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NFAC No. 0649-79

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

5 February 1979

National Intelligence Officers

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Director, National Foreign Assessment Center

FROM: [redacted] 25X1A
National Intelligence Officer for China

SUBJECT: Letter to the President from "Retired Generals and Admirals"

REFERENCE: Your Conversation with Dr. Brzezinski on 31 January 1979

1. Action Requested: None. This memorandum is for your information only.

2. Background: In the memorandum of your conversation with Dr. Brzezinski, mention was made of a misunderstanding over Deng Xiaoping's having endorsed just before his U. S. visit a letter by 100 Generals and Admirals. You indicated that you were not familiar with this letter. I believe this must refer to a letter to the President by more than 170 retired military officers, including senior Generals and Admirals, warning him of what they described as an "increasing Soviet challenge" to the United States. The letter quotes an authoritative U. S. Government National Intelligence Estimate as acknowledging that the Russians were heading for superiority, not parity, in the military arena, and cites data on Soviet arms developments as chapter and verse.

[redacted] STAT

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3. There have been at least two public references to this letter to the President: a New York Times item of 12 January 1979 (Tab A) and a Time Magazine account of an interview between Deng Xiaoping and Hedley Donovan (also reprinted in the The Washington Star) which appeared on the eve of Deng's arrival in the U. S. (Tab B). In the Donovan interview, Deng stated that he had read the letter and very much approved of it. He went on to use it to bolster his argument that the U. S. must do more to respond to the Soviet military threat.

4. The National Intelligence Estimate referred to by the retired officers was undoubtedly NIE 11-3-78: SOVIET CAPABILITIES FOR STRATEGIC NUCLEAR CONFLICT THROUGH THE LATE 1980'S, a draft of which appears to have been leaked to the person or persons who composed the letter to the President.

[redacted] 25X1

Attachment:
A - NYTimes Article
B - Wash. Star Article

cc: DDCI

Distribution:
Orig. & 1 - Addressee, w/atts.
1 - DDCI, w/atts.
1 - ER, w/atts.
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ARTICLE APPEARED
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THE NEW YORK TIMES
12 January 1979

170 Retired Top Military Officers Warn Carter of a Soviet Challenge

By DREW MIDDLETON

More than 170 retired generals and admirals have warned President Carter of what they describe as an "increasing Soviet challenge" to the United States.

In an open letter, they said a National Intelligence Estimate that is described as "the most authoritative U.S. Government evaluation of intelligence data" had finally acknowledged that the Russians were "heading for superiority, not parity, in the military arena."

The letter said an American interagency study on the global military balance concluded recently that "in a nonnuclear conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States in the Middle East, Israel alone might deter Soviet combat forces' intervention or prevent the completion of such deployment."

Were it not for the ability of Israel's ground forces, the officers declared, the United States would have to station significant forces and equipment in the Middle East.

Soviet Objectives Described

The signers, among whom were 6 generals, 15 lieutenant generals and 4 admirals, included Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr., former Chief of Naval Operations; Gen. Paul L. Freeman Jr., former Army commander in Europe; Gen. T. W. Parker, former Army chief of staff in Europe; Gen. Albert C. Wedemeyer, who was commander of the China theater of operations at the end of World War II; Maj. Gen. John K. Singlaub, former chief of staff, United States forces, Korea, and Maj. Gen. George J. Keegan Jr., former chief of intelligence, United States Air Force.

They urged Mr. Carter to recognize Israel's value as an ally that can defend itself and said Israel should be reinforced to avoid sending American forces to the area.

The Soviet Union's "imperial objectives" were described as the neutralization of Western Europe, partly by denying it access to oil, the encirclement of China and the isolation of the United States.

The letter said the Soviet focus on the Middle East to reach these objectives represented "a real and growing threat to Western security." It said Soviet influence and power had expanded in the eastern Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan had come under Soviet control and "anti-American forces" were harassing the Governments in Iran and Turkey.

