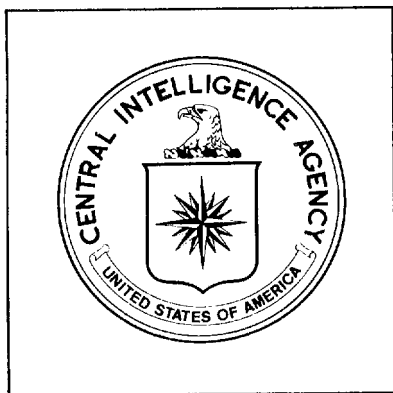


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# STAFF NOTES:

## Chinese Affairs

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*Handle via Talent-Keyhole Channels*

September 15, 1975  
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CHINESE AFFAIRS

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the East Asia - Pacific Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence and from the Directorate of Science and Technology. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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The MAC Meeting Revisited

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The political fortunes of certain regional military commanders seem to have taken a turn for the better recently, but there still may be much foreboding within their ranks. At first blush the reappearances of Li Te-sheng, Hsu Shih-yu and Han Hsien-chu in the wake of the enlarged meeting of the Military Affairs Commission (MAC) this summer suggests that Mao fared poorly in this latest round with the commanders. There are many indications that the Chairman has fought long to have at least some of these men removed from their posts. At the same time there are signs that the commanders may have taken quite a few knocks themselves at the MAC meeting.

The most important decision the commission made was to streamline the army through a net reduction in troop strength and an upgrading of its capacity for technological warfare. This decision per se does not necessarily cut against the interests of regional military leaders. In principle, some may have even favored such a shift. The decision, however, may have been taken in response to a broadside attack against the military by Mao and Teng Hsiao-ping.

Although the Chairman may not have attended the meeting personally, he reportedly sent a message which acrimoniously chastised the PLA for being oversized, inefficient, corrupt and militarily unprepared. Indeed, senior cadres in China have been told that Mao ordered the rehabilitation of Lo Jui-ching and wants to give military training clear priority over political studies. Teng Hsiao-ping and Defense Minister Yeh Chien-ying weighed in with similar criticism of the military.

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Teng charged that the army was "obese, arrogant, insubordinate, lazy, wasteful" and generally unprepared for battle.

Since they were probably not criticizing members of their own general staff, these attacks can easily be read as an indictment of the regional military commanders who are responsible for implementing policy and keeping the army combat ready. The commanders may also sense a potential threat in the MAC order to retire a number of older officers. Peking would presumably pass judgment on high-ranking military region officers and could use the order to erode the power base of selected commanders. In light of the earbeating administered by Mao and Teng, the favorable decision made in the cases of Li, Hsu and Han may have looked more like a reprieve than a victory.

Even though Mao and Teng are singing the same anti-military tune, their objectives may be quite different. The Chairman, continuing his long-standing struggle with certain commanders, may well have his sights fixed on a purge. Only a couple of weeks before the opening of the meetings, a *People's Daily* article seemed to argue that Mao should exercise real rather than titular control over the PLA. Using historical allusion, the article claimed that political and military power must be concentrated in the hands of the "supreme representative of the central political organs" who is a specific individual. Mao may have seized on Teng and Yeh's discontent with the PLA in an effort to carry on his offensive against the commanders. Teng, however, may look at reform of the army in an entirely different light. While keenly aware of the military's shortcomings and convinced that a major overhaul is necessary, he probably does not see a purge--however limited--of regional military leaders as part of this process. In fact, he styles himself as conciliator. In his January speech before

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the Party plenum, Teng remarked that changes in the leadership create uneasiness among the populace, and at the MAC meeting, he sought to dampen factionalism within the PLA. He put his stamp of approval on a pardon for those soldiers cited as "516 elements" and on a requirement for lenient treatment of those who have caused political disorder within the army. In all probability the commanders see Teng's broadsides as much less threatening than Mao's.

There is limited evidence that Teng wants to put some distance between his position and the Chairman's. If our account of Central Directive 18 is complete, the vice premier did not choose to invoke Mao's authority in announcing the overhaul of the PLA. The Chairman in fact sent two messages to the MAC meeting, but neither were acknowledged in Directive 18.

The outcome of the Military Affairs Commission meeting appears to have been short of decisive and may have left a number of military region commanders with a deep sense of foreboding about Mao's next move. This political context lends some credibility to the view that Mao and elements of the military are deeply involved in the current criticism of the Chinese novel "Water Margin." Such involvement was evident in an August 30 *Kuangming Daily* article which appeared to utilize a historical analogy to defend Lin Piao and, by implication, attack Mao. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM/NO DISSEM ABROAD/BACKGROUND USE ONLY/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

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### Appearances and Disappearances

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The festivities surrounding Sihanouk's return to Cambodia brought out most members of the Chinese leadership, plus a heavy representation from the distaff side. The appearances, however, served to highlight several notable absentees.

