

May 19, 1969

**Cable from the Soviet Embassy in the DRV,
'Responses in the DRV to the work and results of
the "9th CPC Congress"'**

Citation:

"Cable from the Soviet Embassy in the DRV, 'Responses in the DRV to the work and results of the "9th CPC Congress"', May 19, 1969, Wilson Center Digital Archive, RGANI, f. 5, op. 61, d. 454, ll. 51-61. Contributed by Sergey Radchenko and translated by Gary Goldberg. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/209170>

Summary:

An analysis from the Soviet Embassy in the DRV of the response in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to the 9th Chinese Communist Party Congress. The DRV is reported to be dissatisfied with the lack of attention and indifference the CPC Congress paid to Vietnam.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY)

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

THE SOVIET EMBASSY
IN THE DRV

[stamp: Vietnam] [faded stamp: CPSU CC 17738, 30 MAY 1969]

Secret Copy № 3
20 May 1969
Outgoing № 296

Responses in the DRV to the work and results of the "9th CPC Congress"
(information)

The "9th CPC Congress (1-24 April 1969) was held during a period of a noted increase of strain in relations between the DRV and PRV caused by differences in the approach and assessment of a number of very important questions of the international situation and the situation in Vietnam.

By the start of the current year new questions have been added to the previous questions on which there existed differences between the two countries (a peace settlement in Vietnam, the attitude toward the "Cultural Revolution" in China, and an assessment of events in Czechoslovakia and the Near East). They include the DRV positions with respect to armed clashes on the Soviet-Chinese border, the presence of Chinese troops on DRV territory, and others.

Insofar as one can judge from conversations with Vietnamese comrades the 1 April opening of the 9th CPC Congress was a surprise for the DRV leadership and the Vietnamese public. The Vietnamese comrades, taking into account the slow pace of the preparatory work for the Congress, expected its opening no earlier than May. [Translator's note: the following sentence was highlighted in the left margin] This is demonstrated by the fact that the telegrams of invitation to the VWP CC and the NFOYuV [National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam] CC were dated 2 and 3 April and accordingly published in the Vietnamese press two and four days after the opening of the Congress.

On the whole the DRV press has covered the work of the 9th CPC Congress sparingly and with restraint. During the entire time of the work of the Congress national DRV newspapers limited themselves to just a brief presentation without commentary of two informational communiqués about the opening and closing of the Congress, and also the telegrams of greeting to the Congress from the CC's of the VWP and NFOYuV, and the central board of the society of Chinese emigrants to the DRV. As regards the second informational communiqué of the Congress it was not published in the national newspapers. [Translator's note: the following sentence was highlighted in the left margin] No editorial materials devoted to the Congress were also not published.

[stamp at the bottom of the first page]:

The material is informative

the CPSU CC Department has been familiarized [with it]

[illegible signature]

Sector chief [illegible signature]

15D/5 13 August 1969

[illegible signature]

[to the archives

[[illegible signature]]

13 August 1969]

The 2 April telegram of the VWP CC, composed in quite warm, although also stereotyped, expressions with respect to China which have been ingrained in the press, spoke of the "comprehensive successes of the CPC and the Chinese people in building socialism", assessed the importance of the Congress as "a very important event in the political life of the CPC and Chinese people", contained a wish for success to the Congress, and also a wish to the Chinese people "armed with Marxism-Leninism and the ideas of Mao Zedong to achieve still larger and comprehensive successes in the socialist development of China".¹

1 Nhan Dan, 3 April 1969

Further in the telegram it noted that "the VWP and CPC, the Vietnamese and Chinese peoples, have long since formed strong ties of friendship, which are based on Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism" and "this close friendship develops with each year, firmly tying both Parties and peoples of our countries together, like lips and teeth".

In the conclusion of the telegram it expressed "the sincere and deep gratitude to the CPC and the Chinese people for the endlessly valuable support and aid", contained the assurance that "the VWP and Vietnamese people will continue to give every effort to the struggle for the further strengthening and development of the friendship and combat solidary between Vietnam and China".

In our view, the NFOYuV CC telegram of 3 April was composed in more restrained expressions and was briefer in size than the VWP CC telegram; they noted "the enormous successes of China in socialist development and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution", expressed admiration of these successes, and contained "sincere and deep appreciation to Chairman Mao, the CPC, and the government and people of China for the vigorous support and enormous aid", and also expressed a desire of the success of the 9th Congress².

