

“All Under the Heaven Is Great Chaos”

Introduction and annotation by Chen Jian and David L. Wilson

In retrospect, the years 1968-1969 witnessed profound changes in both the People’s Republic of China’s (PRC’s) external relations and the international history of the Cold War. In August 1968, the Warsaw Pact forces invaded Czechoslovakia. In the months following the invasion, long-accumulated tensions between China and the Soviet Union evolved into open confrontation. In March 1969, a bloody border conflict erupted between the two Communist giants, bringing them to the brink of a general war (Soviet leaders even reportedly considered using nuclear weapons).

mobilize the masses. For a department as large as the Foreign Ministry, with 3,000 people working there, nothing can be done without mobilizing the masses. Among the ambassadors we dispatched to your country, two are bad. We did not know this in the past. One issued an anti-Communist statement in the newspaper, and the other, though no evidence to show that he had issued such a statement, surrendered to the enemy. They have not just

workers have remained unchanged. The main body of the work force has not changed, still consisting those who had served during the late Qing period and the Beiyang period.

Zhou Enlai:¹³ Now we have added some workers. We have expanded the number of the workers.

Mao Zedong: I mean that those who are in charge have not changed. This is the social foundation for revisionism to prevail in China. Without mobilizing the masses, without thoroughly mobilizing the working class, these problems will never be solved. But if this is not enough, we should send in the People's Liberation Army, and only then can the problems be solved.

Hill: Yes.

Mao Zedong: I want to ask you a question. Do you know what the imperialists will do? I mean, are they going to start a world war? Or maybe they will not start the war at this moment, but will start it after a while? According to your experience in your own country and in other countries, what do you feel?

Hill: In my opinion, they have not decided to start the war. They are facing tremendous difficulties now. And it seems to me that they will not start the war for a while. At least they do not have the strength to start a war on a global scale at the present time. This is the view held by the majority of people I know. However, viewing the situation from another angle, as they have lost the ability to make correct judgments, danger for military confrontation exists. But in an overall sense, they are not in a position to start a world war now.

Mao Zedong: Both the United States and the Soviet Union have the capacity to start a war. Next to them are such defeated countries as Japan, West Germany and Italy. Neither Britain nor France is much interested in fighting a war.

Zhou Enlai: [Charles] De Gaulle even has reduced (France's) military expenditure.

Mao Zedong: Even in Japan and West Germany, I cannot find signs to show that they are willing to fight a war. West Germany wants to annex East Germany so that Germany will be unified. Japan hopes to take back Okinawa. In actuality, Japan has not won its independence.

Zhou Enlai: The United States controls Japan militarily. There are so many American military bases there.

Mao Zedong: The situation after the end of the Second World War has been different from that after the end of the First World War. I do not know whether or not

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lazy. I have not revised some of my own writings. Some of them should be revised. For example, when some of them are to be published in a second edition, I should revise them a little bit. When there is a third edition, I should revise a little bit once more. It is not necessary for some articles to be that long. Comrade Lin Biao¹⁷ has invented a new method, that is, to compile quotations.

Kang Sheng: The Greek language edition of *Chairman Mao's Quotations* is translated by them (pointing to Hill).

Mao Zedong: Oh, it is translated by them. Confucius' *Analects* is a collection of quotations. Buddhism also has collections of quotations.

Zhou Enlai: The *Adamantine*.

Mao Zedong: I am a very lazy person. I have never read the Bible. It does not attract me, and I do not know what is said there. Occasionally I will pick it up, but simply do not want to read it.

Hill: I fully understand what you mean as I often have the same feeling. I cannot read through it. But when I was a small boy, I was forced to read the Bible.

