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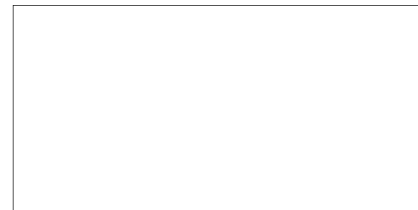
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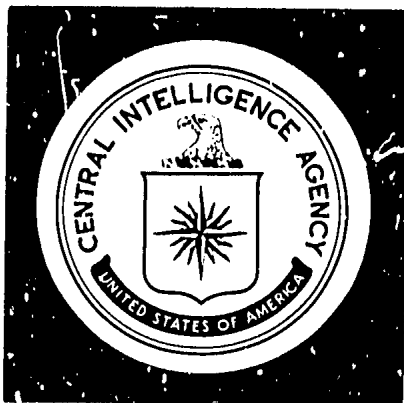
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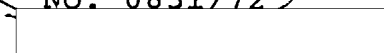
# Intelligence Memorandum

*The Current State of Sino-Soviet Relations*

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10 February 1972  
No. 0831/72



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Directorate of Intelligence  
10 February 1972

## INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Current State of Sino-Soviet RelationsPeking Attacks Soviet-Japanese Contacts

1. China's first direct comment on Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko's 23-28 January visit to Japan was carried by the New China News Agency on 3 February. It blasted Moscow for "stepping up collusion with the Japanese reactionaries to oppose the people of China" and for "contending with the US" for spheres of influence in Asia. The article alleged indirectly that Japan was willing to act as an accomplice to Soviet designs.

2. Quoting the official communiqué and Japanese press articles, the news agency outlined the major issues allegedly covered during the Gromyko visit, especially the "anti-China issue," "suppression of national liberation movements in Asia," the extension of Soviet influence in Asia, and Soviet-Japanese economic cooperation. The agency cited an Asahi Shimbun article in charging that Moscow encouraged Japanese "occupation" of Taiwan. The Chinese reported the agreement to discuss a Soviet-Japanese peace treaty but emphasized that despite "seemingly relaxed statements" on the Northern Territories--the four northern Pacific islands occupied by the USSR at the end of World War II--Moscow did not promise to return them to Japan. Obviously alluding to Soviet territory

Note: This memorandum, the 48th in a series of biweekly reports on Sino-Soviet relations, was prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence and the Office of Strategic Research and was coordinated within the Directorate of Intelligence.

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claimed by China, the news agency repeated Japanese press comment that Moscow would not dare return the islands to Japan as that would cause a "chain reaction" in other areas "occupied" by the USSR.

3. Chou En-lai had made some forthcoming statements to the Japanese on the eve of Gromyko's visit in the hope of blunting the impact in Tokyo of his trip. The New China News Agency article, which repeats some of Chou's themes, leaves little doubt that Peking would view closer Tokyo-Moscow relations with genuine concern.

#### Soviet Propaganda on China

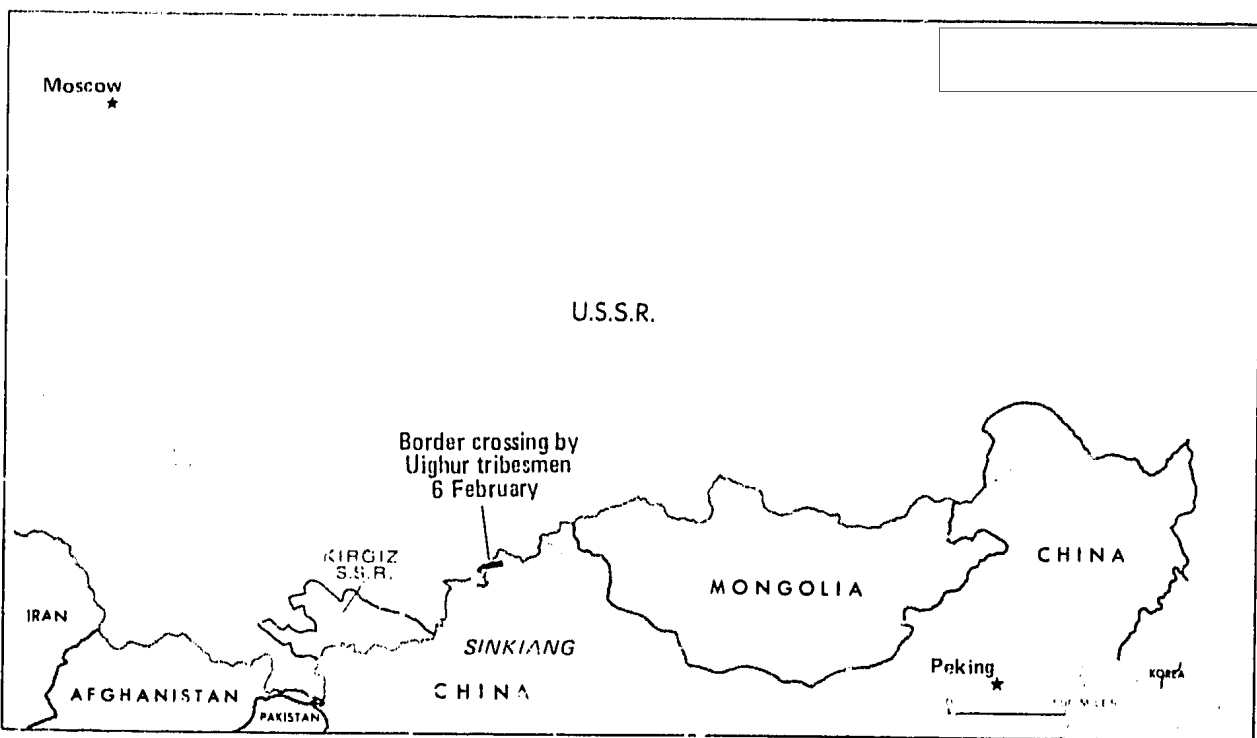
4. Moscow has continued to assail the Chinese leadership and its policies. Many of Moscow's barbs focus on the President's trip. The Soviets charge that the Chinese leadership is selling out the birth-right of the Chinese revolution through its opening to the US. In a 6 February Pravda article the Soviets raised the delicate subject of a Soviet attack on China. This issue had not been discussed in the Soviet media in over a year. It came in the form of an attack on Joseph Alsop. Pravda charged that Alsop had "impudently concocted the lie" that Moscow had asked Washington to look the other way in 1969 while it undertook "the nuclear castration of China." The article accused Alsop of contradicting the official US rationale for the opening to China when he wrote that the main purpose of the Nixon visit was to restrain Moscow from an attack on China. The author stated that "no one intends to undertake such an attack."

