

NIE 91

**Probable Development in Indochina
Through Mid-1954**

4 June 1953

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

PROBABLE DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA
THROUGH MID-1954



NIE-91

Published 4 June 1953

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The following member organizations of the Intelligence Advisory Committee participated with the Central Intelligence Agency in the preparation of this estimate: The intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Joint Staff. The Intelligence Advisory Committee concurred in this estimate on 26 May 1953. The FBI abstained, the subject being outside of its jurisdiction.

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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PROBABLE DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA THROUGH MID-1954

THE PROBLEM

To estimate French Union and Communist capabilities and probable courses of action with respect to Indochina and the internal situation throughout Indochina through mid-1954.

ASSUMPTION

There is no major expansion of the Korean war.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Unless there is a marked improvement in the French Union military position in Indochina, political stability in the Associated States and popular support of the French Union effort against the Viet Minh will decline. We believe that such marked improvement in the military situation is not likely, though a moderate improvement is possible. The over-all French Union position in Indochina therefore will probably deteriorate during the period of this estimate.
2. The lack of French Union military successes, continuing Indochinese distrust of ultimate French political intentions, and popular apathy will probably continue to prevent a significant increase in Indochinese will and ability to resist the Viet Minh.
3. We cannot estimate the impact of the new French military leadership. However, we believe that the Viet Minh will retain the military initiative and will continue to attack territory in the Tonkin delta and to make incursions into areas outside the delta. The Viet Minh will attempt to consolidate Communist control in "Free Laos" and will build up supplies in northern Laos to support further penetrations and consolidation in that country. The Viet Minh will almost certainly intensify political warfare, including guerrilla activities, in Cambodia.
4. Viet Minh prestige has been increased by the military successes of the past year, and the organizational and administrative effectiveness of the regime will probably continue to grow.
5. The French Government will remain under strong and increasing domestic pressure to reduce the French military commitment in Indochina, and the possibility cannot be excluded that this pressure will be successful. However, we be-

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lieve that the French will continue without enthusiasm to maintain their present levels of troop strength through mid-1954 and will support the planned development of the national armies of the Associated States.

6. We believe that the Chinese Communists will continue and possibly increase their present support of the Viet Minh. However, we believe that whether or not hostilities are concluded in Korea, the Chinese Communists will not invade Indochina during this period.¹ The Chinese Communists will almost certainly retain the capability to intervene so forcefully in Indochina as to overrun most of the Tonkin delta area before ef-

fective assistance could be brought to bear.

7. We believe that the Communist objective to secure control of all Indochina will not be altered by an armistice in Korea or by Communist "peace" tactics. However, the Communists may decide that "peace" maneuvers in Indochina would contribute to the attainment of Communist global objectives, and to the objective of the Viet Minh.

8. If present trends in the Indochinese situation continue through mid-1954, the French Union political and military position may subsequently deteriorate very rapidly.

DISCUSSION

THE CURRENT SITUATION

9. *Military Situation.*² The Viet Minh occupation of the mountainous Thai country of northwestern Tonkin in late 1952 and the follow-up thrust into northern Laos in April 1953 demonstrate that the Viet Minh have retained the military initiative in Indochina. Although the Viet Minh did not defeat any large French Union forces in these operations, they did force the French to withdraw the bulk of their offensive striking power from the Tonkin delta and disperse it in isolated strong points, dependent on air transport for logistic support. At the same time, strong Viet Minh guerrilla elements plus two regular

Viet Minh divisions sufficed to contain the 114,000 regular French Union forces remaining in the Tonkin delta. The Viet Minh now appear to have withdrawn the bulk of their regular forces from Laos. They probably have left behind political cadres, some regular forces, and well-supplied guerrilla units in the areas which they overran in order to consolidate Communist political and military control, to prepare bases for future operations, and to pin down French Union garrisons.

10. The invasion of Laos may have been undertaken as part of a long-range Communist design to develop unrest in Thailand and ultimately gain control of all Southeast Asia. Viewed solely in terms of the Viet Minh objective to win all of Indochina, however, the Viet Minh offensive in Laos is an extension of the 1952 winter's offensive in northwestern Tonkin, and represents a shift in Viet Minh military tactics. This shift in tactics is probably largely explained by the inability to defeat the main French Union forces in the Tonkin delta by direct assault. Faced with this position of strength, the Viet Minh began

¹The Deputy Director for Intelligence, The Joint Staff, believes that the intelligence available is insufficient to permit a conclusion at this time that the Chinese Communists will or will not invade Indochina prior to mid-1954.

