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SOVIET THINKING ABOUT THE DANGER OF A SINO-US RAPPROCHEMENT

MEMORANDUM FOR RECIPIENTS

This study examines Moscow's anxiety that US gestures toward Peking may result in turning China and Chinese strength all the more against the USSR. In particular, the study points up the increasingly close interplay of Chinese and US considerations in Soviet thought and action, the urgency with which the Soviets view the Chinese threat, and the fact that only after Moscow had tamped down the level of 1969 conflict with Peking did it proceed to new and freer US policies -- whether heightened toughness or SALT. The study also emphasizes that Soviet worries over the possibility of future Sino-US dealings at Soviet expense have not ended, and that the USSR awaits with concern the resumption of US-Chinese Communist talks.

This study has met general agreement within the Central Intelligence Agency. Comments on the study are welcome, and should be addressed to its author, Mr. Arthur A. Cohen, of this Staff.

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Chief, DD/I Special Research Staff

SOVIET THINKING ABOUT THE DANGER OF A SINO-US RAPPROCHEMENT

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Summary

Soviet thinking on Sino-US relations has undergone a basic shift over the years from preferring improvement of those relations to preferring unmodified mutual hostility. The shift reflects the sharpening of Moscow's own troubles with Peking, and Moscow's desire, more than ever before, to see the Chinese Communists isolated and contained by the US. The post-Khrushchev leadership was forced to recognize that Sino-US relations might become unfrozen suddenly, that such a development might be detrimental to Soviet policy in various areas of the world, and that a situation seemed to be developing in which Washington was indeed discarding its isolate-Peking policy almost precisely as the Sino-Soviet dispute intensified. Soviet leadership thinking grew more suspicious that Washington would deliberately and actively seek to exploit the Sino-Soviet dispute to gain political leverage over the USSR. This suspicion is now one of the permanent features ingrained in Soviet thinking about Washington's Far Eastern policies, and it varies only in intensity from time to time and, probably, but not demonstrably, from Soviet leader to Soviet leader.

For many years the Soviet leaders operated from an unvarying calculation that the US commitment to defend the Nationalist regime on Taiwan would make Sino-US hostility permanent. They were spared the task of worrying about progress at the Sino-US talks, owing to Mao Tse-tung's refusal to permit a step-by-step improvement in Washington-Peking relations before the Taiwan issue was settled on his terms. This comfortable certainty was carried over into Soviet thinking during escalation of the Sino-Soviet dispute, but two developments changed this attitude to one of apprehension between late 1966 and early 1967.

The first of these developments was the beginning of new US gestures toward Peking. A particularly deep impression apparently was made on the Soviet leaders by Vice President Humphrey's 1966 appeal for improved Sino-US relations and his use of the slogan, "containment without isolation." For the Russians, the guarantee of permanent US official antagonism toward Peking was on the verge of being dissolved.

The second development was the increase of incidents on the Sino-Soviet border which resulted in armed clashes in February 1967. Although the Russians already had been increasing their forces near the border for several years, this eruption, alongside other aberrations of Mao Tse-tung's explosive Cultural Revolution, revealed Chinese anti-Sovietism to be an even more dangerous phenomenon than the Soviets had earlier held. The Russians began to worry that Washington, in the process of courting Peking, might try to exploit the military confrontation burgeoning on the Sino-Soviet border. Some Soviet leaders, Kosygin among them, in early 1967 began to complain that Washington's policy toward the menace of China was "not firm enough."

Analyzing Washington's gestures toward Peking to determine the degree of seriousness in US intentions became an important problem. The main conclusion of a KGB analysis of May 1967 was that Washington's new flexibility was basically "propagandistic," part of a tactical maneuver intended essentially to deepen Peking-Moscow disagreements. In support of this interpretation, the analysis noted that the US position on diplomatic recognition of Peking, UN entry, and the Taiwan issue indicated that no "practical steps" had been taken to settle Sino-US issues. In directing its attention to the Chinese Communist response, the analysis noted that Peking was not meeting the American gestures even "half way." It is not known whether this KGB analysis or similar interpretations of American initiatives toward Peking dominated Soviet leadership thinking about Sino-US contacts. But even assuming that it did dominate -- that is, that most Politburo members interpreted US gestures as merely tactical, they were probably not free from uneasiness. The KGB analysis itself indicated

strong apprehension that what thus far seemed to be a mere tactical US ploy could change without notice overnight and become a serious US effort dangerous to Soviet interests. The Soviet leaders, like the KGB, could not have failed to recognize that Washington had started maneuvering more actively than ever before, that this had created a new situation, and that the possibility of a Sino-US rapprochement thereafter had to be watched carefully and never again dismissed as a fantasy.

Thus Soviet concern was a paradoxical mixture of a probability judgment (merely a US tactic) and a prudent suspicion (possibly a US goal). The degree of concern began to increase as Washington's overtures increased. But even in subsequent periods of inactivity from the US side, the residue of aroused suspicion in Soviet thinking has persisted. One reflection of this implanted wariness has been the serious probing by Soviet officials, during periods following Peking's postponement of a Warsaw meeting, to verify the existence of "secret" talks between Peking and Washington representatives in another capital. Almost without exception, whenever American officials have privately expressed the view to their Soviet counterparts that the US does not intend to use against the USSR any contacts with Peking, the Russian reaction has been skepticism or complete disbelief.

The degree of seriousness in Chinese probes toward the US, always previously estimated to have been securely and rigidly zero, had to be reappraised by the Soviets immediately following the advent of the Nixon Administration. In Peking's November 1968 probe of the Administration's attitude toward the Taiwan issue, were the Chinese finally prepared to meet the Americans half way, or part of the way, on the knotty matter of the US commitment to the Nationalist regime? Following President Nixon's reaffirmation that the US would not retreat on the Taiwan issue, as suggested in his January 1969 press conference, the Russians probably were temporarily relieved of their apprehensions. It may be conjectured that they were also pleased with the emotional Chinese response which was unprecedented in authoritativeness and volume against a new President. Moreover, cancellation in February 1969 of the

scheduled Sino-US meeting at Warsaw must have indicated to the Russians that Mao Tse-tung was still obsessed with his black-white position that Washington must agree to withdraw from Taiwan before substantive discussion on steps to improve relations can begin. But this was only temporary reassurance.

Evidence suggests that the Russians perceive clearly that absence of a Taiwan settlement does not prevent Washington from exploiting the atmospherics of gestures toward Peking. US use of such tactics are appraised as objectively harmful to Soviet interests, especially in connection with the Sino-Soviet border dispute. A neutral, or "balanced" approach to various issues in this dispute on the part of the US is also appraised as harmful, especially when the Soviets themselves are trying to "unbalance" international opinion against the Chinese. In instructions to diplomatic personnel abroad issued in June 1969, the Foreign Ministry warned that although public statements from Washington appeared to be neutral on the Sino-Soviet border dispute, the new Administration saw advantage in pressing the USSR "from two flanks -- NATO and China." There is some evidence that some Soviet officials believed that subsequent US gestures toward Peking in 1969 were intended as a signal to the Chinese, the suspicion being that the US was tactitly informing Peking that it could safely withdraw forces from China's east coast for use against Soviet forces on its northern border.

Some Soviets have become wary that US initiatives reflected something more than mere exploitation of the border crisis of 1969. In mid-1969, one of the Kremlin's most sophisticated America-watchers, Yuri Arbatov, warned an American visitor against the extreme case of recognition of Peking by the new Administration. That this was not long-range thinking -- that is, five to ten years in future projection -- and that Arbatov was reflecting a higher-level worry about a near-term possibility, was suggested by the probe at the time by another Soviet official along the line that the US somehow had prompted Canada to move toward recognition in order to "test the water," because Washington itself desired to open similar recognition talks. These probes may have been only an overreaction

to one aspect of the border crisis and a reflection of highly intensified suspicion over any Washington initiatives toward Peking. However, it may be conjectured that hand-in-hand with Soviet awareness that the Taiwan problem continues to prevent a US move toward formal recognition, there is now a nagging subordinate suspicion that Washington is "using" its NATO allies to clear the way and to establish the proper atmosphere for its own recognition of the PRC.

Despite the US incursion into Cambodia, the Soviet leaders apparently believe that the net effect of Washington's gestures tends to make Peking less apprehensive about being confronted with a two-front war. At the same time, the Soviets apparently believe that Peking's new policy of improving its diplomatic contacts world-wide has made it improbable that Moscow can "completely" isolate the Chinese as it had hoped to do. There is some evidence that Soviet diplomats are for the first time trying to determine the extent to which Washington might disregard repercussions in Taipei in continuing its initiatives to Peking.

One important element in the mixture of reasons for Moscow's delay in replying to Washington in 1969 on a date to begin SALT apparently was Soviet worry about the unfavorable atmosphere created by border trouble with China. Indeed, Soviet behavior in the summer and fall suggests that the leadership had been operating from a scale of priorities. The issues of starting SALT, of negotiating on the status of Berlin, and of agreeing on a renunciation of force with West Germany had fallen victim to the highest Soviet priority: dealing with China. The Soviets apparently decided that first they had to make the effort to tie up the Chinese in negotiations, and they mounted a threat-of-Soviet-attack campaign to impel the Chinese to desist on the border and begin negotiating. Until they had succeeded in this, they temporarily shelved other outstanding issues. They also believed with increasing anxiety that if border clashes were to escalate and lead to big military engagements, the US would go beyond its small gestures to Peking. Beyond that, they believed that Washington felt the USSR,

confronted with a border war, must act from a position of political weakness in any Soviet-US negotiations. Thus they preferred not to begin SALT while clashes were still likely to occur on the border.

However, in the fall of 1969, the Chinese retreat to an agreement to talk about the border dispute served to remove this cause for hesitation. Talks in Peking began on 20 October. Tension on the border began to subside, and on 25 October, Moscow announced the date for beginning SALT. Shortly afterward, a Soviet official told an American embassy officer in Moscow that the USSR was no less anxious to proceed with SALT than before, and added that the delayed Soviet response had been due, in part, to preoccupation with China. It may be conjectured that the Soviet leaders now believe it imperative to continue the Peking talks regardless of deadlock not only because border tensions might otherwise be revived, but also, although less importantly, because they fear that a breakdown would tend to weaken their position in SALT.

There is a third reason for continuing the border talks, namely, to maintain an active channel of communication with the Chinese on a basic and lively issue. This provides the Soviet leaders with a means to try to convince the Chinese that they do not intend to attack across the border, that Western dissemination of rumors about a Soviet pre-emptive attack against China's nuclear facilities is a deliberate provocation, and that Peking's options include improvement of relations with Moscow. In this way, the Russians hope to prevent revival of the trend which in their interpretation was developing in 1969 when they saw the Chinese, overreacting to Moscow's 1969 threat campaign, as being driven toward improved contacts with the US.

But the Russians have a problem, inasmuch as the hard fact of their continuing build-up near the border is an "objective" threat which they refuse to dissolve. The Chinese will not accept Moscow's dialectical logic which claims that this military threat is not a threat. The Chinese still worry. Their sense of vulnerability is very high because, on any reading, China is very vulnerable to the superior Soviet military capability. There

is evidence that the Russians believe Washington in 1969 deliberately made overtures to Peking in order to take self-serving advantage of this sense of vulnerability. What they would prefer in US policy toward Peking probably was accurately reflected in the [redacted] statement of one Soviet official: Washington should do "absolutely nothing" -- no talks, no diplomatic approaches, no normalization.

Regarding Peking's receptivity to Washington's late 1969 initiatives to resume the Warsaw talks, the Soviet leaders seemed to calculate that the Chinese were engaged in mere tactical maneuvering. For example, Brezhnev privately interpreted Peking's receptivity in terms of two possibilities -- i.e., either as "a device" for applying "pressure" on the USSR or as a reflection of a real Chinese "change in line." Brezhnev's stated preference for the first interpretation may reflect a majority opinion in the Politburo. However, Politburo recognition of the purposes of Chinese and American tactics, and even a Politburo estimate that a Washington-Peking agreement on substance is unlikely, will probably not dispel Soviet apprehension entirely. In the apparent Soviet view, any improvement, however small, of Peking's relations with the US would strengthen China's position in the three-power triangle.

The Soviets have been able to shift their policy since mid-1969 from one of caution -- i.e., regarding care not to provoke situations of tension with the US and in Western Europe and the Middle East -- to one of greater acceptance of a worsened atmosphere, if need be, with the US. A major reason for feeling that this shift could be taken without harming Soviet security is the apparent view of the Soviet leaders that since they have succeeded in lowering Sino-Soviet border tension by tying the Chinese up in negotiations, they have a less precarious situation on their eastern flank and can, therefore, be somewhat freer in pressing forward against the West. Nevertheless, they are wary of Washington's attitude and seem to believe, genuinely, that the American willingness to use the Chinese as a counterweight against USSR interests will increase rather than decrease in the future. Foreign

Minister Gromyko's son, a section head in the Soviet institute specializing in analysis of US policies, recently complained about Washington's "meddling" in Sino-Soviet relations and showed concern regarding moves the US might make toward Peking in the future.

They also seem to believe that Peking will not indefinitely postpone the Warsaw talks -- the last meeting was held in February 1970 and the meeting scheduled for May was cancelled -- and Moscow is probably prepared to attack Peking for "collusion" when the talks eventually are resumed. The Soviets will continue to probe to determine the extent to which the Americans will be willing to go in gestures toward the Chinese Communists, despite the fact that such US actions tend to undercut international support for Taipei and morale among the KMT leaders. As in the past few years, Soviet leaders probably will attach considerable, and even exaggerated, importance to any such US gestures toward Peking.

SOVIET THINKING ABOUT
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I. Concerned but Not Worried

In the mid-1950s, the Soviets believed that Washington-Peking contacts would not be harmful to Soviet interests but that a Sino-US military clash in the Taiwan Strait would be. When regular Sino-US official contacts began on Peking's initiative -- i.e., when the ambassadorial talks began on 1 August 1955 -- the Soviets were relieved, as their policy was to reduce tensions between Peking and Washington. In addition, they were determined to resist Mao's effort to drag them into supporting the PLA effort to seize offshore islands. The Soviet policy was reflected in the speech of the Soviet charge in Peking on 14 February 1955: in replying to Mao's boast that Moscow would fight as Peking's military ally in the Far East, he did not refer to any direct military support for the PLA, and he used a less bellicose tone than Mao in stressing Moscow's advocacy of "relaxing international tensions."

