

November 10, 1966

**Note on a Talk with the Soviet Ambassador,
Comrade [Ilya] Shcherbakov, on 28 October 1966 in
the Soviet Embassy in Hanoi**

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Summary:

Soviet Ambassador Ilya Shcherbakov reported that Vietnamese officers lately seem defensive and not trusting, while emphasizing their autonomy. Also states that Ho Chi Minh was made to promise not to talk with the US or call for volunteers from socialist countries without first consulting the Chinese.

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Comrade Shcherbakov reported on the position of the Vietnamese comrades, that they are not always open and trusting, that in a series of questions, as e.g. with regard to the situation in South Vietnam and the economic and military situation in the DRV, they are reserved, even if they always talk about friendship and thank for aid. They emphasize their independence and autonomy, and that they will make decisions without any [outside] influence.

But it has become known to the Soviet comrades that Comrade Ho Chi Minh last summer[1] had to promise the Chinese leaders that the Vietnamese comrades would not have any talks with the Americans without consultation of the Chinese, and that they would not request volunteers from socialist countries without consultation. Else, [the Chinese] would withdraw their "construction troops."

After Comrade Ho had made that promise, the Chinese provided aid worth 700 million yuan. While 100 million are earmarked as military aid, food will be delivered for 600 million, namely [in the form of] 300,000 tons of hulled rice and 500,000 tons of unprocessed rice; moreover 500 tons of fabrics and cotton, and the [salary] payment for the road construction crews will eventually also be included in that sum.

[1] Possibly the June 1966 visit to China.