted into Indochina some weeks ago with a letter of introduction from de Gaulle is also in Ceylon. He spent twenty-four hours with French Army officers in Indochina, and stated, upon his return that a basis for a French resistance movement exists there, but reportedly declined to say more until Blaizot's arrival. Blaizot, a Lieutenant General, was formerly Chief of Staff in Indochina. He is a "colonial" general.

Although SEAC was advised specifically that only military, and not political, questions might be discussed with the French Mission, political questions are in fact under discussion.

The British SOE which is actively engaged in undercover operations in Indochina has recently received orders from the Foreign Office that they should have nothing to do with any Annamite or other native organizations in Indochina, but are to devote their efforts to the French.

The OWI representative at New Delhi has received indication that the British wish OWI activities directed at the native populations in Thailand and Indochina be eliminated so as not to stir up native resistance to the Japanese and so incite the Japanese to send more troops into those areas. Colombo states that it is apparent SOE desires severely to restrict OSS operations in the SEAC theatre and to give SOE preeminence or, failing that, to establish combined SOE-OSS operations.

British

British propaganda agencies are emphasizing the recent appeal by the French War Ministry for recruits to participate in the campaign for liberation of Indochina on the ground that news of any French military efforts to recover Indochina would encourage the French in Indochina. OWI has so far refrained from mentioning the French appeal or other phases of French preparations for military participation fearing the adverse affect on the native populations in Indochina and elsewhere in the Far East on the restoration of the status quo ante which such preparations would appear to imply. OWI has specifically requested State Department guidance on United States policy in this regard, and have been advised to be silent on the subject despite the anticipated British broadcasts.

General Donovan has submitted to the Secretary of State a report from the OSS representative in SEAC reading in part:

"There can be little doubt that the British and Dutch have arrived at an agreement with regard to the future of Southeast Asia, and now it would appear that the French are being brought into the picture. ... It would appear that the strategy of the British, Dutch and French is to win back and control Southeast Asia, making the fullest use possible of American resources, but foreclosing the Americans from any voice in policy matters."



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

November 15, 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Developments Regarding Indochina

Supplementing my memorandum of November 2, 1944, the Department has been informed of two further developments regarding Indochina.

Monsieur Chauvel, Secretary General of the Foreign Office, has informed the American Ambassador in Paris that France is anxious to participate in the recovery of Indochina to the maximum extent its capacity will permit; that 2,000 of the troops which have been training in North Africa for service in the Pacific have already arrived in India; that recruiting has been active in metropolitan France and training there already commenced for a French expeditionary force which eventually may amount to two normal divisions; that the French Government is interested not only in a French force in India but also would be interested in having French units included in any forces which might strike toward Indochina from the Philippines, if such an operation is contemplated.

The American Minister at Cairo has been informed by a usually reliable and well-informed source that at the meeting between Lord Louis Mountbatten, Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden at Cairo last month, Lord Louis urged strongly that his command should be extended to include Indochina and Thailand; that operations in Malaya should be conducted only by British troops, while operations in Indochina should, with British support, be conducted by French troops.



E. A. Tamm



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

November 15, 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

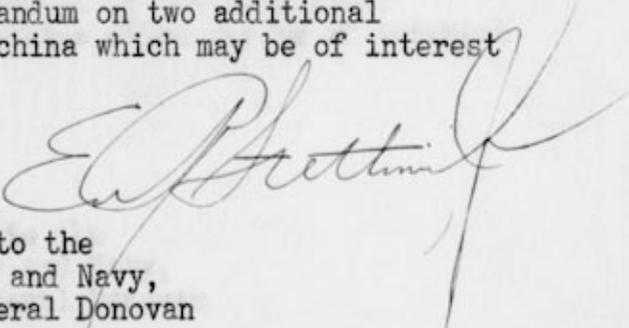
Indochina and Southeast Asia

As agreed in our conversation on November 10, I am enclosing suggested letters for your signature to the Secretaries of War and Navy, Admiral Leahy, General Donovan and Mr. Davis, on the subject of Indochina and Southeast Asia. I feel that these letters will be helpful in coordinating American policy in this area.

The Department, of course, will continue to carry out the policies expressed in your memorandum of November 3, and instructions are being sent to its appropriate missions in the field. Because, however, the question of the French Military Mission is primarily a military matter, the instructions in this respect will be confidential until instructions to military officers in the Far East are issued through military channels.

I am enclosing a memorandum on two additional developments regarding Indochina which may be of interest to you.

Enclosures:

- 
1. Suggested letters to the Secretaries of War and Navy, Admiral Leahy, General Donovan and Mr. Davis.
 2. Memorandum regarding Indochina.



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hms

PSF: Indo-China folder 1-44

November 18, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE
UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

The President has signed the letters addressed to the Director, Office of Strategic Services, the Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of War, the Director of the Office of War Information, and Admiral William D. Leahy, in reference to Indochina, which you submitted with your memorandum of November fifteenth.

They are herewith returned for transmittal.

M. C. LATTA
Executive Clerk

hms

November 17, 1944

My dear General Donovan:

The State Department has informed me, on the basis of a telegram from the American Consulate General at Colombo, that a large French military mission has arrived in Ceylon and "has received American approval and is now recognized openly and officially" with the same status as the Dutch and Chinese Missions to the South East Asia Command. Continuing, the Consulate reports that, although the South East Asia Command was advised specifically by an "acquaint" order (from whom not indicated) that only military, and not political, questions might be discussed with the French Mission, political questions are in fact under discussion.

With regard to this matter, I wish to make it clear that American approval must not be given to any French military mission being accredited to the South East Asia Command; and that no officer of this Government, military or civilian, may make decisions on political questions with the French military mission or with anyone else.

