

STALIN'S CONVERSATIONS

Talks With Mao Zedong, December 1949-January 1950, And With Zhou Enlai, August-September 1952

with commentaries by Chen Jian, Vojtech Mastny, Odd Arne Westad, and Vladislav Zubok

This issue of the Cold War International History Project *Bulletin* leads off with translations of five meetings between Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and top leaders (Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai) of the newly-created People's Republic of China (PRC) between 1949 and 1952. The originals of the documents, which constitute some of the most intimate glimpses of the personal interaction between Soviet and Chinese leaders yet to emerge from the formerly closed archives of the communist world, are kept in the Russian Presidential Archives (officially known as the Archive of the President, Russian Federation, or APRF) in Moscow. They were recently declassified by Russian authorities in connection with efforts to gather materials related to the Korean War for presentation by the Russian Government to South Korea. CWIHP obtained copies of these documents, as well as many other Russian archival records concerning the Korean War which appear later in this issue of the *Bulletin*, as a consequence of its cooperation with a research project involving the Center for Korean Research, Columbia University, and the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

(Photocopies of all the Russian documents obtained by CWIHP are available to researchers through the National Security Archive, a non-governmental documents repository, library, and research institute located on the seventh floor of The Gelman Library at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and will also be made available through Columbia University.)

The documents that follow begin with transcripts of two conversations between Joseph Stalin and Mao Zedong, which took place in Moscow on 16 December 1949 and 22 January 1950, during the Chinese leader's two-month visit to the USSR shortly after the establishment of the PRC in October 1949. Those conversations came as the two countries negotiated the terms of the incipient Sino-Soviet alliance following the Communist victory in the Chinese Civil War, and also constituted the first and only personal encoun-

ter between these two communist titans and major figures of 20th-century world history.

Next come three transcripts of conversations in Moscow between Stalin and Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai in August-September 1952, where issues on the table for discussion included the ongoing Korean War, Sino-Soviet ties, and the relationship of both to the broader Cold War. The transcripts yield insights into these issues, and also into the state of mind of Stalin himself in his final months (he died in March 1953), one of the murkiest periods in his nearly-three decade reign over the USSR.

To assess the significance of these documents, the *CWIHP Bulletin* has assembled four specialists familiar with Sino-Soviet relations, and the personalities of Stalin and Mao, from various perspectives: **Prof. Chen Jian** (Southern Illinois University at Carbondale), author of *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); **Prof. Vojtech Mastny** (Bologna Center of the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, currently at the University of Hokkaido, Japan), author of *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years, 1947-1953* (Oxford University Press, 1996), a forthcoming sequel to his *Russia's Road to the Cold War, 1941-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979); **Dr. Odd Arne Westad** (Director of Research, Norwegian Nobel Institute), author of *Cold War and Revolution: Soviet American Rivalry and the Origins of the Chinese Civil War, 1944-1946* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); and **Dr. Vladislav M. Zubok** (National Security Archive), co-author (with Constantine Pleshakov) of *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: Soviet Leaders from Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, March 1996).

Translations of the documents were performed for CWIHP by Danny Rozas, with additional assistance from Kathryn Weathersby and Chen Jian.

—Jim Hershberg, Editor, *CWIHP Bulletin*

WITH CHINESE LEADERS

I: Conversation between Stalin and Mao, Moscow, 16 December 1949

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"NOT SECRET" Stamped]

RECORD OF CONVERSATION
BETWEEN COMRADE
I.V. STALIN AND CHAIRMAN
OF THE CENTRAL PEOPLE'S
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF CHINA MAO ZEDONG
on 16 December 1949

After an exchange of greetings and a discussion of general topics, the following conversation took place.

Comrade Mao Zedong: The most important question at the present time is the question of establishing peace. China needs a period of 3-5 years of peace, which would be used to bring the economy back to pre-war levels and to stabilize the country in general. Decisions on the most important questions in China hinge on the prospects for a peaceful future. With this in mind the CC CPC [Central Committee of the Communist Party of China] entrusted me to ascertain from you, comr[ade]. Stalin, in what way and for how long will international peace be preserved.

Comrade Stalin: In China a war for peace, as it were, is taking place. The question of peace greatly preoccupies the Soviet Union as well, though we have already had peace for the past four years. With regards to China, there is no immediate threat at the present time: Japan has yet to stand up on its feet and is thus not ready for war; America, though it screams war, is actually afraid of war more than anything; Europe is afraid of war; in essence, there is no one to fight with China, not unless Kim Il Sung decides to invade China?

Peace will depend on our efforts. If we continue to be friendly, peace can last not only 5-10 years, but 20-25 years and perhaps even longer.

Comrade Mao Zedong: Since Liu Shaoyi's return to China, CC CPC has been discussing the treaty of friendship, alliance

and mutual assistance between China and the USSR.

Comrade Stalin: This question we can discuss and decide. We must ascertain whether to declare the continuation of the current 1945 treaty of alliance and friendship between the USSR and China, to announce impending changes in the future, or to make these changes right now.

As you know, this treaty was concluded between the USSR and China as a result of the Yalta Agreement, which provided for the main points of the treaty (the question of the Kurile Islands, South Sakhalin, Port Arthur, etc.). That is, the given treaty was concluded, so to speak, with the consent of America and England. Keeping in mind this circumstance, we, within our inner circle, have decided not to modify any of the points of this treaty for now, since a change in even one point could give America and England the legal grounds to raise questions about modifying also the treaty's provisions concerning the Kurile Islands, South Sakhalin, etc. This is why we searched to find a way to modify the current treaty in effect while formally maintaining its provisions, in this case by formally maintaining the Soviet Union's right to station its troops at Port Arthur while, at the request of the Chinese government, actually withdrawing the Soviet Armed forces currently stationed there. Such an operation could be carried out upon China's request.

One could do the same with KChZhD [Chinese Changchun Railroad, which traverses Manchuria], that is, to effectively modify the corresponding points of the agreement while formally maintaining its provisions, upon China's request.

If, on the other hand, the Chinese comrades are not satisfied with this strategy, they can present their own proposals.

Comrade Mao Zedong: The present situation with regard to KChZhD and Port Arthur corresponds well with Chinese interests, as the Chinese forces are inadequate to effectively fight against imperialist aggression. In addition, KChZhD is a training school for the preparation of Chinese cadres in railroad and industry.

Comrade Stalin: The withdrawal of

troops does not mean that Soviet Union refuses to assist China, if such assistance is needed. The fact is that we, as communists, are not altogether comfortable with stationing our forces on foreign soil, especially on the soil of a friendly nation. Given this situation anyone could say that if Soviet forces can be stationed on Chinese territory, then why could not the British, for example, station their forces in Hong Kong, or the Americans in Tokyo?

We would gain much in the arena of international relations if, with mutual agreement, the Soviet forces were to be withdrawn from Port Arthur. In addition, the withdrawal of Soviet forces would provide a serious boost to Chinese communists in their relations with the national bourgeoisie. Everyone would see that the communists have managed to achieve what [Nationalist Chinese leader] Jiang Jieshi [Chiang Kai-shek] could not. The Chinese communists must take the national bourgeoisie into consideration.

The treaty ensures the USSR's right to station its troops in Port Arthur. But the USSR is not obligated to exercise this right and can withdraw its troops upon Chinese request. However, if this is unsuitable, the troops in Port Arthur can remain there for 2, 5, or 10 years, whatever suits China best. Let them not misunderstand that we want to run away from China. We can stay there for 20 years even.

Comrade Mao Zedong: In discussing the treaty in China we had not taken into account the American and English positions regarding the Yalta agreement. We must act in a way that is best for the common cause. This question merits further consideration. However, it is already becoming clear that the treaty should not be modified at the present time, nor should one rush to withdraw troops from Port Arthur.

Should not Zhou Enlai visit Moscow in order to decide the treaty question?

Comrade Stalin: No, this question you must decide for yourselves. Zhou may be needed in regard to other matters.

Comrade Mao Zedong: We would like to decide on the question of Soviet credit to China, that is to draw up a credit agreement

for 300.000.000 dollars between the governments of the USSR and China.

Comrade Stalin: This can be done. If you would like to formalize this agreement now, we can.

Comrade Mao Zedong: Yes, exactly now, as this would resonate well in China. At the same time it is necessary to resolve the question of trade, especially between the USSR and Xinjiang [Sinkiang], though at present we cannot present a specific trade operations plan for this region.

Comrade Stalin: We must know right now what kind of equipment China will need, especially now, since we do not have equipment in reserve and the request for industrial goods must be submitted ahead of time.

Comrade Mao Zedong: We are having difficulties in putting together a request for equipment, as the industrial picture is as yet unclear.

Comrade Stalin: It is desirable to expedite the preparation of this request, as requests for equipment are submitted to our industry at least a year in advance.

Comrade Mao Zedong: We would very much like to receive assistance from the USSR in creating air transportation routes.

Comrade Stalin: We are ready to render such assistance. Air routes can be established over Xinjiang and the MPR [Mongolian People's Republic]. We have specialists. We will give you assistance.

Comrade Mao Zedong: We would also like to receive your assistance in creating a naval force.

Comrade Stalin: Cadres for Chinese navy could be prepared at Port Arthur. You give us people, and we will give you ships. Trained cadres of the Chinese navy could then return to China on these ships.

Comrade Mao Zedong: Guomindang [Kuomintang] supporters have built a naval and air base on the island of Formosa [Taiwan]. Our lack of naval forces and aviation makes the occupation of the island by the People's Liberation Army [PLA] more difficult. With regard to this, some of our generals have been voicing opinions that we should request assistance from the Soviet Union, which could send volunteer pilots or secret military detachments to speed up the conquest of Formosa.

Comrade Stalin: Assistance has not been ruled out, though one ought to consider the form of such assistance. What is most

important here is not to give Americans a pretext to intervene. With regard to headquarters staff and instructors we can give them to you anytime. The rest we will have to think about.

Do you have any assault landing units?

Comrade Mao Zedong: We have one former Guomindang assault landing regiment unit which came over to join our side.

Comrade Stalin: One could select a company of landing forces, train them in propaganda, send them over to Formosa, and through them organize an uprising on the isle.

Comrade Mao Zedong: Our troops have approached the borders of Burma and Indo-China. As a result, the Americans and the British are alarmed, not knowing whether we will cross the border or whether our troops will halt their movement.

Comrade Stalin: One could create a rumor that you are preparing to cross the border and in this way frighten the imperialists a bit.

Comrade Mao Zedong: Several countries, especially Britain, are actively campaigning to recognize the People's Republic of China. However, we believe that we should not rush to be recognized. We must first bring about order to the country, strengthen our position, and then we can talk to foreign imperialists.

Comrade Stalin: That is a good policy. In addition, there is no need for you to create conflicts with the British and the Americans. If, for example, there will be a need to put pressure on the British, this can be done by resorting to a conflict between the Guangdong province and Hong Kong. And to resolve this conflict, Mao Zedong could come forward as the mediator. The main point is not to rush and to avoid conflicts.

Are there foreign banks operating in Shanghai?

Comrade Mao Zedong: Yes.

Comrade Stalin: And whom are they serving?

Comrade Mao Zedong: The Chinese national bourgeoisie and foreign enterprises which so far we have not touched. As for the foreigners' spheres of influence, the British predominate in investments in the economic and commercial sectors, while the Americans lead in the sector of cultural-educational organizations.

Comrade Stalin: What is the situation regarding Japanese enterprises?

Comrade Mao Zedong: They have been nationalized.

Comrade Stalin: In whose hands is the customs agency?

Comrade Mao Zedong: In the hands of the government.

Comrade Stalin: It is important to focus attention on the customs agency as it is usually a good source of government revenue.

Comrade Mao Zedong: In the military and political sectors we have already achieved complete success; as for cultural and economic sectors, we have as yet not freed ourselves from foreign influence there.

Comrade Stalin: Do you have inspectors and agents overseeing foreign enterprises, banks, etc.?

Comrade Mao Zedong: Yes, we have. We are carrying out such work in the study and oversight of foreign enterprises (the Kailan [?] mines, electric power plants and aqueducts in Shanghai, etc.).

Comrade Stalin: One should have government inspectors who must operate legally. The foreigners should also be taxed at higher levels than the Chinese.

Who owns the enterprises mining wolfram [tungsten], molybdenum, and petroleum?

Comrade Mao Zedong: The government.

Comrade Stalin: It is important to increase the mining of minerals and especially of petroleum. You could build an oil pipeline from western Lanzhou to Chengdu [?], and then transport fuel by ship.

Comrade Mao Zedong: So far we have not decided which districts of China we should strive to develop first - the coastal areas or those inland, since we were unsure of the prospects for peace.

Comrade Stalin: Petroleum, coal, and metal are always needed, regardless of whether there be war or not.

Comrade Stalin: Can rubber-bearing trees be grown in southern China?

Comrade Mao Zedong: So far it has not been possible.

Comrade Stalin: Is there a meteorological service in China?

Comrade Mao Zedong: No, it has not been established yet.

Comrade Stalin: It should be established.

Comrade Stalin: We would like to receive from you a list of your works which

**Rivals and Allies:
Stalin, Mao, and the Chinese Civil War,
January 1949**

Introduction by Odd Arne Westad

In early 1949, as the communist-led People's Liberation Army (PLA) was winning decisive victories on the battlefield in the Chinese civil war, the Guomindang (GMD) government made a last attempt at a peace settlement through Great Power mediation. Stalin decided not to disregard completely the GMD initiative, but to offer Soviet mediation in case the Chinese government accepted those harsh preconditions spelled out in his January 10 telegram to Mao Zedong. That telegram, in turn, prompted a brief but revealing exchange between the two communist leaders over the merits of diplomatic versus military tactics

in the conflict; the exchange, recently declassified in the Russian archives, is printed below.

There are several likely reasons why Stalin did not want to turn the GMD appeal down forthright. He may genuinely have seen the response he outlined to Mao as the best tactic in order to forestall a propaganda victory for the GMD and Washington. Stalin probably also wanted to impress on Mao and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leadership his status as the master tactician of the world Communist movement—as someone who immediately understood a political situation wherever it came up with more clarity and breadth than “local” leaders. Thirdly, he may have wanted to remind the CCP leaders, in a not too subtle way, of their dependence on Soviet political and diplomatic support notwithstanding the PLA's victories.

Whatever his motives, Stalin's scheme

backfired badly when Mao refused to play along with the Soviet leader's initiative. In his telegram of January 13, Mao not only turned down Moscow's instructions on how his party should respond to the GMD, but even had the temerity to suggest to Stalin how he ought to respond on behalf of the Soviet Union. In both cases Mao emphasized that there was no need for negotiations and that Stalin's suggestions would only delay the final military victory.

For the leader of a Communist party to respond in such a way to Stalin's instructions was rather unusual in the late 1940s, and did not endear the CCP to the Soviet leadership. On the Chinese side—even after Moscow basically accepted Mao's reply—there remained a suspicion that Stalin had really wanted to stop the PLA offensives north of the Yangzi river and thereby create

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could be translated into Russian.

Comrade Mao Zedong: I am currently reviewing my works which were published in various local publishing houses and which contain a mass of errors and misrepresentations. I plan to complete this review by spring of 1950. However, I would like to receive help from Soviet comrades: first of all, to work on the texts with Russian translators and, secondly, to receive help in editing the Chinese original.

Comrade Stalin: This can be done. However, do you need your works edited?

Comrade Mao Zedong: Yes, and I ask you to select a comrade suitable for such a task, say, for example, someone from CC VKP/b/ [All-Union Communist Party of bolsheviks].

Comrade Stalin: It can be arranged, if indeed there is such a need.

Also present at the meeting: comrs. Molotov, Malenkov, Bulganin, Vyshinskii, [Soviet translator N.T.] Fedorenko and [Chinese translator] Shi Zhe /Karskii/.

Recorded by comr. Fedorenko.

[signature illegible 31/XII]

[Source: *Archive of the President, Russian Federation (APRF), fond (f.) 45, opis (op.)*

I, delo (d.) 329, listy (ll.) 9-17; translation by Danny Rozas.]

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**II. Conversation between Stalin and
Mao, Moscow, 22 January 1950**

RECORD OF CONVERSATION
BETWEEN COMRADE I.V. STALIN
AND CHAIRMAN
OF THE CENTRAL PEOPLE'S
GOVERNMENT OF THE
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
MAO ZEDONG

22 January 1950

After an exchange of greetings and a short discussion of general topics, the following conversation took place.

Stalin: There are two groups of questions which must be discussed: the first group of questions concerns the existing agreements between the USSR and China; the second group of questions concerns the current events in Manchuria, Xinjiang, etc.

I think that it would be better to begin not with the current events, but rather with a discussion of the existing agreements. We believe that these agreements need to be changed, though earlier we had thought that

they could be left intact. The existing agreements, including the treaty, should be changed because war against Japan figures at the very heart of the treaty. Since the war is over and Japan has been crushed, the situation has been altered, and now the treaty has become an anachronism.

