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TRENDS IN COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA
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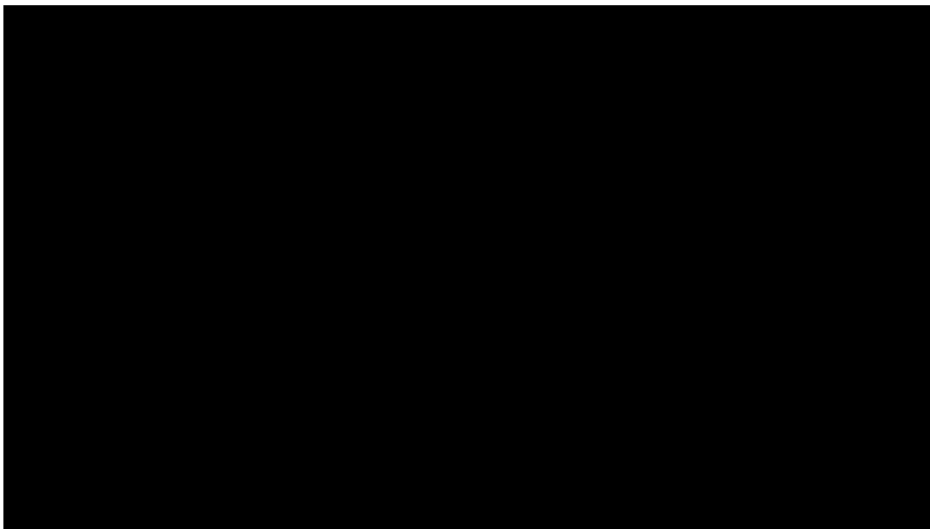
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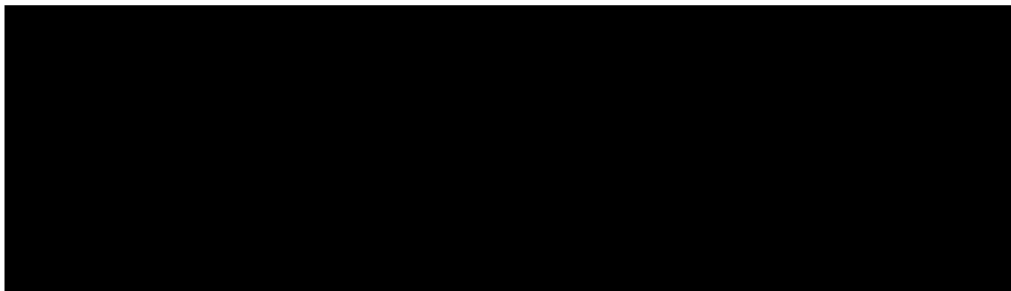
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NOTE: Because of the shortened work week during the holidays, the next two issues of the TRENDS will be delayed. Both will be prepared on Fridays--28 December and 4 January--and distributed on Wednesday, 2 January and Monday, 7 January respectively.

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ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

USSR MAINTAINS NONCOMMITTAL STANCE ON PEACE CONFERENCE ISSUES

In a period of intensive diplomatic activity in preparation for the Geneva peace conference, Moscow, not surprisingly, has avoided substantive comment on the issues. While it has described the forthcoming conference as an event of great significance, it has commented only in passing on the problems involved in convening the conference. Thus PRAVDA in its international review on the 16th remarked without elaboration that "tense efforts" had been made during the past week to prepare for the conference. Soviet media briefly traced Secretary Kissinger's 13-17 December Middle East tour, noting that both Kissinger and Egypt's as-Sadat described their talks as "useful," but also noting that foreign newsmen had reported that the Secretary "met with great difficulties" during his negotiations in Cairo and "especially in Damascus." Comment tailored for North American audiences underlined Soviet-U.S. cooperation in arranging the conference, but a commentary broadcast to Arab listeners remarked sourly that the United States was trying to take major credit for "positive changes" in the Middle East.

In the only current remarks on the situation by a Soviet leader, Podgorny, speaking at a dinner for the PRG delegation on the 18th, expressed hope that the Geneva conference would serve the attainment of a lasting and just peace in the Middle East. He pledged that the Soviet Union would "assist in every way a reliable settlement" of the conflict, specifying Moscow's standard terms for such a settlement--Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories and assurance of the legitimate rights of all states and peoples of the area, including the Palestinians.

UN ROLE TASS on the 18th reported that identical letters had been handed to UN Secretary General Waldheim by the U.S. and Soviet UN delegates expressing the hope that Waldheim would agree to serve as the official host of the conference and preside in the opening phase. The TASS summary noted that the conference would be under the co-chairmanship of the Soviet Union and the United States, and that the "question of other participants" would be discussed during the first stage of the conference. TASS' account did not mention

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that the letters expressed the hope that the secretary general could make available a representative "who would keep you informed" as the conference proceeded, or the suggestion that the Security Council president should consult informally with council members with a view to securing their concurrence.

TASS had briefly reported the Security Council resolution on the 15th, noting that it expressed confidence that the UN secretary general would play a "full and effective role" at the peace conference and would preside over the meetings "if the parties so desire." The TASS dispatch reported that the resolution passed by 10 votes with the Big Four abstaining and China not voting.

While Moscow generally had not publicized its co-sponsorship of the Geneva conference, a Losev commentary broadcast to North America on the 14th had reminded listeners that "the Soviet Union and the United States are working together to arrange the conference," and recalled that Kissinger in his recent Washington news conference had mentioned the USSR's "constructive contribution" toward organizing the talks and working out such matters as agenda, participants and procedures.

U.S. AID TO ISRAEL In a slightly more critical tone than Moscow has customarily shown toward Kissinger, TASS in reporting the Secretary's address to the Pilgrims in London on the 12th noted that he "admitted" that the United States had not done everything in its power prior to the October fighting to contribute to a lasting Middle East settlement. TASS skipped over his remark that the United States had demonstrated great restraint once the October war began "until the Soviet effort reached the point of massive intervention." But in noting his explanation of the U.S. arms resupply to Israel, it claimed that he "tried to justify" U.S. policy in the area, particularly the arms supplies which "encourage Israel's stubborn refusal" to withdraw its troops from occupied Arab territories. Moscow has publicized Senator Fulbright's objections to appropriations for military aid to Israel, and the Losev commentary on the 14th remarked in passing that "no flood of American weapons" could promote a settlement.

The matter of American military aid was also raised in an Arabic-language commentary on the 18th which revived, for the first time since the October fighting began, a complaint which the Soviet Union had previously made at times of U.S.

