

Roosevelt and Stalin Discuss the Future of French Rule in Indochina, Teheran Conference, November 28, 1943, from *Major Problems in American Foreign Policy, Volume II: Since 1914*, 4th edition, edited by Thomas G. Paterson and Dennis Merrill (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1995), p. 189.

The President [FDR] said that Mr. Churchill was of the opinion that France would be very quickly reconstructed as a strong nation, but he did not personally share this view since he felt that many years of honest labor would be necessary before France would be re-established. He said the first necessity for the French, not only for the Government but the people as well, was to become honest citizens.

Marshal [Josef] Stalin agreed and went on to say that he did not propose to have the Allies shed blood to restore Indochina, for example, to the old French colonial rule. He said that the recent events in the Lebanon [where the French ended their mandate] made public service the first step toward the independence of people who had formerly been colonial subjects. He said that in the war against Japan, in his opinion, that in addition to military missions, it was necessary to fight the Japanese in the political sphere as well, particularly in view of the fact that the Japanese had granted the least nominal independence to certain colonial areas. He repeated that France should not get back Indochina and that the French must pay for their criminal collaboration with Germany.

The President said he was 100% in agreement with Marshal Stalin and remarked that after 100 years of French rule in Indochina, the inhabitants were worse off than they had been before. .

The President continued on the subject of colonial possessions, but he felt it would be better not to discuss the question of India with Mr. Churchill, since the latter had no solution of that question, and merely proposed to defer the entire question to the end of the war.

Marshal Stalin agreed that this was a sore spot with the British.

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