

# THE VIETNAM WAR AS CHINA'S WATERSHED

*China today is a rising superpower and a major challenger to American hegemony. The industrialization and modernization that other nations achieved in centuries, China has compressed to a few decades. Indeed, all too often, we forget how meager were China's origins before its recent rise. By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century, China remained extremely poor and militarily weakened, having suffered the Century of Humiliation and the Japanese Invasion. These trends would begin to change, however, during the Vietnam War of the 1960s and 1970s. This paper tracks how the Chinese leadership used their involvement in Vietnam to work toward three goals: first, to legitimize Mao's military theories; second, to damage Soviet international prestige in the Communist movement; and third, to secure an advantageous post-war relationship with the United States. In achieving these goals, the Chinese used Vietnam as a springboard for future geopolitical relevance and development.*

By Christian Talley '16  
Vanderbilt University

One of the most important trends in Vietnam War historiography has been the shift from a stale East versus West analysis and toward an examination of the competing intra-bloc interests of the Soviets, Chinese, and Vietnamese. Historians such as Lien-Hang Nguyen have recently reconstructed Hanoi's perspective, demonstrating that North Vietnam's leaders were torn between their communist patrons in Beijing and Moscow as a result of the Sino-Soviet split. Just as important is the perspective of China in this seminal conflict. At the beginning of the Vietnam War, China was an impoverished junior partner in the world communist movement. Yet at war's end, it had become a dynamic communist leader that rivaled Soviet preeminence while enjoying a new diplomatic and economic relationship with the United States. China achieved this about-face very consciously by using Vietnam War diplomacy as a weapon against the Soviets, attempting to minimize Soviet influence whenever possible. The Chinese enjoyed notable diplomatic victories over the Soviets in three areas both during and after Vietnam. First, they convinced the North to follow a Maoist resistance strategy, contrary to Soviet calls for conventional urban warfare; second, they consistently controlled and damaged the Soviet resupply effort to North Vietnam; and third, they used their anti-Soviet stance in Vietnam to leverage an advantageous post-war relationship with the United States.

## THE SINO-SOVIET SPLIT

China and the Soviet Union appeared to be communist bedfellows after the 1949 Chinese Revolution. In 1950, the two powers signed the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance.<sup>1</sup> From 1950 until 1959, the Soviet Union may have provided up to one billion dollars in developmental loans to the Chinese to help kickstart the decimated Chinese economy.<sup>2</sup> Yet simultaneously, Chairman Mao Zedong began to find himself disillusioned with Nikita Khrushchev. Mao felt personally insulted when Khrushchev failed to give him advance notice of his shocking "Destalinization" speech in 1956.<sup>3</sup> Not only had Khrushchev slighted Mao, but in Mao's eyes Khrushchev had also cast dangerous questions about the legitimacy of personality cults and the totalitarian



U.S. President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger at the White House (1973)  
Source: *The Central Intelligence Agency*

system generally. After the speech, Mao informed the Soviet Deputy Chairman Anastas Mikoyan that he, to the contrary, felt that "Stalin's merits outweighed his faults."<sup>4</sup>

Mao also found Khrushchev's favorable attitude toward détente with the West to be pure anathema. Khrushchev had stated at the Twentieth and Twenty-First Party Congresses that he thought world war was no longer inevitable and that there could be a "stable international order" shared with capitalism.<sup>5</sup> Mao saw these ideas as inimical to Marxism and the 'continuous revolution.'<sup>6</sup> Thus, Mao began a rhetorical offensive against Soviet leadership that accused them of revisionism and "the abandonment of revolution."<sup>7</sup> On Mao's diplomatic mission to Moscow in 1957, he probably anticipated an imminent break in Sino-Soviet relations. He strongly approved when Deng Xiaoping engaged in a fierce argument over Marxist theory with the Soviet statesman Mikhail Suslov.<sup>8</sup> Building upon his 1956 speech "U.S. Imperialism Is A Paper Tiger," in 1957 Mao openly stated that in contrast to

the Russians, China did not fear nuclear war with the United States. Mao boasted that even if American bombs could kill 400 million Chinese, “200 million would still survive” and refuse to surrender.<sup>9</sup> Sensing that Mao was derailing his bid at détente and even fearing that the Chairman might be insane, Khrushchev cancelled the delivery of “long promised” nuclear technology to China in 1959.<sup>10</sup> By August of 1960, he had recalled all Soviet advisors and halted all economic aid.<sup>11</sup> Mao, consistent with his goal of preeminence in the world communist movement, had broken the patron-client relationship. For the next few years, both nations would make token statements about the ‘unbreakable’ Sino-Soviet friendship. Yet, in reality, China had alienated itself from its most powerful partner and had established an independent path in communist geopolitics.



