

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

Prime Minister Chou En-lai
Ch'iao Kuan-hua
Vice Foreign Minister
Chang Wen-Chin, Assistant Foreign
Minister (second part only)
Tang Wen-sheng, Interpreter
Chi Chao-chu, Interpreter
Two notetakers

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger,
Assistant to the President for National
Security Affairs
Winston Lord, NSC-Staff
John D. Negroponte, NSC Staff

DATE AND TIME:

Tuesday, June 20, 1972, 2:05-6:05 p.m.

PLACE:

Great Hall of the People, Peking

Dr. Kissinger: I read over the conversation between Chairman Mao and the President, and it sounded when I read it after I knew everything that happened. . . . it was like an overture to an opera. Every theme that was later discussed was mentioned in that hour.

Prime Minister Chou: Mr. Lord also was very familiar with that talk.

Dr. Kissinger: Mr. Lord disappeared from every picture. I requested it.

Prime Minister Chou: It was said that on arriving in Moscow your President also was immediately received in the Kremlin by Mr. Brezhnev. Was Mr. Lord also there, and you yourself there, but disappeared from the pictures?

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Dr. Kissinger: At the first one, yes.

Prime Minister Chou: That was also my belief, but the picture came out to be a large table with only an interpreter in between.

Dr. Kissinger: But after that we announced the participants. I participated in every meeting between the President and Mr. Brezhnev.

Prime Minister Chou: At the beginning it was kept secret.

Dr. Kissinger: We have learned our lessons.

Prime Minister Chou: They were probably trying to copy our way of doing things.

Dr. Kissinger: They were very interested. They wanted a list of all the gifts you had given to our party before we came.

Prime Minister Chou: So that they could exceed it slightly. Including the times on which they would present presents and the amount and so forth. The only thing they could not manage was the Ilyushin-62, the airplane. Perhaps because China was using the more backward Ilyushin-18.

Dr. Kissinger: The Prime Minister knows Kosygin and knows he is a very serious, so when the Ilyushin-62 was delayed in taking off he came back on the airplane to talk to the President. I said this proves objects are basically malevolent. He said, what does this mean? I said, if you drop a coin it always rolls away from you. And Kosygin said, that isn't always true--I have dropped coins that rolled toward me.

Prime Minister Chou: [laughs] So would you like to begin?

Dr. Kissinger: Which subject should we discuss first? The Soviets?

Prime Minister Chou: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: What aspect would be of the most interest to the Prime Minister?

Prime Minister Chou: Because before this you had already said you would like to come and inform us after your visit to Moscow, you can do it as you feel proper. We don't have any special request. And as for the brief information that Mr. Lord gave Ambassador Huang-hua, we have already received that.

Dr. Kissinger: Perhaps it might be most useful for the Prime Minister for me to describe our general approach to the Soviet Union, what we are trying to accomplish; then describe my visit at the end of April, the President's visit and some general impressions. I am sure that the Prime Minister knows that we do not do reciprocal things in Moscow. The reason we do it with you is because of our evaluation of the relative intentions of the two allied communist countries.

Prime Minister Chou: But that alliance has gone with papers.

Dr. Kissinger: There is no question that one of the results of my visit to Peking last year, as the Prime Minister foresaw, was a considerable speeding up of our relationship with the Soviet Union. This was not a case that we particularly sought. In fact we thought there was a possibility that after my visit to Peking we would confront a period of extreme hostility, and when we informed the Soviet Embassy one hour before the announcement we had decided that if their reaction was one of hostility, we would be prepared to deal with all consequences.

Prime Minister Chou: So that was your estimate beforehand.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, I remember it very well. But it did not seem to us to be right.

Prime Minister Chou: That shows that we don't take a petty attitude toward such things, and we thought that if it was necessary for the President to visit the Soviet Union first it would perhaps have been better. And that happened... that was proved to be the truth because after you made the announcement of your President's decision to visit China... after the announcement they expressed extreme concern. And during your President's visit to China the Moscow newspapers were full of a lot of things.

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Dr. Kissinger: You were much more relaxed when we were in Moscow.

Prime Minister Chou: We were quite relaxed. We had turned our attention to other things.

Dr. Kissinger: It wouldn't have made any difference because now we have been in Moscow. And when I announced our visit here I received urgent visits from the Soviet Ambassador in any event. In fact, I have found, Mr. Prime Minister, that if I want to see the Soviet Ambassador without asking him to come, I can put some item in the newspapers about China and he will surely come.

But in any event, whatever the reason, our relations with the Soviet Union speeded up considerably after the announcement, and at Soviet initiative, not at ours. As I told you when I was here in July, we had planned a summit meeting with the Soviet Union, but for a variety of reasons we felt that a number of concrete issues had to be settled since we were in a different objective position with respect to the Soviet Union than with the People's Republic. We thought with you we were at the beginning of a historical process, and it was therefore important that it be started with the top people. With the Soviet Union we were involved in a series of concrete problems and there was no sense in involving the top people unless a solution could be reached.

The concrete issues are familiar to you because we have kept you informed scrupulously since our first meeting. But all of them accelerated since our first contact, such as the Berlin Agreement, and took a broader scope than we had first asked for. After the completion of the Berlin agreement, and progress in the strategic arms limitations talks, we agreed to the summit. The announcement was in October, but we actually agreed to it in August, as I told your Ambassador in Paris at the time.

At that time it seemed to us that the Soviet Union was pursuing two policies that were sometimes contradictory at the same time, which we have found is not an unusual phenomenon in Moscow. On the one hand, they wanted to make progress in their bilateral relations with us. On the other hand, they wanted to show, to demonstrate your impotence, and your impotence even combined with us, and therefore they pursued the policy in the Indian Subcontinent. And secondly, they greatly accelerated their arms into Indochina as a result of the first Podgorny visit. This is our analysis-- your interpretation may be different. Actually, what happens in Indochina would not demonstrate your impotence, but would create one other Soviet

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dependent state around your borders. We discussed that previously-- I am just summing it up.

And we also believe that they would have liked the offensive to start before the visit to Peking because that would have created the maximum amount of complications in our relationship. I am just giving you our assessment. I am sure you do not agree with every last analysis we have made.

As you know, we reacted extremely strongly to the situation in South Asia. And on one morning when we received a message that you had a message to deliver to us which was, we thought, that you had sent your troops in, we had decided that if you were attacked by the Soviet Union as a result of it, we would support you and take military measures if necessary to prevent that attack. We received that message in early December--I think it was December 11, our time, in the morning. We received word, and when we picked up that message in the afternoon, it had a different content. We also, as you remember, threatened to....

Prime Minister Chou: By that time East Pakistan was already unable to be saved.

Dr. Kissinger: No, no, you made the correct decision. It would have been too late, but I had had a talk with your Ambassador.

Prime Minister Chou: Because when they were in the UN at that time they were not clear about that situation. Because Mr. Bhutto himself also was not a military man and Yahya Khan had boasted about the military situation, so I believe Mr. Bhutto arrived on the 11th, and he thought that the military situation in Pakistan at that time was indeed very well. He didn't know about the coup at home.

Dr. Kissinger: I think it was about December 11. Bhutto arrived in New York on Friday the 10th our time, 11th your time. I met Huang Hua on the 10th. I first met Huang Hua the evening of Friday the 10th, then I met Huang Hua the morning of the 11th -- no, I met Huang Hua the evening of the 10th and then I met....and then you sent us a message which we received. You called us the morning of the 12th, and we were going to the meeting with Pompidou so we sent General Haig.

