

December 31, 1959

**Memorandum of Conversation with the Deputy
Chairmen of the People's Committee of the City of
Shanghai, and the CPC City Committee Candidate,
Liu Shuzhou, 16 December 1959**

Citation:

"Memorandum of Conversation with the Deputy Chairmen of the People's Committee of the City of Shanghai, and the CPC City Committee Candidate, Liu Shuzhou, 16 December 1959", December 31, 1959, Wilson Center Digital Archive, GARF f. 9576, op. 18, 1959, d. 26, l. 340-346. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Austin Jersild.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/116829>

Summary:

Liu Shuzou, the CPC City Committee Candidate, describes the Shanghai delegation's recent one-week educational visit to Leningrad. According to Liu, the delegation was received well by the Leningraders, and the Chinese were impressed by the city, Soviet culture, education, and a general improvement in standard of living

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

From the diary
of A.I. Elizavetin

Copy
SECRET. Copy No. 2
31 December 1959
No. 73

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

With the deputy chairmen of the People's Committee of the city of Shanghai, and the CPC City Committee candidate and secretary, Liu Shuzhou, of 16 December 1959

On 16 December I invited Liu Shuzhou to dinner, who just returned from the Soviet Union, where he was the deputy head of a OKSD delegation as well as the head of the Shanghai delegation in Leningrad, and also Li Qitao, the secretary of the Shanghai City Committee Komsomol and the head of the youth delegation of Shanghai which visited Leningrad. Between us a conversation took place, in which from the Chinese side the deputy general secretary of the Shanghai OKSD branch, Jiang Yan, was also present, as well as responsible personnel of the Foreign Branch of the People's Committee of the city of Shanghai, Cheng Yinxing and Wang Moyi.

At my request Liu Shuzhou shared his impressions of the trip to the Soviet Union.

Liu Shuzhou said that he had already presented his impressions in a report on his trip to the Soviet Union at a large meeting of the OKSD administration, attended by more than 300 representatives of public life (obshchestvennost') of the city. In the words of Liu Shuzhou, he soon must present on this question to a meeting of the city people's committee and at a mass meeting of labor representatives in Shanghai. Besides this, it has been suggested that he write two articles about his trip to the Soviet Union. Liu Shuzhou as a joke noted that writing these articles was a lot more difficult than the public presentations. The remaining members of the delegation will present in their institutions. Li Qitao added that he had already given a 20 minute speech about the trip of the youth delegation of Shanghai to Leningrad before students, and a 7 minute presentation on radio. Besides this, one of the delegation members, a young worker from the Shanghai Electro-Technical Factory, presented at a meeting of workers in his factory.

Liu Shuzhou noted that Leningrad made quite an impression on the members of the delegation, where they spent 7 days. We, he said, were very glad to be presented with the opportunity to familiarize ourselves with the life of the Soviet Union and at the same time we feel bad that we have not taken the trouble to do the same for your leading comrades. The administrative comrades from the Leningrad CPSU City Committee themselves composed a program for our stay in the city, and dedicated much care to the living situation of the members of our delegation, especially in regard to cooking. We, he said, should learn from this when we host your delegations, as often we do not consider the [culinary] tastes of the Soviet comrades.

It is especially important, continued Liu Shuzhou, that we were presented with the opportunity to become acquainted with various issues in the life of the Soviet Union, and with Soviet people. We met not only with leading personnel in Leningrad, but with representatives from public life (obshchestvennost') in the city. Cde. Boikov, the CPSU City Committee secretary, was especially considerate [to us] during our stay in Leningrad. She organized for us a meeting with writers from Leningrad in the city branch of the Union of Writers, and also with old Bolsheviks of this heroic city in the Gor'kii Palace of Culture, where we conversed with members of a communist labor brigade. We also had an evening on the "Aurora" cruiser with participants of the

October Revolution. We deeply valued all of these evenings and conversations. The delegation visited one metallurgical enterprise in Leningrad where the warm meeting made a great impression on the members of our delegation. After the meeting the members of the delegation conversed with secretaries of the party organization, the head engineer, and brigadiers from the communist labor brigade. Liu Shuzhou emphasized that the members of the delegation were very pleased that at this factory the Soviet friends "warmly congratulated the Chinese comrades for their own successes in their Homeland." It can be said, added Liu Shuzhou, that our stay in Leningrad was not for entertainment, and that we learned much.

