

**October 13, 1972**

**Telex from Department Head van Well, 'China Visit  
by the Foreign Minister'**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

In a meeting with Foreign Minister Walter Scheel, Zhou Enlai expressed support for West Germany's proposal to join the United Nations, discussed European security, and the China's mistrust of the Soviet Union.

**Credits:**

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**Contents:**

Translation - English

Department Head van Well, currently Beijing, to Foreign Office

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Telex Nr. 130

Citissime

Sent: October 13, 1972, 17:35 hours[1]

Subject: China Visit by the Foreign Minister[2]

here: talks with Zhou Enlai (October 12, 1972)

Reference: Telex No. 119 from October 12, 1972, File Number: 313 (I B 5)-82.92.08  
Strictly Confidential[3]

1) On the afternoon of October 12 the Foreign Minister and the entire delegation were invited on short notice to a two-hour meeting with Zhou Enlai in the Great Hall of the People. Participants from the Chinese side were Foreign Minister Ji Pengfei, Minister Assistant Chang Wen-ding. and Department Head Wang Tung.

Zhou turned out as an alert, sovereign politician. Only his way of speaking told of his age (74 years). Although the conversation was not structured systematically, due to Zhou's vivid argumentation it left a lasting impression with all participants.

2) Germany - China:

a) Most important result: Zhou assured that China will support our proposal for accession to the United Nations if we will submit it. Prior to that, our Foreign Minister remarked both German states can become members at the same time only. Zhou took note of this without objections.

b) Zhou pointedly asked about the Moscow visit by State Secretary [Egon] Bahr[4] and thus probably criticized indirectly its coinciding with the Foreign Minister's visit to Beijing. Zhou asked with interest about our negotiations with the GDR and asked which issues are still causing problems. When the Foreign Minister talked about the two parts of one nation, Zhou said one probably[5] talks about two states. Some even talk about two states and two nations[6] as well; he does not understand that. China is not in favor of splitting up nations. Classes would rather disappear than nations. He agreed with the remark of our Foreign Minister that unification of the divided German nation would probably only occur during the course of a longer process. The tendency of the superpowers to divide nations, as a consequence of their policy of influence spheres (he mentioned Korea, Vietnam, China, Cambodia, Laos, Pakistan, Malaya, Palestine), would always create only new harm. With regard to terminological problems during the Bonn pre-talks[7], it was interesting that Zhou corrected himself upon a mentioning of "Westberlin" and added: "'Berlin (West)', if you so will." Remarkable was also a hint by Zhou concerning a certain correlation between the Ussuri incident in early March 1969[8] and the tensions around the [FRG] Federal President's election in Berlin.[9] After the Ussuri clash, the situation around Berlin would have calmed down.

c) Taiwan: On this subject Zhou remarked only in passing that the Federal Republic has no diplomatic relations with Taiwan. The Foreign Minister specified that we have no official relations.[10]

3) European

Zhou asked in detail about the state of European unification and in particular about Europe's defense readiness. The transfer of military sovereignty to the European Community would probably constitute the most difficult problem. Following a remark by the Foreign Minister that for a balanced security structure in Europe the presence of American forces is currently indispensable, Zhou stated: the Federal Republic of Germany as well as Japan probably still continue to need a nuclear umbrella; Gromyko's demand for the ban of all nuclear weapons[11] he qualified as hypocritical.

#### 4) Soviet Union

Zhou as well displayed insurmountable mistrust against the Soviet Union, though he nuanced Chinese statements heard so far: China wants to solve border problems through negotiations, not by force (Foreign Minister Ji Pengfei had yesterday denounced any agreement with the Soviet Union as a "scrap of paper").[12] However, he would not make any territorial claims because of the unequal treaties. [13] China would not think about provocations, though it continues with its defense preparations.

#### 5) On the program for the visit

Zhou conveyed greetings from Mao and apologized that he cannot receive our Foreign Minister.

[signed] van Well

Section I B 5, Vol. 660 A

[1] Submitted to Division Heads Simon and Diesel as well as Ambassador Roth on October 16, 1972. Submitted to Counselor Heimsoeth on October 17, 1972. Submitted to Department Head von Staden on October 18, 1972. Submitted to VLR I Bleck and VLR Meyer-Landrut,

[2] Foreign Minister Scheel visited the People's Republic of China from October 10 to 14, 1972. See on this also [AAPD] documents 329 and 333.

[3] See also document 328.

[4] State Secretary Bahr from the Federal Chancellery held talks in Moscow on October 9 and 10, 1972 with Soviet Foreign Minister [Andrey] Gromyko and the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, [Leonid] Brezhnev. See on this documents 317 and 320.

[5] This term was added later upon instruction by Department Head van Well. Deleted got instead: "not" ["nicht"]. See document 333.

[6] The phrase "some even talk ... two nations" was added later upon instruction by Department Head van Well. Deleted got instead: "Some even talk about states and two nations." See document 333.

[7] From August 21 to September 29, 1972 Department Head von Staden held talks with Chinese journalist [and Bonn Xinhua bureau chief] Wang Shu about the establishment of diplomatic relations between West Germany and the People's Republic of China. On problems regarding the terminology for Berlin (West) see especially documents 254 and 283.

[8] In the night of March 2, 1969 Chinese forces occupied Damansky Island situated in the Ussuri border river. See AAPD 1969, I, document 96.

[9] On March 5, 1969 the West German Federal Assembly elected in Berlin (West) Gustav Heinemann as Federal President. On Soviet efforts to prevent the Federal President Election in Berlin (West) see AAPD 1969, I, documents 16 and 58.

[10] On the relationship between West Germany and the Republic of China (Taiwan) see document 312.

[11] On September 26, 1972 Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko declared before the U.N. General Assembly: "Our country believes that it is possible to eliminate or, at least, to reduce drastically the danger of a conflict between states provoking a nuclear catastrophe. That can be done if renunciation of the use of force in international relations is elevated to the level of international law and of at the same time - I repeat, at the same time - the use of nuclear weapons is prohibited. [...] For those reasons, and because it is aware of its responsibility as a permanent member of the Security Council, the Soviet Union has submitted for consideration at the twenty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly the item entitled "Non-use of force in international relations and permanent prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons". See UN General Assembly, 27th Session, Plenary Meeting, 2040th meeting, p. 7. For a German transcript of the speech see Europa Archiv 1972, D 600-606 (excerpt).

[12] See statements by the Chinese Foreign Minister from October 12, 1972; document 329, footnote 5.

[13] With the Treaties of Aigun and Tientsin (1858), as well as with the Trade Agreement of Beijing (1860), borders between Russia and China were settled this way that territories north of the Amur and east of the Ussuri fell to Russia. In dispute was especially the only partially agreed border line from the Treaty of Ili respectively St. Petersburg (1881) pertaining to the area of Xinkiang and Turkestan. While the Chinese government insisted on viewing the treaties as "unequal" and therefore in need of renegotiation, the USSR referred to the validity of the treaties and was of the opinion that an open border question does not exist. See on this issue the memorandum by LR I [Erwin] Wickert from March 20, 1963; Sector II A 3, Vol. 62.