

Socialist China Repulses Soviet-Instigated Attack

The key battle in the recent China-Viet Nam border conflict centred at the Vietnamese provincial capital of Lang Son. This city is located along the banks of the Ky Cung River in northern Viet Nam.

The northern half of the city was captured on March 2. However, Vietnamese troops maintained control of the southern half of Lang Son and bombarded the Chinese troops with artillery fire.

In the early morning of March 4, Chinese frontier troops crossed the Ky Cung River in several locations under heavy artillery cover. The strategic iron bridge crossing the river was rushed and captured by a Chinese shock team. Once on the south side of the river, the Chinese troops moved along the sides of the railway line and captured the Lang Son municipal party office building, a bus terminal, a post office and a railway station.

Chinese riflemen followed and took the city's bank, a public security bureau and barracks. They caught up with the fleeing Vietnamese three kilometres south of the city and engaged them there. The Vietnamese "crack" third division was hit hard in the fighting which went on all day. A mountain top and ten heights around the southern half of Lang Son were captured before the day's end.

On March 5, three more important heights were captured, including "Height 413". This was an important Vietnamese stronghold near the highway southwest of Lang Son. Having charged halfway up the hill, Chinese soldiers were blocked by land mines linked by electric wires which an enemy soldier hiding in a shelter was planning to trigger. At this crucial moment, two Chinese fighters crawled to the mined area, cut the wire and removed some of the mines, opening the way for the army to advance. At the same time two other fighters charged to the shelter and killed the Vietnamese soldier.

Chinese soldiers captured the height and ended the battle of Lang Son at 2:40 p.m. on March 5. Two white flares were sent up to signal victory. By that time, all command posts south of Lang Son were controlled by Chinese forces and the way to Hanoi was open. In the evening of March 5, *Xinhua News Agency*, authorized by the Chinese Government, announced that the Chinese frontier forces would begin to withdraw from Viet Nam.

The capture of Lang Son was the final objective in China's counterattack against the Vietnamese aggressors. Earlier in the conflict, Chinese troops captured the provincial capitals of Cao Bang and Lao Cai and 20 other Vietnamese border cities, towns and strategic positions. The military operation, spanning 16 days, saw Chinese troops push the belligerent Vietnamese forces away from the border and decisively explode the myth of Viet Nam's military invincibility.

In capturing Lang Son, China opened the way for a campaign against the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi. The counterattack proved to Viet Nam that if China wanted, it could walk into Hanoi just as the Vietnamese walked into Phnom Penh just a few weeks earlier. However, deflating the Vietnamese aggressor's arrogance and seriously weakening the fighting capacity of Viet Nam's army were China's strategic goals. This they did before withdrawing on March 5.

China is not an expansionist country like Viet Nam. It had no intentions of overrunning Viet Nam when conducting its military counterattack. Chinese foreign minister Huang Hua commented on this subject in a March 16 press conference marking the completion of the withdrawal of Chinese troops from Vietnamese territory. "China means what she says," he stated. "We do not want a single inch of land from Viet Nam, nor do we want to station a single soldier on Vietnamese soil. What we want is a peaceful and tranquil boundary. We have kept our word by withdrawing all our frontier forces. Facts have refuted the lies spread by the Soviet and Vietnamese authorities about China's 'aggression' and 'expansion'."

sion'."

Why did China send its troops into Viet Nam if it didn't want to annex some territory? What is the logic of China's actions? These are important questions which must be answered. Expansionist countries move their troops into other countries in order to control those countries. The Soviet Union's invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, the United States' involvement in an aggressive war against Viet Nam, Cuba's recent activities in Africa and Viet Nam's aggression against Kampuchea are all examples of hegemonic expansionism.

China's counterattack against Viet Nam was a military action of self defence. In response to the Vietnamese provocations (detailed in issue 128 of *Alive Magazine*), China rose up to defend its territorial integrity against the Soviet-instigated attacks. In one sense the Chinese military operation was a retaliatory blow in response to Vietnamese atrocities along the border. In the most important sense, however, China was standing up on the basis of firm political principles.

