

January 6, 1970

Embassy of the GDR in the PR China, 'Note about the "Club Meeting" of the Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors of Hungary, the GDR, Czechoslovakia, the USSR, Poland, Bulgaria, and Mongolia on 19 December 1969 in the Embassy of Mongolia'

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Summary:

Ambassadors to China from Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Poland, Bulgaria, and Mongolia discuss Chinese preparations for war, Maoist groups in Western Europe and Japan, and other aspects of Chinese foreign policy.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY)

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

Embassy of the GDR in the PR China

Beijing, 6 January 1970

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Domestic Policy

On the Preparations for War

[Mongolian Ambassador] Comrade Chulunbaatar informed that war preparations are continuously pushed forward. For instance, a textbook for voluntary medical responders and a magazine "First Aid to Wounded in War" are in distribution, the latter being published by the Medical Publishing House with a circulation of 300,000 copies.

Factories and institutions are receiving concrete slabs to build air-raid shelters, the population is receiving bricks and clay. Many Chinese think those shelters will become their graves in a modern war as they are not withstanding [pressure]. The Taiwan-published paper "Minbao" reported on November 21 from Guangzhou that each inhabitant had to pay one Yuan for the construction of air-raid shelters. The same paper reported on December 3, referring to a statement by the Indian Minister of Defense, that China is producing annually 40 nuclear bombs of 20 kilotons each. The nuclear bombs are getting relocated from Xinjiang to Tibet.

[Bulgarian Ambassador] Comrade Bossev reported about a statement from the Pakistani Military Attache that exercises have been held now near Beijing to defend against airborne troops and to practice air defense. Those exercises though would not been the only reason for the closing of various sightseeing areas. This is also about the installation of ground-to-air-missiles in those areas. In a lengthy article, [French newspaper] "Le Monde" had reported on December 10 that war preparations have been especially accelerated since the start of Soviet-Chinese [border] negotiations.

[Polish Ambassador] Comrade Wisniewski reported that war preparations are also forced in Shanghai. Shelters are constructed with reinforced concrete near bridges and arterial roads. Windows are taped with paper strips. Radar stations have been installed, and you can frequently spot trucks sprayed with camouflage colors. Anti-Soviet propaganda is continuing. Almost every night there are air raid drills held. Cadres and youth are also sent to the countryside for the purpose of propagating war preparations and civilian defense measures.

On the Army

[Acting Soviet Ambassador] Comrade Rogachev informed about an assessment by the Soviet Embassy regarding the situation in the Chinese Army. Recently they have begun to focus more on the role of combat strength and to move away from one-sided emphasis on the political aspect. Comrade Rogachev listed the following advantages of the People's Liberation Army (PLA):

1. with 3.5 to 4 million members this is the strongest army in the world with unlimited human reserves;
2. the Chinese soldier is obedient, tenacious, flexible, and fanatical;
3. the Army is rather satisfactorily equipped with conventional light weaponry;
4. the nuclear and missile program is speeding ahead;
5. through practical steps (shelter construction, alarm drills, etc.) the population is getting thoroughly prepared for a war situation.

Disadvantages:

1. Army units are spread out over the entire country and have to deal with non-military-related tasks, like for instance administrative obligations, ideological education;
2. the "Cultural Revolution" had a negative impact on the process of modernization, it caused disruption among the higher and medium levels of the military and impaired discipline in many units;
3. the heavy conventional technology is mostly outdated;
4. the hinterland is too large and immobile because transportation routes are bad or insufficient.

On Build-Up of the Party

Comrade Chulunbaatar informed that the process of rebuilding and restructuring the party in Beijing has been mostly completed. Each party member had to declare during meetings in the presence of non-party members what he did under Liu Shaoqi and had to exercise self-criticism. Now the party members have to study the party statute and Mao's "50-Characters-Program". Efforts are made to improve the role of party members.

