

Vietnam re-colonised

SOVIET EXPANSION IN S.E. ASIA

The real victor to emerge from the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea and the consequent conflict between China and Vietnam is the Soviet Union. In less than five years it has become a major military power in Southeast Asia, a near equal to the US. Through Vietnam, the Soviets have acquired the use of three military bases and the allegiance of the third largest army in the world. The combined naval, land and air forces of the Soviet-Vietnamese alliance are now capable of exerting influence over the entire region.

Although the alliance was formed out of mutual need - Vietnam needed the USSR to take control of Indochina and the USSR needed the Vietnamese expansion to extend its own influence in Southeast Asia - this is not an alliance of equals. Vietnam has become militarily and economically dependent on the Soviet Union. The cost of this dependence to Vietnam has been its political independence, for which the people of that country had fought and made countless sacrifices for over 30 years. Through the instrument of Hanoi's own ambitions, Vietnam has become incorporated into a regional strategy of which it is not the master.

To help show the aims of this strategy and the role the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea has played in their realisation, the following pages give a brief account of the background to Soviet-Vietnamese relations and examine Vietnam's current military and economic subordination to the Soviet Union.

The Moscow-Hanoi-Beijing triangle

The Soviet Union's foreign policy in the 1950s was defensive and centred on Europe. Its interest in Southeast Asia was limited to the defence of China, its main regional and global ally. In both the Korean War of 1950-53 and in the Vietnamese struggle, at least until 1957, Moscow supported the measures taken by China, rather than acting on its own initiative. Up to this time China was the main source of military and economic support to North Vietnam; there was in political terms no Moscow-Hanoi-Beijing triangle, as the line connecting Moscow to Hanoi went through Beijing.

As the first signs of the rift between Moscow and Beijing began to show, Ho Chi Minh established more direct relations with the Soviet Union. This enabled him to keep a careful balance between the two sides in the subsequent ideological dispute.

Although the Vietnamese leadership's general political outlook was closer to the Soviet position, on the issue that was central to the dispute as well as of vital concern to the Vietnamese struggle - the interpretation of peaceful co-existence - it tilted towards the Chinese.

This tilt was reversed in 1964, when the Vietnamese leadership - on one of the several occasions during the war against the US - shifted its emphasis from guerrilla warfare based on the people of the South, and conducted as part of a social revolution, to a general offensive war by North

Vietnamese troops, relying on advanced weaponry. The dominance of one or the other type of strategy was to have a strong influence on Hanoi's relations with its two allies. In 1964, the 9th plenum of the Vietnamese Workers' Party Central Committee decided to step up support from the North to the armed struggle in South Vietnam. To put this into practice, "it was obvious that Hanoi would need Soviet assistance to continue the struggle. The Chinese were unable to supply the sophisticated anti-aircraft weaponry needed to counter American bombing attacks". (1) The decision to seek sophisticated anti-aircraft weaponry had the immediate consequence that an issue of *Hoc Tap*, a government publication, containing an article critical of Moscow was hastily withdrawn. "A month later the USSR promised to supply all necessary assistance to North Vietnam in the event of an American attack." (2)

In 1964 and early 1965, first Khrushchev and then Kosygin advocated a negotiated settlement in an effort to bring the Indochina war to an end. In February 1965, Kosygin visited Hanoi and Beijing and proposed that Vietnam should open negotiations with the US by accepting Johnson's precondition - halting military support to the South - in return for a cessation to the bombing of North Vietnam. For international consumption, Hanoi initially gave public approval to this proposal but later indicated that it was not prepared to accept the compromises Moscow desired. A strong hint of the divergence between the two capitals was given a little later by the Vietnamese refusal to attend the Consultative Conference of Communist Parties, which the Soviet leadership had mounted as part of its campaign to isolate China within

the international communist movement.

Moscow's strategic objectives

By this time, three objectives had begun to define Soviet strategy in Southeast Asia and these have remained the same to this day, though their order of priority has changed. The principal Soviet objective until 1969 - when Nixon's Vietnamisation policy signalled the beginning of the US withdrawal and when serious border clashes between China and the USSR occurred - was to see its global rival weakened in this region by being forced to pull out of Vietnam. The principal objective was limited by two secondary ones. Of these, one was the desire to maintain detente with the US, namely, the whole post-1945 arrangement of spheres of influence. This kept Soviet support for Vietnam to a level where detente did not have to be abandoned. The other, in this period still secondary, objective was to contain China's regional and global influence. The Kremlin was anxious to ensure that the Vietnam war should not enhance the political prestige of the Chinese Communist Party. This consideration put strict limits on the pressure that the Soviet Union could exert on the Vietnamese leadership to moderate their position and bring it in line with the Soviet pursuit of detente. Soviet leaders nevertheless repeatedly demonstrated that they did not regard detente conditional on US withdrawal from Vietnam or even on a cessation of bombing of North Vietnam. A startling example of this was the subdued Soviet reaction to the US bombing of North Vietnam during Kosygin's visit to Hanoi. "Soviet papers even appeared to be making a conscious effort to treat Kosygin's visit to the DRV and the American bombing of that country as two completely independent events." (3)

