

June 17, 1955

**From the Journal of P. F. Yudin: Note of
Conversation with Comrade Mao Zedong on 25 May
1955**

Citation:

"From the Journal of P. F. Yudin: Note of Conversation with Comrade Mao Zedong on 25 May 1955", June 17, 1955, Wilson Center Digital Archive, AVP RF , f. 0100, op. 48, papka 393, d. 9, ll. 107-112. Translated by Paul Wingrove.

<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/118667>

Summary:

Mao discusses several Chinese reactionary figures, including Hu Feng, Gao Gang and Rao Shushi.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

From the Journal of P. F. Yudin, 7 April 1955

Note of Conversation with Comrade Mao Zedong on 30 March 1955

Today I visited Cde. Mao Zedong and handed to him the text of the letter from the CPSU CC of 23 May addressed to the central committees of parties which are members of the InformBuro. Cde. Mao referred to this letter and the CPSU's proposals most approvingly and stated that these measures seemed principled and absolutely right. Cde. Mao expressed his gratitude to the CPSU CC for sending the aforementioned letter.

In the further course of conversation, Cde. Mao raised a number of questions of an inner-party nature. On the question of the activity of the reactionary figure Hu Feng, Cde. Mao said that it was now clear that Hu Feng was a central figure in a reactionary underground organization which had support either from the GMD or the Japanese secret service. Cde. Mao said that Hu Feng, who in 1925 led the Komsomol organization in Beijing, in that same year apprised Comrade Chen Yi, leader of the Beijing communist underground organization, that he was resigning the leadership of the Komsomol due to the difficulties and dangers of the work. During that time Hu Feng bore the name Zhang Yinda.

In the GMD period Hu Feng was with the forces of the Yunnan militarists, nominally part of the forces under Chiang Kai-shek, but in fact with forces operating independently in the Yunnan province. There he carried out political work, holding the position of head of department in the political directorate of the Yunnan forces. The GMD arrested Hu Feng twice, but soon after his arrest he was found to be at liberty, which he explained by saying he had escaped. In the period of particularly severe repression by the Japanese government of all progressive forces and persons (1928-1937), Hu Feng was in Japan. At that time the Japanese government did not repress the Japanese writer Bai Hua Zi [Chinese transcription], at present the wife of CCP CC member Yi Bian [Chinese transcription], or Hu Feng. Comrade Mao made the suggestion that in this period Hu Feng could have been recruited by the GMD or Japanese secret service.

The present struggle against Hu Feng and the continuing investigation of his affairs by organs of the CCP had shown that Hu Feng had and still has his people in many responsible areas of work. His supporters are found in the Propaganda Department of the CCP CC. One of the main advisers to Hu Feng was deputy head of the department of Marxism-Leninism in the Beijing People's University, and one of the editors of the CC newspaper Renmin Ribao was also a supporter of his. He has representatives in nearly all the main cities of China (Shanghai, Hangzhou, Xian, Chongqing etc) who worked—and some of them still work—in the party apparatus or on the cultural front. Among the known supporters of Hu Feng we estimate that up to 200 are members of the CCP, but there must be others. Hu Feng and his people lead a certain portion of the intelligentsia, perhaps up to 5%. To our appeals to Hu Feng's supporters, said Cde. Mao, to acknowledge their mistakes and make common cause with the party, they maintained silence, and some of them are still silent at the present time. Some particular supporters of Hu Feng, after they had confessed their mistakes before the party, went to Hu Feng and repented, declaring that their confessions were a mistake. Com. Mao said that people could act like that, getting in with the party or abasing themselves. On this he mentioned that during the last exchange of party cards up to 350,000 members (from seven million) were screened out for crimes against the party or against the people, for moral turpitude or for joining the party out of careerist or other motives. However there were still a few people of that sort in the party, against whom a serious struggle is being carried out. All this bears witness to the fact that in the PRC class war is getting sharper and sharper. We are using the example of Hu Feng and his supporters to educate the party cadres and the intelligentsia, said Cde. Mao.

Further in the conversation Cde. Mao talked about the anti-party bloc of Gao Gang and Rao Shushi. On this he said that Gao Gang and Rao Shushi stuck to two methods

in their anti-party activity. Gao Gang was an individual without morals, intending to seize power; amongst his own supporters he said that around Mao Zedong two untrustworthy groups had arisen: one headed by Liu Shaoqi which also included Bo Yibo, Li Fuchun, Li Lantao, An Ziwen and others; the second, headed by Zhou Enlai, which includes quite a number of people. Gao Gang, on the other hand, speaks out against these groups to defend Mao Zedong.

