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AMEMBASSY NAIROBI TELEGRAM

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TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, CH, US

SUBJECT: PRCLO PROTESTS "BUZZING" OF PRC VESSELS IN SOUTH PACIFIC BY U.S. NAVAL RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT

1. AT HIS REQUEST, PRCLO COUNSELOR TSIEN TA-YUNG CALLED ON DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY GLEYSIEEN MAY 2 TO DELIVER PROTEST. FOLLOWING IS NEAR-VERBATIM TEXT OF TSIEN'S STATEMENT:

A. TWO CIVILIAN OCEANOGRAPHIC VESSELS, THE HSIANG-YANG-HUNG NO. 5 AND THE HSIANG-YANG-HUNG NO. 11, UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE STATE BUREAU OF OCEANOGRAPHY, HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN HYDROGRAPHIC AND METEOROLOGICAL SURVEY AND RESEARCH WORK IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN. ON APRIL 25 AT NOON, AS THE VESSELS WERE TRAVERSING THE HIGH SEAS AT AN APPROXIMATE POSITION OF 120 16' 48" SOUTH/1790 39' 30" EAST, U.S. NAVY RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT FLYING AT LOW ALTITUDE REPEATEDLY CIRCLED AND HARASSED THE VESSELS, HINDERING AND MEANACING THEIR NORMAL OPERATIONS. ON THE MORNINGS OF APRIL 29 AND MAY 1, U.S. RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT AGAIN CIRCLED AND HARASSED THE VESSELS.

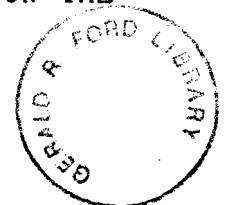
B. THESE TRUCULENT ACTS OF THE U.S. AIRCRAFT VIOLATED INTERNATIONAL NORMS OF NAVIGATION ON THE HIGH SEAS, AND CONSTITUTED AN UNFRIENDLY ACT TOWARD CHINA. WE ASK THE UNITED STATES TO TAKE IMMEDIATE MEASURES AGAINST A RECURRENCE.

2. GLEYSIEEN RESPONDED THAT WE WOULD INVESTIGATE. IF ANYTHING WAS DONE WHICH WAS WRONG, THEN WE WOULD TAKE THE APPROPRIATE STEPS. HE ADDED THIS WAS THE FIRST WE HAD HEARD OF THE EPISODE.

3. DEPARTMENT IS IN PROCESS OF SEEKING THE FACTS ON THE ALLEGED INCIDENT.

DECLASSIFIED *State Review*
 E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.5 *3/2/04*
 STATE DEPT, GUIDELINES
 BY *hr*, NARA, DATE *7/11/08*

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4. FOR CANBERRA: A FEW HOURS BEFORE TSIEN CAME IN, AUSTRALIAN EMBOFF INFORMED US THAT CHINESE HAD MADE SIMILAR PROTEST (BUT CITING DIFFERENT LOCATION AND DATES) TO GOA. EMBOFF ASKED HOW WE HANDLED SUCH PROTESTS, NOTING THAT CANBERRA MESSAGE TO EMBASSY STATED NO RAAF PLANES WERE INVOLVED IN SURVEILLANCE. WE SAID WE COULD THINK OF NO ANALAGOUS PROTEST TO US IN THE PAST, BUT HAVE NOW INFORMED EMBOFF OF ABOVE PROTEST AND AGREED TO KEEP IN TOUCH. SISCO

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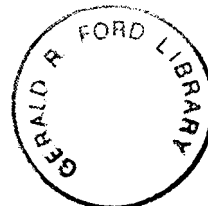
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5. FOREMOST AMONG THESE IS OUR POLICY TOWARDS THE SOVIET UNION. BECAUSE OF DIFFERING CIRCUMSTANCES, OUR TWO COUNTRIES HAVE SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT POLICIES, AND WE RESPECT THE DECISION YOUR COUNTRY HAS MADE REGARDING YOUR POLICY, FOR OUR PART, WE HAVE A DUAL POLICY. WHILE WE WISH TO IMPROVE OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE USSR AND STABILIZE THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM, THE UNITED STATES IS DETERMINED TO RESIST SOVIET EXPANSIONISM--AN OBJECTIVE WHICH OUR TWO COUNTRIES SHARE EVEN IF OUR TACTICS MAY DIFFER.

6. AS YOU MAY KNOW, SOME YEARS AGO I SERVED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, INCLUDING A PERIOD AS SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, AND I HAVE MAINTAINED MY INTEREST IN US DEFENSE MATTERS. I CAN THEREFORE SPEAK FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE ABOUT THE DETERMINATION OF THE UNITED STATES TO MAINTAIN A STRONG MILITARY POSTURE. PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY KISSINGER ARE ABSOLUTELY COMMITTED TO THIS GOAL WHICH IS REFLECTED IN THE PRESIDENT'S CURRENT DEFENSE BUDGET. DESPITE SOME OF THE RHETORIC IN OUR ELECTION PROCESS, THE US CLEARLY REMAINS THE NUMBER ONE POWER IN THE WORLD IN TERMS OF MILITARY, ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL POWER. WE INTEND TO REMAIN SO, AND IT APPEARS THAT THE CONGRESS IS NOW INCREASING ITS SUPPORT TO THIS END.



7. WE HAVE NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION, AND ON THIS POINT ALSO, THERE IS GROWING AWARENESS AMONG THE AMERICAN PEOPLE OF THE SOVIET UNION'S HEGEMONIC AMBITIONS.

