

February 28, 1973

**Note on the Meeting with Comrade O.B. Rakhmanin,
Deputy Head of International Department of CC**

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Summary:

This document notes changes in Chinese policy that has led to difficult relations with the Soviets, and problems caused by comments made by Mao Zedong. It also discusses other aspects of Chinese foreign policy, such as their attitude and actions towards the U.S. and Japan.

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Note on the Meeting with Comrade O. B. Rakhmanin, Deputy Head of International Department of CC, on 28 February 1973 in Moscow

[...]

On China

There are hardly any news about China's domestic development and the Mao Zedong group's policy. [...]

Comrade Rakhmanin noted that the U.S. prepares some hundreds of China specialists every year. Yet in the USSR only 50 specialists graduate annually from universities. The USA has 50 research institutes dealing with China issues, yet in the USSR there is only one institute although the USSR shares a long border with the PRC. Decisive measures are demanded by the secretariat of the CPSU CC to change this. In fact, the China problem is not only of international nature but also a national problem for the USSR.

These are the changes we can currently note in Chinese policy:

The Chinese leadership deliberately excluded the Soviet Union from the global socialist system and the communist world movement. They call the Soviet Union a social-imperialist country on purpose. The Chinese differentiate between the Soviet clique and the Soviet people. Comrade Rakhmanin mentioned in this context that all addressing in the Soviet apparatus must use "comrade" up to the First Secretaries in the USSR Foreign Ministry, and downwards either "Mister" or no addressing at all. As Comrade Brezhnev stated in his speech for the 50th Anniversary of the USSR [in 1967], China is a socialist country but it has excluded itself from the communist world movement. It is difficult for China to change from that position. As it's well known, Mao Zedong has called the Soviet Union a social-imperialist country and a fascist dictatorship.

He can distance himself from this statement in two ways. Either he has a declaration issued that he did not make such statements, or he actually proves that the Soviet Union is indeed a capitalist country. Currently the Chinese are not choosing the first option. One has to concede that Chinese people expect actions in the spirit of these Mao Zedong slogans. Thus there is not only increasing anti-Sovietism in Chinese propaganda; one also has to enter political and military adventures into the equation. The Chinese let not pass any chance to slander the Soviet Union and spread untruths about it. They even use the transition of Comrade Mazkeviets to another position for slander against the Soviet Union. They want to shake the unity and stability of Soviet Union and CPSU through these means and methods. They have declared mortal combat against the Soviet Union. The experience of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, they say, proved how a large empire of nationalities is doomed to fall. The Chinese expect trouble stirred up by nationalities of the Soviet Union, especially those along the border with China. Comrade Rakhmanin noted that the Chinese conduct the struggle with all means available.

The Soviet Union knows from satellites [Sputniks] that 70 percent of Chinese ground forces are concentrated in the North and the province of Xinjiang. More than 50 percent of China's air force is located near the Soviet border. Through the satellites more than 1,000 aircraft were spotted on Chinese airports. More than 70 percent of Chinese divisions are digging in at the Soviet-Chinese border. In addition, the Beijing leadership has rejected any negotiations about a treaty on the renunciation of force treaty. They bet on China surviving a nuclear confrontation, and then dealing a strong blow with ground forces against the Soviet Union. We have learned from experiences in the past and will not concede any surprise along this long border. In Manchuria

alone there live 70 million people while in the Soviet border regions next to the PR China there are only 7 million residents. The Soviet Union must spend enormous means for defending the border and safeguard its military protection. In the Soviet point of view, the danger from the West is no greater than from that in the East.

In the development of relations between the U.S. and China, there is a certain similarity to the events concerning Hitler's Germany in the 1930s as the U.S. systematically armed Hitler and pushed him to the East against the USSR. Today there appears to be a certain division of labor between China and the U.S. China is deliberately being built up as a danger for the USSR in order to distract the USSR's attention from Europe and provocations in other parts of the world.

In foreign policy, there are serious changes that are primarily visible in a conspiracy with the U.S. During Kissinger's last stay in Beijing major concessions were made to China. China's representation in the U.S. will be in fact an embassy. The U.S. has changed its position towards Taiwan. There is supposedly a letter from Mao Zedong to Nixon expressing the expectation that the U.S. should provide military assistance to China in the case of an attack on the PR China by the Soviet Union.

The comrades in the CC CPSU are presently considering which means can be employed to prevent further rapprochement between China and the U.S. on an anti-Soviet basis.

China's relations with Japan have developed significantly in recent times. The volume of foreign trade between both states amounts currently to one billion dollar. In contrast, the trade volume between China and the U.S. is only 300 million dollar annually.

During the visit by Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka to the PR China there were utterings like that the presence of American forces in Asia is welcome. Also, the U.S. nuclear umbrella in Asia was endorsed by Zhou Enlai and Tanaka. Internally Japan is said to have declared to assist China in case it is attacked. Zhou Enlai supposedly said the 1950 Friendship Treaty between Soviet Union and PR China does no longer exist, and thus the mutual support clause between Soviet Union and China has expired.

Japan demanded after Tanaka's visit to China from the Soviet Union to return all Kurile Islands to Japan. The Soviet comrades had to note that relations between Japan and USSR suffered from a certain chill after Tanaka's visit to China. China and Japan have declared they will fight hegemony by a third state in Asia. It is not hard to guess to which state they are referring.