All around the world the late-coming superpower is stirring up trouble. In Africa, the Middle East and Asia, Soviet social-imperialism is striving for greater spheres of influence and control. In building a worldwide united front against the two superpowers, China has continually urged the world's people to resist the aggressive actions of the Soviet hegemonists.

Brinksmanship, in a word, sums up the actions of the USSR and its pawn Viet Nam in their recent actions in southeast Asia. The occupation of Laos, invasion of Kampuchea, racist attacks on the one million ethnic Chinese in Viet Nam and provocations on the Chinese border are decisive facts indicating the deeply entrenched national chauvinistic line practiced by the leaders of Viet Nam and the Soviet Union.

All those who play brinksmanship end up going over the brink



sooner or later. This is what happened to the hegemonists when dealing with China. The world's leading socialist country stood up to the provocation and fought back. Significantly, the victory was relatively quick and China proved that it could push Viet Nam "all over the block" if it wanted to. China's courageous opposition to Soviet-inspired aggression is a shining beacon for all the world's peoples in their struggle against superpower domination.

HEGEMONISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

As the Vietnamese war against U.S. aggression came to an end, the Vietnamese authorities moved to establish regional hegemony in southeast Asia. Posing as the "third military power in the world", Viet Nam carried out a policy of expansionism towards other countries. Kampuchean and Chinese islands were occupied in 1975 and armed forces were stationed in Laos. The long standing national chauvinism of the Hanoi leadership began to flower in the headiness of the Vietnamese people's victory against U.S. imperialism.

The land boundary between China and Viet Nam is a point of Vietnamese expansionism. This border was originally established by agreement of the government of the Qing dynasty in China and the French colonialist government in Viet Nam. Border marks were established, and up until a few years ago both the Chinese and Vietnamese governments had expressed agreement with this boundary. In the past four years, however, and especially in the six months preceding the February 17, 1979 counterattack by the Chinese, Viet Nam constantly encroached upon Chinese territory, killing Chinese people, destroying property and unilaterally seizing sections of China.

This provocative action by the Vietnamese authorities is certainly a reflection of their overall expansionist ambitions in southeast Asia. Kampuchea and Laos also suffered heavily from the Vietnamese authorities' swell-headedness. Yet, Viet Nam's anti-China policy is also closely connected to the fact that China is seen as the biggest obstacle to its pursuit of regional hegemonism. In actual fact, Viet Nam's national expansionism has aroused the vigilance of the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and is roundly condemned throughout the world. China is but one country opposing Viet Nam's regional hegemonism, but the Vietnamese leaders wrongly think that if they could only intimidate China they could have their own way in the rest of southeast Asia.

The attacks on the Chinese border were also designed to shift the Vietnamese people's attention away from the economic hardships and suppression in the country. The invasion of Kampuchea was very unpopular and there was great opposition to building a war economy once again. Consequently, the provocations at the Chinese border were planned to incite a response from China. In reaction to China's justified actions, the Vietnamese leaders are working to suppress the Vietnamese people's dissatisfaction with and resistance to their domestic and foreign policies under the pretext of "coping with Chinese aggression".

The conflict at the Chinese border is definitely in the interests of the Vietnamese national expansionists' domestic and foreign policies. Without massive support from the Soviet Union, however, it would have been impossible for Viet Nam to launch such ambitious attacks. Viet Nam's war-torn and flood ravaged economy would simply not support such activities on its own. Thus, Soviet military and economic aid is essential to Viet Nam's expansionism. To serve their own global hegemonist aims, the Soviet leaders have taken advantage of Hanoi's desire for expansion.

Viet Nam is definitely a pawn for Soviet expansion into southeast Asia and the Pacific. Soviet military vessels are stationed at Da Nang and Cam Ranh ports in Viet Nam and pose a menace to the security of the region. Having Viet Nam in its pocket strengthens the Kremlin's position in its superpower contention with the United States in the Asian-Pacific and the Indian Ocean

regions.

Viet Nam is also a tool in the USSR's anti-China campaign. Socialist China, over its 30 year history, has consistently supported the small and weak nations of the world in their struggles to safeguard independence and sovereignty and combat hegemonism. Today, China has embarked on a march towards socialist modernization. As China's economic base strengthens it will be able to make greater and greater contributions to building a worldwide united front against superpower aggression. This prospect has the Soviet Union worried, and this is why it has commissioned a "Cuba of the east" to provoke China.

