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Emperor BAO-DAI's Rescript
on the occasion of his abdication

**Happiness of the Vietnamese People
Independence of the Vietnamese nation**

For these I declare that I am ready to
make any and every sacrifice.

For these I wish my sacrifice to be useful
to our Fatherland.

Seeing that the most useful thing for our
Fatherland is at present the unity of all our
countrymen, I declared on August 22nd:

In the present crisis, Unity is Life,
Division is Death.

Constatng that the urge for Democracy
of the people in the North has risen too
high, and that if I kept waiting until the
opening session of the National Congress,
friction between North and South would be
unavoidable. Such a conflict would cause
more suffering to our countrymen and afford
exploitable opportunity to foreigners.

For these reasons, however painful I may feel when thinking of my ancestors' fighting during four hundred years to develop our country from Thuan-Hoa to Ha-Tien; however painful I may feel when thinking that I have reigned for twenty years but I have really been near my people for only a few months, during which I have not rendered my country any appreciable service,

I have decided to abdicate and to hand over the rule of the country to the Democratic Republican Government.

In handing over the rule to the new Government, I desire to express three wishes:

1) The new Government should take proper care of the temples of my Royal Ancestors.

2) The new Government should treat kindly all those parties and groups which had fought for the independence of the country, although they were not in line with the popular masses. This will give them the opportunity to contribute in the reconstruction of the country, and will show that the democratic Republican Government of our country is being built upon the absolute Unity of our entire population.

3) I advise all groups and parties, all the different classes of people, as well as the Royal Family, to be all united, and to support the Democratic Republican wholeheartedly in

Government

order to consolidate our national independence.

As for myself, during the twenty years of my reign, I have tasted much of bitterness. Now I feel happy to become a free citizen of an independent country. I will never allow anybody to utilize my name or the name of the Royal Family to deceive our Countrymen.

Long live the independence of Vietnam!

Long live our Democratic Republic!

Hue, Kien Trung Palace
24th of August 1945

Signed: BAO-DAI

The Emperor's message to his royal clan on the occasion of his Abdication

Having adopted the motto: « The people above everything else » and having declared that I would far rather be a common citizen in an independent state than be the king of a subjugated nation I decided to abdicate in order to hand over the rule to a Government capable of leading the forces of the whole country towards the consolidation of National Independence and the pursuit of happiness for our countrymen.

« Independence for our Fatherland, Happiness for the people ».

Because of these eight words and for over eighty years, so many of our brothers and sisters have sacrificed their lives in the jungle and in the forests, in prison and in jail.

Compared with the sacrifices of these hundreds and thousands of heroes and heroines, the act of handing over my throne is but a very small thing.

Therefore, I am sure that, after reading my last Rescript, on the occasion of my abdication, all my relatives will place the debt to our country above the Love of our Family, and will get closely united with all our countrymen, in order to support the Democratic Government, in the common effort of consolidating the independence of our Fatherland. Only by that lofty and idealistic way can they really show their loyalty to me and their love to our ancestors.»

Hue, Kien trung Palace

24th of August 1945

Signed: BAO-DAI

Declaration of independence of the Republic of Viet-nam

« All men are created equal. They are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness ».

This immortal statement was made in the « Declaration of Independence » of the United States of America in 1776. Now if we enlarge the sphere of our thoughts, this statement conveys another meaning: « All the peoples on the earth are equal from birth, all the peoples have a right to live, be happy and free ».

The « Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen » of the French Revolution in 1791 also states: « All men are born free and with equal rights, and must always be free and have equal rights ».

Those are undeniable truths.

Nevertheless, for more than 80 years, the French imperialists deceitfully raising the

standard of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, have violated our Fatherland and oppressed our fellow-citizens. They have acted contrarily to the ideals of humanity and justice.

In the province of politics, they have deprived our people of every liberty.

They have enforced inhuman laws; to ruin our unity and national consciousness, they have carried out three different policies in the North, the Center and the South of Viet-nam.

They have founded more prisons than schools. They have mercilessly slain our patriots; they have deluged our revolutionary areas with innocent blood. They have fettered public opinion; they have promoted illiteracy.

To weaken our race they have forced us to use their manufactured opium and alcohol.

In the province of economics, they have stripped our fellow-citizens of everything they possessed, impoverishing the individual and devastating the land.

They have robbed us of our rice fields, our mines, our forests, our raw materials. They have monopolized the printing of bank-notes, the import and export trade; they have invented numbers of unlawful taxes, reducing our people, especially our countryfolk, to a state of extreme poverty.

They have stood in the way of our

businessmen and stifled all their undertakings; they have extorted our working classes in a most savage way.

