

SECRET/SENSITIVE

BRIEFING GIVEN BY DR. KISSINGER IN THE FAMILY THEATER OF
THE WHITE HOUSE - 7 MARCH 1972

Dr. Kissinger: I didn't expect you to stand, but I at least thought you would kneel.

I thought I would give you a brief summary of what we see in the China trip -- to bring you about up to the level of the ordinary TIME reader (for which I trust you don't have the time, from your other duties) and also to put you on the same level as your friends in the State Department when it comes to leaking. I will cover it on several levels. First of all, let me give you our judgment of what we are up against with the People's Republic, and then the various levels at which this communique ought to be seen, and then some of the long term implications as we view them.

- I.** The China We Face. First, what are we up against. I believe the People's Republic is a different phenomenon from the Communist Parties and Communist countries in Eastern Europe with which we have dealt heretofore. The Communist countries in Eastern Europe are of two varieties. They are either countries on whom communism has been imposed by a foreign country, and therefore it has no original indigenous roots, or as in the Soviet Union it is a revolution that was achieved by relatively small conspiratorial group and that in any rate has lost its original revolutionary motivation and is now carried along by bureaucratic inertia and the maintenance of the status quo. This, incidentally, does not make the Soviet Union easier to deal with.

The Chinese Leadership. In the People's Republic we are still dealing with the people who made the revolution. We are dealing with people who in the 1920's joined the Communist Party when there was absolutely no chance of their getting to power; this selected out a certain type of person. We are dealing with people who in the 1930's went on the Long March, who in the 1940's fought the Japanese, who in the 1950's fought the United States, who in the

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1960's took on the Soviet Union; who in the 1950's tore apart their country on ideological grounds with the Great Leap Forward and in the 1960's tore apart their country with the Cultural Revolution. For better or worse, they are a different psychological type from the ones we know in the United States and for that matter in Eastern Europe. If they were pragmatic legalists as our people -- if Mao were a pragmatic legalist he would be a bank president in Shanghai today. The fact that they are not, the fact that they were willing to enter the career they chose and suffer its deprivations means that they are men of very great philosophical, almost religious motivation. Their ideology, indeed their almost religious fervor, happens to be quite contradictory to ours, but its sincerity and intensity cannot be questioned by anybody who has dealt with them.

The Implications for Them. Secondly, their value system as I have pointed out is quite different from ours. In an early meeting in China I pointed out the advantages of peace and I was severely reprimanded. It was pointed out to me that peace is not an objective, but a result. The objective has to be justice. If there is justice, there will be peace. If there is not justice, there must not be peace. So where we extol peace, they extol justice. Where we talk of compromise as an end, they talk about principle. Where we talk about stability, they talk about struggle. This permeates their whole way of thinking and especially the thinking of the top leaders. These are the only ones with whom I have any personal acquaintance, so I cannot say whether at lower levels in the Chinese hierarchy or in the rural area these views are held with equal intensity. But at the levels at which I have dealt and with all their subordinates, one had to be struck by the intensity and uniformity of this feeling.

Therefore, for these people the encounter with the United States was a dramatically unsettling event. For us, it was justifiable on pragmatic foreign policy grounds and we can explain it in terms of the necessities of an immediate pragmatic situation. For them it required a re-orientation of the whole pattern of thinking, especially in a society that prides itself so much on maintaining basic principles. Some basic principles had to be found to explain why this was done.

Therefore, from the beginning (for example, in our October contacts), exposing our group to the public was a major event for them that went through a series of stages. The first stage was an announcement in the

People's Daily that an American delegation, headed by me, had arrived at Peking Airport and was greeted by the following Chinese leaders (which happened to be many of the top leaders quite out of proportion to our protocol rank). The next day they published a picture of Chou En-lai and the delegation that I headed, which was the first time that the Chinese had ever seen one of their leaders with an American official. The next day there was an opera. It was scheduled for, I think, eight o'clock, or at any rate for some time when I was still with Chou, and I thought it would be in the opera house. So at eight o'clock, when we were still going strong and Chou said, "Well, now we'll have some dinner," I said, "No, I have to go to the opera." He said, "No, you will have some dinner," and I said, "Well, I don't mind skipping the opera," and he said, "They will hold it for you." And so we got there an hour late. It turned out to be, as we later found, that almost everything that happened on my trips and on General Haig's trip, was not done only in terms of its own merit, but as a dress rehearsal for what would happen later. We both went through exactly what the President went through later. At any rate, it was not in the opera house but in the Great Hall of the People. We were taken in by leaders, by Marshal Yeh Chien-ying, the Number Three Man in the country now. When we entered the Hall he started applauding and we were greeted with a very tepid round of applause which we killed by not applauding back. So it was not one of -- it was like a staff meeting.

