

New Documents on Mongolia and the Cold War

Translation and Introduction by Sergey Radchenko¹

On a freezing November afternoon in Ulaanbaatar (Ulan Bator), I climbed the Zaisan hill on the southern end of town to survey the bleak landscape below. Black smoke from *gers*—Mongolian felt houses—blanketed the valley; very little could be discerned beyond the frozen Tuul River. Chilling wind reminded me of the cold, harsh winter ahead. I thought I should have stayed at home after all because my pen froze solid, and I could not scribble a thing on the documents I carried up with me. These were records of Mongolia's perilous moves on the chessboard of giants: its strategy of survival between China and the Soviet Union, and its still poorly understood role in Asia's Cold War. These documents were collected from archival depositories and private collections in Ulaanbaatar and beyond, and were publicly presented for the first time at the *Mongolia and the Cold War* conference in March 2004.²

Now I wanted to read through these materials once again and put them into a proper context. Zaisan offered an almost perfect place for contemplation. The only sound structure here was a socialist-era monument paying tribute to the Red Army. This circular structure, vandalized by the inevitable autographs of visitors, features a mosaic portraying the heroic history of Soviet-Mongolian friendship from the Russian revolution to the space age. A Russian soldier towers over the structure, glaring towards Ulaanbaatar with the blank but resolute countenance demanded by socialist realist sculpture. Not even the thick smog from the *ger* district could shield the Chinese embassy from his stern gaze. The other side of the monument has been appropriated by the Mongolian mountain god - the *ovoo*, a tall pile of stones with blue Buddhist scarves tied here and there. This *ovoo* grows from year to year. He might after all prove to be the real ruler of Zaisan. I sat down near the *ovoo* and pulled out the documents.

These documents (printed below in translation) represent a small glimpse into Mongolia's complicated foreign relations during the last century. In earlier times, Mongolia was considered a menace to its neighbors: in the 13th century, both

China and Russia fell under the Mongolian sword. However, after being conquered in the 17th century by the Manchus, the land of the Mongols was divided into two parts—called “Outer” and “Inner” Mongolia—and reduced to provincial status. The inhabitants of Outer Mongolia enjoyed much greater autonomy than their compatriots across the border, and after the collapse of the Qing dynasty, Outer Mongolia asserted its right to nationhood. Weak and disorganized, the Mongolian religious leadership appealed for help from foreign countries, including the United States. But the first foreign troops to appear were Russian soldiers under the command of the notoriously cruel Baron Ungern who rode past the Zaisan hill in the winter of 1921. The “bloody baron” wore a Mongolian robe, practiced Buddhism, and perhaps planned to use Mongolia as his base for anti-Bolshevik pursuits. He soon engaged in battle with Chinese regular forces stationed in the capital and, while he defeated them, his triumph was short-lived, as he was pursued by Red Army regiments. In the process, the Bolshevik Red Army helped “liberate” Outer Mongolia from the “yoke of feudalism” and clear its path to socialism.

The first years of the Mongolian People's Republic (as Outer Mongolia now called itself) proved tragic and tumultuous. Religious reforms were marked by the curtailment of Buddhism, demolition of temples, and mass execution of lamas. Expropriationist state policies undermined the livestock economy. Prosecution of mostly imagined “enemies of the state” and “Japanese spies” silenced all opposition. Mongolia followed closely in Soviet footsteps, and political initiative was severely constrained. Prime Ministers Peljidiin Genden and Anandiin Amar, who dared to oppose Stalin and criticize, if implicitly, Soviet policies, discovered the limits of Mongolia's independence: they were arrested and executed in Moscow in 1937 and 1941, respectively.³ By the 1940s, political power was in the hands of Soviet-supported Marshall Khorloogiin Choibalsan, Mongolia's “Stalin.”

Despite his Soviet connection, Choibalsan did not lose sight of Mongolia's national purpose. He hoped to wrestle Inner

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Mongolia from China's control. He also sabotaged efforts by a number of Mongolian intellectuals and political figures to accede to the Soviet Union.⁴ Choibalsan wanted a strong, united Mongolia on friendly terms with the Soviets. He reasoned that a closer relationship with the Soviet Union was a better option for Mongolia than being a Chinese province, since the Soviets supposedly did not pose a threat to the existence of the Mongolian nation.

China, on the other hand, posed a very real threat in the eyes of the Mongolian leadership. Indeed, were it not for the help of Russian bayonets, Mongolia might not have escaped the embrace of its southern neighbor. The Mongolian leaders' suspicions of China's designs were not erased by the creation of the People's Republic of China (PRC). In the fall of 1949 the two countries established diplomatic relations, officially inaugurating a 'new era' in their relations. But their friendly public statements barely obscured underlying mistrust on both sides.

Sino-Mongolian relations developed intensively in the 1950s, helped by the growth and strengthening of cooperation between Beijing and Moscow.⁵ The Chinese supplied labor-strapped Mongolia with construction workers and credits and helped build factories, apartment buildings, and even a power station.⁶ When Mao Zedong received a Mongolian delegation in September 1956, he claimed that it was China's duty to aid Mongolia: "Our ancestors exploited you for three hundred years" [Document #2]. China thus had to "repay the debt." Mao said he was "ashamed" of the insignificance of Chinese aid to Mongolia and promised much more once the PRC overcame its own economic difficulties. Mao's explanations apparently made a strong impression on his Mongolian visitors; Dashiin Damba, first secretary of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP), felt the need to repeat at least three times during the conversation that Mongolia was grateful for Chinese aid and in no way considered it a historical "debt." But Mao insisted: "In the past we oppressed you, but now you don't even have a word of complaint. The aid we are giving you is small. It is repayment of debt and not aid." In due time he promised to send between 100,000 and 300,000 Chinese workers to Mongolia.

The prospect of having so many Chinese workers was daunting to the Mongolian leadership. Since the country's population was only 800,000 at the time, if Mao's offer were to be carried out, Mongolia would be left with far more ethnic Chinese that it could ever hope to assimilate. No wonder that Damba hurried to say that such an event would require long-term preparation so that the Chinese workers could be properly housed. Fortunately for the Mongolians, Mao Zedong did not insist on any immediate measures and suggested that in the meantime the Mongolians take measures to end their nomadic lifestyle and work on hydraulic engineering projects in the desert.

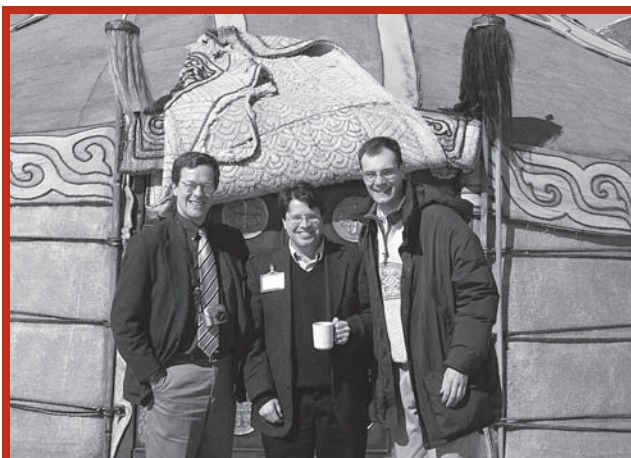
Mao's conversation with Damba had an important and striking subtext. The Chairman put Mongolia on the same footing as Chinese national minorities. He emphasized that China's

policy towards Mongolia paralleled its policies towards Chinese non-Han nationalities. In all cases, the government sought to "repay debts" incurred through the years of Qing exploitation of minorities: "We not only do so with you [repay "debts"], but *with all national minorities inside the country*" [my italics]. In this respect, Mongolia was hardly different, in Mao's view, from the peoples of Tibet and Xinjiang. In the new China, these nationalities had nothing to fear, for the communist party undertook to root out "Great Han nationalist thinking" and promote "equality of nationalities." Mao suggested that the Mongols should "educate" those Chinese workers who had not reconciled themselves to the official policy and still tried to "ride roughshod" (literally, pretend to be "kings and overlords") over their Mongolian hosts.

Mao also dwelled extensively on the historical links that connected the ancient Chinese and Mongolian peoples. Weren't Mongolians descendants of the Gaoche tribe long noted in China for their "tall carts," Mao asked? Damba's only recourse was to comment that historical records in Mongolia were still being studied with Soviet help. Significantly, Mao circulated this important record of conversation as a policy document to all provincial, city, and district party committees because all provinces, cities, and districts had their own nationality problems, which were to be resolved in the spirit demonstrated by Mao in his approach to the Mongolian nationality.

A few words should be added here about the acquisition of this record of conversation. I knew for some time that an important meeting between Mao and Damba took place in September 1956, but the Mongolian Foreign Ministry flatly refused persistent requests to provide me with the memoranda of conversation. By accident, I located a summary of this conversation in the Government Archive in Ulaanbaatar, as telegraphed by Ambassador Ochirbat to Foreign Minister Dashiin Adilbish on 26 September 1956. Marked "mash nuuts" (top secret), Ochirbat's report highlights important points of the conversation, although it clearly overlooks the national minority subtext and claims that Mao offered to send at most 200,000 workers to Mongolia.⁷ Then it occurred to me to check the Internet for information on the history of Sino-Mongolian relations written in the Chinese language. In ten seconds, I was reading the Chinese version of the conversation on my laptop; in another two minutes, I had downloaded volume six of *Jianguo Yilai Mao Zedong Wengao*, published in China several years ago. The volume contained the records of conversation between Mao and Damba, as well as Mao's comments on that record. Even a trip to the famous Central Committee bookstore in Beijing proved unnecessary.

China's offer of thousands of workers to drive forward Mongolia's economic construction created a dilemma for Ulaanbaatar. Choibalsan's successor, Prime Minister Yumjaagiin Tsendenbal, was happy to receive the Chinese workers but preferred to have them sent from Inner Mongolia and for permanent residence rather than a short stay.⁸ Having lost hope of ever retrieving Inner Mongolia from Chinese possession, Tsendenbal wanted at least to retrieve the ethnic



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Malcolm Byrne (NSA), James Hershberg (GWU), and CWHIP Director Christian F. Ostermann outside the conference ger near Ulaanbaatar.

Mongolians from across the border. The relevant request was made through Chimeddorjiin Surenjav, a senior Mongolian official who headed a delegation to Inner Mongolia in the spring of 1957.⁹ Premier Zhou Enlai received Surenjav on 7 May 1957. He turned down Ulaanbaatar's request, citing the shortage of ethnic Mongols in Inner Mongolia, who were outnumbered by Han Chinese by about seven to one.¹⁰ Instead, he allegedly offered to resettle Mongolian families from the Gobi desert in order to allow Chinese farmers to cultivate the land. Surenjav's reaction was predictably sharp: "Most of our livestock are in the Gobi and the steppe. Although there is little vegetation in the Gobi, the vegetation is nutritious. And the climate is warm. Thus, it is suitable for both cattle and people. And they will not move anywhere [else]. We don't have any surplus land."¹¹ In sharp contrast, that very same year, Tsendenbal agreed to hand over a vast track of land in northwestern Mongolia to the Soviet Union, overruling the objections of his own foreign minister.¹²

Tsendenbal's apprehension towards China was not without reason. The Sino-Mongolian friendship resembled a cat-and-mouse game, with Mao privately pushing levers to return the former province back to China. The Chairman did not discuss the question of Mongolia's sovereignty with Tsendenbal, anticipating the latter's negative reaction. Instead, Mao repeatedly approached Moscow. For instance, during the visit of CPSU CC member Anastas Mikoyan to Xibaipo for secret consultations with the Chinese in February 1949, Mao asked for Soviet acceptance of Mongolia's return to China. Mikoyan replied that Mongolia had "long grown accustomed to the taste of independence and was unlikely ever to surrender that independence voluntarily." Mao hurried to say that he "did not of course defend the Great Han chauvinistic line and would not raise the question of Mongolia's reunification."¹³ After Stalin's death, however, the Chinese leadership probed the Mongolian issue again—in a still classified conversation with Nikita Khrushchev in the fall of 1954, and in a conversation with

Anastas Mikoyan in April 1956 [Document #1]. The Soviet leadership repeatedly turned down these requests.¹⁴

The record of Mikoyan's April 1956 encounter with senior CCP CC Politburo member Liu Shaoqi and Premier Zhou Enlai shows how the Chinese leadership hoped to connect Mongolia with the question of Stalin's "mistakes" and thereby cancel its independence in the wake of Khrushchev's condemnation of Stalin's personality cult. Liu drew a parallel between Mongolia and Ukraine, with Mongolia being China's "Ukraine." Liu suggested that when Russia and Ukraine were "reunited" (i.e. following the Pereyaslav Treaty of 1654), Mongolia was already a part of China. In 1954, Khrushchev had celebrated with much fanfare the reunification of Russia and Ukraine, while China was left with the "historical injustice" of an independent Mongolia—an injustice that "deeply pained" the Chinese people. Mikoyan was not impressed by the analogy and pointed to the different cultures and ethnicities of the Mongols and the Chinese: "in Mongolia there is a completely different nationality." Liu and Zhou were disappointed and hinted that China might return to the question of Mongolia at a later stage. Passing through Ulaanbaatar on his way back to Moscow, Mikoyan warned Tsendenbal about the Chinese approaches, thus deepening the latter's suspicions of Chinese intentions.

Chinese claims on Mongolia did nothing to strengthen proletarian solidarity between the two parties. While relying on aid from the PRC to help economic construction in Mongolia, Tsendenbal maintained an unequivocally pro-Soviet political orientation. His outlook owed much to his personal background: he had graduated from a Russian university, visited Moscow several times a year, married a Russian, and spoke excellent Russian (indeed, his children never learned Mongolian). Tsendenbal enjoyed the personal friendship of both Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev. By contrast, Tsendenbal had no Chinese connections, and his infrequent encounters with Mao Zedong left him with the impression that the Chinese leader was trying to "buy" the trust of the Mongolian leadership with his "purely Chinese ceremoniousness."¹⁵

In the early 1960s, Mongolia's relationship with China took a turn for the worse, following the curve of the Sino-Soviet split. Faced with the choice to back one side or the other in the quarrel, the Mongolians placed all their eggs in the Soviet basket.¹⁶ This choice was not the only one available. Indeed, the Sino-Soviet split changed the rules of the game in the socialist bloc, with North Korea, Romania, and Albania easily exploiting the weakening lines of authority in the communist bloc to assert independent policies and maintaining equal distance between Beijing and Moscow. Kim Il Sung was in fact the master of the game, managing to receive economic and military aid from both his neighbours while claiming complete self-reliance in the political, economic, and military spheres.¹⁷ But circumstances were different in Mongolia. Its ties to the Soviet Union and its suspicion of China—imperial or proletarian—made Mongolia's choice quite predictable.

China, for its part, exerted considerable political and eco-

conomic pressure to win Mongolia's neutrality in the Sino-Soviet split. Such pressure became particularly problematic for Ulaanbaatar because of its economic reliance on China and particularly on Chinese workers. Mikoyan had presciently warned Tsedenbal in March 1956 against over-reliance on Chinese workers: "In order for you not to end up with a mainly Chinese working class, you should develop your own working class."¹⁸ Tsedenbal would have been happy to follow that advice, but Mongolia's acute labor shortage left him with little room to maneuver. Tsedenbal's economic thinking centered on hopes of creating an "industrialized countryside" with machines milking cows and shearing sheep, while nomadic Mongolians pushed buttons from plastic *gers*.¹⁹ Such dramatic economic breakthroughs in the countryside would have freed up a work force for industrial construction. In the meantime, Chinese workers were a necessary evil. They arrived in Mongolia in the 1950s, and by the early 1960s, their number had reached 8-10,000. By this time open disagreements between Mongolia and China began to surface.

In December 1962, when Zhou Enlai met with Tsedenbal [**Document #3**], the Chinese premier threatened for the first time to withdraw the Chinese workers if Mongolia continued to oppose the Chinese "struggle against Soviet revisionism." Tsedenbal reportedly almost came to blows with his Chinese interlocutor, barely managing to maintain a resolute posture. "We will not retreat in ideological terms and will not change the correct policy line of our party because of 8,000 workers," he told Zhou. Zhou followed up on his threat, and pulled the workers out of Mongolia. In a bid to get them back, Deputy Premier Sonomyn Luvsan visited China in September-October 1964. He again insisted on having workers from Inner Mongolia (i.e. ethnic Mongols), but Zhou turned down the idea. The Chinese premier promised, though, that in the long term "good relations will set in and then the PRC will be able to provide aid to Mongolia" [**Document #6**].²⁰

Tsedenbal's meeting with Zhou Enlai on 27 December 1962 (the final meeting of the two premiers) went well beyond the issues of Sino-Mongolian relations and offers new insights into the Sino-Indian border dispute and the Sino-Soviet split. The record of the meeting (or rather meetings) illustrates difficulties encountered by Cold War historians in multi-archival research. An East German copy of a transcript of a conversation between Tsedenbal and Zhou Enlai on 26 [sic] December 1962 published in the CWIHP *Bulletin*, represented for a time the only published "Mongolian" document on the Cold War.²¹ It was not a rare occurrence for the Mongols to share such records with socialist allies.²² The record of conversation presented below partially overlaps with the German record. Tsedenbal met with Zhou Enlai three times: on 25, 26, and 27 December 1962.²³ But Mongolian Ambassador Dondongiin Tsevegmid, in summarizing the records of the conversations to his Soviet colleague Stepan Chervonenko, apparently lumped together the contents of the conversations on 26 and 27 December 1962, hence the overlap. It is reasonable to say that whereas on 26 December the two premiers talked main-

ly about the Sino-Indian dispute, the following conversation explored Sino-Mongolian relations and the Sino-Soviet split. I retrieved the document presented here from the Russian Foreign Ministry archives (AVPRF). The original Mongolian Tsedenbal-Zhou memorandum of conversation remains inaccessible to foreign researchers in the Foreign Ministry Archive in Ulaanbaatar.²⁴

Tsevegmid's summary relays in vivid detail how Zhou accused Tsedenbal of trying to "teach" him, how Tsedenbal "asked Zhou Enlai not to be angry," and how later Zhou "calmed down somewhat." Although the ambassador probably presented a somewhat distorted picture, one can at least surmise that the two premiers had a very tense conversation. The discussion began with the Sino-Indian border dispute. In the fall of 1962 skirmishes occurred along the Sino-Indian frontier, and on 20 October, the Chinese launched an attack on Indian positions, occupying border regions of Ladakh and the North East Frontier Agency. In taking a hard line on India, Mao was ostensibly more concerned with the ideological imperatives of "the struggle against revisionism and imperialism" than with border issues *per se*.²⁵ But as tensions on the border escalated, the Chinese leadership hurried to improve Beijing's position by concluding border agreements with neighboring countries, including Mongolia, North Korea, Pakistan, and Burma. Zhou Enlai tried to win Tsedenbal's support for China's stance in the conflict with India. However, Tsedenbal merely expressed "regret" over the two great powers' tensions, angering the Chinese premier. Zhou reportedly said that the Chinese "did not like this attitude of the Mongolian comrades." It is interesting to note that some of the sharper comments, allegedly made by Zhou in the discussion of Sino-Indian relations, were not reflected in the German record. Perhaps Tsevegmid explained to Chervonenko what, in his opinion, Zhou *meant* to say, as opposed to what he actually said.

Tsedenbal did not merely parrot Khrushchev's formulations on the Sino-Indian conflict. In fact, in the fall of 1962 Khrushchev tended to support China, disappointing Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and undermining Soviet-Indian relations. Soviet support for China was not so much a consequence of the Cuban Missile Crisis, but part of Khrushchev's efforts to repair relations with Beijing.²⁶ As the Soviet leader told PRC Ambassador Liu Xiao on 13 October 1962, he was not yet certain "which way India would go." Indians were merely "friends," while the Chinese were "brothers." In Khrushchev's view, "in relations between us [China and the Soviet Union] there is no place for neutrality. This would be a betrayal. [...] We shall always be in one camp and share joys and sorrows."²⁷ Tsedenbal, by contrast, was far from such expressions of comradeship. Even the conclusion of the Sino-Mongolian border agreement did not alleviate his suspicions of China's irredentism. After returning to Ulaanbaatar he scribbled in his diary: "the Chinese are preaching feudal isolation. However, their goal is different. In reality, they want to make other countries into their satellites."²⁸ Tsedenbal therefore sympathized with India more

than he was willing to tell Zhou.

In the second part of the conversation, probably on 27 December, Zhou and Tsendenbal discussed the Sino-Soviet disagreements. The Chinese premier accused Tsendenbal of “blindly follow[ing]” the Soviet leadership and asked sarcastically whether he also “loyally follow[ed] Stalin.” Tsendenbal replied self-righteously: “We [Mongolians] are convinced in the rightness of the CPSU, we are deeply convinced in and committed to the endeavor carried out by the CPSU.” Tsendenbal and Zhou clashed over the issue of Sino-Soviet polemics; the Chinese premier complained that Mongolia only printed the Soviet side and ignored both the Chinese and Albanian materials that criticized Soviet “revisionism.” Tsendenbal in turn praised Soviet efforts to reach a compromise with Albania and blamed the Chinese for encouraging Tirana’s anti-Soviet rhetoric. In Tsendenbal’s view, “the Albanian question became a kind of a compass, a kind of a test of the sincerity of everyone towards the CPSU.” China had evidently failed the test and had abandoned Marxism-Leninism. Tsendenbal’s line on Albania was in fact tougher than Moscow’s policy at the time. Leonid Brezhnev, in an encounter with Chinese Ambassador Pan Zili in January 1963 (only days after Tsendenbal’s meeting with Zhou), diplomatically abstained from criticizing China’s handling of the Albanian issue and even asked for Beijing’s “help” in bringing Tirana back to its senses. Brezhnev asked “what bug has bitten the Albanians” and said that the Soviets did not want Albania “to become a reason for staining our relations with the CCP.”²⁹

Tsendenbal was much more abrupt and direct. He even went as far as to “remind [Zhou] what constituted the ABCs of Marxism-Leninism,” implying that the Chinese premier had abandoned Marxism altogether. By a curious coincidence, only a week later Khrushchev also spoke about the “ABCs of communism” in a meeting with the Chinese ambassador. But unlike Tsendenbal, the Soviet leader claimed an affinity of views and similarity of ideological conceptions with the Chinese.³⁰ Therefore, if Tsendenbal was a puppet in the Sino-Soviet split, he was dancing to his own tune; his split with China was deeper and wider than ideology. Keeping China at bay was, in Tsendenbal’s mind, at the core of Mongolia’s strategy of national survival.

In July 1964, Mao suddenly announced that much of Siberia and the Far East once belonged to China and had been unfairly annexed by the Russian tsars.³¹ That, of course, put Mongolia on Mao’s “unsettled bill” and embarrassed the Chinese diplomats who now had to reconcile the Chairman’s statements with China’s foreign relations. Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi had difficulty explaining Mao’s remarks to Mongolian Deputy Premier Sonomyn Luvsan, who visited China in September-October 1964.³² Chen Yi blamed “confused” publications in Japanese and Western newspapers for misrepresenting the Chairman’s thought and claimed that China “does not want to seize [territory from] others.” Zhou Enlai, in a meeting with Luvsan on 3 October 1964, also tried to avoid the issue [Document #6]. He “talked about the necessity of living in

friendship, although disagreements will persist for a long time, [he said that] the main thing is the unity of our countries.” Mao Zedong also spoke about “unity” when receiving Luvsan. On the whole, the Chinese leaders “tried to create an atmosphere of exceptional warmth, hugged [and] kissed” the Mongolian visitors. At the same time, Zhou Enlai politely refused to provide economic aid to Mongolia, making it clear, however, that if Mongolia adopted a more flexible line in the Sino-Soviet split, Chinese aid would resume.

As Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated, Mongolia’s relationship with the Soviet Union acquired strategic significance for both countries. Mongolia provided a military platform that would be indispensable in the event of a war with China. Partial mobilization of Mongolian troops was apparently underway by the fall of 1964 [Document #6], though Tsendenbal claimed that the army only carried out “construction work” [Document #5]. As early as July 1963, Mongolia had sought membership in the Warsaw Pact, which, at the time, appeared to be an anti-Chinese move. The secret MPRP Politburo resolution on Mongolia’s application to the Warsaw Pact made no mention of China and instead dwelled on the threat of a US buildup in the Far East after a renewed security treaty with Japan [Document #4]. However, the resolution made it clear what Mongolia wanted to get from the Warsaw Pact: the “modern weaponry and technology” enjoyed by member states. The date of the resolution—15 July 1963—is significant, as it came five days after Khrushchev’s letter to Polish leader Wladislaw Gomulka recommending Mongolia’s admittance to the Pact. Tsendenbal apparently decided the issue of application in principle with Khrushchev and then sought the support of his own Politburo after the fact.³³

The Soviet military presence was another noteworthy dimension of the Soviet-Mongolian “friendship.” It was assumed in the West that the decision to send forces to Mongolia was Moscow’s alone; Ulaanbaatar simply had to comply with Soviet military priorities. But newly available Mongolian documents paint a much more complex picture. On 1 December 1965, the MPRP Politburo decided to approach the Soviet leadership with a request to station “an appropriate unit from the Soviet armed forces” on Mongolia’s territory at Soviet expense [Document #7]. The letter to the Soviet leaders prepared on the same day outlines the rationale for the move: “the deteriorating situation in the East” raised concerns in Ulaanbaatar as to Mongolia’s capacity to defend itself against Chinese encroachment. Although Mongolian military forces were trained and equipped by the Soviet Union, they were deemed insufficient to repel “potential sudden attacks.” Moreover, lacking appropriate reconnaissance capabilities, they could not predict the timing of such “attacks.” Soviet troops were therefore “insistently” invited in order to “further strengthen” Mongolia’s defense capabilities.

