

January 10, 1963

**Cable from the Chinese Embassy in Mali, 'The
Duration of Employment for the Agricultural Experts
Aiding Malii'**

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Summary:

The Chinese Embassy in Mali reports on the "ideological" preparedness of Chinese experts to stay in Mali and assist with development projects.

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The Duration of Employment for the Agricultural Experts Aiding Mali

[To the] General Bureau for Economic Relations with Foreign Countries:

Regarding the ideological situation of our agricultural experts and translator comrades in Mali, over their past year [the situation can be] described as quite good. It's not bad. [They are] content with their work, they work tirelessly, and they work with their own hands. [Paying no attention to] their living conditions [or] working conditions [they have displayed] a truly selfless [dedication to their] labor [and have] achieved remarkable results. [They have] left a deep impression [on the] people of Mali and [the officials of] the Government of Mali. [They] receive praise from all [concerned] parties.

However, [they are] generally [unprepared to] stay [in Mali for] a long time [and their current] way of thinking [is] temporary. [They] have no plans to [stay] for a long time. According to the experts, prior to going abroad [they were under the impression the period of their] exchange [would be] from three months to half a year, then they could return to China. This type of thought mainly arises from the following reasons:

(A) Ideologically Unprepared: [Prior to] going abroad [they were] insufficiently clear about the conditions [which would be experienced during] the period of working abroad.

(B) Some comrades' family situations back home [have] impacted [their ability to] work.

(C) Mali's natural conditions such as the climate and living conditions are relatively poor.

(D) We have [done] ideological indoctrination work with the experts [but it has been] insufficient. Every time [any of] the experts returns [to China] from Bamako [the capital of Mali] individual interviews with every person is insufficiently widespread and frequent. Generally speaking, our daily ideological work is sufficient, carrying out a [policy of] adjusting [to conditions and] going deep work method (including going to Bamako on a monthly basis to report conditions to the Party Committee) to [effectively] grasp the ideological work. Therefore, although this kind of idea has been revealed it has no impact on the work. However, this ideology is long term.

At the end of November 1962, when the experts reported back to Bamako, the experts saw that the agricultural aid project agreement [which China] signed with Mali did not have a concrete work time [specified]. [They] thought [that if] there was no [concrete] working time [specified, then there was also no time specified for] going home [which caused them] to immediately bring the issue up to Director Du. During the second quarter of 1963, because the embassy extended to the third quarter, therefore the experts felt the embassy did not care about [scheduling] their time for returning home. [This caused them to be] emotionally volatile [and they began] sending letters to domestic bureaus [about the situation]. Director Du clearly explained to them that the rotation schedule is determined domestically and is not [related to] foreign aid [but they] did not listen.

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Therefore, we propose the following suggestions:

(A) In the future when China sends experts abroad, [we should] clearly explain how long they will spend overseas. If unsure, please do not tell them any random time for their return so as to avoid breaking promises [and causing] their emotions and ideology to be compromised. Furthermore [I] hope that domestic departments will consider [a formal] rotation [schedule] for the experts and translators currently working in Mali.

(B) In order to politically and ideologically educate foreign experts, and strengthen and improve our political and ideological work with our foreign experts abroad, please send a full time management cadre promptly.

Please respond promptly to the above suggestions.

Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Mali
10 January 1963