The next day I told Chou that I appreciated his enormous courtesy of holding up a performance, and I hoped that the audience wasn't too inconvenienced. He said that it wasn't an audience, it was selected cadres. So this was the first time that the cadre in Peking got a look at the "foreign devils." And it was only after they had gone through all of this programming that we were let out on a visit to the Summer Palace where, insofar as I could tell, ordinary Chinese would get a look at these Americans accompanied by senior Chinese.

Now the tremendous philosophical upheaval this was for them was shown at every stage of the proceedings -- by the deadly seriousness with which they approached almost any drafting of anything joint that was undertaken between the United States and the People's Republic, and by their general approach to the conduct of our relationship. Now it is obvious that what brought us together was necessity, not love -- not the fact that they admire Americans, not that our diplomacy was so brilliant, but the fact that they decided that among all their dangers we were the least, and that

among all the possibilities of reassurance we were the most comforting. Once they made that decision the problem for them was how to get themselves into the position to carry it off.

The Chinese Negotiating Style. In dealing with them, however, there are a number of characteristics in which they are quite different from Hal Sonnenfeldt's client. When you deal with the Soviets, they start with the assumption that they haven't made a mistake since 1917 and we haven't done anything right since 1776; that no proposition we make to them has any conceivable merit but because they are talking to us and therefore presumably they want to deal they will reluctantly make the minimum concessions that are necessary, but within a framework that makes it perfectly obvious that at the first opportunity they will break it. The first time I was in China, when we were drafting the July 15 announcement, they asked, "How shall we proceed?" I thought I was dealing with Dobrynin, so I said, "Well the way to do it is for you to write down your things and we'll write down our things, and then we'll start trading them off." They said, "That is not the way to do it. The way to do it is, let's first talk about what you must have and what we must have, and if we understand each other we will find words easily enough." Now that talk turned out to be very prolonged and took the better part of the night, but they were men of their word. Once we had done it, we went off to draft our version of the announcement and they went off to draft their version of the announcement. One of the smarter things we did was to ask them to table theirs first; it turned out that theirs was better than the one we were preparing to table.

On another occasion when we were drafting this communique, -- which has parallel columns: "the U. S. side says" and "the Chinese side says" -- they said something objectionable in their section and I urged them to take it out. I said, "If you take this sentence out, I'll give you one of mine." In dealing with the Russians, this is the minimum I could have said. They said, "If you want to give this sentence to somebody, give it to your President; we don't want it. If you object to our sentence, tell us why you object to our sentence, and if we agree with you we'll take it out. But your taking out your sentence is irrelevant to whether we should take out our sentence. So give it to your President if you want to take it out." Well, the upshot of it was they took out their sentence, and we kept our sentence -- having been trained in the Russian tactic.

It is not a big thing, and I'm not claiming that this makes any vital difference. I'm just trying to give you a feel for the difference in negotiating tactics. When you make a proposition to them, the Chinese think nothing of saying, "Is what you really mean this?" and then stating your view better than you stated it yourself, or at least as well, and treating it as if it were a perfectly meritorious point of view. Then they will say, "Our view is the following." It doesn't mean they'll yield; it just means it isn't a brute test of endurance and a brute test of strength. But these are all surface things, which I am stressing only to give you a feel for what we were dealing with there. They stressed the fact that "With us [speaking of themselves] our word counts, and therefore when we say something, we do it." And that led to very meticulous discussions about every aspect.