Mao Zedong: That is good. When you are forced to read something, that probably is good for you. Some say that I have never committed any mistake. As a matter of fact, I believed in Confucius' feudalism when I was a little boy. Later, when I entered school, I believed in capitalism, taking [George] Washington and Napoleon as great heroes, and looking upon [Oliver] Cromwell, [Duke of] Wellington, and Admiral [Horatio] Nelson as wonderful human beings. During [Nikita] Khrushchev's times, he often claimed that war was inevitable. But now they [the Soviet leaders] no longer make this kind of noise. To say that war is inevitable really means that war is avoidable. In recent years they no longer mention this issue. Isn't that they seldom touch upon this issue?

Kang Sheng: They never mention this issue now. They sent troops to Czechoslovakia. At the Polish Party's Fifth National Congress [Ed. note: 11-16 November 1968], this issue was not mentioned.

Mao Zedong: If that is the case, they, both the United States and the Soviet Union, and some other countries, are preparing to spread the war. As far as this is concerned, it seems that a war might begin. I am not quite sure about this question. Therefore I want to ask for your advice. But I can not force you to answer this question immediately. Can you reflect on this issue? We will come back to discuss this issue in one year's time. But we must take people's consciousness into our consideration. When the United States stopped bombing North Vietnam, American soldiers in Vietnam were very glad, and they even cheered. This indicates that their morale is not high. Is the morale of American soldiers high? Is the morale of Soviet soldiers high? Is the morale of the French, British, German, and Japanese soldiers high? The student strike is a new phenomenon in European history. Students in the capitalist countries usually do not strike. But now, all under the heaven is great chaos. Mainly in Europe, in the

United States, in Latin America, and in Japan, there are student strikes. Are there also student strikes in your country?

Hill: Yes.
Mao Zedong: In another five years, our country, in a relative sense, will be in a better position than the United States.

world. The Japanese wanted to unify the Pacific area. But they all failed. It seems to me that the possibility to unify the world has not disappeared. The capitalist system is forcing the peoples in the world to accept capitalism, and this is a way by which to unify the world. Another way is that the peoples of the world will rise to make revolution and then unite together. In my view, the world can be unified. Now the United States is maneuvering the United Nations. I am afraid that it is not easy for either the imperialists or the revisionists to unify the world. Can they make a nuclear war, by which they will almost eliminate the population of the world, and then let the United States and the Soviet Union unify the world? But these two countries have too small a population, and they will not have enough manpower if it is dispersed. Further, they are also afraid of fighting a nuclear war. They are not afraid of eliminating population in other countries, but they are afraid of their own population being eliminated. Those countries located in the second intermediate zone, such as Britain, France, Germany, Japan, and Italy, are secondary powers. I am afraid that they are unwilling to fight a war. After all, I am afraid that we still must go the path directed by Marxism, first let peoples in various countries make revolution, and then freely unite together. Why is it necessary to have all these differences at this time? At first, the Americans loved to talk about cosmopolitanism, but later they no longer talked so much about it. In fact, they favor unifying the world. I have read your articles. The intrusion of American capital into your country has caused discontent with the Americans. There is a difference between the Vietnam War and the Korean War, that is, the European countries are not there. Britain, France, Turkey, and Belgium all participated in the Korean War. Let me put forward a question, I will try to answer it, and you will try to answer it. I will consider it, and I ask you also to consider it. This is an issue with worldwide significance. This is the issue about war. The issue about war and peace. Will we see a war, or will we see a revolution? Will the war give rise to revolution, or will revolution prevent war? All in all, now there is neither war nor revolution. Such a situation will not last long. Is it about the time to finish the meeting?

Hill: Thank you very much.

Mao Zedong: I am told that you are leaving tomorrow?

Hill: Yes:

Mao Zedong: Have a safe journey.

Hill: Thank you very much. I thank the Chairman and the Chinese Communist Party for inviting us to visit China again. This visit is of great value for me, and it is also a great inspiration for my comrades.

Mao Zedong: Is it valuable?

