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WEEKLY SUMMARY

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The WEEKLY SUMMARY, issued every Friday morning by the Office of Current Intelligence, reports and analyzes significant developments of the week through noon on Thursday. It frequently includes material coordinated with or prepared by the Office of Economic Research, the Office of Strategic Research, and the Directorate of Science and Technology. Topics requiring more comprehensive treatment and therefore published separately as Special Reports are listed in the contents pages.

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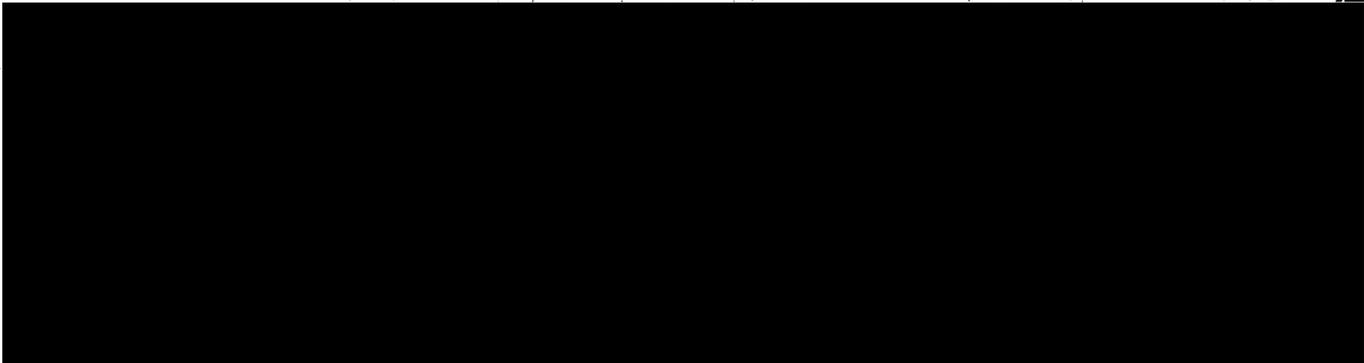
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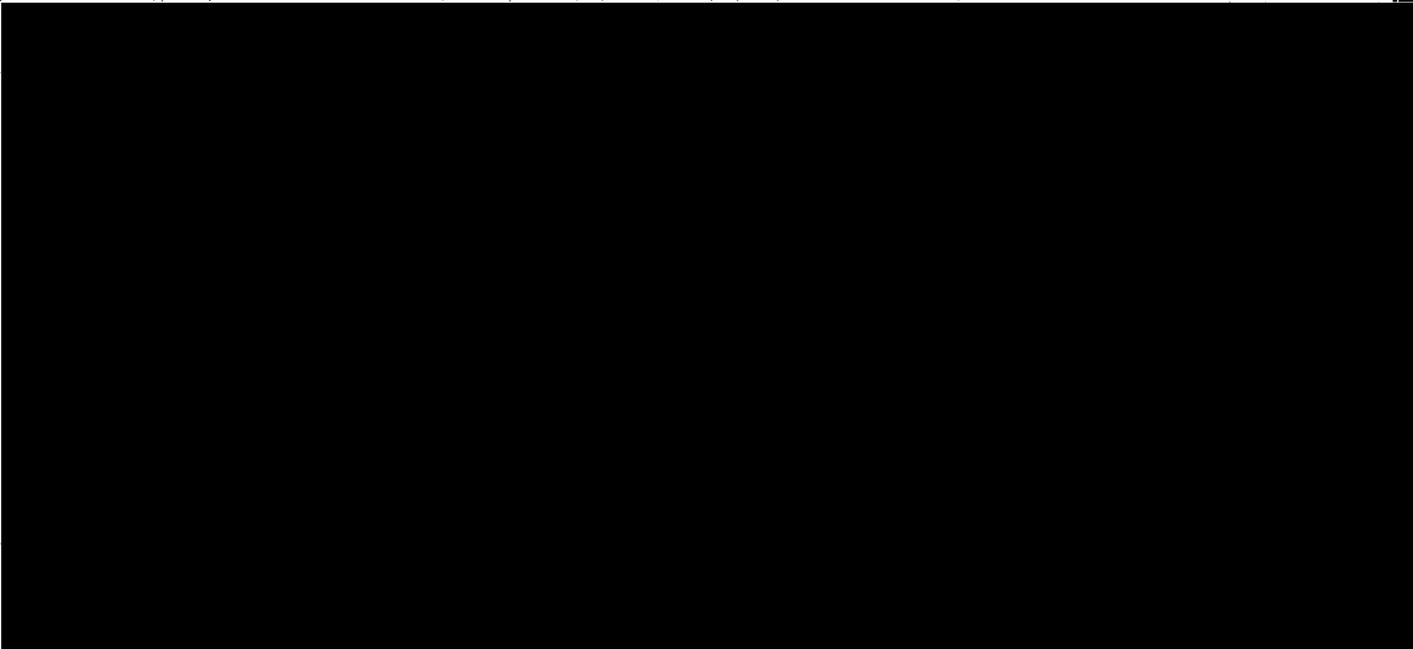
(Information as of noon EDT, 23 October 1969)



