

History 353

Re: Long Term/Short term look at the question posed in journal:

The "central dilemma" of US policy vis-a-vis Indochina, especially Vietnam.

1. See the two views from European and Far Eastern desks in V & A / or doc. # 10. These are dated April 1945 (before or after FRD's death; he died in April 1945)

Summary of European Desk: It is Eurocentered. Advises that the US should give France aid in her efforts to return to Indochina as long as they are compatible w/ all other military obligations in the Pacific in bringing the war against Japan to a successful conclusion.

Summary of Far Eastern Desk: Notes in #6 that record of the French in Indochina was one of collaboration w/ the Japanese for almost the entire duration of the Pacific war (beginning in 1940) "in marked distinction to the admionistrations of colonial areas belonging to other allies."

Point #8 notes that it is to US interests that stability reign in thjis area after the Pacific war is over.

Point # 9 That FDR originally contemplated placing Indochina under trusteeship but changed his opinion on this because of pressure from other colonial powers--Britain, France, and Dutch. It was unlikely that the French would move to place Indochina under trusteeship.

Point # 10 This is point is prophetic. If liberal poolcies toward Indochina are not conducted, etc. that is, if the paramount interests of the native peoples--that is ultimate independence--is not contemplated by French policy there "will be substantial bloodshed and unrest for many years threatening the economic and social progress and the peace and stability of SE Asia."

Point # 14. If frustrated in their demands for self-determination the peoples of SE Asia "may embrace ideologies contrary to owr own"

May want to play off this a short history of Vichy France's collaboration with the Japanese. (See McAlister notes)