

1949

Speeches/Documents

Title: Telegram to Managers and Staff of Two Aviation Corporations

Author: Mao Zedong

Date: November 12, 1949

Source:. *The Writings of Mao Zedong, 1949-1976: September 1945 - December 1955*, Michael Y. M. Kau, John K. Leung. Pg.32

Description:

General Manager Liu Jingyi,
China National Aviation Corporation,
General Manager Chen Zhuolin,
Central Air Transport Corporation, and
all comrades of the staff and workers of the two companies:

It is an act of greatly significant patriotism that the entire staff and workers of the China National Aviation Corporation and Central Air Transport Corporation, under the leadership of the general managers of these two companies, have resolutely separated themselves from the remnants of the Kuomintang reactionaries and have thrown themselves into the arms of the people's homeland. On this occasion I extend especially to you my congratulations, our welcome, and our regards. I hope that you will unite as one and strive for the building of the people's aviation enterprises and for the protection of the land's properties that remain in Hong Kong.

Remarks

On Nov. 9, 1949, the general managers of the China National Aviation Corporation (CNAC) and the Central Air Transport Corporation (CATC) declared the separation of the two companies from the control of the KMT and "insurrected," throwing in with the new Communist government. This telegram indicates the PRC government's acceptance. Subsequently, the PRC government declared that the property of the two companies, including 71 airplanes and equipment in Hong Kong, had become the property of the Chinese people. On Nov. 24, 1949, the KMT government appealed to the Supreme Court of the Hong Kong government to freeze the two companies' assets. On Dec. 13, Premier Zhou Enlai of the PRC stated that the property of the two companies could be received only by the PRC government. Complications set in when, on Dec. 19, the Civil Air Transport Company (CAT), headed by the American general Claire Chennault, presented a case to the Hong Kong Supreme Court that the airplanes of the two companies in Hong Kong had been sold to the CAT by Yan Xishan on December 12, i.e., prior to Zhou's declaration. Litigation on the issue continued until October 1952, when finally Chennault was awarded custody and ownership of all the airplanes formerly belonging to the two companies and which had sat in Hong Kong's Kai Tak Airport for over three years.