With the US escalation of the war in 1965 - marked by regular bombings of the North from February and the sending in July of 100,000 American troops to South Vietnam - the Soviets stepped up their military supply to North Vietnam and steadily increased it until the capture of Saigon in April 1975. There is no neutral witness to cite on whether the military equipment was, as the Chinese claimed, mostly of "old weapons of its own armed forces" and that even the newer types were "outmoded" and insufficient in quantity. But this claim is consistent with Moscow's attempt to reconcile the three objectives it was pursuing. "Enough diplomatic and material support had to be extended so that the North Vietnamese could not accuse the Soviet Union of abandoning a fraternal ally in the Kremlin's pursuit of detente, but at the same time, too much diplomatic and material support may have endangered detente itself." (4)

Different main enemies

During the Cultural Revolution, Vietnam moved closer to the Soviet Union and away from China. The Vietnamese Workers' Party was closer to the statist and technocratic version of socialism espoused by the Soviet party than the emphasis on mass mobilisation and struggle against bureaucracy that was propagated by Mao. A more specific reason was that the Chinese strongly disapproved of the Vietnamese decision in 1967 to move to general offensive warfare. In August that year Beijing's propaganda department republished Lin Biao's essay "Long live the victory of the People's War" and the Chinese media repeatedly stressed that the Vietnamese would be victorious if they "follow a correct political and military line and persevere in a protracted people's war." (5)

It was symptomatic of Hanoi's close relations with the Kremlin that in 1968 it came out in support of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, on the grounds that "it was a legitimate and essential action which symbolised such noble principles as to protect by all means the Socialist Bloc and the Socialist Revolution." (6) Although relations with China improved somewhat the following year when the Vietnamese again placed the emphasis on guerrilla tactics - they reverted to general offensives by North Vietnamese troops in 1972 - there now existed a serious divergence in the strategies of the two countries. For the Vietnamese, the US still in control of the South was the principal enemy and to hasten its defeat Hanoi was prepared to increase its dependence on the Soviet Union. The Chinese, however, were convinced by 1970, that the US was on the way to being defeated in Indochina and was therefore a declining force in the region. For them, the Soviet Union now posed a greater threat.

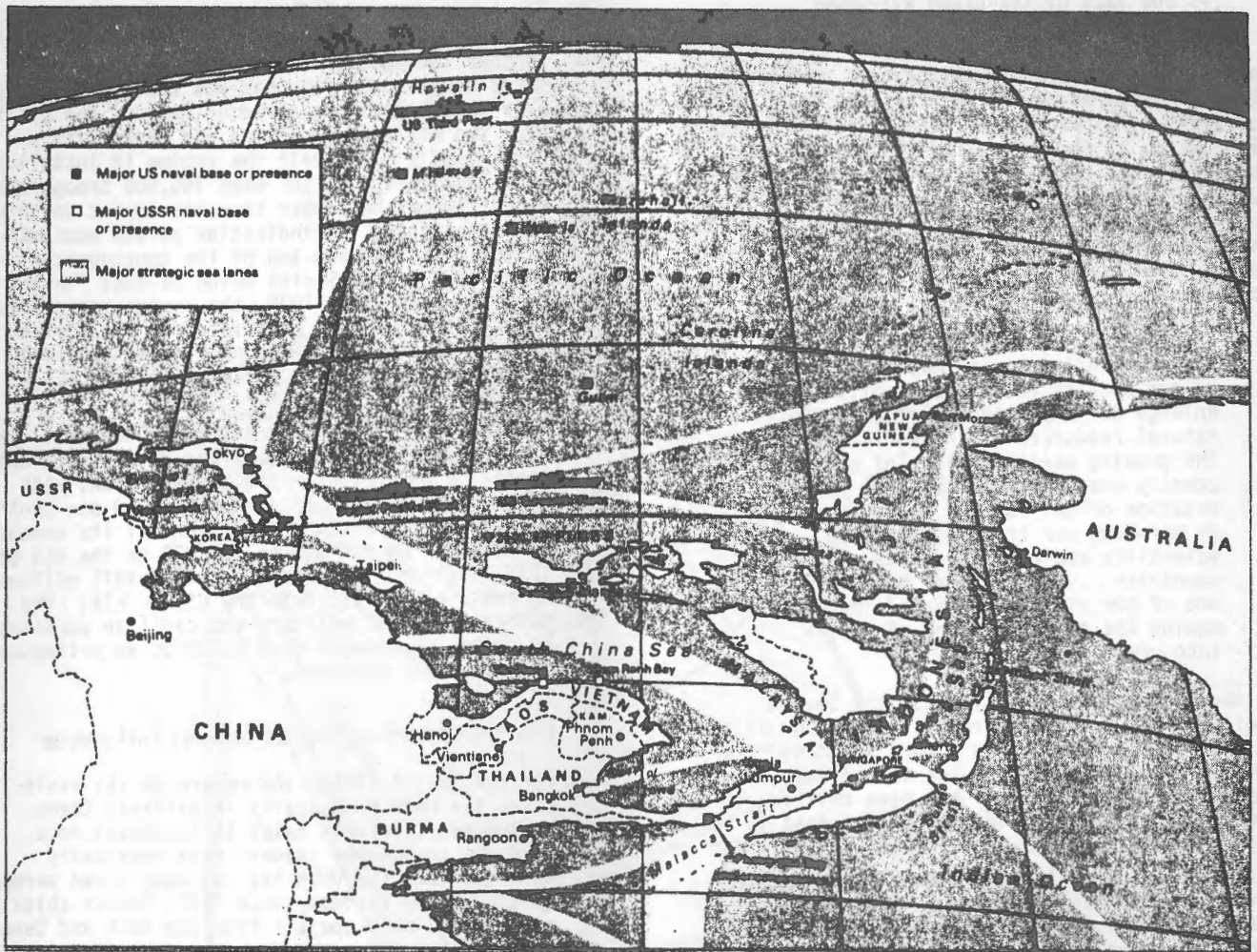
The most immediate manifestation of this threat was the Soviet military build up along the Chinese frontier, which by 1970 "had reached at least thirty-five combat divisions with another twenty-five divisions ready to reinforce them. In addition, Moscow had expanded its border air-force bases, constructed several new landing strips and vastly increased the number of tactical nuclear missiles and rockets deployed in the region." (7)

