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Record of Conversation between Mao Zedong and A.A. Gromyko

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Summary:

A.A. Gromyko and Mao Zedong discussed Sino-Soviet relations, U.S. relations with Taiwan and Chiang Kai-shek, Chinese economic policy and conditions in comparison to industrialized countries, Chinese foreign policy and relations with the U.S. and Britain, the United Nations, Stalin, and Soviet leadership.

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RECORD OF A CONVERSATION
BETWEEN MAO ZEDONG and A. A. GROMYKO
19 November 1957

A conversation with A. A. Gromyko was held in the Kremlin this evening at the initiative of Mao Zedong.

Mao Zedong warmly greeted the arrival of A. A. Gromyko. He recalled the meeting with him during his first stay in Moscow in 1949-1950.

During the conversation Mao Zedong displayed interest in the work of the USSR MFA, noting at the time that in China they are assiduously watching the intense work of the Soviet MFA. He said that Soviet diplomats have "to sometimes fight not only for themselves, but for all of us". Aregards me, Mao Zedong noted, I always support you, though, it is true, I remain "behind your back".

A. A. Gromyko noted that in all matters in the international arena the Soviet representatives feel the support of People's China, which is present with us at all conferences, unseen.

Mao Zedong dwelled further on some issues of PRC foreign policy. He stated that the PRC always supports the foreign policy measures of the Soviet Union. On the question of relations with the US, China is trying to stand "further from them". He stressed that on this issue the CPC holds to the following main policy: not to establish diplomatic relations with the US for 10-15 years. Such a policy is to China's advantage, he noted. The pursuit of this policy is facilitated by "the existence of the Taiwan problem". He noted, the US wants to consider Taiwan an independent state. This, too, is to our advantage. On this issue, he jokingly noted, we have become brothers with Dulles. There is only one apprehension, he continued, that in certain economic conditions or under the influence of internal forces in Taiwan that the US will abandon Chiang Kai-shek and "try to find its way to us on the mainland". In this event certain difficulties will arise.

We, stressed Mao Zedong, developing his thought, have stated officially the desirability of establishing diplomatic relations with all countries, although in fact this is not always desirable for us, and in individual cases brings us even more harm than benefit. In political terms and in population the PRC is a large country, but economically it is a weak country. He said, most of all we are afraid that the US will establish official relations with us and infiltrate the continent. There are five million intellectuals and 700,000 members of capitalist families in China. Among these categories a considerable part support socialism, but part of them are right-wing elements and represent an intelligence network of the US and other Western countries.

The PRC cannot compete with the capitalist countries of the West in economic terms

since it has neither the necessary goods for foreign trade nor enough hard currency. For these reasons a lack of diplomatic relations with the US is to the PRC's advantage. Dulles also rendered us a certain service in his policy with respect to the PRC. We are happy that he does not want to recognize us. If we manage to drag out the period of non-recognition for a long time, maybe for 50 years, then a real possibility will arise of catching up to the US. Economically, 10 five-year plans will evidently be required for this. Mao Zedong noted here that this was the picture at the present time: by the end of the first five-year plan China will produce 5,200,000 tons of steel; the US, 100 million tons, Britain 20 million tons, Germany, 20 million tons, France, 16 million tons, and Japan 10 million tons. Italy is about at the current level as China in the production of steel. Therefore, he said, Italy does not scare us. From everything which was said above, Mao Zedong stressed, the only conclusion that presents itself is that the PRC needs to firmly hold to the planned foreign policy with respect to the US and other capitalist countries.

He asked whether Gromyko shared this point of view.

A. A. Gromyko replied that this policy of the CCP is reasonable and correct. Gromyko added that this policy, as we understand the situation, is not in contradiction with the position of the Soviet Union and the other friends of the PRC, which constantly raise questions in the international arena about the admission of the PRC to the UN, and thus about the need to normalize Chinese-American relations.

Mao Zedong agreed with this comment and said that in its public statements the PRC government also stresses this fact and criticizes the die-hard positions of several countries which are not letting the PRC into the UN.

A. A. Gromyko then shared with Mao Zedong his impressions about the reaction in the US to PRC foreign policy in the recent period. He stressed the fact that the principled and calm position of the PRC on the issue of the establishment of diplomatic relations with the US and the other capitalist countries forces the Americans, with all their hostility toward China, to respect it in the sense in which the Americans respect power and restraint.

Mao Zedong agreed with this comment. He again pointed to the fact that in China they are not displaying the slightest haste in the establishment of diplomatic relations with the US. The Geneva talks between the PRC and US ambassadors might be held for another 20 years and we can well wait. As is well-known, he continued, in Korea the negotiations with the Americans also lasted two years and did not lead to results until the Americans were forced to an agreement in connection with the successes at the front of the Korean-Chinese army.