²See Annex A for Estimated French Union Strengths and Dispositions;
See Annex B for Estimated Viet Minh Strengths and Dispositions;
See Annex C for French Far Eastern Air Force Strengths and Dispositions; and
See Annex D for French Far Eastern Naval Strengths and Dispositions.

during 1952 to turn the bulk of their regular forces toward the conquest of northwestern Tonkin and northern Laos, areas lightly held by isolated French Union garrisons.

11. In this manner, the Viet Minh probably hope to retain the military and political initiative and, by dispersing French Union forces, to prevent either a clean-up by the French Union in the Tonkin delta or offensive operations by the French Union against Viet Minh troop concentrations and supply installations outside the delta. The Viet Minh may well believe that by gradually extending their base areas in lightly defended regions of Laos, Cambodia, and central Vietnam they can keep French Union forces dispersed and pinned down indefinitely. In time, they probably expect to sap the morale of the Vietnamese and the French and finally so alter the balance of power as to make possible successful Viet Minh attacks against the key areas of Tonkin and south Vietnam.

12. The deployment of four divisions into Laos by the Viet Minh and the fact that the French did not attack their long and exposed lines of communication typify the over-all situation in Indochina. French Union forces still outweigh the Viet Minh in numbers, firepower, and materiel. French ability to air lift troops and equipment, although strained at the present time, provides the French Union with tactical flexibility in planning defensive and offensive operations. The Viet Minh, however, by their skill in guerrilla war, their ability to move rapidly and to infiltrate and control areas under nominal French occupation, have caused the French to commit large forces throughout Indochina to static defense, thus seriously reducing French ability to take the offensive.

13. Viet Minh regular forces in northern Indochina have continued their gradual evolution from lightly armed guerrilla bands to a regularly organized military force. They have made noticeable advances in the development of field communications, and unit firepower has increased although they still possess only limited amounts of artillery. Viet Minh combat effectiveness is still limited

by a lack of medical supplies and an inability to sustain major military operations.

14. Military aid from the US has enabled the French Union to equip adequately their regular ground forces. The French air forces, with US logistical support, and with no air opposition, have maintained a fair degree of effectiveness in paratroop operations, supply by air drops, and daylight attacks on enemy supply dumps. French naval forces have improved in combat effectiveness and have maintained control of the seacoasts and inland waterways. However, the Viet Minh have the continuing capability to threaten control of the inland waterways by a mining campaign. Some Vietnamese National Army units have performed creditably in combat, but desertion and "missing in action" figures remain high. For the most part, Vietnamese National Guard and other local security forces lack the firepower, discipline, and leadership to hold positions alone against regular Viet Minh units which infiltrate the Tonkin delta.

15. Although French Union military capabilities have improved slightly, the French Union military effort has been inhibited by considerations of domestic French politics, French security in Europe, and fear of involvement in a war with Communist China. These considerations have caused French commanders in Indochina to forego aggressive military operations that would entail heavy casualties and have prevented them from obtaining reinforcements on a scale that might make possible the defeat of the Viet Minh.

16. The development of the Vietnamese National Army, promised by the French in 1949, has been retarded by a shortage of officers and non-commissioned officers, by French lack of faith in the Vietnamese and by French fiscal problems. There has also been an unwillingness among many Vietnamese leaders, not including Premier Tam, to undertake a major mobilization effort until the French grant further political concessions and until the Vietnamese character of the new army is fully guaranteed.

17. *Political.* Some political progress has been made in Vietnam during the past year. Premier Tam's administration has enlisted the cooperation of the strongly nationalist Dai Viet leader Nguyen Huu Tri, and nationalist concern over Tam's francophilia has to some extent dissipated. Tam has also added to the political vitality of Vietnam by holding local elections in secure areas of Vietnam. Another Vietnamese program, undertaken with US economic assistance, which involves the relocation of scattered villages in the delta into centralized and defensible sites may be an important step toward the eventual "pacification" of heavily infiltrated areas. The decisions of March 1953 to increase the size of the Vietnamese National Army while expanding the area of Vietnamese strategic and operational responsibility, could also be of major political significance.

