

**Nixon's 'Mission'****Jack Anderson**

**W**HEN Richard Nixon returns from Peking, he may bring a secret message for President Ford.

From sources directly involved, we have learned that a moderate faction in Peking has made several backdoor attempts to sound out the President about improving Chinese-American relations.

The moderate Chinese would like to strengthen their hand against the Russians. The best way to achieve this, they feel, would be to tighten their ties with the United States.

But some Chinese don't trust Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who has been altogether too cozy with the Kremlin to suit them. Therefore, the feelers to Mr. Ford were passed through private channels.

The message reached the White House where it was regarded with some puzzlement. President Ford's advisers don't quite know how to evaluate it.

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**A**T THIS POINT, arrangements were suddenly made to receive Richard Nixon in Peking. One possible reason, our sources suggest, is to use him as an emissary. The moderates may ask him to pass their proposition to Mr. Ford in more positive terms and to impress upon the President the seriousness of their intentions.

The timing of his trip could be significant. He arrived in the midst

of an intense power struggle in Peking.

The moderates still hold most of the key posts. They want to concentrate on improving China's economic stability and international standing. They also favor a better understanding with the United States.

They are pitted against the radicals who want to delay economic growth, concentrating instead upon the "class struggle." They deeply distrust the U.S. capitalist super-power.

Apparently, they have been able to mount enough strength to block the late Premier Chou En-lai's handpicked successor, Teng Hsiao-ping, from taking over the premiership. Instead Hua Kuo-feng, a relatively obscure bureaucrat, has been named acting premier until the struggle is settled.

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**T**ENG'S SLIP from power took official Washington by surprise. According to the secret minutes of a White House briefing, President Ford and Kissinger returned from Peking in December fully convinced Teng would be the next premier.

"Mao made clear to President Ford that Teng is the man," the minutes quote Kissinger as saying. The President confirmed that Teng was "very much in charge."

Why did Mao mislead the President less than three months ago about the next Chinese premier? No one in Washington seems to know.