

## **November 10, 1965**

# **Memorandum of the First Conversation between Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice Premier Ri Ju-yeon**

### **Citation:**

"Memorandum of the First Conversation between Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice Premier Ri Ju-yeon", November 10, 1965, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 106-01476-05, 41-69. Translated by Jake Tompkins. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/118694>

### **Summary:**

Zhou Enlai and Ri Ju-yeon have an extensive discussion on the situation in Asia and Africa.

### **Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from MacArthur Foundation

### **Original Language:**

Chinese

### **Contents:**

Translation - English

[...]

Memorandum of the First Conversation between Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice Premier Ri Ju-yeon

(Has not received the Prime Minister's approval)

Time: 10 November 1965, 4:00pm - 7:35pm

Location: The Reception Room on the 4th Floor of the Diaoyutai Hotel

Participants: Chinese [Communist] Party: Chen Yi, Zhang Hanfu, Qiao Guanhua, Hao Deqing, Jiao Ruoyu, Liu Xianglun

North Korean [Workers'] Party: Pak Seong-cheol

Translators: Chinese: Jiang Chunyi

North Korean: Kim Sun-ho

Recorders: Chinese: Tao Bingwei, He Zhangming

North Korean: Paek Hyeong-pok

Vice Premier Ri Ju-yeon: Since we are the ones who have come to speak with you, I will begin the conversation. First of all, thank you very much for your warm welcome and accommodation.

Premier Zhou: We're all old friends, besides this is a special situation.

Ri: We would like to pass on the greetings of Comrade Premier Kim Il Sung to Comrade Premier Zhou and Comrade Vice Premier Chen Yi, and ask that you pass on these greetings to Chairman Mao, Chairman Liu, Standing Committeeman Zhu, and to our other comrades in the country's leadership.

Zhou: Thank you, we will pass on your greetings.

Ri: As I said when we were in the car, the reason Premier Kim instructed us to come here is so that we can hear Premier Zhou's opinions on the problems currently concerning us. Originally, a vice member of the central authority was going to be sent, but because the central authority is preparing for a meeting, myself and Ambassador Pak were sent.

Zhou: It's the same.

Ri: As I said, we have five questions we'd like to hear Premier Zhou's opinions on.

First, the Vietnam problem. The American imperialists are investing a large number of troops in Vietnam. We have already been tested against the American imperialists, and are still currently at a standoff. We cannot not be concerned with the situation our Vietnamese brothers are facing. We would very much like to hear what the Chinese government thinks of the Vietnamese situation.

Second, the situation in Indonesia. Indonesia has had a good relationship with our two countries in the past, but recently they've been unpredictable. Even though representatives from the embassy have given us some explanations, we feel they are very incomplete.

Zhou: Do you have reporters there?

Ri: Yes. But, their understanding of the situation is limited.

Zhou: Are your telegrams unblocked?

Ri: No.

Zhou: We're the same.

Ri: What do you think of the situation in Indonesia, Premier Zhou? We're very concerned with this problem.

Third, as for the treaty to be signed between South Korea and Japan, the people of our two countries, South Korea, and Japan are all opposed. Nevertheless, it seems it will still be passed. Everyone knows that this is being orchestrated by the American imperialists. The Japanese Imperialists are preparing to encroach on North Korea and Asia. In the long term, Japan is our enemy. We've been tested by America, and it seems we will soon be tested by Japan as well. That is to say, we will soon be faced with the power of an American-Japanese union. Under such circumstances, we would like to know what policy China intends to take toward Japan. What are your thoughts?

Fourth, The Second Asia-Africa Conference has been delayed. What do you think this situation will mean for the cohesion between Asia and Africa?

Fifth, we are being faced with unsettling events on all sides. We fought the American imperialists for three years, leaving our country in ruins. After the war, we engaged in ten years of reconstruction, returning to a semblance of our prior selves. Presently, we are preparing to be returned to ruin. In the face of such a situation, our party has already used the slogan, "A Weapon in One Hand, A Sickle in the Other" to help fortify our nation. In keeping with this policy, we are currently training and expanding the people's militia. At the same time, we're digging bunkers all over the country.

Zhou: You are very experienced.

Vice Premier Chen Yi: Your country's topography is good as well.

Ri: We've instructed all of our factory workers to start thinking of things they can do themselves, and in case something happens, they should go into the tunnels. As we've mentioned before, tunnels are also being dug in Pyongyang. As everyone knows, North Korea does not have much land and is surrounded on three sides by water. In case of war, we do not have any room to maneuver, so we've adopted the strategy of building tunnels. We're currently implementing a Seven-year Plan, but because of these kinds of problems, I'm afraid we cannot finish on time. Even so, we are preparing for war. Because of our experiences in the last war, we are currently stockpiling oil, etc. in preparation. We would like to know what preparations China is making, and in the case problems arrive, will you be prepared to provide us aid?

Zhou: How much oil do you currently use per year?

