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LBJ Welcomes Soviet Envoy's 'Peaceful Coexistence' Pledge

By Murrey Marder
Staff Reporter

President Johnson welcomed a pledge from the Kremlin's new leaders yesterday to seek "a more solid peace" by saying that the United States stands ready to pursue that quest with actions.

Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin quickly carried to the White House a statement that Moscow's policy of "peaceful coexistence" with the West is unchanged by the sudden departure of Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev.

The first test of the Soviet Union's declared intention, the President pointedly implied to Dobrynin, can come in next month's showdown in the United Nations on payment of Soviet peacekeeping debts. That issue has raised threats of a Soviet walkout from the U.N.

In a double-climax, the Johnson-Dobrynin meeting came just after news flashes of the explosion of a first nuclear

device by Red China, the Soviet Union's archrival for Communist world leadership.

President Johnson quickly said in a televised announcement that "This explosion comes as no surprise to the United States" and "its mili-

Text of President's statement on A-explosion in China. Page A11.

tary significance should not be overestimated."

Mr. Johnson called the blast "a tragedy for the Chinese people" because of its drain on scarce resources. He also called it a subject of dismay for "all humanity" because it contaminates the atmosphere while most nations have agreed to ban such tests and seek paths toward disarmament.

A third major development that preoccupied the President and his principal advisers in one of the most hectic combin-

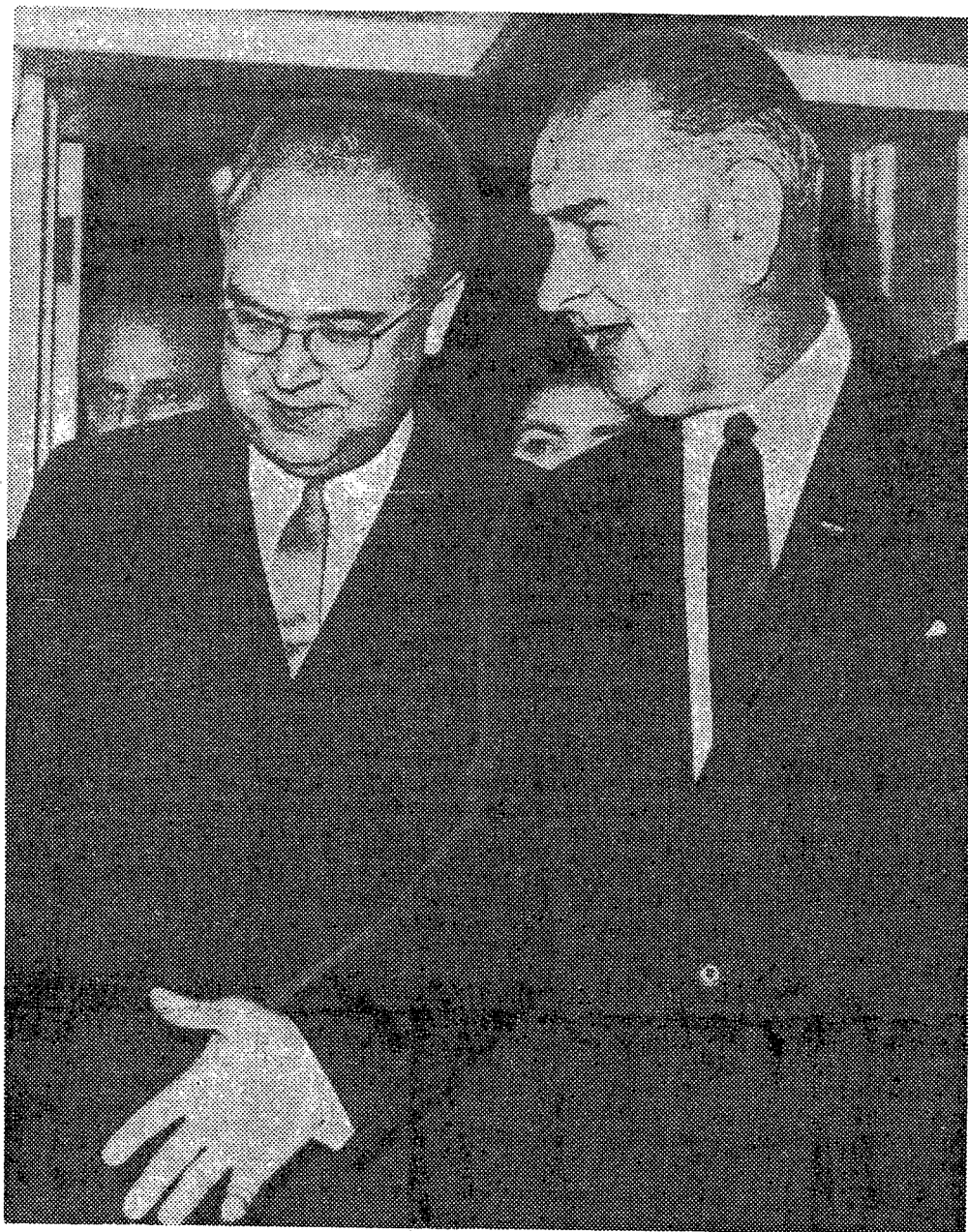
ations of foreign policy news in years was the knife-edge victory of the Labor Party in the British elections.

