

Record of conversation between A. Ya. Vyshinsky and member of the Politburo of the CPC Central Committee Liu Shaoqi on the issue of organizing the diplomatic service and the tasks of diplomacy of the new central government of China

1949, July 30

At 16:00 I received member of the Politburo of the CPC Central Committee Liu Shaoqi in connection with his request to meet for a conversation. After exchanging greetings and a short conversation on general topics, Liu asked me to shed light on 4 issues:

1. On the structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on the form and method of work, on the training, use and placement of personnel.
2. On the organizational status of plenipotentiary missions and consulates in other countries and the content of their work.
3. The main principles of struggle in the diplomatic arena and the most important experiences in this area.
4. Our proposals for the new Central Government of China in the field of diplomatic work.

Touching on the first question, I noted that the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs is structured somewhat differently than the US State Department, the British Foreign Office or the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The main feature of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs is that its structure is based on operational-political departments, which are responsible for the relevant countries. In addition, there are several functional directorates, as well as auxiliary bodies. I named the main Departments and Directorates. He also pointed out the auxiliary departments: the Administration, the Currency and Financial Administration, and the Central Accounting Office.

He said that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also has an Administration for Material Services to the Diplomatic Corps and two educational institutions: the Higher School of Management and the Institute of International Relations, which train personnel for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs system.

The work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is based on the principle of one-man management. The orders of the Minister are mandatory for all employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Board is an advisory body. The decisions of the Board are subject to approval by the Minister. Some issues of a foreign policy nature are submitted by the Minister to the Government for consideration.

Liu inquired about the system of the party organization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I noted that all members of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including the Minister and his deputies, are united in a party organization, the party committee of which is granted the rights of a district committee. All party bodies are elected.

The Party Committee is elected by the Party Conference. The Party organization does not interfere in the affairs of the MFA, it is not given control functions. It is engaged in the political and educational work of the Party organization and resolves organizational and Party issues.

The Party organization of the MFA is under the leadership of the Moscow Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and the Party part of the MFA leadership is under the leadership of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks).

To Liu's question about the number of MFA employees and what percentage of them are Party members, I answered that the MFA has about 1,500 employees, of which approximately 95% are members of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks).

Liu inquired whether there are Party organizations in our foreign institutions (embassies, missions and consulates). I answered that there are "trade unions" there. When Liu asked whether there were party organizations in the embassies and missions of the people's democracies in Moscow, I said that I had never heard of this.

Then Liu asked me to tell him about the organization of our embassies and missions. I explained this issue, focusing, at Liu's request, on the functions of the consuls.

Next, Liu inquired about the training of our diplomatic cadres, their party affiliation, and the use of old specialists in the service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other Soviet bodies. In answering this question, I emphasized that in the training and education of diplomatic cadres we rely on our party. The source of our cadres is the VDSH and IMO. The overwhelming majority of our diplomatic workers are members of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and come from the milieu of workers and working peasants. I pointed out that during the years of Soviet power we had managed to completely renew the composition of diplomatic workers both in the central apparatus of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in foreign institutions. At the same time, I noted that we had attracted old specialists, especially in the first years of Soviet power; we do not refuse to use old non-party specialists at the present time (experts on international law, consultants, lawyers, etc.). In the question of using old specialists, we proceed from the well-known statements of Lenin and Stalin about the need to boldly promote new personnel along with the use of old specialists. Our experience testifies that this course has been fully justified.

We proceeded from the fact that genuine scientists and specialists, if they are provided with conditions for creative activity, cannot remain passive observers in the process of creating a new society, especially under the condition that the Soviet power really provides all opportunities for initiative and creativity (for example: Academician Pavlov and others).

Then Liu asked what advice or wishes from our side on international relations he could convey to Mao Zedong. In connection with this, I said that one of the important international issues is a peaceful settlement for Japan. And in resolving this issue, we should strive to ensure that the preparation of this issue is carried out by the Council of Foreign Ministers, and not at a conference of 11 or 12 states, as the United States and Great Britain propose. In resolving this issue, as in resolving other international issues, it will be important to ensure that by that time the new democratic government of China is recognized by foreign states.

Further, I noted that we should closely monitor the policy of the United States, with a view to taking such measures that would promptly paralyze attempts by the American ruling circles to use the situation for their own imperialist aims. In this regard, I noted, Chinese democrats should exercise particular caution and vigilance.

I also noted that in international affairs it is necessary to maintain freedom of maneuver. Diplomacy is the sister of military strategy. One can but hope that our friends in China will successfully cope with this task as well.

The exploitation of contradictions in the camp of our enemies must be constantly in our field of vision. To understand in a timely manner and skillfully exploit the contradictions

of our enemies means to possess an important strategic reserve.

In this regard, Comrade Stalin teaches us very well, and we say that this is Stalinist diplomacy. Then Liu said that Mao Zedong expresses a great desire, in an appropriate situation, to visit the Soviet Union and personally acquaint himself with the successes of socialist construction.

For our part, Liu said, we invite you to visit China. I thanked for the invitation.

At the end of the conversation, Liu asked whether the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had the possibility of accepting a group of Chinese democrats for short-term training courses for diplomatic personnel for the future Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its overseas institutions, or, if convenient, to send Soviet specialists to China to train Chinese personnel on the spot. I replied that, as it seemed to me, in principle this was feasible. However, this issue must be agreed upon between the highest authorities. Liu said that this, of course, would be reflected in the corresponding letter addressed to Comrade Stalin.

During the conversation it became clear that the Chinese friends did not have sufficient reference literature on international relations, in particular, a diplomatic dictionary, etc. I promised to send them several copies of the already published volume 1 of the diplomatic dictionary and the 2nd volume as soon as it was published.

Present at the conversation were: member of the CPC Central Committee Wang Jiaxiang and Shi Zhe (Karsky), as well as comrades Kovalev I.V. and Fedorenko N.T.

The conversation lasted 3 hours.

A. Vyshinsky