Ri: Normally, we use 600,000-700,000 tons every year. Aside from that, there's also the question of grains. We're doing a bit better than normal, and everyone has enough to eat. Of course, we still have to import a little, but not very much. We are working hard to be self-sufficient.

Zhou: Do you currently have stockpiles?

Ri: No. The military has some, but very little. This is exactly what I'd like to talk about, and hear your opinions.

Zhou: Thank you for the information, Vice Premier Ri, and we are thankful for Premier Kim's intentions in coming to ask our opinions. These are all problems that concern both of our countries' obligations in the Eastern hemisphere, so we're both concerned. We wish to not only express our own opinions, but to hear those of the North Korean party and government. Of course, our opinions may not currently be complete, but we can talk about them. I'd like to change the order of the questions Premier Kim has raised a little, and talk about three of those questions this afternoon, two tomorrow morning, and if there are still any questions tomorrow afternoon we can talk about them then. Today, we can talk about the problems in Vietnam, Indonesia, and that of the Asia-Africa Conference. Tomorrow morning we can cover the "Korean-Japanese Treaty," as well as the preparations and strategy China and North Korea can take against the Japanese. How does that sound?

Ri: Good.

Zhou: These three questions are all inter-related. Before we touch on them, I would first like to talk about the changes in the situation of Asia and Africa in the twenty years after the war. In the first ten years after the war, some countries engaged in reconstruction, while some new independent countries were born, especially some socialist nations. In the east, the People's Republic of China, People's Democratic Republic of Korea, and People's Republic of Vietnam were created. Later, North Korea went through a war against American imperialist invasion in which they were victorious and began reconstruction. Vietnam was involved in the Indochina war against the French, convened the Geneva Convention, coming to an agreement the results of which are that half of Vietnam became Socialist and began reconstruction. We won't bother to mention the East European socialist nations.

Furthermore, the war produced a number of socialist countries in Afro-Asia, significantly impacting international affairs. For example, after Indonesia became independent, it created a united war front, which has been very useful; India's present work toward the people's liberation movement has been useful. There's also Burma and Cambodia. The overturning of the Farouk dynasty in the United Arab Republic encouraged the independence struggle in other countries. At the time, not only was a new socialist country born, but it was an Afro-Asian country, increasing demand in the region for revolution, liberation, and national independence. Even though some nations once again became dependent on the Imperialists after gaining independence, they cannot become examples. They cannot receive too much attention. For example, the Philippines, Thailand, Turkey, etc. These countries cannot create progress, only destruction. This is exactly the situation under which the first Asia-Africa Conference was convened.

At the time, when the first Asia-Africa Conference was held in Bandung, the Imperialist countries did not pay it much attention. They were under the impression that the meeting, though a gathering of Asian and African countries to exchange ideas, would be thwarted by their puppets from the inside, for example Philippines, Thailand, South Vietnam, Turkey, Lebanon, and the other right leaning countries of the time such as Pakistan, Sri Lanka, etc. But, in the end the meeting in Bandung was successful, strengthening the desire and determination for independence in Asian and African countries. Their plot to destroy the meeting was thwarted, which was something they hadn't planned on. At the same time, there was another event. At the time, there were two international conferences which resolved some problems. One was the cease fire negotiations in North Korea. On one side of the war was North Korea, on the other side was America, but America also represented fifteen vassal states as well as the United Nations. The other was the Indochina agreement reached at the Geneva Convention in 1954. The North Korean problem was also discussed at the time, but no agreement was reached. As a result the Imperialist

nations such as England and France got the idea that agreements could be reached through negotiations. But, in reality, those agreements were reached through war. This reveals a truth: that the things that cannot be obtained through war, can certainly not be reached through negotiation. Then, some nations hoped that there would be negotiations between China and America to resolve the problem of Taiwan. Talks between China and America came about as a result of the Asia-Africa Conference. We have been negotiating for eleven years beginning in 1954 without any progress, because we still have not waged war over Taiwan. This proves that negotiation is useless.

After the conclusion of the Bandung Conference, several African countries obtained independence one after another. There were six African representatives at the conference. Of the six, three were independent countries, namely Egypt, Ethiopia, and Liberia; and 3 were not entirely independent, namely Gold Coast, Sudan, and Libya. Nations active outside of the meeting include Algeria, Tunisia, Guinea, and Morocco, none of which were independent. However, in the later ten years after war, the three independent African nations grew to 36. Of course, their degree of independence varies. In Asia at the time, because there still had not been a resolution to the problem in North Korea, neither North or South Korea attended, nor did Mongolia. Malaysia was not invited since they were already independent. There were 32 attendants from Africa and Asia.

There were two modes of development among Afro-Asian countries in the second ten years. First was to obtain independence through peaceful negotiations, and the other was to do so through armed struggle. Most countries were liberated through negotiations, so their independence was not complete. The countries that obtained their independence through war include Algeria. Congo also obtained a degree of independence, but it was suppressed, reigniting the war. Sudan has not obtained independence and is always in some kind of struggle whether small or large.