The narrowness of Labor's victory is an added measure of uncertainty on the international scene, although Labor's success produced no surprise or particular dismay here. The United States worked well with a Labor government in the years after World War II. President Johnson sent a message of "warmest congratulations" to new British Prime Minister Harold Wilson and the President later telephoned him for a personal chat.

Mr. Johnson's meeting with the Soviet Ambassador in a 45-minute discussion got the United States and the new Soviet government off to a courteous and hopeful enough beginning.

American officials, however, said the United States is still very much in the dark about the style and intentions of the new Soviet leaders, Leonid Brezhnev and Alexei Kosygin. Moreover, it is expected to be some time before the real direction of the new leadership in the Kremlin becomes meaningfully evident. It is standard procedure for new governments to as-

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Associated Press

President Johnson talks with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin outside the Chief Executive's office after a long con-

ference. The Russian envoy called yesterday to discuss this week's changes in leadership in the Soviet Union.

sure all others that the policy of the new team is no change.

The assault on Khrushchev in the early editions of Pravda last night for "hare-brained scheming, immature conclusions," and the rest of the indictment was aimed ostensibly more at his personal manner of leadership and his manner of executing policies, rather than the policies themselves.

The condemnation gave no sound clues to what Soviet policies may be altered or reversed, although Pravda repeated, as Dobrynin did to President Johnson yesterday, a determination to continue to seek reduction of tension with the West.

American officials noted with interest the "warm greetings" that Communist China sent to the new Soviet leaders yesterday, and evaluated it as the start of a probable attempt to repair the huge breach between Moscow and Peking.

But it would be erroneous, American sources stressed, to assume that the gap could be quickly or easily closed.

They noted that Communist China was still stressing "Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism" and the Soviet Union was still stressing its adherence to the decisions reached by the 20th,

21st and 22d Communist Party Congresses.

Both of these mean different things to Moscow and Peking.

Moscow employs its emphasis to mean support of its theory of peaceful coexistence and a belief that communism can triumph without the inevitability of war.

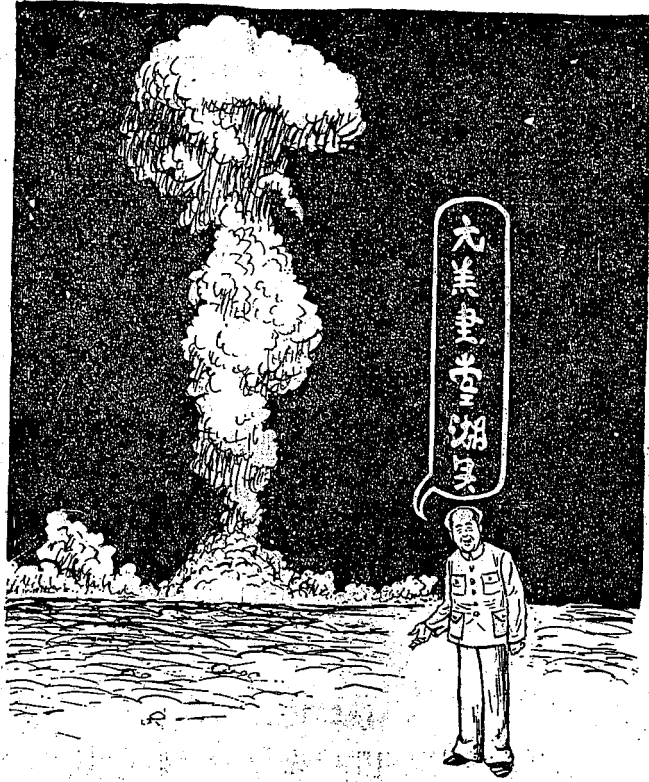
Peking means that all national parties must join in a militant world policy that offers no quarter to "capitalists and imperialists."

President Johnson and Ambassador Dobrynin came out of the White House meeting yesterday morning in good humor. Leading Dobrynin to the newsmen and cameramen, the President told him, with a smile, "Now protect yourself." He showed the envoy his

hands bruised by welcomers on the campaign trail, saying, "See what happened to me."

Dobrynin said Soviet policy will continue "unchanged," following the policies set by the last three Communist Party Congresses. "As you know," he said, "the fundamental foundation of our policy is peaceful coexistence between the different states with different systems, and further relaxation of tension."

The President's meeting with Dobrynin was preceded by a meeting with his major security advisers. The President will hold another meeting with the National Security Council today to keep abreast of the sudden international developments. His campaign schedule has been curtailed for that reason.



Interlandi from Los Angeles Times

Translation: "You were expecting, maybe, an inscrutable bomb?"