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PEKING 005

June 26, 1973

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 SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652

TO: HENRY A. KISSINGER EXEMPTION CATEGORY 1

FROM: DAVID BRUCE

SUBJECT: Meeting with Chou En-lai

1. I was called with no prior notice on June 25 at 5 pm and told Prime Minister Chou wanted to see me. I met him at Great Hall of the People at 5:45 pm, accompanied by Jenkins and Holdridge. On Chinese side were Chou, Ch'iao Kuan-hua, Chang Wen-chin, Lin P'ing (Head American/Oceanian Department, MFA), Ting Yung-hung (Deputy Head, American/Oceanian Department EARAN), Nancy T'ang, Shen Jo-yun, and two others.
2. Chou began with polite chit-chat about weather, and then worked the conversation around to modern science -- "It can't be said that there is no progress, but there are many unknowns". We talked about archeology, elimination of disease in China, and cancer research. (Comment: I recall from record of your conversations with Chou that cancer research was often mentioned, and wonder if this subject might have a special interest for Chou).
3. We then got on to topic of way that scientists today keep in touch with one another in various parts of the world. Noted that this included nuclear scientists, who often felt an obligation to share their discoveries with fellow scientists in other countries regardless of security considerations. Chou picked this up, saying it was not possible for nuclear secrets to be spread throughout the world because their purpose was not to cure disease but to cause harm. He then referred to an article he had read in a Japanese newspaper about the U. S. S. R. having stolen secret plans, weapons and equipment from NATO since World War II, which had given it much military knowledge. There had been more than ten major cases of this.
4. I told Chou I accepted the dissemination of nuclear science secrets as an exceedingly dangerous thing. I considered that any nation would be foolish to let other nations know about its technical developments in this field, regardless of whether these nations were friendly or not.

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5. Chou promptly agreed. "No matter how friendly people are to each other around the Western White House swimming pool, it is impermissible to make an exhibition of their nuclear secrets." There was a political question here, and in spite of the fact that so many agreements had been signed, people still viewed them with suspicion.
6. Chou emphasized that this was his own view even after receiving the President's letter. He thanked the President for writing, but the Chinese would maintain the position set forth in the U. S. - PRC joint communique of February 1972. This position has been conveyed to you through Ambassador Huang Hua and Huang Chen, and so no further renunciation necessary. Similar reactions among others in the world would become evident in a short period of time.
7. Chou indicated the Chinese had been notified through "friends in the White House" that they would be informed about the Brezhnev talks. Ambassador Huang Chen was to be invited to the Western White House on July 5. Colonel Kennedy had also informed them in a letter that Brezhnev would make public the non-aggression agreement. (Chou referred in this context to four articles.) Brezhnev had told the President he would do so.
8. Chou declared that the Chinese had expected something like this ever since they had seen the draft agreement two days before Brezhnev's departure for the U. S. They had said so to the President through you, and had also forwarded their conclusions. They were quite familiar with Soviet tricks, and could imagine what kind of show the Soviets would put up both before and afterwards.
9. I said I thought that the Chinese position was perfectly well known in the U. S., and was indeed indicated by the President's letter. It was quite unique that in the course of all our negotiations with the USSR, the President had instructed you to keep Prime Minister Chou informed before, during, and after, about what had gone on. I deduced from this that there was a certain amount of suspicion also in the U. S. regarding the USSR.
10. I remarked it seemed to me that it had been a Soviet tactic for a considerable length of time to try to divide the U. S. and China. They must have been surprised at the turn taken in U. S. - PRC relations, and in fact had given every indication of it. If PM Chou recalled the original draft agreement submitted to you by the Soviets, it was evident this was

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an attempt on their part to arrive at a bilateral agreement with the U. S. in which the interests of third parties were not taken into account. As I understood the present agreement, the U. S. has undertaken with the Soviets to renounce the aggressive use of nuclear weapons, and not only by one power against the other but against a third power. This raised an interesting question -- if two parties entered into an agreement not to take certain action, could one nation trust the other not to violate this agreement if it was not a treaty but an executive agreement?