Hill: Yes, extremely valuable. I fully agree with the Chairman's opinions on the "absolute authority" issue, and I also fully agree with the Chairman's opinion about the "thoroughly establish" question. But I also feel that we have a very important task, that is, we should go all out to

Document No. 8**Mao Zedong's Speech at the First Plenary Session of the CCP's Ninth Central Committee, 28 April 1969³¹**

What I am going to say is what I have said before, which you all know, and I am not going to say anything new. Simply I am going to talk about unity. The purpose of unity is to pursue even greater victory.

Now the Soviet revisionists attack us. Some broadcast reports by Tass, the materials prepared by Wang Ming,³² and the lengthy essay in *Kommunist* all attack us, claiming that our Party is no longer one of the proletariat and calling it a "petit-bourgeois party." They claim that what we are doing is the imposition of a monolithic order and that we have returned to the old years of the base areas. What they mean is that we have regressed. What is a monolithic order? According to them, it is a military-bureaucratic system. Using a Japanese term, this is a "system." In the words used by the Soviets, this is called "military-bureaucratic dictatorship." They look at our list of names, and find many military men, and they call it "military."³³ As for "bureaucratic," probably they mean a batch of "bureaucrats," including myself, [Zhou] Enlai, Kang Sheng, and Chen Boda.³⁴ All in all, those of you who do not belong to the military belong to this "bureaucratic" system. Therefore it is called the "military-bureaucratic dictatorship." I say, let them talk, talk about all of this. Whatever they want to say, let them say it. But there is a characteristic in what they say, that is, they never scold us as a bourgeois party. They label us a "petit-bourgeois party." On our part, we call theirs a bourgeois dictatorship. They are restoring the bourgeois dictatorship.

We are talking about victory, this means that we must guarantee that we should unite the vast masses of the

years, detained in the “cattle pens.”³⁷ As a result, they know nothing about what is happening in the world. When they come out and listen to other people, they find the language the other people use is different. They are still talking in the language of two years ago. They have been separated from life for two years. We should help these people and should hold study sessions for them. We should tell them about history and tell them about the history of the advance of the Great Cultural Revolution in the past two years, so that they gradually will awaken.

We should unite together for one purpose, that is, to consolidate the proletarian dictatorship. This should be solidly carried out in every factory, every village, every office, and every school. In the beginning, we should not spread this out too widely. We may spread it out, but should not stop taking charge of it when it has been spread out. We should not just do this for half a year or a little bit longer, and then have no one take charge of it. The experiences must be summarized factory by factory, school by school, and office by office. Therefore, Comrade Lin Biao emphasizes in his report that this must be done factory by factory, school by school, commune by commune, party branch by party branch, and working unit by working unit. There is also the question of rectifying the [Communist] Youth League, which should be done League branch by League branch.

In addition, there is the question of being prepared for war, which I have mentioned in the past. We should be prepared for war year by year. People may ask: What if they do not come? No matter whether they come or not, we should be prepared. Do not wait for the Party Center to distribute materials even for manufacturing hand grenades. Hand grenades can be manufactured everywhere, can be manufactured in every province. Such things as rifles and light weapons can be manufactured in every province. I am talking here about being prepared in a material sense. But what is more important is to be prepared in a spiritual sense. To be prepared in a spiritual sense is to be prepared for war. Not only [members of] our Central Committee, but also the majority of the people of the whole country, should have such spiritual preparation. Here I do not mean to include the enemies of the [proletarian] dictatorship, such as landlords, rich peasants, reactionaries, and bad elements. This is because these people are quite happy to see the imperialists and revisionists invade our country. They suppose that if the invasion occurred, the world would be turned upside down, and that they would come out on top. We should also be prepared for dealing with this situation. In carrying out the socialist revolution, we should also carry out this revolution.

