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## DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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State Dept Guidelines

By John NARA Date 6/24/10~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE  
EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY~~MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Chairman Mao Tse-tung  
Prime Minister Chou En-lai  
Foreign Minister Chi Peng-fei  
Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Wang Hai-jung  
Tang Wang-shen, Interpreter  
Shen Jo-yen, Interpreter  
  
Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State  
Ambassador David Bruce, Chief U.S.  
Liaison Office  
Winston Lord, Director of Planning and  
Coordination, Department of State

DATE AND TIME: Monday, November 12, 1973  
5:40 p.m. - 8:25 p.m.

PLACE: Chairman Mao's residence, Peking  
Peoples Republic of China

(There was informal conversation as Chairman Mao greeted the Secretary, Ambassador Bruce, and Mr. Lord in turn while the photographers took pictures. The Chairman said that he had not seen the Secretary in a long time and that he now had a higher position. The Secretary responded that the Chairman looked well, and the Chairman commented that he was fair. To Ambassador Bruce, the Chairman commented that he was advancing in age like him, but younger. Ambassador Bruce responded that he was not much younger. To Mr. Lord, the Chairman noted that he was very young.)

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE  
EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY~~

- Chairman Mao: What did you discuss?
- Prime Minister Chou: Expansionism.
- The Secretary: That's correct
- Chairman Mao: Who's doing the expanding, him (indicating the Secretary)?
- Prime Minister Chou: He started it, but others have caught up.
- The Secretary: The Foreign Minister criticizes us from time to time for the sake of equilibrium, but I think he knows the real source.
- Chairman Mao: But that expansionism is a pitiful one. You should not be afraid of them.
- The Secretary: We are not afraid of them, Mr. Chairman. Every once in a while we have to take some strong measures as we did two weeks ago.
- Chairman Mao: Those were not bad, those measures.
- The Secretary: At that time, we were not yet able to persuade Egyptian Vice President Shafei. He came here and said that they had no confidence in you. He said you were partial to Israel. I said not necessarily. I said that those of Jewish descent are not a monolithic block; for example, we cooperated with Engels and not with other Jewish capitalists.
- The Secretary: The problem in the Middle East is to prevent it now from being dominated by the Soviet Union.
- Chairman Mao: They can't possibly dominate the Middle East, because, although their ambition is great, their capacities are meager. Take, for instance, Cuba. You intimidated them, and they left.
- The Secretary: And since then we've done that a second time, although we did not announce it.



Chairman Mao:

Recently?

The Secretary:

Recently. They moved several submarines, and we moved several ships, and they left.

Chairman Mao:

I'm very suspicious that this country wants to have some relations with us. At the beginning it was done through delegations sent by Castro. At that time, the head of the Delegation was Rodriguez. He led a delegation of six Latin American compatriots to China to try to make peace with us on behalf of the Soviet Union. The second time they tried to make peace through Ceausescu of Romania, and they tried to persuade us not to continue the struggle in the ideological field.

The Secretary:

I remember he was here.

Chairman Mao/

Prime Minister Chou:

That was long ago.

Prime Minister Chou:

The first time he came to China. (Said in English.)

Chairman Mao:

And the second time Kosygin came himself, and that was in 1960. I declared to him that we were going to wage a struggle against him for ten thousand years (laughter).

Interpreter:

The Chairman was saying ten thousand years of struggle.

Chairman Mao:

I also declared to him that neither of us two were socialists, and that we had been labeled by you (Soviet Union) as being dogmatists and that this is anti-Marxist. So I said let us also give you a title, and that is "revisionism." (Laughter) And, therefore, neither of us is Marxist. And this time I made a concession to Kosygin. I said that I originally said this struggle was going to go on for ten thousand years. On the merit of his coming to see me in person, I will cut it down by one thousand years (laughter). And you must see how generous I am. Once I make a concession, it is for one thousand years. (Chou and Mao confer.)



And then there was another time, also Romania, and a Mr. Bordeoloski came also to speak on behalf of the Soviet Union. This time I again made a concession of a thousand years (laughter). You see, my time limit is becoming shorter and shorter.

And the fifth time the Romanian President Ceaucescu came again -- that was two years ago -- and he again raised the issue, and I said "this time no matter what you say, I can make no more concessions" (laughter).

The Secretary:

We must adopt Chinese tactics.

Chairman Mao:

There is now some difference between you and us. I do not speak with such ease now because I've lost two teeth. And there is a difference between your and our activities, that is, we just hit back at everything that comes. And we seized upon the fact that the agreement reached between Prime Minister Kosygin and us has never really been implemented, that is, the September 11, 1969, agreement at the Peking Airport.

The Secretary:

I explained to the Prime Minister, going in the car or elsewhere, that our tactics are more complex and maybe less heroic, but our strategy is the same. We have no doubt who is the principal threat in the world today.

Chairman Mao:

What you do is a Chinese kind of shadow boxing (laughter). We do a kind of shadow boxing which is more energetic.

Prime Minister Chou:

And direct in its blows.

The Secretary:

That is true, but where there is a real challenge, we react as you do.

Chairman Mao:

I believe in that. And that is why your recent trip to the Arab world was a good one.

The Secretary:

The Chairman is learning English.

Chairman Mao:

Why is it in your country, you are always so obsessed with that nonsensical Watergate issue? (There is much laughter on the Chinese side as the interpreter tries to explain that she





couldn't really translate the Chairman's wording for "nonsensical" which really meant "to let out air." Prime Minister Chou asks Mr. Lord if he knew the meaning of the Chinese word, "pee." Mr. Lord said "no" and the Prime Minister said that he could ask his wife. The Chinese side explained that it was an adjective used to qualify the incident.)

The incident itself is very meager, yet now such chaos is being kicked up because of it. Anyway, we are not happy about it.

The Secretary:

But not in the conduct of foreign policy, Mr. Chairman, which will continue on its present course, or in our capacity to take actions in crises as we've shown.

Chairman Mao:

Yes. And even in the domestic aspects, I don't think there's such an overwhelming issue for you and the President.

The Secretary:

No. For me there is no issue at all because I am not connected with it at all. The President, too, will master it.

Chairman Mao:

What I mean by domestic aspects is your inflation, rising of prices, increase in unemployment, because it seems that the number of unemployed has been cut down by an amount and the U.S. dollar is relatively stable. So there doesn't seem to be any major issue. Why should the Watergate affair become all exploded in such a manner?

The Secretary:

There are many complex factors, including the fact that there are many old style politicians who dislike the President because he pursues unorthodox policy. And too many intellectuals have become nihilistic and want to destroy everything.

Chairman Mao:

For instance, James Reston and Joseph Alsop are all now triggered against President Nixon. I can't understand that.

The Secretary:

I can understand James Reston because he follows others, and he is always a reflection of the fashionable view. Joseph Alsop -- I think -- that was a brief aberration, and he will return to his original position very soon.



Chairman Mao:

Do you think they are writing articles, for instance, in trying to taste public opinion?

The Secretary:

They all like to think that they are running the country. And they play President alternately every other day and take turns at it (laughter). If we had paid attention to them, Mr. Chairman, I'd never have been here on my first trip (laughter). Everything important has been done against their opposition.

Chairman Mao:

Yes. People say that Americans can keep no secrets.

The Secretary:

That's true.

Chairman Mao:

I think Americans can very well keep secrets.

The Secretary:

That's basically true, Mr. Chairman, but you may be sure that as long as we keep the information in the White House, you can be sure that nothing has ever come out of our discussions.

Chairman Mao:

Take the Cuban incident, for instance. Take, for instance, your visit to China. And another situation would be your recent dealing with the Soviet Union. In all these cases, secrets were kept quite well.

The Secretary:

That's true. Things we can keep in my office, we can keep quite well. But there are no secrets with the Soviet Union. We always tell you everything we are doing with the Soviet Union. There is nothing we are doing with the Soviet Union that you don't know. You can count on that for the future.

The Soviet Union likes to create the impression that they and we have a master plan to run the world, but that is to trap other countries. It's not true. We are not that foolish.

Chairman Mao:

You are always saying with respect to the Soviet Union something we are ourselves are also saying. And your views seem approximately the same as ours, that is, there is the possibility that the Soviet Union wants to attack China.

The Secretary:

Well, Mr. Chairman, I used to think of it as a theoretical possibility. Now I think it is



more a realistic possibility, and I've said it, especially to your Prime Minister and also your Ambassador. I think they above all want to destroy your nuclear capability.

Chairman Mao:

But our nuclear capability is no bigger than a fly of this size (laughter).

The Secretary:

But they are worried about what it will be ten years from now.

Chairman Mao:

I'd say thirty years hence or fifty years hence. And it is impossible for a country to rise up in a short period.

The Secretary:

Well, as I have said on many occasions, and as I said to the Chairman last time, we believe that if this eventuality were to happen, it would have very serious consequences for everybody. And we are determined to oppose it as our own decision without any arrangement with China.

Chairman Mao:

Their ambitions are contradictory with their capacity.

