

Soviet Gives No Sign It Will Act on Laos

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MOSCOW, Feb. 9—The Soviet Union continued to denounce the United States today for the allied incursion into Laos but gave no sign that it would take any action to bolster the Communist cause in Indochina.

Pravda, the Communist party newspaper, devoted its front page editorial to what it termed "the stepped-up imperialist aggression" throughout Indochina. It charged that American aircraft had dropped bombs on densely populated areas—an action that "can only be called genocide."

Western diplomats who have been following the Soviet reaction closely, said that they had noted no change in Moscow's rather aloof attitude to-

ward the latest events in Indochina.

This policy, made clear at the time of the allied incursion into Cambodia last spring, calls for strong verbal support and some military and economic aid to the "patriotic forces," which are privately acknowledged by Soviet officials to be directed by North Vietnam, with the active participation of Hanoi's army.

But because of Hanoi's increasing ties to Peking in the last year and a half, the Russians have shown a growing coolness toward any actions that might involve them more deeply in the situation.

The diplomats believe that the Kremlin is convinced that Hanoi—backed and encouraged by Peking—is trying to win a protracted war in Indochina

that will lead in the end to increased Chinese influence in the area. The Russians are thought to be concerned privately that Hanoi might be extending itself in the area, but are refraining from any public criticism of Hanoi's policy.

Most Western diplomats believe that the Kremlin would welcome a new international conference to discuss a political solution in Indochina. But the Russians are prevented from even discussing such a meeting by Hanoi's refusal to take part in such a forum. Soviet officials, when asked about Moscow's reluctance to join with Britain in calling a conference, inevitably say it is not up to them.

Nevertheless, Moscow remains politically committed to supporting the North Vietnamese operations and to continue its programs of military and economic aid.