Most prominent among the missing were party vice chairmen Wang Hung-wen, who may still be in Chekiang Province overseeing the return to normality, and Yeh Chien-ying, who has not appeared since Army Day. There seems to be no political reason for Yeh's non-appearance, but there have been occasional rumors that he is not in the best of health.

Chiang Ching made her first public appearance in three months at the Chinese banquet for Sihanouk. She apparently made the most of the occasion, wearing makeup for the first time in recent memory, downing considerable quantities of Maotai, and in general letting everyone know she was there. She was the only major leader attending the Chinese banquet, however, who did not attend Sihanouk's reciprocal dinner two days later.

Madame Mao, of course, has not had a good year politically since her failure to win a government position at last January's National People's Congress. The Chinese people, apparently sensitive to that failure, have circulated numerous rumors since then about Mao's displeasure with her. The latest, and perhaps most devastating rumors have it that the Politburo voted earlier this year to reactivate its decision of the 1940s to keep her out of politics, and that Mao wrote her a letter in which he suggested that they go their separate ways from now on since they had been going in opposite (presumably political) directions anyway.

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Chiang Ching's one-day reappearance, plus public appearances by the wives of Chu Te, Chou En-lai, Li Hsien-nien and even Hsu Hsiang-chien seemed to underscore the surprising absence of Cho Lin, wife of Sihanouk's official host, Teng Hsiao-ping. Cho Lin does not appear on every occasion at which her busy husband is top man, but the presence of so many other wives made her absence all the more conspicuous. There is no ready explanation for her non-appearance, but it is at least possible that it has some connection with the current attacks on "Water Margin." If the novel's leading figure, who is attacked for accepting a royal amnesty and seeking official positions for his wife and son, is intended by some to represent the rehabilitated Teng Hsiao-ping, Madame Teng may prefer for the time being to maintain a low profile. She currently holds an unspecified position in the government. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

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Vietnam: A Quiet Anniversary

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Peking's subdued treatment of Hanoi's National Day early this month reflects continuing friction between the two countries, while clearly pointing up Chinese concern that Hanoi is falling under Moscow's domination.

The celebrations in Hanoi, marking the 30th anniversary of the communist government's founding, called for high-level Chinese attention, but Peking appears to have played down the importance of the event as well as the current status of China's relations with North Vietnam.

Neither the message from Chinese leaders nor the *People's Daily* editorial marking the occasion included the enthusiastic expressions of Sino-Vietnamese solidarity that were features of Chinese statements during the war. Thus, there was no mention of Peking's "proletarian internationalist duty" to support Hanoi; no depiction of the Sino-Vietnamese relationship as being "as close as lips and teeth"; no references to "sharing weal and woe"; no mention of the application of Marxist-Leninist principles in Vietnam.

Although China sent a fairly high-level delegation led by politbureau member Chen Hsi-lien to Hanoi, the Chinese in Peking displayed a clear lack of enthusiasm for the anniversary. In 1965 and 1970, the Chinese held rallies marking the 20th and 25th anniversaries of the DRV. Moreover, receptions at the North Vietnamese embassy those years were attended by at least three politbureau members and Chou En-lai delivered speeches on both occasions. This year, there was no rally and politbureau member Wu Te was the speaker at the embassy reception.

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Chen Hsi-lien, in a speech delivered at a Vietnamese iron and steel complex, did pull out most of the stops in describing Peking's ties with Hanoi, referring to China's "internationalist obligation" to support the Vietnamese and to the Vietnamese as "close comrades-in-arms and brothers." Still, Chen's remarks in Hanoi are almost certainly not as authoritative as the *People's Daily* editorial and the message that was signed by both Mao Tse-tung and Chou.

More important, however, Chen took the opportunity to lecture the Vietnamese on the dangers of Soviet machinations in Southeast Asia and elsewhere. Without mentioning the Soviets by name, Chen warned the Vietnamese that "the superpowers" were attempting to dominate other countries, especially in the Third World. Chen asserted that China, itself a Third World country, would never attempt to establish hegemony over other countries, obviously contrasting China's allegedly benevolent view of Southeast Asia with what Peking considers to be Moscow's dark designs on the area. He said China stood by other developing countries in opposition to "superpower aggression, intervention, control, subversion and plundering."