But between the time we got the phone call and picked up the message we didn't know what it was. And since Huang Hua had taken a very tough line, not knowing the situation, I thought your message to us was that you were taking military measures. And since we were going to the Azores before we met with you we had to give instructions. If

your message was you were taking military measures, our instructions were that if the Soviet Union moved against you we would move against the Soviet Union.

Prime Minister Chou: Why was it that your newspapers later on published the full minutes it seemed, or parts of the minutes, of meetings held by the Washington Special Actions Group?

Dr. Kissinger: This part of the decision was never in the Washington Special Actions Group because it was much too sensitive. This sort of decision had been made in a much smaller group.

Prime Minister Chou: I know about that. But why did the newspapers publish what had been discussed step by step in the Washington Special Actions Group with respect to the East Pakistan situation?

Dr. Kissinger: Well, first the Prime Minister has to understand the Washington Special Actions Group is a group which implements decisions--it does not make decisions. The reason that I had to take such a strong stand in this group was because the vast majority of our bureaucracy was pro-Indian and pro-Soviet.

Prime Minister Chou: Pro-Soviet?

Dr. Kissinger: More pro-Soviet than pro-Chinese in any event. I came under the most violent attack after I threatened to cancel the Moscow summit. That was when you [to Ch'iao] were there probably, the most violent attack. But what happened was a disloyal member of our bureaucracy gave these documents to the newspapers, and they printed them in order to destroy us, and they came very close. They will not be given a second opportunity.

Prime Minister Chou: But after reading the records that were published it seemed to me the members of that group came from quite a lot of quarters.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, they were almost unanimously against our policy.

Prime Minister Chou: Especially toward India.

Dr. Kissinger: They didn't understand our overall strategy. If they had understood we were getting ready to take on the Soviet Union then

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what happened was mild compared to what would have happened. The reason we moved our fleet into the Indian Ocean was not because of India primarily--it was as pressure on the Soviet Union if the Soviet Union did what I mentioned before.

Prime Minister Chou: And they also closely followed you down into the Indian Ocean.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, but what they had there we could have taken care of very easily.

Prime Minister Chou: What they were trying to do was to create more noise in East Bengal. They openly passed through the Tsushima Straits and then through the Malacca Straits.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, but not with a force that could have fought ours.

Prime Minister Chou: But you know they could surface in such a way their support to East Bengal.

Dr. Kissinger: Oh yes, it was used for that purpose. Actually, the Pakistani army in the east surrendered five days later, so it would have been too late for you to do anything.

Prime Minister Chou: Also, Yahya Kahn had already sent his order in preparation for such a measure on the 11th or the 12th.

Vice Foreign Minister Ch'iao: I would like to add a word. On the morning of Friday, the 10th, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. U Thant, had already informed us that East Pakistan had informed the Secretariat through their personnel in East Pakistan...

Dr. Kissinger: Oh yes, the Vice Foreign Minister is absolutely correct. Speaking very confidentially, we urged them then not to do this until we had an opportunity to talk to you, and to assess the situation, and I believe your advice was the same.

Vice Foreign Minister Ch'iao: That happened on the day that Mr. Bhutto arrived in New York, and on his arrival we told him about this news.

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He had originally prepared to meet U Thant, but we had a luncheon engagement with U Thant. So we went, but Mr. Bhutto upon going to the hotel immediately called Yahya Kahn and advised him not to do so. That happened on the day of his arrival in New York.

Prime Minister Chou: But we must say that Yahya Kahn made his efforts and contribution toward our countries, and we still mention this when we see him. But he was a general who did not know how to fight a war. He not only was useless in war, but he did things that worsened the situation. This was something we had not expected. We had expected he would not be able to improve the situation, but we didn't know he could have done things so badly. Because he had four divisions that had not been thrown into battle, but before any fighting they began to crumble. Actually, according to our knowledge, these armed forces were able to fight in battle.

Dr. Kissinger: But he scattered them around the frontier--he put too many forces into East Pakistan. They would have done him more good if he had used them in West Pakistan in an offensive. Secondly, he should have ignored the Indians and concentrated on one place, and tried to defeat them somewhere.

Prime Minister Chou: On such things Ayub Khan was more capable than Yahya Kahn.

Dr. Kissinger: Yahya Kahn was a decent man, but not very intelligent, and, it turned out, not a very good general. And we are very grateful to him on our side for having arranged our contacts. I think it was the last joy on his public career--he loved secret missions. He worked on it with great passion. When I visited him just before I came here, he was beside himself with conspiratorial maneuvers. He also gave me great advice on how to deal with the Prime Minister, all of which turned out to be wrong. (Prime Minister Chou laughs)

But I didn't mention it in order to go into details of this, or to discuss the Chinese aspect of the policy, but to explain our general strategy toward the Soviet Union.

After the war in South Asia and before the summit in Peking the Soviet Union began to become more conciliatory toward us again, but still very hostile toward you. But they did not take any specific steps

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except in atmosphere until we returned from Peking. After we returned from Peking all negotiations speeded up, similar to the time in August, in all the fields which we gave you in New York.

I had been invited in December to pay a secret trip to Moscow, and we rejected that on the ground that we had sufficient diplomatic contact to make that unnecessary. This invitation was repeated again after the Peking summit, and we rejected it again. I believe we informed you of some of this when we were here. (Prime Minister Chou nods.)

Then when the offensive in Vietnam started...you can generally assume that when we informed you of our readiness to take drastic steps we also informed Moscow, because we do not want you to be in a separate position in that situation. And we made a number of public comments about the degree to which arms deliveries had made the situation possible, the degree to which Soviet arms deliveries had produced that situation. It was at this point that they repeated their request for me to come to Moscow to discuss both Vietnam and preparations for the summit, and at this point, as I told your Ambassador in New York, we felt obliged to accept.

Prime Minister Chou: Was that on the 20th of April?

Dr. Kissinger: April 20 to 24, if I remember correctly. Yes, 20 to 24.

Prime Minister Chou: That was when your press was saying you were resting in Camp David.

Dr. Kissinger: The Prime Minister is keeping good track of me. But I had told your Ambassador ahead of time, not the Japanese Ambassador. (Laughter)

On this occasion we had a long discussion about Vietnam. The Soviet view was that you had planned the offensive on the occasion of your visit after the Peking summit.

Prime Minister Chou: We have never interfered in either their military actions nor their political negotiations. We only get notifications from them and have often received them only after events have occurred, because that's their business. How can we intervene in their affairs?

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Dr. Kissinger: Well, the Soviets made their case with great passion on the grounds that there was no offensive before the Peking summit and there was one before the Moscow summit. The Prime Minister, according to them, had been in Hanoi before the Peking summit and there was no offensive. He went to Hanoi after the Peking summit and there was immediately an offensive.

Prime Minister Chou: But I didn't go before the President's visit. I went there after your secret visit, but I didn't go before the meeting in Peking. But it was only after your President's visit to Peking that I went there the second time. I only went twice.

Dr. Kissinger: Well, officially I never knew about any of your visits. I thought you went before the Peking summit, but I never knew you went after the Peking summit. But I am only telling you about the Soviet argument.