I would like further to have it made clear that this Government has made no final decisions on the future of Indochina, and that we expect to be consulted in advance with regard to any arrangements applicable to the future of Southeast Asia.

Sincerely yours,

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

Brigadier General William J. Donovan,

Director,

Office of Strategic Services.

November 17, 1944

My dear Mr. Secretary:

The State Department has informed me, on the basis of a telegram from the American Consulate General at Colombo, that a large French military mission has arrived in Ceylon and "has received American approval and is now recognized openly and officially" with the same status as the Dutch and Chinese Missions to the South East Asia Command. Continuing, the Consulate reports that, although the South East Asia Command was advised specifically by an "acquaint" order (from whom not indicated) that only military, and not political, questions might be discussed with the French Mission, political questions are in fact under discussion.

With regard to this matter, I wish to make it clear that American approval must not be given to any French military mission being accredited to the South East Asia Command; and that no officer of this Government, military or civilian, may make decisions on political questions with the French military mission or with anyone else.

I would like further to have it made clear that this Government has made no final decisions on the future of Indochina, and that we expect to be consulted in advance with regard to any arrangements applicable to the future of Southeast Asia.

Sincerely yours,

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

The Honorable

James V. Forrestal,

Secretary of the Navy.

November 17, 1944

My dear Mr. Secretary:

The State Department has informed me, on the basis of a telegram from the American Consulate General at Colombo, that a large French military mission has arrived in Ceylon and "has received American approval and is now recognized openly and officially" with the same status as the Dutch and Chinese Missions to the South East Asia Command. Continuing, the Consulate reports that, although the South East Asia Command was advised specifically by an "acquaint" order (from whom not indicated) that only military, and not political, questions might be discussed with the French Mission, political questions are in fact under discussion.

With regard to this matter, I wish to make it clear that American approval must not be given to any French military mission being accredited to the South East Asia Command; and that no officer of this Government, military or civilian, may make decisions on political questions with the French military mission or with anyone else.

I would like further to have it made clear that this Government has made no final decisions on the future of Indochina, and that we expect to be consulted in advance with regard to any arrangements applicable to the future of Southeast Asia.

Sincerely yours,

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

The Honorable

Henry L. Stimson,

Secretary of War.

November 17, 1944

My dear Mr. Davis:

The State Department has informed me, on the basis of a telegram from the American Consulate at Colombo, that a large French military mission has arrived in Ceylon and "has received American approval and is now recognized openly and officially" with the same status as the Dutch and Chinese Missions to the South East Asia Command. Continuing, the Consulate reports that, although the South East Asia Command was advised specifically by an "acquaint" order (from whom not indicated) that only military, and not political, questions might be discussed with the French Mission, political questions are in fact under discussion.

With regard to this matter, I wish to make it clear that American approval must not be given to any French military mission being accredited to the South East Asia Command; and that no officer of this Government, military or civilian, may make decisions on political questions with the French military mission or with anyone else.

I would like further to have it made clear that this Government has made no final decisions on the future of Indochina, and that we expect to be consulted in advance with regard to any arrangements applicable to the future of Southeast Asia.

Sincerely yours,

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

Mr. Elmer Davis,
Director,
Office of War Information,
Washington, D. C.

November 17, 1944

My dear Admiral Leahy:

The State Department has informed me, on the basis of a telegram from the American Consulate General at Colombo, that a large French military mission has arrived in Ceylon and "has received American approval and is now recognized openly and officially" with the same status as the Dutch and Chinese Missions to the South East Asia Command. Continuing, the Consulate reports that, although the South East Asia Command was advised specifically by an "acquaint" order (from whom not indicated) that only military, and not political, questions might be discussed with the French Mission, political questions are in fact under discussion.

With regard to this matter, I wish to make it clear that American approval must not be given to any French military mission being accredited to the South East Asia Command; and that no officer of this Government, military or civilian, may make decisions on political questions with the French military mission or with anyone else.

I would like further to have it made clear that this Government has made no final decisions on the future of Indochina, and that we expect to be consulted in advance with regard to any arrangements applicable to the future of Southeast Asia.

Sincerely yours,

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

Admiral William D. Leahy,
Chief of Staff to the Commander-
in-Chief of the Army and Navy,
The White House.

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file
PSF: Indo-China

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

18 November 1944

My dear Mr. President:

I have your letter of November 17 referring to the French military mission to the Southeast Asia Command.

Please be assured that the instructions in your letter will be followed by the Navy.

Sincerely yours,

James Forrestal

The President

The White House

COPY

PSF: *Indo-China*

BRITISH EMBASSY,

WASHINGTON 8, D.C.

23rd November, 1944

3304

~~TOP SECRET~~

My dear Ed:

I send you herewith an Aide-Memoire concerning proposals for the use of the French in pre-operational activities in Indo-China.

This is a matter which Mountbatten and all of us have very much at heart. Until we have the all-clear from your side he cannot effectively carry out sabotage etc. activities which he is satisfied should contribute very considerably to his task.

You will see that the matter is urgent and I would be grateful if you could let us have a very early reply.

HALIFAX

The Honourable

Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.,

Department of State,

Washington, D.C.

DECLASSIFIED

By Authority of *British*

Brit. telegram, 1-12-72

By *J* Date FEB 10 1972

COPY

AIDE MEMOIRE

TOP SECRET

1. In August last His Majesty's Government invited the concurrence of the United States Government in the following proposals:

(1) The establishment of a French military mission with the South East Asia Command. This would facilitate the work of the Secret Operations Executive and of the Office of Strategic Services and would serve as the nucleus of the operational headquarters which may be required later. The function of the mission would be primarily to deal with matters concerning French Indo China and it would not participate in questions of general strategy. It would, therefore, be much on the same basis as the Dutch and Chinese missions attached to the South East Asia Command.

