

THE RISING TIDE

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POWER STRUGGLE IN NORTH VIETNAM

The following article by the FLF research staff is based largely on a lengthy report by Vietnamese Information Analyst Nguyen Ngoc Bich.

Since Ho Chi Minh's death, the clouded struggle for power among Hanoi's leadership is lately resolving into a dispute between Le Duan, Secretary of the Lao Dong (Communist) Party and Truong Chinh, the Chairman of the National Assembly. The primary dispute between the two is mainly "tactical" in regard to the war in South Vietnam. Their opposing attitudes toward the precarious economic situation and the decision to drop 89 "Southern Deputies" from the National Assembly elections of April 11, 1971, have helped clarify the nature of the struggle.

The Le Duan-Truong Chinh conflict dates back to the disastrous Land Reform of 1956, which cost Truong Chinh his 15-year-old job as Party Secretary-General. At that time his hard line on absolute collectivization during the agrarian reform even included a denunciation of his own father in a People's Court. After the total failure of the campaign he remained silent on the issue until 1968, when he attacked what he believed to be the core of the economic problem: "We must prevent all schemes of changing land and property of collective ownership into private property of cooperative member families." Precisely this policy of shifting to the peasant plot system has been favored by Le Duan who supported "material incentives," asserting the fact that "a co-op member draws from the 5% of the land left over for his own use a production representing 60-70 percent of the value of production derived from the 95% of the land pooled in the cooperatives." He added that "I think the comrades who attended to theoretical matters in the Party had better try to give that a theoretical explanation."

Truong Chinh remarked his distaste for Le Duan's revisionist economic policy when he stated "The idea that any method of production that increases production is acceptable is not the view of the working class and the Party; we must produce in accordance with socialist collectivization." The Le Duan course in economic development radically changed when Truong Chinh's more stringent views finally became the official policy after approval by Ho Chi Minh in August of 1969 and passage by the Standing Committee of the National

Assembly of which Truong Chinh himself was chairman. Taking full advantage of the North's plagued economy to increase his own position of power, Truong Chinh reshuffled many of the economic ministers and replaced them with men supporting his own views.

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A VIETNAMESE COMRADE ASSASSINATED BY PRO-COMMUNIST TERRORISTS

The following telegram was received at FLF headquarters on July 2, 1971:

We urgently announce the President of Saigon Law School, newly elected Vice President of the Saigon Student Union, Mr. Le Khac Sinh-Nhat, 23, was assassinated by communist terrorists at 10:30 a.m., in the premise of the Law School, Saigon. We request your support in denouncing to the whole world that inhuman action and pray for Le Khac Sinh-Nhat, who died for our just cause.

*Ly Buu Lam, President
Saigon Student Union*

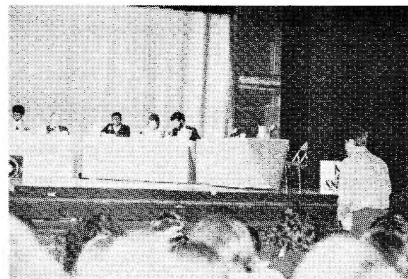
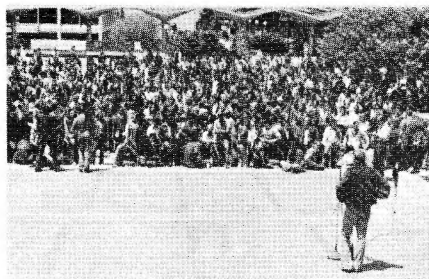
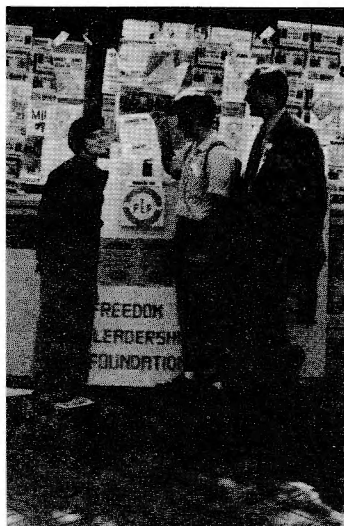
Le Khac Sinh-Nhat had been an outspoken opponent of militant Saigon activist Huynh Tan Mam, the chief South Vietnamese supporter of the so-called, "People's Peace Treaty," circulated in the U.S. by anti-war groups. Ly Buu Lam, who had been Sinh-Nhat's running mate, ousted Huynh Tan Mam from the Presidency of the union in a hotly contested election a few days before Sinh-Nhat's assassination.