That may be true.

The Secretary:

Beginning from their Pacific Ocean, there is the United States, there is Japan, there is China, there is South Asia, and westward there is the Middle East, and there is Europe, and the Soviet forces that are deployed along the lines through Siberia way up to the Kurile Islands only account for one-fourth of their forces.

Prime Minister Chou:

East of the Urals.

The Secretary:

A little closer to one-half. Two-fifths maybe.

Chairman Mao:

Excluding the Middle East, that is. The Middle East would be counted on the other side.

The Secretary:

I see.

Chairman Mao:

But that includes Kazakhstan, the Uzbek Republic, Urquiz and other small republics. Also, some other minority nationality troops stationed in the East.

The Secretary:

We know where every Soviet division is. And we have occasionally discussed some of this with you. But I agree with the Chairman...

Chairman Mao:

(Before translation) They have to deal with so many adversaries. They have to deal with the Pacific. They have to deal with Japan. They have to deal with China. They have to deal with South Asia which also consists of quite a number of countries. And they only have a million troops here -- not enough even for the defense of themselves and still less for attack forces. But they can't attack unless you let them in first, and you first give them the Middle East and Europe so they are able to deploy troops eastward. And that would take over a million troops.

The Secretary:

That will not happen. I agree with the Chairman that if Europe and Japan and the U.S. hold together -- and we are doing in the Middle East what the Chairman discussed with me last time -- then the danger of an attack on China will be very low.

Chairman Mao:

We are also holding down a portion of their troops which is favorable to you in Europe and the Middle East. For instance, they have troops stationed in Outer Mongolia, and that had not happened as late as Krushchev's time. At that time they had still not stationed troops in Outer Mongolia, because the Chienpao Island incident occurred after Krushchev. It occurred in Brezhnev's time.

The Secretary:

It was 1969. That is why it is important that Western Europe and China and the U.S. pursue a coordinated course in this period.

Chairman Mao:

Yes.

The Secretary:

Because in that case, nobody will be attacked.

Chairman Mao:

Japan's attitude is also good.

The Secretary:

That's very important, yes.



Chairman Mao:

And the attitude of major European countries are not bad either.

The Secretary:

Their attitude is better than their courage. (Prime Minister Chou explains something in Chinese to Chairman Mao.)

Chairman Mao:

The main trouble now is those small Nordic countries. (The interpreters then corrected.) No, mainly the Benelux countries.

The Secretary:

The Benelux countries and the Scandinavian countries, and there's some ambiguity in the evolution of the German position.

Chairman Mao:

In my opinion, Germany is still a part of the West and will not follow the Soviet Union, while Norway is quite fearful of the Soviet Union. Sweden is a bit wavering. Finland is slightly tended to be closer to the Soviet Union.

The Secretary:

Because of its geographic position, not because of its conviction.

Chairman Mao:

That's correct. And they were very courageous during that war.

Very.

The Secretary:

They are the country of one thousand legs.

The Secretary:

That's true.

Chairman Mao:

The Soviet Union first carved out a part of their country and then gave it back, and that country is not one to be easily offended. Because they are hemmed in too close to the Soviet/Finish border.

Prime Minister Chou:

Why were they cut off?

The Secretary:

They did take part. They were in the Karelian Isthmus.

Chairman Mao:

And even during the time of Hitler's occupation of Poland, Stalin still did not dare attack some of the countries that used to exist along the Baltic Sea.



The Secretary:

But he took them shortly afterwards.

Chairman Mao:

That was because Hitler attacked Poland, and the Soviet Union seized the opportunity to act in such a manner. They tried an agreement of cooperation. The Soviet Union was able to resist that opportunity to seize these three countries.

Perhaps these three representatives have embassies in your country.

The Secretary:

And they still do, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Mao:

And the Soviet Union did not ask you first to abolish those embassies before they established diplomatic relations with you.

The Secretary:

That is correct.

Chairman Mao:

In 1933.

The Secretary:

In 1933, those countries still existed, and we established diplomatic relations in 1933.

Prime Minister Chou:

It's not so convenient for them to go to the United Nations.

The Secretary:

They are not in the United Nations.

Prime Minister Chou:

They probably have some nationals residing in your country.

The Secretary:

Yes. I frankly...they have ambassadors and are accredited, but I don't know what they do.

Ambassador Bruce:

They don't do anything. One of them appears. I think it is Estonia, once a year, and gives an annual day reception (laughter).

The Secretary:

You're quite right. It has not affected our diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

Chairman Mao:

Let's discuss the issue of Taiwan. The question of the U.S. relations with us should be separate from that of our relations with Taiwan.



The Secretary:

In principle....

Chairman Mao:

So long as you sever the diplomatic relations with Taiwan, then it is possible for our two countries to solve the issue of diplomatic relations. That is to say like we did with Japan. As for the question of our relations with Taiwan, that is quite complex. I do not believe in a peaceful transition. (To the Foreign Minister) Do you believe in it?

The Secretary:

Do I? He asked the Foreign Minister.

Chairman Mao:

I'm asking him (the Foreign Minister). (Prime Minister Chou said something that was not translated.)

They are a bunch of counterrevolutionaries. How could they cooperate with us? I say that we can do without Taiwan for the time being, and let it come after one hundred years. Do not take matters on this world so rapidly. Why is there need to be in such great haste? It is only such an island with a population of a dozen or more million.

Prime Minister Chou:

They now have 16 million.

Chairman Mao:

As for your relations with us, I think they need not take a hundred years.

The Secretary:

I would count on that. I think they should come much faster.

Chairman Mao:

But that is to be decided by you. We will not rush you. If you feel the need, we can do it. If you feel it cannot be done now, then we can postpone it to a later date.

The Secretary:

From our point of view we want diplomatic relations with the Peoples Republic. Our difficulty is that we cannot immediately sever relations with Taiwan, for various reasons, all of them having to do with our domestic situation. I told the Prime Minister that we hope that by 1976, during 1976, to complete the process. So the question is



whether we can find some formula that enables us to have diplomatic relations, and the utility of it would be symbolic strengthening of our ties, because, on a technical level, the Liaison Offices perform very usefully.

Chairman Mao:

That can do.

The Secretary:

What can do?

Chairman Mao:

(Before translation) It can do to continue as now, because now you still need Taiwan.

The Secretary:

It isn't a question of needing it; it is a question of practical possibilities.

Chairman Mao:

That's the same (laughter). We are in no hurry about Hong Kong either (laughter). We don't even touch Macao. If we wanted to touch Macao, it would only take a slight touch. Because that was a strong hold established by Portugal back during the Ming Dynasty (laughter). Krushchev has cursed us, saying why is it you don't want even Hong Kong and Macao. And I've said to Japan that we not only agree to your demand for the four northern islands, but also in history the Soviet Union has carved out one and a half million square kilometers from China.

The Secretary:

As I see the problem of diplomatic relations, Mr. Chairman, it's this. On the question of Taiwan, I believe we have a very clear understanding to which we will stick. So the problem we have is...also, the Liaison Offices are doing useful work at this time. So the only question is whether at some point either or both of us thinks it is useful to demonstrate symbolically that our relationship is now normal in every respect. In that case, we should find a formula to make it possible, but it is not a necessity.

Chairman Mao:

We have established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and also with India, but they are not so very good. And they are not even as good as our relations with you, which are better than our relations with them. So this issue is not an important one.



The issue of the overall international situation is an important one.

The Secretary:

I agree with the Chairman completely and on that we must understand each other, and I believe we substantially understand each other.

Chairman Mao:

Our Chief of our Liaison Office was talking to you about grand principles and referred to George Washington's opposing Britain.

The Secretary:

Yes, he made a great speech to me a few weeks ago. I'd heard it before from the Prime Minister.

Chairman Mao:

That set of language can be cut down. And we are now facing a contradiction. On the one hand, we have supported various Arab countries against Israeli Zionism. On the other hand, we have to welcome the U.S. putting the Soviet Union on the spot, and making it so that the Soviet Union cannot control the Middle East. Our Ambassador Huang Chen mentioned this support of the Arab world, but he didn't understand the importance of U.S. resistance to the Soviet Union.

The Secretary:

Well, I took him by surprise, and he repeated the formal position from the United Nations (laughter). And I understand that publicly you have to take certain positions, and it is not against our common position that you do so. But the reality is that we will move matters toward a settlement in the Middle East, but we also want to demonstrate that it was not done by Soviet pressures.

So, whenever the Soviets press we must resist apart from the merits of the dispute. Then when we have defeated them, we may even move in the same direction. We are not against Arab aspirations; we are against their being achieved with Soviet pressure.

Chairman Mao:  
Exactly.



The Secretary: And that is our strategy right now.

Chairman Mao: And now there is a crucial issue, that is the question of Iraq, Bagdad. We don't know if it is possible for you to do some work in that area. As for us, the possibilities are not so very great.

