

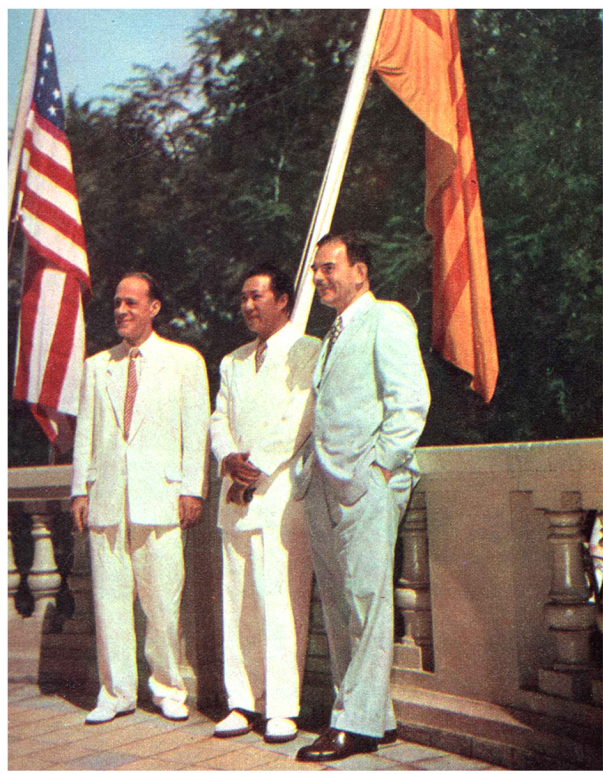
# Collier's

December 15, 1951

# THE WAR FOR THE RICE BOWL

Southeast Asia is the cornerstone of our Pacific defenses, Gov. Dewey says; and we must pledge to defend it to prevent the Reds' moving in

By **THOMAS E. DEWEY**



Minister to Viet-Nam; Emperor Bao Dai and Gov. Dewey often called a playboy, is educated, intelligent and devoted to his duty

*In earlier installments of this Pacific Report, New York's chief executive stated that the U.S. must give sufficient help to Chiang Kai-shek to hold Formosa and that the free world cannot let Japan fall to the Communists. In this article he examines the potentially explosive situation in French Indochina and shows the importance of the fight being waged there. These articles will be part of a book to be published soon by Doubleday*

## THE RICE BOWL



General de Lattre, World War II hero, reorganized French forces in Viet-Nam, led them to victory against Viet-Minh Reds. On desk is a photo of his son, killed fighting under him

**T**HIS is the critical fight of the world. If south-east Asia stays free, we will not see India fall; the whole Pacific can remain free and probably we will not see World War III." A great soldier was speaking with blazing conviction, a deep sense of destiny, and with personal tragedy in his voice. For this was General Jean Marie de Lattre de Tassigny, High Commissioner and Commander in Chief of the French forces in Indochina.

This was the same General de Lattre who was a Free French hero in World War II. Imprisoned by the Vichy government for his continued resistance to the Germans, he escaped a special guard of 50 German soldiers with the aid of his wife and young son and made his way to England in disguise. As a five-star general he was commander of the French First Army in the liberation of southern France and the march north in the defeat of Germany.

Today he is the hero of the least understood major war of our time in the almost unknown area of Indochina. It is the bitter struggle by the Communist Viet-Minh to conquer the free Viet-Nam, the recognized government of the largest area of Indochina. To most of the world, Indochina is just a name somewhere on a map. In reality it is a vital, rich area running along the southeast coast of southeast Asia, bordered by the South China Sea.

Burma, Siam and Indochina spread across this little peninsula which hangs down from China. The area looks small on the map. It was contemptuously referred to by an important American just last summer as an area of "tottering, weak little Asiatic kingdoms."

But these three countries have two thirds of the exportable rice surplus of the world. True, they are new at the business of self-government. True, they are politically weak. But economically they are absolutely essential to the stability of our new Japanese ally in terms of food, minerals and trading area. Without them our Pacific structure is broken. They are the cornerstone of the Pacific defenses of America. And Indochina is the cornerstone of the cornerstone.