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initiatives in the Middle East, namely, that the United States was trying to "persuade the world that the key to solving the Middle East question is in Washington's hands." The commentary, a routine-level, unattributed talk, echoed past arguments that "this key" remained in the hands of the Arab countries "on whose side stands the Soviet Union." In the first public display of Soviet pique over U.S. diplomatic initiatives the commentary charged that "efforts of American diplomacy at present are concentrated on suggesting that the greatest credit is due to Washington for the positive changes" in the Middle East. As a case in point, the broadcast cited Deputy Secretary of State Rush as saying that peace in the Middle East could only be achieved with American help. Noting that Rush was testifying before Congress in support of military aid to Israel, the commentary wondered whether "military aid to the aggressors" could be related to efforts to restore peace in the Middle East.

SYRIAN POSITION Moscow has not commented on the Syrian decision not to attend the conference, TASS merely reporting on the 18th that Damascus said the decision, announced that day, was adopted after a series of contacts with Egyptian and U.S. officials and in light of facts pointing to "maneuvers" aimed at serving Israel's interests. On the 19th TASS reported an Egyptian Government spokesman as saying that progress at the Geneva talks would open the door to participation by Syria and other Arab countries. Earlier, Moscow had indicated Syrian readiness to attend, with an Arabic-language broadcast on the 15th citing President al-Asad to that effect. Soviet media had pointed out that Israel had agreed to participate in a conference with Egypt and Jordan but not with Syria because Damascus refused to provide a list of Israeli prisoners of war. Moscow objected that settlement of the crisis was impossible without Syrian participation as "one of the victims of Israeli aggression." TASS on the 18th said that Arab papers, commenting on Israel's "provocative hullabaloo" about the POW issue, recalled that while there was a POW exchange between Israel and Egypt Tel Aviv did not meet its commitment on withdrawal of troops to the 22 October positions.

PALESTINIAN ISSUES TASS on 14 December reported that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) had decided to convene a session of the Palestine National Council in January to discuss the questions of "the future of the West Bank and Gaza" and of Palestinian representation at

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the peace talks. Palestinian representation at the peace conference was also broached by Middle East specialist Belyayev in a 12 December LITERARY GAZETTE article. Belyayev pointed out that the recent Arab summit conference in Algiers had confirmed the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians. Thus when the "interested sides" begin to discuss possible variants of a Palestinian solution during the "forthcoming political settlement," Belyayev said, they will have to deal with the PLO. Suggesting some Soviet impatience with the Palestinians' indecision, Belyayev admonished the PLO on the need to "formulate clearly its attitude" toward "those specific proposals . . . which may be worked out in the process of a settlement."

The 17 December Palestinian attack on a PanAm aircraft at Rome airport and the hijacking of a Lufthansa plane brought not only the customary Soviet publicity for PLO denials of involvement but also criticism from PRAVDA. TASS on the 19th reported PRAVDA commentator Orestov as saying that world public opinion viewed with alarm the "political aspect" of these "crimes" committed by "people who call themselves Palestinians." Orestov found it suspicious that the incidents coincided with preparations for the Geneva conference which, among other questions, must discuss ways of achieving a just settlement of the Palestinian problem. In this context, Orestov declared, attempts to set public opinion against the legitimate demands of "Palestinian patriots" were "provocative."

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FORCE REDUCTIONS

MOSCOW INSISTS REDUCTIONS MUST INCLUDE NATIONAL FORCES

With the Vienna negotiations on force reductions now in recess until 15 January, Moscow and its East European allies have been assessing the progress of the talks. Summing up points made in routine comment over the past few weeks, PRAVDA's Vienna correspondent Igor Melnikov on 17 December concluded that after six weeks of negotiations there is "reason to assume" that all the participants possess sufficient realism and good will to insure the "successful completion" of the talks. At the same time, he and other commentators have made it clear that Moscow continues to regard Western positions on the timing of "national" force reductions--that is, the West and East European forces other than the U.S. and Soviet--and on asymmetrical reductions as major stumbling blocks to agreement.

NATIONAL FORCES Moscow has been increasingly critical of the Western two-phase approach to force reductions, which calls for initial reductions to be applied to U.S. and Soviet troops exclusively and postpone for a subsequent stage the problem of reducing West and East European national forces. Apparently concerned about the well-equipped and well-trained Bundeswehr, Moscow has argued that this approach fails to provide firm guarantees regarding the nature and scope of the reductions to be applied to national forces. A TASS-attributed report in PRAVDA on 2 December, for example, which included the first reference in the central press to the details of the Soviet plan presented at Vienna, observed that the Western plan's first stage called for the reduction of U.S. and Soviet ground troops only, but that "the content of the second stage has not been revealed. Admittedly," PRAVDA continued, without directly mentioning the FRG, "the possibility of a reduction in the forces of other countries in central Europe is mentioned, but what categories will be cut back and when is not clear from the proposal." It is noteworthy that this PRAVDA commentary and other Moscow discussions have not rejected the two-stage NATO proposal outright, but have indicated that NATO should be more explicit regarding the second stage details, thus seemingly leaving open the possibility for future negotiation in this sphere.

IZVESTIYA's Vienna correspondent K. Perevoshchikov on the 4th strongly criticized the NATO plan, saying that "the essential character of the second stage has scarcely been revealed,"

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and adding that the "diffuse formulas on the possibility of also reducing the forces of other countries in central Europe" postpone a resolution of this issue "for an indeterminate period." Asserting that it is impossible "to ignore the West's inclination to leave national forces untouched," Perevoshchikov said that the Bundeswehr alone numbers just under 500,000 men. Although Perevoshchikov and other Moscow commentators refer to the armies of the United Kingdom, Belgium and others in this connection, it is clear that Moscow's concern is focused on the West Germans.

ASYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS Since the details of the Soviet force reduction proposal became public knowledge in mid-November, Moscow's treatment of the proposal has gone from initial silence to acknowledgment of the details, and then into specific comparisons of the Soviet plan with the NATO proposal offered on 22 November. Moscow radio's main commentator on force reductions, Vladimir Komlev, on the 29th acknowledged the details of the Eastern bloc's draft plan for the first time, pointing out that it called for a reduction in 1975 of 22,000 men on each side along with the corresponding arms and combat equipment, a further reduction in 1976 of five percent on both sides, and a final 10 percent cut in 1977. Komlev asserted that implementation of this plan "would preserve the existing proportion of NATO and Warsaw Pact forces in the area, but with a lower level of forces and arms"--the longstanding definition of Moscow's criterion of successful force reductions.