(2) The establishment in India of a "Corps Leger d'Intervention" composed at the start of 500 men and designed to operate exclusively in Indo China on Japanese lines of communication. The activities of this body would correspond to those of the American and British Secret Operational organizations and its establishment could be without prejudice to the wider question of from what sources French forces participating in the Far East should be equipped.

(3) French participation in the planning of political warfare in the Far East. This would be a matter for arrangement between the South East Asia Command and the French Military Mission.

2. The United States Chiefs of Staff, from a military point of view concurred with these proposals except that they believed that French participation in the planning of political warfare should be restricted to the area of the South East Asia Command. No further action could be taken by them in this matter as it was understood that the President had expressed the desire first to discuss the question of French Indo China orally with the Prime Minister.

3. The United States Chiefs of Staff took occasion to point out that in their view, French Indo China was part, not of South East Asia Command, but of the China

DECLASSIFIED

By Authority of British

Theatre

Brit telegram 1-13-72
By Jf Date FEB 10 1972

Theatre and was an American sphere of strategic responsibility. They recognized that an oral understanding had been come to between Admiral Mountbatten and the Generalissimo by which both Commanders would be free to attack Thailand and French Indo China, and boundaries between the two Theatres would be decided at an appropriate time in the light of progress made by the two forces.

4. This agreement was recognized by the Generalissimo after Sextant as applying to pre-operational activities. It has however never been formally confirmed by the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

5. No further steps could be taken in obtaining the necessary approval by the Combined Chiefs of Staff to the proposals outlined in paragraph 1 of this aide memoire until the President and the Prime Minister had had an opportunity to discuss them. It was anticipated that this discussion would take place at the Quebec Conference, but in fact the subject was never raised. Consequently no further progress has been made in this matter which is becoming increasingly urgent.

6. Admiral Mountbatten is strongly of the opinion that useful and important work on irregular lines could immediately be done in French Indo China. The French Army and Civil Service are unquestionably anxious to take part in the liberation of the country from the Japanese and constitute virtually a well-organized and ready-made Maquis. The secret organizations operating from South East Asia Command have made contact with these elements and are now in regular communication with them. All that is necessary to exploit the situation is the presence in South East Asia Command of the necessary French personnel from whom alone the French in French Indo China will take the direction necessary to produce the action required.

7. Admiral Mountbatten has pointed out that French Indo China constitutes an area of vital importance to the operation of his Command since it lies on the Japanese land and air reinforcement route to Burma and Malaya. Irregular activities therefore on the lines envisaged in the proposals which are the subject of this aide memoire are for him a matter of urgency.

8. His Majesty's Government, therefore, earnestly hope that the United States Government will concur as to the desirability and urgency of pushing on with the irregular operations outlined above and will take such

action

action as will make possible the issue of a directive by the Combined Chiefs of Staff

- (a) confirming the oral understanding already existing between the Generalissimo and Admiral Mountbatten, and
- (b) approving the program set out in the opening paragraph of this aide memoire.

Such action would in no way prejudice the question of the ultimate settlement of the boundary between the China Theatre and the South East Asia Command, which, by the agreement between Admiral Mountbatten and the Generalissimo, is at present left open, nor the wider question of the participation of regular French armed forces in the Far Eastern War.

BRITISH EMBASSY,

WASHINGTON, D. C.

22nd November, 1944

PSF: Indo-China from 1-45

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION

WASHINGTON

*file
confidential*

November 23, 1944

The President
The White House

Dear Mr. President:

Pursuant to the instructions in your letter of November 17, we have advised our staff in the theater of the South East Asia Command that they are not to undertake discussion of political questions with the French Mission.

Very respectfully,

Elmer Davis

Elmer Davis
Director

~~SECRET~~

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WAR DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON

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DIR. 5200.9 (9/27/58)

November 24,

1944: 2-19-70

Signature- JWR

My dear Mr. President:

Your letter of November 17th advising me of the arrival of a French Military Mission with the South East Asia Command and giving me your wishes in regard to our policy toward Indo-China has been received.

Upon investigating the matter, I find that the proposal for sending a French Military Mission to the South East Asia Command originated with the French, who submitted it to the British Chiefs of Staff who, in turn, forwarded the proposal to our U. S. Chiefs of Staff, leading to action by the Combined Chiefs of Staff. I am informed that the British proposal was sent to you on August 26, 1944, by the State Department. After some modification of the British proposal, our Joint Chiefs of Staff gave their approval, and on the 29th of August so notified the State Department. On the following day the Joint Chiefs of Staff notified the Combined Chiefs of Staff of their concurrence and the Combined Chiefs thereupon approved the action of sending a Military Mission accredited to the South East Asia Command (a British headquarters), restricting the planning of the Mission in regard to political warfare to the area of that Command. I also learned that at the SEXTANT Conference matters respecting the boundaries of the South East Asia Command and the political policy affecting French Indo-China were discussed.

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DDO DIR. 5200.9 (9/27/58)

- 2 -

Date- 2-19-70

Signature- *JWR*

From the above facts, it is apparent that through the Joint Chiefs of Staff American approval was given to the sending of a French Military Mission to the South East Asia Command. Any withdrawal of such approval at this time, I imagine, would produce substantial repercussions, particularly since the Chinese and other Missions are already attached to that headquarters.

In accordance with your wishes, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to whom I have referred the contents of your letter, have instructed General Sultan, General Wedemeyer and General Wheeler that no officer, military or civilian, shall make any decisions on political questions with either this French Mission or anyone else; and the same officers have also been advised that this Government expects to be consulted in advance in connection with any plans applicable to the future of South East Asia.