II. The Communique. Now, let's talk about the communique. We started out with the idea of a conventional communique, that is to say, a lot of garbage or common things that were stated so vaguely that it permitted each side to do what they wanted. At first, they seemed to go along with that. Then they came back; they said, "This is just not right. This is the first time you and we are making a joint statement. This is the sort of thing that our Northern neighbor would sign; they would sign it not meaning a word of it, and not keep it for two months. It is much better for us not to pretend to agreements that don't exist, but to state where we disagree -- and then the agreements we do state make some sense." We were not too happy with that at first, but in retrospect I think they were right and we were wrong, because we couldn't have stated agreements across the whole board without putting it into phraseology that immediately would have forced each side into explanations that it meant something quite different by that phraseology than the other. This is why we began by making two sets of statements.

Now then, what does the communique mean, first in practical terms and then in more long range terms? In practical terms, it was greeted by an odd collection of criticisms at first. One -- that combined Senator Humphrey and Representative Ashbrook -- was that we had pulled the rug out from under Taiwan. The other criticism was that we had accepted certain principles that we had rejected eighteen years ago. Another was that the Chinese position -- where it says, "the Chinese side stated " -- was not very good music to American ears.

Taiwan. Let me first deal with the Taiwan section. Let's first analyze what it says. The Taiwan section is in two parts, one in which they state their position, the other in which we state our position. Normally the way this was negotiated was that each side had an opportunity to express its views about the statement of the other, but didn't press it to the breaking point. On Taiwan, however, they felt very strongly that this was an issue of the profoundest principle to them, and they therefore felt that what we said on their soil was a matter of the gravest consequence. They permitted us -- not in the form of an agreement between them and us, but in the form of a unilateral American statement -- to take care of our sensibilities. The statement of their position is, as Far Eastern experts will probably confirm, a rather moderate statement of their position, free of invective and above all free of any attack on the Defense Treaty, which was not generally noticed. They do not in their statement of their position declare that the Defense Treaty is null and void, the way they have done it in their standard positions.

Our section on Taiwan is in two parts, one having to do with our general approach to the problem, the second having to do with the disposition of our forces. The part having to do with our approach to the problem states that we acknowledge that the Chinese maintain that there is only one China and that Taiwan is part of that China. We don't acknowledge that this is the case; we acknowledge that all Chinese on both sides of the Strait maintain this. This happens to be a statement of fact. If there is one thing that Chiang Kai-shek and Mao agree on, it is that there is one China and that Taiwan belongs to that China. It is the credo of both of them. When we say we do not challenge ^{the} proposition, that is also a statement of fact that has been the basis of our policy. Even in our U.N. vote we did not challenge the proposition that there was one China. We maintained that there were two governments in that one China, but we did not challenge the proposition that there was one China. So, that too is a restatement of the obvious.

The next part has to do with the disposition of our forces. We say that we reaffirm our interest in a peaceful settlement by the Chinese themselves, and, with this prospect in mind, we reaffirm the ultimate objective of the withdrawal of our forces. In the meantime, we will reduce these forces progressively as tensions in the area diminish.

Now to reaffirm our interest in a peaceful settlement, first of all, runs counter to their assertion that the settlement of the Taiwan issue is

a purely internal issue. This is a complicated way of opening our statement into the commitment. The prospect of a peaceful settlement is organically linked to the ultimate objective of the withdrawal of our forces, and before this ultimate objective can even be discussed, we will reduce our forces as tensions in the area diminish. We also told them that we would say publicly, first, that our Defense Treaty would remain in force, and secondly, that we would interpret the diminishing of tensions to apply not simply to the Taiwan Strait (in which they could sort of control the degree of tension) but to all of Asia and indeed to all international relations.

If we made a statement like this about the situation in Vietnam, we would be accused of having devised a trick formula for perpetual involvement.

If you ask yourself, "what are we required to do as result of this unilateral statement operationally?" it is not easy to point to one practical consequence that we have to carry out immediately. I am not saying this to say we have tricked the Chinese. Anyone who has sat through as many hours as we have with the Chinese knows that they are not trickable, nor is it in our interest to trick them. The whole basis of our relationship has to be that -- necessity having brought us together, and the fact being that most of the things that can and should be done must be done over a period of years -- then only the most meticulous attention to reliability can carry us through all the shoals of this policy. So if the Chinese agree to this formulation -- and believe me it was not their opening position -- it must be not because they thought we were pulling the rug out from under Taiwan, but because they needed a fig leaf for their domestic policy, in order to justify why suddenly Enemy Number One has become somebody with whom they are pursuing a parallel policy. And, as is clear now when one reads some of the briefing they give to their cadres, they justified the Taiwan section not on the grounds that it enables them to take over Taiwan but that it contributes to the diplomatic isolation of Taiwan; this has some merit, although that was accomplished more by our visit than by anything we say in the communique. They are putting much more stress on the second level, which I now want to mention.