In follow-up comments, Moscow has criticized the Western plan for not including air and nuclear-armed forces, and for excluding the national forces or leaving them for some undefined, ambiguous second stage. It has also continued to denounce the NATO proposal for asymmetrical reductions and NATO's singling out of those elements of the force equations in which the Warsaw Pact enjoys an advantage over NATO, such as armored forces. Moscow has charged that NATO is attempting through its demands for asymmetrical reductions to upset the present equilibrium of forces in central Europe--an equilibrium which, it says, has maintained peace on the continent for a full generation.

EAST EUROPEAN CONCERNS While the comment of Moscow's allies has generally taken its cue from Moscow, there have been occasional indications of the independent concerns that the East European countries have in the force reduction talks. Two recent items in the Warsaw government

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daily ZYCIE WARSZAWY, for example, suggest a less adamant position than Moscow has indicated on the issue of asymmetrical reductions and a particular Warsaw interest, for economic reasons, in seeing a successful outcome of the talks.

In a 27 November article criticizing NATO's call for asymmetrical reductions, the author, J. Golebiowski, argued that the discussion of asymmetrical reductions "could easily lead the Vienna negotiations up the blind alley of endless polemics." But he also stated that "we should not, of course, refuse to discuss this problem." This is the only known case in which a Warsaw Pact spokesman has indicated a willingness to discuss NATO's asymmetrical approach to force reductions.

On 9 December, the same author pointed out that the "economic consequences" of force reductions should be a "crucial" factor affecting the decisions of both sides. He said that "Poland is most interested in this." He went on to point out that a failure of the talks might lead to a new arms race and, hence, preclude the opportunity for shifting resources to more productive purposes which a successful outcome of the talks might provide.

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SALT

MOSCOW BREAKS LONG SILENCE ON U.S. MIRV'S, SHOWS CONCERN

After Moscow media's avoidance of the issue for almost two years, articles discussing U.S. MIRV's have appeared in the December issue of the journal USA, signed to the press on 19 November, and in the 9 December RED STAR. The last extensive discussion of MIRV's appeared before the SALT ONE agreements in a March 1972 RED STAR article. Although the two articles focused on different aspects of the U.S. program, they could be interpreted as expressions of growing concern in Moscow over the destabilizing effects of MIRV on the U.S.-Soviet strategic balance. Neither article broached Soviet developments in this area, although the change in posture came on the heels of the announcement by Secretary of Defense Schlesinger last August that Moscow had begun to test its own version of missiles with multiple, independently targetable warheads.

Writing in USA, military specialists M. A. Milshteyn and L. S. Semeyko maintained that the second round of SALT was being conducted under more favorable conditions than the first round, and they were generally optimistic about the outcome. But echoing arguments made in the West, and in fact drawing extensively on the observations of U.S. specialists, they showed considerable concern about the destabilizing effects of qualitative weapons improvements upon the U.S.-Soviet nuclear balance. They emphasized the urgency of placing qualitative limits on strategic weapons in a permanent SALT accord. The authors built their case for such limitations by quoting U.S. spokesmen who maintain that the particular qualitative development embodied in MIRV's is destabilizing, since the acquisition of MIRV's makes sense only in terms of a search for a first-strike capability. They warned that an unrestricted U.S. MIRV program presents "a potential danger of breakdown in the process of easing military tensions in U.S.-Soviet relations."

Milshteyn and Semeyko defined the basic asymmetries in the U.S. and Soviet strategic force structures as "qualitative-quantitative," on the one hand, and geographic, on the other. Arguing that these asymmetries are unlikely to be eliminated but must be balanced by a formula that ensures "equal security" for both sides, they went on to reiterate Moscow's longstanding opposition to an accord that would simply establish equal numerical ceilings for basic strategic systems. This line of argument suggests that the authors

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may favor some form of limitation on MIRV's which would grant the United States an advantage in that area in exchange for compensation in other areas.

ARMS REDUCTIONS The Milshteyn and Semeyko article is also notable for the considerable interest it showed in progress toward strategic arms reduction at SALT TWO. Although Brezhnev last December had first characterized arms reductions as a basic goal for SALT, this is the first public indication that it is considered a goal of some urgency. The two authors stressed that arms reduction had been advanced as the "ultimate task" of SALT at the Moscow summit and affirmed as a goal of the second stage at the Washington summit. And they went on to observe that "the importance of bilateral steps in this sphere--even if they are only partial steps--is difficult to overestimate." Although they noted the economic benefits of such measures, they seemed more interested in the international and domestic political impact of reductions.

The 9 December RED STAR article focused exclusively on difficulties in the U.S. testing program for Poseidon missiles, thus raising the possibility that some military quarters in Moscow are skeptical about the advisability of a full-scale Soviet MIRV program. The author of the article, Eng. Lt. Col. L. Nechayuk, was perhaps scoring points in an internal debate on force structure as he drew on reports in the Western press to describe test failures, "particularly during the separation of the multiple warheads and their guidance onto the targets." He concluded that the reliability of a system "which only yesterday was being referred to as powerful and efficient" has "proven to be much lower than was calculated."

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EUROPE

MOSCOW SAYS LATEST MEETINGS REVEAL U.S.-NATO "CONTRADICTIONS"

In reporting the recent NATO defense and foreign ministers meetings and the EEC's Copenhagen summit, Moscow has played up the "contradictions" between Washington and its NATO allies and the differences among the West Europeans themselves.

While reporting Secretary Kissinger's remarks at the 10 December NATO Council meeting that the Alliance remains the cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy, Moscow has stressed his acknowledgment that differences have arisen between Washington and its allies in recent months, particularly over the Middle East war. Similarly, in reporting Kissinger's 12 December London speech to the Pilgrims, Moscow has alleged that there was no agreement among the EEC leaders at their Copenhagen summit for a West European response to his call for an Energy Action Group; it has noted that only London has publicly endorsed the secretary's suggestion, and that the other West Europeans are allegedly striving to resolve the energy crisis by direct cooperation with the Arab states.

As for NATO, Moscow has accused Washington of trying to ride roughshod over its allies on everything from burden sharing and offset payments to West European strategic interests during the Middle East war. While it has been particularly harsh in its treatment of NATO Secretary General Luns, Moscow has also observed that "even" NATO could not ignore the present development of detente in Europe, as indicated by its endorsement of the CSCE and force reduction negotiations. Continuing a theme that began to emerge in Moscow comment well before the recent NATO and EEC meetings, Moscow has harshly criticized the public discussion in West Europe of the possibility of developing a West European defense system, possibly separate from NATO.

