

**January 24, 1954**

**Statement from A.G. Krymov (Guo Zhaotang), a  
Prisoner in Noril'sk and Former Member of the  
Chinese Communist Party and the Executive  
Committee of the Comintern**

**Citation:**

"Statement from A.G. Krymov (Guo Zhaotang), a Prisoner in Noril'sk and Former Member of the Chinese Communist Party and the Executive Committee of the Comintern", January 24, 1954, Wilson Center Digital Archive, RGANI f. 5, op. 28, 1954, r. 5112, d. 185, l. 27-31. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Austin Jersild.  
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/116806>

**Summary:**

A statement from A.G. Krymov, where he pleads for cancellation of his verdict to a labor camp and to gain permission to serve the Communist cause in either the Soviet Union or China. In March 1938 he was arrested by the NKVD in Moscow and exposed as an enemy of the people.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

**Original Language:**

Russian

**Contents:**

Translation - English

To the Chairman of the Soviet of Ministers of the USSR, G.M. Malenkov

From A.G. Krymov (Guo Zhaotang), a prisoner in Noril'sk – a former worker of the Chinese CP and the executive committee of the Comintern  
Living in the city of Noril'sk, Krasnoarsk Region, Pionerskaia street, building 54, apartment 59.

#### STATEMENT

I am Chinese, my original name is Guo Zhaotang. My literary pseudonym is Evgenii Kyo. I was born in 1905, and am native to Zhejiang province, the district of Yuyao, from a family of poor peasants. From age 11 I began my independent laboring life, and worked as an apprentice in a material processing plant for medical equipment in Shanghai. From age 16 I participated in revolutionary activities. From 1921 I worked in lithography at a publishing house attached to a middle school, which I simultaneously attended as a military student, helping with the illegal printing of revolutionary proclamations and brochures. In 1924 I joined the Komsomol (underground) and worked in the department of communication at Shanghai University. In 1925 I participated in the management of a general strike in Shanghai famously known as the events of May 30th. At the end of 1925 the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party commanded me to go to Moscow for studies at KURV [Stalin Communist University of Workers of the East], where I studied until 1927. Then in 1927 and 1928 I worked for the Chinese CP in specialized work. After the defeat of the revolution in China I again was sent to Moscow. I worked as the deputy secretary in the bureau of languages in the VKP(b) at Chinese University.

In 1931 this was changed into the Historical-Party branch, and I defended my dissertation there in 1934 and received my candidate degree in history and graduated from IPIKL.

From 1929, along with my studies I worked for the CC of the Chinese CP at IKKI (the Comintern), primarily on the preparation of cadres for teaching work at the International Lenin School at KUTV. I was a member of the editorial board of the journal Communist International, translating the journal into Chinese. I was a member of the editorial group translating the works of Lenin into Chinese. In 1932 I was an instructor for the CC of the VKP(b), in the Far East. From 1933 I was a member of the bureau of the department on work in the countryside of IKKI (the department working under the leadership of V. Kolarov).

From 1934, after graduating from IPIKL, by decision of the organizational bureau of the CC VKP(b), I was transferred to work at IKKI, where I appointed a deputy of one of the eastern sectors of the secretariat. In 1935 I was a delegate at the VII Congress of the Comintern of the Chinese CP and a bureau member of the delegation after the Congress. I worked for Cde. Dimitrov on the Chinese question. In 1937 I was named a deputy to the research department of the Secretariat of IKKI and senior research worker (at the school of eastern cadres of the IKKI) and the CC VKP(b). I was appointed a deputy to the department of the eastern branch at the Institute of Red Professors.

During my time in the party I was never associated with any [factional] groups or oppositionists. I always actively struggled against them. I was never penalized by the party. In 1938 before my arrest there was a pronouncement about the crime of [insufficient] vigilance, but at the general meeting not one person was identified as having personal contacts with anti-party elements.

My parents were already at an advanced age when I parted with them in 1925. My brother was in grammar school. Their fate is unknown to me as I have not had any ties to them.

