



July 18, 1949

Cable, Liu Shaoqi to Mao Zedong

Citation:

“Cable, Liu Shaoqi to Mao Zedong,” July 18, 1949, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Jianguo yilai Liu Shaoqi wengao (Liu Shaoqi’s Manuscripts since the Founding of the PRC), vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2005), 30-37. Translated for CWIHP by David Wolff. <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113439>

Summary:

A committee to write up a preliminary draft for a loan from the USSR to China is created. Stalin meets with a delegation of the CCP and answers several of their questions, including: the CCP's policy towards the Chinese national bourgeoisie, the matter of people's democratic dictatorship, Chinese foreign policy issues, Sino-Soviet relations, Xinjiang, Dalian, a Chinese University in Moscow, a railway from outer Mongolia to Zhangjiakou, and a naval school. Stalin and the CCP delegation also discussed the possibility of a war breaking out between the USSR and the US.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

- English Translation

A Telegram about the Meeting of Stalin with the Chinese Communist Party's Delegation (18 July 1949)

To the Center, to Chairman Mao:

I. After we had sent the Soviet Party Center's Stalin a written report and some other materials, on 11 July at 10 p.m. the Soviet Party's Politburo met in the Kremlin. We [Liu Shaoqi, Gao Gang, and Wang Jiaxiang] and Kovalev took part with Shi Zhe translating. [Others present were] Stalin, Molotov, Malenkov, [Lavrentii] Beria, Mikoyan, [Lazar] Kaganovich, [Nikolai] Bulganin, [Nikolai] Shvernik, [Vasilii] Sokolovskii, intelligence heads, and admirals. First Stalin explained that several of the Politburo members had already left for vacations and that several military men would participate, since the Chinese delegation's report had touched on military issues. Then Stalin asked us: Do you have your own naval officers? Does the airforce have its own pilots? Does each province have a provincial government? Is each provincial government and regional government like the northeast obeying the future central government? Does the future central government have the right to approve and dismiss the main personnel of provincial and regional governments? With Mao Zedong as the central government's chairman, is "chairman" the same as "president" [?] What is the nature of the relations between the chairman and the cabinet? He also asked about bureaucratic capital? Would comprador¹ capital be included in bureaucratic capital? After we had answered every question, Stalin started to explain about the Chinese national bourgeoisie and answered all the questions we had raised in our report. At the end, at our request, he explained the present international situation. The other comrades spoke very little and the mood was completely serious. After the meeting Stalin asked if we were comfortable and everyone watched four movies that had been picked by Stalin. He gave a running commentary as we watched the movies.

II. During the meeting a committee to draft a loan agreement was constituted with Mikoyan and Kovalev participating on the Soviet side and we three on the Chinese side. We decided to have Gao Gang sign the loan agreement in the name of the Northeast Government, since the Soviet side considered this an appropriate procedure. They will now send it to the Supreme Soviet for approval and we can collect the loan at an early date. Below is a summary report of Stalin's oral answers to the questions we asked in our report [to him].

a. Regarding the CCP's policy towards the Chinese national bourgeoisie

Stalin said: The point of view that considers cooperation between you and the Chinese national bourgeoisie as the way of drawing them into the government is correct. The Chinese national bourgeoisie is not the same as the East European and German bourgeoisie, which cooperated with Hitler during the war, tarnishing itself, and were forced to leave with Hitler. They settled down in their

enterprises, so in the period after the defeat of Hitler, all these countries focused on was their enterprises, and not on themselves. But the Chinese national bourgeoisie is different. They did not surrender to Japan during the war. So they didn't have to retreat with the Japanese. After the defeat of Japan, a part of this group supported Jiang Jieshi to get American recognition and support. But the Chinese-American Trade and Shipping Convention was extremely unfair, a big attack on the Chinese national bourgeoisie, which found itself dependent both in trade and in shipping. Therefore, the Chinese national bourgeoisie is against the US and Jiang Jieshi, against the relations between the US and Jiang Jieshi. That the Chinese Communist Party is using this anti-American feeling in order to establish a comparatively long-term cooperative tie with the Chinese national bourgeoisie is a correct policy. It is necessary to get the Chinese national bourgeoisie to stand in the anti-imperialist camp. You should undertake some kind of policy that is good for the national bourgeoisie, such as protective tariffs, preventing any imperialist goods from entering China, profitable for the national capitalists, while also giving infant national industry a chance to develop. This is a second advantage. After the October Revolution in Russia almost all the private capitalist enterprises were confiscated, while a [state] monopoly on foreign trade was introduced. In China, at the present time, it is very difficult to resist a trade monopoly, but we should institute a protective tariff policy.

