

February 25, 1964

Record of Conversation between Chen Yi and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

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Summary:

Chen Yi and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto conversation, focusing mainly on the Soviet Union's current foreign policy regarding India. Both Chen Yi and Bhutto criticize the Soviet Union's support for India. Bhutto complains that China and Pakistan are the "only countries that expose India" for their behavior. Both agree that Pakistan and China must work hard together to prevent India -- with its support from the US and Soviet Union -- from strengthening its influence over the Security Council, UN and Afro-Asian politics.

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Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

[...]

Regarding the Soviet Union's Current Foreign Policy

Chen Yi: In our early period, we had no experience in foreign relations, and we studied much from the Soviets; later, we discovered that we could not completely follow this practice since we could not accept the Soviet position on some matters. At the Geneva Conference [of 1954], the Soviets wanted us to agree to allow India to act on behalf of the Soviets and raise a resolution proposing the Soviets and the British chair the Conference—that is, they wanted us favor India. But, at the time, India's attitude was already bad, so we refused. The Conference began at 5 p.m., and at 12 p.m. that afternoon the Soviet representative came looking for us, wanting us to agree. We did not accept this, and said: if Cambodia, India and several other countries jointly raise a resolution taking the Soviets and the British as the Conference chair, then we will agree. Soviet-Yugoslav relations have also been repeatedly up-and-down. First, the Soviets said they were traitors, later they said things had improved, then they again said they were bad, and now they are willing to improve relations with them unconditionally. This is not having any standard between right and wrong.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto: The Soviet Union has greatly encouraged India's great power chauvinism. Khrushchev supports Nehru on disarmament, economics, and in the United Nations, makes it seem as though India is neutral and that it would be inappropriate for it to lean toward any country. The Soviets encourage India's lack of reason on this matter, while, at the same time, bringing about great confusion on the part of Afro-Asian countries, since the Soviets have influence in these emerging countries. At present, China and Pakistan are the only countries that expose India; Ceylon, Nepal, and Burma all have things to say, but do not dare speak. India's face and prestige will plummet if its behavior is exposed; after this, other countries might also express their grievances, including India's dependencies in Bhutan and Ceylon. We should work hard to unmask India's policy to Afro-Asian countries, and support those who have disputes with India allowing them not to feel afraid of exposing India. The Soviets want India to become a permanent member of the Security Council. If we do not work hard together, India might strengthen its influence in the Security Council, in the UN more broadly and over Afro-Asian politics. India might also never resolve its outstanding disputes with other countries, and countries like Bhutan and Ceylon will be unable to achieve sovereignty. At present, India's internal situation is very chaotic, so it is trying hard to strengthen its international position.

Chen: Yes. Soviet policy is essentially as you have described. India does not take seriously any other Afro-Asian countries. During the Conference, Nasser said Nehru's policy was mistaken; Ali Sabri said India was having a difficult time stabilizing its internal situation. China and the Soviet Union have differences on the India issue. The Soviet Union is currently in a very passive state and we cannot defend its methods; they only say that offering aid to India will not change the balance of power, it will only drag India toward it and prevent it from falling into the Western camp.

Bhutto: Soviet aid will change the balance of power between India and Pakistan, but the Soviets believe they can compete with the United States by offering economic aid to India—this is a mistaken view. If the US provides a large amount of money to India, India will lean towards the US and take the Soviet Union's money in the process. During every session of the Security Council, the US and the USSR engage in discussions proposing a motion of cooperation, like a family. But the grounds of their arguments don't have a leg to stand on; the US representative says do not censure India, then reaffirms the past decision of the UN resolution, because this will be met with the Soviet representative's veto; the Soviet representative then says, you do not have to force us to use our veto, we are willing to improve relations with Pakistan. But the real reason—and, on this point, the US is more candid than the USSR—is the "flirtation between Pakistan and China". I say to them, there is no "flirtation"; China

and Pakistan are neighboring countries; improving Sino-Pakistani relations is beneficial to peace in Asia and the world. We would not sacrifice Sino-Pakistani friendship to obtain one resolution; even if the Kashmir issue were to be solved, we would not thereafter abandon Sino-Pakistani friendship. I tell the Americans, I am willing to remind them that Pakistan is America's ally, but in reality it is India and the US that are extremely close.

Chen: India also does not support many of the Soviet Union's foreign actions; the Soviet Union's policy will certainly fall through. In Sino-Soviet discussions, the Soviets have nothing to say, they only say that aid could not possibly change the balance of power between China and India, but will only pull India away from leaning toward the US. At present, India is in the process of steadily losing its neutrality, and becoming America's satellite; even though Pakistan receives US aid, it is politically independent. India used its attack on China to receive US aid, whereas other countries obtain US aid in order to defend their independence. The Soviet Union cannot refute this; some Soviet diplomats have even said they agree with our view, but there is nothing they can do. Soviet policy toward the US is also flawed; the Soviets make so many concessions, but the US has no interest in the USSR-African countries have a much better understanding of this. This can all be corrected if we only have patience; by uniting to obstruct it, China and Pakistan can stop Indian expansion. Our friendship is not a measure of expedience. Just now you said, even if the Kashmir issue were to be resolved, our friendship would not be abandoned-I very much admire this. We are the same: even if the Taiwan issue were to be resolved, and if relations with India and the US were to be improved, and if we were to enter the United Nations, we could never forget about Pakistan. China has 15 years of history, the Party has 43 years of history; looking back on the past, we have never sold out a friend.

Bhutto says Sino-Pakistani mutual trust is very important; we must strengthen friendship, and proceed cautiously

Bhutto: Trust is very important. Premier Zhou said to our President that India and Pakistan both have Muslims, and so internal factors have international influence. India oppresses Muslims, and there have been 563 rebellions. These have had an impact on our bilateral relations. Even if Kashmir were to be resolved, India would still have 50 million Muslims and would likely treat them even more unfairly.

Chen: Muslims there wants liberation.

Bhutto: No, they just want equal treatment.

Chen: Yes, but the meaning of "liberation" is precisely not suffering oppression.

Bhutto: This is one of our important considerations. India says, even if Kashmir were to be resolved, Indo-Pakistani relations would still be difficult to improve; in this way, India uses this as an excuse for not resolving Kashmir. We instead argue that once Kashmir is resolved, India and Pakistan can peacefully coexist completely...

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