11. Chou said the agreement was a mere statement about which we could not be sure. World opinion also had doubts. "When a nation has very adequate weapons, do you think it would renounce them?" Besides, even treaties had not been honored by the Soviets in the past. The Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty had been signed to last for a thirty-year period and still had seven years to run, so why was it necessary to propose another non-aggression? (sic) To conclude a new treaty would show that the old one did not exist; hence, the (old) treaty was not reliable. If there was good faith, then a tacit understanding or a simple statement would be useful, but without good faith nothing was useful. Even a treaty would be useless.

12. Chou raised another point: Since only the two major powers were engaged in this agreement, there were grave doubts among other states as to whether these two powers wanted to dominate the world. The U. S. - PRC Joint Communique stated that neither party should seek hegemony, and it was also mentioned in the President's letter that you would mention this when you came. But from the speeches and statements of the Soviet leaders, it could be seen they were seeking out-and-out domination by the two world powers.

13. I said I sincerely believed that the U. S. was not out to dominate the world even if it could. It had had enough difficulties in its worldwide endeavors, even in the recent past. However, I frankly could not say I had the same judgement or opinions about the Soviet Union. In my opinion, the agreement would be inoperable in case of aggression as far as its practical effects were concerned because its status would not affect any existing treaties, alliances, or rights involving third parties. Therefore, the U. S. was in exactly the same position as before -- if there were an attack on a NATO country, or more dangerously, on Berlin, we had an obligation under existing agreements to come to their assistance. Such undertakings could not be breached now or in any other way.

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14. Chou observed that in this case, we would give the world the impression it was possible to have a relaxation of tension. There would be a false sense of security.

15. I said that might be. I referred to the dangerous situation which already had been created for us in Europe by the measures advocated by some members of our Congress. They wanted to withdraw troops from NATO and rely entirely on nuclear power for defense. I did not know what the consequences would be if our people were lulled into a false sense of security regarding the USSR.

16. Chou injected at this point that we would have to wait and see. It did not yet matter, because there was still time.

17. Continuing, I explained their attitude as being one of trying to make arrangements of one kind or another via trade, aid, etc. to get as many guarantees as possible no matter whether these were later violated or not. Knowing of the President's and your own communications and talks with PM Chou, I realized the Chinese attitude regarding this operation was different from ours. Nevertheless, we were informing them of what we had in mind every step of the way. In my opinion, this was a very unique situation.

18. Chou remarked there had been direct Chinese contact with the U. S. for less than two years, and so there were various speculations as far as the world was concerned. He noted that although I had just arrived, I had read the records of previous conversations. He wanted to repeat what Chairman Mao had said to you last February: The U. S. wanted to step on the Chinese shoulders to reach the USSR. He, Chou, repeated this to indicate that such things could happen. Chairman Mao extended this philosophy to visualize what might happen if a war broke out between China and the USSR. In the beginning, the U. S. would maintain a position of non-involvement, but give military supplies to the USSR. Then, after waiting until China had dragged out the USSR for a period of time, the U. S. would strike the Soviets from behind. Chou reiterated that he was only repeating what the Chairman had said; however, the Chinese had made material preparations.

19. I said that I could see from this why they had such strong reservations about the agreement. Chou asked me if I had read the passage from the record, and I said I had.

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Comment: I in fact do not recall Mao having spoken in such terms, though Chou himself did speak elsewhere of the U. S. standing on China's shoulders to reach the USSR.

I added that I thought that estimate was highly pessimistic.

20. Chou declared that as he had told you, they had all along calculated on fighting on two fronts. They were digging tunnels and storing grain, and hence did not fear isolation. You had said they were approaching this question from the standpoint of revolutionaries, and they agreed. This was right -- from the beginning they were revolutionaries, they had made revolution, they would never abandon their revolutionary principles. Chou said he wanted to tell me this frankly so that I could understand their general picture. They were not pessimistic but had to be realistic. This was why they went overseas to seek friends everywhere, and opposed hegemony.

21. I said I hoped and believed our people understood. Every country had to consult its own self-interest and prepare for the worst. It should not be optimistic; that would be foolish.

22. Chou stated that there were many people in the world however not aware of this. They wanted to rely on other kinds of forces rather than on their own people themselves. I observed that it would be a terrible mistake for a great nation not to be self-sufficient, and to rely largely on other nations.

