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4/8/54

PRIORITY

Amembassy PARIS

PERSONAL FROM SECRETARY

Your 3729

If you think appropriate advise Bidault orally and personally from me as follows:

QTE My friend, I know that you and Laniel are subject to great burdens. I have done and am doing all properly in my power to bring reinforcements to the situation.

The US has met with almost miraculous speed and efficiency every emergency request that the French have made up to the point of our assuming the role of an active belligerent. It can hardly be expected that this momentous decision could be taken without preparation when our nation is not itself directly attacked. There must be adequate public understanding and Congressional support and international preparation. Congressional action is problematic unless other nations in the area more directly and immediately interested than we show that they share our judgment of the danger and are also willing to act with us to meet it. We deeply regret that this political

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exploration will cause some delay.

Our military advisers see no reason why the fate of all of Indochina should be decided in ten days at Dien Bien Phu since this battle must be greatly exhausting the military potential of the enemy. It would seem that they are making a reckless military gamble in the hope of psychological results which will achieve political success. There seems to be no material reason why this political success need be given them, particularly if the free nations of the area unite to deny it.



The gallant effort being made by the French is already not without results as there is growing recognition of the great burden France is carrying and the courage which her sons are showing and an increasing disposition to stand together even more closely. I extend my warm regard and respect.

Foster Dulles UNQTE

For Ambassador Dillon's Information Only

In reference to your 3738 and 3739, latest French request was considered at emergency meeting of NSC this afternoon. The military felt that B-29's were impractical, and we felt that to base planes on the Philippines would involve them in hostilities and was unacceptable to us. However these were tentative reactions and matter is still under study. Believe military may recommend alternative offer of light planes which can be flown off French carrier. Hope have firm decision by tomorrow. You can tell Bidault we are giving this request our urgent study and expect answer soonest.

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