And so, in the first ten years, many Asian countries obtained their independence and developed; In the second ten years, there were not many such countries, and the nations that first became independent were divided. Does this division represent the continuation of the people's revolution or a remnant of imperialism changing them into dependents? The newly independent regions of Africa also experienced development, increasing the struggle. After ten years, as the struggle increased, these independent nations became polarized. Those who desired revolution and continued development on the left, those following imperialism on the right. Those who were indecisive remained in the middle. This proves a truth, that nationalists are representatives of the Bourgeoisie. They have two sides: One is to be active when fighting for independence and afterward, continuing to oppose imperialism and colonialism after obtaining liberation; The other is to remain immobile and conservative. They do not oppose imperialism, and domestically preserve feudalism, becoming stagnant. There are few countries in the middle. The left leaning nationalists want to continue opposition to imperialism and colonialism. There must be a central leading factor, or they must accept the guidance of a communist party, or cooperate with it to keep the left maturing, and finding the reason behind revolution. In Asia, these kinds of countries are rather few in number, and in Africa the majority of countries do not have communist parties. On the topic of communist parties, the last ten years have produced a certain new situation, namely the rise of revisionism. In 1953, Khrushchev took the stage. In the first two years, revisionism was still in the process of developing and did not have a large impact on the international scene. So, the USSR revisionists did not pay much attention to the Bandung Conference, Nehru did not invite Khrushchev and he didn't say anything about it. In 1954, prior to the Asia-Africa Conference, we raised five principles to which Khrushchev did not pay attention either. Afterward, the Bandung Conference was reaffirmed. In 1954, we pointed out that peace is conditional. In the 20th Congress of the CPSU, he spoke of peace, and argued with us. In reality, two are not the same. The last ten years were not the same. The revisionists became active and formed a coalition. They've been particularly active in the past few years. Under

these conditions, the communist party has become divided. Only true Marxist-Leninists can lead the people's revolution, like the Indonesian Communist Party. And then there is the nationalist right who chase imperialism and revisionism, becoming revisionists. India's Dange Group is a classic example. African and Asian countries have also become divided in foreign policy. The leftists who truly support people's independence carry on the fight for revolution. South Africa, Central Africa, Vietnam, and Laos have all begun their revolution. The nationalist right opposes people's liberation movements, even to the point of following and supporting imperialism, helping to suppress the people's struggle for liberation, like when India supported the United Nations in sending troops to Congo, killing Lumumba, and arresting Gizenga. The nations in the middle approve one minute and are opposed the next. Today they are with us, tomorrow they're against us. They are entirely indecisive.

Modern revisionism has shown its colors. It supports the right, and opposes the people's liberation movement. It believes that a small spark can turn into a big war, and completely ignores the development that the people's liberation movement has undergone in the past twenty years. As a result, modern revisionists approve of the United Nations sending troops to Congo, and currently supports the American imperialists holding peace talks in Vietnam. This time in Indonesia they support the Right of the Indonesian army. For example, they work with Nasuiton, and may even support the formation of a revisionist party by the Indonesian Right.

Similarly, the people's armed revolutionary struggle has also been impacted, it has been divided. Some take a stance of armed struggle to the end, when they have obtained independence; some support peaceful negotiation, meeting in the middle. This is most evident in Congo. The situation is complicated. Today they tell us they want a war of resistance, tomorrow they want to surrender. The situations in Central and South Africa are the same.

There's been a theme over the past ten years, countries that have already obtained independence continue to split. Those that lean toward the left do well, while the citizens of countries on the right are dissatisfied and want to revolt. This has already happened in some countries. For example, Zanzibar was like that in 1964. Congo is another example. After gaining independence, their leaders became tools of the French imperialists. When the Bourgeoisie overthrew them in August of 1963, the revolution was successful. That is the nature of things. When a government is overthrown, sometimes it gets better and sometimes it gets worse. There are plenty of examples of this. Arabia and Africa both have had these kinds of experiences. The overall trend is that even if a country's first step is to obtain independence, no matter what, once independence is obtained, a nation must depend on its military might. Those who obtain the right to rule through peaceful negotiation all now understand that they must have military power. Afro-Asian countries that depend on their military to protect their right to rule are increasing in number daily. There are almost none that do not. The trend is that the rightists depend on the militaries of the colonialists. Of course they also have some military of their own to maintain stagnation. Those in the middle are half self-dependent. One part of their military belongs to the colonialists, and part is their own. Those on the right protect themselves, and are even more revolutionary. The military that I'm talking about is of course that of the Bourgeoisie.