Cde. Mao remarked that Gao Gang in the course of one week arranged eight evening dances: whenever he felt like dancing he gave instructions to round up women. Cde. Mao remarked on Gao Gang's political unscrupulousness. He said that he got close to a shadowy figure Zhang Menyuan and made him the link between himself and the consulate-general in Mukden. Zhang Menyuan was expelled from the ranks of the CCP in 1926, but on the insistence of Gao Gang was re-admitted to the party, sent to a party school for re-education, and then after the liberation of the north-east was moved to Mukden by Gao Gang to work in the NE bureau of the CCP CC.

Cde. Mao said that Gao Gang, during Cde. Tevosyan's visit to the PRC sought in all sorts of ways to get on the trip to the Northeast, even though the CC had intended to send Li Fuchun. Gao Gang had the opportunity to travel with Tevosyan due to Li Fuchun being ill with a cold. I replied to Cde. Mao that I also travelled in the NE with Com. Tevosyan and that during the journey Gao Gang talked twice with us, in the main about the organization of GOSPLAN in the USSR and that he, Gao Gang did not act in any special way to get close to us.

Cde. Mao, having raised this question of Gao travelling with Tevosyan evidently wanted to suggest that Gao did intend to get close to responsible figures in the Soviet government who came to China, in order to get information out of them.

Cde. Mao said that Rao Shushi had conducted underground work of service to the GMD and foreign secret services, while trying to appear loyal to the party. He had a hand in the nomination of Pan Hannian, who was connected with the American, Japanese and GMD secret services, to the posts of Deputy Mayor of Shanghai and Deputy Secretary of the Shanghai organization of the CCP. Rao Shushi, Yan Feng and Pan Hannian together headed a counter-revolutionary organization.

Pan Hannian kept the Chiang Kai-shek clique informed about everything. Very important materials were sent to Taiwan in Jan-Feb 1950. Information about the arrival of a Soviet air division in the Shanghai area was sent to Taiwan by Pan Hannian. An air raid on Shanghai on 6 Feb. 1950, carried out by GMD aircraft, was carried out at Pan Hannian's bidding. As a result of his work on behalf of the Chiang Kai-shek clique, following their expulsion from the mainland, Pan Hannian was decorated four times by Chiang. Documentation of these decorations, as well as other evidence, had fallen into the hands of the relevant organs of the PRC.

Com. Mao said that 1953 was a particularly difficult year for the CCP. He recounted that before leaving Hangzhou, at one session of the Politburo, on 24 December 1953, he said that the CCP had two headquarters, of which one was acting openly, struggling to overcome difficulties, while the other was acting secretly, taking advantage of difficulties to struggle against the official headquarters—the Party Central Committee—and spreading all sorts of rumors. At that time, according to Mao, he did not name the leaders of the underground 'headquarters', but at a meeting Gao Gang and Rao Shushi were very downcast. They were, as Mao put it, very dispirited when the CPSU materials concerning the anti-party activity of Beria were read out.

Turning to international questions and referring to the visit of Menon to Beijing, Cde. Mao said that in the course of the ten days of his visit to Beijing Menon discussed the Chinese-American talks concerning Taiwan. Menon met with many PRC governmental figures. By prior agreement amongst themselves members of the government of the

CCP gave Menon quite a few different answers. The responses of some members of the government put Menon in an optimistic mood, and the replies of others, in a pessimistic mood. For example, Zhu De's announcement that "if the Americans want to fight, then we are ready for war", made Menon shudder. Menon was told something in general about China's attitude to direct Sino-American talks. It was noted on this that if everything that was told to Menon became known to all those states who might wish to act as intermediaries, then others might take the initiative as intermediaries. Apart from India, among those who might wish to act as intermediaries in talks were England, Burma, Indonesia and Pakistan. It was said to Menon that India would be preferred as an intermediary for talks. Taking this position, said Cde. Mao, the Indians will not even tell Britain all that they have heard in Beijing. Cde. Mao noted that [Great Britain's Prime Minister Anthony] Eden himself wanted to come to China from Singapore to act as an intermediary. But in reply to his proposal to visit Beijing after the conclusion of the Bangkok conference the PRC intentionally gave an answer that meant Eden would refuse to come. In giving this answer the government of the PRC proceeded from the fact that the position of the government of Great Britain on the Taiwan question was almost exactly the same as the position of the government of the USA. Eden's letters sent from Singapore and London (after his return from Singapore) differed considerably in tone from each other. In the letter from Singapore, Eden tried to intimidate China, saying that the PRC's policy on Taiwan could lead to world war. In the letter from London this intimidation was not present. At the moment Britain's position on Taiwan is a little different from America's.

Cde. Mao talked about the flight to Beijing of Satroamidjoyo [Russian transcription], Prime Minister of Indonesia. He said that Satroamidjoyo, scared by provocations in Hong Kong, did not want to disembark at Hong Kong, but flew directly to Canton.

The conversation lasted more than two hours. Shi Zhe and T.F. Skvortsov also attended.

Ambassador of the USSR in China, P. F. Yudin.