In the Autumn of the year 1940, when the Japanese fascists violated Indochina's territory to get one more foothold in their fight against the Allies, the French imperialists fell on their knees and surrendered, handing over our country to the Japanese, adding Japanese fetters to the French ones. From that day on the Vietnamese people suffered hardships yet unknown in the history of mankind. The result of this double oppression was terrific: from Quangtri to the Northern border two million people were starved to death in the early month of 1945.

On the 9th of March 1945 the French troops were disarmed by the Japanese. Once more the French either fled, or surrendered unconditionally, showing thus that not only they were incapable of «protecting» us, but that they twice sold us to the Japanese.

Yet, many times before the month of March, the Vietminh had urged the French to ally with them against the Japanese. The French colonists never answered. On the contrary they intensified their terrorizing policy. Before taking their flight they even killed a great number of our patriots

who had been imprisoned at Yenbay and Caobang.

Nevertheless, towards the French people our fellow-citizens have always manifested an attitude pervaded with toleration and humanity. Even after the Japanese putsch of March 1945 the Vietminh have helped many Frenchmen to reach the frontier have delivered some of them from the Japanese jails, and never failed to protect their lives and properties.

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The truth is that since the Autumn of 1940 our country had ceased to be a French colony and had become a Japanese outpost. After the Japanese had surrendered to the Allies our whole people rose to conquer political power and institute the Republic of Vietnam.

The truth is that we have wrested our independence from the Japanese and not from the French. The French have fled, the Japanese have capitulated, Emperor Baodai has abdicated, our people has broken the fetters which for over a century have tied us down; our people has at the same time overthrown the monarchic constitution that had reigned supreme for so many centuries and instead has established the present Republican Government.

For these reasons, we, members of the provisional Government, representing the

whole population of Vietnam, have declared and renew here our declaration that we break off all relations with the French people and abolish all the special rights the French have unlawfully acquired, on our Fatherland.

The whole population of Vietnam is united in a common allegiance to the Republican Government and is linked by a common will which is to annihilate the dark aims of the French imperialists.

We are convinced that the Allied nations which have acknowledged at Teheran and San Francisco the principles of self determination and equality of status will not refuse to acknowledge the independence of Viet-nam.

A people that has courageously opposed French domination for more than 80 years, a people that has fought by the Allies' side these last years against the fascists, such a people must be free, such a people must be independent.

For these reasons we, members of the Provisional Government of Vietnam, declare to the world that Vietnam has the right to be free and independent, and has in fact become a free and independent country. We also declare that the Vietnamese people is determined to make the heaviest sacrifices to maintain its independence and its Liberty.

Hanoi Sep 2nd 1945
President HO-CHI-MINH

**Message of the minister of interior
Mr Vo-nguyen-Giap to the Vietnamese
people on Independence Day**

(September 2 Nd 1945)

Dear fellow-countrymen,

After so many decades of ruthless fight against the land robbers, we at last met the favourable opportunity afforded by this second world war.

From the memorable year 1940, our people began to stand up, fighting to clear this country first of the French, then of the Japanese oppressors, in order to recover our sacred independence. Secretly, but steadily, the revolutionary organizations of the Vietminh league have spread all over the land. From the heart of the jungle, from the depth of the forest, the fighting units of our guerilla forces have developed into our present national Liberation Army.

A «Liberated Territory», comprising 6 provinces of North Vietnam, is being organized

on new lines of administrative and social policy. Meanwhile a nation-wide uprising has transferred the governing rule of the State into the hands of our people, thus materializing the unity of the country from Nam-quan to Cape Camau. We have gone through so many hardships and sufferings, and have sacrificed so many of our heroes, to see the dawn of this day. In the present hour, the thousands and thousands of those who are present here at this meeting, as well as the twenty millions of fellow-countrymen scattered everywhere, all are feeling their hearts throbbing with hope and expectation, joy and enthusiasm, under the red banner with the central yellow star, for all are going to take their solemn oath to the fatherland, pledging themselves to make the heaviest sacrifices to maintain and consolidate our independence. To day, we solemnly, declare to the world that we are determined to defend our right to live. We also declare that we have achieved the goal of our struggle, which was to establish as undeniable facts this two-fold reality:

— Vietnam is an independent country.

— Vietnam is a democratic republic.

We have attained this splendid result thanks to three factors:

The first factor is the deadly struggle

fought by our heroic ancestors who for over eighty years under French ruthless oppression have sacrificed their lives and their personal interests either in jail or on the battlefield.

The second factor is the unity of our people, and the solidarity between the aforesaid heroes on the one hand, and the rest of the population on the other.

