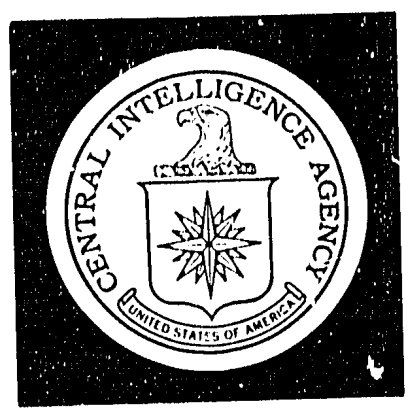
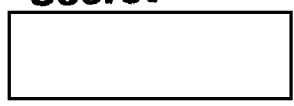


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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

# Intelligence Memorandum

*The 25th UN General Assembly*

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Directorate of Intelligence  
7 January 1971

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The 25th UN General Assembly

Introduction

This paper focuses on those developments at the recent 25th UN General Assembly that are most relevant to US interests. In addition to the special commemorative session in October that attracted some 40 heads of state, other highlights of the meeting were the controversial resolutions on the Middle East situation, the majority attained for the first time by the "Albanian" resolution to seat Peking and expel Taiwan from the UN, the resolution on disarmament, and the agreements looking toward new international regulation of the seas and their resources. An assessment of the results of the Assembly is presented in paragraph 20.

Note: This memorandum was prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence and coordinated within the Directorate of Intelligence.

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Background

1. The 25th session had been anticipated as a major diplomatic event leading to a thorough assessment of the UN's world role and the initiation of measures to improve its effectiveness.\* For a variety of reasons, particularly the missile crisis in the Middle East, this assessment did not materialize. Nevertheless, in the working session--relatively quiet and unspectacular and highlighted by the assertiveness of the less developed countries against the major powers--the General Assembly took a number of steps that will have some impact on how the members work and get along with each other in the future.

The Middle East

2. Near the end of the 90-day cease-fire instituted in August on the basis of the Rogers Plan, Egypt sought debate on the Middle East in an attempt to obtain an Assembly statement before the cease-fire expired. Over strong US and Israeli objections, the Assembly subsequently adopted by a 57-16 vote a resolution that could aggravate the difficulty of implementing the 1967 Security Council resolution, the basis on which the search for a settlement has so far proceeded. Although the resolution did recommend to the parties concerned a three-month extension of the cease-fire, it made no reference to violations of the standstill agreement and included an ambiguous request to the Council to consider the imposition of economic sanctions against Israel. The Assembly resolution was also very selective in its references to the 1967 Council resolution, emphasizing in particular the need for Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in the six-day war.

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3. Early in December, the Assembly adopted four resolutions on the Palestinian refugee situation, one of which may also complicate movement toward negotiated settlement. Declaring that full recognition of Palestinian "inalienable rights" is indispensable to the establishment of peace, the resolution advocates "self-determination" for the Palestinians. Strenuous US and Israeli efforts to block its passage narrowly failed.

4. As in 1969, the principal immediate casualty of the heated Middle East debates was the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), which provides welfare services in the refugee camps of the area. Charges that the fedayeen benefit from the camps--and thus from UNRWA services--resulted in a tepid response to Secretary General Thant's urgent appeal for funds to alleviate UNRWA's chronic financial difficulties, made all the worse by the destruction resulting from the Jordanian civil war. Pledges for 1971 amounted to about \$6 million less than the agency's budget, and [redacted]

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[redacted] the agency may not be able to meet this month's payroll.

#### Chinese Representation

5. As a result in part of Peking's more "reasonable" diplomatic posture, including its establishment of diplomatic relations with Canada and Italy, support for Taiwan as the sole representative of China at the UN eroded much more rapidly this year than many observers had anticipated. For the first time, the "Albanian" resolution to seat Peking and expel Taiwan won a plurality, 51 to 49 with 27 abstentions, but it failed adoption because the issue was again declared an Important Question (IQ) requiring a two-thirds vote for passage. In light of the vote on the "Albanian" resolution, support for the IQ ruling may wane considerably now that it has been made to appear a device to frustrate majority opinion.

6. The so-called "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan" formulas favored as a solution by many states seem likely at this point to become the

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focus of international discussion before the 26th Assembly meeting opens next September, possibly within the broader context of the concept of universality of membership at the UN. Both Chinese regimes have already indicated extreme hostility to any idea of dual representation, each contending that it would refuse to hold a seat if the other were also represented.

#### Arms Control

7. The 25th session was also in harmony with the trend toward increasing preoccupation with disarmament--especially nuclear disarmament. Turned aside by the Assembly in 1969, the draft treaty cosponsored by the US and USSR to limit the use of the seabeds for military purposes was revised to meet most criticisms and won an overwhelming 104-2 endorsement by the Assembly. It is expected to be opened for signature this month, and should enter into force soon afterward. The only probable holdouts will be France and Communist China, which traditionally do not adhere to such disarmament measures, and a few Latin American states that maintain the treaty impinges on their claims to 200-mile territorial waters.