Exchanges. The second level is the things we agreed to do jointly: exchanges, trade, diplomatic contact. On this I can only say that they gave us exactly what we asked for. To say that we got less than was hoped is simply newsmen running competition with themselves. They accepted exactly the drafts that

were given to them. And the drafts that were given to them went beyond anything that in October they said they were willing to consider. One has to keep in mind how much more specific could it have been? We could have listed in the communique all the exchanges that will be taking place, but considering the pressures they are under from the Soviet Union, I think both sides preferred to have this develop defacto than to have it all listed in one document. There is no question that, certainly on exchanges and gradually on trade, there will be a noticeable and significant increase.

On the issue of diplomatic contact, my friends and admirers in Foggy Bottom would, of course, have liked to have a representative in Peking. We saw no overwhelming interest in that, partly for Taiwan reasons and partly from having observed other Interest Sections at work. All I can say is, we have the diplomatic contacts we need. We are going to set up one, and we are not lacking in diplomatic contacts; if one looks at the reality and not at the form, we are in close, intimate and frequent contact with them. That is what matters, and not whether some Third Secretary was left behind in a Western embassy whose Ambassador never sees Chou. By this time we have logged more time with their top leaders than any Ambassador in Peking has in ten years. So the essence isn't whether there is some formal person left behind, but what degree of contact do we have, and I maintain we have the maximum degree of contact that we could want. In fact, we have any contact that we want. But that isn't the key. The key is in the part of the communique that is hard for Americans to understand.

Principles. I would say that for the Chinese the two essential elements of the communique were the section on Taiwan, which gave them their legitimacy, and the section on common principles, which Americans will never understand: the principles that both sides were opposed to hegemony, that both sides wished to reduce the dangers of military conflict, that both sides would not use force in international relations, and also the principles of coexistence.

Now first with respect to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. It is of course true that we rejected them in 1955. We rejected them in 1955 primarily because we wanted to build SEATO, because we didn't want them to seem an alternative to the need for military defense. Now since all of you have access to classified information, I think I can give away the fact that SEATO is not the most vital instrument of American policy today.

First of all, most of the members of SEATO are no longer operationally in it, and whatever damage can be done to the remaining members is being done in the daily cables that Dick Kennedy has to clear to Thailand and other places, without anything that we need to say in Peking. So that argument doesn't apply. But on their side, the problem was this. First, when the thing was all finished -- in other words when it wasn't a bargaining point -- the Chinese said to us, "You may not appreciate what it means to have a joint communique at all after twenty-two years with a country that still occupies part of our territory and that is daily engaged in military operations against an ally just south of our boarder." And ask yourself how the People's Republic, which as late as a year ago had denounced us as Enemy Number One, plus some adjective which were anything but flattering, could communicate to its people that there has been a change? They could not make an agreement with us on Vietnam or Korea or any other of the pragmatic problems, partly because we can't do it and partly because both sides would get under violent attack from their Allies. They could not assert that we have a common danger, because that might produce the very danger against which they are trying to protect. What they could do is publish in the People's Daily and in every provincial newspaper a statement of common principles, which indicates that this country -- which is still occupying part of Chinese territory as they see it, and which is daily engaged in military operations against an ally that they have said is as close to them as the lips to the teeth -- nevertheless is worthy of enunciating common principles with a theological society.¶ To us it doesn't make any difference, because we don't pay that much attention to formal principles. Therefore, they paid a great deal of attention to these common principles, and again if you read the intelligence report of what they tell their cadres, this is what they list first among the achievements -- not the Taiwan section about which you would expect them to crow. And indeed, if you look at it from the point of view of the Chinese and not only from the point of view of Americans, their statement of their position in this communique -- which was published in every provincial newspaper and the national newspaper, and on the national radio and on every provincial radio -- is relatively more moderate than any other public statement they have made. Hanoi is pointing this out to them, indirectly, almost daily. What they say on Vietnam is an extraordinarily moderate statement, in which they simply support the public positions and take no position of their own, and add a sentence that all foreign troops

have to return to their national territories. This includes, if not North Vietnamese troops in South Vietnam, it certainly includes North Vietnamese troops in Laos and Cambodia -- a fact, as we know now, that has not been lost on Hanoi.

