Indo-China Civil War Stalemate

(The political fate of southeast Asia may be decided in the rice paddies of Indo-China. A Chinese-trained Red army is trying to eject the French and push the iron curtain 900 miles toward Singapore. To give Canadians a first-hand picture of the hair-trigger situation, Bill Boss, Canadian Press staff writer, has spent a month in Indo-China. He interviewed French, anti-Communist Viet Nam and Communist Vietminh leaders. In this story, first of a series, he assesses the military and political situation. For almost two years Boss has been CP correspondent with the Canadian forces in Korea He was an army officer and later a CP war correspondent during the Second World War.—Editor)

By BILL BOSS
Canadian Press Staff Writer

SAIGON, Indo-China—At this moment, neither side is winning the crucial civil war in Indo-China.

French and their anti-Communist Viet Namese allies claim they are getting the upper hand. Their situation seems a little better than a year ago.

But neutral observers say the civil war has reached a temporary stalemate.

They maintain the French will never clear Indo-China of the Communist-led Vietminh unless political factors change abruptly. Equally, Vietminh chances of driving the French from Indo-China before they want to go are nil.

WAR EVERYWHERE

This isn't a war in which you can put your finger on the enemy. War is everywhere.

There isn't a "safe" place in Indo-China, except for large cities like Saigon, Hanoi, Haiphong and Hue along the bulging eastern coast and a few areas where Vietminh activity is sporadic.

French and Viet Namese say they can go anywhere safely So they can—if they travel by day, in convoy, along roads guarded by blockhouses less than a mile apart. Two hundred yards off the roads death lurks constantly.

And by night most of Indo-China, including all of the independent state of Viet Nam which skirts the South China Sea from Red China to Indo-China's southern tip, is in the hands of the Vietminh.

Traffic stops. Roads must be swept each morning for Vietminh mines. In villages a stone's throw from the blockhouses the Vietminh hold Communist meetings, collect taxes, recruit men for their army and women porters for their military supply trains.

VIETMINH STRENGTH

The Red-organized Vietminh army is estimated to exceed 300,000 men.

Against them are 600,000 French and Viet Namese troops. The government of France pours half its annual military budget into the war. For six years it has made life turmoil for the 30,000,000 population of Viet Nam and of Cambodia and Laos, the other two associated states of Indo-China.

The country was Japanese during the Second World War. When the Japanese were beaten in 1945, Communist leader Ho-Chi-Minh seized power with the help of a nationalist clique.

For a year the returning French administration dealt with "Uncle Ho," negotiating a form of independence for the agricultural country, promising to withdraw completely in due course. But Ho denounced the French, announced formation of a Communist "People's Republic of Indo-China," and rallied the country's nationalists in an outright war for independence.

MAINLY NATIONALISTS

French officials concede that even now, when it is clear Ho's aim is to set up a Communist state in addition to ejecting the French, two-thirds of his soldiers are not Communists but nationalists who think force is the best way to gain independence.

If Ho succeeds, world Communism will have a new bastion against India, Pakistan, Burma and Thailand to the west, Japan and the United States to the east.

But as long as France maintains her influence in Indo-China, southeast Asia can retain some semblance of stability.

That is why France and the United States are pouring billions of dollars into Indo-China to bolster the anti-Communist Viet Namese.

FIGHTING IN MOUNTAINS

Neither side so far has managed to "pacify" the country.

In the Tonkin Mountains and marshes along the China border, French and Viet Namese mobile groups of brigade strength are trying to cordon off 120,000 Vietminh troops grouped in six regular divisions.

In the central coast area and Cochin-China district of the extreme south, the Vietminh have perhaps 170,000 men. Along the coast they wage heavy attacks, seize French and Viet Namese posts and inflict heavy casualties. In Cochin-China their operations are along guerrilla lines.

In Laos and Combodia, where the French hold is strongest and the population more prosperous and less congested, 15,000 Vietminh can conduct only sporadic raids.

But throughout Viet Nam, the Vietminh have the political advantage.