A. A. Gromyko then noted that, judging from the impression which he formed from his time in America that for their part the ruling circles of the US could scarcely take real steps to improve relations with the PRC since they fear that any effort of theirs in this direction will be regarded as a sign of American weakness and would therefore have catastrophic consequences for the entire policy of the Americans. He noted that this fact is especially strengthened in connection with the recent achievements of the USSR in the field of military technology. Gromyko said that the same situation has also materialized in disarmament negotiations, where the US is also afraid of making any concessions under the threat of a collapse of its entire foreign policy, considering that such concessions might be taken as a sign of weakness which would drive many countries away from them and shatter the military blocs created under their aegis.

Mao Zedong noted that this is a correct comment and assessment of the sentiments in the US. Touching further on Chinese policy with regard to Britain Mao Zedong noted that the PRC was waging a struggle with the foreign policy measures being pursued by Britain, and obstructs any rapprochement with it. Britain takes about the

same position with respect to the PRC. Recalling the history of the establishment of relations between the PRC and Britain Mao Zedong pointed out that in the initial period Britain strongly solicited the establishment of official relations and an exchange of representatives of ambassadorial rank. Agreement about the establishment of semi-official relations and the exchange of representatives at the chargé d'affaires level was reached in talks on this issue, which lasted a long time. The British were satisfied with this and immediately sent their representative to Peking. For a long time the PRC, Mao Zedong continued, did not send their representative to London. Eden spoke with Zhou Enlai about this specific issue during the Geneva Conference (in 1954). Inasmuch as Britain and France took a more progressive position than the US at this Conference (they even agreed to a cease-fire in Vietnam) the PRC decided to send its representative to Britain with the goal of further intensification of the differences between the US and Britain.

Mao Zedong then stressed the inconsistent position of the British with respect to the PRC: on one hand Britain maintains normal relations but on the other, votes for Chiang Kai-shek in the UN. It is true that sometimes they abstain from voting, but "in this event we also stress our dissatisfaction with their position since it does not call for the exclusion of the representatives of the Chiang Kai-shek clique from UN membership. Mao Zedong said, we constantly insist that Britain act the same as the USSR and India on the China issue at the UN. Only on this condition will the PRC agree to establish official relations with Britain and exchange representatives of ambassadorial rank.

As regards other countries - France, West Germany, Italy, and Japan - he noted that we will not display initiative in the establishment of diplomatic relations with them. One main condition is presented in talks with them on this question - a demand for the expulsion of the Chiang Kai-shek clique from the UN. When this is done the PRC pursues two goals on the issue of its recognition by other capitalist countries: tearing these countries away from the US and the breaking of ties between these countries and the "Taiwan government".

A. A. Gromyko asked for clarification of whether the recognition of the need to admit the PRC to the UN is raised as a condition in talks about the establishment of diplomatic relations.

Mao Zedong replied that the breaking of ties with the Chiang Kai-shek regime and the expulsion of its representative from the UN is the main condition. He noted that Britain agrees with the first condition, but does not accept the second. Based on this, the PRC established only semi-official diplomatic relations with it. At all international conferences and meetings the PRC consistently holds to this official policy, he stressed. At this point he mentioned the recent incident at the International Red Cross meeting in Delhi when the Chinese representative vigorously declared that the PRC delegate would leave the meeting of this organization in the event of the involvement of representatives of the Chiang Kai-shek clique in the work of the meeting. Approximately the same situation developed during the last Olympic Games in Australia.

In the course of the conversation Mao Zedong stressed the correctness of the foreign policy of the USSR on the issue of the admission of the PRC to the UN. He expressed the gratitude of the CCP CC and PRC government for the determined struggle of the Soviet representatives in the defense of the legal rights of the PRC. At the same time he again noted that the PRC might wait for the resolution of this issue for another 15 years. By this time, said Mao Zedong, the production of steel in the PRC will evidently reach 40 million tons. In 15 years the level of production of steel might only reach 30 million tons in Britain, as [General Secretary of the Communist Party of Great Britain] Pollitt informed him. Thus, declared Mao Zedong, in 15 years the PRC will overtake Britain and the Soviet Union, the US. It will be easier for you to work on such a common "steel platform", he said, turning to Gromyko. The size of the population of

the two countries will need to be increased to do this.

Demonstrating the real opportunity for China to achieve such a level of steel production Mao Zedong reported quite rapid growth rates of steel production in China. He said that in the past 1943 was the highest level of steel production in China - 900,000 tons, of which approximately 800,000 tons was produced at Japanese enterprises and 40-50,000 by Chiang Kai-shek. By the time of the creation of the Republic steel production had contracted, in comparison with the "highest level". At the present time, by the end of the first five-year plan 5,200,000 tons of steel will already be obtained, in the second five-year plan, 20-22 million tons, in the third, 30-35 million tons, and in the fourth, 40-45 million tons. Stressing the good prospects for the growth of steel production in China, Mao Zedong noted the high growth rate of steel production in the Soviet Union, especially in the last 12 years. At such rapid growth rates, he noted, it was hard for him to imagine what great successes the Soviet Union would achieve in the near future.