Cuban mercenaries were described as carrying out Soviet policies in Angola, Ethiopia, Zaire, Syria and Lebanon.

Debate on Arms Accord

In appealing to the President to "restore the global military balance," the writers foreshadowed what is expected to be a national debate over the second strategic arms limitation treaty. In the absence of an "indispensable military equilibrium," they said, "we oppose a 'deal' that freezes the current imbalance and reinforces permanent Soviet strategic superiority."

The letter said the challenge was growing in these areas:

¶The Soviet Union has developed seven ICBM missile systems since 1965, the United States one.

¶The Russians have invested heavily in submarine-launched ballistic missiles and modernized their ICBM's.

¶The so-called Backfire bomber, which the letter lists in the Soviet strategic arsenal although the Russians call it a medium-range aircraft, "is capable of delivering weapons anywhere in the United States without refueling."

¶Soviet advances in multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRV's) are rapidly overcoming the American lead in the quantity and quality of nuclear warheads.

¶The development of Soviet naval power threatens vital sea lanes that provide resources essential to the United States.

The writers also mentioned a point raised by nuclear scientists, academic students of Soviet policy and many foreign and American intelligence analysts: "Soviet defense literature expressely rejects the Western doctrine of 'mutual assured destruction.' It rejects specifically the notion that nuclear war means suicide. Soviet forces are structured to fight, survive and win a nuclear war."

Mr. Carter was urged to build a coalition of "genuine peace," including Israel and Japan as well as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization nations.

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Q and A: Exclusive Interview With Vice Premier

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As he was preparing to leave on his historic trip to Washington last week, Chinese Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping took time out for an 80-minute interview with Hedley Donovan, editor-in-chief of Time Inc. The interview, which appears in the current issue of Time magazine, follows:

Donovan: *As the first senior official of your government to visit the U.S. since the founding of the People's Republic of China, how do you assess the significance of your trip and what do you hope to accomplish?*

Teng: The significance is mainly reflected in the normalization of relations between China and the U.S. (Because I am) going there this time as one of China's leaders, the exchange of views with President Carter and other leaders will, of course, be of benefit. Particularly at the present time, the world is quite untranquil and we are faced with a lot of problems. Not only during this visit but in the future as well, it will be beneficial to have the leaders of the U.S. and China frequently contact each other and exchange views and outlooks. As for the significance of normalization between China and the U.S., there has been much talk about it already, but you cannot underestimate the significance of this event. One aspect of it is the development of relations between the two countries, but what is even more important is from the point of view of global strategy.

Q: *Are you suggesting more or less regular summit meetings?*

A: We cannot say regular but we hope we will have more frequent contacts.

Q: *More often than once every 3d years?*

A: Since 1972, there have been many contacts. And during my present visit I will, on behalf of the Chinese government, be extending an invitation to President Carter to visit China. And at an appropriate time in the future, a Chinese leader, regardless of whom, will visit the U.S. again.

Q: *"Hegemony" is a policy that your government has frequently condemned with reference to the Soviet Union. How do you assess Soviet policies today, and what opportunities do you see in the new Sino-American relationship for countering those policies? What does hegemony actually mean? How would the Soviets achieve it? Is the Soviet Union aspiring to make China and the U.S. like East Germany and Czechoslovakia?*

A: I suppose that you have already read the letter of 170 retired American generals and admirals. I have read it myself and I very much approve of that letter.