When others invade our territory and attack us, we shall not invade others' territory. We must not invade others' territory. I say this because we should not be provoked. Even if they invited me to come out, I will not come out. But if they invade my territory and attack me, I will deal with them. My response depends on whether they come on a small scale or a large scale. If it is a small-

scale invasion the fighting will be waged on the border. If it is a large-scale invasion, I am in favor of giving up some land. China is not a small country. If there is no benefit waiting for them, they will not come. We must let the whole world see that when we are fighting the war we have both reason and advantage in our hands. If they do come, I think it is more advantageous to us, as we will have both reason and advantage in our hands. It is easy for us to fight [an invading enemy] since he will fall into the people's encirclement. As far as such things like planes, tanks, and armored vehicles are concerned, experiences everywhere prove that they are easy for us to deal with.

In order to achieve victory, we must have more people. Isn't this correct? [We must have] people from all backgrounds, no matter to which “mountain stronghold” they used to belong or in which province they used to work, either in the north or in the south. Is it better to unite with more people or to unite with fewer people? It is always better to unite with more people. Some people may have different opinions from ours, but that is not a relationship between us and the enemy. I simply do not believe, to take a specific example, that the relationship between Wang Xiaoyu³⁸ and Yang Dezhi³⁹ is, as some people say, one between us and the enemy. Is the relationship between you two one between us and the enemy, or is it one among the people? In my opinion, it is a quarrel among the people. The Central Committee has been somewhat bureaucratic, and has failed to pay enough attention to you. On your part, you never bring this matter to the Central Committee for discussion. Shandong is such a big province, and there are contradictions among the people. Would you two please take this opportunity to have a good discussion? In my opinion, there are such contradictions among the people in East China too. There is also the case of Shanxi province, which involves problems among the people too. You support one faction, and I will support another faction. But is this endless

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**Report by Four Chinese Marshals—Chen Yi,⁵⁰ Ye
Jianying,⁵¹ Xu Xiang/f4x.64 760.8 Tmi~0.00Au**

once they are bogged down in China, it is not easy to get out. Both the U.S. imperialists and the Soviet revisionists want others to take the lead, allowing them to take advantage by hiding in the back. We are ready in full battle array. No matter how the aggressors will come, jointly or independently, they will be thoroughly defeated.

III. Analyzing the American-Soviet contradiction

(1) The Soviet revisionists have adopted a "one-leg" policy in the construction of their country. They first pursued partial development in heavy industry, and then pursued a deformed development in advanced military industry. This provided them with the capacity for expansion. The U.S. imperialists have been trapped in South Vietnam, and the British imperialists have decided to withdraw from areas east of the Suez Canal, which has created a new opportunity for Soviet expansion. The Soviet revisionists also carry out expansion in the name of anti-imperialism or under the cover of opposing China. They often begin with the vulnerable spots, occupying grounds in North Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. They even have extended their hands into the U.S. Imperialists' backyard: Latin America. One of the most conspicuous indications of Soviet expansionism is the all-out effort to develop a navy. The ocean was controlled by the United States and Britain in the past, and the Soviet revisionists are vigorously expanding in the ocean, causing conflicts with the capitalist-imperialists.

(2) The expansion by the Soviet revisionists has been conducted for the purpose of squeezing out the U.S. imperialists. The Soviet revisionists hope to divide the world equally with the U.S. imperialists, as well as take charge of world affairs together with the U.S. imperialists. The U.S. imperialists are determined to maintain their superior position, and are unwilling to give up their hegemony and the world hegemon's position. The U.S. imperialists will not allow the Soviet revisionists to consolidate their position in the Middle East. The U.S. imperialists do not believe that the Soviet revisionists will really enter a major war against China, and they thus will not allow the Soviet revisionists to expand at will.

(3) Both the Soviet revisionists and the U.S. imperialists are making plans for action now. The Soviet revisionists want to extend their influence into Western Europe, and the U.S. imperialists hope to put a leg into Eastern Europe. They give tit for tat, competing to seize what is possessed by the other side. What exists between them is a real and concrete conflict of interests. The struggles between them are both constant and severe.

