

OUR FOREIGN POLICIES AND OUR TASKS

April 30, 1952

I. OUR FOREIGN POLICIES

Ever since the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, we have adhered to a foreign policy of peace. This is because we are confident that we will surpass imperialism through peaceful competition. Certainly, in our struggle for peace we should consolidate national defence and increase our economic strength so as to guard against the possibility of a war launched by the imperialists and to dissuade them from any such attempt. But if they start a war nevertheless, we will defeat them.

In implementing our general foreign policy of peace, our specific policies are as follows:

1. "*Making a fresh start*". As Comrade Mao Zedong put it in the spring of 1949, one of our major foreign policies is to "make a fresh start". That means that we repudiate the former relations between the Kuomintang government and other countries and establish new ones on a new basis. Foreign envoys to old China are no longer considered diplomatic representatives but are treated like ordinary foreign residents. In the past after a revolution the established foreign relations were sometimes maintained. After the Revolution of 1911, for example, the government went along with the old ties in hopes of winning recognition from other countries as soon as possible. But we haven't done that. In the "Proclamation of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China", Comrade Mao Zedong announced that we would establish diplomatic relations with foreign countries on the basis of equality, mutual

Excerpt from an address at a meeting of China's diplomatic envoys to foreign countries.

benefit and mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty. The governments of old China had never established such diplomatic relations in more than a century. After Comrade Mao Zedong's announcement, we transmitted the proclamation to governments of all other countries in the name of the Foreign Minister, making our position clear to all. To show that we were serious about foreign affairs, we asked for negotiations before establishing official relations with other governments. We want to make sure that they sincerely intend to establish relations with us on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty. As far as members of the peace camp are concerned, the Soviet Union recognized us first, then the other people's democracies followed suit in succession. These countries sincerely wished to establish relations with us on the basis of the principles I have mentioned. That's why we established diplomatic relations with them quite soon.

As for the capitalist countries and the former colonial and semi-colonial countries, we cannot dispense with negotiations, because we need to understand whether they accept our principles for establishing foreign relations. We should not only listen to their words but also observe their actions. For instance, if they vote in the United Nations not for New China but for Chiang Kai-shek's reactionary government, we would rather postpone establishing relations with them; on the other hand if India and Burma really cut off relations with the Kuomintang reactionaries, we can establish relations with them after negotiation.

Thanks to the policy of "making a fresh start", China is no longer a semi-colonial country and has established independent diplomatic relations with other states.

2. "*Leaning to one side*". In his article "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship", written in June 1949, on the eve of the founding of the People's Republic of China, to commemorate the 28th anniversary of the Party, Comrade Mao Zedong put forward the policy of "leaning to one side", declaring that China stands on the side of the peace-loving democratic camp headed by the Soviet Union. On July 7 all China's democratic parties and people's organizations published a joint statement endorsing this policy. By taking a clear-cut stand in favour of the camp of peace and democracy, China has dissipated the illusions of the imperialists. If we had not stated our position explicitly, the imperialists would still have indulged the vain

hope that they could count on us. For example, that's why Leighton Stuart⁶² stayed on in Nanjing after the city was liberated. By declaring our policy of "leaning to one side", we have thrown cold water on their heads.

3. "*Cleaning up the house before entertaining guests*". The imperialists still want to retain some privileges in China in the hope of sneaking back in. A few countries intend to negotiate with us about establishing relations, but we prefer to wait for a time. The remaining imperialist influence in China must be eradicated first, or the imperialists will have room to continue their activities. Although their military forces have been driven out, the economic power they have built up over the past century is still strong, and their cultural influence in particular is deep-rooted. All this will undermine our independence. We should therefore "clean up the house before entertaining guests", that is, before establishing diplomatic relations with them. But that doesn't mean we can do the cleaning in a hurry; we should do it step by step. When they invaded Korea, the U.S. imperialists adopted hostile policies towards us and froze our property. That being the case, we froze their assets in China and took over cultural institutions subsidized by them. It is particularly worth mentioning that in the movement to resist U.S. aggression and aid Korea,²⁶ we have denounced worship of the U.S. and pro-U.S. sentiment and dispelled fear of the U.S. Were it not for the movement, it would have taken us perhaps dozens of years to do that.

4. "*Courtesy demands reciprocity.*" As far as capitalist countries are concerned, if they treat us well, we shall treat them well, and if not, not. It is our policy to reciprocate, for it is impolite not to pay a man back in his own coin. We often gain the initiative by striking last, and if anyone plays a trick on us, we shall repay him in kind. We are not afraid if anyone strikes the first blow: if he does, he will immediately find himself in trouble. Since the founding of our People's Republic, we have been in a strong strategic position because we have made a fresh start and cleaned up the house before entertaining guests. In specific matters, however, it is desirable to gain the initiative by striking last.