PEKING SEES GROWING U.S.-EUROPEAN UNITY AGAINST MOSCOW

Peking has professed to see signs of Western unity rather than disunity in recent developments affecting U.S.-European relations. This line has been pressed in a series of NCNA reports addressed to the recent NATO ministers' meetings, the EC summit, and the CSCE and force reduction talks. In a striking example of selective reporting, Peking has presented these events as testifying to a growing unity between the United States and its West European allies based on a common determination to resist Soviet military pressure.

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NATO, EC MEETINGS The meetings in Brussels of NATO defense and foreign ministers--on 7 and 10-11 December respectively--prompted NCNA reports suggesting that the meetings had helped in developing a solid Western defense against increasing Soviet military power in Europe. Hailing the evidence of Western determination at the NATO meetings to maintain a strong NATO posture in both conventional and nuclear armaments, NCNA on 8 December drew attention particularly to European acknowledgments of the continued importance of the U.S. commitment to Europe's defense. The report noted the European defense ministers' welcome of the announced U.S. determination to maintain forces in Europe, as well as their recognition that "a common effort on the part of the allies" was required to offset U.S. financial difficulties arising from the maintenance of troops in Europe. Similarly, a 12 December report noted French Foreign Minister Jobert's observation that at present "there is no alternative to the role played by the U.S. nuclear force and its military presence in Europe."

Chinese coverage of the NATO sessions and of the subsequent EC summit meeting of 14-15 December drew attention to what was described as the emergence in Europe of growing opposition to "superpower" domination. Muffling the fact that the United States also qualifies for "superpower" status, Peking interpreted this opposition as being directed mainly against the Soviet Union. Thus, NCNA could report "European unity" and "U.S.-European unity" as complimentary rather than contradicting phenomena. For example, in a 12 December report on Secretary Kissinger's comments at the NATO foreign ministers' conference NCNA highlighted both his avowal of continued U.S. backing for an "independent European entity" and also his assertion that U.S.-West European differences were minor in comparison with the broader unity they shared. More pointedly, a 14 December NCNA report on the EC summit carefully quoted from the group's document on "European Identity" the passages noting that U.S.-EC ties are mutually beneficial and should be preserved, and that "these ties do not conflict with the determination of the nine to establish themselves as a distinct and original entity."

CSCE, MBFR Peking has highlighted the lack of progress at the recent CSCE and MBFR sessions as evidence of Western determination to protect and pursue their interests despite the blandishments of detente. A 15 December NCNA commentary noting the holiday recess of the European security talks in Geneva said that Moscow's efforts to achieve a summit meeting on European security by the end of the year had been dashed

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because of serious differences with the West. Reporting issues dividing the two sides, NCNA noted that the West favored keeping the door open for the possibility of peaceful changes of European frontiers, whereas Moscow was determined to maintain and solidify the status quo. Peking pointedly replayed in this connection a West German spokesman's assertion that provision should be made for the eventual peaceful reunification of Germany. NCNA also stressed Moscow's refusal to agree to prior notification regarding movements of its military forces, charging that this revealed its intention to commit future interventions in Europe similar to the one it had undertaken in Czechoslovakia.

An NCNA article on the 13th, marking the holiday recess of the MBFR sessions in Vienna, ridiculed the talks as "six weeks of wrangle." It said that the meetings had witnessed a clash between Moscow's determination to "maintain and strengthen the superiority in conventional forces it now has in Central Europe" and Washington's counter determination to whittle down the advantage of the Warsaw Pact forces. After castigating Moscow's continued military buildup in central Europe during the course of the sessions, Peking predicted a protracted debate in Vienna, noting sarcastically that many delegates have rented apartments with "longterm leases" and plan to stay in Vienna "til they retire."

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INDOCHINA

DRV SAYS OUTCOME OF KISSINGER-LE DUC THO TALKS DEPENDS ON U.S.

The 13 December U.S.-DRV announcement that Secretary Kissinger and Le Duc Tho would meet in Paris in a week prompted articles in Hanoi's two leading papers on the 14th which insisted that the United States bears the "entire" responsibility for the situation in Vietnam and the outcome of the talks. Le Duc Tho's statement on his arrival at the Paris airport on the 17th similarly placed the blame for the breakdown of the peace agreement on the United States. Professing that he had come to Paris with "good will and a serious attitude"--the very words used to describe the DRV position prior to the Paris talks last May--Tho made clear that he felt the progress of the meeting would depend on the "correct attitude" of the United States.

Hanoi's stress upon U.S. responsibility is in line with a series of high-level official DRV and PRG statements beginning in mid-October which seemed aimed at placing the blame on the United States for the deteriorating Vietnam situation and at pressing it to help put an end to the intensified military action. Hanoi's concern in this regard was demonstrated most recently in an 8 December NHAN DAN Commentator article* which took Secretary Kissinger to task for viewing the Vietnam conflict as a civil war which the Vietnamese themselves must end.

The articles in the DRV party paper NHAN DAN and the army paper QUAN DOI NHAN DAN on the 14th said that the scheduled 20 December meeting was proposed by the United States and explained that DRV agreement to the talks "is a diplomatic move" to force U.S. and Saigon implementation of the peace agreement. Tho underscored Hanoi's apparent sensitivity about the origin of the proposal by leading off his Paris statement with a denial of an "untrue report," allegedly spread by U.S. and Saigon officials in Paris, that the DRV called for the meeting.

Tho went on in his statement with a routine indictment of the United States, charging continued U.S. military involvement in South Vietnam, the introduction of U.S. military advisors into the South disguised as civilians, massive U.S. military aid to Saigon, and U.S. failure to contribute to North Vietnam's postwar reconstruction. Unlike the press articles he made no

* The article is discussed in the TRENDS of 12 December 1973, page 9.

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reference to the spate of U.S. reconnaissance overflights of DRV territory that have recently been protested in statements issued by the DRV Foreign Ministry spokesmen. In a further recital of oft-repeated charges, he claimed that Saigon, "encouraged and assisted by the U.S.," has engaged in land-grabbing operations, terrorized the populace, refused to return political prisoners, and created obstacles preventing the proper functioning of the Paris consultative conference and the Joint Military Commission in Saigon.