As you will see, this matter was never before the War Department as such for approval. It was for the purpose of avoiding such results, as shown above, that I have always insisted that communications to the Joint Chiefs of Staff - other than those from the President himself on military matters, but including all those from other departments and agencies of government - should go through

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- 3 -

the Secretaries of War and Navy. Otherwise I foresee that the reasons of our ancestors for having civilian heads to our military establishments will be eventually frustrated, with results not in accord with our national traditions or interests.

Faithfully yours,

Henry L. Stimson

Secretary of War.

The President

The White House.

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ODD DIR. 5200.9 (9/27/58)

Date- 2-19-70

Signature: *JH*

~~TOP SECRET~~

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 24, 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR

HON. E. R. STETTINIUS, JR.

It should be called to the attention of our British friends that Mr. Churchill and I did not officially recognize the French Military Mission at SEAC and furthermore, I have made no agreement, definite or otherwise, with the British, French or Dutch to retain their Far Eastern Colonial possessions.

F.D.R.

Transmitting original of attached memorandum with enclosures, which are noted.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

November 20, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: British, French and Dutch Colonial Policy
in the Far East

In connection with our recent conversation concerning British, French and Dutch intentions in regard to their Far Eastern colonial possessions, I think you will be interested in the enclosed telegrams on this subject from our Consulate in Colombo and our Embassy in Chungking. As you will note, Colombo reports that Mountbatten informed his staff that the French military mission at SEAC was recognized officially on the basis of a verbal agreement between you and Mr. Churchill. Chungking transmits the views of General Wedemayer to the effect that the British, French and Dutch Governments have reached a definite agreement to retain their Far Eastern colonial possessions and even to expand their political and economic interests in that area.

S/ E. R. Stettinius, Jr.

Enclosures:

1. Copy of telegram
no. 338 from Colombo,
November 18, 1944.
2. Copy of telegram
no. 1853 from Chungking,
November 17, 1944.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By J. Schauble Date FEB 10 1972

T-442

PSF: Indo. China *for all*
1-44

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 27, 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR

ADMIRAL LEAHY:

TO DO THE NECESSARY.

F.D.R.

My dear Mr. President:

Your letter of November 17th advising me of the arrival of a French Military Mission with the South East Asia Command and giving me your wishes in regard to our policy toward Indo-China has been received.

Upon investigating the matter, I find that the proposal for sending a French Military Mission to the South East Asia Command originated with the French, who submitted it to the British Chiefs of Staff who, in turn, forwarded the proposal to our U. S. Chiefs of Staff, leading to action by the Combined Chiefs of Staff. I am informed that the British proposal was sent to you on August 26, 1944, by the State Department. After some modification of the British proposal, our Joint Chiefs of Staff gave their approval, and on the 29th of August so notified the State Department. On the following day the Joint Chiefs of Staff notified the Combined Chiefs of Staff of their concurrence and the Combined Chiefs thereupon approved the action of sending a Military Mission accredited to the South East Asia Command (a British headquarters), restricting the planning of the Mission in regard to political warfare to the area of that Command. I also learned that at the SEXTANT Conference matters respecting the boundaries of the South East Asia Command and the political policy affecting French Indo-China were discussed.

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DIR. 5200.8 (9/27/68)

- 2 -

Date- 2-19-70

Signature- *YD*

From the above facts, it is apparent that through the Joint Chiefs of Staff American approval was given to the sending of a French Military Mission to the South East Asia Command. Any withdrawal of such approval at this time, I imagine, would produce substantial repercussions, particularly since the Chinese and other Missions are already attached to that headquarters.

In accordance with your wishes, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to whom I have referred the contents of your letter, have instructed General Sultan, General Wedemeyer and General Wheeler that no officer, military or civilian, shall make any decisions on political questions with either this French Mission or anyone else; and the same officers have also been advised that this Government expects to be consulted in advance in connection with any plans applicable to the future of South East Asia.

As you will see, this matter was never before the War Department as such for approval. It was for the purpose of avoiding such results, as shown above, that I have always insisted that communications to the Joint Chiefs of Staff - other than those from the President himself on military matters, but including all those from other departments and agencies of government - should go through

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- 3 -

the Secretaries of War and Navy. Otherwise I foresee that the reasons of our ancestors for having civilian heads to our military establishments will be eventually frustrated, with results not in accord with our national traditions or interests.

Faithfully yours,

S/ Henry L. Stimson
Secretary of War.

The President

The White House.

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DIR. 5200.9 (9/27/59)

date- 2-19-70

signature- JLR

~~TOP SECRET~~



Indo-China folder 1-44
file ~~SECRET~~

THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

December 1, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Future of Southeast Asia

I believe you will be interested, in the light of reports we have previously received alleging an Anglo-Dutch-French understanding on the future of colonial possessions in Southeast Asia, in the enclosed telegram from Schoenfeld describing a conversation with the Netherlands Foreign Minister who denies categorically that any such understanding exists.

Enclosure:

Copy of telegram from London,
Meter series no. 39,
November 27, 1944.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By J. Schauble Date FEB 10 1972

FMH-1004

This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (SECRET)

London

Dated November 27, 1944

Rec'd 10:12 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

NETER 39, November 27, 8 p.m.

FROM SCHOENFELD

In course of a conversation on November 24, I mentioned to Dr. Val Kleffens the reports reaching Washington indicating that the British and the Dutch might have reached a common understanding regarding economic, political and security aspects of the future of south east Asia and that the French might also be included (your 12, November 21). He said there was no truth in these reports.

Van Kleffens then digressed to say that the Belgians and the French had sought before Dumbarton Oaks to have talks with him about a regional security arrangement in western Europe. He had told them he would not enter upon such discussions without first talking with the British. Eden had taken the position that the British could not enter upon such talks before
the Washington

-2- #NETER 39, November 27, 8 p.m. from London

the Washington talks on a world security organization.

