

TRANSCRIPT OF REMARKS ON NIXON TRIP TO CHINA

[The following transcript of his remarks was not edited by Comrade Novack.]

These are some preliminary observations on Nixon's visit. The new turn represents the collapse of Washington's attempts for over twenty years to blockade the People's Republic of China, and the establishment of a different policy to achieve its imperialist objectives in Asia. The circumstances of the visit ratified the seriousness of the diplomatic realignment. The character of the reception was as warm as that given anybody else in recent years -- Mao receiving the chief running dog of imperialism on the first day and then Nixon pictured with Marx and Engels towering behind him. The official stamp of approval and the weight of it was evident in the photo displays in the Peking Daily.

The seriousness of it was evident also in the reactions from other capitals that are most directly concerned. Hanoi has been silent and properly suspicious. Tapei, outraged. Tokyo, very uneasy. Moscow, watchfully waiting to see exactly what can come out of the entente. Most interesting, there was no discernible disquiet in Saigon. This latter circumstance is directly connected with the reciprocal concessions that formed the basis of the agreement between the two.

The understanding arrived at, probably beforehand and ratified in private, seems to be that Nixon would recognize that Taiwan was strictly a Chinese problem and would eventually withdraw troops from there, and, in return for that, the Chinese recognized in principle the need for negotiations in Southeast Asia, a coalition government in Vietnam, and its good offices in helping to get a solution of that kind. Evans and Novack, in their column on Wednesday, stated that in the view of experts in Washington, nothing short of a secret Peking pledge to help settle Vietnam could balance Nixon's concessions. If it's not Taiwan for Vietnam, one such expert told us, Mr. Nixon got a deal that can only be described as brutal.

Both sides explicitly envisage now a long-term peaceful coexistence. What this means in practical terms is that Peking has opted for collaboration among the great powers with the U.S. rather than with the Soviet Union or Japan in that area.

Summit parleys of this sort, as we know, almost always include secret agreements, or semi-agreements, on issues that neither side cares to have made public at this point. What other points were discussed, if not definitely decided upon, of course, we don't know. They only let the public in on what meets their respective propaganda postures and reserve the real business for off-stage. We may have to wait for some future "Peking Papers" to find out what the hidden clauses are.

On the collateral question of Lin Piao, it's difficult to say exactly what the disputes were which led to that rift at the top: whether Lin Piao, and the general staff who have been cashiered, objected to the new course or whether it was a means that the Mao clique used for cutting down the army influence, which had swollen to tremendous proportions during the great cultural revolution, is unclear. Of course the two are not mutually exclusive.

But we'll have to wait for further information on that rift at the top.

Although there was silence on Indochina, this was what Nixon wanted most urgently, so that he could secure at the bargaining table what he couldn't win on the battlefield. Hanoi is very fearful of this possibility, but it's in a fairly good position to resist the pressures from Peking, or the blandishments, as the case may be. Just as Nixon is playing Peking against Moscow, and vice versa, so Hanoi can play one against the other in the matter of supplies and support. So that Mao's capacity to deliver what Nixon would like is considerably curtailed. Nixon gave himself an escape clause in the understanding on Taiwan by saying that the American military protection wouldn't have to be withdrawn until things had quieted down in that area, which means essentially, when Washington can get what it wants.

We have to continue to warn against this danger, against this secret diplomatizing and agreements at the expense of the Vietnamese and the Asian revolution. The fact that Peking has so warmly welcomed the U.S. leaders while the bombs kept raining down shows what little conscience and solidarity the Maoist clique have when they're out to bargain on their own behalf. Anything and anyone can go by the board and is expendable, whether it's the American antiwar movement or the resistance of the Vietnamese.

There are certain features to the new situation that has been created: the definitive breaking of the military, economic and diplomatic blockade of China; de facto recognition of the People's Republic; and the opening up of communications and the markets can all be considered on the plus side. However, these advantages are greatly outweighed by the adverse consequences that the entente portends for the colonial revolution. Peking, as we've written, has given sureties of good behavior to Nixon in advance by its behavior in regard to Bangladesh and Ceylon. It's ready to give more in the future in exchange for further favors and these will probably come out in connection with a possible Indochinese settlement and the restraining of the revolutionary forces in Asia.

It's instructive to note that world politics today is dominated by relations between the great three: the U.S., the U.S.S.R. and China. Japan has to sit in the gallery while France, Italy, England and even Germany, despite its economic potential, are in the position of third-rate powers, somewhat like the Balkan countries used to be.

Peking's repulsion from Moscow, which has not been mitigated in the least, is complemented by drawing closer to the U.S. The USSR is considered as the main enemy, and there is bitter hatred and hostility between the two. If you could have heard the harangues between the Chinese and Soviet delegates at the United Nations during the Indo-Pakistan war, you could hear a resonance of that.

It's interesting to observe Peking's behavior in the United Nations in voting with the U.S. It's a tip-off of its intentions to follow the patterns of big-power diplomacy despite its expressed claims.

A word might be said about the impact of the latest developments upon the world Maoist movements. They were fragmented enough before, but Chairman Mao's new "revolutionary diplomatic line," as it's baptized, has certainly sowed much disarray among the Maoists. Their chief attraction had been the pretense that their positions are well to the left of Moscow. There's hardly a shred left of this claim now. What difference is there between the line of peaceful coexistence as practiced by the two bureaucracies? The Guardian editors may strain to discern some differences, as they did last week, but not too convincingly. The recent events should help dispose of the illusions about Peking as the new guiding center of the world revolution.

On the home front, Nixon got what he immediately wanted from the trip. It was a super-colossal on TV which enables him to pose as a peacemaker and promote his chances of reelection. It was a very skillfully stage-managed event. It's amazing how quickly the anti-China specter has been dispelled and replaced by another image, even though this has been the justification for American intervention in Vietnam. The China lobby proved impotent and, though the right-wing Republicans are growling about Nixon's betrayal, they'll have to swallow the accomplished fact. I believe Nixon's move is popular and it gives him a certain advantage over his Democratic rivals.

The approval of his move indicates how weary of the war and the cold war the American people have become. They welcome any sign of relaxing tensions. This mood can create problems for the ruling class later on. The visits to Peking and Moscow further weaken the brandishing of the anticommunist bogey as the ideological basis for sustained witch-hunting. Where's the great menace to the survival of the American way of life now to come from? Nixon has such friendly relations with both Peking and Moscow.

The friendliness toward Peking also undermines the justification for continuing the blockade of Cuba, as the New York Times pointed out, although, of course, the administration doesn't have to follow out the formal logic of its new turn. I noticed that Dick Roberts' article on Nixon's visit is coming out as a pamphlet. I also think it would be helpful if the newspaper could run a series on this development, which could be printed as a pamphlet because it's very likely to become a subject of discussion for quite some time to come.