

May 10, 1982

**Excerpts of Talks between Leading Comrades and
Foreign Guests (No. 5)**

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Summary:

A summary of Premier Zhao Ziyang's talk about Chinese foreign policy with Guinea-Bissau Chairman João Bernardo Vieira.

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During Premier Zhao Ziyang's meeting with Chairman Vieira of Guinea-Bissau on April 19 [1982], [Premier Zhao] talked about our foreign policy and the economic and political situation in China. The main points are as follows:

I. On Our Foreign Policy

The basic basis for our foreign policy is still the theory of the division of the three worlds put forward by Chairman Mao Zedong.

China's foreign policy can be summed up in three basic points:

First, strengthen solidarity and cooperation with Third World countries. China will always belong to the Third World and stand firmly with them. China firmly supports the struggle of Third World countries against imperialism, colonialism, hegemony and racial discrimination, and the just struggle of all peoples. China firmly supports the just cause of the Third World countries to develop their national economies and to gain political independence through economic independence. China has been doing all its capabilities to actively develop economic cooperation with Third World countries. Together with the Third World countries, we are fighting for the change of the unreasonable international economic order and the establishment of a new and fair international economic order. We firmly support the efforts of the Group of 77 to establish a new international economic order.

Second, oppose hegemony. China believes that the root cause of the tension and turmoil in the world arises from the struggle between the two superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States. The main danger comes from the Soviet Union because the Soviet Union is attacking and the United States is defending. The Soviet Union has sent troops to the Czech Republic and dispatched troops to occupy Afghanistan.

The Soviet Union has supported Vietnam's invasion and intensified its struggle in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. The reason why China focused its opposition to hegemony on the Soviet Union was that it was on the offensive everywhere, under the flag of socialism and support for the struggles of the Third World people, deceiving them by pretending to be a "natural friend" of the developing countries. China's opposition to the Soviet Union does not mean in any way that the United States is not hegemonic, nor does it mean that China does not oppose British hegemony. China opposes both Soviet hegemony and U.S. hegemony.

China's foreign policy is principled and independent. In the Middle East, the U.S. stubbornly supports Israel and is an enemy of the Arab people; in Latin America, it supports reactionary dictatorial regimes and suppresses the anti-imperialist national democratic movement of the people; in Korea, it refuses to withdraw its troops from South Korea and obstructs the peaceful reunification of Korea; with regard to China, the U.S. actually insists upon its hegemony, continuing right up to the present to sell weapons to Taiwan, treating Taiwan as its unsinkable aircraft carrier in the Pacific Ocean. China is opposed to the Soviet hegemony, but also to U.S. hegemony. We are firmly opposed to the U.S. hegemony wherever it is exercised, and we support all the countries that suffer from it. China's solidarity with third world countries does not mean that China seeks to sow divisions amongst them.

China does not rank any country according to its attitude toward the Soviet Union. China is not against some Third World countries receiving aid from the Soviet Union, and it is good that they receive some aid from the Soviet Union as long as it is possible. We are not in any way prejudiced against them or dislike them, and we do not regard them as pro-Soviet countries. However, from our own experience of dealing with the Soviet Union, we would like to remind our friends to be vigilant when receiving Soviet aid and not to be fooled, because the Soviet Union often has ulterior motives in giving you aid. We fully understand that some Third World countries, because of their different status and situation, have focused their struggle upon the United States and need some assistance from the USSR.

Some countries, for the sake of national independence and liberation, regard the United States as the main enemy in their struggle. This is only natural and we support it. However, we should pay attention to the fact that we should guard against wolves at the front door and defend ourselves against attacks by the tigers at the back door. The history of international struggle is full of such lessons.

To be clear, there are two exceptions, one is Vietnam and the other is Cuba. These two countries have in fact become tools of Soviet hegemonism, aggression and expansionism.

Third, maintain world peace. The purpose of China's foreign policy is to maintain world peace. China, like Guinea-Bissau, is faced with the serious and arduous task of economic construction and raising the living standards of its people, and needs a long-term peaceful international environment to accomplish this. Whether world peace can be maintained depends not on our subjective wishes but on our struggle, so we need to strengthen solidarity and cooperation with the Third World countries.