SINO-SOVIET TALKS UNDER WAY IN PEKING

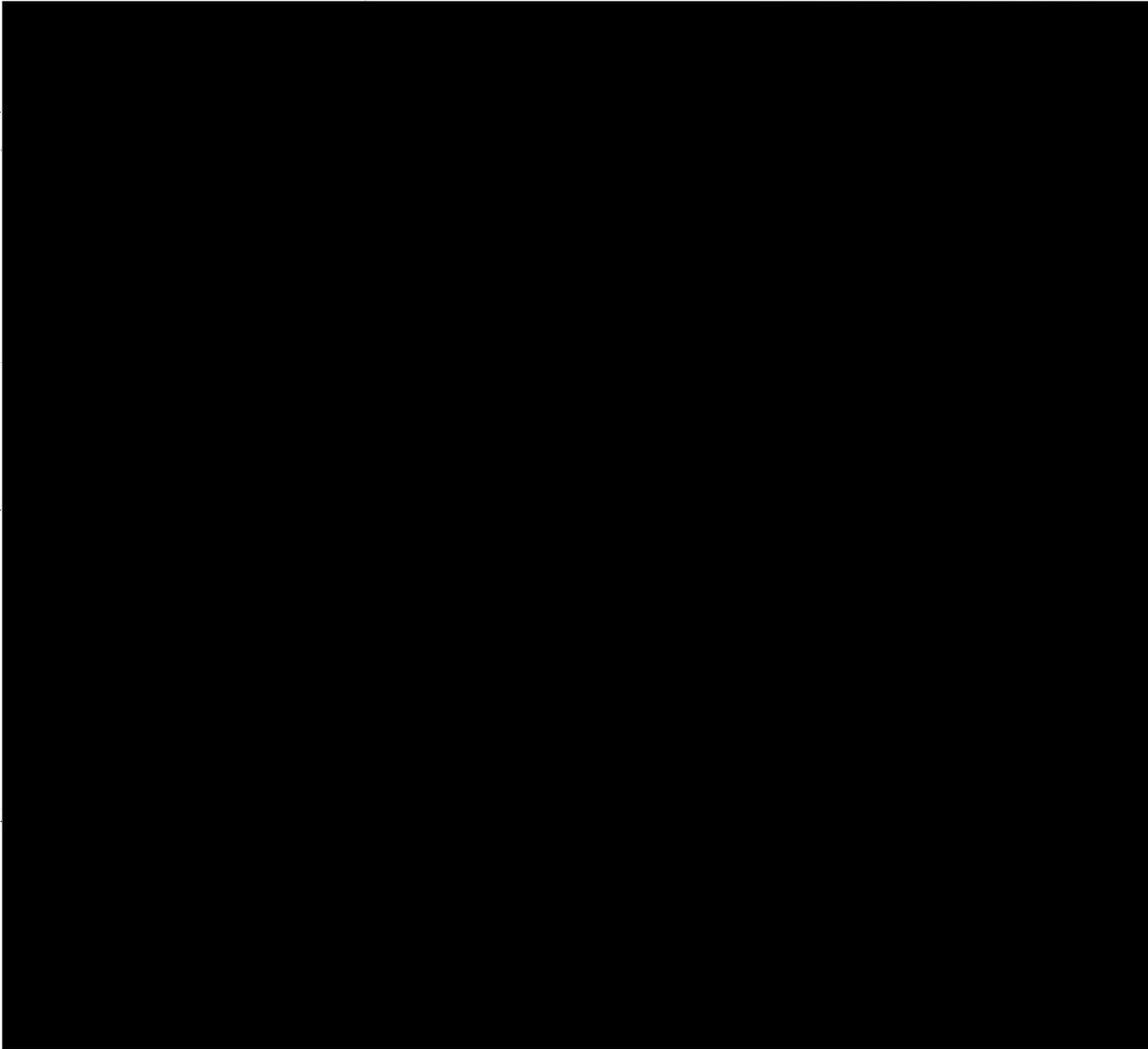
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Sino-Soviet talks to ease border tensions began on 20 October in Peking and are expected to go on for some time.