This military build up was not an overspill from the ideological conflict or the natural extension of the 1969 border clashes. It reflected rather, a new order of priority in Soviet strategic objectives in Southeast Asia, whereby the containment of China was given primacy over weakening the US. The Soviet leadership had evidently decided that China represented the main threat to its political influence in the region.



Marcos: US bases and Soviet approval

An early indication of this development was provided by the Soviet attitude to Prince Sihanouk's Government of National Union of Cambodia (FUNK). In March 1970, Sihanouk was overthrown in a military coup headed by Lon Nol and engineered by the US. Soon after Sihanouk, whose neutralist position had been a great asset to the Vietnamese, set up a government in exile in Beijing, with the participation of Cambodian communists who were ideologically pro-Chinese. The Soviets pre-



ferred the US puppet regime to this government in exile with pro-Chinese leanings. Moscow did not recognise FUNK as the legitimate government of Cambodia until March 1975 and kept its embassy open - though with a low level representation - until the capital was captured the following month by the Khmer Rouge. (8)

An even more blatant case of the priority that the Soviets accord in this region to countering China is provided by their attitude to the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines, where the US has its main military base in Southeast Asia. In 1974, the pro-Moscow Philippine Communist Party, apparently with Soviet approval, laid down its arms and gave its support to the Marcos regime. "The aim was to curb the growth of the other outlawed party, the staunchly anti-Soviet Maoist Communist Party of the Philippines and so undercut Peking's influence." Since then, in line with this policy, the "Soviet press has increasingly lauded Marcos' programmes and foreign policy and has stepped up its drive to strengthen Philippine-Soviet relations." (9)

At the end of the US war in Indochina, in 1975, the Vietnamese state had close links with Moscow but since its dependence on the Soviet Union had been based largely on the need for weapons, the end of the war opened up the possibility of Vietnam becoming less not more dependent on the Soviet Union. In August 1975, Vietnam signed an agreement with the Soviet Union on the coordination of their economic plans but it indicated that it intended to establish economic relations with other countries, apparently with the aim of strengthening its overall independence. It sought economic links with the West as well as the East and good relations with China as well as the Soviet Union.

In 1978, the Vietnamese leadership changed tack. It joined COMECON in June and signed a military alliance with the Soviet Union in November - measures that were preparatory to the invasion of Kampuchea. For although the decision to invade Kampuchea stemmed from political and economic pressures from within Vietnam, it could not have been attempted without Soviet support. The Soviet Union was prepared to give that support because it saw in the invasion of Kampuchea a means for advancing its own strategic objectives. In the first instance the invasion of Kampuchea overthrew a government that was an ally of China and replaced it with one that was pro-Hanoi and could be counted upon to support Soviet policy. Beyond that, however, and even more importantly, Hanoi's need for Soviet backing provided Moscow with the opportunity to increase its influence in Vietnam itself and, through that, in Southeast Asia as a whole.