2 Nhan Dan, 5 May 1969

The national newspapers of the VWP published the second report about the 9th Congress only on 26 and 27 April after a three-week hiatus. Excerpts from the 24 April, third, concluding communiqué of the secretariat of the presidium of the 9th Congress were published without commentary in the first columns next to a portrait of Mao Zedong. When this was done the anti-Soviet attacks contained in it were removed from the text of this communiqué. The newspapers placed two reports about the economic and technical achievements of the PRC in the interval between the publication of these communiqués.

The fact stands out that for the first time, in spite of the custom, when placing this report the newspaper did not highlight the place in the communiqué where it speaks of the support to the struggle of the Vietnamese people. This was said with just one phrase which was placed in a modest place after the declaration about the "readiness of liberate the island of Taiwan": "the 9th Congress will send a military and fervent greeting to the Vietnamese people, who are stubbornly waging a battle to the end against the US to save the Motherland".³

3 Nhan Dan, 26 April 1969

After the close of the Congress and before the end of April the Vietnamese newspapers mentioned the 9th Congress only once in connection with the work of the 3rd Congress of Chinese emigrants of the city of Hanoi. The report about this Congress said that in its opening remarks the deputy chairman of the Hanoi branch of the Chinese emigrants society said "he fervently welcomed the brilliant successes of

the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and the 9th CPC Congress"⁴

4 Nhan Dan, 30 April 1969

It ought to be noted that such limited coverage of the work of the 9th CPC Congress by the DRV national press was to a certain degree compensated for by a considerable quantity of publications in Chinese in the newspaper Xingyue Huabao, the publication of the central board of the society of Chinese emigrants in the DRV. Besides listing the above materials published by the national newspapers, this newspaper placed the full text of the first and second informational communiqués of the secretariat of the presidium of the 9th Congress, an abridged text of the concluding communiqué about the end of the work of the Congress, and an editorial devoted to the conclusion of the work of the 9th Congress. Articles of greetings by Chinese emigrants and reports about the expanded meetings of the boards of branches of the societies of Chinese emigrants in Hanoi, Haiphong, Nam Dinh devoted to the work of the Congress were regularly printed on its pages under a special heading.

On 5 April a telegram of greeting to the 9th CPC Congress from the central board of the society of Chinese emigrants in the DRV was placed in the newspaper. The telegram noted that the 9th CPC Congress was the Congress "of life affirmation, unity, and victory", and will exert "a deep effect on the proletarian revolution in China, and on the development of the revolutionary movement in the entire world". The end of the telegram contains an assurance that "Chinese emigrants living in the DRV will continue to vigorously develop the traditions of militant solidarity between China and Vietnam, dynamically put into effect the appeals of Chairman Ho Chi Minh, and devote all their energies to the fight against the US to save the DRV, to defend and develop socialist North Vietnam, liberate South Vietnam, and thereby make their contribution to the defense of their great socialist motherland". "Such is the most substantial gift of the Chinese emigrants in the DRV to the 9th CPC Congress", it said further in the telegram⁵.

5 Xingyue Huabao, 5 April 1969.

The first two informational communiqués of the secretariat of the presidium of the 9th Congress were published in full on the pages of the newspaper as well as an abridged text of the third concluding communiqué, from which anti-Soviet expressions were removed.

On 26 April Xingyue Huabao published an editorial devoted to the end of the work of the 9th CPC Congress entitled "We Ardently Greet the Successful Conclusion of the 9th CPC Congress". It stressed that the 9th Congress fully coped with the task posed it by Chairman Mao and that the Congress is "an important event in the life of the great CPC and the great people of our homeland"... "the convening of the 9th CPC Congress", it says further in the article, "its successful work, is a great victory of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, a great victory of the ideas of Mao Zedong, a great victory of the revolutionary line of Chairman Mao". The article further notes that in their fight against the US the Vietnamese people "constantly receive the comprehensive assistance and support of the CPC led by Chairman Mao and the 700-million Chinese people, and that the Chinese emigrants living in the DRV will continue to fight against the American aggressors shoulder to shoulder with the Vietnamese people until final victory". The editorial ends with the assurance that "Chinese emigrants educated by the VWP under the wise leadership of the VWP and the great leader Ho Chi Minh are vigorously putting into effect the policy of the CPC and VWP with respect to Chinese emigrants, and will continue to develop the glorious traditions of combat solidarity between the Chinese emigrants and the Vietnamese people, develop the revolutionary spirit of collective management, deeply study the specific situation in Vietnam, closely connect the study of the works of Mao Zedong with Vietnamese reality, and take an active part in the fight against the American

aggressors".