The contradictions between the soviets and the capitalists is an objective (keguan) one, strikes can take place. For now we do not want to broaden the conflict between the soviets and the capitalists, but labor conflict is what might cause us trouble in our cooperation with the bourgeoisie. In order to prevent labor conflict from ruining our cooperation with the bourgeoisie, we should push for an agreement between the bourgeoisie and the workers. This agreement should protect workers' rights and we must persuade the capitalists to become civilized capitalists who take care of their workers. Such an agreement would allow cooperation between the capitalists and us to go on for a while.

b. Regarding the matter of people's democratic dictatorship

Stalin said: Your implementation of a people's democratic dictatorship system of government is correct. Your citing Stalin's 1926 statement to the effect that "China's future revolutionary sovereignty will emphasize anti-imperialism" is also correct. After we had answered the questions about the central government's Chairman group and the relationship between the Chairman group and the cabinet (to the effect that, the Chairman's group is a collective presidency and the cabinet serves the Chairman's group as the central government's executive organ), Stalin said: It is possible that this system is very suitable to present-day China. When we answered the questions about whether each regional (for example, the northeast) and provincial government obeyed the central government and whether the central government had the right to approve or dismiss each regional or provincial government's choices of leaders, Stalin said:

Your present point of view of avoiding excesses in carrying out central collectivism is correct. That is to say, on the condition that the local governments are obeying the central government, it is not necessary to implement excessive central collectivism. But Stalin pays much attention to the possibility of splits between the local and central governments. Furthermore, in the report we had not mentioned the comprador bourgeoisie, so Stalin asked if comprador capital was or was not included in bureaucratic capital. It seems that he is paying great attention not to mix up the comprador bourgeoisie and the [Chinese] national bourgeoisie.

c. Regarding foreign policy issues

Stalin considers the foreign policy principles we mentioned in our report to be correct. These principles are the conflict with imperialist countries and cooperation with the Soviet Union and each new democratic country; making use of contradictions within capitalist countries; developing China's trade and commerce with all countries, in particular with the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe. Regarding the investments and enterprises in China of various imperialist countries, Stalin said: You can use the labor laws. Require each foreign enterprise to implement the labor laws strictly as a method for struggling with them. At the present, you don't want to expropriate the Chinese affairs of each imperialism, don't rush (bumang) into taking any other measures, wait a bit and see what happens. As to the question of whether we should strive for all of the imperialist countries to recognize China's new government, Stalin said: You should not rush into demanding recognition from all the imperialist countries, while you increase your observations, grasp the situation, see how they express themselves. You have a really good magic weapon (fabao), which is that imperialism wants to do business (maimai) with you. The imperialist countries' economic crisis has already begun. I think the powers could quickly decide to try and recognize you. You can first do good business with them and then discuss the recognition issue.

d. Regarding Chinese-Soviet relations

Stalin said: As soon as the Chinese government is established, the Soviet Union will immediately recognize you. Regarding the Sino-Soviet Treaty, he said: There was already a statement about this in the exchange of cables with Mao Zedong, saying that this treaty is unequal, that it can't be otherwise, since the treaty was made with the Guomindang at that time. There are a lot of American soldiers in Japan; Jiang Jieshi is also collaborating with the Americans. The Soviet troops in Port Arthur [Lushun] prevent them having the freedom of action to make use of armed force; they protect the Soviet Union and at the same time, they also protect the interests of the Chinese Revolution. At the present time, the Soviet Communist Party has already decided to conclude a peace treaty with Japan. After the Americans remove their troops from Japan, the Soviet Union

can consider withdrawing troops from Lushun. If the Chinese Communist Party considers it necessary that the Soviet troops leave Lushun immediately in order to give the Chinese Communist Party more room to maneuver in the political sphere, the Soviet troops can withdraw from Lushun and Dalian [Luda] right now. Stalin does not consider necessary [yongbuzhao] any of the three preliminary options (inherit the treaty without changes, sign a new treaty or announce that in a while a new treaty will be signed) for handling the Chinese-Soviet treaty that we presented in the report. He said to wait until Mao Zedong comes to Moscow to solve this matter. Regarding China's relations with the countries of Eastern Europe, Stalin said: You can negotiate with all the countries of Eastern Europe. We can help you, but it is best if you negotiate directly. Furthermore, he said, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and Romania all can supply you with goods and help you. You can negotiate with them boldly. Regarding the question of relations between the Soviet and Chinese communist parties, Stalin said: when you said in the report that the Chinese Communist Party obeys the Soviet Communist Party, we felt strange. There has never been a case of one country's party obeying another country's party, because it is impermissible [buxukede]. The two parties are responsible to their own peoples. If there is a problem, we talk about it. If there is a difficulty, we help each other. It's not a matter of one party obeying another. Close party relations is correct. Today's Politburo meeting is such a kind of tie. Regarding Mao Zedong's coming to Moscow, Stalin said: When China's [new] government is established and relations are established between our countries, then Mao can come. If Mao still finds it inconvenient to come, the Soviet Union can send a delegation to China.

e. Other matters

1. Regarding Xinjiang, Stalin said: because in Xinjiang there are no runways, there is still no way to bring troops in to Xinjiang by air. As for sending fighter aircraft to beat Ma's cavalry², this is very simply done. We can send a detachment of 40-50 aircraft and we'll begin with Soviet pilots and then pass them over to Chinese pilots [as they are trained.] While we were watching films, Stalin said: in the Second World War, cavalry was not of much use, because they feared the airplane, because they were such a big target, very easy to disperse.

