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SUBJECT Economic Information: North China and Manchuria

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North China

1. The British are dealing commercially with the Chinese Communists, and many British firms are having representatives sent from London to sign agreements with the Chinese Communists. British and American ships are putting in at Taku Bar to pick up cargo.
2. Although business in Tientsin is almost at a standstill, the Chinese Communists are trying to encourage trade and have reinstated link and barter systems. Exports are permitted on a barter basis, and the exporter and importer have to arrange their own link set-up. There are gradual increases of restrictions on business and of government monopoly on certain products -- notably bristles, which is one of the most important export commodities from Tientsin.
3. The cost of living has tumbled, and a family of four can live very comfortably on US \$100 a month.
4. Chinese Communist officers in Tientsin are quartered in private dwellings, including those of foreigners.

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Manchuria

5. Salted products, such as caviar, are coming in from the USSR through Manchuria in great quantities.
6. Travel and communications between Harbin and Mukden have been open for some time.

This document is hereby regraded to CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the letter of 16 October 1978 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the Archivist of the United States.
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