



## **August 06, 1946**

# **Talk with the American Correspondent Anna Louise Strong**

### **Citation:**

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### **Summary:**

Mao Zedong says that "all reactionaries are paper tigers" and discusses the Chinese Civil War. He also introduces the theory of the "intermediate zone," when he states that "the United States and the Soviet Union are separated by a vast zone which includes many capitalist, colonial and semi-colonial countries in Europe, Asia and Africa."

### **Credits:**

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### **Original Language:**

Chinese

### **Contents:**

- English Translation
- Chinese Transcription

*Strong:* Do you think there is hope for a political, a peaceful settlement of China's problems in the near future?

*Mao:* That depends on the attitude of the U.S. government. If the American people stay the hands of the American reactionaries who are helping Chiang Kai-shek [Jiang Jieshi] fight the civil war, there is hope for peace.

*Strong:* Suppose the United States gives Chiang Kai-shek no help, besides that already given, how long can Chiang Kai-shek keep on fighting?

*Mao:* More than a year.

*Strong:* Can Chiang Kai-shek keep on that long, economically?

*Mao:* He can.

*Strong:* What if the United States makes it clear that it will give Chiang Kai-shek no more help from now on?

*Mao:* There is no sign yet that the U.S. government and Chiang Kai-shek have any desire to stop the war within a short time.

*Strong:* How long can the Communist Party keep on?

*Mao:* As far as our own desire is concerned, we don't want to fight even for a single day. But if circumstances force us to fight, we can fight to the finish.

*Strong:* If the American people ask why the Communist Party is fighting, what should I reply?

*Mao:* Because Chiang Kai-shek is out to slaughter the Chinese people, and if the people want to survive they have to defend themselves. This the American people can understand.

*Strong:* What do you think of the possibility of the United States starting a war against the Soviet Union?

*Mao:* There are two aspects to the propaganda about an anti-Soviet war. On the one hand, U.S. imperialism is indeed preparing a war against the Soviet Union; the current propaganda about an anti-Soviet war, as well as other anti-Soviet propaganda, is political preparation for such a war. On the other hand, this propaganda is a smoke-screen put up by the U.S. reactionaries to cover many actual contradictions immediately confronting U.S. imperialism. These are the contradictions between the U.S. reactionaries and the American people and the contradictions of U.S. imperialism with other capitalist countries and with the colonial and semi-colonial countries. At present, the actual significance of the U.S. slogan of waging an anti-Soviet war is the oppression of the American people and the expansion of the U.S. forces of aggression in the rest of the capitalist world. As you know, both Hitler and his partners, the Japanese warlords, used anti-Soviet slogans for a long time as a pretext for enslavement of the people at home and aggression against other countries. Now the U.S. reactionaries are acting in exactly the same way.

To start a war, the U.S. reactionaries must first attack the American people. They are already attacking the American people - oppressing the workers and democratic circles in the United States politically and economically and preparing to impose fascism there. The people of the United States should stand up and resist the attacks of the U.S. reactionaries. I believe they will.

The United States and the Soviet Union are separated by a vast zone which includes many capitalist, colonial and semi-colonial countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. Before the U.S. reactionaries have subjugated these countries, an attack on the Soviet Union is out of the question.

In the Pacific the United States now controls areas larger than all the former British spheres of influence there put together; it controls Japan, that part of China under Kuomintang rule, half of Korea, and the South Pacific. It has long controlled Central and South America. It seeks also to control the whole of the British Empire and Western Europe. Using various pretexts, the United States is making large-scale military arrangements and setting up military bases in many countries. The U.S. reactionaries say that the military bases they have set up and are preparing to set up all over the world are aimed against the Soviet Union. True, these military bases are directed against the Soviet Union. At present, however, it is not the Soviet Union but the countries in which these military bases are located that are the first to suffer U.S. aggression. I believe it won't be long before these countries come to realize who is really oppressing them, the Soviet Union or the United States. The day will come when the U.S. reactionaries find themselves opposed by the people of the whole world.

Of course, I do not mean to say that the U.S. reactionaries have no intention of attacking the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is a defender of world peace and a powerful factor preventing the domination of the world by the U.S. reactionaries. Because of the existence of the Soviet Union, it is absolutely impossible for the reactionaries in the United States and the world to realize their ambitions. That is why the U.S. reactionaries rabidly hate the Soviet Union and actually dream of destroying this socialist state. But the fact that the U.S. reactionaries are now trumpeting so loudly about a U.S.-Soviet war and creating a foul atmosphere, so soon after the end of World War II, compels us to take a look at their real aims. It turns out that under the cover of anti-Soviet slogans they are frantically attacking the workers and democratic circles in the United States and turning all the countries which are the targets of U.S. external expansion into U.S. dependencies. I think the American people and the peoples of all countries menaced by U.S. aggression should unite and struggle against the attacks of the U.S. reactionaries and their running dogs in these countries. Only by victory in this struggle can a third world war be avoided; otherwise it is unavoidable.

*Strong:* That is very clear. But suppose the United States uses the atom bomb? Suppose the United States bombs the Soviet Union from its bases in Iceland, Okinawa and China?

*Mao:* The atom bomb is a paper tiger which the U.S. reactionaries use to scare people. It looks terrible, but in fact it isn't. Of course, the atom bomb is a weapon of mass slaughter, but the outcome of a war is decided by the people, not by one or two new types of weapon.

