

August 12, 1965

Chinese Foreign Ministry Circular, "Malraux's visit to China"

Citation:

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Summary:

The Chinese Foreign Ministry reports on a visit by the French Minister of State Andre Malraux to China. Malraux came in part to act as a peace broker for the United States and proposed a plan to Zhou Enlai to divide Vietnam. Zhou rejected the proposal.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Between July 19 and August 6 (1965), French Minister of State (Andre) Malraux visited China as special envoy of de Gaulle. At first, the French government indicated that Malraux would come to China as a private visitor. It did so for three reasons: to protect France's prestige as a "big power" and not to appear that it needed our help; to prevent the prospect that we would reject Malraux's visit because he served as a peace broker on Vietnam; and not to irritate the United States. After Malraux's arrival in China, the French government worried that our leaders would not receive him. As a result, it stressed that de Gaulle wanted to conduct talks with our leaders and that Malraux was making an official visit. But in public statements the French government still insisted that Malraux was making a private trip. We expressed our dissatisfaction with the unclear identity of Malraux and the trick played by the French government. Later, the French government delivered a letter of introduction from de Gaulle to Chairman Liu (Shaoqi), authorizing Malraux to "thoroughly exchange views" with China on "significant issues concerning both China and France as well as the future of the world." It also expressed apologies to us. To exploit Franco-American contradictions and to woo de Gaulle, Chairman Mao, Chairman Liu, Premier Zhou, and Deputy Premier Chen (Yi) all received Malraux and discussed with him the following issues:

(1) Vietnam and Indochina

The Vietnam question was a primary issue that Malraux wanted to discuss. Rather than raising the issue directly, he chose to sound us out indirectly. Deputy Premier Chen asked Malraux whether he carried any specific proposals on Vietnam from de Gaulle, he replied no, saying that France would not initiate any proposal without obtaining China's agreement. During his meeting with Premier (Zhou), Malraux indirectly advanced the "Indochina neutralization" plan: to divide Vietnam along the Truong Son Ra mountain. The area east of the mountain, including Saigon, would belong to the DRV or the NLF; the area west of the mountain as well as Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand would be "neutralized." Malraux also asked whether it was possible to open negotiations when the United States "promised" to withdraw troops. Premier immediately repudiated Malraux's plan, pointing out that the boundaries in Indochina had long been established and that what needed to be discussed at the moment was the respect for the independence and neutrality of Cambodia and Laos on the basis of the Geneva Accords. Premier also explained our position on Vietnam and expressed our firm support for the anti-American patriotic struggle of the Vietnamese people. He contended that the United States, rather than seeking to preserve its prestige and disengage, desired to stay in Vietnam.

(2) Opposing American-Soviet Hegemony [not translated].

(3) Reform of the United Nations [not translated].

(4) Sino-French Relations [not translated].

(5) Chinese Domestic Issues [not translated].

August 12, 1965.

[1] The CC CCP on August 24, 1965 sent this circular to its regional bureaus, provincial committees as well as the ministries of the State Council and the General Political Department of the PLA.