

November 11, 1958

**Premier Zhou's Report on the Current Situation and
Conflict in the Taiwan Region and the Chinese
People's Tasks in the Anti-Imperialist Fight**

Citation:

"Premier Zhou's Report on the Current Situation and Conflict in the Taiwan Region and the Chinese People's Tasks in the Anti-Imperialist Fight", November 11, 1958, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Fujian Provincial Archives, 101-12-160, 23-36. Translated by Simon Schuchat. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/290995>

Summary:

An internal speech given by Zhou Enlai during the 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Chun & Jane Chiu Family Foundation

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Premier Zhou's Report on the Current Situation and Conflict in the Taiwan Region and the Chinese People's Tasks in the Anti-Imperialist Fight

(November 11, 1958)

1. (Omitted)
2. (Omitted)
3. Strategy and Tactics for the Conflict in the Taiwan Straits Region

It has now been nearly 80 days since the start of bombardment of Jinmen on August 23. One should say that this fight has exposed the American imperialist paper tiger for what it is*. If one were to say the war to Resist America and Aid Korea was a war that exposed the paper tiger of American imperialism, then this war, although relatively small in scale, in essence, went further in exposing the American imperialist paper tiger. Although this battle was short, and smaller in scope, nevertheless it was somewhat more serious in nature. The people all over the world felt that, if the U.S. were to start a war, it could possibly become a world war, so they were very worried. Because on the Korea battlefield we were assisting the Korean people, and indirectly came into contact with American imperialism, but in the Taiwan Straits we were fighting directly with the U.S. But facts have already proven that the U.S. doesn't dare to start a war. This issue has proved even more clearly the correctness of the assertion that American imperialism is a paper tiger.

Below I will briefly discuss the situation, strategy, and tactics of the conflict in the Taiwan Straits:

This conflict has direct influence on three sides: America, Chiang [Kai-shek; Jiang Jieshi], and us; it is a triangular struggle. It also influences the whole world as a large triangle. Within Taiwan there are some people who want to return to the mainland, some people who want to go along with America, and the majority are wavering in the middle. Regardless whether it is a direct triangular conflict, whether it is the large triangle or the small triangle, its complexity, scope, and depth are clearly evident.

First let me talk about the U.S. side's policy. The United States in this instance is reactive, it did not foresee how the situation would develop after our bombardment of Jinmen. After we shelled Jinmen, the U.S. panicked. From the U.S. to Chiang Kai-Shek to the whole world, [everyone] received a false alarm, as if the world war was about to start. The U.S. scrambled to transfer troops from the Mediterranean and Pacific to the Taiwan Straits, and this action to instigate a war met opposition on all sides, including its own people, its allies, neutral countries and even the people of the socialist countries. Facing this kind of situation, the U.S. had no choice, but to finally set a policy, which was in fact a policy of retreat: get Chiang to withdraw from Jinmen and Mazu and use the Taiwan Straits to separate us. Its was a two-stage plan: the first stage was to isolate Taiwan, and the second stage was to establish a mandate over Taiwan. This was the true U.S. policy. After going through this bombardment of Jinmen, the U.S. had already learned a lesson, and felt that it would be better to break away from us. Because if it didn't it could be caught by us at any time. Just as the Chairman said, he's put the noose around his own neck and handed us the other end, so that the power to tighten or loosen is in our hands. This way he is completely reactive, and the only way to get out of this reactive position would be to adopt a withdrawal policy. But this move first of all encountered resistance from Chiang Kai-Shek, whose policy was completely the opposite. First, he wants to drag the U.S. into the water, get the U.S. to send troops to participate in the battle for Jinmen, and attack the mainland. This would have led to a Sino-American war. The U.S. understood this point very well. When Dulles went to Taiwan this time he said to Chiang Kai-Shek, you have become someone opposed by the entire world. You should declare to the people of the world that your policy is still going through changes. So the communique on the Dulles-Chiang talks should say: the mainland will be recovered through the Three People's Principles, and not by the use of force. Therefore, this contradiction between the U.S. and Chiang is antagonistic and is sharp. Second, Chiang wants to keep holding on to Jinmen and Mazu, thinking that as long as Jinmen and Mazu remain in his hands he still has a chance to start a war. Therefore, on October 20, on the eve of the Dulles-Chiang talks, we bombarded Jinmen, giving Chiang an opportunity to make his case. Chiang said, You see, how can

I withdraw with a war like this going on? Originally, before October 20, Dulles had fully prepared his talking points, and had pre-recorded them for the British Broadcasting Corporation, intending to force Chiang to withdraw from Jinmen and Mazu, but when he got to Alaska, our "shelling salute" had gone off, and as a result he couldn't quite raise the issue of withdrawing forces. So Dulles had to call Eisenhower at the last minute, and come up with one thing to say: don't use force, use the "Three People's Principles."