Speaking of the superiority of the USSR and PRC over the capitalist countries Mao Zedong also pointed to the unlimited capacity of the markets of the two countries. Our countries do not need foreign sales markets, he declared.

In the course of the conversation A. A. Gromyko touched upon the problem of disarmament. He stressed the complexity and delicateness of the US position on this issue which arises in connection with the PRC. On the one hand, said Gromyko, the US refuses to hold direct talks with the PRC and does not agree to let the PRC into talks; on the other, it cannot avoid disarmament issues affecting the PRC. Therefore, when it is a matter of negotiations to reduce the armed forces of the great powers the Soviet government proceeds from the position that the discussion should be about the four powers and the PRC is another issue, and issues affecting the PRC cannot be decided without the participation of the PRC government. We assume that such a position is also acceptable for the future. Gromyko asked the attitude of the Chinese friends toward the Soviet position on this issue.

Mao Zedong noted that the position of the Soviet Union, refusing to discuss issues concerning China in the absence of Chinese representatives, is completely correct and principled. He further noted that the non-participation of the PRC in the work of the Disarmament Committee and other international organizations frees China's hands to some degree in carrying out its foreign policy. "The PRC feels freer, it is not bound by any conventions or agreements. Right now, if we are invited to some conference or to participate in the work of some international body, we wait until they turn to us three or four times with this offer and only after this decide whether it is worth it for us to take part". He noted, it is true this position of ours is reminiscent of the "position of paupers". But, "although we are also poor, we have our own will and principles".

We always insist, Mao Zedong continued, on the observance of the principles of complete reciprocity in relations with any countries. He mentioned in this connection the story of the invitation of American correspondents to China. Mao Zedong said that last year groups of progressive American correspondents were allowed to come to the PRC. The PRC did not raise any conditions when this was done. This action of the PRC pursued the goal of discrediting the policy of Dulles, who opposed this visit. Finally, the State Department prohibited the trip of these correspondents. This year Dulles tried to organize a visit to the PRC of a group of American correspondents. Mao Zedong noted, we began to insist on the observance of parity and then made an offer to discuss these issues at the Geneva meeting of ambassadors. The US refused to do this and thereby put itself in a defensive, passive position.

Then Mao Zedong touched on issues of American citizens imprisoned in the PRC. He said that part of these people were released from imprisonment after they served out

the appropriate terms. Mao Zedong noted that some representatives of friendly countries have advised him to release all these American citizens. One such representative is Nehru, another was Molotov. Mao Zedong said, Molotov was quite satisfied with the results of the Geneva Conference and consequently began to try to persuade us to release all American citizens in the PRC from imprisonment. We declined to follow this advice and have consistently held to our position to release these people only at the end of the term of imprisonment. Mao Zedong said, right now I very much regret that very few such people were left in China (about 10). It would be better if there were 400-500 people.

A. A. Gromyko noted that the firm and the principled position of the Chinese friends in international affairs increasingly establishes respect for the PRC from representatives of the capitalist world.

Mao Zedong then asked what kind of impression Gromyko had formed of the leaders of the capitalist West. How confidently or hesitatingly do they behave with representatives of the socialist countries[?]

A. A. Gromyko replied that, in his opinion, recently the representatives of these countries feel less confident than before. They are afraid of a growth of the power of the socialist camp. This is especially notable recently as a result of the well-known achievements of the Soviet Union in the field of science and technology. However, outwardly the representatives of these countries are trying to behave confidently and bombastically, and they try to swagger.

After all, it is not because he is having a good time that Eisenhower is going to Europe in December to attend a NATO session.

Mao Zedong spoke approvingly of these events and noted that "this is a very good omen".

Then Mao Zedong briefly repeated some of his thoughts about international issues expressed at the last meeting of the Conference of Fraternal Parties. He stressed that he had thought much about these issues since 1946. When talking about this, Mao Zedong noted that at a time when the revolution in the PRC had still not prevailed Hitler was already dead but the countries of people's democracy were being formed in Europe. I have not lost confidence, he noted, that the USSR and the countries of people's democracy are stronger than the West. After Hitler's defeat the US appeared. At first glance it seemed that it was stronger than the USSR, especially as they had dropped the atomic bomb. Mao Zedong said, at that time I was writing an article in which I stressed that the US would gain nothing from an attack on the USSR, that this attack would cost the US many lives.

Mao Zedong said, it should be stressed that the Americans are very afraid of death. For them even a loss of 10,000 people is a serious loss. If they lost two or three million people, then this is tantamount to the death of the US. Therefore they do not dare to attack us. Such a situation in which they can exploit other peoples without suffering casualties and losses in the process is ideal for them. Mao Zedong said, in my opinion, the US is trying to subordinate peoples and seize the territories of the countries of the intermediate zone located between the US and the USSR. They want to enslave these peoples without war, to create bases there, and conclude political, economic, and military treaties with these countries. All these acts they accomplish under anti-Soviet and anti-Communist pretexts. Such US policy has given rise to two kinds of contradictions.