Van Kleffens went on to say that just as he would not talk about a regional security arrangement in western Europe with the Belgians and the French without the British or for that matter with the British and the French without the Belgians so he would not talk with the British and the French about the security aspects of south east Asia without talking to United States nor talk to United States without also talking to the British and the French. There were, he said, no political or security or economic understandings between the Dutch and the British and the French regarding ~~south east Asia~~.

He could tell me, however, that a French general some time ago had approached a Dutch military person with such an idea. The latter had brought the matter to the attention of Dr. Van Kleffens who had requested M. De Jean the French Minister to call and had asked him how a French general could take up a matter which was so essentially political. He had added that if the French Government wanted to discuss such a matter presumably it would not take it up in that way. He thereupon turned over to M De Jean the French General's "paper" and had since heard no more about the matter.

Repeated to Paris.

WINANT

MJF

PSF: Indo-China folder 1-44
TOP SECRET
files

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON
December 11, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: British Proposals Involving French
Plans with Regard to Indo-China.

I am enclosing for your information a copy of an aide memoire from the British Embassy dated November 22 again seeking the concurrence of this Government in a number of proposals involving French participation in certain military plans and operations in the Far East looking toward the liberation of Indo-China.

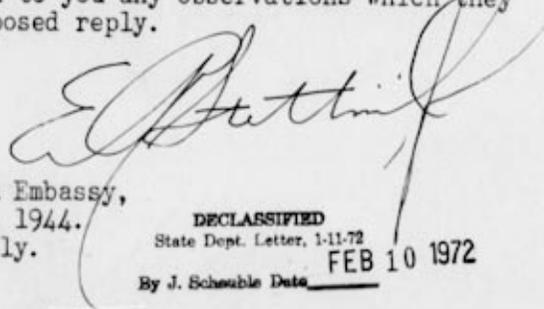
I am also enclosing a suggested reply which has been prepared in the light of your memorandum of November 3, 1944 and previous instructions on the subject.

With regard to the British request for confirmation of the reported oral understanding between Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and Lord Mountbatten concerning the boundaries between their two theatres, we propose to inform the British that this is a matter on which decision should be left to the appropriate military authorities.

Copies of the British aide memoire and of my proposed reply are being transmitted to the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy with the suggestion that they make known to you any observations which they may have on the proposed reply.

Enclosures:

1. From British Embassy,
November 22, 1944.
2. Proposed reply.



DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By J. Scheuble Date FEB 10 1972

AIDE MEMOIRE


The British Embassy's aide memoire of November 22, 1944 has been referred to the President. The State Department is authorized to make the following reply. In the aide memoire left by Lord Halifax with the Department of State on August 26, reference was made to a French request for British approval of:

- (a) Sending a French military mission to be attached to S.E.A.C. headquarters;
- (b) Sending to India a light intervention force for later use in Indo-China;
- (c) Sending, later on, a French expeditionary force to participate in the liberation of Indo-China;
- (d) Participation by the French in planning the war against Japan;
- (e) Participation by the French in planning political warfare in the Far East.

In this aide memoire there was expressed on behalf of the British Government: disapproval as to proposal (d), approval of proposal (c), but only "in the later stages of the war and on the understanding that they are made up of good and experienced fighting men"; approval of

of proposal (e) "in areas in which the French are interested", this to "be a matter for arrangement between the SEAC and the French Military Mission"; and approval of proposals (a) and (b). American concurrence on these last two was requested if possible in time to advise Monsieur Massigli before he should leave London on August 29.

As indicated in the Embassy's aide memoire of November 22, no formal reply was made to this request as it was expected that the entire matter would be discussed and a decision reached by the President and the Prime Minister at the Quebec conference. No such decision, however, was made.

This Government, meanwhile, has given serious consideration to the French requests referred to in the Embassy's aide memoire of August 25, and again in the Embassy's aide memoire of November 22. It concurs fully with the British Government that the French should not participate in planning the war against Japan; it feels that no plans should now be made for a French expeditionary force to participate in the liberation of Indo-China; and it has

reached

reached the conclusion that American approval cannot be given at this time to the accrediting of a French Military Mission to the S.E.A.C.

In particular, it does not believe that pending final decisions on the future of Indo-China, such a Mission should participate in the planning of political warfare in the Far East where French interests center primarily in Indo-China.

Reports, which would appear reliable, have recently been received by this Government that a French Military Mission under General Blaizot has arrived in Kandy, that such Mission has been accorded by Admiral Mountbatten official recognition and approval and the same status as the Chinese and Dutch Missions accredited to the South East Asia Command, and that discussions are proceeding between officers of the South East Asia Command and the French Mission. Reports have also been received that two thousand French troops have arrived in India and the French are recruiting and training personnel in metropolitan France with the hope of increasing this group ultimately

to

to about two divisions.

This Government is surprised by these reports, which would imply that the British Government has already given approval to the French Military Mission without the concurrent approval of this Government.

Finally, the British aide memoire of November 22 expresses the earnest hope that this Government will concur in taking such action as will make possible the issue of a directive by the Combined Chiefs of Staff confirming that the oral understanding said to exist between Admiral Mountbatten and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek concerning the boundaries between their two theaters should be applicable to preoperational activities. It is felt that in view of the military considerations involved decision in regard to this question should be left to the appropriate military authorities.