Following a period of suspension of Sino-US talks, the Soviets again were relieved when, during the 1958 PLA shelling of the offshore islands, the Chinese Communists decided to retreat and resume the talks. Peking retained its hostility to Washington when Sino-US talks were re-opened in mid-September, and US-China collusion against the USSR was then a development the Soviet leaders undoubtedly never seriously considered.

Khrushchev in 1958 was in fact eager for steps that might improve Sino-US relations. He hoped to relieve Chinese pressure on Soviet policy for greater militancy against the US everywhere.

Even escalation of the Sino-Soviet dispute in the early 1960s did not impel the Russians to worry about the resumed Sino-US talks. The basic reason for this ease of mind was the fact that Mao was still obsessed with the Taiwan issue and was more hostile toward the US than toward Moscow. In November 1961, Mao complained that he could not accept Moscow's relatively moderate policy because Peking has "an immediate and pressing problem with the US, namely, the Taiwan issue." The Russians indicated no concern that the relatively conciliatory behavior of Chinese Communist officials at the Geneva talks on Laos in 1962 would lead to a thaw in Washington-Peking relations. They probably calculated that this behavior was tactical and temporary, and that although the US had assured Peking that it would not support a Nationalist attack on the mainland, Washington was still the number one enemy of Peking.

It is probable, although there is no direct evidence, that by the fall of 1964 the Soviets for the first time wondered if the US might hope to exploit Peking's increasing animosity in the Sino-Soviet dispute. In mid-August, Khrushchev had withdrawn the Soviet delegation to secret border talks held in Peking. The first tentative sign of apprehension regarding Washington's attitude appeared in September when Ambassador Dobrynin asked Ambassador Thompson what he thought of Soviet relations with China, although he did not pursue the matter when Thompson replied that he could not see why Peking pressed on with the dispute. Suggestions of a new US approach began to appear publicly in the American press. Most prominent was an article by George Kennan reviewing Washington's China policy. (New York Times Magazine, 22 November 1964) While not advocating the establishment of diplomatic relations with Peking or UN membership for it, nevertheless Kennan concluded that it would be "foolish of us to disregard the Chinese-Soviet conflict entirely and fail to take advantage of any favorable effects it may have."

Such highly publicized recommendations undoubtedly were picked up and analyzed by the Russians, who may have begun to fear that policy would be influenced by them. They probably believed that Washington was reading the logic of the Sino-Soviet dispute as slowly impelling Peking toward Western countries.

On the other hand, the Russians undoubtedly also analyzed Peking's reactions to US gestures. When, for example, on 29 December 1965 the State Department eased passport restrictions on mainland travel for American doctors, Moscow had no difficulty in ascertaining the degree of Mao's receptivity to the gesture. The Peking People's Daily of 1 January 1966 thundered in an important editorial that

> *...the Johnson Administration is seeking to put on a peace-loving air by issuing passports to a few doctors. Such hypocrisy of a fox pretending to be pious is really nauseating.*

This was another indication to China specialists in the USSR that Mao still insisted that the US must withdraw from Taiwan before any exchanges would be permitted.

That the Soviets were not overly concerned about a possible new and moderate Washington approach to Peking is suggested by the nature of the requirements set forth in a Soviet document for military intelligence on China in January 1966. The document did not request information on American gestures toward Peking. It asked only about information on Peking's "plans for a solution...of the problem of Taiwan." However, on the separate matter of a possible new US policy designed to exploit the Sino-Soviet dispute, the document reflected some concern. It centered its attention on misinformation, tersely warning collectors to guard against US efforts "to misinform us on the true intentions and actions of the CPR in order to aggravate still further our relations with the Chinese." Thus, in January 1966, the Russian intelligence problem regarding the US attitude was expressed in terms of American trouble-making motivated by a possible desire to exacerbate the Sino-Soviet dispute; a genuine gesture toward Peking was not considered likely.

II. Beginning to Worry

The Russians had cause to start becoming apprehensive and to worry about official US statements which suggested a real shift in Washington's China policy in March 1966. On 12 March Vice President Humphrey declared that the US must "seize every opportunity to demonstrate our friendship for the Chinese people." They probably gained considerable insight into the preferred China policy of influential American scholars when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearings of late March were widely publicized. They noted that the scholar who received the most publicity in the American press was Professor A. Doak Barnett, who attacked the previous US policy and suggested a new slogan, "containment without isolation," which was promptly reiterated by the Vice President.

But the Soviets were given reason to worry less than deeply by the Maoist rejection of this US gesture. With two separate and authoritative replies, the Vice President's probe was denounced. In an article by the editor of the People's Daily published on 14 March, the Chinese declared that "Humphrey's 'kiss of Judas' approach cannot but arouse the disgust of the Chinese people and put us on the alert a hundredfold." The authoritative "Observer" article in the People's Daily on 29 March reacted to the new policy slogan derived from the Hearings and then articulated the crux of the problem between Peking and Washington.

> *But according to the U.S. Vice President Hubert Humphrey and others, Washington's China policy is nevertheless about to undergo a major change and this change is said to be one from "containment through isolation" in the past to "containment without isolation." Listen, Chinese people! The American gentlemen have kindly decided not to 'isolate' us any longer. Should not this move us to tears of gratitude? ....*

> *So long as the U.S. government does not change its hostile policy toward China and refuses to pull out its armed forces from Taiwan and the Taiwan Strait, the normalization of Sino-American relations is entirely out of the question and so is the solution of such a concrete question as exchange of visits between personnel of the two countries.* (emphasis supplied)

That the Russians were not yet intensely worried may be conjectured partly from the uncompromising Maoist response and partly from the fact that scholars at the Hearings had not recommended US exploitation of the Sino-Soviet dispute as the motivation for a new Washington approach.

However, the Russians did not remain silent about the Warsaw talks. The meetings provided them with a means to riposte Chinese charges of Soviet-US collusion. When Pravda on 28 July 1966 chided the Chinese about collusion in the Sino-US "dialogue," they provoked an angry Maoist reaction at a time when Mao's purge of the CCP was in full flood. The Chinese postponed the Warsaw talks on 7 September -- the first of several postponements that were, more or less, directly related to Sino-Soviet polemical maneuvering. In the act, Peking for the first time unilaterally publicized a major statement on the talks. At his Warsaw press conference, the Chinese ambassador complained of Moscow's polemical tactic of "conducting a great deal of propaganda about a 'Sino-US dialogue.'" There is evidence that the Russians were annoyed by Chinese charges of Soviet-US collusion -- as witness President Podgornyy's complaint to Ambassador Kohler on 11 November that these accusations would continue to come from Peking "for a long time."

An indication of stronger Soviet concern appeared in the fall of 1966, when Soviet and East Europe officials began to ask American officials for information on the transfer of Sino-US talks from Warsaw to Rangoon. They implied that such a move was possible and even imminent.

It is not clear where this rumor began, and it is even conceivable that certain Soviet intelligence collectors started it themselves in probing for information on the status of the Sino-US talks. If so, the Soviets confused their own analysts, for a subsequent Soviet classified collection guidance expressed suspicions that the US had launched such rumors.

Some apprehension at that time that Washington was engaged actively in worsening Sino-Soviet relations was reflected in public commentary and in serious private conversations. "All the enticing proposals now being made to Peking from the USA," said one article, are gestures to encourage the Chinese to make still greater efforts to inflame hostility against the Soviet Union and then get "something in return." (Literaturnaya Gazeta, 20 December 1966) The Russians had not yet begun to specify what concessions they believed Washington would make to Peking as a reward for working harder against Moscow, and they carefully avoided discussing the Taiwan issue. In a [redacted] conversation [redacted] in mid-January 1967, Soviet embassy officials complained that Washington was trying to deepen the Sino-Soviet split. In mid-February 1967, during discussions [redacted] Kosygin expressed real apprehension about China on ten separate occasions; his major complaint was that US policy toward China was "not firm enough." Kosygin's further remark that the US did not recognize the extent of the Chinese menace was made at a time when an armed clash between Soviet and Chinese border guards had occurred near the Dzungarian Gate in Sinkiang and a small shooting incident had taken place on the Amur River near Blagoveshchensk. In this way, he attacked the US posture of neutrality in the Sino-Soviet dispute; neutrality in Soviet thinking meant a pro-Chinese attitude.

A. The KGB Document of May 1967

Traces of apprehension in the fall of 1966 became full blown suspicions in the spring of 1967, particularly within the KGB. On 26 May 1967, the KGB issued to all

rezidenturas (stations) an "Orientation-Requirements" document under the title "Concerning Some Aspects of U.S.A. Policy in Regard to the C.P.R.", interpreting changes in Washington's policy toward Peking. The document stated that "toward the end of 1966", the US, while remaining basically hostile, had adopted a new policy of "tactical flexibility" toward China.

> *The term 'flexibility' means the readiness of the U.S.A. to conduct talks with China, to develop contacts in the field of culture, to have an exchange of scientists, exhibits, etc. ...*
>
> *One of the chief factors which influenced the appearance of tactical flexibility in U.S.A. policy is the aggravated condition of Chinese-Soviet relations ...*

Washington's new policy was said to be devised "for the purpose of deepening the disagreements between the C.P.R. and the U.S.S.R.". In particular, the US was said to be trying covertly to convey information to the Chinese leaders in order to create the impression that Moscow and Washington policies were "coordinated," that Moscow was making big concessions in talks with Washington, and that Moscow was more hostile to Peking than was Washington. As to the nature of the disagreements Washington allegedly was seeking, the document stated that the deterioration preferred was from a government-to-government "confrontation" to a "military-political antagonism." Finally, American policy makers "do not exclude the possibility of China's waging war against the Soviet Union, although such a possibility is considered unlikely."

The thrust of the document's estimate was that the new US policy was a "propagandistic" tactical maneuver. But it was not excluded "that the U.S.A. is interested in some normalization of its relations" with China. American gestures toward Peking were appraised through the eyes of Western diplomats in some paragraphs, leaving a loophole

for the KGB authors of the document. The authors apparently did not want to be held entirely responsible for an appraisal that concluded against the prospect of a real improvement in Sino-US relations.

> *However, among Western diplomatic circles, the information being spread by the Americans concerning the readiness of the U.S.A. to improve relations with China is considered to have, to a great degree, a propagandistic character, and appears above all to be a tactical maneuver. In the opinion of the aforementioned circles, the government of the U.S.A. has not and does not intend to take any kind of practical steps for the settling of America-Chinese relations. It is not giving diplomatic recognition to the C.P.R., it categorically prevents its admittance to the U.N., and as usual gives full support to the Taiwan regime.*

As for estimating the true nature of the Chinese response, the document indicates that the KGB believed that Peking had rejected the American gestures.

> *The Chinese leaders, according to available information, are not meeting the American proposals half way and they refuse to discuss the question of the normalization of Chinese-American relations. The Permanent Representative of the U.S.A. to the U.N., Goldberg, in one of the unofficial discussions in March of this year [1967] stated that 'at present there exists nothing which could possibly be called relations between the U.S.A. and the C.P.R.,' and as for the meetings in Warsaw, they are limited to the conversations concerning 'will the U.S.A. leave Taiwan or not.'*

The document then confessed that KGB headquarters cannot reliably confirm the rumors, provocatively "released by the

Americans," concerning "secret negotiations" between the US and China being held outside Warsaw. The possibility of secret talks was to prey on Soviet minds subsequently, and in the following years up to the present time, Foreign Ministry and KGB personnel on occasion have privately questioned various Americans regarding the existence of such talks. The document included questioning on this matter among its "first priority" requirements.

Also included as first priority requirements was the matter of US maneuvering to exploit the Sino-Soviet dispute. Collectors were asked to discover:

> *What concrete measures are being put into effect by the Americans (and whether they are put into effect) for the purpose of the possible normalization of relations with the C.P.R.*
>
> *The use by the Americans, for their own interest, of Soviet-Chinese differences, and their efforts to amplify these differences.*

Publicly, the Soviets meanwhile showed some concern over the 14 June 1967 Sino-US meeting at Warsaw. Introducing a new variation on their theme of Peking-Washington "collusion," their propagandists implied that the Chinese had taken a revised position -- one of "flexibility" over Vietnam -- at the Gronouski-Wang meeting in a selfish effort to strike a deal on Taiwan. (Izvestiya article of 15 June 1967.) But it was unlikely that they genuinely believed that any deal was at that time being discussed at the Warsaw talks.

B. American Overtures of 1968

Throughout 1967, the Soviet leaders apparently believed that Mao, still obsessed by the irrational spirit of his Cultural Revolution, would continue to take a hard

line toward Washington on improving mutual relations. The Red Guards' physical attacks on foreign diplomats and sieges of some embassies, and Mao's purge of key personnel from his Foreign Ministry, apparently were appraised as decisively detrimental to any moves toward normalizing relations with the Americans. By early 1968, however, the purge was being advanced in a less extreme form, and in February 1968, a Soviet embassy official -- probably a KGB officer -- stated that by the end of the year, Peking would seek to end its isolation and devote more attention to foreign policy. In his words, "China will emerge from its cocoon and the USSR is preparing its policy accordingly." He thus implied awareness that any such Chinese change would pose new problems for the USSR. In addition, he may have been trying to convey the impression that Moscow itself was planning to take advantage of any such increased flexibility by seeking an "accommodation" with Peking -- a line intended to mute the speculation of third parties regarding the detrimental effect of the Sino-Soviet dispute on Soviet policies.

Renewed concern probably was felt by the Russians in March, stimulated by public suggestions of a new look in Washington's China policy. The fact that new appeals for a new approach to Peking were sustained for a four-month period and were, in part, attributed directly to several US government officials probably impelled the Soviets to worry.