1. As a result of this policy they have turned their allies against themselves, Britain and France, who are now saying that the US is acting not against the USSR but

against them. These countries, Mao Zedong noted, are our indirect allies. The differences between them and the US are to our benefit. Based on this, said Mao Zedong, in the Declaration of the Conference of Fraternal Parties the US is consciously not put in the same class as Britain, France, and the other capitalist countries. Some representatives of the fraternal Parties, for example the Poles, did not figure out this. He noted, having consulted with the Soviet comrades, we came to a common conclusion that our main blow is to be concentrated on the US and to thereby promote the further amplification of the differences between them and the other imperialist countries.

2. The differences between the colonies, semi-colonies, and former colonial countries and the US. Differences of this sort encompass a broad range of countries. The populations of these countries are 1.3 billion, of which 700 million live in countries which received independence (India and others).

Mao Zedong noted in connection with this question that these countries have still not gained independence economically. The former colonial powers maintain their interests there.

Mao Zedong took Egypt as an example. Noting Nasser's bold actions to nationalize in the country the bank capital of the Western countries and with respect to the Suez Canal, Mao Zedong stressed at the same time that the Anglo-French capital invested in railroads and other enterprises is not being nationalized. Certain interests of Anglo-French monopolies are still being preserved at the Suez Canal. He then dwelled on the financial difficulties of Nasser, who evidently expected that the income from the use of the Suez Canal would be able to completely provide the financing of measures associated with the use and improvement of the Canal, and would also provide the investment of capital for the construction of the Aswan Dam. However, he noted, right now one can already see that the money received for these purposes from the Suez Canal is not enough. Mao Zedong then stressed the weakness of the Egyptian national bourgeoisie. He said that in questions of the nationalization of all foreign capital in the country Nasser is still not exhibiting the proper consistency and decisiveness, and suggested that the US might use the economic difficulties of Egypt for their own purposes.

A. A. Gromyko reported in this connection that right now the Egyptians are asking for credits from the Soviet Union.

Mao Zedong noted in response: "When they request credits from you, this is another matter." However, he continued, it is difficult to expect that Egypt could completely break with the imperialist countries economically. Nehru in India also exhibits the same inconsistency in the question of the nationalization of foreign capital. After all, although he began quite intensively, he evidently did not have the guts. Mao Zedong noted, however, that on the whole national capitalists and the national bourgeoisie in India are stronger than in other neutral countries.

Touching on the issue of the first five-year plan in India he said that the growth of steel production in India during the five-year plan will total 300,000 tons at a time when it is 3,300,000 tons in the PRC.

Mao Zedong agreed with A. A. Gromyko's comment that India still relies on American and British capitalists to some degree economically, which the corresponding information says. Continuing this thought, he said that unlike India and other countries the PRC mainly counts on its own resources. He said that it is true that the USSR gave the PRC a loan of 6.2 billion rubles. Mao Zedong pointed out that this amount has already been partially repaid. Most of it will be repaid in the second five-year plan, but final settlement with the USSR for the debts will be done in the third five-year plan. The credits offered by the USSR were spent in the PRC for the

following purposes: 1/3 for economic construction and the purchase of various equipment, and 2/3 for the Korean War, for weapons to the army and acquiring military equipment. In the PRC our own savings will gradually grow and in the future it is expected that "the PRC will avoid getting loans from the Soviet Union since without us there are many countries which ask you for aid". He said, the PRC will not take a penny in loans from the countries of the capitalist world.

Mao Zedong then repeated his statements which, according to his report, he made in a conversation with N. S. Khrushchev on the issue of the granting of various requests of the Chinese government. He noted that there might be two approaches here.

1) The granting of all the requests of the Chinese side. In this approach the Soviet comrades, he said, are guided by [the consideration] to not offend the Chinese and to not worsen relations with them. Mao Zedong said that, in his opinion, this approach is incorrect since "China will never seek to worsen relations with the Soviet Union". It is also necessary to consider the fact that Chinese economic managers still do not always have a complete picture of the situation in their own house and are striving to exist at someone else's expense. "They need to be educated for them to 'rely' on the Soviet Union on the one hand, but at the same time not to seek 'dependence' on the Soviet Union". He noted in this connection that not only he (Mao Zedong) relies on Khrushchev and the other Soviet comrades, but you also rely on me to some degree. "We stand shoulder to shoulder and fight the common enemies".

2) A stricter attitude toward our requests. "Possibly it is necessary to grant no more than half of our requests or in any event to reduce what we have requested by 30%". He said, it needs to be done so that Chinese organizations "do not consume so much of your aid to excess". Such a meticulous attitude toward the requests of the Chinese side forces Chinese economic managers to think more seriously about solving domestic difficulties. When this is being done we ought to remember those difficulties with which the Soviet people were faced at one time. It is also well known "people can only be tempered in difficulties".