Why did Chiang want to hold on to and not abandon Jinmen and Mazu? Because, if he left, the U.S. would be able to separate Taiwan from the mainland and get rid of Chiang Kai-Shek. This matter is no secret, it is out in the open. Currently the anti-Chiang atmosphere being spread about in Hong Kong is quite thick, there is a little pamphlet entitled "To Oppose the Communists it's necessary to Oppose Chiang first," which in fact was put together by the U.S. CIA. This pamphlet propagandizes how Chiang Ching-kuo [Jiang Jingguo] is a "Communist," and Chiang Kai-Shek is also someone who "supports and allies with Communists". On the cover is a cartoon of Chiang Kai-Shek and Chiang Ching-kuo holding the five-star red flag [of the PRC], which Chiang Ching-kuo wants to raise, and Chiang Kai-Shek is saying, "No hurry, wait until we've finished making use of the U.S. and then we can raise it." Now the Americans are very worried that "Prince Chiang" [Ching-kuo] might switch flags the way that Zhang Xueliang did. From this one can see the contradictions between the U.S. and Chiang. There are still quite a few pro-U.S. scum in Taiwan, like Hu Shi and Sun Liren. Liao Wenyi and his sort are the worst of their kind.

To take a broader perspective, the entire world's people are against war. But plenty of people are also afraid of war. We in China, due to our position and the circumstance of the Great Leap Forward, have a milder feeling towards war, but this doesn't mean that no one is afraid of war among the Chinese people; there are surely some like that. Within the confines of the entire world, there are plenty of people who are afraid of war. Because of this, they cannot make the right analysis of the situation in the Taiwan Straits. Because the U.S. and China are not at war. Should there be war, the Americans will have to be the ones who start it. We don't want to start any war. At present it doesn't look like the Americans want to start a war either.

Although they have assembled so much troop strength in the Taiwan Straits, the U.S. Defense Department has ordered its ships not to enter within the 12 mile offshore limit. Here's something amusing: we first announced a temporary halt in bombarding Jinmen, under the condition that there are no U.S. convoys. The October 13 announcement said that if there are U.S. convoys, we will immediately open fire. Since we were only bombarding Jinmen, the U.S. flotilla remained 12 miles outside of the Jinmen Straits. On the Mazu front, the U.S. military are active within 12 miles of the nautical boundary of Mazu. This demonstrates that the U.S. is on one hand afraid of starting a war, but on the other is also afraid of losing face, so while in one place it doesn't escort convoys, and in another place it crosses the 12 mile nautical boundary. On October 20 there was a landing ship which suddenly appeared out of nowhere and entered within the 12 mile nautical boundary of Jinmen, escorted by three destroyers. This gave us the opportunity and we immediately grabbed this little pigtail and announced we were going to open fire, giving Dulles a welcoming artillery salute, which then gave Chiang Kai-Shek an excuse not to continue holding his ground. However, there are some people in the U.S. Air Force and Navy who advocate provoking a war. There was a Commander in the Air Force who announced that, if he encountered a Chinese Communist airplane "provocation" over the water, he would not only fire on it, but chase it all the way back to its base and drop bombs there. The Defense Department immediately declared that it was OK to say the first half, but the second half didn't count. This also shows that the U.S. doesn't dare start a war. Also, for instance, Chiang had wanted to send planes on several occasions to bomb our artillery emplacements, but the U.S. just wouldn't give permission, so there's quite a bit of argument going on between Chiang and the U.S.

Another incident involved one of Chiang's planes that carried Sidewinder missiles, which once broke into mainland airspace, and fired four missiles. We seized the evidence, and put them on exhibit in the Beijing Working People's Cultural Palace. This was the first time cruise missiles were used and it caused quite a bit of shock in the U.S. Because if you use them then I can also counterattack, and the war could get out of hand. The U.S. Senate made a fuss over this, asking why had we given

cruise missiles to Chiang in such a tense situation? There are four fliers who have already been transferred back to the U.S. for questioning.