(4) Both the U.S. imperialists and the Soviet revisionists face crises at home and abroad, but they will not shrink back simply because they are facing difficulties. The Soviet revisionists are making active preparations in the East, not relaxing efforts in the West, and hoping to develop in the South. The U.S. imperialists also want to pursue a path of expansion. It is necessary that the contradictions between them will intensify.

(5) The contradictions between the United States and the Soviet Union concentrate on Europe and the Middle East. The unification of Germany is the core of the European problem. The strength of West Germany has

(Concerning the leadership of the negotiation delegation) It should be divided into the first, the second, and third lines. Qiao Guanhua and Chai Chengwen belong to the first line Ji Pengfei,⁷⁰ Huang Yongsheng⁷¹ belong to the second line. The third line is the Party's Central Committee.

(Concerning the preparations for the negotiation:) All members of the delegation should put down all other work and be concentrated, and should go all out to prepare for the negotiation. They should first get familiar with the statements of, as well as notes, between the two governments. They should also get familiar with the history and current status of the [Sino-Soviet] border. The temporary measures, which should be solved as the first step in handling the negotiation, are closely related to the whole situation. You are not just negotiating to settle the border dispute; you are negotiating about the relationship between the two countries.⁷²

[Source: *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo shilu*, vol. 3, part 1, pp. 523-524]

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¹ [Editor's note: See John H. Holdrige, *Crossing the Divide: An Insider's Account of Normalization of U.S.-China Relations* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997), p.25. Thanks to

Military Commission. During the early stage of the Cultural Revolution, he was appointed the head of the PLA's Cultural Revolution Leading Group, but lost the position in late 1967.

⁵³ Nie Rongzhen, also one of the ten marshals, was then a member of the CCP CC and vice chairman of the CCP Central Military Commission. He had been in charge of China's national defense industry (including the building of China's A bomb and H bomb) and, during the Cultural Revolution, was the least criticized of the four marshals.

⁵⁴ After the CCP's Ninth Congress in April 1969, Mao Zedong instructed the four marshals to study the international situation together and to present to the Party's central leadership a written report. Zhou Enlai then assigned Xiong Xianghui, one of his long-time top aids, to assist the four marshals in preparing the report. From June 7 to July 10, the four marshals held six meetings for a total of 19 hours. On July 11, they completed this report and presented it to Zhou Enlai. Xiong Xianghui took detailed notes at these meetings. The excerpt of the report translated here is based on the material released in his memoir, "The Prelude to the Opening of Sino-American Relations," *Zhonggong dangshi ziliao* (CCP History Materials), no. 42 (June 1992), pp. 56-96.

⁵⁵ We now know, however, that China dispatched a total of 320,000 engineering and anti-aircraft artillery troops to Vietnam in 1965-1969. For a discussion, see Chen Jian, "China's Involvement in the Vietnam War, 1964-1969," *China Quarterly* 142 (June 1995), pp. 357-386.

⁵⁶ This refers to the Sino-Indian border war of 1962.

⁵⁷ The four marshals are probably alluding to Nixon's press conference remark of 14 March 1969. Nixon's reference to "a potential Chinese Communist threat" is cited in Raymond L. Garthoff, *Detente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan*, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1994), p. 246, citing *Presidential Documents*, vol. 5 (March 17, 1969), p. 404. The context for Nixon's statement was the new administration's announcement that it would proceed with an antiballistic missile (ABM) system, which had been justified by the Johnson Administration by the need to be prepared for a potential Chinese danger, and the implication that the Soviets, too, had an interest in containing the Chinese threat: "I would imagine," Nixon said, "that the Soviet Union would be just as reluctant as we would be to leave their country naked against a potential Chinese Communist threat." We thank William Burr (National Security Archive) for alerting us to this quotation.

⁵⁸ Sato Eisaku served as Japan's prime minister from 1964 to 1972.