8. AS YOU KNOW FROM YOUR OWN COUNTRY'S EXPERIENCE, IN A COMPLEX AND GLOBAL MATTER SUCH AS THIS ONE, THERE WILL BE OCCASIONAL SETBACKS AS WELL AS SUCCESSES. THE OUTCOME IN ANGOLA WAS SUCH A SETBACK TO OUR MUTUAL INTERESTS. IF WE, TOGETHER WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, HAD BEEN ABLE TO CONTINUE OUR SUPPORT OF THE ANTI-SOVIET ELEMENTS IN ANGOLA, THE OUTCOME WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT.

9. WE HAVE MADE IT CLEAR TO THE SOVIET UNION, BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY, THAT WE WILL REACT STRONGLY TO

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FURTHER EFFORTS BY THE SOVIETS TO EXPAND THEIR INFLUENCE BY MILITARY MEANS OR MILITARY PRESSURE WHETHER DIRECTLY OR, AS IN ANGOLA, THROUGH SUPPLY OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND SUPPORT OF THE CUBAN TROOPS. WE HAVE ALSO STATED THAT FURTHER SOVIET ACTIONS LIKE THEIR INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA ARE BOUND TO HAVE A SERIOUS EFFECT ON OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS.

10. WE HAVE ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT ACCEPT FURTHER CUBAN MILITARY INTERVENTION ABOARD. WE ARE CONCERNED BY THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF CUBAN TROOPS IN ANGOLA AND BY THE POSSIBILITY THAT THEY WILL BE USED ELSEWHERE. WE WOULD WELCOME YOUR ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET/CUBAN ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

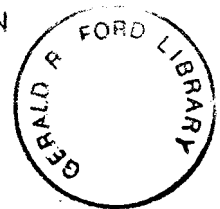
11. SECRETARY KISSINGER'S TRIP TO AFRICA WAS DESIGNED TO STRENGTHEN OUR TIES WITH THE AFRICAN NATIONS. WE ARE PURSUING A DUAL-TRACK POLICY OF VIGOROUSLY SUPPORTING MAJORITY RULE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND WARNING AGAINST SOVIET/CUBAN INTERVENTION. OUR OBJECTIVE IS THAT AFRICAN COUNTRIES SOLVE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS FREE OF OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE.

12. THE FURTHER CHANGE IN EGYPT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIETS IS A MAJOR FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENT. IT WAS A COURAGEOUS AND STATESMANLIKE MOVE BY PRESIDENT SADAT, AND IS UNDOUBTEDLY VIEWED BY THE SOVIETS AS A MAJOR SETBACK. WE BELIEVE THAT THE RELATIONSHIP OF TRUST WHICH WE HAVE BUILT WITH EGYPT HELPED TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR PRESIDENT SADAT TO TAKE THAT STEP.

13. WE ARE GRATIFIED THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS RESPONDED TO PRESIDENT SADAT'S REQUEST FOR MILITARY EQUIPMENT, AND HOPE THAT YOU WILL FIND IT POSSIBLE TO CONTINUE THAT AID. WE ARE PROVIDING SOME TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT, AND PRESIDENT SADAT UNDERSTANDS WHY WE CANNOT DO MORE THIS YEAR. WE HOPE TO PROVIDE MORE MILITARY AID IN THE FUTURE.

14. WITH RESPECT TO THE ARAB-ISRAEL DISPUTE, WE ARE QUIETLY CONTINUING OUR EFFORTS WITH THE PARTIES

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CONCERNED TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR FURTHER STEPS TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT. IT REMAINS A DIFFICULT PROBLEM, AND WE DO NOT EXPECT A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH IN THE NEAR FUTURE. HOWEVER, THE US REMAINS DETERMINED TO HELP MAINTAIN THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS AND REALIZES THE DANGER OF STAGNATION--BOTH IN TERMS OF POSSIBLE CONFLICT AND THE SOVIET ROLE. IT REMAINS OUR PURPOSE TO PREVENT THE SOVIETS FROM INJECTING THEMSELVES INTO THE PROCESS IN A WAY THAT WOULD INCREASE THEIR INFLUENCE.

15. ALTHOUGH SYRIA HAS TAKEN A HARDER POSITION THAN EGYPT REGARDING A SETTLEMENT WITH ISRAEL, WE HAVE WELCOMED SYRIA'S EFFORTS TO HELP RESOLVE THE CIVIL STRIFE IN LEBANON. PRESIDENT FORD SENT A SPECIAL EMISSARY, AMBASSADOR BROWN, TO LEBANON TO SUPPORT THOSE EFFORTS. WE THINK PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE AND IN A MANNER THAT HAS REDUCED SOVIET INFLUENCE.

16. OUR RELATIONS WITH OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES REMAINS VERY STRONG. IN ADDITION TO OUR JOINT DEFENSE EFFORTS, THE ALLIANCE IS BEING STRENGTHENED BY UNPRECEDENTED POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND COORDINATION.

THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE AND CLOSE TRANS-ATLANTIC TIES ARE PARAMOUNT US INTERESTS AND WILL BE VIGOROUSLY UPHELD.