There was another incident during the October 10 Commemoration of the 1911 "Xinhai" Revolution, when Chiang sent a bunch of airplanes to intrude on the mainland [airspace], boasting about shooting down so many of our planes, and that there was even one person who gloriously sacrificed his life. But the truth was we had shot his plane down and the pilot was captured alive. On one hand they boast, and on the other hand Wang Shuming* was very angry, since he was afraid the Americans would accuse them of making trouble.

What I've described above shows that the U.S. and Chiang have some serious contradictions and shows that the U.S. is afraid of causing trouble, because the entire world's people are against war, so the Americans don't really want war. You can see this very clearly in the Taiwan issue. It's in this sense that we can say that we have thoroughly exposed the American paper tiger. From what we can now see, most likely they do not dare to provoke a war. However, we should acknowledge that there will always be some crazy war-lovers in the U.S. who will want to provoke a war.

As for our side, I've already talked about the psychology of people all over the world. The people of the nationalist countries deeply fear war, this is the inevitable psychology of people who are in the middle, and it is something we can understand. Think back a bit: at the time when the Nationalist-Communist relationship was tense, the people in the middle most of all hoped there would be no war, since they themselves had no power and they would be in trouble if war broke out. There are some people in the world who are afraid of any kind of war. We have already been at war with Chiang Kai-Shek for more than thirty years without ever stopping, and it hasn't had an impact on the world situation. The only reason there is an impact is due to the interference of the U.S. So, the issue isn't whether we bombard Jinmen or not, but whether the U.S. interferes or not in our internal affairs. The U.S. is now thinking about withdrawing, because in 1955 they said this: if the "defense" of Jinmen and Mazu concerns [the defense of] Taiwan and Penghu, then they will have to step in. They will have to make a final decision, and as of now there has been no decision.

So, they are very reactive, should they or shouldn't they step in? During the Warsaw talks, they proposed reducing the forces on Jinmen and Mazu to what is needed for collective and individual self-defense, to which we objected, because what right do they have to say anything about Jinmen and Mazu? As for "Individual" self-defense, you are not Chiang Kai-Shek's representative, no one has invited you, and in any case we won't recognize any such invitation; as for "collective" self-defense, you have no obligation to be responsible for any defense, you are completely without standing. Also, the issue has nothing to do with whether there's a ceasefire, it has to do with your withdrawal, so after that they were afraid to bring this up again. Because of this, [the U.S.] wants to tell Chiang to withdraw, break off from us, face us from across the sea, therefore we call this a withdrawal policy.

So now the question is whether we should allow them to withdraw? Some people maintain we should let them go. The good thing about them withdrawing is that once Chiang is gone, the coastal islands would return to the mainland. It would be convenient to go into and out of Xiamen and Fuzhou's ports, we could navigate freely in the Taiwan Straits, and we could feel relatively secure in our peaceful development. However, these benefits come with plenty of bad aspects. We would be separated from the enemy by the Taiwan Straits, which are 100 miles wide, and the U.S. would still occupy Taiwan and Penghu, and we could only "gaze at the ocean and sigh", because the enemy would no longer be at our gates, we can't easily get at him. When the situation is tense, it's good for us. It gives us more motivation, makes us work better, speeds up the pace. In the past two months, the tense situation has spurred us to set up more [People's] Communes, and now 95-96% of the nation's countryside has already transformed into Communes. We are working hard on steel [production], this year 10.7 million tons of steel are already guaranteed (of course we still need to work hard), now the main [task] is how to improve the quality and produce good steel products. As for "making everyone battle ready" [we have] 151 divisions and more than 100 independent regiments. The reason everything moved so fast was due to our ever greater motivation as a result of the tense situation. Should the enemy to abandon the coastal islands, then we will lose some steam, and

also lose the opportunity for our military exercises. Right now everything is great. The Navy, Army, and Airforce can all be rotated through training, and the cultural troupes can go perform for the troops, even go to the front lines and fire a few artillery shots, just do some drills. If the enemy is not there, there would be no opportunity to practice. If we Chiang's army were to leave Jinmen and Mazu, it might seem like we've regained the coastal islands, but in fact we would have given way to the U.S. If we let the U.S. back out, it will no longer be reactive. Instead, we will have become the ones who are reactive. What's to follow in the next chapter will be the question of Taiwan. The nationalist countries will come and encourage us to improve our relations with the United States, and so forth. This will put us in the position of always being reactive every step of the way and it would be quite insufferable.