Mao Zedong talked in this connection about one suggestion the Chinese economic organizations made to the CCP CC Politburo. He said, a good harvest of cotton was gathered in the year before last, which allowed an increase in the production of cotton fabric last year and an increase the norms for the issue of these fabrics to the population. The annual norm for the issue of cotton fabric was set at 12 meters per person.

He stressed, for China this is an unprecedentedly high norm. The possibility of a poor cotton harvest in succeeding years was not taken into consideration when calculating this norm. And when a poor cotton harvest was gathered in 1956 our organizations were forced to take steps to cover the shortfall in cotton fabric. In this connection Chinese economists suggested buying an average of 50,000 tons cotton a year in the USSR for five years. Mao Zedong said, this suggestion was discussed in advance in Peking during my vacation in Hangzhou. Having approved this suggestion in principle our comrades did not, however, turn to the Soviet government with it in connection with the fight against the Anti-Party Group of Molotov which had been launched at that time.

On return to Peking, continued Mao Zedong, I opposed this suggestion of our economists, pointing out that "we ought not bother the Soviet comrades since Soviet cotton goes not just to cover domestic needs in the USSR but also the need for cotton in the countries of people's democracy, and also to get needed hard currency in the foreign market". It was decided not to send this request to the Soviet Union but to lower the supply norm from 12 meters for the first five-year plan to 9 meters to solve the difficulties. It is true that this decision caused discontent among the peasantry. Speaking of the difficulties with cotton, Mao Zedong also reported that last year the

area devoted to cotton was reduced by about 200,000 hectares. He noted that the temporary measure caused by a shortage of food crops in the country. It was proposed to again devote these plots to cotton in the PRC beginning with the next year and steps were taken to increase the cotton yield per mu of land and to also increase the production of synthetic fiber.

During the conversation Mao Zedong spoke at length about the importance of Soviet aid to China. He said that this enormous and generous aid needs to just be used wisely and targeted at the main industrial facilities. Mao Zedong stressed that in the history of China not a single country had given it such enormous aid. He noted that other countries of the socialist camp (the GDR, Czechoslovakia, and Poland) were giving some aid to the PRC, however it does not compare with the Soviet Union. Mao Zedong noted that the Soviet comrades also justly point out that in the history of economic relations between China and the Soviet Union there had never been such a large scale of trade between the two countries.

Then, touching on the activity of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the USSR and the PRC Mao Zedong stressed the characteristic that the main problem issues of Soviet-Chinese relations are mainly solved through the Central Committees of the two Parties. He noted, in all probability Soviet diplomats need to concentrate main attention on relations with the capitalist countries and also with the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Mao Zedong continued, we are faced with the tasks of expanding ties with the countries of the intermediate zone. Work with the capitalist countries of the West is still not being given proper attention. Consequently the representatives of these countries do not take a friendly position with respect to the PRC.

A. A. Gromyko noted that relations between the PRC and the Soviet Union really have a Party nature, which is completely correct. The Soviet MFA, which works under the constant and daily guidance of the CPSU CC and CC Presidium, considers its main task to be the strengthening of Soviet-Chinese relations, the strengthening and expansion of relations between the countries of the socialist camp, and at the same time undermining the camp of imperialism by carrying out certain foreign policy measures.

Mao Zedong stressed in reply that this task coincides with the tasks faced by the PRC MFA.

A. A. Gromyko noted the great useful work of the Chinese friends with such countries as India, Indonesia, and others. Soviet representatives are aware the usefulness of this work every day in their activity abroad.

Mao Zedong again stressed that diplomatic relations between fraternal countries are fundamentally different from the diplomatic relations between the fraternal countries and capitalist countries inasmuch as they develop predominantly through Party channels. At the same time he stated that the ministries of foreign affairs of these countries also play and ought to play a definite role in the development and deepening of these relations. Mao Zedong wished the Soviet MFA success in [its] work. He said, it is clear that "you can do without Molotov entirely".

A. A. Gromyko said in reply that things are going even better without him, for Molotov slowed down the work of the MFA and its organizations abroad. He was a burden on the Party, although possibly it seemed to him that matters would collapse without him and fall to the ground. However, this did not happen.

Mao Zedong greeted this comment with approval. He said, if Molotov's policy had triumphed in the CPSU CC then "this would have been very dangerous not only for

the Soviet Union but also for the other socialist countries. Everyone would have been harmed by this".

A. A. Gromyko cited as an example facts when Molotov actually tried to give Albania and the GDR away to the imperialists, and suggested these countries not be included in the Warsaw Pact system. These facts already sufficiently show what kind of policy he pursued.

Mao Zedong then began to recall his first trip to the Soviet Union, when he was in the USSR two and a half months. He said, during this time "I quarreled with Stalin several times["]. Mao Zedong noted, Stalin hated me. At one of the meetings he (Stalin) organized an "attack" on me. The first shot rang out from Molotov, the second from Beria, and Stalin had the last word. The general direction of the accusations made against me, continued Mao Zedong, were that "the Communists in China are nationalistic, that Mao Zedong, although also a Communist, is yet nationalistically-minded".