The circumstances of the Politburo letter suggest that the request for Soviet troops was Tsendenbal’s initiative, not a fig leaf for Moscow’s “imperial” ambitions. The post-Khrushchev leadership bent over backwards to repair the Soviet position

in Asia: Premier Alexei Kosygin travelled to China, North Vietnam, and North Korea in February 1965 in an effort to improve relations. There was a sense in Moscow that with Khrushchev's flamboyant persona out of the picture, the underlying problems in Sino-Soviet relations could be overcome with patience. Hanoi and Pyeongyang were also reassured of the Soviet intent to respect their dissenting ideological views. Under such circumstances, sending troops to Mongolia would cause problems for Soviet diplomacy in Asia. Moreover, in late 1965 China was not yet as great a threat to the Soviet Union as it would become a few years later during the Cultural Revolution. Tensions had certainly escalated, but the Soviets continued to make offers of reconciliation to Beijing well into early 1966. It was not until the embassy siege crisis of August 1966 that the Chinese problem alarmed the Soviet leadership. For Tsendenbal, alarm bells were ringing all along; he wanted Soviet troops in Mongolia as a measure of additional security against perceived Chinese militancy.

Tsendenbal expressed his concerns about the Chinese military build-up on the Sino-Mongolian border to Brezhnev when he visited Ulaanbaatar in January 1966 [Document #8]. Brezhnev relayed that the Soviet leadership "replied positively to the request of the MPRP CC about aid in strengthening the defense capabilities of the MPR." That statement suggests that Moscow had agreed in principle to station forces in Mongolia. Soviet Defense Minister Rodion Malinovsky was instructed to coordinate all details. The next record we have concerning Soviet forces in Mongolia comes a year later, on 4 February 1967, when the CPSU Politburo adopted Resolution P32/32op on "stationing Soviet forces on the territory of MPR" [Document #9]. This decision came on the heels of violent demonstrations in Beijing and the siege of the Soviet embassy by Red Guards. On the same day, the Politburo adopted several other decisions on strengthening Soviet forces in the Far East, in line with a reassessment of the Chinese threat. It appears that despite the earlier talks with Tsendenbal, it was only when the crisis point was reached in Sino-Soviet relations that the Soviet leadership decided to send troops to Mongolia. The development of the necessary infrastructure, such as barracks, airfields, and garages, was a long-term project. It was not until 26 April 1967, for example, that the Politburo arranged the logistics for sending construction troops to Mongolia to prepare military bases. According to one recent publication, the first train carriages with 800 Soviet tanks (mainly T-76) crossed the Soviet-Mongolian border in March 1968, startling Mongolian peasants nearby.³⁴ By the early 1980s, the Soviets had firmly established a presence in Mongolia, ready to repel any Chinese intrusions.



It was getting late on top of Zaisan. I started down the steps, leaving my stone companions to themselves. Halfway down, I looked back and met the gaze of the Russian soldier. He was

still there, sinking slowly into the evening shadows. These documents, too, were in the shadows, silent witnesses of dramatic events. They raised important questions about the roles of culture, memory, and ideology in Mongolia's recent history. Tsendenbal's anti-Chinese inclinations were not Soviet-dictated; the Mongols had their own reasons to fear China, which were much more deeply rooted than ideology. Marxism-Leninism did not adequately address the vital concerns of a small nomadic nation at the fringe of a vast, established civilization, especially fears of cultural obsolescence and unwanted assimilation. Deeply rooted anti-Chinese sentiments were reinforced for many Mongols by the collective memory of China's imperial rule and the difficult struggle for independence in the early 20th century.

Thus, for Tsendenbal and other Mongolian leaders, closer ties with the Soviet Union were important for two reasons. First, the Soviet Union helped safeguard Mongolia's independence. Clearly, Mao considered Soviet intransigence a major obstacle to Mongolia's return to China in the late 1940s and the 1950s. Second, the USSR brought Mongolia a promise of material prosperity. Three hundred years of Qing rule had left the nomads as poor as they had ever been, while closer relations with the USSR furthered economic development. The Russians landed the first airplane in Ulaanbaatar in 1925; in 1949 the first train line connected Soviet Naushki with Ulaanbaatar; in 1981 the first Mongolian cosmonaut flew into space aboard a Soviet rocket. Soviet-Mongolian friendship seemed to offer Mongolia a bright future among advanced nations, a chance to escape the "backwardness" that threatened national survival. And even if it failed in every other respect, the long-standing relationship with Moscow at least helped assure Mongolia's continued national existence.

Notes

1. I would like to thank the following archives for providing relevant documents: *Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii* and *Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Noveishei Istorii* (Russia), *Mongol Ardyn Khuvsgal Namyn Arkhiv* and *Mongol Ulsyn Zasgiin Gazryn Arkhiv* (Mongolia). Many individuals helped bring the Mongolian project to fruition; among others, I would like to thank James Hershberg, Christian Ostermann, Odd Arne Westad and Balazs Szalontai for their encouragement and support.

2. Conference, "Mongolia and the Cold War," 19-20 March 2004, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, co-sponsored by the Cold War International History Project.

3. Genden even accused Stalin of being a "Russian tsar" and reportedly broke the Soviet leader's pipe in anger at a drunken reception. Amar also insisted on Mongolia's sovereign rights, albeit in a more diplomatic way. Bat-Erdene Batbayar (Baabar), *The Twentieth Century Mongolia*, ed. by Christopher Kaplonski (Cambridge: White Horse Press, 1999): 348.

4. The proposal to accede to the Soviet Union was formulated by prominent intellectuals and political figures S. Avirmed, B. Badarch, G. Galbadrakh, D. Tumor-Ochir, Ts. Dugersuren and L. Tsend in a letter to Choibalsan dated 3 July 1950. The letter is reprinted in

“BNMAU-yg Zuvlult Kholboot Ulsyn Bureldekhund Oruulakh Asuudal Tav’san n”, *Unen* No. 178, 17708 (31 July 1990): 3 and *Unen* No. 185, 17715 (8 August 1990), 3.

5. For a recent account of the rise and fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance see Odd Arne Westad (ed.), *Brothers in Arms: the Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-1963* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1998).

6. As of 1966, Chinese aid to Mongolia amounted to 103.55 million rubles (67.5 million rubles in credits and 36.05 million rubles in grants). By comparison, China’s aid to North Korea for the same period amounted to 400.15 million rubles, and to North Vietnam - 496.8 million rubles (nearly 4 and 5 times higher, respectively). These figures do not include military aid. Regarding PRC aid to socialist countries (28 May 1966), See AVPRF; fond 0100, opis 59, papka 529, delo 37, list 27.

7. Ochirbat to Dashiin Adilbish (26 September 1956), Mongol Ulsyn Zasgiin Gazryn Arkhiv; fond 1, dans 4, kh/n 5, khuu 173.

8. Conversation between Vasily Pisarev and Yumjaagiin Tsedenbal (29 November 1954), AVPRF; fond 0111, opis 36, papka 235, delo 3, listy 57-58.

9. Report on trip to China in spring 1957, Surenjavyn Tuvshin’s personal archive. Surenjavyn Tuvshin is the grandson of Chimeddorjiin Surenjav.

10. Mao Zedong officially confirmed this position in his letter to Dashiin Damba dated 20 May 1957. See “Letter to Damba” in *Mao Zedong Wenji*, vol. 7 (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 1993-9), 300.

11. This document was obtained from Surenjavyn Tuvshin, grandson of Chimeddorjiin Surenjav, and apparently represents recollections written by Surenjav many years later. In all likelihood, the account was based on original notes, but its reliability has not been verified.

12. Foreign Minister Sodnomyn Avarzed (1922-1989) reportedly opposed Vyacheslav Molotov’s demands for territorial concessions and subsequently lost his job for being “anti-Soviet.” The charges of anti-Sovietism were lifted in 1990, shortly after Avarzed died after being hit by a truck. Chuntyn Boldbaatar, *XX Zuuny Mongolyn Uls Turiin Zutgelmuud* (Ulaanbaatar: Admon, 2004): 13. See also Boldbaatar’s paper, “Was Sodnomyn Avarzed an Anti-Soviet?” presented at the CWIHP Conference on Mongolia and the Cold War, 19-20 March 2004, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

13. See Soviet records of these exchanges on pp. 144-145, 154 of this *Bulletin*. For an account of Mikoyan’s visit to China in January-February 1949, see Andrei Ledovsky, *SSSR i Stalin v Sudbakh Kitaya* (Moscow: Pamyatniki Istoricheskoi Mysli, 1999): 62. For a recent analysis of Mikoyan’s discussion of Mongolia with the Chinese leadership, see Xiaoyuan Liu’s paper, “The Structure of Bloc Politics: Stalin, Mao and Mongolia’s Independence” presented at the CWIHP Conference on Mongolia and the Cold War, 19-20 March 2004, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

14. During the CPSU CC Presidium (Politburo) meeting on 19 August 1964 Khrushchev and his colleagues recalled the details of the 1954 discussion with Mao on Mongolia in the following terms: Khrushchev [...] Mao Zedong used to say...—we talked about this back in 1954, when a party delegation visited Beijing. They said then, how do you look at this, Mongolia used to be a part of the Chinese state [?] I replied then, yes, this is so, but now Mongolia is an independent state, it will hardly want to accede to China. In general, this is the Mongolian ques-

tion. And, he says, what do you think about this? I remember that [Andrei] Gromyko was there. I said, what can we say?—they will hardly want this.

Andropov: It was said that they had become used to independence.

Khrushchev: This was all.

Andropov: [We] even refused to discuss this question.

Source: “Meeting of the CPSU CC Presidium” (19 August 1964), in Aleksandr Fursenko (ed.), *Prezidium TsK KPSS: 1954-1964* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2003), 848-849.

15. Leonid Shinkarev, *Tsedenbal Filatova Khoyor: Khair Durlal, Erkh Medel, Emgenel* (Ulaanbaatar: Munkhiin Useg Khevelekh Uildver, 2004): 134-135.

16. For Mongolia’s pioneering initiatives in the Sino-Soviet split see Sergey Radchenko, “*The China Puzzle: the Soviet Policy Towards the People’s Republic of China, 1962-67*,” PhD Dissertation, University of London, 2005.

17. For an account of Kim Il Sung’s position during the Sino-Soviet split, see Bernd Schaefer, “North Korean Adventurism and China’s Long Shadow, 1966-1972,” Cold War International History Project Working Paper No. 43 (October 2004), and Sergey Radchenko, “The Soviet Union and the Seizure of the USS Pueblo: Evidence from Russian Archives,” Cold War International History Project Working Paper No. 47 (April 2005). Romania’s self-proclaimed neutrality in the split is discussed in Sergey Radchenko, “The China Puzzle” and in Xiaoyuan Liu and Vojtech Mastny (eds.), *China and Eastern Europe, 1960s-1980s, Proceedings of the International Symposium: Reviewing the History of Chinese–East European Relations from the 1960s to the 1980s, Beijing, 24–26 March 2004* (Zurich: Center for Security Studies, 2004).

18. Budyn Sumya (ed.), *Gerel Suuder: Yu. Tsedenbalyn Khuviin Temdeglelees* (Light and Shadow, From Yu. Tsedenbal’s diary) (Ulaanbaatar: Ulsyn Kheveleliin Kombinat, 1992): 91-94.

19. Tsedenbal described his vision for Mongolia’s economic future in his diary, Budyn Sumya (ed.), *Gerel Suuder: Yu. Tsedenbalyn Huviin Temdeglel* (Ulaanbaatar: D. Sukhbaataryn Neremjit Ulsyn Kheveleliin Kombinat, 1991): 19-20. Balázs Szalontai details Mongolia’s plastic ger initiative in “Tsedenbal’s Mongolia and the Communist Aid Donors: A Reappraisal,” *IAS Newsletter* 35 (November 2004), Leiden: International Institute for Asian Studies: 18.

20. For record of Luvsan’s meeting with Chen Yi see “Conversation between Sonomyn Luvsan and Chen Yi” (30 September 1964), Mongol Ulsyn Zasgiin Gazryn Arkhiv; fond 1, dans 16, kh/n 299 (1965), khuu. 92-98.

21. Conversation between Yumjaagiin Tsedenbal and Zhou Enlai (26 December 1962), *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, 8-9 (Winter 1996-97), 266.

22. In a move reflecting Tsedenbal’s efforts to advertise his “Marxist-Leninist” posture, the MPRP Central Committee Politburo approved a special resolution to share records of Tsedenbal’s meetings with Zhou Enlai with “some fraternal parties,” as well as with members and candidate members of the MPRP Central Committee. See On the Results of Visit to China by Chairman of the MPR’s Council of Ministers, First Secretary of the MPRP comrade Yu. Tsedenbal, Politburo Resolution No. 22 (30 December 1962), Mongol Ardyn Khuvsгалт Намын Архив; fond 4, dans 26, kh/n 6b, khuu. 16-18.

23. Mongol Ardyn Khuvsгалт Намын Архив; fond 4, dans 26, kh/n 6b, khuu. 18. Chinese sources confirm that there were three meetings. See “Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi,” *Zhou En-*

lai Nianpu, Vol. 2 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1997): 521; and Liu Chongwen et al., *Liu Shaoqi Nianpu: 1898-1969*, Vol. 2 (Beijing: Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe, 1998): 567.

24. Foreign Ministry Archive (Ulaanbaatar), fond 0,6, kh/n 39. Tsendenbal's meeting with Zhou is briefly discussed in Chuluunay Dalai and Irgy Shima, *Otnosheniya Mezhd MNR i KNR, 1949-1985*, internal circulation (Prague and Ulaanbaatar: Oriental Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and Institute of Oriental Studies of MPR Academy of Sciences, 1986). The archival reference is taken from that book. See D. Shurkhuu, "Sino-Mongolian relations in the 1960s," paper presented at the CWIHP Conference on Mongolia and the Cold War, 19-20 March 2004, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia for an additional account of Tsendenbal-Zhou meeting, based on research in the Mongolian Foreign Ministry Archive.

25. Odd Arne Westad (ed.), *Brothers in Arms*, pp. 27-28.

26. For a contrary view, i.e. that Khrushchev wanted to improve relations with China in October 1962 mainly because of the Cuban Missile Crisis, see Mikhail Prozumenshchikov, "The Sino-Indian Conflict, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the Sino-Soviet Split, October 1962: New Evidence from the Russian Archives" in the *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Issue 8-9 (Winter 1996-97): 251.

27. Quoted in Sergey Radchenko, *The China Puzzle*, p. 31.

28. Budyn Sumya (ed.), *Gerel Suuder*, p. 99.

29. "Conversation between Leonid Brezhnev and Pan Zili" (15 December 1962), AVPRF; fond 0100, opis 55, papka 480, delo 4, listy 44-46.

30. Sergey Radchenko, *The China Puzzle*, p. 52.

31. "Beseda Mao Tszeduna s Yaponskimi Sotsialistami," *Pravda* (2 September 1964): 2-3.

32. Conversation between Sonomyn Luvsan and Chen Yi (30 September 1964), Mongol Ulsyn Zasgiin Gazryn Arkhiv; fond 1, dans 16, kh/n 299 (1965), khuu. 92-98.

33. Letter from Nikita Khrushchev to Wladislaw Gomulka (10.07.63), Modern Records Archive (Warsaw): KC PZPR, XIA/103, k. 521. Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact (PHP), www.isn.ethz.ch/php, by permission of the Center for Security Studies at ETH Zurich and the National Security Archive at the George Washington University on behalf of the PHP network.

34. Leonid Shinkarev, *Tsendenbal Filatova Khoyor*, p. 304.



DOCUMENT No. 1

Information Memorandum, "About the Claims of the Chinese Leaders with Regard to the Mongolian People's Republic," by USSR Far Eastern Department First Secretary, I. Kalabukhov, 30 January 1964

[Source: CWIHP Collection (www.cwihip.org).]

TOP SECRET. Copy No. 1

About the claims of the Chinese leaders with regard to the Mongolian People's Republic (information)

After the 20th Congress of the CPSU [Communist Party of



Mongolia and the Cold War: International Workshop, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, March 2004:

Sanjaasuren Bayraa, Christian Ostermann (CWIHP), Vojtech Mastny (PHP), Margolzata Gnoinska (GWU), and A. Tuvshintugs inside the conference get outside Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

the Soviet Union], [CPSU CC member] Comrade [Anastas] Mikoyan visited the People's Republic of China [PRC] and had conversations with the leading comrades of the CCP [Chinese Communist Party]. During the conversation between Comrade Mikoyan and [PRC Vice Premier] Liu Shaoqi and [PRC Premier and Foreign Minister] Zhou Enlai on 7 April 1956, the issue was raised that Mongolia was at one time part of China. Zhou Enlai, having reminded him that in 1949, during Comrade Mikoyan's stay in China, they [the Chinese leaders] raised before Stalin the question of the possibility of returning Mongolia to the PRC and that Stalin, through Comrade Mikoyan, gave the wrong answer, and asked whether we consider this answer one of Stalin's mistakes.

(Note: In February 1949 during the confidential trip of Comrade Mikoyan to Shijiazhuang [Mikoyan in fact visited Xibaipo, a village 50 miles to the northwest of Shijiazhuang, in Hebei Province] ahead of the 3rd March Plenum of the CCP CC, [CCP CC Chairman] Mao Zedong in his conversation with the former, in the presence of Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai, raised the question of uniting the two parts of Mongolia. Comrade Mikoyan replied that, taking into consideration the territorial integrity of China, this would not be in China's interests because a large part of the country—Inner Mongolia—would break away. Mao Zedong then commented that he had in mind the unification of Mongolia with its accession to China. Comrade Mikoyan declared that the Mongolian people have tasted the fruits of sovereign existence and will hardly agree to abandon independence; in any case, this question was the business of the Mongolian people. This note is based on the oral report by a referent of the CPSU CC Department [for Relations with Socialist Countries], Comrade A. N. Katerinich, who has seen the transcript of Comrade Mikoyan's conversation. On this trip, Comrade Mikoyan was accompanied by [CPSU CC emissary to the PRC] Comrade Ivan Vladimirovich Kovalev.)

In response to Comrade Mikoyan's objection that he then considered and still believes that Stalin was right, that is—that Stalin gave a correct answer—Zhou Enlai said that, formally, Stalin really did answer correctly saying that the Mongolian comrades should be asked about Mongolia's accession to China because only they can solve this question. But in accordance with party principles, Stalin should have answered differently. Zhou Enlai supposed that Stalin should have expressed his opinion, because it was a conversation between communists, and then he could say that the Chinese should talk to the Mongolians. Zhou Enlai believes that Stalin evaded this question and did not express his opinion. Comrade Mikoyan explained that Stalin's answer should be interpreted in the sense that Stalin in effect spoke against raising the question about Mongolia's accession to China, but since he did not want to get into an argument with the Chinese comrades on this question, he suggested that the solution of this question be left to the Mongolians.

During the same conversation, Liu Shaoqi added that the Chinese people allegedly are very deeply pained by Mongolia's secession from China. He noted that when the Soviet Union was celebrating the 300-year anniversary of the reunification of Ukraine with Russia, [some people] said in China that 300 years ago Mongolia was already a part of China and asked whether it could be reunited with China. The Chinese, Liu Shaoqi continued, consider Mongolia, like Taiwan, a part of their territory.

Comrade Mikoyan replied that it is wrong to equate Mongolia with Taiwan. Chinese [people] live in Taiwan, but in Mongolia there is a completely different nationality. Mongolia was not a *de facto* part of China even under the tsar. It acquired independent existence as a state after the October Revolution, and the Mongolians, having learned the taste of national independence, will now hardly want to abandon it. We, continued A. I. Mikoyan, never considered joining Mongolia to the Soviet Union. When the Japanese occupied a part of China and decided to grab Mongolia as well, we defended it with weapons in our hands.¹ When the danger passed, we pulled out our forces from the MPR [Mongolian People's Republic] and helped the Mongolians create a national army to defend their own country. Moreover, at the time some Mongolian comrades raised the question of joining Mongolia to the USSR as a Soviet Republic. We categorically refused this. Finally, continued Comrade Mikoyan, the Chinese communists should not be worried about the existence of regret in the PRC regarding the MPR's secession from China because the very act of Mongolia's formal secession from China was carried out by Jiang Jieshi's [Chiang Kai-shek's] government, and not by the PRC government, and this act was correct and proceeded from the [de facto] situation.

Zhou Enlai and Liu Shaoqi concluded that they are not raising the question of reuniting Mongolia with the PRC, this could

be done later. But they considered it expedient to express "the opinion of the Chinese people on this question." In April of the same year, when he was in Ulaanbaatar, Comrade Mikoyan informed the Mongolian friends about the content of the above-mentioned conversation with Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai. [MPR CC Secretary Yumjaagiin] Tsedenbal, on behalf of the members of the Politburo of the CC MPRP, declared that they agree with the stated position of Comrade Mikoyan and emphasized that they stand for the independence of the MPR.

1st Secretary of the Far Eastern Department of the USSR
/I. Kalabukhov/

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1. *Editor's Note:* Mikoyan refers here to the major fighting between Soviet-Mongolian and Japanese forces at the border post of Khalkhyn Gol in 1939.



DOCUMENT No. 2

Memorandum of Conversation between Mao Zedong and the Delegation of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party [MRPR] and Comments on the Distribution of the Memorandum of Conversation, 24 September 1956

[Source: *Jianguo Yilai Mao Zedong Wengao*, Vol. 6 (Beijing: Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe, 1992): 213-222. Translated for CWIHP by Sergey Radchenko.]

One. Memorandum of Conversation.

Date: 24 September 1956

Participants:

Mongolian side: [MPR First Secretary Jebtsun] Damba [Khutukhtu] (head of the delegation), [MPR Foreign Minister Munkh-Orgil] Tsend, [MPR Head of State Punsalmaaqiyn] Ochirbat (Ambassador), Hashengangbai, Tsevevsamba;

Chinese side: Chairman Mao Zedong, [CCP CC Secretariat] Wang Jiaxiang.

Chairman Mao [Chairman]: You got tired over these few days, didn't you?

Damba [Da]: No, we are not tired, we are very comfortable.

Chairman: Mongolian comrades are good comrades, good friends. You are a friendly nation, a friendly party!

(Chairman sends regards to Comrade Tsedenbal)

Da: He is very well, he and Comrade [Jamtsarangiyin] Sambuu send their regards to you.

Chairman: Thank you. Please give them regards on my behalf.

Da: Thank you. We appreciate your aid to us.

Chairman: No, you should not say so! China is a big country, it is our duty, and it is your right. I always hear you talk this way, and at the same time I see documents worded this way, and my heart feels uneasy. We should do our duty, because our ancestors exploited you for three hundred years, oppressed you, they ran up quite a debt; therefore, today we want to repay these debts. In the past our national minorities were also oppressed this way, and we also want to repay our debts to them—this is our duty. One million two hundred thousand of our Tibetan population are actually in Lhasa, another million are scattered across Qinghai, Yunnan, Sichuan, Gansu, and other places. How is the religious situation in Mongolia? Are there many *lamas*? What is the general population?

Da: There used to be many, but there are extremely few now. In the early period of the revolution some *lamas* did bad things, and they were dealt with. Some have engaged in labor and other work. There are still a small number of *lamas*. Our country's general population is 800,000.

Chairman: How is the development of industry and agriculture in Mongolia?

Da: Before the revolution we were a very backward nation, but during the revolutionary era, owing to enthusiastic help from the Soviet Union, our people have attained good development in the spheres of industry, animal husbandry, culture, and education.

Chairman: And Mongolian agriculture developed as well?

Da: We only began to develop agriculture this year.

Chairman: Is there enough water?

Da: In our country water is scarce.

Chairman: How about rainfall?

Da: In an average year, we have 120 to 300 millimeters of rain (of these, 300 millimeters fall in the forest belt, and the desert belt has 120 millimeters).

Chairman: What about drilling wells?

Da: In the desert belt, it is difficult to drill wells.

Chairman: In this case, create some reservoirs, store up water, and use it when needed—why don't you try it this way?

Da: This would be difficult in the desert region—water does not stay and quickly seeps into the ground.

Chairman: What big rivers do you have on your territory?

Da: Selenge, Onon, Herlen, etc.

Chairman: Which ones flow in the northwestern direction?

Da: Onon and Herlen.

Chairman: Where did Mongolian history and culture develop?

Da: In the region of the Onon and Herlen rivers.

Chairman: Can't you construct dams, reservoirs, drainage, etc. on these rivers?

Da: The people and all of us urgently demand to have it done so, but we do not have enough strength.

Chairman: We also have some difficulties now. But in a few years we will help you in this regard.

Da: Thank you.

Chairman: This year Hebei suffered from flooding, thirty million *mu*¹ of agricultural land were devastated by water. In China, hydraulic engineering work did not develop greatly until now; another ten years will pass before [this problem] can be resolved. But in this regard we will help you; you need not wait ten years.

Da: Last year you gave us a lot of aid, [you] sent thirteen thousand workers and technicians, and this gave an impetus to industrial and other construction. In addition, this year [you] gave [us] a grant of one hundred and sixty million rubles. Therefore, the Mongolian people feel elated.

Chairman: No, no. I already said it before: it is our duty. These numbers are too small. When you raise this I feel ashamed.

Da: Connecting the two [railroad] lines had a great effect on our country's development.

Chairman: How is Mongolian agriculture now?

Da: Now, compared with the past, it has developed somewhat; but due to the lack of manpower, large tracts of land have not yet been opened up for cultivation.

Chairman: This is not good. Uncultivated land should be

opened up. Have you settled down?

Da: Settling down would be very advantageous for our agriculture and animal husbandry, but [we] have not yet settled.

Chairman: This cannot be accomplished at once, but has to be done gradually, because grass is limited in any one place. In our country there are provinces with a similar situation. With settling down, one can grow vegetables and cultivate crops. This way the population can increase.