All reactionaries are paper tigers. In appearance, the reactionaries are terrifying, but in reality they are not so powerful. From a long-term point of view, it is not the reactionaries but the people who are really powerful. In Russia, before the February Revolution in 1917, which side was really strong? On the surface the tsar was strong but he was swept away by a single gust of wind in the February Revolution. In the final analysis, the strength in Russia was on the side of the Soviets of Workers, Peasants and Soldiers. The tsar was just a paper tiger. Wasn't Hitler once considered very strong? But history proved that he was a paper tiger. So was Mussolini, so was Japanese imperialism. On the contrary, the strength of the Soviet Union and of the people in all countries who loved democracy and freedom proved much greater than had been foreseen.

Chiang Kai-shek and his supporters, the U.S. reactionaries, are all paper tigers too. Speaking of U.S. imperialism, people seem to feel that it is terrifically strong. Chinese reactionaries are using the "strength" of the United States to frighten the Chinese people. But it will be proved that the U.S. reactionaries, like all the reactionaries in history, do not have much strength. In the United States there are others who are really strong -- the American people.

Take the case of China. We have only millet plus rifles to rely on, but history will finally prove that our millet plus rifles is more powerful than Chiang Kai-shek's aeroplanes plus tanks. Although the Chinese people still face many difficulties and will long suffer hardships from the joint attacks of U.S. imperialism and the Chinese reactionaries, the day will come when these reactionaries are defeated and we are victorious. The reason is simply this: the reactionaries

represent reaction, we represent progress.

斯特朗：你得中的，在不久的，有政治解、和平解的希望有？

毛答：要看美政府的度。如果美人民拖住了助介石打的美反派的手的，和平是有希望的。

：如果美除了它所已的以外不再助了[2]，那末介石可以打多久？

答：一年以上。

：介石在上可能支持那久？

答：可以的。

：如果美明此后不再介石以什么助了呢？

答：在上有什么征象，表示美政府和介石有任何在短期停止的愿望。

：共党能支持多久？

答：就我自己的愿望，我一天也不愿意打。但是如果形迫使我不得不打的，我是能一直打到底的。

：如果美人民到共党什么作，我怎回答呢？

答：因介石要屠中人民，人民要生存就必自。是美人民所能理解的。

：你于美是否可能行反如何看法？

答：于反的宣，包括方面。在一方面，美帝主确是在准着反的，目前的反宣和其他的反宣，就是于反的政治准。在另一方面，种宣，是美反派用以掩盖前美帝主所直接面着的多矛盾，所放的烟幕。些矛盾，就是美反派同美人民之的矛盾，以及美帝主同其他本主家和殖民地、半殖民地家之的矛盾。美反的口，在目前的意，是迫美人民和向本主世界它的侵略力。你知道，希特勒和他的伙伴日本，在一期中，都曾把反的口作奴役本人民和侵略其他家的托。在美反派的做法，也正是。

美反派要掀，首先必攻美人民。他已在攻美人民了，他政治上、上迫美的工人和民主分子，准在美行法西斯主。美人民起抵抗美反派的攻。我相信他是做的。

美和中隔着极其的地，里有、非三洲的多本主家和殖民地、半殖民地家。美反派在有服些家之前，是不到攻的。在美在太平洋控制了比英去的全部力范要多的地方，它控制着日本、民党治的中、半朝和南太平洋；它早已控制着中南美；它想控制整大英帝和西。美在各种借口之下，在多家行大模的事布置，建立事基地。美反派，他在世界各地已建立和准建立的一切事基地，都是着反的。不，些事基地是指向。但是，在，首

先受到美侵略的不是，而是些被建立军事基地的家。我相信，不要很久，些家到真正迫它的是，是美。美反派有一天他自己是在全世界人民的反中。

然，我不是，美反派不想攻。是世界和平的保者，是阻碍美反派建立世界霸的强大的因素，有了，美和世界反派的野心就根本不能。因此，美反派非常痛恨，确想消社主家。但是在目前，在第二次世界大束不久的时候，美反派如此大吹大擂地强美，得烟瘴气，就使人不能不看看他的目的。原他是在反的口下面，狂地攻美的工人和民主分子，和把美向外的一切象都成美的附物。我以，美人民和一切受到美侵略威的家的人民，起，反美反派及其在各的走狗的攻。只有斗胜利了，第三次世界大才可以避免，否是不能避免的。

：是一很好的明。但是如果美使用原子炸呢？如果美冰、以及中的基地炸呢？

答：原子是美反派用人的只老虎，看子可怕，上并不可怕。然，原子是一种大模屠的武器，但是定胜的是人民，而不是一件新式武器。

一切反派都是老虎。看起，反派的子是可怕的，但是上并有什么了不起的力量。的点看，真正强大的力量不是于反派，而是于人民。在一九一七年俄二月革命以前，俄究竟哪一方面有真正的力量呢？表面上看，的沙皇是有力量的；但是二月革命的一，就是沙皇吹走了。根蒂，俄的力量是在工兵埃方面。沙皇不是一只老虎。希特勒不是曾被人看作很有力量的？但是史明了他是一只老虎。墨索里尼也是如此，日本帝主也是如此。相反的，以及各好民主自由的人民的力量，却是比人所料的强大得多。

介石和他的支持者美反派也都是老虎。提起美帝主，人似乎得它是强大得不得了，中的反派正在拿美的“强大”唬中人民。但是美反派也要同一切史上的反派一，被明并有什么力量。在美，另有一人是真正有力量的，就是美人民。

拿中的情形，我所依靠的不是小米加步，但是史最后明，小米加步比介石的机加坦克要强些。然在中人民面前存在着多困，中人民在美帝主和中反派的合攻之下，要受到的苦，但是些反派有一天要失，我有一天要胜利。原因不是的，就在于反派代表反，而我代表步。