Prime Minister Chou: It is relatively difficult to do that. It is possible to have contacts with them, but it takes a period of time for them to change their orientation. It is possible they would change their orientation after they have suffered from them. They've already suffered once, that is with regard to the coup.

The Secretary: You can do good work in Iran, and Iran is active in Iraq. And we have encouraged the Shah to establish good relations with you. Our strategy with Iraq is first to try to win Syria away from it, and then to reduce its influence in sheikdoms along the Persian Gulf. And then when it sees it can achieve nothing by leaning to the Soviet Union, then we will move toward them. But first they have to learn that they gain nothing from their present course.

Chairman Mao: And this country it contains no banks or coasts of the Arab gulf, that is the Persian Gulf. Recently, your naval ships have gone in that part of the world. I said that was good.

The Secretary: They are still there, and we will keep them there a little longer.

Chairman Mao: That is one carrier.

The Secretary: A carrier and escort ships.

Chairman Mao: And the Soviet Union often passes through the Japanese straits, for example, the Tsrumi Straits eastward to the vicinity of the Midway Islands. And they go in and out of the Japanese Islands. Sometimes they test their missiles in the Pacific Ocean, too.



The Secretary:

Yes.

Chairman Mao:

In my opinion, their aim is to tie down a portion of your strength in the Pacific Ocean to avoid your sending a large number of troops westwards.

The Secretary:

First, we don't mind their testing missiles in the Pacific, because this makes it very easy to find out what their characteristics are. As for the fleet, our difficulty about operating in the Indian Ocean and the Arab Sea has been that we have not had a base in that area. But we have now developed an island called Diego Garcia as a base, and we have also discussed with Pakistan the possibility of building a port. And we are establishing very close relationships with the Shah of Iran. And I believe you will see we will be stationing more ships in the Indian Ocean from now on.

Chairman Mao:

Why is it that Iran is favoring the Soviet Union's Asian collective security system?

The Secretary:

First, of the leaders in that area that I know, the one who understands the Soviet danger best is the Shah of Iran. And he's buying very large numbers now of military equipment from us in order to defend himself against the Soviet Union and also to be able to protect Pakistan. So if we sat here, Mr. Chairman, he would agree completely with your analysis of the situation. But he has a tactical problem, and he wanted to say that he was for peace in general. I think he made a mistake, but he is not really for an Asian security system.

Prime Minister Chou:

He will be arriving in China during the first three months of next year. (The Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister discuss the date.) It's going to be postponed. It is not going to be so early.

The Secretary:

He is very much interested in good relations with China, and we have recommended it very strongly. And he sees your attitude and our attitude about Pakistan and Afghanistan.





Chairman Mao:

It seems to me that the comparatively weaker place in the contemporary international situation would still be Iraq.

The Secretary:

Iraq right now is the most difficult place in that area.

Prime Minister Chou:

(Laughing) Quadaffi went to Iraq to stir up something there.

Chairman Mao:

What have they done now?

Prime Minister Chou:

He has gone and returned. He went there to persuade them not to accept a ceasefire.

The Secretary:

Quadaffi is not the most stable intellect that leads countries right now.

Chairman Mao:

He is a man I do not understand. There's another, that is South Yemen. The President of South Yemen approached me. He said he wanted to sever diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. He asked me my opinion. I was not taken in by him and said he must be prudent. Now they are tying themselves very closely to the Soviet Union.

The Secretary:

Very closely tied to the Soviet Union. And they are stirring things up all over the Gulf.

Chairman Mao:

Do you have diplomatic relations with them?

The Secretary:

We have technically diplomatic relations with them but no useful influence. But we give assistance to Muscat and Oman and North Yemen in order to contain them. (The interpreter and Prime Minister Chou explain the location of Muscat and Oman to the Chairman.)

Chairman Mao:

Let's discuss something about Japan. This time you are going to Japan to stay a few more days there.

The Secretary:

The Chairman always scolds me about Japan. I'm taking the Chairman very seriously, and this time I'm staying two and a half days. And he's quite right. It is very important



that Japan does not feel isolated and left alone. And we should not give them too many temptations to maneuver.

Chairman Mao:

That is not to force them over to the Soviet side.

The Secretary:

And not force them into too many choices, for example, between us.

Chairman Mao:

That would not come about.

The Secretary:

Not from our side either (not translated).

Chairman Mao:

Their first priority is to have good relations with the United States. We only come second.

The Secretary:

We have no objection to good relations between Japan and China. We want to prevent them from moving too close to the Soviet Union.

Prime Minister Chou:

And they should not be taken in.

The Secretary:

That's why if they do something in the Soviet Union, we sometimes join them, so they are not all alone in facing the Soviet Union.

Chairman Mao:

And we also encourage them to do things together with the United States to avoid their being taken in.

Prime Minister Chou:

Recently, Tanaka and others paid a visit to the United States. Was that on the West Coast or in Hawaii?

The Secretary:

No, he went to Washington before they went to the Soviet Union during the summer. Our relations now are better than they were when I was here last time. They are no longer so nervous (laughter).

Chairman Mao:

They are afraid of you and you should try to lessen their fear. The Soviet Union is doing its utmost to go all out to win them over, but Japan is not so trustful of them.

The Secretary:

No, they had a very bad historical experience, and that is very fortunate for all of us. And the Russian temperament doesn't harmonize very well with the Japanese.

- Prime Minister Chou: During Tanaka's visit to the Soviet Union, the Russians acted very stupidly.
- Chairman Mao: They didn't have any discussions the first two days.
- Prime Minister Chou: They lectured them.
- Chairman Mao: They only made proposals about the resources of the Soviet Union.
- The Secretary: Yes, they did that to us, too. It creates the impression they are trying to buy us. But the proposal is that we have to invest there for ten years, and only after everything is built, then they'll start paying us back (laughter). We have not yet agreed and there is no prospect of an early agreement to any of their big projects.
- Chairman Mao: And that includes most favored nation treatment. Now it is put on the shelf. I thought it was good upon hearing that news. I think it is best to put it on the shelf for a longer period of time.
- The Secretary: But we would like to have MFN for China (laughter).
- Chairman Mao: Not necessarily. So long as the Soviet Union doesn't get it, that would be enough (laughter).
- The Secretary: The prospects of that legislation are not very promising.
- Chairman Mao/  
Prime Minister Chou: Is that so?
- The Secretary: It won't be taken up again until February. That's in the House. And then it must be taken up in the Senate. But all in all, it seems it will be finally passed if not next year, the year after. The big problem, Mr. Chairman, is not the MFN clause, because the Soviet Union doesn't have goods to sell us. The obstacles to Soviet trade is not our duties, but the low quality of Soviet products.





Chairman Mao:

But they can give you energy which you need.

The Secretary:

Mr. Chairman, that is not exactly accurate. Even if they were able to produce the natural gas they have claimed, and there is still some dispute about that, it would only amount to about five percent of our needs. And it would take ten years to deliver. And within that ten-year period, we will have developed domestic alternatives, including natural gas in America. That makes it much less necessary, in fact probably unnecessary, to import natural gas in quantities.

Chairman Mao:

That would be good.

The Secretary:

The problem is credits more than MFN. And those we have controlled very rigidly. We haven't given any credits.

Chairman Mao:

I'm lacking in knowledge and cannot understand this problem. I cannot understand this. Probably what you said is correct. At present, the Soviet Union seems in need of such great amounts as \$8 billion in credits.

The Secretary:

Yes, and we've given them up to now \$330 million. They want \$8 billion dollars just for natural gas.

Chairman Mao:

Your President issued the Nixon Doctrine at Guam, I believe, and we see that you are gradually realizing his policy in putting out the flames of war in Southeast Asia. In this manner, you will be able to achieve a greater initiative.

The Secretary:

That is correct.

Chairman Mao:

What you issued was a new Atlantic Charter. (There was some discussion of the translation of this word and the difference between "Charter" and "Constitution.") But they mean the same thing. I would think we will realize the basic objective of that proposal within the first half of that year. Most of the Charter is already drafted in the military sphere; we've almost completed a draft, and

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in the political sphere, we've almost completed drafting it. The economic one requires more work.

Chairman Mao:

In the economic field, there are some contradictions.

The Secretary:

Yes. That's true, but they have to be overcome too, because of the great need, and I think we can work them out. Our press always concentrates on disagreements. Those diplomats who are willing to talk publicly are usually least reliable, and their reports are always published. But basically, we are making good progress.

Chairman Mao:

That is why I believe it will be greatly difficult for the Soviet Union to seize Europe and put it on its side. They have such ambition but great difficulty.

The Secretary:

I think it is very difficult for them to seize militarily, and if they attempt it, they will certainly have to fight us.

(Chairman Mao talks to Prime Minister Chou.)

The greatest danger with the Soviet Union is where they either move land armies quickly, as in Czechoslovakia, or make a sudden air attack in areas where they think we will not do anything.

Chairman Mao:

Take, for instance, the manner of their actions in Czechoslovakia. It is completely unseemly. For instance, they engaged in intriguing against Czechoslovakia; they sent civilian aircraft and used troops in the civilian aircraft.