Richard Nixon and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev at the Kremlin in Moscow (1959)  
Source: National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)

### SHAPING THE VIETNAMESE RESISTANCE

One of the most important and immediate Sino-Soviet disagreements regarded the nature of North Vietnam's resistance to the United States. Which would be the preeminent patron? Would the North follow Mao's guerrilla strategy or Soviet urban warfare doctrines? As North Vietnam found itself under American fire, its communist leaders appealed to both nations to quell their bickering. At the outset, Ho Chi Minh (North Vietnam's President) acted as a neutral communist negotiator to focus the Chinese and Russians toward aiding the Vietnamese. In January of 1962, the Vietnamese Lao Dong Party “sent letters to a number of Communist parties proposing that ‘a meeting be held between representatives of Communist and Workers Parties to settle the discord together, and, pending such a meeting, that the parties cease attacking one another in the press and over the radio.’”<sup>12</sup> By May, both the Soviet and Chinese Communist Parties had agreed to the proposal, leaving their discord “somewhat improved.”<sup>13</sup> An unforeseen confrontation would shatter this tentative truce: the Cuban Missile Crisis. While the Chinese

communists were initially strong supporters of Khrushchev and the American standoff, they did an about-face when Khrushchev decided to withdraw Soviet missiles on October 28, 1962. They quickly resumed attacks against Khrushchev. The Chinese asserted that, by deescalating, the Soviets had sold out a communist ally to American “imperialist schemes.”<sup>14</sup>

The Cuban Missile Crisis also prompted a North Vietnamese tilt toward the Chinese. From the North Vietnamese perspective, it seemed that the Soviet Union was more interested in world peace than in communist solidarity and resistance to imperialism. The North Vietnamese press thus began its first criticisms of the Soviets.<sup>15</sup> The North Vietnamese feared that if they aligned with the Soviets as their main patron, the Soviets could be intimidated by American brinkmanship into abandoning them, as they had apparently done with Cuba. The Chinese, with their fervent anti-Soviet and anti-American rhetoric, seemed the more ideologically attractive patron.

China's propaganda about Soviet ‘abandonment’ of Cuba probably also influenced North Vietnam's pro-Chinese shift. The Chinese adroitly linked the Cuban alliance issue to another Vietnamese concern: China's alliance with the anti-Soviet Albanian communists. Albania, while communist, had refused to align itself with Moscow, making it a target for Soviet attacks. As early as 1960, Vietnamese diplomats had begun to favorably view China's patronage and defense of Albania against Khrushchev's threats of force. At the November 1960 Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties, Vietnamese delegates demonstrated their solidarity in “approving the Albanian position” by refusing to clap when Khrushchev spoke.<sup>16</sup> Ho Chi Minh had personally appealed to Khrushchev to accept the Chinese-Albanian position at this conference, which Khrushchev refused to do.<sup>17</sup> Thus, after Khrushchev failed to intervene in the 1961 Bay of Pigs attack, Vice Chairman Dong Biwu promised Albania that if it were attacked, China would “assist her with all our forces.”<sup>18</sup> He reiterated, “Albania is not Cuba.”<sup>19</sup> The North Vietnamese government did not want Vietnam to be another abandoned Cuba either. It seemed that China, with its ‘anti-revisionist,’ anti-imperialist Maoism, would be North Vietnam's unshakeable patron against the United States.

While the Vietnamese had acted as moderators between the Soviets and Chinese for over a year, they finally abandoned any pretense of neutralism after the USSR signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty in August of 1963. The treaty was the last straw, seemingly confirming that the Soviets were more interested in compromise than resistance. The North Vietnamese openly supported the Chinese with their assertion that the Soviets had “capitulated to US imperialism” and began to issue harsh criticisms of the Soviet Union in September.<sup>20</sup> The Chinese had thus won an important diplomatic victory against the Soviets. In advocating their ‘hard line’ stance





Nikita Khrushchev, Mao Zedong, Ho Chi Minh and Soong Ching-ling (1959)  
Source: Author Unknown (Wikimedia Commons)

against the United States, the Chinese had demonstrated that proxies could look to them as a reliable patron. This development would also influence the basic nature and strategy of North Vietnamese combat operations against the United States.