Therefore allowing a withdrawal surely has benefits, but it also has many drawbacks.

The current situation has mobilized the entire country to engage in construction, development, increased the national strength, increased production, improving technology, all of which resulted from pressure, and has enabled us to take the initiative. We restrain Chiang Kai-Shek, and Chiang can deter the United States. Just as that Hong Kong pamphlet said, "No hurry, we can haven't finished using the U.S.", between the U.S. and Chiang, one asks, one gives, so let them continue to give. Keeping Jinmen and Mazu is now the U.S.'s burden, he has to pay for it. The initiative is entirely in our hands, this is fully acknowledged by world opinion. Whenever we want to fight we fight, whenever we want to stop we stop. Doing it this way we can also avoid trouble. If the United Nations wants to interfere, we are fighting a civil war, it's none of your business. Should you bother to interfere, we can even fire a few more shots. And the neutral countries won't be able to say anything, either.

Some people say, so this way, we announce that we bombard only on odd days and not on even days. Chiang's army is very attentive to Minister [of Defense] Peng [Dehuai]'s orders, sending ships only even days, and not on odd days. On the odd days we primarily only shell their artillery emplacements, and we don't hit their wharfs, ships, civilian dwellings and so on, in order to "minimize casualties and preserve existing holdings [properties]". There are those who would say "What kind of fight is this?" Our Chief of Staff Huang [Kecheng] says, "This is a fight about politics." It sure is a fight about politics, the shells that fall on the Chiang's army fortifications are actually landing square on American imperialism. And that's not all. What we are doing is actually very beneficial to the development of the global movement for national independence. In the past we have given them a lot of aid, but in fact we couldn't help them much, since giving them some material didn't amount to much. However, this time this skirmish of ours led to a redeployment of American naval and air forces, and this is the kind of aid that was more meaningful. Because after this U.S. forces in the Mediterranean were reduced and weakened, this forced the U.S. to withdraw troops from Lebanon. Therefore the Taiwan Straits really have become a gallows. If the U.S. makes trouble in some other place, and Chinese assistance is needed, we will just fire a few more rounds, and the U.S. military will have to show up again. Basically, this way we have more initiative. So, our conclusion is, we will use this noose policy to oppose their withdrawal policy, and this noose is one they themselves have slipped on. If we let the U.S. withdraw, it would be like "uniting with the U.S. to oppress Chiang", but we want to "unite with Chiang to resist the U.S.", that is, we want Chiang to keep hanging on. This strategy has been proven in practice to be to our benefit. Dulles' single message to Chiang Kai-Shek to principally not use force against the mainland caused a deepening of the contradiction between the U.S. and Chiang, and endless arguments. The anti-American mood in the Hong Kong and Taiwan newspapers is very elevated and is caused by the U.S. Right now some of what the pro-Chiang newspapers are saying is more or less the same language as what is in our Defense Minister Peng's proclamation to Taiwan compatriots. You can see that our announcements are very influential, and the U.S. intelligence agencies are very worried.

Is it possible for the U.S. to back out? If the U.S. truly were to announce that it did not want Jinmen or Mazu, that would prove that it is irresponsible towards its puppets, and further expose its hollowness inside a tough exterior. If the United States is

willing to withdraw from the Taiwan Straits, that would be closer to our demands. We can hold direct talks with Chiang Kai-Shek, and without the Americans around. But the U.S. is afraid to do it that way. If it did, the U.S. occupation policy would be bankrupt, and many countries will have second thoughts [about their relations with the U.S.]. Eisenhower and Dulles have said openly that this would be surrendering to socialism, and would also be what the Democratic Party accuses the Republicans of, a "defeatist policy." [The U.S.] doesn't dare do this.