In mid-March, Jack Anderson's newspaper column reported that the US government was considering asking Chiang to withdraw his troops from the offshore islands for reasons of cost. In April, the new Canadian Prime Minister announced that he intended to work for formal recognition of the Peking regime (while maintaining relations with the "Government of Taiwan"). On 2 May, the USIA director invited Peking to send journalists to cover the American elections. On 21 May, Under Secretary of State Katzenbach called for closer contacts between the two countries and hinted at ending America's trade embargo. On 29 May, Senate Majority Leader Mansfield

urged abandonment of the "closed-door" policy on trade. On 22 June, a New York Times editorial set forth its program of "steps" that Washington should take: end the trade embargo, open the way for UN membership for Peking, and move toward formal recognition of Mao's regime (while not abandoning Taiwan). In contrast to the Soviet silence in 1966 following the Congressional hearings on academic advocacy of a new China policy, Moscow commented on these 1968 overtures in June and July. For example, worry regarding Peking's response was reflected in a 27 July 1968 article in Red Star which insisted that "State Department advisers" were studying Peking's reply, that "higher spheres of US politics" were discussing new possible US concessions, and that the new US China policy was "to keep the door ever open."

Although the Soviets were aware that the Taiwan issue remained in deadlock -- this was apparent to them from Secretary Rusk's 21 June comment regarding Peking's persistent demand at Warsaw for the "surrender" of Taiwan, they were worried about the above-mentioned American appeals for a new approach. Their concern was now in the context of increasing tensions on the Sino-Soviet border. In September, Peking for the first time publicized its protest about Soviet overflights of Chinese territory along the border, but Moscow, without immediately replying to the protest, continued reconnaissance flights along the border, and on one occasion, a Soviet aircraft penetrated deep into Chinese airspace in the northwest. In October, Brezhnev privately revealed [redacted] his growing apprehensions regarding border tension with China, and on 12 November, he publicly attacked the "Mao group." It became more and more necessary to find various ways to keep the Chinese worried about other issues, and it was in this context that experimenting with a new means to discomfit Peking was initiated. This was to be the Soviets' open contacts with the Chinese Nationalists which developed into an effort to harass Peking by seeming to opt for a "two Chinas" policy. The Soviets were also interested in trying to acquire whatever hard intelligence regarding the mainland the Nationalists had and were willing to share.

C. Soviet Contacts with the Chinese Nationalists

The ground had been prepared earlier for this Soviet initiative by the Nationalists themselves in connection with the exploitable and harsh anti-Soviet excrescence of Mao's Cultural Revolution. In early 1967, Taipei's Ministry of Foreign Affairs reportedly issued a "provisional regulation" authorizing Nationalist officials abroad to respond to questions initiated by Soviet officials at third country social gatherings. The regulation also authorized more formal meetings, and it instructed Nationalist officials to avoid criticizing the Russians unless criticized by them first. Correspondents for TASS and the Nationalists' Central News Agency in Singapore reportedly began regular meetings, but they seem to have avoided publicity.

The rationale for this official (but private) Nationalist attitude was reflected in the remarks [redacted] to American officials in November 1967. He said that the Nationalists

> *believe in supporting, for the moment at least, the Russian attitude towards China. It is now our unwritten policy to support Russian revisionism. Ultimately we feel this revisionism will help to undermine Mainland communism.*

Such an official view could have been authorized only at the highest level, that is, only by Chiang Kai-shek himself. This flexibility in his thinking about the usefulness of the Russians against the Peking regime was reflected in the fall of 1968 at a time when Moscow decided to surface its contacts with Taipei. In mid-October, Chiang reportedly ordered that all Nationalist public media refrain from attacking the USSR; he told a National Security Council meeting that Moscow was newly displaying some moderation in its attitude toward Taipei at international conferences. Chiang probably had been favorably impressed by the report of a GRC National Assembly member (resident in the US), who

had visited the USSR in September (ostensibly as a member of a US delegation to a technical conference) and who had been received cordially in Moscow. Subsequent official contacts, in one known case and almost certainly in all other cases, must have been authorized by Chiang personally. The issuing of a visa to a Soviet citizen, as occurred to set up the late October 1968 visit to Taiwan of Victor Louis -- an agent of the Soviet state -- would not have been approved by the Nationalist Foreign Ministry without first clearing the matter with Chiang or his son and heir-apparent, Chiang Ching-kuo.

Victor Louis's visit of four days to Taiwan as "a tourist" was unique in that it was the first time since 1949 that Moscow had been willing to imply a changed attitude toward Chiang's regime publicly -- and, similarly, it was the first time that Chiang had been willing to imply a reciprocal change in attitude publicly. Evidence indicates that the Soviets had taken the initiative for the visit and that despite his ostensible position as a "private" Soviet journalist, Louis's apparent assignment was to arouse Chinese Communist apprehension regarding a possible Moscow shift to a low-key -- or de facto -- "two Chinas" policy. Louis called on Minister of Defense Chiang Ching-kuo -- the second most important man in the regime -- and on the Secretary General of the Council for Economic Cooperation and Development. During his meeting with the latter, he reportedly suggested that some kind of trade agreement should be worked out between the two countries, although he acknowledged that direct trade would be "awkward" and suggested some kind of indirect arrangement through a third country. Louis invited the Nationalist trade official to visit Moscow for further talks (with Soviet trade officials), but the GRC side did not accept the invitation. The intention of the pitch on trade seems to have been to firm up USSR-GRC contacts by formalizing the new relationship in an official (even if unpublicized) agreement.

The secondary motivation for expanding and sustaining contacts with the Nationalists seems to have been to try to extract intelligence information regarding developments on the mainland. In December 1968, Soviet military attaches

approached their Nationalist counterparts in Tokyo, trying to engage them in a substantive discussion and sending them invitations for Soviet-sponsored dinners. In at least one subsequent contact in March 1969 between Soviet and GRC diplomats in New Zealand, the Russians asked specifically for Taipei's views on Mao's successor and on the link between the first major border clash on Damanskiy Island and the forthcoming CCP congress. It is not known what materials, if any, the Soviets may have acquired along the way from Nationalist officials, but in view of the GRC's own limited intelligence capability against the mainland, it probably amounted to very little of real value. While Taipei set about to determine the real purpose of Moscow's overtures, Chiang kept down anti-Soviet propaganda in his regime's media, permitted some contacts to continue, and allowed the GRC Foreign Ministry to pass unclassified propaganda material to Soviet diplomats in several capitols, but authorized no commitments to be made.

The border clash on Damanskiy Island apparently increased Soviet belligerency toward Peking to the point where a leadership decision seems to have been made to discreetly hint that Moscow was not really opposed to all aspects of a "two Chinas" policy. For example, on 15 March 1969, shortly after the first firefight on Damanskiy, the first secretary of the Soviet embassy in Washington told a State Department official that Moscow's position was that all independent states should be represented in the UN, that Peking should be in the Security Council, but (and then he professed to give his "personal opinion") that the "people of Taiwan" should be represented by a government of their choice in the General Assembly. Shortly thereafter, a Soviet official in Brussels took a roughly similar line with the Belgians. Between March and July 1969, Soviet diplomats at various posts, at first indirectly and later directly, warned officials of the Italian, West German, Belgian, Canadian, and Austrian governments against moving to establish diplomatic relations with Peking. These actions were intended not only to undercut Peking's long-term effort toward international recognition but also to make it more difficult for the GRC to be expelled from the UN and for the PRC to be voted in. When, in July 1969, Belgian Foreign Minister Harmel asked Kosygin (after having been urged on by a Soviet Foreign Ministry official)

about his views on admission of Peking to the UN, the Soviet Premier surprised Harmel by stating that the matter should be settled "between the two Chinas." Harmel believed that this was the first time that the Soviets had ever used the term "two Chinas." That this was part of a deliberate policy tactic was supported by Gromyko's failure to make any reference to the need for Chinese Communist representation in the UN -- the first time a General Assembly debate speech made by a Soviet had avoided the matter. (Speech of 19 September 1969.)*

The Chinese Communist reaction to this tentative Soviet "two Chinas" tactic was cautious, and at first Peking avoided commenting publicly on Louis's trip and on other USSR-GRC contacts. Subsequently, they took the wraps off, partly for the benefit of their Asian revolutionary clients, attacking Moscow for "overt and covert contacts" with the Chiang regime (Red Flag article of 27 August 1969), complaining that Gromyko in the General Assembly speech "did not utter a single word" on Peking's UN rights (NCNA article of 16 November 1969), officially protesting that Moscow had "deliberately coordinated with US imperialism in its plot of creating 'two Chinas'" (Foreign Ministry note of 9 January 1970), and complaining again that Soviet media was now depicting Taiwan "as a 'country'" (NCNA article of 11 January 1970). By that time, Peking was already maneuvering around Moscow and toward the US in preparation of the 20 January 1970 meeting in Warsaw, and may also have intended to remind Washington that any "two Chinas" formulation at the meeting would be unacceptable to Mao.

Subsequently, the Soviets have had to back away from hints that they might favor a "two Chinas" policy, but

**The first hint that the Soviets would use their turn to speak in the UN General Assembly as a means for worrying Peking about the possibility of a Moscow "two Chinas" position appeared in the General Assembly speech of Gromyko of 22 September 1967. For the first time in such a speech, Moscow did not call for the expulsion of the Nationalist representative from the UN.*

they continue their covert contacts with Chinese Nationalist officials and continue to lobby privately with various governments against recognition of Peking. The Nationalists themselves also prefer now to keep these contacts discreet, inasmuch as GRC officials believe that publicized contacts, such as Victor Louis's visit, had detracted from the anti-Communist image of Chiang Kai-shek's regime. Moscow's temporary overt flirtation with Taipei had been a reflection of the state of growing anxiety in Soviet thinking regarding developing tensions on the border (hence the need to discomfit the Chinese and to obtain intelligence), but it exposed Moscow to Peking's complaints that the Soviet "revisionists" were now even willing to play at "two Chinas" with Chiang -- a "counterrevolutionary" in the eyes of all Communists in every party. Soviet statements regarding the 25th UN General Assembly session were explicit in stating that "the formula of 'two Chinas' is untenable and has no chances of success." (TASS comment, 12 November 1970) That the Soviets probably will continue to take a public stand opposing a "two Chinas" (or a "one China, one Taiwan") formula in the UN General Assembly is predicated, of course, on the assumption that the border war does not once again flare up, as in 1969. At present, they seem content to profess publicly a willingness to see Peking admitted and the Nationalists expelled, while inwardly hoping that the US will be successful in carrying the fight to prevent Peking's entry.

D. Peking's November 1968 Probe of the New US Administration

To return to a reconstruction of Soviet thinking about Sino-US contacts in the fall of 1968, Moscow undoubtedly was taken by surprise by Peking's seemingly more conciliatory position as set forth in its 26 November 1968 probe of the new Administration's willingness to make a major concession on the Taiwan issue. Reference to the five principles of peaceful coexistence appeared as a new emphasis, and this moderation worried the Russians, who were not clear about what the Chinese would concede in the forthcoming talks that they had asked the Americans to resume.

Nevertheless, Peking's Foreign Ministry statement contained all the crucial elements of the previous position. It called on the new US Administration to make a major concession in a formal "agreement" or be confronted with "no result whatsoever."

> *Over the past 13 years, the Chinese Government has consistently adhered to the following two principles in the Sino-U.S. ambassadorial talks: first, the U.S. Government undertake to immediately withdraw all its armed forces from China's territory Taiwan Province and the Taiwan Strait area and dismantle all its military installations in Taiwan Province; second, the U.S. Government agrees that China and the United States conclude an agreement on the five principles of peaceful coexistence. But in the past 13 years, while refusing all along to reach an agreement with the Chinese Government on these two principles, the U.S. Government, putting the cart before the horse, has kept on haggling over side issues [such as personnel exchanges]. The Chinese Government has repeatedly told the U.S. side in explicit terms that the Chinese Government will never barter away principles. If the U.S. side continues its current practice, no result whatsoever will come of the Sino-U.S. ambassadorial talks no matter which administration assumes office in the United States.*
> (emphasis supplied)

In short, the agreement Peking sought at that time was first, that the US get out of Taiwan; and second, that it stay out, while the Chinese Communists handle in their own way the "internal" matter of dealing with the Chinese Nationalists.

Soviet sensitivity to this November probe was reflected in the immediate central press reaction. On 29 November, under the heading "Chinese Proposal Elicits U.S. Interest," Pravda carried two TASS reports: one from Peking that China

had proposed a 20 February meeting and the other, based on the New York Times, that high circles in the U.S. are "greatly interested" in the Chinese proposal for concluding an agreement on the five principles of peaceful coexistence. Moscow was now impelled to determine accurately Peking's present intention, after years of Chinese irascible rejection of US overtures. Why was Peking initiating an overture?

On the one hand, the Soviets had evidence from a Chinese Communist newspaper outlet in Hong Kong that the Chinese were not more conciliatory, but merely wanted to probe the new President's attitude. The 27 November 1968 article of the Hong Kong Ta Kung Pao declared: "If the Nixon government still takes the old road, the Sino-U.S. ambassadorial talks definitely will not be productive." On the other hand, they undoubtedly received reports, as did the US, that the Peking diplomatic community generally believed that China was interested in improving relations with the US and would not continue to insist on a major concession as a precondition for such improvement.

Moscow promptly initiated a public effort to make the Chinese leaders pay a political price for their proposal to resume talks with the Americans on 20 February 1969. The first interpretative comment on the Chinese proposal was designed by Moscow to evoke complaints against the Chinese move from Hanoi (and, to a lesser degree, Pyongyang). A Sino-US "pact of non-attack" was said to be the reason why Peking, while refusing to cooperate with the USSR in aiding Hanoi, was now preparing to make a "sacrifice to the paper tiger." (Komsomolskaya Pravda article of 1 December 1968) A second comment added that Peking was preparing to reach an "agreement" with the imperialist US at a time when Peking was doing nothing to normalize relations with a number of nearby states with which it once had friendly contacts -- an allusion to the state of Peking's relations with Pyongyang as well as with Moscow. (Izvestiya article of 4 December 1968) The clearest Soviet public effort to tie Peking's proposal to an alleged Chinese desire to play a role in Hanoi's political balliwick was made in a New Times article of 20 December. This article alleged that Peking needed a dialogue with the US to conform Chinese

foreign policy with the changed situation in Vietnam and the prospect of talks in Paris. It alleged that Peking did not want to "miss the train" while the Southeast Asian problems are solved, and that Peking planned to get its ticket from the US -- for a political price.