5. Alsop's columns on Soviet policy have always irritated the Soviets, but his comments on Moscow's intentions toward China at a time when the Soviets are seeking to press for detente in the West are particularly resented. Moscow may hope that the Pravda article will serve to quiet speculation that it might be considering more drastic measures against Peking. (Of course, such comment would do little to quiet Peking's apprehensions about Soviet intentions.)

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Central Asian Minority Problems

7. According to a Japanese press report from Moscow on 6 February, a "Soviet source" has claimed that 2,700 Uighur tribesmen, evading the fire of Chinese guards on the Sinkiang border, defected to the USSR on the night of 27 January. There has been no confirmation of this incident, and no unusual military activity has been noted in the area. Information on events in this area, however, is very limited. If the report is true, the escape represents the first sizable defection in recent years. The most significant migration of Chinese minorities into the USSR occurred in 1962, when, with Soviet encouragement, approximately 50,000 border tribesmen crossed over. Peking responded at that time by closing Soviet consulates in Sinkiang--which the Chinese considered centers of subversion directed toward the minorities--and by tightening controls on access to the immediate border areas.

8. The Soviets have obvious reasons for attempting to discredit the Chinese by calling attention to minority discontent. The press report must therefore be treated with caution. Recent Soviet and Chinese propaganda indicates the problem of

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minorities remains a source of friction. The Soviet New Times weekly of 28 January--the day after the alleged escape--noted that non-Chinese offer "stubborn and ever increasing resistance" to Peking and that "many thousands" have escaped from Tibet and Sinkiang. The article ended on the usual note--criticizing Peking's posture as fighter for national liberation while it is "forcing assimilation" of its own minorities. Soviet broadcasts in Uighur to Sinkiang are playing the same tune, contrasting conditions in the USSR with "national oppression" in China.

9. Peking's commentary on the South Asian situation has suggested some concern over potential Soviet appeals to Chinese minority groups. The People's Daily editorial of 31 January on Bangladesh, for example, noted Soviet support of Indian intervention in East Pakistan under the "principle of national self-determination." The editorial specifically asked whether this justification permits foreign intervention any place, i.e., China, where a problem of minorities exists. Earlier Chinese commentary on Bangladesh explicitly suggested that Moscow might be interested in intervening on behalf of Chinese minorities. During the UN debate, China's chief permanent delegate, Huang Hua, charged that the USSR had "organized counter-revolution in Sinkiang" in 1962 and implied that another such effort could be used as a pretext for future armed aggression against China.

10. [REDACTED] Chinese attempts to exploit the Soviet minorities' dissatisfaction add another dimension to these exchanges. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Peking has directed special propaganda efforts toward Ukrainian troops stationed along the Sino-Soviet border as well as minorities in Central Asia. No samples of such broadcasts are available, but they were of sufficient concern to the Soviets to have drawn sharp comment from Kirghiz party boss Usubaliyev at the 24th party congress last March. He called for vigorous efforts to counter Peking's "malicious slander" of Moscow's handling of minority problems. It seems clear that each side realizes the other has vulnerabilities on the minority issue and that each will continue to fan the other's problem.

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