In March 1938 I was arrested by the organs of the NKVD in Moscow. As a result I was under the administration of the first division of the third branch in Poliachek, and later Khabinsk....As a result of having been exposed as an enemy of the people I was faced with monstrous accusations. I was sent to the Lesortovsk Prison. I was subject to cruel, unbearable Soviet laws and intrusive methods [of punishment]. I categorically rejected the false accusations against leading workers of the CC of the Chinese Communist Party, the IKKI, and the other fraternal parties. As a result, when all these slanderous accusations against me were unsuccessful, I was presented with several so called witnesses with evidence against former IKKI workers, who had since been arrested by the NKVD and "unmasked" as complete criminals.

One of these woman, personally unknown to me, was a technical worker in the communications department at IKKI.....-----She received the task from the commander of her department, Miuller-Mel'nikov. In 1935-1936 she was to establish a connection with two easterners, one of whom was me, Krymov, working at that time in the eastern department.

If the question is that of receiving material through me representing the interests of enemy intelligence, then that was simply nonsense. All material coming from other countries was held by Miuller-Mel'nikov. He was the only one familiar with such material. If Miuller required the translation of such material into Russian, he could count on my work. My work was in fine order. If Miuller had decided to engage me in his criminal activity, it would have been pointless, as in any case he could do this himself and without the input of important personnel such as Williams.-----

It is clear that the evidence of Williams about her reception from Miuller of material from me, that he had received from me and was holding, implicating me in some sort of criminal activity, is absurd. Williams herself in her accusations did not say anything about whether or not I managed to do any of this, or whether or not she received any material from me, or when, where, and how [all of this occurred].

Then I was presented with the accusations of still another old colleague, Gartman. She once studied in a political circle [study group] which I led. Never under any circumstances did I have any romantic relations with her. She writes that once at the end of 1935, she passed on espionage material concerning the Korean question to Youshangyu; she was very embarrassed to see me, having worked in that same office. The latter [Youshangyu] had told her that Krymov is a religious person. From this she came to the conclusion that Krymov also was a member of counterrevolutionary [espionage] organs.

First, I never worked in the same office with Youshangyu. He worked in an office with several colleagues in the secretariat of Kuusenin. I worked in a completely different office with colleagues in the secretariat of Dimitrov. Second, it is completely incomprehensible to me why anyone pays any attention to Gartman. Indeed is it not obvious that passing on [such] material during working hours in an office would arouse the suspicion of one's colleagues?

It's obvious that the accusations of Gartman against me are a lie. I denied ever being in the same headquarters with Gartman and Youshangyu.

Third, [regarding] the accusation about my former [association with] Japan: Volk writes that I studied in the history-party [department at the] institute of red professors, where the director was Knorin, who subsequently turned out to be an

enemy of the people, from which he comes to the conclusion that I must be a member of counter-revolutionary [espionage] organizations. However, further on he adds that he does not have any information about my criminal activities, and that he has no connection to me.

It is completely evident that the accusations of Volk offer no proof of my criminal activities.

I requested [to address] the accusations of Knorin at headquarters with Knorin and Volk, but my request was rejected.

The fourth accusation about me was given by Youshangyu. He writes that I had a conversation about the situation in Manchuria with the anti-party group of Chugunov—a former member of the CP of China.

Undoubtedly, I had conversations with Youshangyu not only about Manchuria but on other political problems concerning our work, but never did Youshangyu communicate to me that such conversations were related to any criminal intent. Indeed can conversations with colleagues at work be evaluated in this way as criminal activity?

Regarding the anti-party activities of Chugunov, they have no connection to me. Everyone knows, including Youshangyu, that I was one of those in the lead in the struggle against the anti-party activities of Chugunov and recommended to IKKI that Chugunov be removed from his work at the International Lenin School. In 1934, during the exchange [verification] of party cards, Chugunov was excluded from the party.

Subsequently Youshangyu testifies that he is acquainted with many members of counter-revolutionary organizations in the Comintern. He has a list, supposedly outlining a conspiracy at the IKKI, that of Vasil'evskii. My name is on this list.