Affirming the good intentions of the DRV and PRG in implementing the Paris agreement and the 13 June joint communique, Tho declared that the DRV and PRG could not "sit with folded arms" and watch Saigon continue its "grave violations" of the agreement. He added that the DRV supports the stand of the PRG to use "all energetic means to duly punish all acts of war" by Saigon.

In making the standard accusations of U.S. and Saigon peace agreement violations, the NHAN DAN and QUAN DOI NHAN DAN articles on the 14th both included charges of U.S. "encroachment" of DRV territory with reconnaissance aircraft and warships. The most recent alleged overflights were on the 17th--the same day Tho spoke in Paris--and were protested in a standard DRV Foreign Ministry spokesman statement on the following day.

Outright violation of DRV territorial waters has not been charged in protests involving U.S. warships. For example, a 2 October foreign ministry spokesman statement alleged that the U.S.S. Hancock was present 120 miles off the coast of Nghe An Province and that six U.S. destroyers were 60 to 80 miles off the same coast on 30 September, and the presence of the U.S.S. Midway "close" to the coast of North Vietnam off Quang Binh Province on 6 December was protested in a spokesman statement on the 7th. In neither case was there any mention of encroachment of territorial waters. (A DRV Foreign Ministry spokesman statement issued in September 1964 indicated the extent of Hanoi's territorial claims when it took issue with the United States for not recognizing a 12-mile limit to DRV territorial waters and claimed this was an attempt to justify repeated intrusions by U.S. war vessels.)

NORMALIZATION OF
U.S.-DRV RELATIONS

In setting forth rewards that could accrue if the United States "strictly respects and scrupulously implements" the Paris agreement and the joint communique, both the NHAN DAN and QUAN DOI NHAN DAN articles offered the possibility of "normalizing

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U.S.-DRV relations"--a goal Hanoi has ignored since the period immediately after the signing of the 13 June joint communique. Le Duc Tho did not raise the question of normalization of relations in his 17 December statement, although he had in his statement on his arrival in Paris last May for the talks which led to the joint communique.

USSR SCORES U.S. SUPPORT FOR SAIGON, EXPRESSES HOPE FOR TALKS

Two days before the scheduled Kissinger-Le Duc Tho meeting, Soviet President Podgorny expressed Moscow's hope for the success of peace-seeking efforts and focused responsibility on the United States with unusual directness by accusing Washington of supporting Saigon violations of the Paris peace agreement. Podgorny's critical remarks, in a speech welcoming a visiting PRG delegation, were consistent with Moscow press and radio comment in the past month, but went beyond previous speeches by Soviet leaders. Kosygin had atypically castigated U.S. support for Saigon, however, in a 1 October joint communique on his visit to Yugoslavia.

Speaking at an 18 December dinner for PRG Advisory Council Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho, Podgorny accused the United States of supporting systematic Saigon sabotage of the Paris agreement, and warned that attacks on communist territory had brought about "a dangerous exacerbation of the situation in South Vietnam." Maintaining that the establishment of peace requires full implementation of the Paris agreement, Podgorny added: "We hope that the efforts that are being undertaken at the present stage with the aim of lessening tensions in Vietnam will produce positive results, and that the interested sides will find the appropriate ways for the realization of the agreements reached in Paris." He went on to affirm Soviet support for the Vietnamese struggle and willingness to "do everything depending on it to facilitate" the establishment of lasting peace and implementation of the "lawful rights and aspirations" of the Vietnamese.

BACKGROUND Following the signing of the January Paris agreement, Moscow was very circumspect in its treatment of the U.S. role in Vietnam. While there was some criticism of U.S. actions in propaganda prior to the 13 June joint communique, Soviet leaders did not voice such censure, and even low-level press and radio attacks were dropped during

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the first three months after the joint communique. (During the period of this low-key approach--from mid-June to mid-September--Moscow failed to mention even alleged Saigon violations in the communique on DRV First Secretary Le Duan's July visit. The issue of Saigon violations had been raised in a Podgorny speech and the communique on a visit of PRG Foreign Minister Nguyen Thi Binh in March and early April, and such official criticism of Saigon was revived again beginning with the 21 September communique on Brezhnev's visit to Bulgaria.)

In the weeks after direct criticism of U.S. support for Saigon was voiced in the 1 October joint USSR-Yugoslav communique on Kosygin's visit to Belgrade, the issue of the U.S. role was broached only indirectly by Soviet leaders: Brezhnev, in a 27 November speech in India, warned against "foreign interference" in Indochina, and Suslov, in a speech on the following day, claimed Saigon was encouraged in its violations by "imperialist circles." Low-level Soviet reports in October and November did begin to cite alleged examples of illegitimate U.S. activities in Vietnam, and since mid-November U.S. actions have drawn comment in the central press. Thus, RED STAR on 18 November, IZVESTIYA on 24 November, and NEW TIMES on 7 December condemned the United States for allegedly supporting Saigon violations of the peace agreement. More recently this charge was raised in a 15 December PRAVDA article, timed to coincide with Le Duc Tho's arrival in Moscow en route to Paris.

LE DUC THO During his stopover in Moscow, DRV envoy
STOPOVER Le Duc Tho on 16 December had talks, in a
 "friendly and heartfelt" atmosphere, with Soviet
Central Committee Secretary Katushev. On previous stopovers
Tho usually had met with Politburo member Kirilenko as well as
Katushev. A TASS report on the Tho meeting with Katushev did
not include any Soviet criticism of the United States, but
noted that Tho had demanded the United States and Saigon to
strictly observe the Paris agreement and had claimed that the
PRG "reserves the right to take necessary measures" to protect
PRG-controlled areas from any "hostile encroachments." The
Soviet side, according to TASS, reaffirmed its support for the
DRV-PRG stand on the fulfillment of the Paris agreements "by
all sides" and "strongly condemned" Saigon's continuing
violations.

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PRC PRESS REITERATES SUPPORT FOR VIETNAM; LE DUC THO FETED

Increased Peking backing for the position of its Vietnamese allies, first reflected during PRG leader Nguyen Huu Tho's visit to the PRC last month, was again apparent in a 1 December PEOPLE'S DAILY Commentator article endorsing recent DRV and PRG foreign ministry statements. The article is the first such authoritative Chinese endorsement of Vietnamese protests of U.S.-Saigon peace violations since last summer, although in the months following the January Paris agreement Peking had regularly seconded high-level Vietnamese statements on developments in Vietnam. Thus, DRV and PRG government statements of 30 March and 1 April had prompted a 3 April PEOPLE'S DAILY editorial, while PRG and DRV foreign ministry statements at the end of July were endorsed in a 3 August PEOPLE'S DAILY Commentator article. By contrast, the outpouring of harsh, high-level Vietnamese protests beginning in October and including PRG and DRV government statements of 9 and 10 November, had heretofore elicited no seconding Chinese comment.