Da: Right! (Pointing to Tsend) He is responsible for the National Planning Committee. These suggestions of yours are of great help to our future planning work.

Chairman: Develop agriculture and animal husbandry; first of all one should develop hydraulic engineering work, and this includes dams, reservoirs, drainage, etc. On the other hand, pastures are very important; for your future, "grass is oil." You should cultivate pastures, using the deep plough method; this way the grass will grow tall and there will be much more of it. This will create conditions for you to settle down.

Da: That's right! We attach importance to your words.

Chairman: You can start some hydraulic engineering work early. This aspect includes geological prospecting work, physical resources, etc. Financial resources are not that important. Manpower is the most important, most critical. You should first do the most pressing, most needed work. For example, you fixed up a modern highway from Ulaanbaatar to the country's western border, but you use it very rarely. This is unnecessary.

Da: Only seven years have passed since the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Before that time the people of our two countries did not have much contact. Thirty-five years have passed since our revolution, but because our country was very backward, we have not been able to develop well in these thirty-five years (although we have had successes). Therefore, one can say that industry and agriculture in our country have not developed well.

Chairman: You should be self-sufficient.

Da: Currently we cannot manufacture many everyday products.

Chairman: This is not good. [You] should expand this aspect of industry.

Da: Japanese imperialism's invasion of our country also influenced development in this regard.

Chairman: How many troops do you still have?

Da: About one division.

Chairman: That's enough. Now you do not have enemies around you.

Da: We are right now training demobilized soldiers from these troops to become drivers, construction workers, etc.

Chairman: This is good. This is a production army! Then, how is the written language?

Da: Now we are using new (Russian) letters; all adults are literate.

Chairman: Very good. Inner Mongolia is now doing the same thing.

Da: That is what they say. With regard to the written language, we can help Inner Mongolia.

Chairman: Right. It must be done this way. Do you have direct links with Inner Mongolia?

Da: We do not have direct links now. We only have links through the Central [Committee].

Chairman: Shouldn't there be direct relations?

Da: There must be direct relations, but we did not go through formalities.

Chairman: You can do so. You can establish your consulate in Inner Mongolia. If you do so, you will not have any costs! You can take several people from your embassy and send them there, this would do. The Soviet Union does this. They have consulates at Tianjin, Shanghai, Shenyang, Guangzhou, etc. However, I am only speaking about the aforementioned things as a private individual, perhaps [I am] incorrect, because I have not consulted with the government and responsible people at the Foreign Ministry. By the same token, you also have not consulted with your government. But I think these things can be achieved.

Da: Thank you! We never even gave a thought to the historical "debt." We only want to thank you.

Chairman: No! One must pay debts—we repay debts incurred by our ancestors. You, the Mongolian nation, are the third nation. The first nation were the Xiongnu. They settled in Xinjiang and the northern part of Huanghe, and some had crossed the Huanghe. The second nationality was the Tujue. They seized Armenia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Egypt, Greece, and some other nations, and founded a big empire. But that nation was subsequently defeated by the Mongolian nation. Therefore Mongolia is the third nation. Until now we have not

clarified the origin of your ancestors. Is it in Siberia?

Ochirbat: Ah! That is what they say!

Chairman: Siberia used to have the Gaoche [Tall Cart] nationality, it is said that they all sat upon great tall carts. Are the Gaoche nationality your ancestors?

Da: Old people say that when ancestors moved their homes, they used tall carts to move all their things.

Chairman: Do you have records of this?

Da: As for the records prior to the 12th century, we have none now; we have records after the 13th century. The Soviet Union is helping us with work in this regard. Mongolia's pre-13th century history is intimately related to Chinese history; therefore, in the future we will possibly need to conduct joint research with you in this regard.

Chairman: Very good. Today we talked about many things related to history.

Da: Our prospects are very bright, because we have fraternal aid from the Soviet Union and China. From now on, we will work even harder and more diligently.

Chairman: You should develop well.

Da: I again express our sincere gratitude. Your aid to us is great fraternal aid. We cannot look upon it as a "debt."

Chairman: But we think this way. We have equal coexistence with all countries. In the past, we oppressed you, therefore now we want to admit our mistake. We not only do it so with you but with all national minorities inside the country. In the past, we oppressed them; therefore, if we now do not admit our mistakes, we cannot root out Great Han nationalist thinking and implement [principles of] equality of nationalities. This is [our] basis, not pretty words. Isn't that so? In the past we oppressed you, but now you do not even have a word of complaint. The aid we are giving you is small. It is repayment of debt and not aid. Only this way can we attain mutual trust. You say "aid"—this is also good; when you say so, you also express equality.

Da: We express gratitude for your aid, which you have given and will give to us. The Chinese and Mongolian working people have always been friends; things done by the reactionary classes are a different matter.

Chairman: Some Chinese workers have gone to Mongolia. You should carry out propaganda work with them so that they do not commit the error of Great Han nationalist thinking, so that they do not ride roughshod over you [*chengwang chengba*]. If the Chinese workers or laborers there commit mistakes, you

should make this known to us.

Da: The majority of the people are very good, though a small number of people sometimes make mistakes, but not intentionally. At the same time, everybody might have some shortcomings.

Chairman: You should educate them; if anyone commits grave mistakes, they should be punished in accordance with the law. You should take the attitude of hosts and educate them.

Da: Among Chinese workers there, there are two hundred party members, and they lead the others to do good work.

Chairman: Good! How many workers are there altogether?

Da: 13,000 people, counting the family members. Of the former overseas Chinese, a part returned to the homeland, now only 45,000 people remain; but these people are all old.

Chairman: Are the Mongolian people directing them?

Tsend: Yes! The Mongolian people direct them with the attitude of hosts in their own country.

Chairman: Are there any carpenters among the Chinese workers?

Da: Yes. There are also brickmakers and all other professions.

Chairman: Do you let them train Mongolian apprentices?

Da: They certainly train apprentices!

Chairman: Later, with regard to agriculture, we may use our manpower to aid you. The number may be one hundred thousand, or it can be two hundred thousand; it can even reach three hundred thousand. Of these, some people could also help you with animal husbandry.

Da: Right, but beforehand we should fully complete preparatory work and planning work. Otherwise, after we receive these people, we will have difficulties in housing and other aspects.

Chairman: Right! You should gradually carry out this work. You have 800,000 people, therefore you can develop agriculture and begin hydraulic engineering.

Da: We have more than 52,000 workers.

Chairman: 52,000 workers out of a population of eight hundred thousand—this number cannot be considered small. Do they use machines?

Da: They use semi-automatic machinery.

Chairman: Do they have automation?

Da: They do not.

Chairman: Then you can install some in the future. On this question, we can have a talk in the future.

Da: Owing to your aid, we now have a match factory and a porcelain factory, but boxes for matches, etc. are still made by hand.

Chairman: What is the scale of the production of matches?

Da: The country requires 20 million boxes of matches, next year production can reach that number. But they do not sell very well inside the country.

Chairman: How is your market?

Da: As for the market, we have it, but it is very small.

Chairman: We talked well today.

Da: We thank you for your attention to us, thank you for taking some time out of your busy schedule to meet with us, thank you for giving us very important suggestions, thank you for giving us very useful ideas. When we return home, we will now be guided in our work by the words you spoke tonight. As we part, I once again extend our heartfelt respect to you on behalf of my party's Central Committee and the entire people.

[...]

Two. Comments on the distribution of the memorandum of conversation.

Foreign Ministry:

This conversation should be sent to our embassy in Mongolia, to the Party Committee of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, and to each province, city and district party committee, because all provinces, cities and districts have issues relating to the minority question. Also, [it should be sent] to the United Front Department and the party group of the National Committee. Please handle jointly with [CCP CC Member] Comrade [Yang] Shangkun.

Mao Zedong. 16 December.

1. *Editor's Note:* A *mu* is a Chinese unit of land measure equivalent to approximately 0.1647 acres (0.0667 hectares).



DOCUMENT No. 3

Record of Conversation between USSR Ambassador to the PRC S[tepan] V. Chervonenko and the MPR Ambassador to the PRC D[ondogiin] Tsevegmid, 1 January 1963

[Source: Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF). fond 0100, opis 56, papka 495, delo 7, listy 1-19. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Sergey Radchenko.]

Embassy of the USSR in the PRC

Top Secret

“15” January 1963

Copy No. 1

Outgoing No. 82

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Union
of Soviet Socialist Republics

Comrade Gromyko

Enclosed is the copy of a record of conversation with the MPR ambassador in the PRC, D[ondogiin] Tsevegmid, which we sent to [CPSU CC Secretary] Comrade [Yuri Vladimirovich] Andropov.

Attachment: as mentioned, 19 pages (top secret).

Ambassador of the USSR to the PRC

[Signature] (S. Chervonenko)

Top Secret

1 January 1963

Ambassador Tsevegmid, after his return to Beijing (he accompanied the government delegation of the MPR headed by Yu[mjagiin] Tsedenbal, who left Beijing for the motherland on 27 December 1962 after the signing of the border treaty between the MPR and the PRC), at his [own] initiative, as he said, with Tsedenbal's instruction, visited the Soviet embassy and confidentially informed [us] about the conversations that took place between Yu. Tsedenbal and Zhou Enlai on 25 and 27 December 1962.

Tsevegmid said the following:

On the day of the arrival of the Mongolian delegation in Beijing—25 December—all conversations and meetings, including the conversation between Tsedenbal and Zhou Enlai, had a formal character and stayed within the framework of discussion of the border treaty. Conversation with Liu Shaoqi on 27 December, before the signing of the treaty, also had a pointedly formal character; none of the big, principal questions were touched upon during that meeting.

After the signing of the treaty and a large demonstration on 27 December the second conversation between Tsedenbal and Zhou Enlai took place. Evidently, the Chinese side carefully prepared for this meeting since the conversation touched upon important principal questions that not only concern relations between the PRC and the MPR, and between the CCP and the MPRP, but also relations with other parties, including the CPSU.

At the beginning of this conversation, Zhou Enlai remarked—continued Tsevegmid—that the signing of the border treaty between the PRC and the MPR had great meaning, not only for our two countries but for other states as well, and would positively influence the international situation in general. After the demarcation of the borderline, the official border would be established. Then, touching on the Sino-Indian dispute, Zhou Enlai stressed that formerly the official border had not been established; therefore the two sides stuck to the historically formed traditional border. Now the issue was to establish an official border between China and India. Zhou Enlai also dwelt briefly on the Sino-Pakistani talks, noting progress on this issue and stressing that the Pakistanis take a correct stand on defining the border. However, the United States was worried about the favorable progress in talks between China and Pakistan. The US did not like this. Zhou Enlai remarked that, given the successful negotiations between China and Pakistan on the border question, the contradictions between India and Pakistan would, understandably, worsen, but that he still hoped that in the end this dispute, too, would be settled. Zhou Enlai—Tsevegmid said—tried to prove that the position of the Chinese side in the Sino-Indian dispute was the correct one and that India allegedly tried by all means to have this question solved with help from the outside, including the Soviet Union. India speculated on this help. It made a public effort to receive help from the US and England, but this would not save Nehru's position because the truth was on China's side and the main thing, as Zhou Enlai remarked, was that the people of Asia and Africa supported them—the Chinese.

Tsevegmid remarked that in his opinion this part of the conversation looked like a lecture, which Zhou Enlai tried to read to the Mongolian delegation.

Having finished this statement of his, Zhou Enlai said that allegedly, you, Comrade Tsedenbal and the MPR government, expressed regret in connection with the Sino-Indian border dispute.

Tsedenbal responded affirmatively and declared that we in Mongolia really do regret that the Sino-Indian dispute was not cut short at the very beginning and [instead] grew into a major military clash.

Zhou Enlai said that they, the Chinese, did not like this formulation of the Mongolian comrades about regret in connec-



Mongolia and the Cold War: International Workshop, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, March 2004

Organizer Sergey Radchenko (LSE), Yvette Chin (GWU) and other panelists

tion with the conflict. Here, Zhou Enlai, having reminded [us] about his meetings with Tsedenbal after 1959, said that when in 1959 Tsedenbal was passing through India and expressed [his views] in connection with the Sino-Indian conflict, he, Tsedenbal, was evidently already not standing on China's side. Zhou Enlai again repeated that they, the Chinese, did not like this attitude of the Mongolian comrades toward the Sino-Indian dispute.

Tsedenbal pointed out that one must approach the resolution of such questions flexibly and carefully, and that life and facts had shown how important it was to show flexibility in these cases. Further, Tsedenbal stressed that in the future, should socialism and communism win in the entire world, border disputes would be looked upon as a thing of the past [*perezhitkov proshlogo*]. This is how a communist should approach border disputes and conflicts, in my opinion [Tsedenbal said]. Continuing on this subject—said Tsevegmid—Zhou Enlai again tried to prove that the Chinese were not to blame in the Sino-Indian dispute, that they wanted from the very beginning to solve the border dispute by peaceful means and that China, for its part, did everything in order not to take this dispute to the stage of a military confrontation.

Tsedenbal pointed out in this connection that one should look at the results of the military clash, and one should think with precision [*trebovatel'nost' yu*] and accountability on what the [consequences of this] conflict are in India, where currently the atmosphere of nationalist passions has heated up to the boiling point, and [that] this has considerably complicated not only the position of the communist party of this country [i.e. India], but [also] of all democratic, progressive organizations and people; repression in India was now raging wild, reactionaries and rightist elements had become active, and they openly put pressure on Nehru.

At this point Zhou Enlai hurried to interrupt Tsedenbal and

again tried to prove that the Chinese were not to blame for any of this. Then, he started to say that the Chinese managed to agree on the border with almost all countries except for India, and started to praise the results of the negotiations between the PRC and the MPR.

These negotiations, he remarked, have been successfully concluded as a result of mutual understanding and mutual concessions by both sides. Here Zhou Enlai—according to Tsevegmid—stressed that, allegedly, China, taking into consideration Mongolia's interests, made appropriate concessions. [Zhou Enlai] expressed the hope that in the future, in possible border questions, both fraternal countries will meet each other half-way. For instance we hope that if there is a request from our side to allow the grazing of cattle on the Mongolian territory adjacent to the Chinese border, this will not become a big question. We, on our part, will also be happy to satisfy your requests. When this part of the conversation was about finished—said Tsevegmid—Tsedenbal raised some questions of an interstate nature.

1. He told the Chinese comrades that as of late the workload of the railroad which passes through Mongolia into China and the freight of transit goods had decreased sharply. We would like to request an increase in the volume of freight by the Mongolian railroad if the Chinese comrades consider this possible.
2. Having remarked that the preliminary talks of the trade experts had now been concluded, Tsedenbal pointed out that the Mongolian side is worried that the Chinese side will considerably decrease trade operations with Mongolia in 1963, and this breaks the framework already created for the mutual supply of goods. As a result of this, unexpectedly for the MPR, questions arise that could not be foreseen ahead of time. These questions are connected with the supply of the Mongolian factories with certain types of raw materials which used to come from China.
3. He expressed gratitude to the Chinese government for help in construction work in the MPR, including sending workers from China. Tsedenbal remarked that currently 8,000 Chinese workers are working at different enterprises in the MPR together with Mongolian workers. Unfortunately, more and more frequently these workers refused certain types of work. They did not know the Mongolian language, and for this reason, too, some misunderstandings and troubles arise. Tsedenbal stressed that now, as well as in the near future, the MPR would have a great need for a workforce and that therefore Mongolia welcomed the presence of the Chinese workers at their enterprises. However, those Chinese workers who are presently in the MPR did not know the Mongolian language. Would it not be possible to send to the

MPR more workers from Chinese Inner Mongolia, who know the Mongolian language? This would be important as they would be able to work with greater productivity.

Having listened to Tsedenbal, Zhou Enlai said that during the conversation the Mongolian comrades raised three questions and that he would try to answer them. First, he said, I consider it necessary to remark that Mongolia supplied China with considerably fewer goods than what the PRC supplied to the MPR. We, indeed, were forced to decrease the supply of certain goods, especially cotton textiles, because we ourselves have internal difficulties, including those that arose from the drought and bad harvests that unfortunately happened in the last three years. Even if we did not export a gram of raw materials for the cotton textile industry abroad, and used it entirely for the production of textile, still these raw materials would only be enough to produce 3 meters of textiles per person. Generally speaking, Zhou Enlai said, we are now suffering ourselves, and we cannot promise to supply the cotton textile industry of the MPR with raw materials at the level of previous years. As far as rice, tea, silk, and to some extent wool are concerned, in general, we could send you these goods; let the trade representatives discuss these questions among themselves.

Further, Zhou Enlai said that the MPR was asking to have 17 million rubles worth of goods (on the new price scale) supplied from the PRC. The PRC now, apparently, would only be able to supply 6 million rubles worth of goods.

Next year, continued Zhou Enlai, the Chinese side would try to increase the freight of goods via the railroad across Mongolia. As a result of this, the income of the MPR would increase to a certain extent. Then Zhou Enlai said that the Mongolian comrades promised to sell China 100,000 horses. We have certain difficulties that have come up, and we would like to ask your help in solving them. Tsevegmid explained that these difficulties amount to the Chinese asking to supply horses only across two border points. This makes the MPR's position more difficult, as this is connected with great financial expenditures. We are suggesting to the Chinese that we supply horses across those border points that are economically most beneficial for Mongolia. What the Chinese suggest amounts to collecting horses from all corners of Mongolia at only two border points.

Secondly, Zhou Enlai touched on some issues of construction in the MPR and put the question in such a way that, allegedly, Mongolia, in implementing its plan, naturally ran into some difficulties. Perhaps, he said, the Mongolian comrades, in light of the fact that they would not have certain types of raw materials, would consider it appropriate to re-examine certain questions. For example, the MPR had difficulties with the cotton textile factory, and with other enterprises as well. To implement the plan was a good wish, but one had to base oneself on the possibility of getting raw materials and other materials for

enterprises. Therefore, Zhou Enlai advised, some enterprises should perhaps be frozen for a certain time.

Tsevegmid commented that in connection with the fairly well-formed attitude of the PRC toward Mongolia, the latter really did have serious difficulties in implementing the five-year plan since in accordance with this plan the Chinese were supposed to build 25 economic objectives. In order to carry out this construction work in Mongolia, besides the 8,000 Chinese workers who work together with the Mongolian workers, there are also 5,000 Chinese there independently, from the Chinese construction companies.

Third, Zhou Enlai touched on the question of the Chinese workers. He remarked that sending workers from China to the MPR was a new thing in the relationship between socialist countries and that was a good thing. However, the Chinese government has certain difficulties. Zhou Enlai stressed the historical community of China and Mongolia, touched on the friendship between the two countries, the development of which allowed them to send Chinese workers to the MPR beginning in 1950. These workers worked in Mongolia for a long time. In 1960, after the end of the period of their stay in the MPR, the government of the PRC not only lengthened this period for many workers but sent new Chinese workers to Mongolia. When sending our workers to the MPR, said Zhou Enlai, we were worried and thought a lot about this. In particular, we thought a lot about the fact that the Chinese workers did not know the Mongolian language and did not know the customs of your people, and this could lead to the emergence of various questions. One should say, however, that in the first five years of their work in the MPR, despite some misunderstandings that arose, we easily solved them. But recently certain new aspects emerged and cases of workers refusing to work became more and more frequent.

Here Tsedenbal, making use of these words of Zhou Enlai, said, you see, you are yourself saying that the Chinese workers refuse to work and that they know neither the Mongolian language nor the customs of our country and that this sometimes to some extent leads to certain misunderstandings, including misunderstanding of each other.

Zhou Enlai declared in response that in China a situation existed whereby Chinese workers, if the conditions of work did not correspond to their demands, were allowed to refuse to work, that is, they were allowed to conduct a kind of strike.

In this connection, Tsedenbal pointed out that Mongolia has its own laws. We cannot agree that some workers can break and ignore the established order. Such a situation could, in the end, negatively influence the Mongolian workers.

Zhou Enlai, having heard this, said that our countries were not ideologically united in everything, and this influenced

both inter-state and inter-party relations. Above all, there were major disagreements on principal questions between our fraternal parties. Now we would not like to dwell on the question of what precise aspects we would agree on. At the time of the 22nd [CPSU] Congress [October 1961], I, Zhou Enlai, made a statement there and tried to the best of my ability to restore unity between parties in order not to show our disagreements before the enemy. However, this effort was unsuccessful, and disagreements subsequently deepened even more. Further, Zhou Enlai remarked that in the Chinese media they published equally both Albanian and Soviet materials on the questions of disagreements. These materials were also published in [North] Korea, in [North] Vietnam and in some other countries. The MPRP, in his view, took an opposite stand, that is: Mongolia published materials with criticism directed against Albania, and did not publish Albanian articles. Zhou Enlai expressed the anxiety of the Chinese side with the fact that the disagreements thus were becoming more and more open and engulfing an ever greater range of parties. He pointed out that the CCP came under open criticism at the congress of the Italian Communist Party [PCI]. The materials of the Czechoslovak Communist Party [CPCz] congress were published in Mongolia, he continued, but the statement of the CCP representative was not published. The CPSU and Khrushchev criticized the CCP, not directly, but indirectly. Khrushchev's speech was naturally published in China, and we also published our reply.

In this connection, Zhou Enlai again declared that those Chinese materials, which contained replies to the statements at congresses of different parties, were not published in Mongolia. Of course, Zhou Enlai said, it was the Mongolian party's business what attitude to take on this. We would not impose our opinion, even less so make another party act in a way we, for example, considered correct. Further, he expressed himself to the effect that the internal policy of the CCP was the business of the Chinese, and nobody should interfere in the internal affairs of the PRC. However, our disagreements over key questions, because of someone, became known to the enemy. The dispute did not need to be deepened. In our opinion, one could not go further down this road. As if summarizing, Zhou Enlai again emphasized that the CCP and the MPRP had different points of view on a series of important problems; they followed two different directions. Having changed the topic of the conversation to the relations between the PRC and the MPR, Zhou Enlai stressed that in general these relations were still good. Touching upon the issue of sending workers from China to the MPR, he declared that they could send other workers to Mongolia, but the question was that this was connected with different approaches to important questions as a result of which we encounter difficulties of an ideological nature. It is difficult for us, Zhou Enlai continued, to conduct political work with our workers in Mongolia. In China, we conducted political work of a certain direction among the workers. If we were to conduct mechanically this work with the Chinese workers in the MPR, then a whole range of questions could come up.

As they were in touch with the Mongolian population, they are familiar with the Mongolian press, and this caused certain difficulties. 8,000 Chinese workers were in the midst of the Mongolian population. Zhou Enlai stressed that a man was not an inanimate commodity [*mertvy tovar*], but a living, politically thinking individual. We brought our people up in such a way that if they did not like something, then they could give up work. Therefore, we allow such order [of things]. Now, let's look at the situation of the Chinese workers in Mongolia. What you publish in Mongolia disposed the Chinese workers critically towards the PRC. This caused difficulties. What are we to do with these workers? Leave them in the MPR? But I already said these are people and not commodities.

Tsedenbal asked what, in the end, should be done about those workers who refuse to work.

Zhou Enlai replied that we should think about this together in order not to allow complications to arise in the relations between two neighboring states, the MPR and the PRC, because of this question. If the situation remained as it was, conditions would remain for the occurrence of troubles, misunderstandings, and unfavorable events.

Tsevegmid remarked that the conversation between Tsedenbal and Zhou Enlai took on a more and more hostile form, and at times he even thought that the custom would be set aside and they would come to blows [*skhvatyatsya za grudki*].

Having listened to Zhou Enlai, continued Tsevegmid, Tsedenbal declared the following. Above all, he said, Comrade Zhou Enlai gave us Mongolians a series of recommendations regarding our further construction. I would like to say that our difficulties arise at those sites that China is building, and also with those for which China, in accordance with previously reached agreements, had to supply appropriate goods, especially raw materials. This is what our construction difficulties are connected with. Then, Tsedenbal remarked that the Chinese workers helped Mongolia a lot in her construction, especially up to 1961. The Chinese workers lived and worked together with the Mongolian workers; however, difficulties about which Zhou Enlai spoke did not arise here. Beginning from 1960, and especially from 1961, "difficult questions" began to arise. We cannot transfer to the MPR the practice established in the PRC. In accordance with this practice, as Comrade Zhou Enlai said, workers in China can give up their work and even bring factories to a standstill, conducting, to use Comrade Zhou Enlai's expression, strikes. If you allow this, other countries do not. But the main thing is why the Chinese workers refuse to work in the MPR. This is the result of, as Comrade Zhou Enlai said, different ideological bases of our parties. You said this correctly, Comrade Zhou Enlai. You speak about the relations between parties and about the attitude of parties towards the Albanian question. I would like to tell you, emphasized Tsedenbal, that the Mongolian party has a principled, correct stance with

regard to the policy of the Albanian leadership. The leadership of the A[lbanian] P[arty of] L[abor] by its actions really did begin to break the unity between fraternal parties, initiate a split in the international communist and workers' movement and depart in its line and its statements from the principles of internationalism, from the principles of the cohesion of parties. We believe that the MPRP's position is the correct one. Our party will continue to maintain this correct objective position, will conduct a resolute struggle against those who want to split the communist movement. The Mongolian party, Tsedenbal said emphatically, fully agreed with the line of the CPSU and supported its struggle for the unity of the international communist movement.

