

Indo Truce Sets Up New Iron Curtain

GENEVA, July 20 — France made peace with her Communist enemies in Indochina just before dawn today and a new Iron Curtain clanked down on 13 million persons in north Viet Nam.

Gen. Georges Deltiel of France and Gen. Ta Quang Bui of the Vietminh rebels signed armistice agreements covering Viet Nam and Laos just 3 hours and 50 minutes after the Tuesday midnight deadline. French Premier Pierre Mendès-France had set for peace or his resignation.

A truce for the third Indochina state, Cambodia, was scheduled to be signed later today.

The simple signing ceremony, under a blaze of photographers' lights in the former home of the League of Nations, called a halt to an eight-year war in which 92,000 soldiers of the French Union expeditionary corps died or disappeared.

It also laid a Korea-like partition across the 42-mile waist of Viet Nam, Indochina's largest, richest and most populous state, about at the 17th Parallel of latitude.

Communist leader Ho Chi Minh will take over the destinies of the residents north of the line. The 10 million Vietnamese below the partition will live under the pro-Western regime of chief of state Bao Dai.

All Vietnamese elections, not earlier than one year from today and not later than two years, are supposed to reunite the divided country. But Western officials here generally conceded the "temporary" partition line probably will become a political and ideological frontier like those which split Germany and Korea.

Officials said the texts of the agreements would not be published for several days, but their contents already were generally known.

Civilians on either side of the partition line will have one year to move to the other side if they desire.

The French have the next 300 days to move out of the big northern cities of Hanoi and Haiphong. Until that day next May they will hold an enclave in the Red River Delta around those two major centers.

Cambodia and Laos will remain under their French-supported royal governments. Vietminh troops which have invaded their territory — an estimated 10,000 in Laos, fewer in Cambodia — will withdraw in 60 days.

For military security reasons the date for the end of hostilities was not announced. One Vietnamese official said, however, that cease-fire orders would become effective in a week for the regular forces on both sides. Guerrilla fighters in the jungles and mountains would be given a longer period, he added.

The partition line across Viet Nam runs along the Song Ben Hai River. It leaves Highway No. 9, a principal road leading from the coast across the country to Laos, in the hands of southern Viet Nam. The south also retains the major port of Tourane and ex-emperor Bao Dai's royal capital, Hue, both in central Viet Nam.

Cambodia did not join in the early-morning armistice ceremony because of a last-minute burst of independence on the part of her delegation. Cambodian Foreign Minister Tep Phan demanded until nearly 2 a.m. that his nation's courts be permitted to try Communist sympathizers for working with the Vietminh invaders.

He agreed to drop the demand after the issue was ironed out in a long session with Mendès-France. Soviet Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov and British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden.

The armistices for Viet Nam and Laos cover the area where most of the Indochina battling took place. There was little fighting in Cambodia.

During the 300 more days the French hold Hanoi and Haiphong, the Vietminh will hold five pockets south of the partition line. Then

they must pull out for the north. Neither side may bring in troops or war material, and no new military bases can be set up on either side of the line.

This prohibition applies particularly to any bases for the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), which the United States and Britain are preparing to check any future Communist aggression in this area.

However, the organization, once formed, is expected to bring southern Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos under its protective wing.

Signifying disapproval of the partitioning, the U. S. government had decided not to join in the general declaration which the other conference delegations were to issue later today taking note of the agreement terms.

Instead, the United States

planned a separate declaration, noting the terms with which it agrees but ignoring officially those of which it disapproves.

The U. S. delegation carefully avoided expressing any opinion publicly about the provisions of the armistice agreement, but from Washington Associated Press Diplomatic Correspondent John High-tower wrote that the terms were generally regarded there as a victory for the Communists and defeat for the free world.

The Vietnamese government of Bao Dai shared the U. S. attitude. One Vietnamese official called newspaper correspondents as the signing was about to begin and emphasized that no official of the Viet Nam government was taking part in or even observing the ceremony over parchment papers bound in green ribbons.

Vietnamese Foreign Minister Tran Van Do declared in an interview yesterday that the big powers were splitting his country in violation of the wishes and interests of its people.

"We have been presented," he said, "with a fait accompli. We were not consulted and were informed of the decisions only after they had been taken."

But the military weakness of Do's government and its dependence on the West for economic and military backing made it certain the Vietnamese regime would go along with the truce.

In a statement issued after the signing, U. S. Under Secretary of State Walter Bedell-Smith said the American delegation he is heading at Geneva was pleased about the progress made toward ending bloodshed in Indochina. He added

that the United States was withholding comment on the armistice provisions until after an examination of its text.

"We share the fervent hopes of millions throughout the world that an important step has been taken toward a lasting peace in Southeast Asia, which will establish the right of the peoples of that area to determine their own future," Smith's statement said.

The agreements must be sent to the French and Vietminh high commanders in Indochina for countersigning. They will become effective after that.

A three-nation neutral armistice commission, headed by India and

including Canada and Communist Poland, will supervise the carrying-out of the armistice agreements.

All prisoners of war and civilian internees are to be liberated with-

in 30 days, and each side pledged to help transfer residents who wished to move to the other zone. This clause fulfilled one American demand that no one must be forced to live under a Communist regime.

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Postal Bill Draws Fire

WASHINGTON (AP) — In an all-out nothing gamble, House leaders today called up a double-barrelled bill to raise both postage rates and the pay of postal workers.

GOP leaders made no predictions on the outcome, but Democratic Leader Rayburn of Texas declared the one-package measure "will be beaten."

The tandem measure has stirred resentment from those who contend proposed rate increases are too high and pay raises too low.

The bill would:

- Increase first, second and third-class rates a total of 23 million dollars a year. This includes estimated additional revenue of 159 million a year from raising the cost of mailing ordinary letters from 3 to 4 cents; 13 million from a penny increase in air mail stamps; 13 million from publishers' mail; and \$44,200,000 from commercial third-class mail.

2. Raise the pay of post office workers 13 million dollars a year through a 5 per cent across-the-board increase with a \$200-a-year minimum. The pay bill also would give uniformed postal workers a \$100-a-year uniform allowance and provide other "fringe" benefits.

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