

March 27, 1965

Cable from the Chinese Embassy in the Soviet Union, 'Regarding the Situation of Strengthening Controls on Chinese Graduate Students in the Soviet Union following the March 4th Incident'

Citation:

"Cable from the Chinese Embassy in the Soviet Union, 'Regarding the Situation of Strengthening Controls on Chinese Graduate Students in the Soviet Union following the March 4th Incident'", March 27, 1965, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 109-02859-02, 35-38. Obtained by You Lan and translated by Jake Tompkins. <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/119939>

Summary:

The Chinese Embassy in Moscow claims that Chinese students are facing harassment from their schools in the Soviet Union.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from MacArthur Foundation

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Urgent
From Moscow
Received (65) No. 1633

Regarding the Situation of Strengthening Controls on Chinese Graduate Students in the Soviet Union following the March 4th Incident

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Higher Education:

Following the incident on March 4th, pressure has been exerted on the Chinese graduate students in their professional studies in each of the research centers in Moscow's Soviet Science Academy. They've placed all sorts restrictions on our graduate students to control them. For example,

(1) Our biologist, Zhou Fengfan, has been repeatedly criticized by his supervisor through his female coworker, saying that he is not working hard enough. She's even threatened him, saying, "Your supervisor says that if you aren't able to produce results, then your credentials as a graduate student will be revoked." She's also instructed him to work in the laboratory from 9am to 12am, and that he is to inform her if he is to go anywhere except to the laboratory or to Russian classes.

(2) Our graduate student in the elemental organic chemistry research center, Wang Runheng, has been required by his supervisor to remain in the center conducting experiments from 9am to 9pm every day.

(3) The academic secretary at the microbiology research center has been checking on our graduate student Wu Keyang to ensure that he's going to the center every day, and has required that Wu increase his work load to six hours of experimentation per day.

Recently, each of the laboratories has criticized our students in their academic audits for not working hard enough, also using limitations from the Soviet end and refusing to help students with their more difficult assignments to make things even more difficult on our graduate students. For example,

(1) The study plan given to our graduate student in the planetary physics lab, Shao Xuezhong, has been extremely problematic. The test in one of his professional classes was divided into three parts, and after spending a year's time, he was unable to pass the final portion of the test and was required to re-take the entire exam. His thesis topic was also confirmed late. Furthermore, his internship in the first year had absolutely nothing to do with his thesis topic, slowing his progress in his studies. Despite all this, on March 24th, following the academic audit conducted by the lab and research center on March 17th and March 19th, Shao's supervisor wrote on his audit that Shao's enthusiasm, willingness to take initiative, and creativity in the field of science are inadequate; he's lacking in practical experience; and has no direction in planetary physics. He said that Shao does poorly in collecting materials for his thesis and does little work related to it. Therefore, he doubts that Shao will be able to complete his thesis in the final year. The supervisor asked Shao to sign the audit, but Shao, after pointing out that it does not represent the reality of the situation, refused to sign it.

(2) When the academic committee of the inorganic chemistry research center discussed our graduate student Yang Ruiyan's work plan, they said that her Russian is poor, and that she has little experimental experience and spends little time working. Furthermore, she has failed to defend her thesis within the allotted

three-and-a-half years. Someone in the committee even suggested she be changed to an intern.

(3) After March 4th, our graduate student in the botany research center, Chen Chang'e, who was about to graduate, was informed that she would be testing for her final class early. On March 19th, the testing committee was expanded from the usual three members to seven, who asked an excessive number of questions. Since Chen didn't have enough time to prepare, she failed.

In light of these events, we have instructed our students to, on one hand, work hard and not give the Soviets any excuses, while, on the other hand, create difficulties for them [the Soviets] using other soft methods, and using logic to combat them in suitable manner.

[Chinese] Embassy in the Soviet Union
27 March 1965