18. Despite these advances, Vietnam still lacks the degree of political strength essential for the mobilization of the country's resources. Tam's "action" program remains more shadow than substance. Elected local councils have no real power, promised land reform and other social and economic reforms which might generate popular support have not left the planning stage, and the Vietnamese government is handicapped by incompetent cabinet ministers and the lack of competent administrators. While Bao Dai refuses to assume active direction of the affairs of state, he remains hostile toward new leadership and democratic activities.

19. Of more basic importance in the failure of Vietnamese to rally to the Vietnamese government following the French grant of independence within the French Union in 1949 have been the following:

a. Many Vietnamese doubt the ability of French Union forces to defeat the Viet Minh and prefer to remain apart from the struggle.

b. The French Government has not dared to promise complete national independence at some future date, as demanded by the Vietnamese, because of the fear that the French national assembly would then refuse to support a war in a "lost" portion of the French Union.

c. The Vietnamese, despite many evolutionary steps toward complete independence since 1949, are generally inclined to believe that the French intend to retain effective control over the affairs of Vietnam.

d. The nationalist appeal and military prestige of the Viet Minh remains strong among significant numbers of the Vietnamese.

20. In Cambodia, internal political strife has weakened the government, dissident nationalist elements have continued to sap popular loyalty to the throne, and the King is demanding greater independence from the French in order to strengthen his political position at home. Meanwhile, the 9,000 Viet Minh combatants in Cambodia, while under fairly constant attack by French and Cambodian forces, are capable of exploiting disorders which may develop.

21. Laotian stability has been upset by the recent Viet Minh incursion. The Laotians are generally hostile to the Viet Minh but are unable to contribute a great deal to the defense of their homeland. A small group of pro-Communist Laotians returned to Laos with the Viet Minh during the recent incursion. It is led by a disaffected Laotian nobleman, Prince Souphanouvong, and calls itself the "Free Government of Pathet Lao" (Laos).

22. Meanwhile, the Viet Minh leadership, with Chinese Communist material and advisory assistance since 1949, has demonstrated the necessary zeal, ruthlessness, and tenacity to exploit to the maximum the limited resources at their command. The Viet Minh have expanded the area under their complete control and their prestige has probably increased throughout Indochina as a result of military successes in northwest Tonkin and Laos.

23. In the areas of Viet Minh occupation, Viet Minh control is believed to be effective, and minimum food requirements are being met. The Viet Minh have taken on increasingly the conventional characteristics of a "Peoples Republic" and are now engaged in programs to confiscate and redistribute land and to eliminate "traitors" and "reactionaries." Although this departure from national front tactics has increased realization

that the Viet Minh are under complete Communist domination, the Viet Minh control many villages within areas of nominal French Union occupation through terror, compulsion, and their continued nationalist appeal.

24. The Viet Minh and the Chinese Communists continue to maintain close relations. It is estimated that there are less than a thousand Chinese Communist advisers and technicians with the Viet Minh in Indochina. The Chinese Communists are providing the Viet Minh with military supplies at an estimated average level of 400 to 500 tons per month, and some Viet Minh troops are sent to Communist China for training. Small Chinese Communist units reportedly have entered the mountainous northwest section of Tonkin on several occasions to assist the Viet Minh against French-supported native guerrillas, but no Chinese Communist troops have been identified in forward areas. There was some evidence during the past year that Viet Minh policy statements may be "cleared," if not written, in Peiping. Close Viet Minh relations with Communist China are complemented, superficially at least, by equally warm relations with the Soviet Union, but we are unable to determine whether Peiping or Moscow has ultimate responsibility for Viet Minh policy.

PROBABLE TRENDS IN FRENCH UNION CAPABILITIES AND COURSES OF ACTION

25. French plans for dealing with the war in Indochina now revolve around the development of national armies in the Associated States, particularly in Vietnam. In March 1953, the Franco-Vietnamese High Military Council approved a new program calling for an increase in Vietnamese strength during the current year of 40,000 men, organized in 54 "commando" battalions.³ A further expansion of 57,000 men has been proposed for

³The 40,000 are to be recruited and will represent a net increase in French Union strength. Planned transfers of native units from the French Army to the Vietnamese Army will also strengthen the Vietnamese Army but will not represent any net increase in French Union strength.