Q: *They'll be glad to hear that.*

A: Those generals have already retired, but they are concerned and that means that the situation is indeed not tranquil. I have said this to a number of foreign friends: that the nuclear arsenal of the Soviet Union and the constant development of their strategic weapons means that we can say that the Soviet Union is already on a par with the U.S. and we may say that in the near future it may surpass the United States. The Soviet military budget takes up around 30 percent of the gross national product. What does one do with all these things? With no war going on, it has increased its standing army in three years from 3 to 4 million men. What does one do that for? And as we have often noted, many people often overlook the continual development of the armed forces of the Soviet Union and its stockpiling of conventional weaponry, including ammunition, as well as the stockpiling of food grains. If one has so many things in one's hands, the day will come when one's fingers begin to itch. You can't eat those materials or wear them. You must use them somehow. We've already been through two world wars and both started from small incidents. Such things often develop independent of one's will, perhaps even independent of the will of the present [illegible]

Q: *We did not think of Pearl Harbor as a small incident. I must note parenthetically, though, that it was not the start of the war.*

A: Yes, the war did not start with Pearl Harbor. Hitler started it in Czechoslovakia. Pearl Harbor was toward the latter part of the war. We must face reality. Now every day one talks about detente, about striving for detente and disarmament. But was there detente in 1977 or in 1978 or will we see it in 1979? Let us look at the Mediterranean, at the Middle East, at North Africa. Was not 1978 more tense than 1977? We see that last year South Yemen was taken over by the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union gained influence in Ethiopia. If we go further east, there's Afghanistan and now there's Iran where there seems to be no end to the trouble. And Pakistan. And further to the east, Vietnam controls Laos by military means and the Vietnamese made a major invasion into Cambodia with more than 10 divisions. And then if we go even further east, do we see that the Soviet military force has been strengthened or weakened in the Asian and Pacific region? At least its navy and air force have been strengthened. What is particularly noteworthy is that the Soviet fleet in the Far East is now equal in strength to the Soviet fleet in the Atlantic. So all this gives serious concern to the countries of the world and the countries of the world should deal with it seriously.

Q: *If I could come back to your definition of hegemony, do you mean by that a desire to be the dominant power in the world or to have actual control over other countries, such as East Germany and Czechoslovakia?*

A: We look upon it as being big hegemonism, where one wants to exercise global hegemonism, and small hegemonism, where one seeks only local hegemonism. As for global hegemonism, only the Soviet Union and the U.S. are capable of it today, but it has been our view all along that since the early 1970s the U.S. has been on the [illegible] means that you want to control the whole world, one in which, in fact, there is no scruple at using war as a step to achieving hegemonism. But it would first try to attain its aims by intervention, showing discord or, as they say in Europe, by means of the process of Finlandization. But in the final analysis it would use military force and that would be World War III.

Q: *Are you attributing greater virtue to the U.S. or saying that it is weaker than the Soviet Union?*

A: We consider that the true hotbed of war is the Soviet Union, not the U.S.

Q: *Is the vice premier saying that the U.S. is in strategic retreat or does he believe that the U.S. intentions are more pacific?*

A: At the present time, the U.S. has no reason and no need to want to launch a war. It is in the interest of the U.S. to maintain the status quo. The problem is that maintaining the status quo is difficult.

Q: *When you go to Washington, I think you'll hear that President Carter, Secretary of State Vance and various members of Congress do not entirely agree with the retired generals, and that they think it is possible to have good relations with the Soviet Union and China at the same time. What is your reaction to that?*

A: It is only possible for each individual to express his point of view. No country can impose its views on another. But we believe in what Chairman Mao Tse-tung and Premier Chou En-lai said repeatedly: that from the point of view of global strategy and international politics, even where there was no normalization between China and the U.S., there were still many common points between China and the U.S. What we are faced with is stark reality. Reality cannot be changed by any person's subjective views.

Q: *President Carter hopes this year to sign SALT II.*

A: Actually, this should be considered [illegible]