23. I went on to say that I had been refreshed and invigorated (by) the Shanghai joint communique because it contained statements which outlined the differences between us -- e. g. , our political and social systems. However, there were also areas of agreement, and we could reach more agreement if we proceeded carefully and frankly. All too often people talked together and ignored their differences, and left them still in existence. In our case, I did not see the differences between our two countries as irreconcilable over the long run if we proceeded with patience.

24. Chou paused for a long moment without comment, and then asked me how long my diplomatic experience had been -- forty or fifty years? I replied, not that long, about twenty to twenty-five years. He referred to my previous statement as having been made on the basis of practical experience, and then said in effect that if things become too complicated and too many empty words are said, matters turn out superficially. It would be far better to work out one thing effectively and keep one's promises.

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25. I said the U. S. would never want, nor could it achieve hegemony over China, over the USSR, or indeed over any peoples in the world, because hegemony in the old imperialistic sense is gone. Nationalism is dominant. People may make a mess of their internal affairs, but it is their mess. This is the great change which has come about in my life time. Chou added, especially after World War Two.

26. I continued that the real point of possible difference between our two countries might arise from each of us acting on our own vis-a-vis the USSR. If we acted independently in this regard, it could cause great international difficulty. The situation in Western Europe also figures in the equation. The emergence of WE economically has been startling and beneficial. But if it could also develop political cohesion, this would be beneficial to you and to us -- but not to the Soviet Union. Chou interjected that the Soviets have tried different tricks to divide us. I said the Soviets since 1947 had tried to destroy Western Europe or to dominate it. I was skeptical that they would surrender that ambition. Chou said emphatically, "they havn't." I said if WE could form its own political apparatus (economic cohesion was comparatively easy), it would be at least as strong as the U. S., and stronger than the USSR. I did not know whether this could be achieved. Some progress had been made, but they had been talking unification for thirty years.

27. Chou said Soviets were now applying pressure on Japan. He asked whether it would be possible to improve our relations with Japan now, or whether this possibility had become more doubtful. I said I would like to answer by asking the Premier a question: Can any nation as economically prosperous as Japan, which has had a past history of imperialism and expansionism, ever renounce it? Chou said the Chinese at many time expressed to us the conviction that economic expansionism would bring about military expansionism. They also said this to their Japanese friends. It is necessary for us to work together with respect to Japan, for it is still at the crossroads. Chou said he had discussed this with you several times, emphasizing that we must work to keep Japan on the right course. Japan still speaks of its alliance with the U. S. now. It was important that Japan not be left in a position where it felt there was no way out. Japan should not listen to Soviet recommendations. For a time it might be possible for Japan to derive advantage (note: "win more rights") but this could not be relied upon.

28. I said it was essential that Japan not fall under Soviet influence. China and the U. S., for different reasons, should take the position of keeping Japan from engaging in some mad adventure, e. g. allying themselves with a great power in a way which would put them under its control.

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29. Chou observed that Japan has its own self-dignity, but economically its development was lop-sided. With such a large population in a small area it was dependent on foreign markets. To export, it had to import large quantities of raw materials. It might be beneficial to export Japanese capital to certain places, such as Siberia. The USSR has left the door wide open. Chou said China would not mind if the U. S. and Japan made investment there if we thought there was profit in it. We will feel more reassured if you are in it with Japan. If you are both in it together, you will not be so easily taken advantage of.

30. At this point the conversation had lasted over an hour and a half. Chou's colleagues were consulting their watches; they probably had dinner engagements. The PM said when he left: "I've enjoyed this talk; I wish it could have continued".

31 Comment: Perhaps because of U. S. -Soviet summit, most Chinese officials present appeared unusually serious at first, but warmed during hour and half meeting. Chou was relaxed and friendly throughout, although deputies thought he too was more serious than usual. In sorrow but not in anger he dismissed U. S. -Soviet agreement as a fait accompli, but several times referred to Soviet unreliability and duplicity. Neither Indo-China nor Taiwan was mentioned.

32. Chou appeared to be in excellent health and spirits. Would appreciate if you would have check made as to textual accuracy of Chou's reference to Chairman Mao's statement (twice emphasized by Chou) of possibility of Soviets attacking China, and then in turn being attacked by the U. S. End of comment.

33. Warm regards. END ALL

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