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BRIEFS AND COMMENTS

USSR-CHINA-EUROPE: Soviet Commentary

Moscow's continuing concern over Chinese intentions is underscored by a new indictment in Pravda of Beijing's efforts to cement ties with the US while developing its relations with the Yugoslav, Romanian, and Italian Communist Parties. [REDACTED]

Attributed to the high-level pseudonym "I. Aleksandrov," which connotes Central Committee approval, commentary on Monday declared that China has decided to avoid any improvement in relations with the USSR. According to "Aleksandrov," Beijing is now striving to reassure its partners abroad that domestic developments, such as the posthumous rehabilitation of Liu Shaoqi, signify no change in China's anti-Soviet policies. [REDACTED]

Chinese officials have been stressing Beijing's opposition to Moscow in recent weeks, apparently hoping to neutralize Soviet diplomatic tactics and set a favorable atmosphere for Vice Premier Geng Biao's visit to the US to discuss expanded security relations. The Soviets are particularly agitated over the visit, which they view as a major step in the development of China's military ties with the West. The veremence of the Soviet article may also reflect Moscow's displeasure over Chairman Hua Guofeng's current visit to Japan as well as recent Chinese flight testing of an ICBM. [REDACTED]

"Aleksandrov" also accused Beijing of "stepping up" its campaign to undermine the world Communist movement "from within"--a sensitive theme which the Soviets usually play down. Moscow objects to the recent visit to China of Italian Communist Party leader Berlinguer, whom the Soviets have already publicly attacked for "objectively assisting" Chinese policies, despite his willingness to disagree publicly with his Chinese hosts about their conflict with the USSR. The Soviets may also be upset by Hua Guofeng's visit to Romania after President Tito's funeral--where he publicly snubbed Soviet President Brezhnev. [REDACTED]

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This latest "Aleksandrov" commentary appeared only three days after the same by-line was used to defend the Soviet-backed European Communist Parties Conference in Paris in late April. None of the European parties that have good relations with China attended the conference, and none is likely to give up those relations merely to placate the USSR. [REDACTED]