Prime Minister Chou: How could we give our opinions or suggestions about whether it was beneficial to fight at a certain time or not? And I would like to do something here -- perhaps you might agree, perhaps not. But Senator Mansfield, after leaving China recently, gave me a text of a speech he made in his hometown in Montana in May of 1968. But he gave it to me after he left China. Have you read it?

Dr. Kissinger: Yes.

Prime Minister Chou: And he mentioned two things that drew our attention. The first is it should be recognized there is only one China and Taiwan is a province...

Interpreter Chi: Part!

Prime Minister Chou: Part of China. That's what Senator Mansfield said.

Dr. Kissinger: It only took me two nights to get the word "province" out of the communique (laughter).

Prime Minister Chou: But it proved now that Senator Mansfield had already foreseen that in 1968 -- it seemed you borrowed from his words, but you also added that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Straits recognize

there is only one China. That is your masterpiece, and we must recognize that.

And the second point he made was to say China's being aggressive could only be said in accordance with China's words, but China's deeds did not say that. And as Chairman Mao also said to President Nixon, what we did was to fire empty cannons. What we did was not to commit aggression, but we supported the movements of national liberation which Senator Mansfield also mentioned.

And the third point he made was that with respect to Vietnam the assistance the United States had given to the Republic of Vietnam greatly exceeded the assistance China had given to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Of course, I do not agree with all of his definitions, but in his capacity of being the Democratic leader of the Senate it was not easy for him to say that at that time, and it seems that his views on these matters have not changed. So we believe your President's assessment of that man was quite correct.

Dr. Kissinger: Oh, he's a fine person.

Prime Minister Chou: Honest.

Dr. Kissinger: Very honest and very sincere.

Prime Minister Chou: He has a British flavor, a gentleman's style.

Dr. Kissinger: He's of Irish stock.

Prime Minister Chou: He doesn't look very much like an Irishman.

Dr. Kissinger: He looks like a member of a monastic order, which you cannot say of Senator Scott.

Prime Minister Chou: No, they were two different characters, and it was interesting to talk to them together.

Dr. Kissinger: But I must say, Mr. Prime Minister, you managed to do one thing with Senator Scott we have not managed to do -- you got him to keep confidences. They were both very much impressed by their visit to the People's Republic, and I think after their return they made a number

of constructive speeches. You will find that the Majority Leader in the House is a different person.

Prime Minister Chou: So by your advice I will have to make a bit of preparation?

Dr. Kissinger: No, I would say if he's exposed to too much mao-tai I don't know what might happen. I recommend seeing him in the morning.

Our analysis of the situation is...we will talk about it longer when we talk about Indochina...that we see no Chinese interest served by an intensification of the war in Indochina because I believe you take us seriously when we said we would react strongly. This drags us back in when we want to get out.

So, we do not believe that this is your strategy.

We discussed, as I said, Vietnam at some length along lines which I will discuss with you when we discuss Indochina.

To return, however, to one point. It's not only the Soviet leaders, but East European leaders who maintain that you have been the primary moving force in this offensive, and who got this thought into many channels so it reaches us in many ways. And it would be very persuasive if we had not had this chance to talk previously.

Now, with regard to other issues, we spent...

Prime Minister Chou: And I had beforehand foreseen and predicted that the Soviet Union would try to tell you that. And it has been...the facts are that between last year and the present, the Soviet Union has sent four delegations to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, two of which were led by Podgorny and Katushev went himself once and then Mazurov.

Dr. Kissinger: And then a general.

Mr. Negro Ponte: Batitsky.

Prime Minister Chou: (To Negro Ponte) Thank you. You have a better memory than I have. He was the Vice Minister of National Defense.

Dr. Kissinger: On bilateral issues, the discussion was somewhat similar to the discussions we had here in October, that is, preparation of a communique, and the Soviet Union for the first time submitted a declaration of principles.

Prime Minister Chou: Because we included that in our communique so they had to have something like that.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, which had a different character, which I will explain to you in a minute. And then some precise negotiations on all the agreements which were signed in Moscow including a specific proposal on how to deal with the inclusion of submarines in the Strategic Arms Limitation talks. Incidentally, Mr. Prime Minister, if you want, some of the provisions of that agreement are somewhat technical and complex, and if you want, I will be glad to explain them to some technical person, or to you if you have time. But if you don't want it, I would be glad to explain the technical provisions of the agreements to any person you designate.

Prime Minister Chou: Yes, I don't think technical matters need to be mentioned here.

Dr. Kissinger: If you are interested.

Prime Minister Chou: If you would like we can get some of our specialists. It's up to you.

Dr. Kissinger: It's up to you.

Prime Minister Chou: You also wanted to discuss something like that with the Vice Chairman of our Military Commission and his assistant. But that was one side of what you would like to say. I would like to ask one question. Of course, you already know about the things I mentioned publicly.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, that you considered it partial.

Prime Minister Chou: No, I said that this is a bilateral matter and then I said, "but it won't solve the problem." Because you cannot cut down your budget. Of course, if it continued without any limitation at all the budget

would increase in even a greater way. Of course, now that you have a possibility of five years, then perhaps you can limit your budget in a certain way. And perhaps it will also make people feel it will be more difficult for a nuclear war to break out in the next five years.

Dr. Kissinger: It will stop the increase in the budget. Our Secretary of Defense gives the impression that we will increase the budget dramatically, but he's given to dramatic statements, as the Prime Minister remembers.

Prime Minister Chou: Yes, at precisely the time when you were signing those agreements, he was thinking about what would be going on five years after, about new submarines completed by that time.

Dr. Kissinger: But the problem is if one doesn't plan now, in five years... I don't think it is in anybody's interest that the Soviet Union is able to work for five years and we do nothing. So he was not wrong in speaking of that -- he was not wrong in thinking of that, he was wrong in speaking.

Prime Minister Chou: Yes, but I appreciate that man very much because he says some true words. For instance, while you were here engaging in secret talks in July last year he was in Japan making public statements; and also at that time your President was making his Kansas City speech on the sixth of July at the same time Secretary Laird made his speech in Japan, and they both appeared at the same time, which I appreciated very much, which made the situation clear. Perhaps this is part of the American character.

Dr. Kissinger: It made it clear what the forces were, not necessarily what our policy was.

Prime Minister Chou: Not necessarily. I think you can see things from there. The Soviet Union is fearful people will get to know about their doings. Actually, people know their doings. The only thing people may not know is the quantity of what they are doing. So if it is said the Strategic Arms Agreement made some advance, then it can be said in the sense that in the coming five years the danger of outbreak of nuclear war will be less but the competition will not be less.

Dr. Kissinger: The numerical competition will stop; the technical competition will not stop.

Prime Minister Chou: Because it is allowable to change old with the new.

Dr. Kissinger: If the characteristics do not change. With respect to secrecy, we achieve secrecy by saying so much that no one knows what is true.

Prime Minister Chou: But people can see a tendency.

Dr. Kissinger: Thoughtful people can see a tendency. Literal people just see the words and ask for explanations.

Prime Minister Chou: That is why I asked the five families of American friends when I met them that Senator McGovern, if he is elected, is saying he will be able to cut the military budget by one-third. I asked them whether they thought this were possible, and they could not reply.

Dr. Kissinger: Mr. Prime Minister, I honestly believe the worst thing that could happen to you would be if this were to happen.

