

The Star

23 Jan 1979

An apology

In "The STAR" of Friday, November 12th, 1976, under the headlines "SOVIET CASH FOR MYSTERY GROUP IN HONGKONG?" and (in a later edition) "RUSSIAN HELP FOR FILM TO DISCREDIT HONGKONG" we alleged that the Soviet Union was helping finance a film about Hongkong which could embarrass China.

In our edition of Saturday, November 13th, 1976 we named the makers of this film as a team from Granada Television's "WORLD IN ACTION" and further stated that this group were "allegedly financed by the Soviet Union in a plot to discredit Hongkong and embarrass China".

In addition to

GRANADA TELEVISION POPE and ROBERT we named as participants ALCOCK, who are also in this alleged plot engaged in objective reporting and film-making in many countries. Producer GAVIN MACFADYEN, Film Crew RICHARD POPE and ROBERT ALCOCK and Translator WENDY LAM PUI FONG.

"The STAR" accepts that the above allegations were grossly defamatory and wholly unfounded and untrue in respect of the company and of all four persons named and we now wish to withdraw them unreservedly. We realise that such allegations of political bias and secret involvement with a foreign government are very damaging to a company such as GRANADA TELEVISION and to individuals such as GAVIN MACFADYEN, RICHARD

We also realise that our allegations caused unnecessary distress and embarrassment to WENDY LAM PUI FONG and to her relatives and friends, and aroused unjustified suspicions about her among those with whom she has worked, both in Hongkong and Britain.

"The STAR" attended court yesterday by its Counsel to withdraw all the above allegations unreservedly and to apologise, and has agreed to pay a total sum of HK\$500,000.00 by way of damages and costs.