

23 August 1965

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT: Chinese Communist Activities in Africa**

**SUMMARY**

Peiping's ultimate goal in Africa is to install Communist regimes led by pro-Chinese Communist parties. At present and over the short run, however, the Chinese are working to eliminate or weaken pro-Western and pro-Soviet influences and to foster the growth of radical nationalist regimes friendly to Communist China. The Chinese have concentrated their major effort on a comparatively small number of strategic African countries which may be described as the staging areas for wars of "liberation." Along with the search for close political friends and revolutionary allies, Peiping is continuing its effort to develop diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations with as many of the new African states as possible.

1. The long-range Chinese Communist goal in Africa is to install Communist regimes led by pro-Chinese Communist parties. At present and over the short run, however, Peiping is working to eliminate or weaken pro-Western and pro-Soviet influences and to foster the growth of radical nationalist regimes friendly to Communist China. The wide range of political views among dissident leaders with whom the Chinese are working illustrates the opportunistic character of Peiping's activities.

2. Africa is a major theater of Sino-Soviet competition for leadership of the underdeveloped world and of the Communist movement. In this contest, Peiping frequently employs the argument that black and yellow peoples have common grievances against the whites, including Russians.

3. There are, however, significant similarities between Chinese and Soviet policies in Africa. Both seek to destroy Africa's links with the West and to encourage African countries to identify themselves with the "socialist" camp. Both play upon their alleged similarity with the Africans in historical experience and social aspirations and portray international problems as direct conflicts between "progressive" and "neo-colonialist" forces.

4. There is no widespread Communist movement in Africa. There are only a handful of Communist parties, and the Chinese have relatively little influence in them. However, there are significant pro-Chinese elements in some of the local parties such as in the Party of African Independence in Senegal, and a small pro-Chinese faction in the Sudan Communist Party. The South African Communist Party is completely dominated by a pro-Soviet group. This absence of sophisticated Communist party organizations and disciplined Communists has forced both Peiping and Moscow to work with a disparate array of Africans.

5. The Chinese have made liberal use of bribery. They have sought to establish close relations with radical elements in the national mass parties, but there is no evidence yet that they have tried to form Communist cells within these parties. In the short term, Peiping will probably continue to rest its hopes not on the development of Communist parties but on militantly radical regimes which welcome Chinese assistance and accept a considerable Chinese presence.

6. Although the Chinese line in Africa emphasizes revolutionary action, Peiping actually follows a dual strategy. Where it is expedient, the Chinese seek to expand state-to-state relations even with "bourgeois" regimes. Peiping is particularly interested in ties with governments which have, or give promise of having, a satisfactory "anti-imperialist" orientation. In the case of governments which do not meet this test, Peiping generally seeks to work through opposition, dissident, or exile elements, either to put pressure on those in power or to overthrow them.

7. Peiping appears to divide African nations into four general categories and tailors its program to fit the Chinese conception of the situation and circumstances which apply in each case. The first group, composed of the radical states with which close cooperation is possible, includes Algeria, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, and Congo (Brazzaville). The Chinese maintain cordial ties with the leaders of these countries and work closely with them to maintain bases for operations against third countries.

8. The second category of states includes those which have recently become independent and where the political orientation of the government is still in the process of development. Dahomey, the Central African Republic, Kenya, Somali Republic, Uganda, and Tanzania fall in this group, which Peiping is attempting to steer toward the left. The Chinese have offered generous economic aid programs to these countries and have sent military assistance to Tanzania.

9. A third category consists of "conservative" states, vulnerable to revolutionary efforts in the long run, but not lucrative targets for active subversion at the present time. Tunisia, Morocco, and Ethiopia are included in this group. Peiping has diplomatic relations with Tunisia and Morocco and has made periodic overtures for an exchange of diplomatic missions with Addis Ababa.

10. The final category is composed of "reactionary" regimes--that is, those which do not recognize Peiping and have been resisting Chinese Communist blandishments. Included in this group are Upper Volta, Niger, Chad, Gabon, Congo (Leopoldville), and Rwanda. All are targets for active subversion at the present time. Other "conservative" governments--Liberia, Ivory Coast, Malawi, and the Malagasy Republic--appear to be on the Chinese list for future attention.

11. Peiping now maintains diplomatic ties with 17 African nations. During 1964 Kenya, Congo (Brazzaville), Tunisia, Central African Republic, Zambia, and Dahomey established relations. Mauritania followed suit in 1965 and more gains are in prospect. Many moderate African governments, however, including Cameroon, Niger, Upper Volta, and the Ivory Coast, are genuinely suspicious of the Chinese Communists and their potential for subversion and are not anxious to see them established locally. Burundi established relations in 1964, but suspended them in January 1965, accusing the Chinese of subversive activities.

