

Nixon Note Tells Moscow He Hopes for Better Ties

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From News Dispatches

MOSCOW, Dec. 22 — President Nixon has sent a message to President Nikolai V. Podgorny expressing the hope that relations between the United States and the Soviet Union will continue to improve, the Soviet News agency Tass said.

The message was on the occasion of the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Soviet Union.

Publication of the message came a day after Communist party Chief Leonid Brezhnev had cautioned in a speech to an anniversary meeting that further steps toward detente between Washington and Moscow would depend to a large degree on a Vietnam settlement.

Mr. Nixon's message, in an unofficial translation said: "On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the U.S.S.R. I would like to express to your excellency the best wishes of happiness and progress for the peoples of your country and a sincere hope that the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union will continue to improve.

Brezhnev unexpectedly

failed to attend this morning's session of the Kremlin celebrations for the 50th anniversary, briefly reviving rumors that he might be ill. But he reappeared in the congress hall in mid-afternoon.

Brezhnev left the conference hall shortly after his address yesterday and was absent for about 20 minutes while Chief North Vietnamese delegate Truong Chinh was speaking. Observers at the time put this down merely to fatigue after Brezhnev's three and a half hour speech.

Observers recalled that there were rumors in October that the party chief was not well. He made no public appearances between Oct. 10, when he received West German representative Egon Bahr, and Nov. 7, when he took his usual place on Lenin's tomb during the anniversary celebration of the Bolshevik Revolution.

Observers pointed out, however, that Brezhnev has been absent from the current celebrations during the three speeches which dealt the most directly with China: Chinh's yesterday, and those today by the foreign minister of the

South Vietnam's Provisional Revolutionary Government, Mrs. Nguyen Thi Binh, and North Korean Delegate Tsoi Yen Gen.

The North Korean made an implied appeal to the Soviet Union and China to settle their differences. Without mentioning the two countries by name, he said that "only unity in the socialist camp and 'non-interference in the affair of the other parties' would help to foil 'imperialist aggression.'"