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For the Record

From a report on an interview with Ho Chi Minh by the chief of intelligence division, the Office of Strategic Services, China Theater, in 1945:

Mr. Ho continually affirmed that he is not a rabid revolutionary, but merely a man who desires autonomy for his people. He said that he realizes fully the dangers and obstacles his people face in their fight for independence, and he knows that it is not to be obtained quickly and easily. He stated that assuredly the French will try to return in force, but hopes that they will be willing to settle peacefully the affair, and will respect the rights and hopes of his people. However, if this cannot be brought about, he said that he and his people will fight. He assured me that if that is necessary, his people are prepared for a long struggle of ten or twenty years, and are willing to fight for the freedom . . . of future generations.

Concerning the United States, Mr. Ho said that he asks nothing, but looks hopefully in that direction for moral support. He expressed admiration for the Atlantic Charter, as representative of the freedom-loving spirit of the American people, and presumed that "freedom for all peoples" included freedom for the Annamese people. Therefore, he expressed his anxiety to have the United States government and people know the facts of the former French regime in Indo-China, and the aspirations, actions, and determination of its native peoples at the moment. He feels certain that if the people of the United States had this knowledge, their moral support would be assured. He said, "This is all I ask, that news of Indo-China be given to the world."

My personal opinion is that Mr. Ho Chi Minh is a brilliant and capable man, completely sincere in his opinions. I believe that when he speaks, he speaks for his people, for I have travelled throughout Tonkin province, and found that in that area people of all classes are imbued with the same spirit and determination as their leader.