

April 8, 1960
**Excerpt from the Political Report of the Soviet
Embassy in China for 1959**

Citation:

"Excerpt from the Political Report of the Soviet Embassy in China for 1959", April 8, 1960, Wilson Center Digital Archive, GARF f. 9576, op. 18, 1960, d. 26, l. 331-338. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Austin Jersild.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/116830>

Summary:

This excerpt from the USSR embassy in the PRC highlights the development and strengthening of the Chinese-Soviet friendship, cultural exchange, and exchange of knowledge and expertise in the year 1959. This was achieved with the help of the Society of Chinese Soviet Friendship and other active social organizations. The report concludes with goals for the upcoming year.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

SECRET. Copy No. 1
8 April 1960
No. 231

EXCERPT

From the Political report of the USSR Embassy in the PRC
for 1959

The activities of the Society of Chinese-Soviet Friendship. Connections between the Embassy with the Society. This year the Society of Chinese Soviet Friendship along with the active participation of all the other social organizations has continued to play an important role in the development and strengthening of friendship and unity between the peoples of China and the Soviet Union, the strengthening of cultural exchange between our countries, and the rendering of aid regarding knowledge about the Soviet Union and the study of our experience to the broad masses of the PRC.

In 1959 the basic form of activity of the Central Administration and the local OKSD branches was the conducting of mass meetings with the participation of representatives from all layers of the population, the organization of reports, conversations and meetings with Soviet people located in the PRC, and the setting up of film festivals and photo-exhibits, the publication of material and propaganda help about the successes of the Soviet Union.

The Central Administration and the local OKSD branches conducted enormous propaganda work connected with famous dates and events in the life of the Soviet Union. The OKSD in collaboration with other state and social organizations in the PRC widely disseminated information about important political events, such as the 21st CPSU Congress, the launching of rockets and the cultural sputnik of the Soviet Union, the Solntsa [Sun], the 9th and 10th anniversaries of the Treaty of Friendship, Unity, and Mutual Aid between the Soviet Union and the PRC, the 42nd anniversary of the Great October socialist revolution, and the 10th anniversary of the creation of the OKSD, and more.

In the first half of this year the Society devoted significant work to the popularization of the report of N.S. Khrushchev on the seven-year plan of the Soviet Union and the seven-year plan itself. So, for example, the OKSD Central Administration and the OKSD branches in Beijing, Shanghai, the provinces of Liaoning, Hebei, Anhui, Sichuan, Guangdong, the autonomous region of Inner Mongolia and other cities and provinces (15 in all) organized extensive discussions with representatives from all levels of the population, dedicated to the 21st Congress of the CPSU and the advance of the USSR to the period of the developed construction of communism. Many responsible workers from the party, the state, and social organizations took an active part in these discussions, and also the activists from the democratic parties.

OKSD branches organized a large collection of reports and lectures by cadres, workers, military figures, and students about the 21st Congress of the CPSU and the seven-year plan, and instructional reports for propagandists and agitators. The Beijing branch of OKSD led a report on the theme of "The Seven-Year Plan of the Soviet Union and the enormous help rendered China by the Soviet Union" for some 1200 propagandists and agitators. The Shanghai branch led 3 sessions for 5,000 propagandists and agitators. The Xian OKSD branch organized 26 evening events with reports about the 21st Congress of the CPSU, attended by more than 34,000 people, and so on.

In its work of propagandizing the 21st party congress, the report of N.S. Khrushchev, and the 7-year plan, the OKSD utilized a variety of methods, including: the

composition and distribution to lower organizations of material for use in the publication of "bulletin boards" [(doskakh obozrenii), but in the Chinese context this refers to the posting of big-character posters in public places (dazibao)], radio broadcasts, brochures, articles of Soviet and Chinese authors in newspapers, and the printing of special collections of documents from the 21st Congress of the CPSU and brochures with reports from N.S. Khrushchev. All the local branches of the OKSD used preparatory Central Administration materials and publications in a large quantity of photo-exhibits about the 21st party congress and the 7-year plan, which were visited by thousands of people.

All of these measures allowed the popular masses of China to understand better the manner in which the construction of communism in the Soviet Union is unfolding, and to become acquainted with the struggle of the Soviet people for the construction of the seven-year plan.

In connection with the celebration of important dates the Central Administration and the local branches of OKSD devoted special attention to the propagandizing of the enormous and self-less aid rendered by the Soviet Union to China in its socialist construction, the necessity of strengthening [their] study of the experience of the Soviet Union, and the study of leading Soviet experience in science and technology. In articles and speeches, in reports and lectures, in photo-showcases and photo-exhibits, the administrators of the Central Administration and the local OKSD branches have routinely emphasized the significance of the help rendered to China by the Soviet Union over the course of the past ten years, evident in the construction with the help of the Soviet Union of large industrial enterprises that make up the heart of the industry of China in the first five-year plan. They have widely illuminated the help rendered China by the Soviet specialists.