Given the Soviet compromise in Cuba, the North Vietnamese press opined that Soviet patronage would produce a “defensive strategy” at best. Not only did the Soviets seem more interested in “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism than in resistance, but they also advocated for complex urban engagements and conventional warfare.<sup>21</sup> The Vietnamese realized that they probably could not sustain such a strategy against the United States. Instead, the Vietnamese shifted to a more revolutionary theory of warfare—“People’s War”—that relied heavily on the philosophy of Mao Zedong and the principles of guerrilla war. They had seen success with Chinese strategy at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. There, Chinese general and adviser Wei Guoqing “had played a key role in guiding the fighting” by forcing Vietnamese general Vo Nguyen Giap to maintain a relentless attack.<sup>22</sup> Vo, under Wei’s leadership, produced a stunning and decisive defeat of the French garrison. While Dien Bien Phu had seen conventional fighting, Chinese influence, secured by victory, in turn dictated a long-term transition to insurgency. Mao’s writings, including *The Present Situation and Our Tasks* (1947), deeply influenced Vo’s views on warfare. In 1961, Vo himself published *People’s War, People’s Army*, a book that expanded on Mao’s theory of insurgency. Maoist thinking subsequently had great effect on North Vietnamese military thinking. From then on, “the leaders in Vietnam were scrupulous in executing Mao’s strategy,” and would continue to fully abide by Mao’s guerrilla philosophy for several years—at least until the large-scale Tet Offensive in 1968.<sup>23</sup> Only after Tet would the North Vietnamese then shift the nature of their operations to a more fundamentally Soviet strategy, focusing on large-scale conventional assaults

and urban warfare, as seen in the Easter Offensive of 1972 and the fall of Saigon in 1975.<sup>24</sup>

The Chinese had thus won important victories over the Soviet Union in the early stages of the Vietnam War. First, North Vietnam had shifted its political allegiance toward the Chinese, seeing them as a more reliably anti-American partner. Second, it ignored Soviet guidance on conventional, urban warfare and adopted and legitimated Mao’s philosophies on asymmetric insurgency.

#### SUPPLYING THE WAR EFFORT

Despite Mao’s bellicose rhetoric, the Soviet Union remained far more technologically advanced and better armed than China. Fortunately for the North Vietnamese, their early tilt toward China did not alienate the Soviets. Ironically, it might have actually increased the amount of aid the Soviets ultimately supplied: The Soviets believed that their influence in Hanoi directly correlated with the amount of supplies they provided the North Vietnamese.<sup>25</sup> The more arms flowed into Hanoi, the greater was their political capital in the North. China, in response, sought to “obstruct and delay the growth of a Soviet military presence in [North Vietnam] because of fear of consequent growth of Soviet political influence in Hanoi.”<sup>26</sup>

China gained major leverage over both the Soviets and the North Vietnamese in this resupply battle due to its geographical location between the USSR and Vietnam. As a geographical intermediary, the vast majority of Soviet shipments would have to pass through Chinese territory. The only Soviet resupply options were shipment by railroad through China, by sea into the North via Haiphong Harbor, or by airplane over China and into the North. Of these three options, only the first, land shipment through China, proved viable for politico-strategic reasons.

The Soviets refused to sail important weapons such as anti-aircraft missiles into North Vietnam via Haiphong because they “wish[ed] to avoid a direct clash with the United States in the Gulf of Tonkin.”<sup>27</sup> The Soviets believed shipment by sea would be too obvious and could provoke direct American action. In 1965, the CIA opined that the Soviets would refuse shipment via Haiphong because of “their 1962 Caribbean blockade experience” in the Cuban Missile Crisis “and their desire to avoid having to choose between confrontation with the United States and humiliating retreat.”<sup>28</sup> This assumption proved correct. After the 1969 Sino-Soviet border conflict, when soured relations with China made rail shipments politically impossible, the Soviets did begin sea shipments into Haiphong. However, the shipments remained small and had a limited impact on the war. In 1969, the CIA concluded that “even if every suspicious item [coming by ship] were combat material, total deliveries of such cargo would be negligible with the amount of military aid which North Vietnam receives from the USSR.”<sup>29</sup>