Prime Minister Chou: What I do not believe is that it would be really possible to cut the budget by one-third. Of course, you probably know the majority I met were in support of Senator McGovern. I asked them that question, but they could not answer.

Dr. Kissinger: In fact, they were unanimously in support as I look over that list.

Prime Minister Chou: Fairbank wavered.

Dr. Kissinger: Fairbank , yes.

Prime Minister Chou: So I asked them to answer that question, but they couldn't. It's impossible.

Dr. Kissinger: One problem with McGovern is that he is very professorial and he...

Prime Minister Chou: Was he a professor before?

Dr. Kissinger: He was a professor at one time. But he is likely to try to do what he says, and the attempt to do it would have very serious consequences for everybody.

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Prime Minister Chou: I don't believe that.

Dr. Kissinger: That he would do it?

Prime Minister Chou: If he is elected, it will be impossible for him to do so. Otherwise, he will have to change that slogan in the course of his election campaign.

Dr. Kissinger: It may be objectively impossible for him to do so, but the education of finding that out is what would produce the damage.

Prime Minister Chou: Your Pentagon wouldn't agree, wouldn't be able to pass what he said he will try to do.

Dr. Kissinger: That's not the major problem. The impact on the international situation of a dramatic effort by the United States to weaken itself would lead to a chaotic situation which would have a high probability of producing a war, because I do not believe your northern neighbors would resist that temptation.

Prime Minister Chou: Anyway, they always want to try to exceed you.

Dr. Kissinger: But not when we are going down. They don't compete in that direction, in reductions with us.

Prime Minister Chou: Never, never.

Dr. Kissinger: Exactly. There's in addition the problem that apart from whether it's possible to cut the budget, the sort of policy I describe in South Asia, for example, would be totally impossible.

Prime Minister Chou: To the word "never" I would like to add a condition. That is, if the type of leadership the Soviet Union now has would continue, that would never happen. The policies they are pursuing now, if it continues, will exceed the former policies of the Czars in old Russia. I believe it was Harrison Salisbury who said our description of the new Soviet leaders as being new Czars was exact. The Soviet leaders are dissatisfied with that description.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, they have certain reservations with respect to the People's Republic of China.

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Prime Minister Chou: And the greatest headache comes from the use of that term, "the new Czars," and we were the first to use it. As for "social imperialism," Lenin began the use of that term, and we are continuing.

Dr. Kissinger: I don't think the Prime Minister would be elected to the Politburo from what I was told. (Prime Minister Chou laughs)

Prime Minister Chou: They probably hate us to death. Of course, the number one target of hatred is Chairman Mao, and I who implement his policies...

Dr. Kissinger: The Prime Minister is coming up in that regard. He's still number two, but gaining.

Prime Minister Chou: Very happy to hear that. Because how will it do if no one opposes a person?

Dr. Kissinger: When I was in Shanghai I was with a member of the Shanghai People's Revolutionary Committee, and he congratulated me on the communique. I said I will have enormous difficulties with my opponents when I get back to America. He said Chairman Mao says you should worry only if your enemies do not attack you.

Prime Minister Chou: That's true.

Dr. Kissinger: But to return to my visit at the end of April. I won't go into the agreements which are really self-explanatory -- we have brought you the texts, and we can give them to you -- except for the Strategic Arms Limitation talks, where the Vice Chairman can ask me questions, and I will explain it to him.

There were a number of aspects that I wanted to mention to the Prime Minister. One, the Soviet strategy was obviously to create the impression, and the reality, that one would go to Peking for banquets and to Moscow for agreements. And therefore, they were trying for the absolute maximum number of agreements. And we found it much easier to agree with them than the Vice Foreign Minister did on the border question.

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Second, in the communique and especially in the Declaration of Principles, there were a number of aspects that we eliminated because we thought the objective import was directed at you -- also against Britain and France, but I think objectively against you. For example, there was a joint appeal to other nuclear countries to join the accidental war agreement. Now France wants to do this, and we have refused. We have refused on grounds that France is an ally, and we don't need an agreement with an ally, and if it wants to make one with the Soviet Union, we don't object. They wanted to make a general agreement between all nations possessing nuclear weapons against accidental war. They wanted us to make a joint appeal that other countries should join the Non-Proliferation Treaty. And they wanted to resurrect their proposal for a conference of nuclear countries that they had made last summer. And they wanted us to make an appeal together to other members of the Security Council on a number of issues which we also refused. This is in line with our general policy that we will not join other countries in any dealings that we have with you. If we have a request, we will make it directly.

Thus at the summit, but also at the meeting I had in Moscow, they made two other proposals, one that there should be special consultations between the United States and Soviet Union about the nuclear capabilities of other nations that are not part of the nuclear limitations agreement, and whose capacities are growing. They also made a proposal, which we have not told anybody else about, as we have not almost everything I have said to you -- of course, this is all very confidential. The proposal is that we agree not to use nuclear weapons against each other. We have said that we could consider something like this only if there were some assurance that this would not... that they were not free to attack either our allies or other countries with nuclear weapons. Because this would not be banned. In that proposal that would not be banned.

Prime Minister Chou: Would that mean in effect that all countries should guarantee not to be the first to use nuclear weapons?

Dr. Kissinger: I know this is your proposal. The problem we have with that is we have to reserve the right, if there is a massive attack either on a major ally such as Europe, or on a country whose independence we consider vital, we have to reserve the right to use nuclear weapons. So in other words, there are some areas of the world where we cannot accept their being overrun by conventional armies. We can renounce the use of force, but we have great difficulty signing an agreement where a country is free to launch an attack on regions whose security we consider vital

to peace in the world and ourselves. If conventional means are not enough, we cannot consider renouncing the use of nuclear weapons. We cannot accept a Czechoslovakia in every part of the world.

Prime Minister Chou: Of course, in a certain sense, there are only a few possibilities of such an event happening.

Dr. Kissinger: That is true. Those are the ones that worry us most. In most foreseeable circumstances we would not have to worry about nuclear weapons, but I can think of two places where it would have to be considered.

Prime Minister Chou: Which two?

Dr. Kissinger: One is an attack on Europe, and the other is an attack that would put all of Asia under one European center of control.

Prime Minister Chou: There possibly would exist that ambition, but the question is whether or not it could be realized.

Dr. Kissinger: That is the problem. But speaking in this small group, I would not exclude that this intention may exist. I am not saying that it does -- but it could.

Prime Minister Chou: The ambitions, of course, exist. The question is how or whether it will appear, and of course, we must closely watch the development of events.

So they only proposed that your two countries should mutually agree not to use nuclear weapons against each other, but it said nothing about consultations on a worldwide scale leading to prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons?

Dr. Kissinger: No, explicitly not. Now this is not known by anybody, Mr. Prime Minister, and it is a sign of our special confidence in you.

Prime Minister Chou: Of course we won't discuss that. We only... what we say is only the principles that we repeat every time we carry out an experiment. You probably already have memorized them.

Dr. Kissinger: We have never had any difficulty. If there is any further discussion of this we will tell you. At the moment there is no further discussion, but my experience tells me that your allies are very persistent, and it is certain to be resurrected. And if it is, I will discuss it with your Ambassador in New York, and we will not make any moves without discussing it with you. If you had asked your dinner guests on Friday night whether they had been in favor of such a project I think they all would be in favor of it on sentimental terms, the five Americans, with the exception of Fairbank . They would have favored it for US-Soviet bilateral relations; they would not necessarily have seen the implications of this for other countries. But you can make that experiment yourself.