I ask to hear your opinion regarding the treaty of friendship and alliance.

Mao Zedong: So far we have not worked out a concrete draft of the treaty, only a few outlines.

Stalin: We can exchange opinions, and then prepare an appropriate draft.

Mao Zedong: Judging from the current situation, we believe that we should strengthen our existing friendship using the help of treaties and agreements. This would resonate well both in China and in the international arena. Everything that guarantees the future prosperity of our countries must be stated in the treaty of alliance and friendship, including the necessity of avoiding a repetition of Japanese aggression. So long as we show interest in the prosperity of our countries, one cannot rule out the possibility that the imperialist countries will attempt to hinder us.

Stalin: True. Japan still has cadres remaining, and it will certainly lift itself up again, especially if Americans continue their current policy.

Mao Zedong: Two points that I made

earlier are cardinal in changing our future treaty from the existing one. Previously, the Guomindang spoke of friendship in words only. Now the situation has changed, with all the conditions for real friendship and cooperation in place.

In addition, whereas before there was talk of cooperation in the war against Japan, now attention must turn to preventing Japanese aggression. The new treaty must include the questions of political, economic, cultural and military cooperation. Of most importance will be the question of economic cooperation.

Stalin: Is it necessary to keep the provision, stated in article 3 of the current Treaty of friendship: "...This article shall remain in force up until that time when, by request of both High Participants in the Treaty, the United Nations is given the responsibility of preventing any future aggression on the part of Japan"?

Mao Zedong: I don't believe it is necessary to keep this provision.

Stalin: We also believe that it is unnecessary. What provisions do we need to specify in the new treaty?

Mao Zedong: We believe that the new treaty should include a paragraph on consultation regarding international concerns. The addition of this paragraph would strengthen our position, since among the Chinese national bourgeoisie there are objections to the policy of rapprochement with the Soviet Union on questions of international concern.

Stalin: Good. When signing a treaty of friendship and cooperation, the inclusion of such a paragraph goes without saying.

Mao Zedong: That's right.

Stalin: To whom shall we entrust the preparation of the draft? I believe that we should entrust it to [Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei] Vyshinskii and [Chinese Foreign Minister] Zhou Enlai.

Mao Zedong: Agreed.

Stalin: Let us move over to the agreement on KChZhD. What proposals do you have on this question?

Mao Zedong: Perhaps we should accept as the guiding principle the idea of making practical changes concerning the KChZhD and the Port Arthur agreements, while legally continuing them in their present state?

Stalin: That is, you agree to declare the legal continuation of the current agreement,

while, in effect, allowing appropriate changes to take place.

Mao Zedong: We must act so as to take into account the interests of both sides, China and the Soviet Union.

Stalin: True. We believe that the agreement concerning Port Arthur is not equitable.

Mao Zedong: But changing this agreement goes against the decisions of the Yalta Conference?!

Stalin: True, it does—and to hell with it! Once we have taken up the position that the treaties must be changed, we must go all the way. It is true that for us this entails certain inconveniences, and we will have to struggle against the Americans. But we are already reconciled to that.

Mao Zedong: This question worries us only because it may have undesirable consequences for the USSR.

Stalin: As you know, we made the current agreement during the war with Japan. We did not know that Jiang Jieshi would be toppled. We acted under the premise that the presence of our troops in Port Arthur would be in the interests of Soviet Union and democracy in China.

Mao Zedong: The matter is clear.

Stalin: In that case, would you deem the following scenario acceptable: declare that the agreement on Port Arthur shall remain in force until a peace treaty with Japan is signed, after which the Russian troops would be withdrawn from Port Arthur. Or perhaps one could propose another scenario: declare that the current agreement shall remain in place, while in effect withdrawing troops from Port Arthur. We will accept whichever of these scenarios is more suitable. We agree with both scenarios.

Mao Zedong: This question should be thought through. We agree with the opinion of comrade Stalin and believe that the agreement on Port Arthur must remain in force until a peace treaty is signed with Japan, after which the treaty shall become invalid and the Soviet soldiers will leave. However, we would like for Port Arthur to be a place for military collaboration, where we could train our military naval forces.

Stalin: The question of Dalny [Dairen; Dalian]. We have no intention of securing any Soviet rights in Dalny.

Mao Zedong: Will Dalny remain a free port?

Stalin: Since we are giving up our rights

there, China must decide on its own the question of Dalny: will it remain a free port or not. During his time Roosevelt insisted that Dairen remain a free port.

Mao Zedong: So the preservation of the free port would be in the interests of America and Britain?

Stalin: Of course. It's a house with open gates.

Mao Zedong: We believe that Port Arthur could serve as a base for our military collaboration, while Dalny could serve as a base for Sino-Soviet economic collaboration. In Dalny there is a whole array of enterprises that we are in no position to exploit without Soviet assistance. We should develop a closer economic collaboration there.

Stalin: In other words, the agreement on Port Arthur will remain in force until a peace treaty is signed with Japan. After the signing of the peace treaty the existing agreement shall become invalid and the Russians shall withdraw their troops. Did I sum up your thoughts correctly?

Mao Zedong: Yes, basically so, and it is exactly this which we would like to set forth in the new treaty.

Stalin: Let us continue the discussion of the KChZhD question. Tell us, as an honest communist, what doubts do you have here?

Mao Zedong: The principal point is that the new treaty should note that joint exploitation and administration will continue in the future. However, in the case of administration, China should take the lead role here. Furthermore, it is necessary to examine the question of shortening the duration of the agreement and to determine the amount of investment by each side.

Molotov: The conditions governing the cooperation and joint administration of an enterprise by two interested countries usually provide for equal participation by both sides, as well as for alternation in the appointment of replacements for management positions. In the old agreement the administration of the railroad belonged to the Soviets; however, in the future we think it necessary to alternate in the creation of management functions. Let's say that such an alternation could take place every two-three years.

Zhou Enlai: Our comrades believe that the existing management of KChZhD and the office of the director ought to be abolished and a railroad administration commission be set up in their place; and that the

offices of the commission chairman and of the director should be replaced by Chinese cadres. However, given comrade Molotov's proposals, this question requires more thought.

Stalin: If we are talking about joint administration, then it is important that the replacements for the managing position be alternated. That would be more logical. As for the duration of the agreement, we would not be against shortening it.

Zhou Enlai: Should we not change the ratio of capital investment by each side, by increasing the level of Chinese investment to 51%, instead of the current requirement for parity?

Molotov: This would go against the existing provision for parity.

Stalin: We do indeed have agreements with the Czechs and the Bulgarians which provide for parity and equal-footing for both sides. Since we already have joint administration, then we might as well have equal participation.

Mao Zedong: The question needs to be further examined, keeping in mind the interests of both sides.

Stalin: Let us discuss the credit agreement. We need to officially formalize that which has already been agreed to earlier. Do you have any observations to make?

Mao Zedong: Is the shipment of military arms considered a part of the monetary loan?

Stalin: This you can decide yourself: we can bill that towards the loan, or we can formalize it through trade agreements.

Mao Zedong: If the military shipments are billed towards the loan, then we will have little means left for industry. It appears that part of the military shipments will have to be billed towards the loan, while the other part will have to be paid with Chinese goods. Can't the period of delivery of industrial equipment and military arms be shortened from 5 to 3-4 years?

Stalin: We must examine our options. The matter rests in the requisition list for our industry. Nevertheless, we can move the date that the credit agreement goes into effect to 1 January 1950, since the shipments should begin just about now. If the agreement specified July 1949 as the time for the commencement of the loan, the international community would not be able to understand how an agreement could have been reached between the Soviet Union and China, which

at the time did not even have its own government. It seems that you should hasten somewhat to present the requisition list for industrial equipment. It should be kept in mind that the sooner such a list is presented, the better for the matter at hand.

Mao Zedong: We believe that the conditions of the credit agreement are generally favorable to China. Under its terms we pay only one percent interest.

Stalin: Our credit agreements with people's democracies provide for two percent interest. We could, says comr. Stalin jokingly, increase this interest for you as well, if you would like. Of course, we acted under the premise that the Chinese economy was practically in ruin.

As is clear from the telegrams that we have received, the Chinese government intends to use its army in the reconstruction of its economy. That is very good. In our time we also made use of the army in our economic development and had very good results.

Mao Zedong: That's right. We are drawing on the experience of our Soviet comrades.

Stalin: You raised the question of China receiving a certain amount of grain for Xinjiang?

Mao Zedong: Wheat and textile.

Stalin: For this you need to come up with the necessary requests that include numbers.

Mao Zedong: Very well, we shall prepare these.

How shall we proceed with the trade agreement?

Stalin: What is your opinion? Up until now we have only had a trade agreement with Manchuria. We would like to know what sort of a situation we should look forward to in the future: will we be signing separate agreements with Xinjiang, Manchuria and other provinces, or a single agreement with the central government?

Mao Zedong: We would like to have a single, central agreement. But in time Xinjiang may have a separate agreement.

Stalin: Just Xinjiang; what about Manchuria?

Zhou Enlai: A separate agreement with Manchuria can be ruled out, since in the agreement with the central government China's obligations would in essence be fulfilled by shipments made from Manchuria.

Stalin: We would like the central government to sanction and take the responsibility for the agreements with Xinjiang or Manchuria.

Mao Zedong: The agreement with Xinjiang must be signed in the name of the central government.

Stalin: Right, since [a] provincial government might not take many things into account, whereas things are always clearer to the central government.

What other questions do you have?

Mao Zedong: At the present time the main question is economic cooperation - the reconstruction and development of the Manchurian economy.

Stalin: I think that we will entrust the preparation of this question to comrs. Mikoyan, Vyshinskii, Zhou Enlai, and [CCP CC member and Vice Chairman of Finance and Economics Commission] Li Fuchun.

Any other questions?

Mao Zedong: I would like to note that the air regiment that you sent to China was very helpful. They transported 10 thousand people. Let me thank you, comrade Stalin, for the help and ask you to allow it to stay a little longer, so it could help transport provisions to [CCP CC member and commander of the PLA's Second Field Army] Liu Bocheng's troops, currently preparing for an attack on Tibet.

Stalin: It's good that you are preparing to attack. The Tibetans need to be subdued. As for the air regiment, we shall talk this over with the military personnel and give you an answer.

The meeting took two hours.

Present at the meeting were comrs. Molotov, Malenkov, Mikoyan, Vyshinskii, Roshchin, Fedorenko and Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Li Fuchun, [PRC Ambassador to the USSR] Wang Jiaxiang, [CCP CC member] Chen Boda, and Shi Zhe /Karskii/.

[Source: APRF, f. 45, op. 1, d. 329, ll. 29-38; translation by Danny Rozas.]

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III. Conversation between Stalin and Zhou Enlai, 20 August 1952

[Classification level blacked out: "NOT SECRET" stamped]

RECORD OF CONVERSATION
BETWEEN COMRADE
I.V. STALIN AND ZHOU ENLAI

20 August 1952

Present:

On the Soviet side
comrs. Molotov, Vyshinskii,
Fedorenko.

On the Chinese side comrs.
[Vice Premier] Chen Yun, Li Fuchun,
[PRC Ambassador to the USSR] Zhang
Wentian, [Deputy chief of staff] Su Yu

Translated by
comrs. Fedorenko and Shi Zhe

Zhou Enlai sends comrade Stalin greetings from Mao Zedong and inquires about comrade Stalin's health.

Stalin thanks Zhou Enlai and inquires about Mao Zedong's health.

Zhou Enlai announces that Mao Zedong has been feeling well during the past two years. Speaks of the enormous amount of attention being focused in China on the upcoming [October 1952] XIX Congress of VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party of bolsheviks].

Stalin notes that there has not been a convention for a long time, that in 1939 there were only 1.5 mln. party members, while now there are about 6 mln.; even though we have been holding down the influx of new party members, the party is still growing.

He asks about the delegation's trip.

Zhou Enlai expresses thanks for the attention and answers that the trip went quite well and that the delegation travelled in full comfort. In the name of Mao Zedong, [he] thanks comrade Stalin, the party CC [Central Committee] and the Soviet government for the enormous help in both the development of the national Chinese economy and in the struggle with its enemies.

Stalin. There is no need to thank. This is our duty. Wouldn't the Chinese comrades help us if we were in the same position?

Zhou Enlai agrees that this is true, adding that though assistance should be given, gratitude, obviously, should also be expressed.

Stalin. We must also thank the Chinese people for carrying on the right struggle. China also helps us by delivering us caoutchouc [natural rubber]. Thus, we will have to thank China as well.

Zhou Enlai says that, unfortunately, China's assistance to Soviet Union is insufficient.

Stalin. You came to power too late. You were late by more than 30 years.

Zhou Enlai asks for permission to set forth the reason for the delegation's visit. Refers to the telegram from Mao Zedong which contains the Chinese government's wishes. States three main topics to be discussed. First question - the situation in Korea. Second - the internal situation within PRC over the past three years and the five year plan for economic development. Notes that a written report is under preparation. The Chinese delegation would like to deal with this question after the report has been presented. Third - the extension of the agreement on Port Arthur.

Stalin notes that the initiative to extend the joint use of the military naval base at Port Arthur must come from China. We are guests there, and guests don't ask such questions.

Zhou Enlai agrees with comrade Stalin and offers to exchange diplomatic notes. The Chinese government shall address the Soviet government with the necessary request.

The next question concerns the construction of the railway from Ulan-Bator to the Sino-Mongol border.

Stalin asks whether China is interested in such a railway.

Zhou Enlai notes that a railway to Xinjiang would be of greater importance. But that would be a complicated and difficult construction project. The Chinese government is intent on first building a railroad to Mongolia which could then connect to Soviet Union. The length of this railroad on Chinese territory would be approximately 350 km. This railroad is projected to be completed by June 1955. Such a railroad serves Chinese interests as it opens a means of direct rail communication with Soviet Union and eases the receipt of industrial equipment from the USSR to China and the export of Chinese goods to Soviet Union.

Stalin responds that a railway to Xinjiang is very important in the long term, and that we could help China build this railway. But

this is indeed a long project. If the Chinese comrades are interested in building a railway across Mongolia, we are ready to help in its construction within Mongolian territory. This would be quicker. However, we believe that one cannot lose sight of a Xinjiang railway, since this would be a very important railway which would pass through regions rich in oil. There should be oil there. Mongolia doesn't have much of it.

Zhou Enlai notes that there are large deposits of iron ore in the Pinditsuan region, and that it will become the center of the railroad and steel industries. Right now a plan for the construction of the Xinjiang railway is being drafted. In the course of the first five year plan a railway will be constructed from Lanzhou to Khami. In the second five-year plan a railroad will be built from Khami to the USSR border.

Stalin approves of this and reiterates the significance of a Xinjiang railway with respect to prospective oil mining.

Zhou Enlai affirms that there are oil deposits all along this route. Moves on to the agreement on hevea [rubber] trees.

Stalin indicates that the question has been pretty much decided.

Zhou Enlai agrees and shifts to the question of the five year plan for the PRC's economic development. Says that a written report on the subject is under preparation and that, as soon as the report is completed, he would like to visit comrade Stalin and personally go over the report with him.

Stalin agrees to this.

Zhou Enlai requests assistance for work in geological exploration.

Stalin promises such assistance.

Zhou Enlai shifts to the question of construction projects for various industrial enterprises in China. Says that there are 151 such enterprises planned to be constructed. Points out that China needs the Soviet Union's help in procuring equipment. Asks that the PRC's written request be considered and that an answer be given as to whether and in what capacity the Soviet Union would render such assistance, and that time periods be specified, and also that Soviet specialists be sent to China. Emphasizes that Soviet specialists working in China have performed a great deal of work and have been of great help to China, especially in the area of training work cadres and specialists.

Stalin. That is most important. China must have its own cadres in order to stand

strong on its own feet.

Zhou Enlai informs that they would like to receive an additional 800 specialists from Soviet Union.

Stalin says that this request will be examined and that we will try to send as many as we can.

Zhou Enlai asks also for assistance with technical documentation (blueprints, etc.).

Stalin answers that this is, indeed, necessary.

Zhou Enlai asks if it will be possible to continue to educate students in the USSR and to send interns to Soviet enterprises.

Stalin expresses agreement.

Zhou Enlai touches on the question of the military five year plan. Informs that materials are under preparation and that a written report will be presented. Also wishes to receive military equipment.

Stalin asks what Zhou Enlai has in mind: shipments of weapons or equipment for military factories.

Zhou Enlai says that he meant shipments of weapons. Noting that since agreement has already been expressed with regard to weapons for 60 divisions, he would like to discuss shipments for naval forces. Asks what sort of assistance could be received in the way of airplanes.

Stalin asks whether the Chinese government is thinking of building aero-manufacturing plants.

Zhou Enlai says that this would be very difficult to do in the course of the first five year plan, particularly with regard to jet airplanes. Notes that such construction is not planned to begin until at least 5 years from now, and motor-building - in 3 years.

