

March 1, 1979

Cable from the Foreign Ministry, 'Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping Discusses the Vietnam Issue'

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Summary:

A summary of a conversation where Deng Xiaoping said, "We are now teaching a lesson to the Cuba of the East -- Vietnam."

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Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping Discusses the Vietnam Issue

To the foreign affairs bureaus of all provincial, municipal and autonomous region revolutionary committees with copies to all regional military districts and to provincial military districts:

On February 28, when Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping received Egyptian Vice Premier Hassan Tuhami, the special emissary of the Egyptian President, the Vietnam issue was discussed. Vice Premier Deng said as I told the Americans, the US-Soviet talks on limiting strategic nuclear weapons cannot stop hegemonism. Hegemonism can only be stopped by taking concrete action. The Soviet Union uses Cuba in the Americas and bullies Middle Eastern countries, but the USA and Europe has not taken action to teach it a lesson. We are now teaching a lesson to the Cuba of the East - Vietnam - right under our nose and right beneath our eyes. This should not be seen simply in the light of China-Vietnam relations or even in the light of the situation in Indochina but in the light of the global situation. One first goal is to upset the strategic measures that the Soviet Union has put in place. When we decided to take this action, we had that danger in mind and made the appropriate preparations.

At present, we do not see any great danger ahead. The Soviets are screaming very angrily and making strong statements. Aren't they afraid of danger? First of all, is the Soviet Union capable of shifting from making Europe the center of its strategic calculations? Could it switch to Asia and let drop its concerns about the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia? It doesn't have the will to do that. We have already been fighting for eleven days. We can say that our objective of teaching Vietnam a lesson has been accomplished. It seems that one can get away with feeling the tiger's bottom after all.

This talk is provided for the purpose of internal study and for understanding the spirit of the talk. It should not be referred to externally.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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