

## On Vietnam-Kampuchea conflict

Dear Comrades,

Allow me to take issue with your view of the Vietnam-Kampuchea conflict as a Vietnamese "invasion" rather than a border conflict and with the way this tragic development has been reported in your pages.

Certainly every reader is deeply concerned about this conflict. At a time when hard facts are so scarce, the best way to support a rapid, peaceful solution to the extent that we can help by building sympathy for that goal here in the U.S., is by an approach which is scrupulously even-handed, mindful of present facts and past history, as well as one which duly opposes and exposes reactionary analyses and propaganda.

Support for Kampuchea's revolution is incomplete without support for Vietnam and Laos, too. Likewise, exposing Soviet strategic aims requires paying attention to the essential self-reliance of Vietnamese socialist construction, that is, their will and ability to face up to the Russians.

In my opinion, *The Call* improperly tilts toward Kampuchea. While the Jan. 23 editorial was balanced, the "score" was six paragraphs to two on Jan. 16,

# Letters



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and Kampuchea was the basic focus of a major 28-inch article on Jan. 30 and a full page on Feb. 13.

On the other hand, reporting a direct Soviet operational role unrealistically overestimates their influence while discrediting Vietnamese independence. Reports said to be supported by "battlefield confirmation" (Jan. 16) and "mounting battlefield evidence" (Jan. 30) are unattributed, although the fact that Phnom Penh public statements are the source is obvious from the bourgeois media. China, which may have direct knowledge, doesn't support these claims.

As a Vietnam veteran (1969-71), I share with my fellows the profound conviction that if there was a single key factor prevailing in Southeast Asia from the 1940s until very recently, it was the Vietnamese infantryman. Inspired and led by Marxism-Leninism and the Lao Dong (Workers) Party, he overcame all obstacles with precious little help from

the USSR, as *The Call* is well aware. One needn't examine the overwhelming differences between Vietnam and Kampuchea in population, economic base and military might to find reason to question the implication that Vietnam should now, suddenly, become dependent on Russian tank commanders.

I hope my comments may contribute to the generally excellent standpoint and quality of the paper and that they may be of interest to *The Call's* growing number of readers.

J.G., Brooklyn, N.Y.

## Eric Clapton's new song

Dear *Call*:

Today I heard a new song on the radio. I listened to it because I liked the tune but the words struck me as being, especially chauvinistic and degrading to the woman who the song is about.

In the song, the woman is instructed to "lay down Sally" and "don't you ever leave" after an apparent disagreement. When I found out who wrote and sang the song I was no longer surprised at the blatant chauvinism.

The song is by Eric Clapton, the British singer who supports the fascist National Front Party in Great Britain. What this pointed out to me was that