

February 2, 1953

Memorandum of Conversation, Soviet Ambassador to China A.S. Paniushkin with the Chair of the City People's Government in Beijing, Peng Zhen, 6 January 1953

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Summary:

Peng Zhen talked about the great significance for China of the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Regarding difficulties that the CCP struggled with in the first year after the formation of the PRC, Peng Zhen said that at that time the party needed to carry on significant work regarding the ideological reeducation of a significant part of the intelligentsia, which incorrectly understood the role and significance of the Soviet Union in the matter of the victory of the revolution in China.

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From the diary of
A.S. PANIUSHKIN

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Soviet Ambassador in China, A.S. Paniushkin, with the Chair of the City People's Government in Beijing, Peng Zhen, 6 January 1953

Today there was a visit with Peng Zhen. After a short conversation, according to protocol, Peng Zhen talked about the great significance for China of the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. He said that at the present time workers at the highest level of the state apparatus in a committed way are studying the work of comrade I.V. Stalin, Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR, the speeches of comrade Stalin, the report of Cde. Malenkov, and other [reports of] leaders of the Soviet government at the 19th Congress of the CPSU.

Peng Zhen in detail described how this work is going in Beijing.

In response to the request of Peng Zhen I provided my impressions about the work of the 19th Party Congress and in particular discussed a meeting at the Congress of delegates from the fraternal communist and workers parties.

Regarding difficulties that the CCP struggled with in the first year after the formation of the PRC, Peng Zhen said that at that time the party needed to carry on significant work regarding the ideological reeducation of a significant part of the intelligentsia, which incorrectly understood the role and significance of the Soviet Union in the matter of the victory of the revolution in China. A majority of the intelligentsia in China openly referred to the Soviet Union as imperialist, asking things like: Why until now has the Chinese Changchun Railway been the property of the Soviet Union? They asked many other similar, anti-Soviet questions. This is testimony to the fact that the majority of the intelligentsia of China, having received their education in America, England, France or institutions of higher education in China belonging to [these countries], in essence were oriented against the new policies of the people's revolutionary power.

After three years of educational work we managed, said Peng Zhen, to reeducate somewhat the intelligentsia. However even now a significant part (including even the children of responsible party workers) continue to prostrate themselves (prekloniat'sia) before everything American. As an example he noted the hospital of the Soviet Red Cross in Beijing, where the majority of the Chinese staff of the hospital-the doctors and nurses-coming from a petty-bourgeois and bourgeois sphere, doubt that Soviet medicine is better than American [medicine]. Having noted the wonderful work of Soviet personnel of the hospital among the population, Peng Zhen said that the Chinese personnel all the same passively accept the rich experience of Soviet medicine. Unfortunately, added Peng Zhen, to replace these doctors and nurses is not possible yet, as the only better medical workers available at present are at the Korean front.

SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN THE PRC ~~PP~~PANIUSHKIN

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2 February 1953