The third factor is the democratic movement which is shaking the whole world. The final victory of the anti-fascist democracies has had a determining influence on the future and fate of our nation. Japan, who has surrendered to the Allies, was our enemy.

Yet independent Vietnam and her Republican Government are still in the early days of childhood and we have to work hard to bring them rapidly into maturity, a sturdy, unshakable maturity.

From that starting point, the Vietminh league which has already an extensive audience will develop into a nation-wide movement of national liberation, including all classes and groups, and in which every individual is animated with the unflinching desire to materialize the unity of our people and to resist any violation of our sovereignty.

The present Provisional Government is embodying the will of the whole nation; it

is not the representative of any political faction; since its institution it has never ceased from urging our people to be more and more united and to prepare ourselves for a harder fight. The spirit of our people is rising higher and higher, the strength of the nation growing greater and greater every day. Peasantry, labour and trading classes, intelligentsia, all have but one goal in view. Even the buddhist and christian priests, even Emperor Baodai are sharing the common enthusiasm and have volunteered to fight the common foe. The Provisional Government which is the outcome of unity and fighting spirit, shall make this unity and fighting spirit even wider and deeper.

To develop and maintain this unity and this fighting spirit the Provisional Government will in a few days issue a decree, summoning a national congress on democratic republican lines, whose members will be elected by the people through universal suffrage. The national congress will give us an official constitution and an official government.

While waiting for the national congress, the duty of the Provisional Government is to take immediate measures regarding our home administration, foreign relations, military organization, economical and financial policy, cultural and relief organizations.

As regards home administration, the double object we have in view is unification

and solidarity. The former distinction between North, Center and South no longer exists. The discrimination among the various Indo-chinese races will disappear. Those who had followed wrong paths but have resolved to turn over a new leaf will be reintegrated into the national community. The lives and properties of everyone, Vietnamese as well as strangers, will be respected. A point to be stressed is that the political rights of the citizen shall be so emphasized as to guarantee the freedom and the happiness of the individual.

To achieve this particular end, the Government on the one hand, has established intimate connections between the central departments and the provinces, with a view to carrying out a uniform policy everywhere, so as to avoid misunderstanding and errors, and on the other hand, has prepared a propaganda campaign as well as an adequate educational program to bring the spirit of our people to a higher level, thus enabling every citizen to enjoy and defend the rights of liberty and citizenship which we have so dearly acquired.

As regards military preparations, the liberation forces which had been created during the fighting days in the war zone, have developed into a national army with sufficient strength to support the republican Government and our independence. The creation

of more cadres, to command and instruct our regular as well as our guerilla forces, is being organized as rapidly as is required.

France is preparing to invade our country once more, and her menacing words reach us everyday, but with our unity, the self-denying disposition of our whole people, united behind our shock troops, we may confide in our final victory, and especially in our success in breaking the chains which the invaders intend to put around our feet once more.

As regards national economy, the looting policy of France and Japan has brought our country into a critical situation. Our productive powers have been throttled by monopolies and trusts, our industrial plants have been converted into manufactures for the use of the army, our commerce has been disorganized by speculation. It has been rumored that to face the present situation, the Government will nationalize all private enterprises. But the Government will not do so. The Government will so organize national economy as to promote private undertakings, and what is more, the Government will encourage and support any individual enterprise on a great scale.

As regards finance, we shall not conceal the truth to our people: the situation is critical and we are certain to find many difficulties in our way. But we have inquired into the

problem and have considered ways and means to face the situation. In spite of these difficulties, we shall carry out a policy which will meet the expectations of the people, we shall abolish all market taxes and, the head tax, to relieve the condition of the poor.

But we must not forget that our program of reconstruction and the building up of a national army requires much money. So that to fill the gaps in our treasury we must resort to special means such as loans, income tax, raising of war funds etc...

In the carrying out of such a policy, the Government relies upon every citizen's love for the Fatherland. We are convinced that in the present crisis, everybody is aware of the fact that if we lose our country we lose everything, that if the independence and the freedom of our country are affected, our personal rights will also be alienated. If our enemy can return to this land, not only our individual freedom, but also our properties will be violated.

As regards national culture, the Government has manifested much toleration towards the writers and the journalists who had erred in the past. If press censorship is still functioning, it is only to avoid rumor-spreading or wrong propaganda which may affect our foreign relations or national security. But very shortly, when the political situation is clearly outlined, the liberty of opinion and of expression shall be promulgated.

National education is being organized on new lines. As a matter of fact, primary education shall be compulsory, secondary education gratuitous and poor students given scholarships. Instruction will be as practical as possible, and educational programs will lay stress on the formation of such virtues as are required in social cooperation and of such qualities as are needed in our age of technical and active life.

