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Chairman Mao Receives American Writer [Edgar] Snow

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Summary:

A summary of Mao's comments to Edgar Snow concerning Taiwan, Jinmen (Quemoy), and Mazu (Matsu), as well as China's legal status at the UN.

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Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Chairman Mao Receives American Writer [Edgar] Snow

On October 22 [1960], Chairman Mao received American writer [Edgar] Snow, and engaged in conversation with him. Herein is an excerpt of the content of the Chairman's remarks regarding the Taiwan issue, China entering the United Nations, and the issue of shouldering responsibility for world peace; selections appear below:

On the Issue of Taiwan, Jinmen and Mazu

Snow asked the Chairman whether he had seen the "debate" between Kennedy and Nixon over the Jinmen and Mazu issue, as well as the question of U.S. policy towards the Far East.

The Chairman pointed out that the reason they had taken this issue to use in their election campaign was because the American people are afraid of war. The two islands are close to the mainland, so Kennedy was trying to use this point to win votes. Nixon said that the two islands must be defended. He also wants to win votes. The issue makes the U.S. election campaign more exciting. Nixon went too far, he spoke as though the U.S. government had an obligation to defend the two islands. The U.S. State Department said they have no obligation to protect these two islands. Ultimately, whether to defend the islands or not will depend on circumstances, the President will make his decision according to the situation at the time. This was Eisenhower's statement two years ago. We don't see these two islands that way. We've already made a public statement on this issue, that we will let Chiang Kai-shek [Jiang Jieshi] keep holding these two islands. We don't cut off their supplies. If their supplies are insufficient, we can even give them assistance. What we want is the entire Taiwan region, which is Taiwan, the Penghu Islands, and it includes Jinmen and Mazu. This is all Chinese territory. But it looks like the people campaigning in the American election haven't gotten this information figured out yet. This problem may continue for a very long time. Now it has already been 11 years, let's say its possible for it to continue for another 11 years, or even longer. Because the U.S. government doesn't want to give up Taiwan. It doesn't want to, and we don't want to fight. So we talk with the U.S. government, first in Geneva, and later in Warsaw. We want a negotiated solution, not a military solution. The U.S. government has long known this logic. We don't want to fight for Jinmen and Mazu either. We've already made a statement in the past.

On the Issue of Our Country Entering the United Nations and the Issue of the U.S. Embargo Against Us

The Chairman said, in your article you have a passage, saying our interest in being recognized by the United States is a bit less than our interest in joining the United Nations and it appears that our interest in entering the United Nations is a bit greater. I don't see it that way, you can't say it like that. In the United Nations, it should not be Chiang Kai-shek who represents China, it should be us. It should have been like that quite early on. But the U.S. government got together a lot of people, not allowing us to join, and there's nothing wrong with that. We are not at all anxious to join the United Nations. There are some others who are eager for us to join the United Nations, of course it doesn't include the Americans. Right now the U.K. has no choice but to listen to the U.S. However, it is possible that the British's own view is like what you said; if we are outside the United Nations, we are beyond the law. So it would be better to trap us in the United Nations to follow its rules. There are quite a few countries who wish for China to be more obedient. As you know, we fought guerrilla wars, we're used to being in the wild. So many rules, they are unpleasant, right? If we don't join the United Nations, we don't lose anything, but if we join the United Nations how much good would it do for us? Of course, there are some benefits, but one can hardly say there are lot of benefits. Some countries make a huge effort to join the United Nations, but we don't entirely understand that kind of sentiment. Our own country is a united nation all by itself. We have provinces that are bigger than some countries.

They have imposed an economic blockade on us, just like the economic blockade that the Nationalists imposed on us in the past. We are very grateful to the Nationalists for their economic blockade on us, it gave us no choice, we had to do things ourselves quickly, resulting in us stepping up production in all of our base areas. Now the Americans are also carrying out embargoes against us, but this embargo will also be good for us.

On the Issue of Shouldering the Responsibility for World Peace

Snow asked the Chairman whether he would agree with the view that, since the U.S. and China have no peace treaty or agreement, and there are some Americans who even consider that in practical terms the U.S. and China are currently in a state of semi-conflict, and so the peace of the entire world depends on China's sense of responsibility. This kind of situation can not be changed in any way by signing some paper agreement. China's sense of responsibility first of all is to the people of China, then secondly towards the entire world, but China is also a part of the world.

The Chairman said yes, it doesn't matter whether the U.S. recognizes us, it doesn't matter whether we enter the United Nations, but we will take on the responsibility for world peace. We can't completely disregard the law just because we haven't entered the United Nations, like Sun Wukong causing an upheaval in the Heavenly Palace. We want to maintain world peace, and prevent a world war. We advocate that countries not use war with each other to resolve problems. However, maintaining world peace is not only China's responsibility, the U.S. also has responsibility. Taiwan is our internal affairs, we must stick to that point.