On 10 and 12 April the newspaper placed reports about the expanded meetings of the boards of these largest branches in the DRV of the society of Chinese emigrants held in Haiphong (7 April) and Hanoi (3 April) devoted to the opening of the 9th CPC Congress. Leaders of the branches of the society spoke at meetings, and who noted that "the convening of the 9th CPC Congress is an important event in the life of the Chinese emigrants in the DRV, a great victory of the all-conquering ideas of Mao Zedong", that this Congress "was convened at the moment when the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution led by Chairman Mao has won a complete victory". It was stressed in their speeches that the great international significance of the Congress is "an enormous inspiration to uplift the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples of the entire world". Special appeals to Chinese emigrants to note the convening of the 9th Congress with new successes were adopted at the meetings.⁶

6 Xingyue Huabao, 5 April 1969

Besides the materials listed Xingyue Huabao printed a number of reports about the meetings and rallies of Chinese emigrants held on the occasion of the opening of the 9th Congress at which telegrams of greeting to Mao Zedong and the Congress were adopted, and several laudatory articles by Chinese emigrants devoted to the Congress were placed [in the newspaper]. For example, in a telegram adopted at a meeting of teachers and students of a Hanoi pedagogical school it said that "under the correct leadership of the VWP headed by Ho Chi Minh the collective of the school will zealously study and employ Marxism-Leninism and the ideas of Chairman Mao in practice, and take an active part in the revolutionary struggle of the Vietnamese people to fight all their lives for the cause of Communism in Vietnam."⁷

7 Xingyue Huabao, 8 April 1969

At a rally of students and instructors of a Hanoi secondary school where the children of Chinese emigrants study, the director of this school declared that "turning our great motherland into a powerful socialist country with modern industry, advanced agriculture, a modern defense, and developed science and technology is a serious blow against imperialism, contemporary revisionism, and the reactionaries of other countries, and serves as a great stimulus to develop the national liberation movement of the peoples of the entire world."⁸

8 Xingyue Huabao, 13 April 1969

In an extensive article signed by Chinese emigrant Xin Bing "We Greet the 9th CPC Congress With Joy and Enthusiasm" the "merits" of Mao Zedong are unrestrainedly extolled.

In another article by Chinese emigrant Liang Ge, "The Sounds of a Spring Thunderstorm Shake the Sky" it said that "the 9th CPC Congress means the complete bankruptcy of the bourgeois reactionary line of the strikebreaker, traitor, and turncoat Liu Shaoqi, and signifies the collapse of the illusions of the imperialists, revisionists, and reactionaries who have tried to restore capitalism in China."⁸

9 Xingyue Huabao, 10 April 1969

On the whole characteristic of all the materials about the 9th Congress published in the newspaper Xingyue Huabao was the unvarying stress that, first, the Congress met in a favorable domestic and international situation, when the "Great Proletarian

Cultural Revolution" had won a complete victory and when the ideology of Mao Zedong was completely affirmed"; second, the praise of the economic and scientific-technical achievements of China; third, the glorification of the "Cultural Revolution", Mao Zedong, and the 9th Congress; fourth, the deliberate stress of the "enormous" international significance of the Congress.

[Translator's note: the following paragraph was highlighted in the left margin] It ought to be noted that in spite of the lack of materials of direct anti-Soviet attacks published in the press, in a number of the aforementioned materials there contained criticism against "modern revisionists".

As is evident from this survey of the DRV press, the 9th Congress received poor coverage in it. In the national newspapers which are published in Vietnamese, including the VWP CC publication, the newspaper Nhan Dan, of all three communiqués of the secretariat of the Congress the second informational communiqué was not published, and the first and last communiqués were carried with a great abridgment, especially the latter.

The reaction to the 9th Congress by DRV officials was just as restrained. These people declined direct answers in response to questions about the 9th Congress, limiting themselves to the same stereotyped replies in the spirit of the content of the VWP CC telegram of greetings, and when doing so consistently stressing that the 9th CPC Congress is "a domestic event of China, but the questions discussed at it are its 'Internal matter'"¹⁰, and that therefore the Congress passed without the participation of foreign delegations.