Unlike the Peking comment earlier this year endorsing Vietnamese statements, the 8 December Commentator article did not refer to specific statements, instead seconding the denunciations issued in unspecified DRV and PRG foreign ministry protests against recent U.S. and Saigon violations. Reflecting the heightened intensity of Vietnamese criticism of the United States in their statements, Commentator castigated the United States in stronger terms than those used in Peking's earlier endorsing comment. The article accused Washington of having uttered "truculent military threats" and of "brazen provocations" against the Vietnamese people; however, it did not in its own name go beyond demanding that Washington "scrupulously implement" the Paris agreement.

It is possible that the revived Chinese willingness in the Commentator article to second Vietnamese official protests may be related to Sino-Vietnamese discussions during the 18-23 November PRG delegation's visit to China. During the visit, Peking at first seemed characteristically reluctant to associate itself with its allies' comprehensive condemnation of U.S.-Saigon violations, but the Chinese ultimately agreed to a joint Sino-Vietnamese denunciation of such infractions in the joint communique at the conclusion of the visit.*

* The change in Peking's position is discussed in the TRENDS of 28 November 1973, pages 14-15.

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LE DUC THO Peking media carried the 13 December Hanoi announce-
STOPOVER ment of the plans for the Kissinger-Le Duc Tho
 meeting, but, as usual, offered no comment.

Le Duc Tho's Peking stopover on the 14th enroute to Paris was marked by a "cordial and friendly" conversation with Tho's usual escort, Politburo member Chang Chun-chiao, who also hosted a dinner. The head of the CCP International Liaison Department led the official delegation which went to the airport on Tho's arrival and departure.

Le Duc Tho did not meet with Chou En-lai during his stay in Peking. While this is the first time Chou failed to see Tho since a stopover enroute to Europe in June 1971, there is a more recent precedent: Chou did not attend ceremonies in October when DRV Premier Pham Van Dong passed through Peking on his way to East Europe, but he greeted Dong and hosted a banquet during his stopover enroute back to Hanoi in early November.

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PRG, DRV STRESS 'ILLEGALITY' OF HELICOPTER AMBUSH CLAIMS

Initial Vietnamese communist reaction to the 15 December incident near Saigon in which U.S. and GVN members of a body-recovery team were killed and injured has focused on denials that there was any Four-Party Joint Military Commission (JMC) authorization for team operations. Comment rejects "slanderous allegations" without acknowledging allied charges. Communist media are not known even to have acknowledged thus far that anyone was killed or injured in the "so-called attack" on three helicopters in Binh Chanh District, Gia Dinh Province, and have referred to Saigon and Western reports only in general terms. Comment lays stress on alleged previous instances of "illegal activities" conducted by the United States in South Vietnam "in disguise" as ICCS personnel or the use of Four-Party JMC markings without joint agreement.

Press communique issued by Liberation Press Agency and the Vietnam News Agency and broadcast by Liberation Radio on the 16th provided the first media reaction to the attack, citing Western reports of a Four-Party JMC helicopter being fired on but denying that any "Four-Party JMC team" helicopter had been sent on a mission. The PLA communique flatly asserted: "So far, there has been no agreement in the Four-Party Joint Military Team on appointing any group of this team to carry out a mission in South Vietnam." A PRG Foreign Ministry spokesman's statement on the incident on the 16th acknowledged that the United States on 6 December had requested PRG participation in a search for a helicopter that had previously crashed in Binh Chanh, but added that the PRG side "on several occasions" had rejected the proposal. A DRV Foreign Ministry spokesman's statement on the 18th, covering essentially the same points, concluded with a demand that the United States and Saigon respond to DRV and PRG proposals to facilitate the search for missing persons. Both statements maintained that, without confirmation by both South Vietnamese parties to the peace agreement as to which side controls an area where a search is to take place, such searches are illegal. The communists took strong exception to the U.S. contention that such teams were under the auspices of the Four-Party JMC, stressing that "no agreement whatsoever has so far been reached" in regard to designating any Four-Party JMC teams to search for war dead and missing.

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The strongest language concerning the incident came in an LPA commentary of the 16th. It warned that if the United States "unilaterally" joins Saigon in searching for missing persons, it has "no right to complain if anything should happen, and the United States must be held fully responsible if anything does happen." The same commentary, in responding to Defense Secretary Schlesinger's remarks on the incident, terms them "worn-out threats against our people."

A Hanoi radio commentary on the 18th complained that U.S. military personnel have used helicopters "bearing ICCS and Four-Party JMC markings to go here and there in South Vietnam" and concluded that the "slandorous allegations" concerning the latest incident are aimed at "concealing their violations of the agreement and continuing their illegal activities in disguise."

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PRG HUNGARIAN VISIT CONCLUDED; UN STATUS FOR PRG DISCUSSED

The 10-14 December visit to Hungary by a PRG delegation, led by Advisory Council Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho and including Foreign Minister Nguyen Thi Binh, followed the pattern of the group's visit to Poland during the previous week. The delegation was hosted by President Losonczi and received by First Secretary Kadar. It concluded an agreement on economic aid for the PRG in 1974 and signed a final joint communique labeling the visit a "splendid success" and offering Hungarian recognition of the PRG's status as the sole representative of the South Vietnamese people. The communique, like the one signed earlier in Warsaw, also quoted Tho's hosts as condemning violations of the Paris accord by Saigon, "with the support of the imperialists."

The question of PRG representation in the United Nations, which Warsaw had said was discussed by the Polish and PRG foreign ministers, was reported by Budapest media to have been raised again during the Hungarian visit. Vietnamese communist media have not mentioned the issue in reports on the two visits. According to Budapest media, Foreign Minister Binh discussed the issue of UN observer status during talks with the Hungarian foreign minister and stated, at a press conference on the 13th, that international forums such as the United Nations should be used to press for implementation of the Paris agreement and that the Paris accord had recognized the PRG and thus given it the right to UN observer status.*

* See the TRENDS of 12 December 1973, page 15, for background on the question of the PRG's bid for UN observer status.