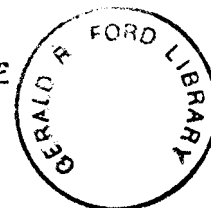
17. THE SOUTHERN EUROPE SITUATION IS THE MOST TROUBLE-SOME. PORTUGAL IS NOT YET STABLE, BUT THE INFLUENCE OF THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY, AND THEREFORE SOVIET INFLUENCE, HAS BEEN FURTHER REDUCED.

18. REGARDING SPAIN, FRANCO'S DEATH HAS CREATED LESS INSTABILITY THAN SOME EXPECTED. WE HAVE NEGOTIATED A RENEWAL OF OUR AGREEMENT WITH SPAIN ON OUR MILITARY FACILITIES, AND ARE HOPEFUL THAT IT WILL BE RATIFIED BY OUR SENATE.

19. WE HAVE MADE IT CLEAR TO OUR EUROPEAN FRIENDS THAT WE WOULD VIEW INCLUSION IN THEIR GOVERNMENTS OF COMMUNIST PARTIES LINKED TO MOSCOW AS SERIOUSLY DETRIMENTAL TO OUR MUTUAL SECURITY INTERESTS.

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20. WE HAVE RECENTLY NEGOTIATED AN OVERALL AGREEMENT WITH TURKEY REGARDING OUR MILITARY FACILITIES THERE AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE, AND ARE NOW NEGOTIATING A SIMILAR AGREEMENT WITH GREECE. BOTH AGREEMENTS WILL REQUIRE CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL, AND THIS MAY TAKE SOME TIME. HOWEVER, THESE DEVELOPMENTS, AND A BETTER PROSPECT FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY, SHOULD STRENGTHEN SIGNIFICANTLY NATO'S SOUTHERN FLANK.

21. I WOULD LIKE TO MENTION SEVERAL DEVELOPMENTS IN ASIA. WE HAVE OF COURSE NOTED YOUR RECENT AGREEMENT WITH INDIA TO EXCHANGE AMBASSADORS. WE ASSUME THIS DID NOT PLEASE MOSCOW, BUT WOULD WELCOME YOUR VIEWS ON THIS POINT, AS WELL AS WHETHER YOU EXPECT INDIA TO SUGGEST OTHER STEPS TO IMPROVE ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR COUNTRY. WE WOULD ALSO WELCOME YOUR ASSESSMENT OF INDIA'S GESTURES TOWARD PAKISTAN.

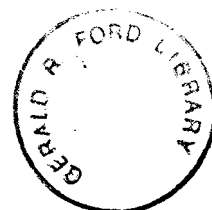
22. WITH RESPECT TO JAPAN, OUR RELATIONS ARE IN VERY GOOD SHAPE AND OUR CONSULTATION HAS NEVER BEEN CLOSER. A TROUBLESOME DEVELOPMENT THERE HAS BEEN THE SO-CALLED LOCKHEED AFFAIR. BUT WE HAVE BEEN WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM, AND WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT IT WILL NOT HAVE A LASTING EFFECT ON OUR CONTINUING CLOSE RELATIONSHIP.

23. IN THAILAND, WE HAVE BEEN REVISING OUR MILITARY PRESENCE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE CHANGED SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND TO MINIMIZE THE POSSIBILITY FOR THOSE UNFRIENDLY TO THE US, INCLUDING THE SOVIETS, TO EXPLOIT

THE SITUATION. HOWEVER, THE DETAILS OF OUR MILITARY RELATIONS WITH THAILAND WILL HAVE TO BE NEGOTIATED WITH THE NEW THAI GOVERNMENT.

24. WE HAVE BEEN NEGOTIATING WITH THE PHILIPPINES REGARDING OUR ECONOMIC AND MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS. WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT BY RESOLVING SOME OF THE ISSUES THAT HAVE ARISEN WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME, OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PHILIPPINES WILL BE EVEN STRONGER THAN IT IS

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NOW.

25. SOME WEEKS AGO, AS WE INFORMED YOUR GOVERNMENT THROUGH YOUR LIAISON OFFICE IN WASHINGTON, WE MADE A PROPOSAL TO NORTH VIET-NAM TO HOLD TALKS TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF IMPROVING RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. OUR PROPOSAL WAS A SERIOUS ONE. HOWEVER, HANOI'S RESPONSE, BY RESURRECTING THE PARIS AGREEMENT CLAUSE ABOUT ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AFTER HAVING KILLED THE AGREEMENT BY ITS MILITARY ACTION LAST YEAR, SUGGESTS TO US THAT HANOI IS NOT NOW INTERESTED IN IMPROVING RELATIONS. OUR OWN ATTITUDE WILL OF COURSE BE STRONGLY INFLUENCED NOT ONLY BY BILATERAL MATTERS BUT ALSO BY WHETHER NORTH VIET-NAM ACTS WITH RESTRAINT TOWARDS THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. WE WOULD WELCOME YOUR THOUGHTS ON THIS POINT.

26. REGARDING KOREA, OUR PRIMARY CONCERN REMAINS THAT THERE BE NO DEVELOPMENTS WHICH WOULD HEIGHTEN TENSION BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA. WE CONTINUE TO HOPE THAT WAYS CAN BE FOUND OVER TIME TO REDUCE THOSE TENSIONS. IN THE MEANTIME, WE INTEND TO MAINTAIN OUR MILITARY PRESENCE AS WE BELIEVE IT CONTRIBUTES TO STABILITY IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA.