The Secretary:

To control the Prague Airport.

Chairman Mao:

Later they sent troops there. Others thought they carried civilian passengers in that aircraft, but they sent troops. In that manner, they were able to control the Prague Airport. They sent troops there and reduced Czechoslovakia to inertia.

The Secretary:

That's true. That's exactly how it happened.





Chairman Mao:

And, therefore, in my opinion, with regard to the Soviet Union, it has a great ambition -- and that is, it wishes to seize in its hands the two continents of Europe and Asia, and North Africa and elsewhere, but they will have trouble doing that.

The Secretary:

As long as countries that are threatened stay united. (Chairman Mao toasts everyone with his tea.)

Chairman Mao:

They made use of the opportunities when both of your feet were stuck in the quagmire of Southeast Asia. And in this, your President can't take all the blame for that. The Johnson Administration was responsible for that.

The Secretary:

Where did they take advantage of their opportunity?

Chairman Mao:

That is to enter Czechoslovakia.

Prime Minister Chou:

And also India.

Chairman Mao:

And I don't pay so much attention to these minor things. That is, they have so-called nonaggression pacts with Egypt, Iraq and India, like the Treaty of Friendship with India. I don't believe that settles things. Therefore, we would not agree to any such treaties when they propose them to us.

The Secretary:

Yes. I have noticed that.

Chairman Mao:

And there are some people here who are commenting that you had lost an opportunity to take action when you did not do so when Egypt chased out Soviet military personnel. The commentary goes that at that time you should have assisted Egypt a bit. Upon hearing that I thought further. I thought that because at that time both your feet were in the whole of Southeast Asia, and you had not yet climbed out.

The Secretary:

You are quite right, Mr. Chairman. There were two problems. We had our election. And, secondly, we were still in Vietnam, and we couldn't tackle both at once.

Chairman Mao:

That is so. You are now freer than before.

The Secretary:

Much more.

Chairman Mao:

And the philosopher of your motherland, Hegel, has said -- I don't know whether it is the correct English translation -- "freedom means the knowledge of necessity."

The Secretary:

Yes.

Chairman Mao:

Do you pay attention or not to one of the subjects of Hegel's philosophy, that is, the unity of opposites?

The Secretary:

Very much. I was much influenced by Hegel in my philosophic thinking.

Chairman Mao:

Both Hegel and ~~Fuerbach~~ who came a little later after him. They were both great thinkers. And Marxism came partially from them. They were predecessors of Marx. If it were not for Hegel and ~~Fuerbach~~ there would not be Marxism.

The Secretary:

Yes. Marx reversed the tendency of Hegel, but he adopted the basic theory.

Chairman Mao:

What kind of doctor are you? Are you a doctor of philosophy?

The Secretary:

Yes (laughter).

Chairman Mao:

Yes, well, then won't you give me a lecture?

The Secretary:

I think the Chairman knows much more philosophy than I. And he has written profoundly about philosophy. I used to shock my colleagues, Mr. Chairman, by assigning essays from your collected works, in my courses in the 1960s at Harvard.

Chairman Mao:

I, myself, am not satisfied with myself. The main thing is that I don't understand foreign languages and, therefore, I am unable to read books of Germans or Englishmen or Americans.



The Secretary:

I can't read German in its original form. I must translate into English, because it is too complicated in its original form. This is quite true. Some of the points of Hegel -- quite seriously -- I understand better in English than German, even though German is my mother language.

Prime Minister Chou:

Because of the intricate structure of the German grammar, it is sometimes gets misinterpreted if one doesn't understand the grammar correctly. Therefore, it's not easy to understand the German language and especially the reasoning of various works.

Chairman Mao:

(To Prime Minister Chou) Don't you know some German?

Prime Minister Chou:

I learned in my youth; now I've forgotten it.

The Secretary:

German sentences are long, and the grammar is involved. Therefore, it's easier to understand English than German. One of the characteristics of the German language....

Prime Minister Chou:

Yesterday, a few of those who know German were joking together that German sentences are so long in length that there are quite a few pages, and one does not understand the sentences until you find the final verb, and the verb is at the very end. That, of course, is exaggerated. One sentence does not take several pages.

Chairman Mao:

Did you meet Kuo Mo-juo who understands German? Now we are discussing Hegel, and I give you an opinion.

The Secretary:

I don't know the gentleman that the Chairman was mentioning.

Chairman Mao:

He is a man who worships Confucius, but he is now a member of our Central Committee. ✓

Let's go back to Hegel. In Hegel's history of philosophy, he mentioned Confucius who he showed great disrespect. He showed more respect for Laotze, but he showed the greatest



respect for the philosophy of Indian Buddhism.

The Secretary:

I don't quite agree with him (the Chairman) on that last point. That's a very passive philosophy.

Chairman Mao:

And I also believe that that was not a correct way of saying. And this is not only true of Hegel.

The Secretary:

There is a sentimental love affair between Western intellectuals and India based on a complete misreading of the Indian philosophy of life. Indian philosophy was never meant to have a practical application.

Chairman Mao:

It's just a bunch of empty words.

The Secretary:

For Ghandi, nonviolence wasn't a philosophic principle, but because he thought the British were too moralistic and sentimental to use violence against. They are nonsentimental people. For Ghandi it was a revolutionary tactic, not an ethical principle.

Chairman Mao:

And he himself would spin his own wool and drink goat's milk.

The Secretary:

But it was essentially a tactical device for him.

Chairman Mao:

And the influence of Ghandi's doctrine on the Indian people was to induce them into non-resistance.

The Secretary:

Partly, but also given the character and diversity of the English people, it was only a way to conduct the struggle against the British. So I think Ghandi deserves credit for having won independence against the British.

Chairman Mao:

India did not win independence. If it did not attach itself to Britain, it attaches itself to the Soviet Union. And more than one-half of their economy depends on you. Did you not mention during your briefings that India owes ten billion dollars in debt to the U.S., or was that all debts?



The Secretary:

That was all debts together. It's not \$10 billion but closer to \$6 billion. I will have to check. I thought it was \$10 billion to everybody, of which India owed 60 percent. But you may be right. I have to check. (To Lord: can you check, Win?)

Prime Minister Chou:

That includes the rupee debt.

The Secretary:

Including the rupee debt, that is correct. Yes. And one can mention the dollar debt, too.

Chairman Mao:

I recall your President told us the various debts at the World bank were \$10 billion.

The Secretary:

Yes. When one includes the unilateral debts and the rupee debts and the bilateral debts, then it is \$10 billion and probably a little more even.

Chairman Mao:

That is also something you've imparted to me. In the past, I had not known that. And if you come to China again, besides talking politics, talk a bit of philosophy to me.

The Secretary:

I would like that very much, Mr. Chairman. That was my first love, the study of philosophy.

Chairman Mao:

Perhaps it is more difficult to do now as Secretary of State.

The Secretary:

Yes.

Chairman Mao:

And they say you are a galloping horse whose hooves never stop (laughter).

The Secretary:

He (Prime Minister Chou) called me a "cyclone" (laughter).

Chairman Mao:

There is a cyclone around the world.

The Secretary:

Your Vice Foreign Minister told me your views, Mr. Chairman, about the Arab world when he talked to me in October, and I paid great attention to them.

Chairman Mao:

That is the matter of my discussions with the Vice President of Egypt which was somehow gotten hold of by Lord Chiao (alighter).



Secretary: He didn't tell me who he had talked to.

Chairman Mao: It was Shafei. Did you see him?

The Secretary: I saw Sadat and two or three others.

Chairman Mao: At that time I was trying to persuade him to get closer to you, because I noted that after you announced your position as Secretary State and you'd only been that a few days, you met the Arab Foreign Ministers and later on invited them to lunch. Only the Foreign Ministers of Iraq Syria, Libya, and South Yemen declined. I think even Egypt accepted.

The Secretary: That is correct.

Chairman Mao: That is why I was following behind you (laughter). I was very happy that you entertained those Arab Foreign Ministers.

The Secretary: Yes. It was my first official function.

Chairman Mao: And your predecessor, the previous Secretary, I think did not do so.

The Secretary: He was interested, but I don't think he ever had them as a group.

Chairman Mao: And these Arab countries, which spread up from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf, account for more than a hundred million people.

Prime Minister Chou: The population is now one hundred and fifty million.

Chairman Mao: And they are composed of 19 countries.

The Secretary: And we are making a major effort to improve our relations with them and take this very seriously.

Chairman Mao: And the difficulties are also great because these countries are both united and engaged in internal struggles. It is not so easy to deal with.



Secretary:

Libya quarrels with all its neighbors.  
(Prime Minister Chou leaves the room.)

Chairman Mao:

Perhaps he's that kind of cock that loves fighting. That's the way Krushchev cursed us. He said we were a cock that liked fighting.

The Secretary:

He did not have a very successful visit here in 1959.