The Chinese have in several recent private conversations expressed a conviction that Hanoi has tilted toward Moscow. They obviously hope, however, to increase their own leverage with the Vietnamese and to continue to draw Hanoi's attention to the darker side of Soviet intentions. That clearly was Chen's objective in asserting that Peking does not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, as well as his comment that China had supported Hanoi "to the best of our ability," thus reminding the Vietnamese that they still owe China for past favors.

How much confidence Peking actually has in its ability to improve ties with Hanoi, to say nothing

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of effectively countering Soviet influence in Vietnam, is another question. [REDACTED] have reported recently that Chinese officials believe their relations with North Vietnam are "worsening." As examples, [REDACTED] cited "published" Vietnamese claims of Chinese aggression against Vietnam and assertions that Kwangsi Province was Vietnamese territory. [REDACTED] reported that the Chinese had twice returned boundary markers on the Vietnam-Kwangsi border to their original locations after they were moved by the Vietnamese.

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Differences of opinion over territorial claims in the South China Sea have been clear for some time--especially since Peking assumed full control of the Paracel Islands last year--but the land border has been clearly demarcated since the 19th century and has not been a contentious issue in the past.

If issues such as these continue to surface, the possibility of any significant improvement in relations between the two countries will remain remote. In internal briefings, the Chinese have often portrayed problems with Hanoi as resulting from Soviet "meddling," probably in order to disguise the seriousness of Peking's difficulties with Hanoi. Over the long run, however, the Chinese view of Hanoi as a challenger to Peking's own influence in Southeast Asia--especially one that has Soviet backing--could mean that relations between the two countries will deteriorate even further. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

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Sayonara, Sihanouk  
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After five tumultuous years, Prince Sihanouk ended his exile in Peking last week and returned to Phnom Penh. The Chinese gave every indication that they were pleased with the arrangements.

Peking's endorsement of Sihanouk's return was evident in the turnout at farewell banquets in Peking and at his airport sendoff. More top-level Chinese officials attended these affairs than any event honoring a foreign visitor since Kim Il-song was in Peking last April. Moreover, the Chinese heaped praise on Sihanouk for his past role in Cambodia's "liberation" and expressed the hope that he "will make still greater contributions" after returning to the Cambodian capital. Sihanouk also had final meetings with both Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai.

While the Chinese are clearly happy to have Sihanouk out of their hair and back in Cambodia with at least a nominal title--as "head-of-state"--Peking almost certainly recognizes that the Prince is not likely to have a significant voice in Cambodian affairs. Peking, therefore, has been careful not to jeopardize its equities with the ruling Cambodian communists by arguing for a more important role for Sihanouk. Since the end of the fighting in Cambodia and Vietnam, the Chinese have concentrated their attention on Cambodia and their ties with the new communist regime appear to be closer than those with any other Indochinese country. The Chinese ambassador to Cambodia arrived in Phnom Penh last Wednesday, the first foreign envoy to take up his post since the communists took over last April.

Expressions of support for Sihanouk seem aimed primarily at avoiding the impression that Peking has

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dumped him, as well as being a gentle reminder to the Prince that he has an obligation to the new regime in Phnom Penh. Chinese leaders were almost certainly concerned that Sihanouk, whose difficulties with the communists have been well known since the mid-1960s, might break with the new leaders and relocate in another country, where he could criticize them through his many contacts in the foreign press. This development, which Sihanouk himself has hinted at in the past, would force Peking to side with their new ally in Phnom Penh against the Prince and might seriously embarrass Peking.

Peking's treatment of Sihanouk's departure in itself does not, of course, commit the Prince to a long-term alliance with the communists. His current stay in Phnom Penh will apparently be a brief one, after which he plans to travel for several weeks, probably as a "senior spokesman" for the new regime. Reportedly included in his itinerary are trips to Peking for the October 1 National Day celebrations and for his birthday in late October. The Chinese will probably use these occasions to reiterate their hope that the Prince will continue to cooperate with the communists. (CONFIDENTIAL NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

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Bourgeois Rights: Right or Wrong?

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Local authorities still seem to be in a quandary over how to implement the so-called restriction of bourgeois rights--the various incentive measures including private plots, sideline production, and free markets. The restriction of free markets, where farmers can sell produce they have grown privately, seems to be especially controversial.

The reaction in Canton to the alleged closure of free markets as of July 1 was not at all favorable. It is still not certain whether the markets were closed entirely, as they have reportedly been in other areas, or whether the number of days they were allowed to operate was severely restricted. In any case, Canton residents reportedly lobbied for looser restrictions on the markets, and they have apparently been successful. A Kwangtung provincial document reportedly authorized the reopening of the free markets in Canton on August 1. The official explanation was that the closure of the markets had prevented the peasants from exchanging their products for other needed goods. Most Canton residents apparently attribute the reopening of the markets to popular pressure.