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U S S R

SHCHERBITSKIY'S PURGE OF UKRAINIAN OBLAST LEADERS CONTINUES

Ukrainian First Secretary Shcherbitskiy's purge of Ukrainian oblast leaders has continued to gain momentum with the removal of two obkom first secretaries and four obkom secretaries since the end of November.

Since Shcherbitskiy became party chief in May 1972 a total of nine obkom first secretaries, twenty-three obkom secretaries, and four oblast executive committee chairmen have been replaced, representing a much higher rate of turnover than in the previous year and a half under Shelest. Five of the obkom first secretaries were removed from office under criticism for such shortcomings as corruption, poor economic leadership, ideological negligence, improper selection of cadres, and incorrect style of work. Shcherbitskiy's role in the purge may be gauged by the large number of replacements brought in from his native oblast of Dnepropetrovsk and from the Ukrainian Central Committee apparatus. In this respect, the Ukrainian purge differs sharply from the practice of advancing local cadres that Moscow has generally followed since 1966.

The most recent purge occurred in the important industrial oblast of Voroshilovgrad, where longtime First Secretary V. V. Shevchenko was dismissed on 14 December for unspecified "serious shortcomings." The 14 December Kiev radio account reported Shcherbitskiy's attendance at the installation of B. T. Goncharenko, head of the Ukrainian Central Committee section for machine building, as new first secretary. Signs of dissatisfaction with the Voroshilovgrad leadership had been evident in July 1972, when Second Secretary V. N. Azarov was removed and Shcherbitskiy protege A. A. Ulanov was elected one of the obkom secretaries. At the April 1973 Ukrainian Central Committee plenum Shcherbitskiy sharply criticized the oblast for lags in agricultural production and for serious cadre errors.

In late November, Lvov First Secretary V. S. Kutsevol was transferred to a relatively minor republic post in the wake of nationalist disturbances in that oblast.* The Lvov obkom secretary for

* See the TRENDS of 5 December 1973, pages 17-18.

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agriculture was also pensioned off at the same time. On 7 December the press announced the replacement of the obkom second secretaries of Vinnitsa and Chernigov and of the Zhitomir secretary for ideology, all without explanation.

PUBLIC CRITICISM The Ukrainian oblasts hardest hit by the purge--Chernovtsy, Kherson, Poltava, Odessa, Lvov and Voroshilovgrad--have also come under sharp public criticism. At the April 1973 Ukrainian Central Committee plenum Shcherbitskiy criticized mistakes in the selection of officials in trade and public catering in Odessa, Poltava and Chernovtsy oblasts and the city of Kiev. Editorials on the plenum in the 24 April PRAVDA UKRAINY and RABOCHAYA GAZETA spoke of violations of party and state discipline, misuse of positions, improper conduct and laxity toward these abuses in Odessa, Kherson, Poltava, Voroshilovgrad and Chernovtsy. In the 31 August PRAVDA Shcherbitskiy wrote that the Ukrainian Central Committee recently had to fire and "strictly punish" some leaders of Odessa, Kherson and Chernovtsy who had committed serious errors.

The Chernovtsy obkom first secretary had been removed in June 1972 and demoted to a minor republic post, and the oblast executive committee chairman was removed without explanation in June 1973. The Kherson obkom first secretary was fired for "serious shortcomings" in October 1972, and the obkom agriculture secretary was dismissed for similar reasons in December 1972. Shcherbitskiy supervised the ouster of the Poltava obkom first secretary at a January 1973 obkom plenum which exposed massive agricultural shortfalls. Tolerance of nationalist deviations was exposed by the new obkom first secretary at a 23 March 1973 oblast meeting, and the incumbent obkom second secretary was pensioned off at an 8 June obkom plenum dealing with cadre errors and economic shortcomings.

The Odessa obkom second secretary was fired for shortcomings at a 5 April obkom plenum. An oblast aktiv meeting the following day exposed shortcomings in economic leadership and ideological work and called for intensified struggle against Ukrainian nationalism. In his April plenum speech Shcherbitskiy extensively criticized "certain former leaders" of Odessa for allowing some sectors to become filled with "profit seekers," and during a 18 May visit to the oblast Shcherbitskiy conferred with local police officials on "strengthening socialist legality." The Kiev gorkom secretary for trade and consumer goods was fired

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for shortcomings at an 18 May gorkom plenum following Shcherbitskiy's criticism of his sphere of responsibility at the April plenum.

Shcherbitskiy has now appointed new first secretaries in nine of the 25 Ukrainian oblasts, new second secretaries in eight oblasts, and both first and second secretaries in Chernovtsy, Poltava and Voroshilovgrad oblasts. The new appointees include three Shcherbitskiy proteges from Dnepropetrovsk (Lvov First Secretary V. F. Dobryk, Odessa second secretary V. A. Artamonov, and Voroshilovgrad secretary A. A. Ulanov). Shcherbitskiy has also drawn on the Ukrainian Central Committee apparatus in replacing the Poltava obkom first and second secretaries, the Voroshilovgrad obkom first secretary, the Chernovtsy obkom second secretary, the Kiev gorkom ideology secretary, and an Ivano-Frankovsk obkom secretary.

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CHINA

PRC BROADCAST ENDORSES "PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT" OF TAIWAN ISSUE

Using language identical to that which outlined the U.S. position in the 28 February 1972 Shanghai communique marking President Nixon's visit, a 13 December PRC broadcast beamed to Taiwan endorsed "peaceful settlement" of the Taiwan issue. The broadcast was pegged to the 37th anniversary of the Sian Incident, in which Chiang Kai-shek was captured by rebel Nationalist forces and freed after agreeing with Chou En-lai to form a united front against the Japanese. The radio stated that "peaceful settlement of the Taiwan issue conforms with the interests of the whole people of China." The language marks a change from Peking's practice in recent months of calling for "peaceful unification."*

Peking's advocacy of "peaceful settlement" comes in the wake of its major shift on Taiwan in the 14 November communique marking Secretary Kissinger's 10-14 November visit to China. In that communique Peking had dropped the detailed attention paid to Sino-U.S. differences over Taiwan in the 1972 Shanghai communique, substituting a brief declaration--without specific reference to Taiwan--that Peking-Washington relations could be normalized only on the basis of affirming the principle of one China.