Department of State,
Washington,

740.0011 P.W./8-2544

Indo-China folder 1-44

file

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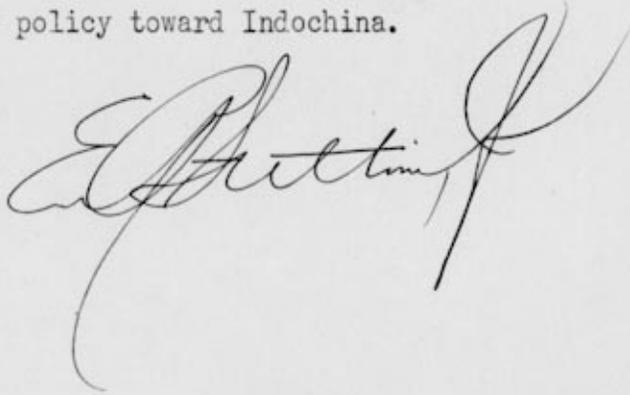
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

December 26, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: United States Policy toward Indochina

The enclosed cable from London describes an informal inquiry from the British Foreign Office in regard to our policy toward Indochina.



Enclosure:

Copy of telegram
no. 11368 from London,
December 22, 1944.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By J. Schauble Date FEB 10 1972

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

u

DCG-547
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. ([REDACTED])

London

Dated December 22, 1944

Rec'd 5:30 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

11368, December 22, 3 p.m.

During the course of conversation on December 21
with an officer of the Embassy, the head of the Far
Eastern Department of the FOROF-referred
to the request made by the British in August for American
approval of a French Military Mission to be despatched
to the Southeast Asia Command and expressed some concern
at the fact that the United States Government policy on
Indo China had apparently not yet been determined.
Bennett stated that it was felt that the French
Provisional Government was constantly strengthening its
position in world affairs and that it would be difficult
to deny them participation in the reconquest of Indo
China. He expressed the fear that as events were
progressing in the Far East, circumstances might at any
time arise in connection with Indo China which would
place the United States and United Kingdom Governments

in an

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By J. Schenble Date FEB 10 1972

-2-#11368, December 22, 3 p.m. from London.

in an awkward predicament if the policy to be pursued toward Indo China had not been previously agreed upon. Bennett was not talking officially but was only expressing his personal views. However, it is believed that the views expressed by him are those generally held in the FOROF.

WINANT

WTD

Stettinius memorandum printed in Foreign Relations
of the United States, 1944, volume 3, pp. 783-784.

Indo-China folder
1-45

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 1, 1945.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

I still do not want to get mixed up in any Indochina decision. It is a matter for post-war.

By the same token, I do not want to get mixed up in any military effort toward the liberation of Indochina from the Japanese.

You can tell Halifax that I made this very clear to Mr. Churchill. From both the military and civil point of view, action at this time is premature.

F. D. R.

PSF: Indochina

~~SECRET~~

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

December 27, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Indochina

With reference to the British aide-memoire of November 22, requesting approval of the French Military Mission to the Southeast Asia Command and French military participation in the liberation of Indochina, a proposed reply to which was sent to you with a memorandum on December 11, the British are obviously perturbed about the situation.

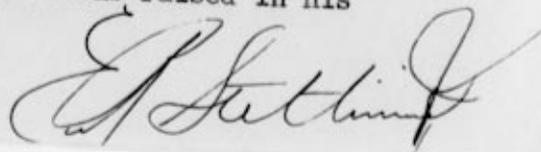
On December 8 Lord Halifax called at his request and stressed to me the importance of a prompt reply.

Ambassador Winant has now reported that Mr. Bennett, head of the Far Eastern Department in the British Foreign Office, has expressed his concern that the United States apparently has not yet determined upon its policy towards Indochina. Mr. Bennett stated that it would be difficult to deny French participation in the liberation of Indochina in light of the increasing strength of the French Government in world affairs, and that unless a policy to be followed toward Indochina is mutually agreed between our two Governments, circumstances may arise at any moment which will place our two Governments in a very awkward situation. Although Mr. Bennett was expressing his personal views only, Mr. Winant stated his belief that the Foreign Office generally share those views.

In a conversation yesterday Lord Halifax again referred to the importance which his Government attaches to a prompt decision on the questions raised in his aide-memoire.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By J. Scheuble Date FEB 10 1972



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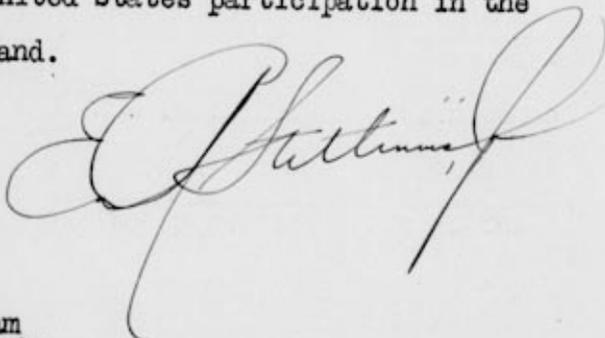
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

January 10, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: American Participation in
Southeast Asia Command

The enclosed telegram from Bishop, our Political Representative with the SEAC, sets forth some of the political and strategic considerations which he believes should be taken into account in reaching a decision as to whether to increase, to decrease, or to maintain at its present level United States participation in the Southeast Asia Command.



Enclosure:

Copy of telegram
no. 9 from Colombo,
January 9, 1945.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By J. Schauble Date FEB 10 1972

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

GEM-1026

This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (████████)

Colombo

Dated January 9, 1945

Rec'd 11:42 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

U.S. URGENT

9, January 9, 5 p.m. (SECTION ONE OF TWO)

~~TOP SECRET~~ FOR SECRETARY AND ~~SECRET~~ FOR
UNDERSECRETARY

With accomplishment of recapture of Burma Road
and securing of its defence which may be reasonably
expected within one month, question of American
participation in Southeast Asia Command will require
consideration and decision, perhaps at highest level.
Militarily it will be necessary to decide upon mission
to be assigned to United States forces in this theatre.
It is possible that that mission may be limited to
operation of Burma Road and all necessary functions
for movement of supplies to our forces in China. In
that event all forces and equipment not needed to per-
form supply mission would be available for transfer
elsewhere, presumably China, and primary military
interest of United States would be directed to areas
north and

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By J. Schauble Date FEB 10 1972

-2-#9, January 9, 5 p.m. (SECTION ONE OF TWO) from
Colombo.

north and east of a line running roughly from
Philippines to Burma Road.