27. LET ME CONCLUDE WITH A FEW BRIEF REMARKS ABOUT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS.

28. IN HIS MESSAGE TO YOU UPON YOUR APPOINTMENT AS PREMIER, AND IN THE LETTER I BROUGHT WITH ME, PRESIDENT FORD REAFFIRMED OUR COMMITMENT TO COMPLETE THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZING RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. HE HAS ASKED ME TO REITERATE THAT THAT IS OUR FIRM POLICY AND TO SAY THAT HE IS CONFIDENT THAT THROUGH OUR JOINT EFFORTS WE CAN ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE OF FULLY NORMALIZED RELATIONS.

29. WE RESPECT YOUR VIEW THAT UNTIL THAT TIME, THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF SOME ASPECTS OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP MAY NOT BE FEASIBLE. NEVERTHELESS, WE WILL WELCOME ANY SUGGESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE, AT ANY TIME,

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FOLDER TITLE China unnumbered items (29)

DATE WITHDRAWN 08/14/2008

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Chinese media gave special notice to three positive public statements by President Ford on US-PRC relations in an April 16 article in one of their Hong Kong papers, but at the same time took the unprecedented step of publicly criticizing US foreign policy in an April 21 attack on the "Sonnenfeldt Doctrine". They also made a low-key protest to us on May 2 regarding routine US naval aircraft surveillance of two of their ocean research vessels operating for the first time near the Fiji Islands.

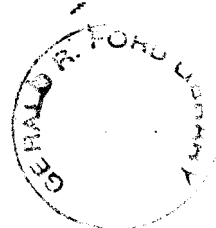
The Dissipation of Domestic Political Discipline

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We have now accumulated reliable evidence from multiple diplomatic [redacted] [redacted] reporting which indicates that the April 5 demonstrations just prior to Teng Hsiao-p'ing's downfall were well planned and widely organized within Peking's governmental bureaucracy, and were paralleled by demonstrations in other Chinese cities. Indeed, we have several reports that cadre hosting foreign visitors urged them to go to Tien An Men Square on April 5 where, they were told, they "would see something interesting happen".

The decisive action of the leadership on April 7 in purging Teng and elevating Hua Kuo-feng permanently to the Premiership thus has the quality of an effort by Mao and other leaders at the center to prevent a widespread and violent mass confrontation over the question of a successor to Chou En-lai. This impression is reenforced by the series of counter-rallies which were organized throughout the country following Teng's ouster. Two weeks of rather manic demonstrations and propaganda activities in support of the Central Committee's decision to purge Teng and elevate Hua, in which the military played a highly visible role, seemed designed to submerge broad support for Teng (or at least dampen widespread public doubts generated by the unexpected removal of the Vice Premier, and cope with growing unease among the cadre about a re-radicalization of the political scene and the possibility of a widespread purge).

In the three weeks following Teng's ouster, the "leftist" elements within the leadership who led the attack on the Vice Premier dropped from public sight, presumably to lower their profile and minimize a popular reaction against them. At the same time, leaders on the right identified with Teng (such as Vice Premiers Li Hsien-nien and Chen Yung-kuei) and centrist officials (such as Chi Teng-kuei and, of course, Premier Hua) maintained active public appearances, evidently to reassure the public that Teng's purge would not be followed by a widespread elimination of his followers. This pattern was reenforced by the appearance on



health. The Muldoon meeting was limited to 15 minutes, and Mao was characterized by the visitors as being very frail and almost inarticulate. He impressed the New Zealanders as being near death.

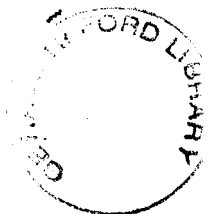
Another curious anomaly in the Chairman's position has been the non-participation in the three most recent Mao meetings with foreigners of Nancy Tang, who has been consistently in attendance at these sessions for the past four years. Miss Tang was replaced in the Muldoon meeting by Chi Ch'ao-chu, who had been chief interpreter at the PRC Liaison Office in Washington, and was an active Mao interpreter during the 1960s. We are unable to account for this shift in appearance pattern but assume that it reflects some sensitivity on the question of direct access to Mao.

If we were to summarize China's internal situation at this time, the evidence suggests that the divisiveness within the central leadership is now paralleled by an increasingly sullen and potentially explosive public mood, as China's population reacts with disbelief and unease to the unsettling changes in the Party leadership. Dissipation of Mao's authority is producing paralysis at the lower levels of the bureaucracy, which in turn is reenforcing incidents of local factionalism and loss of public discipline which -- [redacted] -- have been quite widespread in the past six weeks. Mao himself is reported to be concerned about this situation. [redacted] the Chairman recently sent a letter to senior Party leaders warning them of the possibility of a "reactionary coup attempt" following his death. [redacted]

The key to whether this nasty public mood will lead to widespread disorder is a function of the future course of the leadership struggle. Continuing pressure by the radicals for a broadening of the purge is likely to heighten the strains at the center and throughout the society; and the death of Mao could very well provide the catalyst for a major blood-letting. The role of the military remains critical in this situation, and the unstable appearance patterns of Marshall Yeh Chien-ying (still, as far as we know, China's Defense Minister, but not formally identified as such) and Chen Hsi-lien (whose position as Commander of the Peking Military Region is also obscure) indicate that the military itself remains divided. The army is thus likely to play a critical, swing-role as the instability in the political leadership plays itself out.