Fittingly, the Chinese began to use the Soviets’ sensitivity and reluctance toward sea shipment as a political “taunt” against Soviet enthusiasm for North Vietnam.<sup>30</sup> The Chinese portrayed the Soviets as “afraid of the United States” for their “cowardly” refusal to sail into Haiphong.<sup>31</sup> The Soviets, in response, proposed a direct ‘air corridor’ over China for Russian cargo planes to fly into North Vietnam. China “steadfastly refused” to grant such authority.<sup>32</sup> The Chinese again used this opportunity to damage Soviet credibility with the North Vietnamese. They sought to “obstruct and delay” Soviet military shipments to minimize Moscow’s influence in Hanoi.<sup>33</sup> The Chinese maintained this extremely restrictive policy about air resupply throughout the war. Each time a Soviet plane requested to fly through Chinese airspace, it “required separate permission from Peking.”<sup>34</sup>

properly reassembling weapons after dismantling them, due either to technical incompetence or sabotage.<sup>38</sup>

From April of 1965 to July of 1966, the Chinese continued their obstruction of rail shipments. They strongly disagreed with having Soviet advisers in North Vietnam to operate surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), and thus blocked Soviet SAM shipments until North Vietnamese could be trained in SAM operation. The Chinese then informed the Soviets and all Eastern European countries that they would no longer ship non-military goods by rail; any shipments of “economic goods” would have to occur over sea.<sup>39</sup> Further developments confirmed that China had secured leverage over Hanoi. In May of 1966, in part to dissuade the Chinese from their resupply obstruction, Ho Chi Minh left Vietnam for the first time in five years to visit China. While there, he worked out a shipping agreement with the Chinese to preserve aid flows into North Vietnam.<sup>40</sup> Ho concluded that North Vietnamese personnel would handle the Soviet shipments in China. The Chinese, content with this settlement, allowed shipments to continue unobstructed until 1967.

The most serious instance of political sabotage of the Soviet resupply came in January of 1967. Le Duan traveled to China in January to inform Mao “of a recent politburo decision to accept negotiations [with the US] when conditions were judged propitious.”<sup>41</sup> North Vietnam’s Foreign Minister later stated unambiguously that they would accept negotiations after the next American bombing halt. Mao Zedong was extremely displeased with the idea of a settlement and decided to take action to prolong the Vietnam War. On January 26, the Chinese Communist Party “deliberately planned, provoked, and coordinated” a siege on the Soviet Embassy in Beijing.<sup>42</sup> The CIA strongly believed that this represented an attempt to break diplomatic relations with the Soviets.<sup>43</sup> Simultaneously,

---

## “China engaged in this resupply brinkmanship to discipline the North Vietnamese into continuing the war.”

---

Thus, the only practical option for massive Soviet resupply was by railroad through China. The CIA characterized Sino-Soviet negotiations over rail shipment terms as the story of “acrimonious haggling.”<sup>35</sup> At almost every step, the Chinese sought to impede and regulate Soviet shipments. Troubles began in February of 1965 when the Chinese asserted a “sovereign right” to inspect all Soviet shipments.<sup>36</sup> Chinese officials began intercepting and dismantling Soviet weapons, possibly to study Soviet technology. The Chinese began a propaganda offensive against the Soviets, informing the North Vietnamese that the Soviets were sending them “obsolete” weapons, just as they had done during the Korean War.<sup>37</sup> Soviet advisors also found evidence that Chinese inspectors were im-

the Chinese began a blockade of Soviet shipments to North Vietnam to “rais[e] the specter of a permanent cut off of Soviet aid,” a crippling proposition for Hanoi.<sup>44</sup> On February 10, Ho Chi Minh received a letter from President Johnson discussing the conditions for negotiation. With Mao’s blockade looming in the background, Ho promptly rejected the offer, and on February 11, the Chinese ended the embassy siege and reinstated Soviet shipments of some “300 railroad cars” they had blocked.<sup>45</sup> Though one cannot be certain without access to concealed Chinese documents, the CIA strongly inferred that China had engaged in this resupply brinkmanship to discipline the North Vietnamese into continuing the war. Even as China entered the most destabilizing and leftist