In China's policy towards the socialist countries one must note an energetic peaceful offensive in the area of state-to-state relations. This way they intend to differentiate between the socialist countries and to separate them from the Soviet Union. They want to hit the head of our community, and hope for the latter to break up by itself as a result. We have to consider these facts in the development of our relations with the PR China. These problems should be dealt with at a third Crimea meeting that the International Department of the CPSU advocates energetically.

Comrade Rakhmanin informed that the next international meeting of International Departments from the CC of CPSU, SED, PUWP, CPC, HUWP, BCP and MPRP is supposed to be held in April or May 1973 in Ulan-Bator. A deep and complex analysis of developments in China and the Beijing leaders' foreign policy will be conducted there. Right now also the Deputy Trade Ministers are convening in Moscow to consult about relations between the socialist states and the PR China. The Soviet comrades attribute very high importance to this meeting.

Then Comrade Rakhmanin talked about a so-called international Garaudysm^[1] that portrays a romantic picture of current China. The Secretary General of the Communist Party of Spain, [Santiago] Carrillo, and also other functionaries of fraternal parties advocate such positions. In part these opinions have even gained traction with Soviet academics.

Subjective causes for developments in China and its conflict with the communist world movement are pushed into the foreground. Yet Comrade Rakhmanin stressed again that the Chinese leaders always focused their main strikes against the general line of the CPSU. In 1964 already, Zhou Enlai demanded in his talks with Comrade Brezhnev, and in 1965 in his meeting with Comrade Kosygin, that the CPSU abandons its line expressed at the XX and XXII Party Congresses. Doing that, the Chinese want to blur the real issues and divert the Soviet Union to secondary problems. Confrontation with Maoism is a struggle for the purity of Marxism-Leninism. We must devote even greater attention to these questions, we must work smarter and more refined to unmask Maoism.

Soviet foreign trade with the PR China will amount to about 150 million rubles in 1973. From time to time there occur problems in trade since the Soviet Union is not willing to deliver additional goods to China on favorable terms.

The main problem in Soviet-Chinese relations, however, is the border issue. At the border negotiations [in Beijing], the Chinese delegation leader made unmistakably clear that the PR China rejects any compromise and will also not submit a new draft of its own. According to the Chinese leadership, the Soviet Union has to recognize first the so-called disputed territories. What are those disputed territories about?

In 1964 the PR China provided us with a map with a proposed borderline between China and the Soviet Union where the border deviated up to 100 kilometers North into Soviet territory from the current border. The area between these two borderlines comprises 33,000 square kilometers. In this area there are some USSR cities, an autonomous republic, and millions of residents.

The Chinese claim that these so-called disputed territories are Chinese territory. As they stated during negotiations, the term "disputed territories" is supposed to help the Soviet Union to move from its previous positions. Actual negotiations could only start when the Soviet Union has recognized these disputed territories as Chinese.

The Soviet comrades stated they do not assume the Chinese side would be content even with that. During past negotiations the Chinese have tabled many drafts. These drafts did not show any major differences. They only shuffled some text without saying anything new. In recent years, the Soviet Union proposed a couple of measures to develop relations. In 1970 it was willing to demarcate the border at the thalweg of the rivers. The Chinese rejected this proposal.

In July 1970 we proposed a meeting between Comrade Kosygin and Zhou Enlai; the proposal was rejected.

Furthermore the Soviet Union suggested to renew loyalty to the Friendship and Alliance Treaty of 14 February 1950. This was rejected as well.

The Soviet Union proposed to sign an agreement about the renunciation of force and non-aggression. The Chinese side also did not accept these proposals.

Comrade Rakhmanin underlined that the Soviet Union will not tolerate any violation of the Soviet border. It is ready, however, to talk about individual parts of the border.

In confidence, the head of the Soviet delegation is under instructions to make concessions on certain segments. The Soviet Union will always remain patient and conduct negotiations with Russian calm and equanimity. Yet Comrade Rakhmanin also emphasized a time will come where questions of prestige are no longer irrelevant.

Through the negotiations in Beijing a Deputy Foreign Minister and an ambassador of the USSR are permanently absorbed. Maybe the Soviet Union will propose to continue negotiations in Moscow or the USSR Ambassador in Beijing, Comrade Tolstikov, will be asked to continue negotiations on his own.

Apparently the Chinese leadership wants to buy time through delaying the negotiations. The Chinese openly talk about how a delay for two more years will constitute a success. A delay by three years would be a victory for China.

One must not underestimate the Chinese. When they need it, they will also be ready for provocations.

In a way, the Beijing leaders have created a couple of linkages. They hold the position that there will be no development of bilateral relations between USSR and China without success in the border negotiations. Successful border negotiations, however, will only occur when the Soviet Union has recognized the disputed territories. Another condition for future successes, they say, would be implementation of agreements on these disputed territories allegedly reached in 1965 between Comrade Kosygin and Zhou Enlai.

Comrade Rakhmanin told us that such an agreement does not exist at all.

The Chinese side has also rejected to develop cooperation between the Friendship Associations USSR and China.

In spite of this negative [Chinese] position the Soviet comrades remain optimists. There is a latent danger of provocations but of local character only. Yet this danger diverts from communist construction in the USSR and requires additional means.

[\[1\]](#) Named after Roger Garaudy (*1913), a temporary French Marxist, who as a fierce critic of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia embraced Chinese positions and was expelled from the French Communist Party in 1970. [\[back\]](#)