The general policy of China's foreign policy can be summarized in three sentences: strengthening solidarity and cooperation with the Third World countries, opposing hegemony, and maintaining world peace.

Over the past 30 years since the founding of the People's Republic of China, China has made great achievements in various fields, basically solving the problem of feeding and clothing one billion people. We have carried out large-scale construction projects, basically established an independent and complete national economic system and laid the foundations of heavy industry. But the achievements we have made are not commensurate with the labor of our people. We have had some major setbacks in economic construction. One was the Great Leap Forward at the end of the 1950s; the other was the chaos of the decade of the "Cultural Revolution".

[underlined in pencil in text]

Summing up the lessons of those economic setbacks, we can say that we were too hasty in drawing up our requirements for economic construction and that our policies were too radical. Our ambitions were out of proportion to our capabilities so as a result we had to reorganize. We had to retreat, accepting that we had incurred serious losses and wasted time, having lost the initiative and lapsed into a passive state. The policy was too radical. It often damped down the enthusiasm of the people. After the end of the decade of turmoil, we made these same mistakes again in 1978. The economy was stagnant after ten years of turmoil and so, anxious to upgrade the economy, we were again too ambitious. We imported too much technology and equipment, exceeding the financial and material resources of the country. This led to fiscal deficits and an increase in the money supply that resulted in inflation. The crisis that we then found ourselves in forced us to carry out economic adjustments starting in 1980 so we cut infrastructure spending by 30 percent. These determined economic measures reduced our economic growth rate. This basically eliminated fiscal deficits and stabilized prices so that the national economy became basically stable. From the first quarter of this year, economic growth has started to rebound and we are back again on the path of steady growth. (underlined) At the beginning of the implementation of the adjustment policy, there were some different views among the cadres and the people, but now they all see clearly that the adjustment policy is correct.

During the period of adjustment, in addition to reducing infrastructure spending, we made appropriate relaxation in our policies and adopted some flexible measures to mobilize the workers and peasants. Our country is a socialist country, with universal collective ownership. However, this has been done too rigidly in the past.

Now, under the premise that universal and collective ownership is absolutely dominant, an economic system that allows multiple forms of ownership, such as universal, collective and individual, exists. China's implementation of economic planning was too centralized and too rigid. This affected the enthusiasm of factories and the rural areas. Now, on the premise of maintaining a planned economy, we are expanding the autonomy of enterprises, expanding the autonomy of production brigades, giving full play to the enthusiasm and initiative of grassroots units, and combining the unified state plan with the autonomy of production units. These policies have achieved very good results.

The situation in rural areas has been very good in the past few years, mainly because the enthusiasm of peasants has been mobilized. After the socialist transformation of our countryside, the peasants have organized themselves and become members of the people's commune. This path is completely correct and is the way to go. However, after they were organized, they were too rigid and the distribution was egalitarian for a long time, which affected the enthusiasm of the peasants. The remuneration of peasants' labor was not closely related to the results of their labor. In the past few years, the group or individual production responsibility system has been implemented, which has achieved very good results, that is, under the premise of insisting on collective ownership of the means of production, the group and individual contracting systems have been adopted. Thus the remuneration of group and individual labor is tied to the fruits of their labor. This not only brings into play the advantages of the collective, but also mobilizes group and individual production effort.

Last year, the Chinese Communist Party held the Sixth Plenary Session of the Central Committee which summed up our historical experience since the founding of the country. At present, the political situation in China is the best since the founding of the country, and we are doing three major things in parallel with economic construction: streamlining institutions, overcoming bureaucracy and improving efficiency; combating criminal activities in the economic field; and promoting spiritual civilization. While implementing the policy of opening up, it is important to prevent the corruption of Western capitalist ideas and to maintain a socialist social atmosphere in the country. This is very important for carrying out the "Four Cardinal Principles". The work I have just discussed is proceeding successfully.