## *The Vietnam War as China's Watershed*

phases of the Cultural Revolution, a time in which their international influence is assumed to have waned, they continued to effectively use their policy of resupply obstructionism. Blockages, in fact, increased during this time by the paramilitary Red Guards. Mao only reluctantly interrupted the marauders with conventional forces when their rail harassment showed signs of permanently damaging relations with Hanoi.<sup>46</sup>

Throughout the war, the Soviets never solved this fundamental resupply issue. Though they experimented, as mentioned, with increased sea shipments after 1969, this method never proved viable for major resupply. Rather, throughout the war, the Soviets simply had to rely on continued Chinese amenability. Chinese control of supply logistics truly was "an important weapon held in reserve by Peking" that kept China's international influence palpable in both Moscow and Hanoi.<sup>47</sup>

### THE POST-WAR SETTLEMENT

Beginning in 1969, American diplomats began to theorize that rapprochement with China could accomplish two major goals: it could end the Vietnam War in the short term, and in long term geopolitics it could be used "to correct the Russians and to discipline the Russians."<sup>48</sup> With the USSR as a mutual Sino-American foe, perhaps America could arrange an 'enemy of my enemy is my friend' relationship with China. On October 8, 1969, the National Security Council forwarded Henry Kissinger a memo entitled "Time for a US Initiative Toward Peking?" It suggested that an appeal to China could bring about a favorable settlement in Vietnam.<sup>49</sup> Perhaps by restoring relations with North Vietnam's most important patron, the US could in turn staunch the flows of Chinese arms and materiel into the North. Kissinger and President Nixon became very impressed with the importance and potential of a Chinese diplomatic and economic rapprochement, and thus began to build the conditions for an 'opening' to China.

The initial goal of the opening was facilitating Nixon's 'peace with honor' promise in Vietnam. Kissinger remained convinced that China held the keys to a favorable withdrawal. On April 27, 1971, he told Nixon that "if we can get this thing [the rapprochement with China] working, we'll end Vietnam this year."<sup>50</sup> The Pakistani President Yahya Khan, working as Kissinger's intermediary with the Chinese, had reported promising Chinese responses to Kissinger's initial negation offers. Kissinger drew up a plan for a post-Vietnam settlement that he would present to Zhou Enlai on a secret trip to China in July of 1971. While the Chinese contemplated Kissinger's proposals in light of the upcoming Nixon visit, the President reemphasized the importance of the Vietnam settlement. In his January 24, 1972 message to the Chinese government, Nixon underlined the importance of "find[ing] a negotiated settlement to the Indo-China war."<sup>51</sup>

Unfortunately for Nixon and Kissinger, Zhou and Mao had

little interest in making any major concessions over Vietnam. Almost as soon as Nixon and Kissinger got off the plane in China on February 21, 1972, Zhou began to lecture them about China's solidarity with the North Vietnamese resistance. He argued, "the Vietnamese are fighting for their country, and as long as they continue fighting, we must continue to support them."<sup>52</sup> Mao was similarly disinterested in Vietnam. When Nixon tried to steer their conversation toward a Vietnam settlement, Mao replied that he did not want to get into "those troublesome problems," but that he would rather discuss "philosophic questions."<sup>53</sup> Mao and Zhou thus parried any direct settlement agreement.



Vo Nguyen Giap, Vietnamese general (1954)  
Source: Author Unknown (Wikimedia Commons)

Ultimately, the trip's most important implications regarding Vietnam were indirect. Hanoi was offended and worried that China would seek better relations with the United States, prompting a shift toward Soviet patronage.<sup>54</sup> China did encourage the North to settle in future peace talks with the US. And Chinese funding to Vietnam after the Nixon visit did actually decrease from \$200 million in 1971 to \$85 million in 1973. Yet this decrease was simply correlated with the broader American withdrawal, and would not prove a lasting arrangement. By 1974, Chinese funding had bounced back to \$180 million a year, financing North Vietnam's conquest of the South in 1975.<sup>55</sup>