Leningrad is a very great city, continued Liu Shuzhou, and there is much there worth seeing. Indeed, in one week we were unable to see everything, but saw the main tourist sites of the city.

Having said that during the trip to Leningrad the delegation had a conversation with Cde. Boikova about party work and [a conversation] with the main architect of the city, Liu Shuzhou noted that [both] party work and the urban architecture of Leningrad are useful for Shanghai.

In the words of Liu Shuzhou, the workers of the OSKD branches welcomed the delegation warmly and enthusiastically. He said that they not only know their region well but are able clearly and concisely to present it; all your OSKD workers are very talented. Our OSKD workers do not have experience in the presentation of short and concise reports that are needed by members of a delegation. Liu Shuzhou asked me again to thank Leningraders for the fine reception of the delegation.

Answering a question, Liu Shuzhou said that because of insufficient time and the intensity of the program of the delegation, unfortunately, they did not manage to visit a collective farm or a worker's home.

In this regard I became interested in whether or not the delegation expressed its opinion beforehand in terms of suggestions to the program.

Your workers, Liu Shuzhou said, were interested in our suggestions, but it was difficult for us to express our opinion since we did not know the city. We, added Liu Shuzhou, know that the Soviet comrades know well how to put together a program, and therefore we rely more on them.

In response to the question of whether or not the members of the delegation were satisfied with the program, Liu Shuzhou answered that they "should be satisfied with it." But if we had communicated our suggestions on the program, he added, they undoubtedly would have been accommodated. In his words, the busy program was in part because of the circumstances of the Chinese students studying in Leningrad, who put together a warm reception for the delegation, literally laying siege to the hotel where the delegation stayed, and it was impossible not to devote time to discussions with them about matters in the PRC.

During his presentation Li Qitao noted that the Soviet comrades devote considerable attention to the daily life of the Chinese students, and help them acquire the Russian language. It was especially pleasing to see how you took measures in the course of two weeks to mark the 10th anniversary of the PRC. Almost every Chinese student received a present during these days from Soviet students.

Liu Shuzhou affirmed what Li Qitao said, and added that during the 10th anniversary of the PRC the Chinese students studying in Leningrad were glad to receive invitations from the students of Tallin to visit their city, in which there are no Chinese students. Your comrades, said Liu Shuzhou, praised the Chinese students, and during

discussions with our students indicated that they should be grateful to the Soviet government for providing them with the conditions to study.

During dinner Liu Shuzhou as if by chance noted that after returning from Leningrad to Moscow, the delegation found out that the Leningrad newspapers "for some reason presented us not as a Shanghai delegation, but as a group of representatives of an All-Chinese OKSD delegation, when we were in a Shanghai delegation." Besides this, in the words of Liu Shuzhou, the Leningrad newspapers did not publish the letter of greeting from the CCP Shanghai City Committee to the CPSU Leningrad City Committee. Perhaps, he added, there were many other communications at this same time, and the newspapers did not have enough space to publish the letter.

After the dinner the conversations continued. Liu Shuzhou again asked me to pass on their gratitude to the Leningrad comrades for the warm reception, and said that if they had not permitted some "liberalism" in the composition of the program, then the members of the delegation would not have seen so much in Leningrad.

Your comrades, he said, know how to organize short discussions and other measures in the reception of delegations. This is very good. We should learn much from you in this regard. "If you are not lazy, when going to the Soviet Union," he continued, "you can learn much everywhere and constantly in numerous areas."

I asked Liu Shuzhou to talk about his most significant impressions, in his opinion, about what might be learned in the Soviet Union.

Above all, answered Liu Shuzhou, the great labor enthusiasm and spirit of the Soviet people in their fulfillment of the tasks of the first year of the seven-year plan is striking. And second are the especially warm feelings which Soviet people have for Chinese people and the great interest of Soviet people in the problems of socialist construction in the PRC. Regarding what might be learned from study in the Soviet Union, there is much to say. In my opinion, he said, the CPSU and the Soviet government very effectively train their cadres. In your country after the October revolution a great quantity of highly qualified cadres have been prepared. We, for example, managed to meet with the chairman of the Sverdlov Collective Farm in langiul'sk region, not far from Tashkent. Earlier in the course of ten years he worked as a regional party secretary, and now three times he has been a Hero of Socialist Labor. He conducts himself very modestly, like a regular collective farm worker. This is a very valuable cadre. The main thing is that your specialists are specialists in specific areas. The high level of preparation of your cadres was striking to us. In Tallin, for example, we visited a pedagogical institute, where the course of study was for five years. The institute prepares teachers for grammar schools. Nowhere in the world are there more of such institutes, or more grammar school teachers prepared at such a high level.