Prime Minister Chou: I wouldn't do that experiment because when these questions are discussed certain people proceed completely out of naive illusions.

Dr. Kissinger: Exactly, and it's too sensitive anyway.

About the summit. The summit proceeded in the same way as my meeting, and we discussed essentially the same subjects except that the Soviet leaders made exactly the same proposals to the President they had made to me in April and received exactly the same answers.

We made agreements in three general areas, that is first, technical areas where we and the Soviets, as advanced industrial countries, have common interests -- environment, space, health. Secondly, we spent a great deal of time on the strategic arms limitation agreement which is a technical and extremely complex issue. And, as the Prime Minister pointed out, it involves qualitative implications that will not be significant now but which should be terribly important five years from now. Thirdly, we agreed on those principles and the communique which are really self-explanatory. Fourth, there were discussions about commercial matters. We created a commercial commission, and the Soviet leaders are extremely interested in receiving credits and Most Favored Nation treatment.

Prime Minister Chou: But they don't repay their debts.

Dr. Kissinger: No, although they are very willing to do that to get credit.

Prime Minister Chou: Yes, but they take a rather long-range view of that, and it seems their view on this matter... there is still some distance between their view and yours.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, but that will be solved because what they want in credit is so much more than their debt that we are really paying them to pay their debt (laughter). But I will sum this up...

Prime Minister Chou: But they would have to buy your equipment with the credit they got from you, with most of the credit.

Dr. Kissinger: Probably. But that I consider unimportant because what they want they can probably only get from us. And so, and this has not yet been made public, or not very much, they are extremely interested in getting us involved in a very massive development of Siberia. Our approach... the sums involved are very large -- \$8 billion. And they want us to do it jointly with the Japanese, or alone; they are not particular. They will take it from us alone if we are willing to do it.

Now, before I give our reaction to this economic thing let me give you... well, let me give you first our formal reaction to this economic thing. I know at least some of your associates seem to think we are driven very much by economic considerations. This is not true, in this Administration anyway. We have... I remember very vividly my first conversation with the Prime Minister almost a year ago when he asked me what we had really produced by our economic assistance. On strictly economic grounds it is easy to put money into a country. It is very hard to get it back. But that I consider second order. The more important question is what do you produce objectively when you develop an area; it is not always what people tell you their intentions are, as the Prime Minister has told me often with regard to Japan.

So we are looking at these projects with great care. And we do not want to be in a position where these projects can be used either to blackmail us or to create the basis for blackmailing others. Let me sum up what our basic approach is... oh, two other issues we discussed -- European Security Conference and mutual force reductions. With respect to the European Security Conference, the Soviet Union has been very passionate in pushing it, but very vague in what they want to discuss once they get there.

Prime Minister Chou: Is that so?

Dr. Kissinger: Yes.

Prime Minister Chou: Without a prospect how can you enter into discussions?

Dr. Kissinger: The Prime Minister will soon have an opportunity to meet some leading European statesmen, and he will then be able to judge for himself the degree to which precision of thinking is their outstanding attribute. As I understand the European leaders, most who are not distinguished by their capacity to see things long-range, there is the paradox that they first advocated a conference on mutual balanced force reduction for the amazing reason that they thought this would force us to keep our forces in there until this conference had taken place. They proposed mutual reductions to prevent unilateral reduction. So then when their own project assumed reality, they accepted the idea of a European Security Conference in order to stop the mutual balanced force reductions.

So they produced two conferences they don't want in order to prevent something they could have stopped by saying "no", but didn't want to for domestic reasons. I think the Prime Minister would have found that most European leaders today would not have been very good candidates for the Long March (laughter).

Our strategy with respect to these two conferences is to answer the question that the Prime Minister put to me -- simply, we will go, but we will insist that there is a very concrete agenda and very concrete criteria which enable us to measure success or failure. So we sometimes appear dilatory, but in any event we will be very concrete, and we will emphasize also those elements of the European Security Conference that enhance the sovereignty of the participants, east or west.

And to sum up our evaluation of the situation, there are three possibilities in Soviet policy. One is that there will be a more peaceful evolution. If there is a more peaceful evolution, then the agreements we have signed will promote a possibility for constructive policies. And we will attempt to give every opportunity for all parties to live up to the principles we have agreed to.

But it is also possible that it is their intention to neutralize Europe and to concentrate on Asia, and to get their rear free for dealing with one problem at a time. That cannot be excluded.

And it's not impossible that their strategy is to isolate each of their principal enemies or opponents and to defeat them separately, even though these principal opponents may not have any formal relationship with each other.

Our assessment is as follows. We have no interest in your quarrel with the Soviet Union, as I have said to you and as I have said publicly. We have never asked you to do anything against the Soviet Union, and we never shall. And you have never asked us to do anything against the Soviet Union -- in fact, you have encouraged us to deal with the Soviet Union. But our assessment is, we would prefer the Soviet Union to take the first course of changing its policy in a more peaceful direction, and we will give it every incentive to do this. If it should move in the second direction, we shall pursue the same policy more strongly than we did last December.

In terms of our relations, the principal significance I see in whatever visible bilateral things we have done is not in their own terms, but to create the objective conditions to permit decisions like this to be made quickly if it should become necessary against anybody's will or intention. Leaving aside this particular aspect which is a tactical question and not decisive, we shall continue to move along the lines we have described, and we shall continue it as long as the Soviet Union pursues a peaceful policy. If the Soviet Union should move aggressively, even not against you but against countries whose independence we consider important, then we will draw the appropriate conclusions and we will not be deterred by any agreements we have made. That will be the policy of this Administration in the next term, even more strongly than now.

I should add, at the summit there was also a long discussion of Vietnam, but I am saving that for the other discussion. I am sorry I have talked so very long.

Prime Minister Chou: Thank you. I would like to ask whether the European Security Conference will be held as a meeting between two blocs, or a meeting between individual countries, or both.

Dr. Kissinger: Well, it will in any event not be held before 1973 when our freedom of movement will be somewhat greater. Secondly, it will

be held as a meeting between countries, though I have the impression that on the Soviet side it is being given a bloc character. It is in our interest, that is in the U.S. interest, to emphasize the sovereignty of the participants. Incidentally, I may say, we evaluate positively what we take to be the low-key Chinese encouragement of European community efforts.

Prime Minister Chou: At the same time they have a lot of internal disputes.

Dr. Kissinger: The Europeans?

Prime Minister Chou: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: It's not their heroic age.

Prime Minister Chou: But they believe that collectively they will have power, but how to lead that power is a question. Quite a number wish to be the leadership of that power.

Dr. Kissinger: And no one wants to make the sacrifices necessary to get it.

Prime Minister Chou: That's where the question lies. What is your assessment of the tendency of the development of the policy in your motherland, of the country where you were born?

Dr. Kissinger: It's always easy to start a policy, but if one starts it one has to think through where one will be after a few years. And speaking as a historian, the Germans have brought disaster upon themselves for the last 50 years -- more than that, for this century -- because they have not had any far-sighted statemen since Bismarck, except perhaps for Adenauer.

Prime Minister Chou: It's a century since Bismarck.

Dr. Kissinger: The German problem has been that when they had a choice between two policies, they did them both. The risk they run, what they are doing now, is to belong to the western community, that is to the European community, but to run the risk of winding up like Finland. That is one risk.

