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Trends in Communist Media

this issue includes . . .

- Soviet publicity on new rift with Poland
- Polish leaders face electoral difficulties
- Soviet criticism of U.S. support for Israel

Approved for Release

MAR 2001

~~Confidential~~

JUNE 1981
FB TM 81-024

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CHINA - SOUTH ASIA

PREMIER'S VISIT FURTHERS BEIJING'S ANTI-SOVIET GOALS

Premier Zhao Ziyang's recent visit to Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh reflected renewed Chinese determination to strengthen its position in South Asia and to encourage the nations of the region to overcome their differences and unite to resist Soviet inroads in Asia. Beijing is attempting to maintain its traditionally close ties with Pakistan while resuming efforts to establish good relations with India. China apparently calculates that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan makes such a move more urgent and that the current climate is somewhat more favorable for its success.

Zhao's visit to South Asia--the first by a Chinese Premier since 1966--did not result in any new agreements or surprising departures from the general line of Chinese diplomacy in the region, but it underscored Beijing's determination to keep Soviet and Vietnamese activities in Asia at the forefront of international attention. Zhao's statements during the 1-8 June trip emphasized repeatedly that South Asia is part of the frontline against Soviet global expansionism, and the XINHUA account of his 1 June banquet speech in Islamabad quoted him as saying that "at present, the situation in South Asia is developing in a direction favorable to the people in the region and unfavorable to the hegemonists."

After Zhao's return to Beijing, both he and Chinese Vice Chairman Deng Xiaoping amplified the importance China attaches to the region in remarks to UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, reported by XINHUA. Deng, after condemning the Israeli air strike against Iraq's nuclear reactor, declared that Kampuchea and Afghanistan are "the two major hot spots in the present-day world," and that "no matter what new problems emerge on the international scene, the issues of Kampuchea and Afghanistan must not be put aside." Deng's comments are reminiscent of statements he made to visitors to China in April urging that the Polish situation not be allowed to overshadow events in Kampuchea and Afghanistan.

Zhao's visit served to cement old ties in the region at a time when Beijing is renewing efforts, begun in 1978, to improve Sino-Indian relations. He clearly indicated in a 7 June press conference in

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Katmandu, reported by XINHUA, that Beijing's overriding interest in South Asia is to foster cooperation and a resolution of regional disputes in the face of the perceived threat from the Soviet Union. The development of relations of friendship and cooperation in the region, he maintained, would be in the interests of peace and stability as well as in the "cause against hegemonism."

SUPPORT FOR PAKISTAN
AND AFGHAN REBELS

Zhao's visit to Pakistan was carefully orchestrated to stress the importance of Beijing's bilateral ties with Islamabad while demonstrating increased Chinese responsiveness to Indian concerns. In his 1 June banquet toast, Zhao repeated the standard assurance that the Chinese Government and people "firmly support" Pakistan's "just struggle to oppose foreign aggression and interference." He went on to make a rare public reference to Beijing's military aid to Pakistan—the second at this high level since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan—during a 3 June news conference, but he used terms intended to allay Indian suspicions of collusion against its interests. He said that since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan posed a "grave military threat" to Pakistan, China "fully understands" Pakistan's efforts to upgrade national defense capabilities and "will give whatever energetic support it can to these efforts."

During the news conference, Zhao further justified Chinese military support to other countries in general by claiming that the invasion of Afghanistan and Soviet support for Vietnamese involvement in Kampuchea were "important component parts" of a Soviet global strategy which must be opposed with energetic means. He stated, "We have always rendered energetic political and moral support to the countries and peoples that are subjected to hegemonist aggression and expansion and given them material and other assistance within our means."

The strength of Chinese support for anti-Soviet forces was underscored in Zhao's dramatic tour of an Afghan refugee camp near the border on 2 June. In a gesture designed to suggest Beijing's material and political support for the Afghan resistance without substantiating Soviet charges that Beijing is arming and training the rebels, Zhao met with refugee leaders, strongly denounced the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and praised the Afghan struggle. He expressed confidence that the refugees would be able to drive Soviet forces from Afghanistan and pledged that the Chinese Government and people would "resolutely stand on the side of the Afghan people and support your just struggle." Zhao then presented a check for 500,000 yuan to Pakistani President Ziaul Haq for his Afghan refugee relief fund.

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BEIJING'S APPROACH
TO NEW DELHI

The importance of Zhao's trip in setting the stage for a new approach to India was made clear by Zhao's repeated calls for improved Sino-Indian relations. Zhao disclosed in Pakistan on 3 June that Foreign Minister Huang Hua would soon visit India; the trip had originally been planned for the fall of 1980 but had been postponed by the Chinese due to India's recognition of the Phnom Penh government of Heng Samrin. XINHUA has since announced that Huang Hua's visit will begin on 26 June and will be followed by a visit to Sri Lanka beginning 30 June. Reaffirming the approach for improving Sino-Indian relations outlined by Deng to a visiting Indian journalist in June 1980, Zhao called on 3 June for a resolution of problems "step by step" through friendly consultation. And in Nepal on 7 June he said that a "package solution to the boundary question . . . is possible so long as both sides agree to work in the spirit of mutual understanding and mutual accommodation."*

Beijing's desire to promote a more favorable climate for improving Sino-Indian ties was also reflected in Zhao's treatment of the India-Pakistan dispute over Kashmir. Beijing has customarily endorsed the Pakistani position, but in his 1 June speech in Rawalpindi, Zhao apparently did not do so. Party Chairman Hua Guofeng had similarly omitted the endorsement in his toast for visiting President Zia in Beijing in May of last year, at a time when Beijing was pushing for closer ties with New Delhi.** After India's recognition of the Heng Samrin regime had soured the earlier Chinese overture, Beijing returned to its customary stance, as evidenced by Huang Hua's statement of support for Pakistan's position on Kashmir last December at a banquet for visiting Pakistani Foreign Minister Agha Shahi.

Beijing's renewed overture to India apparently stems from its belief that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has created an opportunity to woo India from its Soviet ally. Beijing has generally cast New Delhi's statements on Afghanistan in a favorable light. Last December Chinese reportage of President Brezhnev's visit to India, including a RENMIN RIBAO Commentator article on the 13th, stated that India had not acquiesced in

* Deng's statements on the border problem are covered in the TRENDS of 9 July 1980, pages 11-13.

** Zia's visit to China is covered in the TRENDS of 21 May 1980, pages 11-13.

the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. A 4 June GUANGMING RIBAO article by Liu Cun, written in conjunction with the Zhao visit, favorably cited India's opposition to Soviet troops in Afghanistan and noted that Prime Minister Gandhi had demanded foreign troop withdrawal from Afghanistan in a joint communique during a recent visit to Kuwait.

Sino-Indian relations are still complicated by Beijing's distress over New Delhi's recognition of the Soviet-backed Phnom Penh government of Heng Samrin. Beijing has pointed to signs of a more positive Indian stance on this issue, however, noting in February this year, for example, that India did not support Soviet and Vietnamese efforts to gain recognition for the Heng Samrin regime at the New Delhi nonaligned meeting. Nevertheless, there are still problems on this issue. As recently as 24 May, for example, a RENMIN RIBAO article by Ya Zhou attacked a statement by India's Secretary to the Foreign Ministry Gonsalves which blamed China for the problems in Kampuchea and the tension in Southeast Asia. The article said that Gonsalves' remarks were "untimely" and "will not help to improve Sino-Indian relations."