Soviet military build up

A recent study of the Soviet Union's relations with the Third World notes:

In the early 1960s, the Soviet Union lacked on ocean-going navy, sea-based air-power, long-range transport aircraft and amphibian shipping. She could not maintain a fleet at sea and had few friendly ports of call. Even her mercantile marine was small and lacked the kind of heavy-lift equipment needed to off-load items like tanks in countries with minimal dockyard facilities. She has no special roll-on/roll-off shipping for the rapid disembarkation of vehicles. By the end of the 1970s, all but one of these disadvantages has been remedied. The one that remains

is the lack of sea-based air-power ...
(10)

Nowhere has this transformation been more complete or occurred over a shorter time than in the Southeast Asian waterways. The Soviet Pacific Fleet which is the largest of its four fleets no longer even lacks sea-based air-power. In the summer of 1979, it acquired an aircraft carrier that takes 35 vertical fighter and landing planes. The strategic motivation behind the build-up in Soviet naval power is openly stated by Admiral Gorshkov:

The constantly growing maritime might of our country ensures our ability to enlarge our exploitation of the colossal natural resources of the World Ocean ... The growing maritime might of our country ensures the successful implementation of her foreign policy and allows us to widen our trading, shipping, scientific and cultural links with other countries ... Naval power has always been one of the historical factors determining the transformation of states into great powers. (11)

In terms of combat effectiveness the Soviet Pacific Fleet is still marginally inferior to the US Pacific Fleet which has a more complete network of bases in the area, but in the last ten years the balance of power has been shifting in favour of the Soviet Union. The US defeat in Vietnam and Kampuchea was followed initially by a decline in US military presence in Southeast Asia, but this decline was put into reverse by the build up in Soviet naval power. (12) Southeast Asia is again one of the centres of super-power contention, which is in turn giving a boost to the forces of militarism at the expense of the popular forces. The Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea is the principal cause of these developments.

To maintain the occupation of Kampuchea, the Vietnamese army depends on the Soviet Union for supplying weapons on extended credit and for additional aid to cover the economic disruption caused by the war. In preparation for the invasion of Kampuchea, Vietnam increased its army by fifty per cent from 615,000 to 900,000. (13)



The border war with China, which was a direct consequence of the invasion of Kampuchea, involved further increases. Vietnam, one of the poorer Third World countries, has now the third largest army in the world; a standing army of one million, plus two million as militia and paramilitary units. (14) To sustain the regime it installed in Kampuchea it has to keep 180,000 troops there, almost twice the number that the Soviet Union has in Afghanistan. An indication of the economic burden this involves and of the consequent dependence on the Soviet Union is that "in the first six months of 1979, the Vietnamese received about 90,000 tons of material from the Soviet Union - more than the amount Vietnam received from Moscow during the whole of 1978." (15)

Much of this material consisted of weapons. Whereas in 1977 the Vietnamese armed forces were only partially dependent on the Soviet Union, with Soviet imports accounting for only 19 per cent of Vietnam's aircraft and 4 per cent of its armoured vehicles, from the autumn of 1978 to the end of 1979, Vietnam "imported a total of \$871 million in arms, almost all from the USSR". (16) The number of Soviet military and civilian personnel in Vietnam increased from 2,700 to an estimated five to eight thousand.

