

September 5, 1958

Speech, Mao Zedong at the Fifteenth Meeting of the Supreme State Council (Excerpt)

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Summary:

Mao Zedong speaks about American foreign policy and the tense international situation following the Chinese decision to begin shelling Kinmen Island in the Taiwan Strait.

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国际形势，我们历来有个观点，总是乐观的。后来总结为一个“东风压倒西风”。

美国现在在我们这里来了个“大包干”制度，索性把金门、马祖，还有些什么大担岛、二担岛、东碇岛一切包过去，我看它就舒服了。它上了我们的绞索，美国的颈吊在我们中国的铁的绞索上面。台湾也是个绞索，不过要隔得远一点。它要把金门这一套包括进去，那它的头更接近我们。我们哪一天踢它一脚，它走不掉，因为它被一根索子绞住了。

我现在提出若干观点，提出一些看法供给各位，并不要把它作为一个什么决定，作为一个法律。作为一个法律就死了，作为一个看法就是活的。拿这些观点去观察国际形势。

第一条，谁怕谁多一点。我看美国人是怕打仗。我们也怕打仗。问题是究竟哪一个怕得多一点。这也是个观点，也是个看法。请各位拿了这个观点去看一看，观察观察，以后一年、二年、三年、四年，就这样观察下去，究竟是西方怕东方多一点，还是我们东方怕西方多一点？据我的看法，是杜勒斯怕我们怕得多一点，是英、美、德、法那些西方国家怕我们怕得多一点。为什么它们怕得多一点呢？就是个力量的问题，人心的问题。人心就是力量，我们这边的人多一点，它们那边的人少一点。共产主义，民族主义，帝国主义，这三个主义中，共产主义和民族主义比较接近。而民族主义占领的地方相当宽，有三个洲：一个亚洲，一个非洲，一个拉丁美洲。即使这些洲里头有许多统治者是亲西方的，比如泰国、巴基斯坦、菲律宾、日本、土耳其、伊朗等国的，可是人民中间亲东方的不少，可能是相当多。就是垄断资本家以及中了他们的毒最深的人是主张战争的。除了垄断资本家，其他的人，大多数（不是全体）是不愿意战争的。比如北欧几个国家，当权的也是资产阶级，他们是不愿意战争的。力量对比是如此。因为真理是抓在大多数人手里，而不抓在杜勒斯手里，他们的心比我们虚，我们的心比较实。我们依靠人民，他们是维持那些反动统治者。现在杜勒斯就干这一套，他就专扶什么蒋委员长、李承晚、吴庭艳这类人。我看是这样，双方都怕，但是他们怕我们比较多一点，因此战争是打不起来的。

第二条，美帝国主义它们结成军事集团，什么北大西洋，巴格达，马尼拉，这些集团的性质究竟怎么样？我们讲它们是侵略的。它们是侵略的，那是千真万确的。但是它们现在的锋芒向哪一边呢？是向社会主义进攻，还是向民族主义进攻？我看现在是向民族主义进攻，就是向埃及、黎巴嫩和中东那些弱的国家进攻。社会主义国家，除非是比如匈牙利失败了，波兰也崩溃了，捷克、东德也崩溃了，连苏联也发生问题，我们也发生问题，摇摇欲倒，那个时候它们会进攻的。你要倒了，它们为什么不进攻？现在我们不倒，我们巩固，我们这个骨头啃不动，它们就啃那些比较可啃的地方，搞印尼、印度、缅甸、锡兰，想搞垮纳赛尔，想搞垮伊拉克，想征服阿尔及利亚等等。现在拉丁美洲有个很大的进步。尼克松是个副总统，在八个国家不受欢迎，被吐口水，打石头。美国的政治代表在那些人面前被用口水去对付，这就是藐视“尊严”，没有“礼貌”了，在他们心目中间不算数了。你是我们的对头，因此拿口水、石头去对付你。所以，不要把这两个军事集团看得那么严重，要有分析。它们是侵略性的，但是它们并不巩固。