So, in the last ten years, the people's independence movements in Africa and Asia have been developing. After rising up, their top leadership splits into two camps, with very few in the middle. When re-consolidating their power, they either follow Imperialist nations, becoming a colony, or they revolt, walking the path of independent development. As a result, there is also a huge division among those in the middle. Other nations have a big impact on them, Imperialist and revisionist nations have influence, and those Marxist-Leninist nations who maintain revolution to the end also have influence. And so, this is a time of significant upheaval, division,

and reorganization. It can be said that the situation before the convening of the first Asia-Africa Conference was such that the desire for revolution was strong and mainstream, whereas the non-mainstream was divided and easily broken and so the conference was successful. In the past ten years, the mainstream supporters of people's independence and revolution are increasing, but will not revolt, and the non-mainstream saboteurs of revolution have also increased in number, and while the mainstream is the root, the non-mainstream also has influence; they can affect every time, region, country, and movement. For this reason, the first Asia-Africa Conference was easy, but the second one ten years later has been postponed three times, and still has not been convened, so if we hold it in June of this year, there will still be arguments.

And so, imperialism is good, and revisionism is also good. They allowed the Non-Aligned Movement Conference, the African Summit, and the Arabian Summit, but cannot tolerate the Asia-Africa Conference, and it is no simple matter of geography, rather one of the nature of the conference. The other conferences were tolerated because they were not about the fight against imperialism and colonialism, nor were they promoting armed struggle. The Asia-Africa Conference on the other hand is one to oppose imperialism and colonialism. There is struggle here both in support of and counter to revolution. Let me give an example to explain my point. The Non-Aligned State Conference was held last year in Cairo, the tone of which was very anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist. However, very quickly there were seventeen non-aligned countries who, in reaction to the American imperialists' peace talks, wanted to spin the Vietnam problem to one of war between Vietnam and the American imperialists, rather than Vietnam resisting the American imperialists' invasion. This proves that sometimes what they say and what they do are not the same.

One aspect of the African Summit was to support the armed struggles in Central and South Africa, even to the point of organizing a committee in Tanzania. Another aspect was to organize a mediation committee in Kenya. This conference has suffered the determination of those opposed to the people's liberation struggle, even refugees of the revolution have been expelled, calling their activities subversive. This is exactly the problem. It is reflective of the two sided-ness of the Bourgeoisie's rule.

On the other hand, the Asia-Africa Conference has communist leaders, and participating countries that support Marxism-Leninism like China, North Korea, and Vietnam. This will impact some certain countries that are influenced by communist parties or have contact with communist parties. Indonesia, for example. If we are able to hold a conference like this, we will maintain revolutionary policies, arguing against compromise. In the end, this problem will be resolved by truth. Therefore, imperialism is terrified of this conference, they cannot afford not to destroy it. Revisionism is scared as well, and is willing to fight its way in and do imperialism's work for it. From last year to this year, we have been facing this problem from beginning to end. Once the conference is convened, we must argue. We must confront this struggle. The problem at the heart of the rest is that of Vietnam. America has stated publicly that the Asia-Africa Conference will oppose American imperialism, calling for America to withdraw its troops. Asia has over 60 countries, influencing world opinion, and they are willing to move in support of Vietnam. Modern revisionism wants to squeeze its way into the Asia-Africa Conference to destroy it and weaken everyone on the Vietnam problem. They will attempt to be low key, shielding the American imperialists. The Vietnam situation proves this point.

Now, let's talk about the Vietnam problem itself.

We've had two opportunities to speak with our comrade the leader of Vietnam recently. Once was when a delegation from the Vietnamese Party passed through Beijing on the way to the USSR to discuss the matter of aid. The second was over the

past couple of days when we went to Guangzhou to meet with the him.

Our opinions on the following matters are rather close.

The first problem is that of the conditions of the Vietnam War. Everyone believes that the war will continue, and that there is currently no possibility for negotiation. The situation is still not mature. That is to say, the current so called "peace talks" are a product of the American imperialists' scheming. America's scheme is to negotiate with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in order to make its invasion legal and make La [sic] unable to move in Vietnam.

Recently our comrade from Romania told me that [Dean] Rusk has spoken with the Romanian Foreign Minister in the United Nations. Several nations are engaging in peace talks. Nasser and Tito are as well. Their actions are useless. They all just want the Nobel Prizes. Rusk hopes that Romania will approve of their activities, snooping around to see what problems exist between China and Vietnam. Our Romanian comrade answered saying that a decision has already been reached at the 9th Romanian [Party] Congress. They support the four policies adopted by the People's Republic of Vietnam: China and Vietnam are united. They don't care about receiving Nobel Prizes, rejecting their requests. Our Romanian comrade also asked Rusk what their position is in the peace talks with America. Rusk responded that the People's Republic of Vietnam is pushing four points, the first of which is that America must withdraw troops from Vietnam. This is non-negotiable.

Ambassador Pak: So the negotiations will be unsuccessful.

Zhou: The other three points can be discussed. It is very clear that America wishes to legalize their invasion of Vietnam. That is also to say, that the war has still not come to the point where America will admit defeat.

Originally America dispatched 135,000 troops, which has already increased to 170,000. By the end of the year they could reach 200,000. They've already exceeded the originally stated number. Because of this, in the invasion of Vietnam, not only do they send puppet soldiers to the front lines, but they also have to send horses. Sometimes American soldiers even fight alone.