Significant work was accomplished by the Society and other Chinese organizations in connection with the presentation of the Soviet exhibit on the peaceful uses of atomic energy in Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Chengdu. Numerous lectures about the help rendered China by the Soviet Union were delivered in the six month period when this exhibit was on display, in particular regarding the study and use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

At present the OKSD has created friendship and culture houses in twenty large and mid-level cities of China, including Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjian, Shenyang, Harbin, Guangzhou, Wuhan, Chongqing, Baotou, and others. In these cities the OKSD regularly leaders friendship evenings, reports, lectures, and organizes the display of Soviet pictures, photo-exhibits, and the creation of libraries, and so on.

This year the OKSD has devoted significant attention to the study of the Russian language. The local Society branches have created additional evening schools and correspondence courses and radio courses for the study of Russian.

The Central Administration and the local OKSD branches in the course of 1959 have done significant work in propagandizing and popularizing in China our weekly journal, "Soviet-Chinese Friendship," intended for Chinese readers and to acquaint the Chinese people with the Soviet Union. Consequently the number of individual subscribers to the journal has significantly risen; it was 35,000, and now is more than 50,000.

In 1959 the OKSD led in Beijing and other cities of the PRC a series of conferences for readers of the journal "Soviet-Chinese Friendship," and for radio listeners of Moscow Radio in Chinese for the PRC. All the suggestions and wishes for the improvement of the publications and the distribution of the journal were collected and sent to the editors of the journal. The subscription numbers to the journal for 1960 testify to the growth of its popularity in the PRC. In this regard an important role was also played

in Beijing in May 1959 by a special conference dedicated to the question of foreign propaganda in the PRC.

This year the OKSD organized large anniversary conferences, dedicated to the memory of cultural and scientific figures from the peoples of the USSR, including Gogol, Pushkin, Rainis, Khetagurov, Musorgskii, Mendeleev, Popov, Repin, and others. These measures of course were well-organized, and facilitated the strengthening of cultural ties between China and the Soviet Union and the enrichment of the cultural life of the peoples of both countries.

The Society observed the 89th anniversary of the birthday of V.I. Lenin in China at a very high mass-political level.

This year an exchange of delegations of the Societies of Friendship of China and the Soviet Union took place. A OSKD delegation led by A.F. Fedorov went to China for participation in the 1 May celebrations, the work of the 6th All-Chinese OKSD Conference, the 10th anniversary celebrations of the formation of the PRC, and a OSKD delegation led by N.S. Tikhonov [went to China] for the cultural events connected with the 10th anniversary of the formation of the OKSD and during its stay in China accomplished significant work and devised several measures for the strengthening of Soviet-Chinese friendship, presented lectures for large audiences, and took part in numerous meetings and discussions.

In 1959 the Central Administration of the OKSD sent to the Soviet Union two large delegations, headed by Cao Jinghua and Qian Junrui. These delegations took part in a variety of artist events, visited a series of republics and cities, and had numerous meetings with the workers of the Soviet Union. The reception granted by Cde. N.S. Khrushchev to the OKSD delegation led by Cao Jinghua made a big impression on Chinese society.

Another positive fact about the work of the OKSD worth noting is that after the return of the delegation of Chinese friends to their homeland they organized numerous presentations before large auditoriums to report on their trip to the Soviet Union, made speeches on radio and in the press, and published books and articles about the Soviet Union, further promoting the strengthening of friendship between the peoples of our countries.

In May 1959 in Beijing the 3rd All-Chinese Conference of the OKSD took place, proceeding on a high political level. Representatives of the Central Administration and the local OKSD branches, a OSKD delegation led by A.F. Fedorov, workers from the USSR Embassy, and representatives from different levels of the population - in all some 1000 people - took part in the work of the conference. Party and government leaders of the PRC such as Zhou Enlai, Dong Biwu, Lin Biao, Deng Xiaoping, Lin Boqu, Peng Zhen and others took part in the conference. The conference was opened by the Chair of the OKSD Central Administration, Song Qingling. The General Secretary of the Central Administration of the OKSD, Qian Junrui, presented reports about the work of the OKSD for the past four years. In the report many interesting details about the work of the Society were communicated. From 1955 in the branches of the OKSD in 23 provinces, cities, and autonomous regions there have been 18,516 reports and lectures, attended by more than 9,263,000 people, and the organization of more than 27,500 photo-exhibits, attended by more than 61,894,000 people. For the past several years the OKSD has published more than 101,370,000 copies of 756 different books and brochures, and 26,556,000 copies of 829 different forms of propaganda, and 4,268,000 sets of 334 different photograph and poster exhibits.

At the present time 68,067 people are studying the Russian language in evening programs organized by OKSD, and the number studying Russian through radio programs is 208,323 people.