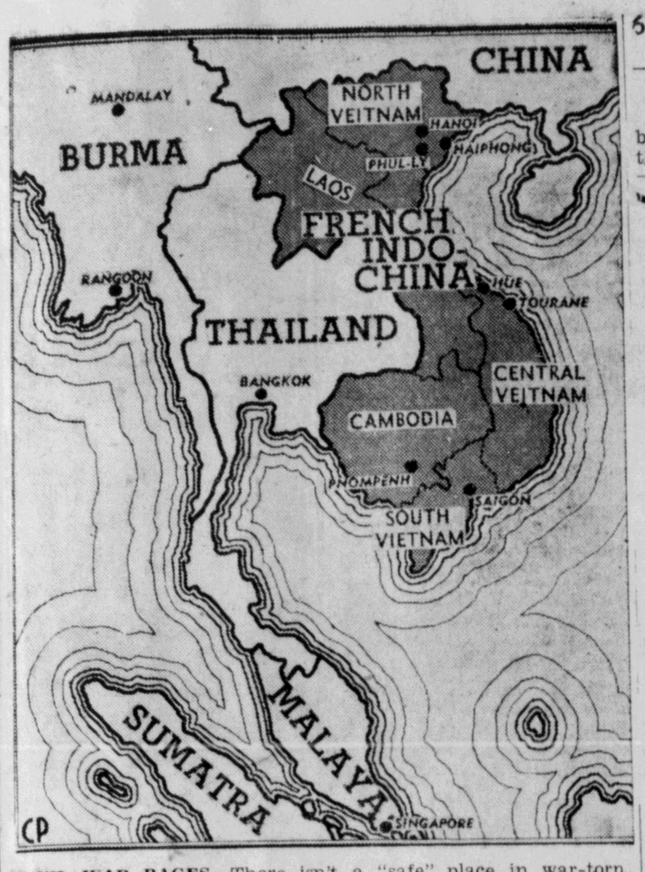
WORK IN OPEN

Their network through Indo-China can work almost openly without fear of disclosure to the local military authorities. The peasants, who have suffered from both sides, will not compromise themselves until order is established.

Most of the popular leaders, and most of the country's small educated group, are with the Vietminh. Many have deserted but nevertheless the Vietminh take no part in the anti-Communist campaign because, they say, there is no real independence in Indo-China and the present associated states are just French puppets.

So the military stalemate continues. The Vietminh, a strong minority, hold at bay the cream of the French army which is fortified by thousands of tons monthly of United States ground and air weapons and ammunition.

The principal victim is the small native farmer in his rice paddy.



CIVIL WAR RAGES—There isn't a "safe" place in war-torn Indo-China, except for large cities like Saigon, Hanoi, Haiphong and Hue along the bulging eastern coast and a few areas where Communist-led Vietminh activity is sporadic. The political fate of Southeast Asia may be decided in the rice paddies of Indo-China where a Chinese-trained Red Army is trying to eject the French and push the Iron Curtain 900 miles toward Singapore. (CP PHOTO)

STILL OPERATING

The first all-professional baseball team, organized in 1869, was the Cincinnati Red Stockings.

WEIGHTY FIGURE

The bronze statue of Fre[illegible] atop the capitol at Washin[illegible] D.C., weighs 14,985 pounds.

African Black Magic Society Launches Attacks on Mission

NAIROBI, Kenya (CP) — An Irish missionary told here today how a raiding party of the Black Magic Mau Mau Society encircled his jungle mission and attacked with spears.

Rev. J. O'Donoghue missed death by inches. An African pupil of his mission school deflected a hurtling spear before it reached the missionary.

The attack was the latest incident in an undertone of unrest which the Mau Mau is raising among the natives of Kenya. Heavy police reinforcements and other securtiy measures have been taken in recent weeks against the Mau Mau, rallying natives to the cry of "Kenya for the Africans."

The raiding party of six Mau Mau spearmen attacked the Romal Catholic mission at Kirku.

They meant to kill the mission chief, Rev. P. J. McGill, who has been teaching natives to disbelieve the magic of the Mau Mau.