was concluded in 1963. The second in 1972, the third in 1974. We have constantly said not that we are opposed to such agreements, but that they are of no use, that they are not of much use. In 1963 when the tripartite partial test ban treaty was signed between the U.S., Great Britain and the Soviet Union, there was a great discrepancy in nuclear weapons between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. At that time all three countries had in mind the question of dealing with China; that is, to prevent China from acquiring nuclear weapons, but this aim was not attained. The U.S. and Great Britain also wanted to limit the Soviet Union in nuclear weapons. Did they attain this aim? In 1972, and this was after a nine-year span, the Soviet Union had tried its best to catch up. By 1972 we cannot say that the Soviet Union was already on par with the U.S. But the discrepancy between the two countries had already narrowed. And then in the 2½ years before the 1974 meeting at Vladivostok and the second agreement that was reached at the time even the U.S. could not but admit that the strength of the two countries was more or less equal. What is more, both sides admitted at the Vladivostok meeting that the agreement did not put restraints on either side. And since 1974 it has been another four years or so and another agreement is to be concluded. Could we believe that the agreement could prevent the Soviet Union from further development?

Q: *The language of the agreement is intended to impose some restraints.*

A: And I don't believe that will restrain them.

Q: *You mean they won't comply with it?*

A: Because the so-called supervision or surveillance will not work, no matter how you proceed about it. After the Vladivostok agreement, Dr. Kissinger came to China and told us about it, and I said to Dr. Kissinger, "Well, you two will continue your race." After the conclusion of this fourth agreement the race will continue. But the difference will be that the U.S. will be forced to continue the race while the Soviet Union will just further step up its development.

A: Because the so-called supervi[illegible] or surveillance will not work, no [illegible]ter how you proceed about it. A[illegible] the Vladivostok agreement, Dr. [illegible]singer came to China and told [illegible] about it, and I said to Dr. Kissin[illegible] "Well, you two will continue y[illegible] race." After the conclusion of t[illegible] fourth agreement the race will c[illegible]tinue. But the difference will be [illegible] the U.S. will be forced to continue [illegible] race while the Soviet Union will [illegible] further step up its development.

Q: *This should provide you wit[illegible] lively hour of discussion with Pr[illegible]dent Carter.*

A: I'm not opposing your signi[illegible] this agreement or three or four m[illegible] agreements. We're just being sob[illegible]

'I'm not opposing your signing the agreement . . . We're just being sober.'

One should not rely on such a thi[illegible] In seeking world peace and wo[illegible] stability, such agreements are neit[illegible] as significant nor as useful as the [illegible]malization of relations between Ch[illegible] and Japan. And if you look at the q[illegible]tion in an even broader perspect[illegible] such an agreement is not as import[illegible] as the strengthening of relations [illegible]tween the U.S. and Europe and [illegible]tween the U.S. and Japan, nor [illegible] important as taking a more earn[illegible] attitude towrads each specific ev[illegible] as it occurs. The first characteristic [illegible] the Soviet Union is that it alwa[illegible] adopts the attitude of bullying the s[illegible] and fearing the strong. The seco[illegible] characteristic of the Soviet Union [illegible] that it will go in and grab at eve[illegible] opportunity.

Q: *Viewing the triangular situati[illegible] between you and the Soviet Uni[illegible] and the U.S., it must be reassuring [illegible] you that both China and the U.S. ha[illegible] a very close relationship with a ve[illegible] important fourth power, Japan. Th[illegible] is no equivalent for the Soviet Uni[illegible] on their side of the balance.*

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A: The question is: After setting up this relationship between China, Japan and the U.S., we must further develop the relationship in a deepening way. If we really want to be able to place curbs on the polar bear, the only realistic thing for us is to unite. If we only depend on the strength of the U.S., it is not enough. If we only depend on the strength of Europe, it is not enough. We are an insignificant, poor court, but if we unite, well, it will then carry weight.

Q: *To go back to Japan, does that not tip the triangular balance?*

A: It [illegible]ot only of interest to China but al[illegible] great significance to world peace, world security, world stability, that there be friendly relations between China and the U.S., Europe and Japan.

Q: *Our readers will be surprised to hear you describe China as insignificant. We've spent quite a few pages in the magazine saying otherwise.*

A: Well, when I said insignificant, I was going to extremes. But China is quite poor and you have made a poor friend.

