

November 29, 1963

Telegram 869/871 from André Saint Mleux

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Summary:

André Saint Mleux tracks recent Xinhua dispatches on the state of Franco-American relations.

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The renewal of interest towards France shown in the last few weeks by the Chinese press is also accompanied by a moderate tone that contrasts with the bitter hostility towards the other capitalist countries.

Xinhua first tries to highlight a 'Franco-American dispute' and accuses the United States of wanting to isolate France.

On these subjects, the Chinese editors are looking for all the information that could support this thesis, focusing long dispatches to the speech of M. Dean Acheson to the University of Connecticut or that of Senator Fulbright to Congress. In the same way, the speech given on 29th October to the National Assembly was summed up under the headline: 'the French foreign minister gives an anti-American speech', and the accompanying dispatch insists on France's special place in Europe. Finally, in a general sense, the Chinese press wants to show that the American government is starting a flirting campaign towards Chancellor Erhard so to push him away from France. Beijing's press, still pervaded by a virulent anti-Americanism, which came across when President Kennedy died, seems to be trying to show that France is driven by the same sentiments in Europe that animate China in Asia.

Moreover, the information given by Xinhua about France's domestic policies are surprisingly objective.

While not so long ago a strike was an opportunity to attack French capitalism, and it is still the case for all other social movements or popular protests in other 'capitalist' countries, Xinhua mentioned without any comments the 6th November strike. A few days later, a dispatch noted, in moderate terms, the rise of French prices along with the rise of wages. Finally, the creation of the 'volunteers of progress' was mentioned without the usual anti-American imprecations that generally come up for similar American groups.

Signed André Saint Mleux