1954 and will probably be undertaken if the initial reinforcement is successful and if equipment is made available by the US. With these additional Vietnamese forces, the French hope to undertake widespread clearing operations and subsequently to organize sufficient mobile groups to begin by early 1955 the destruction of the Viet Minh regular forces in Tonkin.

26. Progress has been made in carrying out the troop reinforcement program thus far, and the Vietnamese may have close to 40,000 reinforcements recruited, trained, and available for combat by early 1954. However, the Viet Minh invasion of Laos and the threat of similar operations will probably keep French mobile reserves deployed outside the Tonkin delta in isolated strong points. The addition of 40,000 untested and lightly armed Vietnamese will not offset the absence of these regular French forces, and effective clearing or offensive operations cannot be undertaken until French Union forces are regrouped. Moreover, the French military leadership has been so dominated by concepts of static defense as to be unable to conduct the planned operations with the vigor necessary for their success. How the new military leadership may alter this we cannot estimate. Finally, unless the French Union forces prove strong enough to provide security for the Vietnamese population, it will not be possible to sweep the guerrillas out of the areas as planned. Not only will the populace fail generally to provide the intelligence required to rout the guerrillas but, as in the past, they will frequently give warning of the presence of the French Union forces, thus permitting the guerrillas to take cover and later to emerge when the danger is past.

27. The French are fearful that they cannot achieve a military decision in Indochina. Unless the French Union military plans achieve great success during the period of this estimate, the conviction will grow in France that the Indochina problem can only be solved through some over-all East-West settlement in the Far East. The difficulties of the French financial position impel the French to seek relief from the mounting costs

of the Indochina war, and French apprehensions concerning eventual German rearmament not only make them reluctant to increase the military establishment in Indochina but impel them to seek the early return of French troops to Europe. The French Government will therefore remain under strong and increasing domestic pressure to reduce its military commitment in Indochina. On the other hand, the French Government is under strong pressure to maintain its position in Indochina. There is still considerable sentiment against abandoning the heavy investment which France has poured into Indochina. More important, there is great reluctance to accept the adverse effects on the cohesion of the French Union and on French prestige as a world power which would accompany the loss of France's position in Indochina. In these circumstances, we believe that the French will continue without enthusiasm to maintain their present levels of troop strength through mid-1954 and will support the planned development of the National Armies of the Associated States. At the same time, France will probably continue to seek maximum financial and material assistance for the French Union effort while resisting any measures which would impair French pre-eminence among the Associated States, including the making of any commitments concerning the eventual political status of the Associated States.

28. Political strength in Vietnam may grow slightly during 1953 as progress is made toward a stronger national army, as the Vietnamese assume increasing governmental responsibilities, and as Premier Tam's social and political programs serve to decrease distrust of French intentions. There will probably also be a growing understanding, and fear, of the true Communist nature and purpose of the Viet Minh. However, these developments will not bring about a significant increase in Vietnamese will and ability to resist the Viet Minh during the period of this estimate because the Vietnam leadership cannot in this brief period overcome popular apathy and mobilize the energy and resources of the people. Moreover, if events should

persuade Vietnam leaders that no progress toward national independence is possible under the French or that French Union forces cannot defeat the Viet Minh, it is probable that the political strength of Vietnam would decline rapidly. Substantial Viet Minh military victories in the Tonkin delta or elsewhere in Indochina would also produce such a decline.

29. In Cambodia, political stability is likely to decline as the result of tension between the monarchy, the politically divided people, and the French colonial administration. Even if French concessions to the King insure his adherence to the French Union, unrest in Cambodia or a Viet Minh penetration into southern Laos might force the deployment of strong French forces to Cambodia.

30. In Laos, political attitudes will be determined almost entirely by military developments. The Laotians will probably remain loyal to the French Union if they are defended aggressively. They will not, however, offer effective resistance to Communist efforts to consolidate political control if French Union forces retreat from the country or if the French Union forces defend only a few strong points.