In a very short time, a decree will be issued, promulgating the compulsory study of Vietnamese reading and writing, and inaugurating a merciless fight against illiteracy. We cannot wait until better days to solve this all-important question. We must begin now.

The first steps in the organization of national education are being taken: committees of experts have been appointed to inquire into all the branches of human thoughts. Reactionary habits, outmoded or backward conceptions, shall be rooted out, pornographic literature as well as worthless fiction shall be prohibited.

As regards relief organizations, the recent flood has placed us in a critical food situation which may exert some influence on politics. The problem is now to feed millions of starving people, and in a few months, to transport rice from the South to provinces which suffered from a bad harvest. Though it is for the Government an imperative duty to preserve

the population from famine and starvation, yet well-to-do classes should regard relief organizations and charity work as a sacred responsibility, not only for humanitarian reasons but because the future of our nation is at stake.

As regards foreign relations, our public opinion pays very much attention to the Allied Missions which successfully arrive at Hanoi, because everyone is anxious to know the result of the foreign negotiations of the Government.

First of all we wish our people to keep a cool head before the changing situation and avoid being too optimistic or too pessimistic. Our foreign policy depends on two essential factors: the world situation, and our own strength.

The world situation is in many ways favourable to our emancipation. From the Atlantic Charter to Teheran, Yalta and San Francisco conferences, every where the principle of self-determination has been defended and proclaimed. The democratic powers have declared that they will fight for world peace, and there is no reason why they should allow imperialist France to send her troops here to wage a conquering war upon us. The democratic powers have declared that they will fight for equality among nations and there is no reason why they should help imperialist France to return here to oppress and plunder our people.

It is inconceivable to us, as well as to the whole world, that after we have fought the Japanese on the Allies side, after we have shed our blood in the battle of the Pacific, we should be considered by our Allies as a people that deserves to be placed once more under the domination of those French imperialists who had assented to the Japanese occupation of Indochina, who offered Japan important bases to attack the Allies, who shamefully surrendered to the fascist Japanese and collaborated with them.

When the Japanese were at their lowest, and were compelled to remove the government of Indochine into their own hand, the French only thought of surrendering or taking their flight instead of energetically opposing or resisting the attack. Whereas the Vietnamese people rose up and successfully fought the Japanese in the highlands and midlands of Tonking, thus giving birth to a generalized anti-Japanese feeling and to a very efficient non-collaboration movement.

There is one more thing we should like the Allies to know, and that is that for over three years, the Vietminh party had appealed to the French people in Indochina, urging them to join us in our fight against the Japanese. Not only did they ignore our appeal, but on the contrary they continued their oppressive policy to an even more terrorizing extent, for in many places they shot or slayed our antifascist patriots. Yet, we

never retaliated. On the contrary, whenever we came across Frenchmen that had been taken prisoners by the Japanese, we never failed to have them released.

To-day the rule of the state is in our hands ; towards the French we have adopted a friendly attitude, not out of fear or out of sheepish loyalty. The Frenchmen ought to be sensible enough to recognize our independence. On the contrary, if they are determined to invade our country by force of arms, we have resolved to fight them to the last man and we are sure that they will be routed.

Such is the friendly attitude we shall adopt towards any and every nation in the world. However, as far as China and the United States of America are concerned, we have had particularly intimate relations which it is for me a pleasant duty to dwell upon.

China is the nearest nation to us, from geographical as well as economical and cultural point of view.

The Chinese, living up to now in this country, have undergone untold miseries from the French, then from the Japanese oppression. They have shared our sufferings, our anxiety and our secret hopes. To-day they are rejoicing, et the simultaneous liberation of our two peoples. They have acclaimed and supported the independence of Vietnam, and the Vietnamese Government will defend their

rights. They shall share with us the fruit of our victory: liberty and happiness in an atmosphere of complete equality.

The United States of America are a Republic which has no territorial interests in this country. They have paid the greatest contributions to the Vietnamese fight against fascist Japan, our enemy, and so the Great American Republic is a good friend of ours.

Among the foreign problems we have to solve now, the most important concerns the attitude of de Gaulle's government towards our independence. They are launching a slandering propaganda to conceal to the Allies the real situation in Indochina: now they tell the world that we are loyal to them, and that we fought the Japanese on behalf of France, now they say that we have played at Japan's game, now they falsely charge us with savagely exterminating French women and children. But we have sufficient evidence to nullify those unfounded charges and to frustrate all those dark intentions. They have appointed a Governor general and secretly incited the French administrative servants here to try and occupy all public buildings and services. They are making preparations to land their forces in Indochina. In a word, and according to the latest intelligence, France is preparing herself to reconquer our country. We pledge here to defend this homeland against the French until our death. Our people

is a peace-loving people, but when it is necessary to shed blood, we shall shed our blood.