I'm not saying that we didn't pay a price. Of course, the diplomatic problems of Taiwan have been compounded. Of course, some of our allies have become more uncertain. Of course, Japan is using this as a pretext to accelerate the movement towards nationalism that was slated to happen with the successor to Sato, and to push it up into the Sato period; and we may have compounded the problem somewhat. I don't deny that we have paid a price.

But if you look at the alternatives which we had, then the problem is quite different. Last year, less than a year ago, an American table tennis team was invited to Peking and this was headline news all over the world. If we had rejected the Chinese overtures, the Chinese would have applied to us the same methods that the North Vietnamese do, that is a succession of opposition politicians, peace groups, and newsmen would have been invited to Peking. The obstacle to normalization would have become Formosa as a public issue. Our commitment to Formosa would have become the same sort of problem as our commitment to Vietnam has become. The two issues, in fact, would have merged, and Senator Humphrey would be accusing us of not pulling the rug out from under Chiang Kai-shek, of not giving a deadline, of tying ourselves once more to a corrupt military dictatorship. So we didn't have the choice between doing nothing and doing this.

III. Implications for the Long Term. But, moreover, on positive grounds, this generation of Chinese leadership, while tough, while fanatical, still has a sweep and a perspective to them which enables us to set a course which their successors, brought up entirely under the revolution, might no longer possess. And, therefore, we have been able to open up the international arena to possibilities of foreign policy and to conciliation that simply were not available before. In short, I believe that what has been started in China can be a turning point in diplomatic history. However, for us to do it we have to pursue it with wisdom.

I am told by some of our right wing opponents that the United States cannot stand balance of power policy, that the United States must be moral or it will be nothing, and that therefore only the most rigid anti-communism can make us survive. We can no longer afford this. We gave up a total preponderance of power -- I'm not going to argue whether we should have or shouldn't have -- but the facts of the matter are that we are now in the position that every other nation has been throughout history. We need wisdom and judgment in order to survive, and we cannot simply rely on assumed moral superiority and overwhelming productive capacity.

I know, on the other hand, there are people who engage in a pro-Chinese nostalgia and who believe that all we have to do now that we have opened up is to get their revolutionary ballet over here and our scientists over there and all our problems will disappear. These people [the Chinese] are very tough. They are very purposeful. And it is absolutely essential that we conquer our penchant for cheap little maneuvers, because the only hope we have is by dealing with them reliably and steadily. There is nothing we can do for them right now. There is little, if anything, they can do for us right now. But, if we begin to set a course, then as things evolve our policies in certain areas can, where our interests are similar, at least avoid conflicts and perhaps support each other. Now this is what is involved here. With the Soviets, things tend to become tests of strength on almost any issue. When we make an agreement with the Soviets, I assume that they will double-cross us in the translation to begin with and in the execution next. That's understood, and it's all taken in good spirits! With the Chinese, while the basic hostility may be greater, the immediate problem is to conduct a steady, reliable, long-range policy. The only thing that can make this worthwhile to them is to make them believe that they are dealing not with individuals that they agree with, but with individuals who have a view of the world that they can understand and relate to and who have the steadiness of purpose to execute it. And, in a way that is true of us.

It requires some delicacy. We have problems with some of our allies in Asia. We have a delicate road to hoe with the Soviet Union, because with all the comparisons I have made between the Chinese and the Soviet Union, the fact is that we are determined to stay on good terms with both of them.

But we will not let ourselves be drawn into their parochial quarrels. All of this requires great skill and considerable diplomatic insight. At the same time I think it has opened up prospects for the future which at least are up to our own abilities to implement, and in which we are no longer just prisoners of events.

That's as much as I want to say now, but I'll be glad to answer questions.

IV. Questions and Answers

Question: I am curious. You say there is little we can do now for one another, and yet I can see why it was good for us to do this at this particular time, but why was it in their interest to have the initiatives at this time?