The turnabout on the Canton free markets graphically illustrates not only the ability of ordinary people to influence events when sufficient pressure is applied but also the uncertainty among local officials over how to handle such issues. It is not at all clear that Kwangtung officials had authorization from Peking to close the markets in the first place. In fact, recent propaganda, especially an article written by the Ministry

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of Agriculture, seems to be taking a dim view of excessive economic restrictions. The Ministry of Agriculture article as well as similar broadcasts from a few provinces have once again attacked the "wind of communization," as did vice premier Chang Chun-chiao last April.

The return of the "wind of communization" theme suggests that some elements in the leadership, mindful that popular discontent over economic policy will likely lead to further production disruptions, do not want to make rash changes in current policy and are not pleased with those who have done so. As with so many other issues, however, the leadership in Peking is probably not of one mind over how to proceed with "restricting" bourgeois rights. It seems likely that some people are arguing for tighter restrictions, which may have accounted for the free market closures, the reduction in the size of private plots and in some cases confiscation of the plots. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

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Location of Industrial Plants

[REDACTED]

China has apparently changed its policy for siting industrial plants. For the past few years, major new industrial installations have been built on flat, accessible terrain rather than in remote mountainous areas. This policy apparently recognizes that the construction of facilities in more accessible areas will cut the time and cost of construction, improve access to transportation facilities, and, in many cases, eliminate the need to build new housing and support facilities.

[REDACTED] re-  
cently admitted that the old policy was a costly error that slowed industrial development. They indicated, for example, that the location of the Peking petroleum complex--China's largest--in the mountains southwest of the capital caused construction delays and greatly reduced the efficiency of the plant.

[REDACTED]

During the 1960s many industrial plants were dispersed in rugged mountainous terrain away from population centers, in accordance with a directive from the Military Affairs Committee in Peking. Emphasis was placed on defense against air attack and on preventing observation from rail and road networks.

The period when this policy was at its height corresponds with the period Lin Piao was defense minister (1959-1971) and defense spending was high (1965-1971). Military procurement dropped off sharply after the coup attempt by Lin in 1971.

China may now consider its growing nuclear arsenal a sufficient deterrent, so that an industrial

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dispersal policy is probably no longer considered necessary. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] If China continues to feel relatively secure, we would expect that economic efficiency, rather than defense, will be the prevailing consideration for locating industrial plants. (TOP SECRET RUFF/NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

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Minority Problems in the Provinces

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Until recently it appeared that the leadership's special efforts in the minority areas had largely contained the problems evident in the 1950s and early 1960s. Part of this relative success was due to the concessions made by the center--exemption from the two child limit of the national birth control policy, preservation of minority languages, establishment of minority publications, industries to produce special minority goods, and a privileged status in terms of university entrance.

Another aspect of Peking's minority policy, however, has been the leadership's effort to move Han Chinese--especially demobilized servicemen and youth--into minority regions. This approach has the positive effect of diluting large concentrations of minorities but the negative effect of alienating much of the native population, which fears it will be swamped by an influx of Hans.

In fact, recent reports indicate that serious problems have developed among the Huis in Yunnan and Kweichou. Attempts by provincial leaders, the majority of whom are Han Chinese, to curtail Huis religious practices are responsible for these problems. The latest incidents in Yunnan were triggered when the leadership tried to force the Huis, who are Muslims, to work on Fridays. The Huis retaliated by trying to raid a PLA armory. Equally serious, dissident Huis in Kweichou recently presented a visiting United Nations team with a petition requesting an examination of the right of self-determination.

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Other incidents, moreover, go well beyond earlier protests, which were characterized by poster campaigns and street demonstrations. These new activities--cutting a railroad line, production sabotage, and armed clashes--tend to erode Peking's authority over these minorities. The incidents in Yunnan have already triggered a strong response--the ringleaders of the raid on the armory have been arrested and intensive ideological study is being carried out among the Huis. The last attempts at "armed rebellion" by Huis in Ningsia in 1974 were quelled by PLA troops.

Given the strong response by Peking in the Chekiang case, it is likely that any new outbreak of dissidence will bring a strong response from Peking. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

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Gleanings from the Special Session

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Peking is keeping its own counsel on US and European proposals to the recently concluded UN Special Session. In his keynote address to the special session on September 2--the day after the US presentation--Chinese Foreign Trade Minister Li Chiang hewed to Peking's canned line of blaming the superpowers for Third World economic ills, warning of continued superpower--primarily Soviet--efforts at world economic domination, and expressing Chinese support for general Third World aspirations.