The will of Hanoi and Moscow is to discredit China in international circles and to disrupt China's modernization program. In southeast Asia as a whole, the aim of the hegemonists is to destabilize the region and threaten the security of every country. Already Kampuchea and Laos are suffering from the hegemonists' wanton expansionism.

China's historic counterattack against hegemonism was not merely a self-defensive move to protect its own border. The broader and more profound background to the border conflict, involving the worldwide struggle against hegemonism, is of immediate interest to the vast majority of the world's peoples. Standing up with great success against the unjustified Soviet and Vietnamese attacks, China has encouraged peace-loving people the world over with its heroic victory.

AN ANTI-CHINA CLAMOUR

China's significant military counterattack against Vietnamese aggression has highlighted the fundamental differences in political line between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary groups in the world today. A wide spectrum of anti-Marxist groups have virulently denounced China's actions and in so doing have shown their open contempt for the united struggle of the peoples of the world against superpower aggression.

On the one hand these denunciations are comical, because they are so far fetched and are totally abstracted from facts. Mao Zedong incisively noted, in 1955, "Idealism and metaphysics are the easiest things in the world, because, being based neither in objective reality nor submitting to its test, they permit people to talk as much nonsense as they like." Today's anti-China clamour in the anti-Marxist circles is an excellent example of what Chairman Mao describes.

On the other hand this anti-China clamour is a phenomenon worthy of careful attention. A wide spectrum of groups have joined the chorus. These include the straightforward mouthpieces of Soviet social-imperialism around the world, such as the revisionist "Communist Party of Canada". Well known police groups like KGB agent Hardial Bains' "CPC(M-L)" have also gotten into the act. Formerly well respected groups like the Party of Labour of Albania have adopted the same hysterical tirade. Although there are definite differences in the appearance of what the various anti-China groups say, in essence they all sing the same anti-Marxist tune.

What about the detailed facts which China presents concerning Vietnamese provocation? Without even producing a shred of evidence to counter the solid Chinese case, a Canadian group called En Lutte! states: "The Chinese leaders and Canada's own *Forge* are certainly not short on creative imagination. They have even managed to invent a new military manoeuvre where the counterattack precedes the attack! Such an invention definitely comes in handy in covering up acts of aggression against other countries."

The reality is that it is En Lutte! who is doing all the inventing. None of the facts of Vietnamese provocation are touched and the Chinese case remains unchallenged. Also, in attempting to scorn China this minor Canadian sect takes a shot at the *Forge*. This left paper puts forward a correct line on international politics and has consistently been a good friend of China. The attack on the *Forge* is likewise entirely unjustified.

The Albanians give passing mention to the fact that China has a well documented case concerning Vietnamese provocations. In a February 21, 1979 article in *Zeri i Popullit*, the Central Committee of the Party of Labour of Albania asks this rhetorical question, "But who can believe the leaders of Peking that it is Viet Nam that has sent its people to destroy the peaceful life of villages and towns on the Chinese border and that 'China is compelled to counter-attack'?" The article also states, "The Chinese justification for the barbarous action undertaken in Viet Nam could have been taken word for word from Hitler, who in his day claimed that he invaded Czechoslovakia because the Sudeten Germans were being ill-treated, or Poland because people sent by the Poles had carried out sabotage and murders on German territory."

Serious charges indeed and obviously incorrect. The Albanians give no proof for any of the hysterical accusations that they mutter. They draw an historical "parallel" but never show the similarities they see between what Hitler did in the 1930s and what China did in 1979. There is good reason for this, of course. The charge is pure slander. It has no basis in the real world, and China's voluntary return to its own border conclusively proves that China is not an expansionist power. Like *En Lutte!* the Albanians never get down to the facts: China's well-documented case of Vietnamese provocation goes unchallenged amidst all the anti-China clamour of the anti-Marxist forces.

