

T H E F A R E A S T

KOREAN WAR: Volume of Comment Dwindles, No New Topics Exploited

Moscow demonstrates only routine interest in the War. There is a decline in the volume of comment--an overall decline in volume has been in process since Malik's peace feeler on 23 June--and familiar topics are exploited. This pattern seems to reflect a plan to write off the War as a major propaganda topic.

The Neptune Incident: Moscow does not comment on the shooting down of the Neptune which allegedly approached Vladivostok in early November; the official protest note was broadcast only after Warren Austin raised the issue in Paris. (There was no comment on previous incidents of this type. Moscow broadcast only the official notes protesting the strafing of airfields near Vladivostok in October 1950 and the American attack on an "unarmed Soviet plane" in the Yellow Sea area on 5 September 1950.)

A Downward Trend: There have been occasional increases in attention to Korea, e.g. the sharp increase in attention that followed Vishinsky's reply to Admiral Kirk, but these do not appear to indicate concern in the War per se. Rather, they appear to have been part of over-all propaganda campaigns or reactions to American charges, as in the case of the flurry of denials of the Hanley charges. In general, the volume of comment, while erratic, has pursued a downward trend.

No New Topics: Nor has Moscow instituted any new topics or themes. As has been true for many weeks, the primary topic is the profit-seeking of American officials. American audiences, continuing to receive almost half the total comment on the War, are repeatedly told of their own sacrifices--in lives lost and economic burdens endured--because General Electric and International Nickel seek to perpetuate the arms race by obstructing the negotiations. Such reminders are a primary element of the Korean War, but are also characteristic of Soviet radio comment in other--and larger--contexts, such as the rearmament drive.

Another indication of a possible writing off of the War is found in the fact that topics emphasized in broadcasts to Koreans are readily adaptable to a post-war situation. There are continuing reminders of Soviet heroism in World War II and in post-war reconstruction. The Koreans are also reminded of the heroism displayed by their own Army and their guerrillas. Some commentaries imply that the Korean liberation struggle will continue until victory is won but these are also readily adaptable to a post-war situation.

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