

Indochina Torn By Bitter Guerrilla War; U. S., Red China Aid Belligerents

By LARRY ALLEN

HANOI, Indochina (AP)—The Viet-minh forces generally attack at night. They come out of the jungle with mortars, rifles, pistols, grenades, knives and razor-sharp bamboo spears.

Against this kind of foe the French Union forces even with their American-supplied fire power, never have been able to land a crushing blow.

The average soldier on the French-Vietnamese side is dead tired of the shadowy war fought in jungle, rice fields and on forest-covered mountains. He is dead tired, but goes on fighting—usually against overwhelming numbers.

Indochina is half again as big as France, and has 25 million inhabitants. Viet Nam, with 20 million, is the largest state. About eight million of the Vietnamese live in the areas controlled by Communist Ho Chi Minh's Viet-minh forces. The other 12 million live in the zone of the Bao Dai government. The French-Vietnamese forces hold most of the richer areas, principally the deltas of the Red and Mekong rivers.

CIVIL WAR
The conflict that has marred this land for more than seven years is basically a civil war. To millions of Vietnamese, Ho Chi Minh is the symbol of a fight for independence and an end to the remnants of French colonialism. Many of them dislike communism but still admire Ho Chi Minh.

The French count upon the increased zeal of loyal Vietnamese as the hope of an eventual military victory.

French admit there is much to be achieved before the Vietnamese become a first-class fighting force—and before the people as a whole realize there is a war on.

Over-all casualties top one million killed, wounded, captured or missing. The conflict has cost France and the Indochinese about 10 billion dollars. Two million Vietnamese have been uprooted from their homes.

The United States government regards the war as a struggle against the spread of communism into Southeast Asia and hence affecting the security of the United States. It has cost the United States half a billion dollars annually in war equipment supplied since 1950. This year America will pay out about 800 million dollars to support the anti-Communist struggle.

RED AID
Red China is supplying the Viet-minh with 3,000 tons of war equipment monthly. If it decided to throw in regular or "volunteer" troops to help Ho Chi Minh, the situation obviously would change.

Currently, one hope for ending the war lies in the April conference at Geneva, where Indochina as well as Korea is to be discussed. While some leaders of the Vietnamese government say the time is not ripe to discuss peace, there is an underlying eagerness for peace among French Union forces (including the fledgling armies of Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos) and among those Vietnamese aligned with Ho Chi Minh. France also is eager for peace.

Viet Nam's Premier Prince Buu Loo says Viet Nam wants a peace that guarantees "individual liberties, respects the government of the Viet Nam and the continuation of the Viet Nam nation." These

will be guiding principles for the Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian delegations at Geneva.

How far Ho Chi Minh's demands may be pressed probably will rest in the hands of Red China.

RAINS COMING
The fighting is in the final eight weeks of the winter, before the start of the seasonal rains which always bog down military operations.

The only place a battle seems likely in the near future is at the French Union fortress of Dien Bien Phu in northwestern Indochina, 80 miles west of Hanoi, where the Chinese-trained and equipped "elite" Viet-minh divisions encircled the fortress. French Union troops have been snatching out from the fortress in groups of 4,000 to 5,000 men in an effort to draw the Viet-minh into a showdown battle.

If the French Union forces finally succeed and knock out of action the bulk of the 36,000 rebel troops, they will have scored the first major victory of this long war.

Elsewhere there does not appear to be any chance for a victory. The Viet-minh have their 308th Division deep in northern Laos pointed at Luang Prabang. Gen. Henri Navarre, French commander in chief, says there is no chance of the Viet-minh's taking Luang Prabang.

The French express optimism that the coming months will bring a favorable turn, particularly with the more effective help of the expanding Vietnamese army.

But as the situation stands now there is nothing to indicate where, when or how that favorable turn might come.

Vietminh Sink French Boat

HANOI, Indochina (AP)—The French Friday reported the loss of a small Red River patrol boat under Vietminh shelling.

Communist-led rebel gunners, firing recoilless rifles, sank the vessel near Son Tay, a river port 25 miles northwest of this French headquarters city.

In the continuing actions against rebel infiltration of the Red River delta, the French announced 41 Vietminh troops had been killed and 35 captured.

Only light patrol clashes were reported between French Union and Vietminh forces in the hills around Dien Bien Phu, the big French stronghold in northwest Indochina.

STUPID THIEVES
PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Burglars broke into Max Schwartz's food market and spent several hours prying the steel off a heavy safe and cracking through the cement lining. Then they discovered (1) the safe had been open all the time—a turn of the handle would have saved them all that work, and (2) only a few business papers were inside.