You, Comrade Zhou Enlai, are saying that it was impermissible to air publicly the differences between parties. But, as you know, the CPSU took drastic measures and took a big initiative with regard to the APL, calling on it to take the stand of unity. You, Comrade Zhou Enlai, and all Chinese comrades undoubtedly know full well about this. You cannot help but know that in 1960 the Soviet leaders tried several times to talk with [APL CC First Secretary Enver] Hoxha and [APL CC Chairman Mehmet] Shehu. Comrade Khrushchev personally took a series of steps to stop the Albanian leaders. But they, as you know, not only refused to heed these sincere wishes of the Soviet leaders, but, on the contrary, rudely, in a hooligan manner, rejected all proposals of the Soviet comrades. After this, the Soviet leaders naturally no longer thought it necessary to place the main emphasis on a meeting of a closed nature. I would like to tell you, Comrade Zhou Enlai, that the actions of the Albanian leadership are directed not only against the CPSU, but also against the entire international communist movement; they not only slander the CPSU, but also the entire international communist and workers' movement. This means that the Albanian leaders through their splittist actions themselves departed from the international communist movement.

You, Comrade Zhou Enlai, Tsedenbal continued, reprimand us for not printing the Albanian materials. This is actually true. But I would like to note that in the future we will not print such materials either. You also said that we did not publish the Chinese materials. We print and will print only Marxist-Leninist materials. We respect very much the leadership of the CCP. You, the Chinese communists, have come a long way, lived a long political life. Nevertheless, we consider that you follow an incorrect line. I recall the year 1960, the meeting of the fraternal parties in Moscow. I would like to say that then you contributed greatly to the unity of international communist movement, and I will tell you frankly that I still hoped that you would not depart from the agreed line and would go forward together with the CPSU and other parties. Commenting on his attitude towards these questions, Tsedenbal told Zhou Enlai that what he said in no way suggests an intention to sharpen relations. This is what I, Tsedenbal, would more than anything like to avoid. However, you, the Chinese comrades, support Albania, encouraging it

thereby to slander the Soviet Union in a rude manner.

Further, Comrade Tsendenbal spoke about the Chinese workers. He emphasized that we cannot change our ideological line, and have no intention of [doing so], because of 8,000 Chinese workers in Mongolia. However, we would like to assure you that we do not carry out any political work among the Chinese workers. As far as the press is concerned, we cannot help but print what we consider correct.

Without concealing that he was angry and nervous, Zhou Enlai interrupted Tsendenbal and asked whether he could ask him one question. Having received an affirmative answer, Zhou Enlai said that if articles with direct or indirect criticism addressed at the PRC were printed in the Mongolian press and if the Chinese workers read them, then what attitude should they have towards this? Tsendenbal replied that he did not deny the presence of difficulties of this sort. Zhou Enlai asked how, then, should the question of workers be solved?

Tsendenbal said that, as he understood [the point raised by Zhou Enlai], Zhou Enlai was taking the issue in such a direction [*vedet delo k tomu*] that the Chinese workers would not work in the MPR. Zhou Enlai replied that he did not mean the old workers, but he was asking what was to be done about the new workers. Tsendenbal again declared that we would not retreat in ideological terms and would not change the correct policy line of our party because of 8,000 workers.

Zhou Enlai said that he did not demand to change the party line. You are yourself saying that the CCP should change its political line. You call yourself a Marxist and you criticize me. Tsendenbal pointed out that Zhou Enlai was the first to raise this question.

Zhou Enlai declared that he spoke about other things—about how to solve concrete questions in the relationship between our countries. But you, he said, wanted to teach me. I do not accept your instructions [*poucheni*]. Tsendenbal replied that he did not teach and had no intention of teaching Zhou Enlai.

Zhou Enlai declared in irritation that Tsendenbal talked about changing the party line all the time. Tsendenbal stressed that what Zhou Enlai said did not correspond to the spirit of the meeting of the fraternal parties.

Zhou Enlai said to this: “I did not violate the Moscow treaty. The Moscow treaty was violated by Khrushchev and his followers.”

Tsendenbal asked Zhou Enlai not to be angry. It was bad when one gets angry, he remarked. The MPRP was created and builds its entire existence on the basis of the great experience of the CPSU. The party reflects the thoughts and feelings of the international communist and workers' movement [and] enjoys its support. For the entire 40 years since the creation of the MPRP,

the entire Mongolian people unreservedly go together with the CPSU. We would like to affirm to you that nobody will be able to shake the unity of the Mongolian party and the CPSU. This unity is forged by blood. We are deeply convinced in the correctness of the political line of the CPSU. We believe in the CPSU—the party of the great Lenin, the vanguard of the international communist movement.

Zhou Enlai asked Tsendenbal—does this mean that you blindly follow the CPSU?

Tsendenbal replied that this was not so, we were convinced of the rightness of the CPSU, we were deeply convinced of and committed to the endeavor carried on by the CPSU. Zhou Enlai asked a question: Did you do the same thing during the period of Stalin's cult? Did you loyally follow Stalin as well? Did you look at all questions this way during the cult of personality?

Tsendenbal asked Zhou Enlai what questions he had in mind. What questions in particular did he have in mind when he talked about Stalin? Zhou Enlai replied that Stalin was correct on some questions, as is known. Tsendenbal said that the Soviet leaders themselves many times declared that Stalin was correct on some questions. By all means, the Soviet comrades did not vulgarize all of Stalin's deeds, they gave him due credit, pointing at the same time to his crimes, to his mistakes.

Zhou Enlai changed the conversation to the Chinese workers in Mongolia.

Tsendenbal declared that inasmuch as the Chinese comrades were worried about the fact that the Chinese workers in the MPR were in the midst of the Mongolian working people, this could be corrected. 8,000 Chinese workers could be placed separately and put into the same situation as the 5,000 Chinese workers who organizationally belong to independent Chinese construction companies.

Zhou Enlai, having calmed down somewhat, replied that this question could be discussed in detail by the appropriate representatives of the MPR and the PRC, for example, by the officials of the PRC embassy in Ulaanbaatar and Mongolian organizations. My goal, he stressed, was to tell you what kind of difficulties we encountered and to make sure you understand us correctly. Tsendenbal declared that the above-mentioned Chinese workers should probably be concentrated at one site. If the PRC embassy in the MPR was appropriately instructed, we, for our part, would find people, they would conduct the necessary negotiations and we would solve this question. Zhou Enlai, having agreed to this, said that he was not offended and that he did not get angry, but he insisted again that allegedly Tsendenbal for over 40 minutes tried to teach him.

Tsendenbal emphasized that the Mongolians respect the CCP, value the struggle of the CCP for the establishment of the rule

of the working people and value their efforts in the endeavor of building socialism. He remarked that the CCP, in comparison with the MPRP, is more experienced and that he merely reminded him what constituted the ABCs of Marxism-Leninism.

Zhou Enlai told Tsedenbal that he did not need not be shy and pitiable [*ne pribednyalsya*]. You, Tsedenbal, he declared, are a leader of a state and a party. Ambassador Tsevegmid said that Tsedenbal, taking into consideration the atmosphere of the meeting, and also keeping in mind that the time had almost come for the reception which was hosted by the Mongolian side in connection with the signing of the treaty, wanted to end the conversation at this point, and on behalf of the entire Mongolian delegation thanked the Chinese comrades for their hospitality [and] for the useful exchange of opinions that took place.

Zhou Enlai said something to the effect that Tsedenbal supposedly did not respond to the questions he touched upon. He again remarked that his goal was only to acquaint Tsedenbal with the situation and with the difficulties that arose, that he did not raise any questions. Moreover, Zhou Enlai began to insist that Tsedenbal allegedly criticized him.

Tsevegmid remarked that this was done in a clearly Chinese manner—when one thinks up an allegation against oneself and then attributes it to one's interlocutor. Then Zhou Enlai, Tsevegmid continued, said that in 1961, when he was in Moscow, he advised the CPSU not to take the disagreements beyond the framework of communist parties and to conduct consultations with the APL. The CPSU measures with regard to the APL, of which you, Comrade Tsedenbal, spoke, were taken before the 1960 meeting. Unfortunately, the CPSU did not accept our position and during its 22nd Congress not only failed to remedy the situation, but on the contrary started to criticize openly another party. Thereby the disagreements were exposed before the enemy. Therefore the main one to blame is the CPSU, and not the APL. Some parties, attacking the CCP, even claim that the CCP departed from the line of the Moscow treaty, but we do not agree with this. It is precisely the CCP that tried to preserve unity and tried not to take the disagreements outside of the circle of the communist parties. Criticism against the CCP was slander. Those who criticized our party took a wrong stand. As time was limited, we could not continue the conversation now. However, if there was a need, Zhou Enlai declared, this conversation between our parties could be continued. Zhou Enlai emphasized that what Tsedenbal talked about concerned relations between parties and did not concern inter-state relations. I, he continued, did not intend to touch on a series of questions, but you, Comrade Tsedenbal, criticized me, and I had to reply to you. I believe, for example, that the MPRP follows a wrong line. However, I am not demanding that you change your line. If there is a meeting of fraternal parties in the future, I would ask you, Comrade Tsedenbal, not to strike me with a blow again (Zhou Enlai pointed to his right cheek with his hand). You, Comrade Tsedenbal, made a state-

ment at the 1960 Moscow meeting and said that Zhou Enlai tried to persuade you to follow the Albanian Labor Party. I told you then that in Albania there were different internal forces, that one should be attentive to this country. You, however, presented the encounter in such a way as if I tried to persuade you to follow the Albanian road. I will not go into details now, but I do not accept this accusation you threw at me at the 1960 meeting.

Then Zhou Enlai said that although our two parties were communist, we had different views on some ideological questions. However, we should not let our ideological differences carry over into inter-state relations. Perhaps, Zhou Enlai declared, we would transfer our ideological differences to inter-state relations with some other countries, but we would not do this with regard to Mongolia. (Tsevegmid remarked that perhaps this phrase was not translated exactly).

Tsedenbal, touching on his statement at the 1960 meeting, which Zhou Enlai had mentioned, said that he has no intention to talk about this now. He noted further that he knew about the presence of disagreements between the CCP and other parties, but now, in his opinion, was also not the time to talk about this. If we were to talk about disagreements, then the attitude towards the APL reflected two different approaches, two different lines. Zhou Enlai raised a question in this connection: Why was it so? Wasn't the Albanian Labor Party a communist party?

Tsedenbal remarked that the Albanian question became a kind of a compass, a kind of a test of sincerity of everyone towards the CPSU.

Zhou Enlai said that both the Albanian question and other questions should be solved jointly. Some parties and countries were not big, but one should not disregard them, one should not disrespect them. Further, Zhou Enlai said that N.S. Khrushchev allegedly used to tell him: We should, allegedly, solve everything between ourselves, that was—between the CPSU and CCP, and the small parties did not count. Questions of small parties also should not be solved by two big parties.

Having listened to all of this, Tsedenbal worriedly expressed himself to the effect that the border treaty had already been signed, and he understood a lot in this connection. When I went to Beijing, he continued, I was convinced that the signing of the border treaty would have a certain positive meaning for the friendship between our two countries...

Ambassador Tsevegmid remarked that though Tsedenbal did not finish his thought, he later expressed in the circle of Mongolian comrades that the signing of the border treaty, as far as one can judge, did not in the slightest improve relations between the MPR and the PRC.

Concluding the conversation, Tsedenbal again expressed his thanks for the reception given to the Mongolian delegation, remarked that he considered the exchange of opinions useful, but it was already 6 p.m. and one should go and receive the guests invited to the reception.

With this, Tsevegmid said, the conversation between Tsedenbal and Zhou Enlai ended. Later, during the reception and at the farewell neither side raised any major principal questions. Ambassador Tsevegmid asked to take into account that he did not rule out the possibility of some inaccuracies in the translation, as, in his opinion, the interpreters were not qualified enough. At the end of the conversation Tsevegmid said that because of the refusal of the Chinese side to meet its obligations, construction of some enterprises would not be finished, and some other enterprises that could operate, would not be able to operate because of the lack of raw materials.

I thanked Tsevegmid for this information. The record of conversation was written down as closely as possible to the account presented by Ambassador D. Tsevegmid.

Ambassador of the USSR in the PRC

[Signature] (S. Chervonenko)



DOCUMENT No. 4

Resolution of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee [MPRP CC] Politburo on Joining the Warsaw Pact, 15 July 1963

[Source: Mongol Ardyn Khuvsгалт Намын Архив (Archive of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party's Central Committee), фонд 4, данс 26, кх/н 306б, кхуу. 40-41 Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Sergey Radchenko.]

MONGOLIAN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE POLITBURO RESOLUTION [MPRP CC Politburo]

15 July 1963 Ulaanbaatar No. 24

ON JOINING THE WARSAW PACT

At present, international reactionary forces headed by the American imperialists are intensifying preparations for war, and increasingly threaten the peace and security of the socialist camp countries and the people of the world.

In particular: the fact that the American imperialists are increasingly using the "security treaty" concluded between the USA and Japan [on 19 January 1960] in order to turn Japanese



Secretcy and Freedom of Information Roundtable Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, March 2004:

CWIHP Senior Scholar Bernd Schaefer, CWIHP Director Christian Ostermann, and Malcolm Byrne (National Security Archive) discuss declassification issues at the Mongolian Foreign Ministry.

territory into their own military base, that they are trying to equip the Japanese army with nuclear weapons—creates a real threat to the freedom and sovereignty of the MPR, and to the efforts of the Mongolian people to construct socialism.

In such threatening circumstances, it is increasingly necessary to strengthen the unity of the socialist camp countries on the principled basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

The Warsaw Pact, concluded between European socialist countries in 1955, has in reality become a reliable guarantee of freedom, sovereignty, peaceful construction of socialism and communism, of peace and security of peoples of all socialist countries. The armies of Warsaw Pact states are equipped with modern weaponry and technology, have mastered its usage, have strengthened their defense capacities and honestly carry out their duties on behalf of the international communist and workers' movement.

Being conscious of the aforementioned threat, and noting the necessity of strengthening this country's defense capacity, especially by training our people's army in the use of modern military weapons and technology, and by allowing its generals, officers and fighters to master modern military science, the MPRP Central Committee Politburo RESOLVES:

1. Consider it appropriate for the MPR to join the Warsaw Pact, which has become a reliable foundation of freedom, sovereignty, peaceful construction of socialism and communism, of peace and security of peoples of all socialist countries.
2. Instruct the Council of Ministers / C[omrade] Tsedenbal / to put, in the proper form, a request to join the Warsaw Pact to the depository of the Warsaw Treaty, the government of the P[olish] P[eople's] R[epublic].

POLITBURO MEMBERS

T[sagaan-Lamyn] S. DUGERSUREN
N[yamyn] JAGVARAL
D[amdinjavyn] MAIDAR
D[emchigiin] MOLOMJAMTS
J[amsrangiin] SAMBUU
Yu[mjaagiyn] TSEDENBAL
L[uvtsantserengiin] TSEND

POLITBURO CANDIDATE MEMBERS

N. LUVSANRAVDAN
[MPRP CC Secretary] B. LHAMSUREN



DOCUMENT No. 5

Record of Conversation between Yumjaagiin Tsedenbal and the PRC Ambassador to Mongolia, Zhang Canming, 24 September 1963

[Source: Mongol Ardyn Khuvsгалт Намын Архив, фонд 4, данс 28, kh/n 182, khuu. 70-80. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Sergey Radchenko.]

RECORD OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN
YU[MJAAGIIN] TSEDENBAL AND THE NEW CHINESE
AMBASSADOR TO MONGOLIA, ZHANG CANMING.

Ulaanbaatar, 24 September 1963.

Tsedenbal: [...] In the future relations between our two peoples can develop according to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism. They must develop on that basis. People will certainly approve if friendship between our two peoples is developed on the basis of these great principles.

Zhang: The border between our two countries is not only delimited by the mountains and waterways, but is also connected by the Gobi desert. It is not merely a matter of delimiting the border by mountains and waterways.

Tsedenbal: The border between our two countries is 4,500 km long.

Zhang: That's very long.

Tsedenbal: Now work is underway to erect border markers. It should be finished soon.

Zhang: This work is being carried out very successfully. This is an expression of friendly relations between our two countries.

Tsedenbal: Now the two sides' commission is working. I have not had a chance to become acquainted with the latest situation. You probably know the work situation yourself. Now they are putting up these border markers. In the future, during the communist period, borders will not be needed anywhere. They will remain as historic reminiscences for young people to study.

Zhang: This is the law of dialectics. For example, now we have a proletarian dictatorship. Its aim is to annihilate classes. Now we are erecting border markers. Their aim is to annihilate borders in the future.

Tsedenbal: Yes. It has to be like this. Borders are a product of class society. During that period, nation states separated from each other. Now such borders are also needed. In the future, in the communist period, they will not be needed. In the future there will be no nation states that close themselves up in a box.

Zhang: In the communist period, the world will be one big family.

Tsedenbal: Yes, society, based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism, will develop further, and there will be no regard for people's nationality and skin color, there will be one language and one culture.

Zhang: Now all work we are doing is directed towards the building of communism. [...] Now your army expenses have been cut down a lot?

Tsedenbal: They have been. They can't compare with the previous period.

Zhang: There are only socialist countries around you.

Tsedenbal: Our army does mainly construction work.

Zhang: As for us, along with construction work, we have to resist the imperialist threat, and so we need appropriate forces. For example, imperialists are occupying our Taiwan.

Tsedenbal: Today's weapons are very dangerous. Today's bombs are several million times more dangerous than previous bombs. Today's weapons are as dangerous as nothing seen before, and therefore all honest people must strive towards preventing war. The weapons that protect the entire socialist camp and all people are the Soviet nuclear weapons. This is the force that restrains the imperialists. When there are weapons in the Soviet Union that protect our camp and all of humanity, there is no need for countries like ours to have such large military forces as before. Instead of this, young people can engage in peaceful labor and soldiers can be used for construction work.

Zhang: [...] How many soldiers do you have now?

Tsedenbal: About 14,000. With the air force included, not more than 15,000.

Zhang: These soldiers are probably used mainly for construction work?

Tsedenbal: Almost [all] do construction work. The weapons that protect Mongolia, China, the entire socialist camp and all peace-loving peoples are in the Soviet Union. [...]



DOCUMENT No. 6

Record of Conversation between Soviet Ambassador to the PRC Stepan V. Chervonenko and MPR Ambassador to the PRC Dondongiin Tsevegmid, 7 October 1964

[Source: CWIHP Collection (www.cwihp.org).]

[Excerpt]

From the diary of
S[tepan] V. Chervonenko

Top Secret

7 October 1964

Record of Conversation with the MPR Ambassador to the PRC [Dondongiin] Tsevegmid

[...] Tsevegmid said that on 30 September, as he was receiving the [Mongolian] delegation,¹ [CCP CC Foreign Minister] Chen Yi many times expressed his gratitude to the MPR government for sending a delegation to [participate] in the 15th anniversary of the PRC. When the Mongolian delegation arrived in Beijing, Chen Yi and other Chinese [officials] tried to create an atmosphere of exceptional warmth, they hugged, kissed, etc., said Tsevegmid.

[...]

Tsevegmid explained to me that the MPRP CC Politburo instructed [MPRP Council of Ministers Deputy Chairman Erdenechuluun] Luvsan to make use of his participation in the festivities in China to probe the position of the Chinese regarding their sincerity with regard to the MPR on a series of questions—territorial claims of the Chinese, sending of the Chinese workers to the MPR. [...]

Tsevegmid then informed [me] about the meeting between Zhou Enlai and Luvsan that took place on 3 October of this year (at this meeting, besides the two of them, only Tsevegmid

was present).

In the beginning, said Tsevegmid, Zhou Enlai spoke to the effect that the disagreements between the MPR and the PRC were not the main thing, the main thing was unity. Zhou Enlai cited Mao Zedong's words to the effect that socialist countries could have disagreements, but that this was a secondary question, and in the struggle against imperialism socialist countries must be united, and this was the main thing. If imperialism attacked one socialist country, all socialist countries must come forward united in this struggle. To this, Tsevegmid said, Luvsan replied that Mongolia always spoke out and speaks out for unity on a principled Marxist-Leninist basis. Everyone knows, continued Luvsan, that with the help of the USSR, the PRC and other countries, the MPR achieved considerable successes; we must also live in friendship in the future. Then, Tsevegmid said, Luvsan, having noted the aid provided by China, pointed out that at a certain point in time the Chinese government began to take unfriendly actions toward the MPR. As an example he pointed to the recall of the Chinese workers. Now we were forced to mobilize youths from the countryside for the construction, and there, in the countryside, difficulties also appeared. Right away Luvsan passed on the request of the government of the MPR to the Chinese government to send to Mongolia no less than 10 thousand herders for 3-5 years. With this, Luvsan stressed that it would be preferable to have the PRC herders sent from the regions adjacent to the border of the MPR.

This would simplify the solution of many problems we had to face when workers were sent from various remote regions of the PRC (household and language difficulties, payment of transit across the entire PRC territory, etc). Tsevegmid commented that raising the question about provision of workers from the border regions was in essence a probe of the Chinese position on the question of Inner Mongolia, because he was in fact talking about the Mongolian herders from Inner Mongolia.

Tsevegmid said that Zhou Enlai, apparently, was not ready to answer, and in connection with that he began to ask many secondary questions, thinking about an answer in the meantime. Then Zhou Enlai said that he understood the thought of Comrade Tsedenbal. After the establishment of the PRC, he continued, diplomatic relations were established between it and the MPR. In former times, before the victory of the revolution, there were questions between China and the MPR left over by history. But this was a thing of the past. We had a border and have exchanged documents to this effect; [we] exist as sovereign states. We, Zhou Enlai further said, also had a treaty on friendship, which had to be observed by both sides.

As far as economic aid was concerned, continued Zhou Enlai, China had provided it to the MPR for a long time. With this, said Tsevegmid, he reminded him that Tsedenbal visited the PRC three times and during the first and the second visits was

received by Mao Zedong, who told Comrade Tsedenbal that “a country should be given aid until it becomes economically independent.” At Mao Zedong’s initiative, continued Zhou Enlai, we provided economic aid to the MPR, several treaties were signed (Tsevegmid said that at this time Zhou Enlai began to account in detail for the aid provided by China to Mongolia).

Then, Tsevegmid said, Zhou Enlai highlighted the question of the Chinese workers, stressing that various practical misunderstandings existed earlier, but the Chinese government did not pay attention to this because the ideological positions of both countries were generally the same. In recent times, continued Zhou Enlai, the question of the Chinese workers in the MPR became a sharp one, and this was explained by the ideological disagreements between the MPR and the PRC. We, Zhou Enlai said, strove not to transfer the inter-party disagreements to the inter-state relations; however we brought up our people in one spirit and you, in the MPR, in another spirit. Therefore when the Chinese workers met with the Mongolian workers, they had disagreements. This could take on an aggravated form, especially now, when the disagreements became open, because as a result of this the circle of people participating in the disagreements widened more and more. Already incidents had begun to occur (Zhou Enlai had in mind the murder of a Chinese worker at one of the construction sites in the MPR).

Under these circumstances, continued Zhou Enlai, the idea arose to return the Chinese workers to the motherland. We based ourselves on the fact that the departure of the Chinese workers would remove the ground on which our disagreements sprang up. If new Chinese workers were to be sent now and they were brought up in the spirit of our ideas, then this could lead to even greater disagreements than before, clashes may take place, [and] there might be even wider killings.

Your press was criticizing China, and what were the Chinese workers who do not agree with this criticism to do, especially since you already criticized the Chinese leaders[?] If herders were sent, this meant that the disagreements could spread even further, transfer to the countryside, and therefore the question about the sending of the Chinese workers should be temporarily postponed. Of course, said Zhou Enlai, this would to a certain extent harm the construction, but it was better to delay construction than aggravate relations between us. We were thinking about helping you, but there were difficulties in the current situation, stressed Zhou Enlai. You, he said unexpectedly, were a neighbor of the Soviet Union, which provides you with a lot of aid. Then Zhou Enlai began to say that the disagreements, however, would be gradually resolved, good relations would set in, and then the PRC would be able to provide aid to Mongolia. One must wait patiently, one must not lose hope that in the future we will live in friendship, but for now, while the disagreements had not been resolved, we had to act in such a way as not to deepen them, to strengthen friendship

between the peoples. Tsevegmid said that Zhou Enlai time and again repeated that the Mongolians had a right to ask for aid from the PRC, and China would necessarily help, but now was not the time and the right conditions for [aid] were not there, one would wait. We respected the idea of Comrade Tsedenbal about sending herders, said Zhou Enlai, but now was not the time to implement it. The Chinese government would study this question and give an answer through the ambassador of the MPR in the PRC. We would not look at this question as if it were a simple one, we would not leave it, stressed Zhou Enlai; [he should] pass this on to Comrade Tsedenbal.

Tsevegmid told me that Zhou Enlai invited the delegation to a dinner during which he talked about the necessity of living in friendship; although disagreements would persist for a long time, [he said that] the main thing was unity of our countries. The solution of all questions in mutual relations between China and Mongolia should be directed towards this. Zhou Enlai also said several times that the concrete questions raised (the payment for the transit of workers, etc.) were of a different character, they were secondary and this was not the main thing. Zhou Enlai hinted that the main thing was the nature of relations between the MPR and the PRC.

Tsevegmid remarked that Zhou Enlai was exceptionally polite and delicate with the Mongolian delegation; he tried in the course of the conversation not to allow the slightest aggravation and asked several times to convey his greetings and wishes to Comrade Tsedenbal.

When he received the delegation, Mao Zedong spoke about unity as being the main thing and also asked to convey his personal greetings to Comrade Tsedenbal. When the delegation was leaving for the motherland, said Tsevegmid, the Chinese leaders stressed many times at the airport that both countries were sovereign states and had to leave in friendship [and] respect each other, etc.

Summarizing all of the above, Tsevegmid expressed his thoughts to the effect that the Chinese in the conversations with the delegation tried to say carefully that they were ready to provide greater aid if the MPR departed from its firm principled position, which it took in the course of the current struggle in the communist movement. The MPR, the ambassador continued, probably very much stood in the way of the Chinese implementing their line among the countries of Asia and Africa, because the MPR’s example was in many respects very unpleasant for the Chinese. Unfortunately, Tsevegmid remarked, we did not have enough strength yet, we would need to develop further our economy to really demonstrate in contrast the example of prosperity before the Mongolians from Inner Mongolia and before other Asian countries, which would further frustrate the plans of great Han chauvinism and vanguardism in Asia and on other continents.