Chairman Mao:

We fell out by 1959. We began to fall out in 1958 when they wanted to control China's sea-coast and also China's naval ports. And during my discussions with them, with their Ambassador, I almost slammed the table, and I gave him hell (laughter). And he reported that to Moscow and Krushchev came. At that time, he put forth the notion of a joint fleet, that is, for the Soviet Union and China to form a joint naval fleet. That was the suggestion he raised. And at that time, he was quite arrogant because he had seen General Eisenhower who was then President, and he attained the so-called "spirit of Camp David." And he boasted to me in Peking that he got to know the President and the two English words concerning President Eisenhower were that he was "my friend." (To Ambassador Bruce: You knew that?)

Ambassador Bruce:

No, I never knew that.

Chairman Mao:

And also a piece of news. Since then, he never came again. But he had been to Vladivostok, and he went there from China.

Prime Minister Chou:

There he made an anti-China speech.

Chairman Mao:

None of the present leaders of the Soviet Union have been as far eastward as Vladivostok. Kosygin himself has said he is not quite clear about matters in Siberia. (The Chinese check the time.)

Prime Minister Chou:

It's been two and one-half hours.

Chairman Mao:

And there's another issue I would like to discuss with you. It seems today we have talked



too long. Over two and one-half hours. We have taken up time originally set aside for other activities. (Note: He meant Ambassador Bruce's reception.) The question I would like to discuss is that I am quite suspicious that if the Democratic Party comes into office, they will adopt the policy of isolationism.

The Secretary:

That is a very serious question, Mr. Chairman. I think there may be trends now among the intellectuals and some Democrats in the direction of isolationism. On the other hand, objective realities would force them to understand that there is no alternative to our present policy. Now, what damage would be done until they learned this, and whether they would continue with the same tactical complexity, this I don't know. But I think they would pursue the present course. (The last sentence is not translated.)

Chairman Mao:

Then you seem to be in the same category as myself. We seem to be both more or less suspicious.

The Secretary:

I'm suspicious, and I have some questions about some leaders. But I believe the overwhelming necessity of the situation will force us to return to the policy we are now pursuing.

But this, Mr. Chairman, is why I believe we should use this period, when all of us are still in office and understand the situation, to so solidify it that no alternative will be possible anymore.

Chairman Mao:

And this is mainly manifested in that one point -- that is the advocacy of troop withdrawals from Europe.

The Secretary:

Yes.

Chairman Mao:

This will be a great assistance to the Soviet Union.

We will not carry it out in our Administration. It occurs in two things, the troop withdrawals



from Europe and may be a less of a willingness to be very brutal very quickly in case there is a challenge.

Chairman Mao:

What you mean by "brutality" is probably going to war.

The Secretary:

If necessary, but....

Chairman Mao:

I am not happy you are putting up a diplomatic front to me.

The Secretary:

If necessary, but our experience has been that, if they know we are going to war, they draw back. Up to now, they've always been afraid of us.

Chairman Mao:

Because I also think it would be better not to go to war. I'm not in favor of that either, though I'm well known as a warmonger (laughter). If you and the Soviet Union fight a war, I would also think that would not be very good. If you are going to fight, it would be better to use conventional weapons, and leave nuclear weapons in the stockpile, and not touch them.

The Secretary:

We will not start a war in any event.

Chairman Mao:

That's good. I heard you put forward the opinion before that you want to gain time.

The Secretary:

We want to gain time, but we also want to be in a position that, if the Soviet Union attacks any major areas we discussed, we can resist. And it's in those circumstances we have to be prepared.

Chairman Mao:

That's entirely correct. As for the Soviet Union, they bully the weak, and are afraid of the tough. (Laughter as he points to Miss Wang and Miss Tang.) And you shouldn't try to bully either Miss Wang or Miss Tang because they are comparatively soft.

The Secretary:

Mr. Chairman, in my experience they are not very soft. They also don't carry out the Chairman's advice (laughter).



Chairman Mao:

She (Miss Tang) is American, while she (Miss Wang) is a Soviet spy (laughter).

(The Chairman then got up unassisted and escorted the Americans to the outer lobby. He said goodbye to the Secretary, Ambassador Bruce, and Mr. Lord in turn, and asked photographers to take pictures. As he shook hands with the Secretary, he said "and please send my personal greetings to President Richard Nixon." The Secretary said he would do that. Ambassador Bruce and Mr. Lord indicated that it was a great honor to see Chairman Mao. The Chairman mentioned to Mr. Lord that he had met him before, and Mr. Lord acknowledged this.)



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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

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~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Chairman Mao Tse-tung  
Teng Hsiao-p'ing, Vice Premier of the State  
Council of the People's Republic of China  
Ch'iao Kuan-hua, Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Amb. Huang Chen, Chief of PRC Liaison Office,  
Washington  
Wang Hai-jung, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs  
T'ang Wen-sheng, Deputy Director, Department  
of American and Oceanic Affairs and interprete  
Chang Han-chih, Deputy Director, Department of  
American and Oceanic Affairs

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State  
and Assistant to the President for  
National Security Affairs  
Ambassador George Bush, Chief of U.S. Liaison  
Office, Peking  
Winston Lord, Director, Policy Planning Staff,  
Department of State

DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, October 21, 1975  
6:25 - 8:05 p.m.

PLACE: Chairman Mao's Residence, Peking



At 5:45 p.m. during a meeting with Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping, Secretary Kissinger was informed that Chairman Mao would like to see him at 6:30. He was asked to name those members of his party, including his wife, whom he would like to have greeted by the Chairman, as well as those two officials who would accompany him to the talks themselves. The meeting with Teng lasted another 15 minutes. Then Dr. Kissinger and his party rested until 6:15, when they went from the Great Hall of the People to the Chairman's residence.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12853 (as amended) SEC 3.3  
State Dept Guidelines  
NARA Date 6/24/10

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE BY Henry A. Kissinger~~  
~~EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION~~  
~~SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11653~~  
~~EXEMPTION CATEGORY 5 B (3)~~  
~~AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED ON 6/24/10~~

Each of the following were introduced to the Chairman in turn and exchanged brief greetings while photographs and movies were taken: Secretary Kissinger, Mrs. Kissinger, Amb. Bush, Counselor Sonnenfeldt, Assistant Secretary Habib, Director Winston Lord, Mr. William Gleysteen, Mr. Peter Rodman (NSC), and Ms. Anne Boddicker (NSC). The Chairman stood and talked with considerable difficulty. When he saw Mrs. Kissinger, he sat down and asked for a note pad and wrote out the comment that she towered over Secretary Kissinger. He then got up again and greeted the rest of the party. Then the guests were escorted out of the room except for Secretary Kissinger, Ambassador Bush and Mr. Lord.

The participants sat in arm chairs in a semi-circle. Throughout the conversation the Chairman would either speak with great difficulty, with Miss Tang and Miss Wang repeating what he said for confirmation and then translating, or he would write out his remarks on a note pad held by his nurse. Throughout the conversation the Chairman gestured vigorously with his hands and fingers in order to underline his point.

Chairman Mao: You know I have various ailments all over me. I am going to heaven soon.

Secretary Kissinger: Not soon.

Chairman Mao: Soon. I've already received an invitation from God.

Secretary Kissinger: I hope you won't accept it for a long while.

Chairman Mao: I accept the orders of the Doctor.

Secretary Kissinger: Thank you. The President is looking forward very much to a visit to China and the opportunity to meet the Chairman.

Chairman Mao: He will be very welcome.

Secretary Kissinger: We attach very great significance to our relationship with the People's Republic.

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Chairman Mao: There is some significance, not so very great. (Gesturing with his fingers) You are this (wide space between two fingers) and we are this (small space). Because you have the atom bombs, and we don't.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, but the Chairman has often said that military power is not the only decisive factor.

Chairman Mao: As Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping has said, millet plus rifles.

Secretary Kissinger: And we have some common opponents.

Chairman Mao: Yes.

Secretary Kissinger: You said that in English and wrote it. Can I have it?

Chairman Mao: Yes. (He hands over the note he had written out.)

Secretary Kissinger: I see the Chairman is progressing in learning English.

Chairman Mao: No (holding two fingers close together). So you have quarreled with him (pointing toward Vice Premier Teng).

Secretary Kissinger: Only about the means for a common objective.

Chairman Mao: Yesterday, during your quarrel with the Vice Premier, you said the US asked nothing of China and China asked nothing of the US. As I see it, this is partially right and partially wrong. The small issue is Taiwan, the big issue is the world. (He begins coughing and the nurse comes in to help him.) If neither side had anything to ask from the other, why would you be coming to Peking? If neither side had anything to ask, then why did you want to come to Peking, and why would we want to receive you and the President?

Secretary Kissinger: We come to Peking because we have a common opponent and because we think your perception of the world situation is the clearest of any country we deal with and with which we agree on some . . . many points.

Chairman Mao: That's not reliable. Those words are not reliable. Those words are not reliable because according to your priorities the first is the Soviet Union, the second is Europe and the third is Japan.