Comrade Wisniewski reported the rebuilding of the party is supposed to be completed in Shanghai's and Guangzhou's factories until the end of December 1969. During a meeting of the new Polish Consul with a representative from the Revolutionary Committee of the City of Shanghai, the latter said the Party Committee will have the political power while the Revolutionary Committee will embody organizational power.

On the Question of Cadres

Comrade Rogachev said that [Deputy Foreign Minister] Qiao Guanhua told [Soviet negotiator] Comrade [Vasili Vasilyevich] Kuznetsov^[1] during a conversation that all cadres of the Foreign Ministry, including the Deputy Ministers, will be sent to the countryside to engage in productive labor. The length of deployment is contingent on the ideological position of the cadres. During their deployment they continue to get paid their salary by the Foreign Ministry. These deployments would create certain difficulties for the Foreign Ministry's work. Many able employees who can think and write, have nonetheless to go to the countryside because they have deficits in ideological thinking. One has created opportunities though that they can maintain their linguistic capabilities. On [the] October 1 [National Holiday] some of those employees were recalled to Beijing to serve foreign guests.

Comrade Chulunbaatar reported many workers in factories would make fun of the new cadres who had to return to their old jobs in the assembly halls to engage in productive labor. They tell them they had become officials but now were still sent back to their old jobs.

On the Industry

Comrade Wisniewski talked about the Industry Fair in Shanghai visited in November 1969 by Polish Comrades. A couple of new products were on display there, among other things many products from the electronic industry, radar installations with a range of 48 nautical miles, an automatic ship control system, electric calculators, an electron microscope with 200,000-fold enlargement, a telephone switchboard, new type of engines (e.g. with 400 P.S./horsepower), a model of a new steel converter, trucks weighing between 22 and 32 tons, a rice net [Reisnetz][\[2\]](#) machine and harvest machines, tractors with 45 P.S., ship diesel engines, a machine for plastic production of type "KuAS" (copy of a machine from [GDR] Plastic Mechanical Factories, also shown in 1969 at the Poznan [Polish city] Fair), waterproof clocks, as well as medical appliances and surgical devices also usable under combat conditions.

The Albanian Ambassador told Comrade Wisniewski the most important task the Chinese leadership is now facing is the construction of small industrial factories contributing to the development of agriculture. Development of agriculture is very important for preparations for the war. There is less of a hurry concerning the rebuilding of the party and state apparatus.

On the Supply Situation

Comrade Chulunbaatar reported about information the Mongolian Embassy has received from Chinese sources.

According to that, each Chinese is receiving annually cloth vouchers for 24 chi[\[3\]](#) (about 8 meters) of cotton fabric. In addition, every Chinese receives annually 500 grams of cotton (for cotton coats etc). Also, each Chinese gets 3 talons for three months each for industrial goods,. Cloth vouchers valid for 1969 have been extended to June 1970. If you buy hats and gloves, you have to show factory IDs, student IDs or house agendas[\[4\]](#). Many prices are higher than before liberation [1949]. Monthly rents for a 3-room-apartment without heating have increased from 3 to 6 Yuan. For a medium apartment with running water and heat the rent is even 16 Yuan. Average monthly wages of workers are between 30 and 45 Yuan, the maximum wage lies between 70 and 85 Yuan. One individual needs to spend about 16 to 19 Yuan per month on food. The bicycle tax is 2 Yuan per year.

Foreign Policy

Maoist Groups and 'Parties'

[Hungarian Ambassador] Comrade Halasz provided informations about Maoist groups in 14 countries. He referred to the following list:

Austria:

(Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Austria/MLKPÖ): Chairman Strobel; about 100 members; monthly journal "Red Flag" with a circulation of 10,000 copies

"Group of Revolutionary Workers of Austria": Chairman Jock; about 60 members.

Great Britain:

"Communist Party of England (M/L)", founded in April 1968, Chairman Birch; about 150 members, in addition to London a small group in Oxford, monthly journal: "The Worker".

"English-Chinese Friendship Society" and "English-Albanian Friendship Society" are supporting the "party".

