

September 5, 1963

Zhou Enlai's Discussion with a Kenyan African National Federation Delegation (Excerpt)

Citation:

"Zhou Enlai's Discussion with a Kenyan African National Federation Delegation (Excerpt)", September 5, 1963, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Dang de wenxian (Party Historical Documents), no. 3 (1994): 15-16. Translated by Neil Silver.
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/114355>

Summary:

Zhou Enlai criticizes the Three-Nation Treaty (Limited Test Ban Treaty) of 1963, arguing that it signifies an attempt by the US, UK, and USSR to monopolize nuclear weapons. Enlai warns that the agreement will allow larger nuclear countries to commit "nuclear blackmail" against smaller, non-nuclear countries.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY)

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Transcript - Chinese
Translation - English

Now, the United States is again using the Three-Nation [Limited Test Ban] Treaty together with the Soviet Union, and some large countries are monopolizing nuclear weapons. Atmospheric nuclear testing, of course, has already ended, since people around the world oppose it, and, in fact, they already don't need atmospheric nuclear testing. Why? Since they have already gotten the essential data. Besides this, everything else remains as it was. That is to say, use of nuclear weapons is permitted, underground nuclear testing is permitted, continued production is permitted, massive stockpiling is permitted, transport abroad and proliferation is permitted, and provision by the United States of nuclear weapons data to its allies and countries under its control is permitted. Of course, people all over the world oppose these things, and demand the total end to nuclear testing and the complete destruction of nuclear weapons. [But] by signing the Three-Nation Treaty, except for a temporary halt in atmospheric nuclear testing, everything else has been legitimized. All the countries that signed onto the treaty are restrained by the treaty, that means that all peace-loving countries that signed have no right to possess nuclear weapons, even while they still have to face nuclear blackmail and the danger of annihilation by nuclear weapons. This is one-sided.

On the other hand, countries allied with American imperialism can still obtain nuclear weapons and data necessary to produce nuclear weapons. As the United States has said to France, you don't need to test in the atmosphere, [since] we can give you the data and you can become a nuclear great power. The three countries have all agreed to this. The countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization are all American allies, [and] the United States has said that it will establish a multilateral nuclear force in these countries and allow every country to get nuclear weapons. The Three-Nation Treaty does not prohibit this, but merely binds the hands and feet of our peace-loving countries and peoples, [while] they can even more unscrupulously carry out nuclear blackmail. But the socialist countries do not have this right, since the Soviet Union has undertaken this obligation. The United States and Britain only signed once they attained this enormous concession. Isn't this simply the height of deception! After signing, the United States spoke up immediately, issuing a series of pronouncements, from [President] Kennedy, [Secretary of State] Rusk, [Undersecretary of State] Harriman, [Secretary of Defense] McNamara, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the chiefs of all the armed services, all the way to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The essence of it all was that this treaty assuredly does not prohibit the United States from using nuclear weapons, continuing to produce nuclear weapons, stockpiling nuclear weapons, and conveying nuclear weapons to its allies and countries under its control, and, moreover, that it will expand underground nuclear testing. Sure enough, after signing on August 5th, it carried out three underground nuclear tests. The U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense said that [they] intend to expand the scope of underground nuclear testing, that all prohibited nuclear testing to the extent possible will be carried out underground; that [they] will expand defense expenditures, in order to establish more nuclear sites to produce nuclear weapons; and that [they] are prepared when necessary to resume atmospheric nuclear testing; and, moreover, publicly designated the establishment of an atmospheric nuclear testing site in the Pacific Ocean. Everybody knows this. How can this not increase the threat of nuclear war? Not only has world peace not been assured, but it has now been placed under even greater threat. In the past, people all over the world opposed this, and now it's turned into a situation where all the signatory countries cannot oppose this. First of all, the Soviet Union can't say a word, since it is a signatory country. Only a month after signing, the United States was even more aggressive, to an extent never before seen. Britain said nothing, since it is a follower of the United States. But the Soviet Union is a country in opposition [to the United States], and it didn't utter a word either. The United States is even freer to continue to implement nuclear blackmail and bind the hands and feet of our peace-loving countries. So we oppose this.

Why is there no complete prohibition on nuclear testing? They say they want to take a step at a time. This sounds good, but this is duplicitous. With the United States so aggressive after signing, where is there any intention of a total prohibition [of nuclear

weapons]? If there is no intention to fight, and no willingness to prohibit [nuclear weapons], what is the purpose? The purpose is to use this [situation] to carry out nuclear blackmail. Towards whom? Towards countries that do not have nuclear weapons, especially small, weak countries, Asian, African and Latin American countries. There are two ways to accomplish this: One is to listen, to sign and to bind up one's own hands and feet; the other is not to listen, [and] then they will use nuclear weapons to carry out nuclear blackmail toward you, since you don't have any. If you don't sign, they will say you love war, that you are a "warmonger." Take a look around. Where in China is there any atmosphere in favor of war? There are still some people in the world who speak on the basis of facts. Even some Western capitalist newspapers tell the truth, saying that they find no articles or discussions by Chinese indicating China wants to launch a nuclear war and cause the annihilation of half the population of the world. Not only France, Japan, northern Europe, and Britain have people who speak the truth, even the United States has some. This is really interesting. The Soviet Union says we are this type of war-lover, but the West says this is not so. Can it be that the West is especially good to us? No. The West exploits the contradiction between China and the Soviet Union. We will not fall for Western tricks, and will not be manipulated. We have come to a conclusion. The Three-Nation Treaty is a huge swindle. It is not the first step in prohibiting nuclear weapons, but an extremely dangerous step.