Mao Zedong said, they expressed fears that "their own Tito" would appear in China. Mao Zedong noted that N. T. Fedorenko, who interpreted, was a witness to this conversation. Only two Chinese were present at the meeting: Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. Zhou Enlai tried to assure Stalin and the others that there was no place in China for "nationalistic Communism" and that Chinese Communists were not pro-American. During this conversation, said Mao Zedong, I basically kept silent, although in [my] heart I laughed at them". I did not try to deny their statements, but said one phrase, "everything that has been said here does not correspond to reality". Mao Zedong noted, they had no other way out inasmuch as they didn't risk arresting me, but the 14 February 1950 treaty and the corresponding agreement according to which the Chinese Changchun Railroad was ceded to us was concluded in order to set things right.

Stalin did not want to listen to me about contentious issues, he stressed. Once he even threw the telephone receiver and stopped the conversation with me. Another time they replied to me that he was not home and Mikoyan was charged with talking with me. Mao Zedong said, they tried at that time "to give two bitter fruits to swallow, although we did not want to eat". Firstly, this was the so-called mixed companies, and secondly, the most difficult, the issue of the 'sphere of influence" in Manchuria and Xinjiang.

In the conversation Mao Zedong mentioned in what conditions the talks about these issues were conducted. Chiang Kai-shek then was organizing a furious bombing of Shanghai, trying to destroy industrial enterprises. Mao Zedong said, we asked Stalin to send one or two Soviet air divisions for the defense of Shanghai inasmuch as we had no aircraft at that time. Stalin replied that he agreed to this. During the discussion of this issue, however, Molotov asked, "Can we consider the area of Xinjiang and Manchuria two spheres of influence of the Soviet Union[?]" . It turned out such that two Soviet air divisions would be sent to Shanghai in the event of our agreement to this.

On the issue of these "spheres of influence" this meant that only Chinese and Soviet citizens could live in these regions and that the residence here of representatives of third countries was prohibited. During the talks, Mao Zedong continued, I asked Molotov how to act with the Koreans living in Manchuria. There were about 1.5 million in Manchuria, however they had lived here for hundreds of years. Molotov didn't know what to reply to this question. Mao Zedong said: besides, a considerable number of Poles, Yugoslavs, and representatives of other countries lived in Harbin. Pakistanis (about 200-300,000), who were engaged in commerce, lived in the south of Xinjiang. He noted, bound by this agreement with Stalin, we were forced to expel the Pakistanis from there.

Only the imperialists had previously committed such acts with respect to China. Mao Zedong said, I think that Stalin was subject to the sentiments of a great-power chauvinist, which was demonstrated by the Manchurian and Xinjiang issues. The Yugoslav experience already testified to this. Stalin bungled everything in relations with Yugoslavia, and called Tito a fascist and butcher.

On the whole, in our opinion, Stalin had about 70% merits and 30% mistakes. Possibly historians will make a different calculation of the merits and mistakes of Stalin. Possibly this will be 10% mistakes, but even in this 10% there will be mistakes connected with great-power chauvinism. The CPSU CC is very correctly rectifying these mistakes right now. "The actions of N. S. Khrushchev and the CPSU CC have sort of removed a lid for us and dispelled the religious prejudices. "We do not agree with you in part on the issue of the cult of personality", said Mao Zedong, ["]and mainly that at the beginning of the formulation of this question the scales of the merits and mistakes of Stalin were not properly defined. It is true that this was more clearly stated at the July CPSU CC plenum. "Additions were made, as a result of which our points of view became closer".

A. A. Gromyko asked Mao Zedong again, "became closer" or "agreed"?

Mao Zedong replied "agreed". Then he said that, in his opinion, "it still had not been said sufficiently clearly what Stalin had more of, merits or mistakes". He said that this affects not only Stalin personally, but also the entire CPSU, the entire 200-million Soviet people, inasmuch as the revolution was finished and victory was achieved in the [Great] Patriotic War during 30 years of Stalin's life. These services were accomplished with the people of the Soviet Union, the CPSU, its CC, and with Stalin. This connection was correctly reflected in the resolutions of the July plenum. This was also correctly stated at the anniversary session of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

A. A. Gromyko stressed in this connection that the CPSU CC, our leadership comrades, and Cde. N. S. Khrushchev personally have repeatedly expressed themselves about Stalin's activity, in point of fact about both the merits and mistakes. He said that in his personal opinion to determine a precise proportion of the mistakes and merits of Stalin and to express this in a proportion presents a difficulty. In such a method is there a danger of falling into reductionism and no better than to essentially assess both the positive aspects of the life and activity of Stalin and his mistakes?