I was shown this list composed by Youshangyu from memory. This is utter delirium. I consider it unnecessary to go through who is and who is not on this list, but will only say that many people on it have been in leading positions in the fraternal parties for decades. I was not acquainted with anyone on the list, and I have never been part of any counter-revolutionary organization. At [one meeting] at headquarters on this question I was accused by Youshangyu and Vasil'evskii.

The fifth accusation against me concerned the American secretariat [of the Comintern], who claimed that in the spring of 1937 at the instructions of Harry Pollitt he had conversations with me about a national front in China, and that he passed on material about this conversation to Harry Pollitt. [He claimed] that I worked as an agent of an "intelligence service." Such an absurdity does not even deserve a response. Everyone knows that Harry Pollitt until today is the General Secretary of the CC of the CP of England.

The sixth accusation against me was provided by Stern. He also described how he became acquainted with me in an apartment in Berzin, and a dinner in Berzin where he initiated a connection between me and Wang Ming and other Comintern workers. After this he understood that he could be completely open with these people. Subsequently, supposedly he had conversations with me in a Trotskyite spirit. He writes all about this.

This is a brazen lie. I never had any conversations in a Trotskyite spirit. And I was never even at the apartment in Berzin, or at the supposed dinner.

At [the meeting] at headquarters I was accused by Fred Stern of [these activities] in Berezin. I have no idea how Stern came up with these circumstances—was it intentional slander or prompted? But I am sure that in the future such lies should be evaluated by the court. I beg you in the future to verify these accusations.

In the beginning of March 1939 I wrote about the conclusion of these matters, and the case went before the Procurator, who informed me in writing. But at the end of March 1939 I again called to address Chekrykin Kobarni, who informed me that the Procurator returned my case and the investigation was beginning anew. Chekrykin subsequently used the most cruel measures to get more information out of me that would compromise the leaders of the CC of the CP of China and other [figures]. This took place regardless of the fact that I had been physically weakened significantly from my stay in the Leforbovsk Prison. I firmly decided to die without admitting to the slander against me or against other honest people. And after all this coercion used by Chekrykin was to no effect, he appealed for the help of an old Trotskyite-Zinov'ev scoundrel, Safarov, whom I had worked with in party organization since 1937.

Safarov writes that I systematically altered translations, that I in fact worked in the same office with Youshangyu, that I often communicated with Williams, that I often was at the apartment at Piatnitskii, that I participated in a [counter-revolutionary] group at IKKI, that I conducted criminal activities together with Safarov, Mad'iar, and others, and that all the accusations about my criminal activities were true.

Above all its is worth wondering how Safarov, who was arrested in 1934, was in a position to know what I was doing from 1935 to 1938, how he could verify these slanderous accusations unmasking my crimes in 1935-1938, how he could be aware of the activities of my IKKI colleagues in [19]35-36-37, and how he even knew the location of my office in 1937, with Youshangyu or somewhere else. Further, never at a single meeting did the question of my loss of documents given to me for translation ever come up. The documents at the Secretariat were translated at work and no one ever took them home. Even if such a matter came up, especially if more than once, the punishment would have been severe, but I never faced any accusations or punishments and remained at my responsible post.

When I unmasked all these accusations of a provocative character from Safarov, investigator Chekrykin informed me that the truth or not of all this was not important, that all the same I was not trusted and was untrustworthy.

The long investigation into my case concluded in this fashion.

27 April 1939 I was called to the preliminary court to hear the concluding accusations against me, presented by commander Sliadskiannii and Kabulovyi. There it was said that I through the help of Comintern workers and enemies of the people Knorin, Safarov (!), Mif and Aleksandr had returned from China to enroll for studies at KUTV, IKP, and IKKI and NIINKP and join a counter-revolutionary right Trotskyite organization, whose goal was to damage the Chinese revolution and bring about the downfall of the Chinese Communist Party. I was not allowed to address these accusations and there was no evidence and all my personal documents were destroyed.

The War College of the Supreme Court at the initiative of Kondalbin, on 27 April 1939, after an investigation came to the conclusion that I was an agent of Japanese intelligence since 1931 and a member of a Trotskyite organization, that I carried on anti-Soviet activities, and based on Article 58 I was sentenced to the deprivation of my personal freedom for fifteen years and to five years deprived of all personal property.