The Chinese leaders were particularly vulnerable to charges of gross inconsistency and expediency on the matter of offering to discuss an agreement on peaceful coexistence -- a concept of international relations which they previously had attacked the Russians for endorsing. Thus the most authoritative Soviet attack, set forth in the Pravda article of 15 December, underscored the point that now Peking for the first time publicly had made such a peaceful coexistence proposal. Pravda went on to suggest that there might be a serious aspect to the Chinese offer, inasmuch as Peking no longer demanded the return "of Taiwan" but only withdrawal "of U.S. troops." In an apparent reaction to this Soviet suggestion that Peking was soft-pedalling the territorial issue, a Chinese official stated [redacted] to [redacted] in late December 1968 that there had been no shift in China's policy. He noted that one of the five principles is a demand for respect of Peking's "territorial" integrity.

More and more, the Chinese revealed their sensitivity to Soviet charges of Sino-US collusion, and they tried to protect their exposed flank by turning the charge back against Moscow. In their first comment on President Nixon's 20 January 1969 Inaugural Address, they twisted the President's remarks, alleging that he "strongly called for... increased collaboration and 'cooperation'" with the USSR. (NCNA article of 21 January) The Soviet Union was raised to the level of a principal enemy of China when Peking referred to a new formulation -- "these two number one enemies" of China. (People's Daily article of 22 January) In their most authoritative article on the Inaugural Address -- the joint Commentator article of the People's Daily and Red Flag of 27 January, sections of which read as if they had come from Mao's own hand -- the Chinese attacked Soviet-US "collusion" and "peaceful competition." The article explicitly demanded that the US withdraw its troops from the Taiwan

Strait and pronounced final judgment on the new head of state: "Nixon is resolved to recklessly pursue the beaten path of Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson." On the same day, Peking acted in distinctively Maoist fashion by making the Inaugural Address a text for "good teaching by negative example," thus putting it in the lowest circle of Mao's hell with the statements of Chiang Kai-shek, Liu Shao-chi, and Khrushchev. Following the President's press conference of 27 January, the Chinese began using the crudest (most Maoist) metaphors in its attack on Soviet-US collusion, depicting American and Soviet leaders as two fish out of water "each trying to prolong the life of the other with spittle." (People's Daily article of 2 February 1969)*

The Soviets may well have appraised this deliberate recourse to Maoist abuse against the US and this stress on US-Soviet collusion as preparation for an intransigent Chinese line at the next Warsaw meeting. Peking's propaganda following the President's statements had become unprecedented, in authoritativeness and volume, in attacking a new American President. Although other Sino-US bilateral issues were not mentioned in the Peking barrage, the most important commentary sarcastically demanded a US pullback from the Taiwan Strait. Whether this barrage -- hardly conducive to creating a favorable atmosphere for profitable talks -- was intended to be a prelude to Peking's postponement of the next Warsaw meeting or merely a prelude to an intransigent line during the meeting is a matter for conjecture. More important is the question of why the Chinese did postpone the meeting.

*At his press conference, the President had stated that:

> *The policy of this country and this Administration at this time will be to continue to oppose Communist China's admission to the UN.... We look forward to that [Warsaw] meeting. We will be interested to see what the Chinese Communist representatives may have to say at that meeting whether any changes of attitude on their part on major substantive issues may have occurred. Until some changes occur on their side, however, I see no immediate prospect of any change in our policy.*

Examination of a possible hawk-against-dove split in the standing committee of Mao's Politburo is beyond the scope of this paper. Whether such a split existed at the time or not, the postponement seemed to reflect a leadership perception, by the end of January, that the new President would not make a major concession. The choice for Mao and his aides may therefore have become one of holding a meeting which had already become superfluous for the original Chinese purpose of probing for such a concession, or cancelling the meeting. The latter course (the one taken) would have the advantage of blunting the effective Soviet propaganda campaign stressing the theme (to Peking's revolutionary friends in Asia) that a Washington-Peking "deal" was in prospect. Thus the primary reason for postponement may have been a judgment in the Chinese leadership that the meeting with the Americans would have produced neither US concessions nor new information about US intentions, while it would have been a clear-cut liability in Mao's polemic with the Soviet leaders.

In any case, on 18 February, the day of the announced cancellation, the Soviets had reason to relax their concern about possible improvement in Sino-US relations.* The Polish Deputy Foreign Minister told Ambassador Stoessel on that day that "many people both in Warsaw and Moscow will be relieved by the news."

Nevertheless, the Soviet leaders were taking the long-range perspective, and their officials continued to probe Washington's attitude, warning against exploitation of the Sino-Soviet dispute. After Mr. Harriman stated his impression to Pravda columnist Yuri Zhukov on 29 January that President Nixon would like to improve relations with Communist China, in February a Soviet UN official complained [redacted] to an American scholar that the US seemed to be

*The next time Peking cancelled a Sino-US meeting at Warsaw, the same time-span was used. That is, the Chinese waited until the last moment (18 May 1970) to cancel the 137th meeting (scheduled for 20 May).

"relaxing" its hard position against Peking's membership in the international body by failing to control Canada and Italy in their voting on the China representation issue. At about the same time, the director of the Institute for the Study of the USA, Yuri Arbatov, told a visiting American businessman that there was a "tentative" Soviet sympathy with the idea of coming closer to the West because of China, but this sympathy could be dissipated by one side trying to use it as a "trump card" at the expense of the other.

III. Suspicions Deepened

A. Reaction to Senator E. Kennedy's Speech of March 1969

Senator E. Kennedy's speech of 21 March 1969 to a conference of China scholars was made at a time when Moscow was trying to mobilize the opinion of Western governments against the Chinese immediately following clashes on the Sino-Soviet border. The Soviets made demarches to high levels of Western governments. These approaches were unprecedented in Moscow's diplomatic practice because for the first time the Russians were asking for the understanding of NATO powers -- the former "enemy" -- against Peking -- the former "friend." In Rome and Ottawa, Soviet diplomats suggested that recognition should not be extended to Peking, and in Bonn, they hinted their disapproval of any improvement in trade relations with the Chinese Communists. On 20 March, when two Soviet journalists tried to impress American embassy officers with the seriousness of the border situation, they implied that Washington must not encourage the Chinese. One journalist, the deputy editor of New Times, stated that at some future time the situation might reach a point where a Soviet-US "understanding" on China would become necessary. It was on the heels of this nervous reaction to the border clashes that Senator Kennedy proposed a drastic shift toward Peking in Washington's China policy.

The Soviets suspected official support partly because his policy proposals were widely publicized in major American newspapers. According to the Senator, the new Administration should begin "more informal official and semi-official conversations" with Peking, drop restrictions on travel and on nonstrategic trade, place Peking on "the same footing as the Soviet Union" and East European regimes in matters

of trade, offer to send a "resident" trade mission to Peking, exchange consular offices with Peking even "in the absence of diplomatic relations," welcome Peking's international contacts and cease efforts to isolate it, "guarantee" the people of Taiwan against a "forcible take-over" by the Communists but "withdraw" American forces from the island, and drop American opposition to Peking's entry into the General Assembly and Security Council as "the" representative of China in the UN. Despite the Senator's remark that Peking's reaction "will probably be a blunt refusal," and his description of the policy as really something for the future -- i.e., for the "seventies and beyond" -- the Soviets were angry and alarmed. The timing of the speech added to the impact of its content. The Soviets immediately suspected that the border dispute was being viewed as exploitable against Moscow not only by the Senator and US China scholars, but also by the new US Administration.

Soviet officials viewed the timing of the speech as "proof" of an intention to attain a Washington-Peking detente to Moscow's detriment. The central press complained in commentaries that American political figures hoped to seize advantages from Peking's anti-Soviet policies, and on 27 March, a senior Pravda commentator stated [redacted] to the visiting Newsweek foreign editor that the Senator had "killed himself" in the eyes of the Soviet people by advocating improved Sino-US relations at a time when Soviet soldiers were dying on the border. By early April, an official of the Soviet Far Eastern Institute, who was angered by what he regarded as the pro-Peking attitudes of China experts he had just visited at several major American universities, complained about the "balanced" approach to China and the USSR in Senator Kennedy's speech. He stated that despite what State Department officials had told him, he considered the Administration to be quite capable of making friends with Peking on short notice. At least two Soviet officials privately probed the view of American scholars to determine whether "secret talks," other than the Warsaw talks, were already taking place between American and Chinese Communist diplomats.

Moscow's displeasure was conveyed to Western diplomats by Soviet Foreign Ministry veterans. In early April, Deputy

Foreign Minister Vinogradov complained [redacted] in Moscow that the US had first isolated Peking and blocked its entry to the UN, and now was making "inopportune overtures," implying that now Washington was not isolating Peking enough. Ambassador Dobrynin told [redacted] on 14 April that it would be good if the Chinese were to have greater contact with the outside world, but that it would be "terrible" if the US tried to exploit such a development against the USSR. Dobrynin conjectured that if Peking were to agree to exchange diplomatic representatives without insisting on an Ottawa diplomatic break with Taipei, this would be an opening for the US government, and Washington quickly would take advantage of it. The Soviets apparently were beginning to fear that Canadian recognition of Peking would somehow make it easier for Washington to move toward eventual recognition, and Dobrynin seemed to be hinting that the Canadians should delay recognition.

B. Urging "Complete" Isolation of Peking

By June 1969, new thinking emerged and was reflected in more explicit and direct advocacy of non-recognition and isolation of Peking, going beyond the hints made in the Soviet demarches during the spring. The first sign of a shift appeared in early June. Brezhnev's 7 June appeal for a new look at a "system of collective security" for Asia was an expression, at the highest level, of a new policy to try to use Soviet influence in countries on the periphery of China to frustrate Mao's anti-Soviet diplomatic moves. Soviet ambassadors were recalled from the countries of Southeast Asia at this time, almost certainly to discuss how advocacy of such an undefined "system" could be made to help influence governments in this region to support Moscow's anti-Peking policy. But because the Soviets were unwilling to propose policy content for this vague concept, it was of little help in modifying the attitudes of such governments toward Peking. The mere fact that the USSR approached South Asian governments with this concept, however, evidently gave concern to Peking; this may have been one of the Soviet purposes.

Meanwhile, the Soviets also sought to influence Western governments, to tell them in effect to keep away from the Chinese as the Sino-Soviet dispute intensified on the border. Behind the scenes, instructions for carrying out a more energetic effort against Peking were dispatched in a circular telegram signed by Foreign Minister Gromyko and sent to all embassies on 15 June. Soviet embassies were instructed to note the "definite danger" from Peking, partly in connection with the serious border clashes, and the "new aspects" of diplomatic activity that should be directed toward political containment of China. One of the new tasks for Soviet diplomats was to begin efforts aimed at "preventing the possibility of a [Chinese] compact with the major imperialist powers." The telegram warned that although public statements from Washington appeared to be "neutral" on the Sino-Soviet dispute, the new Administration saw advantage in pressuring the USSR "from two flanks." Embassies were instructed to refrain from "complications" with the US.

> *The Nixon administration's course with respect to the CPR has not yet come into clear focus. In public statements, the U.S. is maintaining an apparently neutral line on questions of relations between the USSR and China. However, after the Chinese provocations on the Ussuri River, the idea of the usefulness of pressure on the USSR from two flanks -- NATO and China -- is ever more clearly discernible.*
>
> *With a view to exerting influence on the U.S. by strengthening tendencies favorable to us in their China policy, at the present stage it is necessary to manifest restraint, moderation and flexibility in relations with the U.S., to refrain from complications with her.*

In short, these instructions suggested that there was to be a direct relationship between the worsening of Moscow-Peking

relations and the muting of points of friction between Moscow and Washington. Moreover, NATO powers were to be warned.

Probably acting on the new instructions, on 16 June, the first secretary of the Soviet embassy in Rome made Moscow's first request to [redacted] to reconsider its Peking recognition policy and advocated isolating the Chinese. When asked how Sino-Soviet tensions could be reduced, the Soviet diplomat stated that "isolation" might be the only solution, that the isolation practiced up to now had not been "total," especially in its geographical aspects, and that perhaps a "complete" application of the principle would induce the Chinese leaders to abandon "their insane policy." He then alluded to Moscow's "hope" that all states would refrain from any actions, such as those he alleged were now being taken by Canada, Belgium, and West Germany, (i.e., moves toward recognition) that would favor Peking's present policy. In the course of a conversation on 18 June with a Soviet official, [redacted] was warned that recognition of Peking would only be the start of Canada's troubles. Suspicion that the US had somehow prompted Canada to move toward recognition was reflected in the [redacted] remark of the first secretary of the Soviet embassy in Ottawa on 26 June to an American embassy officer: the US, he claimed, had urged Canada to begin talks with the Chinese in order to "test the water," inasmuch as the US wished to begin similar talks.

Using more direct warnings than were used earlier in the year, Arbatov, the director of the Institute for the Study of the USA, stated emphatically to a visiting American scholar in late June 1969 that Washington should not fish in the troubled waters of the border dispute. Arbatov was paraphrased by the scholar as follows:

> *Do not try to exploit the situation to your advantage. Except for making Moscow uncomfortable, you have nothing to gain by warming up to Peking. We -- the US and the USSR -- have much more in common than the US and China. Keep your hands off.*

Foreign Minister Gromyko's son, a member of the Institute, interjected that "It is none of your business." Also in late June, Arbatov did not use any subtle locution in warning an American visitor to his Institute, declaring that the USSR would regard recognition of Peking by the Administration as an alignment of forces against the Soviet Government. Arbatov undoubtedly was reflecting the views of some Politburo members, probably those of Kosygin in particular but not exclusively.

The Belgian Foreign Minister, who had visited Moscow in mid-July and had had discussions with Kosygin and Foreign Minister Gromyko, came away with the impression that the Soviets feared increased Sino-US contacts, and (as noted earlier in this paper) he commented that Kosygin was the first Soviet he had ever noted using the term "two Chinas." Thus the Soviet effort to achieve "complete" isolation of Peking included strong warnings to Americans against moving toward recognition, and repeated attempts were made to convey this message to Administration officials. On 18 July, Deputy Foreign Minister V. Kuznetsov told Arthur Goldberg that the Soviets were disturbed by Washington's China policy, that there was "evidence" in official and unofficial circles that the US was tending to deal with Peking against Soviet interests, and that the US was in this way encouraging Chinese belligerence.