There are two schools of thought about history. One is that events make men. The other is that men make events. In the case of the dramatic struggle for Indochina I have not the slightest doubt that a single man, General de Lattre, made some of the most important history of our century.

In December a year ago, 150,000 Communist Viet-Minh troops under Moscow-trained Ho Chi Minh were on a grand offensive after the rainy season came to an end. The objective was to take the Tonkin delta in the north of Indochina, to gain control of its huge rice-producing area and to win Hanoi, its capital city. Supplied by new railroads built in South China, the Communists cut the lateral road that runs along the border of China. They advanced on the entire front against weakening resistance by the outnumbered French. Meanwhile, the eyes of the world were fixed on Korea as almost unnoticed calamity threatened to engulf Indochina and the whole Pacific. The Rice



## THE RICE BOWL

Bowl of the Orient—indeed of the world—and all of southeast Asia tottered.

At this critical moment the French Cabinet called on General de Lattre to become High Commissioner and Commander in Chief and sent him to save Indochina. Flying halfway around the world from Paris to Saigon, De Lattre went north immediately to the fighting front. At the first airfield where he landed, he found the troops slovenly and dispirited, the airfield poorly defended.

"Who is in command here?" he blazed. A colonel admitted he was. "You will return to France tomorrow, in disgrace," said De Lattre.

From one end of the front to the other he flew, traveled by jeep and walked. Storming, raging, removing commanders, promoting new ones on the spot, exhorting, encouraging, he thrilled men with his leadership, with shining courage and determination. In a dramatic appeal to the ancient French courage under fire, he restored morale, reorganized the wavering forces and turned them to the attack. The rout was stopped.

### Wife's Stay Defies Communist Guns

General de Lattre returned briefly to Saigon, in the south, for consultations with his own government and with the American Military Aid Advisory Group, concerning essential supplies. Then, with his wife, he flew back to Hanoi where his first act was to revoke an order for the evacuation of women and children. Against the rumble of guns in the distance De Lattre proclaimed to the people of Indochina and the world, "I have brought my wife to Hanoi! We are here to stay!"

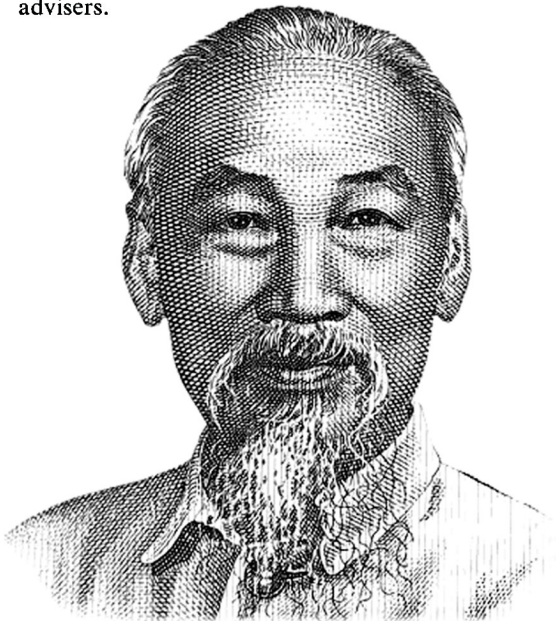
The spirit of the army was restored. But men cannot fight without guns and ammunition, and both were getting desperately low.

Fortunately, a few Americans understood the crisis. Washington had given Indochina a high priority on American aid, second only to our needs in Korea, subject to the approval of General Douglas MacArthur. Taking a wisely calculated risk, General MacArthur had allowed several cargoes of guns and ammunition to be diverted to the French in Indochina. The shipment arrived at the last desperate moment. Overnight, under enormous pressure, the precious supplies were unloaded. By truck, by cart and on the backs of men, they were moved to the front lines as the outcome of the struggle still hung in the balance.

Many Americans have asked whether our aid to our allies is really useful. Here is one case where a few million dollars of American arms turned the tide of war. For once, it was neither too little nor too late. It was enough and just on time.

A few months later, at the state dinner given by General de Lattre the night I arrived in Saigon, in the presence of most of his staff and of Emperor Bao Dai, the great French general threw his arms around Brigadier General Francis G. Brink, head of the American Military Mission, and said, "He was my salvation!"