The Soviets "Wave" Expectantly Over the Border

The unprecedented April 29 explosion at the Soviet Embassy in Peking, which reportedly killed two PLA security guards and one or more Chinese who carried the bomb, could be -- as China's authorities claim -- simply the work of a "mad counter-revolutionary". At the same time it also seems quite likely that the incident is a reflection of Peking's reaction to Soviet efforts to play on their domestic political instability through propaganda activities.



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April 17 of Marshall Yeh Chien-ying, who had been absent from public view for three months (since mid-January) and was reported [redacted] to have stalked off in anger when Teng's promotion to the Premiership was blocked in late January. Yeh has not been directly identified as Defense Minister since his reappearance, however.

On April 26 Peking's political mood took a sharp turn to the left with a large rally held in honor of the military "heroes" who had suppressed the demonstrations three weeks earlier. The rally marked the return to public view of all those identified as the Party's radical faction: Mao's wife Chiang Ching, the young Wang Hung-wen, ideologue Yao Wen-yuan, and Chang Ch'un-ch'iao. Moderate leaders Yeh Chien-ying, Li Hsien-nien, and Chu Teh were notable by their absence. The rally also marked the onset of harsher media polemics hinting at the need to broaden the attack on Teng by rooting out his followers. A series of People's Daily and Red Flag articles of late April and early May stressed the fact that the April 5 "counter-revolutionary" political incident at Tien An Men Square was "neither isolated nor accidental" and that it was necessary to "detect in depth all counter-revolutionary activities, and resolutely suppress all counter-revolutionaries". At the same time, [redacted] the Party leadership had established a "rumor suppression and investigation headquarters" to cope with the problem of identifying those who had organized the widespread demonstration in support of Teng, and who continued to spread divisive propaganda throughout the country -- such as a purported last will of deceased Premier Chou En-lai.

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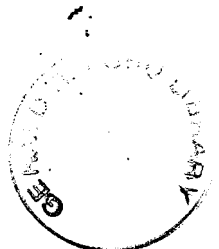
Mao's Authority Sharply Declines

Paralleling the widespread signs of leadership instability and conflict over the past month has been a remarkable series of indications that the prestige of Chairman Mao has declined sharply in the wake of the purging of Teng Hsiao-p'ing. [redacted] nearly a dozen instances of Party officials criticizing Mao -- sometimes in private, and other times openly to foreigners -- in which the Chairman is characterized as a senile old man who is nepotistically trying to insure the continuation of his dynasty by promoting the fortunes of his wife. The cadre assert that Mao no longer inspires confidence in China, that he is as selfish as the late Chou En-lai was selfless, and that China might be better off if the Chairman stepped down from power. Chiang Ching is characterized as a "neurotic old woman".

At the same time, the report of New Zealand Prime Minister Muldoon's April 30 meeting with Mao suggests the Chairman is in seriously declining

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Two weeks before the explosion, Moscow's Chinese-language "Radio Peace and Progress" concluded an unusual five-article series of commentaries on the efforts of Mao's wife to "usurp" the throne of political leadership in China. Madame Chiang was characterized in the commentaries as an ambitious prostitute who was trying to manipulate her senile husband and take over Party leadership. The Russian broadcasts compared Chiang Ching to the last Empress Dowager, who was "the incarnation of debauchery, cruelty and evil". It is conceivable that the Madame, outraged by this Soviet effort to play on the anti-Chiang Ching sentiment which so clearly surfaced during the May 5 demonstrations, decided to send the Russians a message.

An alternative, but not necessarily contradictory, accounting for the explosion is related to an April 28 Pravda commentary under the authoritative pseudonym of I. Alexandrov which attacked Mao for "stubbornly trying to impose on the Chinese people the view of the USSR as China's enemy". The article went on to imply that Moscow would continue to hold out the prospect of improved Sino-Soviet relations to any reasonable Chinese leader who should succeed the Chairman.

It could be that the Soviets have tried actively to capitalize on the instability within the Chinese leadership by presenting some new proposal for settlement of the border issue, or in some other way maneuvering to crystallize the anti-Mao/Chiang Ching sentiment which has been so unprecedentedly visible in China over the past month. In this context, the explosion at the Soviet Embassy could be the work of those in the Chinese leadership who wish to forestall any possible movement toward Sino-Soviet political discussions and hope to sustain a high level of tension in the relationship.

US-PRC Relations: Continuity, but Criticism

Since the ouster of Teng Hsiao-p'ing, PRC authorities have gone to considerable length to communicate to us the view that there will be no shift in China's foreign policy as a result of the shake-up within the leadership. Comments by senior Chinese officials to foreign visitors, and briefing materials for NCNA correspondents and diplomatic personnel stationed abroad, stress this theme.

At the same time, Peking appears to have been pleased by a number of positive Presidential statements in early April stressing continuity in the US commitment to seek normalized relations with the PRC. The Hong Kong Wen Hui Pao, a PRC-owned newspaper, printed a commentary on April 16 entitled "Ford Attaches Importance to Sino-US Relations".



Quoting from President Ford's statements of April 10, 13, and 14, the paper asserted that three positive Presidential comments on US-PRC relations three days in close succession was "something seldom heard before". The commentary concluded that, "Today, when so-called US-Soviet detente is cooling off and US-Soviet relations are gradually deteriorating, Ford's words and deeds concerning China are worthy of attention."

At the same time, on April 21 NCNA began a series of articles indirectly critical of the so-called "Sonnenfeldt Doctrine" as representing a US sell-out of Western Europe's security in the interest of preventing a Soviet-American confrontation over Europe. As well, on May 2 the PRC Liaison Office made a low-key representation to the State Department criticizing American naval aircraft surveillance of two Chinese hydrological ships which are conducting ocean surveys for the first time near the Fiji Islands.

