

**Dates of Meeting:**

07-07-1954

**Type of Meeting:**

Politburo

**Place of Meeting:**

Beijing

**Attendance:**

Zhou flew back to Beijing before the final stage of the Geneva Conference to report to Mao

**Major Agenda Items:**

Geneva Conference

**Speeches and Reports:**

**Zhou** reports on the Geneva conference and on the Liuzhou meeting.

Zhou reported that the Chinese delegation had adopted a policy line of uniting with France, Britain, southeast Asian countries, and the three Indochina countries—that is, uniting with all international forces that could be united, in order to isolate the United States and to contain and break up the U.S. imperialist plan of expanding America's hegemony in the world. The central part of this policy line, emphasized Zhou, lay in achieving a peaceful settlement of the Indochina problem. Zhou believed that, judging from the progress that had been made at the Geneva Conference thus far, the settlement could be reached. Chen Jian (2010) *Mao's China and the Cold War* Page 143

China's Geneva experiences, he explained, consisted of two major achievements. First, 'united front' policy proved effective even in an 'international struggle'. The chief policy line the Chinese delegation adopted was 'to get united with France, England, countries in Southeast Asia and Indochina, and all international forces that can be united so as to isolate America and restrict and defeat its plan to expand hegemony globally'. The final agreement on Indochina was evident of the effectiveness of such a policy. Second, it was possible to have international tensions relaxed through non-military means. Although merely achieving a ceasefire over the Indochina crisis, Zhou asserted, Beijing together with Moscow and Hanoi worked vigorously to establish a truce in Indochina and possibly a peaceful solution of the conflict which, in effect, 'was a major step forward toward relaxing international tensions and containing America's plan to expand its global hegemony'

Zhang Shu Guang (2007) *Constructing 'Peaceful Coexistence': China's Diplomacy toward the Geneva and Bandung Conferences, 1954–55 Cold War History*, 7,4 Page 518

Zhou Enlai raised the issue of whether or not China should open up further to the outside world. Mao's earlier call to 'have the house swept first and then invite guests in', he explained, had served as 'one of the most important diplomatic principles' over the years; however, based on his own observations of the changes in international politics, it was high time to reconsider 'the earlier decision to keep the door closed for another year' and, in his view, 'it looks like we can no longer keep the door closed'. Now that 'New China enjoys a very high reputation, the Soviet Union also wishes that our country would participate in international affairs'. It seemed to have become 'inevitable that we must open up'. Zhang (2007) Page 518

**Mao**, Speech July 7, 1954 "Unite and work together with all peace loving countries"

He praised and approved Zhou's report. In Geneva, we grab the peace slogan, that is to say that we want peace. On the other hand, the Americans did not grab the peace slogan, they want to fight. Thus, they lost the argument; they cannot be persuasive. Currently, more people want peace, and we need to cooperate with all the people who want peace, so that we can isolate those warmongers, that is the current US administration... Looking at the general international situation, the U.S. is quite isolated. After this Southeast Asian issue, that is the Indochina issue, being resolved, I think the US isolation will be greater (Mao, 1999: 6. 332-335).

"—Our activities for the last two months are very good ... We, the Soviets, Korea and Vietnam have cooperated well, our policy is correct and our activities have gained results." "—peace slogan I had isolated the US: —In negotiations, things which can be compromised, we should compromise, things which we should insist upon, we must be firm."

Mao highlighted the strategic dangers posed by the US: —Look at this Far East, it [the US] occupied Japan, took over South Korea, controlled Taiwan, and the Philippines, Thailand and Pakistan too. In addition, there is Turkey, Australia and New Zealand. II As Mao considered the Geneva Conference a done deal from this point onwards, his attention turned next to the —long term problem of Taiwan: "We need to destroy any possibility of a ROC-US defence treaty, we need to think of some solutions, and more propaganda is necessary." Yet, the international situation was so positive that "to shut the door is no longer possible." This ideal situation beseeched the PRC to "venture out." Mao advocated an intense diplomatic effort to win over countries like India and Burma. Finally, Mao

reminded his colleagues that the PRC's desire to uphold peace was solely for the purpose of "protecting our country, protecting socialism and to strive for building up a great socialist country." "the door can no longer and should not be kept closed and, moreover, [we] should walk out". What convinced him was that 'the call for tension relaxation and peaceful coexistence originated from us and now is adopted by both [British Prime Minister Anthony] Eden and Nehru, showing that the situation has greatly changed'. To keep up with the momentum, he directed, 'we must develop a working relationship with all the countries that are willing to establish relations with us; . . . to that end, [we] must assign a number of people to assume diplomatic work'. Diplomatic work, the CCP chairman stressed, was the 'equivalent of any constructive work'. Yang Hueipang (2015) *Helpful Allies, Interfering Neighbours: World opinion and China in the 1950s Modern Asian Studies*, 49, 1 pp 204 - 240

#### **Documents passed:**

#### **Other Decisions and/or Actions:**

- to abandon the principle of "cleaning up the house first, then inviting guests" and to step out onto the world stage.
- instructed Zhou to get Moscow's endorsement (see remark 3)

#### **Remarks:**

1. success at the Bandung conference greatly encouraged the Chinese leadership and spurred them on to abandon the principle of "cleaning up the house first, then inviting guests" and to step out onto the world stage.
2. On July 8, 1954, Mao Tse-tung gave 11 instructions on China's diplomacy which included: "begin to establish Southeast Asian peace zone, effect and develop cooperation on the zone, and sign non-aggression pact or collective peace treaty"; "unite all peaceful forces (including government), isolate and split up U.S."; "International Peace and United Front", etc
3. Flying back to Geneva, Zhou stopped at Moscow on 10 July. Meeting with the top Kremlin leaders (Georgiy Malenkov, Kliment Voroshilov, Lazar Kaganovich, Anastas Mikoyan—Nikita Khrushchev was out of Moscow), he reached an agreement that 'if we rejected Mendes' proposal, the US would seize the chance to replace the Mendes government with a more belligerent one, which would make the settlement of the Indochina conflict even more difficult.
4. To ensure that Hanoi would not change its mind, on the evening of his arrival at Geneva on 12 July, Zhou had a long meeting with Hanoi's representative until midnight. Informing him of the consensus he had earlier secured with Ho Chi Minh and the Soviet leaders, the Chinese premier stressed that '[Hanoi] should seize the initiative to resolve the issue quickly, actively, and directly'. To that end, the Chinese–Soviet–Vietnamese side should establish a few principles including: 'trying to simplify the issues so as to avoid complicating the negotiations; focusing on France as the primary counterpart which requires considering the possibility of its acceptance before raising any requests; and being willing to compromise by accepting slightly different arrangements toward an agreement as long as no primary interest endangered'
5. Since his return from Hangzhou on 17 March, Mao chaired at least five Politburo meetings to discuss the PRC's approaches to the Geneva Conference. Throughout the Geneva Conference, Zhou (or Li Kenong) sent almost daily reports to Mao.