Resolutions adopted by the conference noted the necessity of struggling for the further strengthening and development of Chinese-Soviet friendship, the realization of a wide level of exchange between the peoples of China and the Soviet Union, and the identification of new OKSD tasks.

The tenth anniversary of the creation of the OKSD was celebrated in the PRC in a creative fashion. Zhou Enlai, Song Qingling, Dong Biwu, Lin Boqu, Peng Zhen, Chen Yi, Wang Jiaxiang, Lu Dingyi, Go Moruo, the leaders of the democratic parties and people's organizations, representatives of all the levels of the population, the army, the national minorities, the representatives of Chinese emigrants returning to China, diplomatic representatives from socialist countries, members of the government delegations and members of the countries of Asia and Africa, and other foreign guests all took part in this meeting. In his report the Chairman of the Central Administration of the OKSD Song Qingling emphasized that "our friendship is supported by experience. In difficulties and in victories we are always together. History more and more convincingly demonstrates that Chinese-Soviet friendship is a powerful foundation for peace throughout the entire world and the progress of humanity."

This year as a result of the daily links established between the OKSD Central Administration and workers of the Embassy we have had the opportunity to more effectively, in contrast with the past, address issues that arise in connection with measures conducted to strengthen Chinese-Soviet friendship and the celebration of famous dates and anniversaries.

In the course of 1959 the colleagues of the Embassy have become acquainted with the activities of the 12 local branches of OKSD, in the cities of Guangzhou, Haikou, Chanxiang, Nanning, Guilin, Hefei, Hainan, Dal'nii, Chongqing, Shanghai, Hanzhou, and Kunming.

This familiarity with the work of the local branches of the OKSD has provided the opportunity to address mistakes and other tendencies in their work. In numerous places a series of lectures, reports, and evenings dedicated to the Soviet Union and Soviet-Chinese friendship are taking place only in connection with important dates. For example, for the first four months of 1959, which included rich and significant events in the life of the Soviet Union, the OKSD branch in Nanning offered only one lecture on the occasion of the signing of the Soviet-Chinese Treaty on friendship. In the province of Sichuan in 1959, the OKSD branch did not produce a single poster or brochure propagandizing Chinese-Soviet friendship and the achievements of the USSR, although last year there was many publications. Many photo-exhibits in the localities for a long period were not revived. The administrators of the local branches of the OKSD do not listen to our radio broadcasts in Chinese and do not know when they are available. The workers of OKSD poorly propagandize Soviet literature among the population, although the OKSD has spent significant resources on this. Especially unsatisfactory is the conditions of work among the branches far from the center [of the country] and the big cities, in the small cities and the countryside.

An acquaintance with the work of the local branches of the OKSD allows us to come to the conclusion that the experience of Soviet state construction, ideological work in the USSR, and our peace-loving foreign policy, do not occupy a significant place in their propaganda activities. The Central Administration and the local OKSD branches almost did not pay any propaganda attention to the trip of N.S. Khrushchev to the USA, and the idea of peaceful coexistence. In both Beijing and the localities the OKSD did not present any reports and conversations, and insufficiently distributed a documentary film about the trip of N.S. Khrushchev to America.

It is worth mentioning that the Soviet press does not publish material about the work

of the OSKD branches [either, so this criticism] does not apply only to the Chinese friends. Our Friendship Societies in the republics and people in cultural relations with foreign countries in the republics, in China as in our country, poorly publicize the practical activities of the Society in the press. In the opinion of the Embassy, it would be useful to more broadly publicize in the press and on the radio the work of several branches of the OKSD and the OSKD, which have already positive results in the matter of the propaganda of friendship between our countries.

In November of 1959 in Moscow, at the initiative of the OSKD, for the first time an agreement on collaboration between the Unions of Soviet Societies of Friendship and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries, the OSKD and the OKSD, was signed. The signing of this agreement was positively received by the Chinese friends and should play an important role in the further development and strengthening of connections between the friendship societies of both countries.

The Embassy intends in 1960 to strengthen connections to the leadership of OKSD and its local branches, and render more help in the fulfillment of collaboration plans between the societies in 1960.

This year the Embassy intends to take measures calculated to strengthen personal contacts and links of collaboration between the Embassy personnel and that of the Central Administration and the Beijing branch of OKSD, [and encourage] the more active participation of Embassy personnel and Soviet specialists in OKSD programs. With the goal of acquainting Embassy personnel with the work of the local OKSD branches and establishing working contacts, this year a series of regular trips of Embassy personnel will be planned to the localities, and a series of protocol measures will be hosted by the Embassy (receptions, film showings, friendship evenings, and so on) for leaders and activists in the Central Administration, the Beijing Branch of OKSD, and the leading branches in factories, communes, educational institutions, so as to broaden exposure to our film collection at the public showings in the House of Culture at the Beijing OKSD branch.

I-VI/IK

No. 485-dv

I.IV.60.