PROBABLE TRENDS IN VIET MINH AND CHINESE COMMUNIST CAPABILITIES AND COURSES OF ACTION

31. *Viet Minh Capabilities and Probable Courses of Action.* Barring serious Viet Minh military reverses, which could occur if Viet Minh forces should overextend themselves or make frontal attacks on French Union strong points, the Viet Minh regime will probably increase its total strength slightly during the period of this estimate. Viet Minh prestige will be increased by their recent gains in Laos. The organizational and administrative effectiveness of the regime will probably continue to increase with experience and Chinese Communist guidance. The program of expropriation and distribution of lands to tenants now being carried out probably weakens the Viet Minh appeal among some classes, but will

probably strengthen Viet Minh controls at the village level and thus facilitate the collection of rice.

32. Militarily, the Viet Minh are unlikely to expand greatly their armed forces because they are already experiencing manpower difficulties. Their combat efficiency probably will increase, however, as the result of a modest augmentation of their unit firepower and a steady improvement in staff planning and coordination of forces. The Viet Minh probably will continue to receive a steady flow of material assistance from the Chinese Communists, and the amount may increase at any time. The Viet Minh do not have, and probably cannot develop within the period of this estimate, the capability to make such effective use of heavy equipment — artillery, armor, and aircraft — from the Chinese Communists as to permit successful attacks against strong concentrations of regular French forces. Over a longer period, however, a great increase in Viet Minh capabilities, including the development of an air force, is possible.

33. We believe that during the period of this estimate the Communists in Indochina will probably attempt to avoid combat except where they can achieve surprise or great superiority in numbers. They will attempt to consolidate Communist controls in "Free Laos" and will build up supplies in northern Laos to support further penetrations and consolidation in that country. If they reach the Thai border, they probably will attempt to organize guerrilla forces among the Vietnamese in northeastern Thailand, but we do not believe they will have the capability to provide much material assistance to such forces through mid-1954. The Viet Minh forces in Laos may hope to receive assistance from the Vietnamese population in Thailand. The Viet Minh will almost certainly intensify political warfare, including guerrilla activities in Cambodia.

34. We believe that neither the French Union nor the Viet Minh will be able to win a final military decision in Indochina through mid-1954. The Viet Minh, with their principal striking forces operating from the Tonkin base area, will probably retain the initiative

during the period of this estimate by maintaining attacks against lightly defended French Union territory. The French Union can hold key positions in Laos and may attempt by attacks against Viet Minh lines of communication, to prevent the Viet Minh from moving southward in force towards southern Laos and Cambodia. We believe, however, that Viet Minh guerrillas in southern Laos will develop sufficient strength to control much of the countryside and that guerrilla activities in Cambodia will be intensified. The French Union probably will reduce, but not eliminate, Viet Minh strength in south Vietnam. Viet Minh infiltration of the Tonkin delta will probably be maintained at a high level and the Viet Minh may undertake major attacks against the delta if they can weaken French defenses by drawing French strength elsewhere.

35. Unless there is a marked improvement in the French Union military position in Indochina, political stability in the Associated States and popular support of the French Union effort against the Viet Minh will decline. We believe that such marked improvement in the military situation is not likely, though a moderate improvement is possible. The over-all French Union position in Indochina therefore will probably deteriorate during the period of this estimate.

36. *Chinese Communist Capabilities and Probable Courses of Action.* The Chinese Communists will have the capability during the period of this estimate to improve airfields in south China, to train Viet Minh pilots, to continue improvement of transportation facilities, and to increase their present level of logistic support for the Viet Minh. The Chinese Communists will probably retain their present capability to commit and support logistically 150,000 Chinese Communist troops for an invasion of Indochina. The combat efficiency of this potential invasion force could probably be increased considerably by the use of combat-seasoned troops who have been rotated from Korea in the past year. The ability of Chinese Communist forces to sustain offensive operations in Indochina would probably be increased should logistic requirements in Korea remain at low levels for a prolonged period.

37. A Chinese Communist force of 150,000, added to Viet Minh forces, would probably be able to overrun the Tonkin delta area before effective assistance could be brought to bear. The Chinese Communists now have, and will probably continue to have during the period of this estimate, sufficient jet and piston aircraft, independent of operations in Korea, for small-scale but damaging attacks against French Union installations in Tonkin. With surprise, they probably could neutralize the French Air Forces in Tonkin. The Chinese Communist air forces do not appear, however, to possess the capability at present of conducting sustained air operations in Indochina because of a lack of improved airfields in south China and stockpiles of supplies. Such preparations would take several months.