The Chinese were almost certainly surprised by Brezhnev's 7 June reference to the importance of an Asian collective security system and appraised it as part of a new Soviet effort to isolate Peking. On 9 July, the Chinese Foreign Ministry's specialist on West Europe, Tang Haikuang, told [redacted] that Brezhnev's collective security proposal was a plan to encircle China, but that China was "firmly determined not to be isolated." Reflecting an apparent high-level decision to appear more cordial toward countries already represented in Peking, Tang linked the topic with a comment on the excellent state of Sino-Scandinavian relations, referring to these relations as a model for normalizing China's relations with non-Communist countries. Replying to a question about the state of Sino-US relations, Tang said that although there were signs of "new thinking" in Washington, US policy

was still hostile, Peking must look for deeds not words, and for the present there was no prospect for improved relations. Although Peking media had by then begun to attack Brezhnev's security system statement, the first Chinese leader to do so publicly was Chou En-lai, who on 13 July denounced it in a speech which praised Pakistan for rejecting the Soviet "anti-China military alliance." The first sign that the Chinese were willing to reduce their previously adamant opposition to Hanoi's policy of continuing the Paris talks appeared within a month, during the visit of a North Vietnamese delegation to Peking -- another indication that Mao was willing to permit Chou to maneuver with some leeway against Moscow.

However, regarding any basic change in Peking's policy toward establishing relations with the US, Chinese officials privately were explicit in demanding a major concession from Washington as an indispensable precondition. "Informed sources" in Peking rejected the "meager" US gesture of mid-July of easing travel restrictions and permitting the purchase of mainland products, and it was noted by these same sources that regardless of State Department intentions Peking had issued visas to journalists, such as Edgar Snow, allowing them entry with no need of official US assistance. In late August, NCNA's chief editor in Hong Kong told a West German newsman that the US gestures were "chickenfeed." He said that the only action Peking would regard as meaningful would be "withdrawal of military forces from the Taiwan Strait." On 25 August, the official stated that a mere reduction would be immaterial, that "all" US troops must be withdrawn from Taiwan, and that Peking could not promise to renounce the use of force in dealing with the future of the island. Thus, while maneuvering against Moscow at a time when the Chinese were deeply worried about a possible Soviet airstrike against their nuclear facilities, Mao was unwilling to permit his aides to show flexibility on the major Sino-US issue.

On 13 August, a border clash took place in Sinkiang at a time when the Soviets were conducting a campaign in which they threatened -- but only threatened -- to attack if the Chinese did not cease moving patrols into Soviet-

claimed territory. The Soviets apparently believed that the American overtures in mid-July were acts of deliberate encouragement to the Chinese to step up border probing. The Soviets may also have interpreted late August US press reports about American intelligence appraisals of the likelihood of a Sino-Soviet war as deliberate US interference. Pravda warned on 28 August that a Sino-Soviet war "would not leave a single continent unaffected" and an Izvestiya commentator declared on 31 August that such a big war would have "almost unforseeable consequences," noting that this danger should be recognized by "realistic-minded Americans." In early September, a Soviet UN diplomat told an American scholar that Under Secretary Richardson's 5 September speech to the American Political Science Association was viewed by Moscow as pro-Chinese.* Suspicious of US encouragement of the Chinese, the official asked why Washington chose precisely "this dangerous moment" in Sino-Soviet relations to make overtures to the Chinese.

On 4 September, Kosygin complained to visiting Japanese Foreign Minister Aichi about the efforts of "other states" (presumably not only Japan) to exploit Sino-Soviet tensions. When Aichi told the Soviets that Washington really desired an improvement in relations with Peking, they wanted to know the extent of Washington-Tokyo consultation on Peking. Aichi gained the impression that although Kosygin had referred to the idea of an Asian collective security arrangement as "important," the idea was imprecise and the Soviets had nothing definite in mind.

The Soviet effort launched in June 1969 to make the isolation of Peking "complete" had been followed by US gestures to Peking and by Asian non-support for the vague idea of collective security arrangements. The effort, that

**The Under Secretary had stated that regarding an improvement in relations, "we are not going to let Soviet apprehensions prevent us from attempting to bring Communist China out of its angry, alienated shell."*

is, had fallen flat and Asian collective security was a dead letter. To the conspiracy-conscious Soviet political mind, which believes that no major political development occurs "by accident," Washington on two important occasions had tried to exploit the Sino-Soviet border dispute to improve relations with Peking. Senator Kennedy in late March and Under Secretary Richardson in early September had called for improved relations "precisely" at times when bloody clashes had been fought on the border. Soviet officials told [redacted] in mid-September that American gestures toward Peking were intended to signal the Chinese that they could safely withdraw forces from eastern China for use against the Soviets on the northern border. [redacted] one Soviet official there, when asked to produce evidence of US intentions to exploit the border dispute, claimed that Washington's negative reaction to the idea of Asian collective security arrangements was dictated by a desire to see the USSR and China at loggerheads.

C. Delaying Reply on Start of SALT

The Soviets were acting as though they believed Washington's basic calculation to be as follows: confronted with a border war, Moscow must act from a position of political weakness in any Soviet-US negotiations. The Soviets probably believed that it would be disadvantageous to the USSR to begin SALT while clashes were still likely to occur on the border. Although there undoubtedly were other reasons for Moscow's delay in the summer and fall of 1969 in replying to Washington on a date to begin SALT, Soviet thinking about the unfavorable atmosphere (given their China troubles) probably was one element in their hesitation.

In early September, a Soviet newsman in Washington hinted that Moscow's reply on SALT would await a Soviet

effort to clarify the US attitude toward Peking. On 8 September, a Soviet UN representative explained Soviet hesitation on the grounds that disarmament talks would be a political constraint if the USSR had to take punitive military action against the Chinese. Thus the Soviets, who had earlier in 1969 warned against American delays in responding to the Soviet willingness to move ahead on SALT, were themselves delaying their answer to the last US communication.

When Kosygin met with Chou En-lai at the Peking airport on 11 September to ease border tensions and pave the way for border talks, a major Soviet consideration had become the need to warn the US that the USSR's troubles with Mao were less open to exploitation than Washington may have estimated. The Soviets clearly believed that the US had made such an estimate: on 15 September, B. N. Ponomarev, chief of the CPSU Central Committee's International Department, told visiting US Communist Party boss Gus Hall that Kosygin, among other things, had tried to show Chou how Sino-Soviet differences were being exploited in the West. One day later, Brezhnev stated to Hall that the "U.S. imperialists" had seemed to be very much disturbed when they thought that Chou would meet with Kosygin in Hanoi and that subsequently the US was speculating on the significance of the Peking meeting. Although this Soviet line was self-serving, since the two Russian leaders were providing a foreign Communist with justification for Moscow's negotiating with the Chinese enemy, their statements nevertheless probably reflected genuine concern that the border dispute had become an important source of US political leverage.

Brezhnev went on to complain that the only two questions of importance for President Nixon were the ABM question and the question of reaching some understanding on strategic weapons. He suggested that agreement on lesser questions could pave the way for these larger agreements. On this point, Brezhnev seemed to imply that the Soviets would continue to delay their response on SALT.

The immediate Soviet reaction in New York to the President's UN speech of 18 September was negative, partly

because the Russians reportedly were displeased by his reference to Moscow's failure to respond on SALT. They were also made uneasy by his reference to the possibility that the US might deal with Peking if the latter would come out of isolation. Foreign Minister Gromyko, in his speech of 19 September to the UN, did not comment on SALT and, significantly, relegated the issue of disarmament to the end of his speech. This downgrading of the disarmament theme was in sharp contrast with his speech in 1968, fully one-half of which was devoted to disarmament topics. Gromyko seemed to be emphasizing, to a more than usual degree, the theme of Soviet strength as against that of Western Europe. His stress on the destructive capability of Soviet nuclears was given added prominence by his failure to mention old Soviet proposals to avoid their use. While these shifts in emphasis may have partly reflected some internal Soviet indecision over disarmament issues, they also seemed to reflect leadership sensitivity to any thought in the West (particularly in the US) that Moscow had been weakened or made vulnerable to political pressure because of its dispute with Peking. In addition, for the first time in a Soviet general debate speech in the UN, no reference was made by Gromyko to the need for Chinese Communist representation in the world organization.

In September, therefore, trouble with Peking on the border seems to have been one factor that made it appear to Moscow to be a disadvantageous time to begin SALT. However, Chinese willingness to talk about the border dispute in Peking was to reduce this factor in Soviet calculations.

By late September, Soviet officials were optimistic in hinting to US and other Western officials that Sino-Soviet talks were in immediate prospect. In early October, on the eve of Peking's 7 October announcement that talks "are to be held" at a mutually agreed time, [redacted] told the [redacted] that although Kosygin and Chou "did not renew the alliance," they tried to reduce the risks of war and to facilitate normalization of state relations. In reply to the [redacted] question regarding the effects that

the Kosygin-Chou meeting would have on Soviet-US relations, in particular on SALT, [redacted] stated that "we may now have greater freedom of action." On 13 October, the second secretary of the Soviet embassy in London -- a KGB officer -- called on American embassy officers there and stated that the reason why the Soviets had not yet replied on SALT could be summed up in one word: "China." He implied that a reply on SALT would be held in abeyance until the Soviets had sorted out their thinking about the Chinese. (At the time, Peking had not yet provided Moscow with its 20 October date for beginning Sino-Soviet border talks.)

Soviet behavior in the summer and fall of 1969 suggests that the leadership had been operating from a scale of priorities. The issues of starting SALT, of negotiating on the status of Berlin, and of agreeing on a renunciation of force with West Germany had fallen victim to the highest Soviet priority, dealing with China. By floating the idea of collective security in Europe and Asia, the Soviets had tried to keep tensions low in the West and to somehow isolate China politically in the East. They decided that first they had to make the effort to tie up the Chinese in negotiations, and they mounted a threat-of-Soviet-attack campaign to impel the Chinese to desist on the border and begin negotiating. Until they had succeeded in this, they temporarily shelved other outstanding issues. This arrangement of priorities reflected their estimate that troubles with Peking over the border was the issue most likely to lead to big military engagements. They also believed with increasing anxiety that if border clashes were to escalate, the US would go beyond its small gestures to Peking. [redacted] the Polish ambassador in Moscow had been told by Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister V. Kuznetsov, on the eve of his departure to begin border talks in Peking in late October, that if the Sino-Soviet dispute worsened, the US might try to establish "diplomatic relations" with the CPR.

The Soviet leaders tried to put the best -- i.e., the most optimistic -- interpretation on the forthcoming border talks with the Chinese. Politburo member Podgornyy

in Helsinki in mid-October told [redacted] that Sino-Soviet relations had taken a very definite turn for the better and that an era of friendlier relations could be expected. When the US ambassador in Helsinki remarked to Podgornyy that the Soviets seemed to have serious problems with regard to their border with China, the Soviet president shot back that this was an "easy problem," which would be settled "quickly." When asked about a reply on SALT, Podgornyy repeated the "hope" of the American ambassador that a favorable response would come soon. Kosygin was somewhat more candid with [redacted] During the mid-October visit of [redacted] Kosygin stated that talks with the Chinese were intended to resolve current disputes and to normalize relations, but the process would be a long haul, and Kosygin could not say whether success would be the result. [redacted] later (7 December 1969) told Secretary Rogers that [redacted] interpreted the 13 October communique with the Soviets as Moscow's desire to protect its rear. The Soviets, he said, were interested in stablizing the European situation on the basis of a political, ideological, and territorial status quo in order to leave them free to concentrate their attention on China.

Nevertheless, the main thing for the Soviet leaders was that the Chinese had been impelled to agree to maintain the border status quo by ceasing patrol activity in Soviet-held territory. Talks in Peking began on 20 October 1969. Tension on the border began to subside, and on 25 October, Moscow announced the 17 November date for beginning SALT. The acting editor of New Times told an American embassy officer in Moscow on 3 November that the USSR was no less anxious to proceed with SALT than before, and added that the delayed Soviet response had been due, in part, to preoccupation with China.

Having tied the Chinese to negotiations, it was important, in Soviet thinking, to keep the Chinese from breaking off the talks. Brezhnev, in his speech of 27 October, referred to Chou En-lai as "comrade" -- a public gesture of conciliation not known to have been made by the Soviets since 1966 -- and went on to express the hope that "a positive, realistic approach will prevail at these

talks." However, Brezhnev already was aware that the Chinese were not interested in serious negotiations pointing toward a settlement of the border dispute. The Chinese privately were demanding the signing of a mutual Agreement on Provisional Measures before real talks could continue. Mao's "provisional measures" were drastic demands: (1) that the Soviets pull back from areas held by Soviet forces but which Mao chose to define as "disputed," (2) that the Soviets sign a guarantee not to attack China and not to use nuclears in any attack on China, and (3) that the Soviets withdraw all their military forces from Mongolia. These Maoist demands were not opening bargaining gambits; on the contrary, they were calculated to elicit a refusal from Moscow and to deny the Soviet leaders any hope that a border settlement might be reached. The Soviet leaders did refuse to agree to Mao's "provisional measures," countered by offering to sign a no-attack pact simultaneously with Peking's signing of a final border settlement, and kept their troops in place in order to maintain military pressure on the Chinese to keep them negotiating.

no progress had been made in the Peking talks, but the Soviets wished the talks to continue because they were anxious to avoid a breakdown at a time when they were involved in important diplomatic activity in the West. The Soviets were said to believe that a breakdown in the Peking talks would weaken their ability to negotiate effectively in SALT and in preparing for a European security conference. Unreported was the additional Soviet calculation that talks were preferable to border firefights.

From the Soviet viewpoint, Moscow had conducted nimbler diplomatic tactics than Peking in dealing with foreign policy problems since early 1969 when border clashes had erupted. The Soviets had improved their position with regard to Czechoslovakia and had gained in stature by pressing for a reduction in tension (through a European security conference and some form of Asian collective

security arrangement) and by engaging the US in SALT. By contrast, the Chinese were still laboring slowly toward a more nearly normal (post-Cultural Revolution) situation in foreign contacts. The Soviets saw a positive advantage in maintaining the new quiet on their eastern border while they pursued an increased level of stability in relations with the West. The talks in Peking tended to free the Soviets from the psychological burden they had felt in appearing to be a supplicant when appealing for reduced tensions with Western countries. Moscow's public announcement regarding the start of SALT was made only five days after the beginning of border talks in Peking.