Q: *You don't mean a bad friend.*

A: No, not a bad friend, but economically poor. In Chinese the word "poor" [illegible]s no bad connotations to it. Of co[illegible], that does not mean that China is of no use. We do not look upon ourselves as inconsequential.

Q: *How will the new relationship between China and the U.S. help with your "four modernizations" campaign?*

A: We believe that the normalization of relations will enable us to obtain much scientific and technological know-how. From the point of view of the U.S. we also think it will be beneficial. And if we look at it from the broader perspective of global politics, it will have even greater benefits.

Q: *You set the year 2000 for attaining modernization. Is that a date of [illegible] public convenience or does it hav[illegible]*

A: It is not symbolic. We indeed do have such an ambitious goal. For an[illegible] country, if it wants to develop itself, it must mainly rely on itself and its own potentialities. But it is also necessary to obtain capital from the developed countries (and) to learn from the experiences of the developed countries, especially in the field of management.

Q: *There has been much written in the Western press in recent months about the "de-Maoification" of China. To what extent is the legacy of Mao still relevant and to what extent have you departed from his legacy?*

A: You may have noted that we already declared on many occasions that we will continue to take Mao Tse-tung thought as our guiding thought. What is more, many of our basic principles are still based on the basic tenets put forward by Chairman Mao and Premier Chou. For instance, the development of relations between our two countries was promulgated some time ago by Chairman Mao himself and the i[illegible]ance of the Shanghai communique during the visit of President Nixon in 1972 was something personally looked after by Chairman Mao and Premier Chou. This was on the basis of our global strategy of dividing the world into three worlds. According to our view of the three worlds, the first would consist of the U.S. and the Soviet Union, but in this concept of our thinking of three worlds, we proceed from the establishment of a united front against hegemonism and for the defense of world peace, security and stability, and this united front includes the U.S. Chairman Mao and Premier Chou paid personal attention to relations between our two countries and the development of relations between China and Europe and China and Japan. So how can you call this de-Maoification? It is following the line of Mao Tse-tung. The four modernizations was put forward by Chairman Mao and then was made public through Premier Chou in his speech at the fourth National People's Congress in 1974. At the same time, we have always considered that Chairman Mao was not beyond fault. [illegible] cannot demand of any great person [illegible]

that is not in keeping with the thoughts of Marx or of Mao Tse-tung [illegible] things which Chairman Mao could not foresee during his lifetime because of the limitations of the conditions then existing. Now there are new conditions and so we raise new questions. This is entirely logical and cannot be called "de-Maoification." For instance, the question of absorbing foreign capital and foreign technology to help our development — during the chairman's lifetime — the conditions for doing so did not exist.

Q: *It would not be wrong, would it, to say that the present leadership has helped create the new conditions?*

A: These conditions were created by Chairman Mao himself. For instance, the improvement in relations between China and Japan and China and Europe were policies promulgated during the lifetime of Chairman Mao, as well as the normalization of relations with the U.S.

Q: *It is the impression of the U.S. that there have been important changes in China in the last two years. Is that a mistaken view?*

A: There have been many changes. But, as I said, many are made according to the fundamental principles laid down by Chairman Mao. I must also say that in carrying out these policies of Chairman Mao, there were obstructions in those days. And in the latter years of his life, because of his poor health, Chairman Mao was not able to remove some of these obstacles, so in this respect we cannot say that the Chairman was devoid of responsibility. But from the overall point of view, we are still building up our country according to the blueprint laid down by Chairman Mao and Premier Chou.

Q: *Have the obstacles been totally removed?*

A: Yes, you may say that. But even when you remove the obstacles, lingering influences will remain for some time and for some of these influences we will need quite some time to be totally eradicated. You know that for more than 10 years there was ob-

struction by the Gang of Four. Before, the Chinese people were a highly [illegible] plined behavior became rampant. Now, in this field we are recuperating rather rapidly. But the field of education is a major problem. For many years the gang looked upon people who didn't study as heroes, people who didn't work as heroes. Now people must work. But we can say we lost a whole generation as regards education, including science and technology. We need quite some time and much effort to catch up.