2. Regarding Dalian, Stalin said: we could let the Northeast [Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party] and the Soviet comrades in Dalian discuss and reach agreement. Dalian's governing regime should be united with the Northeast [Bureau's]. While countries are not recognizing China, before the Japanese Peace Treaty is concluded, Dalian's harbor should only be used by Chinese and Soviets.

3. We had asked in the past about opening a Chinese university in Moscow for fewer than 1,000 students to train and build up China's construction and

management personnel. Stalin said: this is a good thing. There are difficulties, but we can do it.

4. Stalin himself raised the question of building a railway from Outer Mongolia's Hulun [Buir] area to Zhangjiakou (because someone raised this idea during Andreev's visit to Xibaipo). He said, this is a good thing, we can do it. We asked: Can we build a railway from Shaanxi through Xinjiang to the Soviet Union? S[talín] said: It's too long. It's not as good as first building an oil pipeline that would cost less than a third of the railroad. Stalin also said: If you have tea, tung oil, husked rice, tungsten ore, pig bristles and other plant oils, we need them all. Furthermore, he said, you should expand the land area under cotton cultivation and raise cotton production. In order to do this, you should gradually make use of agricultural machinery. It would be very good to increase cotton production.

5. Stalin said: [They can] help us to set up a naval school at Lushun and help us to build maritime defense. Stalin asked us if a Soviet film crew could visit our frontlines and help us to make a film. They [the Soviets] could help us with film technology. We answered that this was possible and said that a film crew had visited Lin Biao's headquarters in the past. Stalin said: because they did a bad job of it there, we withdrew them. We say we want to shoot a film again. It could be good for our relations. Stalin said: We can make the film's contents completely according to your suggestions.

III. Regarding the international situation, after we raised the issue, Stalin replied as follows:

There is a main point for estimating the contemporary international situation and this is whether or not a war can break out. By looking at all manner of international and economic conditions and [deducing] from America's preparations for war (imperialism is always preparing well for war), we can see that at present it is disadvantageous [buli] for imperialism to make war on the Soviet Union. According to regular patterns of historical development, there should not be a war at the moment, but there are adventurers and lunatics (jingshen shichang) in history, so there is still a possibility of war breaking out. We are ready for this. They are even using the nuclear bomb to intimidate [konghe] us, but we are also preparing. We are preparing a bit more quickly than they are.

Some adventurers and lunatics propagandize and say: The Soviet Union wants to attack the US. Others believe this kind of talk, which gives ground for the emergence of adventurers. For example, if the US Secretary of Defense [James] Forrestal, although he is dead, can still produce these kinds of people, then the possibility of war [neng chuwei] is always with us.³

We asked: can a compromise agreement be reached on the various problems

that separate you and the British and Americans? Stalin answered: It is very difficult. It is possible to resolve individual issues, but the most important matter is very hard to resolve. Let's wait a bit and see.

[Stalin continued regarding] our present policy of isolating the reactionary party, making use of mass methods and meetings, while in many countries, including America, continuing a propaganda battle, is very effective and should be continued.

Today the American government is forcing non-resolution of the problems with its policies. There are some people in the US who want to have good relations with the Soviet Union, but they are not in power. In the future, if the Americans have a new government and a new policy, it is possible that US-Soviet relations will get better.

The Marshall Plan is already bankrupt. American influence in Germany is already very small.

If imperialism wants to attack, let them attack; if they use nuclear weapons, we will also use nuclear weapons.

The Americans, of course, are not planning to attack themselves, since they always think of how to use other people's hands to attack for them. They even said so publicly, but there are not so many people willing to spill blood for America.

In general, neither do we fear peace, nor do we fear war. Liu [Shaoqi] Gao [Gang] Wang Jiexiang]

Printed from an original revised and approved by Liu Shaoqi.

1. Intermediary between the Chinese government and western powers who became part of the Chinese middle class.
2. Probably referring to Warlord Ma Bufang. The ethnically Hui "Ma clique," in particular, controlled Qinghai, Gansu, Ningxia and parts of Xinjiang in the 1940s. Their warlord leader was Ma Bufang, although over 200 relatives, all with the surname Ma, served in his armies, including his son Ma Chi-yuan.
3. Forrestal's apparent suicide on 22 May seems to have attracted Stalin's attention.