

April 30, 1979

**Notes on a Meeting in the Great People's Palace in
Peking on 30 April 1979 at 9 A.M**

Citation:

"Notes on a Meeting in the Great People's Palace in Peking on 30 April 1979 at 9 A.M", April 30, 1979, Wilson Center Digital Archive, S-0987-0008-14, United Nations Archives and Records Management Section. Obtained for CWIHP by Charles Kraus.
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Summary:

Huang Hua says that "the Vietnamese were the Cubans of Asia but rather more dangerous." In addition to commenting on the situation in Indochina, Huang weighs in on Soviet and Cuban policies toward the Third World, events in the Middle East, and China's involvement in the United Nations.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

RAH
2/8

CONFIDENTIAL

FMG/MS bf:BA/AR

Trip File
Xref: China

NOTES ON A MEETING IN THE GREAT PEOPLE'S PALACE
IN PEKING ON 30 APRIL 1979 AT 9 A.M.

Present: The Secretary-General

- Rafeeuddin Ahmed
- Ferdinand Mayrhofer-Grünbdhel *gm*
- François Giuliani

Foreign Minister Huang Hua

- Mr. Chang Wen Ching, Vice Minister of the Foreign Ministry
- Mr. Lin Ching, Director of the Department of International Organization, Conferences, Treaty and Law
- Mr. Tien Chin, Deputy Director of the Department of International Organization, Conferences, Treaty and Law
- Mr. Fu Shun Ho, Vice Director of the Protocol Department, Foreign Ministry
- Mr. Yang Hu Chan, Chief of Division, Department of International Organization, Conferences, Treaty and Law
- Mr. Chang Teh Wei, Chief of Division, the Asian Department, Foreign Ministry
- One official

The Foreign Minister welcomed the Secretary-General, termed his visit as timely and expressed great interest in hearing the Secretary-General's views on some of the world problems.

The Secretary-General expressed gratitude for the invitation to come to China and appreciation for China's growing interest in the work of the world Organization. In

the course of his tour d'horizon, he gave his views on the recent developments concerning the Middle East (the peace-treaty between Egypt and Israel) and the future role of the UN in this regard, on the state of affairs in southern Africa (southern Rhodesia and Namibia) and in particular on the developments in Indo-China, which he said were of great concern to the United Nations.

Regarding Indo-China he recapitulated what had happened in the Security Council in January and February and underlined the apprehension of the ASEAN countries over Viet Nam's policies. The fear of the ASEAN countries was in the first place based upon the fact that Viet Nam had invaded Kampuchea, after Prime Minister Pham Van Dong had given what the ASEAN countries had believed to be assurances that Viet Nam would not do so. Although there was hardly any support for the policies of the Pol-Pot regime, it was generally felt that the interference by force in internal affairs was not justified. The Secretary-General then related in detail the explanations given to him by Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, stating in particular that Kampuchea was "a different and special case". The Prime Minister also had raised the question of Ambassador Prasith and had - for the time being - rejected the idea of an Indo-China conference. He had refused to accept any linkage between the sino-vietnamese conflict and the Kampuchean matter. Viet Nam was afraid of a second attack by China but would continue to negotiate with patience and perseverance. While the Prime Minister had said that there was no question of a formal UN good offices mission, he had welcomed any assistance which the Secretary-General would be able to give in a personal capacity.

The Secretary-General also raised the Laotian complaint about the alleged Chinese occupation of a part of Laos as well

as the refugee problem. The Malaysian Foreign Minister had asked him to check with the Chinese Government whether it would be ready to receive some of the refugees of Chinese origin.

Foreign Minister Huang Hua thanked for the Secretary-General's exposé and in particular for the detailed presentation of the Indochina problem which had been very useful to him.

In his view the international situation was tense. The factors making for war had increased. The US was taking a defensive position while the Soviet Union - as a result of the change of the balance of power - assumed an offensive posture. The Western countries harboured illusions about détente, disarmament and technological exchange with the USSR. This was naïve and had led to a greater imbalance for the West. How could the results of the European security conference be reconciled with the presence of Cuban forces in Africa? The Disarmament agreements which had been reached so far had reduced the American military superiority to a balance of power which would soon tilt in favour of the Soviet Union. The experience of the last twelve years had shown that "the more you talk about disarmament, the more armament takes place and the worse is the position of the West". It was no use to try to check the Soviet Union's aggressive designs through disarmament negotiations. Practical measures had to be taken, such as the recent Sino-Japanese treaty, the normalisation between China and the US, and in particular the Chinese action against Viet Nam's expansionist policy which it pursued in collusion with the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union's tactic in resorting to détente, disarmament and economic "co-operation" had succeeded in lulling Europe but meanwhile this super power had increased its activity at the flanks. Cuba was being used as a tool to intervene in Angola, Zaire and Ethiopia. The Cubans even did not hesitate to intervene in the internal affairs of this latter State (Eritrea) with a view to obtain Soviet control of the Red Sea. The Soviet aggression extended on towards Western Asia; Yemen, Afghanistan and Iran (taking advantage of the dissatisfaction of the Iranian population). It exerted its influence in India and Pakistan in order to fulfill its traditional objective of continuing its drive South towards the Indian Ocean. Capitalizing on the minority problem in Pakistan, it tried to dismember this State further. Through a series of treaties it wanted to tie some of these countries to the Warsaw Pact aggressive alliance (e.g. Ethiopia, Afghanistan). Only recently the Soviet Union had attempted to involve the Warsaw Pact in areas outside its hegemony. However, Rumania had objected vigorously.

