

May 23, 1979

**Cable from the Foreign Ministry, 'On Maintaining
Consistent Lines in Propaganda on the Vietnam
Issue'**

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Summary:

Propaganda guidance for Chinese officials to rely upon when discussing the Sino-Vietnamese conflict with foreign nationals.

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On Maintaining Consistent Lines in Propaganda on 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:

Recently Vietnam and the Soviet Union have been spreading rumors that China is not being sincere in the negotiations but is gathering a large military force on its borders with Vietnam and Laos thereby creating a tense situation. Some visitors have asked whether China is preparing to "teach Vietnam another lesson."

In order to expose Vietnamese and Soviet lies, and to properly present our position, please in your activities involving foreigners take the initiative in engaging with foreigners in the spirit of the material presented below.

1. China carried out its self-defense counter-attack against Vietnam when it found itself in an intolerable situation. China did not start the disagreement between China and Vietnam. That disagreement is the direct result of the plotting of hegemonists both large and small.
2. China all along has advocated resolving the disagreements between our two countries through negotiations and for restoring normal diplomatic relations. China proposed the Eight Principles for Peaceful Coexistence. These principles are relevant to all the major issues in Sino-Vietnamese relations. At the core is that both sides respect the Five Principles for Peaceful Coexistence and the principle of not seeking hegemony. Vietnam not only strongly opposes these principles but has the intention of using these negotiations as a platform for opposing China and for insulting and attacking China. Vietnam basically has no intention of addressing the fundamental issues in Sino-Vietnamese relations. Therefore the first phase of the negotiations concluded on May 18 without having made any progress. According to mutual agreement, the next phase of the negotiations will be held in Beijing. Although the attitude of the Vietnamese side is very disappointing, our side is determined to make great efforts to overcome the various obstacles and difficulties, to bring the positions of the two sides closer together, so that the talks will achieve a positive result, lead of the resumption of normal Sino-Vietnamese diplomatic relations, ensure peace and security in the border area, and made a contribution to the peace and stability of Indochina, Southeast Asia and the world.
3. In addition to exposing Vietnam's collusion with the Soviet Union in the military incursion and expansionism in Laos and Cambodia, we can also expose the fact that Vietnam continues armed provocations on the Sino-Vietnamese border and sends agents into China to carry out sabotage. Our border troops have taken the appropriate measures and strengthened security. We already solemnly stated our position clearly in the declaration on the withdrawal of Chinese troops from Vietnam. If foreign guests ask us whether we are prepared to make a second counter-attack (give a lesson), we can say that we don't have any plans to do that at present.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

May 23, 1979