Recently the People's Army of South Vietnam reported that they destroyed 130,000 troops in September, over 8,000 of which were American. The proportion has increased. But this is only the beginning, so if America is not willing to admit defeat, then they will also be unable to truly negotiate.

In the course of the war's development, in the end they will either fight to the last man, disperse, or admit defeat. If there are none left, then naturally there cannot be negotiations. If they disperse, then there is still no way to negotiate. It is only with the admittance of defeat that negotiations can be held. America was not involved in the Chinese war of liberation, but they orchestrated it from behind the scenes. When the Jiang [Jieshi] bandits fell, America dispersed without negotiations. In the Korean War, America was defeated, admitted defeat, and negotiations were held. In Vietnam, America still has not exhausted its resources, has not dispersed, and will not admit defeat, so they will not be able to negotiate. The Vietnamese intention is to fight out a result.

It isn't that Vietnam will only fight and is not willing to negotiate. It's just that the current situation has not matured, and the situation is such that the People's Republic of Vietnam's government's four conditions and the five conditions set by the South Vietnamese People's Liberation Front absolutely cannot be reduced.

The Vietnamese party, government, and people are the leaders in the Vietnamese problem. All that we can do is support them, we do not have the right to change nor reduce their conditions.

However, the USSR has already begun all kinds of negotiations behind closed doors. America will not be mentioned in the era of Khrushchev, apparently even America's firing its cannons is a result of China's provocation. As for the new leader of the USSR, Kosygin spoke with us when he passed through Beijing on the way to Hanoi this February. He said that they only offer support to Vietnam, but cannot act on their own. He also asked the opinion of the Chinese party. We answered saying that we would still like to ask the opinion of Vietnam. However, as soon as Kosygin returned to Moscow, the offensive came. He immediately began rushing about asking for peace talks.

The Vietnamese government responded saying that they cannot negotiate. We said that we could not give them an answer until we knew Vietnam's thoughts on the matter. The USSR government, however, did not pay attention to Vietnam's objections, nor did they wait for our answer. They went straight to Charles De Gaulle for peace talks. From that time on, the international community has all been chattering about how the USSR is willing to negotiate with only China opposed.

The USSR has always been wavering on the 4 points raised by Vietnam. When Nasser visited the USSR in the latter half of this year, the reports issued by the USSR were very low key on the question of Vietnam. They did not condemn the American invasion, nor did they demand that America withdraw from Vietnam. Does the USSR have no choice but to stand with Nasser on these issues? I don't believe so. Recently, on the 5 November, Nasser issued a public report with Guinea's Sékou Touré, after which his tone on the Vietnam issue changed. Previously, Comrade Chen Yi visited Guinea and spoke with Touré concerning Vietnam. So, it can be seen from Nasser and Touré's report condemning the American invasion of Vietnam that Nasser is able to accept such a stance. Why is that he is suddenly unable to accept it when in the USSR? In reality, it's just that the USSR did not want to bring it up, and changed their position on Vietnam.

Vice Premier Chen Yi said that the USSR has not influenced Nasser, rather it is Guinea that swayed him. Before and after the 20th of September, I visited Guinea for two days and had a long talk with Touré. We spoke for ten hours. He said that he wants to intervene in the Sino-Soviet split. He said that the Sino-Soviet split is a global problem, which he has the right to speak on. I said, "Correct, it is a global problem which impacts the destiny of the world. You do have the right to speak on it." I told him repeatedly, "If you mediate in the Sino-Soviet split without taking into account right and wrong, then you will certainly be aiding revisionism." He was furious, saying, "You are burning bridges by speaking like this to me; If no matter who helps who it's all helping revisionism, then who will come to mediate again? From now on I will not try to mediate again!" I responded saying, "You are welcome to come participate in negotiations, but you must clearly distinguish between right and wrong. These are significant rights and wrongs. Not distinguishing between the two will be of no help to you, indeed it will be extremely inconvenient. For example, when the USSR decided to abandon its relationship with Albania and pull its experts out of China, tearing up our contracts, were we in the wrong? This is the Soviet Union cooperating with America to conquer the world. They say that Marxism-Leninism is outdated, and we say that it is still necessary. We take a position of revolution." Touré said that China has many reasons for its split with the USSR, whereas the USSR's reasons are few. Therefore, his trip to the USSR was only a visit in which he told them to be better to China, that its actions are baseless whereas China's actions are sensible. He also said, "If you don't believe me, you can go look at the records of the meeting in Moscow." I told him, "As long as you distinguish between right and wrong, we welcome your opinions on the Sino-Soviet split. If you cannot distinguish between the two, it will be very troublesome for you, you will be taken advantage of."

He said, "From now on I just won't worry about the Sino-Soviet split."