But the victory was costly and it was not complete. The Communists still occupy areas in the Tonkin delta in the north, many points along the coast and much of the territory inland. They are again regrouped and poised in the north, reinforced with ammunition and months of training from the Chinese Reds and, it is believed, Russian advisers.



**General Ho Chi-Minh is the Moscow-trained leader of the rebellious Indo-Chinese.**

## THE RICE BOWL



**Governor Dewey inspecting the 1st Battalion, Suffolk Regiment, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaya**

The rainy season has come to an end. During the past six months, 120,000 French troops have feverishly strengthened their defenses and prepared themselves for the next onslaught. No one knows when it will come or in what strength.

Why is this gripping struggle for such titanic stakes so little understood or appreciated in the Western World today? I *(Continued on page 86)* suppose it is because Indochina seems so far away, so vague, so small. Perhaps also it is because people think of it as a French colony in which nobody has any interest but the French. Perhaps, too, so far as we Americans are concerned, it is because we have so little direct trade with Indochina. When I met with the American businessmen in Saigon, I found there were only three of them.

There seems to be no other area in the world concerning which so much of what is printed and so many things that are said are just plain not true. Even as I planned my trip last spring, Indochina was the one country I was advised to stay away from. Things were too delicate there, it was said, between the French and the native officials. If I spoke to one more French than native official, feelings could be hurt and an incident created. General de Lattre was the most difficult man in the world to get along with. The Emperor Bao Dai was controversial. Moreover, it was dangerous. People were being killed all over the place every day.

None of these arguments seemed very impressive. I was going to four other war-torn countries. What difference could one more make?

I was drawn to Indochina as by a magnet. For a long time it had seemed to me to be one of the decisive areas of the world. The closer I got, the more it fascinated me and the more misinformation I received.

The only accurate thing I was told about Indochina was that conditions are bad. The war in the north is still critical. Inland, the Communist guerrillas are a grave menace. By intimidating workers and forcing rubber plantation owners to maintain private guards for defense, the Communists greatly reduce production and increase costs. Infiltrating throughout almost the whole area, they terrorize the peasants and levy tribute on their rice. It is the major objective of the Communists to cut down all production, to weaken the country economically and make it easier to take over.

The Communists know, too, that the rice exports of Indochina are necessary for other free nations of the Pacific. All the damage they can do to the rice production of Indochina weakens both Indochina and those who rely on her rice—Japan, the Philippines and Indonesia.

### **Mine Sweepers Are Kept Busy**

Saigon is probably the only completely beleaguered capital city in the world. The only way I could plan to go or leave was by



## THE RICE BOWL



**Indonesian women refine rice by a primitive method as Governor Dewey and farmer watch**

air. Situated 60 miles up the Saigon River from the South China Sea, Saigon is a great port. But it sees few, if any, passenger ships today. Each morning mine sweepers must travel the entire distance to sweep the river free of mines that have been laid the night before by the Communist guerrillas. Even in daylight no ship travels the river without mine sweepers immediately ahead, and gun crews aboard to repel attacks by Communist shore batteries. On the very day I write this, there is a report that a transport has been blown up by a mine in the river, with the killing of two French soldiers and the wounding of 20 others.

Each morning at six, mine detection crews leave Saigon to clear the highways of land mines which have been laid the night before. No one ventures out of the city until after the roads have been cleared for the day. Fortunately most of the mines are homemade and crude and they are easily detected.

"The jungles are Viet-Nam by day and Viet-Minh by night" is a common saying about the country surrounding Saigon. It means that the Communist guerrillas sleep and lie low in the daytime. The people are free to come and go as they will and the Viet-Nam government rules. By night the guerrillas roam and pillage the countryside.

Except near the cities, the highways are not safe, even in the daytime. Just this year an American Information Service team was invited to show movies to the workers on a plantation some distance out in the country. They were ambushed on the way. A patrol car in front was shot up and three French soldiers were killed. A patrol car behind and the French Senegalese guards were captured. Our American team got through without injury.

It was in the late spring of last year when Donald Heath, the American Minister to Viet-Nam, arrived at Saigon with Mrs. Heath. He is a career man in the State Department and did not hesitate when he was asked to take a post in a city from which came daily reports of bloodshed and violence. He had been evacuated from three countries and shot at in two. This would not be a novel experience.