The anniversary of the Sian incident was not noted by the Chinese media last year. The incident itself is significant as the sole instance of CCP negotiations with Chiang Kai-shek that led to a successful peaceful resolution of their bilateral problems. The 13 December article dwelt on the historical importance of the CCP-KMT talks at Sian, pointing out that the intercession by Mao and particularly by Chou En-lai had persuaded Chiang to agree to call off the war with the communists and unite with them against Japan. It significantly added that had the communist leaders not acted according to "the national interest," Chiang surely would have perished at the hands of KMT generals who, "on the pretext of rescuing Chiang Kai-shek...were actually trying to destroy Chiang so they could take over." Drawing a direct parallel with the present need for CCP-KMT negotiations over the Taiwan issue, the article affirmed that "the appeal of CCP-KMT peace talks has become steadily louder on Taiwan" and it urged responsible officials on the island to work toward a "peaceful settlement."

* For a discussion of this issue see the TRENDS of 15 August 1973, pages 15-16.

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NOTES

FRG-CZECHOSLOVAK TREATY: Soviet, Czechoslovak, and East German comment on the FRG-Czechoslovak treaty signed by Chancellor Brandt and Premier Strougal in Prague on 11 December refrained from any reference to the contentious issue of West Berlin representation that had stalled the treaty signing for two months. The three countries' praise for the document varied in tone. A typical Soviet commentary, in PRAVDA on the 13th, simply hailed the treaty as a new success for detente and a further step in the "normalization" process that began with the signing of the Soviet-West German treaty in 1970. In contrast, Czechoslovak comment underscored the difficult and "complicated" negotiations which preceded the accord and stressed the continued opposition to it by opponents of detente in Europe. Strougal, in a Federal Assembly speech on the 13th, reacted defensively to alleged "bourgeois" arguments as to which side was "the loser" or "the winner" in the treaty. East Berlin was more explicit than Moscow or Prague, pointing out in NEUES DEUTSCHLAND on the 13th that "a realistic approach by the ruling FRG circles was a prerequisite" to conclusion of the treaty.

Peking's approval of closer ties between Moscow's East European allies and NATO countries was indicated anew as NCNA reported factually on the 14th that the treaty signed during Brandt's visit to Prague nullified the 1938 Munich pact and expanded bilateral cooperation.

PRC REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES: Recent PRC propaganda for the first time has suggested a permanent role for revolutionary committees; NCNA on 7 December and a Szechwan broadcast on 12 December designated the committees as "revolutionary new things." Previous PRC discussion of "new things" has stressed that they are permanent reforms which must be defended, but revolutionary committees had not previously been placed in the "new things" category. NCNA on the 7th transmitted two articles defending revolutionary committees. One described the experience of a Hopei commune which had given no responsibilities to its revolutionary committee, but then realized its error, recognized the revolutionary committee as a revolutionary new thing, and allowed the revolutionary committee its full role. This was said to have produced "more practical" decisions by the party committee, since its decisions now incorporate the advice of

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the masses on the revolutionary committee. An accompanying article recalled Wang Hung-wen's party congress injunction against a "joint conference" of leadership bodies, stressing that the party and revolutionary committee functions must be kept separate. In defending the revolutionary committees as cultural revolution "new things," Chengtu radio on 12 December called for putting the committees on a sound organizational basis and giving full play to their various functions.

CHINA'S HARVEST: NCNA on 18 December claimed that China this year has reaped a "record harvest of all grains" despite natural disasters. The article did not specify a total grain figure, merely noting that output was "more than double" the 1949 harvest--a harvest of approximately 119 million tons. Peking's claimed output last year was 240 million tons. PRC reports of provincial crop yields by both NCNA and local broadcasts had previously indicated a record crop in 10 provinces: Szechwan, Shansi, Shensi, Kweichow, Kiangsu, Hupeh, Kirin, Honan, Hopei and Shantung. In addition good harvests have been reported in Inner Mongolia, Heilungkiang, Liaoning, Sinkiang, Anhwei and Tibet. More provincial records have been claimed thus far than at the comparable time in the previous record year 1971. Provinces that have provided statistical comparisons with last year's poor crop have claimed increases ranging from six to nearly a hundred percent for grain and from 10 to 65 percent for cotton.

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KOREAN COASTAL DISPUTE: A 17 December "authorized" statement by North Korea's KCNA, concerning access to five ROK-controlled islands along its southwest coast and the legitimacy of KPA naval patrols in that area, seems to reflect another step in a campaign for wider recognition of 12-mile territorial limits that began 1 December. The new KCNA statement, after detailing alleged South Korean naval gunboat "grave military provocations" on the 15th and 16th and referring back to 1953 Korean armistice provisions concerning control of coastal waters, states: "It is clear that the routine patrol duty performed by our naval vessels in the territorial waters of our side north of the extension of the military demarcation line cannot be an 'intrusion'" into "non-existent" South Korean territorial waters. The statement does not clarify precisely what line extension it refers to, but it is highly unlikely that it refers to the unofficial "Northern Limit Line" (NLL). The NLL was established unilaterally by the United States in 1964 to separate the naval activities of North and South and has been honored in practice by both sides, but it falls within the 12-mile limit claimed by the North. Since opening the current campaign by its 1 December announcement in the Military Armistice Commission that sea visits to the five islands required DPRK approval, Pyongyang media have routinely denounced South Korean naval operations in the area. While Moscow and Peking support Pyongyang's 12-mile claim, neither has acknowledged its current claim to control access to the islands.

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A P P E N D I X

MOSCOW, PEKING BROADCAST STATISTICS 10 - 16 DECEMBER 1973

<u>Moscow (2689 items)</u>		<u>Peking (1127 items)</u>	
Supreme Soviet Session, 12-14 Dec.	(1%) 17%	Domestic Issues	(47%) 40%
China	(4%) 5%	Nepal King in PRC	(8%) 13%
CPSU Central Committee Plenum, 10-11 Dec.	(--) 4%	Korea	(3%) 9%
Middle East	(5%) 4%	Indochina	(20%) 8%
Indochina	(2%) 4%	[Cambodia UN Membership Debate	(11%) 5%]
[Le Duc Tho Moscow Stopover	(--) 2%]	Europe	(--) 5%
NATO Council Session, Brussels	(--) 2%	[NATO, EC Meetings	(--) 4%]
		Middle East	(4%) 4%

These statistics are based on the voicecast commentary output of the Moscow and Peking domestic and international radio services. The term "commentary" is used to denote the lengthy item—radio talk, speech, press article or editorial, government or party statement, or diplomatic note. Items of extensive reportage are counted as commentaries.

Figures in parentheses indicate volume of comment during the preceding week.

Topics and events given major attention in terms of volume are not always discussed in the body of the Trends. Some may have been covered in prior issues; in other cases the propaganda content may be routine or of minor significance.