He then said, "Marshall [Chen Yi], you say that negotiations and peace talks are helping America. Your position on this is extremely clear, but I do not agree." I responded, "No, that's not what we mean. In the Vietnam War, you have to distinguish between the invaders and those being invaded, those doing the damage, and those being damaged. America is harming the people of Vietnam, so the people must resist. Anyone with a sense of justice must call for America to end their invasion of Vietnam. Nothing else is acceptable. Our stance is that engaging in peace talks is the same as helping America, so the Vietnamese people cannot accept it." He said, "So I will condemn America at the African Summit". I replied, "I thank you, and the people of Vietnam also thank you. Not long ago, Nasser issued a public report with the USSR speaking of peace talks, not distinguishing between right and wrong. I hope you will do differently at the African Heads of State Conference, since what he did has no meaning."

Zhou: This is related to the situation in Vietnam. Currently, the Vietnamese people will keep fighting until America admits defeat. We agree with them. Vietnam's government has set their four conditions for negotiation. They will not be reduced.

The second matter is the current condition of the war.

Our comrade from Vietnam tells us that their victory in the rainy season exceeded expectations. America even admitted that they had originally hoped to improve their position, but were unsuccessful. You've seen recently how big America's losses have been in their two military engagements on land surrounded by water. America has combined their army, navy, and air force all to attack a beachhead, and lost. They've used "Blot Tactics" to eliminate a radius of 50 kilometers, but there are guerrilla forces just fifteen kilometers from Saigon. Skirmishes have also broken out within Saigon.

Supposedly there are 500,000 puppet soldiers (including regular and local forces), but in reality there are only 60-70 percent of that number, they can't take anyone prisoner. America has been holding a meeting with the puppet governments for the past few days during which they admitted this point. There are not enough puppet soldiers, so America has no choice but to take things in their own hands, accepting losses.

Our comrades in Vietnam tell us that once the rainy season has passed, they are preparing to regroup during the dry season. During next year's rainy season, they plan to achieve victory. They plan to obtain victory within three years. Currently they've run into a few problems. America is using B-52s to carpet bomb them, so they will possibly suffer losses, and infrastructure could be damaged. However, they are already thinking of ways to avoid this problem: If they know about the bombing beforehand, then they can evacuate or camouflage themselves to avoid losses.

America is blowing smoke right now. If the armed resistance in the South just relaxes a little bit and the North stops sending more troops to the south, then they can stop bombing. They will try this method. Some nations in Eastern Europe are also promoting this. However, the military strength of South Vietnam will only continue to strengthen. America has also noticed that the North has sent two groups of reinforcements (They've noticed two numerical divisions). Therefore, America's fantasy has been broken. In reality, the reinforcements sent by the North do not stop at just two divisions.

Ambassador Pak: The foreign news says that is the 325th Division.

Zhou: Our Vietnamese comrades say that they will continue to send reinforcements.

The third matter in question is that of the developmental path the war will take.

Our Vietnamese comrades are, subjectively speaking, containing the war in the South. It is there that they will resolve the problem. America also is currently only deploying to the south. They want to limit the conflict to the South and seize it. This is the desire of both parties. However, war does not frequently develop according to one's wishes. They must prepare for the possibility that the war will expand. America also says that it wishes to "gradually escalate" the war. America originally said that they will not bomb the 50 kilometer radius around Hanoi, nor will they bomb the coastal defense perimeter because there are Soviet warheads there. The Soviets have also said that their warheads can protect Hanoi and the coastal defense perimeter. And so, the reason America does this is because they hope that the Soviets will pressure Vietnam to accept peace talks, but Vietnam will not accept.

They've already bombed within 50 kilometers of Hanoi in the past two or three rounds of bombing. Our Vietnamese comrades told me they are afraid that there may be no geographic limits to the bombing now. Hanoi is completely evacuated now, even the children, in preparation for the bombing.

The planes the US has lost in North Vietnam are already more than 600 in number. Because they suffered losses in the bombing, they felt the insufficiency of their air force. There are even some training personnel participating in the war. Something like this happened just three days ago: a plane was taken down (five people in total), and a helicopter was dispatched to save them, but due to artillery fire was unsuccessful. Of the five occupants of the plane, two were taken captive, and three hid but were unable to escape and could only wait until night to send up a distress signal. This proves that the American air force personnel are insufficient, and morale is low.

Ambassador Pak: What proportion of their total air force is participating in the war in South and North Vietnam?

Zhou: Check the report tomorrow (Note: Premier Zhou had already given related materials to Vice Premier Ri Ju-yeon on 12 November). Essentially, there are two divisions, one is on the front lines and the other is a reserve force. They are divided domestically and all over the world, and cannot be picked out.

Our Vietnamese comrades have also prepared for America to spread the war to North Vietnam. They have recently postponed our plans to provide aid. They want to engage in smaller, spread-out projects.

The American bombs are mostly concentrated on main roads, military bases, armories, and factories. The Vietnamese comrades have, like those in North Korea before them, learned methods of self-protection. For example, the use of bridges, and dismantling things in the day and storing them at night.