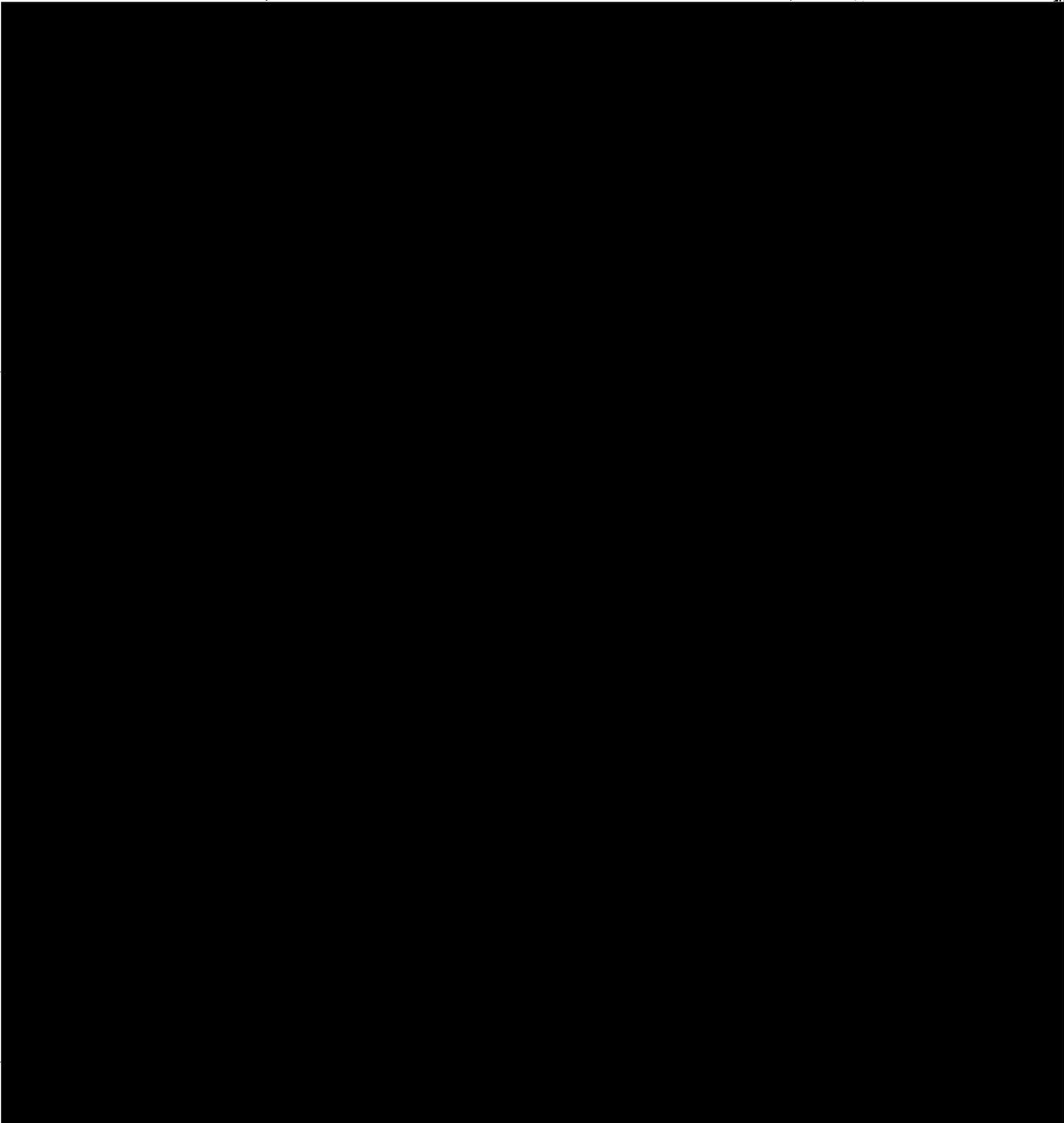
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SINO-SOVIET TALKS UNDER WAY IN PEKING