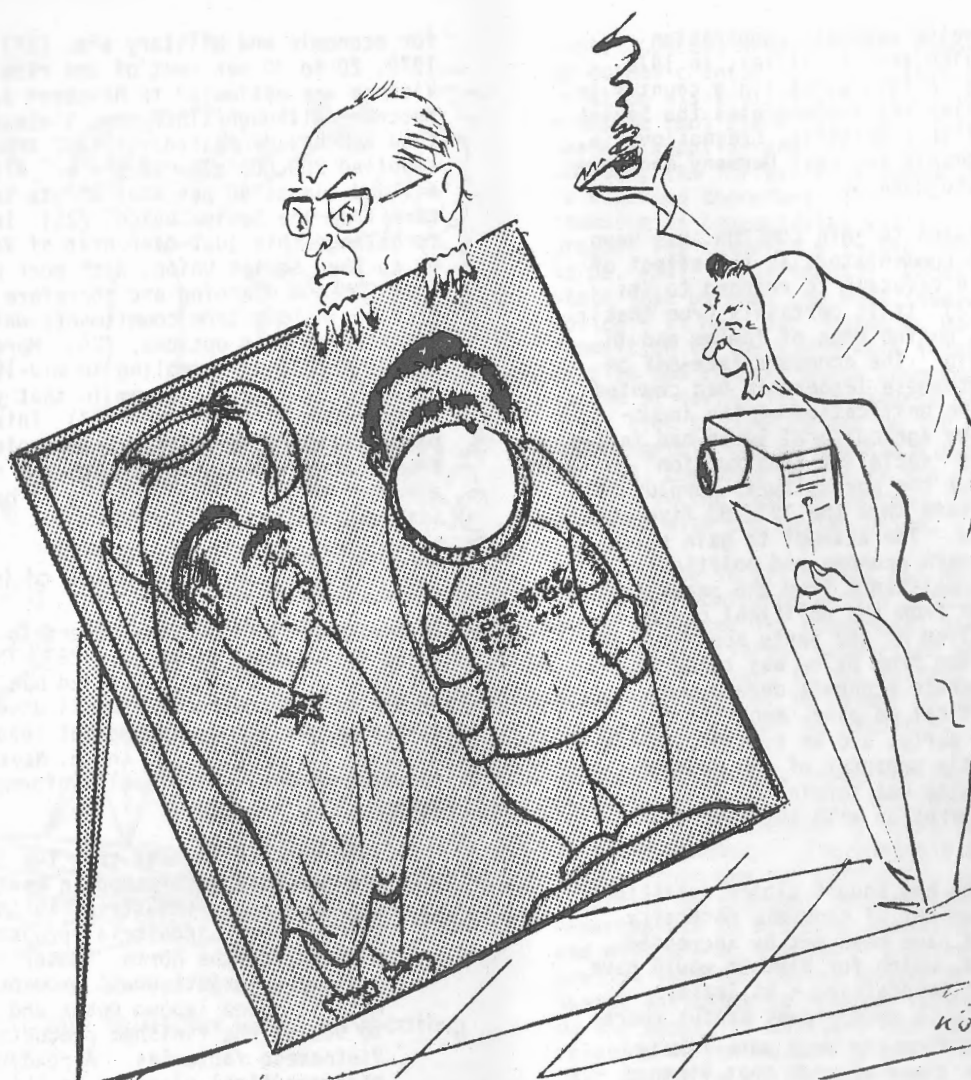
The ways and means of Soviet influence

For the Soviet state, the return on its assistance has been principally in military terms. It has gained strategic bases in Southeast Asia. Although Vietnamese leaders have repeatedly asserted that the USSR has not been given permanent bases in Vietnam, since 1979, Soviet ships and planes regularly operate from Cam Ranh and Danang and from the Kampuchean port of Kompong Sam. The ground personnel at the airfield and the ports are reportedly Soviets and a sophisticated Soviet communication system has been installed in Cam Ranh Bay. "Such developments have put Soviet bombers within two hours of the Straits of Malacca, used by the bulk of the shipping in the region and through which most of Japan's oil passes from the Middle East. Soviet ships and planes can easily monitor movements at the US Subic Bay naval base in the Philippines, the South China coast and the Straits of Malacca." (17)

The enhanced Soviet military capacity in the region has gained it at least as much strategic advantage in relation to China as in relation to Japan and the US. Soviet reconnaissance planes are able to use Vietnamese airfields to overfly the South China Sea. During the Sino-Vietnamese border conflict in February and March 1979, a 15 ship contingent of the Soviet Pacific Fleet was dispatched to the Vietnamese coast "to intercept Chinese battlefield communications and pass them on to the Vietnamese." (18)

The Soviet Pacific Fleet is now also in a position to exert pressure on the ASEAN countries. In November 1980, after the overwhelming UN vote in favour of the ASEAN resolution on Kampuchea, four Soviet warships, including the aircraft carrier Minsk, sailed into the Gulf of Thailand: "It was a subtle message to the Thai government not to move too close to Beijing." (19)

The extension of Soviet military and political influence in Vietnam through the supply of arms reflects the general trend in Soviet-Third World relations. The Soviet Union's own production difficulties and technological lag behind Western countries have prevented it from successfully competing with the latter for economic influence within the Third World. But as one of the major



Brezhnevism without Brezhnev

arms producers in the world it has been able to use arms transfer to acquire political influence. An influx of sophisticated weaponry requires spare parts that are not otherwise obtainable, the stationing of Soviet military advisers and technicians, and the training by Soviet experts of Third World personnel. This puts the Soviet Union in a position to acquire influence within the military, a social force that according to the Soviet theory of non-capitalist development is capable of taking the country towards socialism.

