

September 6, 1945

**Record of Conversation between Soviet Ambassador
in China Apollon Petrov and Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai
and Wang Ruofei**

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Summary:

Mao discusses the progress of talks with Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese Nationalist Party.

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Record of conversation between Soviet Ambassador in China Apollon Petrov and Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and Wang Ruofei. September 6, 1945.

On 6 September I was visited by cde. Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and Wang Ruofei, with whom the following conversation was held:

Responding to my question as to how the talks were proceeding between the CCP and the GMD, Mao Zedong said the following. At the present time one may consider the first stage of the talks completed: the most important questions of political and military character were discussed in general terms. In the course of the exchange of opinions, the two sides touched only on the positions of principle, leaving aside the clarification of concrete questions.

The talks showed with complete clarity that the GMD and personally Chiang Kai-shek [Jiang Jieshi] are striving to fully maintain their former political positions, to provide in the future for a one-party dictatorship, obtain concessions from the CCP's side, and then, with the help of the armed forces, to carry out a blockade of the Communist region and army. During meetings and conversations with Zhang Qun, Zhang Zhizhong, Wang Shijie, Shao Lizi, and also with Chiang Kai-shek himself, the GMD did not advance any points new in principle, different from previous Guomintang [Kuomintang] conditions.

"We," Mao Zedong said, "stand for immediate calling (before the end of talks) of a political conference comprised of representatives of the GMD, the CCP, the Democratic League and non-party [representatives] in order to discuss and resolve the most pressing state questions. But the GMD representatives insist on finishing negotiations between the GMD and the CCP. At the same time, they are pressing for the publication of a special communique, which will recount the results of our talks, and then they promise to call such an inter-party conference."

With regard to the National Congress, the GMD still demands to keep the old delegates who were elected and appointed ten years ago. Chiang Kai-shek agrees merely to elect an additional number of delegates from the CCP and other parties.

"The GMD," noted Mao, "bluntly refuses to carry out a general election of delegates into the National Congress. Chiang Kai-shek intends to keep the old delegates as the main composition of the Congress participants. He agrees to introduce into the list of delegates just a small number of representatives of the CCP and other parties. In other words, Chiang Kai-shek counts on preserving the preponderant position of the GMD in the National Congress."

Mao Zedong said that, strictly speaking, the question of a coalition government, as the talks have shown, has been taken off the agenda altogether. They are talking about keeping the "national government" under the GMD leadership and about allowing several representatives of the CCP and other parties to participate in the government apparatus.

"Chiang Kai-shek," Mao Zedong pointed out, "is unwilling to create a coalition government in the strict sense of this word. Zhang Qun stated, among other things, that they can only go as far as to allow representatives of the CCP and other parties to participate in the government. However, this is possible only on the condition of keeping the GMD's preponderant position."

The question of legalization of political parties has been reduced by the GMD to so called "political construction." During the conversations GMD representatives did not reject the CCP demands to legalize different political parties but also did not express their agreement. They propose an unclear formula about "political construction," in

the course of which this question will find its resolution.

Disagreements were also discovered on the question of release of political prisoners.

"We demand," Mao Zedong declared, "to release all political prisoners, i.e. we would like to obtain amnesty on a wide scale. But the GMD insists on writing up a list of political prisoners, in the release of whom the CCP is especially interested. In such a way they want to reduce this matter to giving freedom to just an insignificant group of people."

Mao Zedong said that when the question of special services ("tewu") was touched upon, Zhang Qun and other GMD representatives tried to prove that the secret service organs are not a specifically Chinese institution, that all countries have different kinds and forms of secret police and that, therefore, one should hardly press for the complete dismantling of the "tewu."

"They intend," Mao Zedong stressed, "to keep the special services, having given them a new name. The GMD is prepared to call them secret police, though, of course, all measures will be taken to preserve the currently functioning Gestapo system."

The question of territories and administration was also discussed in a preliminary manner.

"We agree," Mao Zedong noted, "to leave the liberated areas in South and Central China, which count more than 40 million people and 300 thousand of our troops, if the GMD agrees to transfer to us the administration of five provinces, apart from the Special region: Shandong, Hebei, Shaanxi, Chahar and Rehe. We also allow for the possibility that such big centers as Beiping, Tianjin, Qingdao, Jinan, and also the main lines of communication, will remain under the Guomindang control. With this, the administrative apparatus of the above provinces would allow for the participation of GMD representatives, just as the municipalities of Beiping, Tianjin, Shanghai, Nanking, Canton, Qingdao, and other cities, must include CCP representatives."

During the meetings and the talks the two sides exchanged opinions concerning military questions. The CCP strives to keep 48 divisions (or 600,000 men). However, Chiang Kai-shek stated that he agrees at most to allow the CCP to have 12 divisions.

"On the excuse of preventing a civil war, Chiang Kai-shek demands," Mao Zedong said, "to cut the number of both the Guomindang and the Communist forces. Therefore, he agrees only to 12 Communist divisions, though we name the number 48. It is clear that there is a huge gap between the two sides." Mao Zedong pointed out that at most the CCP can make concessions and agree to keep 25 divisions. But this is our limit, which one is not allowed to breach."

Touching on the question of the delay of the signing of the act of capitulation of Japanese forces in China, Mao Zedong stressed that at present there is sufficient ground to conclude that there exists an understanding and cooperation between the GMD and the Japanese. It is beyond doubt that this cooperation is first and foremost directed against the CCP. At the same time, the Guomindang authorities are legalizing the position of the puppet forces, turning them into their regular army. It is clear that this military force will be turned against the Communist forces. Thereby, Mao Zedong pointed out, instead of just the Guomindang army, the CCP will have to struggle against a doubled armed force, which Chiang Kai-shek is preparing now.

CCP representatives during the talks raised the question about the participation of the CCP in the acceptance of the Japanese capitulation but the GMD has not until now

given any answer to this question.

At the end of the conversation, cde. Mao Zedong characterized further behavior of the CCP in the talks, having formulated his main tactical principle.

"We know ahead of time that many of our demands will not be accepted by the Guomindang and we are prepared to make concessions. We, however, will do everything to defend our positions. And if we have to retreat, we will strive to do so slowly and with great resistance. Concessions are possible only on the main condition that our core interests will not be harmed. We will not retreat from the line, behind which our vital interests begin. Therefore, our tactic comes down to simultaneous pressure and retreat. With this, the maximum concessions of the CCP are conditioned by the core interests of our task."

During the conversation, cdes. Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and especially Wang Ruofei, showed interest in our appraisal and point of view concerning a whole range of questions. Thus, they are extremely interested in the behavior of the U.S.A. in the case of the outbreak of a civil war in China: will America maintain neutrality or will it begin active military support of the GMD. They were also interested in the Soviet Union's position: what practical steps with the USSR take if the USA helps the Guomindang army in the destruction of the CCP forces. During the conversation the CCP leaders repeatedly stressed the difficulty of the existing situation and also the fairly responsible character of the ongoing talks between the GMD and the CCP. Pointing out that it is fairly difficult for them to orient themselves as they are not clear about either the U.S.A. position or the U.S.S.R. position in case of the outbreak of a civil war, Mao Zedong said that the CCP would very much value the advice and directions from its friends.

During the conversation I repeatedly stressed that the Soviet Union would like to see China politically united, that the talks must continue, and an agreement between the parties must be reached through reciprocal concessions.

N[ikolai] V. Roshchin and N[ikolai] Fedorenko were present at the conversation.

Ambassador of the USSR in China A[pollon] Petrov