After seven months of propaganda posturing, veiled and direct threats, and occasional open fighting, China and the USSR began border talks in Peking on 20 October. Although the negotiations will probably be protracted and difficult, both sides have good reason to seek some degree of accommodation. For the Chinese, the issue is simple: prevention of a possible war. Mounting Soviet military and diplomatic pressure, including hints of Russian nuclear attack, has had the desired effect of bringing Peking to the table.

The Chinese, increasingly concerned over Soviet intentions, fear that future border clashes could be used as a pretext for Soviet attack. The Russians feel that others have taken advantage of their preoccupation with the China problem and want relief from the harassment, uncertainty, and political embarrassment that the border tension has caused them. Soviet diplomats are currently at pains to depict recent Sino-Soviet developments in an optimistic light, probably in part to convey the impression that Moscow is no longer tied down by this issue.

Moscow, judging that it presently holds both military and political advantage over the Chinese, can be expected to press for a settlement that would remove the border issue from the stable of fundamental Sino-Soviet differences. The Soviets also appear hopeful that the talks

can lead to more normal state relations, such as the return of ambassadors. Kosygin is reported to have made such suggestions at his meeting on 11 September with Chou En-lai, and the TASS statement announcing the beginning of the Peking talks implied that Moscow expected issues other than the border to be taken up.

On the other hand, there has been no sign of Chinese readiness to arrive at such a far-reaching accommodation on Soviet terms. A Chinese position paper released on 8 October strongly reiterated Peking's demand that Moscow acknowledge the present frontier as based on Czarist "unequal treaties" and that a new "equal treaty" be signed to replace them. This was the long standing Chinese demand that collapsed the last Sino-Soviet border talks in 1964. In addition, Peking clearly indicated in its agreement to meet with the Russians that the question of a permanent and over-all settlement should be shelved in favor of reaching agreement on interim steps to cool down the dangerous situation on the frontier.

As a result, quick agreement seems possible only on military withdrawal from disputed border areas, as well as other tactical steps to minimize the chance of further border conflict. Progress in resolving thorny territorial issues, such as ownership of the islands in the Ussuri and Amur rivers where fighting broke out last spring, will be far more difficult.

Peking, meanwhile, is still warning its population against a Soviet military threat--a continuation of the Chinese "war preparations" campaign designed to foster greater domestic unity. Within this context, a domestic broadcast

of 17-October rationalized Peking's acceptance of talks as a necessary "revolutionary" ploy to counter Moscow's "counterrevolutionary dual tactics" of seeking negotiations while preparing for aggression. 

