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Diary of Teimuraz Stepanov-Mamaladze, 2 February 1989

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The East is red over the "Diaoyutai" residence. This "town of the highest guests of the state" is full of various Chinese gems and of European conveniences. Among others-tennis courts, on which our team-I. Rogachev, P. Rakhmanin, Iu. Miakotnykh and I-conducted a pre-dawn match.

Morning Beijing: unhurried flow of bicycle rivers on the sides of wide highways with numerous interchanges, a multitude of high-story buildings under construction, motley cars: from "Cadillacs" to "Toyotas" and "Jeeps"; textile consumer goods flutter like banners of a market breakthrough, people are dressed well, not poorly.

□

The massive boulder of the All-Chinese Congress of People's Representatives [National People's Congress]. A young Chinese ensign contemptuously shouts out some sort of a command, the blades of the bayonets fly up to "attention."

This building was built in 1959, to the 10th anniversary of the PRC, in the number of the "ten great projects." While E.A. talks with Qian eye-to-eye, I look at the "Xinjiang" hall, which will host the talks.

It is fairly uncomfortable, spacious, train-station-like. Three bronze cyclopic many-horned [?] chandeliers shed the dim light of the past on a table covered with green cloth, copper-beaten dishes on the wall, Xinjiang landscapes, [one word unclear] pretty scene "taking of the harvest."

On tall, wall-high windows hang deep-purple curtains with golden, "wine-grape" ornament.

The ministers have come back. In spite of the expectations, Qian proposes to begin the talks with the discussion of the Kampuchean problem, "because a joint statement is being prepared."

- It is necessary to work out a statement, says Qian Qichen. One the one hand, this hastens the process of the settlement, and on the other-this has significance of the summit.

Just like that, the main issue of the talks, their nerve point, bulged forward: direct relationship was discovered between the settlement of the Kampuchean [problem] in the direction needed by the Chinese and our passionate urge for the summit and "full normalization of Soviet-Chinese relations."

- One can reach agreement on unsolved problems, continued Qian, and it will be an important result of your visit to our country.

In other words, agreement on questions of interest to the Chinese is a necessary condition of the summit.

As if in passing, Qian Qichen said that China hopes for Vietnam's direct contacts with Norodom Sihanouk "who, by the way, lives within a few steps of your residence."

- I can't orient myself well in this territory, joked E.A.

But afterwards, there was no scope left for jokes. The Chinese began to build up pressure, occasionally raising voice to ultimatums.

- For the Kampuchean settlement, three questions are of principled importance, Qian pressed. The first: after the withdrawal of foreign forces, the military forces of the parties must be frozen and cut back. This is necessary to prevent a civil war. Second: during the transitional period, before elections are held, [one has] to create a temporary coalition government from representatives of the parties, headed by Sihanouk. Third: during this period, [one has] to send international peacekeeping force to Kampuchea, and establish strict international control... If one cannot reflect on these questions in the joint statement, one could reach an internal understanding.

E.A.: The most difficult question is about the coalition government. I am not avoiding discussing it. But to place the Vietnamese and the Kampuchians before a fait accompli is to limit the possibility of our positive influence and, accordingly, of the settlement.

Qian: now there are two governments in Kampuchea: you recognize one, we-the other. What can be done? [One should] create a four-party government. You are proposing a council of national reconciliation. This is government all the same, but without power.

E.A.: I read the text of the statement during the night. I did not find any subversion in the formulation "temporary organ." If the Vietnamese and the Kampuchians do not take offense, this is acceptable. About the freeze of the armed forces. Is this a question that we are supposed to solve, and not the Kampuchians? About contacts with Sihanouk. There are no questions here for me. But it would be better if at the first stage the Vietnamese met with him. Then I could be more helpful. Sihanouk frequently changes positions. Against this background, I would not want for my meeting with him to facilitate splintering of forces.

Q[ian]: What I said does not mean that you will immediately get up and walk over to Sihanouk's...

E.A.: The next question is about military détente in the border region. Or, maybe, you prefer the border question?

Q[ian]: On the border. This is a sensitive question, which has great significance for our relations. It also cannot be bypassed during the summit. We have a proposal: as 95% of questions on the Eastern section of the border have already been agreed upon-to focus efforts on the eastern section of the border. To fully resolve the remaining 5%.

E.A.: Good, agreed.

Q[ian]: You also wanted to speak about decreasing [the level of the] military confrontation in the region of the Soviet-Chinese border.

E.A. recounts the general principles of decreasing and restructuring of the armed forces, proposes to create a negotiations mechanism in the form of a group of military and diplomatic experts.

Qian says that they will study our proposals and give a reply. The general aim of cut-backs, however, must be in reaching a minimal level of arms, corresponding to good neighborly relations.

- You said that 75% of Soviet forces would be withdrawn from Mongolia. Excellent. But what will happen to the remaining 25%? Should one leave a "tail"?

E.A.: Re-stationing of forces is a complicated matter. If they are being dismissed, people should be given a job. If they are kept, one should build [military] towns. The main thing is that the main contingent is leaving. This will take a year-and-a-half. The rest will leave afterwards.

Q[ian]: I simply raised a question...

After the dinner we went to the Great Wall of China-near a place [called] Badaling. The site turned out to be grand; the crowd of tourists-gigantic; interest towards the guest-colossal. He [Shevardnadze] was pushed around, over-photographed, over-interviewed, and some insolent Canadian woman even patted him on the cheek.

All of this, together with the landscape reminds one of [one place name unclear]-Dzhavakheti near the Vardzia region. The similarity increased when someone said to my ear in Georgian: "Let me come forward, Teimuraz Grigorievich!" I turned around-there is some guy with a big voice recorder in hand. Someone called Panoyan, a radio journalist from Akhalkalaki. "He who has not been to the Great Wall of China has not done a good job," says a Chinese proverb [sic, actually incorrect reference to a Mao quote]. We have been [there].

While we went there, the working groups continued to spar over the text of the joint statement. They came to no result. And the Chinese even threatened: "If there is no statement, there will be no summit." And while we went climbing the Great Wall, Sihanouk made a statement that he agrees to head the coalition government.

In the evening there was the Great Chinese Dinner. We were fed to the limit. It only took a minute to walk to the [dining] hall. But we went in a car train, probably to avoid stumbling into Sihanouk.