

Cable by Dulles on Negotiations At Geneva on Vietnam Elections

Cablegram by Secretary Dulles to United States Embassy in Paris with copies to the United States Embassies in London and Saigon and to United States Consul General in Geneva for Under Secretary Bedell Smith, July 7, 1954.

We see no real conflict between paragraphs 4 and 5 US-UK terms. We realize of course that even agreement which appears to meet all seven points cannot constitute guarantee that Indochina will not one day pass into Communist hands. Seven points are intended provide best chance that this shall not happen. This will require observance of criteria not merely in the letter but in the spirit. Thus since undoubtedly true that elections might eventually mean unification Vietnam under Ho Chi Minh this makes it all more important they should be only held as long after cease-fire agreement as possible and in conditions free from intimidation to give democratic elements best chance. We believe important that no date should be set now and especially that no conditions should be accepted by French which would have direct or indirect effect of preventing effective international supervision of agreement ensuring political as well as military

guarantees. Also note paragraph 3 of President and Prime Minister joint declaration of June 29 regarding QTE unity through free elections supervised by the UN UNQTE.

Our interpretation of willingness QTE respect UNQTE agreement which might be reached is that we would not (repeat not) oppose a settlement which conformed to seven points contained Deptel 4853. It does not (repeat not) of course mean we would guarantee such settlement or that we would necessarily support it publicly. We consider QTE respect UNQTE as strong a word as we can possibly employ in the circumstances to indicate our position with respect to such arrangements as French may evolve along lines points contained DEPTTEL 4853. QTE respect UNQTE would also mean that we would not seek directly or indirectly to upset settlement by force.

You may convey substance above to French.