

WORLD BANGER SPOT.

For seven and a half years war has raged in French Indo-China. It is perhaps only in recent months that the world has fully realized that this is more than a skirmish with bandits. The story of Dien Bien Phu brought home to us all that this is total war. Meanwhile, far from the battelfront, politicians meet. Mr. Molotov arrives at peaceful Geneva for talks which aim to bring about a cease-fire. Russia is no spectator in the Indo-China war: her arms are aiding the Communist forces. Now, from the opposite camp, comes the recently-elected Prime Minister of France, M. Mendes-France, who has threatened to resign on July the twentieth if he fails to secure a truce. Even as talks are renewed at Geneva, Vistwink delegates arrive at Trung Gia for discussions with Viet Nam and French leaders. This is the first time that such a meeting has been held in Indo-China.

A portrait of Ho Chi Minh, the Communist leader, hangs above the conference table. He is not present - instead, one of his aides, General Tien Dung heads the Red delegation. The position of a truce-line, presents an immediate problem: the Reds say the 14th parallel, the French the 16th. In between lies the wealth of the country - rice fields. Now our cameras move into the front-line, to Phuly in the delta where the war is fiercest. Viet Minh troops have penetrated into the town, but French and Viet Nam forces lay a devastating barrage to slow their advance. Thus it is hoped to get the civilian population away to comparative safety.

Protected by French troops, civilians begin the trek away from Phuly. A child leads his pet dog along the dusty road that may lead to freedom - if the rebels fail to force a counter-attack. No, this is no skirmish - this is war - war at its most bestial, for none are spared its horrors. Death is in the midst of these people, Bewildered by a conflict barely understood, a woman can still smile as she takes the dusty road that may, or may not, have an ending.

It is for her and her nation that the politicians meet in Geneva. And yet not only for her nation, for who can tell what lies ahead if Indo-China should become a Communist prize? Where next? Siam, Burma or even India...? Indo-China poses such problems for the world's ministers - the security of millions may depend upon their answers.