38. We believe that whether or not hostilities are concluded in Korea, the Chinese Communists will not invade Indochina during the period of this estimate.⁴ Although they possess the capability, the following considerations militate against intervention by regular Chinese Communist forces or by large numbers of Chinese Communist "volunteers":

⁴The Deputy Director for Intelligence, The Joint Staff, believes that the intelligence available is insufficient to permit a conclusion at this time that the Chinese Communists will or will not invade Indochina prior to mid-1954.

a. The Communists probably consider that their present strategy in Indochina promises success in a prolonged struggle and produces certain immediate advantages. It diverts badly needed French and US resources from Europe at relatively small cost to the Communists. It provides opportunities to advance international Communist interests while preserving the fiction of "autonomous" national liberation movements, and it provides an instrument, the Viet Minh, with which Communist China and the USSR can indirectly exert military and psychological pressures on the peoples and governments of Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand.

b. Communist leadership is aware that the West, and in particular the US, would probably retaliate against Communist China if Chinese Communist forces should invade Indochina. We believe that fear of such retaliation and of the major war which might result are important deterrents to open Chinese Communist intervention in Indochina.

39. We believe that the Communist objective to secure control of all Indochina will not be altered by an armistice in Korea or by Communist "peace" tactics. However, the Communists may decide that "peace" maneuvers in Indochina would contribute to the attainment of Communist global objectives, and to the objective of the Viet Minh.

ANNEX A

ESTIMATED GROUND FORCE STRENGTHS AND DISPOSITIONS AS OF 1 APRIL 1953¹

INDOCHINA

A. FRENCH UNION FORCES

COMPONENT	TONKIN	ANNAM & PLATEAUX	COCHIN -CHINA	CAMBODIA	LAOS	TOTAL
<i>Regulars²</i>						
French Expeditionary Corps (CEF)	91,000	20,000	45,000	8,000	7,500	171,500 ³
Associated States Armies	27,000	33,000	20,000	8,500	8,000	96,500
Associated States National Guards	6,000	4,000	10,000	4,000	5,500	29,500
<i>Semi-Military</i>						
CEF Auxiliaries	23,000	6,500	18,000	3,300	2,400	53,200
Vietnam Auxiliaries	8,000	10,000	34,000	52,000
Other Semi-Military	27,000	7,000	30,000	9,000	6,500	79,500
TOTALS	182,000	80,500	157,000	32,800	29,900	482,200

¹ These strengths and dispositions were effective before the Viet Minh invasion of Laos. Since that time French Expeditionary Corps (CEF) strength in Laos has been increased to 17,500 and CEF strength in Tonkin reduced to 81,000.

² French Union regular forces are organized into a total of 118 CEF battalions and 95 Associated States battalions. The CEF has 83 infantry, 7 parachute, 8 armored, and 19 artillery battalions and 1 AAA battalion. The Associated States have 87 infantry and 4 artillery battalions and 4 parachute battalions.

³ Does not include 6,000 French personnel detached for duty with the Associated States forces as cadres and advisers. Composition of the 172,000 is as follows: French — 51,000; Foreign Legion — 19,000; African — 17,000; North African — 30,000; native Indochinese — 55,000.

ANNEX B

ESTIMATED VIET MINH GROUND FORCE STRENGTHS AND DISPOSITIONS AS OF 1 APRIL 1953¹

B. VIET MINH FORCES

COMPONENT	TONKIN	ANNAM & PLATEAUX	COCHIN -CHINA	CAMBODIA	LAOS	TOTAL
<i>Regulars²</i>						
Army	81,000	25,000	13,000	1,000	3,000	123,000
Regional Forces (Full-time)	35,000	14,500	7,500	3,000	2,000	62,000
<i>Semi-Military</i>						
People's Militia (Armed)	<u>50,000</u>	<u>34,000</u>	<u>25,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>115,000</u>
TOTALS	166,000	73,500	45,500	9,000 ³	6,000	300,000

¹ These strengths and dispositions changed during the Viet Minh incursion into Laos in April. An estimated 30,000 Viet Minh regulars moved from Tonkin into Laos and an estimated 10,000 moved from Annam. By mid-May, however, it is believed that all but 15,000 of the Viet Minh regulars had returned to their base areas in Tonkin and Annam.