¹⁰ See the conversation of the Soviet ambassador with DRV Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Hoang Van Tien (our outgoing № 226 of 21 April 1969)

Such restraint on their part, in our opinion, is explained by a reluctance to go beyond the bounds of the existing tactical line of the DRV leadership of preserving "balance" in relations with the USSR and PRC. Therefore it is no accident that, fearing the appearance of provocation against Soviet citizens working in the DRV and the Soviet Embassy from Chinese emigrants living in the DRV incited by the Chinese Embassy in Hanoi, the DRV authorities undertook some steps to defend the Soviet Embassy and Soviet citizens.

It is also obvious that the stepping up the propaganda activity of the Chinese Embassy from the moment of the opening of the Congress, including the distribution of materials of the Congress with anti-Soviet attacks among the population, could not fail to cause the Vietnamese leaders a certain concern and worry. It is evident that for this reason at meetings in state institutions of Hanoi at the beginning of April it was not recommended that professional officials and office workers visit the Chinese Embassy and not take propaganda materials there. However, this measure was not in fact implemented. [Translator's note: the following sentence was highlighted in the left margin] In addition, the Vietnamese authorities essentially took a position of connivance with respect to the propaganda activity of the Chinese Embassy, which was especially increased during the work of the Congress. During this period meetings and rallies were regularly held in the Chinese Embassy with the participation of Chinese emigrants and specialists and with a clearly-expressed anti-Soviet orientation. Such meetings of Chinese emigrants were organized at a number of enterprises and educational institutions of the DRV, and not without the active participation of the Chinese Embassy. According to available information the Chinese Embassy has used the rallies devoted to the Congress to stir up anti-Soviet sentiments. One such meeting in a school where the children of Chinese emigrants are taught ended, according to a report of Vietnamese officials, with a call to conduct a demonstration at the Soviet Embassy. In the words of these officials, only the intervention of the militia prevented such an intention from being accomplished.

[Translator's note: the remainder of this paragraph and the next paragraph were highlighted in the left margin]. During the work of the 9th Congress without hindrance the Chinese Embassy mailed materials of the 9th Congress containing anti-Soviet attacks in them to DRV state institutions and enterprises and private individuals, and also to the embassies of a number of socialist countries in Hanoi.

In spite of representations from the Soviet ambassador the Vietnamese authorities took no vigorous steps to obstruct the propaganda of photographic materials of an anti-Soviet nature in the display case of the Chinese Embassy and the distribution of anti-Soviet propaganda literature.

In our opinion, the holding of various meetings of the boards of branches of the society of Chinese emigrants, rallies, and meetings of Chinese emigrants at enterprises and educational institutions with the knowledge and participation of representatives of the Vietnamese authorities, and also the systematic coverage of the work of the 9th Congress on the pages of Xingyue Huabao has facilitated an increase of the propaganda among Chinese emigrants of "the ideas of Mao Zedong" and the "Cultural Revolution", and in the final account has increased the influence of China on the Chinese emigrants living in the DRV.

With the limited nature of information about responses to the 9th Congress by officials the conversations [between] officials of the Soviet Embassy and Vietnamese citizens and members of the diplomatic corps give a definite idea about the reaction of various strata of the DRV population to the course and results of the 9th CPC Congress.

At meetings in state institutions the population has been given instructions to reply to questions about the Congress in the spirit of the VWP CC telegram of greeting.¹¹

¹¹ See our outgoing N° 219 of 21 April 1969.

In spite of these "explanations" in conversation with officials of the Soviet Embassy the Vietnamese comrades have expressed their critical comments about the domestic situation in China in which the 9th Congress was held, the true goals and nature of the 9th Congress, the reasons for the absence of foreign delegations at the Congress, and about some questions of Vietnamese-Chinese relations.

In the opinion of the Vietnamese comrades, the opening of the 9th Congress was preceded by a fierce struggle for power, the failures of the Chinese leadership in domestic and foreign policy, which in domestic terms has led the country to economic stagnation and a reduction of the material standard of the life of the population, and in foreign policy terms, to the political isolation of China. The latter circumstance, in their words, explains the fact that the Peking leadership refrained from inviting foreign delegations to their Congress.¹²

¹² See our outgoing N° 196 of 17 April 1969.

The Vietnamese comrades also said that Mao's group has used the 9th Congress to legalize the "Cultural Revolution" and the changes in China associated with it¹³ and to demonstrate the final victory of Mao's supporters over opposition groups.