### **U.S. Minister Traveled Light**

Like all State Department career people, the Heaths traveled from one post to the

## THE RICE BOWL

next with most of their earthly possessions in their trunks. Upon arrival they needed some dishes immediately. But none were to be had in all Saigon. The city was in a state of siege. Most of the shops were closed and bare of goods. Hand grenades exploded every night in the streets within a few blocks of their home. Looking out their wide, unshuttered windows, they could see tracer bullets of machine guns firing in the streets.

Illiterate coolies would be hired to throw hand grenades into restaurants where French soldiers might be eating. Often the coolies did not know how to throw grenades and they were killed or their arms blown off as their reward.

There was violence in the streets as the Viet-Minh deliberately waged a savage, cruel war of assassination and murder.

Some of it still continues. Two days before I arrived in Saigon a hand grenade was thrown in the outskirts of the city and two French warrant officers were killed. Since my return home, two of my hosts during the summer have been murdered by Communist assassins—Jean de Raymond, French Representative in Cambodia, and Sir Henry Gurney, British High Commissioner for neighboring Malaya.

Today, the streets of Saigon are quiet in the daytime and violence occurs only sporadically at night. As I walked down the main street of Saigon, looking at stores and chatting with people, I saw one of the reasons for the surface calm that prevails. A French officer, followed in single file by three soldiers, moved slowly down the center of the sidewalk. The officer was looking straight ahead with a drawn revolver in his hand. Each of the men behind him looked fixedly to the left or to the right, with a tommy gun on his arm and his finger on the trigger. A semblance of order has been won the hard way.

The basic police job has been taken over by the native government. Within the year they have developed real skill. Their sources of information are good. Apprehension of criminals is becoming swift and punishment sure and severe.

Saigon is called "the Paris of the Orient." It has a stately cathedral and one of the most beautiful boulevards in the world, four lanes of traffic and three wide malls with great rubber trees down the center of each as far as the eye can see. Today, every shop is open and filled with goods. The streets are crowded with people. The old-fashioned ricksha pulled by a coolie has been abolished by law. The streets of Saigon are filled with rickshas driven by motor bikes and they careen around the corners, driven with all the abandon of Paris taxicabs.

Along the riverbanks are the stark reminders of war. A great battle cruiser and military transports are tied up along the docks and there are huge supply installations guarded by barbed wire and machine-gun nests. At the airport I counted 23 great earthen bunkers guarding the field. Also along the river are the tragic human victims of civil war. Hundreds of sampans line the banks of the river, two and three deep, each holding one or more families.

At least a thousand tables appear at night along the riverbank with small groups waiting for their family supper, while the wife cooks the evening rice in a little brazier on the ground. One of the effective jobs our Economic Mission has done has been to use their small allotment of ECA money to provide work for these tens of thousands of refugees who might otherwise starve to death or turn Communist in sheer desperation.

Saigon provides only a lonesome and Spartan life for the 200 Americans attached to our diplomatic, military and economic missions. But they have a sense of dedication to their jobs. They know the crucial importance of Indochina to the free world, and under the fine leadership of Donald Heath, I found among them a single-minded sense of unity and devotion to their



## 7 **THE RICE BOWL**

important task. They know this is a grim world in which we are living. The Kremlin is waging bitter, ruthless war against the whole free world and the sooner all of us recognize it, the better our chances of survival will be.

Both at home and in the Pacific, I had been told that the political situation in Indochina is bad. In Tokyo it was said that Emperor Bao Dai was nothing but a French playboy with no influence; that he was a liability to the cause of freedom. Ho Chi Minh, the Nationalist leader, was the popular figure and we were making a great error in not supporting him. He would win a free election 20 to one, it was claimed, and we were simply helping to prop up a bankrupt French colony. So it went. But once again it was dramatically demonstrated to me that in foreign affairs there is no substitute for firsthand knowledge. Nearly everything I had been told and most of the things I had seen in print about the personalities of Indochina were grossly inaccurate.