In the same article the Albanians discount China's help in the Vietnamese war. They state: "Even in the war against American imperialism the Chinese leadership, like the Soviet social-imperialist leadership, irrespective of certain minor aid which it may have given, obstructed and damaged the anti-imperialist war of the people of Viet Nam." How did China do this? The Albanians say, "Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai made deals with the President of United States to the detriment of the Vietnamese people." What slander! What deals are the Albanians talking about? How was the Vietnamese struggle damaged and obstructed by them? To this the Albanians utter not a single word.

Although there is uniform condemnation of China, one subject on which there is a certain amount of disagreement in the anti-Marxist forces is the question of Viet Nam. It is a fact that Viet Nam has close economic and military ties with the Soviet Union and is a supporter of Soviet hegemonic policy in the world today. Precisely because of this the revisionist "Communist Party of Canada" gives its wholehearted support to "Socialist" Viet Nam.

The Albanians refuse to condemn Viet Nam. To "disprove" the Chinese assertion that Viet Nam is a regional hegemonist, the Albanians simply restate what the Vietnamese authorities say themselves, namely, that they aren't. Vietnamese presence in Laos and Kampuchea conclusively proves otherwise. In the end the Albanians offer only mild criticism of Viet Nam for its close ties to Soviet social-imperialism. The Albanian line is clearly one of appeasement with Soviet social-imperialism. Viet Nam is not condemned for its Soviet dependency, and its word is actually treated with some undeserved respect by the Albanians.

Both *En Lutte!* and the Bainzites actually use Vietnamese sources in presenting their positions against China. "CPC(M-L)" quotes from the *Vietnamese News Agency* in covering the border conflict. Even western news agencies refused to accept these news

reports since they were so unreasonable. However the Bainzites joined the straightforward revisionist camp in echoing the words of the Vietnamese liars.

The U.S. paper *Unite!* differs from the other anti-Marxist groups cited so far by writing every country involved in events in Indochina into the revisionist garbage can. It states, "Both Viet Nam's alliance with the Soviet Union and the alliance of former Kampuchean head of state Pol Pot with China represent the large-scale intervention and influence of imperialism and revisionism in the region." "Today neither Viet Nam, Kampuchea nor least of all China pursue a socialist course."

The question of the difference between China's counterattack against Viet Nam and the Vietnamese military occupation of Kampuchea is an important one. None of the anti-Marxist forces deal with the fundamentally different character of the two military actions. China was compelled to make a limited counterattack in self-defence of the Chinese frontier. It withdrew its forces from Vietnamese territory shortly after the operation began. Such an action is acceptable according to the norms of international law and was undertaken in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

The Vietnamese invasion and occupation, however, is a gross violation of the United Nations Charter and the norms of international law and poses a serious threat to international peace and security. Vietnamese occupation troops have overthrown the legitimate government of Kampuchea and have been fighting a war of aggression against the Kampucheans for three months. They have no intentions of leaving the country on their own accord.

The differences between these two situations is fundamental. Neither the anti-Marxist position which apologizes for the Vietnamese military occupation of Kampuchea nor the anti-Marxist position which exactly equates the two situations, correctly characterizes events in Indochina. The anti-Marxists make up their analysis completely divorced from events in the real world.

PROGRESSIVE FORCES STRENGTHENED

Those condemning socialist China today are, in essence, attempting to undermine the struggle of the world's peoples against superpower aggression. The two superpowers, and particularly the more aggressive Soviet Union, are the true beneficiaries of the anti-China tirade.

Certainly the Soviet revisionists well know this. The March 12 issue of the revisionist *Canadian Tribune* carries excerpts from an article by Wilfred Burchett, a journalist best known as a regular contributor to the U.S. paper the *Guardian*. Although the *Guardian* postures as "progressive" and a part of the "anti-revisionist Marxist-Leninist movement", its straightforward support for Soviet social-imperialism is so strong that the revisionists have no qualms about using material from key *Guardian* writers.

The anti-Marxist forces, however, are doomed to failure along with the two superpowers they defend. In all corners of the world there is genuine respect for China's actions against Vietnamese and Soviet aggression. Strengthened by China's decisive action, the people of the world have renewed their vigilance against superpower manoeuvres. The forces for progress have been strengthened.