In the 1950s and early 60s Soviet military exports and economic aid to developing countries were roughly of equal value but since 1968 it has moved in a 2.5:1 ratio in favour of arms. "Clearly, arms transfer", concludes a study not unsympathetic to Moscow, "has become an important instrument of Soviet diplomacy." (20) However, Western writers often point to the relative fragility of Soviet political influence in the Third World because it is based mainly on military aid, citing by way of example the rapid termination of Soviet influence in Egypt and Somalia. But in the case of Vietnam, Soviet influence is firmly embedded in economic as well as military dependence. The supply of arms has been instrumental in the development of strong economic ties between the two countries. This was indicated by a report in the Far Eastern Economic Review as early as 1979:

Growing Soviet-Vietnamese ties are reflected in the trade and aid figures. Moscow wrote off all Viet-

nam's debts before August 1975 and for the second five-year plan period (1976-80) promised project aid and commodity supplies as well as hard currency financing amounting to US \$2,500 million. Western experts estimate that the figure may have sharply increased since 1978 as the Soviets had to come up with more hard currency financing to supply Vietnam with some 1.5 million tons of wheat, rice and other foodstuffs to avert a famine. Also Hanoi is almost totally dependent on Soviet financed purchases of petroleum products from the Middle East. (21)

Despite improvements in the food situation relative to 1979, in both Vietnam and Kampuchea, Hanoi's dependence on the USSR is on the increase. According to Vietnamese Foreign Minister, Nguyen Co Thach assistance from the Soviet Union will increase four-fold in the next five years: "The aid from 1976 to 1980 was as big as the entire 20 years before. And aid in 1981 to 1985 will be four times bigger than the previous five years." (22)

Vietnam's economic subordination

Vietnam's economic subordination to the Soviet Union has developed within the framework of COMECON. Vietnam joined COMECON, the organis-

ation set up to develop economic cooperation among the Soviet Union and its allies, in 1978. It had been founded in 1949 as Stalin's counter to the US's Marshall Plan and incorporates the Soviet Union's European allies; Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and East Germany and more recently Mongolia and Cuba.

The Vietnamese decision to join COMECON has been interpreted by some commentators as the effect of American and Chinese refusals to respond to its appeals for aid. (23) It is certainly true that in 1978 Vietnam was on the edge of famine and in desperate need of aid. The economic take-off on which the North Vietnamese leadership had counted on as a result of the unification of the industrial North with the agricultural South had failed to materialise. The "socialist construction" in the South did not put the agricultural surplus into the hands of the state that the 1976-80 five year plan had anticipated. The attempt to gain swift control of the Southern economy and political structure met with resistance from the peasantry, the traders and even from the political cadres who resisted the centralism of the party apparatus in Hanoi. The revolution from below was taken over from above to accelerate economic development - the result was political malaise, manifested in a mass purge of the party, and an economic crisis. Since there was little prospect of aid from the West and aid from China was terminated, the inducement for closer cooperation with the Soviet bloc was strong.

But if the Vietnamese had sought closer relations with the Soviet Union out of economic necessity, this in itself could have been met by increased bilateral agreements, which for Vietnam would have had the advantage of maintaining - at least formally - the country's independent status thereby making future aid from the West more likely. It was presumably on these grounds that Vietnam had resisted previous pressures from Moscow to join COMECON. What made Hanoi change its mind in 1978 was the decision to invade Kampuchea. Vietnam's need for Soviet support left it in no position to resist Soviet pressures to join COMECON. Moreover, from Hanoi's own point of view, that option, whatever its economic merits, now made political sense. The decision to intervene in Kampuchea - with the predictable consequence of provoking the hostility of China and ASEAN - made the abandonment of non-alignment in favour of becoming an integral part of the Soviet bloc a military necessity. While for the Soviet Union, Vietnam's entry into COMECON was a means of binding it into its sphere of influence and thereby secure a lasting ally on China's southern flank, for Vietnam it became a means of gaining Soviet protection for its expansion in Indochina. Thus it was a decision dictated less by Vietnam's economic needs than by military necessity and Soviet strategic objectives.

For Vietnam the principal effect of its incorporation into COMECON has been to turn its relation of dependence on the Soviet Union - made near total by the occupation of Kampuchea - into a structural feature of the Vietnamese economy. The economic projects introduced in Vietnam to enable it to repay its debt to the Soviet Union and the pattern of trade between the two countries are reproducing an international division of labour that will increasingly organise the Vietnamese economy in accordance with the requirements of the Soviet economy. There is evidence that this process is well underway.

Vietnam's debt to the Soviet Union since 1975 is generally estimated to be about £1,600 million

for economic and military aid. (24) In 1978 and 1979, 20 to 30 per cent of the rice eaten in Vietnam was estimated to have been supplied by Moscow. Although since then Vietnam's need for food aid has decreased, in 1982 the USSR still supplied 200,000 tons of grain. All Vietnam's oil and almost 90 per cent of its total imports came from the Soviet Union. (25) In the effort to balance this just over half of Vietnam's exports go to the Soviet Union, with much of it aligned with COMECON planning and therefore thought to be tied up in long term commitments which restrict Hanoi's economic options. (26) Moreover, with Soviet oil prices trebling in mid-1981, Soviet trade surplus with Vietnam in that year increased to nearly US\$800 million. (27) This has been partly off-set by increased financial assistance from the Soviet Union but for the remaining debt a number of plans for reducing it have been put into operation.