### **Not a French Puppet State**

The flip and facile left-wing line that Bao Dai is a French puppet is false. Indochina is no longer a French colony. It has been given a genuine freedom.

The native governments which have been established are led by good men who are earnestly striving to build good governments where none existed before.

When the French began to occupy the Empire of Annam nearly a century ago during the great colonization movements, the area included five small separate nations. Today, the Empire of Annam has become Viet-Nam, with a population of some 23,000,000 people, running from the Tonkin delta on the north down the entire coast line. The area of Indochina today includes the fabulous little inland kingdoms of Cambodia and Laos with populations of about 3,000,000 and 1,000,000 respectively.

These countries within the French Union are tied together by the exigencies of defense and by a customs union which is necessary for their own economic survival. Otherwise, each has almost as much independence as Canada and Australia within the British Commonwealth.

It is dangerous nonsense to suggest that we should recognize Ho Chi Minh simply because he has a popular following. That was tried once and he turned out to be a Communist puppet and assassin. For 25 years, Ho Chi Minh has been a Nationalist leader, agitating against the French. He does have a popular following and after the evacuation of the Japanese at the end of World War II, he was recognized as the head of the government of Viet-Nam. The French negotiated with Ho Chi Minh to give him increasing grants of power leading toward the complete independence of Viet-Nam. Controversy exists as to the speed with which the concessions were made.

The fact is that Ho Chi Minh betrayed himself as a Communist and the tool of Moscow during those negotiations. It became apparent that he was building a Communist dictatorship in Viet-Nam. His years of training in Moscow were revealed as he raised his demands each day like a typical Communist negotiator, deliberately making peaceful settlement with the French impossible.

When he finally succeeded in making negotiations intolerable, he broke them off, returned to Viet-Nam and launched one of the most savage massacres of modern times. Throughout the country, the grounds around the homes of European residents were quietly infiltrated by native assassins.

### **Innocent People Massacred**

At a given signal whole families—husbands, wives and children—were attacked.

## THE RICE BOWL

No one has been able to make an accurate count of the people slaughtered, but the best estimate is that nearly 8,000 innocent people were massacred before Ho Chi Minh fled to the hills to launch his guerrilla warfare.

Despite their war weariness and their terrible burdens of reconstruction, the French made the hard choice. They refused to abandon Indochina to Communist aggression. They fought. In the creation of a new government for Viet-Nam the French turned naturally to the only possible figure who could head it, the hereditary Emperor Bao Dai who was then in refuge in France.

What kind of man is this controversial figure? In view of all the propaganda against him I was eager to know. Upon arriving at Saigon, I found I was scheduled to pay an immediate courtesy call on the emperor, who had flown down from his home in the mountains to meet me. The courtesy call was to last five minutes. It lasted an hour. That night we sat next to each other for more than two hours at General de Lattre's dinner. The next day we had a third, long, visit, covering the entire panorama of the political and economic problems of his country.

Bao Dai is personable, intelligent and well educated. He also has courage and character. He did not have to leave his comfortable and safe home in France. He accepted the challenge to return to Viet-Nam and to serve his people. He met his responsibilities squarely. Before agreeing to return home as chief of state he negotiated for many months with the French government. He procured concessions from the French which Ho Chi Minh had not even attempted. He actually achieved the independence of his country within the French Union.

Bao Dai never avoided an answer to a single question in all of the times I was with him. Sometimes the answer seemed circuitous, but for an Oriental emperor to convey his point of view to a Westerner takes time if he is going to be accurately understood. Thirty-eight years old, with great charm, Bao Dai can and does walk freely, often unguarded, in city streets. Whatever his political strength, I think it is a fair statement that he receives the customary reverence extended by Asian peoples to their rulers. As crisis after crisis develops between his government and the French, it is usually Bao Dai who solves the problems. The best-informed people in Saigon expressed the opinion to me that Bao Dai is the great and dominant statesman of Viet-Nam today.

He maintains the ancient traditions faithfully. For example, any citizen can stop him on the road or in the street to petition for a farm or relief from a grievance.

It is complained that Bao Dai spends too much time shooting elephants. He does shoot elephants, like most Asian rulers, and I rather suspect that if he did not, his people would think there was something wrong with him. He is also an ardent fisherman, but he mourns the absence of good bass fishing in his part of the country. I offered to send him some of New York's fine bass to stock the lakes and he was delighted. He was so delighted that he offered me an elephant in return.