IV. A New Concern: Peking's Foreign Policy Maneuvering

China had started to emerge from its self-spun cocoon of international isolation in the spring of 1969 following the Chen Pao clashes in March and the 9th CCP Congress in April. Prior to this gradual emergence, the immobility of China's foreign policy had been reflected partly in the fact that ambassadors it had recalled for indoctrination in 1967 had not been returned to key European and Asian capitals. This situation hampered Chou En-lai's ability to present effectively Peking's version of the border clashes. By contrast, the Soviets immediately used their ambassadors already in place to make demarches presenting their version of the firefights, while other officials in Soviet embassies disseminated photographs of slain Soviet border guards. Peking was confronted with a bad press in most world capitols.

Following the 9th CCP Congress of April 1969, the pace of Chinese ambassadorial appointments quickened. Beginning on 15 May with the assignment of an ambassador to Albania, Mao followed a procedure of dispatching men first to the most-favored nations. Assignment of an ambassador to France was announced on 20 May. Subsequently, by early June and soon thereafter, the priority of assignments was clustered around four groups of countries: (1) North Vietnam, Cambodia, and Pakistan; (2) Guinea, Tanzania, and Zambia; (3) Rumania and Sweden; and (4) the Congo and Syria. The high professional qualifications of the ambassadors suggested that Mao had finally been persuaded by Chou of the necessity to make a serious effort to counter Soviet anti-Chinese diplomacy by a diplomacy of maneuver, unimpeded by the gauche "revolutionary diplomats" he had encouraged in 1966-67. A new diplomacy, featuring flexible tactics, required better knowledge of Soviet and American official foreign policy thinking, and when Chou En-lai, in early June, suggested to the newly arrived [redacted] a desire to initiate an exchange of views on current political subjects, he was in effect asking for help in making informed judgments about the

views of Peking's two major opponents. In July, Chinese officials began to pump [redacted] on various subjects, including Washington's attitude on withdrawal from Vietnam. It may be conjectured that these officials also probed for [redacted] analysis of Soviet moves against Peking, such as Brezhnev's 7 June proposal for the formation of a system of Asian collective security.

There were two indications in October 1969 that the Chinese were now aware that they had been badly outmaneuvered, and that this is what finally impelled Mao to act. First, the Australian Communist journalist Wilfred Burchett, after having been given a warm greeting by Chou En-lai in Peking, was briefed by Deputy Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua -- the head of the Chinese border talks team -- on the Chinese version of border tensions. Burchett was asked many questions about his contacts in the West, and then he was asked for his views on how China's image in the world could best be improved. Next, on 28 October, Deputy Foreign Minister Lo Kuei-po spoke to [redacted] and the first subject Lo raised was the inferiority of China to the "superpowers," the US and the USSR, in the area of influencing foreign public opinion. Lo complained that the Americans and Russians had a much more effective and impressive mechanism for "transforming truth and fiction" and that the Chinese were at a disadvantage in explaining their policies abroad. This conversation had taken place eight days after the start of border talks in Peking, and Lo angrily complained that China had been pressured to negotiate by Soviet threats.

Starting in the fall of 1969, Peking therefore launched three basic operations of diplomatic maneuver, intended to overcome those disadvantages and to significantly increase Chinese foreign policy mobility. One maneuver was in the form of an indirect message from Peking to the US that Moscow was in deep trouble in the border talks and, therefore, had not solved its most pressing problem with China. The second was a decision to worry the Russians by finally responding favorably to Washington's hints to resume the Warsaw talks. The third was a warning to the East Germans that what was depicted as

Moscow's "soft" policy toward West Berlin would open the way to bigger sellouts of Pankow's interests. In sum, Peking's professional diplomats were given leeway to try to relieve Soviet psychological and military pressure on China by encouraging other nations to take firm stands on unresolved issues with Moscow.

A. Exposing Soviet "Optimism" Regarding the Border Talks

At the start of the talks on 20 October 1969, the Soviets in Peking and Moscow radiated optimism, hinting to foreign diplomats that the border talks would eliminate their major problem with the Chinese. When the Chinese, in actual negotiations, showed no sign of softening their demands, the Soviets maintained a blandly optimistic front. They were trying to sustain the illusion of a gradual rapprochement with China, with the ultimate aim of strengthening Moscow's diplomatic hand in negotiations with the US.

The Chinese deliberately created a dark cloud of pessimism when, on 6 November, they published an article in their Hong Kong Ta Kung Pao which gave a clear indication that the talks were deadlocked. Attributing the article to a "correspondent in Peking," the Chinese announced that the talks "have not been proceeding as smoothly as some in the outside world have made them out to be." On the next day, Soviet delegation chief, V. Kuznetsov, took refuge in diplomatic understatement by telling [redacted] that the talks would last a long time. Covertly, the Soviets began a campaign among diplomats in Peking to cast doubt on the authenticity of the Hong Kong article. Among the Chinese officials who undercut this line was Tang Hai-kuang, the acting director of the Foreign Ministry West Europe Department, who told [redacted] in mid-November that the newspaper was "a very responsible one." In Moscow, the NCNA bureau chief told a [redacted] newsman on 19 November that the article on troubled talks was "correct," and that earlier Soviet public optimism was "a

typical lie." [redacted] the article in fact was personally written by the chief Chinese negotiator, Deputy Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua.

This striking new mobility in Peking's tactics was necessitated by what the Chinese perceived was the most immediate threat to their national security, namely, the build-up of Soviet forces on the border. The Soviets had made it clear at the start of the talks that they would continue to maintain this force and would not withdraw the implied threat to use it. They also made it clear that they would not yield to Peking's demand that they withdraw their troops which held large areas of Chinese-claimed disputed territory at various sections along the border. In discussions with a Chinese Foreign Ministry official in early December, [redacted] were informed that the Chinese interpreted Soviet participation in SALT as a message to Peking that the USSR had no worries on the Western front and could devote its full military attention to China. Deputy Foreign Minister Lo Kuei-po already (in his 28 October discussion [redacted]) had indicated Peking's view that the US, in its "collusion" with the USSR, had demonstrated its sympathy with the Soviets by negotiating on Seabeds and SALT. Just as the Soviets had previously feared that Sino-US talks would injure Soviet interests, so now the Chinese believed that Soviet-US talks were aiding Moscow to attain a freer hand in dealing with China. The Chinese charge in Moscow asked [redacted] on 4 December if the simultaneous NATO and Warsaw Pact meetings were only a coincidence, complaining that if Moscow-Washington "collusion" was expanding to NATO and the Warsaw Pact, then the "situation is extremely grave."

B. Worrying Moscow by Responding to US Gestures

Confronted by the Soviet military buildup on their northern border, the Chinese decided that it was necessary to give the Russians the impression that the long-term military confrontation with the US (and the Chinese Nationalists)

was easing and that they would be capable of concentrating their military attention more fully on the USSR. In their view, they would be covering their eastern flank, just as Moscow was acting to cover its western flank by engaging the US and West Germans in talks.

In order to convince the Russians that the PLA was not split between two major fronts, that military tensions with the US had eased, and that Soviet forces were the main enemies, the Chinese tried to make the prospects for a Sino-US accommodation appear more promising than in previous years. Privately, they tried to seed the idea that there would be some flexibility in Peking's position. In Peking, a Chinese Foreign Ministry official told a [redacted] on 9 July 1969 that "new thinking" on China had recently emerged in Washington. In Moscow, the Chinese charge in late July indicated that Peking might be receptive to a limited accommodation with Washington and that the Warsaw talks, only "temporarily" suspended, would be resumed. In Hong Kong, a Chinese official stated [redacted] on 19 September that Peking was well aware of Soviet apprehension over a possible improvement of Sino-US relations. But these hints necessarily were kept vague, inasmuch as the Chinese intention was to display only so much flexibility as to worry the Russians but not so much as to make a basic concession to the Americans.

By early August 1969, the Chinese had become genuinely alarmed by the Soviet campaign which threatened -- but only threatened -- an attack on China. In mid-August, a Chinese unit took a beating from Soviet forces on the Sinkiang border, the Soviet intention having been to return "ten blows for one" and to wipe out the unit completely. The Chinese were impelled by their alarm to accept the Soviet offer to begin discussions, and following the Chou-Kosygin meeting of 11 September, the need for the Chinese to talk with the Russians apparently took precedence over the need to talk with the Americans. When Chou was asked [redacted] on 25 September about a resumption of the Warsaw talks, the Chinese Premier replied that "the situation was complicated"; although [redacted] interpreted this noncommittal remark to a direct question about Sino-US talks as indicating differences in the Chinese leadership over policy toward the US, a more plausible explanation is

that Chou was evasive because he had already agreed with Kosygin to hold talks with the Russians. But following the start of Sino-USSR talks on 20 October, the Chinese leaders once again turned their attention to the matter of resuming the Warsaw talks.

In early November 1969, within two weeks after the Chinese had settled down in Peking to talks with the Russians, one of their diplomats in Prague stated [redacted] that his side was now ready to resume the Warsaw talks. He indicated that the US would have to propose "topics" to be discussed. Reflecting the still-present Chinese concern regarding a possible Soviet attack, the Chinese diplomat, in contrast to previous talks with the [redacted] did not directly criticize the Soviet leadership. Peking apparently hoped that this conversation would reach both the US and the Soviets.

Thus after the Chinese leaders had dealt with border tension, their major concern at the time, they next moved to respond to American initiatives which had been directed at them since the summer of 1969. Showing a willingness to engage American diplomats in open conversation -- a tactic last used by them at the Geneva conference on Laos in 1962 -- NCNA officials spoke to American diplomats at receptions in Hong Kong on 13 November and in Moscow on 18 November. On 3 December, they reacted favorably to the US initiative at a fashion show in Warsaw; on 7 December, Peking announced the release of two long-held American yachtsmen; on 11 December, the Chinese agreed to the unprecedented visit by the US ambassador to their Warsaw embassy, receiving his request to resume the suspended talks. It was at this point that the Soviets temporarily withdrew delegation chief Kuznetsov from the border talks on 14 December, ostensibly to attend a Supreme Soviet meeting in Moscow. The main Soviet purpose in taking this action was apparently to apply pressure on the Chinese to end the border talks stalemate or face a possible reduction in the level of talks. In so doing, however, the Soviets seem to have selected a time for this warning when the Chinese were beginning to show more mobility in their policy toward the US. A secondary Soviet motive for the Kuznetsov withdrawal thus may have been a hope to impel the Chinese not to accept the American initiatives.

For their part, the Chinese used the December American initiative to hint to the Russians that Peking now had the option of negotiating with the US, and that a reduction in the level of border talks would only impel them more quickly to resume talks with the Americans. The Chinese publicly linked Kuznetsov's departure -- which they insisted should be only "temporary" -- with the US initiative at Warsaw. The announcement of Kuznetsov's departure was carried in Peking broadcasts simultaneously (on 14 December) with the report that Ambassador Stoessel had met with the Chinese charge "in the Chinese embassy" in Warsaw. On the same day, a TASS report complained that Washington had described the embassy meeting as a "cordial" one; once again, Moscow's intention was to suggest that the Chinese were seriously seeking an accommodation with the US.

The Soviet leaders seem, however, to have appraised this new element of Chinese receptivity as a tactic. In his report to the CPSU Central Committee plenum held in mid-December 1969, Brezhnev stated that the Soviet Union knew why the Chinese had agreed to a resumption of the Warsaw contacts. Brezhnev was paraphrased as follows:

> *Perhaps the Chinese are using this device as a means of pressure against the USSR, or they hope that it may result in such pressure.*

Brezhnev went on to consider an alternative interpretation to the effect that the resumed Warsaw contacts actually reflected a basic "change in line" of the Chinese. But he concluded with the interpretation that it was really a form of pressure, that is, a tactical Chinese move.

The implication of Brezhnev's preferred interpretation was that a Sino-US agreement of substance in Warsaw was unlikely when the talks were resumed. The reaction of Soviet embassy officials in Peking to the news of renewed contacts in Warsaw in mid-December 1969 was that the Chinese were trying to gain leverage to pressure the Russians at the

Sino-Soviet border talks. These officials played down the possibility of any basic Sino-US agreement, suggesting indirectly that they would not be taken in by the Chinese bluff. They pointed to the intractability of the Taiwan question, and the lack of progress at the numerous meetings in the past. Nevertheless, these embassy officials probed their diplomatic colleagues for views and news of the developments in Warsaw. The contacts there continued to prey on Soviet minds. Worry about a possible Sino-US agreement could not be entirely dispelled, and the Russians were further concerned by Washington's 19 December announcement of a relaxation in restrictions on trade with China.

Moscow may have been sufficiently concerned about the Warsaw contacts to act to resume the Peking talks somewhat sooner than they would otherwise have done. The timing of Kuznetsov's return to Peking on 2 January 1970 was apparently intended to be a signal to the Chinese that the Russians would not act to downgrade the level of the talks.

Immediately on his arrival in Peking, Kuznetsov urgently requested an immediate resumption of the border talks. The Russians apparently had decided that they had better reopen their talks with the Chinese before the Americans resumed in Warsaw. They may even have hoped that they could deter the Chinese from resuming the Warsaw meetings. On 5 January, when border talks had started again in Peking, the editor of the USA Institute's journal, Berezhkov, tried to find out (by quizzing an American embassy officer) whether talks would reopen in Warsaw, asserting that "a date" would soon be announced.

Once the Chinese had obtained Soviet assurance, however, that the Sino-Soviet talks would soon be resumed and would not be downgraded, they delayed for two days their response to Kuznetsov's urgent request for immediate resumption, and meanwhile proceeded with their own plans for the Sino-US meeting. The Russians were informed by the Peking announcement of 9 January 1970 that the 135th session of Sino-US talks would be held on 20 January. In order to make a major impact on the Russians,

the Chinese launched two direct political attacks, both also on 9 January. In the first -- an article planted in the Hong Kong Ta Kung Pao -- the Russians were accused of failing to restrain their forces on the border during the Peking talks. In the second -- an NCNA release of a protest delivered to the Russians by the Chinese embassy in Moscow -- the USSR was criticized for alleged collusion with the US in a "two Chinas plot." Privately, in a conversation also on 9 January, an NCNA official in Hong Kong stated that the news regarding Sino-US talks deliberately was released to coincide with the resumption of border talks in Peking in order to have a "discomfiting effect" on the Russians.