FLF President Neil Salonen, who met with student leaders in Saigon last May, said that Mam's supporters had been known to use strong-arm tactics against his political opponents in past elections.

The Ly Buu Lam group is critical of the Saigon government, but supports working through legal channels for reform. The Huynh Tan Mam group, on the

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Report from Berkeley



The history of recent FLF activities in Berkeley clearly validates that city's claim to be one of the most dynamic political centers in the U.S. today.

In early April, FLF sponsored a debate on the controversial Police Partition Proposition, which if implemented would have fulfilled radical pledges to "make the South Campus area a revolutionary free zone" as "an example to Amerika."

Despite an overwhelming expression of Berkeleyans' collective desire for *responsibility* in change — demonstrated by a more than 2-1 vote against the Police Amendment — a divided moderate opposition watched helplessly as 3 out of 4 radical April Coalition candidates were elected to the City Council together with an only slightly less radical mayor.

With the City Council split 4-4 between moderates and radicals, two of the moderates supporting immediate and total withdrawal from Vietnam, and the "People's Peace Treaty" coming before the Council for "ratification", Berkeley FLFers quickly reorganized a campus chapter of American Youth for a Just Peace (AYJP) in conjunction with anti-Communist allies from the moderate Right (Campus Republicans) and democratic Left (Young People's Socialist League.)

At the City Council's public hearing on the "Peace Treaty" two FLF members (the only Berkeleyans to speak out against the Treaty at the hearing) were shouted down by a packed radical audience.

A successful AYJP press conference the next day brought needed attention to the fallacies of the "Treaty", but also provoked the wrath of the previously unchallenged radical Establishment at Berkeley's University of California. FLF and AYJP members were often threatened and intimidated, literature was destroyed, and the AYJP campus table became the scene of minor confrontations almost daily.

Another public hearing had been called for the following week, to discuss the appointment of the City Council's crucial ninth member. When FLF Director Dan Fefferman approached the microphone radicals met him with such a cacophony of jeers, chanting and obscenities, that the mayor was forced to call a recess and finally to discontinue discussion. Mr. Fefferman's speech was later printed in the Berkeley *Daily Gazette*, which lauded his message as "strong", "boldly decibled", and "electrifying."

The quarter's activities culminated in an AYJP rally against North Vietnamese imperialism. Before the first speaker could even be introduced, a chorus of "Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh . . ." began to sound over the campus. Vietnam Veteran Bob Dickey delivered a powerful speech over the chants, addressing himself to the homework-gap problem and outlining some of the serious misconceptions which American young people have developed about the war.

Then self-proclaimed Communist Bradford Cleaveland interrupted Dickey's speech. Repeatedly refusing to leave the microphone area, Cleaveland was peacefully removed by campus police officers. The crowd then surged up around AYJP speakers, chanting "Pigs off campus" and the microphone cables were disconnected.

After some minutes of chaos, the power was restored and Vietnamese student Nguyen Van Dinh attempted to speak to the crowd about his country. Not a strong-voiced orator, Dinh was forced to cut short his speech, visibly shaken by the shouts of "CIA running dog", pointing fingers and obscenities.

Ex-Free Speech Movement leader James T. Burnett of the avowedly anti-Communist Socialist Party spoke next, sharply criticizing both the radicals and the North Vietnamese regime. Some of the younger YSA members in the crowd must surely have been shaken when it was revealed to them that in 1945-46 their counterparts in Vietnam — the North Viet-

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Who Is the Imperialist?

Lenin defined imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism. The Soviet State was conceived by Leninists as the directing center of the revolution, which would crush capitalist imperialism and usher in the new age of peace and socialism. Any victory for the Soviet State was seen as a victory for the continuing socialist revolution and was not to be considered an act of imperialism. (The following ironic quotations were excerpted from the 1971 AFL-CIO pamphlet, Who IS the Imperialist?)