² The Viet Minh are organized into 6 infantry divisions, 1 artillery division, 14 independent regiments, and 15 independent battalions. Regional forces are organized in 44 battalions.

³ Some 3,000 dissident Khmer Issarak are also active in Cambodia.

ANNEX C

AIR ORDER OF BATTLE — FRENCH AIR FORCE AND NAVAL AIR ARM, FAR EAST

UNIT DESIGNATION	AIRFIELD	NO. AND TYPE AIRCRAFT ASSIGNED
<i>North Tactical Command</i>		
1st/8 Fighter Squadron	Bach Mai, Hanoi	18 F8F
2nd/8 Fighter Squadron	Cat Bi, Haiphong	20 F8F
Detachment, 1st/21 Fighter Squadron	Cat Bi, Haiphong	7 F8F
1st/25 Lt. Bomber Squadron	Cat Bi, Haiphong	15 B-26
Detachment, 1st/19 Lt. Bomber Squadron	Cat Bi, Haiphong	3 B-26, 1 RB-26
80th Photo Recon. Squadron	Bach Mai, Hanoi	11 F8F
Detachment, 2nd/62 Trans. Squadron	Bach Mai, Hanoi	12 C-47
Detachment, 1st/64 Trans. Squadron	Gia Lam, Hanoi	5 C-47, 3 JU-52
Detachment, 2nd/64 Trans. Squadron	Gia Lam, Hanoi	5 C-47
2nd/62 Trans. Squadron	Do Son, Haiphong	6 C-47
<i>Center Tactical Command</i>		
1st/21 Fighter Squadron	Tourane Afd., Tourane	12 F8F
Detachment 2nd/9 Fighter Squadron	Ban Me Thout Afd., Ban Me Thout	5 F8F
1st/19 Lt. Bomber Squadron	Tourane Afd., Tourane	16 B-26, 3 RB-26
Detachment, 1st/64 Trans. Squadron	Tourane Afd., Tourane	2 JU-52
1st/64 Trans. Squadron	Nhatrang Afd., Nhatrang	5 C-47, 6 JU-52
<i>South Tactical Command</i>		
2nd/9 Fighter Squadron	Tan Son Nhut, Saigon	8 F6F, 10 F8F
2nd/64 Trans. Squadron	Tan Son Nhut, Saigon	16 C-47
Detachment, 1st/64 Trans. Squadron	Tan Son Nhut, Saigon	4 JU-52
Miscellaneous light aircraft and helicopters (used throughout the three tactical commands for liaison, reconnaissance, medical evacuation, and flight training) —		152
TOTAL		345
<i>Naval Air Arm</i>		
Carrier based		22 F6F 12 SB2C-5
Miscellaneous other types		28
TOTAL		62
Aircraft (all types) temporarily unoperational because of shortages in personnel and logistics —		179
GRAND TOTAL		586

ANNEX D

FRENCH NAVAL FORCES IN INDOCHINA

Small Aircraft Carrier (CVL) ¹	1
Gunboat (PG)	2
Escort (PCE)	8
Submarine Chaser (PC)	11
Submarine Chaser (SC)	5
Motor Minesweeper (AMS)	6
Amphibious Vessels:	
LST	4
LSIL	13
LSSL	6
LCU	19
Miscellaneous small landing craft	211
Auxiliary Vessels:	
ARL	1
AG	1
AGS	1
AR	1
AFDL	1
AVP	2
AO	1
Service Craft	54
French Navy Personnel	9,760
Vietnam Navy Personnel	277
Mission Aircraft:	
F6F-5 ²	22
SB2C-5 ²	12
PB4Y-2	8
JRF-5	11
S-51	2
Morane 500 "0"	6
C-47A	1

¹ The French have attempted to keep one of their two carriers in Indochina waters, subject to overhaul and repair schedules. The ARROMANCHES (CVL) and the LAFAYETTE (CVL) departed for France in February and May 1953, respectively, for overhaul and repairs.

² Carrier-based aircraft.