The sentence was extremely unjust. There was no evidence about my crimes, and the only material presented against me were the accusations of “witnesses,” which were lies about how I in detail organized and was involved in the materials presented before the court.

Among the accusatory materials in the conclusion and sentence, there was nothing connected to me concerning my activities at work, or my trip to the Soviet Union. I was in the Soviet Union on komandirovka [work-related travel] from the CC of the Chinese CP, and nothing in the accusations identified people that I had worked with, or others [were identified] who had never been Comintern workers at that time and had never had anything to do with my work or studies or decisions in party organization.

There was not any material that addressed how I have been drawn into any kind of organization, either in 1939 or in any year. There was not a single fact that addressed any collaborators, or how I, sitting in Moscow, was able through my compatriots to harm the Chinese revolution, or through someone else contribute to the deterioration of the Chinese revolution.

There were not any materials proving my direct or even indirect participation in counter-revolutionary activities, or how I in my work brought about any harm to the Soviet Union or the Chinese revolution.

Through the course of the past year the sentence was directed not at my actual name, but at a distorted name that never belonged to me. My statement about this sentence also was not received with reference to my name, Guo Zhaotang, but for some reason was attached to some other name unknown to me, Zhan Papiuk.

The prosecuting organs and the court are also mistaken in their use of slanderous material against me, and all the other documents detailing [my] positive work and contributions were destroyed.

The court did not conduct a careful preliminary investigation or examination into the materials. I was not given the opportunity to prepare materials or find living witnesses, but was confronted at headquarters by people who slandered me. The court and the investigation even ignored the fact that I had never had any close relationship to the people who slandered me and that some of them were completely unknown to me personally, such as Williams and my political enemy, Safarov.

At the same time there was absolutely no evidence that I had any links at work to counter-revolutionary groups, and, what is especially important, there was not a single accusation from my compatriots—the Chinese—among whom I lived and worked throughout my life, about anything inappropriate in my conduct. This entire case from beginning to end is a pure falsification. I am a victim of a villainous provocation from enemies whose goal is the destruction and murder of honest party and Soviet cadres.

I implore you to look over my case, the accusations, and the sentence in order to close the matter and end my current exile, so that it won't be in vain that I have served my 15 year undeserved sentence.

I never was and never became an enemy. As before, I remain devoted to the communist party, the Soviet government, and the government of People's China.

During my years of imprisonment and exile I have not lost my strength, and labored

in good conscience, and even had a series of successes. I am firmly assured that the confused and hostile provocations will be untangled and I will be rehabilitated. I have a clean conscience, and under the threat of death I did not give up on myself or other honest people.

I know the majority of the leadership of the CC of the Chinese CP, in particular Zhou Enlai (the Premier of the State Administrative Council), Liu Shaoqi (the General Secretary of the CC CCP), Zhang Wentian (the Ambassador of the PRC to the USSR), and others.

During my arrest and sentencing, there were not any older and responsible workers of the Chinese CP in Moscow. Wang Xiasen was then in Moscow, but he was very sick. The leadership of the Chinese CP was far away. There were not any of my Chinese comrades in Moscow to provide a correct report about me, or to look after me.

The work of the CPSU and the Chinese CP concerning party cadres gave me the opportunity to receive a Marxist-Leninist education. I was the only Chinese to finish the Institute of Red Professors and I received a scholarly degree in the USSR. At the moment when I should have returned to my homeland, to devote my strength to the struggle for the liberation of the Chinese people at a terrifying time in its experience, villainous enemies disrupted my political life in my most fruitful years.

I want to give the remainder of my life to the Chinese people—especially now, when my homeland is successfully constructing socialism, taking the path for which I have struggled for a quarter of a century but from which I have been cut off. In the event of rehabilitation I ask for any sort of work on behalf of the party, whether it be in the USSR or in China.

If I am not allowed to see the free land of my much-suffering homeland, please let my comrades in the struggle know that I never was their enemy, and that I always in my thoughts hope for the best for my people, for which I have dedicated my life from childhood.

24 January 1954 Krymov  
Noril'sk