第三条，关于紧张局势。我们每天都是要求缓和紧张局势，紧张局势缓和了对世界人民是有利的。那末，凡是紧张局势就对我们有害，是不是？我看也不尽然。这个紧张局势，对我们并不是纯害无利，也有有利的一面。什么道理呢？因为紧张局势除了有害的一面外，还可以调动人马，调动落后阶层，调动中间派起来奋斗。怕打原子战争的，就要想一想。你看金门、马祖打这样几炮，我就没有料到现在这个世界闹得这样满城风雨，烟雾冲天。这就是因为人们怕战争，怕美国到处闯祸。全世界那么多国家，除了一个李承晚之外，现在还没有第二个国家支持美国。可能还加一个菲律宾，叫做“有条件的支持”。比如伊拉克革命，还不是紧张局势造成的？紧张局势并不取决于我们，是帝国主义自己造成的，但是归根结底对于帝国主义更不利。这个观点列宁说过的，他是讲战争，他说，战争调动人们的精神状态使它紧张起来。现在当然没有战争，但是这种在武装对立的情况下的紧张局势也是能够调动一切积极因素，并且使落后阶层想一想的。

第四条，中东的撤兵问题。美英侵略军必须撤退。帝国主义现在想赖在那里不走，这对人民是不利的，可是同时也有教育人民的作用。你要反对侵略者，如果没有个对象，没有个靶子，没有个对立面，这就不好反。它自己现在跑上来当作对立面，并且赖着不走，就起了动员全世界人民起来反对美国侵略者的作用。所以它迟迟不撤退，总起来看对人民也不见得就那么纯害无利，因为这样人民每天就可以催它走：你为什么不走？

第五条，戴高乐登台好，还是不登台好？现在法国共产党和人民应该坚决反对戴高乐登台，要投票反对他的宪法，但是同时要准备反对不了时，他登台后的斗争

。戴高乐登台要压迫法国人民，但对内对外也有好处。对外，这个人喜欢跟英美闹别扭，他喜欢抬杠。他从前吃过苦头的，他写过一本回忆录，尽骂英美，而对苏联的好话。现在看起来，他还是闹别扭的。法国跟英美闹别扭，没有好处。而对内，为教育法国无产阶级不可少之教员，等于我们中国的蒋委员长一样。没有威信，你将会把他打败了，他没有死，人们还是想他。让他登台，无非是顶多搞个五年，六年，七年，八年，十年，他得垮的。他一垮了，没有第二个戴高乐了，这个毒放出来了。这个毒必须放，等于我们右派的毒，你得让他放。你不让他放，他总是有毒的，放出来毒就消了。

第六条，禁运，不跟我们做生意。这个东西对于我们的利害究竟怎么样？我看，禁运对我们的利益极大，我们不感觉禁运有什么不利。禁运对于我们的衣食住行以及建设（炼钢炼铁）有极大的好处。一禁运，我们得自己想办法。我历来感谢何应钦。一九二七年红军改编成国民革命军第八路军，每月有四十万法币，自从他发了法币，我们就依赖这个法币。到一九四〇年反共高潮时就断了，不来了。从此我们得自己想办法，想什么办法呢？我们就下了个命令，说法币没有了，你们以团为单位自己打主意，从此，各根据地搞生产运动，产生的价值不是四十万元，不是四百万元，甚至于不是四千万，各根据地合起来，可能一亿两亿。从此就靠我们自己动手。现在的“何应钦”是谁呢？就是杜勒斯，改了个名字。现在它们禁运，我们就自己搞，搞大跃进，搞掉了依赖性，破除了迷信，就好了。

第七条，不承认问题。是承认比较有利，还是不承认比较有利？我说，等于禁运一样，帝国主义国家不承认我们比较承认我们是要有利一些。现在还有四十几个国家不承认我们，主要的原因为在美国。比如法国，想承认，但是因为美国反对就不敢。其他还有一些中南美洲、亚洲、非洲、欧洲的国家，以及加拿大，都是因为不承认美国而不敢承认。资本主义国家现在承认我们的，合起来只有十九个，加上社会主义阵营十一个，有三十个，再加上南斯拉夫，有三十一个。我看就是这么一点过日子吧。不承认我们，我看是不坏，比较好，让我们更多搞一点钢，搞个六七亿吨，那个时候它们总要承认。那个时候也可以不承认，它们不承认有什么要紧？