5. "*Supplying each other's needs*". Since the founding of the People's Republic, we have done business with foreign countries in accordance with the principle of equality and mutual benefit. We have put an end to the days when China was merely a market for the

consumer goods of foreign merchants. When the U.S. imperialists laid an embargo on us, we resorted to barter as a substitute for purchase with foreign exchange; that's an excellent way for us to get around the U.S. embargo. China mainly exports farm products in return for industrial equipment. Now we have substantially expanded trade with the Soviet Union and the other people's democracies and with capitalist countries. China's volume of export is greater than it was before World War II. Of course it would be good for us to turn the unfavourable balance of trade of the Kuomintang days into a favourable one, but for the time being our goal is simply to strike a balance between import and export. Now we import what we need and export what other countries need, such as eggs and pork. This practice of helping to supply each other's needs is an example of mutual benefit.

6. "*Uniting with the peoples of all countries*". We carry out the policy of "leaning to one side" in our relations with the Soviet Union and the other people's democracies. Meanwhile, in order to help consolidate and develop the strength of the international forces for peace and to extend the influence of New China, we should unite with and win over the former colonial and semi-colonial states and also the people of capitalist and imperialist countries.

These principles constitute the foreign policy of peace to which we adhere.

II. THE DIPLOMATIC ALIGNMENT

1. *The kind of diplomatic alignment we should establish.* Does diplomacy refer to relations between countries or between peoples? Should we approach states or people? We must unite with the people of all countries not only fraternal countries but also former colonial and semi-colonial countries and capitalist countries. But the function of diplomacy is to deal with relations between states. Through diplomacy we ultimately gain access to the people, influencing them and winning them over. We should be clear about this dialectical relation.

2. *Drawing distinctions between ourselves and our friends and the enemy.* In the early days of our People's Republic, we called people's attention to this question. We ourselves and our friends

are on one side and the enemy is on the other. Let's make a specific analysis. There are two kinds of friendly countries: those that will be friendly more or less constantly and those that are friendly just for the time being. Even these last differ from each other. Some are our friends for a short time, while others remain so for a relatively long period. The crucial point that distinguishes them from each other is their attitude towards war and peace. Although by their nature they belong to the capitalist world, it is likely that they won't join in a war but will observe neutrality. This is what happened when World War II broke out. At that time the Soviet Union persuaded Sweden to remain neutral,⁶³ which was favourable to the U.S.S.R. It would have been more favourable to the Soviet Union and the other European countries if Norway had been persuaded to do the same. The neutrality of capitalist countries would be of advantage to us in a war against the imperialists, so we should on no account be hostile to them and push them into the enemy camp. Rather, we should make friends with them. Of course, their attitude will not be obvious until war breaks out, but we should try to anticipate it and do our best to unite with them. Once war breaks out, it is possible that these countries will remain neutral. There is even a slight possibility that they will come over to the peace camp and oppose the imperialists. That depends on how strong the peace camp grows and how serious the divisions are in the enemy camp.

It is also necessary to analyse even the imperialist camp. The countries that follow the U.S. imperialists are, after all, a minority. On the Korean battlefield, 15 countries joined the U.S. aggressors. But if the war had broken out in China, would there have been so many countries fighting against us? It is doubtful. In the final analysis, only a handful of countries will cling to their obstinate antagonism and be ready to fight us on the battlefield. The capitalist countries by no means form a monolithic bloc and we should make distinctions among them.

We should wage a resolute struggle against the countries that are most hostile to us.

As for the countries that have poor relations with us and have not established diplomatic ties, we should not put them on a par with the U.S. imperialists. There are contradictions between these countries and the United States, and we should try to influence them so that they will not be too hostile.

With regard to the European countries that have not established diplomatic relations but are negotiating with us, so long as they don't turn against us, we can go on with the negotiations.

As for the European countries that have established diplomatic ties with us, we should treat different ones differently.

The Southeast Asian countries that have diplomatic relations with us were previously colonies. Today all that has changed — they have established their own congresses and governments. And since the people have awakened, the imperialists have been obliged to give up their old trick of coping with a colony by delegating their power to the local bourgeoisie. Therefore, it would not be realistic to insist that these countries are still colonies. Even Japan cannot be called a U.S. colony. The chief attacks of the Japanese people are sometimes directed against the U.S. imperialists and sometimes against their own government. Only those countries directly under the rule of imperialists can be called colonies. The countries of Southeast Asia are in contradiction with the imperialists on the issue of war and peace. We should try to win them over so that they will remain neutral in time of war and keep their distance from the imperialists in time of peace.

Work with the Islamic countries can be completed gradually, since we have only limited relations with them and a modest degree of influence on them.