Dr. Kissinger: Well, I am not saying we cannot do anything for each other. We have already done some things for each other. It has certainly not been unhelpful to us with Vietnam to have this opening, regardless of what was agreed or not agreed; the mere fact of its happening broadened the canvas in Asia. Similarly, our taking an interest in the existence of the People's Republic is at least a factor that other countries have to take into account. So, it isn't true that we cannot do anything for each other. Nor do I say that these exchanges and trade are totally irrelevant; they can be the beginning of an important process. But how far that process will go depends on the wisdom, the self-restraint of both sides over the years ahead. I mean, we have just opened the game. We haven't played it yet.

Question: Sir, how do you believe they view our and their military strengths in our relationships with each other and with our mutual third party?

Dr. Kissinger: Well, like all opponents, they overrate us. You have to be an ally to know how unsteady we are. So, I think they rate our military strength quite high, and I think they have a rather realistic assessment of their own military strength. I think that they have no offensive capability, nor do they think they have an offensive capability, and I think they have a very realistic assessment of their extraordinary military weakness. But they are also extremely determined.

Question: The talks you handled very secretly. How will the problem of continuity be handled if, God forbid, there should be a change of administrations or something?

Dr. Kissinger: We will tell our successors exactly what went on.

Question: Is there a record?

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, we have a verbatim record of all the meetings. These are not personal things, and we will of course tell our successors, if there are successors in 1972, everything that went on. So there is no major problem in continuity.

Question: On the other side of the question, this is a society that for more than a decade has been trying to deal with the succession question before the leader dies, and their internal policy has been characterized by swinging back and forth from radicalism to pragmatism. Do you think from their side they will be able to maintain the continuity?

Dr. Kissinger: I have no way of know and there is no way we could know from what we saw. What we saw showed Chou in great control and able to line up all the other members of the Politburo for at least some appearances. Whether he can maintain this we don't know. On the other hand, if he can't, we have done nothing irrevocable, and there are enough escape hatches in all the things that have been agreed to. It is possible, however, that any successors would feel the pressure of the same necessities that Mao and Chou have; I mean a frontier of 5,000 miles is a geopolitical reality, and 42 divisions on that frontier are a military reality. Now, whether the successors could come to a modus vivendi with the Soviet Union, I don't know, and if they do that will certainly affect their stance toward us, but in that case what have we lost? Dick?

Question: How do the Chinese see the forthcoming Moscow Summit and what do they think will come out of this?

Dr. Kissinger: Well, we have been meticulously honest with them. We have felt that whatever price we would pay, it is better for them not to be surprised. So we have in general given them a rough idea of the sort of agreements we're contemplating. They claim that they don't care, and that our relations with the Soviet Union are our business. But, I'm sure

they don't mean it. But they are much more outwardly relaxed about it than the Soviet Union is in the other direction. That is one of the things we have to manage with great care. Marshall?

Question: Two questions that are somewhat related, I suppose. The first one -- just in conceptualizing what they are doing now, the conventional wisdom, I guess, is that the Chinese have gone very pragmatic and yet you were stressing the religious intensity with which they hold to conviction and to principle. The second and somewhat related question is how are we going to relate this requirement for reliability and steadiness in the specific areas that we're charged with. For instance, in both Africa and the U.N., on the track record they are out to cut our throat from ear to ear [Kissinger: Absolutely] and there hasn't been any change [Kissinger: That's true]. We are just finishing two days of talks with the British in the State Department and we were on this today, and it certainly is the combined judgment of the Foreign Office and the State Department that they are going full steam ahead and the prospects are pretty good. [Kissinger: That the Secretary of State has told them that there is no danger of revolution in Africa]. No, the Secretary has passed on a quote from the Chinese Foreign Minister that the Chinese aim in Africa is turmoil and revolution. [Kissinger: That's true, but he has pointed out to the Chinese that if they traveled more they wouldn't make such insane statements. But go ahead.] Well, those are my two questions.

