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026038

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

SOVIET INTENTIONS IN THE
CURRENT SITUATION

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 947003
Date 12/5/87



NIE-11
Published 5 December 1950

ACCOUNTABLE DOCUMENT
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1/7/88

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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JUN 947003
BY BS NARS, Date 10/19/93

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Date 6/24/93

HRP 93-3

The intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force participated in the preparation of this estimate and concur in it. This paper is based on information available on 1 December 1950.

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SOVIET INTENTIONS IN THE CURRENT SITUATION

1. Developments in Korea and Manchuria indicate that the purpose of the Chinese Communist intervention is to render the UN position in Korea untenable.
2. The attitude of the Chinese Communist regime and urgent defensive preparations in China show that this intervention was undertaken in realization of the risk of general war between the United States and Communist China and perhaps in expectation of such a development.
3. It is highly improbable that the Chinese Communist regime would have accepted this risk without explicit assurance of effective Soviet support.
4. The Soviet Union will probably:
 - a. Continue to support Chinese Communist operations in Korea by the provision of suitable materiel, technical personnel, and even "volunteer" units, as necessary.
 - b. Provide aircraft and anti-aircraft artillery, with trained personnel, as necessary for the defense of targets in China against UN air attack.
 - c. Come openly to the military support of Communist China, under the terms of the Sino-Soviet Treaty, in the event of major US (UN) operations against Chinese territory.
5. The Soviet rulers, in directing or sanctioning the Chinese Communist intervention in Korea, must have appreciated the increased risk of global war and have felt ready to accept such a development.
6. Intelligence is inconclusive as to whether or not the Soviet intention is to precipitate a global war now. If the Soviet rulers do now intend to bring on such a war, they might well prefer that it should develop from the situation in East Asia. On the other hand, even if they do not intend to precipitate a global war, they must estimate that a broadening of the Korean war into a general war between the United States and China would be advantageous to the USSR.
7. Whether or not a global war were to ensue, the USSR could reasonably hope to derive the following advantages from the development of a general war between the United States and Communist China.
 - a. The diversion of effective US and allied forces to operations in an indecisive theater and their attrition and containment there.
 - b. The creation of dissension between the United States and its allies, which is more feasible with respect to Asian than to European issues.
 - c. The disruption of the coherence achieved by the UN with respect to the original Communist aggression in Korea.
 - d. The obstruction of plans for the defense of Western Europe under the North Atlantic Treaty.
 - e. The speedier achievement of immediate Communist objectives in Korea and Southeast Asia.
8. On the other hand, the USSR may estimate that the United States would decline the immediate challenge in Asia, in which case the USSR could proceed to collect the immediate stakes in Korea and Indochina.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

9. The Soviet rulers have resolved to pursue aggressively their world-wide attack on the power position of the United States and its allies regardless of the possibility that global war may result, although they may estimate that the Western Allies would seek to avoid such a development. Further direct or indirect Soviet aggression in Europe and Asia is

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the fighting in Korea in order to: (a) avoid a possible expansion of the war which might oblige the USSR either to introduce Soviet military forces on a large-scale or to accept the extension of non-Communist control as far as the Soviet and Manchurian borders of Korea; (b) prevent the further development of strains on the Communist regimes of China and North Korea which might ultimately threaten their stability; (c) permit Communist China to complete the modernization of its armed forces, to develop more effective administrative and police controls, and to develop a stronger industrial and economic base; (d) restore North Korea as a "model satellite" with the potential for the subversion of the Republic of Korea; (e) permit increased efforts to extend Communist influence and control to southeast Asia and the Far East generally. We are unable to determine what relation a Communist desire for a suspension or termination of hostilities in Korea would have to Soviet global policies.

46. We believe that the Communists desire a suspension or termination of hostilities in Korea, but that their present position is not

such as to oblige them to accept terms which they may regard as seriously disadvantageous. We believe the Communists will protract the military negotiations while there is a chance of obtaining concessions of actual or propaganda value. Thereafter, political negotiations will be prolonged in the confidence that while negotiations continue the UN will not renew or widen hostilities, and in the hope that popular pressures in the West will oblige the UN to conclude a settlement on terms more favorable to the Communists.

47. On the other hand, the possibility cannot be excluded that the Communists are protracting the armistice negotiations merely to gain time to build up the Chinese Communist air and ground forces preparatory to launching an all-out offensive against UN forces in Korea. A decision to launch such an offensive might be taken at any time during negotiations.

48. Finally, we believe that the Communists will not agree to any political settlement unless they are convinced that it provides opportunities ultimately to subvert the Republic of Korea.

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