最后一条，就是准备反侵略的战争。头一条讲了双方怕打，仗打不起来，但世界上的事情还是要搞一个保险系数。因为世界上有个垄断资产阶级，恐怕他们冒里冒失乱搞，所以，要准备作战。这一条要在干部里头讲通。第一，我们不要打，而日反对打，苏联也是。要打就是他们先打，逼着我们不能不打。第二，但是我们不怕打，要打就打。我们现在只有手榴弹跟山药蛋。氢弹、原子弹的战争当然是可怕的，是要死人的，因此我们反对打。但是这个决定权不操在我们手中，帝国主义一定要打，那末我们就得准备一切，要打就打。就是说，死了一半人也没有什么可怕。这是极而言之。在整个宇宙史上来说，我就不相信要那么悲观。我跟尼赫鲁总理辩论过这个问题，他说，那个时候没有政府了，统统打光了，想要讲和也找不到政府了。我说，哪有那个事，你这个政府被原子弹消灭了，老百姓又起一个政府，又可以议和。世界上的事情你不想到那个极点，你就睡不着觉。无非是打死人，无非是一个怕打。但是它一定要打，是它先打，它打原子弹，这个时候，怕，它也打，不怕，它也打。既然是怕也打，不怕也打，二者选哪一个呢？还是怕好，还是不怕好？每天总是怕，在干部和人民里头不鼓起一点劲，这是很危险的。我看，还是横了一条心，要打就打，打了再建设。因此，我们现在搞民兵，人民公社里头都搞民兵，全民皆兵。要发枪，开头发几百万枝，将来要发几千万枝，由各省造轻武器，造步枪、机关枪、手榴弹、小迫击炮、轻迫击炮。人民公社有军事部，到处练习。在座的有文化人，你们也要号召一下，单拿笔杆不行，一手拿笔杆，一手拿枪杆，又是文化，又是武化。

有这么八个观点，当做一种看法，供各位观察国际形势的时候采用。

As far as the international situation is concerned, our view has always been optimistic, which can be summarized as “the East Wind prevails over the West Wind.”

At present, America commits itself to an “all-round contract” policy along our coast. It seems to me that the Americans will only feel comfortable if they take complete responsibility for Kinmen [Quemoy; Jinmen] and Matsu [Mazu], or even for such small islands as Dadan, Erdan, and Dongding. America gets into our noose. Thereby, America’s neck is hanging in China’s iron noose. Although Taiwan is [for the Americans] another noose, it is a bit farther from [the mainland]. America now moves its head closer to us, since it wants to take responsibility for Kinmen and other islands. Someday we will kick America, and it cannot run away, because it is tied up by our noose.

I would like to present some viewpoints, offering some ideas for the participants at this meeting. Do not treat them as a decision, or some kind of law. As law, they might not be changed; as opinions, they are alive and flexible. Let us use these points to review and analyze the current international situation.

The first question is who fears whom a bit more. I believe that the Americans are afraid of fighting a war. So are we. But the question is which side actually fears the other a bit more. This is my point, as well as my observation. I would like to invite everybody here to apply this point to your observation from now on. You can observe the situation for one, two, three, or four years by using this point. You will eventually find out whether the West fears the East a bit more, or the East fears the West a bit more. According to my opinion, it is Dulles who fears us more. Britain, America, Germany, France, and other western countries fear us a lot more. Why do they have more fears? This is an issue of strength, and an issue of popularity. Public attitude is indeed strength. There are more people on our side, and fewer on their side. Among the three doctrines [in today’s world]—communism, nationalism, and imperialism, communism and nationalism are relatively closer. Nationalism dominates a large part of the world, including the three continents: Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Even though the ruling groups of some countries in these continents are pro-West, such as those in Thailand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Japan, Turkey, and Iran, among the people in these countries many, probably quite a few, are pro-East. Only the monopoly-capitalists and a few people who have been totally poisoned by the monopoly-capitalists want a war. Except for them, the rest of the people, or the majority of the people (not all of them) do not want a war. In northern European countries, for example, the ruling classes, though belonging to the capitalists, do not want a war. The balance of strength is like this. The truth is in the hands of the majority of the people, not in the hands of Dulles. As a result, while they feel rather diffident, we are solid and dependable inside. We depend on the people, while they support those reactionary rulers. This is what Dulles is doing right now. He specializes in such people as “Generalissimo Chiang,” [South Korean leader] Syngman Rhee, and [South Vietnam leader] Ngo Dinh Diem. My viewpoint is that both sides are afraid [of each other], but they fear us a bit more. Thus, it is impossible for a war to break out.

