

January 10, 1955

Cable from Feng Xuan, 'Reaction of Britain, United States, France towards the Kuala Lumpur Five Countries inviting China to attend the Afro-Asian Conference'

Citation:

"Cable from Feng Xuan, 'Reaction of Britain, United States, France towards the Kuala Lumpur Five Countries inviting China to attend the Afro-Asian Conference'", January 10, 1955, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 207-00002-06. Translated by Jeffrey Wang. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/113186>

Summary:

The UK responded the decision of inviting China to attend the Asian-African Conference with anger, stating that countries in the Bogor Conference had wrong expectations toward China. The US feared that China would have great influence on the Asian-African Conference and thus weaken US influence in the region. The US and UK also worried that China's participation would improve China-Japan relations. French press expressed this decision as the evidence of the failure of the US power in Southeast Asia.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from MacArthur Foundation

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Forward to: Huang Hua, Gong Peng

Priority: Rush

From: Switzerland

Date: 1955, January 10

Forwarded to: Chairman [Mao Zedong], [Liu] Shaoqi, [Zhou] Enlai, Zhu De, Chen Yun, [Peng] De Huai, [Deng] Xiaoping, Chen Yi, [Xi] Zhongxun, [Yang] Shangkun, Foreign Ministry, [Wang] Jiaxiang, [Li] Kenong, Su Yu, Unified Military Command, Military Intelligence

Reaction of Britain, United States, France towards the Kuala Lumpur Five Countries inviting China to attend the Afro-Asian Conference

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

Reaction of Britain, United States, France towards the Kuala Lumpur Five Countries inviting China to attend the Afro-Asian Conference:

1. Britain expressed discontent towards the Kuala Lumpur conference's decision to invite our country to attend the Afro-Asian conference. They have started to conduct provocation. The Times once warned the Kuala Lumpur conference countries to not place "erroneous hope" on China and that "the views of Chinese communist leaders won't change significantly". The Daily Telegraph and The Times slandered our country claiming we want to conduct "imperialist policies" in Tibet. The Times published our country's new maps, and explained that Tibet is not "China's last territorial request". Towards this, India became suspicious, angered and regretful [of the new borders]. [India] has already notified China that it can not accept or discuss the revising of borders.
2. The United States expressed deep fears towards our country's participation in the Afro-Asian conference. On January 10th, Time magazine claimed: "Western officials are feeling the shivers because of the potential damage Zhou Enlai may do at the conference". The United States is afraid that China would be effective at the conference which would then raise the international position of our country. This would also be a blow to the United States' conspiracy to invade the Afro-Asia [region]. Lippmann of the New York Herald Tribune claimed in writing "Due to the participation of Red China, this conference is no longer a neutral bloc or a third force, rather it is the most feared and ambitious action of this generation's Asians." The New York Times claimed: China's participation will stimulate neutralism, and will destroy American policy in the Far East. The same paper is afraid that our country would use this opportunity to create a Far East collective peace zone. Therefore, the paper said the greatest effort should be put forth to prevent the conference from becoming an "Anti-free world, communist sympathizing alliance". After slandering our country as imperialist, [The New York Times] warned "Communist ambitions will not end at Taiwan" "No country on China's borders is free from communist activity". Britain and the United States are waiting to convoke the South East Asian eight country conference prior to the Afro-Asian conference because their purpose is to suppress this region's national movements and organize anti-communist military organizations.
3. Britain and the United States are afraid that relations between Japan and China would become closer during the Afro-Asian conference, which would in turn influence Japanese policy. The United States sees Japan as eager to revive trade relations with China, and this conference happens to be a good opportunity for China and Japan to establish official contact. For this reason, British and American papers have been creating the atmosphere of "Japan hesitating to accept the invitation [to the Afro-Asian conference] due to China's participation". On the other hand, they are warning the Japanese government that in considering Asia policy, [the Japanese government] should pay attention to "improving relations with Taiwan". It has been claimed that the Japanese Foreign Minister will soon converse with the American Ambassador to Japan about the question of Japan participating [in the Afro-Asian conference].
4. French bourgeoisie public opinion placed importance upon the Kuala Lumpur

Conference's decision to invite our country to the Afro-Asian conference. Generally it is asserted that our attendance will "give the Afro-Asian conference significant meaning" and "causes great interest". The Aurora on the 30th said that China's participation: "will cause this Arab-Asia conference to become a communist demonstration against the West". On the 31st, La Croix said that: China's participation is "To many people an almost impossible obstacle". On January 6th The Observer weekly said: "This is a great diplomatic victory for the Beijing government; post-Geneva, this is the second time she is able to speak at an international conference." Although Le Monde said that it is not unusual for our country to be invited, but [Le Monde] had to admit that this is a failure on behalf of the American imperialists. On January 3rd, the paper said: "Originally people all thought that because of the economic aid plan from the United States to South East Asia, the Kuala Lumpur conference countries would probably push China aside with excuses, but they did not do that." Ms. Tabouis through the l'Information said "This conference is a sign [forecasting] the [future] trend of establishing a bloc adhering to the policy of co-existence". Le Express on the 8th also believes that "This conference might produce an international organization that would play a meaningful role in world politics, this is a test of co-existence for the Asia-Arab peoples." In addition, French bourgeoisie public opinion values the Kuala Lumpur conference countries' statement regarding their "hopes that the Geneva Agreement would be followed". They believe this is a warning for the Manila Treaty member states. Le Monde said on the 3rd: "Paris has always stated that agreements must be followed, therefore the five countries' statement will not cause any opposition".

Feng Xuan
10 January 1955