Also in Germany there is a very strong nationalistic tendency similar to Japan, although the German social structure does not have the cohesion

nor the strength nor the self-confidence of the Japanese. So it is not excluded that in Germany...Germany can go three ways. It can become part of the European community fully; it can become a Finland and objectively an outpost of eastern Europe; or it can become extremely nationalistic. And I do not exclude that when that happens the German communists may join their other colleagues on the basis of nationalism, but that would be a long time in the future. But I do not exclude that happening. But these are the three possibilities.

Prime Minister Chou: Do you believe that East Germany at this time would be even more weakened?

Dr. Kissinger: East Germany can become strong only through a very nationalistic policy. It has no objective basis except by becoming the heir of old Prussia.

Prime Minister Chou: But quite a part of the former East Prussians have now gone into West Germany.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, but it's not the population; it's the spirit. I have had old Prussians in West Germany tell me that when they want to be reminded of their Prussian heritage they go to East Germany. That was said to me by the son of the former head of the Foreign Ministry under the Nazis, Weiszacher, who is now a professor, and who himself is a fine man and is not at all of this type.

Prime Minister Chou: Since Germany has developed her economy to its present degree do you think it could be that Germany is also at a crossroads?

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, but not primarily for economic reasons.

Prime Minister Chou: Also for nationalistic reasons?

Dr. Kissinger: The countries that were defeated during the war could spend 20 years on economic recovery, and could find in that a substitute for their lack of military achievement. But now economic recovery is no longer enough and creates psychic and psychological problems.

Prime Minister Chou: Right.

(There was a thirteen minute break at this point, 4:30 p.m. The meeting resumed with the addition of Chang Wen-chin on the Chinese side.)

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE
EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

Prime Minister Chou: Thank you for your notification concerning the U.S. -Soviet talks. There are not many more questions I would like to ask, because they are generally all in the documents. Only on the general Declaration of Principles there is one case which the Third World was quite displeased with -- they said, "the superpowers" such and such. You know about that?

Dr. Kissinger: No.

Prime Minister Chou: The main objection is with respect to the third principle (reading): "The U.S. A. and USSR have a special responsibility... in their internal affairs."

Dr. Kissinger: What is the objection?

Prime Minister Chou: It appears from that principle as if world affairs will be monopolized by you two big powers. It has that feeling. I note that from the press.

Dr. Kissinger: I have not had the opportunity to pay attention to that particular... or it has not come to my attention. That was not the intention on our side. This is a paragraph which in its original form we thought was directed against you. Our intention is to use it to prevent such situations as the South Asia one. And when we apply it, it will be intended to be used to prevent a situation where when tensions arise a big country will not exacerbate them by military supplies and/or by diplomatic pressures. That was our intention.

Prime Minister Chou: India seems somewhat unhappy about that. Do you have any feelings there?

Dr. Kissinger: Whether India is unhappy about it? (Prime Minister Chou nods.)

Since December India has been unhappy with us about so many things it is not easy to tell what is a special cause of unhappiness and what is a general condition.

Prime Minister Chou: But this time they were displeased not just with you but with both of you. They consider the United States and Soviet Union

want to manipulate matters. That is their feeling -- I don't know their reason for this.

Dr. Kissinger: It is not our intention. We have no intention of forming a condominium -- it would take an extraordinary circumstance for us to do this. It is not our intention to create a condominium. We do have the intention of building walls against expansionism, either political ones or physical ones. Our primary concern with local conflicts is when a big power attempts to exploit them for its own ends.

Prime Minister Chou: In the Soviet objections to our communique with you it appears that they particularly expressed objection to this common principle: "Neither should seek hegemony..." Do they think that was directed against them?

Dr. Kissinger: They didn't say, but they seem to think it might be directed against them. We took the position it was directed only against countries that want to establish hegemony. I had an interesting query from India -- I don't know whether you did. They said that since the Asia-Pacific area didn't include India, what we were saying was that we agreed to Chinese hegemony over India (laughter).

So I told them this was not true. I hope you are not offended.

Prime Minister Chou: India is a highly suspicious country. It is quite a big country. Sometimes it puts on airs of a big country, but sometimes it has an inferiority complex.

Dr. Kissinger: It's been governed by foreigners through most of its history.

Prime Minister Chou: Yes, that might be one of the historical factors. And an additional one that there are such big competitions in the world.

Now let's go on to the Indochina question -- I would like to hear from you.

Dr. Kissinger: The Prime Minister said he had some observations he would like to make to me. Maybe we should reverse the places and let him talk first.

Prime Minister Chou: These are questions on which there are disputes, and we would like to listen to you first to see your solutions of the problem.

Dr. Kissinger: Is the Prime Minister's suggestion that after he's heard me I will be so convincing the disputes will have disappeared, and there will be no further need for him to make observations?

Prime Minister Chou: I have no such expectations, but I do hope the disputes will be lessened.

Dr. Kissinger: I will make our candid assessment. I know it doesn't agree with yours, but I think it is useful for you at any rate to understand how we see the situation. And I will take the situation from the start of the North Vietnamese offensive on March 30.

I believe that I have explained to the Prime Minister what our general objectives in Indochina are. It is obvious that it cannot be the policy of this Administration to maintain permanent bases in Indochina, or to continue in Indochina the policies that were originated by the Secretary of State who refused to shake hands with the Prime Minister. It isn't... we are in a different historical phase. We believe that the future of our relationship with Peking is infinitely more important for the future of Asia than what happens in Phnom Penh, in Hanoi or in Saigon.

When President Johnson put American troops into Vietnam you will remember that he justified it in part on the ground that what happened in Indochina was masterminded in Peking and was part of a plot to take over the world. Dean Rusk said this in a statement. You were then engaged in the Cultural Revolution and not, from my reading of it, emphasizing foreign adventures.

So that the mere fact that we are sitting in this room changes the objective basis of the original intervention in Indochina. For us who inherited the war our problem has been how to liquidate it in a way that does not affect our entire international position and -- this is not your primary concern -- the domestic stability in the United States. So we have genuinely attempted to end the war, and as you may or may not know, I personally started negotiations with the North Vietnamese in 1967 when I was only at the very periphery of the government, at a time when it was very unpopular, because I believed there had to be a political end to the war.

So from the time we came into office we have attempted to end the war. And we have understood, as I told you before, that the Democratic Republic

of Vietnam is a permanent factor on the Indochinese peninsula and probably the strongest entity. And we have had no interest in destroying it or even in defeating it. After the end of the war we will have withdrawn 12,000 miles. The Democratic Republic will still be 300 miles from Saigon. That is a reality which they don't seem to understand.

Prime Minister Chou: What they are paying attention to is your so-called Vietnamization of the war.

Dr. Kissinger: But they have a curious lack of self-confidence. What have we tried to do? Let's forget... they are masters at analyzing various points and forgetting the overall concepts. We have attempted to separate the military outcome from the political outcome so that we can disengage from the area and permit the local forces to shape their future. Curiously enough, the North Vietnamese have tried to keep us in there so that we would do their political work for them.

Last May 30, for example, we proposed that we would withdraw all our forces if there were a ceasefire and the return of prisoners. May 31 it was, not 30. Where would the North Vietnamese be today if they had accepted this? In a much better position than they are. But they didn't accept it. Why? Because they want us to overthrow the government and put their government in. We are not negotiating. I am trying to explain our thinking. The practical consequences of our proposals have been to get us out; the practical consequence of their proposals have been to keep us in.