8. A raft of other arms control resolutions was adopted, including eleven on a single day. The general theme of these proposals was their advocacy of further curbs on the arms race in the interest of reallocating the resulting savings to economic development and progress on social problems. In one area, chemical and biological warfare (CBW), there was no repetition of last year's Assembly vote challenging the US contention that the Geneva Protocol of 1925 does not ban the use of tear gas and herbicides in war. The 26-nation Geneva disarmament conference is likely to focus on CBW during its 1971 sessions.

9. The strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) were accorded a generally favorable response at the Assembly, but the superpowers did not agree on how to react to a SALT-linked Swedish draft resolution calling on "all" nuclear states to halt the

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testing and development of strategic weapons. The Soviets voted for the draft--adopted in the plenary by a 102 to 0 margin--whereas the US abstained, maintaining that the text constituted an attempt to influence sensitive areas under bilateral negotiation. Moscow argued that abstention would undercut the superpowers' commitment in the Nonproliferation Treaty to take further steps toward curbing the arms race.

10. Soviet motives in splitting with the US on the Swedish resolution undoubtedly were largely tactical. Moscow had the opportunity to line up with the nonnuclear states on an issue of considerable importance to the latter, making the US appear the major obstacle to unverified moratoriums. The USSR most likely judged that its action would not adversely affect the prospects for SALT.

#### Perennial Issues

11. The Assembly again rebuffed by a wide margin the usual Communist resolutions calling for withdrawal of foreign forces from Korea and dissolution of the UN Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK). Although the margin was somewhat smaller than in 1969, some observers had expected a much larger dip in the wake of the plurality given the "Albanian" resolution. However, Chile, one of the seven members of UNCURK, did withdraw from the commission during the Assembly session, and there is concern that a similar move by Pakistan could endanger UNCURK's existence.

12. Issues of colonialism and racial discrimination consumed a considerable amount of the Assembly's time and attention this year, as the

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UN commemorated the tenth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and People. African concern in the Assembly was largely focused on South Africa, since the primary Rhodesian and Portuguese territories issues--gaps in the economic sanctions effort and the raid on Guinea, respectively--were dealt with in the Security Council. A bid to have the Assembly decline Pretoria's membership credentials nearly succeeded this year, and the Africans may move more decisively in that direction at the 1971 Assembly meeting next fall.

13. Despite vigorous efforts, the US was not able to resolve long-standing differences with the USSR over the control and conduct of UN peacekeeping operations. The Assembly continued to mark time on the subject, although some members now favor an alternative, piecemeal approach that would permit agreements on several less contentious issues relating to the peacekeeping guidelines.

#### Other Topics

14. In its final days, the Assembly adopted two resolutions that reflect the strong interest of the international community in achieving accords on a host of intertwined maritime issues. Crucial to passage of the resolutions was the reduced suspicion of major power intentions, largely a direct result of the 1970 US proposal that national jurisdiction stop at a water depth of 200 meters and that the ocean floor beyond be considered the "common heritage of mankind." A set of principles on seabeds exploitation--along lines of the US initiative--was approved without a single dissenting vote.

15. The second resolution calls for a Law of the Sea conference in 1973 to deal with a broad range of subjects, including territorial waters claims, rights of passage through international straits, and the establishment of international

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machinery to govern peaceful utilization of the ocean floor. Although they share the US interest in obtaining agreements in many of these areas, the Soviets opposed this resolution. They view its terms as too comprehensive, especially in looking toward the creation of another international regulatory agency.

16. In both its commemorative and regular sessions, the Assembly adopted rather toothless resolutions on "strengthening international security." The texts fell far short of what the USSR had hoped to obtain when it initiated this item as a propaganda ploy at the 1969 Assembly session. Strong Western opposition prevented passage of controversial formulations on such topics as support for national liberation movements and opposition to troops on foreign soil.

17. After considerable acrimony, delegates to the commemorative portion of the Assembly meeting did manage to achieve agreement on guidelines for the Second UN Development Decade (DD-II), the 1970s. The less developed countries (LDCs) pushed the DD-II concept very hard, but the final product--hedged by both Eastern and Western statements of interpretation and reservation--provided only amorphous commitments to a strategy for development assistance. The LDCs did not secure firm adherence to a specific date for the major powers to fund aid programs on the basis of one percent of their annual gross national products.

18. The rash of aerial hijacking immediately preceding the convocation of the 25th Assembly prompted a quick response from the UN membership. In November, the representatives approved a resolution condemning hijackings "whatever the pretext or motive." Galvanized by this affirmative UN stance, a diplomatic conference at The Hague in December completed work on a convention setting international standards to deal with aerial pirates.

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19. A serious disappointment at the 1970 Assembly was the continuing inability to reach agreement on the treaty that would establish rules for liability in the event of accidents related to outer space ventures. The Soviets remained intransigent on two key issues: the form of arbitration and the type of laws that are applicable. There is some hope that a compromise can be effected on these points during the coming year.

Assessment

20. Judged by the very high expectations set for the 25th Assembly, its actions and their probable impact on the future may seem only modest at best. On the other hand, the effects--whether for better or worse--of the controversial Middle East resolutions and the vote on the "Albanian" resolution could be quite far-reaching in the years ahead. In addition to again proving its worth as a forum for international dialogue, the Assembly this year moved the UN more fully into several matters of increasing importance, e.g., maritime issues, aerial hijackings, and problems relating to international development assistance.

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