There were, however, some suggestions in the speech that the Chinese hope that the session will result in an easing of tensions between developing and developed countries. Li, for example, spoke approvingly of a "positive attitude" on the part of the "Second World," an apparent reference to the Lome agreement to stabilize earnings of some products exported by 46 developing countries associated with the EC. The Chinese lauded the Lome agreement when it was signed last spring, and for some time have been apprehensive that Western Europe--which Peking claims is the frontline in the struggle against "Soviet hegemonism"--would be weakened the most by continued world economic disorders.

At the same time, Li's speech appeared to signal that China will continue to avoid an active role in any mechanism or agreements designed to satisfy Third World demands. In this regard, Li appeared to rule out Chinese contributions to any world food stocks by stressing China's example of "self-reliance." Peking has declined invitations to join such international bodies as the World Food Council and the Food and Agricultural Organization largely because membership entails the divulgence of economic statistics the Chinese consider vital state secrets.

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Similarly, Li's failure to make even an oblique reference to the US proposal for a multinational fund to aid developing countries most severely affected by world market fluctuations--a concept the Chinese support in the abstract--undoubtedly reflects Peking's wariness of being drawn into such potentially expensive endeavors.

Despite any reservations Peking may have over any particular stand taken by developing countries in the special session, Peking can be expected to continue lending strong vocal support to their cause. China continues to see a unified Third World as a means of diffusing superpower--primarily Soviet--influence on the world scene and thereby create openings that China can exploit to increase its own prestige and influence as a world power. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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Provincial Leadership Notes

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Radio Shantung announced on September 6 that Tsingtao--the second most important city in the province--had formed a municipal party committee. Tsingtao is the last major municipality to form a party committee in the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution. All members of the new committee are veteran cadres that served in Shantung prior to the Cultural Revolution. Tsingtao suffered severe turbulence during that upheaval but, according to infrequent travelers, has appeared relatively calm recently. The formation of the committee may have been delayed by factional maneuvering within the provincial party committee, to which a number of new faces have been added in the last year.

Significant additions have also recently been made to party committees in other provinces. Chao Wu-cheng was identified as a secretary in Tientsin on August 16. Chao was the second secretary there before the Cultural Revolution. The current second secretary, Wu Tai, is one of the few career military officers remaining on the Tientsin committee, which was dominated by soldiers when it was formed in May 1971.

Inner Mongolia has a second secretary, Hung Chou-hsing, for the first time, but his background is obscure and the significance of his appointment is unclear. The appointment of Ragde as a secretary in Tibet in conjunction with celebrations of the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Tibetan Autonomous Region appears to represent a nod to the sensitivities of ethnic Tibetans.  
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CHRONOLOGY

- August 23 Criticism of "Water Margin" begins in *Kwangming Daily*. (U)
- August 31 - Chinese delegation led by Vice Premier  
September 4 and politbureau member Chen Hsi-lien in Hanoi for 30th anniversary of DRV National Day. (U)
- September 2 Foreign Trade Minister Li Chiang addresses 7th UN Special Session. (U)
- September 3-11 Chinese trade delegation led by Chairman of the Council for the Promotion of International Trade visits Sweden. (U)
- September 4 *People's Daily* editorial cites Mao as originator of "Water Margin" criticism. (U)
- September 5 Kuo Yu-feng identified as head of Central Committee Organization Department. (U)
- High-ranking Romanian delegation arrives in Peking for five-day visit. (U)
- West German industrial exhibition officially opened in Peking by Bonn's Economic Minister Friderichs. (U)
- Romanian delegation led by Defense Minister Gheorghe Gomoiu arrives in Peking. (U)
- Chinese trade delegation led by Li Chuan, vice-chairman of the Chinese Council for the Promotion of International Trade, departs for the US. (U)

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- September 6 Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping hosts farewell banquet in Peking for Cambodian "head-of-state" Norodom Sihanouk; Sihanouk ends five-year exile in China and departs for Phnom Penh on September 9. (U)
- September 8 Rwandan foreign minister arrives in Peking. (U)
- September 9 China and Mexico sign scientific and technical cooperation agreement. (U)
- Celebrations in Lhasa marks the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region. Politburo member Hua Kuo-feng heads delegation from Peking for the occasion. (U)
- Chinese ambassador to Cambodia Sun Hao departs for Phnom Penh to take up his post. (U)
- September 12 Third National Games open in Peking. The games were last held in 1965 on the eve of the Cultural Revolution. (U)

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