The only way for the U.S. to get away, is for it to take the initiative and withdraw from the Taiwan Straits. He would then be removing the noose himself, but his occupation policy would be bankrupt, therefore I figure that he's not yet ready to do this yet. Otherwise, I'm afraid he will have to go through "five gates". The first one is to force Chiang's military to withdraw from Jinmen and Mazu. I figure that Chiang will not want to go, because leaving would mean for Chiang to be separated from the mainland, and fall completely under U.S. control, in which case his position would become very dangerous, something Chiang would absolutely not want to do. This gate is hard to pass through. The second gate is to promote "Two Chinas". This gate is even harder to pass through, since not only do we absolutely oppose it, Chiang also opposes it. In our proclamation to Taiwan compatriots we said, Dulles already sees us as the big China, and has labelled Taiwan as the little China, which is his way of promoting "two Chinas". This is something hard for Chiang to accept. If he did accept it, he would be forced out. And at the same time, mainlanders who went to Taiwan, military and civilian alike, their consciousness would be rocked, so Chiang cannot have "two Chinas," he does he will fall [from power]. The third gate is to invite us to join the United Nation, but at the same time also let Chiang Kai-Shek stay in as well, which is something we won't have. We would prefer to let Chiang Kai-Shek remain there, but we won't go in. We can't have a real and fake Lord Bao show up at the same time. We can do a lot more from outside. In practice this won't work anywhere. If we entered, then we would regain our seat on the Security Council, in which case Chiang Kai-Shek cannot also be there at the same time. The fourth gate is to overthrow Chiang Kai-Shek and install another puppet. This issue will mainly have to be settled by the Chiang Kai-Shek clique. As long as Chiang still has more than a hundred thousand troops on Jinmen and Mazu, the U.S. won't dare do anything. If [Chiang] leaves Jinmen and Mazu, then the U.S. can stage a military coup on Taiwan, but if Chiang doesn't leave, then a coup can't be carried out. That's why [Defense] Minister Peng warned the Chiang clique, telling them to pay attention to the Zhang Zuolin incident. Of course, the U.S. may think that Chiang is getting old and might soon die, but by then our steel production will reach a hundred million tons, our navy will be stronger, and we'll undoubtedly have new types of weapons, so the situation will be greatly changed. The fifth gate is to have a mandate over Taiwan. In order to have a Mandate Taiwan they would have to get rid of the "Republic of China" signboard which would have to go through the United Nations. So it won't be easy to get through these five gates, we will also set up numerous obstacles and make impossible for them to get through the gates.

Our approach is to fight and pause, half fight and half pause, and fight and talk at the same time. We will fight in Jinmen on one hand, on the other hand we will talk in Warsaw. Striking Chiang Kai-Shek is in effect striking at the Americans. Making it difficult for them to pass through these five gates, is binding his feet and making it impossible for him to take even one step. It gives our military and diplomacy a lot of excellent exercise in the conflict with imperialism. This is the best open stage, this stage is Jinmen, Mazu, it is Warsaw.

Therefore, our conclusion is this: let Taiwan, Penghu, Jinmen and Mazu remain in Chiang Kai-Shek's hands for the time being. One of these days they will return to the motherland. Even if they fall into the hands of the Americans in the form of a mandate, they will still have to be returned, whether through negotiations, or through battle, though that would be much more troublesome. In the past we thought we might divide this into two stages; first take back Jinmen and Mazu, and later take back Taiwan and Penghu. Now we think that accomplishing it all in one breath is even better. Our present method is known to the entire world, this battle is not any kind of secret. Military secrets, after a certain interval has passed, will no longer be secret. We need to explain this clearly to our cadres. Under these circumstances, there is a possibility that the United Nations can be brought in to interfere with the

situation, to say that it's not good to fight in this place, it could lead to a world war, or some well-meaning but confused people might also speak up and cause interference. We need to resist all this interference. If the United Nations were to slander us as an "aggressor state," we can let them say that, since they'll have to retract it in the future. I'm not worried about it. We also want to be prepared for any kind of nagging by neutral countries. We only have one [response]: we aren't at war with the Americans, it is the Americans who are interfering with us! You go talk to the Americans! Some foreigners say "the Chinese people have a belligerent attitude". We are fine with them saying this. We are strongly peace-loving, but we are an oppressed nation, therefore our fighting spirit is strong. If you look through our history, you'll see that we have always possessed the spirit to oppose oppression. You might say we have provoked war, but we certainly have not. That is, if the Americans are oppressing us, of course we will resist, that's why we fight with the Americans. We need to be prepared for all of these [arguments]. We are in the right, and we need to stand firm in order to resist any unjust opinions blowing our way. We may also have to be prepared for a few capitalist countries to leave [i.e., close their diplomatic missions] Beijing, so let them leave, why do we need to keep them? Whoever decides to recognize "two Chinas" will just be asked to leave. We need to take a stand from a have a class struggle point of view. Some people may not understand right away, but they will understand this reasoning one of these days. As for reactionary elements slandering us, let them slander. In this conflict we will always be in the right and have the advantage, and can be restrained. In the end we will prove that our approach is correct, is peace-loving, and that it is the Americans who are the creators of tensions.