Dr. Kissinger: Well, let me take the second one first. When I say reliability and steadiness, it doesn't mean we have to agree with them, or that they are going to agree with us. They are going to pursue, in areas where they can do it safely, a revolutionary strategy, because that is their conviction. When I say reliability, I just mean that we have to perform on what we say, and that we have to give them some idea of what they can expect from us and then live up to it, and not try to be tricky. Especially with respect to their major problems, which happen to be in Asia not in Africa. Now as far as Africa is concerned, I would assume that it is not beyond the wit of man to contain what the Chinese are doing, but it may be beyond our wits and in that area I would expect us to be competitors. And in any area where it is relatively safe for them to compete, and particularly where they can pursue revolutionary strategies

which do not involve the outward projection of military power, we will find them as antagonists. There is no question about that, nor do they leave any doubt about that, although I think they will stop short of military involvement or even of massive infusion of military aid. So, reliability means within the framework of what we have said they will do, even when we have said we would oppose them.

Now, the relationship between principle and pragmatism is, of course, a very complex one, because you could argue that only really principled people can be totally pragmatic because they will be able to justify almost any course in terms of their principles. The basic point I'm making is that they will not rationalize something to themselves or to their leaders on the ground that it works, or on the ground that it is expedient, but on the ground that it serves some higher purpose. Now it may be a specious theological exercise. They are Jesuits of the seventeenth century and the Jesuits were known to be extremely pragmatic. They are not American Mid-Westerners out of Purdue University trying to build dams across the Yangtze. This is the difference in psychology. They have to be seen as a militant religious order, totally convinced of their purposes and therefore quite capable of very great shifts in tactics to adjust to circumstances, for all of which they will find a theology. And therefore it is quite important in their case to watch their theology.

Also, in our experience, and I'm not saying this couldn't stop tomorrow, in our experience they have been absolutely meticulous about carrying out the letter and spirit of even the most minor undertaking that they have made to us -- I mean in a way that is almost pedantic. Even an off-hand remark that is made to us of something they might do, you can be absolutely sure that they will do. We have never made an agreement with the Soviets, for example, in which their text emerged the same as ours. In every case when we made an agreement, even if it was a simple announcement, we had to go through the bloody exercise of checking every word; where is the comma? When you say cease fire, is there a hyphen? No, is it a dash or a hyphen, comma or semicolon? You know, it took an hour to go through the communique. They spell program with two m's and an e because they use the English; they notice that we spell it with one m. Well, now, if we are going to put out exactly the same text, somebody has to yield, you know. This doesn't mean anything. I have absolutely no doubt that if tomorrow morning they settle their problem with the Soviet Union and if tomorrow morning they decide to be pure religious fanatics, they are going to come after us with the same dedication and with the same reliability

that they are now carrying out their present policy. But there is this streak, which I have not encountered in almost any other diplomatic dealings with almost any other country, this pedantic attention to carrying out what they have said they would do. It was a total surprise to me. I thought they were a variation of the Russians when I first started dealing with them, so it was not a preconceived idea. I had no view either about them as communists, nor had I ever dealt with Chinese before. This happens to be a fact. Therefore, it is terribly important that when we promise them something, we carry it out absolutely meticulously. It is better not to promise them anything. Yes?

Question: Joe Alsop reported a couple times that the Soviets had been seriously considering a few years ago launching a first strike against the Chinese. Putting aside whether that is accurate or not, did the Chinese perceive that the Soviet military threat was one that might involve the first strike, or there was some reasonable chance . . . ?

Dr. Kissinger: Well we had no chance to discuss that. All everybody knows is that they were digging shelters like crazy in Peking in the late '60's, and they weren't digging them in the '50's when our hostility was at the greatest. I don't know against whom they are digging if it is not against the Soviet Union, and those are massive efforts. But they don't express that view. Yes?

Question: What is the role of Mao? How do you assess this?

Dr. Kissinger: Well, he struck me as a man of tremendous physical presence. You know, you meet few people who totally dominate a room, and he certainly does that. I had heard from others that when you meet him and Chou there is (a) no question of who is Number Two, and (b) no question of who is the more impressive. Now I admit I am extremely impressed by Chou, so I couldn't believe that until I saw them together. Now I believe it. Now, what I don't know is whether we saw him during the only lucid hour he has got during the day. I don't know whether he has -- whether he pays great attention to detail. The few times that I was told by Chou in previous meetings that Mao had intervened, the message that was brought from him was characteristically to the point and sharper than anything that I had ever heard Chou say, and less elegant, and this was confirmed by the way he spoke when we met him, but to the degree of detail I cannot tell. But there is absolutely no question that he is essential to legitimize whatever is done, and the fact that he saw us the first day -- when you look back on it, he covered in that first day every topic that might be the subject of discussion, so that Chou could quote his authority even if he only covered

it for five minutes -- was absolutely crucial for what we did. So as the spiritual leader of the enterprise, regardless of anything else, he seems to be totally essential, and what will happen after he dies, I think, is totally unpredictable in that sense. Yes?

