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Soviets Admit to Radiation in U.S. Embassy

MOSCOW (AP) — Izvestia, the Soviet government newspaper, admitted today that there is "electromagnetic radiation" in the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, but said it is low minimum health standards in Soviet Union.

In the first Soviet comment on reports of radiation hazards at the embassy, Izvestia rejected any suggestion that the health of embassy personnel were endangered. It

blamed the reports on "circles that oppose the line of maintaining and developing good, normal relations between the USSR and the United States."

Izvestia said it was well known and normal that "a certain electromagnetic field" may develop in big cities because of radio and television stations, other means of communication and some industrial enterprises. It said a joint Soviet-American check was made at the U.S. Embassy, and it was found that the radiation "is below the minimum sanitary standards existing in the Soviet Union."

The embassy said it had no comment on the Izvestia article

FIRST REPORTS of the radiation surfaced 10 days ago when it became known that U.S. Ambassador Walter J. Stoessel Jr. had warned embassy employees at a secret briefing some time earlier that there might be a potential medical problem due to the high levels of radiation.

The United States was reported to have lodged a protest with the Kremlin and demanded an explanation.

One source said then that embassy officials first became concerned about high radiation levels in December and tried to pin down what caused them. He said the investigation was complicated by the fact that the embassy is surrounded by buildings, any of which might house whatever device causes the radiation.

The investigation showed that the radiation was the result of Soviet electronic devices, apparently aimed at the embassy, "but how they're doing it and why they're doing it is still up in the air," the source said.

He said that although this was the first time high levels of radiation had been a problem at the Moscow embassy, the use of powerful electronic equipment is "part of the game every side plays."

AN EMBASSY doctor was report-

ed to have assured the staff that no health hazard existed, but nevertheless, a State Department medical technician was said to have been sent to Moscow, apparently to check blood samples of embassy staffers.

According to earlier accounts, the microwave device — variously described as intended to activate hidden microphones, or to interfere with the American antijamming devices — has been directed at the top three

floors of the 10-story embassy. The top floors contain offices where classified work is conducted as well as the ambassador's office.

Yesterday, the U.S. Embassy termed as "inaccurate and misleading" a story published in the Boston Globe on Monday that Stoessel had a mysterious blood ailment, resembling leukemia.

An embassy spokesman said "the ambassador feels fine, keeps a busy schedule, leads an active life, has not undergone medical treatment and is not at the present time undergoing medical treatment."

LAST WEEK reporters in Moscow saw workmen put up metal screens on the outside of the double-glazed windows on the top floors of the embassy. The work was proceeding despite the bitter cold. Witnesses described the screens as the usual wire shields used to keep out mosquitoes.

Both the United States and the Soviet Union plan to build new embassy complexes in Moscow and Washington simultaneously, but construction has not started yet.

The present U.S. Embassy is a five-minute drive from the Kremlin and contains about 50 apartments as well as four floors of offices for the 125 embassy staff members.