Having covered everything in general, now let's take another look at the triangular contradictions among us, the Americans, and Chiang. Someone asks, the U.S. and Chiang both belong to the reactionary class, they are anti-Communist, and between the two they are fundamentally in agreement. So how could any contradictions develop between Chiang and the U.S. ? This is because they are only aware of one aspect and not the other. It's true, Chiang and the U.S. are both in agreement as anti-Communists, but fundamentally similar countries can still go to war with each other. Why did Hitler first attack the UK and France? Wasn't this capitalists fighting capitalists? So it isn't unusual for two countries with the same class nature to fight each other. On the other hand, those of different classes can still unite, like the Soviets and the UK once fought on the same battlefield against Hitler. There are plenty of instances like this in history! Right now the issue is that the U.S. is putting so much pressure on Chiang Kai-Shek he can hardly live, whereas we are not the ones making it difficult for Chiang to live. The U.S. wants to force Chiang to withdraw from Jinmen and Mazu, and after that isolate Taiwan, causing Chiang Kai-Shek to not be able to survive, and therefore [he knows] the contradiction between them is irreconcilable. As for us, all we did was had to fire a few shots at them. So now the contradiction between them is greater than our contradiction with Chiang. Although they may be in agreement on certain issues, is it not possible to separate them? Why can't our strategy cause them to separate? There is this possibility, right now it is a very likely possibility, that the contradiction between the U.S. and Chiang will continue to develop.

Someone might ask, how effective is it for us to use the Chiang Kai-Shek clique to oppose the U.S., and is positive in nature? Of course, it is reactionary, but it has a bit of positive nature as well. The contradiction between Chiang and the U.S. is a conflict between nationalism and aggression. We will use [Chiang] not wanting to allow Taiwan to fall completely into U.S. hands, which is the one positive trait he has, against the U.S. Didn't we just mention the Huanggudun incident, when Zhang Zuolin showed his positive aspects in disagreeing with the Japanese, so the Japanese had him killed. Chiang's history bears proof that he was anti-Communist, carrying out the big massacre in 1927, but ten years later we still could use him to resist [Japan], even though it was a passive resistance, it was still beneficial for the Chinese people. Even though he did resist Japan and did oppose Communism at the same time, and his positive traits were rather insignificant, we still wanted to make use of it.

Additionally, we believe that we can use the little bit of positive trait of the Chiang Kai-Shek clique to prevent Taiwan from falling completely into American hands, so that after several years, the situation will have changed. If our socialist construction

is completed, and the collective ownership system has been transformed into nationalized property ownership system, and incompletely nationalized property system has been completely transformed into a nationalized property system, and the entire country has been industrialized, mechanized and electrified, industry factory-ized....by that time there's no way it wouldn't have an influence on Jinmen, Mazu, Taiwan and the Penghu islands. Our economy and military strength will also have an influence on them. So there is no loss for the motherland in regaining Jinmen, Mazu, Taiwan and Penghu at a later date. Our main objective is to crackdown on imperialism and prove that everywhere they are reactive and weak. So we want to use Chiang's positive traits no matter how miniscule. In any case we would need much greater economic power to regain these areas. If we look at it from the historical standpoint, it was only in the Shunzhi and Kangxi reigns of the Qing dynasty that Taiwan was finally unified [with the mainland]. If we want to talk about the socialist countries, after the Soviet Union's October Revolution the three independent countries in the Baltic Sea region (the nationalities were different, so it cannot be compared with Taiwan), which are close to Leningrad, were not unified with the Soviet Union until 22 years later. We're already unified with Tibet, but socialist transformation has to be postponed until after the third Five-Year Plan. It will depend on how enlightened the Tibetan people are, and proceed after consulting with the Tibetan leaders. Right now reforms in different regions of the whole country aren't being carried out at the same time and development is not balanced. Thus, as long as they remain in Chinese hands rather than in American hands, it's better for Taiwan, Penghu, Jinmen and Mazu to return to the motherland a bit later. It's easy to understand if you analyze the issue this way.