If the war spreads to North Vietnam, it is very possible that it will also spread to China. As America is bombing the two railroads in North Vietnam, sometimes a plane will cross over to our side, at which point we shoot it down. If the war becomes even larger, the border will become even more fuzzy. In this case, it will certainly spread to China. Therefore, we've been preparing. We'll talk about our war preparations tomorrow.

The fourth question is that of China's cooperation with and support of Vietnam.

Besides assisting with military resources, we've also sent a division of engineers to Vietnam to repair railroads and highways. They're restoring the railroads and highways that were bombed in Hanoi (The ones that run to Guangxi and Yunnan). They are also restoring fortifications on offshore islands. At the same time, we sent troops to guard the workers as they repair the railroads. By the beginning of next year we intend to send a total of 230,000 engineers and protection forces. This is not public information. On the other hand, Vietnam is using some of our provinces as a place to fall back to. They send their wounded, and some people for training. Soldiers and technical personnel all come. We have four provinces set to maintain contact with Vietnam and act as their rear: Yunnan, Guangdong, Guangxi, and Hunan.

The fifth matter I will address is that of the argument over the USSR's support of Vietnam and the consequential split. In retrospect, when the new leader of the USSR took office, approved of and aided Vietnam, his actions were obviously welcome. We've told Kosygin, "As long as you support the war in Vietnam, the more support you offer, the more useful you are, and the more effective it is, the better." From the perspective of aid, a portion certainly appears to have fought the enemy, so we cannot say that it hasn't been useful. However, the USSR's motive in helping Vietnam is to control the political situation there, at the same time securing the right to speak with America in negotiations. It was actually selling out the Vietnamese people.

America has said itself, if China supports Vietnam, then they will fight to the end, but if the USSR supports Vietnam, then there is the possibility for negotiation and ending the war early. (Vice Premier Chen Yi commented, "Even America can see this clearly.")

The new leader of the USSR has indicated that they regret the way they spoke to us. We responded saying, "Why don't you condemn America? Why don't you support Vietnam in fighting the war to victory? Why don't you refute the rumors?" They remained silent. The devil is in this detail.

We wrote an article concerning the USSR's support of Vietnam and its effectiveness, and it will be distributed tonight at 8:00. You can read the report tomorrow and consult with us about it. We won't bother talking about it anymore here. Of course, this is what we think of the matter, but we should also point out that recent events prove that our opinions are not unfounded. America suggested condition-less negotiation, and said that it would send 1,000,000,000 dollars to aid development in Southeast Asia, and end the Vietnam War. The Vietnamese government has already voiced their opposition. Even Prince Sihanouk is openly opposed. In pursuit of its goals, America even held a Southeast Asia Developmental Banking Meeting in Bangkok. However, the USSR also attended this meeting and wanted to invest. Who were they sitting with? Aside from America, there was also Thailand, the Jiang [Jieshi] bandits, Saigon, South Korea, and Japan. It's unseemly! Not only does the USSR want to participate in the Africa-Asia Conference, but they also want to be in the Southeast Asia Group, and Northeast Asia group! Of course, America welcomes them to participate in the discussion of a Southeast Asian Development Banking constitution. We simply could not imagine they would sink this low.

To Vice Premier Chen Yi: "Could you imagine this?"

Vice Premier Chen Yi: "I never expected it!"

The USSR's goal in aiding Vietnam is to ruin the relationship between China and Vietnam and obtain the right to speak on their behalf. So, we told our Vietnamese comrades, "You cannot refuse the USSR's aid, but this casts a shadow on Sino-Vietnamese relations".

Originally, Vietnam didn't think that Sino-Vietnamese relations would be impacted by the USSR. They did not really agree with our way of looking at it. But recently, the USSR sent us a letter to try to pass on their problems. I'll give the letter to Comrade Kim Il Sung a little later. (Ambassador Pak said, "We've already received it.") After this event, I went to Guangzhou to speak with Vietnam's highest ranking leaders, at which time they also admitted that a shadow has been cast over our relationship.

Furthermore, I told our Vietnamese comrades, "The Chinese [Communist] Party is good, and so is the Vietnamese Party. There will always be those on the left and on the right, both in the cadre and among the people. Those in the middle are of good intentions but are susceptible to being duped." Our Vietnamese comrade agreed, saying, "The central authorities of our two parties will not be affected, we will still fight together against imperialism to the end." I responded, "Correct, but we must increase our vigilance and guard against meddling; we also must educate the well intentioned to prevent them from being fooled." Our Vietnamese comrade agreed.

The heart of the Vietnam matter is how we support the Vietnamese people in their fight to victory. Everything else must serve this purpose.

The final matter is like this.