Despite the original theory of rapprochement, the Chinese got to have their cake and eat it too in the American Opening. Not only did they continue to support Vietnam, but they

also gained the benefits of new ties to the US. In fairness, the burgeoning US-Chinese friendship did give the US some diplomatic leverage against the Soviets. Yet China continued to freely underwrite Hanoi while also accruing many direct and major benefits from the United States, particularly in terms of economic development. Zhou Enlai, in fact, considered the new American relationship as bearing the possibility for a Chinese economic renaissance. He was almost frenetically excited when he learned of the plans for Kissinger's 1971 visit, stating "Only America can help China to modernize."<sup>56</sup> Zhou ordered hundreds of Western books "on anything that will help us to understand high technology... We have been deprived of good books for too long."<sup>57</sup> While China maintained its commitments to North Vietnam, it in turn reaped the benefits of new connections with the US. After Kissinger's diplomatic visit, when he learned of the even more important Nixon visit, Zhou opined that China was "on the threshold of a technical revolution which will alter all views and concepts. We must ready ourselves for it."<sup>58</sup>

Zhou was basically correct in his predictions. Nixon began to grant immediate and significant economic concessions to the Chinese that would set the stage for Deng Xiaoping's overhaul of the Chinese economy after 1978. Nixon eased travel restrictions to China and relaxed currency controls. He ended the American trade embargo against China and also ended the Foreign Assets Control requirement that forced American businesses to obtain a license from the US Treasury each time they transacted with China. In 1973, a group of American executives formed the National Council for United States-China Trade, which dedicated itself to expanding bilateral exchanges.<sup>59</sup> While Mao remained an impediment to capitalist reform, after his death in 1976 and after Deng's ascent in 1979, China's *kai fang* ("liberalization") would become a paradigm-shifting, unprecedented

revolution in modern economics. China would set itself on the path to rapid modernization that would see it become a major global economy, and in fact a major American bilateral trading partner. From Nixon's first probes in 1972 up to 1985 after Deng's liberalization, US-China trade expanded 70-fold, from \$95.9 million to seven billion annually.<sup>60</sup>

This burgeoning economic relationship remains one of the most important ways in which China benefitted unequally from the post-Vietnam settlement. While the Soviets would come to enjoy a period of détente with the United States, they would receive no paradigm-altering economic opening like the Chinese. In fact, as the United States sowed the seeds in China for an unprecedented modernization and a renaissance in bilateral trade, the USSR entered its infamous Era of Stagnation that would signal the beginning of the end for the Soviet economy.<sup>61</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The Vietnam War in retrospect appears as a great, if generally unacknowledged, boon to Chinese geopolitical standing. In about a decade, China transformed itself from a Soviet junior partner and an economic backwater into a major international force - even despite the destructive Cultural Revolution. China had outmaneuvered the Soviets in shaping Vietnamese resistance strategy from 1963 until the Tet Offensive. It had damaged Soviet influence and diminished Soviet control by dictating resupply terms at almost every point. Most importantly, China had secured a favorable post-Vietnam settlement with the United States that sowed the early seeds for its unprecedented modernization and its current trading relationship with America. While there were many contingent events separating China then and China today, it is thus undoubtable that China's involvement in the Vietnam War helped fundamentally shape its geopolitical future. ■

## Endnotes

[1] Austin Jersild, *The Sino-Soviet Alliance: An International History* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2014), 2.

[2] Marshall I. Goldman, "A Balance Sheet of Soviet Foreign Aid," *Foreign Affairs* 43 (1965).

[3] Ross Terill, *Mao: A Biography* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2000), 276.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Paul Marantz, "Prelude to Détente: Doctrinal Change Under Khrushchev," *International Studies Quarterly* 19 (1975): 511.

[6] Ibid.

[7] King Chen, "North Vietnam in the Sino-Soviet Dispute," *Asian Survey* 4 (1964): 1034.

[8] Ezra Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China* (Cam-

bridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 42.

[9] James Mulvenon, "China and Mutually Assured Destruction: Is China Getting Mad?" in *Getting Mad: Nuclear Mutual Assured Destruction, Its Origins and Practice* (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2004), 245.

[10] King Chen, 1030.

[11] Ibid.

[12] King Chen, 1024.

[13] Ibid, 1025.

[14] Ibid, 1027.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ana Lalaj, Christian F. Ostermann, and Ryan Gage, "Albania is Not Cuba: Sino-Albanian Summits and the Sino-Soviet Split," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Issue 16, *Wilson Center*, 219.