Stalin points to the example of Czechoslovakia and Poland, which began with assembly plants. Says that the USSR could send China motors and other airplane parts, and China could organize the assembly of these airplanes. Cadres can be trained in this way. We went through the same process. Such a process would be more beneficial for Chinese comrades as well. First you must build 1-2 factories for motor assembly. We will send motors and other airplane parts which would then be assembled in China. That's how it was done in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. This ought to be organized. Having organized assembly plants, you could then, in another 3 years, build an airplane factory. That is the easiest and the best way.

Zhou Enlai says that they are beginning to understand this and are organizing maintenance and assembly plants. He adds that if comrade Stalin finds it necessary to hasten the process, then they will take all appropriate measures to comply.

Stalin asks whether divisions of some sort have been organized in order to receive the shipment of weapons for 60 divisions which Soviet Union sent to China.

Zhou Enlai explains that out of the 10 divisions' worth of armaments that China has received, 3 have been given over to Korea and 7 have been earmarked for Chinese detachments in Korea.

Stalin asks if he understands correctly that all of the weapons will go to the Korean front.

Zhou Enlai affirms that it will be so, assuming that the war will continue. Informs that, out of the total of 60 divisions' armaments, the Chinese government is intent on sending 3 to Korea, preparing 42 divisions [of Chinese soldiers] to serve in Korea [ellipsis in original]

Stalin asks whether the Chinese have gotten used to the new weapons.

Zhou Enlai explains that they are gradually becoming proficient with the new weapons, with 3-4 months of training.

Stalin. Under these circumstances we operate in a way so as to allow soldiers to become familiar with the weapons and the overall organization of the division. This takes time - approximately 6 months. Without it one could lose the weapons. Besides, during this time we inspect the operation of various mechanisms, and only then do we send these units to the front. Of course this preparation could be carried out behind the front, in Korea, for example. Half of the divisions receiving the new weapons should remain in China.

Zhou Enlai notes that the shipment of divisions to Korea results in losses, which must be made up.

Stalin emphasizes that it is imperative to train the divisions, so as to make them stronger.

Zhou Enlai raises the question of assistance with artillery.

Stalin asks whether China can produce ammunition.

Zhou Enlai answers that they have not yet addressed this question.

Stalin notes that, all in all, it is more difficult to transport ammunition than artil-

lery pieces.

Zhou Enlai repeats his request for assistance with artillery. Emphasizes that for every Chinese shell fired, the Americans answer with 9 shells of their own.

Stalin. That's bad. Adds that if the Americans are firing 9 shells, the Chinese should be firing 20. We smothered the Germans with artillery. We had a gun stationed every 2 meters, while the Germans had a gun every kilometer. Artillery is important stuff. The Chinese government needs to get the munitions production going. We will help you build these factories.

Zhou Enlai points out that they are reorganizing existing factories and are planning new factories.

Stalin. That is necessary. Machine tools are of utmost importance here.

Zhou Enlai says that they have machine tools, but old ones.

Stalin says that machine tools are essential in the production of ammunition for 122mm, three-inch and anti-aircraft guns. We can help in this matter. Adds that it is not necessary to build large factories. We build ammunition in different plants: one plant makes shell casings while another loads them. It's difficult to do everything in one factory.

Zhou Enlai announces that the Chinese government will act upon the advice of the Soviet government regarding its aviation industry and take all measures to further its development.

Stalin emphasizes the importance of first organizing assembly plants.

Zhou Enlai says that the Chinese government plans to build tank-producing factories: one for light tanks with an output of 1 thousand tanks per year, and another for medium tanks, to be completed in 4-5 years.

Stalin advises to start here with assembly plans as well, pointing out that during the war we converted automobile factories to produce tanks. Says that it would be good for China to have 1-2 auto assembly plants.

Zhou Enlai says that they plan to build a factory in Changchun with an output of 20 thousand cars and are organizing an assembly plant with an output of 3 thousand cars a year. Asks for assistance in the planning of yet another factory.

Stalin emphasizes that cadres must receive training in assembly and maintenance factories. This issue must be addressed.

Zhou Enlai agrees completely with this

observation and notes that the Chinese government is addressing this matter. They have maintenance factories and are currently working to organize assembly plants; these plants will open next year.

Stalin inquires whether China has worker education schools in their factories. Adds that we have such a school in every factory.

Zhou Enlai admits that this is one of the weaker spots. They are taking measures to rectify the situation. There are courses given in factories. They are trying to attract students and are selecting party members to teach.

Stalin points out that we have a special ministry, the Ministry of Labor Resources. There are vocational schools. It would be good for China to establish something of the sort. Every year these schools graduate around 1 mln. young workers.

Zhou Enlai asks, what sort of institutions does Soviet Union have to train middle management cadres[?]

Stalin explains that there are special technical schools for this purpose.

Zhou Enlai says that he would like to discuss the question of radar.

Stalin promises to assist in this matter. Radio and radar are very important.

Zhou Enlai says that they were thinking of building assembly plants for this purpose.

Stalin emphasizes that subsequently they should build radar equipment manufacturing plants.

Zhou Enlai says that so far they are not capable of producing radar equipment.

Stalin promises to help.

Zhou Enlai returns to the question of specialists. Says that the Chinese government does not intend merely to ask us for help with specialists but also plans to prepare its own specialists.

Stalin approves of this, pointing out that, in time, other countries will ask China for specialists: India, Burma, Indo-China. Adds that it would be wiser for the Chinese government to send engineers and technicians to Soviet factories, where they could hone their skills.

Zhou Enlai raises the question of defraying the costs that China bears from the trade imbalance between the two countries. Says that the Chinese government would like to ask for a new loan. However, observes Zhou Enlai, we understand that this

would be a burden for the Soviet Union.

Stalin points out that this is because we came to power earlier, that we were lucky. If the Chinese comrades had come to power before us, then we would have had to ask the same of them.

To this Zhou Enlai responds that Moscow is the center from which all nations derive inspiration for their struggle for liberation.

He goes on to give a short account of the situation in Korea. He points out that up until May 1951 the war in Korea was not static, but was a war of movement. Since May 1951, a front has been established, and the war has become static. Both sides are about equal in strength. The enemy is in no position to carry out an offensive. There is a certain equilibrium. But we are not carrying out large offensives, either. Like the enemy which has reinforced its position 15-20 km. deep, so have we created our own fortified zone, and continue to dig even now. The enemy has not been able to destroy our fortifications. The front line extends for about 200 km and is completely fortified, as are the left and right flanks.

Mao Zedong has put forth three questions. First - will we be able to repulse the enemy? We are convinced that we will. Second - will we be able to hold our present positions? This year has shown that we will be able to hold and strengthen our positions. Third - will we be able to carry out an offensive, to attack the enemy? Earlier we thought that we would hardly be able to carry out an offensive for more than 7 days. Now we are sufficiently strong to launch longer offensives and have entrenched ourselves well enough to withstand bombing raids.

Stalin asks whether they are capable of widening the scope of the offensives.

Zhou Enlai explains that they can launch offensives to capture isolated positions, but a general offensive would be difficult to carry out. Since the war acquired its static nature, the American command has been intent on drawing out the negotiations and is not interested in signing a truce.

Stalin says that apparently the Americans want to keep more Chinese POWs. That would explain their refusal to return POWs. Perhaps they turned them over to Jiang Jieshi.

Zhou Enlai affirms that there are agents of Jiang Jieshi among the POWs.

Stalin observes that Americans want to decide the POW question on their own, in

defiance of all international laws. Under international law the warring sides are obligated to return all POWs, except those convicted of crimes. What does Mao Zedong think regarding this matter: will he give in or will he hold his own?

Zhou Enlai briefly relates the differences that separate them and the [North] Korean comrades in this matter. America has agreed to return 83 thousand POWs, and [North] Korea was ready to accept the offer. However, they have not considered the crafty game that America is playing here - out of the 83 thousand, only 6400 are Chinese, and the rest Koreans. In truth, they are supposed to return another 13,600 Chinese volunteers, but the Americans don't want to do this, though they are quite willing to return 76 thousand Koreans. This clearly shows that they are out to provoke us, by trying to drive a wedge between China and [North] Korea.

Stalin asks how many Korean POWs are there.

Zhou Enlai answers - 96,600. Emphasizes that the question of the number of Chinese and Korean POWs supposed to be returned is a matter of principle. Informs that the Chinese government is firmly committed on having all 116 thous. POWs, including 20 thous. Chinese, returned. But if Americans were to agree on returning a few less, then we would not strongly object, if [they] promised that negotiations for the return of the other POWs will continue.

Stalin affirms that this is the right position.

Zhou Enlai informs that Mao Zedong, having analyzed the current situation regarding this matter, believes that one should stand firmly committed on the return of all POWs. The [North] Koreans believe that the continuation of the war is not advantageous because the daily losses are greater than the number of POWs whose return is being discussed. But ending the war would not be advantageous to the USA. Mao Zedong believes that the continuation of the war is advantageous to us, since it detracts USA from preparing for a new world war.

Stalin. Mao Zedong is right. This war is getting on America's nerves. The North Koreans have lost nothing, except for casualties that they suffered during the war. Americans understand that this war is not advantageous and they will have to end it, especially after it becomes clear that our troops will remain in China. Endurance and

patience is needed here. Of course, one needs to understand Korea - they have suffered many casualties. But they need to be explained that this is an important matter. They need patience and lots of endurance. The war in Korea has shown America's weakness. The armies of 24 countries cannot continue the war in Korea for long, since they have not achieved their goals and cannot count on success in this matter. Koreans need our help and support.

Asks about the bread situation in Korea. Says that we can help them.

Zhou Enlai says that Korea is having difficulties in this regard. The Chinese government knows that USSR has helped Korea. Says that they have also helped Korea and have told Kim Il Sung that this is not an obstacle, that they will give them foodstuffs and clothing and everything they ask for, but that they cannot give weapons.

Stalin says that we can give Korea additional weapons. We will begrudge nothing to Korea.

Zhou Enlai repeats that they cannot yield to the Americans during the negotiations.

Stalin observes that if the Americans back down a little, then you can accept, assuming that negotiations will continue on questions still unresolved.

Zhou Enlai agrees, adding that if the Americans don't want peace, then we must be prepared to continue the war, even if it were to take another year.

Stalin affirms that this is correct.

Zhou Enlai emphasizes the truth of comrade Stalin's observations, namely that this war is getting on America's nerves and that the USA is not ready for the world war. Adds that China, by playing the vanguard role in this war, is helping to stave off the war for 15-20 years, assuming that they will succeed in containing the American offensive in Korea. Then the USA will not be able to unleash a third world war at all.

Stalin says that this is true, but with one stipulation: Americans are not capable of waging a large-scale war at all, especially after the Korean war. All of their strength lies in air power and the atom bomb. Britain won't fight for America. America cannot defeat little Korea. One must be firm when dealing with America. The Chinese comrades must know that if America does not lose this war, then China will never recapture Taiwan. Americans are merchants.

Every American soldier is a speculator, occupied with buying and selling. Germans conquered France in 20 days. It's been already two years, and USA has still not subdued little Korea. What kind of strength is that? America's primary weapons, says comrade Stalin jokingly, are stockings, cigarettes, and other merchandise. They want to subjugate the world, yet they cannot subdue little Korea. No, Americans don't know how to fight. After the Korean war, in particular, they have lost the capability to wage a large-scale war. They are pinning their hopes on the atom bomb and air power. But one cannot win a war with that. One needs infantry, and they don't have much infantry; the infantry they do have is weak. They are fighting with little Korea, and already people are weeping in the USA. What will happen if they start a large-scale war? Then, perhaps, everyone will weep.

Zhou Enlai states that if America makes some sort of compromises, even if they are small, then they should accept. If America does not agree to return all POWs and proposes a smaller number, then they should accept the offer, under the condition that the question of the remaining POWs will be resolved under mediation by some neutral country, like India, or the remaining POWs transferred to this neutral country until the question is resolved.

Stalin asks how many American POWs there are.

Zhou Enlai explains that the overall number of POWs in North Korean and Chinese hands is 12,000, out of which 7,400 are South Koreans.

Stalin does not exclude such a resolution to the question, as proposed by Zhou Enlai. On his part, [he] proposes that they could announce to the Americans that if they are holding back a certain percentage of Korean and Chinese POWs, then North Korea and China will hold back the same percentage of South Korean and American POWs until a final solution to the POW question is agreed upon. This needs to be tried as a way of pressuring Americans by publicizing it in the press. If America rejects this offer, then it should be declared that they apparently want to send Chinese POWs to Jiang Jieshi. If these proposals are unsuccessful, then you can resort to mediation. The main thing here is to propose a ceasefire.

Zhou Enlai declares that, indeed, an armistice agreement also involves a cease-

fire. On the POW question [he] enumerates three positions. First - announce from the beginning that they will hold back the same percentage of South Korean and American POWs as the percentage of North Koreans and Chinese held back by America, and leave it at that. Second - resort to mediation by a neutral country. Third - sign an armistice agreement by putting off the POW question and resuming its discussion afterwards.

Then Zhou Enlai returned to the question of military assistance and put forth the Korean comrades' request for 10 anti-aircraft gun regiments. We told the Koreans that we don't have such capabilities, but that we would bring this up with the Soviet government.

Stalin. Kim Il Sung asked as for 5 regiments. We promised to send him these. Perhaps China will also give 5 regiments?

Zhou Enlai repeats that they do not have such capabilities and that this is new to them.

Stalin says that this question needs to be cleared up with Kim Il Sung.

As for Zhou Enlai's request to send 10 regiments, irrespective of those promised earlier, comrade Stalin answers that it will have to be examined.

Zhou Enlai brings up the Korean comrades' request for advice on whether they should start bombing South Korea. They are not sure whether it's the right way to go.

Stalin explains that the air force belongs to the state and that Chinese volunteers should not use state planes.

Zhou Enlai informs that the Korean comrades have asked about launching a new offensive, to which the Chinese government replied that they cannot carry out a strategic offensive.

Stalin points out that when armistice negotiations are taking place, they should not be launching either strategic or tactical offensives. They shouldn't be launching any offensives.

Zhou Enlai asks, referring to Mao Zedong's question whether Kim Il Sung and [Chinese military commander] Peng Dehuai should be invited to Moscow.

Stalin. I would happily talk to them, but they are far away. Besides, we are not very comfortable with inviting them. If they were to bring up the question, then we would happily welcome them here.

Zhou Enlai informs that Peng Dehuai would very much like to come, though he is

unsure of what Kim Il Sung thinks. Perhaps it would be good to speak to them about this.

Stalin agrees.

Zhou Enlai repeats that the Chinese government believes that it is wise to continue the negotiations in Panmunjom. But China is preparing for the possibility of another 2-3 years of war. Again asks for assistance with aviation, artillery, and ammunition, as China cannot deal with these matters on its own.

Stalin announces that everything we can give you, we will.

Asks how is the Korean morale. Is there confusion?

Zhou Enlai explains that, indeed, there has been much destruction in Korea, especially after the bombing of the electric power station on the Yalu river. This has had an impact on Korean morale and on their efforts to accelerate the struggle to achieve peace.

Stalin says that the American strategy is fright. But they have not frightened China. Could it be said that they have also failed to frighten Korea?

Zhou Enlai affirms that one could essentially say that.

Stalin. If that is true, then it's not too bad.

Zhou Enlai adds that Korea is wavering somewhat. They are in a slightly unsteady state. Among certain elements of the Korean leadership one can detect a state of panic, even.

Stalin reminds that he has been already informed of these feelings through Kim Il Sung's telegram to Mao Zedong.

Zhou Enlai confirms this.

Asks how should the Chinese delegation proceed further.

Stalin proposes to start work immediately. Informs that Soviet Union has assigned a commission under the chairmanship of comrade Molotov and consisting of comrs. Bulganin, Mikoyan, Vyshinskii and Kумыkin, and that the Chinese delegation can speak to Molotov about when to start work.

Zhou Enlai expresses thanks for the information and asks comrade Stalin to name the time when he can brief comrade Stalin on the internal situation in the PRC.

Stalin agrees to see Zhou Enlai as soon as he receives a finished version of the written report.

Transcribed by

A.Vyshinskii [signature]

N.Fedorenko [signature]

[Source: APRF, f. 45, op. 1, d. 329, ll. 54-72; translation by Danny Rozas.]

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IV: Conversation between Stalin and Zhou Enlai, 3 September 1952

RECORD OF MEETING BETWEEN COMRADES I.V. STALIN AND ZHOU ENLAI

3 September 1952

Present:

on the Soviet side
comrs. Molotov, Malenkov, Bulganin,
Beria, Mikoyan, Kaganovich,
Vyshinskii, and Kумыkin.

on the Chinese side
comrs. Chen Yun, Li Fuchun,
Zhang Wentian, and Su Yu

translated by
comrs. Fedorenko and Shi Zhe.

After an exchange of greetings the discussion began with the question of the five year plan of the People's Republic of China.

Stalin. We have familiarized ourselves with your five year plan for construction. You are setting the yearly growth at 20%. Is not the setting of yearly industrial growth at 20% strained, or does the 20% provide for some reserve margin?