Mao Zedong agreed that this is a quite difficult issue since it is impossible to actually weigh the merits and mistakes in kilograms. He expressed a conviction that it seems an easier matter for historians to solve this problem. However, he then again repeated that in China they think that Stalin had 70% merits and 30% mistakes. He noted, possibly historians will correct us. He said, on the whole right now there we have a common opinion with the CPSU about the assessment of Stalin.

Mao Zedong then said that there are also no differences between the CPSU and CPC on the Hungarian issue. He stressed in this connection that this issue was solved in close consultations with the CPC CC. He referred to the presence in Moscow at that time of a delegation headed by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping.

Mao Zedong noted that Chinese representatives are ready to come to Moscow about any issue which requires possible discussion. This time, he said, the Chinese delegation arrived in Moscow immediately when the need arose to meet in connection with the 40th anniversary of the October Revolution and to convene an international conference.

Mao Zedong stressed that many issues might arise in the future in the international arena and our comrades, Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, Zhou Enlai, Mao Zedong, and

Chen Yun could meet with comrades from the CPSU CC Presidium at any time. At this point Mao Zedong gave a high appreciation of Chen Yun, one of the Deputy Chairmen of the Party and "a capable economist".

During the conversation Mao Zedong spoke highly of the activity of the CPSU CC and of Cde. N. S. Khrushchev personally. He stressed that a number of good steps are being taken at the initiative of Cde. N. S. Khrushchev both in the area of foreign policy and in domestic policy. For example, he said that on the China issue the credit for the elimination of all the previous troubles and stratification belongs to N. S. Khrushchev. It is under N. S. Khrushchev that "we returned those bitter fruits which we were forced to swallow at one time". He continued, in China they note with approval the considerable improvement of the style of work of the Soviet comrades, which exerts a deep influence on other countries.

Mao Zedong said, the relationship between your CC and other fraternal Parties deserves every approval. This was clearly manifested at the last conference of fraternal Parties when various points of view were taken into consideration and efforts were made to consolidate forces. Was this possible, Mao Zedong said, in Stalin's lifetime? At that time, he said, the words "fraternal Parties" were only a pretty phrase. Practically, Stalin was a father and all of us, sons.

China, too, is happy with the changes inside the Soviet Union. For earlier, when Stalin was alive, no one dared to express a single critical word against him. Mao Zedong said, Cdes. N. S. Khrushchev and A. I. Mikoyan in particular told me about this.

Mao Zedong then spoke with satisfaction about the existence of differences in policy during his first and second times in the Soviet Union. Now, he said, I came to Moscow on the 2nd of November, and already on the 3rd of November I have talked and eaten with the Soviet leadership comrades. In this conversation it was said in particular that the relationship between Stalin and the representatives of the fraternal Parties could be compared with the "relationship between a father and son or a cat and a mouse". "Your comrades have correctly noticed that rather this was the relationship between a cat and a mouse. If one speaks of the relationship between a father and a son then one ought to bear in mind not a European family but an Asian family with its feudal despotism and the supremacy of the father in the family".

Returning to an assessment of Stalin, Mao Zedong said that Stalin had a positive aspect. This was that he would retreat and in one or two weeks might agree to that which he had previously opposed. For example, after the PRC entered the Korean War Stalin nevertheless believed that the Chinese Communists were not pro-American, but the Chinese Revolution was not "nationalistic Communism". After the start of the Korean War an agreement was concluded between the USSR and PRC about aid to China in the construction of 156 enterprises, etc. For all this the Chinese people were grateful to Stalin, the CPSU CC, and the Soviet people.

Gromyko stressed that all the friendly actions of the Soviet government with respect to China correspond to the feelings of love and deep respect of the Soviet people for the Chinese people.

Mao Zedong replied that there is a complete reciprocity on this question. "We and you are friends in any weather. Even if back then I was arrested here, Liu Shaoqi would have still remained your faithful friend".

I, continued Mao Zedong, should of course apologize to the memory of Stalin, but in his lifetime we quarreled with him. Of course, we did not act like the Yugoslavs had acted. In response to Stalin's abuse of them began to accuse the Soviet Union of "red imperialism". Unquestionably, it should be admitted that there were mistakes of a

partial nature at that time, but on the whole the USSR and CPSU were always right. A Marxist-Leninist analysis of this activity needs to be given in an assessment of this activity of the Party on the whole.

Mao Zedong noted, it is also necessary to analyze the activity of the CPC. On the whole it is a Marxist-Leninist party, but it has made a number of mistakes in its history. Here he named the opportunistic mistakes of Chen Duxiu, Li Lisan, and Zhang Guotao, and the anti-Party activity of Gao Gang. At this point Mao Zedong stressed that "in the USSR there was Molotov, but in China - Gao Gang, who was a terrible person. He noted, Gao Gang joined around him more than 100 senior officials, especially in Northeast China. He had his representatives in four of the six large administrative regions of China. Supporters of Gao gang later admitted they had tried to draw senior military personnel of the ground, air, and naval forces to their side. Mao Zedong said, the Gao Gang supporters promoted the slogan, "We support Mao Zedong, but we oppose Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai, who are factionalists". Mao Zedong later said, if the plans of the Gao Gang supporters to remove Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai had been realized, "I, too, would have been removed". He said, it is characteristic that recently Gao Gang became strongly interested in state of my health. "Once, having found out that I had become ill, he quickly returned to Peking from the South".