Many interlocutors have stressed the illegal nature of the convening of the 9th Congress and also that elementary norms of Party democracy were violated in the process of its preparation, that Congress delegates were not elected but only appointed in accordance with lists which were distributed by Mao's group directly to the local level [na mesta], and that therefore the 9th Congress was in reality a

conference of Mao's supporters.¹⁴

In conversations with us the Vietnamese comrades directed attention to the fact that the overwhelming majority of the participants of the Congress were representatives of the army, but only several people at the Congress attended from the intelligentsia.¹⁵

13 See our outgoing N° 210 of 21 April 1969.

14 See our outgoing N° 206 of 18 April 1969.

15 See our outgoing N° 208 of 21 April 1969.

In the opinion of the interlocutors the lengthy nature of the Congress and the multi-day discussion of the question of the new composition of the CPC CC demonstrated serious differences in the CPC leadership. In their words, with the end of the work of the 9th Congress in China changes in the composition of the governing bodies of the Party and state have not stopped, but elections for a new chairman of the PRC and appointments of new PRC government ministers are impending.¹⁶

16 See our outgoing N° 220 of 17 April 1969.

All the interlocutors were unanimous in their assessment of the nature of the VWP CC's telegram of greeting to the 9th Congress. In their words, "the telegram, although composed in warm expressions, is however not sincere, does not contain anything new, and only repeated hackneyed expressions; that the mention in the telegram of the successes of the "Cultural Revolution" is insincere inasmuch as everyone knows that VWP CC's negative attitude toward these questions. As regards the mention of Mao Zedong, in the words of the interlocutors, it was done in the telegram "exclusively for the sake of politeness". In their opinion, the warm tone of the telegram is explained by the DRV's dependence on China and its fear [of it].¹⁷

17 See our outgoing N° 196 of 17 April 1969.

The fact that in conversations with us many Vietnamese comrades did not conceal their dissatisfaction and disappointment with the insignificant attention which the 9th CPC Congress paid to Vietnam both in the political report of Lin Biao at the Congress as well as in the concluding communiqué of the secretariat of the presidium ought to be specially noted.

[Translator's note: the following sentence was highlighted in the left margin] In our opinion, the coverage of the 9th CPC Congress in the DRV press and the unofficial reactions to the Congress by individual Vietnamese comrades had on the whole a restrained nature. Such a position was caused by the situation in which the DRV found itself by the time of the opening of the Congress: on the one hand, the tendency toward the independence of the VWP in pursuing its own foreign policy and differences in views between it and the CPC, which increased after the Chinese provocation on the Soviet-Chinese border, and on the other, the continuing dependence on China, a feeling of fear and dread of them.

This position with respect to the 9th CPC Congress ensues from the tactical line of the DRV leadership to preserve a balance between the USSR and China and not allow a worsening of relations with them. This also explains, in our view, the preservation of the warm tone of the VWP CC telegram of greetings to the Congress, the removal of anti-Soviet statements from the text of the final communiqué of the secretariat of the Congress, and also the measures undertaken by the DRV leadership in order not to permit anti-Soviet provocations.

At the same time the DRV leadership has, as before, continued to tolerate the anti-Soviet propaganda activity of the Chinese leadership in Hanoi among Chinese emigrants and the Vietnamese population, not hindering it from placing anti-Soviet materials in its display case, and also distributing materials of the Congress among the population containing anti-Soviet attacks.

On the whole the work and results of the 9th CPC Congress were received with restraint and coldness by both the leaders and the DRV population.

The emphatically indifferent attitude of the Congress toward the Vietnamese question, the lack of special documents of the Congress about Vietnam, and the attempt of Mao's group before the opening of the Congress to use the question of the adoption of such a document in order to exert political pressure on the DRV - all this provoked a certain disappointment and aloofness among the DRV leaders, and was received as evidence of China's dissatisfaction with the foreign policy steps of the DRV and led to a further decline of the authority of PRC policy and its leadership in the eyes of the Vietnamese population.

1st Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in the DRV
[signature] (N. Shirokov)

2nd Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in the DRV
[signature] (A. Zaytsev)

One copy printed

- 1 - OYuVA
- 2 - DVO [the Far East Department]
- 3 - the CPSU CC Department
- 4 - to file

19 May 1969

MP N° 661

ga.

[handwritten: 593-ls]