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**Note on a Conversation with an Unnamed
Representative of the International Department of
the CPSU CC on the Situation in Vietnam [Excerpts]**

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Summary:

An unnamed Soviet official explains that Chinese officers and advisors in Vietnam are discouraging the use of Soviet weapons, despite the fact that they are the most modern and effective.

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German

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The Soviet comrade explained that the Soviet Union is in a complicated situation in Vietnam, because, due to China's attitude, it is not in a position, despite its efforts, to support Vietnam, to contribute directly and quickly to a change in the situation in Vietnam. The Soviet Union supplies the most modern weapons (the most modern jet fighter aircraft, missiles, and anti-aircraft guns), but they are not used because Chinese "advisers" to the general staff of the Vietnamese army and to the ministry of defense subvert the use of Soviet weapons. The weapons have been delivered and, as a rule, have been deposited somewhere, or are being only partially used for the establishment of Hanoi's defense system. The stationing of Soviet weapons, especially of heavy weapons, in provinces to the south has been prevented by the Chinese side.

Under China's pressure, the Vietnamese government does not allow Soviet pilots, missile specialists, and other specialists necessary for the use of modern military technology to enter the country, although the technology sent by the Soviet Union cannot be used without its personnel.

The army as well as large parts of the people in Vietnam increasingly understand the real situation. There are also a mounting number of cases, in which Vietnamese, even officials of the party and government, speak openly about the difficulties which have occurred in Vietnam due to the attitude of the Chinese leadership, which wants, as before, to let the US and the Soviet Union clash on Vietnamese territory. However, there are also different opinions. One cannot speak of a uniform line.

The Vietnamese leadership, especially the realistically thinking forces, think that, due to the obstructionist policy of the Chinese and [due] to the fact that Vietnam has no common border with the Soviet Union, it is necessary for Vietnam to give in partially to the Chinese policy and propaganda, at least to maneuver [around it]. In Vietnamese circles, the fear of a Chinese occupation is very big.

The hands of the Soviet Union are tied to a very great degree. It cannot unmask the pernicious [verderblich] policy of the Chinese leadership, because Vietnam would suffer most from it, since the Chinese are in a position, and are probably willing, to create even bigger difficulties for the Vietnamese.

The situation is similar with regard to the political solution of the Vietnam problem. In general, one has to acknowledge that the US, the Soviet Union, and also the Vietnamese themselves would move forward toward negotiations, even if [they have] different positions and different approaches.

The Soviet Union advocates a political solution because the continuation of military actions in Vietnam will provide fertile ground for reactionary developments in the US. The Chinese leaders resist a political solution with full vigor.

[...]