## *The Vietnam War as China's Watershed*

- [17] Nikita Khrushchev, *The Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev, Volume 3: Statesman, 1953-1964* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 502.
- [18] Lalaj, Ostermann, and Gage, 228.
- [19] Ibid.
- [20] King Chen, 1030.
- [21] Ibid, 1034.
- [22] Vogel, 271.
- [23] William O. Staudenmaier, "Vietnam, Mao, and Clausewitz," *Parameters* VII (1977): 1; and Lien-Hang Nguyen, *Hanoi's War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 119.
- [24] *Hanoi's War*, 119.
- [25] Mark Lawrence, *The Vietnam War: A Concise International History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 142.
- [26] Directorate of Intelligence, "The 1965 Sino-Soviet-Vietnamese Controversy over Soviet Military Aid to North Vietnam" (Washington, D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, 1965), ii.
- [27] Directorate of Intelligence, "The Sino-Soviet Dispute on Aid to North Vietnam (1965-1968) - Summary Version," (Washington D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, 1968), 16.
- [28] Directorate of Intelligence, "The 1965 Sino-Soviet-Vietnamese Controversy over Soviet Military Aid to North Vietnam," iii.
- [29] Directorate of Intelligence, "Anomalies in Soviet Shipping to North Vietnam During the First Half of 1969," (Washington D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, 1969), 2.
- [30] Directorate of Intelligence, "The 1965 Sino-Soviet-Vietnamese Controversy over Soviet Military Aid to North Vietnam," iii.
- [31] Ibid, 8.
- [32] Ibid, 2.
- [33] Ibid, ii.
- [34] Directorate of Intelligence, "The Sino-Soviet Dispute on Aid to North Vietnam (1965-1968) - Summary Version," 13.
- [35] Ibid, "Memorandum to Recipients."
- [36] Directorate of Intelligence, "The Sino-Soviet Dispute on Aid to North Vietnam (1965-1968) - Detailed Version," (Washington D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, 1968), 7.
- [37] Ibid, 8.
- [38] Ibid, 11.
- [39] Ibid, 27.
- [40] Directorate of Intelligence, "The Sino-Soviet Dispute on Aid to North Vietnam (1965-1968) - Summary Version," 5.
- [41] Directorate of Intelligence, "The Sino-Soviet Dispute on Aid to North Vietnam (1965-1968) - Detailed Version," 38.
- [42] Ibid, 37-39.
- [43] Ibid.
- [44] Ibid, 38.
- [45] Ibid, 39.
- [46] Ibid, 55. The CIA suggests, "In both 1967 and 1968 Mao could have acted sooner than he did to enable the PLA to enforce the removal of Red Guard factional obstruction of the rail line."
- [47] Directorate of Intelligence, "The Sino-Soviet Dispute on Aid to North Vietnam (1965-1968) - Summary Version," 12.
- [48] "Conversation Between President Nixon and his Assistant for National Security Affairs," *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1969-1976 Volume XVII, China, 1969-1972, Document 192.
- [49] "Memorandum From John H. Holdridge of National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)," *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1969-1976 Volume XVII, China, 1969-1972, Document 38.
- [50] "Nixon Conversation 002-052," Richard M. Nixon Presidential Recordings, *Miller Center*, <http://millercenter.org/presidentialrecordings/rmn-002-052>.
- [51] "Message From the Government of the United States to the Government of the People's Republic of China," *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1969-1976 Volume XVII, China, 1969-1972, Document 186.
- [52] Han Suyin, *Eldest Son: Zhou Enlai and the Making of Modern China, 1898 - 1976* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), 382.
- [53] "Memorandum of Conversation," *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1969-1976 Volume XVII, China, 1969-1972, Document 194.
- [54] Nguyen, *Hanoi's War*, 226.
- [55] Directorate of Intelligence, "Communist Military and Economic Aid to North Vietnam, 1970-1974" (Washington D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, Date Classified), 4.
- [56] Han Suyin, *Eldest Son*, 376.
- [57] Ibid.
- [58] Ibid, 377.
- [59] Wang, Dong, "U.S.-China Trade: 1971-2012: Insights into the U.S.-China Relationship," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 11 (2013): 1-8.
- [60] Robert D. Hormats, "Forty Years After the Nixon Visit: Progress, Challenges, and Opportunities in U.S.-China Economic Relations," (Speech, New York City, March 6, 2012), <http://www.state.gov/e/rls/rmk/2012/182523.htm>.
- [61] William Tompson, *The Soviet Union Under Brezhnev* (London: Pearson, 2003), 75.