

1949

## Meetings

**Dates of Meeting:**

19-10-1949

**Type of Meeting:**

3rd meeting of the CPGC

**Place of Meeting:**

Beijing

**Attendance:**

Soong Ching Ling, Lin Biao, Ye Jianying, Peng Dehuai, Xu Xiangqian, Rao Shushi, Luo Ronghuan, Deng Zihui, Kang Sheng, Lin Feng, Xi Zhongxun, Li Zhangda, Long Yundeng, Liu Yazi are absent

**Major Agenda Items:****Speeches/Reports:**

**Zhou Enlai** made a brief report on the diplomatic situation.

**Zhou Enlai** special attention to the selection of a large number of experienced non-party democrats in leadership positions. Leadership members, after thorough consultation, are proposed for appointment by the Central People's Government. Considering that the structure of government members should be conducive to uniting people of all classes and strata in society to work together for the construction of New China, Zhou Enlai especially emphasized the selection of a large number of experienced non-party democratic individuals for leadership positions.

**Other Decisions and/or Actions:**

Central People's Government appointed heads of departments list (draft)

Dongbiwu was appointed the Director of Political legal Committee (Zhengzhi falu weiyuanhui). Luo Ruiqing as Public Security Minister, Shi Liang as Justice Minister and Chen Guiyu as law committee member.

The Political-legal committee is responsible for providing policy directions to Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of Justice, Law Committee and Ethnic Affairs Committee.

approved the appointment of Li Weiham as the first Chairman of the Central Ethnic Affairs Commission, the appointment of Ulanhu (Mongolian), Liu Geping(Hui) and Seypidin Azizi (Uygur) as its Vice-Chairmen and the appointment of 22 other members from various ethnic groups

Bo Yibo appointed minister of MOF

**Remarks:**

Mao Zedong also attached great importance to the selection of democratic individuals for various leadership positions. On the way to Beijing, Mao Zedong told Zhou Enlai: "For the leaders of the democratic parties who have made contributions, they should be arranged for positions in the government. The first 'cabinet' of New China—the State Council—is a democratic united government, and it must appoint non-party democratic individuals to various leadership positions." However, how to arrange and allocate positions in a balanced manner is an extremely complicated matter, for which Zhou Enlai did a lot of coordination work. For example, Fu Zuoyi made great contributions to the peaceful liberation of Beijing and had done a lot of work in the construction of the Hetao irrigation project. Therefore, Zhou Enlai nominated Fu Zuoyi as Minister of Water Resources.

Zhou Enlai persuaded Huang Yanpei, who was unwilling to hold an official position, to serve as Vice Premier of the State Council concurrently as Minister of Light Industry. Huang Yanpei was the Chairman of the China Democratic Construction Association and had previously refused to serve as a high-ranking official in the old government. After New China was established, he had no intention of holding office. To persuade him, Zhou Enlai visited his home and sincerely invited him to hold a public position in the Central People's Government. Unchanged in his original intention, he said, "In 1946, I was only 68 years old and already felt old and incapable of serving as an official. Now at 72, can I still serve as an official?" Zhou Enlai patiently persuaded him: "Serving in the new government is different from serving as an official in the old society. Now it is the people's government, not just holding office, but doing things, serving the people. At the National Political Consultative Conference, the 'Common Program,' jointly drawn up by all parties nationwide, is the 'script' for serving the people. We've scripted it, so how can we not take the stage?" After two hours of earnest conversation, Huang Yanpei was finally convinced and said he would consider it. The next morning, Huang Yanpei consulted his friends Jiang Wenyu and Yang Weiyu, who unanimously believed that, under the sincere invitation of Zhou Enlai representing the CPC Central Committee seeking talents, he should accept the position in the State Council.

That evening, Zhou Enlai visited Huang Yanpei again to hear his reply. He happily expressed to Zhou Enlai that he was willing to serve as Vice Premier of the State Council concurrently as Minister of Light

Industry. After taking office, his fourth son Huang Daneng asked him, "You have always refused to hold office throughout your life. How come you are taking up an official position at over 70 years old?" Huang Yanpei replied, "In the past, I refused to hold office because I didn't want to get involved in the dirt. Today, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, I am serving as an official for the people!"

Zhou Enlai proposed that Li Shucheng, a non-party democratic person, be appointed as Minister of Agriculture. Initially, some people were puzzled by this suggestion. Therefore, he introduced Li Shucheng's experience. He said: Li Shucheng was an early member of the Revolutionary Alliance, serving as Chief of Staff to Huang Xing, the Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Army, in Wuhan after the Xinhai Revolution. He then participated in the campaigns against Yuan Shikai and for constitutional protection, playing an important role in the old democratic revolution. At the same time, the First National Congress of the CPC was held at his home. In the cause of the liberation of the Chinese people, he had also done some beneficial work. Zhou Enlai believed that such an arrangement reflected considerations for various aspects of democratic individuals. Zhou Enlai also sent Bo Yibo to talk to Li Shucheng, instructing Bo Yibo, "He has such a history, we need to take care of it. Go talk to him and tell him that he will be appointed as Minister of Agriculture." Through Zhou Enlai's coordination, Li Shucheng became the first Minister of Agriculture of New China.

After Zhou Enlai patiently and meticulously conducted coordination and balancing work, the arrangement of leaders of the State Council and its subordinate agencies was ready and approved by the CPC Central Committee. On October 19, 1949, Mao Zedong chaired the third meeting of the Central People's Government Council, appointing Dong Biwu, Chen Yun, Guo Moruo, and Huang Yanpei as Vice Premiers of the State Council, and Li Weiham as Secretary-General of the State Council. Among the Vice Premiers, non-party democrats accounted for 50%; among the 21 leading members of the State Council, 11 were non-party democrats, accounting for 52.3%. Zhu De, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Peng Dehuai, and Cheng Qian were appointed as Vice Chairmen of the People's Revolutionary Military Committee, with non-party democrats accounting for 20%, and Xu Xiangqian as Chief