Gao Gang, said Mao Zedong, enjoyed the trust of Stalin, Beria, Molotov, and evidently Malenkov. He reported secret information to Beria's group behind the back of the CCP CC. Mao Zedong said that Goglidze, a representative of Beria, secretly came to Manchuria to meet with Gao Gang for these purposes.

In this connection Mao Zedong recalled that back in 1949 Liu Shaoqi had come to agreement in Moscow with Stalin not to conduct intelligence work in the fraternal countries. Stalin agreed with this proposal and in 1951-1952 officially sent to the PRC and the other socialist countries a document that such work would not be conducted in the fraternal countries. Mao Zedong said, however, this was an empty phrase. "Such work was actually conducted before the execution of Beria".

Everything about which I am speaking here, said Mao Zedong, relates to the 30% of the mistakes of Stalin. There is every reason in China to be dissatisfied with Stalin. He said, our dissatisfaction could be formulated in the following three points:

1. As a result of the mistakes by Wang Ming in the '30s the Chinese Revolution suffered serious damage, and 80% of the manpower on the side of the Revolution was lost. During those years the Chinese Communist Party was forced to make a Long March costing many lives. Mao Zedong noted that Wang Ming, who is being treated in the USSR right now, could better tell about this himself. It is true, he himself does not admit his mistakes.

2. In 1945 "we weren't permitted to make a revolution". At that time Stalin gave us a directive in the name of the CPSU CC - don't start a civil war. I explain this by the fact that Stalin during the Yalta Conference Stalin shared responsibilities with Roosevelt. Roosevelt was charged with prevailing upon Chiang Kai-shek and Stalin, the Communists. In Stalin's directive, Mao Zedong continued, it ordered that if the Chinese Communists began a civil war then "he would stand aside and the results would be difficult to foresee". It was suggested that "the entire Chinese nation might perish". Mao Zedong noted, we "did not implement Stalin's telegram." Moreover, the Chiangkai-shek-ists began an offensive against us". Such a directive from Stalin prevented the CCP from seizing power immediately after Japan's surrender.

3. After victory was won the fact of the victory of the Chinese Revolution was doubted. A supposition was voiced that "the Chinese Communists were Titoist and [that they were] pro-American". Mao Zedong said, such suspicions against us were

only dispelled after the Korean War.

Mao Zedong said, such was our dissatisfaction, of which, it is true, we never publicly spoke, not to give a reason for our enemies to introduce division in Chinese-Soviet relations. We could not say much, and only what was said at the conference held in Moscow. Many people were present at this conference. The imperialists could have found out much and used this against our common interests. Therefore at the conference we stated that we were dissatisfied with Stalin, but did not detail why we were dissatisfied.

A. A. Gromyko agreed with the reasonableness of the views expressed by Mao Zedong and the consideration that that the elaboration of what he had mentioned could have been used by the imperialists if it had become known to them.

Mao Zedong then stressed that the Chinese people do not know about this dissatisfaction in the CCP CC with the exception of CCP CC members and individual leaders of provincial Party committees. It is true, Mao Zedong noted, what had been arranged about China between Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin began to become known somewhere from documents of the Yalta Conference published abroad, and also from the biography of Tito written by Dedijer. He said, there is information in this same biography about the division of influence in Yugoslavia at Yalta.

A. A. Gromyko stressed to Mao Zedong in this connection that the reference by Churchill in his memoirs to a document according to which agreement was supposedly reached about a division of influence in Yugoslavia was groundless inasmuch as this document, as a check showed, was not sent to the Soviet Union, and accordingly a reply was also not sent by the Soviet side. Gromyko noted that in a recently published collection of correspondence between Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt a special explanation is made about this issue, while this explanation is not disputed by the British.

Mao Zedong said this is a very important fact to which the attention of the Yugoslav comrades ought to be directed.

At the end of the conversation Mao Zedong wished the Soviet MFA productive work in strengthening Soviet-Chinese friendship. He stressed again that China and the USSR "are tied forever by friendship." Mao Zedong expressed a wish about the desirability of Gromyko coming to China.

The conversation lasted three hours. Yang Shangkun, a candidate member of the CPC CC Secretariat, and Yan Mingfu, an official of the CPC CC staff, were present at the conversation.

The conversation was written down by O. B. Rakhmanin, 1st Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in the PRC.

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Distributed to comrades:

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Aristov

Kalnberzin

Gromyko □□□

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Belyaev
Kirilenko
Patolichev □□□
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KI [Information Committee] □□□
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