Tsevegmid also told me that the statement by Mao Zedong in the conversation with the Japanese socialists very much undermined the authority of the PRC and of Mao Zedong personally, that even the nationalists who did not agree on all the questions of the internal and external policies of the MPR leadership, [who] expressed doubts in the policy of the MPR leadership with regard to the Chinese leaders, now speak about the above-mentioned statement of Mao Zedong with indignation and resentment.

[...] Informing about all of the above, we would like to stress that the current Chinese approaches with regard to the MPR are part of an important, well thought-out new round of cunning, more refined tactical steps and actions of the Chinese leadership, directed towards widening the “swamp” in the socialist camp and in the communist movement, towards the separation of fraternal countries from the USSR (they insistently tried to create an impression among all the delegations from the socialist countries that they were the “sincere protectors” of the unity of the peoples of the socialist camp, many times and at all levels declaring that, allegedly, “disagreements are not the main thing, nobody dies from discussions, the main thing is unity,” etc. [CCP CC Member] Peng Zhen had a conversation along these lines with a Polish delegation for over 4 hours on 6 October. [...] The Chinese are trying again to flirt with the Germans, telling them that, allegedly, “you are the forward post of the socialist camp in the West, and we—in the East, therefore, we must be united.” The top leadership of the PRC stubbornly worked with the Romanian delegation, though, as ambassador [Ambassador Dumitru] Georgiu told us, no joint documents were being planned.

Taking all of this into consideration, we would suppose it expedient to, with an eye to the next few years, specifically look at the MPR question in terms of further securing its position as a loyal ally of the Soviet Union, of more effectively and systematically using it to frustrate plans of the Chinese leadership, especially of their play on racial and nationalist strings of so-called Afro-Asian unity. ([This should] include the question regarding measures for bringing closer to the CPSU, aside from Tsendenbal, other, especially authoritative, influential Mongolian leaders, so that the firmness of Soviet-Mongolian relations depended to a lesser extent on one or two persons who are currently in power.)

Perhaps the time is ripe to look at the question of a visit of the leadership of the CPSU to the MPR, timing it to some big action with regard to the MPR which would strengthen and develop our alliance with it. At the same time, one must not fail to take into account the necessity of weakening a certain Mongolian fear in connection with the great power chauvinist pressure from the Chinese, which shows through in the conversations of the Mongolian comrades with us.

The ambassador of the MPR Tsevegmid, for example, confi-

dentially informed us that a partial mobilization is underway in the MPR (although for the Chinese and other foreigners they were inventing a version that under the pretext of mobilization into the army, countryside youths were being mobilized for industrial construction), that special posts had been installed on the Mongolian side to observe the actions of the Chinese on the border, etc. [...]

Ambassador of the USSR to the PRC
[Signature] S. Chervonenko

1. A Mongolian delegation headed by Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers S. Luvsan visited China in September-October 1964 to participate in the 15th anniversary celebrations of the PRC's founding.



DOCUMENT No. 7

Resolution of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee [MPRP CC] Politburo, 1 December 1965

[Source: *Mongol Ardyn Khuvsгалт Намын Архив, фонд 4, данс 28, kh/n 173b, khuu. 35-37. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Sergey Radchenko. The resolution was written in Mongolian and the addendum in Russian.*]

MONGOLIAN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE POLITBURO RESOLUTION

1 December
1965

Ulaanbaatar
No.

ON REQUEST FOR AID FROM THE SOVIET UNION TO STRENGTHEN MPR'S DEFENSE

MPRP Central Committee
Politburo RESOLVES:

Taking into consideration the deteriorating situation in the East, and the worsening international tensions, considers it appropriate to strengthen this country's defense. For this purpose, considers it appropriate to put a request to the Soviet Union's Communist Party Central Committee and the Soviet government to provide an appropriate unit from the Soviet Union armed forces to be stationed in this country and be maintained at their own expense.

MPRP Central Committee Politburo members, candidate members:

Ts. Dugersuren	D. Molomjamts
N. Jagvaral	J. Sambuu
S. Luvsan	Yu. Tsendenbal
D. Maidar	B. Lhamsuren
N. Luvsanravdan	

Copy is correct.

Top Secret

TO FIRST SECRETARY OF THE CPSU CC
Comrade BREZHNEV Leonid Il'yich
TO CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF
USSR

Comrade KOSYGIN Alexei Nikolaevich

Dear Comrades!

Taking into consideration the deteriorating situation in the East, and the worsening international tensions, the MPRP CC and the MPR government are taking measures to strengthen the defence capabilities of the country. With generous help from the Soviet Union, we are equipping the Mongolian people's army with modern technology and weapons, and with the help of Soviet specialists, we are training army personnel in new means of struggle.

However, these measures are insufficient to safeguard us from all sorts of incidents and possible sudden attacks. Our army units do not possess the means of detection that would allow us to learn about the activities of the enemy at a considerable distance from our territory.

Taking the aforementioned into consideration, and with the aim of further strengthening the defence capabilities of the MPR, the MPRP CC and the government of the MPR are turning to the CPSU CC and the Soviet government with the insistent request to consider the question of providing a battle unit (formation) from the armed forces of the USSR and maintaining it on the territory of the MPR at the cost of the Soviet Union, having supplied it with modern powerful military equipment and arms, housing, as well as cultural facilities, amenities, and all other necessary items.

The place of stationing of a military unit and other concrete questions can be additionally discussed.

We are firmly convinced that the CPSU CC and the Soviet government will look into our request with understanding and make a positive decision on it.

With communist greetings,

On the instruction of MPRP CC and the government of the MPR

Yu. Tsendenbal
First Secretary of MPRP CC,
Chairman of the Council of
Ministers of the MPR

1 December 1965

[On the opposite side added by hand: Tsendenbal *darga* gave it to Namsrai *darga* on 6 December [1979?], Namsrai *darga* received it / in the secret fond /. Signature, 7 December 1979]



DOCUMENT No. 8

Information about the Visit of the Soviet Party and Government Delegation to the MPR, Headed by the First Secretary of the CPSU CC C. Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, in January 1966 [Excerpt]

[Source: AVPRF: fond 0111, opis 48, papka 287, delo 12, listy 21-38. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Sergey Radchenko.]

Secret. The only copy.

About the visit of the Soviet party and government delegation headed by the First Secretary of the CPSU CC C. L[eonid] I[lyich] Brezhnev to the MPR in January 1966.

Information

[...]

On 13 and 15 January [1966] the delegations of the two sides held official talks.

Comrade [Yumjaagiin] Tsendenbal, welcoming the Soviet delegation, stressed its exceptionally high level and the great importance of the visit of the Soviet leaders. [...]

Comrade Tsendenbal expressed warm gratitude to the CPSU CC and the Soviet government for the quick and effective dispatch of working forces in 1964, when a particularly difficult situation with [regard to] labor resources occurred in the MPR in connection with the departure of the Chinese workers from Mongolia. [...]

All the workers of the MPR warmly support the policy of the party and the government. True, Comrade Tsendenbal remarked, some members of the MPRP CC had deviations in the direction of pro-Chinese views, but they were given a resolute rebuff. In general, all members of the party support the line of friendship with the Soviet Union and other fraternal socialist countries.

In the sphere of international politics, Comrade Tsendenbal stressed, our two countries had one line. [...]

Comrade Tsendenbal praised highly the help of the Soviet

Union to Vietnam and censured the position of the Chinese on this question. [...]

Recently the Chinese had been building up their forces at the Mongolian-Chinese border. Now there were 73 so called "stations" with military garrisons along the border with the MPR. There were 4 large Chinese garrisons on the western border; in the Xinjiang region, on the railroad at the Erlian border station, in the East, close to the meeting point of the three states (MPR, USSR and PRC) there were large Chinese garrisons, two of which arrived in the beginning of 1965.

Comrade Tsendenbal pointed out that there are cases of PRC nationals crossing the Mongolian-Chinese border. Mainly, the people who cross are of Mongolian nationality, live in Inner Mongolia and were looking for a refuge in the MPR from the harsh conditions of life in China. In 1965 there were 30 crossings, during which 48 people crossed into Mongolian territory.

Responding to the relevant question of members of the Soviet delegation, Comrade Tsendenbal said that about two million Mongolians and nine million Chinese lived in Inner Mongolia; at the same time, there was a policy of active assimilation of the Mongolian nationality by the Chinese. [...]

Comrade [Leonid] Brezhnev on behalf of the Soviet delegation expressed his gratitude to the Mongolian comrades for the warm, hearty welcome [the delegation] received in the MPR, and also thanked Cde. Tsendenbal for the information.

Having noted the firm character of the Soviet-Mongolian friendship, Cde. Brezhnev stressed that our parties have common views on questions of foreign policy, the struggle with imperialism, the national liberation movement, the unity of countries of the socialist commonwealth, and on questions of the international communist movement.

Comrade Brezhnev expressed gratitude to the MPRP CC and the Mongolian government for the support of our foreign policy, and, in particular, for support of the Soviet Union in the question of participation in the Second Conference of the Afro-Asian countries.

Touching on the economic relations between the USSR and the MPR in the next five years, Brezhnev remarked that not all questions had been fully solved yet. He noted that one should not rule out amendments to the agreements reached. He stressed the necessity for the Mongolians themselves to make the best effort to use in the most effective way the credits and aid provided by the Soviet Union to Mongolia. [...]

Brezhnev said that the CPSU CC Presidium looked at the question of providing aid to Mongolia in the intensification of its external political activities. A decision was made to help the

MPR in the preparation of the necessary staff, translators, diplomats, and journalists for the publication of literature about the MPR, with translation in different languages for dissemination abroad. It was decided to provide, with the aim of the intensification of the activities of the MPR on the international stage, three million dollars for use in cases when the MPRP CC and the MPR government consider it necessary to spend this money.

He also said that the CPSU CC Presidium positively replied to the request of the MPRP CC requesting aid to strengthen the defense capabilities of the MPR. [Soviet Defense Minister Rodion Yakolevich] Malinovsky has been instructed to coordinate the details of this question. [...]



DOCUMENT No. 9

List of Questions Discussed and Adopted by the CPSU Politburo in the First Five Months of 1967

[Source: *RGANI, fond 2, opis 3, delo 67, pp. 150-151.*
Obtained and translated for CWIHP by Sergey Radchenko.]

List of questions, discussed and adopted by the Politburo in the first five months of 1967 [...]

In the first five months of this year, 118 decisions of the Politburo pertaining to defense questions were discussed and adopted (list attached) [...]

14. About strengthening forces in the Far East, Zabaikal'ye and Eastern Kazakhstan (4 February 1967) [P32/31op]

15. About stationing Soviet forces on the territory of the MPR (4 February 1967) [P32/32op]

16. About strengthening border protection between the Soviet Union and the PRC (4 February 1967) [P32/33op] [...]

18. About building protected points of control of the armed forces of the USSR (4 February 1967) [P32/35op] [...]

38. On sending military-construction units to the MPR (26 April 1967) [P39/137op]



Twenty-Four Soviet-Bloc Documents on Vietnam and the Sino-Soviet Split, 1964–1966

Annotation and Introduction by Lorenz M. Lüthi

Studying Hanoi's foreign relations during the early Vietnam War is a mystery within a riddle. Given the paucity of Vietnamese internal or archival sources, the use of substitute documentation, be it Chinese, Russian, or East European, is the only way to approach Vietnamese thinking. Moreover, the leadership of the DRV (Democratic Republic of Vietnam) not only was careful not to antagonize any of its many, mutually antagonistic allies, but also seemed to be skillful at disguising internal disagreements in its dealings with foreigners. Vietnamese leaders often tended to make vague or general statements on their relations or conflicts with other countries.

The parallel escalation of the Vietnam War and of the Sino-Soviet Split in 1964-1966 makes this period central to our understanding of Hanoi's, Beijing's, and Moscow's positions and mutual interactions. The documents presented here fill a gaping hole in our knowledge, especially for the period from August 1964 to the summer of the following year.¹ Yet, for several reasons, they should be used with caution. They do not replace the actual transcripts of talks between the three. Most are at least one step removed from the actual events. More than half are Soviet reports to the East European allies on talks with the Chinese or Vietnamese, and some are based on intelligence gathering or, to a lesser degree, well-informed hearsay. Yet, already existing information, as for example the excerpts of Sino-Vietnamese talks published earlier by *CWIHP*, is corroborating many of them.² Finally, the documents also speak much for the fact that the Soviet and East European diplomats in Beijing and Hanoi confronted many of the problems historians face today when they try to understand the period—a lack of reliable evidence. Thus, as we can glean from the documents, they tended to work as a team, gathering and sharing information with each other whenever possible.

The Sino-Soviet split inevitably shaped the course of the early Vietnam War. Sino-Soviet ideological disagreements became public with the release of the so-called Lenin Polemics in April 1960, in which the Chinese communists accused their Soviet comrades of ideological revisionism. Over the course

of the early 1960s, these polemics became more vitriolic, largely as a result of their function in domestic Chinese politics. Especially after the summer of 1962, Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Chairman Mao Zedong linked his internal adversaries—PRC Chairman Liu Shaoqi and CCP General Secretary Deng Xiaoping, above all—rhetorically to the supposedly revisionist Soviet comrades who, in his view, not only had betrayed Joseph Stalin, other fellow communists, and even the national liberation movement in the Third World, but also were restoring capitalism at home. The twelve months before the launch of the Cultural Revolution in August of 1966 witnessed a quantum leap in these attacks, especially once Mao Zedong had left Beijing in the fall of 1965 for southern China. From there he observed the events in the Chinese capital he had triggered, gathered like-minded supporters against what he called the revisionists in the Politburo, and prepared for his jubilant return in August of 1966 to humiliate his internal opponents.³

In this context, the normalization of Sino-Soviet relations was near impossible. Since 1962, various communist parties had tried to nudge the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and the CCP to agree to another meeting of the international communist movement like the one held in Moscow in late 1960. Yet, Sino-Soviet disagreements over the process of summoning this meeting were at the heart of the deadlock. While the CPSU wanted to follow the process of 1960—first Sino-Soviet talks, then convening the so-called Editorial Board consisting of 26 major parties, and finally the gathering of all parties—the CCP demanded changes that would benefit its ideological positions. In fact, Mao also used this maneuvering to provoke Nikita Khrushchev to call a rump-meeting which Mao had already publicly declared to be splittist. By early 1963 Mao had already decided on the necessity of a Sino-Soviet split, but, as he said himself, the only problem was how to shift the blame on Khrushchev: “We should make Khrushchev instigate the split, let him assume the responsibility for it.”⁴ A series of polemics from the late summer of 1963 to the summer of 1964 achieved that goal; on 15 July 1964,

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Khrushchev announced the meeting of the Editorial Board for 15 December.⁵ After Khrushchev's fall at the October Plenum, his successors Leonid Brezhnev and Alexei Kosygin downgraded it to consultative status and rescheduled it for 1 March 1965. But for Mao, Khrushchev's call was the opening he had sought to gather like-minded parties in Beijing for the purposes of creating an anti-revisionist bloc against the Soviet Union **[Document #3]**.

Realizing that a Sino-Soviet split might have detrimental effects on the unfolding conflict in South Vietnam, the Vietnam Workers' Party (VWP) mediated—with success—from August to October of 1960, and—to no avail—in early 1962 and late 1963.⁶ Given Mao's increasing rhetorical stress on revolution and national liberation since mid-1962, the VWP seemingly moved closer towards Mao's ideological positions in the period prior to the Gulf of Tonkin incident (2 August 1964), which triggered the US escalation of the Second Indochina War. For example, in March 1963, the secretary general of the VWP, Le Duan, openly rejected the Soviet position on peaceful coexistence with the United States. And in late 1963, the VWP's 9th Plenum formally turned toward Mao's concept of national liberation wars, directed mainly against 'US imperialism' in the Third World. Yet, although the Vietnamese party differed with its Soviet counterpart, Le Duan, unlike Mao Zedong, was not willing to openly break with the CPSU.⁷

The immediate reactions to the Gulf of Tonkin incident revealed the different approaches of the CCP and the CPSU towards the conflict in Southeast Asia. The People's Republic of China (PRC) declared that "no socialist country can sit idly by while it [Vietnam] is being subjected to aggression."⁸ Within a couple of days, China sent older MiG-15 and MiG-17 fighters, though without pilots, to the DRV.⁹ Beyond Chinese military assistance, Mao also provided political advice, calling the Gulf of Tonkin incident a result of mistaken judgment and incorrect information, and counseling for a protracted guerrilla war and against negotiations with the US in case of a further escalation.¹⁰ The Soviets, by comparison, were much more cautious. Khrushchev proposed to bring the issue to the United Nations, for which he got publicly criticized by the PRC and DRV—both non-members in that organization.¹¹ Moscow's reluctance to support Hanoi might have stemmed from the impending domestic leadership struggle, but also from the fact that the Soviets were much more skeptical about the chances of a North Vietnamese success than almost everyone else in the socialist world. **[Document #1]**

Khrushchev's fall from power in mid-October did not lead to a reversal of any of his foreign policies, *except* the one on Vietnam. Yet, this event apparently puzzled the North Vietnamese leadership, as we can see from the *Hoc Tap* Affair¹² **[Documents #2 and 3]**. The Chinese Communists tried to use the changes in the Soviet Union to shape politics and ideological debates within the international communist movement by calling for a gathering of the twelve ruling communist parties in Moscow for the 47th anniversary of the October Revolution. The meeting sent mixed messages to the Vietnamese. On the

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one hand, Kosygin, as the new Soviet chairman of the minister council, promised economic and military aid, as well as a possible visit to Vietnam.¹³ At the same time, the tentative Sino-Soviet ideological armistice after Khrushchev's fall collapsed in renewed disagreements and polemics.¹⁴ On his return from Moscow, North Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van Dong talked neither with Deng Xiaoping, who had to come to the airport to greet him during his refueling stop in Beijing,¹⁵ nor with Soviet embassy personnel in Hanoi. **[Document #3]**

Yet, despite all the uncertainties of the Soviet embassy in Hanoi on the new direction of Vietnam's foreign policy, the Soviets were able to perceive Sino-Vietnamese disagreements developing in late 1964 **[Document #4]**. Worried about a direct clash with the United States, Mao's PRC had started to scale back its initial commitments to the DRV; the volunteers he had promised in the summer for frontline battle, turned into regular troops permitted only to secure the Vietnamese hinterland.¹⁶

Kosygin's trip to East Asia in February of 1965 has long been shrouded in mystery. **Document #5** summarizes not only his talks in Hanoi and Beijing but also reveals the open differences in opinion. Sino-Soviet ideological disagreements (mostly about the summoning of the Editorial Board in Moscow in March) put Vietnam into a sensitive position between the quarreling communist great powers.¹⁷ But Kosygin's talks in Beijing appear to indicate that both the CPSU and the CCP were willing not to let their ideological disagreements endanger the North Vietnamese war effort.

However, events in late February and throughout March proved otherwise. Some days after Kosygin's return to Moscow on 16 February, the Soviet Union came forward with four proposals: the call for a new Indochina conference, the release of a joint statement of support by the socialist countries for Vietnam, the dispatch of urgently needed anti-aircraft guns to Vietnam by air across Chinese territory, and the stationing of Soviet missile troops and of an interceptor aircraft squadron in North Vietnam and southern China, respectively. The four proposals are conveniently summarized in **[Document #11]**, but numerous other Russian archival documents corroborate many of its aspects.¹⁸ With the exception of the first proposal (Indochina conference), the North Vietnamese agreed to the Soviet suggestions—the shipment of anti-aircraft guns by air had anyway been requested by Pham Van Dong—while the

Chinese rejected all of them completely. As one Soviet participant later admitted, the proposals had come too quickly and did not take into account Chinese security needs.¹⁹ However, much of the Chinese argument was based on ideology, or was, as in the case of the Chinese claim that the Vietnamese did not agree with any of the proposals, an outright fabrication. **[Documents #6 and #10]**

By late March of 1965, only a Sino-Soviet railroad transport agreement had been signed²⁰ while the US had been pouring weapons and troops into South Vietnam for months. Although Hanoi was willing to continue the fight, the lack of military aid apparently caused problems **[Document #7]**. At the same time, the Chinese rejected a Soviet proposal of early April to carry out trilateral talks to solve the supply problems with the argument that the ideological differences between the CPSU and the CCP would not allow them to sit together with the Soviets at the same table **[Document #9]**. Chinese obstructionism was clearly based on ideologically motivated reasons, which in turn frustrated the Vietnamese greatly **[Documents #8 and #10]**. After fruitless talks in Beijing in early April, a Vietnamese delegation headed by Le Duan, Vo Nguyen Giap, and Nguyen Thuy Thinh left the Chinese capital for Moscow to ask for more aid **[Document #8]**. On their way back, the Chinese comrades accused them of cooperating with the Soviet revisionists **[Document #9]**.

The constant Chinese polemics—such as the claim that the Soviet Union was rendering insignificant aid **[Document #10]**—compelled the Soviet comrades to send a letter **[Document #11]** to the fraternal parties to set the record straight on past and current aid to Vietnam. Together with the following document, it also alluded to Chinese obstructionism with regard to the use of Soviet military equipment once it had arrived in Vietnam. Vietnamese frustration about China's uncompromising positions—"the Chinese are ready to fight to the last Vietnamese but otherwise are content to be left alone by the Americans" **[Document #13]**—has been corroborated by an internal Chinese source which deplores the fickleness of the Vietnamese comrades with regard to Soviet revisionism and to negotiations with the United States as well as expresses the need to lead them subtly back on the correct path.²¹

A series of visits by Pham Van Dong and Ho Chi Minh to Beijing and Moscow in the fall of 1965 **[Documents #14 and #15]** reveal the increasing influence of the approaching Cultural Revolution on Sino-Soviet-Vietnamese relations. Having left Beijing for southern China, Mao Zedong cooked up the fantasy of an all-out national liberation war against US imperialism throughout East Asia. Lacking any material basis to support such a massive conflict economically or militarily, the Chinese leader used bravado to fulfill his need of stressing revolutionary credentials against the Soviet revisionists and their supposed allies in the Politburo, headed by his deputy Liu Shaoqi, in Beijing. Numerous propaganda documents, such as Chen Yi's speech on the 16th anniversary of the foundation of the PRC for example, promoted during that time the claim that China was encircled by four enemies—the imperialist US, mil-

itarist Japan and India, as well as the revisionist Soviet Union, which supposedly coordinated their actions to destroy China and the national liberation movement in the Third World.²²

It was in this context that, in January 1966, both Poland and the Soviet Union sent delegations to the PRC and the DRV to find once more a solution to the complicated problems facing the Vietnamese war effort **[Documents #16, #17, and #18]**. The Michalowski mission was partially induced by a worldwide diplomatic offensive by the US to break the deadlock over Vietnam,²³ while the Shelepin mission was designed to negotiate on further aid and prod the Vietnamese towards more sensible positions with regard to ending the conflict. Both reveal the rigid Chinese position that had developed over the course of 1965, disagreements between the VWP and the National Liberation Front (NLF), Vietnam's over-optimistic outlook for victory in the war, and Polish-Soviet calls to engage in a diplomatic counter-offensive with the aim to isolate the United States.

Against Chinese advice, the VWP decided to send a delegation to the 23rd CPSU Congress (29 March to 8 April 1966). The Chinese apparently punished the Vietnamese with a partial and temporary stop of supplies **[Document #21]**. Both the Vietnamese and the Soviets decided not to pour more oil into the fire of Sino-Soviet disputes; their speeches to the congress were devoid of any negative comments on China.²⁴ In a private conversation after the congress on 11 April, Brezhnev asked Le Duan to convey to Mao the desire for a meeting to clarify bilateral disagreements.²⁵ During his stopover in Beijing, Zhou Enlai accused Le Duan of being anti-Chinese. **[Document #24]**

China's subsequent hard line in the Vietnam War stemmed from both its dissatisfaction with Vietnamese behavior and its domestic need to create an atmosphere of international crisis in order to launch the Cultural Revolution. **[Documents #19 and #20]**. Once the Cultural Revolution with its attacks on established structures of authority had started, the Vietnamese had to walk a tricky path **[Documents #21 and #24]**. Although Hanoi dismissed the Cultural Revolution as an internal affair of the PRC, it certainly was aware of the political dangers of China's political radicalism in international affairs and in domestic politics.

This was the background to Pham Van Dong's visit to Moscow in August and to the stay of a high-ranking Czechoslovak delegation in Hanoi in September **[Documents #22 and #23]**. Both reveal the insecurities of the Vietnamese about the future of the conflict. Rhetorical boldness in describing the military situation stands side by side with the recognition of the difficulties of the NLF in the South and requests for more urgently needed military aid. The two documents also show the dissatisfaction of Vietnam's allies with China's obstructionism of aid to the DRV, while they also register the sobering recognition that a harder line towards Beijing would only damage Hanoi's war effort.

Note on document translations:

The following documents have been translated as literally as possible. Mangled syntax has been rendered into English as closely as possible. In rare cases, when the meaning of the sentences was threatened to be lost, the author rearranged the syntax, though as little as possible, to allow for better comprehension.

1. Many of the Soviet and Chinese documents for this period are not accessible, see for example: Ilya V. Gaiduk, *The Soviet Union and the Vietnam War* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996), 17-33. Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 130-134. Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 212-221.

2. Odd Arne Westad, Chen Jian, Stein Tønnesson, Nguyen Yu Tung, and James G. Hershberg, eds., "77 Conversations between Chinese and Foreign Leaders on the Wars in Indochina, 1964-1977," *Cold War International History Project Working Paper No. 22* (1998).