Secretary Kissinger: That is not correct.

Chairman Mao: It is in my view. (Counting with his fingers.) America, the Soviet Union, Europe, Japan, China. You see, five (holding up his five fingers).

Secretary Kissinger: That's not correct.

Chairman Mao: So then we quarrel.

Secretary Kissinger: We quarrel. The Soviet Union is a great danger for us, but not a high priority.

Chairman Mao: That's not correct. It is a superpower. There are only two superpowers in the world (counting on his fingers). We are backward (counting on his fingers). America, the Soviet Union, Europe, Japan, China. We come last. America, Soviet Union, Europe, Japan, China -- look.

Secretary Kissinger: I know I almost never disagree with the Chairman, but he is not correct on this point -- only because it is a matter of our priority.

Chairman Mao: (Tapping both his shoulders) We see that what you are doing is leaping to Moscow by way of our shoulders, and these shoulders are now useless. You see, we are the fifth. We are the small finger.

Secretary Kissinger: We have nothing to gain in Moscow.

Chairman Mao: But you can gain Taiwan in China.

Secretary Kissinger: We can gain Taiwan in China?

Chairman Mao: But you now have the Taiwan of China.

Secretary Kissinger: But we will settle that between us.

Chairman Mao: In a hundred years.

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Secretary Kissinger: That's what the Chairman said the last time I was here.

Chairman Mao: Exactly.

Secretary Kissinger: It won't take a hundred years. Much less.

Chairman Mao: It's better for it to be in your hands. And if you were to send it back to me now, I would not want it, because it's not wantable. There are a huge bunch of counter-revolutionaries there. A hundred years hence we will want it (gesturing with his hand), and we are going to fight for it.

Secretary Kissinger: Not a hundred years.

Chairman Mao: (Gesturing with his hand, counting) It is hard to say. Five years, ten, twenty, a hundred years. It's hard to say. (Points toward the ceiling) And when I go to heaven to see God, I'll tell him it's better to have Taiwan under the care of the United States now.

Secretary Kissinger: He'll be very astonished to hear that from the Chairman.

Chairman Mao: No, because God blesses you, not us. God does not like us (waves his hands) because I am a militant warlord, also a communist. That's why he doesn't like me. (Pointing to the three Americans) He likes you and you and you.

Secretary Kissinger: I've never had the pleasure of meeting him, so I'm not sure.

Chairman Mao: I'm sure. I'm 82 years old now. (Points toward Secretary Kissinger) And how old are you? 50 maybe.

Secretary Kissinger: 51.

Chairman Mao: (Pointing toward Vice Premier Teng) He's 71. (Waving his hands) And after we're all dead, myself, him (Teng), Chou En-lai, and Yeh Chien-ying, you will still be alive. See? We old ones will not do. We are not going to make it out.

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Secretary Kissinger: If I may say one thing about what the Chairman said earlier about our relative priorities.

Chairman Mao: All right.

Secretary Kissinger: Because the Soviet Union is a superpower it is inevitable that it has much priority, and we have to deal with it very frequently. But in terms of strategy we are trying to contain Soviet expansionism, and this is why in strategy China has priority for us. But we don't want to use China to jump to Moscow because that would be suicidal.

Chairman Mao: You've already jumped there, but you no longer need our shoulders.

Secretary Kissinger: We haven't jumped there. It's a tactical phase which the President will also affirm to you.

Chairman Mao: And please convey my regards to your President.

Secretary Kissinger: I will do this.

Chairman Mao: We welcome his visit.

Do you have any way to assist me in curing my present inability to speak clearly?

Secretary Kissinger: You make yourself very well understood even so.

Chairman Mao: This part (pointing to his brain) is working well, and I can eat and sleep. (Patting his knees) These parts are not good. They do not ache, but they are not firm when I walk. I also have some trouble with my lungs. And in one word, I am not well, and majorally (sic) unwell.

Secretary Kissinger: It's always a great joy to see the Chairman.

Chairman Mao: You know I'm a showcase exhibit for visitors.

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Secretary Kissinger: I've read over our conversation two years ago, Mr. Chairman. I think it was one of the most profound expositions of international affairs, and we take it very seriously.

Chairman Mao: But there's still some things which we must wait to observe. Some of the assessments I made still have to be moved by the objective situation.

Secretary Kissinger: But I think the basic assessment the Chairman made at that time insofar as the situation has developed has proven correct, and we basically agree with it. We've had a difficult period because of the resignation of President Nixon, and we've had to do more maneuvering than we would have liked.

Chairman Mao: I think that can be done. Maneuvering is allowable.

Secretary Kissinger: It was essential, but we are putting that situation behind us.

Chairman Mao: Europe is too soft now.

Secretary Kissinger: We agree with the Chairman -- Europe is too soft.

Chairman Mao: They are afraid of the Soviet Union.

Secretary Kissinger: They are afraid of the Soviet Union and their domestic situation.

Chairman Mao: Japan is seeking hegemony.

Secretary Kissinger: Japan is not yet ready to seek hegemony. That will require one more change in leadership. But potentially Japan has the potential for seeking hegemony.

Chairman Mao: Yes.

Secretary Kissinger: I think the next generation of leaders, my student Nakasone, he was a student of mine when I was a professor.... That generation will be more ready to use the power of Japan.

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Chairman Mao: Europe is too scattered, too loose.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes. We prefer Europe to be unified and stronger.

Chairman Mao: That is also our preference. But it is too loose and spread out, and it is difficult for it to achieve unity.

Secretary Kissinger: Also it does not have too many strong leaders.

Chairman Mao: Oh, yes.

Secretary Kissinger: But Schmidt, who comes here next week, is the strongest of the leaders in Europe today.

Chairman Mao: France is afraid of Germany (counting on his fingers). They are afraid of the reunification of West Germany and East Germany, which would result in a fist.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, France prefers to keep Germany divided.

Chairman Mao: (Nodding yes) That's not good.

Secretary Kissinger: But they may unite on a nationalistic basis, East and West Germany.

Chairman Mao: Yes, we are in favor of reunification.

Secretary Kissinger: It depends under whom.

Chairman Mao: West Germany has a population of 50 million while East Germany has a population of 18 million.

Secretary Kissinger: West Germany is the strongest side materially.

Chairman Mao: But the reunification of Germany now would not be dangerous.

Secretary Kissinger: We favor the reunification of Germany, but right now it would be prevented militarily by the Soviet Union. But the US supports the reunification of Germany.

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Chairman Mao: We agree on that, you and we.

Secretary Kissinger: And we are not afraid of a unified Germany, but Soviet power in Europe must be weakened before it can happen.

Chairman Mao: Without a fight the Soviet Union cannot be weakened.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, but it is important for us to pick the right moment for this, and during the period of Watergate we were in no position to do it. And that is why we had to maneuver.

Chairman Mao: And it seems it was not necessary to conduct the Watergate affair in that manner.

Secretary Kissinger: It was inexcusable. Inexcusable. (Miss Tang indicates puzzlement.) It was inexcusable to conduct it in that manner. It was a minor event that was played into a national and international tragedy by a group of very shortsighted people. President Nixon was a good President (Chairman Mao nods affirmatively) and I'm still in very frequent contact with him.

Chairman Mao: Please convey my regards to Mr. Nixon.

Secretary Kissinger: I'll call him when I return.

Chairman Mao: So please first of all send my regards to President Ford and secondly my regards to Mr. Nixon.

Secretary Kissinger: I'll do both of these with great pleasure.

Chairman Mao: You're too busy.

Secretary Kissinger: You think I travel too much?

Chairman Mao: I was saying that you are too busy, and it seems that it won't do if you're not so busy. You cannot keep from being so busy. When the wind and rain are coming, the swallows are busy.

Secretary Kissinger: That will take me several days to understand the full significance of that.

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Chairman Mao: This world is not tranquil, and a storm -- the wind and rain -- are coming. And at the approach of the rain and wind the swallows are busy.

Miss Tang: He (the Chairman) asks me how one says "swallow" in English and what is "sparrow". Then I said it is a different kind of bird.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, but I hope we have a little more effect on the storm than the swallows do on the wind and rain.

Chairman Mao: It is possible to postpone the arrival of the wind and rain, but it's difficult to obstruct the coming.

Secretary Kissinger: But it's important to be in the best position to deal with it when it does come, and that is not a trivial matter. We agree with you that the wind and rain are coming or may come, and we try to put ourselves in the best possible position, not to avoid it but to overcome it.

Chairman Mao: Dunkirk.

Secretary Kissinger: Not for us.

Chairman Mao: That is not reliable. You can see that that is not the case for you now.

Secretary Kissinger: That will not be the case for us in the future.

Chairman Mao: That is not reliable. A military correspondent for the New York Times put out a book in August.

Secretary Kissinger: Who is he?

Miss Tang: (After consultations among the Chinese) We'll look it up and tell you.

Chairman Mao: Do you think that the 300,000 troops the US has in Europe at the present time are able to resist a Soviet attack?