The second question is what is the nature of the international military alliances organized by the Americans and the other imperialists, such as the North Atlantic [Treaty Organization], the Baghdad [Treaty Organization], and the Manila [Treaty Organization].³⁰ We say that they are of an aggressive nature. It is absolutely true that these military organizations are of an aggressive nature. However, against which side do these organizations direct their spearhead? Are they attacking socialism, or nationalism? It seems to me that they are currently attacking the nationalist countries, such as Egypt, Lebanon, and the other weak countries in the Middle East. But they will attack the socialist countries until, say, when Hungary completely has failed, Poland has collapsed, Czechoslovakia and East Germany have fallen down, and even the Soviet Union and us have encountered troubles. They will attack us when we are shaking and crumbling. Why should they fail to attack you when you are falling down? Stable and strong, we are not falling down now, and they are unable to bite the hard bone. So they turn to those more biteable countries, gnawing at Indonesia, India, Burma, and Ceylon. They have attempted to overthrow [Gamal Abdul] Nasser,³¹ undermine Iraq, and subjugate Algeria. By now Latin

America has made a significant progress. As [U.S.] vice president, [Richard] Nixon was not welcomed in eight countries, where people spat and stoned him. When the political representative of America was treated with saliva and rocks there, it means contempt for America's "dignity," and an unwillingness to treat it "politely." Because you are our enemy, we therefore treat you with saliva and rocks. Thus, we should not take the three military organizations too seriously. [We] need to analyze them. Even though aggressive, they are not steady.

The third point is about the tension in the international situation. We are calling every day for relaxing international tensions because it will benefit the people of the world. So, can we say that it must be harmful for us whenever there is a tense situation? I do not think it necessarily so. A tense situation is not necessarily harmful for us in every circumstance; it has an advantageous side. Why do I think this way? It is because besides its disadvantageous side, a tense situation can mobilize the population, can particularly mobilize the backward people, can mobilize the people in the middle, and can therefore promote the Great Leap Forward in economic construction. Afraid of fighting a nuclear war? You have to think it over. Look, we have fired a few shells on Kinmen and Matsuo, and I did not expect that the entire world would be so deeply shocked, and the smoke and mist is shading the sky. This is because people are afraid of war. They are afraid that the Americans will make trouble everywhere in the world. Except for Syngman Rhee, no second country supports America among so many countries in the world. Probably the Philippines can be added to the list, but it offers only "conditional support." It is a tense situation, for example, that caused the Iraqi revolution, is it not? The current tense situation is caused by the imperialists themselves, not by us. In the final analysis, however, the tense situation is more harmful for the imperialists. Lenin once introduced this point in his discussions about war. Lenin said that a war could motivate people's spiritual condition, making it tense. Although there is no war right now, a tense situation caused by the current military confrontation can also bring every positive factor into play, while at the same time stimulating groups of backward people to think.

The fourth point is about the issue of withdrawing armed forces from the Middle East. American and British troops of aggression must withdraw. The imperialists now refuse to withdraw and intend to stay there. This is disadvantageous for the people, but it will at the same time educate the people. In order to fight against aggressors, you need to have a target; without a target, it is difficult for you to fight against the aggressors. The imperialists now come up there themselves to become the target, and refuse to leave. This arouses the people of the entire world to fight against the American aggressors. After all, it seems to me that it is not so harmful for the people when the aggressors put off their withdrawal. Thereby the people will yell at the aggressors everyday: why do you not leave [our country]?

The fifth question is whether it is a good thing or bad thing to have [Charles] de Gaulle in power. At present, the French Communist Party and the French people should firmly oppose de Gaulle coming to power, and veto his constitution. Meanwhile, they should also be prepared for the struggle after he takes office in case they cannot stop him. Once in power, de Gaulle will oppress the French Communist Party and the French people. His taking office, however, may also have advantageous effects in both domestic and foreign affairs. Internationally, this person likes to make trouble for Britain and America. He likes to argue. He had some miserable experiences in the past. In his memoirs, de Gaulle blamed Britain and America all the time, but said some nice words about the Soviet Union. It seems to me that he will make trouble again. It is advantageous when France has trouble with Britain and America. Domestically, he would become a necessary teacher who can educate the French proletarians, just like "Generalissimo Chiang" in China. Without "Generalissimo Chiang," it would not be enough for the Chinese Communist Party's positive education alone to educate [China's] 600 million people. Currently, de Gaulle is still enjoying his reputation. If you defeat him now, people are still missing him as he is still alive. Let him come to power, he will run no more than five, six, seven, eight, or ten years. He will be finished sooner or later. After he is finished, no second de Gaulle will be there and his poison will be completely released. You must allow his poison to be released, just like that we did to our Rightists.³² You have to let him release the poison. If not, he always has the poison. You can eliminate the poison

only after he releases it.