They have asked us... there's only one demand they have made we have not met and cannot meet and will not meet, no matter what the price to our other relationships, and that is that we overthrow ourselves the people with whom we have been dealing and who, in reliance on us, have taken certain actions. This isn't because of any particular personal liking for any of the individuals concerned. It isn't because we want a pro-American government in Saigon. Why in the name of God would we want a pro-American government in Saigon when we can live with governments that are not pro-American in much bigger countries of Asia? It is because a country cannot be asked to engage in major acts of betrayal as a basis of its foreign policy.

Prime Minister Chou: You say withdrawal of forces. You mean total withdrawal of Army, Navy, Air Forces, bases and everything?

Dr. Kissinger: When I was here last year the Prime Minister asked me that question. I told him we wanted to leave some advisors behind. The Prime Minister then made a very eloquent statement on the consequences of what he called "leaving a tail behind." Largely as a result of that, we, within a month, changed our proposal so it now involves a total withdrawal of all our advisors in all of the categories which the Prime Minister now mentioned. We are prepared to withdraw all our forces.

Prime Minister Chou: How about your armed forces in Thailand?

Dr. Kissinger: We are not prepared to remove our armed forces from Thailand, but under the conditions of ceasefire we would agree not to use these forces in Vietnam. And they would certainly be reduced to the level they had before this offensive started if peace is made.

To explain what I mean by this act of betrayal, even though I know this is somewhat painful, Mr. Prime Minister, but I want to explain: If when I first came here in July the Prime Minister had said, "we will not talk to you until you overthrow Chiang Kai-shek and put someone in there we can accept," then, dedicated as I am to Sino-American friendship, we could not have done it. It would have been impossible. The secret to our relationship is we were prepared to start an evolution in which the Prime Minister has expressed great confidence. Such an act would totally dishonor us and make us a useless friend of yours, because if we would do this to one associate we would do it to anybody.

But to return to the question about Thailand. In every important decision, as we discussed, there are at least two aspects, the decision and the trend. At the dinner the other day with those five Americans the Prime Minister referred to the 1954 situation. And in 1954, whatever happened, whatever document we signed, the reality was that Secretary Dulles was looking for excuses to intervene, because he was convinced there was a Chinese communist conspiracy to take over Asia. We are looking for the opposite excuses.

Prime Minister Chou: The outcome of Dulles' policy was the conclusion of a number of pacts and treaties, but now you want to abide by them. Isn't that a continuation of his policy?

Dr. Kissinger: It is on one level. But on the other, when we make an agreement in Indochina, it will be to make a new relationship. If we can make it with Peking why can we not do it with Hanoi? What has Hanoi done to us that would make it impossible to, say in ten years, establish a new relationship?

Prime Minister Chou: If after you withdraw and the prisoners of war are repatriated, if after that, civil war again breaks out in Vietnam, what will you do? It will probably be difficult for you to answer that.

Dr. Kissinger: It is difficult for me to answer partly because I don't want to give encouragement for this to happen. But let me answer it according to my best judgment. For example, if our May 8 proposal were accepted, which has a four-month withdrawal and four months for exchange of prisoners, if in the fifth month the war starts again, it is quite possible we would say this was just a trick to get us out and we cannot accept this.

If the North Vietnamese, on the other hand, engage in a serious negotiation with the South Vietnamese, and if after a longer period it starts again after we were all disengaged, my personal judgment is that it is much less likely that we will go back again, much less likely.

Prime Minister Chou: You said this last year too.

Dr. Kissinger: Last year if they had accepted our proposal it would now have been a year. If the North Vietnamese could transform this . . .

Prime Minister Chou: You said last year after you have withdrawn and the prisoners of war have been returned then as to what happens then, that is their affair. In principle you mentioned that.

Dr. Kissinger: In principle we are attempting to turn . . . it, of course, depends on the extent to which outside countries intervene. If one can transform this from an international conflict in which major world powers are involved, to a local conflict, then I think what the Prime Minister said is very possible. But this is our intention and since we will be making that policy, it is some guarantee.

Now, the difficulty has been that, for very understandable reasons, the North Vietnamese -- for whom as I have said to the Prime Minister many times, I have great respect -- are acting out the epic poem of their struggle for independence through the centuries and particularly re-enacting their experiences of 20 years ago.

Prime Minister Chou: If we counted from the end of the Second World War, 27 years, and President Ho Chi Minh died for this cause before it was completed. President Ho Chi Minh was a revolutionary, but also a humanitarian and a patriot. I was well acquainted with President Ho Chi Minh. I had known him for 50 years. I have joined the Communist Party now for 50 years and knew him 50 years.

Dr. Kissinger: I never met him, but I knew a Frenchman in whose house Ho Chi Minh lived. In fact, I sent that Frenchman to talk to Ho Chi Minh in 1967 -- that's how I became involved in Indochinese affairs.

Prime Minister Chou: Mr. Salisbury has also been to Hanoi. But he being a correspondent is in a different position from you.

Dr. Kissinger: It is the one place I have not been secretly.

Prime Minister Chou: That shortcoming might be the reason it hasn't been solved yet. Maybe if you had been there you might be more clear about the situation.

Dr. Kissinger: I am clear about the situation. It's the solution I am not clear about.

Prime Minister Chou: You have a new expert. Mr. Smyser had intestinal troubles.

Dr. Kissinger: But he recovered just before you served Peking Duck. (laughter)

Prime Minister Chou: He is still with you?

Dr. Kissinger: No, he went back to the university for a year, but he will come back after the year.

Prime Minister Chou: This system of yours is good, to have your staff go away to a university for a year and then come back.

Dr. Kissinger: I don't think Smyser will work again on Vietnam problems. Maybe there won't be Vietnam problems to work on any more.

Prime Minister Chou: Not necessarily. The Saigon problem is really too much of a headache. And this is one of the bitter fruits left over by Dulles which is not yet solved. It was a tragedy created by Dulles and you are even now tasting the bitter fruits of that.

Dr. Kissinger: I agree with the Prime Minister that what we face now in Vietnam is a tragedy.

Prime Minister Chou: You could shake yourselves free from it.

Dr. Kissinger: No. It depends on what the Prime Minister means by shaking ourselves free. The withdrawal we can do; the other demands we cannot do. Let me complete my analysis of the situation.

I recognize the problem is objectively extremely difficult, and I admit we have demonstrated for 20 years that we do not understand Vietnamese conditions very well, but the North Vietnamese Government has also made a solution extremely complicated.

First, I have negotiated 13 times now . . . eight times with Le Duc Tho; five times with Xuan Thuy. What is the primary use when I negotiate? My primary use is to be able to go to the essence of the problem and to get a big decision made -- that is my primary use in these negotiations. I am useful for big decisions, not for a series of little moves. The little moves should be done by the diplomats.

In the 13 meetings I have had with them they have engaged me in a petty guerrilla war in which we were acting on the level of middle-level lawyers in which we were looking for escape clauses in particular phrases. Time and again I have said to Le Duc Tho -- I know this is painful for you incidentally, Mr. Prime Minister, and I know you are a man of principle who will stick to his allies, but I am trying to explain -- let us set an objective, say in six months we will do this and that, and then we will find a tactical solution. And time and again they have rejected this. Time and again they have done so for essentially two reasons. One is that their fear of trickery is such that they spend more time working on the escape clauses than on the principal provisions of any agreement. And it forces them to demand immediately what we might be prepared to have happen over a period of years.