Question: Did they display any attitudes on U.S. and Soviet Union positions around the Arabs versus Israel?

Dr. Kissinger: Well, they take a somewhat more intransigently pro-Arab position than the Soviets. My judgment is that their primary worry is that all problems that the Soviets have will be solved, and enable them to concentrate against them. So everything has to be seen also in that context. Their incentive to get problems in the West settled is nonexistent. They are not ecstatic about the Berlin settlement, for example. Yes?

Question: What is their view of India? Did they express any view about India?

Dr. Kissinger: In Peking, I am a dove on India. It is distainful and hostile.

Question: Henry, do you think that they understand the nature of our media, and the extent to which our media expose to pressures in all directions?

Dr. Kissinger: I am on the whole impressed by their somewhat greater sophistication in understanding of the United States than the Russians have. Now how they get this is beyond me, because none of them has ever been in the United States. But they are more relaxed about us; they are more relaxed about reaches of good manners, and for that matter of security, then the Russians would be. They have not yet in our contacts with them -- maybe that will come -- accused us of starting a press campaign against them or of using the press against them. On the whole, they show a rather sophisticated understanding of how our political processes work. What throws them completely, and for which they have absolutely no categories of understanding, is how Americans live. I mean, the day-to-day living in America and how their table tennis team is going to behave here and what is expected of them, that a real problem to them. That they simply do not understand; on this they keep asking for information. But in understanding our political process they have shown amazing sophistication, even in understanding our bureaucracy. But that again is due to a considerable extent to Chou, although that Vice Foreign Minister Chiao is also

extremely good. I'll take two more questions.

Question: Do you assume that as spiritually motivated leaders, their first priority is repairing relations with the schismatic Soviets or not?

Dr. Kissinger: I believe that this present leadership thinks it is beyond repair. Partly because they don't believe the Soviets are any more -- an ideologically motivated state. But this could change.

Question: Is there anything you feel you can say about the prospects expressed in the communique for a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question?

Dr. Kissinger: Of the Taiwan issue? I don't think they will resort to force in foreseeable future, directly or indirectly, and the evolution that will now start, I think, will depend on the longevity of various people. O.K. this is the last question.

Question: Sir, how would you describe their perception of the Japanese problem as opposed to their propaganda output, and how they plan to approach the succession to Sato?

Dr. Kissinger: I think they have become more moderate on this subject of the Japanese as compared to my first visit there. I mean, they have become more realistic about what might happen if we pulled out of Japan. This would not necessarily mean an impotent pro-Chinese Japan; it might be a nationalistic, heavily armed Japan. I think that they have some expectations of maneuvering a post-Sato government into a closer relationship to them, which might give them a veto over some Japanese policies, but I think they also face the reality that if Japan ever decides to assert its strength they will be in an extremely dangerous position. For the foreseeable future, Japan has infinitely greater economic potential and if Japan should decide to play with the Soviets rather than with them, or even if Japan pursues its normal policy of playing with everybody, there are going to be limitations on the degree of rapprochement that's possible. Well, Phil, I'll take your question now.

Question: How do you assess the implications of the trip on your trip to the Soviet Union now? How are the Soviets going to react differently because of the fact and the success of the Peking trip?

Dr. Kissinger: Well, you know the secret hope of the Soviets undoubtedly was that we would suffer the same debacle that they did. In which case I am not sure what they would have done, whether they then would have moved drastically towards us or drastically away from us. I think the problem with the Soviets is to keep our China policy in such a posture that there is no irrevocable commitment that they could construe as anti-Soviet and yet that there is a possibility that permits further movement in that direction. And I think the Soviets have two choices -- either to kick us in the teeth, which I doubt they will do, or to get a large number of agreements to signify to us that Moscow is the place where you do business and Peking is the place where you visit the Great Wall and we've done that. I think that that's going to be their strategy.