

Deng Xiaoping on Wufan

22-02-1952

On February 22, a telegram was sent to Mao Zedong, the CCP Central Committee, and Chen Yun, Bo Yibo, and Li Fuchun, reporting and requesting instructions on how to handle the new problems that had emerged in the course of the "Three Antis" and "Five Antis" campaigns. The telegram stated: "After the launch of the 'Three Antis' and 'Five Antis' movements, a number of new problems have arisen both internally and externally. Industry and commerce have displayed a marked, albeit temporary, stagnation; trade volumes have shrunk drastically. Because various construction projects have basically come to a halt, a large number of construction workers have become unemployed. More serious still, because of the stagnation in industry and commerce, the livelihoods of large numbers of urban poor have been affected. They have begun to express dissatisfaction with the 'Three Antis' and 'Five Antis,' and secret agents have also begun to exploit this situation to stir up trouble. If methods for resolving these problems are not adopted swiftly, we will be placed in a passive position, and it may even affect the deepening of the 'Five Antis.'"

The telegram proposed the adoption of the following emergency measures:

- (1) Immediately resume some building construction and repair certain road surfaces in order to place the unemployed construction workers.
- (2) The Ministry of Trade should select important industries and place加工 orders; in any case, some funds must be advanced, and the Central Ministry of Trade should also consider the matter in an overall manner.
- (3) The Ministry of Industry and the Railway Administration should also, to the greatest extent possible, place加工 orders.
- (4) Assume responsibility for all unemployed workers and provide them with relief.
- (5) "Grasp the key points, namely, resolve the two problems of construction workers and private industry, thereby slightly loosening the market and creating more avenues for urban livelihoods. Rapidly handle issues relating to industrial and commercial households so that economic life may return to normal as soon as possible."

Regarding internal problems, the telegram believed: "After the 'Three Antis,' it is estimated that there is a group of people who can no longer be used; it is absolutely necessary to purge a certain number of them, but the immediate difficulty is that there is no one to take over their work. At the same time, when the 'Five Antis' concludes, certain privately owned industrial and commercial enterprises that have been confiscated or have paid fines will have to be taken over by personnel. If these problems are not resolved, it will be very difficult for state financial and economic organs to cope with the situation." The solutions we have considered are:

- (1) To promote in large numbers, and boldly, the activists who have distinguished themselves in the "Three Antis."
- (2) To resolutely streamline and merge secondary organs, economize on personnel, and strengthen financial and economic departments; however, it is estimated that the number of personnel saved in this way will not be large.
- (3) To rely mainly on the army as the source of cadres. We previously requested central approval for the transfer of ten thousand cadres from the Southwest Military Region to local work; we again request that the Central Committee consider and approve this point.

On March 7, the CCP Central Committee replied by telegram to Deng Xiaoping and notified all Central Bureaus: "The Central Committee fully agrees with your views on handling certain new internal and external problems that have arisen following the launch of the 'Three Antis' and 'Five Antis'."

movements.” Concerning institutions and cadres, “it is necessary to resolutely streamline and merge unnecessary organs, and boldly promote advanced and capable intellectuals. Demobilized military cadres may first be used to meet the needs of the Southwest.” “All Central Bureaus are requested to pay serious attention to resolving the same problems raised in Comrade Deng Xiaoping’s telegram.”

On March 23, the CCP Central Committee again sent a telegram to Deng Xiaoping: “With respect to your request in the February 20 telegram to transfer ten thousand cadres from the Southwest forces to local work in order to strengthen financial and economic activities, after review it is considered that this request can be approved.”

[1] Li Fuchun, who at the time served as Deputy Secretary-General of the CCP Central Committee and Vice Chairman of the Finance and Economic Committee of the Government Administration Council of the Central People’s Government.

Remark

Added words to the draft of the Central Committee's reply to Deng Xiaoping [I] (March 7, 1952) (II) Please pay serious attention to resolving the same problems raised by Comrade Deng Xiaoping in his telegram [I] Deng Xiaoping was then the First Secretary of the Southwest Bureau of the CPC Central Committee. [2] In his telegram to Mao Zedong, the Central Committee, Chen Yun, Bo Yibo, and Li Fuchun on February 22, 1952, Deng Xiaoping pointed out that some new problems had emerged after the Three-Anti and Five-Anti Campaigns. From an external perspective, the main problem was the temporary and significant stagnation of industry and commerce, a significant reduction in trade volume, a sharp decline in tax revenue, many private factories having nothing to do, and a large number of construction workers losing their jobs. The stagnation of industry and commerce affected the lives of a large number of urban poor people, who had begun to express their dissatisfaction with the Three-Anti and Five-Anti Campaigns. Secret agents also took advantage of this to stir up trouble. If these situations are not resolved quickly, they will put us in a passive position and even affect the depth of the Five-Anti Campaign. Internally, the main problem is the collapse of some financial institutions. In the past, many things were handled by retained personnel or newly recruited intellectuals; after the Three-Anti Campaign, a large number of them will no longer be usable, and there is no one to replace them temporarily. At the same time, as a result of the Five-Anti Campaign, some private industrial and commercial enterprises that were confiscated or fined must be taken over. Currently, there is a severe shortage of key personnel; if this problem is not resolved, the national financial authorities will find it difficult to cope with the situation.