

July 17, 1948

Cable, Terebin to Stalin [via Kuznetsov]

Citation:

"Cable, Terebin to Stalin [via Kuznetsov]", July 17, 1948, Wilson Center Digital Archive, APRF: F. 39, Op. 1, D. 31, Ll. 39-40. Reprinted in Andrei Ledovskii, Raisa Mirovitskaia and Vladimir Miasnikov, *Sovetsko-Kitaiskie Otnosheniia*, Vol. 5, Book 1, 1946-February 1950 (Moscow: Pamiatniki Istoricheskoi Mysli, 2005), pp. 448-449. Translated for CWIHP by Sergey Radchenko.

<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/113779>

Summary:

Terebin (Andrei Orlov) gives Kuznetsov (Stalin) his, Terebin's, interpretation of Mao's reaction to Stalin's cable asking that Mao's visit be delayed several months.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

To Comrade F. Kuznetsov

Reporting to you on my personal impressions and observations when conveying Stalin's telegram to Mao Zedong.

Having heard Ren Bishi's translation of Stalin's telegram to Mao Zedong, Mao Zedong asked: "is such attention really attributed to grain harvest work in the USSR that the leading persons of the party CC go out to do it?" I replied in the affirmative. Ren Bishi—as well. Mao Zedong asked again: "and what percent does the USSR gain from the agriculture, why, is it bigger than from industry, or smaller."

My reply: "Exactly what percent I do not know now, but in any case it is fairly big." And added that great significance is attributed to grain harvest work in the USSR."

Then Mao Zedong and Ren Bishi were saying that soon, probably, the main master [glavnyi khoziain] will go for rest. The conversation was in their language but I understood. After that Mao Zedong dictated a reply telegram to Stalin.

As far as I know Mao Zedong, [which has been] for more than 6 years, his smile and words "hao, hao—good, good," at the time when he was listening to the translation, do not at all suggest that he was happy with the telegram. This could be seen quite clearly.

My personal conviction is that Mao Zedong believed that in the worst case he will be denied having planes or a ship sent to him. But even this was improbable for him, especially since the plane was offered from Moscow.

He was sure that he was going to go right now. Probably the trip became necessary for him. He waited for a reply with great eagerness.

On 13 July after he dictated his letter, in purely Chinese spirit, I asked when to send [it], perhaps to wait one more day, Mao Zedong replied that he had asked to send it on 13 July.

He was ready for departure.

As I learned in the last few days, they have been currently preparing a series of materials for Moscow, that is: maps of GMD positions at the fronts, data on the composition of the GMD forces, I think of their own as well, data on GMD intelligence, on its structure, some data on the CCP and other [materials]. Mao Zedong's suitcases were being packed, and even leather shoes were bought (like everybody here, he is wearing fabric slippers), and a thick wool coat was tailored. Not only the issue of the trip as such, but its timing, too, had already been decided by him. The only remaining issue was by which way to go.¹ So now he is outwardly calm, polite and attentive, courteous in a purely Chinese manner. But it is hard to see his true soul. One can judge from Ren Bishi's entire appearance that he did not expect the postponement of the visit.

Melnikov told me that on 15 July Mao Zedong put the same question to him about the grain harvest work.

Terebin
17.VII.1948

1. Translation of this sentence, with minor amendments, was taken from Westad,

Decisive Encounters, p. 232.