12. Chinese Communist posts abroad serve as major propaganda outlets. Chinese diplomats and press representatives throughout Africa, as well as Chou En-lai and other lesser figures touring the continent, assiduously echo the line that Peiping is Africa's best friend, overflowing with understanding of African problems, and sharing a common experience of foreign exploitation.

13. Since Peiping is unable to afford economic and technical assistance programs on the same scale as those offered by the West and by the Soviet Union, it relies heavily on the propaganda effect of its more modest efforts. The Chinese now beam more than 100 hours of radio propaganda to Africa each week, as compared with about 50 hours three years ago. Languages include English, French Arabic, Cantonese, Portuguese, Swahili, and Hausa. The Cantonese-language broadcasts are directed toward the more than 40,000 overseas Chinese in East Africa, about half of whom inhabit Mauritius, a British island in the Indian Ocean.

14. High-quality pamphlets and periodicals in both English and French are widely distributed in Africa. The New China News Agency (NCNA), Peiping's principal agency for dissemination of propaganda, now maintains offices in 17 African countries, and also has numerous effective and often influential local stringers. Tanzanian cabinet minister Babu formerly served as an NCNA representative in East Africa.

15. Communist China has made offers of economic assistance amounting to about \$300,000,000, a fraction of that offered by the Soviet bloc. Agreements negotiated last year came close to \$200 million. As in other parts of the world, Chinese economic assistance to Africa has remained largely a paper proposition. Only about one-fourth of the funds have been obligated thus far and about 10 percent have been drawn. There are over 1,500 Chinese technicians and laborers in Africa and this figure is likely to increase substantially in the future.

16. The Chinese aid programs have stressed assistance for agricultural development and the establishment of small-scale industries for food processing and consumer goods. Chinese schemes to grow sugar, rice, and tea in Mali apparently are working out well, and several hundred Chinese technicians continue to be employed on these projects. In Ghana, Chinese technicians are providing assistance in growing swamp rice and other groups are to initiate similar projects for the production of vegetables, cotton, and peanuts.

17. Total Chinese trade with Africa has been small, amounting to approximately \$120 million in 1963. It is growing, however, and for the first six months of 1964 ran about 50 percent larger than the comparable period of the previous year.

18. Several African states are viewed as offering particularly favorable opportunities for Peiping. These include:

a. Congo (Brazzaville)

The Chinese consider Brazzaville one of their major bases of operation in Africa and have had considerable success in cultivating the Brazzaville regime. It is a convenient area for the Chinese to support subversive operations against the "reactionary" Tshombe government of Congo (Leopoldville). Brazzaville's dominant leaders have come to regard Peiping as their principal foreign benefactor. Extreme leftists who preach revolution for revolution's sake and favor Chinese Communist models have been in the ascendancy.

Peiping has sent a senior NCNA official of proven effectiveness to manage stepped-up Chinese propaganda efforts in Congo (Brazzaville) and in adjacent countries. He had been previously stationed in East Africa.

The Chinese have evidently provided both military advisers and munitions to the Brazzaville army. Since last July the Chinese have agreed to provide, interest free, \$25 million in cash and in commodity credits. Recently a start has been made on some projects using this assistance. This is an impressive amount for a country with an annual budget of approximately \$40 million. The Chinese have also granted scholarships to train pilots, engineers, and "others."

b. Mali

Peiping already has a substantial presence in Mali, with major leaders of Mali's Marxist-oriented regime viewing Chinese aid and example as particularly suited to their country's needs.

High-level contacts between Mali and Communist China reached a peak during 1964. They began with a visit to Bamako by Chou En-lai and Chen Yi. Mali President Keita visited Communist China last fall, and in speeches in Asian capitals supported Chinese propaganda positions on virtually every international issue. He saw, with the Chinese, "an excellent revolutionary situation" existing all over Africa, expressed gratitude for China's "disinterested" aid, and warmly congratulated the Chinese for having recently "put an end to the monopoly and atomic blackmail of imperialism."

Before Keita's visit, Peiping had offered long-term, no interest credits of some \$20 million, which was considerably less than the amount committed by Moscow during 1961 and 1962. In 1965 the Chinese reportedly offered new economic aid to Mali, probably in an effort to outbid Western aid proposals. In its latest approaches, Peiping has stressed aid for Mali's agriculture and there are already some 700 Chinese in Mali, most of whom are engaged in rice and tea cultivation. Should additional Chinese technicians arrive, Mali may soon have more of them than any other African country. There are rumors that Peiping may also have offered arms and military advisers to Bamako.

c. Ghana

The Chinese consider Ghana a base country for exporting "revolution" to West and Central Africa. Chinese Communist guerrilla warfare experts have recently been reported in Ghana training African "freedom fighters." Meanwhile, Chinese economic aid commitments have totaled over \$40 million since 1961, although most of the funds have not yet been obligated in specific projects. Over the next eighteen months the Chinese presence in Ghana, particularly agricultural workers and technicians to establish small industries, will probably increase markedly.

d. Algeria

The CPR has maintained cordial ties with the nationalist governments of both Ben Bella and Colonel Boumedienne and regards Algeria as a key country in supporting revolution in North Africa. The Chinese have been assiduous in cultivating the Algerians in 1965, one reason being the second Afro-Asian conference which was to be held in Algiers in June and is now postponed to November. The Chinese expect to use this conference as a forum for consolidating their position as the leaders of the "emerging forces" of the world.