Comment

Chairman Mao's prestige within China is probably at its lowest ebb since the failure of his Great Leap Forward agricultural experiment in the early 1960s. The present mood among Party cadre and the populace seems quite ugly. If Mao were to die shortly, and/or the senior leadership continues to tear itself apart in the succession struggle, we could very well see China return to the kind of domestic turmoil which was at its worst during the Cultural Revolution years of 1967 and 1968. One cannot rule out the possibility of military-backed coup attempts, or of a "de-Maoification" campaign after the Chairman dies (unless he can pull some major achievement out of his cap to rebuild his sagging prestige).

This situation holds two major points of concern for the US: First, it seems increasingly uncertain that after our fall elections we will be dealing with a government in Peking which has sufficient authority to be flexible and accommodating of our needs should we seek to complete the normalization process. Secondly, Moscow must be getting increasingly itchy as it watches the turmoil which is tearing apart China's elite. Thus far the Soviets appear to be responding to the situation by trying to play on the anti-Mao/Chiang Ching sentiment through propaganda measures, and perhaps by way of diplomatic ploys which we do not see. We should heighten our attention, however, to the possibility of the Russians playing more actively on the Chinese succession crisis, if not by military means then at least by more active political maneuvering.

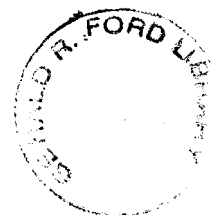


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One would like to think that a PRC under heightened Soviet pressure might be more accommodating of our political needs regarding normalization if we tried to complete the process. It is increasingly uncertain, however, whether Mao's prestige will be behind whoever sits on the other side of the green baize table (if, indeed, Peking is able to field a negotiator with any authority); and our own public and the Congress may develop serious doubts that the U. S. should pay the price for normal relations with a China that is, once again, showing a penchant for periods of political chaos.

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TO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE 8072
BT
~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~ STATE 115132
EXDIS
E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, VS, VN

SUBJECT: U.S. RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM
REF: PARIS 13650
EMBASSY SHOULD INFORM DRV EMBASSY THAT WE CANNOT RPT
CANNOT AGREE TO WITHHOLDING CONFIRMATION OF FACT OF
SENDING LATEST MESSAGE TO VIETNAMESE. THEREFORE, IF
QUERIED BY THE PRESS, DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN WILL CONFIRM
THAT MESSAGE HAS BEEN SENT, BUT WE WILL NOT DISCUSS ITS
CONTENTS. KISSINGER
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E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.5
STATE DEPT, GUIDELINES
BY 1/12, NARA, DATE 1/11/08

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BT
~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~ PARIS 13953

EXDIS
E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, VS, VN
SUBJECT: U.S. RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM
REF: STATE 115182

EMBOFF INFORMED DRV FIRST SECRETARY DO THANH THE EVENING OF MAY 11 OF DEPARTMENT'S DECISION NOT TO WITHHOLD CONFIRMATION OF THE SENDING OF THE MESSAGE TO HANOI. DO THANH DID NOT SEEM UPSET AND SAID HE WOULD CONSULT WITH AMBASSADOR VO VAN SUNG (AND POSSIBLY HANOI) AND WOULD GIVE US DRV REACTION MAY 13 AT 10:00. HE REITERATED THAT PRINCIPAL CONCERN IS THAT CONTENTS OF EXCHANGE BE FOR SERIOUS DIALOGUE AND NOT "PROPAGANDA".

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BY HR, NARA, DATE 7/11/08

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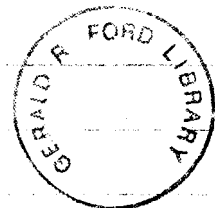
E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEOR, VS, VN
SUBJECT: U. S. RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM
REFS: (A) PARIS 13952; (B) PARIS 10628

1. EMBOFF SAW DRV FIRST SECRETARY DO THANH MAY 13 AT 10:00. THANH SAID THAT THEY HAD NOT YET RECEIVED HANOI'S RESPONSE TO OUR POSITION THAT WE WOULD CONFIRM TO THE PRESS, IF ASKED, THAT A MESSAGE HAD BEEN SENT OR RECEIVED, WITHOUT SPECIFICALLY REPUDIATING PHAN HUY THONG'S SUGGESTION (I.E., THAT EITHER SIDE COULD CONFIRM THE SENDING OR RECEIPT OF A MESSAGE BUT THAT PUBLICATION OF THE TEXT OR CHARACTERIZATION OF THE MESSAGES WOULD BE RELEASED ONLY AFTER AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES, REF. B). THANH IMPLIED THAT EVEN THIS PROCEDURE HAS NOT YET BEEN SPECIFICALLY APPROVED BY HANOI.

2. THANH SAID THAT DRV AMBASSADOR VO VAN SUNG CONSIDERED THAT THE DRV HAD "NOTHING TO HIDE" IN THE EXCHANGE TO DATE AND WOULD BE PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION OF THE TEXTS IF THE U.S. PREFERRED. IF THE U.S. SIDE PUBLISHED SOMETHING WHICH "DEFORMED" THE DRV MESSAGES, THE DRV RESERVED THE RIGHT TO RECTIFY THE ACCOUNT. EMBOFF ASSURED THANH THAT U.S. INTENTIONS WERE NOT "TO DEFORM" THE EXCHANGE AS SHOWN BY OUR ACCEPTANCE OF DRV VIEW ON NON-RELEASE OF THE TEXT UNTIL MUTUAL AGREEMENT.