(If situation in China were to deteriorate to
point where evacuation of American forces from China
were required, our forces in this area would also be
called upon as part of their mission to facilitate
withdrawal from China).

If shortage of such strategic materials as rubber
becomes sufficiently acute, it might be necessary to
direct United States military effort toward areas south
of above line.

War Department is actively considering these
questions and perhaps has already approached the Depart-
ment for decisions on political aspects of problems
involved. Political considerations will shortly out-
weigh strategic factors in American participation in
this theatre under a supreme allied command.

Apparently British desire to increase American
participation in SEAC (my telegram No. 1, January 3)
and to augment American personnel. An American Colonel
from SEAC has recently returned home reportedly on a
mission to obtain additional American personnel for
SEAC staff.

BISHOP

WFS

CC-1315

This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (b)(7)(D)

Columbo

Dated January 9, 1945

Rec'd 6:36 a.m. 10th

Secretary of State,
Washington.

IMPORTANT

9, January 9, 6 p.m. (SECTION TWO)

At least three courses would seem to be open to United States: (1) to limit activities of United States forces in this theater to a supply mission in India-Burma and to prevent activities of United States side of SEAC.

(2) To withdraw from participation in SEAC and to leave Southeast Asia to British and other Allies but to continue supply functions of India-Burma.

(3) To increase American participation in SEAC and to acquiesce in apparent British desire for a fully integrated Allied command in all its phases.

It seems most likely that British land and air effort against Japan will be concentrated under SEAC. To assure (1) that British effort renders maximum assistance to our own efforts in the Pacific and China (2) that our policies toward Thailand, Indochina and Southeast Asia are not prejudiced and (3) that whatever American assistance is

given SEAC,

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By J. Schauble Date FEB 10 1972

-2-#9, January 9, 6 p.m. (SECTION TWO) from Columbo

given SEAC, whether material or personnel, is utilized in a manner to promote American national interests, it would seem highly desirable to maintain at SEAC a strong American military staff fully conversant with American high policy even though all American combat forces are transferred from SEAC.

Decisions which will be reached on these questions are of extreme importance, and I hope that I may be kept fully informed of Department's views as they are formulated to enable me to carry out my duties as political adviser to General Sultan.

END OF MESSAGE

BISHOP

WSB

Indo China folder

~~SECRET~~

files

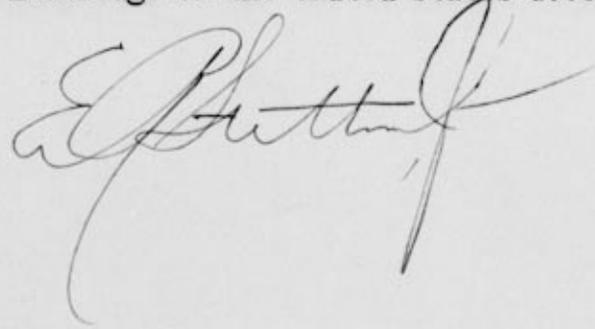
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

January 16, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Reports of Anglo-Franco-Dutch
Understanding Concerning Southeast Asia

The head of the Far Eastern Department of the British Foreign Office recently gave our Embassy in London informal assurances that there is no basis for the reports which have been widely circulated to the effect that the British, Dutch and French have reached some common understanding regarding the future of Southeast Asia. The Foreign Office stated that there are no conversations on this subject going on at present and that none have taken place in the past of which the United States Government has not been kept fully informed. The Foreign Office pointed out that as the war in the Far East progresses it may be necessary from time to time for the British to make special agreements with the Dutch or the French on civil affairs or economic matters but that any such agreements would only be made with the full knowledge of the United States Government.



DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. letter, 1-11-72
By J. Schauble Date FEB 10 1972

my file

file
Confidential

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

January 19, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Indochina

The Department has received the following estimate of the present British point of view about Indochina, sent from Kandy on January 4, 1945. As the source of this estimate was Mr. Dening, the Foreign Office official who is Chief Political Adviser under SEAC, I feel that it is of sufficient importance to transmit to you for your information.

In this estimate it is stated that:

"As a result of his verbal agreement with the Generalissimo at Cairo the Supreme Commander still considers that the status of Indochina is as it was in the days of the ABCD Agreement, namely that Indochina and Thailand are free-for-all areas open to whichever allied military force gets there first. The reason for this is that when it was proposed to the Generalissimo that French Indochina be included in the SEAC theater he objected because of the loss of face involved and the alternative suggested by SAC Supreme Allied Commander, and agreed to by the Generalissimo, was that the decision of the Combined Chiefs that Thailand was in SEAC theater should not be released to the public and that both countries would be considered on a free-for-all basis."

Mr. Dening also expressed the view that, as in Thailand, in Indochina the domestic dislocation resulting

from

~~SECRET~~

-2-

from the occupation would presumably be at a minimum and that there would be little need for military government and again, as with Thailand, Indochina should be governed by an Allied Control Commission.

The report states also that the only recent consideration of French activity in the SEAC theater has arisen from a French request to set up a radio broadcasting propaganda station at Pondichery. The SEAC division of information and civil affairs is apparently reluctant to give this permission because of American non-recognition and has suggested that the propaganda campaign be put on from Radio Paris. A joint SEAC-French leaflet campaign for Indochina is, however, at present under consideration.

