

Record of a Conversation Between USSR Foreign Minister A.Y. Vyshinsky and Chairman of the Central People's Government of the PRC, Mao Zedong, on Soviet-Chinese Relations

January 13, 1950

After exchanging greetings and engaging in a brief conversation on protocol matters, the following discussion took place:

1. I informed Mao Zedong that, following the statement made by the Chinese People's Government regarding the illegitimate presence of a Kuomintang representative in the Security Council, we managed to ensure that during the discussion of the Chinese question in the Security Council, Jiang Tingfu would not preside. However, to achieve this, the Soviet representative had to protest against Jiang Tingfu's unlawful retention in the Security Council, leave the session, and return only after Jiang Tingfu agreed to step down from the chairmanship for the duration of the discussion on the Chinese issue.

In connection with this and in order to see our struggle through to the end, I asked Mao Zedong whether he considered it appropriate for the Central People's Government of China to appoint its own representative to the Security Council and notify the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General of the UN, thereby forcing them to bring the issue to a concrete resolution.

Mao Zedong replied that he fully agreed with this proposal but was interested in two details: first, who should be appointed as China's representative to the Security Council, and second, how this step by the People's Republic of China would be viewed from a legal standpoint.

At the same time, as if answering his own question, Mao Zedong said that the most likely candidate for this position could be the current Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Comrade Zhang Hanfu, who had studied in the United States at one time. However, Mao Zedong continued, appointing a representative to the Security Council is unlikely to resolve the issue, as without a supporting majority in the Security Council, the appointed delegate may not be legally recognized and could be forced to remain in Beijing.

I said that despite the weak legal position on this matter, the appointment of a representative to the Security Council by the Central People's Government of China would undoubtedly have great political significance. I added that some members of the Security Council are currently quite concerned about the situation, as the presence of Jiang Tingfu, this Kuomintang corpse, in the Security Council is the reason the Soviet Union refuses to participate in the Council's work, which effectively leads to the breakdown of the UN.

Mao Zedong asked what, in my opinion, was the policy of the United States and Britain on this issue: were they more interested in the existence of the UN or its collapse?

I said that the United States and Britain were, of course, interested in preserving the UN, since, as is well known, they use this organization as a cover to disguise their imperialist plans. The collapse of the UN would expose all their schemes and plans, depriving them of the means to conceal their aggressive ambitions and deceive international public opinion.

Mao Zedong reiterated that he fully agreed in principle with our proposal to appoint a representative of People's China to the Security Council but that, before making a final decision, he wanted to coordinate all aspects of this measure with Zhou Enlai, who was expected to arrive in Moscow on January 19.

When Mao Zedong asked whether such a delay would be acceptable, I replied that although the matter was urgent, if he considered it necessary to consult Zhou Enlai, it could wait.

2. Mao Zedong stated that the People's Republic of China was interested in delaying U.S. recognition of it. "We," Mao Zedong said, "need to buy time to establish the necessary order within our country." In this regard, Mao Zedong indicated that they intended to carry out two measures in China.

First, they planned to reclaim for their own needs the former barracks of foreign troops in Beijing, which had originally been obtained by foreigners under unequal treaties.

Second, they planned to confiscate the food supplies and property of the so-called Office of Economic Assistance and Cooperation in Shanghai, through which, as is well known, the Americans ...had helped Chiang Kai-shek. Carrying out these two measures would allow China to reclaim the premises of the American consulate general in Beijing and other cities along with the barracks, expel American consular representatives from there, and confiscate significant food supplies from the aforementioned office in Shanghai.

"We believe," Mao Zedong noted, "that implementing these measures will generate political enthusiasm among the Chinese people and further isolate the pro-American right-wing faction of the Chinese bourgeoisie."

I said that while achieving these goals was not out of the question, the implementation of such measures should be carefully studied. In the matter of U.S. recognition of the People's Republic of China, it is also necessary to consider the political objectives pursued by the United States, as they are linking the recognition of the PRC with their broader struggle against communism, not only in China but throughout Asia.

Mao Zedong said that he agreed with this assessment.

3. I informed Mao Zedong that, during our previous conversation, I had briefly mentioned that the Soviet government had decided to send four Soviet specialists to China to assess the emergency situation at the Jilin Hydroelectric Power Station and prepare an appropriate action plan. Since I had sent a detailed telegram to Comrades Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai through our embassy in Beijing, I wanted to add that, in addition to the four Soviet specialists already sent, another seven Soviet specialists would be dispatched in the coming days to provide consultations and oversee the repair work to address the emergency at the Jilin Hydroelectric Power Station.

Mao Zedong expressed his gratitude to the Soviet government for its assistance.

The conversation lasted one hour.

Also present at the meeting were N. Fedorenko and Shi Zhe (Karsky).*

A. Vyshinsky