

Peking and Moscow Said to Join in Mounting

By JOHN BURNS

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PEKING, May 23—As President Nixon continues his talks with Soviet leaders in Moscow, there are growing indications here that China and the Soviet Union have embarked on an extensive if not entirely harmonious effort to thwart the President's effort to cut off supplies to North Vietnam.

Diplomats here have pieced together a picture of a reluctant partnership forced on the two Communist rivals by Mr. Nixon's decision to mine the ports of North Vietnam and bomb the country heavily.

Information from Chinese officials, plus what can be learned from the missions of the other governments involved, have convinced diplomats here that the Chinese have agreed to a large increase in rail shipments from the Soviet bloc through China, but have apparently balked at opening their ports to freighter from the Soviet bloc.

Orders to China's Railways

According to these diplomats, the Chinese railways were ordered to prepare for the new operation not long after Mr. Nixon's announcement of the mining on May 8. Rolling stock has been diverted, the diplomats said, and Moscow has been told that shipments will be accepted to the limits of the rail system's capacity.

However, the diplomats went on, Soviet requests for the opening of ports in southern China were rejected, at least for the time being. One diplomatic source reported that the rejection was coupled with a suggestion that the Russians attempt instead to clear the minefields.

The problems arising from the Nixon moves were said to have been thoroughly discussed in a meeting last week between the Soviet Ambassador, Vasily S. Tolstikov, and the Chinese Foreign Minister, Chi Peng-fei. Mr. Tolstikov subsequently left for Moscow to attend a meeting of the Communist Party's Central Committee, of which he is a member.

MAY 24, 1972

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an Intense Effort to Supply Hanoi

The diplomatic reports, if accurate, indicate that it could be some time before armaments supplies are again entering North Vietnam in the quantities they were before the ports were mined, despite the joint efforts of North Vietnam's two major allies.

Before the Nixon moves, United States estimates were that about 80 per cent of the Soviet supplies were reaching North Vietnam by sea. A negligible amount was moving by air and the rest by rail through China.

Diplomats here say that it may be no easy task for the Chinese to adjust to a five-fold increase in rail tonnage, which would be required to compensate for the loss of the sea route. The diplomats believe, however, that every effort will be made to reach that goal.

The Soviet supplies they note, will be competing for rail space with increased Chinese

shipments, a result of talks that are continuing here between the Chinese and a North Vietnamese delegation that arrived shortly before the mining began.

Soviet Aid 65% of Total

The Hanoi delegation is reported to be delighted with Chinese response to their requests. Diplomats say they have been told that the Chinese have promised a substantial increase in their aid, hitherto mainly small arms and ammunition, food, clothing and medical supplies.

Some measure of the logistical problem can be gained from United States estimates of the aid to North Vietnam in 1971.

These estimates put the Soviet contribution at about \$500-million, or 65 per cent of the total. The Chinese contribution was put at \$230-million, or 25 per cent.

The figures indicate that a substantial increase in Chinese aid would pose less of a problem for Chinese railways than shipping Soviet supplies.

The logistical problem is further compounded by the fact that the Soviet Union has supplied mainly heavy equipment, from tanks to artillery pieces and missiles, none of it easy to move by rail.

Once the shipments have crossed into North Vietnam they will face the threat of

bombing. Already there are reports that key sections of the rail line linking Hanoi to the Chinese border have been cut from the air.

All this daunts the Chinese less than one might think. One official pointed to the network of roads and trails linking the two countries and predicted that the Americans would be more successful in preventing supplies from moving along them than they have been in stopping supplies moving from North Vietnam down the Ho Chi Minh trail in Laos to South Vietnam.

To some Chinese, the situation is reminiscent of the supply problems that faced their

armies in their long struggle for power in China. One senior official, drawing the analogy, has already predicted that the North Vietnamese will prove as able as the Chinese Communists to win despite the odds.

Clearing Mines, Tho Says

By HENRY GINGER

Special to The New York Times

PARIS, May 23—Le Duc Tho, the North Vietnamese Politburo member who is directing his country's delegation to the peace talks here, said today that American mines are being cleared from Haiphong harbor and that "our supplies will continue," to come in.

His remarks, made over tea at a meeting with newsmen at his delegation's headquarters in suburban Choisy-le-Roi, followed by a day a report from Hanoi saying the consensus of foreign observers there was that American mining had effectively closed North Vietnam's ports. The United States Government has also said repeatedly in recent days that no ships were moving in or out of North Vietnamese ports.

Mr. Tho, however, belittled American military initiatives against his country and demanded new proposals from Washington for a settlement.

"When Nixon is prepared to negotiate, we are prepared to

do so with him," Mr. Tho declared.

Earlier in the day, both North Vietnam and the Vietcong sent notes to the United States and South Vietnamese delegations again demanding resumption of the talks on Thursday. There was no immediate response. Further sessions were rejected by the United States and Saigon on May 4.

Today, Mr. Tho declared, "It is true that the bombing and mining will create some losses, but basically they cannot settle the Vietnamese problem."

He noted that his country had "a very long seacoast and long frontiers."

"A few mines cannot change

the situation," he said. "With a few skillful hands the mines will become ineffective. We are taking away the mines and the supplies will continue."

Mr. Tho also rejected what he called "maneuvers" by Mr. Nixon to divide the socialist countries. He said the Soviet Union, China and other countries were continuing their aid.

It was the second time in the last two weeks that Mr. Tho had spoken directly with the press. The setting was more informal than at his news conference on May 12, but the stress was the same: that North Vietnam, despite the present offensive in the south, is ready to negotiate.