We should be flexible in our diplomatic work, relying on the progressives, uniting with the middle-of-the-road forces and splitting the diehards. In this way we will open up new prospects for diplomatic work. It is wrong to think that the world is simply divided into two conflicting camps and that there is nothing we can do to improve it.

III. IDEOLOGICAL LEADERSHIP IN OUR DIPLOMATIC WORK

Our diplomatic work must be performed entirely under the guidance of the proletarian ideology. We can never allow bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideas to exercise a corrosive influence, still less to become predominant. We must be steadfast in our stand and clear in our minds.

1. *Adhering to internationalism and opposing narrow nationalism.* Everyone knows in theory that this is the correct attitude, but in their practical work people sometimes manifest a nationalism and chauvinism that stem from their pride in the victory of New China. Of course, we should have national self-confidence, but it is wrong to behave, even unwittingly, in a conceited and arrogant way; that is narrow nationalism. Every nation has its good qualities, which we should respect and learn from. Narrow nationalism must be eliminated in favour of internationalism.

2. *Upholding patriotism and opposing globalism.* Our patriotism is socialist and people's democratic patriotism, not bourgeois chauvinism. We oppose globalism, which makes people lose national confidence and seek protection from big powers. The United States advocates globalism and leadership by the big powers in the hope of persuading small countries to follow them forever and of keeping them subjugated and exploited. Our internationalism means the independence and equality of all countries.

Socialist patriotism is not narrow nationalism; rather, it is patriotism that inspires national confidence but is enlightened by internationalism. Occasionally, some of our comrades deviate from their stand. This is because living in our country, a former semi-colony, they envy the high level of development of capitalist countries so much, without examining their evil aspects, that they come to worship those countries blindly. It is wrong to say either that everything is good in China or that everything is bad. We should incorporate all the best of both Chinese culture and foreign cultures. In the *Da Gong Bao* there used to be a column entitled "China's Firsts". How could it have been possible to capture so many firsts? Later the column was cancelled. It is true that New China is much better than the old one and that it is our beloved motherland; but we must still learn from foreign countries.

3. *Upholding collectivism and opposing individualism.* Since diplomats represent the state, they should always bear in mind the collective interest. It would be very dangerous if they proceeded from their personal interests. All of our successes should be attributed to the victory of Mao Zedong Thought and to the joint efforts of the people. All honours go to the state. We must never allow personal considerations to intervene in diplomatic work. And we should never feel complacent on hearing praise, because we owe all honour to the people. If we hear complaints, we should examine whether we are

doing anything wrong. We should totally merge the individual with the collective.

4. *Maintaining proletarian discipline and opposing liberalism.* We emphasize the conscientious observance of discipline in the interest of the Party. We cannot permit any liberalism. Irresponsible remarks and acts will cause trouble. Diplomacy deals with relations between states, so in this work we should ask for instructions before making statements and submit reports afterwards. Since we speak on behalf of the state, we must mean what we say. So it's better not to say too much. But does that mean we should keep our mouths shut? No, we can speak of any public pronouncement, achievement or decision, only keeping silent about things that have not been made public and things in areas that are unfamiliar to us. That is because we are not working within our Party but dealing with another state. We can be flexible to some degree, providing we keep to certain principles. We must adapt to changing conditions. And there's nothing wrong with postponing dealing with certain new problems: when we don't have sufficient experience, it's better not to act hastily.

5. *Upholding democratic centralism and opposing bureaucratism.* Since none of us is experienced in diplomacy, we should cultivate democracy. As the old saying goes, "Three cobblers with their wits combined match Zhuge Liang, the mastermind." While it is necessary to solicit everybody's opinion, we should stress centralism. But we must establish democracy in our embassies. Stressing centralism to the neglect of democracy will lead to bureaucratism, while promoting democracy can help us get rid of it.

6. *Encouraging dedicated Party spirit and creating a highly political atmosphere.* To create a highly political atmosphere, our comrades must first dedicate themselves to the Party, temper themselves ideologically and always act in accordance with principle. Being political involves many areas. It doesn't mean reciting principles as dogma. A person who does that is a pedant at best and a dogmatist at worst. We should investigate and analyse problems, and when talking about everyday life or about literature and art, we should proceed from principles. Thus there will be less concern with trivia and a more political atmosphere. Of course, a political atmosphere doesn't mean that you have to discuss Marxism-Leninism every time you open your mouth.

7. *Advocating hard work and plain living and opposing bourgeois extravagance and waste.* Affected by bourgeois values, we are quite

wasteful in our diplomatic work. It is wrong to try to match the Soviet Union in living standards. Actually, after the October Revolution the people of the Soviet Union still led thrifty lives. Comrade Mao Zedong disapproves of lavish entertainment, because it is not in keeping with our current economic conditions. We can't match the Soviet standard of living because our level of production is not up to theirs.