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Secretary Kissinger: The weakness in Europe is not our troops but European troops. I think with nuclear weapons we can resist the attack.

Chairman Mao: That correspondent did not believe the US would use nuclear weapons.

Secretary Kissinger: The New York Times has had a vested interest in American defeats the last ten years. If there's a substantial attack in Western Europe, we'll certainly use nuclear weapons. We have 7,000 weapons in Europe, and they are not there to be captured. That is in Europe. In the US we have many more.

Chairman Mao: But there is a considerable portion of Americans who do not believe you'll use them. They do not believe Americans will be willing to die for Europe.

Secretary Kissinger: Mr. Chairman, we've come through a very difficult domestic period, partly caused by Indochina, partly caused by Watergate, in which many defeatist elements have been public. But if you watch what we've done the last five years, we always confront the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union always backs down. And I can assure you, as the President will reassure you, if the Soviet Union attacks Europe, we'll certainly use nuclear weapons. And the Soviet Union must never believe otherwise -- it's too dangerous.

Chairman Mao: You have confidence, you believe in, nuclear weapons. You do not have confidence in your own army.

Secretary Kissinger: We have to face the reality that we will not have so large an army as the Soviet Union. That is a fact. And the most important fact is that no European country will build a large army. If they did, then there would not be a problem. And, therefore, we must build a strategy which is suited to that reality.

Chairman Mao: The Dunkirk strategy is not undesirable either.

Secretary Kissinger: Mr. Chairman, finally we have to have a minimum confidence in each other's statements.

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There will be no Dunkirk strategy, either in the West or in the East. And if there is an attack, once we have stopped the attack, after we have mobilized, we are certain to win a war against the Soviet Union.

Chairman Mao: (Gesturing with his fingers) We adopt the Dunkirk strategy, that is we will allow them to occupy Peking, Tientsin, Wuhan, and Shanghai, and in that way through such tactics we will become victorious and the enemy will be defeated. Both world wars, the first and the second, were conducted in that way and victory was obtained only later.

Secretary Kissinger: It is my belief that if there is a massive Soviet attack anywhere in the world, the US will become involved very quickly. And it is also my conviction that the US will never withdraw from Europe without a nuclear war.

Chairman Mao: There are two possibilities. One is your possibility, the other is that of the New York Times. That is also reflected in Senator Goldwater's speech of June 3 in the Senate.

Secretary Kissinger: What did he say?

Miss Tang: We will send you a copy. It was during the foreign policy debate in the Senate on June 3.

Secretary Kissinger: But what was the main point?

Chairman Mao: His disbelief in Europe.

Secretary Kissinger: You have to understand, Mr. Chairman, that it is the year before the election and much of what is said is said for domestic effect. The New York Times has had a certain position for 20 years and it has an unparalleled record for being wrong.

Chairman Mao: It is said that the New York Times is controlled by a Jewish family.

Secretary Kissinger: That is true.

Chairman Mao: And also the Washington Post.

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Secretary Kissinger: The Washington Post -- it is no longer true. (He then conferred with Ambassador Bush who pointed out that Mrs. Graham was Jewish, the daughter of Mr. Meyer.) You are right.

Chairman Mao: The proprietess is Jewish.

This Ambassador (looking toward Bush) is in a dire plight in Peking. Why don't you come and look me up?

Ambassador Bush: I am very honored to be here tonight. I think you are busy and don't have the time to see a plain Chief of the Liaison Office.

Chairman Mao: I am not busy, because I do not have to look over all the routine affairs. I only read the international news.

Secretary Kissinger: But the Chairman knows more about what is being written in America than I do. I didn't know about the book by the New York Times man or Senator Goldwater's speech.

Chairman Mao: You don't have the time. You are too busy.

(To Lord) Mr. Lord, you have now been promoted.

Mr. Lord: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Mao: (To Bush and Lord) You have both been promoted.

Secretary Kissinger: He (Bush) not yet. He will be in 1980.

Chairman Mao: He can be President.

Secretary Kissinger: In 1980.

Chairman Mao: You don't know my temperament. I like people to curse me (raising his voice and hitting his chair with his hand). You must say that Chairman Mao is an old bureaucrat and in that case I will speed up and meet you. In such a case I will make haste to see you. If you don't curse me, I won't see you, and I will just sleep peacefully.

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Secretary Kissinger: That is difficult for us to do, particularly to call you a bureaucrat.

Chairman Mao: I ratify that (slamming his chair with his hand). I will only be happy when all foreigners slam on tables and curse me.

Secretary Kissinger: We will think about it, but it will not come naturally to us. If we call the Chairman a bureaucrat, it will be a tactical maneuver separate from strategy.

Chairman Mao: But I am a bureaucrat. Moreover I am also a warlord. That was the title I was given by the Soviet Union and the title "bureaucrat" was given me by the Soviet Union.

Secretary Kissinger: But I haven't seen any Soviet visitors here lately.

Chairman Mao: They are cursing us every day. Every day.

Secretary Kissinger: But we don't share the Soviet assessment of China.

Chairman Mao: (Before Secretary Kissinger's sentence is translated) Therefore, I have accepted these two titles, "warlord" and "bureaucrat". No honor could be greater. And you have said that I am a warmonger and an aggressor.

Secretary Kissinger: I?

Chairman Mao: The United States in the UN. The UN passed a resolution which was sponsored by the US in which it was declared that China committed aggression against Korea.

Secretary Kissinger: That was 25 years ago.

Chairman Mao: Yes. So it is not directly linked to you. That was during Truman's time.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes. That was a long time ago, and our perception has changed.

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Chairman Mao: (Touching the top of his head) But the resolution has not yet been cancelled. I am still wearing this hat "aggressor". I equally consider that the greatest honor which no other honor could excel. It is good, very good.

Secretary Kissinger: But then we shouldn't change the UN resolution?

Chairman Mao: No, don't do that. We have never put forward that request. We prefer to wear this cap of honor. Chiang kai-shek is saying that we have committed aggression against China. We have no way to deny that. We have indeed committed aggression against China, and also in Korea. Will you please assist me on making that statement public, perhaps in one of your briefings? That is, the Soviet Union has conferred upon me the title of "warlord and bureaucrat", and the United States has conferred upon me "warmonger and aggressor".

Secretary Kissinger: I think I will let you make that public. I might not get the historically correct statement.

Chairman Mao: I have already made it public before you. I have also said this to many visiting foreigners, including Europeans. Don't you have freedom of speech?

Secretary Kissinger: Absolutely.

Chairman Mao: I also have freedom of speech, and the cannons I have fired exceed the cannons they have fired.

Secretary Kissinger: That I have noticed.

Miss Tang: You have noticed....

Secretary Kissinger: The Chairman's cannons.

Chairman Mao: Please send my regards to your Secretary of Defense.

Secretary Kissinger: I will do that.

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Chairman Mao: I am dissatisfied that he went to Japan without coming to Peking. We want to invite him here for the Soviets to see, but you are too miserly. The US is so rich but on this you are too miserly.

Secretary Kissinger: We can discuss it when the President is here.

Chairman Mao: Bring him along. You can bring a civilian and a military member, with your President, both a civilian and a military man.

Secretary Kissinger: Me as the civilian and Schlesinger as the military?

Chairman Mao: Yes. But I won't interfere in your internal affairs. It is up to your side to decide whom you will send.

Secretary Kissinger: Well, he will not come with the President. Maybe later.

Chairman Mao: We would like to invite him to pay a visit to the northeast of our country, Mongolia and Sinkang. He perhaps will not go, nor would you have the courage.

Secretary Kissinger: I would go.

Chairman Mao: (Looking toward Bush) He has been.

Secretary Kissinger: I would certainly go.

Chairman Mao: Good.

Secretary Kissinger: And we have tried to suggest to you that we are prepared to advise or help in some of these problems.

Chairman Mao: As for military aspects we should not discuss that now. Such matters should wait until the war breaks out before we consider them.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, but you should know that we would be prepared then to consider them.

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Chairman Mao: So, shall we call that the end?

Secretary Kissinger: Yes.

Secretary Kissinger, Ambassador Bush, and Mr. Lord then said goodbye to Chairman Mao. Secretary Kissinger confirmed with Vice Premier Teng that the Chinese would put out a public statement on the meeting and would send the text to the US side immediately. (The Chinese statement is at TAB A.) The Americans then said goodbye to the other Chinese officials and drove away in their cars.

Attachment

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Meets Chairman Mao

Peking NCNA in English 1441 GMT 21 Oct 75 OW

[Text] Peking, October 21, 1975 (HSINHUA)--Chairman Mao Tsetung this evening met with Dr Henry A. Kissinger, U.S. secretary of state and assistant to the President for national security affairs, his wife Nancy M. Kissinger, and his party.

American guests at the meeting were George H.W. Bush, chief of the U.S. Liaison Office in China; Helmut Sonnenfeldt, counsellor of the State Department; Philip C. Habib, assistant secretary of state for East Asian affairs; Winston Lord, director of the Office of Policy Planning of the State Department; William H. Gleysteen, deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian affairs; Peter W. Rodman, White House staff member; and Anne Boddicker, secretary.