I thanked him very much and explained that we really had no room on the Executive Mansion grounds for an elephant. Al Smith, the last governor of New York who tried to keep the animals presented to him, ended up with so many that he had to send them all to a zoo. I did not explain that what the average American needs least of all is a pet elephant.

### An Emperor Who Is Respected

Bao Dai understands the relationship between the state and its people in a way that



## THE RICE BOWL

would take a Westerner a long time to grasp. But the members of the American Mission in Saigon understand a great deal of it, and he has their wholehearted respect. He understands his limitations, too. He tells with a twinkle in his eye of the old saying of his country that "the power of the king stops at the village line."

That saying is a tradition which has the force of law. It arises from the interesting fact that in Viet-Nam the peasants who live in the villages are entitled to use a plot of land for only three years. At the end of that time it is subject to being reshuffled, and assigned to another farmer. All land is held in the name of the crown. But the crown does not dictate who holds it. The villages are actually self-governed by the elders who determine who shall have the use of the land.

In Cambodia the system goes even further. On my visit to the capital, Pnompenh, we had a delightful dinner at the palace with the twenty-nine-year-old King Norodom Sihanouk Varman. The king described to me with considerable enthusiasm the system of land operation in Cambodia. He was actually traveling around his country of 3,000,000 people, making speeches about it. I asked him what he was saying.

"I am telling the people," he replied, "that the Communists have nothing to offer in Cambodia. We have a far better land system than they could ever invent.

"I tell them," he continued, "how under our system there are no tenants. Everyone has a right to use land simply by filing his claim and having it registered. All he has to pay is his taxes. There is free land for all. Anyone who wants 20 acres of good land can mark out his claim, clear the trees and have the finest land in the world."

As of today, 80 per cent of all the arable land in Cambodia is still available to anyone who wants to clear it and work it. That is one reason why Cambodia, the rest of Indochina and all southeast Asia are a magnet to the land-hungry masses of Communist China.

This does not mean that the people of these countries do not in some sections have problems of land tenantry. It does not mean that enough progress has been made in raising the living standards of the people generally. There are many problems ahead, economic and political, but good and patriotic men are working on them.

Premier Trau Van Huu of Viet-Nam is a fine example. He has an able Cabinet representing varying points of view and considerable skill in government. Trained and educated in Saigon in the French anti-Royalist tradition, Premier Huu nevertheless works in close harmony with the emperor. They share the same palace when Bao Dai is in Saigon. They are both proud of the fact that for the first time in a century they are building, with the enthusiastic help of General de Lattre, an army of 35,000 Viet-Nameese to help in the defense of their country.

You ask these men whether they can see the end of this struggle. They readily admit that they do not see the answers to all the problems. But they can proudly point to the fact that, starting with no native government at all five years ago, they are beginning to develop a civil service. The peaceful areas in the country have been expanded and a steadily increasing number of intellectuals are escaping from Communist areas and coming over to the Viet-Nam. "Look at the wonderful progress we have made in just one year!" says Premier Huu.

Their government will not be a copy of ours. It should not be. The cultures and systems of government of the Orient are far older than ours. For example, in Cambodia a great civilization flourished a thousand years ago. Fifty great temples were built by a civilization which ruled most of southeast Asia.

## THE RICE BOWL

Out of the richness and depth of their own tradition these people, with a new sense of national dignity, are welding new nations and a new future.

Few Westerners understand the nature of Asia. I believe General de Lattre is one of the few who does. In addition, he knows the Russians.

"They are operating through satellites," says De Lattre, "to acquire the man power to conquer the world without using Russian troops. They have taken central Europe and now they have China. But they will not feel secure for their world conquest until they have all Asia."

The logic of the argument seems inescapable. It has seemed to me for some years to be the clear and primary Russian objective. Moreover, they cannot be wholly sure how long Red China's Mao Tse-tung will remain loyal, or, if Mao dies, who his successor will be.

