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PODGORNY GIVES PLEDGE IN HANOI

Soviet President Affirms
Support Against U.S.

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HONG KONG, Oct. 4—President Nikolai V. Podgorny of the Soviet Union gave the Vietnamese Communists a strong pledge of continued support and assistance today in their war against the United States and other opposing forces in Indochina.

Mr. Podgorny, who is on a state visit to Hanoi, expressed full Soviet agreement with Vietnamese Communist demands for ending the war on the basis of a complete American withdrawal from Indochina. He assured the Vietnamese that the Soviet Union would continue to give them "assistance on all levels—military, political and diplomatic."

Mr. Podgorny arrived in Hanoi late yesterday via New Delhi and Rangoon, to an effusive welcome.

He is the first chief of state to visit the North Vietnamese capital in a long time and the first top-ranking Soviet official to come to North Vietnam since Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin attended memorial rites in Hanoi for President Ho Chi Minh two years ago.

One Target Is China

In addition to displaying support for the Vietnamese Communists, Mr. Podgorny plainly has the objective in mind, in coming to Hanoi, of asserting Soviet influence and countering that of China.

His visit was arranged and announced after Peking and Washington had revealed that President Nixon was to visit the Chinese Communist capital before next May.

The news of the forthcoming Nixon visit and China's other steps to relax relations with the United States clearly offended the Communists of both North and South Vietnam.

Peking has since then made special efforts to reassure the Vietnamese through statements of support against any compromise, through additional aid appropriations and through a visit to Hanoi last week by a Chinese mission under Li Hsien-nien, a Vice Premier.

Hanoi has ceased its criticism of Peking's gestures toward the United States and appears more confident now of solid Chinese backing. But Hanoi is nevertheless emphasizing that its status is not that of a Chinese satellite, by underlining close ties with the Soviet Union. Soviet officials are obviously happy to reciprocate North Vietnam's friendly overtures.

Mr. Podgorny's statements about support and aid for the Vietnamese were made at a banquet given for him and his delegation last night by President Ton Duc Than of North Vietnam, the Central Committee of the Vietnam Communist party and government agencies.

Affirmation of Ideology

The Soviet President made no direct reference to Communist China, but he emphasized that relations between the Soviet Union and the North Vietnamese as Communists "have strengthened and developed with each passing day." He added, in an obvious reference to Moscow's disapproval of Maoist Communism, that "we both stand under the same banner of ideology—Marxist-Leninism—the purity of which we have preserved and will continue to preserve from all provocations and distortions based on revisionism and dogmatism."

In his speech, Mr. Thang made it plain that North Vietnam would maintain an evenhanded approach toward the two Communist giants who befriend the North Vietnamese. He lauded Soviet achievements and expressed gratitude for Soviet aid, but mentioned appreciation for aid from China in the same breath.