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VISITING DIGNITARY at the League of Women Voters meeting Wednesday noon at the Winema was Mrs. A. V. Logan, state president, right. Seated with her at the speakers' table are Mrs. C. E. Dennis, charter member of the local organization, left, and Mrs. Fred Rueck, acting president, center.

Women Voters League Meets

Following an impressive resume of accomplishments of the local League of Women Voters by charter member, Mrs. C. E. Dennis. Acting President Mrs. Fred Rueck introduced Mrs. A. V. Logan, state League of Women Voters president.

Mrs. Logan urged the league to work through government to accomplish what would be impossible for individuals. She reminded local members of their crusade for city management in Klamath Falls some years ago which was defeated, and suggested that in this, as in every undertaking, they try again and again until success is inevitable.

The purpose of the league, which is a non-partisan group, is to obtain good government and improve it according to the state president. The league works on all levels of government—community, state and national—but it cannot act until it knows the consensus of opinion of its members.

This is done through unit meetings held monthly in neighborhoods where controversial problems are discussed by people of divergent interests and backgrounds.

The 820 leagues all over the United States meet regularly to discuss controversial matters and arrive at a majority opinion for report to the national office. Mrs. Logan emphasized that the national office cannot take a stand on any issue until the league members themselves arrive at a majority stand, always respecting the views of the minority.

Mrs. Dennis, charter member of the local league since its organization in 1930, listed among the accomplishments of the league in Klamath Falls the survey conducted on replacing the justice of the peace with a district court; help in unemployment of women during the depression; assistance in making meat inspection a requirement.

The league supported moves for a recreation department; transfer of jurisdiction of juvenile cases from the district court to the circuit court; worked toward getting a qualified juvenile officer under the circuit court; helped in establishing a detention home; worked for a severance tax; was partly responsible for merit system in Oregon (Civil Service), for efficient service in government and elimination of the possibility of political patronage.

League members spurred interest in cleaning up Veterans Memorial Park, conducted a voters' service to register voters; interviewed candidates at election time and put the information in print on ballots, according to Mrs. Dennis.

The regular luncheon meeting of the league was held at the Winema Hotel Wednesday. Persons interested in joining are asked to call Mrs. Frank Johnson, phone 3570.

NEW SCHOOLS
JACKSON, Mich. (AP)—This city is going to spend \$60,000 to build four ranch-type, one-room school buildings for district schools. If it ever turns out they're no longer needed, they can be put to another purpose. Each can be converted into a two-bedroom home.

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Block's Shoe Store To Open

Block's Shoe Store, to be located at 711 Main Street, the former Evergreen Studio, will open on March 11, it was announced by H. H. Lappe, who has designed and is directing remodeling of the store.

Contractors who are handling the job are Fremont Glass Co., Fritz Hahn's Empire Electric, Gilmore Sign Co., H. A. Sample, L. P. Brockman Painting Co., and Stan Parks Carpeting Service.

CONFERENCE
TEL AVIV, Israel (AP)—Israel has accepted U.N. Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld's call for an Israel-Jordan conference on Palestine border friction, official sources reported Tuesday.

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Farmers Hear Soil Leader

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Don A. Williams, administrator of the Soil Conservation Service, estimates "less than half the nation's farmers and ranchers are actively operating" with a soil conservation program.

Williams told that to delegates to the National Association of Soil Conservation districts convention which ended Thursday.

He said about 84 per cent of the

agricultural land in this country was included in soil conservation districts. The half million farmers and ranchers operating that land "obviously (were) those who were most interested" in conservation, Williams added.

"The remaining land owners and operators aren't going to become active in the conservation movement as readily as you did," he said.

Williams stated that the administration's conservation program is "the same basic program and is being carried on with vigor and determination" despite a recent reorganization of the Soil Conservation Service.

His agency's job, he said, was

Varied Weather Hits Europe

LONDON (AP)—Capricious winds whipped destructive gales around the British Isles Friday, brought icebound Norway its heaviest snowfall of the year and turned warm with rain further south to start breaking up the deep freeze that had clogged northern Europe's seaports.

Germany's North Sea and Baltic ports, icebound for weeks, welcomed the breakup, and icebreakers began freeing ships which had been locked in the frozen seas.

More than three feet of snow in southern Norway clogged roads, drifted to six feet in places and broke down communication lines.

The winds turned to heavy gales around the British Isles and churned up huge waves in the North Sea, the English Channel and the Irish Sea, damaging property and ripping down communication lines along exposed coastal areas.

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