

October 17, 1948

Cable, Terebin to Stalin

Citation:

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Summary:

Mao asks, through Terebin, whether or not he, Mao, will be picked up by a Soviet plane when he heads to Moscow. Terebin recounts the detailed planning that Mao has done for the trip.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

To Com[rade] Kuznetsov

Having read the translation by Shi Zhe, Mao Zedong immediately asked me: "Can one consider that the plane will be sent[?]"

After my reply that I do not know about this, that the telegram does not say so, Mao Zedong said that if there is no plane, he will not be able to come on time.

Further he said that in July he wrote about three routes, now two [of them]—by land and by sea—have fallen through. Only one remains—by air. Asked me to request from you [information as to] whether a plane will be sent.

[In reaction to] my attempt to avoid such a request on my behalf, with which he was not happy, he said so: "You write that Mao Zedong is asking to inform him whether a plane will be sent." Right away he explained in detail why the two routes fell through.

Then he literally dictated, and Shi Zhe translated the following: "Write that in the conversation Comrade Mao Zedong asked me (Terebin) on my (Terebin's) behalf to transmit the conversation with Mao Zedong about his trip to Moscow.

1. The land route, as before, is difficult, [it is] cut by the enemy and is very lengthy. The sea route in view of the fact that the GMD fleet strengthened control and intelligence, is also unsafe. Therefore [we] decided to ask for a plane to be sent.

2. The danger in the vicinity of the Jiaodong railroad is less, especially given that there is a good aerodrome there (Mao Zedong has Weixian in mind. Terebin). The time—the middle of November—most expedient.

When the planes are prepared [we] ask you to inform us and we will then leave from the area near Shijiazhuang toward the aerodrome. One does not have to stop in Harbin at all, but to fly to Moscow directly, since the situation there is more or less known to us now. [CCP CC member] Chen Yun can go to Moscow straight from there."

In the conversation Mao Zedong said that military actions are taking place in the area of Pingsuilu, that the road is fairly lengthy and inconvenient, that the weather is unfavorable for the trip. [He] stressed that not only does he not have anything to do in Harbin, but it is not profitable to show up there, keeping in mind the non-party democratic politicians who are there.

[He] stressed that the day of the departure is set by You, on the basis of the preparedness of the planes, that he will be at the aerodrome at the appointed time.

[He] counted that in all 18 people had to fly. If there is one plane, then [they] will be compelled to take fewer people, which is less convenient, but [they] will fly anyhow.

[He] suggested to get the details of the quantity of people and cargo from Ren Bishi, Ren Bishi said that the quantity of people and cargo will remain the same, as pointed out in July. If there are any changes, and there will hardly be any, he will immediately inform [me]. It was decided not to take Chen Boda, but, perhaps, Ye Jianying will fly.

In general, in the last half-a-month Mao Zedong, during meetings, on every suitable occasion, stresses that he needs to go, that he is ready to go, that he will arrive on time.

Ren Bishi on the other hand asks directly: what do I think, will the plane arrive, and when[?] [He] says that Mao Zedong wrote that he will arrive by the set time, that [they] know there that without the plane they will not be able to arrive by that time, and so on.

The telegram dated 17 October strengthened their confidence even further, they consider the words "as it was agreed upon" that there will be a plane. Their questions and proposals that I request from you on my own behalf whether there will be a plane and when, place me right into an inconvenient position.

At the same time they are prepared to live the whole winter here, already heating had been installed at Mao Zedong's and Ren Bishi's. This, probably, can be understood in such a way that if there is no plane then they will not go by land in winter.

I am asking you again, if possible, to give me instructions about the line of my behavior in this question.

Terebin
17.X.1948