In Soviet thinking, any improvement of Peking's relations with any third country had become discomfiting, regardless of the extent of the improvement. In early January, a Soviet diplomat in Peking conceded grudgingly that the Chinese had managed to convert a passive diplomatic stance into a more positive posture in a very short space of time. He said this was due largely owing to their development of relations with certain West Europe countries and the reopening of the dialogue with the US. He reflected that, though incomparably deficient in economic and military strength, the Chinese had managed to place themselves on a par with the Soviet Union and the US in a big power triangle. The Russian feared that Peking might avail itself of some of the diplomatic options now open, particularly with regard to the increasing number of Asian countries which had publicly stated a willingness for better relations with China. On 11 January, a TASS correspondent privately complained to a State Department officer about the "unfortunate timing" of the forthcoming resumption of the Warsaw talks. In the course of his complaint, when asked, he stated that in the Soviet view the best US policy toward China would be "doing absolutely nothing," no talks, no diplomatic approaches, no normalization. On 12 January, a Soviet Novosti press official stated privately in Vientiane that the Warsaw talks would "weaken" the Soviet position in the Peking border talks. In sum, the Soviets feared that the triangle was changing its nature, evolving from one in which Peking and Moscow had been politically cooperative (with the US isolated) into one in which Peking and Washington might be politically cooperative (with the USSR isolated).

In order to make the situation somewhat more discomfiting to the Soviets, the Chinese again tried to create the impression of prospective forward movement in Sino-US relations. In their 9 January announcement, they avoided any statements which might indicate that they were still insisting -- as they had insisted on 26 November 1968 in the earlier announcement -- that the US must immediately withdraw from the Taiwan Strait and from bases on the island. Privately, Chinese Communist sources in Hong Kong obscured the matter of "immediate" American withdrawal. On 3 January, one Communist official there stated that the US must "start" withdrawing troops from Taiwan, thereby avoiding the harder Peking position that immediate and unconditional withdrawal was the prerequisite for improving Sino-US relations. The Chinese charge [redacted] admitted on 13 January that the resumption of the Warsaw talks would be a tactical move "forced upon China" by the Soviet military threat on the border. Seeding the idea of some forward movement, he stated that Peking was now actively considering further links with the US outside Warsaw.

Thus the Chinese view of the Sino-Soviet-American triangle was that it provided options for maneuver (rather than for settling any issue of substance), and that it would be irrational for Peking to remain impassive in the face of Soviet diplomatic activity. The Chinese ambassador [redacted] when asked in late January about the "growing understanding" between the Russians and Americans, conceded that one of the motives for resuming the Warsaw talks was Peking's fear of an eventual USSR-US "alliance." The manager of the Hong Kong Bank of China responded affirmatively on 24 January when asked whether the motives of all three countries engaged in two sets of talks were "tactical," if not outright propagandistic, and whether little substantial result could be expected of them.

Awareness in Moscow that the Chinese and Americans were merely maneuvering tactically outside the sphere of substantive issues did not dispel Soviet misgivings. Frustration over the timing of the US initiatives was reflected in the remark made by one Soviet specialist on China in a discussion with an American embassy officer in Moscow on 23 January. The specialist, R. Vyatkin, a member of the

Oriental Institute, complained that the US had "room to maneuver" with China, but the USSR had China "right there on our long border." A Novosti commentator declared at a public lecture in Moscow on 27 January that basic Sino-US issues "remain unchanged" and that the USSR did not object to the Warsaw talks if they did not have "the speculative aim of putting pressure on the USSR from both sides."

Despite the apparent leadership assumption that Washington-Peking substantive issues would not quickly be resolved, the signs in Moscow were of an uncomfortable nervousness as the 20 February 1970 meeting at Warsaw -- the 136th -- approached. In mid-February, the Soviets seemed to be conceding (in a CPSU message to foreign Communists) that Peking already had had some success in restricting the USSR's maneuvering room in the triangle and that, helped by the US, the Chinese had improved their international position and put Moscow on the defensive in only three months -- i.e., since Peking's diplomatic offensive started with the US in December 1969. The message stated that China's effort to improve ties with the "imperialist powers" on an anti-Soviet basis was meeting with "some response" from the US.

Uncertainty and differences of view may have existed between Party and KGB officials, on the one hand, and Foreign Ministry officials, on the other hand, and these differences may have come to a head on the issue of whether to threaten the Chinese (a hard line) or to reassure the Chinese (a soft line) to attain movement in the Peking border talks. On 11 February, Victor Louis, whose actions seem consistently to have reflected the attitude of the hard line advocates, published an article in the London Evening News, suggesting a Soviet willingness to make some minor border concessions, but then sharply castigating the Chinese for unreasonableness and warning that Kuznetsov could not remain in Peking forever. A softer and more reassuring line, perhaps reflecting the attitude of Soviet Foreign Ministry officials, was set forth in Pravda on 15 February by S. Tikhvinskiy, an important China specialist in the USSR Foreign Ministry and a former member of Kuznetsov's team at the talks in Peking. Tikhvinskiy's article refuted speculation that the USSR might launch a pre-emptive

attack against China's nuclear facilities, accused the West of trying to prevent improved Sino-Soviet relations, and criticized in this context the scenario developed by Harrison Salisbury in his book predicting war between Russia and China. On 19 February, Louis volunteered to a US official in Moscow that Tikhvinskiy's article was a "naive" attempt on the eve of the 136th Sino-US meeting to appeal once more to the Chinese on grounds of fraternal Sino-Soviet ties. Louis criticzed "bleeding hearts" in Moscow who still believed that Peking could be moved, and the adverse trend in Sino-Soviet relations reversed, by such an appeal. This Louis approach appears to have been a genuine indication of a split along hard-soft lines on how to handle the Chinese, and it is a probable further reflection of Soviet nervousness that surfaced on the eve of the 136th meeting.

The continuing uncertainty in Soviet thinking -- i.e., that although the Taiwan issue was still preventing improved Sino-US relations, nevertheless Washington and Peking were reaping real tactical advantage from the Warsaw talks -- probably remained even after the 136th meeting. On the one hand, the Soviets undoubtedly noted that Peking, in a long commentary on 28 February, had attacked President Nixon's foreign policy report to Congress of the 18th, directing an open complaint to Washington on a basic issue.

> *While talking hypocritically about his desire to improve 'relations' with China, Nixon asserted blatantly that he wanted to 'maintain' the 'treaty commitment' with the Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang on Taiwan.* (emphasis supplied)

Later, the Soviets had Chou En-lai's own statement to a Japanese newsman in connection with the various US gestures to Peking -- i.e., the easing of travel restrictions and the opening of ways to trade and to exchange personnel. On 19 April Chou was publicly quoted as saying that this was

all part of a minor issue, while Taiwan was the basic issue. "Nothing could be done unless the Taiwan problem is settled first." On the other hand, doubts persisted. In early April a Soviet lecturer in Moscow conceded that Sino-US relations could not improve "until the Taiwan issue is settled." However, he complained that Washington's aim was provocation. "It hopes to build up pressure on the Soviet Union, which then will be forced to agree to concessions in Europe." He concluded that Peking's aim was roughly similar. The Chinese, he said, were trying to "pressure" the USSR into making concessions in Asia at a time when the Sino-Soviet border talks are deadlocked. Kosygin's son-in-law, D. M. Gvishiani, similarly complained to Ambassador Yost at the UN on 7 April that the President's foreign policy report had put US relations with China on the same level as its relations with the USSR, and this, he concluded, had not been well received in Moscow.

C. Warning the East Germans About a Sellout of Their Interests

Peking's worrying over Soviet moves toward a rapprochement with West Germany was reflected clearly in mid-September 1969 in the unusually high number of People's Daily articles attacking Moscow's new collusion with Bonn. The Chinese leaders believed that the result would be a reduction of political pressure on the USSR's western flank, thus permitting the Russians to be more active politically and militarily in the east against China. A People's Daily article of 11 September 1969 made this point explicit. It complained that the Soviet objective in appealing for a European security conference was

> *to stabilize the order of the capitalist world so that they may shift their force to coping with the anti-imperialist anti-revisionist struggles of the Asian people, and to performing more tricks in opposing China...* (emphasis supplied)

This complaint, although partly intended as a reminder to the Vietnamese and Korean Communists, was primarily aimed at the East Germans in an effort to make use of their discomfort with Moscow's new Bonn policy. But whatever Ulbricht's feelings about that policy, it is unlikely that he regarded clumsy criticism of Moscow's dealings with Bonn from such hostile capitals as Peking and Tirana as useful to his interests.

The Chinese nevertheless seemed to believe that the Soviet "betrayal" of the GDR was a very useful issue for exposing Moscow's habit of subordinating the interests of allies to its own interests. The Chinese had previously raised this issue publicly in 1964, before Khrushchev's fall. The deputy director of the CCP's International Liaison Department stated to a foreign Communist in November 1969 that despite the displeasure of Ulbricht, the Russians, who had first tried to prevent elections in Berlin, had

"retreated" under American pressure, and then negotiated with Bonn. He also claimed, more fancifully, that Ulbricht was fearful of the Russians because of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia. [redacted], the Chinese charge in Moscow asked [redacted] whether the simultaneous NATO and Warsaw Pact meetings were only a coincidence. He tried to plant the idea that Soviet-US "collusion" was expanding to NATO and the Warsaw Pact -- a crude pitch undoubtedly reflecting instructions from Peking. Regarding the Warsaw Pact meeting, the charge went on to say that "the GDR is fighting for its life," implying that the Russians were planning a betrayal of Pankow's interests.

Reluctant to remain silent on what they believed to be an issue over which Moscow and Pankow might have differences, the Chinese clumsily overstated East Germany's public position. The first time Peking went beyond saying (since the fall of Khrushchev) that Berlin is located in GDR territory was in the authoritative People's Daily "Commentator" article of 22 December 1969, entitled "Dirty Deal." This important article declared that "West Berlin lies in the territory of the GDR and should belong to it accordingly." (emphasis supplied) It condemned Moscow's new approach to the Brandt government to negotiate a "renunciation of force" treaty. Pointing to "betrayal" on the German question, it underscored the dangers to East European countries of subordination to Moscow and of falling under the application of the doctrine of "limited sovereignty." At the same time, the Chinese made their complaint more formal by a diplomatic act, summoning the East German ambassador to the Chinese Foreign Ministry and telling him bluntly to take a stronger line. The ambassador's reactions were not reported. This form of wedge-driving was gauche diplomacy, and by stating the case for East Germany too crudely, the Chinese may have deprived themselves of the opportunity to embarrass the Russians.

The Chinese revived their wedge-driving efforts in a similarly crude way following the signing of the Moscow-Bonn treaty (7 August 1970). The Chinese ambassador in Kabul harangued [redacted] about the Soviet strategy of lessening potential areas of

conflict with the US in Europe by working through Bonn. On 14 August, NCNA carried the full text of a visiting Albanian's speech, which conveyed openly what the Chinese were saying privately: namely, that the treaty was intended by the USSR to "free itself in Europe and concentrate its strength on other areas, particularly opposing the CPR in Asia." At first, the Chinese had shown themselves diplomatically sensitive to the favorable response of East European countries to the treaty, and they accordingly refrained from initiating critical comment which would hamper their own effort to improve relations with these governments. But they were beginning to draw the Soviet leaders out on the strategy involved in signing the treaty, almost certainly complaining privately about its anti-Chinese thrust.

The Russians reacted by trying to dispel an apparently widely held impression that the signing was linked to their China problem. Kosygin privately denied [redacted] in mid-August that the treaty was anti-Chinese or intended to free Soviet hands to deal with China. Brezhnev later followed up publicly by stating that it was not true that the USSR had "untied its hands...in order to intensify pressure on China." (Alma-Ata speech of 28 August 1970)

Eventually, the Chinese decided to drop their public restraint. Their first authoritative comment on the treaty attacked it as a "gross betrayal" of East German interests. (People's Daily "Commentator" article of 13 September 1970) Peking's comment was out of touch with the reality of East European sentiment favoring the treaty, and it was ludicrously wild in claiming that the Russians during treaty negotiations had given tacit approval to Bonn "to annex the GDR." The politically clumsy and clearly counterproductive nature of the comment suggests that Mao personally had

demanded its publication.* The Russians had an easy time of it in turning the tables on Peking, suggesting to those East Germans who were discontented with the treaty that the kind of people who opposed it were either West German "revanchists" or bellicose Chinese. (Pravda article of 20 September 1970) The Russians were also provided with a vehement East German riposte (Neues Deutschland article of 22 September), parts of which they reprinted rather than replying directly to Peking's earlier tirade. The East Germans had decided to publish their rebuke on the same day the new Chinese ambassador presented his credentials. They were alert to Peking's wedge-driving intention, and they were further annoyed by the secret Chinese request that Pankow should not reply to the "Commentator" article. They later stated privately that not to have replied would have offended the Russians. Thus the Chinese brought down on themselves an open rebuke which the East Germans would have preferred not to make.

In sum, the Chinese probably chafed under the realization that since Khrushchev's ouster, their sellout theme

*A similar exercise in diplomatic irrationality -- namely, the People's Daily "Commentator" attack of 22 December 1970 on both Gomulka and his successor, Gierek, as 'revisionists,' and its appeal to Polish workers to persist in their 'struggle' -- cut against the grain of Peking's developing effort to improve relations with Warsaw and other East European regimes. The new Polish regime had no alternative to formally protesting to Peking. This crass piece of interference in Poland's internal affairs could not have been carefully calculated to advance Chinese interests even with the Rumanians or with such new-found friends in the area as the Yugoslavs. Soviet media criticism of it indicates that the Russians had found it a very vulnerable target. It seems to reflect Mao's personal intervention, suggesting that he will continue to celebrate what he sees as milestone victories and that he will take on new "revisionist" opponents regardless of the damage done to Peking's foreign policy.

had become less effective and the prospect for a new Peking-Pankow "axis" had been reduced. They suspected, and had their diplomats try to confirm the suspicion, that the treaty's real purpose was to allow the USSR eventually to move troops now in Eastern Europe to the Sino-Soviet border.