3. See extensive coverage in: Lorenz Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

4. Wu Lengxi, *Ten Years of Debate, 1956-1966: Recollections of Sino-Soviet Relations* [*Shi Nian Lunzhan, 1956-1966: Zhong-Su Guanxi Huiyulu*] (Beijing: Central Party Literature Publishing House, 1999), 552-556.

5. "To the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China," 15 June 1964, Magyar Országos Levéltár (Hungarian National Archives, MOL), 288 f. 9/1964/22 e, 37-56.

6. For the first mediation attempt, see: Wu Lengxi, *Ten Years*, 344-349, 398-415. For the second mediation attempt, see: "Note on a talk with the Hungarian Ambassador, Comrade Martin, on 31 January 1962," Beijing, 2/1/1962, Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv (Archive of the Parties and Mass Organizations of the GDR in the Federal Archives (Foundation); SAPMO-BArch), Berlin, Germany, DY 30/IV 2/20/124, 1-3. "Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam," 4/7/1962, SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/3606, 68-74. For the third mediation attempt, see: "Declaration by the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Vietnamese Workers Party on the unity of the communist world movement," 2/10/1963, SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/IV A 2/20/437, 1-6.

7. Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars*, 123, 125.

8. The official English version of the statement is reprinted in: *New York Times*, 7 August 1964, 7

9. Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars*, 132, 135.

10. Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 208, 213-214. Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 213. Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars*, 133. "Mao Zedong and Pham Van Dong, Hoang Van Hoan, Beijing, 5 October 1964 7-7:50 (p.m.)," Westad et al., eds., "77 Conversations," 76.

11. "Record of Conversation with the chargé d'affaires of the DRV in the USSR Do Fat Kuang," August 6, 1964, Arkhiv Veshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation; AVPRF), Moscow, Russia, fond 079, opis 19, delo 4, papka 40, 5. Chen Jian, "Personal-Historical Puzzles about China and the Vietnam War," Westad et al., eds., "77 Conversations," 30.

12. The *Hoc Tap* was the theoretical organ of the VWP.

13. Gaiduk, *The Soviet Union and the Vietnam War*, 19-20.

14. See chapter 9 of Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*.

15. Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Bestand: Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten (Political Archive of the Office for Foreign Affairs, Files: Ministry for Foreign Affairs; PAAA-MfAA), Berlin, Germany, Abteilung Ferner Osten - Sektor China, Microfiche A 6835, 1-4.

16. Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars*, 134. Li Danhui, "Sino-Soviet Relations during China's Resist-America-Aid-Vietnam War" ["Zhong-Su guanxi yu Zhongguo de yuan Yue kang Mei"], *Dangdai Zhongguo shi yanjiu* 3 (1998), 112. Gaiduk, *The Soviet Union and the Vietnam War*, 16.

17. Another East German document, based on talks by GDR ambassador to North Korea Horst Brie, reveals Hanoi's desire that Moscow and Beijing come to an agreement for the sake of the Vietnamese struggle against the Americans. See: "Note on two conversations with the minister council of the DRV embassy, Comrade Hoan Muoi, on 1/26/1965, in the Cuban embassy and on 1/27/1965 on the occasion of a goodbye visit in our embassy," January 27, 1965, PAAA-MfAA, VS-Hauptstelle, Microfiche G-A 332, 45-50.

18. Most of the documents can be found in: AVPRF, fond 079, opis 20, delo 12, papka 45 and papka 46, and fond 0100, opis 58, delo 5, papka 516.

19. A. A. Brezhnev, *China: The Thorny Path to Good Neighbourhood: Reminiscences and Reflections* [*Kitai: Termisty Puti K Dobrodstvu: Vospominaniia i Razmyshleniia*] (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 1998), 104.

20. On 30 March 1965, the PRC and the USSR finally signed a transport agreement that allowed for the supply of military aid to Vietnam through Chinese territory. Beforehand, Beijing had allowed the transport by rail of those anti-aircraft guns which it had refused to transport by air in late February.

21. Chinese Foreign Ministry Circular, "Vietnam 'Peace Talk' Activities," 19 August 1965," Qiang Zhai, "Beijing and the Vietnam Peace Talks, 1965-1968: new evidence from Chinese sources," *Cold War International History Project Working Paper No. 18* (June 1997), 33-34.

22. Speech is summarized in: "Information No. 51/65 to the members and candidates of the Politburo," 10/2/1965, SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/IV A 2/20/220, 1-2.

23. For more background on the Polish delegation, see: James G. Hershberg, "Who Murdered 'Marigold'? New Evidence on the mysterious failure of Poland's Secret Initiative to start US-North Vietnamese Peace Talks, 1966," in *Cold War International History Project Working Paper No. 27*; and Hershberg, "Peace Probes and the Bombing Pause: Hungarian and Polish Diplomacy During the Vietnam War, December 1965-January 1966," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 5:2 (Spring 2003), 32-67.

24. "Report by the First Secretary of the CC, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev," 29 March 1966, 23rd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, *Bulletin No. 1*, Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsialno-politicheskoi istorii (Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History; RGASPI), Moscow, Russia, fond 593, opis 1, delo 1, 21-56. "[Speech by the First Secretary of the] Central Committee of the Vietnamese Workers' Party, Comrade Le Duan," 30 March 1966, 23rd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, *Bulletin No. 3*, RGASPI, fond 593, opis 1, delo 3, 36-48.

25. "Zapis Besedi" [Record of Conversation], *Istochnik* 1998 (3), 129.

DOCUMENT No. 1

**Note on a Conversation by Tarka, Jurgas and Mile¹
at the Soviet Embassy in Hanoi, 10 September 1964
[Excerpts]**

[Source: *Archiwum Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych (Archive of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs; AMSZ), Warsaw, Poland, zespol 24/71, wiazka 2, teczka D. II Wietnam 2421, 2-4. Translated from Polish by Lorenz Lüthi.*]

[...]

The conversation took place in the embassy of the USSR on 2 September 1964 at the initiative of the Soviet comrades, especially of the military attaché, General Major Ivanov. Apart from him, the embassy counselor Soloviev was present, as well as the assistant attaché, a colonel of the air force.

[...]

We provided information to the Russians on the situation in the south after 5 August, according to the instructions of Comrade Ambassador. On the request by our interlocutors we added information we possessed on the basis of our knowledge of the topic of economic, political, religious, individual, and social relations with the South. The [Soviet] comrades were interested in, as deep and comprehensive as possible, an understanding of the problems. We feel that the comprehensive information was even more necessary for the development of each other's opinion on the perspectives of the evolving situation in Vietnam, and on the fundamental prospects of the warring parties. They themselves provided us with the following opinions:

1. Friendly relations between the DRV and China are currently almost absolute, mainly as a result of pressure from China. At present, they² are conducting an internal party campaign accusing the Soviet Union of insincere relations to Vietnam. They propagate the thesis that just at the present, when the DRV and the NLF are a few steps from victory, the USSR put together a statement and protest against the US, just for the sake of creating for itself the opportunity to share in the fruits of their victory.

2. The Tonkin [Gulf] incident was a general test for the durability of political agreements and the strength in South East Asia. They [the Soviets] are convinced that the initiators of the incident were the Chinese.

3. The Soviet comrades in general do not share the optimism of the Poles. They consider that:

a) the military situation in the south is difficult for the NLF at the present, especially with regard to the shortage of military technology;

b) the losses of the Americans during the aerial attack of 8/5 [5 August] were a lot lower than the Poles were told [by the Vietnamese?] (according to the Polish side the Americans lost 11 aircraft shot down—the Soviet comrades thought 2—based on the anecdotal evidence and photographic material. The authorities of the DRV refused to provide details to Soviet cor-

respondents: the number and types of aircraft as well as the last names of allegedly captured and killed pilots);

c) the Americans are [usually] in a position to settle, to their own advantage, every military conflict in this region, including the one in Vietnam. Cde. Ivanov expressed the opinion that for the Americans political victory is more at stake than military victory and that their aim in Vietnam above all is to achieve that. Ivanov claimed that both China and the United States avoid taking military steps [against each other] because both sides foresee the serious after-effects of such steps. According to Ivanov, China's military is currently not very powerful, owing to a complete lack of new technology, but its human potential has great significance.

Ivanov and Soloviev consider that the currently complicated situation will not allow the making of even a tentative estimate. The Soviet comrades predict that the escalation of the military situation might lead the US to use tactical nuclear weapons. Americans currently need firing ranges for their weapons. We were given the understanding that this event is not likely if the USSR [threatens to] respond to [US] nuclear measures, such as to the introduction of atomic weapons to Vietnam or a direct [nuclear] attack on China.

A topic of interest for the Soviet comrades was the NLF as a political and military organization. We provided them with the little information we had concerning the quantity and kind of military formation on the NLF as well as on some of the latest military operations. The Soviet comrades were puzzled why until this time the NLF had not appointed a provisional government and if it was possible to predict that they would do this in the near future.

With regard to the internal affairs of South Vietnam, the Soviet cdes. think that in the end the present political crisis had its origins essentially in tyranny. They were interested in political parties and the possibility of their accession to power. It is possible that they [the Soviets] don't have an opinion about both the military situation in that region as well as on the weakness of these parties.

[...]

1. The identity of these three is unknown. Since the document was written in Saigon, they probably were affiliated with the Polish delegation to the International Supervision and Control Commission on Vietnam. No information was found on Ivanov or Soloviev.

2. Refers probably to the Chinese, since Mao had instigated recurrent anti-Soviet campaigns in the CCP since the early 1960s.



DOCUMENT No. 2

Remarks by the GDR Embassy in Hanoi on the Article in *Hoc Tap* No. 11/1964, 12 November 1964 [Excerpts]

[Source: *Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv (Archive of the Parties and Mass Organizations of the GDR in the Federal Archives (Foundation); SAPMO-BArch), Berlin, Germany, DY 30/IV A 2/20/442, 57-58. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.*]

We have already informed you in a telegram about the publication of the article “Long Live the October Revolution in Russia” by Hong Chuong, the withdrawal of that piece as well as its basic contents. Now we send you a partial translation (some paragraphs without significance are missing).¹

In this context we would like to summarize once more, how the withdrawal of the article occurred. Shortly after the publication of the piece, the Soviet ambassador [Ilya] Shcherbakov made a visit to Prime Minister Pham Van Dong. He asked what Cde. Pham Van Dong thought about this article. Cde. Pham Van Dong evaded a clear reply. In the following days, representatives of the editorial board of *Hoc Tap* visited diplomatic missions, removed the copies already delivered, and replaced them with new ones, from which the article had been cut out. When Cde. Shcherbakov shortly thereafter made a visit to the first CC secretary of the VWP, Cde. Le Duan, the latter remarked in the course of the conversation that the article had been a mistake, and apologized for it. He added that there are people in the party, who have no understanding of the situation and thus make mistakes and shoot beyond the target.

...

On 14 November the press attaché of the Hungarian embassy, Cde. Benyei, told me that he knew from Cde. Fourniau,² a correspondent of *L'Humanité*, who the author of the article was. Cde. Hong Chuong is vice director of the pedagogical university in Hanoi; he apparently lived for more than 10 years in France and visited a French school there. He is supposed to be very intelligent and knows the European situation well. His articles, in Cde. Fourniau's view, are always very interesting, since he usually represents the line of the VWP leadership, but sometimes reveals details that provide nuances in official policy.

Estimate by the Soviet embassy

The article was an open attack on the policy of the Soviet Union and, especially, the 20th and 22nd Party Congress.³ In China it is impossible to admit such mistakes or apologize for them. We agree with this opinion. We still have to wait [to see] how things develop. Yet, it is already clear, that at least on the surface a change in the attitude towards the USSR has occurred. Signs for this were, among others, that Cde. Le Duan stayed for a long time at the Soviet reception for the anniversary of the

November [October] Revolution and, while there, embraced a Soviet artist after she had sung a song in Vietnamese, and that, after a long time, speeches by Soviet comrades were published in the media (it relates to the speeches by comrades [CPSU Secretary General Leonid] Brezhnev and [Soviet Minister Council Chairman Alexei] Kosygin at the reception of the cosmonauts and the speeches by Cde. Brezhnev and [Soviet defense minister Rodion] Malinovsky on 7 November—both verbatim).

1. The partial translation of the *Hoc Tap* article (not included here) is attached as an addendum to the original document.

2. Charles Fourniau was a journalist permanently accredited to the DRV from 1963 to 1965. Due to the political closeness of *L'Humanité* (the daily of the French Communist Party), he had some privileged access to information in Hanoi.

3. The 20th party congress took place in February 1956, the 22nd in October 1961. At both, Khrushchev denounced Stalin.



DOCUMENT No. 3

Note No. 131/64 on a Conversation between the Soviet Embassy Counselor, Comrade Privalov, and Comrade Bibow on 11/23/1964 in the GDR Embassy from 10:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m., 10 December 1964 [Excerpts]

[Source: *SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/IV A 2/20/442, 1-5. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.*]

The conversation occurred on request of the Soviet embassy. [...]

Comrade Privalov at the beginning talked about the attitude of the DRV toward the SU [Soviet Union] following the October plenum.¹ He asserted that the improvements that have occurred, and were especially obvious during the days around 7 November, apparently have only temporary character. The changes were evident in the speeches and articles, which the Vietnamese side, on the occasion of the 47th anniversary, held and published, respectively. They became very clear through the withdrawal of the article in *Hoc tap* on the October Revolution, which happened on Le Duan's immediate directive. Some days later Le Duan apologized to the Soviet ambassador in the course of a conversation and called the article a mistake, after Comrade Shcherbakov had raised the issue.

The trip of the Vietnamese delegation headed by Pham Van Dong to Moscow² expressed the fact that the Vietnamese comrades study attentively the policy of the Soviet Union after the October Plenum and wanted to obtain clarity on the policy changes in the Soviet Union with their own eyes. The delegation was able to convince itself in Moscow that the CPSU still works on the implementation of the decisions of the 22nd CPSU Congress. Pham Van Dong made only some general remarks at the airport after his return from Moscow,

when he said that he was content with the trip. He avoided any concrete comment. Even at the dinner, to which he had been invited by the Soviet ambassador, the counselor Privalov, and their wives, it was impossible to direct the conversation towards concrete questions. The conversation remained within the framework of general, protocollary politeness. An invitation, which the Soviet ambassador made for the whole delegation, was accepted by Pham Van Dong only with hesitation, since he apparently wants to avoid any conversation on the trip to Moscow. The delegation must have understood—Privalov continued—that there were no changes in Soviet policy and that the attitude of the Soviet Union remains unchanged with regard to the decisions of the 22nd CPSU Congress in all essential questions. Precisely that is why the changes in the Vietnamese attitude towards the Soviet Union must be judged temporary. In a *Red Flag*³ article, the Chinese have already expressed their disappointment over the unchanged Soviet policy, of which Zhou Enlai convinced himself in Moscow. As before, they [the Chinese] act in all questions against the line of the CPSU and use Khrushchev's resignation as a tool to oppose his successors. Apparently this article is the beginning of a struggle against the CPSU CC following the short interruption after the October Plenum. It is also possible and probable that the DRV might return to the Chinese line. Comrade Privalov does not exclude the possibility that the withdrawn *Hoc Tap* article will be republished (maybe in reworked form). A short version has been published in the Chinese newspaper published here. It thus is necessary to follow the Vietnamese press attentively in this respect.

[...]

Comrade Privalov then asked if we knew about the meeting in Beijing in the context of the 15th anniversary of the PR China. When Comrade Bibow negated the question, Comrade Privalov explained: After 1 October a meeting of representatives of approximately ten countries (China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Korea, and others) occurred, on which the attitude of the communist parties of these countries were discussed in view of the meeting of the editorial board on 15 December. It was decided to create an anti-imperialist bloc. A confirmation exists with regard to [the creation of] this anti-imperialist bloc. A short while ago, the MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] of the DRV held a meeting on the implementation of the foreign policy tasks of the DRV in the first half of the year. The meeting was chaired by [DRV Foreign Minister] Xuan Thuy. He claimed that the main task of foreign policy in the current situation was the struggle against imperialism and modern revisionism, and formulated the aim to contribute to the creation of an anti-imperialist bloc, which was also directed against modern revisionism. Xuan Thuy's statements in that regard have been made accessible to the Soviet embassy. If they were still in the embassy, he was willing to make them available to Comrade Bibow.[...]

1. Refers to the 14 October 1964 CPSU Central Committee ple-

num which formally dismissed Khrushchev from all of his positions.

2. Pham Van Dong visited Moscow during celebrations of the October Revolution taking place around 7 November 1964.

3. Theoretical organ of the CCP.



DOCUMENT No. 4

Note No. 2/65 on Conversations with Comrade Shcherbakov about the Developmental Tendencies in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, on 22 and 28 December 1964, 6 January 1965

[Source: SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/IV A 2/20/442, 8-10.

Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.]

During my [GDR ambassador to the DRV, Wolfgang Bertold] conversation with the Soviet ambassador at the reception of the 20th anniversary of the Vietnamese People's Army, Comrade Shcherbakov explained that some changes in the DRV have been felt since 15 October. In the past 2 months, approximately 20 Soviet delegations were in the DRV, and at this time 6 Soviet delegations are in Hanoi. That was unthinkable some months ago. Even in the speeches and articles in recent times, new tones are being heard. That does not mean that the VWP has moved away from its position. In this respect, I referred to the fact that Comrade [Vo Nguyen] Giap has made comments, more wide-ranging than usual, in his speech on the German question, and that the GDR again is ranking ahead of the national liberation movement in his text. Comrade Shcherbakov replied that such new tendencies can be discerned everywhere. In this respect I added that we observed that the possibility of negotiations with the US is mentioned more often in articles, and talked about some articles in the central organ. Comrade Shcherbakov thanked [me] for the reference, and we agreed on a meeting in the Soviet embassy in order to talk about some problems, and stated that we should exchange our opinions more often. Comrade Shcherbakov asked for permission to include some other ambassadors in these talks.

During the next conversation on Monday, 28 December, to which the ambassadors of the MPR [Mongolian People's Republic], Bulgaria, the CSSR [Czechoslovak Socialist Republic], and Hungary showed up (the Polish ambassador had not come despite an invitation), he [Shcherbakov] picked up on the comments above and said approximately the following: Among some Vietnamese cadres, doubts about the sincerity of the Chinese leaders and the possibility of aid have occurred. Some start to think about the possibility that the Chinese only use the Vietnamese as a tool for their own, Chinese policy. Such doubts have emerged, among other issues, as the consequence of the events in August and of the related, insufficient aid from the People's Republic of China and also of the general, insufficient aid in the economic sphere. While the Chinese assert that

they are ready to support the DRV ("Four Chinese can stand on each square meter of the DRV"), they demand from the Vietnamese to focus on the South. Such comments have caused some Vietnamese to ponder [about the situation], and especially the South is disappointed, so that the NLF is again returning to carrying out individual actions, since it is not in a position to carry out larger military actions without efficient aid. One can view the [Vietnamese] readiness to negotiations with the US in that context. They are even ready to talk about the neutralization of the South. In that respect, they think about a transitional solution in the form of a coalition government. In that respect, they mentioned two steps: 1. withdrawal of US troops from South Vietnam and subsequent negotiations, 2. unification of the country on the basis of the Geneva agreements. That means, they move away from the adventurist plans of the Chinese leaders. On the other hand, they carry out trilateral talks with military delegations from China and the DPRK. These talks probably had been prepared during the visit of [Korean Workers' Party General Secretary] Kim Il Sung a few weeks ago and now are carried out by the Korean defense minister. They assume that, in case of an aggression by the US, joint actions will be implemented, and that those will be coordinated, so that in this given case the Koreans start actions in the south of their country. Furthermore they believe that the Koreans can gather experience here [in Vietnam] for the implementation of a guerrilla war.

The Chinese try hard to build up a similar front, consisting of the countries of North Korea, China, the DRV and including Laos, Cambodia, and Indonesia, opposite to the front of the US in East Asia, which stretches from South Korea to Taiwan, South Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines and Malaysia. In this context, it is interesting to observe the attempts by the US vis-à-vis Great Britain to get pledges from the English imperialists to participate in the struggle in South Vietnam.



DOCUMENT No. 5

Information No. 098 by the CPSU CC to the SED CC, 24 February 1965 [Excerpts]

[Source: SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/3667, 146-156. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.]

The initiative taken by our party to establish contacts with the leadership of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam has been supported actively by the Vietnamese comrades, who have turned to the CPSU CC with an invitation to send a Soviet delegation to the DRV. By accepting this invitation, the CPSU CC proceeded from the necessity to support the Vietnamese people in their struggle against the increasing American aggression.

[...]

The results of the negotiations by the Soviet delegation with leading personalities of the DRV and the DPRK have

been published in joint declarations.¹ The CPSU CC considers it necessary to inform the fraternal parties additionally about the talks with the Vietnamese and Korean leaders as well as with the leaders of the CCP in Beijing.

First. During the stay in Hanoi, an exchange of opinions with the Vietnamese leaders on the situation in Vietnam and possible measures with regard to aid and support of the DRV connected to the danger of an American armed aggression occurred: on relations between the USSR and the DRV as well as between the CPSU and the VWP; on the unity and unanimity of the communist world movement, including also questions about the meeting of the fraternal parties on 1 March of the current year.²

In the talks with the Soviet delegation, the Vietnamese leaders raised their concerns in connection with the intensification of the aggressive actions of American imperialism against the DRV, the broadening of the war in South Vietnam, and stressed the great significance of aid and moral-political support by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries to the successful completion of the struggle of the Vietnamese people for freedom, independence, and reunification of the country.

It was explained to the Vietnamese comrades that the Soviet Union is ready to supply additional aid for the increase of Vietnamese defense readiness by providing some modern means of anti-aircraft defense and of coastal defense.

The Soviet delegation and the Vietnamese leaders had an exchange of opinion on the possibility of a joint statement, in which the violations of the Geneva agreements of 1954 by the Americans would be condemned, by the USSR, China, the DRV, and other socialist countries as well as some Asian countries, such as Indonesia, Cambodia, and Burma. The leaders of the DRV explained that they probably would provide a corresponding draft [statement] soon.

The leaders of the VWP stressed that they see many new elements in how the CPSU CC and the Soviet government approach foreign and domestic questions after the October Plenum, and explained that this brought the VWP closer to the CPSU. The proposals for an improvement of relations between the CPSU and the VWP were accepted by them with understanding. They explained that the measures of the CPSU CC and the Soviet Union with regard to the assault of the American air force on townships in North Vietnam have been acknowledged with satisfaction by the whole Vietnamese people.

In the talks with the Vietnamese leaders, questions on the Communist world movement and on the struggle for a solution of the existing differences in opinion were touched. The leaders of the VWP valued the attempts the CPSU CC had taken after the October Plenum in the interest of the consolidation of the unity of the international communist movement. After the new character of the meeting of the fraternal parties on 1 March 1965 had been explained to them, the Vietnamese comrades explained that they, as before, were of the opinion that the restoration and consolidation of unity of the communist movement depended especially on whether the CPSU and the CCP could find an agreement. They remarked that, on the

whole, they had nothing against the meeting on 1 March, but for understandable reasons could not participate.

The talks with the Vietnamese leaders have shown that certain ideological differences in opinion with the leadership of the DRV still continue to exist, and that, obviously, time is required for their resolution. This is also the opinion of the Vietnamese comrades themselves. At the same time they stressed that, following the decision of the October Plenum, they see real avenues for the solution of these differences in opinion.

According to the instructions of the CPSU CC, the Soviet delegation reassured the Vietnamese leaders that the Soviet Union in the future will supply active aid to the Vietnamese people for its struggle against American aggression and [that it will] increase economic cooperation between the USSR and the DRV. An agreement was reached to continue contacts between the two countries and parties. The Vietnamese leaders accepted our invitation to send a governmental delegation to the USSR for a return visit.

Second. [...]

Third. During the trip to the DRV and the DPRK, the Soviet Union had two stopovers in Beijing, which it used to continue contacts with the leaders of the PRC and the CCP. Our delegation had been instructed by the CPSU CC to exchange opinions with the Chinese comrades on the normalization of Sino-Soviet relations and on the resolution of the differences between the CPSU and the CCP. It was planned, in case the situation was suitable, to deal with concrete questions of our bilateral relations, the coordination of cooperation in the international arena, as well as individual problems of the communist movement: the termination of open polemics, factionalism, measures with regard to the preparation of the international meeting of fraternal parties.

During the stay of the delegation in Beijing it was possible to speak with the Chinese comrades on a series of important questions. Among others, an exchange of opinion on the coordination of aid efforts for the Vietnamese people occurred. On the way to Hanoi, our delegation informed the Chinese leaders about the aims of its visit to the DRV and on the return trip from there on the events of the trip and on the measures taken by the Soviet Union with regard to the increase of aid to the Vietnamese people in its struggle against American aggression. A common point of view arose in this question. Cde. Zhou Enlai declared that in this question "the positions of the CCP and the CPSU are very close, respectively are congruent." But the Chinese side did not support the proposal of a joint posture by the USSR, the PRC, and the DRV with a statement unmasking the violation of the Geneva agreements by the United States of America, and justified its refusal with the differences in opinion in the question of the realization of the consultative meeting by representatives of the fraternal parties on 1 March.