The "socialist" division of labour

In September 1981, Moscow agreed to set up 40 joint development projects. (28) The terms of the agreement were not detailed but there is no reason to believe that it will diverge from the direction set out by the Soviet leaders in previous agreements. Of these, Nayan Chanda, a reporter generally kept well informed by Hanoi, wrote:

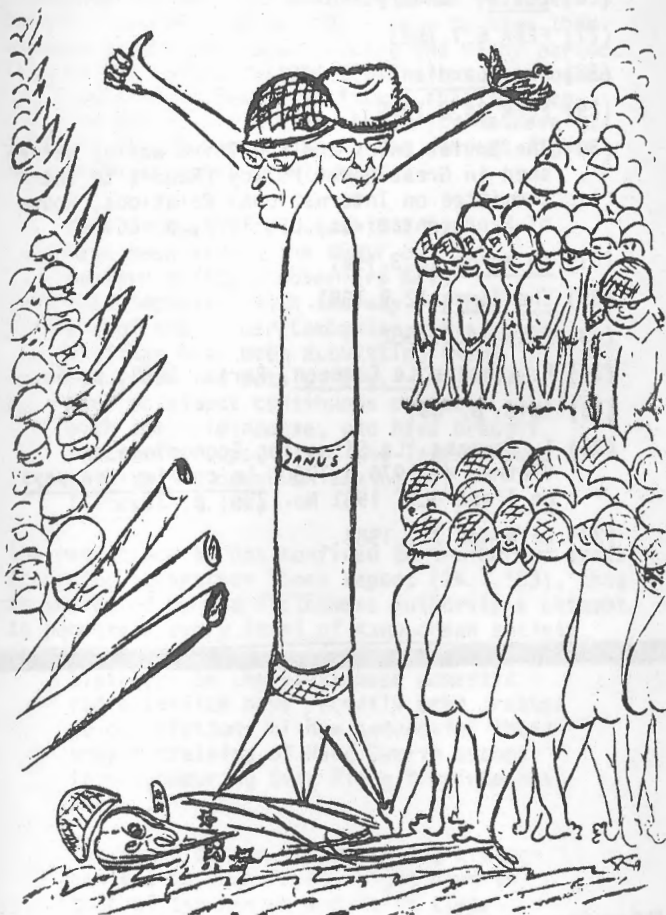
Informed sources say that the Soviets are now more interested in restoring consumer goods industries in the south than in heavy industrial projects planned for the north. Under the agreement, the Soviets would provide the raw materials and labour costs and take up to 90% of the finished products from Vietnamese factories. Already a modern pharmaceutical plant in Ho Chi Minh City is producing medicines for the Soviet market from Soviet-supplied chemicals. Only a small percentage allowed as loss in production is kept for Vietnam's own needs. (29)

Chanda's account is consistent with other Soviet sponsored joint projects in the Third World. These generally involve the production of commodities for the Soviet market profiting from the local raw materials and cheap labour.

"The Soviet Union's trade pattern with Third World countries is remarkably similar", notes a well-documented US government report, "to that of the highly industrialised nations of the West. Foodstuffs and raw materials made up the majority of the Soviet Unions imports from the Third World while manufactured goods - in particular machinery and industrial equipment - comprise a major exports to LDC's (less developed countries)" (30) There is further confirmation of this in the communique issued at the end of the meeting between Le Duan and Brezhnev in March, 1981 which stated that the two leaders:

had discussed, in particular, the extension of joint work in the exploration of gas and petrol on Vietnam's continental shelf and the increase in the exportation of Vietnam's fruit and vegetables to the Soviet Union. (31)

It should be added, that an increase in the export of food is a price that Vietnam can ill afford to pay and is "an indication of the desperate situation in which the Vietnamese leaders find themselves." (32)



**The two faces of Soviet foreign policy:
pursuing military solutions while advocating
disarmament.**

Yet another form of value transfer from Vietnam to the Soviet Union - to off-set debts - which follows the pattern of economic relations between the advanced capitalist and Third World countries is the export of Vietnamese labour. "According to Hanoi sources, the total number of Vietnamese workers now in the Soviet bloc countries is 50,000 and in the next few years is expected to double." (33)