ATTACK BY NIGHT

They attacked the mission at night, while Father O'Donoghue, substituting for the absent Father McGill, was teaching a night class. The priest came to the doorway when the Africans shouted "we want the priests."

He was greeted by the thrown spear, deflected by a nearby student. The Mau Mau group disappeared.

The mission—in the heart of the land of the Kikuyu, from whose 1,000,000 members the Mau Mau gets its recruits—now is under police guard.

Two top Kenya administrators will fly to London tomorrow to discuss proposed measures to combat the Mau Mau.

A government spokesman said yesterday bills giving wider powers to combat the society had been held up because they had not been approved by the British colonial secretary, Oliver Lyttleton.

TO SERVE WHITES

Meanwhile, in Johannesburg, a British woman artist just returned from Kenya said Mau Mau is spreading its campaign aimed at scaring whites out of Africa.

"The situation is rapidly deteriorating," said Mrs. Violet Butler, 60, miniaturist and portrait painter who, with her son Peter, has just completed an 8,000-mile central African junket.

"The Mau Mau are turning travel into a nightmare. The natives of Kenya and Tanganyika are in a state of unrest," she told reporters.

The Kenya colonial government decided last Saturday to summon an emergency session of the legislature council soon to deal with the terrorist campaign.

SILVER JUBILEE

YORKTON, Sask. (CP)— Radio station CJGX here celebrated its 25th anniversary with special programs. The anniversary marked the retirement of manager Art Mills, who is succeeded by J. M. Shortreed.

NEWS OF THE DISTRICT

TERRACE

A public birthday party is planned for Oct. 1 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the village of Terrace.

* * *

Pioneers of the community will be special guests while the rest of community pays tribute to their contributions to progress. Sports program is planned for children, to be followed by a banquet in the Civic Centre and closing with a grand ball.

* * *

The Civic Centre choral group held its first meeting yesterday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Dodds to form a singing group to perform at public events.

* * *

VANDERHOOF

Mr. George Murray, M.P. for Cariboo, and Mrs. Murray during their stay here recently were guests of Mr. and Mrs. H. V. Taylor and were entertained in various homes in the district.

* * *

Miss Pearl Reynolds returned to Penticton where she works following her two weeks' visit with her mother, Mrs. E. Reynolds at Burns Lake and other relatives in the district.

GARDEN FREAK

CORNWALL, Ont. (CP)— Three tomatoes growing on the same stem was the latest garden oddity reported here. J. A. Macdonald found the freak tomato in his garden.

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SCREEN ★ ★ FLASHES

By BOB THOMAS

HOLLYWOOD (AP)—Film production is in the late summer doldrums.

A look at the shooting schedules this week provides a dismal report. Twentieth-Fox has but one picture shooting locally, Universal - International one, Monogram one, and Republic, Columbia and M-G-M have a pair apiece.

Warners is booming along with four. There is only one Independent film shooting in town. RKO has been dark for weeks.

Of course, there are pictures shooting in such places as Kanab, Utah, London, Fiji Islands, Rome, Munich, Samoa, Africa, Quebec and Calabasas, Calif. But that doesn't help the columnist, unless he wants a hot ride to Calabasas for a Randy Scott interview.

The studios assure that they have "dozens of pictures" starting in the near future.

Hollywood's publicity men were licking their wounds on another score this week. On Tuesday night, both Adlai Stevenson and Dwight Eisenhower delivered speeches in which they spoke of "press agents" in derogatory terms.

LONG WAIT

Janet Leigh is anxiously awaiting news of the possible release of "Jet Pilot." That's the Howard Hughes epic which she started three years ago. Off and on, she spent a year with the picture, sometimes working on Sundays while she was doing other films.

The picture has already cost $4,000,000. People have argued that the jets in the picture will be obsolete by the time it is released. But that doesn't seem to worry Hughes. According to Miss Leigh, he has injected some of the sexiest dialogue heard in recent years. Maybe the censors are the ones who have held the picture out of release.

