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TO GEN SCOWCROFT

T O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE CONTAINS CODEWORD WH52047

TOSCO 28

DECEMBER 2, 1975
THE PRESIDENT
BRENT SCOWCROFT
INFORMATION ITEMS

MEMORANDUM FOR:
FROM:
SUBJECT:

CHINESE MILITARY'S INTERNAL SECURITY ROLE: ACCORDING TO DIA, RECENT REPORTS OF POLITICAL UNREST IN THE PRC HAVE FOCUSED ATTENTION ON A LITTLE-PUBLICIZED MISSION OF CHINA'S PEOPLES LIBERATION ARMY (PLA) -- THAT OF ENFORCING INTERNAL SECURITY. MOST NOTABLE HAVE BEEN THE EVENTS OCCURRING IN THE COASTAL PROVINCE OF CHEKIANG, WHERE PROLONGED AND ESCALATING CIVIL UNREST -- PRIMARILY A RESULT OF FACTIONAL POLITICAL STRIFE -- HAS ENSUED THROUGHOUT 1974 AND 1975. THE DETERIORATING SITUATION THERE WAS PROBABLY BEHIND PEKING'S DECISION TO TRANSFER TROOPS FROM OUTSIDE THE AREA TO CHEKIANG TO SUPPORT LOCAL CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES, ENFORCE PARTY DISCIPLINE, AND RESTORE ECONOMIC PRODUCTIVITY. SIMILAR POLITICAL UNREST HAS SURFACED ELSEWHERE IN CHINA DURING THIS PERIOD; HOWEVER, THE LARGE-SCALE EMPLOYMENT OF TROOPS HAS BEEN REQUIRED TO RESTORE ORDER ONLY IN CHEKIANG. USE OF THE PLA IN SUCH A ROLE MARKEDLY CONTRASTS WITH ATTEMPTS OF THE CHINESE LEADERSHIP IN RECENT YEARS TO EXTRICATE THE MILITARY FROM AN ABNORMALLY EXTENSIVE INVOLVEMENT IN CIVILIAN AFFAIRS, INCLUDING PUBLIC SECURITY, WHICH IT ASSUMED DURING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION. THE DECISION TO USE TROOPS FROM OTHER AREAS TO RESTORE ORDER DEMONSTRATED THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE CHEKIANG SITUATION AND REFLECTED ALSO THE EXTENT TO WHICH UNITS STATIONED THERE HAD BECOME ENTANGLED IN THE LOCAL POLITICAL INFIGHTING, THEREBY LIMITING THEIR RESPONSIVENESS TO THE DEMANDS OF THE CENTRAL LEADERSHIP. IT ALSO UNDERLINED THE MESSAGE TO OTHER PROBLEM AREAS IN CHINA THAT SIMILAR DISORDERS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
TOP SECRET-SENSITIVE

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ON-FILE NSC RELEASE
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

DIA review(s) completed

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PSN:035427 PAGE 01 TOR:335/20:072 DTG:012055Z DEC 75

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