The Soviet Union is not profiting, overall, in the financial sense, out of its economic and military aid to Vietnam, though it does not ignore the returns on it. The trade-off it receives is mainly political and strategic, but the economic relation between the two countries is nevertheless furthering within Vietnam a neo-colonial type of economic structure. This is not simply the short-term effect of Hanoi paying off its massive

debt. COMECON organises the member states within an economic union that puts them into a dependent relation vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. By the economic fact alone that the Soviet Union is the largest supplier and the largest market within COMECON, its influence is preponderant. As might be expected therefore, the more a country's commerce is concentrated within COMECON the greater its commerce with the Soviet Union tends to be. (34) Significantly, Romania, the member state that pursues the most independent foreign policy - it has, for example, made known its opposition to the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea - is also the country whose commerce, largely by virtue of having its own source of oil, is the least tied to COMECON and to the Soviet Union. Approximately 40% of Romania's commerce is with COMECON, compared to 80% in the case of Cuba, (35) and 69% in the case of Vietnam, two-thirds of which is with the Soviet Union. (36)

The increase in oil prices has helped to reinforce the Soviet dominance within COMECON for on the one hand, it forces its commercial partners to devote in exchange a larger proportion of their trade and, on the other, it has shifted the balance of trade even further in favour of the Soviet Union, enhancing its power as creditor.

By its debt, by its trade and increasingly by its subordinate place within the international division of labour, Vietnam is being turned into a Soviet dependency. The Soviet's economic relations with Vietnam are not motivated, as was noted above, primarily by economic considerations, but there is, nevertheless an economic dimension to its political and military objectives: Vietnam's economic integration into the Soviet sphere of influence. Soviet influence in Vietnam is therefore not based on the supply of military equipment alone. That relation is reinforced by powerful economic ties that cannot be easily severed.

There is undoubtedly some opposition in Vietnam to the policies that are subordinating that country to yet another foreign power. It is almost certainly this opposition, labelled "pro-Chinese", that has been the target of a number of purges within the Vietnamese Communist Party. That notwithstanding the purges there is continued opposition, can be read from Le Duc Tho's speech at the VCP's Fifth Congress in March 1982; "Reactionaries and opportunists," he declared, "who seek to denigrate the Party's line of international solidarity ... will certainly fail. Genuine patriotism is inseparable from noble proletarian internationalism." (37) But there is a more profound lesson in proletarian internationalism that Le Duc Tho and his colleagues are likely to learn in Kampuchea. It is that a nation that oppresses another cannot itself be free.

E. VINCENT

- (1) R.F. Turner Vietnamese Communism, its Origins and Development Stanford 1975, p. 299.
- (2) *ibid.*
- (3) D.S. Papp Vietnam: The View from Moscow, Peking, Washington North Carolina, 1981, p. 59.
- (4) *ibid.* p. 180.
- (5) Papp *op. cit.* p. 116.
- (6) Turner *op. cit.* p. 290.
- (7) J. Camilleri Chinese Foreign Policy, Oxford, 1980, p. 154.

- (8) M. Leifer 'The Soviet Union in Southeast Asia' in E.J. Feuchtwanger and P. Nailor (ed.) The Soviet Union and the Third World, London, 1981, p. 171.
- (9) Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER) 24.8.1979
- (10) Feuchtwanger and Nailor *op. cit.* p. 14.
- (11) S.G. Gorshkov 'The Sea Power of the State' Survival Vol. XIX No. 1 Jan/Feb 1977.
- (12) 'The US pushes for a new circle of containment' South February 1983.
- (13) S.W. Simon 'Southeast Asia in Soviet Perspective' in W.R. Duncan (ed.) Soviet Policy in the Third World, New York, 1980, p. 241.

(14) D. Pike 'Vietnam in 1981: Biting the Bullet'
Asian Survey Vol. XXII No. 1 Jan. 1982,

77.

(15) FEER 24.8.1979.

(16) S.W. Simon op. cit.

(17) FEER 12.9.1980.

(18) Simon op. cit.

(19) 'Asean and the Cambodian Problem' Asian Survey Vol. XXII No. 6 June 1982, p. 559.

(20) R. Menon 'The Soviet Union, the Arms Trade and the Third World' Soviet Studies, Vol. 34 No. 3 July 1982.

(21) FEER 24.8.1979.

(22) BBC Summary of World Broadcasts Part 3, 4.11.1982.

(23) D. Davies, FEER 2.2.1979.

(24) The Times 20.5.1982

(25) FEER 6.1.1983

(26) South January 1981

(27) FEER 6.1.1983

(28) The Guardian 12.9.1981.

(29) FEER 24.8.1979.

(30) The Soviet Union and the Third World: Watershed in Great Power Policy (Report to the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives) US, 1977, p. 66.

(31) Le Monde 13.3.1981

(32) The Times 12.9.1981.

(33) FEER 14.5.1982

(34) F. Lemoine Le Comecon, Paris, 1982, p. 55.

(35) *ibid.* p. 69.

(36) I. Kamenka 'La Situation Economique du Vietnam de 1976 a 1980' Le courrier des pays de l'est Oct. 1981 No. 255, p. 35.

(37) Le Monde 7.1.1983.