The Chinese leaders spoke positively about the trip of the delegation of the Soviet Union to the DRV and about our aid to Vietnam. But they did not inform us on their steps and mea-

asures to aid concretely the Vietnamese people. Comrade Mao Zedong remarked: "The people of South Vietnam are fighting well even without us. Consequently they will drive away the Americans by themselves." On the occasion of the American bombing of North Vietnam, Cde. Mao said: "These are the stupidities of the Americans. Their bombardments caused only a small number of victims," there is "nothing terrible that a number of people was killed." The Soviet delegation did not agree with this position and expressed the opinion that China indeed could provide Vietnam with essential aid. Both sides agreed that the most recent provocations of the US in Indochina are a serious threat to peace and that the Soviet Union and China should exchange information on the question of aid to Vietnam. In the course of the talks, the Chinese leaders stressed firmly that they intend to carry out an unfriendly struggle against the ideological positions of the Marxist-Leninist parties. They confirmed that they, in their policies, still proceed from the position that tensions in the world are increasing and that world war is inevitable. "If we manage to secure peace for 10 to 15 years," Cde. Mao Zedong explained, "this would be favorable. We are against a world war, but we are not the general staff of the imperialists." He stressed that "it is necessary to create a revolutionary, military situation."³

1. Kosygin's delegation was in Beijing on 5-6 February, in Hanoi on 6-10 February, in Beijing on 10-11 February, and in Pyeongyang on 11-14 February.

2. The meeting of the so-called Editorial Board of 26 communist parties, which like in 1960 was supposed to prepare a meeting of all communist parties of the world, was called by Khrushchev in the summer for 15 December 1964, to discuss the ideological problems within the international communist movement. For years, the CCP had opposed its convention since Beijing feared it would be used to censure the PRC. After Khrushchev's fall from power in October of 1964, the new Soviet leadership decided to postpone it to 1 March 1965. It was attended only by a third of the Editorial Board members.

3. A Polish translation of the Mao-Kosygin meeting on 11 February 1965 is in *Archiwum Akt Nowych* [Archive of Modern Records; AAN], Warsaw, Poland, KC PZPR, XI A/10, 514-533, and was published in an English translation at the CWIHP/GWCW conference "New Central and Eastern European Evidence on the Cold War in Asia" (Budapest, 30 October - 2 November 2003). A copy of the document is available in the National Security Archive's RADD/READD Collection.



DOCUMENT No. 6

Oral Statement of the PRC Government, Transmitted by PRC Vice Foreign Minister Liu Xiao to the Chargé d'Affaires of the USSR in the PRC, Cde. F. V. Mochulskii, on 27 February 1965

[Source: *Arkhiv Veshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation; AVP RF), Moscow, Russia, fond 0100, opis 58, delo 1, papka 516, 1-2. Translated from Russian by Lorenz Lüthi.*]

On 16 February [Soviet] Ambassador [to China Stepan] Chervonenko, in the name of the Soviet government, asked for the opinion of the government of our country with regard to the establishment of a new international conference on Indochina. I have been entrusted to give the following reply:

The Chinese government consistently came forward for convening a conference on Indochina, the safeguarding of the Geneva agreements of 1954 and 1962 and the peaceful solution of the question of Indochina. However, at the current time, the US, on the one hand, increases its armed aggression against South Vietnam, bombs the Democratic Republic of Vietnam without pause, makes noises about the broadening of the war, and makes the appearance that it does not want to carry out peaceful negotiations; but, on the other hand, by various means they develop the idea on the possibility of cessation of fire and peaceful negotiations, attempting to win time for a respite. The people of the southern and northern parts of Vietnam, filled with high fighting spirit, carry out a heroic struggle against the American imperialists, and win one new victory after the other. It is evident that the proposal, promoted by your side, on convening an international conference would mean a manifestation of weakness in front of American imperialism in these circumstances, and would help it to escape the difficult situation. This can only strengthen the aggressive revelry of the US and damage the fighting spirit of the Vietnamese people in its struggle against American imperialism, which would be highly unfavorable for the struggle of the Vietnamese people. Therefore the proposal of the Soviet government on convening a new international conference on Indochina is not sensible in the current situation. The Chinese government cannot agree.

To compel American imperialism to adhere strictly to the Geneva agreements and to withdraw all its armed forces from the region, so that the people of all countries of Indochina can solve their problems by themselves—this is, according to the Chinese government, the only correct path of solving the question of Indochina. The Soviet government also agreed [to that in 1954 and 1962]. Currently conditions for negotiations are not yet ripe. The US continues to make noises about the broadening of war, and asks that the Vietcong must cease infiltration and aggression against South Vietnam, and [that] only then it will be possible to carry out peaceful negotiations. Why do you so hastily raise the proposal on convening a new international conference under such circumstances? In the case that all inter-

ested countries, including the US, will stand for convening an international conference on Indochina, we think that then it will be necessary with regard to our general position to raise the following: first, all armed forces of the US and of its satellites must cease their aggression and intervention, and must completely withdraw from this region; second, it is necessary, that on the international conference South Vietnam is represented by the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, and not by the American puppets—the South Vietnamese authorities. It is necessary to insist on these two points to the end and not go for a compromise, which [only] would lower [our] own demands.

Convening a new international conference by itself is a question of great importance, and the proposal for a convention of such a conference can be raised only after achievement of unity by way of consultation between the interested countries. It is said that the Soviet government already has taken steps in favor of convening such a conference; what concerns us, we do not know, how much these talks conform to reality.



DOCUMENT No. 7

Note by the GDR Embassy in Hanoi on a Conversation with Ambassadors of the Other Socialist States in the Soviet Embassy on 2 April 1965, 25 April 1965

[Source: *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Bestand: Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten (Political Archive of the Office for Foreign Affairs, Files: Ministry for Foreign Affairs; PAAA-MfAA), Berlin, Germany, VS-Hauptstelle, Microfiche G-A 331, 77-79. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.*]

The latest developments in Southeast Asia were deliberated in the conversation, during which Comrade [Ilya] Shcherbakov reported on some talks with leading Vietnamese comrades. He was informed by Comrade Pham Van Dong that the CC would convene, as well as the minister council and the national assembly. In that conversation he said that the situation will intensify further if the US increases its attacks, [and] that the DRV has to react. Hence developments could spin out of control. He [Pham] had already told Kosygin [in February] that the DRV has no interest in expanding the war. The struggle is carried out by the NLF, but the DRV has to support its fellow citizens in the South. In its statement, the NLF has declared its right on the struggle against the US and its right to ask for aid in other countries and to ask for volunteers.¹ The government of the DRV has not replied to this appeal. Instead, the CC of the Fatherland Front² of the DRV has promised its support in a statement.

It was asserted in the talk that the new aspect of the situation rests in the fact that the US increases its war material and troops in the south, and intensifies the attack. Apart from the amplification of bombing attacks, it increasingly also includes

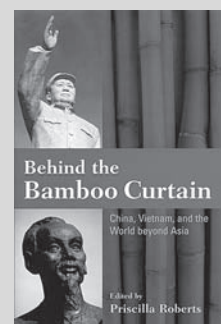
Behind the Bamboo Curtain: China, Vietnam, and the Cold War

edited by Priscilla Roberts

Cold War International History Book Series (James G. Hershberg, Editor)

Copublished by Stanford University Press and Wilson Center Press

Based on new archival research in many countries, this volume broadens the context of the US intervention in Vietnam. Its primary focus is on relations between China and Vietnam in the mid-twentieth century; but the book also deals with China's relations with Cambodia, US dealings with both China and Vietnam, French attitudes toward Vietnam and China, and Soviet views of Vietnam and China. Contributors from seven countries range from senior scholars and officials with decades of experience to young academics just finishing their dissertations. The general impact of this work is to internationalize the history of the Vietnam War, going well beyond the long-standing focus on the role of the United States.



its own troops in battle action. One can say that the US participates in equal parts in the operations of the South Vietnamese government troops. New is also the statement of the NLF and its right to accept aid from all sides. At the moment, the Vietnamese comrades state that it is not yet necessary, for example, for volunteers from other countries to join in. But it is necessary that the struggle is coordinated. Vietnam is a homogenous country and the Vietnamese nation is a homogenous nation, that's why the Vietnamese have the right to carry out this war jointly and to help each other. This attitude has not been that openly stressed by the Vietnamese in the past. Cde. Shcherbakov remarked that Cde. Giap has explained in a talk that "now the raids in the South have to be increased, regardless if the US is going to increase its attacks on the DRV." Since neither the NLF nor the DRV at the moment is ready [to carry out] major actions, [because], for example, the deliveries from the Soviet Union have not yet arrived, all measures now must be decided here. The enlarged Politburo meeting, which will deal with the new situation and the tasks for the party that will derive [from it], serves this purpose. The mobilization of youth and the declaration of a state of war will be debated. The national assembly will also take the necessary decisions. The 2nd Five-Year Plan will be discussed in this context as well. On the surface, it is supposed to be kept as it is, but for the first three years it will be altered into a Three-Year Plan for defense. All means, which have been set aside for the Five-Year Plan, will be subordinated to the interests of defense. Defense is now first priority. Cde. Shcherbakov added that the Vietnamese comrades will probably approach the fraternal parties in the near future with a request for material aid. Furthermore a decision is being prepared [requiring] all South Vietnamese living in the DRV to go to the South.

The question of negotiations was estimated in the talks as follows: There are signs in the US that they attempt to establish contacts for future negotiations. Such tendencies could be seen in the speeches of [US President Lyndon] Johnson, [US Defense Secretary Robert] McNamara, and [US Secretary of State Dean] Rusk. If the Vietnamese reject contacts, one has to reckon with a broader bombing of the DRV. With each day, one can expect the bombing of Hanoi. In that respect, the bombing

of military targets and transportation routes will stand in the foreground, but next industrial centers in the North could be attacked as well. The near future will determine if it is possible to establish contacts.

Thus the following situation is unfolding:

The DRV has the right to defend its motherland. The Americans see that the DRV has not yet received aid. The attacks thus unfold without impunity. The situation is growing more and more complex, and if the Vietnamese lose their head, as Comrade Shcherbakov said, "it will be difficult for us to help." If the Vietnamese make decisions, they should inform the Soviet comrades and they should consult with them more often, so that we all know what we should do. One should expect that they speak openly, and that they don't hide their positions. Even Pham Van Dong has said only general things on the CC session and provides no concrete information. He told Pham Van Dong that the Vietnamese comrades should inform us regularly and comprehensively, so that we know which measures could be taken on our side. "They probably say more to the Chinese, who slander us [saying] that the Soviet Union pursues only its own interests with weapons deliveries, and [that the Soviet Union] wants to draw the PR China into the war." The Chinese comrades supposedly said that if they allowed the transport of supplies through the PR China, the US had a reason to attack China. When Cde. Shcherbakov told this to Pham Van Dong, the latter was completely dispirited and only shook his head. Cde. Shcherbakov told him that the Vietnamese people suffer the most from these differences in opinion. The Vietnamese had asked for weapons and the Soviet Union had been ready to help, while the Chinese refused to transport them through Chinese territory with the slander that the Soviet Union wants to subjugate the Chinese people. On the other side they claim that the Soviet Union is making a pact with the US. If it comes to a joint statement on support [for Vietnam] with the Chinese, one could talk about a new [level of cooperative] quality. Pham Van Dong replied that one had to convince the Chinese. One has to have patience. Unfortunately, the Soviet Union is far away. "What shall we do?"

Pham Van Dong did not state [that he was] against negotiations, but one needs to have guarantees that the US disappears

from Vietnam. Since this is not possible, one cannot reckon with peace in the current moment. The situation of the US is difficult, and if the Vietnamese continue to fight, it will be more difficult for the US.

1. NLF statement made on 22 March 1965. Text can be found in: *Peking Review* 14, 2 April 1965, 15-20.

2. Umbrella organization uniting all pro-government mass organizations.



DOCUMENT No. 8

Note by the GDR Embassy in Hanoi on a Joint Conversation with the Ambassadors from other Socialist Countries in the Hungarian Embassy on 4 May 1965, 12 May 1965

[Source: PAAA-MfAA, VS-Hauptstelle, Microfiche G-A 319, 1-5. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.]

Present: the ambassadors of the GDR, USSR, HPR [Hungary], MPR [Mongolia], PRP [Poland], PRB [Bulgaria]

Comrade [Ilya] Shcherbakov proposed to inform the ambassadors about the contents of the talks of the party delegation of the VWP with the Soviet comrades in Moscow.¹ He said the following:

After the comrades of the CPSU CC proposed some time ago in a letter to the VWP² to declare the position of the parties with regard to the Vietnam question with a trilateral declaration of the Vietnamese, Soviet, and Chinese comrades, because they [the Soviets] proceeded from the assumption that it was unlikely that all parties would agree to such a general statement in short time; the leadership of the VWP has declared its readiness for a general as well as for a trilateral meeting and statement. Le Duan especially advocated this. He expressed the opinion that one had to persuade and win over the Chinese first. At the moment, they are against multilateral, even bilateral declarations.³ In the expectation that the Chinese comrades would express readiness to [sign] a bilateral declaration with the Vietnamese on the Vietnam problem, it was decided at the departure to Beijing of comrades Le Duan, Vo Nguyen Giap, and Nguyen Duy Trinh that space should be left in the central organ *Nhan Dan* for the bilateral declaration. No declaration was agreed upon [in Beijing]. Only then the Vietnamese comrades expressed readiness to fly a party and government delegation to Moscow, after the Soviet embassy in Beijing had been informed about this decision. In Moscow, agreements were reached, which led to [the publication of] a joint [Soviet-Vietnamese] declaration.

In these talks, the Soviet comrades emphasized the coordination of help from all socialist countries. They proceeded from the idea that the Chinese comrades have to be included as well. The Vietnamese comrades, who reported on the situ-

ation in Vietnam, explained that they were determined to lead the struggle to its victorious end with both military and political means. They hinted that they were ready for talks with the US, if the US imperialists terminated the bombing of the DRV. They were even ready for talks on South Vietnam, if the NLF would be included into the talks. The Soviet comrades supported this position, because they recognized that the Vietnamese comrades now took up a more realistic position regarding the solution of the Vietnam question.

In the talks following this report we assessed that Johnson's declaration⁴ recently has revealed a certain retreat. Some circles in the US recognize that the continuation of the current policy of aggression can lead to serious consequences. They recognize that they don't have the unrestricted support of their allies, and that this policy meets greater and greater opposition even among those young national states that have followed the US in the past. The Vietnamese comrades see that as well. They don't condemn those states, which have signed the declaration of the 17 non-aligned countries.⁵ Apparently they first awaited the [negative] position of the Chinese comrades, and now have to acknowledge that many leaders of these states feel disparaged because of the [negative] position of the DRV on this declaration, and express that they don't know if one can help the DRV [at all]. This situation provides the Vietnamese with food for thought.

Concerning the aid of the SU to the DRV, according to Comrade Shcherbakov's opinion it is extraordinarily comprehensive. The outfitting of the Vietnamese army costs many millions of rubles. This aid is not affected by the 100 million rubles of aid which [Politburo member] Comrade Le Thanh Nghi has requested lately. Now it is important that the military cadres learn to operate the modern weapons. In recent times, the number of Soviet military specialists has increased significantly. Furthermore, numerous [Vietnamese] military cadres traveled to the SU. But the measures taken will have no effect until fall. Due to the attitude of the Chinese and shortcomings, for which the Vietnamese are responsible, this aid will affect [the situation only] with delay. The Vietnamese relied too much on Chinese aid, but eventually had to recognize that they could not rely on their neighbor. Now the Chinese exploit this situation and demand millions of rubles for the transit.

This development led the Vietnamese to estimate the situation in more realistic terms and to start to draw conclusions from the differences in opinion. Our [differences] with the Vietnamese started to shrink, so it is possible that things will get back to normal with the Vietnamese. But the propaganda apparatus is still completely in control of the pro-Chinese forces, which intensify their activities and at the moment spread rumors that the Soviet Union is delivering out-dated weapons. When the central organ *Nhan Dan* did not report adequately about the Soviet-Vietnamese negotiations, Comrade Pham Van Dong had to remind and even accuse the chief editor that he was implementing his own line, which contradicted the line of the party leadership. One also has to recognize that the Chinese render more pressure. Now, they suddenly want to increase

their aid. They promise, among other things, food, consumer goods, chemical fertilizer, and electrical appliances.

In further talks it was determined that there are different reasons for our disagreements with the Chinese and with the Vietnamese. Now it is relevant to analyze these reasons. Le Duan told Comrade Kosygin that the Vietnamese comrades have waited for a long time for a high-ranking Soviet delegation. On my remark that [Soviet Presidium Chairman] Comrade Mikoyan had visited the DRV, Comrade Shcherbakov replied that at that time Mikoyan had not yet as high a function as he has now. He also hinted that Comrade Khrushchev did not pay the necessary attention to developments in Vietnam. Comrade Le Duan did not hide his dissatisfaction with the Chinese leaders in the talks. There are three questions, where he does not understand the position of the Chinese.

1st, why the Chinese reject so firmly a joint declaration of support for the struggle in Vietnam.

2nd, why they estimate the role of the national liberation movement higher than the role of the socialist camp.

3rd, why the comrades in Beijing and Tirana believe they are the only true Marxists.

In the further discussion we talked about the existing differences between the Chinese and Vietnamese opinions which should be examined even further. The following differences in opinion were determined:

The Vietnamese are against a continuation of polemics [against the Soviet Union],

they are for a joint declaration,

they are for meetings on the highest level,

they affirm the construction of communism in the USSR,

they are not against contacts between the SU and the US on a governmental level, but [insist that] one has to be careful,

they are not against contacts between the SU and Yugoslavia, but what concerns relations between the communist parties and the LCY [League of Yugoslav Communists], a conference like in 1957/1960 must decide [this question].

Comrade Shcherbakov remarked that Comrade Pham Van Dong mentioned that the communists, in the interest of the unity of the communist world movement, must struggle bravely and decisively for the decisions of the two conferences in 1957 and 1960. One could acknowledge that the Vietnamese comrades on the basis of their complicated situation and in connection with the talks with representatives of the fraternal parties start to rethink their position. But one has to push them a little bit without hurrying them too much.

About the changes in the government [of the DRV] it was assessed that Pham Van Dong's central position was strengthened with the aim to coordinate better the organization of the struggle. Various circles had expected that [former DRV foreign minister] Comrade Ung Van Khiem would be moving into the foreground and [DRV Vice Premier] Truong Chinh would get another function. That this was not the case confirms that the

pro-Chinese group still has strong positions. Comrade Truong Chinh at the moment seems to be the most pronounced representative of the Chinese line in the VWP. At the end of the 1950s, he walked down that path. The incorrect Chinese ideas in agriculture led to sectarian errors in the implementation of ground reform in Vietnam. At that time, more than a hundred rural specialists assisted him, but they disappeared from Vietnam with the replacement of Comrade Truong Chinh as party secretary.

The appointment of Comrade [DRV Foreign Minister] Nguyen Duy Trinh as foreign minister leads to speculations that Comrade Pham Van Dong wants to exercise more influence on foreign policy. After 1954, when Comrade Pham Van Dong served as foreign minister, Nguyen Duy Trinh as minister-at-large was for a long time the closest assistant to Comrade Pham Van Dong.

1. A Vietnamese delegation consisting of Le Duan, Vo Nguyen Giap, and Nguyen Duy Trinh was in Beijing on 8-10 April, in Moscow on 10-17 April, and in Beijing on 18-23 April.

2. Refers to identical letters written by the CPSU CC to the CCP CC and the VWP CC on 3 April 1965, see: *SAPMO-BArch*, DY 30/3610, 1-4, and *AVP RF*, fond 100, opis 52, delo 13, papka 220, 18-19, respectively.

3. Refers to the Chinese reply letter of 11 April 1965, see: *SAPMO-BArch*, DY 30/3610, 5-8.

4. Probably refers to Johnson's speech in Baltimore (7 April) when the President proposed negotiations without conditions while simultaneously pledging to defend the independence of South Vietnam.

5. 17 non-aligned countries, mostly from Africa, met in Belgrade from 14 March to 1 April 1965, demanding the start of immediate and unconditional negotiations to end the Vietnam War.



DOCUMENT No. 9

Note by the GDR Embassy in Hanoi on a Conversation of Comrade Jarck with the Attache of the CSSR Embassy, Comrade Freybort, on 2 June 1965, from 10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., in the Embassy of the GDR, 3 June 1965 [Excerpts]

[Source: PAAA-MfAA, Abteilung Sowjetunion, Microfiche G-A 331, 83-84. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.]

The conversation happened on our request.

[...]

Afterwards we talked about the current situation in the DRV. Comrade Freybort made the following comments:

1. During the talks, which Comrade Le Duan had in Beijing following his visit to Moscow [18-23 April], he was accused by the Chinese side that he has joined hands with modern revisionism too much.

Apparently Le Duan replied that the CCP had even entered into a pact with Jiang Jieshi [Chiang Kai-shek] against the Japanese,¹ and that he did not understand why the DRV cannot

expand and strengthen its relations to a socialist country.

2. During the same talks, Le Duan proposed to coordinate aid supplies from the USSR and the PRC in trilateral negotiations. Such negotiations could lead to the joint coordination among all socialist countries. The Chinese side rejected the proposal with the justification that the ideological differences in opinion with the CPSU are so big that it is not possible to sit at the [same] table.

3. Following Le Duan's return to Hanoi it was attempted to convene trilateral talks between the DRV, the USSR, and the PRC on the coordination of aid measures once more. For that purpose, Ho Chi Minh apparently had been in Beijing and had talked with Liu Shaoqi and other old revolutionaries with whom he had personal relations.² Even these talks did not lead to an agreement on the coordination of aid measures.

4. The PRC apparently increased its aid offers to the DRV significantly. Apart from military aspects, the PRC supposedly offered to the DRV:

- bigger aid supplies in the sphere of transport, i.e. railroad tracks, sleepers, track workers, repair corps, etc.
- an increase of deliveries of artificial fertilizer
- bigger supplies of food, etc.

5. At the moment, the railroad from the Chinese border to Kep (halfway on the way to Hanoi) is being reconstructed, so that in the future it will have three rails, that means, it will be useable for Chinese-gauge as well as for Vietnamese-gauge railroad cars.³

The highways from Hanoi to the Chinese border via Lao Cai and Lang Son are supposed to be renewed and widened.

6. 100 to 130 Korean specialists, who wear the uniform of the DRV air force, allegedly have been living in the hotel for foreign specialists "Kim Lien" in Hanoi for some time. It is assumed that they are ground personnel and technicians.

1. This refers to the so-called 2nd United Front of 1937 between the Nationalist Government of the Republic of China and the Chinese communists in the anti-Japanese War.

2. Ho Chi Minh was in Beijing on 16 and 17 May 1965. For excerpts of these conversations, see Westad, et al., eds., "77 Conversations," p. 86-87.

3. China uses the a rail gauge of 1435 millimeters, while Vietnam uses a 1000 millimeter standard.



DOCUMENT No. 10

Oral Statement by the Head of the Department for the USSR and for the Countries of Eastern Europe of MFA PRC, Yu Zhan, Transmitted to the Embassy on 8 June 1965

[Source: AVPRF, fond 0100, opis 58, delo 1, papka 516, 3-8. Translated from Russian by Lorenz Lüthi.]

On 12 May, the head of the Far Eastern Department of the Soviet MFA Sudarikov made to the PRC ambassador in the USSR Pan Zili a statement with regard to the talks, which had occurred from 13-21 April between the leaders of China and the former Soviet ambassador in the PRC.¹ This statement contains slanders against the CCP CC, the PRC government, and the leaders of China. We categorically reject this statement and give the following reply:

1. We always stood and [still] stand for the united struggle of the PRC, the Soviet Union, and the countries of the socialist camp against the enemy—American imperialism. In February of this year, when Kosygin arrived in Beijing, we again raised the hope that the Soviet Union adopted a position united with Vietnam and China in the struggle against American aggressions, [and] would not seek an exit for the US and bargain with them on the Vietnamese question. Comrade Kosygin stated then that he completely agreed with our opinion. However, two days after Cde. Kosygin had returned to Moscow, the Soviet side, breaking its own words, raised to China and Vietnam the proposal of convening an international conference for [the purpose of] negotiations with the US. Moreover, without having heard the Vietnamese reply or waiting for a Chinese reply, it started with activities in favor of carrying out peaceful negotiations behind the back of the PRC and the DRV. On 22 February your ambassador in France had a talk with the President of France on the question of convening an international conference for the resolution of the Vietnamese question. Your ambassador in France talked about this publicly with journalists, [and] this was transmitted in the communications of TASS and was supported in talks with high officials of France with representatives of the press.² These all are facts, which you cannot deny.

From that it is clear that the absence of coordination of actions by the Soviet Union with the actions of China and Vietnam on the Vietnamese question is explained solely by [the fact] that the Soviet side stubbornly insists on its mistaken policy of Soviet-American cooperation for the solution of international problems, and tries to bargain with the US on the Vietnam question. If you do not give up this policy, neither a trilateral conference of China, the USSR, and Vietnam, nor any other conference will occur to coordinate your actions with ours.

2. We repeatedly stated that we greet the allotment of your aid to Vietnam in conformity with its needs and are ready to render you the greatest possible assistance. Our position is consistent and unchanged. However, at the same time you carry out activities in favor of peaceful negotiations you informed us about your plan to send through the territory of the PRC 4,000 combatants for stationing in Vietnam without agreement by the Vietnamese comrades, and to establish a military base for Soviet military forces in the Chinese city of Kunming which could not be used for covering all of Vietnam's air space at all. Besides, you intentionally told the West about your so-called plan to render aid to Vietnam. Moreover, violating the promises made by yourself to preserve secrecy and referring on the

apparent request from the side of Vietnam, you requested from us to agree to the passage through Chinese territory of 45 airplanes for the delivery to Vietnam of an insignificant quantity of out-dated and commonly used armaments. It is completely clear that the aim of these and similar actions of yours is not to render real aid to Vietnam in its struggle against American imperialism, but to put China and Vietnam under your control and acquire for yourself capital for bargaining with the US. This wholly and completely goes against the interest of the struggle of the Vietnamese people resisting against American aggression and rescuing the motherland. The Vietnamese comrades do not agree with your actions. It is completely clear that we reject these actions. You spread, in every way, the rumor that China put up obstacles to the transport of Soviet arms, designed for Vietnam in the form of aid, through Chinese territory. Speaking plainly, this cannot but hurt us greatly, and this only unmasks your true nature—the nature of people who insist on their mistakes and intentionally create new discord between China and the Soviet Union.

