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'Domino' Theory

Reports gathered in Washington — presumably from State Department and Central Intelligence Agency sources — indicate that Red China is growing increasingly alarmed about the U. S. power buildup in Viet Nam.

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Whether the alarm will tend to increase China's hostility toward us or whether it will convince the Communist Chinese that it can gain little from supporting so-called "national revolutions of liberation" in Asia remains to be seen.

But the Chinese concern does bear out the burden of the recent talk here by Reiman "Pat" Morin, Associated Press special correspondent. Addressing a President's Day audience, the twice Pulitzer Prize winner declared that if Viet Nam falls to the Reds, all of Southeast Asia will quickly follow.

It seems clear that Mao Tse Tung sees U. S. power and determination in Viet Nam as the chief obstacle to the communization of Asia. Mao, like Morin, apparently feels that if U. S. power is broken in Viet Nam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Burma, South Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia and, yes, the Nationalist Chinese stronghold of Taiwan, will tumble "like dominoes" into the Red Chinese orbit. Even Japan's days of freedom would be numbered.

Viet Nam might not be the perfect place to draw the line and tell the Reds that they go no farther. We didn't choose to stand in Viet Nam for reasons of military advantage or because it had an enlightened, democratic government. It was circumstances that forced us to make a decision in Viet Nam — a decision to fight or to run.

That we chose to fight will be to our everlasting credit as a Nation who cares for principles and for people.