The aggressive policy of Viet Nam was a reflection of the Soviet attitude. It was necessary for the Third World and the West to build a common front which would oppose Soviet expansion whenever necessary. The fact that a small country like Cuba could maintain a force of 50,000 in Africa and the Middle East was very dangerous and the lack of reaction on the part of the West encouraged the Soviet Union. At the same time it increased the insecurity of the Third World countries. In this part of the world also, the forces calling for opposition to the Soviet-Cuban aggression became more outspoken (e.g. Tanzania's policy with regard to Uganda).

Middle East:

The Middle East was a primary theatre of the Soviet Union's efforts to realize its drive for hegemony. Owing to the region's important strategic location and its oil resources whoever controlled it would have a decisive influence in the world. Because of apparent deficiencies in the treaty between Egypt and Israel, many countries - also those who were friendly with Egypt - had been forced to take the hard line of the radicals. The treaty was far from settling the Middle East problem, but one would have to see how things developed. The US and the West would have to exert strong pressure on Israel to take a reasonable attitude. If the US and the West made Sadat yield on his three points (overall settlement, Palestinian rights, withdrawal of Israel) Egypt would become isolated and Sadat's position very weak. China always supported the just demands of the Arab countries and the Palestinian people. If its newspapers had reported about the treaty without critical comments, it was because China understood the difficult situation of President Sadat and his country which had to bear the greatest sacrifice and desperately needed peace in order to improve its economic situation. China was a friend of both sides in the inter-Arab quarrel and it would continue to work for Arab unity.

Indo-China:

Viet Nam had always wanted to exercise control over Indo-China. As soon as the war against the US had ended, it started to work for this dream. It was successful in Laos but met with resistance in Kampuchea. Therefore it had to resort to open aggression.

Taking advantage of the Vietnamese ambition, the Soviet Union had instigated this aggression and had given her massive support. In her eyes Indo-China should be turned into a Soviet military base for further action in Southeast Asia.

China could not condone the Vietnamese hegemonist ambition. Viet Nam had therefore systematically impaired the relations between the two countries.

The Vietnamese were the Cubans of Asia but rather more dangerous. During the limited border conflict, China had captured many documents which proved that Viet Nam regarded itself as the third military power in the world and as "invincible". Even during the war against the US, Viet Nam had prepared for the aggression against China, although it had received massive support from this latter country.

With regard to the negotiations between the two countries, the bone of contention was that Viet Nam wanted to restrict the talks to the boundary dispute with China, while China believed that a number of other matters were involved.

Viet Nam said that it was non-aligned and peaceful, at the same time, however, it formed a military alliance with a super power and allowed its territory to be used as a base for action against other Asian Countries. Of course, Viet Nam should withdraw its troops from Kampuchea. The Vietnamese theory that Laos and Kampuchea were special cases was "a copy of the Brezhnev doctrine on limited sovereignty".

The pattern of the Soviet strategy was a) to push Southeast from the Persian Gulf, b) to use Indo-China as a base for a drive towards Southeast Asia (Viet Nam had already directly threatened Thailand) and c) to join the two drives by assuming control of the Malacca straits.

That China should occupy a part of Laos was a lie which was concocted by the Soviet Union and Viet Nam.

With its intervention in Viet Nam, China had succeeded "to explode the myth of this country's invincibility". China was very skeptical of Viet Nam's sincerity in the negotiations.

United Nations:

China was satisfied with the co-operation between its mission and the Secretary-General as well as the various UN bodies. It hoped that this co-operation, based on the principles of the UN Charter, would continue to develop. The Foreign Minister expressed appreciation for the appointment of Mr. Bi Jilong as Under-Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development.

The Secretary-General stated that the United Nations was interested to continue the constructive co-operation which had been established with China.
