

May 21, 1965

**Report from the Department of Soviet and Eastern
European Affairs, 'Situation of the Soviet
Revisionists' False Support for and Betrayal on the
Vietnam Issue'**

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Summary:

An article in 'Foreign Affairs Survey and Research,' a periodical produced by the Chinese Foreign Ministry, offers an in-depth critique of Soviet policy and assistance toward North Vietnam.

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May 21, 1965

Situation of the Soviet Revisionists' False Support for and Betrayal on the Vietnam Issue

1. Political support for Vietnam is weak

(1) Important documents on Vietnam are not reported, or are reported in digest, censored or piecemeal fashion. Out of the eleven important documents issued from the Vietnamese side between March 3 and April 21 (including documents of the Third Congress, Chairman Ho Chi Minh's press conference and the southern Vietnam statement), five were not mentioned at all and four were reported in digest format. Only two documents were carried in full text. Even those reports that were carried, were delayed as much as possible (generally appearing a week or so later), or in censored reports (the censored parts was the part that denounced U.S. Imperialism, stated that the struggle against the U.S. will be carried on to the end and statements that Vietnam is all one country). Most of the statements were printed in less prominent parts of the newspaper such as page four or five.

(2) Propaganda out of step with Vietnam. During the three month period between February 8 and May 5, the heroism of the Vietnamese people and their determination to fight to the end was slightly touched upon only fifteen times. However during this same period there was propaganda about how the issue should be decided by some scurrilous peace talks a total of over sixty times.

(3) Does not propagandize about the excellent situation and glorious achievements of the Vietnamese people in their struggle against the U.S. On the contrary, in many different media (articles, songs and paintings) it propagandizes about the horrors of war and the dangerous situation. For example, from March 8 until the end of April, the achievements of the Vietnamese people on the battlefield did not appear on the front page but instead in a series of twenty-one separate "objective reports" in the inside of the paper taking up no more space than a box of matches. During the same period, our People's Daily made reported on Vietnam 159 times. During that same period, Pravda published only nineteen long articles and talks about the horrors of war and the dangerous situation employing colorful language such as "the fresh blood gushing out", "the flowering of bombs", "the whining of warning sirens", "the whump sound of napalm bombs", and the "endless moans of dying victims coming from Vietnam" to express the view that "the situation is growing steadily worse and threatens peace not only in Southeast Asia but also threatens the peace of regions far from Southeast Asia" and "increases the risk of a military conflict that would have serious consequences for all the people of the world."

(4) Press reports purposely discriminate between northern and southern Vietnam as

"separate areas". From February 8 to the end of April, Pravda reported seventy-nine news items about northern Vietnam but only thirty-three news items about southern Vietnam. Most of the news items about southern Vietnam came from the western wire services; only two of them came from the Liberation News Service of southern Vietnam.

2. Soviet assistance to Vietnam is "little, slow and of poor quality"

(1) Since the U.S. began its Vietnam bombing campaigns, the Soviet Union has only provided Vietnam with 250 million rubles in military assistance. Ever since India stirred up the border conflict with China, however, the Soviet Union has provided India 207 million rubles in military assistance long with 817 million rubles in economic assistance, coming to a total of 1.24 billion rubles. That is to say, the Soviet Union has provided to a socialist country being invaded by the U.S. Imperialists only one-fifth the assistance that it provides to a country that attacked socialist China.

(2) Kosygin repeatedly stated in both Hanoi and Beijing that the Soviet Union supports Vietnam and has pledged to immediately deliver military equipment to Vietnam. However, only two days after he returned to the Soviet Union, he suggested peace talks to us. Only ten days later, that is February 25 [note: handwritten correction from April in printed copy] (he sent the meeting request on February 23 [handwritten correction from April in printed copy] did he propose to us a plan for military assistance. The first shipment of weapons was not turned over to us for transfer to Vietnam until two months after Kosygin's visit to Hanoi that is on March 8. The Vietnamese side asked the Soviet leadership for surface-to-air missiles in 1963 but the missiles were only transferred to us for delivery to Vietnam on April 6, two months after Kosygin's visit to Hanoi, and all the deliveries were not completed until October. From this it is clear to see that the new leadership of the Soviet revisionists feels an urgency for peace talks but takes its time when it comes to assisting Vietnam.

(3) Weapons and armaments provided to Vietnam. With the exception of six firepower battalion surface-to-air guided missiles and two technical battalions. Most of the other weapons are used, obsolete weapons. The sixty thousand rifles provided in 1963 were made in Hitler's Germany. Only ten thousand of them were barely serviceable.

3. Loudly proclaiming "Support Vietnam and Oppose America" while improving relations with U.S. Imperialism

(1) The tenser the Vietnam situation gets, the more they keep reaffirming their determination to uphold the line of the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on peaceful coexistence. They stress that "peaceful coexistence does not change with the seasons." They make statements, give speeches and write articles based on their desire to further develop Soviet-American relations and peaceful coexistence between the Soviet Union and the United States. Kosygin has said openly that the U.S. stepping up its war of aggression in Vietnam will not affect Soviet-American relations in the slightest (March 1 press conference in Leipzig. They even trotted out Khrushchev to send greetings to the U.S. imperialists to say that the "already settled policy on peaceful coexistence will continue" and that Johnson "should not out of a lack of understanding, cause the Soviet Union and its allies to lose patience" and "problems all start with small matters like Vietnam and end in disaster."

