

COMMUNIST CHINA AND THE KOREAN WAR--MOSCOW REMAINS ALOOF

Monitored Soviet references to the Korean war continue to emphasize American atrocities and the eventual success of the Korean people, and Moscow now adds justification for Chinese Communist participation in the Korean war. But this justification is indirect; Moscow does not discuss the rights and wrongs of the question or specifically praise the Chinese Communist "volunteers." (The 7 November North Korean communique which describes the successes achieved through Chinese-Korean collaboration is not reported by Moscow until 10 November, although the campaign to justify such collaboration has been in progress since 5 November.)

Moscow justifies Chinese Communist participation in the Korean war by elaborating on the closeness to China's borders of American aggressive action and by dwelling on the charge that American aggression is really directed at China, not just at Korea. (In this and other contexts it maintains that China is the major target of American imperialism.) But statements explicitly justifying Chinese Communist participation are credited to Chinese rather than to Soviet sources. In widely distributed broadcasts Chinese officials, newspapers and workmen are quoted as expressing their just determination to turn back American aggressors before they reach China, but Soviet commentators, speaking on their own authority, have not yet joined this campaign. Chou En-lai's rejection of the U.N. request for a discussion of Chinese Communist participation in Korea is reported by TASS, but there is no comment beyond quotations from Shanghai press sources which reiterate Chou's belief that America is the guilty one and should be so charged.

A seeming departure from this pose of aloofness occurs in a LITERARY GAZETTE article broadcast on 14 November. The article, entitled "What Did Austin Keep Mum About?" takes issue with Warren Austin and General MacArthur on the ground that they attempt to indict the People's Republic as an aggressor. The commentary makes familiar reference to America's flagrant provocation of the Chinese and to U.S. attempts to spread the flames of aggression, but it does not specifically discuss the question of Chinese Communist volunteers.

By this aloofness and indirection Moscow may hope to maintain the fiction that the Korean war is a local war--a matter for Asians only--and thus to support its condemnation of U.N. "intervention." At the same time it may hope to avoid lending plausibility to the charge that the Soviet Union applied pressure in Peiping to secure participation. This would simultaneously tend to clear Moscow of specific responsibility for the present embroilment and promote the general conception of Peiping as a free agent.