Fellow-countrymen!

In the days to come, we shall find many difficulties in our way, especially in the negotiations with foreign powers. We do not rely upon our own forces in the determination of our future. If we want our home policy to work smoothly, our foreign policy to be successful, we must in the shortest time, build up an adequate national strength, through unity, teamspirit, the strengthening of our fighting spirit and last but not least, through giving practical and efficient support to the Government.

In the present crisis, our mind and heart must be focused on the fight for independence, every one must be anxious to resist invasion. This is the only way to avert foreign domination and to prevent the extinction of our race.

Dear fellow-countrymen, descendants of TRAN QUOC TUAN and of LE-LOI, stand up, go to your rank and file and wait for the orders of your government.

As a warning to those people who are trying to reestablish a foreign domination over this land, let us recall here the famous words of Generalissimo Tchang Kai Chek, speaking on the attitude of the subjugated Asiatic peoples at the close of the second world war:

« If those peoples do not enjoy freedom and equality of status, a third world war will step into the shoes of the second world war, as the second world war has stepped into the shoes of the first ».

The Vietnamese people must be free, independent and equal in status to any other people in the world. This is not the aspiration of the Vietnamese people alone, but the common aspiration of all the democratic peoples in the world. The democratic nations have fought for the cause of Justice and not for the cause of Tyranny. The democratic nations sincerely hope for the liberation of the lesser power and they are of the same opinion as Tchang kai Chek that « the end of the world war must bring with it the end of Imperialism, because Imperialism is the cause of war ».

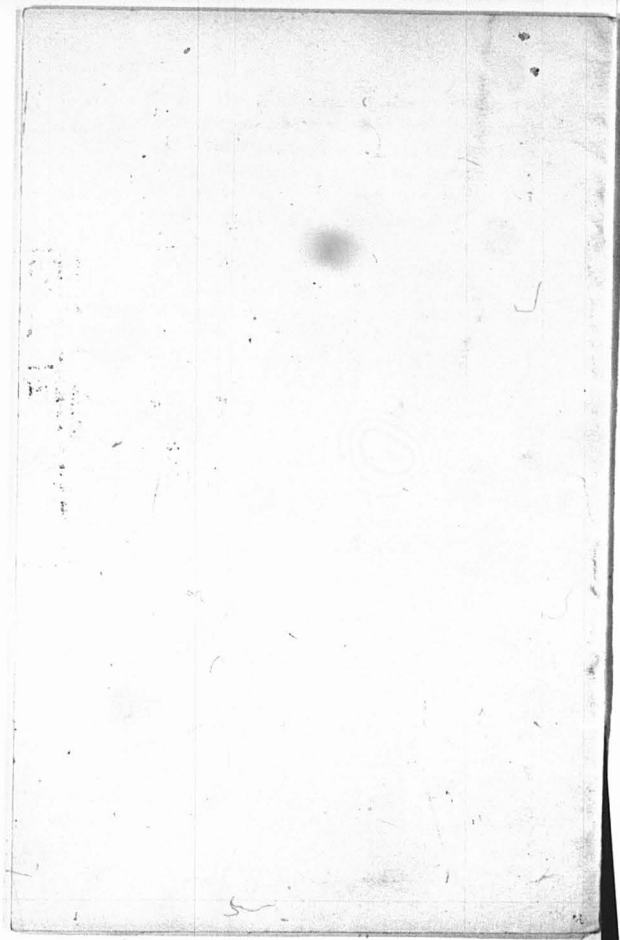
The Vietnamese people will fight for independence, liberty and equality of status. If our negotiations be unsuccessful, we shall resort to arms. We are prepared for the heaviest sacrifices: we may not be so strong as the enemies, but we shall vanquish them as our TRAN ancestors vanquished the Mongolian hordes, in the past.

Be that as it may, we are firmly determined to do or die and if so we shall succeed in preserving the rights which we have so dearly conquered. As President Roosevelt so justly said: « Oppression and Tyranny have made us fully realize what Liberty really is ».

Under the guidance of the Vietnamese Provisional Government and of President HO CHI MINH, our people shall sacrifice everything, material and spiritual, to transform our Fatherland once enslaved and exhausted, into a land of joy, of pure light and happiness.

Following the steps of our forefathers, the present generation will fight a last battle, to hand down to the generations to come, the precious and everlasting inheritance of Independence, Freedom and HAPPINESS.

THE END



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