Some Algerian leaders are concerned about the tactics the Chinese will use at the conference in view of the apparently intransigent positions the Chinese hold toward the US and the USSR. The disruptive tactics of the Chinese at other international gatherings has heightened Algerian concern. A good example is the anti-Soviet polemic conducted by the Chinese at the International Teachers Conference held in Algiers in April.

Both Chou En-lai and Chen Yi visited Algiers during their ten country swing through Africa in the winter of 1963-64, and Chou concluded another visit to Algiers this past spring. Both Chou and Chen were scheduled to attend the postponed June conference and will probably attend the November meeting.

The Chinese began supplying funds in 1959 to support Algerian nationalist military activity. Chinese assistance has continued since Algerian independence in 1962 and has included a \$50 million, interest-free loan for economic and technical cooperation. The Chinese also signed a three-year cultural agreement in 1963, and gave Algeria a 13,000 ton freighter in February 1965.

e. Tanzania

The Chinese maintain close relations with the Tanzanian government, providing economic and military aid, and have had particularly close contact with the more radical members of the government. Tanzania and Communist China have some goals in common, including support of the Congolese and Mozambique rebels. The Tanzanians reportedly have been impressed with Chinese assistance efforts, the competence of Chinese military advisers, and the quality of Chinese military equipment. However, Tanzanian leaders apparently believe that they must still depend on the West for the bulk of their economic assistance.

Dar es Salaam has been a hub of Chinese activity in East Africa since the arrival of the NCNA representative in December 1961. It is the center of financial assistance for radical African movements and even for some arms assistance to them. It is the operations center for the largest Chinese presence in East Africa and is used as a jumping-off point for Africans from this area who are invited to China.

The Chinese have played a significant role in Zanzibar since the January 1964 coup. They have backed a number of Zanzibar extremists, including Tanzanian Minister Babu, in an effort to gain a firm foothold on the East African mainland.

In June 1964 agreements were signed which provided close to \$50 million in economic development credits as well as a small grant. There was also provision for military assistance. Following this, several Chinese technical, economic, cultural, and agricultural missions arrived.

f. United Arab Republic

The Chinese recognize the UAR as the key to greater influence in the Arab world and hope to use Nasir to advance their campaign for greater influence in the area. Peiping wishes to benefit from current US-UAR difficulties. The Chinese have also backed the UAR and the rest of the Arab world in their confrontation with Israel.

Peiping in December 1964 agreed to extend an interest-free loan of \$80 million to cover the cost of Chinese goods and services supplied to the UAR during the next three years. A Sino-Egyptian agreement on scientific and technological cooperation, signed in January 1965, was an extension of the cultural cooperation protocol first signed in 1956.

Despite their acceptance of Chinese aid, some high Egyptian officials have apparently made realistic assessments of Chinese foreign policy goals. Egyptian officials are aware that the Middle East was bound to be a strategic objective for the Chinese in their drive to dominate Asia, Africa, and Latin America, but this push conflicts with Cairo's ambitions for political influence in Asia and Africa. Chou's recent vitriolic attacks on the US have not been seconded by Nasir.

g. Kenya

The Kenyan government of Jomo Kenyatta has adopted a wary approach toward the Chinese Communists. The Chinese themselves have operated with caution in Kenya, apparently not wishing to jeopardize what they regard as excellent opportunities for long-term gains. The Chinese have wooed Oginga Odinga, Kenya's radical and influential vice president, but have recently suffered a loss of influence commensurate with that of Odinga. The chief NCNA representative was asked to leave last July and the deteriorating situation was probably the cause of the Chinese ambassador's quick trip to Peiping for consultation.

h. Guinea

The Chinese maintain good relations with Guinea's radical leaders. Although the Chinese have their largest West Africa embassy staff in Conakry, they have placed less stress in recent years on Guinea than on other radical states, such as Mali, Congo (Brazzaville), and Ghana. This is partly because of the moderate foreign policy line followed by President Toure, who is making an effort to get more aid from the US.

The Chinese have extended Guinea more than \$26 million in credits, and in 1964 a large number of Chinese technicians arrived, primarily for work on the Kinkon dam.