3. THANH SAID HE EXPECTED VERY SOON HANOI'S RESPONSE ON THE HANDLING OF THE MESSAGES AND ASKED US TO WITHHOLD COMMENT JUST A LITTLE LONGER UNTIL THE MESSAGE ARRIVES.

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BY HR, NARA, DATE 7/11/08

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NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
Presidential Libraries Withdrawal Sheet

WITHDRAWAL ID 028076

REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL ÇNational security restriction

TYPE OF MATERIAL ÇLetter

CREATOR'S NAME E. A. J. Fergusson

CREATOR'S TITLE Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London

RECEIVER'S NAME Anne Armstrong

RECEIVER'S TITLE Ambassador

DESCRIPTION cover letter with attached records of
conversations

CREATION DATE 05/14/1976

VOLUME 24 pages

COLLECTION/SERIES/FOLDER ID . 033200150

COLLECTION TITLE NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER.
KISSINGER-SCOWCROFT WEST WING OFFICE
FILES

BOX NUMBER 6

FOLDER TITLE China unnumbered items (29)

DATE WITHDRAWN 08/14/2008

WITHDRAWING ARCHIVIST HJR

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EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, VS, VN
SUBJECT: U. S. RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM
REF: PARIS 14104

1. DRV FIRST SECRETARY DO THANH CALLED ON EMBOFF
MAY 14 AT 11:00 TO GIVE HANDLIS FORMAL VIEW CONCERNING
DISCLOSURE OF US/DRV CORRESPONDENCE. READING FROM A
VIETNAMESE TEXT DO THANH SAID HIS GOVERNMENT WAS OF
THE VIEW THAT "THE TWO PARTIES" SHOULD NOT PUBLISH
EVEN THE FACT THAT THERE HAS BEEN A MESSAGE. THEY
WISH THE U.S. SIDE TO GUARANTEE THAT THE CONFIDENTIAL
MESSAGES WILL NOT BE DIVULGED FOR EXPLOITATION IN A
SENSE DETRIMENTAL TO THE DRV, THEREBY OBLIGING THE
DRV TO CORRECT THE RECORD AND CRITICIZE. FOR ITS
PART, THE DRV CONSIDERS THERE IS NOTHING TO HIDE FROM
PUBLIC OPINION.

2. DO THANH SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD APPARENTLY
DECIDED THAT IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE NOT TO DISCLOSE
(A) THE EXISTENCE OF A COMMUNICATION, (B) THE NATURE
OF THE CONTENTS AND (C) THE ACTUAL TEXT. EMBOFF
POINTED OUT THE DIFFICULTIES WITHIN THE AMERICAN
SYSTEM OF REFUSING TO CONFIRM THE EXISTENCE OF A
MESSAGE AND REPEATED THE PREVIOUSLY STATED U.S.
POSITION THAT IT SHOULD BE ADEQUATE TO MAINTAIN
SECRECY CONCERNING THE CONTENTS. DO THANH SAID THEY
UNDERSTOOD U.S. PROBLEMS, PARTICULARLY THE
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LEGISLATURE, BUT THEY STILL SAW
NO ADEQUATE REASON WHY WE WOULD HAVE TO CONFIRM
EACH TIME THAT A MESSAGE HAD BEEN SENT OR RECEIVED.
DO THANH SEEMED TO PREFER A PROCEDURE BY WHICH THE
DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN COULD AFFIRM THAT THERE WERE
ONGOING EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE USG AND THE DRV, BUT
THAT WE WOULD NOT ANNOUNCE -- OR CONFIRM OR DENY --
WHEN INDIVIDUAL MESSAGES WERE SENT OR RECEIVED.

3. IF DEPARTMENT IS ABLE TO ACCEPT THE ABOVE PRO-

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STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES

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BY HR, NARA, DATE 7/11/08

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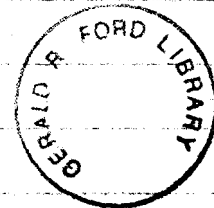
CEPURE, PLEASE INFORM US URGENTLY, AND IN ANY CASE IN
ADVANCE OF ANY OFFICIAL STATEMENT. IF DEPARTMENT
DECIDES THAT IT PREFERENCES TO REVEAL TO THE PRESS EACH
TIME A MESSAGE IS SENT OR RECEIVED, WE SUGGEST WE BE
ABLE TO INFORM THE DRV EMBASSY IN SUFFICIENT TIME SO
THAT OUR POSITION CAN BE CONVEYED TO HANOI. IN
ADDITION, IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO GIVE THE VIETNAMESE
OUR REASONS FOR WISHING TO ANNOUNCE NOT ONLY THE
MOST RECENT MESSAGE BUT ALSO ALL FUTURE CORRESPONDENCE.
A THIRD ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE TO CONFIRM THE MAY 8
NOTE, BUT TO AGREE WITH THE DRV NOT TO ANNOUNCE ANY
SUBSEQUENT MESSAGES RECEIVED OR SENT.