Amphitruon

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By J. Schauble Date FEB 10 1972

yes - leave
out Indochina
JDC.

copy initialed 2-63-47
Ret'd to State 2-17-47

Indo. China folder
~~SECRET~~ 1-45

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

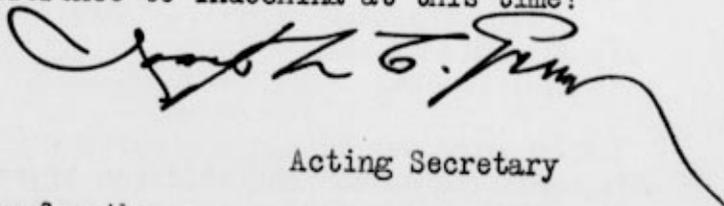
January 29, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Air Transport Agreement with France-
Indochina

Reference is made to the Department's memorandum of January 3, 1945 and to your reply of January 17, regarding the air transport agreement with France, photostatic copies of which are attached hereto for convenience.

The Department is not sure whether your January 17 memorandum refers to the air transport agreement as a whole or merely to the route proposed through Indochina. Will it be satisfactory to proceed now with negotiations for the air transport agreement with France, but without any reference to Indochina at this time?



Enclosures:

Acting Secretary

1. Memorandum for the president, January 3, 1945.
2. Memorandum from the President, January 17, 1945.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By J. Schauble Date FEB 10 1972

Indo-China folder
1-45

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 17, 1945.

MEMORANDUM FOR
THE SECRETARY OF STATE

I think on this air transport agreement it is not necessary to take any stand until a little later on.

F. D. R.

file →

~~SECRET~~

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

January 3, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

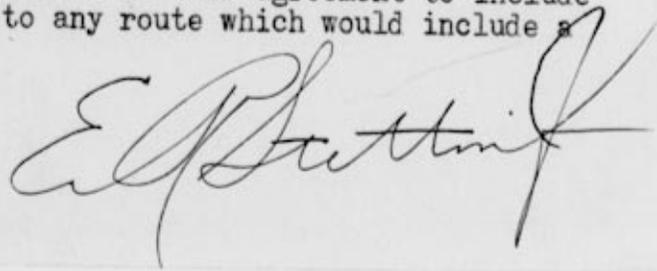
Subject: Air Transport Agreement with France - Indochina

An air transport agreement with France is being drafted for presentation to the French authorities for their consideration. It follows the standard form of bilateral agreement adopted at the Chicago air conference, and includes an Annex stipulating that American airlines are to be accorded rights of transit and non-traffic stop in French territory, as well as the right to take on and discharge international traffic at specific points.

The routes and ports of call specified in this Annex are based on the U. S. international route pattern as proposed by the Civil Aeronautics Board, in so far as it applies to French territory. Included is a stop at Hanoi in French Indochina in connection with the proposed route across the Pacific to Hong Kong, and thence across Indochina to India. There is also a proposed trans-Pacific route with a segment connecting Manila with Singapore and Batavia via Tarakan (Borneo). It has been suggested that this route might go by Saigon instead of Tarakan, in which case Indochina again would be involved.

Various agencies of the Government are anxious for the Department to begin negotiations for an air transport agreement with France as soon as practicable. Will you inform me whether, in view of your memorandum of November 3 and previous instructions relating to Indochina, you wish the proposed draft of this agreement to include or to omit reference to any route which would include a stop in Indochina?

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By J. Schauble Date FEB 10 1972



4241

Carbon initialed "OK F.D.R." and returned to
Acting Secretary Joseph C. Grew, 3/24/45, elb.

Indo-China folder 1-42

~~TOP SECRET~~

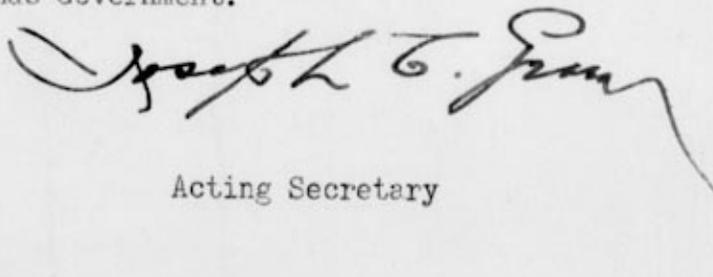
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

March 22, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Netherlands Participation in Planning
and Operations of the South East Asia
Command.

The United States Joint Chiefs of Staff have referred to the Department of State the desire of the Netherlands Government to train Netherlands staff officers for future operations in Netherlands Indian territory by having them study and take part in planning and operations in all parts of the South East Asia Command (SEAC). The Department of State perceives no political objection to Netherlands participation in SEAC except in so far as it may have a bearing on French participation. Unless you have objection, we propose to inform the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff that there is no objection to their agreeing to the request of the Netherlands Government.



Acting Secretary

DECLASSIFIED

State Dept. Order, 1-11-72

By J. Scheuble Date FEB 10 1972

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

Indo-China from 1-45
DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

AMT-1821

This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (SECRET)

file
Colombo

Dated March 22, 1945

Rec'd 12:11 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

74, March 22, 4 p.m.

~~SECRET~~ FOR SECRETARY AND UNDERSECRETARY

FROM BISHOP

"British Chiefs of Staff have wired Mountbatten that General de Saint Didier has requested Combined Chiefs of Staff that Blaizot be formally appointed as "the accredited agent of the French Provisional Government to you." Mountbatten also requested by British Chief of Staff to increase "your present scale of air supply" of French Indochina especially to French at Moncay.

Mountbatten has replied offering to accept formal accreditation of Blaizot to SEAC and requesting additional facilities to increase air supply to Indochina.

Ranking American officers SEAC feel, and I concur, that formal appointment Blaizot to SEAC will be only first step toward full French integration and participation in SEAC."

GATEWOOD

RE DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By J. Schauble Date

FEB 10 1972