

MAR 29 1971

6

C

HANOI'S TOP RED REACHES MOSCOW

Le Duan Confers With Chou
on Way to Congress

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN
Special to The New York Times

MOSCOW, March 28 — Le Duan, the leader of North Vietnam's Communist party, arrived in Moscow last night with ranking Vietcong and Pathet Lao officials to attend the 24th Soviet Party Congress and discuss Indo-chinese developments with Soviet leaders.

It will be the first opportunity for Mr. Duan to confer with Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Soviet party leader, and other Kremlin officials since his stay here last April and May at the time of the Lenin centenary celebrations.

Since then, the Indochinese war has widened from Vietnam into both neighboring Laos and Cambodia. Officially, Moscow lends full support to the Indo-chinese "patrois," but Western diplomats here believe that the Kremlin may be concerned about Hanoi's overextending itself and about the apparent increase in Communist China's influence in Hanoi.

The Chinese Premier, Chou en-Lai, recently visited North Vietnam to pledge China's direct support if the United States widened the war further, possibly into North Vietnam. Mr. Duan and the Vietcong and Pathet Lao delegations all stopped in Peking on their way to Moscow to confer again with Mr. Chou.

Chinese Attack Expected

Soviet sources said that China had rejected an invitation to attend the congress and diplomats expect a new Chinese attack on the Soviet leadership before the opening of the congress on Tuesday.

There will be strong pressure on Mr. Brezhnev to reply in kind to the Chinese, but the presence of such "neutrals" as Mr. Duan and Nicolae Ceausescu, the Rumanian party leader and president, is an inhibiting factor.

Mr. Duan's decision to attend the congress, despite China's opposition, is regarded here as an indication of Hanoi's continued desire to remain on as good terms as possible with both Peking and Moscow. Both countries give Hanoi considerable political, military and economic aid.

The Vietcong are represented here by Nguyen Van Hieu, a member of their Central Committee, and the Pathet Lao by Kaysone Phomvan, a vice chairman of the group that represents the Laotian Communists. So far, no delegation from Prince Norodom Sihanouk's Cambodian government-in-exile has arrived from Peking.

Unlike North Vietnam, China and North Korea, the Soviet Union has continued diplomatic relations with the Lon Nol regime, which overthrew the Sihanouk Government. The Lon Nol Government has an embassy here, but the former ambassador, loyal to Mr. Sihanouk, still lives in the Cambodian Embassy building.

Pravda, the Communist party paper, put Le Duan at the head of its list today of delegates that had arrived for the congress. So far, about 50 delegations have come to Moscow. The important East European leaders are due here either late tonight or tomorrow.

Gus Hall, the head of the American Communist party, arrived yesterday. Some African countries have sent delegations from non-Communist parties in power. Some states, such as Chile, have both Communist and Socialist party representation.

Diplomats assume that Mr. Duan, when he sees the Kremlin leaders, will press for additional military and economic aid, particularly in light of the recent heavy fighting in Laos, which is believed to have cost the North Vietnamese heavily in ammunition and supplies.