D. Cambodia: Cancelling Rather than Ending Warsaw Talks

Peking's room for maneuver between Moscow and Washington was temporarily constricted in May immediately following the late April US decision to conduct ground operations in Cambodia. The Chinese were worried that somehow the fighting might escalate and threaten the security of their southern frontier. At the same time, they may have become somewhat more worried about a heightened possibility of border conflict with the Soviets in the north when border talks were again postponed in the absence of Soviet chief negotiator Kuznetsov. Their line of action was to try to lower the level of tension between themselves and the Russians by muting anti-Soviet propaganda, while turning the point of their political effort more exclusively against the US, taking care to avoid threats of military involvement in Indochina.

Mao himself acted to seek assurances from the Russians, his apparent calculation having been that a message conveyed directly by him would have a strong impact on Moscow. On 1 May, on the rostrum while reviewing May Day marchers, Mao initiated a conversation with the deputy head of the Soviet border talks delegation, saying that China wished the talks to resume as soon as possible and asking when Kuznetsov would be returned to Peking. Mao went on to say that China wished to avoid "confrontation" with the USSR. The two countries, he continued, should live in peace and they "must reach an agreement."

And Peking's polemics against Moscow in public media became suddenly and markedly muted.

The Russians soon perceived that Mao's action was tactical and not important for basic unresolved Sino-Soviet issues. In mid-May they stated privately that Mao has a superb sense of timing, and that a compromise was not in prospect on the border dispute.

By 18 May, the Chinese were resting somewhat easier regarding any danger to their own national security in the north and south, and they announced the cancellation of the Warsaw meeting scheduled for the 20th. They tried, however, to keep the Russians discomfitted by hinting at the temporary nature of the postponement. Peking's announcement stated that the future meeting's date "will be decided upon later" (NCNA dispatch, 19 May 1970), and the Russians, noting this usage, claimed that the State Department spokesman had "implied that unofficial contacts with the Chinese side would be continued." (TASS, 19 May 1970) Within a few days, Chou En-lai planted the idea among diplomats in Peking that the talks were not ended, only postponed temporarily because of US action in Cambodia. Chou took the same tack on 5 June. His intention was to leave the door open for a resumption of the talks at a later time, thus indicating to the Russians that Peking would not indefinitely deprive itself of this kind of leverage against them.

A ranking Chinese Communist official abroad, who had recently visited Peking, privately stated in mid-1970 that China's relations with the USSR were "much worse" than the outside world realized. The Chinese leaders seemed to have been trying to counter the impression abroad that since the American incursion into Cambodia, Sino-Soviet relations had improved. The implication of this no-improvement line was that the US should apply political pressure against Moscow, inasmuch as the Russians were still bedeviled by the border dispute. Late in June, the first secretary of the Soviet embassy in Peking stated privately that in breaking off the talks in such a way as to leave the way open for their resumption, in effect the Chinese had informed the Americans that talks can start later although conditions "now" are not right for discussions.

It is conceivable that the Chinese would have resumed the meetings at Warsaw by the fall of 1970 but for

their decision to sustain the new and improved political position they had attained with their revolutionary neighbors, particularly the North Koreans. Kim Il-sung obviously views the Sino-US talks as cutting against the grain of his anti-American policy in Korea, and in the wake of combined Hanoi-Peking-Pyongyang support for Sihanouk -- by contrast with Soviet non-support -- the Chinese were careful to avoid dissipating the gains they had made with Kim by returning to the Warsaw talks. They denied, particularly to the North Koreans, that they had been doing business as usual with the Americans at Warsaw, insisting that they had taken a hard line all along regarding the Taiwan issue and that they would continue to do so.

In order to assure Pyongyang regarding their strong attitude on the Taiwan problem, they selected 25 June, the 20th anniversary of the start of the Korean war, to make explicit and unusual statements on the basic Sino-US disagreement. Thus, they not only declared that the US occupied the island, but also made a rarely publicized charge that Washington "uses it as a springboard for attacking the China mainland." (People's Daily-Red Flag joint editorial of 25 June 1970.) On 26 June, they were explicit in disparaging the Administration's move to "improve" relations with Peking, saying it was a trick to deceive public opinion and to conceal intensified anti-China activities, and concluding with an attack on the "illegal" Washington-Taipei treaties, including the mutual security treaty and status of forces agreement which formalize US "occupation" of Taiwan. (NCNA article of 26 June 1970.)

The North Koreans were provided with an even more direct assurance of hostility to any improved Washington-Peking relations by the Chief of the PLA General Staff, Huang Yung-sheng, in his Korean war anniversary speech in Pyongyang. Huang was explicit on the crucial issue between the US and China and on the status of mutual relations.

> *The U.S. occupation of Taiwan by armed force is the crucial issue in Sino-U.S. relations. The principles which the Chinese Government has consistently adhered to in the Sino-U.S.*

ambassadorial talks during the past 15 years are: 1. The U.S. must withdraw all its armed forces from Taiwan and the Taiwan Strait; 2. Sino-U.S. relations must be based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence. But the U.S. has all along refused to withdraw its armed forces from Taiwan and the Taiwan Strait and to cease interference in China's internal affairs. Thus, the relaxation of Sino-U.S. relations is, of course, out of the question. Since U.S. imperialism persists in making itself the enemy of the Chinese people, the Chinese people have no choice but to resolve to deal with it accordingly to the end. Taiwan will certainly be liberated. (Speech of 27 June 1970) (emphasis supplied)

In this way, the Chinese temporarily subordinated their tactic of worrying the Russians about possible improved Sino-US relations to a new priority effort to solidify closer ties with the Koreans -- an effort which had increased in early April 1970 when Chou went to Pyongyang and delivered unusually vehement attacks on Washington and Tokyo.

Further flattery of Pyongyang appeared when Mao and Lin Piao met with the entire Korean delegation on 27 June, marking their first appearance at these anniversary observances. As leaders of a new "Asian united front," the Chinese placed highest priority on informing Washington that resumed talks would be far off. At the same time, they showed Moscow that Peking was no longer vulnerable to accusations of encouraging the US at the expense of the interests of Asian revolutionaries. Moscow was attacked for wavering, as witness Li Hsien-nien's 25 June attack on "some people" who "flirt" with the US and maintain "dirty relations" with the Lon Nol government.

The Chinese tried to add a more sensational aspect to their decision to curry favor with Kim Il-sung by attempting to duplicate Pyongyang's 15 April 1969 shootdown

of an American intelligence collection plane. On 2 July, Chinese jet fighters tried to engage a US C-130 aircraft on an intelligence collection mission, flying out roughly 100 miles off the east coast of China -- an unprecedented distance for Chinese fighters to fly from the mainland.

A successful shootdown would have made it even more difficult for the Russians to sustain their public complaint that Peking's "pseudo-revolutionary shouts" fade to whispers when organizing a "practical rebuff" to aggressors is being discussed. (Podgornyy speech of 11 June 1970.)

Such information would provide the Soviet leaders with a strong indication of the extent to which the Chinese had been willing to go in moving toward a better relationship with Kim Il-sung. This information would buttress other evidence that in the summer of 1970, the Chinese were relegating talks with the US to a secondary position.

The Chinese leaders in private discussions with the North Koreans may have used the cautious Soviet reaction to the earlier Pueblo and EC-121 incidents to vilify Moscow as a weak ally. The chief of the PLA General Staff, Huang Yung-sheng, in an unusual public reference, praised the North Koreans for the capture and the shootdown. (Speech of 25 July 1970) At roughly the same time, Politburo member Kang Sheng reportedly told visiting Latin American Communists that Kim Il-sung was leaning more toward Peking since the Chinese have convinced him that the Soviets would not oppose a US invasion of North Korea, the implication being that Peking would fight with Pyongyang against a South Korean-American attack. Kang also claimed that Peking had had some success in "breaking" Soviet ties with North Korea, North Vietnam, and Cuba. Although this claim is exaggerated with regard to North Vietnam and simply false with regard to Cuba, there is evidence that the Chinese indeed had improved their position with the North Korean leaders and

that they had attained this goal at the expense of what had previously been Moscow's relatively favorable status in Pyongyang.

As noted above, the Russians in Peking were privately stating in late June that the Chinese had informed the Americans implicitly that the Warsaw talks could start later although conditions were not now right for discussions. They may have helped to spread the rumor that with the withdrawal of US troops from Cambodia on schedule, the Warsaw talks would be resumed. On 3 July, a Chinese Communist official in Hong Kong denied that withdrawal would mean reopening of the talks, and he described as unfounded press reports sourced to East European diplomats in Peking concerning imminent resumption. Chinese officials told [redacted] in mid-July that the Warsaw talks were "inopportune" at the present time and made no reference to setting a date for resumption of them later. The Russians probably noted that Peking media, in attacking Secretary Rogers' early July interview in Tokyo, refrained from commenting on his remarks concerning the prospects for improving Sino-US relations. They probably also noted that Peking made no mention of ABC's 10 July release of President Nixon's reported remarks to Howard K. Smith on the need for regular diplomatic relations with China. They probably interpreted this as deliberate caution by the Chinese, who intended to keep open the option of resuming the Warsaw talks. They indirectly publicized this underlying Chinese attitude by selecting from the Warsaw press an article which quoted President Nixon's remarks to Smith, printing it without comment in the Literaturnaya Gazeta of 5 August 1970. The implication was that despite the vehement new phase of Peking's anti-US vituperation, behind the scenes the Chinese still had leeway to resume the Warsaw talks at a time of their own choosing because of Washington's sustained gestures of goodwill.

V. Looking to the Future

Despite Peking's cancellation of the Warsaw meeting previously scheduled for 20 May 1970, the Soviets seem to believe that Washington's willingness to use the Chinese Communists as a counterweight against Soviet interests will continue, or even increase, rather than decrease in the future. Foreign Minister Gromyko's son, a section head in the Soviet institute specializing in analysis of US policies, complained in December 1970 about Washington's "meddling" in Sino-Soviet relations and showed concern regarding moves the US might make toward Peking in the future. The Soviets also seem to believe that the Chinese Communists will not indefinitely postpone the Warsaw talks, and are probably prepared to attack Peking for "collusion" when the talks eventually are resumed. Most importantly, they are looking for any sign that the US might be moving toward recognition of the PRC.

The Soviets want to know more about the future of the Washington-Taipei relationship. For many years Moscow apparently had considered unthinkable the possibility that the US would gradually try to disengage from sustaining the GRC's international status, including its position in the UN. But the net effect of Washington's maneuvering with Peking since 1966 may have been to alert the Soviet leaders not only to a US desire to exploit the Sino-Soviet dispute, but also to reduce American commitments to the GRC.

In the spring of 1970, apparently for the first time, Soviet officials began to probe an angle of the Warsaw talks to determine the extent to which the US might disregard repercussions in Taipei. On 10 March, the second secretary of the Soviet embassy in Washington asked a US official about the status of the Administration's relations with the Nationalists. In particular, he pressed for an explanation on exactly how far Washington could go with Peking without damaging American relations with Taipei. This line of questioning probably reflected a new intelligence requirement. Another probe in the same month was made by an Institute of Oriental Studies scholar from Moscow,

who asked an American China expert whether the US was preparing to "make friends" with the Chinese Communists. When that American mentioned the 14 million people on Taiwan as a stumbling block to US recognition of the Peking regime, the Russian suggested (provocatively) that these people would simply have to be written off for a bigger US goal. On the other side of the intelligence coin, during meetings in Vienna on 30 and 31 October 1970 which he had initiated, Victor Louis questioned [redacted] about Taipei's attitude regarding a possible US sellout. Louis reportedly suggested that the Nationalists might be counting too heavily on the US, "since the US was going to abandon the GRC when it served its own interests to do so." Louis arranged for future private meetings -- this one had been approved on the GRC side by Chiang himself -- undoubtedly to facilitate similar probes of the US attitude by questioning along the "abandonment" line. In addition, the Soviets may hope that by fueling GRC suspicions, Taipei will take a stronger line with Washington and complain about US overtures to Peking.

The Russians are following closely what they see as a shift in US tactics on Chinese representation in the UN from non-admission of the PRC to "allowing China to join the UN" (article of 11 November 1970 in USA Institute's journal). They say that they are aware that this shift is primarily intended to preserve GRC representation. (TASS comment of 12 November 1970) There is evidence that the Russians, on the one hand, prefer to keep Peking out, and at least one Soviet official has complained that they would behave as "madmen" if admitted -- that is, as strong opponents of a variety of Soviet policies. Moscow has also privately indicated that it does not want Peking on the Security Council, and it insists that the Chirep question be in the General Assembly's domain.

On the other hand, there is no evidence that Soviet agents have tried to persuade Nationalist officials to stay in the UN (as a future contingency) in order to deter Peking from accepting an entry vote. They certainly prefer that the US take the action and the blame (from Peking and other capitals) for continued exclusion, while keeping

themselves clear of any "two Chinas" taint by expressions of formal support. In the absence of renewed fighting on the Sino-Soviet border and in view of world-wide Communist opinion (and ever-growing non-Communist opinion) favoring PRC admission, the Soviets are not likely to argue publicly for Peking's continued exclusion.

The Soviets have been able to shift their policy since mid-1969 from one of caution -- i.e., regarding care not to provoke situations of tension with the US and in Western Europe and the Middle East -- to one of greater acceptance of a worsened atmosphere, if need be, with the US. A major reason for feeling that this shift could be taken without harming Soviet security is the apparent view of the Soviet leaders that since they have succeeded in lowering Sino-Soviet border tension by tying the Chinese up in negotiations, they have a less precarious situation on their eastern flank and can, therefore, be somewhat freer in pressing forward against the West. Nevertheless, they are wary of Washington's attitude and seem to believe, genuinely, that the American willingness to use the Chinese as a counterweight against USSR interests will increase rather than decrease in the future. They also seem to believe that Peking will not indefinitely postpone the Warsaw talks -- the last meeting was held in February 1970 and the meeting scheduled for May was cancelled -- and Moscow is probably prepared to attack Peking for "collusion" when the talks are resumed. The Soviets will continue to probe to determine the extent to which the Americans will be willing to go in gestures toward the Chinese Communists despite the fact that such actions tend to undercut international support for Taipei and morale among the KMT leaders. As in the past few years, they probably will attach considerable, and even exaggerated, importance to any such gestures.