(2) Diplomatic contacts with the U.S. are unusually frequent as the two sides exchange news, views, and their respective bottom lines on the Vietnam issue. During the three month period from February 7 to May 9, the ambassadors of the Soviet Union and the United States met fourteen times with the foreign minister or vice foreign minister of the other side, at an average pace of over once a week. Nearly every time the U.S.

Bombs Vietnam, it calls in Dobrynin to convey to him the purpose and limits of the bombing. The Soviet Union, on its part, uses these meets to inform the United States as well as to western journalists about its assistance to Vietnam, its purpose and its progress. The U.S. imperialists not only does not object to or express regret about Soviet lofty statements about its "opposition to the U.S." and its assistance to Vietnam, on the contrary, it gets encouragement from them.

(3) Although there is occasional "criticism" of Johnson, but most of the criticism leaves Johnson out and instead puts most of the responsibility for the U.S. war of aggression on militarists and the Pentagon. They say that now the "hawks" and not the "doves" determine U.S. policy. Soviet periodicals spread widely the view that "the most clear-headed people" in U.S. Ruling circles are opposed to the widening of the war and want peace talks.

4. Going against the wishes of the Vietnamese people and going behind the backs of Vietnam and China, putting great efforts into getting peace talks started, and striving hard to get the Vietnam issues onto a track that will be decided through negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States.

When Kosygin passed through Beijing on his way to Hanoi, he told us that he would not push for peace talks but Gromyko, on the very same day that Kosygin returned to the Soviet Union, said to the Deputy UK Foreign Minister Thompson that there was an urgent need to calm down the situation in Indochina and encouraged the UK to find a way to get the U.S. involved in negotiations on the Vietnam issue. The next day, February 16, the Soviet Union suggested to China and to Vietnam that a new international conference be convened on Indochina issues. On February 23, the Soviet Union provided a memorandum on peace talks to DeGaulle. On March 22, the Soviet Union also presented the memorandum to the Sato government in Japan and asked that Japan take part in efforts to find a peaceful resolution to the Vietnam situation. On March 29, the Soviet Union suggested that U Thant visit Hanoi and Beijing for exploratory talks on the possibility of convening talks on the Vietnam issue.

When the Soviet Union's efforts for talks were frustrated by the determined refusal of Vietnam and China, it then tried to get international talks on Cambodia started so as to get into talks about Vietnam from the back door. On April 3, the Soviet Union suggested to the UK ambassador to Moscow their two countries, as co-chairs, propose convening an international conference on Cambodia. On April 8, the Soviet Union formally announced this suggestion as a response to Johnson's statement that he was willing to engage "unconditionally in talks". The Soviet-Vietnam joint communique of April 17 and the Soviet-Mongolian communique of April 23 also took up the proposal. Not long before, Sihanouk had come out against an international conference on Cambodia but the Soviet Union dared not mention that.

The new leadership of the Soviet Revisionists expressed direct or indirect interest in every suggestion made by other countries such as the French February proposal for unconditional talks, U Thant's suggestion of a five-country or seven-country international conference, the call by seventeen non-aligned countries, and the ridiculous Three-Point Plan proposed by the Indian President.

While pushing the peace talks scheme along through diplomatic channels, it purposely promoted an atmosphere favorable to peace talks in order to bring the pressure of public opinion to bear on China and Vietnam. According to an incomplete statistics, from February 7 to early May the Soviet newspapers Pravda and Izvestia along with the Tass Press Agency published over fifty articles and reports on this topic. Kosygin and Mikoyan in their public statements also emphasized key phrases such as "the way to peace", "at the conference table", and "solving the Indochina issue."

5. Getting assistance across the border resulted in many Chinese casualties. The Soviets took advantage of this to disturb Sino-Vietnamese relations, casting themselves as the heroes providing assistance to Vietnam and making us into villains who were interfering with their assistance to Vietnam.

In early March, Moscow began to divide delegates to a Moscow conference by spreading lies about how we were a villain for preventing material assistance to Vietnam from crossing the border. Then Poland, Cuba, Hungary, Bulgaria, Finland, Mongolia and East Germany took this up from the Soviet Union and spread the same libel in their turn. The Soviet Union repeated that lie to leftist parties in Indonesia and Vietnam as to the Romanian Communist Party. They falsely accused us of interfering with Soviet assistance to Vietnam because they were afraid that the U.S. would find out and they would suffer difficulties and disadvantages because of it.

In mid-March, the Soviet Revisionists began to spread propaganda that we were interfering at the border with material assistance to Vietnam in publications and press agencies of India, the U.S., Denmark, Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries.

On March 30, after we signed an agreement with the Soviet Union on the transport of special materials across the border, the U.S. United Press Agency and Reuters reported from Moscow on a conversation with a senior Soviet official stating that an agreement had been reached in Beijing to eliminate Chinese interference and that Soviet weapons would be sent to Vietnam by way of Communist China. The Soviet official said that the interference had only been a procedural matter and was not a big issue.

Since mid-April, the Soviet Revisionists have been spreading false rumors including claims that China has been removing Soviet trademarks and replacing them with Chinese trademarks and replacing good Soviet weapons with old Chinese weapons.

(Soviet-European Department)

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