Belgium:

"Communist Party of Belgium (M/L)", Chairman Vanderlinden, about 800 members;

they publish a monthly journal. Grippa Group has been dissolved, and Grippa was excluded from "Belgian-Chinese Friendship Society" because he was said to be a supporter of Liu Shaoqi.

Greece:

"Communist Party of Greece (M/L)", it is banned and works illegally in underground. Monthly journal "Proletarian Banner". There are many pro-Chinese factions within Greek migrant groups, for instance about 75 members in Great Britain, the Zachos Group in West Berlin and another group in Cologne. There are conflicts between the groups in West Berlin and Cologne.

Denmark:

"Communist Workers Circle". Chairman: Appel (owner of publishing house "Futura"), 35-40 members; Journal: "Communist Orientation".

"Danish Communist Association (M/L)", Chairman Schkokotz[5]. There are substantial conflicts between both groups. While the Appel Group is advocating armed struggle towards the usurpation of power, the Schkokotz Group is supporting the parliamentary path and compromise.

"Communist Youth Association (M/L)", 30 to 25 members.

Italy:

"Communist Party of Italy (M/L)", Chairman Denucci; 16,000 to 18,000 members;

"Party" is receiving 1.5 million Lira monthly from Albanian embassy in Rom and Chinese Embassy in Bern. In 1966 group led by Gracci had split from this party, Other leaders of the group are Dini and Carturi.

In Milan there exists another pro-Chinese organization with about 1,000 members. Its leader is Gubinelli.

Netherlands:

"Organization Red Banner", founded in March 1969, 15 members.

"Association of Dutch Marxist-Leninists", journal "Red Podium"; goal: building a new "Communist Party (M/L)" on Maoist basis.

Norway:

"Communist Party of Norway (M/L)"; attempts to move the real Communist Party of Norway towards a Maoist line,

In addition, there exists a Maoist youth organization with about 200 members who have a certain influence at the University of Oslo, furthermore there is a "Norwegian-Chinese Friendship Society".

Finland:[6]

"Marxist-Leninist Society", founded in early 1967. The Chinese Embassy in Helsinki has rented a house for this "Society" and provided the furniture. Monthly journal "Red Guard" with a circulation of 2,000. In March 1968 this group held a conference where they elected an executive committee with 10 members and adopted a statute.

Chairman is Tauno-Olavi Huotari (also Chairman of the Helsinki City Committee of the "Social Democratic Workers Association"), the Secretary is Matti Puolakka, Peter Nilsson is in charge of the finances. Only those can become members of the "Society" who are faithful to Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Ideology.

Youth organization "Tricontinental", formed in March 1968 by the above mentioned "Society". Chairman: Puolakka; 10 sections across the country. Journal "Appu", chief editor is Markku (author of the book "Red East").

France:

After the events of summer 1968 in France, Maoist organizations that were seen as

extremist groups got banned. Currently the following ones are operating legally:
"French Communist Party (M/L)", founded in 1967, 4,000 to 5,000 members.
"Marxist-Leninist Youth Association": it is most active and has cells in many cities. Student members are instructed to go into factories after graduation from university and become active among the workers.
"Marxist Leninist Center" is the weakest organization.
Official French agencies have their agents in these organizations and control their activities.

West Germany:

"Communist Party of Germany (M/L)", established in December 1968, Chairman: [Ernst August] Aust, about 1,000 members.
"Marxist-Leninist League", active in Hamburg under leadership of Schultz, Goldberg und Jahnke. This group does not agree with Aust's activity and accuses him of adventurism. They want to unite all Maoist groups in Germany into a "League". The "League" has a certain influence among the Socialist Democratic Students and build up "Red Guards" among youth in Hamburg and Bremen. The West German government is exploiting the activities of those groups in fighting the [pro-Soviet] Communist Party of Germany [KPD] and the German Communist Party [DKP].

Sweden:

"Communist Party of Sweden (M/L)", "Communist Youth League of the Friends of China" (about 100 members, "Swedish-Chinese Friendship Society").