CAPSULE REVIEW

"Monkey Business" is not as funny as the Marx Brothers picture of the same name but it is well played and light-hearted. The story deals with man's traditional search for youth. This time Cary Grant and Ginger Rogers are the experimenters, and their excursions to an earlier age is often hilarious.

Charles Coburn gives good support, and Marilyn Monroe offers some of the most attractive scenery outlined in recent months.

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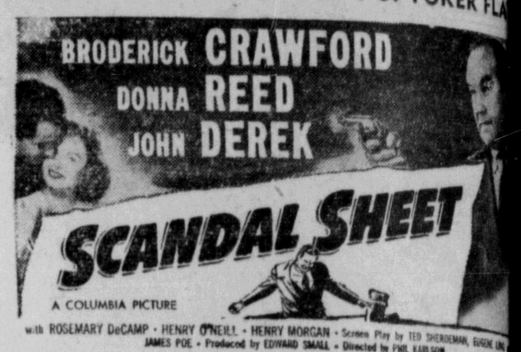
TODAY 7: 9: p.m. (Adult Entertainment) "THE OUTCASTS OF POKER FLA[illegible]



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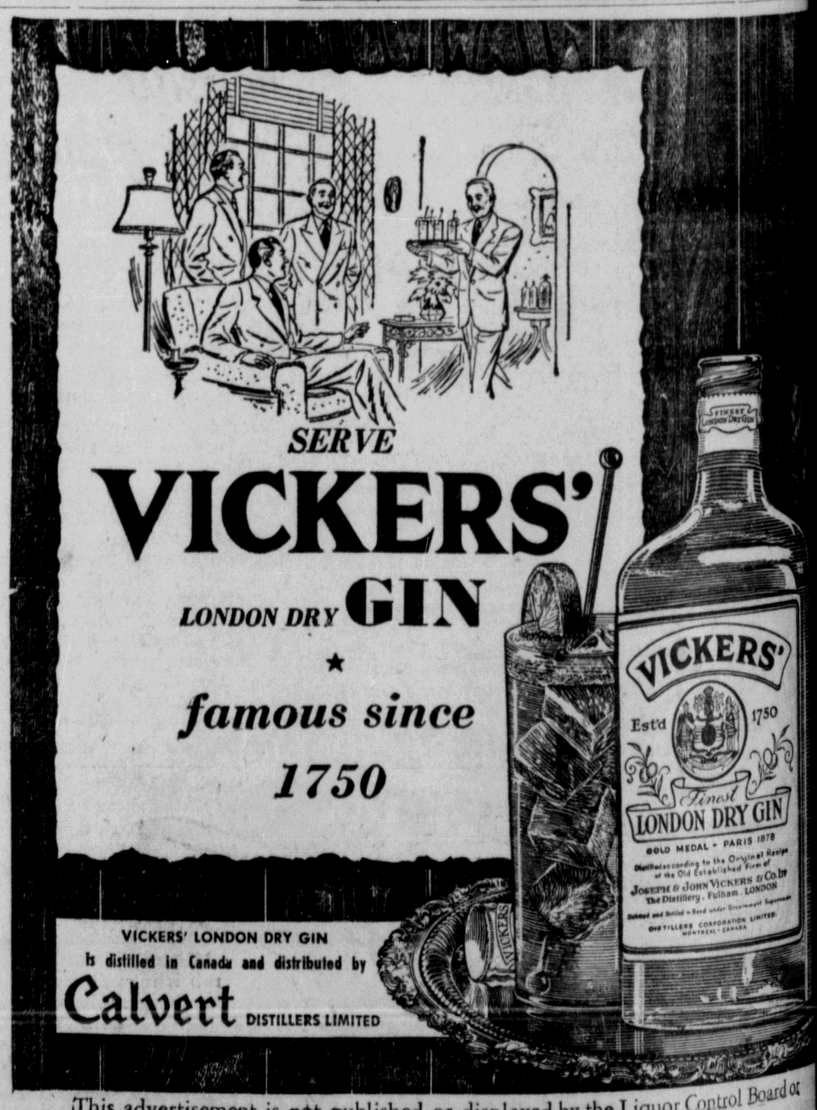

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