As for the question of the small triangle, there are three kinds of people in the Taiwan clique. One type wants to return to the mainland, and cannot but be affected by our several proclamations, but this is a minority. Another type of person is set on following the U.S. line, is determined to split Taiwan and Penghu from China and is happy to be a running dog and a puppet. They are also a minority. The majority is in the middle, wavering, they have some measure of national pride - we aren't talking here about the people as a whole, but only about its upper-class elements. This shows that we have work to do. If we can do our work well with the ones who want to return to the mainland and those who are in the middle, gradually broaden the patriotic forces, eventually there will come the day when Taiwan will be returned to the motherland. Of course, the final liberation of Taiwan could still come about through two possible means, the approach of peace talks, or by the use of military force, both are possible. At present we should place our hopes in the majority of patriotic people, and not so much hope in the minority of hardcore holdouts. One cannot expect Chiang Kai-Shek to be easily enlightened, to come to the mainland and live the commune life and go through rectifications movement, but what's wrong with him opposing the U.S. while staying on Taiwan? Of course, if he's willing to bring Taiwan back, we won't turn him down, he can win merit by atoning for his crimes. So we need to consider the issue from both sides, and not oversimplify the issue.

Some people ask, if this is how things are, what is there for the U.S. and China to talk about? Our issue with Chiang is an internal affair, we aren't at war with the U.S., we want him to withdraw his troops but he won't and talking won't solve the problem. Nevertheless, we say we still want to talk, even if it doesn't solve problems we still want to talk. The Americans also understand this. When they are asked this time, "When will you be through talking?" They say, "We can answer this question in another ten years." He is ready to talk for ten years. If imperialism is still in existence [that long] we can talk for a hundred years. There's no loss even if we can't solve problems, it's fine to just keep the hook in. Here we have a pretty big socialist country, and the last and largest imperialist in the world, who also has a lot of people - so you can't say that these two countries have nothing in common. If we preserve this bit of relationship, the American people can see that we do not reject talks. Therefore, there's no need to solve any problems since on the political level we still do have this kind of relationship with each other. At present we meet every other week, in the future we'll talk every one to two months. That will be fine. In reality America appears in a very embarrassing position as seen by the whole world. On one hand Dulles says that "he sees the existence of China," except he doesn't recognize [us diplomatically] but nevertheless he does want to communicate with us. To use Lu

Xun's words, this is just "Ah Q."

The U.S. invades the waters around Jinmen and Mazu. We have long since warned them, isn't this Ah Q? The purpose of the warning is to keep accounts, and we've already recorded 40 instances. We can't get them to leave by keeping accounts. Why don't we just fight them? Fighting would not be beneficial for our construction. This is not showing weakness, it is preparing our strength. Some people again ask, if it is like this, then why even mention it? It would be better not to mention it at all. But this is wrong. Each warning is an record in the account, and people all over the world, as well as all the Chinese people, know, that he will have to settle the account one of these days, and the more you owe the more you will have to pay. Is it true he's not paying any attention to our warnings. Actually he did pay attention after 40 warnings. We are not showing weakness, our objective in doing this is to isolate the U.S., expose the U.S.'s aggressive nature. Keep doing it this way, after more time things will change, and we will be able to see results in the long term. If we wait until the time when we are so strong that they will have no choice but to retreat, they will have to back out of all their existing battlegrounds. Chairman Mao has said that imperialism is a paper tiger, meaning, he may appear strong, but is in fact weak. Our new-born power will always go from nothing to something, from small to big, from weak to strong. We are in the process of growing big and strong, in the process of energetic construction. We are preparing for when all of Taiwan, Penghu, Jinmen and Mazu return to the motherland in ten or eight years time, when imperialism will have changed its attitude, because in the end it is them and not us who will be finished.
(End)

* Literally, "poked a hole in the American imperialist paper tiger."

* Wang Shuming (1905-1998), Nationalist Air Force Commander.