Zhou Enlai draws attention to the fact that they do not yet have sufficient experience in such planning. The experiences of the past three years has shown that the PRC is underestimating its capabilities. The feasibility of the plan will depend on the efforts of the Chinese people and on the assistance that China is counting on receiving from the USSR.

Stalin. We draft the five year plan with a reserve margin, as it is impossible to take into account every instance. There are various reasons that may affect the plan in one direction or another. We always include the civil and military industries in the plan. The

PRC five year plan does not. In addition, it is necessary to have the complete picture of all expenditures provided by the plan.

We must know how much is required from us on a paragraph by paragraph basis. It is necessary to do the calculations. The given documents do not contain such data. Hence we cannot give our final answer. We need at least two months in order to do the calculations and tell you what we can provide you.

Usually it takes us at least a year to prepare our five year plan. Then we analyze the prepared draft for another 2 months, and still we manage to let mistakes go by.

We would like you to give us some two months to study your plan, so that we could answer your questions.

How do things stand in other matters? It seems that the question of Port Arthur has been examined. In that case we need to make a decision. If there are any sort of objections then they should be discussed right now.

In addition, it seems that there are also no objections to the draft communiqué on the transfer of KChZhD.

The third question concerns hevea [rubber] trees. We would like to receive from you 15 to 20 thousand tons of caoutchouc [natural rubber] each year. You, it seems, object, citing difficulties. The fact is that we have a tremendous need for caoutchouc, since automobiles and trucks, which are also being sent to you, require large amounts of rubber. We would like to receive at least 10-15 thousand tons of caoutchouc. We have not much opportunity to buy caoutchouc, since Britain keeps it to itself. We ask you to reexamine the question of purchasing for us the necessary amount of caoutchouc.

If all these questions get resolved, then the remaining can be decided with other delegation members, as it seems that Zhou Enlai is hastening to return.

Zhou Enlai says that it's difficult for him to remain here for two months, that he would like to return to China in mid-September. [Vice chairman of the Northeast (China) People's Government] Li Fuchun can remain here.

Stalin. Fine.

There still remains the question of constructing the new Ulan-Bator-Pinditsuan railroad. The Mongolian Premier, who was just here in Moscow, has given his approval.

In other words, four questions remain to be decided by Zhou Enlai: Port Arthur,

KChZhD, caoutchouc, and the construction of the new Ulan-Bator-Pinditsiuan railroad.

Zhou Enlai referring to the hevea question, says that they will take all measures in order to provide USSR with 15-20 thousand tons a year, but they are apprehensive that the blockade and other measures directed against China by its enemies may prevent it from fulfilling this commitment in full. The delegation is apprehensive that this may be seen as a breach of its commitments to the Soviet Union.

[He] repeats that they will take all measures to fulfill this commitment, but would like to reserve the right to explain the reasons and not be held in breach of its commitments, if in extraordinary cases the shipment falls short of what was promised.

Stalin says that he understands this. We can soften the wording in the agreement, by saying that China will strive in every possible way to realize the shipments of the stated amount. But if it is unable to deliver caoutchouc in the amount stipulated, then we will have to decrease the number of trucks ordered.

Asks jokingly whether President Ho Chi Minh might not be able to help in this matter.

Zhou Enlai notes that China has many options in this regard (mostly through contraband).

[He] returns to the question of the construction of the new railroad. Notes that here are no objections.

Stalin notes that they can make public announcements on Port Arthur and KChZhD, but not on hevea, and only make announcements on the Ulan-Bator-Pinditsiuan railroad once it has been completed.

Zhou Enlai expresses agreement with this and returns to the question of the five year plan. Again emphasizes that they are underestimating their capabilities. He agrees that it is difficult to perceive the five year plan as a general picture, as it does not include the military, since they are having difficulties with military planning. Overall, they are unsure whether to include the military in the general plan. As for publishing the five year plan, they were not intent on publishing the plan itself, only its general trends.

Stalin explains that our five year plans are published and that we include incognito articles dealing with military technology production, chemical and other industries.

The publication of the plans is essential, if the people are to comprehend the scope of development. There must be numbers. It is not advisable to limit oneself by publishing solely its general trends. There are people who want to know and behold the entire scope of development as specified in the five year plan. That's why it is necessary to provide for military production in this plan, though without naming military enterprises and such. It will be better thus. There must be a single, unitary plan that includes both civil and military development.

As far as the USSR is concerned, we, as the provider, must also know in what capacity and what type of assistance will be required of us. There is but one source - the USSR. But we need a reckoning for both the civil and military sectors. We must know and calculate every portion of the entire sum.

Let's say that in 1953 we provide weapons for 10-15 divisions. We need to know how much steel and other materials will be needed to fulfill this order. During that same year 1953 we must supply a certain amount of equipment for the civil sector. This must also be calculated. Then both sums, the civilian and the military, must be combined to determine whether we will be able to supply the entire amount. This is how a plan must be drafted for each and every year. Perhaps our Chinese comrades believe that all these weapons are lying around somewhere in a warehouse. No, they must be produced.

Zhou Enlai completely agrees with everything laid out by comrade Stalin, and will ascertain how the matter of the [weapons shipments for] 60 divisions will rest. If they will be billed to credit, then that will also have to be specified.

Comr. Mao Zedong had an idea - if the war in Korea were to continue for another year or two, then would it be possible to extend the duration of shipments for 20 divisions to next year?

Stalin says that right now it's difficult to say. Perhaps it will have to be shortened, perhaps not. It needs to be calculated. The calculation will tell us. Nothing here can be determined beforehand.

Zhou Enlai turns to the question of naval-military shipments. Asks whether these need to be included in the plan or not. Roughly speaking these shipments need to be delivered over the next six years. Will the

previous arrangement remain in force?

Stalin. Everything which we have agreed to - military and naval-military shipments - will remain in force. But this must be taken into account when determining the total number of shipments. We are not repealing any loans nor rescinding any agreements. In general, we find it unconscionable to run from the responsibilities that one has taken upon himself. Once an agreement has been signed, it is imperative to abide by it, and we will abide by it.

Zhou Enlai says that comr. Mao Zedong has entrusted him to present the general outline of the five year plan and to ascertain how much will have to be ordered from the Soviet Union for the civilian and military industries. They project 7,700 mln. rubles for the civilian industry, and 4,500 mln. rubles for the military. Mao Zedong asked to ascertain if this is a suitable ratio, if the military portion is not too great.

Stalin. This is a very unbalanced ratio. Even during wartime we didn't have such high military expenses.

Zhou Enlai says that the 4,500 mln. rubles earmarked for military orders are composed of the following: weapons for 60 divisions - 985 mln. rubles., military-naval shipments - 2,126 mln. rubles., aviation - 1,200 mln. rubles., and others.

Emphasizes that under normal conditions the ratio between the military and civilian sectors is not so unbalanced. The military portion is smaller.

Stalin. During wartime our military production constituted about 40-45%, but China doesn't have a real war on its hands. However, shipments for the air and naval forces are necessary. Perhaps Mao Zedong is right about the ratio of 7.7 bln. rubles. to 4.5 bln. rubles.

Zhou Enlai informs that in 1950 expenses for the military constituted 44% of the entire budget (4.2 bln. rubles.), in 1951 - 52% (8 bln. rubles.), in 1952 - 27.9% (6.6 bln. rubles.). Says that, according to the five year plan, investments in the military industry (munitions arsenals, aviation, tank production, military shipbuilding) constitute 12-13% of all industrial investments. If comrade Stalin believes that such a ratio is acceptable, then they will use that as the basis when drafting their general requisitions list.

Stalin. Good. It is acceptable.

Zhou Enlai says that at first they projected constructing 151 industrial enterprises, but now they have dropped this number to

147, excluding military arsenals (aero-manufacturing enterprises, tank enterprises, ship-building enterprises). Explains that these 147 enterprises are not military, though they serve military needs.

Stalin. We usually build few new enterprises; we try to expand existing ones. It's more economical. However, China will have to build new ones, since there aren't enough existing ones. During the war we converted aero-maintenance shops into aero-manufacturing plants, and automobile factories into tank factories. We frequently resorted to inter-enterprise cooperation, producing parts in various enterprises and then assembling them. China ought to try this method. It is simpler than building special factories.

Zhou Enlai says that during the civil war years they also made use of cooperation among enterprises in the manufacture of light weapons, but now they are embarking upon the manufacture of heavy weapons, and that requires creating a base.

Shifts to the question of how to cover the cost of the trade imbalance between the Soviet Union and China. Says that there are 3 ways to cover this cost: 1) increase Chinese exports to the USSR; 2) receive payments in foreign currency - dollars, pound sterling, Hong Kong dollars, Swiss francs; 3) credit. Asks which of the three options is most acceptable.

Stalin. Perhaps it will be necessary to make use of all three.

Zhou Enlai says that they are planning to increase exports to the USSR to 13 bln. rubles. We can supply cattle, leather, fur, wool, silk, mineral resources, and food-stuffs: beans, fats, tea.

Notes that over five years they could collect up to 200 mln. American dollars, as well as 1.6 bln. British pound sterling, Hong Kong dollars, and Swiss francs.

Stalin. American dollars are preferable. British pound sterling have limited circulation. As for Hong Kong dollars, you should consult our Ministry of Finance.

The Soviet Union needs lead, wolfram [tungsten], tin, and antimony. We would like you to increase the deliveries of these.

Notes that we would also accept lemons, oranges, and pineapples which the Soviet Union buys from other countries.

Zhou Enlai says that the loan of 4 billion rubles that they would like to receive from the USSR consists of the following:

985 mln. rbls. - weapons shipments for 60 divisions; 2,126 mln. rbls. - military-naval shipments; 100 mln. rbls. - caoutchouc; 800 mln. rbls. - industrial equipment.

Stalin. We will have to give something, though the exact amount must be calculated. We cannot give four billion.

Zhou Enlai says that this amount does not include aviation. They intend to pay cash for aviation.

Stalin. The question here is not in the monetary amount, but in whether we will be able to produce this much equipment. All that will have to be determined, which will take some two months.

Zhou Enlai shifts to the question of specialists. Says that beginning with 1953, China will need new specialists in the following fields: financial and economic matters - 190 people, military - 417, medical school instructors and others - 140. In addition, they will also need specialists for the military industry, though this matter is still being studied.

Stalin. This will have to be examined: what specialists, in which fields and with what profiles. We will send some, though it's difficult to say how many.

Have you found the Soviet specialists currently working in China useful?

Zhou Enlai responds that they are very useful.

Asks whether comrade Stalin has any remarks to make on the recently submitted report.

Stalin. The impression is a positive one. China is growing. China must become the flagship of Asia. It must in its turn supply other countries with specialists.

Zhou Enlai notes that the report contains a footnote, specifying that in the event the war ends, we would like to create an army of 3,200 thousand people, with 102 divisions.

Stalin. That's good. But that's the minimum. China must be well armed, especially with air and naval forces.

Zhou Enlai. We project on having 150 air regiments with 13,000 flight personnel.

Stalin. That's too few. You'll have to add some. You should have 200 air regiments.

Zhou Enlai. Then we will have to increase the number of flight personnel.

Stalin. That's right. You will probably have to shift to three-regiment divisions. That's more economical - less division staff.

Zhou Enlai asks whether there needs to

be a certain ratio maintained between fighter jets and reciprocating engine planes.

Stalin says that reciprocating engine fighter-planes should be gradually retired and replaced by jets. Fighter jets have a speed of 800 kilometers. Pilots should be trained on reciprocating engine planes and then transferred to jet planes. Reciprocating engine planes should be completely retired over the next two years. We will give you new fighters with speeds of 1000-1100 km/h. You must not fall behind in this matter.

Zhou Enlai raises the question of providing China with technical documentation for the manufacture of the following weapons: 122mm howitzers, 37mm guns and 67.2mm field guns.

Stalin says that the blueprints can be provided.

Zhou Enlai asks whether they should immediately begin the construction of tank factories or build automobile and tractor factories first, and then convert them to tank production.

Stalin responds that some sort of a tank manufacturing plant should be built. Such a plant could be gradually expanded. As for automobile factories, you definitely need more of them.

Zhou Enlai says that they will redraft their five year plan and will seek our advice; the redrafted materials will be submitted to comrade Molotov.

Stalin advises to fix the overall growth [rate] at 15%, and at 20% for yearly plans. Notes that that would be a plan with a reserve margin. Points out the importance of giving the workers a slogan for overfulfilling the plan. Such a plan can be overfulfilled. Says that this is exactly how we draft our plans, with a certain reserve margin, since there is a possibility of having unfavorable circumstances. You can't plan for everything.

Stalin expresses interest in the production of naval mines in the PRC.

Zhou Enlai responds that plans for a naval mine factory are being drafted.

Stalin points out the importance of defending Chinese sea ports.

Inquires about the situation in Macao.

Zhou Enlai replies that Macao continues, as before, to be in Portugal's hands.

Stalin says that this scum that has situated itself on the very entrance to China must be driven out.

Zhou Enlai says that in their relations with Southeast Asian countries they are

maintaining a strategy of exerting peaceful influence without sending armed forces. He offers the example of Burma, where PRC has been trying to influence its government through peaceful means. The same in Tibet. Asks whether this is a good strategy.

Stalin. Tibet is a part of China. There must be Chinese troops deployed in Tibet. As for Burma, you should proceed carefully.

Zhou Enlai says that the Burmese government is concealing its true position with regard to China, but is actually maintaining an anti-China policy, orienting itself with America and Britain.

Stalin. It would be good if there was a pro-China government in Burma. There are quite a few scoundrels in the Burmese government, who make themselves out to be some sort of statesmen.

Zhou Enlai explains that Chinese troops were deployed in Tibet a year ago, and are now at the Indian border. The question of whether there should be Chinese troops in Tibet is moot.

Emphasizes that maintaining communication with Tibet is difficult. In order to communicate with Lhasa one needs 4-motor transport planes, equipped with oxygen tanks and de-icing devices. Could not the Soviet Union provide such planes? 2-motor planes can go 3/5 of the way, but that's as far as they'll go.

Stalin replies that Soviet Union can assist with this.

Zhou Enlai. In that case could China request 20 4-motor planes from the USSR?

Stalin replies that first we will provide 10, and then another 10.

Points out the importance of building a road to Tibet.

Zhou Enlai says that such a road is being built, but that its construction will take up all of next year and part of 1954.

Stalin notes that without a road it's difficult to maintain the necessary order in Tibet. Tibetan Lamas are selling themselves to anyone - America, Britain, India - anyone who will pay the higher price.

Zhou Enlai says that, indeed, the Lamas are hostile. This year (February, March, April) they were planning a rebellion, but the Chinese People's Government was able to suppress the rebels.

Notes that as a result of this, the Dalai Lama's brother fled abroad.

Stalin says that a road to Tibet must be built, and that it is essential to maintain

Chinese troops there.

At the end of the discussion a meeting was arranged for 4 September, at 9 o'clock in the evening.

Recorded by A. Vyshinskii
[signature]
N. Fedorenko
[signature]

[Source: *APRF*, f. 45, op. 1, d. 329, ll. 75-87; translation by *Danny Rozas*.]

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V. Conversation between Stalin and Zhou Enlai, 19 September 1952

[Classification level blacked-out:
"NOT SECRET" stamped]

RECORD OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN COMRADE STALIN AND ZHOU ENLAI 19 September 1952

Present: comrs. Molotov, Malenkov,
Beria,
Mikoyan, Bulganin, Vyshinskii.

Li Fuchun, Zhang Wentian,
Su Yu, Shi Zhe

STALIN, opening the conversation with the Mexican proposal concerning the exchange of POWs, says that we agree with Mao Zedong, that the Mexican proposal is not acceptable, since it conforms with America's position at the negotiations in Korea. If Mexico comes forward with its proposal at the UN, the USSR delegation will reject this proposal as not conducive to the cessation of the war in Korea and will strive towards the following:

"1. Immediate cessation of military activities of the involved parties on land, sea and air.

2. Return of all POWs to their native land in accordance with international standards.

3. Withdrawal of foreign armies, including the Chinese volunteer units, from Korea in the course of 2-3 months; a peaceful settlement of the Korean issue in the spirit of Korean unification, conducted by Koreans themselves under the observation

of a committee with participation of the immediately concerned parties and other countries, including those which did not take part in the Korean war."

He adds that the question of which and how many countries should take part in this committee can be further discussed and decided.

Regarding the proposal of temporary withholding of 20% of POWs from each side, and the return of the remaining POWs, the Soviet delegation will not involve itself with this proposal, which will be left in Mao Zedong's hands.

ZHOU ENLAI asks, what is your opinion concerning the possibility of the Chinese government entering into a non-aggression pact with India and Burma [?] Mao Zedong thinks such a pact would be expedient.

STALIN answers that we support comrade Mao Zedong's opinion. Of course, there are and there will not be any obstacles here.

ZHOU ENLAI asks, is it possible to delay the introduction of the second position, to wait 2-3 weeks[?]