CHINESE vs. SOVIET IMPERIALISM

"The Soviet Union has an area of 22,000,000 square kilometers and its population is only 220 million . . . About 100 years ago, the area to the east of (Lake) Baikal became Russian territory, and then Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, Kamchatka, and since then other areas have been Soviet territory. We have not yet presented our account for this list." *Mao to Japanese Socialist Parliamentary Delegation, July 10, 1964.*

□

"The present Soviet Government has gone further than the old tsars." *New China News Agency, October 8, 1969.*

□

"The Soviet revisionist renegade clique has grown from revisionism into social imperialism . . . The Soviet revisionist social imperialists, however, directly plunder and enslave the people of other countries by means of the state power they have usurped." *New China News Agency, April 21, 1970.*

□

"The 'Brezhnev Doctrine' is an outright doctrine of hegemony . . . A socialist community is nothing but a synonym for a colonial empire with you (the USSR) as the metropolitan state." *New China News Agency, April 21, 1970.*

□

"They have stretched their arms out to Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America and sent their fleets to the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, the Pacific and the Atlantic in their attempt to set up a vast revisionist empire spanning Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America." *New China News Agency, April 21, 1970.*

NORTH VIETNAM

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Significantly, the two opponents hold divergent views on the "War of Liberation" being waged in South Vietnam. After returning from Poland in February 1971, Truong Chinh decided National Assembly elections should be held within a 60-day period. It is a powerful demonstration of his growing authority that Truong Chinh could do this without opposition, on the basis that the "present situation" *no longer represents a state of war* and thus "allows" the holding of elections. Truong Chinh climaxed these events with the decision to eliminate the 89 token Southern deputies from the National Assembly elections, even though all of them have been sitting for 25 years and three legislatures (1946-1971).

This obvious avoidance of the "Liberation War" issue is probably just political expediency for Truong Chinh but never-

"Mao Tse Tung . . . is not only claiming this or that part of Soviet territory, but is portraying his claims as part of some 'general territorial question.' We are faced with an openly expansionist program with far-reaching pretensions. . . . Maps showing various parts of the Soviet Union and other countries neighboring China as Chinese territory continue to be published in the People's Republic of China . . ."

"By what right are the Chinese leaders claiming lands that do not belong to China? . . . Indeed, were not such a serious question involved, such historic arguments could not be called other than childish." *Pravda, September 2, 1964.*

□

"The danger that China presents today comes from the ideology and war-monger politics of Maoism, just as the danger that was formerly represented by Hitler's Germany and militarist Japan came from the ideology and politics of fascism." *Novosti commentator Georgiy Dadyants in Paris Le Monde, April 2, 1969.*

□

"The Chinese leadership has openly shown its unwillingness to participate in any political activity aimed at terminating the Vietnam war . . . The Peking leaders hope the bloody war in Vietnam will be carried on forever." *Moscow Radio, March 21, 1970.*

□

"The Chinese leaders do not want to relax their policy toward Asia . . . The expansionist policy of the Chinese leaders is a grim reality to the Asian peoples." *Moscow Radio, January 8, 1971.*

theless he indicates a move towards a more "dovish" stand than Le Duan. This fact has become more obvious since Truong Chinh has virtually ignored the war in the South in many of his recent speeches, emphasizing instead only the building of socialism in the North.

This shows the increasing significance of the economy for domestic power struggles — it is upon this economic, rather than political, issue that Truong Chinh and leaders within his faction have been gaining greater power, which explains how the Southern deputies could be so quickly eliminated.

The outcome of the Vietnam war will be affected as the struggle between Le Duan and Truong Chinh is resolved. Should the faction behind Truong Chinh emerge in power, a tentative result might be a brighter future for South Vietnam.

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COMRADE ASSASSINATED

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other hand, is militant in its criticism and is supported by the NLF, who have used terrorist activities to intimidate organized moderate students in Saigon and other cities.

FLF responded to Ly Buu Lam's telegram immediately by writing to other national organizations and urging that action be taken to dramatize the event. FLF also sent letters to Congressmen and press releases to major news media. Despite these actions, Le Khac Sinh-Nhat's death remains unknown to the American public and Ly Buu Lam lives in fear for his life. The American press, which usually jumps at the opportunity to sensationalize the violent death of student activists, seemed somehow to let this one slip by with a minimum of coverage.

As of this writing, FLFers are planning demonstrations to publicize this tragedy and insure that Ly Buu Lam does not remain an unknown figure whom the communists can wipe out without repercussions in international opinion.

BERKELEY

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name Trotskyists — had been ruthlessly and methodically exterminated as a result of the fatherly patriotism of "Uncle Ho."

FLFer Dan Fefferman concluded and was applauded by the bulk of the crowd when he denounced the disrupters and called for a re-opening of rational dialogue at Berkeley.

Berkeley FLF members' summer activities include the organizing of a course on comparative Communism with leading political scientists in the area. Several members will have the opportunity to travel overseas, some will work with FLF in Washington D.C., but all look forward to an aggressive fall offensive after a summer of education, training and experience.



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