For a year, we have been passing on the Vietnamese people's struggle against America. People from Asia, Africa, and Latin America all place importance on this struggle, because the Vietnamese problem has become the world's problem. What do the Imperialist nations think? What do the people of the world think? Now, the people of the world who support the Vietnamese people are ever increasing in number. The American people have even risen up, something that did not happen during either the Korean nor the Chinese wars for people's liberation. American professors, students, workers, and intellectuals all oppose America's invasion of Vietnam and call for withdrawal of troops, even to the point of self-incineration as a form of protest. First, an older woman in West Germany incinerated herself, and a student did the same just yesterday. Even the British Bourgeoisie scholars like Russell support Vietnam and oppose the American invasion. Our socialist nation and communist party's support of Vietnam is different. We do not support their four conditions. Doesn't that show the Imperialists that there is a split between us?

The USSR constantly puts its cooperation with America first. Recently, Polyansky said in a speech for October's Revolution Day, "The problem of Vietnam and that of the multilateral nuclear power situation both hamper Soviet-American cooperation" We are starkly opposed to this this statement. Later, when the speech was published, "Soviet-American cooperation" was changed to "the working relationship between America and the USSR". (Vice Premier Chen Yi commented, "They work together so well!") In this matter, our three nations may see things differently, but that cannot obstruct our support of the people of Vietnam in their struggle to victory over the Americans.

How about we end today's discussion here?

Ri: Have you gotten tired, Comrade Prime Minister?

Zhou: We still haven't spoken about the conditions of Indonesia and Afro-Asia. We still have other things to attend to today, so I suggest we reconvene tomorrow at 8:30 in the morning. First, I'd like to ask Vice Premier Chen Yi to explain the situation concerning our plans to visit Africa and the Asia-Africa Conference. I will arrive at 9:30 at which point we can talk about the Indonesia matter as well as our policies concerning Japan and war preparations. We will have to go over time tomorrow. We won't finish unless we speak three times.

Ambassador Pak: Even though your schedule is tight, I'd still like to ask you a few questions. The situation in Vietnam could take three possible routes. Which do you think is the most likely?

Zhou: Our current analysis shows that they will have to admit defeat. It would be best if they were destroyed, and better if they were forced to withdraw without fighting. It would save us a lot of trouble. However, at the moment our Vietnamese comrades agree with our opinion that America must sign an admittance of defeat. If the movement around the world is successful, then they might admit defeat and leave right away.

Ambassador Pak: One more question, is there the possibility for a battle like the one at Dien Bien Phu?

Zhou: Vietnam currently still does not plan to assemble all of its power and fight a war of annihilation. Right now they are still in the phase of using several small victories to equal a large one. Of course, we cannot eliminate the two other possibilities. The first is that the puppet army will be weakened to the point that they can be completely destroyed. The puppet army has 9 main forces which tend to move as a group. Currently we could destroy half of one camp. The next step is to prepare to annihilate the entire group. If we are successful, we can coax the American army out and destroy it completely. (Vice Premier Chen Yi said, "This is also "gradual escalation"!") Right now we could only destroy a part of the chain, we would still have to "gradually escalate" in the future. So, we still cannot think about whether or not a Dien Bien Phu style battle could come about this year or next year, but we should always fight for such an opportunity. The future is not one battle like that at Dien Bien Phu, rather several. The Chinese War of Liberation was first fought on a small scale, then we began destroying the enemy, division by division, to the point where we defeated two division. In Jinan we defeated 3 divisions, after which came three large battles. We didn't even expect things to develop that way. Vietnam's current three year plan is correct.

Vice Premier Chen Yi: America currently has three bridgeheads in Vietnam. Waiting to destroy them will not work.

Ambassador Pak: The American and puppet armies are both stationed in five bases in Saigon, Danang, and others along the coast. If the Vietnamese Liberation Army were to cut off their transportation line, would that pose a shipping problem for the Americans?

Zhou: Yes, it would have a huge impact. So, America has a huge number of freight vehicles and helicopters, more even than actual war machines. I will bring a map tomorrow and explain to you how to cut the middle out of the whole.

Ambassador Pak: Have their sea routes been cut off at any point?

Zhou: The coastal bases have not been cut off, but the non-coastal ones have.

Vice Premier Chen Yi: The America army mostly just come out to clean up and augment the puppet army. This is where they will suffer the most hardship. The five bases are constantly being surrounded and ambushed, and every time they go out to augment the puppet army they are ambushed, so the American army is at greater risk. Sometimes, the five bases and others that have American troops stationed there are attacked at the same time.

Zhou: The Vietnamese have surpassed us in this aspect.

Vice Premier Chen Yi: We didn't have as much ammunition at the time.

Zhou: Actually, that wasn't the problem. The problem was the development of people's war. You've already sent people to study that.

Ambassador Pak: Geographically and militarily speaking, the American bases are next to the ocean and depend on it. That is their world. The Vietnamese People's Liberation Army has their back to the sea. Isn't that disadvantageous?

Zhou: They have aircraft carriers, they stay on the carriers and don't come off which makes them difficult to attack. However, their five bases are easy to attack. Once all of the other locations have been lost, the five bridgeheads will be useless, so they will pull out. Right now, the important thing is that puppet army, but fighting the American army is on the agenda. When the situation is right, we fight the Americans.

It looks like we must hold our meeting over two days.

[...]