

September 13, 1951

Memorandum for: W. Averell Harriman

From: The President

Attached is the letter from General Eisenhower. I was glad to get the opportunity to read it. I imagine when people are on the other side of the ocean and the Congress begins cutting the ground from under them they do have an ill feeling in the stomach, as Ike says he has, but I think we can continue the support and we will come out all right in the longrun.

H.S.J.



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DDE

Supreme Headquarters
Allied Powers Europe
6 September 1951

Dear Averell:

General de Lattre is soon to come to the United States, and already there has been arranged for him a program that will bring him into contact with most of the people that he should appropriately see. However, I think it worthwhile to suggest to you that you make a special effort to see that nothing comes up to interfere with your opportunity of having a talk with him.

He is, of course, primarily concerned in Indochina. But he does seem to appreciate thoroughly the fact that the struggle against Communistic dictatorship is a global one; that his own war is a particular phase and part of the whole. Consequently, it is not difficult to follow most of his arguments. Exactly what requests he will make upon our Government and/or the United Nations, I do not know. But he will, beyond all doubt, reflect clearly the French conviction that it is impossible longer for France to carry the full burden, or practically the full burden, of the Indochinese War and still to produce maximum defensive force in Europe and sustain economic stability. I have had numbers of talks with civil and military leaders on this particular subject. I am sure the French are sincere - my hunch is that they are also reasonably accurate. However, I know that the United States has so many difficult problems of its own, so many obligations to meet, that I cannot tell what priority this particular problem should assume in American calculations. I contented myself with advising General de Lattre to put his case frankly and fully in front of responsible officials. I told him also that he, on his part, should invite a free discussion and to study carefully whatever viewpoint the American authorities might bring to bear. I personally think that his greatest hope

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E.O. 12065, Sec. 3.402

DOD Directive 5100.30, June 13, 1970

By NLT-ALC NARS, Date 1-17-83

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is that we can find some way of helping build up a native Indochinese army, one capable of defending the country with a minimum of French help. He seems quite worried as to what will happen in that corner of Asia if there is an actual "cease fire" in Korea. While he indulges in a great deal of speculation on this particular point, my own feeling is that we should try to solve the problem on the basis of its present importance, significance and circumstances.

By the morning's paper I see that the Persians are really pouring it on the British once again. I hope that you don't have to go back to that corner of the world; but I must say that every new bit of evidence that seems to indicate the probability that Persian oil will no longer be available to the West gives me a sinking feeling in the middle.

While you were away from Washington I wrote quite a lengthy letter to General Marshall. From one of his assistants I later learned that it was considered important enough that it was circulated to a few officials about the City. As I recall, the letter contains nothing that I have not already told you, but if you think it worthwhile, I will send you a copy upon your request.

Please remember me kindly to Marie, and, as always, warmest regards to yourself. Also, I should like you to pay my respects to the Chief.

Cordially,

s/ Ike

Mr. Averell Harriman
The White House
Washington 25, D. C.



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Original copy returned to Mr. Harriman 9-13-51



DDE

July 26

Dear Mr. President

Thank you for your thoughtful letter. I understand exactly what you wish to arrange, and I shall plan a trip to Washington for late September or thereabouts. While I'm sorry you were put to the trouble of explaining your idea a second time I'm very glad you did so - because I was not clear on the matter at first. You see, I was sick in bed when Averett went through here, so I didn't get his full explanation.

This note brings best wishes to you and yours.

Respectfully

The President.

The White House

Dwight D. Eisenhower