⁵⁹ The CCP CC issued the order on 28 August 1969. The order, primarily intended to bring about a general mobilization in border provinces and regions, especially Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, and Helongjiang, was also widely carried out in other parts of China. The order thus resulted in a nationwide mobilization in China late in 1969.

⁶⁰ On 23 July 1969, using Shanxi province as a case, the CCP CC ordered that all mass organizations should end "struggle with violent means," that the PLA should take resolute measures to restore order, that transportation and communication systems should be unconditionally restored, that all counter-revolutionaries should be severely punished, and that production should be unconditionally resumed. See *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao*, vol. 13, pp. 54-55.

⁶¹ Alexei Kosygin was a member of the Soviet Party Politburo and chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union.

⁶² On 11 September 1969, Kosygin, after attending Ho Chi Minh's funeral in Hanoi, made a short stop in Beijing and met with Chinese premier Zhou Enlai at the Beijing airport. The meeting lasted for 3 hours and 40 minutes. According to the Chinese records, the two sides reached four tentative agreements at the meeting: (1) The two sides agree to maintain the status quo of the border; (2) the two sides agree to avoid military conflict on the border; (3) the two sides agree that their military forces should avoid contact in disputed areas; and (4) the two sides agree to let their border authorities consult and negotiate with each in case a dispute emerges. Zhou Enlai and Kosygin also agreed that, after reporting the results of the meeting to the two Party's central leadership, they would confirm these results by exchanging formal letters. (*Zhonghua renmin gongheguo shilu*, vol. 3, part 1, pp. 510-511.) For Zhou Enlai's letter to Kosygin dated 18 September 1969, see Document 13. [Editor's Note: for English translations of Soviet records pertaining to the meeting see Ostermann, "New Evidence on the Sino-Soviet Border Dispute, 1969-71," pp. 191-193; and *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 6/7 (Winter 1995/96), pp. 197-199.]

⁶³ Richard Nixon made a round-the-world journey in July-August 1969, and spent time in Asia. During a stop in Guam, Nixon announced at a news conference that while in the past Asian nations had received both men and money from the United States to fight communist threats, in the future, to receive American military and financial support, they would have to furnish their own troops. This notion of a new American Asian policy became the "Nixon Doctrine." In China, *Caokao xiaoxi* (Reference news), an internally circulated daily newspaper, immediately reported Nixon's remarks.

⁶⁴ Following his agreement with Kosygin reached at their 11 September 1969 meeting at the Beijing airport, Zhou Enlai wrote the letter to Kosygin with the expectation that he would receive a letter with the same content from Kosygin. However, Kosygin did not reply positively to Zhou because of opposition from other Soviet leaders, especially those from the military.

⁶⁵ Choi Yong Kun was a member of the Presidium of the Political Committee of the Korean Workers' Party and chairman of the supreme People's Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. He headed a North Korean party and governmental delegation sent to attend the celebrations for the 20th anniversary of the People's Republic of China. This visit substantially improved Sino-North Korean relations, which reached a low ebb during the Chinese Cultural Revolution, paving the way for Chinese premier Zhou Enlai to lead a high-ranking Chinese Party and Governmental delegation to visit North Korea in April 1970 (the first such visit by Chinese leaders since 1966).

⁶⁶ Qiao Guanhua, China's vice foreign minister, later served as China's foreign minister from 1975 to 1976.

⁶⁷ Yu Zhan headed the Soviet-East European Section of Chinese Foreign Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁶⁸ Chai Chengwen headed the Foreign Affairs Bureau of the Chinese Ministry of Defense.

⁶⁹ Please refer to Document 13.

⁷⁰ Ji Pengfei was China's vice foreign minister.

⁷¹ Huang Yongsheng was PLA chief of staff and a member of the CCP Politburo. He was purged and disappeared from China's political scene after Lin Biao's death in September 1971.

⁷² The Sino-Soviet border negotiations began on 20 October 1969, without producing any concrete results. Tensions along Sino-Soviet borders did not relax until the late 1980s.