And secondly, the nature of their strategy. What is their strategy? Their strategy is to pursue a military campaign designed, on the one hand, to undermine the Saigon government, which I understand, and on the other hand, a combination of a military and psychological campaign designed to undermine the American government, and that we can never accept. They have never been able to make up their mind whether they want to settle with us or to destroy us, or at least to put us in a position where we lose all public support. And therefore, they will make no concession, or have up to now made no concession, to me or any other American negotiator, because they are afraid that if there is the solution of even the most minimal problem, we will then gain the public support and therefore they will not gain their principal objective of undermining our public support to paralyze us.

This is the real reason that the May 2 meeting between me and Le Duc Tho failed. When they thought they were winning, their real strategy was to show the American people that there was no hope, and therefore to force us into a dilemma where we had no choice but to yield to their demands. This is why they deal with us about the prisoners, not through the government or the Red Cross, but through American opposition groups whose significance they don't understand at all.

Prime Minister Chou: But it wasn't right for you either to raid their prisoner of war camp.

Dr. Kissinger: Well, first of all, I think that's a different proposition, and I would be glad to debate this with the Prime Minister, but I am not saying every move we have made in the war has necessarily been right. I am saying we are facing a situation now which needs solution. But I admit -- though I don't in this case -- but we have made mistakes. This is why now they are making a tremendous issue about resuming plenary sessions, and yet any thoughtful person realizes that it doesn't make any difference whether there are plenary sessions when we have nothing to talk about. Until there is a program to negotiate at the plenary sessions, they are pure propaganda and mean nothing.

We are prepared to resume plenary sessions just to finish that particular issue, but they will fail certainly if we do not get a new basis for negotiating, and if they do not change their tactics. We attempt -- and the Prime Minister will have his own judgment on this -- we believe that in dealing with other countries if one does not deal with a country morally and honorably, even if one gains tactical advantage, one loses in the long run. But it is difficult to negotiate if one is engaged with a country which is subverting your authority.

Now, let us talk about the North Vietnamese offensive. Without that offensive we would have withdrawn more and more troops, and more and more aircraft. We had no intention whatever of increasing the scale of our military activities. On the contrary, we would progressively have reduced them. But the North Vietnamese offensive put us in a position in which they wanted to use the fact of an election in the United States to blackmail us into meeting a demand which we cannot meet. We can meet all others, but not that.

Now, what is the situation today? I know what has to be said in propaganda, but it is my judgment that the North Vietnamese offensive is effectively stopped and has no military prospects this year. They have not succeeded in generating this tremendous protest movement in the United States, despite the people who walk around with Vietnamese flags, which is not many. At the time of Cambodia there were 200,000 protesters in Washington, and they couldn't stop what we were doing. After May 8 they tried to get 200,000 and they got 5,000.

So where are we? The only hope for the North Vietnamese is a victory for McGovern in November. We do not believe that this will happen. The latest polls show the President 20 points ahead of McGovern.

Prime Minister Chou: Even if McGovern were to be elected, could he get rid of Thieu?

Dr. Kissinger: I am not sure.

Prime Minister Chou: Not necessarily.

Dr. Kissinger: Not necessarily.

Prime Minister Chou: My view is the same as yours.

Dr. Kissinger: And don't forget we will be in office seven more months.

Prime Minister Chou: That is another matter. Even if he were to be elected would it be possible for him to give up supporting the Saigon regime?

Dr. Kissinger: It is easier to talk about it than to do it.

Prime Minister Chou: It is a pitfall which was created by you which is difficult for you to get out of.

Dr. Kissinger: That is true.

Prime Minister Chou: Whether it be President Nixon or McGovern or Ed Kennedy. Even if you were to be President it would be difficult. But it is a great pity you are not qualified.

Dr. Kissinger: Let us run Miss Tang.

Prime Minister Chou: Even she could not get out.

Dr. Kissinger: If she ran and made me her advisor maybe we could do something together.

Prime Minister Chou: One knot tied into another, and most disadvantageous.

Dr. Kissinger: That is true. But the forces that would elect McGovern would bring about a reorientation of American policy not only on Vietnam, but certainly on the subjects of the Soviet Union, India, Japan, as you can read in the New York Times editorial. I don't have to explain. If you read the tendency of the New York Times, when I threatened to cancel the Moscow summit, for example, or during the India situation when it was impossible to get them to print any other point of view, even in the news columns, you will get some feeling for the reality of what would happen if that happened. I will speak realistically. Everyone is in favor of a Sino-American relationship. There is no fundamental opposition to this any more. But the practical consequences that people are prepared to draw from it and the actual decisions they are willing to make other than sentimental affirmations or cultural exchange, that will differ enormously.

And therefore, any intervention in our domestic politics has two consequences. First, it forces us to react much more violently than we would have in normal circumstances, and second, it has consequences which go far beyond Vietnam and therefore make it a much more general problem than just the Vietnam problem.

And therefore, we believe that the war must now be ended for everybody's sake. If the war continues, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam will surely lose more than it can possibly gain. Its military offensive has stopped; its domestic situation is difficult; and we are forced to do things to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam that go beyond anything that is commensurate with our objective. We don't want them to be weak. And I see no prospect for them to reverse the situation. And we want to end the war because it requires now an effort out of

proportion to the objectives and because it involves us in discussions with countries with whom we have much more important business.

If we could talk to them the way we talk to you, Mr. Prime Minister -- I don't mean in words but in attitude -- I think we could settle the war. As a practical matter, we think the quickest way to end it now is on the basis of ceasefire, withdrawal, and return of prisoners. That's the least complicated and leaves the future open. We are prepared in addition to declare our neutrality in any political contest that develops and in terms of foreign policy we are prepared to see South Vietnam adopt a neutral foreign policy.

We can also go back to our proposal the President made last January 25 and which was formally presented on January 27, and perhaps modify this or that provision and that involved political discussions also. But in practice, political discussions take forever. And the practical consequence of any political solution is either it will confirm the existing government in Saigon, which is unacceptable to Hanoi, or it will overthrow the existing government in Saigon, which is unacceptable to us. And it is almost impossible to think of a possible compromise between these two.

So we should find a way to end the war, to stop it from being an international situation, and then permit a situation to develop in which the future of Indochina can be returned to the Indochinese people. And I can assure you that this is the only object we have in Indochina, and I do not believe this can be so different from yours. We want nothing for ourselves there. And while we cannot bring a communist government to power, if, as a result of historical evolution it should happen over a period of time, if we can live with a communist government in China, we ought to be able to accept it in Indochina.

The Prime Minister caught me on a particularly loquacious day. (Laughter)

Prime Minister Chou: So let us conclude today. As for tomorrow morning, I will first consult our Vice Chairman, Yeh Chien-ying, and then maybe tomorrow morning you will have some discussions with him. I heard that you would like to have a picnic at the Summer Palace.

Dr. Kissinger: I was asked what I wanted to see in addition to the Forbidden City. I said I thought the Summer Palace was so beautiful I would like to see it again. But the idea of a picnic is an addition which is charming but was not suggested by me. It is an idea of your protocol department. But work comes before picnics.