The sixth point is the embargo, that is, no trade with us. Is this advantageous or disadvantageous to us? I believe that the embargo benefits us a lot. We do not feel it [to be] disadvantageous at all. It will have tremendous beneficial impact on our [handling of] clothing, food, housing, and transportation, as well as on our reconstruction (including the production of steel and iron). The embargo forces us to work out all the solutions ourselves. My appreciation goes to He Yingqin³³ all the time. In 1937 when our Red Army was re-organized into the Eighth Route Army under the Nationalist Revolution Army, we received 400,000 *yuan* of *fabi* every month. After we were paid the money, we became dependent on it. In 1940, however, the anti-Communist movement reached its peak, and the payment stopped. No more money was paid [to us]. We had to find out our own means [to support ourselves] from then on. What did we find out? We issued an order that as there was no more *fabi*, each regiment had to find out its own way of self-support. Thereafter, all [of our] base areas launched a production movement. The value yielded from the production reached not 400,000, not 4 million, even not 40 million *yuan*, but about 100 or possibly 200 million *yuan*, if we combined the production of all the base areas together. We have since relied on our own efforts. Who is today's He Yingqin? It is Dulles, a different name. Currently, they are carrying out an embargo. We are going our own way. We have initiated the Great Leap Forward, throwing away dependence and breaking down blind faith. The result is good.

The seventh is the non-recognition issue. Is [imperialist countries'] recognition [of the PRC] or non-recognition relatively more advantageous to us? Same as on the embargo issue, imperialist countries' non-recognition of us is more advantageous to us than their recognition of us. So far there are about forty some countries which refuse to recognize us. The main reason lies in America. For instance, France intends to recognize China, but it does not dare to do it because of America's opposition. Many other countries in Central and South America, Asia, Africa, and Europe, and Canada, dare not to recognize us because of America. There are only nineteen capitalist countries which recognize us now, plus another eleven countries in the socialist camp, plus Yugoslavia, totaling thirty-one countries. It seems to me that we can live with this small number. Non-recognition [of us], in my opinion, is not a bad thing. Rather, it is relatively good. Let us produce more steel. When we can produce 600 or 700 million tons of steel, they will recognize us at last. They may still refuse to recognize us by then, but who cares?

The last issue is about preparations for an anti-aggression war. I said in my first point that as both sides are afraid of war, war should not break out. Everything in the world, however, needs a safety factor. Since there exists a monopoly-capitalist class in the world, I am afraid that it will make trouble recklessly and abruptly. We must therefore be prepared to fight a war. This point needs to be explained clearly to our cadres. First, we do not want a war, and we oppose any war. So does the Soviet Union. If war comes, it will be started by the other side and we will be forced to enter the fighting. Second, however, we do not fear fighting a war. We must fight it if we have to. We have only grenades and potatoes in our hands right now. A war of atomic and hydrogen bombs is of course terrible since many people will die. That is why we oppose a war. Unfortunately, the decision will not be made by us. If the imperialists decide to fight a war, we have to be prepared for everything. We must fight a war if we have to. I am saying that it is not so terrifying even if half of our population perishes. This is certainly talk in extreme terms. Thinking about the history of the entire universe, I do not see any reason to be pessimistic about the future. I had a debate with Premier [Jawaharlal] Nehru³⁴ over this issue. He said that [as the result of a nuclear war] no government could remain and everything would be destroyed. Even though someone might want to seek peace, no government would be there. I told him that it would never be like that. If your government would be eliminated by atomic bombs, the people would form another one which could work out a peace. If you fail to think about things in such extreme terms, how can you ever sleep? This is no more than a matter of people being killed, and [what is reflected here] is the fear of fighting a war. But if the imperialists definitely want to fight a war and attack us first, using atomic bombs, it does not matter whether you fear fighting a war or not; in any case they will attack you. If that were the case, what should be our attitude? Is it better to fear or not to fear? It is

extremely dangerous [for us] to fear this and fear that every day, which will make our cadres and people feel discouraged. So I believe that [we] should be case-hardened toward fighting a war. We will fight it if we have to. We will rebuild our country after the war. Therefore, we are now mobilizing the militias. All people's communes should organize their militias. Everyone in our country is a soldier. We should arm the people. We can distribute several million guns at the beginning. Later on we will distribute several dozen million guns among the people. All provinces should be able to construct light weapons, including rifles, machine guns, hand grenades, small mortars, and light mortars. Each people's commune should have a military office to supervise [combat] training. Some of our participants here today are intellectuals. You need to make a call for holding a pen in one hand and gripping a gun in the other. You cannot only have pens in your hands. You should be culturalized as well as militarized.

These eight points are my opinions. I offer them to you for your observation of the international situation.