### Kremlin Pattern of Conquest

The one way they can be really sure is to surround him. That is part of the explanation of the violent and expensive Communist efforts to take Indochina now. If they can get Indochina, then they believe Burma and Siam will fall easily. With the great mass of southeast Asia in Red hands, they believe both Malaya and the giant new Island Republic of Indonesia with its 75,000,000 people will then be lost spiritually to the free world.

Again, the logic is irresistible. Possession of the man power of southeast Asia would give Russia the fundamental of all Oriental concepts of conquest—mass man power. Most serious to America, the Rice Bowl of the Orient would be gone. The trading area vital to Japan's survival would be gone and so would the marginal rice supply upon which Japan, the Philippines and Indonesia depend. Our defense structure in the Pacific would be wrecked.

The French understand the nature of the threat. Over the bitter opposition of their domestic Communists and Socialists, the French have defended Indochina at frightful cost. They were as ill prepared to wage a war there as America was in Korea. More than one sixth of the entire budget of impoverished France is now being poured into the war for the Rice Bowl. One hundred and twenty thousand French troops are fighting and dying in this critical and little-recognized conflict. This is in addition to their nearly 2,000 soldiers who have fought with valor in Korea, most recently on Heartbreak Ridge.

General de Lattre knows what it means. The son who helped him escape from a prison during the war grew up to be an officer in the French army. At twenty-three, Lieutenant Bernard de Lattre, the only son of the commanding general, was killed in Indochina on May 30th of this year.

General de Lattre fights on. He is a consecrated man who believes the soul of France is being revived by her noble struggle against Communism in Indochina. Speaking with the deepest emotion, he says with simple eloquence:

"The American mother weeps for her boy in Korea. The French mother weeps in the same way for her boy in Indochina.

"The Americans want nothing from Korea but to halt aggression and leave that poor country in peace. We French have pledged ourselves to withdraw from Indochina when there is peace.

"We are both fighting this same menace—this Communism. We are joined together in this crusade."

General de Lattre believes he can win against Ho Chi Minh—he can win if the hordes of Red China do not enter the fray. Remembering that the United Nations had won a clear-cut victory in Korea until Red China entered the conflict, this fear is easily understood. There are some 250,000 Red Chinese troops ranged along the Indochina



## THE RICE BOWL

border. Will they move into Indochina as they did in Korea? If so, we will then be facing the next great world crisis. I propose that we handle it firmly now, in advance, in the hope of avoiding it.

Four years ago, in a speech on November 24, 1947, I warned of impending war in Korea, pointing out that the Russians had built up a well-trained fighting army of 250,000 North Koreans and that in South Korea there was nothing but a political void. I concluded that the Kremlin anticipated that immediately upon the withdrawal of American occupation troops "the armed forces of the North will engulf all of Korea."

That warning was ignored. Worse, after withdrawing our troops from Korea, our government made the final blunder of announcing to the world that Korea was outside our defense perimeter. We created the void—the vacuum. That was an engraved invitation to Stalin to order his satellites to invade. And he did.

### Firmness Can Save Indochina

The way to avoid Russian satellite conquest of Indochina is to let it be known in advance that no vacuum will exist there—that Chinese invasion will be resisted with overwhelming force by the free world. The Chinese have taken a terrible beating in Korea. Their trainloads of wounded have gone all through China. No amount of propaganda can hide them. I do not believe the Chinese are looking for another such bloody defeat.

War is the ultimate failure of diplomacy. The task of diplomacy is to win wars without fighting them. The time for diplomacy to act to prevent all-out invasion of southeast Asia is now. There is still time. With the powerful forces the French are maintaining in Indochina, we can forge ironclad guarantees of joint defense, which is the only language Stalin respects.

For the defense of America, the Pacific must be kept free. Within the structure of the United Nations such guarantees have been forged between the North and South American countries. Similar guarantees have been forged for Europe through the North Atlantic Treaty. We need an equally strong Pacific Treaty now, while we can still weld together the kind of overwhelming force that will prevent another Korea.

The freedom of man is at stake. With foresighted statesmanship and stanch devotion to collective security, we can win the peace without World War III.

I repeat, the Rice Bowl of southeast Asia is the cornerstone of our Pacific defenses. And Indochina is the cornerstone of the cornerstone.

THE END

# Collier's