Q: *You have referred from time to time to your age. So I hope that you will not consider it undiplomatic of me to ask if we may assume that the new policy directions now being undertaken in China will continue past your own service?*

A: That is a matter of certainty. I am confident that I can live at least another 10 years. And our chairman of the party and Premier Hua Kuo-feng is now less than 60 years old. He will certainly go on even longer. As to our present policies and principles, we consider them to be supported by the entire party a[illegible] people, at least by the overwhelming majority. When people worry about whether the policies will continue, they overlook the most important question: Are the new policies correct or not? If the policies and measures are not correct, what's the use of continuing them? If the policies bear fruit, living standards will improve. If these policies bear fruit, then who can oppose their continuation? So the decisive factor is not any particular individual but rather the success of these policies and measures. We are confident they will be effective.

Q: *Do you expect Taiwan to be reunified with the PRC within 10 years?*

A: I said to American friends not long ago that 10 years is too long a time. I hope it'll be realized this year, but that is probably being too impatient.

Q: *How do you visualize reunification happening?*

A: Our policy and our principles for reunification are very fair and reasonable. We will respect the realities on Taiwan and the Taiwanese authorities as a local government will retain their rights and powers, but it must be within the context of one China. When I say that, it means they can maintain a certain amount of their own armed forces. As for trade and commerce with foreign countries, they can continue. They may also maintain their present system and continue leading their own way of life.

Q: *Their capitalism?*

A: Of course. The solution to such a problem may take a long time. In fact, the main part of China, what you call the mainland, will also undergo changes and it will become more developed. We demand of them only one thing: that there be no two Chinas, and that patriots all belong to the same family.

Q: *Taiwan says the same thing.*

A: We agree with them.

Q: *But they think China is (Taiwan).*

A: At present the Taiwan authorities are refusing to negotiate with us. That is bad, but their insistence that there is only one China is good. Another thing, I have noted myself that they do not say that the Chinese capital should be Taipei. That, too, is good.

Q: *While establishing full diplomatic relations with the PRC, the U.S. declared its intention to continue to sell defensive weapons to Taiwan. Would you amplify your attitude toward this policy?*

A: We clearly expressed our disagreement with this. But we said that disagreement on this issue should not prevent immediate normalization. Why do we not approve? Because the [illegible]

to negotiations between us and th[illegible] Taiwan authorities for peaceful reun[illegible]fication, because then Chiang Chin[illegible] kuo will think he has nothing to fe[illegible] and he will thrust his tail up 10,0[illegible] meters high in the sky. And so we [illegible] hope that following normalizatio[illegible] and in the interests of global strateg[illegible] that the U.S., while maintaining [illegible] people-to-people relationship wit[illegible] Taiwan, will take care not to hinde[illegible] negotiations between China and Ta[illegible]wan for peaceful reunification. In [illegible] future, this particular question [illegible] be discussed not only once but ma[illegible] times.

Q: *Your arrival in the U.S. will coi[illegible]cide with the start of the lunar ne[illegible] year. It is the Year of the Goat, said [illegible] be auspicious for peace. How do [illegible] view the omens for peace in Asia a[illegible] around the world in 1979?*

A: We consider that the bigge[illegible] common point between China and t[illegible] U.S. is that we both hope to prolong [illegible] long as possible international pea[illegible] security and stability.

Q: *I don't know whether you [illegible] aware of our interview in Time ma[illegible]zine in which we quote Brezhnev [illegible] saying that he is tired of talking a[illegible] the Chinese. I wonder if there [illegible] be a limited agreement that Bre[illegible] will not talk about China and yo[illegible] not talk about the Soviet Union.*

A: I am not tired of talking abou[illegible] them. You know that Brezhnev to[illegible] the Japanese that I, myself, am th[illegible] worst Chinese. So when you made [illegible] Man of the Year, you may have ma[illegible] an error.

Q: *We don't think so.*

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