

China threatens war on Vietnam

Teng calls for "punishment" of Soviet ally

Evidently bolstered by the *carte blanche* provided by the Carter Administration for Peking's anti-Soviet provocations, Chinese Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping used the occasion of his unofficial visit to Japan last week to threaten war against China's southern neighbor and USSR ally, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Vietnam should be "punished" for its aid in the overthrow of the murderous regime of Cambodian dictator and Peking client Pol Pot, Teng blustered before the Tokyo press on Feb. 6. "We've warned (the Vietnamese) on countless occasions (that) ... the Chinese are a people who act on their word."

Teng's threats were backed up with a reported massive Chinese military build-up on China's southern border with Vietnam. According to well-informed sources, some 10 Chinese divisions (100,000-150,000 troops) are massed along the border, and the Chinese are feverishly constructing airfields and logistical infrastructure in preparation for a possible attack. Heavy artillery, tanks, and jet fighters have been moved into the area and a top Chinese general, a veteran of the Korean War, has been announced as the commander of the southern forces.

Vietnamese diplomatic sources indicate that they fear a strike into Vietnamese territory. For the moment, however, they believe that the Chinese activity is calculated to add "increasing pressure" on Hanoi. China's "pressure tactics" against Vietnam have included daily incidents of Chinese armed incursions into Vietnamese territory, and attacks against small Vietnamese villages and military positions along the border. The Vietnamese sources said that they are "ready for the worst" and indicated their forces have been placed in a state of total mobilization and preparedness for a Chinese attack.

Soviet counterdeployment

In the view of seasoned observers, the Chinese leaders, and Teng in particular, were so bolstered by American acquiescence to their aims that they may well risk an adventure in Vietnam. The Chinese may only be restrained by the fear of a Soviet countermove in defense of their Vietnamese allies. Reportedly, two Soviet naval task forces have been deployed into the waters off Vietnam, one placed off northern Vietnam and the other, which includes heavy cruisers, off the southern coast. A buildup of Soviet forces in the border areas with the Chinese province of Sinkiang has also been reported. Sinkiang is the heart of China's nuclear weapons facilities.

No doubt Peking is still stinging with

the humiliation of China's ouster from Cambodia. The Vietnamese have proved to be a tough obstacle to Peking's designs to dominate Southeast Asia as "China's natural sphere of influence." Vietnamese sources reveal that Teng himself traveled to Vietnam following the 1965 U.S. escalation there, and told the Vietnamese that if they cut off all ties to the Soviet Union, China would take care of them. The Vietnamese pointedly refused this "offer," although it was repeated several times, backed up by Chinese-U.S. collusion to force a settlement creating a de facto permanent division of Vietnam with an anti-Soviet, and pro-Chinese, 'neutralist' government taking over South Vietnam.

Isolation of Khomeini crucial to world peace

With the return of the religious opposition leader Ayatollah Khomeini to Iran, the political crisis there enters a new and delicate phase. If Premier Bakhtiar is not successful in his intensive efforts to split Khomeini's camp, which is officially opposed to the Bakhtiar government, and reach a peaceful compromise with moderate opposition elements, Iran will soon be embroiled in a brutal civil war. Coupled with the serious instability in Pakistan following the upholding of the death sentence against former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the war build-up between Vietnam and China, the so-called "arc of crisis" surrounding the Soviet Union which U.S. security chief Zbigniew Brzezinski has been promoting would become

an awesome reality.

The response of the Soviets toward Carter foreign policy since the visit here of Chinese Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping* has been verbally hostile. The announced departure of U.S. Defense Secretary Harold Brown to four Mideast countries this week to discuss a pro-Western military alliance against "communists" has only further blackened the image of Washington in the eyes of our western allies and Moscow. The first ever trip to the Mideast by a U.S. Defense Secretary, Brown is seeking military alternatives for maintaining the U.S. military dominance in the region that it once had in Iran.

The potential for peace in Iran
A series of far-reaching initiatives have