STALIN answers that this is Mao Zedong's business. If Mao Zedong wants, we can introduce in the Assembly the discussion of the second position concerning the percentage of withheld POWs.

ZHOU ENLAI introduces a question about the third position - the possibility of transferring POWs to neutral countries so that their subsequent fate can be decided separately. He says that this is talked about in the international community, and asks whether comrade Stalin considers it possible to support this position.

STALIN answers, that we want the return of all POWs. This also concurs with the Chinese position. If an agreement cannot be reached on this basis, we cannot deliver the POWs to the UN [because the UN is a military participant in the war; he asks, in China's opinion, which country will the captives be sent to[?]

ZHOU ENLAI answers: Mao Zedong entrusted me to say, that we had in mind India.

STALIN asks who will be responsible, in this case, for the expense of maintaining POWs. It seems, every involved party?

ZHOU ENLAI answers that if the POWs are transferred to India, then after some time they will be transferred from India to China, and then the Chinese and Korean parties will

pay for the maintenance of Chinese and Korean POWs.

STALIN says that this proposal can be acceptable, but we must keep in mind that the Americans will not want to deliver all the POWs, that they will keep some captives, with the intention to recruit them. This was the case with our POWs. Now we are capturing several of our POWs a day, who are being sent over by America. They are withholding POWs not because, as they say, the POWs don't want to return - America often refers to this - but so that they could use them for spying.

ZHOU ENLAI concedes that this is precisely so.

He introduces the following scenario: to cease fire and resolve the issue of POWs later. He reminds that comrade Stalin agreed with this, if no agreement is reached regarding the percentage [of POWs] withheld.

STALIN acknowledges that this can be considered as one of possible scenarios, but America is not likely to agree to it.

ZHOU ENLAI says that perhaps America will suggest this in the Assembly.

STALIN. This would be good.

ZHOU ENLAI says that in the last discussion comrade Stalin suggested that China take initiative in creating a continental or regional UN. He asks whether there would be any other instructions regarding this matter.

STALIN answers that he continues to hold his previous point of view. In addition he says that, besides the current UN, it is necessary to create separate organizations for Asia, Europe, etc., not in lieu of the UN, but parallel to the UN. Let America create an American organization, Europe - a European one, Asia - an Asian one, but parallel to the UN, not contrary to the UN.

ZHOU ENLAI says that China has no interest in the UN and obviously it is necessary to take initiative in creating a continental organization.

STALIN emphasizes that UN is an American organization and we should destroy it, while keeping up the appearance that we are not against the UN; we should conduct this with an appearance of respect to the UN, without saying that it should be destroyed, weakened, but in reality weaken it.

He reminds, that during the war Churchill suggested to create a continental UN, but America opposed this. We quietly

observed the debate, but then Britain rejected its position and we supported the proposal regarding the creation of the UN.

ZHOU ENLAI asks whether there will be letters concerning this matter from comrade Stalin to Mao Zedong.

STALIN explains that it will be better without a letter. He sees that Zhou Enlai is taking notes and he fully trusts him.

ZHOU ENLAI mentioned the Peace Congress in Peking, scheduled in the end of September, saying that now it will be necessary to move the Congress to the beginning of October. He adds that China is striving for the participation of Japan and India in this Congress.

STALIN asks if Pakistan will participate.

ZHOU ENLAI agrees that Pakistan should participate as well and that Pakistan representatives are invited, but the Pakistan government is not issuing them passports. As for India, a part of the Indian delegation has already arrived, and the Japanese delegation will arrive via Hong-Kong.

STALIN says further that we should aim for China to have the principal role [in the Congress], because:

1/ the initiative in assembling the Congress belongs to China;

2/ it will be better this way, because the USSR is only partly located in Asia, and China is entirely in Asia, therefore it should have the principal role.

ZHOU ENLAI asks what specific actions will be taken by our delegation.

STALIN answers: peace.

ZHOU ENLAI talks about Nehru's proposal concerning the conference of five countries - the Soviet Union, China, England, France and USA.

MOLOTOV explains that this was a proposal of the Committee of the National Congress Party.

STALIN says, that this proposal should be supported.

ZHOU ENLAI emphasizes that at such a conference India, it goes without saying, will speak [in agreement] with England, but, it would seem, that it would be advisable to utilize this proposal.

STALIN agrees with this.

ZHOU ENLAI says, that in connection with the publication of the note about Port Arthur, the position which the PRC should take with regard to Japan is completely clear. The PRC should indicate that Japan does not

wish the conclusion of a peace agreement with China and the Soviet Union.

STALIN adds—and is preparing for aggression. He underscores that our position was not directed against the Japanese people.

ZHOU ENLAI raises the question of Formosa. He says that since the Japanese government has concluded an agreement with Jiang Jieshi, it thus has confirmed that it is ignoring the interests of the Chinese people. This excludes the possibility of concluding a peace agreement. So long as a peace agreement exists with Formosa, a peace agreement between the PRC and Japan is not possible.

STALIN emphasizes that the note on Port Arthur was directed against America and not against the Japanese people. America maintains a [naval] fleet around Taiwan and exploits Taiwan. He affirms the correctness of Zhou Enlai's point of view on the impossibility of a peace agreement with Jiang Jieshi, and indicates that the fact of the signing of an agreement by Japan with Jiang Jieshi only worsens its [Japan's] position.

ZHOU ENLAI asks, what will be the further development of events with regard to Germany [?]

STALIN says that it is difficult to forecast. It seems, America will not support German unification. They plundered Germany; if the West Germany and East Germany unite, then it will not be possible to plunder Germany any longer. That is why America does not want German unification.

ZHOU ENLAI says: in his opinion, even though America is rebuilding the military forces of West Germany and Japan, hoping to use them, this weapon can turn against them.

STALIN says that it is quite possible, even though the German government will be controlled by nationalists, Hitler's followers.

ZHOU ENLAI shifts to the situation in Xinjiang. He says that the work in Xinjiang is generally going well and that agricultural reforms are being instituted there. But, there are also some leftist excesses, which manifest themselves in unlawful confiscation of domestic animals, in the domain of religion, and the reduction of interest rates and land lease. To eliminate these excesses the CC Plenum was assembled, which released [PLA commander] Wang Zhen from the office of Secretary of Xinjiang CC CPC sub-bureau,

and a group of CC members was directed to take care of the excesses. In general discontent was eliminated, and cases of defection, including those to USSR territory, have been halted.

STALIN says, that the excesses resulted from the desire to obtain land and domestic animals faster, confiscating both from the rich.

ZHOU ENLAI notes that as soon as the rumors about reforms had spread, the hostile elements began to slaughter domestic animals.

STALIN notes that similar incidents took place at a certain time in our experience as well. It is necessary to hurry up with the reform. If the agricultural reform is not instituted, such looting will continue to occur.

ZHOU ENLAI explains that the agricultural reform is being instituted in crop farming regions, and redistribution and excesses connected with it [are occurring] in the animal farming regions. Since animal herders participated in the redistribution, the Chinese government has decided to improve their condition, which should improve the general condition as well.

STALIN says: of course, it is up to you.

ZHOU ENLAI says that according to the Liu Shaoqi report, two representatives from the Indonesian communist party should arrive at the XIX [Party] Congress, and he asks whether it would be timely to discuss party issues in Moscow with them.

STALIN says that it is difficult to tell yet. It depends on whether they will address the CC. He points out, that when the representatives from the Indian communist party arrived, they asked us to help in determining the party policy, and we had to do it, even though we were busy.

ZHOU ENLAI reports that the Japanese comrades should arrive as well, and it is likely they will also want to discuss party issues.

STALIN answers that older brothers cannot refuse their younger brothers in such a matter. He says that this should be discussed with Liu Shaoqi, who has substantial experience, and clarified how the Chinese comrades perceive it.

ZHOU ENLAI points out that Liu Shaoqi intends to bring with him appropriate material, in order to discuss a number of questions.

STALIN notes that if the Chinese com-

rades want to discuss these issues, then of course we will have no contradictions, but if they do not want it, then we will not have to discuss anything.

ZHOU ENLAI answers that the Chinese comrades will definitely want to talk.

STALIN answers that, in this case, we shall find the time.

ZHOU ENLAI says that it is possible that the comrades from Vietnam will also arrive.

STALIN notes that the Vietnamese comrades are our friends and will be our welcome guests.

ZHOU ENLAI, ending the conversation, says they would like to receive instructions concerning all these issues.

STALIN asks - instructions or suggestions?

ZHOU ENLAI answers that from comrade Stalin's perspective perhaps this would be advice, but in their perception these would be instructions.

STALIN notes that we give only advice, convey our opinion, and the Chinese comrades may accept it or not; instructions, on the other hand, are mandatory.

ZHOU ENLAI repeats that from the Chinese perspective these are instructions, most valuable instructions. He notes that they do not accept these instructions blindly, but consider it necessary to understand and accept them deliberately.

STALIN emphasizes that we know China too little, and that is why we are cautious in giving instructions.

ZHOU ENLAI says that comrade Stalin certainly is well familiar with the particular issues they are addressing, and asks again whether there will be any instructions.

Comrade STALIN answers that our advice is this: we should remember, that England and America will try to place their people into the apparatus of the Chinese government. It does not matter if they are American or French. They will work to undermine, try to cause decay from within, could even commit such crimes as poisonings. That is why we must be alert. He says we should keep this in mind. Here - these are all the instructions.

ZHOU ENLAI says that these are very valuable instructions. He agrees that not only Americans, English and French can commit such treacheries, but they also push the Chinese into it.

STALIN adds - their agents from the

[Chinese] national bourgeoisie.

MOLOTOV, returning to the question of military credit, the payment for weapons for 60 Chinese divisions, asks whether he understood Zhou Enlai correctly the last time, that the cost of deliveries for 60 divisions is not related to the military credit, granted by the Soviet government to China from 1 February 1951, according to the agreement. The deliveries of weaponry for 60 Chinese infantry divisions will be paid in full amount according to the credit, granted in a special agreement between China and the Soviet Union.

ZHOU ENLAI answers that comrade Molotov understood him absolutely correctly, and again asserts, that the weapon supplies for 60 Chinese divisions have to be paid in full, according to the rates established for countries other than China, and not in half.

STALIN says that in this case we should sign a special agreement.

He mentions the gifts presented to Soviet representatives by the Chinese government, and notes that there have been very many gifts.

ZHOU ENLAI explains that they could not present gifts to comrade Stalin for the 70th anniversary [of Stalin's birth]. They attended the museum of gifts, saw the gifts sent by other countries, and they feel they must make up for what they were not able to do before.

STALIN says that we also would like to present the Chinese delegation automobiles made in USSR. He says that we have automobiles "ZIS", smaller than "ZIM", but very beautiful, and we would like to present you with these "ZIMs."

Then he mentions the question concerning Song Qingling [also Soong Chingling; widow of Chinese nationalist Sun Yat-sen and then Vice Chairperson of the Central People's Government of the PRC].

ZHOU ENLAI says that he is working on getting her closer to him, that she is gradually shifting from bourgeoisie ideology to our side, that she comes out with good articles based on our ideology. She says that Song Qingling is very proud of being the winner of the International Stalin Peace Award.

The conversation started at 10:30, ended at 12:30.

Recorded by: [signature] /A. Vyshinskii/
[signature] /N. Fedorenko/

[Source: APRF, f. 45, op. 1, d. 343, ll. 97-103; translated by Danny Rozas with Kathryn Weathersby.]

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COMMENTARIES

Comparing Russian and Chinese Sources: A New Point of Departure for Cold War History

By Chen Jian

These documents from the Russian Presidential Archives provide significant new insights into the making and development of the Sino-Soviet alliance in 1949-1950. They usefully complement the account contained in the memoirs of Shi Zhe, Mao Zedong's Russian language interpreter, who has been one of the main sources of our knowledge about the relationship between Beijing and Moscow during the early Cold War period. (See Shi Zhe, *Zai lishi juren shenbian: Shi Zhe huiyilu* [Together with Historical Giants: Shi Zhe's Memoirs] (Beijing: The Central Press of Historical Documents, 1992).) As the translator of Shi Zhe's memoirs, I am deeply impressed by the richness of the information in these documents. I am also surprised, in spite of some discrepancies, by the extent to which Russian and Chinese materials (including Shi Zhe's memoirs and other sources) are in accord. I will therefore focus my comments on comparing Chinese and Russian sources on the same events as reflected in these documents.

Let me start with the meeting between Mao and Stalin on 16 December 1949. The Russian minutes of the meeting are highly compatible with, but more detailed than, Mao Zedong's own summary of the meeting in his telegram to Liu Shaoqi on 18 December. Mao's telegram reads as follows:

(1) [I] arrived in Moscow on the 16th, and met with Stalin for two hours at 10 p.m. (Beijing time). His attitude was really sincere. The questions involved include the prospect of peace,

the treaty, loans, Taiwan, and the publication of my selected works.

(2) Stalin said that the Americans are afraid of war. The Americans ask other countries to fight the war [for them], but other countries are also afraid of fighting a war. According to him, it is unlikely that a war will break out, and we agree with his opinions.

(3) With regard to the question of the treaty, Stalin said that because of the Yalta agreement, it is improper for us to overturn the legitimacy of the old Chinese-Soviet treaty. If we are to abolish the old treaty and to sign a new treaty, the status of the Kurile Islands will be changed, and the United States will have an excuse to take away the Kurile Islands. Therefore, on the question of the Soviet Union's thirty-year lease of Lushun [Port Arthur], we should not change it in format; however, in reality, the Soviet Union will withdraw its troops from Lushun and will let Chinese troops occupy it. I expressed [the view] that too early a withdrawal [of the Soviet troops from Lushun] will create unfavorable conditions for us. He replied that the Soviet withdrawal of troops [from Lushun] does not mean that the Soviet Union will stand by with folded arms [in a crisis]; rather, it is possible to find ways through which China will not become the first to bear the brunt. His opinion is that we may sign a statement, which will solve the Lushun problem in accordance with the above-mentioned ideas, and that by doing so, China will also gain political capital [*zhengzhi ziben*]. I said that it is necessary for us to maintain the legitimacy of the Yalta agreement. However, the public opinion in China believes that as the old treaty was signed by the Guomindang, it has lost its standing with the Guomindang's downfall. He replied that the old treaty needs to be revised, and that the revision is necessarily substantial, but it will not come until two years from now.

(4) Stalin said that it is unnecessary for the Foreign Minister [Zhou Enlai] to fly here just for signing a statement. I told him that I will consider it. I hope that the commercial, loan and aviation agreements will be signed at the same time, and Premier [Zhou Enlai] should come. It is hoped that the Politburo will discuss

how to solve the treaty problem and offer its opinions.

(See Pei Jianzhang et al., *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiaoshi* [A Diplomatic History of the People's Republic of China] (Beijing: World Affairs Press, 1994), pp.17-18.)

As far as the meeting between Mao Zedong and Stalin on 22 January 1950 is concerned, the Russian minutes are also compatible with the information provided by Shi Zhe's memoirs. Shi Zhe relates that Mao Zedong and Stalin discussed the principles underlying the new Chinese-Soviet treaty at this meeting. Mao emphasized that the treaty should serve to increase the political, military, economic, cultural, and diplomatic cooperation between China and the Soviet Union, while at the same time paying special attention to the prevention of a re-emergence of Japanese militarism. On the China Eastern Railway issue, Shi Zhe recalls that Mao agreed not to change its joint administration structure, but proposed that its administrative head be Chinese and that China's investment in it should be increased from parity to fifty-one percent. However, the Soviets desired to retain a 50:50 ratio between Chinese and Soviet investments. On the issue of Port Arthur (Luda), Mao and Stalin agreed to establish a deadline for the withdrawal of Soviet troops to begin after the signing of a peace treaty with Japan. On the issue of Dairen (Dalian), Stalin claimed that the Soviets had no intention to retain rights there and that the Chinese should feel free to manage the city. Shi Zhe also mentioned that Mao and Stalin discussed issues concerning Sinkiang (Xinjiang) and Manchuria, but some "unpleasant feelings" emerged on the Chinese side because the Chinese leaders believed that these issues were their internal affairs. (Shi Zhe, *Zai lishi juren shenbian*, pp. 445-446.) One finds a similar record of the discussion of these issues in the Russian minutes.