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FOLLOWING REPEAT PEKING 789 ACTION SECSTATE INFO WELLINGTON
HONG KONG 3 MAY 76

QUOTE
C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 789

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, CH, NZ
SUBJECT: CHAIRMAN MAO'S HEALTH

DECLASSIFIED *State Review*
E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.5 3/2/04
STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES
BY 122, NARA, DATE 7/11/08

1. NEW ZEALAND FOREIGN SECRETARY CORNER AT SMALL RECEPTION
MAY 1 BRIEFLY DESCRIBED TO ACTING CHIEF AND SEVERAL FJIENDLY
AMBASSADORS PRIME MINISTER MULDOON'S MEETING WITH THE
CHAIRMAN APRIL 30, THE MAO-MULDOON SESSIONALTOGETHER
LASTED ABOUT 30 MINUTES, HALF OF WHICH WAS IN PRIVATE CON-
VERSATION. CORNER SAID THAT MAO APPEARED IN RATHER BAD
SHAPE. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS DURING MEETING, MAO'S INTER-
PRETER-NURSE, EVEN WHEN SHE STOOD UP TO "LOOK JOWN HIS
THROAT" TO MAKE OUT HIS MEANING, COULD NOT UNDERSTAND HIM
AND HAD TO GIVE HIM A PAD AND PENCIL TO SCRIBBLE ON. MAO
WAS ABLE TO TAKE INITIATIVE TO NOTE THAT NEW ZEALAND AND JAPAN
OPPOSED CHINESE NUCLEAR TESTING AND POINTED OUT THAT IN A
FEW YEARS THIS WOULD BE UNDERGROUND. HE ALSO MANAGED TO
INTRODUCE SOME HOSTILE REMARKS ABOUT SOVIET UNION. IN GENERAL,
HOWEVER, CORNER'S DESCRIPTION FELL FAR SHORT OF "LUCID" BY WHICH
OTHERS HAVE CHARACTERIZED MAO'S CONDITION. CORNER NOTED THAZ
MAO'S ASSISTANTS HAD TO PROP HIM UP AT START OF THE MEETING. HE
SAID THAT, AS MULDOON PARTY WAS GOING OUT THE JOOR, ONE OF
THE NEW ZEALANDERS TURNED BACK TO SEE MAO'S NURSE HURRIEDLY
LOOSENING MAO'S COLLAR AS HE COLLAPSED BACK IN HIS CHAIR.

2. THOSE OF US WHO HEARD CORNER'S DESCRIPTION FULLY AGREED
THAT MAO'S CONDITION SEEMED TO HAVE STRONGLY DECLINED SINCE HIS
MEETING WITH LAO PREMIER KAYSONE, SMOTION PICTURES OF WHICH
WE ALL HAD SEEN. USLO OFFICER WHO SAW THE PEKING TV COVERAGE
OF MAO'S MEETING WITH EGYPTIAN VICE PRESIDENT APRIL 20 AND THE
ONE WITH MULDOON THINKS MAO LOOKED ABOUT THE SAME ON THESE
TWO OCCASIONS, AHOUGH HE WAS MORE OBVIOUSLY BEING SUPPORTED AS
HE STOOD SHAKING HANDS WITH THE NEW ZEALANDERS.

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3. THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE INTERPRETER FOR THE MEETING WITH MULDOON WAS CHI CHAO-CHU, FORMER CHOU INTERPRETER AND PRCLC COUNSELOR. HE IS PICTURED IN BOTH THE PEOPLE'S DAILY AND PEKING TV COVERAGE OF THE OCCASION. OUR LAST NEWS OF CHI, A FEW MONTHS AGO, WAS GOSSIP THAT HE HAD GONE TO A MAY 7 CADRE SCHOOL. CHI AND THE NURSE THUS HANDLED THE INTERPRETING CHORES THAT PREVIOUSLY HAD BEEN SHARED BY MFA OFFICIAL TANG WEN-SHENG AND WANG HAI-JUNG. WANG WAS PUBLICLY INVOLVED IN OTHER ASPECTS OF MULDOON'S VISIT, HOWEVER, WHILE TANG HAD BEEN ONE OF THE PRINCIPALS IN THE CODEL PRICE VISIT.

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: FPR CH US
SUBJECT: ALL ON PREMIER HUA KUO-FENG: GATES/CHIAO MEETING MAY 15

1. DURING USLO CHIEF'S CALL ON HIM MAY 15 FOREIGN MINISTER CHIAO SAID "WE CAN ARRANGE AN APPOINTMENT" WITH THE PREMIER. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF TIMING, BUT WE SENSE THERE WILL NOT BE A LONG DELAY.
2. CHIAO OBVIOUSLY HAD BEEN BRIEFED BY HIS PROTOCOL DIRECTOR ABOUT USLO CHIEF'S DESIRE TO MEET WITH HUA, AND WAS READY WITH THE ANSWER. THE SUBJECT OF THE MEETING WITH HUA -- AND THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO HUA -- CAME UP NATURALLY PART OF USLO CHIEF'S RESPONSE TO CHIAO'S EXPRESSION OF HOPE THAT SINO-U.S. RELATIONS WOULD CONTINUE ALONG LINES OF SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE.
3. CHIAO DID NOT ASK FOR THE LETTER. WE PLAN TO SEND IT TO MFA A DAY OR SO BEFORE APPOINTMENT WITH HUA.
4. OTHER MATTERS COVERED IN 35 MINUTES OF FRIENDLY CONVERSATION WITH CHIAO ARE BEING REPORTED IN SEPTELS.
GATES

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E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.5
STATE DEPT, GUIDELINES
BY 1072, NARA, DATE 7/11/08

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