Switzerland:

"Organization of Swiss Communists", active since 1968, about 15 members.
"Swiss People's Party", Chairman: Buirare^[7].
The Chinese Embassy in Bern did not succeed in accomplishing the merger of various pro-Chinese groups in Switzerland.

Japan:

Several regional groups which have deep conflicts with each other. (According to "Renmin Ribao" from 28 December 1969, the "Communist Party of Japan (Left)" was founded on 30 November 1969, the author [of this note: Heribert Kunz]).

In conclusion, Comrade Halasz stated that overall there do exist Maoist groups in about 60 countries, in some of them multiple ones. Thus there are about 70-75 groups worldwide. This figure is matching the number mentioned by Yao Wenyuan^[8] in his speech about two years ago. The Chinese leadership is aiming at uniting the different organizations from individual countries in order to convene its "World Conference" [of Maoist communist parties] in 1970. The leader of the "Communist Party of Ceylon [Sri Lanka] (M/L)" got commissioned during his stay in Beijing for the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the PR China to sound out opinions about a potential convening of this "World Conference" in 1970 from the other Maoist groups.

On the Soviet-Chinese Negotiations

Comrade Wisniewski informed that he has asked the Albanian Ambassador about his opinion on this issue since the latter has permanent contact with the Chinese partners. The Albanian Ambassador did fudge a specific answer. He only said these negotiations are of limited character since the Chinese side will only discuss border issues and will not address other topics. There exist deep contradictions between China and the Soviet Union, which will become ever deeper. There is no way to talk about a rapprochement.

On the Chinese-American Ambassadorial Talks

Comrade Rogachev reported that high-up American sources have voiced the Chinese Acting Ambassador had behaved very politely and friendly during the recent ambassadorial talk in Warsaw on 11 December 1969. Yet he did not take the initiative during the talk. Apparently he was under directive to listen to [U.S. Ambassador Walter] Stoessel's statements in order to forward them to Beijing. Referencing statements by American politicians, Stoessel had expressed the desire to improve relations with China. He proposed to resume the ambassadorial talks on a regular basis and start from where one had departed two years ago.

Relations with Australia

Comrade Rogachev furthermore explained that China has signed a secret agreement with Australia about the import of 2.200,000 tons of Australian grain for more than 1 million Australian Dollar. Negotiations had been held in November 1969 in Guangzhou. The grain deliveries are scheduled for the period between December 1969 and October 1970. Already in January of 1969 China had purchased the same amount of grain from Australia. It is said the deliveries were already completed by December 1969 (three months ahead of schedule).

Negotiations with Canada and Italy

Comrade Rogachev also informed that the Chinese-Canadian negotiations in Stockholm have reached agreement about all specific issues regarding the establishment of diplomatic relations. Canada is willing to break relations with Taiwan and support the accession of the PR China into the United Nations. Yet Canada is refusing to recognize in the final communique the rights of the PR China concerning Taiwan.

Chinese-Italian negotiations in Paris about the establishment of diplomatic relations have reached a dead end for the same reason.

Relations with France

Comrade Wisniewski reported from a conversation with the French Ambassador about the visit of a French parliamentary delegation to Taiwan. The latter said this was a private visit of which the French government was unaware. He thinks this visit will not impair French-Chinese relations. In addition, there exists a certain agreement between France and China on various issues, like for instance with regard to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Signed [Heribert] Kunz
3rd Secretary

CC:

1. [GDR] Foreign Ministry, Far East Department (2x)
2. Embassy Beijing

[1] (1901-1990).

[2] Literally a 'rice net'. I couldn't find an English term. Here is the product, widely used in Japan and China for rice cooking:
<http://www.emro-aziatica.com/de/product/rijstzak-klein/>

[3] 5 chi = 1,67 meters

[4] A book deposited in every house and building to list residents and visitors.

[5] Probably wrong spelling. Real name could not be verified.

[6] Incorrect name spellings from the original are corrected throughout this paragraph.

[7] Probably wrong spelling. Real name could not be verified.

[8] (1931-2005).