Shi Zhe also covers in his memoirs Zhou Enlai's visit to the Soviet Union in August and September 1952, describing in detail Zhou's meetings with Stalin on 20 August and 3 September. Shi Zhe recalls that at the first meeting Zhou Enlai explained to Stalin the Chinese leadership's assessment of the international situation in general and the Korean War situation in

particular. The two leaders also discussed the agenda of Zhou's visit, which included the issues of Luda, Soviet support of China's first Five-year Plan, Soviet technological support to China in establishing rubber tree plantations in southern China, and the construction of a railway from Ji'nin, a city on the Sino-Mongolian border, to Ulan-Bator. The two leaders then had a long discussion on the Korean armistice issue. Zhou Enlai told Stalin that China would be willing to end the war on acceptable conditions but would not yield to unreasonable American terms. In Mao's view, Zhou informed Stalin, if the Communists could demonstrate a more enduring patience than the Americans, the enemy would sooner or later make additional concessions. Zhou particularly emphasized that it was Mao's belief that a firm Communist stand in the armistice negotiations might prolong the war in Korea but would not trigger a third world war. Rather, in Mao's opinion, the conflict in Korea had exposed the weakness of the United States, and delayed the coming of a new world war. Zhou also mentioned that the Chinese did have difficulties in continuing war operations under the current conditions, especially as the Americans held a 9 to 1 superiority in artillery pieces over the Communist forces. Stalin expressed his full agreement with Mao Zedong's assessment of the situation, offering to increase Soviet military equipment delivery to China so that the Chinese troops would hold a 20 to 9 superiority in artillery fire power against the Americans. Stalin also advised that the Chinese-North Korean side should take three steps in dealing with the Americans on the prisoner issue. First, if the enemy insisted on holding thirty percent of Chinese-North Korean prisoners, Beijing and Pyongyang could suggest holding a comparable proportion of the enemy's prisoners in exchange. The purpose of this suggestion was to force the Americans to change their position. Second, if the first design failed to work, the Chinese-North Korean side could propose a ceasefire to be followed by an exchange of prisoners. Third, if the second proposal was unacceptable to the Americans, the Chinese-North Korean side could make the following proposal: if some prisoners did not want to be returned, they might be temporarily maintained by a neutral third country, and then, after their intentions were ascertained, they would either be released or returned. In

order to strengthen the Chinese-North Korean position at the negotiating table, Stalin agreed to send five Soviet anti-aircraft artillery regiments to Korea. However, he warned the Chinese not to send their air force across the 38th parallel. He believed that the Americans were not in a position to continue a prolonged war in Korea. If the Chinese-North Korean side remained patient in negotiations while at the same time maintaining a powerful position on the battlefield, the Americans would sooner or later yield to one of the aforementioned three Communist designs. (Shi Zhe, *Zai lishi juren shenbian*, pp. 510-511, 520-522.)

Again, if one compares Shi Zhe's description of the meeting with the Russian minutes, they are compatible even in some small details. For example, in both records, Stalin said that the Soviets would assist the Chinese in establishing a 20 to 9 superiority in artillery pieces on the Korean battlefield.

Yet these Russian documents do raise questions about existing Chinese sources in several aspects. While these Russian documents are declassified by the Presidential Archives in their original format, existing Chinese sources are usually released on a selective basis, and published in compilations rather than made available in their original form to scholars working in archives. As a result, serious omissions exist in the Chinese sources. In the Russian minutes on the meeting between Zhou Enlai and Stalin on 20 August 1952, for example, the two leaders discussed the differences between Chinese and North Korean leaders over the Korean armistice issue. In Shi Zhe's memoirs, although he implied that problems existed between Beijing and Pyongyang, he does not explain what the problems were and why and how they emerged. Further, the accuracy of the information provided by memoirs is subject to the limits of human memory. In the case of Shi Zhe's memoirs, even with his marvelous memory of historical events (enhanced by his experience of writing "confessions" several hundred times during the Cultural Revolution and assisted by his privileged access to archival sources), ambiguities exist and mistakes occur. For example, comparing Shi Zhe's account of Mao Zedong's meeting with Stalin on 16 December 1949 with both the Russian records and Mao's own telegram summarizing the meeting, one finds it too general and ambiguous in some places.

Shi Zhe also confuses some important dates in his memoirs. For example, Liu Shaoqi, the Chinese Communist Party's second most important person, visited the Soviet Union from 28 June to 14 August 1949, but Shi Zhe mistakenly states in his memoirs that Liu's visit started on 8 July 1949. Access to original Russian documents will certainly help scholars to establish a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the historical past.

But even the original Russian documents could also contain important omissions. In describing Mao Zedong's first meeting with Stalin on 16 December 1949, for example, Shi Zhe consistently recalls that when Stalin asked Mao about the goals he hoped to achieve through the visit, Mao replied, according to Shi Zhe, that "For this trip we hope to bring about something that not only looks nice but also tastes delicious." (Shi Zhe, *Zai lishi juren shenbian*, p.436.) Indeed, this was the single most important message Mao tried to deliver to Stalin at their first meeting. The Russian minutes, however, do not include this statement. Why not? A possible answer could lie in the cultural differences between Chinese and Russian interpreters. In Shi Zhe's memoirs, he mentioned that Mao made the statement at the beginning of the meeting, and that the Soviets did not quite understand Mao's meaning. Shi Zhe recalled that Lavrenti Beria, a Soviet Politburo member, even laughed at Mao's expression. Is it possible that N.T. Fedorenko, who took the Russian minutes, missed the importance Mao attached to this statement and treated it only as a part of "greetings" or an insignificant "discussion of general topics"? (See the first paragraph of the Russian minutes.)

This discrepancy or omission reminds scholars that the post-Cold War access to previously unavailable Communist documentary sources do not offer automatic answers to all remaining scholarly questions. They provide us with new research opportunities, but they also require us to be more careful in treating our sources and more creative in establishing our perspectives. In this sense, this is a new point of departure in the study of the Cold War history.

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**From Consensus to Strains
in the Sino-Soviet Alliance—**

A Palpable Deterioration

by **Vojtech Mastny**

The two sets of documents about high-level Sino-Soviet conversations, separated in time by less than three years, illustrate the palpable deterioration of relations between the two communist powers under the strain of the Korean war. Yet the nature of the deterioration, as well as its extent—not to mention the personalities of the principles—appear quite different from these contemporary Russian records than they do from the retrospective Chinese accounts which have so far been the main source of information on the subject and which project the later Sino-Soviet rift into a period when a fundamental conflict of interest was neither present nor anticipated.

Even with the allowance made for a tendency of the Russian note taker to embellish the atmosphere prevailing at the meetings, there cannot be a doubt that Mao Zedong on his first visit to Moscow treated Stalin as the supreme authority of world communism, with a reverence that was not merely pretended but rooted in a perception of common interests, to which the Chinese leader repeatedly and cogently alluded. The same perception determined Stalin's uncharacteristically considerate, even generous, attitude toward his junior partner, so much in contrast with the condescension he usually displayed in dealing with his eastern European lieutenants. The Russian documents hardly bear out the self-serving Chinese descriptions of his stinginess and boorishness, an image that Mao himself—no doubt retrospectively embarrassed by the extent of subordination he had once been willing to accept in regard to Moscow—later tried to disseminate.

Of course not everything was sweet and smooth between the two ruthless and devious dictators; still, their ability to dispose of potentially contentious issues was remarkable. Of these, none was more important than the question of whether the treaty Moscow had concluded with China's previous government should remain in effect or be replaced by a new one. During the month that elapsed between his two meetings with Mao, Stalin reversed himself, and on both occasions Mao readily followed suit. Whereas in mid-December Stalin considered the treaty an outgrowth of the Yalta

agreement indispensable to safeguard Soviet territorial acquisitions in the Far East, by January 22 he was ready to send Yalta "to hell" and dispense with the treaty on the ostensible grounds that it had merely been a temporary expedient required by the war against Japan. He proved amenable to Mao's insistence that the new pact must be stronger, including the obligation for the two signatories to consult with each other on all important international matters.

This proposed provision is one of the few possible hints in the record at the impending communist aggression in Korea, whose preparation also provides the most compelling reason for Stalin's reversal on the Sino-Soviet treaty. During their December meeting, the two chieftains still gave no inkling of plotting the Korean adventure, despite North Korea's Kim Il Sung's persistent entreaties to obtain Moscow's support for his plan for a forcible reunification of the country. If in December they knew of the plan but did not yet consider it topical, the thrust of their January conversation suggests that by then they had begun changing their minds. Their assessment, in view of recent U.S. public statements and behavior implying a diminished likelihood of effective American opposition, offers the most plausible explanation of the change.

Besides the decision to proceed toward a tighter Sino-Soviet alliance, the subject of the January conversation most relevant to the prospective North Korean action was the presence of Soviet forces at the naval base of Port Arthur on the Chinese mainland. Unanimous in their view that the forces should remain there as a deterrent to any possible American military move against China, Stalin and Mao anticipate keeping the place under Soviet control until the conclusion of what they look forward to as a satisfactory peace settlement with Japan; in the final agreement signed three weeks later, the transfer to Chinese sovereignty was to be fixed to take place in two years' time. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the only reason why they could possibly expect to achieve a Japanese peace treaty to their liking was the crushing effect that a successful unification of Korea by the communists, presumably within that particular time span, would have on the United States.

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By the time Zhou Enlai came to Moscow in August 1952, the Korean gamble had

failed, Mao had learned the bitter lesson of Stalin's renegeing on his promise to provide Soviet air cover for the Chinese intervention force, and the botched war had reached a stalemate. Its burden was weighing ever more heavily on the Chinese and North Koreans, though not on Stalin, who could relish the sight of the United States being pinned down on the Far Eastern battlefield—unless, to be sure, Washington would decide to expand hostilities in trying to force a decision.

The kind of underlying consensus permeating Stalin's conversations with Mao is no longer evident in the record of his talks with Zhou. These are businesslike talks, where bargaining takes place, though within the limits of propriety, and conflict of interest matters, even if it is not allowed to come into the open. Considering Stalin's rapidly deteriorating physical and mental condition, he still shows an impressive command of economic and military facts; only in the later sessions does his reasoning get muddled when he tackles the larger questions of diplomacy and war. For his part, Zhou lives up to his reputation of a cool and deft negotiator, never losing sight of what he wants to accomplish, his deliberate obfuscations notwithstanding.

Zhou's dual aim was the achievement of an armistice in Korea as quickly as possible while maximizing Soviet economic and military assistance to his ravaged country. Yet he never states these goals so clearly and sometimes even seems to be contradicting them. He affirms China's refusal to entertain any concessions to the Americans. Indeed, the two conversation partners outdo each other in their professions of intransigence toward the "imperialists" although not all that they say is to be taken at face value.

Stalin lectures the Chinese visitor—as if both did not know better—about the supposed military flabbiness of the Americans and their inability to subdue even little Korea. He expresses his expectation that eventually the United States would be compelled to end the war on terms agreeable to the communists; accordingly, as a deterrent to any American attempt to expand the war, he complies with the Chinese request to keep Soviet forces in Port Arthur beyond the previously agreed time limit. It is difficult to tell whether Stalin's expectation was another example of his frequent wishful think-

ing, rooted in the ideologically motivated belief that sooner or later “objective” forces would compel the capitalist enemies to behave that way he wanted them to behave. It is also possible, and not mutually exclusive, that he was making a disingenuous argument to persuade the Chinese to go on fighting, thus perpetuating their dependence on him while keeping the United States engaged. He is certainly not helpful in advancing any practical proposals to induce an armistice, insisting instead on demands that he knew were unacceptable to the U.S. side.

Playing a weak hand as a *demandeur*, Zhou has the difficult task of convincing the Soviet ruler to provide enough material assistance for both the prosecution of the war and China’s economic development while dissuading him from blocking a compromise that alone could lead to the termination of hostilities. By dwelling on China’s determination to fight on for several more years, if necessary, rather than to make any concessions, Zhou secures Stalin’s promises of huge military and economic assistance. He makes good use of the Soviet leader’s fascination with turning China into the “arsenal of Asia” and his support for the Chinese conquest of Tibet, though he sidetracks Stalin’s unsolicited advice to expel the Portuguese “scum” from the enclave of Macau. At the same time, they both agree not to provoke the Americans by acceding to the North Korean request for the bombing of South Korea—an escalation Stalin refuses to authorize with the priceless explanation that the air force belongs to the state and could therefore not be used by the Chinese “volunteers.”

Zhou Enlai fares less well in trying to break the deadlock in the armistice negotiations caused by the disputes about the disposition of the Chinese and North Korean prisoners of war unwilling to be repatriated. While professing China’s insistence on the complete repatriation of all prisoners, he nevertheless outlines to Stalin his plan for the transfer of the unwilling ones to a neutral country, such as India; noting the inconsistency, Stalin demurs. Nor does Zhou succeed any better with his alternative proposal that the armistice be concluded first and the question of the captives be settled later. The inconclusive outcome of the discussion about this key issue was a victory for Stalin, which Zhou papers over by gratefully accepting his “instructions,” which the Soviet leader pre-

tends are merely “suggestions.”

Not even Zhou’s diplomatic skills sufficed to overcome the disparity of power between China and its Soviet protector. When later in 1952 he publicly signaled Chinese interest in the option of transferring the prisoners to India, the Soviet delegation at the United Nations preventively torpedoed the idea. The Korean War was eventually ended in July 1953 by applying Zhou Enlai’s other formula—but only after Stalin’s death in March removed the major obstacle on the road to an armistice.

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Unwrapping the Stalin-Mao Talks: Setting the Record Straight

by Odd Arne Westad

The records of the 1949/50 Stalin-Mao conversations—the only face-to-face meeting between the two dictators—have topped the secret documents wish-list of many a Cold War historian. As often happens in such cases, when the parcel is finally unwrapped the contents prove to be somewhat disappointing. Gone is the high drama of various memoirs, according to which the monologues of the two giants circled each other but never touched, each too preoccupied with his own agenda to address the concerns of the other. On the contrary, these conversations are rather businesslike, not unlike discussions recorded when the head of the new subsidiary is visiting the company president.

But the transcripts help us to set the record straight. They show the Soviet leader in the role of the cautious statesman, whose experience in international relations and the building of socialism enabled him to dispense “advice” to his Chinese friends. On foreign affairs, Stalin told the Chinese not to engage the United States or other imperialists in armed conflict, not on Taiwan nor anywhere else. The reference here goes back to Stalin’s unfortunate remarks to Chinese communist emissary Liu Shaoqi the previous summer on the Chinese taking up “the leading position” in making revolution in the East. When Mao took Stalin on his word, and in October-November 1949 had presented plans for a Chinese intervention in Indochina, he had had his fingers slapped by the *vozhd* (supreme leader). While in Mos-

cow, Mao and Zhou Enlai guarded themselves well against bringing up regional problems unless invited to do so by their hosts.

The most interesting part of the conversations concerns Sino-Soviet relations. Stalin initially turned down Mao’s wish for a new treaty between the two countries, and instead proposed limited changes to the 1945 treaty, using U.S. and British complicity at Yalta in wresting Soviet concessions from Jiang Jieshi’s [Chiang Kai-shek’s] regime as his main reason to leave the main part of that treaty intact. Only after Mao’s long and idle wait in Moscow over the New Year holidays and the Chairman’s increasingly desperate conversations thereafter with various Soviet officials—Molotov, Vyshinski, Mikoyan, and ambassador Roshchin—did Stalin relent.

The January 22 conversation, held just after Zhou Enlai had arrived in Moscow and talks on a new treaty had started, showed Stalin at his magnanimous best. “To hell with” the Yalta treaty, Stalin said. He was willing to restore to China some of the concessions Chiang had given him five years earlier, even if the imperialists undoubtedly would protest such an altruistic act on Stalin’s behalf. (It would have been interesting to know how this absurd line of argument struck the Chinese on that winter’s night 45 years ago.) We can still only guess about Stalin’s real motives. A wish to keep the advantageous provisions of the 1945 treaty? Very likely. An unwillingness to proclaim the Sino-Soviet alliance to the world (and especially to the United States)? Quite possibly, although Stalin’s fears of a confrontation with the Americans seem to have been at an ebb that winter.

The rest of the conversation really formed the start of the detailed negotiations of a new treaty which Zhou Enlai and Andrei Vyshinski continued and which ended in the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance and other agreements signed on February 14. Throughout these negotiations the Soviets held to a hard bargain, insisting on getting new advantages in return for their economic and military assistance and their relinquishing of old prerogatives. The Soviet negotiating strategy both offended and puzzled the Chinese—on the one hand they were treated like “a vassal, not an ally,” on the other hand they just could not make economic sense of many of the Soviet demands. What really hurt Mao and his col-

leagues were Soviet references to Xinjiang, Mongolia, and (to a lesser extent) Manchuria: in Mao's image six years later these areas were "turned into spheres of influence of the USSR." (See Mao's conversation with Yudin, 31 March 1956, reprinted elsewhere in this issue of the *Bulletin*.)

The centerpiece of Stalin's conversations with Zhou Enlai in Moscow in the summer of 1952 is the search for an armistice in Korea, a solution which at this stage both allies wanted, but which was held up by Stalin's ceaseless maneuvering on the issue. The Soviet leader most likely wanted the Chinese to go firmly on record in requesting a ceasefire (possibly to be arranged by Moscow) and to back away from their position from the previous summer, when Stalin had wanted an end to the war and Mao had turned him down. In his conversations with Zhou, Stalin paid lip-service to Mao's previous position, while underlining that the Chinese and the North Koreans should not undertake further offensives and could postpone the contentious POW issues until after an armistice had been signed. But neither Stalin nor Zhou would admit to the other that they were looking for a way out of the war against the United States and its allies.

