

# NIXON SEES RISK OF ISOLATIONISM IF DISENGAGEMENT IS TOO SWIFT; SOVIET SCORES HIS VIETNAM PLAN

## WARNING ISSUE

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### Moscow Says Stepup in War Will Affect U.S.-Russian Ties

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MOSCOW, Feb. 25 — The Soviet Government denounced President Nixon's "Vietnamization" policy today and said the increased fighting in Indochina "cannot fail to affect Soviet-American relations."

The statement, coming on the day of Mr. Nixon's message on foreign affairs, seemed to indicate Soviet exasperation with the situation in Indochina. It was also construed as a warning to Washington that it could expect no help from Moscow in ending the conflict in Southeast Asia.

The Soviet Union at the same time appeared to be urging the United States to show restraint and not to resume the bombing of North Vietnam.

Affirming its opposition to any international forum to settle the Indochinese conflict, the Soviet Union said that it was prepared "to continue giving all necessary aid" to both Hanoi and "the patriots of Indochina." This was the first public Soviet commitment to help the local Communist forces in Laos and Cambodia, organized by the North Vietnamese.

#### First Official Reaction

The statement, printed on the front page of Izvestia, the Government paper, and distributed by Tass, the Soviet press agency, came two and a half weeks after the initial South Vietnamese incursion into Laos. Soviet officials and the news media have condemned the action, but today's was the first official Government reaction. It was expressed in firm but relatively moderate language for such statements.

Western diplomats, in their initial assessment, said the document was probably meant, at least in part, to reassure North Vietnam of continued Soviet political and material backing. The Russians, who tend to regard the North Vietnamese these days as more influenced by Peking than by Moscow, have been much less vocal in their official support than has Peking.

Communist China has reacted

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sharply over the last two weeks to the incursion into Laos, and has made veiled warnings to the United States that it might enter directly into the conflict if the fighting threatened its security. United States Government officials, however, have stressed that the fighting, in the southern area of Laos, was far from China's borders.

The reference in the statement to damage to Soviet-American relations was seen here as a possible effort to give support to antiwar forces in the United States, which have argued from time to time that the Indochina war was preventing better relations with Moscow. Soviet-American relations in recent months have been damaged more by the actions of Jewish militant groups in the United States than by the situation in Indochina.

#### Acceptance of Terms Urged

Moscow emphasized in the statement that the way to end the war was through acceptance of the terms proposed by the Indochinese Communists, basically complete American withdrawal and a coalition government without the participation of the present Saigon leaders.

Commenting on the current invasion of Laos, the Soviet Government said the United States was carrying out "a cynical policy of Vietnamization" to fool public opinion. It said that this policy uses the South Vietnamese forces as "the direct executor of American plans in Laos, making Asians fight Asians."

The Soviet statement said that Mr. Nixon had "unequivocally" stated at his Feb. 17 news conference that he did not rule out the use of American air power against North Vietnam.

#### 'Dangerous Delusion'

"Judging by everything, the United States leadership seeks to prepare public opinion for the idea that the United States can, it seems, act in Indochina with impunity, that everything will go off all right for the American aggressors," it said.

"This is a dangerous delusion, fraught with the most serious consequences for the United States," the statement said, promising that the Soviet Union will help North Vietnam in repelling any "United States aggression."

"The actions of the United States, which so lightly discards its international commitments, undermine the very foundations on which interstate relations are built," it said. "The United States is taking upon itself a grave responsibility for the new complications in the international situation. Such actions cannot fail to affect Soviet-American relations, too."