Chairman Mao shook hands with all the American guests and had a conversation in a friendly atmosphere with Dr Kissinger, George Bush and Winston Lord on a wide range of questions. Chairman Mao asked Dr Kissinger to convey his regards to President Ford.

Present on the occasion were Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping, Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua, chief of the Chinese Liaison Office in the U.S.A. Huang Chen, Vice-Foreign Minister Wang Hai-jung and deputy departmental directors of the Foreign Ministry Tang Wen-sheng and Chang Han-chih.

~~Gen Scowcroft has seen~~  
12-14-75

10/25/75-Lord

SECRET/SENSITIVE

HAK gave<sup>6</sup>  
to President

BD  
→ Peter Johnson

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E.O. 12958 (as amended) SEC 3.3

State Dept Guidelines

By M NARA Date 6/24/10

Analysis/Highlights of Secretary Kissinger's  
Meeting with Chairman Mao, October 21, 1975

The Main Themes

This meeting was on the whole disturbing, signifying a cooling of our relationship linked to the Chinese perception of the US as a fading strategic power in the face of Soviet advance.

Though the session was cordial, it was considerably less so than previous encounters. In November 1973 the conversation was described by the Chinese as "friendly," "wide-ranging," and "far-sighted." This time the third adjective was omitted. We both still have a "common opponent" but whereas before there was a feeling of working in parallel to counter this threat, this time the message was that the US could not be counted upon to resist pressures and therefore China was going to have to go it alone.

To sum up the major theme in one sentence: The US is "not reliable," Europe is "soft," Japan seeks "hegemony," and therefore China will dig tunnels, store millet and oppose the Soviet Union on its own, even as a naive and appeasing world curses the Chinese as "warlords" for sounding the alarm.



The Soviet Union therefore is still the enemy. The US is not so much hostile as it is ineffectual (which perhaps is more insulting). For example, if Europe is attacked we would pull a Dunkirk and get out, rather than either seeing our heavily outnumbered troops get overwhelmed or resorting to nuclear weapons. If this is true in Europe, by extension it is true in Asia as well; China should not count on our defending it in a crunch; we need not discuss military matters as/previous occasions. In any event China is down the list of our priorities, and even our allies in Europe and Japan get less attention than the Soviet Union in our policies.

In our relations with Moscow the theme of appeasement (Teng used the Munich analogy) has overtaken the one of collusion. Detente is dangerous not so much because it represents ganging up on China as it undermines the morale and defenses of the West through false illusions, thus increasing the pressures on the PRC. It is true that we "stood on the shoulders" of China to gain leverage on Moscow in the 1971-3 period, but that is "useless" now -- presumably both because China won't let itself be used and because detente is in trouble. Thus our policy now is marked by maneuvering and Dr. Kissinger's very busy travels. We are flailing away in a rear guard action against the Soviet hegemonic tide which is sweeping toward war: we are "swallows" who are "busy" before "the wind and rain" come. We may be able to postpone the Soviet storm, but it is inescapably on its way.

The source of our troubles is domestic. "Not reliable" can refer to a failure of nerve, a general withdrawal from the fray, the release of classified documents, the incomprehensible (to the Chinese) destruction of a strong President over a minor incident. Our policies are increasingly hamstrung by a combination of the liberal appeasing establishment symbolized by the New York Times, and traditional conservative isolationists (and anti-PRC to boot) symbolized by Senator Goldwater.

This turbulent international situation is much more crucial than Taiwan. For now it is better to have the US keep the island under control rather than having it go independent or toward Moscow or Tokyo. The Chinese can wait patiently until the time is ripe, but then they will have to use force. By implication, the US should not ask for peaceful assurances, but it can take its time letting Taiwan go.

The future of China's policies is uncertain. Mao and his followers -- Premier Chou, Marshall Yeh, and (noticeably) Vice Premier Teng -- are all old and "will not do," "will not make it out." There is criticism, perhaps internal, of Mao as being a "warlord" (too anti-Russian?) and a "bureaucrat" (too much emphasis on production?).

Thus China will go it alone - "rifles and millet." Let all the world curse it as a "warlord" or "warmonger." That only makes

Mao happy. The Chinese will prepare for "the wind and the rain." And if Moscow attacks, Peking will suck the Russians in, let them occupy the big cities à la Napoleon, and mobilize for a victorious counter-attack.

Some Specific Points

Mao is very sick. He looked it, despite his mental agility. He was unable to walk us to the door as on previous occasions. He had much more trouble standing. He was just about unable to speak at all, making most of his points on paper or in obscure grunts. He is "going to heaven" soon, and has an "invitation from God" (points he has made previously, however). And he described his various ailments all over him.

Mao is in charge of general international strategy. He was well briefed and he had clearly given Teng his script the day before. He hit all the major themes of their foreign policy. On the other hand, he is clearly incapable of detailed or sustained work; he himself said that he ignored "routine" affairs and suggested he confined himself to international matters.

Teng is the key official now. Mao referred to him several times in the conversation. He is certainly Chou's replacement, and perhaps Mao's. On the other hand Mao pointed to his age, grouped him with himself, Chou and Yeh, and suggested that they would all be soon irrelevant.

The US (and Kissinger) are "not reliable." See the general

themes above. We are "swallows" before the storm. We "maneuvering" and "busy" - though both are allowable, they are apparently at best delaying actions. We are prone to "Dunkirks." We won't use nuclear weapons. We are no longer "far-sighted."

Our domestic structure is weak. Watergate was mishandled and magnified. Our media (Times) and our Congress (Goldwater) are sapping our strength.

China is relatively backward -- both in strength and in our priorities. After America comes Russia, Europe, Japan and then China.

"Europe is too soft now." They are afraid of the Soviet Union. "Europe is too "scattered," "loose," "spread out." East and West Germany should unite under West German domination (so as to pressure the Soviet Union.)

"Japan is seeking hegemony."

US policy toward the Soviet Union is confused and ineffectual. It is variously described as "Dunkirk" appeasement, frantic maneuvering, using China to get to Moscow, joining Moscow in hurling epithets at the PRC. At the same time Moscow remains a "common opponent" of both China and the US and when war breaks out, then (but only then) we should consider joint cooperation.

In any event Schlesinger should come to China and visit the areas near the Soviet Union (so as to push us towards confrontation with Moscow). He is presumably welcome because he makes preparations and cries out rather than flying around like a "swallow."

"The small issue is Taiwan, the big issue is the world."

They can wait 100 years, for Taiwan is "unwantable," indigestible ("full of counter-revolutionaries"). It's better for the US to keep the island under control for the time being.

China will rely on itself. "Rifles and millet." The Dunkirk strategy if necessary. The Chairman likes to be cursed (unlike Americans who worry about their image?); only then does he pay attention to someone. Dr. Kissinger should go ahead and publicize Chinese aggression against China (Taiwan) and Korea. "I will only be happy when all foreigners slam on tables and curse me." China needs to know its enemies (including the US?) so as to be vigilant: "If you don't curse me, I won't see you, and I will just sleep peacefully."

#### Concluding Caveat

Finally, let us not pretend that we can fathom everything the Chairman had to say. Some passages might have had layers that we are incapable of sensing; others might merely be literal; others might be haphazard, even meaningless.

The Chairman's basic message and principal themes were clear. They clearly formed the strategic framework for the Kissinger visit, indeed for the evolution in our relations in the past couple of years. But there were several cryptic passages that are unclear. The tendency is to dig for the subtleties, the deeper meanings behind the Chairman's laconic, earthy prose. In most instances the larger meaning is apparent. In others, however, there

may be nothing particularly significant, or a somewhat senile man might have been wandering aimlessly for a moment. After all, he is a very frail 82. His words were either translated with great difficulty (and probably smoothed over and elaborated at times) by the three girls or written down. Chiao volunteered his own interpretation the next day, which is unprecedented, playing down the collusion theme and underlining the "common enemy" leverage.

To cite just one example of ambiguity: "Do you have any way to assist me in curing my present inability to speak clearly?" The odds are that this was basically small talk about his own health. It is very doubtful that he was seriously asking for medical assistance. But was the Chairman saying that his voice within China (or in the world) was not being heard, that his influence is being circumscribed, and that he wants US help to strengthen his position through our policies? Does he want us to help him "speak clearly" in this larger sense?

There were several other obscure passages in the talk, e.g. the reference to the anti-Chinese Korean resolution, the cracks against Jewish influence in the American media, the invitation to Bush to pay a call on the Chairman. These might have meant, in turn, that the Chinese don't want to get involved in the Korean problem; that Jews are traditionally appeasers in history and are a major element in eroding American steadfastness; and that the US should pay more attention to China.

Equally the passages may have had no deeper meaning whatsoever,

despite the Chairman's well deserved reputation for the use of aphorism and symbolism and never wasting his words.