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**"To hell with Yalta!"—
Stalin Opts for a New Status Quo**

by Vladislav Zubok

The two transcripts of conversations during the Stalin-Mao talks in December 1949-February 1950 provide a unique insight into Stalin's doubts and second thoughts about the creation of the Sino-Soviet alliance. Although the groundwork for holding the summit meeting had been laid during an exchange of secret high-level missions over the previous year (Anastas Mikoyan's visit to China in February 1949 and Liu Shaoqi's trip to Moscow in July-August), there were still unresolved issues and obstacles on the path to the new alliance. One issue was the matter of Soviet interests in Northeast China. Another was the invisible presence of the Americans at the Sino-Soviet negotiating table and the possible consequences of the alliance for vital Soviet broad interests, not only in the

Far East. Many other issues involving Chinese and Soviet interests were also on the table.

But the delicate and complicated question of establishing a personal relationship between Stalin and Mao also mattered greatly, and the tacit struggle between the two great revolutionary personalities is as important in understanding the talks between them in Moscow as their substance. At first, Stalin seems to have succeeded in impressing Mao with his posture as world leader and magnanimous emperor. Shi Zhe, Mao's interpreter, recalls that at the welcoming banquet Stalin seemed strongly interested in developing a new relationship with China. "The victory of the Chinese revolution will change the balance of the whole world," he quoted Stalin as saying. "More weight will be added to the side of international revolution."¹ According to the official Soviet record of the 16 December 1949 conversation, Mao asked what was the likelihood that a peaceful "breathing spell" would last for the next 3-5 years. Stalin seemed to sound even more optimistic than the previous July, when Liu Shaoqi had asked a similar question. There was no immediate threat to China, he said, because "Japan has yet to stand up on its feet and is thus not ready for war; America, though it screams war, is actually afraid of war more than anything; Europe is afraid of war; essentially, there is nobody to fight with China...." In the most significant breach with the framework of Yalta, Stalin suggested that "peace depends" on the alliance between the two communist powers. "If we continue to be friendly, peace can last not only 5-10 years, but 20-25 years and perhaps even longer."

Shi Zhe recalls that the conversation became uneasy, because Mao avoided speaking about the terms of a future Sino-Soviet treaty, waiting for Soviet initiative. Mao presented a different version to the USSR ambassador to the PRC, Pavel Yudin, six years later: "During my first meeting with Stalin I submitted a proposal to conclude a [new] state treaty, but Stalin evaded a response. Subsequently, Stalin avoided any meetings with me."² The official Soviet record of the meeting provides a much more vivid picture of this episode.³

When Mao asked about the treaty, Stalin immediately presented him with three options: to announce the preservation of the 1945 treaty, to announce "impending

changes" to the treaty, or (without announcement) to proceed with changes "right now." In other words, Stalin had flatly reneged on his commitment—relayed to Mao via Mikoyan the previous February⁴—to discard what the Chinese regarded as an "unequal" treaty. Stalin reminded Mao that the 1945 treaty "was concluded between the USSR and China as a result of the Yalta Agreement which provided for the main points of the treaty (the question of the Kurile Islands, South Sakhalin, Port Arthur, etc.). That is, the given treaty was concluded, so to speak, with the consent of America and England. Keeping in mind this circumstance, we, within our inner circle, have decided not to modify any of the points of this treaty for now, since a change in even one point could give America and England the legal grounds to put forward a proposal to raise questions about modifying also the treaty's provisions concerning the Kurile Islands, South Sakhalin, etc."

Why this sudden change of mind? One plausible explanation is that the cautious Soviet leader still wanted to know more about the American reaction to the creation of the People's Republic of China and to the Sino-Soviet talks. While the Truman Administration and the U.S. Congress coped with the "loss of China" and nervously monitored the news from Moscow, Stalin preferred to wait. However, his last argument shows that there were not only immediate concerns at play. Even in late 1949, after the Cold War had unmistakably broken out, Stalin still found it psychologically difficult to part decisively with the Yalta agreements, which had represented a cornerstone of Soviet diplomacy. He understood that the issue of new Soviet borders in the Far East and the existence of Soviet outposts in Manchuria constituted one facet of an indivisible foreign policy package, linked to the peace treaty with Japan. To destroy this package, which was the crowning achievement of Stalin as a statesman and a foundation of the USSR's international legitimacy, was not an easy thing to do. For decades after Stalin's death, Soviet leaders from Molotov and Khrushchev to Brezhnev and Gromyko considered themselves duty-bound to safeguard and confirm "the results of Yalta" which signified international recognition and acceptance of Soviet legitimacy and the boundaries of its "external empire."

The Soviet leader must have known

from previous months of contacts and correspondence that it would be hard for the Chinese, and Mao in particular, to retain the old treaty which Stalin had concluded with the Guomindang (GMD). Therefore, he tried to sweeten the bitter pill by telling Mao that it would be possible to preserve the existing treaty only “formally,” while changing it “in effect,” that is, “formally maintaining the Soviet Union’s right to station its troops in Port Arthur while, at the request of the Chinese government, actually withdrawing the Soviet Armed forces currently stationed there.” (He quickly added, however, that if the Chinese desired the Soviet troops to remain, they could do so “by request of the Chinese government” for the next 2, 5, 10, or even 20 years.) Stalin also expressed willingness to alter some points concerning the ownership and exploitation of the Chinese-Changchun railroad.

Stalin’s new position must have struck Mao like a bolt of lightning (the final proof, though, will come only in the Chinese leader’s correspondence surrounding the meeting). But Mao did not explicitly object. Instead, he humbly admitted that during the discussions in Beijing of a future Sino-Soviet treaty the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leadership had “not taken into account the American and English positions regarding the Yalta agreement. We must act in a way that is best for the common cause,” Mao said, according to the Soviet record. “This question merits further consideration. However, it is already becoming clear that the treaty should not be modified at the present time.” Mao also admitted that Soviet control over Port Arthur (Lushun) and the Chinese-Changchun railroad “corresponds to the interests of China.”

No language, however, could conceal the divergent priorities of the two leaders. When Mao indirectly asked the Soviet leader “to send volunteer pilots or secret military detachments to speed up the conquest of Formosa [Taiwan],” Stalin promised only “to consider” such assistance and advised Mao to “organize an uprising” on the GMD-controlled island as a possible alternative to a military assault. Stalin was careful not to indicate that he wished to curb the nationalist ambitions of the Chinese revolutionaries, yet in essence that was what his words implied. Again and again, Stalin repeated that the “most important” thing was to avoid giving the Americans a “pretext to inter-

vene.” At the same time, Stalin encouraged the Chinese to “frighten the imperialists a bit” by probing the positions of the British and French in Hong Kong, Burma, and Indochina, i.e. in the South and far from the Soviet security perimeter.

Eventually, in their initial conversation, both leaders decided to drop the issue of the treaty, and moved to discuss other issues. When Mao inquired whether Zhou Enlai should travel to Moscow concerning the treaty, Stalin replied benignly and cryptically that this was a question that “you should decide for yourselves. Zhou may be needed in regard to other matters.” The ambiguity of this response, perhaps aggravated by translation, may well have contributed to Mao’s impression that Stalin did not want to discuss a new treaty. The meeting ended without any specific proposals from either side, and in the coming weeks Stalin and Mao engaged in a tacit war of nerves. Some other factors intervened as well, particularly a report from Soviet advisor I.V. Kovalev (who had been a Stalin emissary to Mao) stating that Mao was neither a real “Marxist” nor strong enough to resist pressure from “the right-wing of the [Chinese] national bourgeoisie, which has pro-American inclinations.”⁵

For whatever reason, Stalin decided to let Mao cool down (and cool his heels), and to gain more time himself to gauge the international response to their meeting, and suggested resuming talks only on 2 January 1950, more than two weeks later. Before calling Mao, however, Stalin sent Molotov and Mikoyan for a reconnaissance to his Blizhnita dacha where Mao was quartered. Molotov recalled that “Stalin hadn’t received him [Mao] for some days after he arrived. Stalin told me, ‘Go and see what sort of fellow he is.’” Molotov returned and allegedly reported that it would be a good idea to receive Mao for another meeting. “He was a clever man, a peasant leader, a kind of Chinese Pugachev [a Russian peasant revolutionary]. He was far from a Marxist, of course....”⁶ The concerns about Mao’s political and ideological face played, however, a secondary role in Stalin’s change of mind—the international situation was far more important. Finally, as Molotov informed Mao on January 2, Stalin decided to jettison the old Sino-Soviet treaty and with it his commitment to the Yalta arrangements in the Far East. Mao jubilantly reported the news to

Beijing: “Comrade Stalin has agreed to Comrade Zhou Enlai’s arrival here and to the signing of a new Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, as well as agreements on credit, trade, civil aviation, and others.”⁷

In Mao’s estimate, the crucial factor was that Great Britain and India recognized the PRC in January. In fact, a more important development was the conclusion of the Truman Administration’s reassessment of its Far Eastern strategy. Washington decided to keep a hands-off policy toward Taiwan and to focus instead on the defense of its essential interests in other Pacific areas it deemed critical, particularly Japan and Southeast Asia, including Thailand, Malaya, and Indonesia. The new American policy was enshrined secretly on 30 December 1949 in a classified document, NSC-48/2, announced by Truman in a press conference on 5 January 1950, and spelled out publicly a week later by Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson in his “defense perimeter” speech at the National Press Club.⁸ One may speculate that Stalin learned about the essence of this new policy before these official pronouncements, from various leaks and intelligence sources in Washington and London. It is even possible that, as with his reversal of the initial Soviet response to the Marshall Plan in the spring of 1947,⁹ an intelligence coup might have been a pivotal factor in prompting Stalin to reassess his Far Eastern strategy.

From Stalin’s perspective, all this appeared as a new American doctrine for the Far East, a crucial change in the international situation which seemed to signify a U.S. retreat from the Asian mainland and implicit acceptance of the Sino-Soviet alliance as a new geopolitical *fait accompli*. Stalin might also have suspected that he no longer had anything to lose if he openly rejected a now-outmoded “spirit of Yalta.” On the other hand, Stalin knew from many sources (Kovalev among them) that other members of the CCP leadership, such as Zhou Enlai, had been enthusiastic about the prospect of balancing Soviet influence in China with an American presence. By sticking to the old treaty, Stalin could only play into the hands of the British and of Acheson, who eagerly sought to discover an opening through which to drive a wedge between Stalin and his most promising and significant potential ally in the Far East.

Interestingly, Stalin did not tell his subordinates about this turnabout in his attitude toward signing a new treaty. On January 6, Mao met with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Vyshinsky, in the presence of Kovalev, the Chinese ambassador in Moscow, and interpreters Nikolai Fedorenko and Shi Zhe, to discuss joint Sino-Soviet tactics at the United Nations, where the Nationalists continued to occupy China's seat on the Security Council. When Mao mentioned the necessity of a new treaty, Vyshinsky repeated the official line that any change in the 1945 treaty "could be used by the Americans and the British as a pretext for revision of those parts of the treaty, whose change would hurt the interests of the Soviet Union and China. This is undesirable and must not happen."¹⁰ Soviet actions at the United Nations, however, had already begun to reflect Stalin's new line: the alliance with communist China against the U.S.-led coalition of capitalist states.

At the second official meeting with Mao (now accompanied by Zhou Enlai, who had arrived in Moscow two days before), on 22 January 1950, Stalin sounded like a changed man. "We believe that these agreements [of 1945] need to be changed, although earlier we had thought that they could be left intact," he said. "The existing agreements, including the treaty, should be changed, because war against Japan figures at the very heart of the treaty. Since the war is over and Japan has been crushed, the situation has been altered, and now the treaty has become an anachronism." The most salient feature of the discussion was the omnipresence of the Japanese threat and a virtual absence of discussion of the United States and the new American policy; nor did anybody then raise Acheson's speech of January 12. Only later, during the discussion of the specific provisions of the new treaty, did the following exchange occur:

Mao Zedong: We must act so as to take into account the interests of both sides, China and the Soviet Union.

Stalin: True. We believe that the agreement concerning Port Arthur is not equitable.

Mao Zedong: But changing this agreement goes against the decisions of the Yalta Conference?!

Stalin: True, it does—and to hell with it! If we make a decision to revise

treaties, we must go all the way. It is true that for us this entails certain inconveniences, and we will have to struggle against the Americans. But we are already reconciled to that.

Mao Zedong: With regard to this matter, we are only concerned by the fact that it could lead to undesirable consequences for the USSR.

Stalin sought to convince Mao that the Soviet Union would risk a conflict with the United States for the sake of its new Asian ally. Yet, he wanted to extract from the Chinese a proper price for this willingness, primarily in the form of recognition of Soviet security interests in Manchuria. This time Stalin did not miscalculate. Mao now accepted Stalin's proposal, put forth at the first meeting, that the Soviet Union would retain its legal rights in Port Arthur, at least until a peace treaty with Japan was signed. The Chinese leader also agreed to keep the Dairen port closed to the Americans.

The Chinese attempted to bargain when it came to Soviet rights to control the Chinese Changchun railroad, the main strategic artery between the USSR and Liaotung (the Port Arthur peninsula). But Stalin and Molotov defended those rights tooth and nail. During the talks on the ministerial level, the Soviet side succeeded in imposing on the PRC several secret agreements. The Additional Agreement to the treaty stipulated that "on the territory of the Far Eastern region and the Central Asian republics, as well as on the territory of Manchuria and Xinjiang," both the USSR and the PRC "would not provide to foreigners the rights for concessions, and would not tolerate activities of industrial, financial, trade and other enterprises, communities and organizations, with the participation, directly or indirectly, of the [financial] capital of the third countries or the citizens of those countries."¹¹ The Chinese also signed a "Protocol on the unimpeded transportation of Soviet troops and military property on the Chinese Changchun railroad in case of the threat of war in the Far East." This secret agreement allowed the Soviets to transport troops and military equipment and supplies quickly, without paying any tariffs to the Chinese and without any Chinese customs control.¹²

The Sino-Soviet Treaty, signed on 14 February 1950, satisfied Stalin's search for the preservation of the status quo (where it

benefitted the USSR) in times of upheaval. It also made the CCP leadership feel more secure in its international isolation. At the same time, the treaty created a new revolutionary-imperial synergy in the Far East. The Chinese communists, backed by Moscow, wanted to complete the reunification of the country and to carry the banner of revolution further, to Burma and Indochina. For Stalin the alliance marked the end of the status quo strategy of Yalta and the opening of a second Cold War against the United States in the Far East. Notwithstanding the fact that in both countries hundreds of millions of people yearned for peace and reconstruction, the new alliance in reality signalled military mobilization and confrontation—as events in Korea would soon demonstrate.

1. Shi Zhe's account is quoted in Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 79-80.

2. P. Yudin, "Zapis besedy s tovarischem Mao," *Problemi Dalnego Vostoka* [Problems of the Far East] 5 (1994), 105-106.

3. This difference was previously noted in Sergei N. Goncharov, John Lewis, and Xue Litai, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 85-86, as one of the authors, Sergei Goncharov, had seen the minutes of the Stalin-Mao talks, which were then still classified, in the Foreign Ministry archives in Moscow.

4. In an undated cable sent to Stalin during the 31 January-7 February 1949 talks with Mao, apparently near the end of the discussions, Mikoyan reported that he had told the Chinese leader that the Soviet government had decided "to repeal this unequal [*nespravedlivii*] treaty and withdraw its troops from Port Arthur as soon as the peace [treaty] with Japan will be concluded. But if the Chinese communist party ... would find expedient an immediate withdrawal of [Soviet] troops [from Port Arthur], then the USSR was ready to do so. As to the accord on the Chinese-Changchun railroad, we [the Soviet] do not consider this treaty unequal, since this railroad had been built primarily with Russian means. Perhaps ... in this treaty the principle of equal rights is not fully observed, but we are ready to consider this question and decide it with the Chinese comrades in a fraternal manner." See Archive of the President, Russian Federation (APRF), f. 39, op. 1, d. 39, ll. 78-79, as quoted in Andrei Ledovskii, "Sekretnaia missiia A.I. Mikoyana v Kitai" [Secret Mission of A.I. Mikoyan to China], *Problemy Dalnego Vostoka* 3 (1995), 94-105, quotation on p. 100; see also Ledovskii, "Sekretnaia missiia A.I. Mikoyana v Kitai," *Problemy Dalnego Vostoka* 2 (1995), 97-111.

5. See Goncharov, Lewis, and Litai, *Uncertain Partners*, 91, 247-249.

6. *Molotov Remembers: Inside Kremlin Politics: Conversations with Felix Chuev*, ed. Albert Resis (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1993), 81; for the original Russian see Felix Chuev, *Sto sorok besed s Molotovim* [One hundred and forty conversations with Molotov] (Moscow: TERRA, 1991), 114.

7. See the text of Mao's cable to Beijing of 2 January 1950, as reprinted in Goncharov, Lewis, and Litai, *Uncertain Partners*, 242.