Discussing the material circumstances of workers in the USSR, Liu Shuzhou said that in the Soviet Union now "the words of Marx and Engels about the necessity of providing people with the necessities of food, clothing, and daily life are being fulfilled." The work in this area, he said, made a deep impression [on us]. The CPSU and the Soviet government devote significant attention to the improvement of the life of the people, and therefore the standard of living of the population in the Soviet Union is quickly improving, and there are many goods in the stores. Regarding this Li Qitao noted that the supply of the population with goods at present is much better than it was in 1953, which was the last time he was in the Soviet Union. In the opinion of Li Qitao, the prices of many goods in the Soviet Union have become very inexpensive now.

I was interested in the opinions of Liu Shuzhou regarding necessary measures for the further strengthening of ties between Shanghai and Leningrad.

Liu Shuzhou answered that this question must be studied in connection with the agreements concluded by the OKSD delegation with VOKS, which is considering the further strengthening of the links between the Soviet Union and China. During our stay in Leningrad, he said, we considered the question of the establishment of links between diverse organizations in Shanghai and Leningrad, however we right away discovered that many already exist. Therefore we did not raise this question in the discussions. Now, continued Liu Shuzhou, we are studying the question of links between Shanghai and Leningrad in connection with OKSD. Connections between separate enterprises and institutions are already extensive. The matter today consists in the adjustment and strengthening of these links. To us it is well-known, further said Liu Shuzhou, that there are cases where our comrades in letters request various gifts of your comrades, from tractors to post stamps to chocolate. This is not good. It is clear that the work of establishing connections must be adjusted and its administration strengthened.

Liu Shuzhou noted that the trip to Leningrad was very valuable for everyone, and especially for the Komsomol members and youth, as this heroic city is full of revolutionary monuments.

Finishing his discussion, Liu Shuzhou said that Chinese comrades must learn how to welcome guests as they do in the Soviet Union. Regarding this Jiang Yan added that Liu Shuzhou had already discussed this topic with here and that the OKSD workers need to learn how to treat delegations from the Soviet Union, although there the staff of the OSKD is smaller than that of the OKSD.

In parting, Li Qitao asked to pass on to the Leningrad comrades that in preparation of the youth delegation to Shanghai they pay attention to the Chinese Spring festival which takes places at the end of January. It would be desirable if their stay in Shanghai did not coincide with the Spring festival, as the Chinese comrades will be on vacation.

Vice-consul M. Chekunov took part in the conversation.

NOTE: On 30 December 1959, at the reception of Soviet specialists to mark the coming of the new year organized by the City Committee of Shanghai, I had a discussion with Cao Diqu and Liu Shuzhou, secretaries of the CCP Shanghai City Committee. We discussed the matter of the study of Chinese experience. I mentioned that it would be useful for our specialists to study as deeply as possible the economic and political processes currently underway in the PRC, as this would help them build close ties to Chinese conditions as they orient to their new work circumstances. Besides this, in the return of the specialist to the [Soviet] Union, he will be in a better position to more fully and deeply communicate to the Soviet people the [nature of] socialist construction in the PRC, as interest in this in the Soviet Union is enormous. Liu Shuzhou, agreeing with me about the necessity of the better organization of work regarding an acquaintance with Chinese conditions and promising to present several lectures for Soviet specialists from the administrative workers in Shanghai, said that during his stay in the Soviet Union he managed to meet with Soviet people who knew almost nothing about the communes in China and the Great Leap. One scientific worker asked me, continued Liu Shuzhou, whether it's true or not that in the PRC they do not intend to mechanize agriculture as there is nowhere else to make use of the labor force that will result [from mechanization]. I managed to explain to him, finished Liu Shuzhou, the inaccuracy of these views.

In my opinion the views of Liu Shuzhou about the fact that many Soviet people almost know nothing about the communes and the Great Leap in China can be understood as a clear allusion to the fact that in the Soviet press these matters, in his opinion, are insufficiently discussed.

GENERAL CONSUL OF THE USSR in SHANGHAI
□ELIZAVETIN

2-RK/tsh
1-t. Andropov
2-OSKD
No. 469-dv
6.IV.60.