

COMMUNIST MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO NORTH VIETNAM

1. Aid to North Vietnam

a. General

Since acquiring a national status in 1954, North Vietnam has been heavily dependent on Communist countries for assistance to support its military establishment and for the expansion of industry and transportation. Communist economic assistance extended to North Vietnam, since its inception, has amounted to nearly one billion dollars with Communist China and the USSR providing the bulk of the aid. The North Vietnamese military establishment has also been the recipient of military assistance from Communist China and the USSR. No Free World countries have provided aid to North Vietnam, although some organizations have provided medical supplies.

b. Communist Economic Assistance to North Vietnam

Since 1954, Communist economic credits and grants extended to North Vietnam have amounted to nearly one billion dollars. Grants account for about 40 per cent of the total - the remainder was in the form of long-term low-interest credits. All of the above mentioned economic assistance was extended prior to 1962. In 1962 the USSR extended a credit of unknown value. However, North Vietnam may have received additional economic assistance from Communist countries, particularly to help reconstruct the damage caused by air strikes.

Communist China has provided the largest part of the economic assistance. During the early years of North Vietnam's reconstruction (1955-56), Chinese aid was in the form of grants concentrated largely on the rehabilitation of transport and telecommunication facilities, irrigation projects, and the expansion of light industrial projects. Beginning in 1959, China directed an increasing proportion of its aid toward the construction of several heavy industrial projects.

Soviet assistance has been channeled primarily to the heavy industrial sector. In addition, the USSR has provided aid to the agricultural sector for the development of state farms.

The European Satellites have extended economic assistance to North Vietnam. Rumania, Poland, and Czechoslovakia have provided most of this aid with East Germany, Hungary, and Bulgaria providing the remainder. A variety of projects involving industrial facilities

have been financed under European Satellite aid programs.

Other Communist countries such as Albania, Mongolia, and North Korea have delivered only token amounts of aid.

c. Communist Military Assistance to North Vietnam

The North Vietnamese armed forces are equipped with a variety of Soviet and Chinese weapons.

These Communist countries have provided infantry weapons, field artillery, antiaircraft guns, trucks, tanks, jet fighters, light jet bombers, missiles, and ammunition. Between 1960 and late 1964 Hanoi is believed to have looked increasingly to Peiping for equipment as well as for ammunition of all types. The mortars and recoilless rifles are believed to be of Chinese manufacture as well as the rifles and machine guns. Both the Soviets and the Chinese have provided aircraft. Surface-to-air missile systems have been provided by the USSR.

2. Viet Cong Food Supplies

It is believed that the Viet Cong are not obtaining wheat and other foodstuffs from Communist countries, with the possible exception of North Vietnam. The Viet Cong depend largely on the countryside that they control in South Vietnam for their food supplies. The Viet Cong taxation system permits payment in rice, and other food items. Where food is not plentiful, particularly in the mountainous areas, Viet Cong food production units are believed to engage directly in farming.

North Vietnam was a food-deficit area throughout the period of French control, but its food deficits then were offset by the transfer of surplus rice from the south, not now available. In 1964, North Vietnam imported foodstuffs much of which came from Free World countries.