8. Goncharov, Lewis, and Litai, *Uncertain Partners*, 98, 101; Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), 336-337.

9. On the importance of espionage data in the reversal of Soviet policy toward the Marshall Plan, see Mikhail M. Narinsky, "The Soviet Union and the Marshall Plan," in Cold War International History Project Working Paper No. 9 (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1994), 45-46.

10. See record of meeting in f. 0100, op. 43, d. 8, papka 302, ll. 4-6, Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation (AVPRF), Moscow, cited in B. Kulik, "Kitaiskaiia Narodnaia Respublika v period stanovleniia (1949-1952) (Po materialam Arkhiva vneshnei politik RF)" ["The Chinese People's Republic in the founding period (Materials from the Archive of foreign policy of the Russian Federation)"], *Problemi Danego Vostoka* 6 (1994), 77.

11. AVPRF, f. 07, op. 23a, d. 235, papka 18, l. 134; also in *SSSR-KNR (1949-1983): Dokumenti i materialy* [Documents and materials on USSR-PRC relations, part one (1949-1983)] (Moscow: Historico-Documentary Department and Far Eastern Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, 1985), 31-32; see also Goncharov, Lewis, and Litai, *Uncertain Partners*, 121. *SSSR-KNR (1949-1983)*, p. 35.

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a divided China. The visit of Soviet Politburo member Anastas Mikoyan to the CCP headquarters later that winter did not do much to mitigate mutual suspicions; indeed, Mao on several occasions during the decades to come referred to this episode as an example of Soviet duplicity.

The documents were translated from Russian by Maxim Korobochkin; see also S.L. Tikhvinskii, "Iz Prezidenta RF: Perepiska I.V. Stalina s Mao Tszedunom v yanvare 1949 g.," *Novaya i noveisha istoriya* 4-5 (July-October 1994), 132-40.

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Stalin to Mao Zedong, 10 January 1949

Comrade Mao Zedong.

On January 9 we received a note from the Nanjing government, proposing that the Soviet government act as a mediator between the Nanjing government and the Chinese Communist party [CCP] in the termination of war and the conclusion of peace. A similar proposal was sent simultaneously to the governments of the USA, Britain and France. The Nanjing government has

not received any answer from these governments yet. Neither has the Soviet government given its answer. Obviously, the government's proposal had been inspired by the Americans. The aim of this proposal is to present the Nanjing government as the advocate of the termination of war and a peaceful settlement, while the Communist party of China would be presented as the advocate of the continuation of war, if it would directly reject peace negotiations with Nanjing.

We think we will give the following answer: the Soviet government was and continues to be in favour of the termination of war and the establishment of peace in China, but before agreeing to mediation it would like to know whether the other side—the Chinese Communist party—agrees to accept Soviet mediation. Therefore the USSR wishes that the other side—the Chinese Communist party—would be informed of the peace action by the Chinese government, and that the other side would be asked for its agreement to the mediation by the USSR. That is how we are planning to answer and we ask you to inform us whether you agree to this. If you do not, give your advice for a more expedient answer.

We also think that your answer, in case you will be asked for it, should be something like this:

The Chinese Communist party has always been a supporter of peace in China, because the civil war in China had not been started by it, but by the Nanjing government, which should bear all responsibility for the consequences of the war. The Chinese Communist party is in favour of talks with the Guomindang, but without the participation of those war criminals who provoked the civil war in China. The Chinese Communist party is in favour of the direct negotiations with the Guomindang, without any foreign mediators. The Chinese Communist party especially finds it impossible to accept the mediation by a foreign power which takes part in the civil war against the Chinese Popular Liberation forces with its armed forces and navy, because such a power cannot be regarded as neutral and impartial in the liquidation of the war in China.

We think that your answer should be approximately like this. If you do not agree, let us know of your opinion.

As for your visit to Moscow, we think that in the view of the abovementioned circumstances you should, unfortunately, postpone your trip again for some time, because your visit to Moscow in this situation would be used by the enemies to discredit the Chinese Communist party as a force allegedly dependent on Moscow, which, certainly, could bring no benefit to the Communist party of China or to the USSR.

We are waiting for your answer.

Filippov [Stalin]

[Source: *Archive of the President of the Russian Federation (APRF)*, f. 45, op. 1, d. 330, pp. 95-96.]

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Stalin to Mao Zedong, 11 January 1949

As you can see from what you have already received, our draft of your reply to the Guomindang proposal is aimed at the undermining of the peace negotiations. Clearly, the Guomindang would not agree to peace negotiations without foreign powers' mediation, especially that of the USA. It is also clear that the Guomindang will not agree to negotiate without the participation of Jiang Jieshi [Chiang Kai-shek] and other war criminals. We assume therefore that the Guomindang would reject peace negotiations on CCP terms. The result will be that the CCP agrees to the peace negotiations and it will be impossible to accuse it of being eager to continue the civil war. The Guomindang, however, will receive the blame for breaking the peace talks. Thus, the peace maneuver of the Guomindang and the USA will be frustrated, and you will be able to continue your victorious war of liberation.

We are waiting for your answer.

Filippov [Stalin]

[Source: *APRF*, f. 45, op. 1, d. 330, pp. 97-99.]

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Mao Zedong to Stalin, 13 January 1949

Comrade Filippov,

I received your telegram of January 10.

1. We think that the government of the USSR should give the following answer to the note by the Nanjing government proposing that the USSR accepts mediation in the termination of the civil war in China:

The government of the USSR has always wished, and still wishes, to see China as a peaceful, democratic and united country. But it is for the people of China itself to choose the way to achieve peace, unity and democracy in China. The government of the USSR, relying on the principle of noninterference in the other countries' internal affairs, cannot accept mediation between the two sides in the civil war in China.

2. We think that although the USA, England, and France, and especially the USA, are very willing to take part in mediation to terminate the war in China and thus achieve their goal—to preserve the Guomindang regime—the governments of these countries, especially the US government, have already lost their prestige among the Chinese public, and as the victory of the PLA nationwide and the downfall of the Guomindang regime is already in sight—it seems questionable whether they still wish to continue their assistance to the Nanjing government and thus further offend the PLA.

Only the USSR has a very high prestige among the Chinese people, so if the USSR in its reply to the note by the Nanjing government will take the position outlined in your telegram of January 10, it would make the USA, England and France assume that participating in mediation is an appropriate thing, and give the Guomindang a pretext for scolding us as warlike elements.

And the broad popular masses, which are displeased with the Guomindang and hope for an early victory of the PLA, would find themselves in despair.

If therefore it is possible for the USSR, in view of overall international relations, to make its reply along the lines which we are proposing, we would wish very much that you approve of our proposals. By doing so, you will help us enormously.

3. One should think thoroughly whether it is possible to let people from the Nanjing government, including war criminals, take part in peace negotiations with us. As of now we are inclined toward the following position: the unconditional surrender of the Nanjing government is necessary to give the people of China a real peace as soon as possible.

By starting the war, the Nanjing government committed a great crime—it has lost the confidence of the nation. To reach an early termination of war and a peace settlement the Nanjing government should surrender its powers to the people. It has no reason for procrastinating.

We think that if we now would start peace negotiations with people like Zhang Zhizhong or Shao Lizi and enter into a coalition government with these people, that would be the exact fulfillment of the US government's wishes.

And that would bring much dissent among the people of China, the democratic parties and popular organizations and even within the CCP, and would be very damaging for our current position of having all virtue on our side.

Starting from July 1946 we have been cautiously paying attention to the deceptive character of the negotiations which the US government and the Guomindang would inevitably start after the military defeat of the latter, and to the degree of influence which this deception has on the

Chinese people.

We are deeply concerned by the fact that this deception will have a large influence on the people and make us start another political detour, i.e. to refrain from rejecting peace negotiations with the Guomindang. We are delaying the creation of the coalition government. Our principal objective is to make the Americans and the Guomindang put all their aces on the table, while we keep our aces until the last moment.

We have recently published a list of war criminals, 43 persons, unofficially (a statement by a person of authority). The PLA has not yet issued an order to arrest these war criminals.

On January 1 Jiang Jieshi delivered his peace proposal. We gave an unofficial answer to this, too (an editorial article by a journalist). To sum up, we have left some room for a volte face, to see how the Chinese people and international opinion would react to the Guomindang's deceptive negotiations.

But now we are inclined towards rejecting the peace deception by the Guomindang with full righteousness, because now, as the balance of class forces in China has already changed irreversibly and the international opinion is also unfavourable to the Nanjing government, the PLA will be able to cross the Yangzi this summer and start the offensive towards Nanjing.

It looks like we do not have to make one more political detour. In the present situation this maneuver would be damaging rather than beneficial.

4. Thank you for asking for our opinion on such an important issue. If you do not agree with my opinion as expressed here or would introduce corrections, please let me know.

Mao Zedong

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Stalin to Mao Zedong, 14 January 1949

To Comrade Mao Zedong.

We received your long telegram on the Nanjing peace proposal.

1. Certainly it would be better if the Nanjing government's peace proposal did not exist at all, if this whole peace maneuver by the USA was nonexistent. Clearly, this maneuver is disagreeable, because it can bring some trouble to our common cause. But, unfortunately, this maneuver does exist, it is a fact and we cannot close our eyes on this fact, we have to accept it.

2. Undoubtedly, the peace proposal by Nanjing and the USA is a manifestation of a policy of deception. First, because Nanjing does not really want peace with the Communist party, as the peace with the Communist party would mean the rejection by the Guomindang of its principal policy of liquidation of the Communist

party and its troops, and that would lead to the political death of the Guomindang leaders and the total disintegration of the Guomindang army. Second, because they know that the Communist party will not make peace with the Guomindang, as it cannot abandon its principal policy of liquidation of the Guomindang and its troops.

So what does Nanjing want after all? It wants not peace with the Communist party, but an armistice, a temporary termination of hostilities to use the armistice as a respite to restore order among Guomindang troops, to fortify the south bank of the Yangzi, to ship armaments from the USA, to reinforce and then to break the truce and deliver a blow on the People's Liberation forces, blaming the Communist party for the breakdown of negotiations. Their minimal wish is to prevent the total defeat of the Guomindang forces by the Communist party.

This is the basis of the current deception policy of Nanjing and the USA.

3. How can one respond to this maneuver by Nanjing and the USA? Two replies are possible. First reply: to reject the Nanjing peace proposals openly and directly, thus declaring the necessity of the continuation of civil war. But what would that mean? That means, first, that you had put your principal ace on the table and surrendered a very important weapon—the banner of peace—into the hands of the Guomindang. It means, second, that you are helping your enemies in China and outside China to accuse the Communist party as the advocate of continuing the civil war, and to praise the Guomindang as the defender of peace. It means, third, that you are giving the USA an opportunity to brainwash public opinion in Europe and America on the lines that no peace is possible with the Communist party, because it does not want peace, and that the only way to achieve peace in China is to organize an armed intervention by foreign powers like the intervention which had taken place in Russia for four years from 1918 to 1921.

We think that a direct and overt answer is good when you are dealing with honest people, but when you have to deal with political swindlers, like the Nanjing people, a direct and overt answer can become dangerous.

But a different answer is also possible. i.e.: a) to accept the desirability of a peace settlement in China; b) to conduct negotiations without foreign mediators, as China is a sovereign country and has no need for foreign mediators; c) to conduct negotiations between the Communist party and the Guomindang as a party, not with the Nanjing government, [which is] bearing the blame for starting the civil war and thus has lost the confidence of the people; d) as soon as the parties come to an agreement on the problems of peace and of the government of China, the hostilities would be terminated.

Can the Guomindang accept these conditions? We think it cannot. But if the Guomindang

will not accept these conditions, the people will realize, that the Guomindang and not the Communist party is to blame for the continuation of civil war. The banner of peace in this case rests in the hands of the Communist party. This issue is especially important now, when a lot of people in China are tired of the civil war and are ready to support the advocates of peace.

But let us assume the impossible and imagine that the Guomindang had accepted these terms. What should the Communist Party's plans of actions be like?

First, it would be necessary to refrain from terminating the hostilities and then to create the central coalition government organs in such a way that approximately three fifths of seats in the Consultative Council and two thirds of the posts in the government would be retained by the Communists, and the other seats and posts would be distributed between other democratic parties and the Guomindang.

Second, it is necessary that the posts of the prime minister, Commander in Chief, and, if possible, that of the president, be occupied by Communists.

Third, the Consultative Council should declare this coalition government the only government of China, and any other government, pretending to be the government of China, should be declared a rebel group, subject to be disbanded.

And, finally, the coalition government should order both your troops and the Guomindang troops to swear allegiance to the coalition government and that hostilities against the troops which had given the oath would be terminated immediately, while they would be continued against the troops which had refused to give the oath.

It seems unlikely that the Guomindang would agree to these measures, but if they would not, it would be also detrimental for them, because they would be totally isolated, and these measures would be carried out without them.

4. This is our understanding of the issue and our advice to you. Maybe we were not able to present our advice clearly enough in our previous telegram.

We ask you to regard our advice as advice only, which does not impose any obligations on you and which you can accept or turn down. You can be sure that your rejection of our advice will not influence our relations and we will remain your friends as we have ever been.

5. As for our answer to the Nanjing mediation proposal, it will be in the spirit of your proposals.

6. We still insist that you postpone temporarily your visit to Moscow, as your presence in China is essential now. If you want we can immediately send an authoritative member of the Politbureau to Harbin or some other place to negotiate on issues of interest to you.

Filippov [Stalin]

[Source: APRF, f. 45, op. 1, d. 330, pp. 110-113.]

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Mao Zedong to Stalin, 14 January 1949

Comrade Filippov,

1. I was glad to receive your supplementary telegram of January 11. On the principal line (the breakdown of large scale negotiations with the Guomindang [GMD], the continuation of the revolutionary war to the end) we agree with you completely.

Today we published eight conditions under which we [would] agree to enter into peace negotiations with the Guomindang. These conditions are put forward against the five reactionary conditions which Jiang Jieshi mentioned in his peace proposal of January 1.

Several days ago already the Americans sounded out our opinion—whether we would wish to conduct peace negotiations with the Guomindang without the 43 war criminals. So this sole condition—negotiating without war criminals—is no longer sufficient to undermine the intrigue of the Guomindang peace negotiations.

2. [This point dealt with the work of the CCP radio station.]

3. Since the publication of the Guomindang's peace proposals there has been much fuss in the GMD-controlled areas and the population is en masse demanding peace from the Guomindang, reproaching the Guomindang that its peace conditions are too severe.

The agitation and propaganda organs of the Guomindang are hastily explaining why the Guomindang needs to preserve its legal status and its army. We think that this disorder in the Guomindang-controlled regions will be increasing further.

Mao Zedong

[Source: APRF, f. 45, op. 1, d. 330, pp. 104-105.]

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Stalin to Mao Zedong, 15 January 1949

To Comrade Mao Zedong.

We have just received your last short telegram, which shows that we now have unanimous opinions on the issue of the Nanjing peace proposal and that the Communist party of China has already started its "peace" campaign. Thus, the matter is now closed.

Filippov [Stalin]

[Source: APRF, f. 45, op. 1, d. 330, p. 118.]

The Official Statement on the Soviet Government's Answer to the Note by the Nanjing Government (*Izvestia*, 18 January 1949)

On January 8 the Chinese Foreign Ministry presented a memorandum to the Soviet Embassy in China, containing an appeal by the Chinese government to the Soviet government to act as a mediator in the peace negotiations between the Chinese government and the Chinese Communist party. As the Soviet Ambassador was informed, the Chinese government had sent a similar appeal to the governments of the United States of America, Great Britain and France.

On January 17 the Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR comrd. Vyshinsky A. Ya. received the Chinese Ambassador in the USSR Mr. Fu Bing Ciang and gave him the answer of the Soviet government, which points out that the Soviet government, always loyal to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, does not regard it expedient to accept the mediation mentioned in the memorandum.

The answer of the Soviet government notes that the restoration of China's integrity as a democratic peace-loving state is the affair of the Chinese people itself and that this integrity could be probably best achieved by the direct negotiations between the internal forces of China, without foreign interference.

[Source: Soviet-Chinese Relations, 1917-57. Collection of documents (*Moscow*, 1959), p. 209.]

CARTER-BREZHNEV CONFERENCE HELD ON SOVIET INTERVENTION IN AFGHANISTAN, 1979

On 17-20 September 1995, in Lysebu, Norway, the Norwegian Nobel Institute hosted an oral history conference on the 1979 Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. The gathering, which included scholars and former Soviet and American officials, was a continuation of the Carter-Brezhnev Project (see *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1994), p. 140) to explore the collapse of superpower detente in the late 1970s and its possible implications for Russian-American relations. The principal organizer of the Project is Dr. James G. Blight, Center for Foreign Policy Development, Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University. Efforts to obtain declassified documentation from U.S., Russian, and other sources has been led by the National Security Archive and CWIHP. A report on the results of the conference, including translations of newly-available East-bloc documents on Afghanistan, will appear in the next issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.