3. [...]

4. The Chinese leaders, receiving the former ambassador of the USSR to the PRC, who made a farewell visit to them, organized a dinner in honor of his departure and did not think at all of carrying out with him disputes on questions of discord between the Chinese and the Soviet side. Only after he [the Soviet ambassador] provoked the quarrel, the Chinese leaders were forced to give the necessary answer. As a response, we criticized you for the fact that you break your word, carry out a mistaken foreign policy, and create new difficulties in Sino-Soviet relations. All these questions concern the interests of the people of China and the Soviet Union, the interests of the people of the whole world, and are not the internal affairs of one country—the Soviet Union. We have the complete right to criticize you on these questions, and our criticism is correct. We never intervene in domestic affairs of other countries and do not teach others, which you very much love to do. But you cannot expect that we will keep quiet with regard to your actions, which go against the interests of the socialist countries and the interests of the revolutionary people of various countries.

We sincerely hope that you, with your sincerity, consider our opinion in the interests of overcoming the split, of the consolidation of unity, and of carrying out our joint struggle against imperialism.

1. "Record of Conversation by the Ambassador of the USSR S.V. Chervonenko with the Premier of the State Council of the PRC Zhou Enlai," 13 April 1965, AVPRF, fond 0100, opis 58, delo 5, papka 516, 101-127. "Record of Conversation with the Chairman of the People's Republic of China, the Vice Chairman of the CCP CC Liu Shaoqi, acting Premier of the State Council of the PRC, General Secretary of the CCP CC Deng Xiaoping," 21 April 1965, AVPRF, fond 0100, opis 58, delo 5, papka 516, 133-152.

2. In a meeting, Soviet ambassador to France, Sergei Vinogradov, was instructed to tell President Charles de Gaulle that the Soviet Union would support the DRV in all its policies. Moscow thereby

intended to warn Washington through Paris of a further war escalation. Subsequently, as *New York Times* articles from the period reveal, the media misrepresented the talks as a Soviet attempt at mediation. No positive evidence that TASS carried such articles could be found. For instructions of Andrei A. Gromyko, minister of foreign affairs of the USSR, to Vinogradov, see: "CPSU CC," 17 February 1965, AVP RF, fond 079, opis 20, delo 12, papka 46, 12-17. For a summary of the talks, see: "Oral Communication to the Ambassador of the DRV in Moscow (draft)," [February 1965], AVPRF, fond 079, opis 20, delo 12, papka 46, 24-25. For the faulty press reports, see: *NYT*, 24 February 1965, 1, 3; 25 February 1965, 2; 26 February 1965, 2, 4.



DOCUMENT No. 11

Unofficial Translation of the Letter of the CPSU CC to the SED CC [undated]¹

[Source: SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/3667, 179-186. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.]

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet government in recent times have undertaken a series of steps [aimed] at the intensification of aid to the Vietnamese people for the struggle against the imperialist aggressors of the US. We deem it necessary to inform you about them.

The Soviet Union has provided great economic and military aid to Vietnam already in the past. From 1955 to 1964 the Soviet Union has provided economic aid of 317 million rubles altogether, including 95.4 million rubles at no cost and the rest as long-term credits under preferential conditions. Approximately 70% of the Soviet aid was used for the development of principal industrial branches in the DRV—energy, coal mining, chemical plants, machine construction, etc. The plants constructed with aid of the Soviet Union play an important role in the creation of the material-technological basis of socialism in the DRV. These plants have produced, relative to the overall industrial production of the DRV: 92.6% of black coal, 80% of metal-utilizing machines, 100% of tin, apatite, and super phosphate. The capacity of the power plants put in service through the aid of the Soviet Union consists of 40% of all power plants in the DRV. During the last 10 years, the Soviet Union has sent to Vietnam over 2 thousand specialists in several economic fields. 3 thousand Vietnamese students, doctoral candidates and young scientists studied at Soviet universities and institutes in 1963-1964.² During a stay of the Soviet governmental delegation headed by Comrade Kosygin in February in the DRV, an agreement on technical aid by the Soviet Union for the enlargement of existing power plants, of coal pits, for the construction of pumping stations, of a diesel engine factory, of state farms, and of other industrial and agricultural objects was signed. The Soviet Union has forgiven the interest on the loans given to Vietnam, and has declared

its readiness to postpone the deadlines for repayment of the DRV's main debt on Soviet loans.

The Soviet Union has also supplied significant aid to the DRV to strengthen its defense readiness. From 1953 to 1964, weapons and military equipment worth 200 million rubles were delivered at no cost. Aircraft, helicopters, small arms, anti-aircraft guns, field weapons, ammunition, tanks, armored personnel carriers, small anti-submarine vessels, torpedo boats, communication equipment, engineering and other military equipment has been delivered. The USSR provides aid at no cost for the construction of many military schools in the DRV, and for the training of officers as well as of maintenance personnel for the equipment delivered.

In the face of the increasing US aggression against the DRV, the CPSU CC and the Soviet government have undertaken measures to enlarge the overall aid, especially the military aid to the DRV to strengthen its defense readiness.

Following the incident in the Gulf of Tonkin (August 1964), the government of the DRV has turned to the Soviet Union with the request to supply additional military aid for the strengthening of the battle equipment of the Vietnamese People's Army. The Soviet Union has discussed these requests and supplied the DRV with military aid worth 32 million rubles (artillery and small weapons) in October 1964.

In December 1964, the decision was taken to supply the DRV with additional aid at no cost in the form of SA-75 anti-aircraft missiles. Soviet military specialists were sent to the DRV to assemble these weapons and to train the Vietnamese personnel.

With the aim of aiding the government of the DRV in the defense against American aerial strikes, the CPSU CC has undertaken a series of measures. Following a request of the Vietnamese comrades, the proposal was put forward to them to cover the region of Hanoi and Haiphong with Soviet troops against aerial attacks. For that reason the Soviet government intended to send an anti-aircraft brigade and a squadron of interceptors of the type MiG-21. Around four thousand men of the Soviet armed forces were scheduled to come to the DRV for the handling of these modern aerial defense systems.

In the context of this aid to the DRV, the Soviet government turned to the government of the PRC on 25 February 1965, with the request to permit transports of goods and personnel through the territory of the PRC as well as to organize a speedy transit to the Vietnamese border.

Also, the request was made to provide an aerial corridor for the transport by airplane of the MiG-21 PF interceptor and other weapons, as well as [to provide] one or two airports near the Sino-Vietnamese border, in order to assemble the MiG-21 PF there and possibly to station Soviet fighter airplanes. Moreover the request was made to take up measures to keep strict secrecy, so that these deliveries would not be discovered by the Americans.

Replying to the request of Comrade Pham Van Dong to supply urgently anti-aircraft guns by air, the Soviet government asked the PRC government on 27 February to allow the over-

flight across the territory of the PRC of 45 [Antonov] AN-12 aircraft in order to transport the cargo.

The Chinese side has refused to implement these measures, which have been undertaken by the Soviet Union with the aim of [rendering] speedy and effective aid to the DRV for the struggle against aggression. We received a reply note from the PRC MFA, which consisted of a brusque refusal of the Soviet proposal. In order to justify somehow their position, the Chinese comrade claimed that the Soviet Union, through their aid deliveries to the DRV and the proposal to transport some of the equipment by air across China, tried to establish "Soviet control over the territory of China and Vietnam." Since the Chinese authorities have refused to agree to the transport of weapons via air, the military goods destined for the DRV had to be transported by rail, which, given the distance between the USSR and Vietnam, took a lot of time. The Vietnamese people could have certainly been spared superfluous sacrifices, if the Soviet military equipment had arrived more quickly in the DRV.

The Politburo of the VWP CC and the DRV government welcomed the decision of the CPSU CC and the Soviet government to deliver additional air planes, tanks, anti-aircraft guns and machine guns, field guns, naval vessels, radio transmitters, tractors and other military equipment. At the same time, the Vietnamese leadership requested that [we] should send a small number of instructors, who could teach the use of Soviet military equipment to Vietnamese personnel on the spot within a certain time period (3 to 6 months), as well as quantitatively small crews instead of complete Soviet crews for the handling of anti-aircraft missiles.

With regard to the dispatch of a squadron of MiG-21 PF to the DRV, the Vietnamese comrades expressed that it would be better if these air planes would be handed over to the Vietnamese side. The DRV intends to have pilots of the Vietnamese People's Army, who [already] fly the MiG-17, be trained in the USSR. Afterwards they could return together with the air planes. The Soviet Union has approved the request of the Vietnamese comrades.

Following the decision of the CPSU CC on 27 March 1965, the Soviet Union supplied military aid worth 150 million rubles at no cost to the DRV for the strengthening of its defense readiness. A special Soviet military delegation was in the DRV for concrete negotiations on the equipment to be delivered to the DRV, on dates of delivery, etc.

Since the CPSU CC and the Soviet government took into account the further intensification of the situation in Vietnam and proceeded from the attempt to aid the Vietnamese people in the defense of their country, they made the proposal on 3 April of this year to carry out a meeting of representatives of the VWP, the CPSU, and the CCP on the highest level, assuming that one could coordinate joint actions and determine further measures to aid the DRV in its struggle against the aggression of the American imperialists.³ The leaders of the PRC have rejected our proposal. The Chinese leaders replied on 11 April to the letter on this question by Comrade [Leonid I.] Brezhnev

and [Alexei N.] Kosygin.⁴ Their letter included general statements [such as] China is “already prepared” and would “fulfill its duty of proletarian internationalism under all circumstances, without any wavering from its duty,” it was ready “to render military, economic, and political aid, according to the events, needs, and requests of the Vietnamese comrades.”

The letter also said that the PRC and the DRV had already negotiated on “how universal aid and support must be granted to the Vietnamese people,” and thus “there is no need to negotiate again.” On the aid of the Soviet Union to Vietnam, the letter said also that “the aid rendered by the Soviet Union had been too insignificant,” and that “the question, of how the Soviet Union should help Vietnam, had to be decided by both sides, the Soviet Union and Vietnam, it had to be discussed by the Soviet Union and Vietnam in a bilateral meetings, and we have no reason to participate.”

While the Chinese leaders refused to participate in a joint meeting, the VWP CC and the government of the DRV sent a delegation headed by Cde. Le Duan to Moscow. The CPSU considers the Soviet-Vietnamese negotiations, which happened on 11-17 April of this year, to be an important step on the path of a further coordination of the positions of the USSR and the DRV in the struggle against American imperialism, as a new, real contribution to the strengthening of the defense readiness of socialist Vietnam, [and] as aid for the people of South Vietnam.

The Vietnamese comrades asked for an increase of Soviet military aid during the negotiations in Moscow. Taking into account this request, the CPSU CC and the Soviet government decided to render new military aid to the DRV worth 145 [million] rubles at no cost. Various equipment of modern military technology has been assigned to the DRV, including engineering equipment for the construction of airports.

All in all the military aid of the Soviet Union for the DRV has reached at the current moment 486.5 mill. rubles, of which 300 mill. rubles have been provided in the last 3 to 4 months.

During the negotiations of the delegations of the CPSU CC and the VWP CC in April of this year in Moscow, the Vietnamese comrades were told that the Soviet Union will provide the DRV with larger quantities of materials and railroad technology, including 120 km of tracks, special scaffolds for the repair of bridges, necessary equipment for the repair of automated and semi-automated railroad equipment, track-laying machines, lifts, 300 cars, 40 movable power plants, etc., in case of the destruction of railroads. The value of this equipment is not included in the amounts mentioned in the negotiations in April this year.

At the moment, deliveries of Soviet military technology, equipment, and engineering goods to the DRV are made according to the agreements with the Chinese side in accordance with the agreements signed by the USSR and the DRV.

Apart from the aid supplies to the DRV, the Soviet Union also provides military aid to the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam. Following a decision by the Soviet government, weapons worth 2.5 million rubles have been handed

over to the South Vietnamese patriots.

Last fall, the DRV received aid at no cost in the form of special technologies destined for the Vietnamese People’s Army with the aim that the Soviet fire-arms that have become available as a result of the modernization [*Umrüstung*] [of the Vietnamese People’s Army] should be handed over to the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam.

It is well-known that the Soviet Union has expressed readiness to send Soviet volunteers to Vietnam.

The question of dispatching Soviet volunteers to Vietnam was discussed with the delegation of the DRV during the negotiations in Moscow. The Vietnamese comrades thanked the CPSU CC for the readiness to send Soviet people to the joint struggle of the Vietnamese against the American aggressors, but explained that at the moment there is no necessity to send volunteers to Vietnam.

The equipment for anti-aircraft defense and other weapons and military equipment, which the Soviet Union has provided to the DRV for the strengthening of its defense readiness and for the strengthening of the armed forces of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, have partially arrived in Vietnam. They have not yet entered action in full, because it will take some time until the Vietnamese troops have acquainted themselves with the special military equipment delivered and until they can use them successfully for the defense against attacks by the aggressors. The anti-aircraft missiles and other means of anti-aircraft defense as well as means of coastal defense are supposed to enter service according to the state of training of the crews of the Vietnamese People’s Army.

A necessary number of Soviet military specialists, which was determined by the Vietnamese themselves, has been sent to the DRV, and they do everything to train the Vietnamese armed forces personnel as quickly as possible. Training centers have been established with the help of Soviet instructors, and the training of Vietnamese cadres has already started there.

The CPSU CC and the Soviet government still have a resolutely firm attitude with regard to the general aid and moral-political support for the struggle of the Vietnamese people. This position has been displayed in the declarations of leading persons of the CPSU and the Soviet government, in the joint Soviet-Vietnamese communiques of February and April of this year, and in other documents. Within its own country as well as in its foreign relations, the Soviet Union implements a series of measures aimed at the broad moral-political support of the Vietnamese people in its struggle against the American aggressors. The Soviet Union informs its allies about these measures constantly. We are striving to undertake everything to increase aid to Vietnam and for the moral-political isolation of the American aggressors. This is where we see our international duty before the Vietnamese people.

1. No date, but probably early July 1965.

2. As a comparison, the Soviet Union sent ca. 11,000 specialists from 1949 to 1960 to China, a country almost 20 times bigger in pop-

ulation. See: T.G. Zazerskaia. *Soviet Specialists and the Formation of the Military-Industrial Complex of China (1949-1960)* [*Sovetskie spetsialisty i formirovanie voenno-promyshlennogo kompleksa Kitaia (1949-1960 goda)*] (St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg State University, 2000), 60, 67. From 1949-1959, China sent 11,000 students to the Soviet Union, see: Dmitrii Shepilov, *Not Having Sided* [*Neprimknuvshii*] (Moscow: Vagryus, 2001), 378. Afterwards, due to the ideological differences, the number of students sent to the Soviet Union dropped off dramatically.

3. "To the Chairman of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, Comrade Mao Zedong, to the Chairman of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Comrade Zhou Enlai," 3 April 1965, *AVP RF*, fond 100, opis 52, delo 13, papka 220, 18-19.

4. "Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and State Council of the People's Republic of China to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the USSR Council of Ministers," 11 April 1965, *SAPMO-BArch*, DY 30/3610, 5-8.



DOCUMENT No. 12

Note on a Conversation with an Unnamed Representative of the International Department of the CPSU CC on the Situation in Vietnam, 9 July 1965
[Excerpts]

[Source: *SAPMO-BArch*, DY 30/3667, 433-434. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.]

The Soviet comrade explained that the Soviet Union is in a complicated situation in Vietnam, because, due to China's attitude, it is not in a position, despite its efforts, to support Vietnam, to contribute directly and quickly to a change in the situation in Vietnam. The Soviet Union supplies the most modern weapons (the most modern jet fighter aircraft, missiles, and anti-aircraft guns), but they are not used because Chinese "advisers" to the general staff of the Vietnamese army and to the ministry of defense subvert the use of Soviet weapons. The weapons have been delivered and, as a rule, have been deposited somewhere, or are being only partially used for the establishment of Hanoi's defense system. The stationing of Soviet weapons, especially of heavy weapons, in provinces to the south has been prevented by the Chinese side.

Under China's pressure, the Vietnamese government does not allow Soviet pilots, missile specialists, and other specialists necessary for the use of modern military technology to enter the country, although the technology sent by the Soviet Union cannot be used without its personnel.

The army as well as large parts of the people in Vietnam increasingly understand the real situation. There are also a mounting number of cases, in which Vietnamese, even officials of the party and government, speak openly about the difficulties which have occurred in Vietnam due to the attitude of the Chinese leadership, which wants, as before, to let the US

and the Soviet Union clash on Vietnamese territory. However, there are also different opinions. One cannot speak of a uniform line.

The Vietnamese leadership, especially the realistically thinking forces, think that, due to the obstructionist policy of the Chinese and [due] to the fact that Vietnam has no common border with the Soviet Union, it is necessary for Vietnam to give in partially to the Chinese policy and propaganda, at least to maneuver [around it]. In Vietnamese circles, the fear of a Chinese occupation is very big.

The hands of the Soviet Union are tied to a very great degree. It cannot unmask the pernicious [*verderblich*] policy of the Chinese leadership, because Vietnam would suffer most from it, since the Chinese are in a position, and are probably willing, to create even bigger difficulties for the Vietnamese.

The situation is similar with regard to the political solution of the Vietnam problem. In general, one has to acknowledge that the US, the Soviet Union, and also the Vietnamese themselves would move forward toward negotiations, even if [they have] different positions and different approaches.

The Soviet Union advocates a political solution because the continuation of military actions in Vietnam will provide fertile ground for reactionary developments in the US. The Chinese leaders resist a political solution with full vigor.

[...]



DOCUMENT No. 13

Note by the GDR Envoy to Moscow, Rossmeisl, on Talks with Unnamed Soviet Vietnam Specialists, 19 August 1965

[Source: *PAAA-MfAA*, Minister Kiesewetter, Microfiche A 17445, 1-3. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.]

The aid the Soviet Union renders to the DRV is worth 1 million rubles a day. Apart from modern missiles and anti-aircraft guns, MiG fighters are provided as the most modern weapons. The training of the Vietnamese pilots takes place in the Soviet Union, on the one hand, because the DRV does not have the necessary conditions (in reality, there is only one airport suitable for military operations), [and] on the other hand, [because] the pilots need special food during training, and this cannot be guaranteed in Vietnam. Regarding the delivery of aid by trucks, transport goes well even when thoroughfares are destroyed.

The aid, which the Soviet Union renders, is increasingly acknowledged and understood by the population of the DRV. The Chinese propaganda that the Soviet Union does not render aid increasingly loses ground. This [however] is not the case in South Vietnam. The fighters of the National Liberation Front still have the view that only the PR China renders aid. Despite the opposition of the Chinese and of the pro-Chinese circles (especially Truong Chinh has been mentioned), the thought of

negotiations, if necessary conditions are given, wins increasing ground with the leading, sensible comrades.

Given the Chinese policy that promises much in words and does little in reality, Le Duan, Pham Van Dong, and other leading comrades are more and more convinced of the view that the Chinese are ready to fight to the last Vietnamese but otherwise are content to be left alone by the Americans.

Not only the Vietnamese, but also the Korean comrades, have drawn [these] conclusions from the attitude of the Chinese. The Vietnamese comrades at the moment not only express opinions that do not concur with Chinese [opinions] but there are also signs of criticism of the Chinese attitude in Vietnam. One can hear Le Duan, even if not directly, make such critical remarks aimed at the Chinese.



DOCUMENT No. 14

Excerpts from a Note by GDR Ambassador to the DRV Kohrt on the Current Policy of the Chinese Leadership, 11 December 1965

[Source: PAAA-MfAA, VS-Hauptstelle, G-A 353, 1-9.
Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.]

During a two-week stay in China, Cde. Ho Chi Minh met Mao Zedong twice.¹ Especially in the first talk, Ho Chi Minh explained the position of the DRV with regard to the developments in Vietnam, and tried to get an increase in Chinese aid. In the course of the second talk, Mao spoke for the most part. According to Mao Zedong's opinion, China was convinced that Vietnam would win. The US is for a peaceful solution because it has been forced to accept it through objective circumstances. One has only to convince the Americans that the stay of their troops in Vietnam is without a perspective for the US—that alone would be half a victory. The war currently fought is strengthening the Vietnamese people. China is ready to render economic and weapons aid, [but] the largest [part of the] aid should be rendered to Southeast Asia (Laos, Thailand, Cambodia) with the demand to carry out active military actions against the US. Thereby, one increases the anti-American front and simplifies the conduct of war of the DRV. The struggle of the Vietnamese people would be easier if modern revisionism would not work against it. Thus, the struggle against modern revisionism is the international duty of all Marxist-Leninists. One has to stand up to and unmask it, as well as demand from it to fulfill its international duty as often as possible. The Vietnamese Workers Party must render an even larger contribution to the struggle against modern revisionism. At the moment, a struggle takes place within the international communist movement, and the Chinese Communist Party is convinced that the new Soviet leadership will resign. [The Chinese] don't claim that everybody in the Soviet leadership is a revisionist. That's why the Vietnamese party has to consider

in what kind of a situation it will be once revisionism has left the stage. The Soviet leadership delivers a certain quantity [of aid] to the DRV because it can't do otherwise and [because] it was forced to do so. Vietnam now does more for the revolution than the Soviet Union, China, and other socialist countries, since the Vietnamese people are at the forefront of the struggle. Thus the DRV has the right to demand aid, not only military [aid] but also aid for the reconstruction and development of the economy. The equipment for the development must be ready, so that Vietnam can make an immediate jump ahead. The DRV has a right to demand from the Soviet leadership machines and equipment for its factories in order to be ready for construction after the withdrawal of the Americans. If the Vietnamese at the moment cannot store this equipment, China is ready to take that task unto itself.

The Politburo of the CCP has decided to render strong pressure on the modern revisionists. An article will be published (note: [this] happened on 11 November²), the impending CPSU congress³ will be taken into account, and other materials prepared.

Recently, a CC plenum of the VWP took place, during which Ho Chi Minh expressed some disappointment about his talks in the PR China. He did not agree with the statement of the Chinese leaders that capitalism is being restored in the Soviet Union, but had been unable to reach any agreement on this question. According to him, it is a surprise that those who do not always agree with the position of the DRV in all questions rendered more and less self-serving aid. Those forces, with which the DRV shared many common views (i.e. in question of war and peace, the development of the revolutionary movement in Asia, etc.), at the time would render less support to the DRV than they could, given their possibilities.

The Party General Secretary Comrade Le Duan, pointed out at the plenum that under current conditions negotiations could not be carried out, but in principle he advocated negotiations (internally, Le Duan expressed that he himself is for negotiations. But he has to be forced to the negotiation table because both he himself, as well as many of his followers, come from the south of the country, and there, the unfailing continuation of the war is demanded).

Cde. Pham Van Dong advocated negotiations. As before, there is still a strong pro-Chinese group, headed by Truong Tinh [Truong Chinh]. These forces obstruct every initiative on negotiations, and even gathered troops at the 17th parallel without the approval of the Politburo. This group plays the Chinese declaration on the enlargement of the anti-American front in South East Asia as a major trump card in order to justify their position.

1. Dates not clear, but Ho met Zhou Enlai in China on 8 November 1965, see: Nguyen Vu Tung, "Interpreting Beijing and Hanoi," 58, footnote 82.

2. Refers to: People's Daily and Red Flag Editorial Departments, "Refutation of the New Leaders of the CPSU on 'United Action'," 10

November 1965, *Current Background* 776, 1-17.

3. The 23rd CPSU Congress took place from 29 March to 8 April 1966.



DOCUMENT No. 15

Report by the Adviser to the Bulgarian Embassy in Beijing, Ivan Dimitrov, to the Bulgarian Ambassador, Khr. Stoichev, 14 December 1965

[Source: *Arkhiv na Ministerstvoto na Vnishite Raboti (Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Relations; AMVnR), Bulgaria, Sofia, opis 22, a.e. 1549, 7-9. Translated from Bulgarian by Lorenz Lüthi.*]

In recent times there has been much talk among the specialists of the socialist countries on the meeting between Mao Zedong and Ho Chi Minh. The conversations boil down to the following:

It is said that at the beginning of the month of November the chairman of the minister council of the DRV, comrade, Pham Van Dong, was on an unofficial visit to China.¹ The conversation did not lead to any result whatsoever, considering that after his visit to Moscow,² he posed some questions which the Chinese leaders did not like, and, for that reason, he returned to Hanoi highly irritated.

Toward mid-November Ho Chi Minh went secretly to China.³ The meeting with Mao Zedong took place in the city of Wuhan, where he [Mao] has resided repeatedly [in the past]. It is thought to be certain that Ho Chi Minh raised the following three questions:

1. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam thinks that it is advisable that the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam is transformed into, and declared as, the official government of South Vietnam, so that the majority of the territory and population finds itself under its control and rule.

2. The new government in South Vietnam requests through a declaration or appeal to all the governments and nations of the world to send aid in [the form of] equipment and volunteers for its struggle against the aggression of the United States.

3. The new government of South Vietnam could start negotiations with the puppet regime of South Vietnam.

Chairman Mao Zedong accepted the first point of the proposals raised by Ho Chi Minh. On the second point he said that it is too early to grumble and to demand volunteers. The Vietnamese nation is 30 million [strong], it has not yet unleashed its [full] strength, and its sacrifices from military action and bombardments are low. It might grumble in case it has lost at least half of its population. In case of raising the demand of volunteers, it is not necessary to turn to the world for assistance, because China as always will provide volunteers. But Mao Zedong again mentioned that it is too early to call for volunteers. Moreover he said that the Chinese volun-

teers will never agree to be together with volunteers from the Soviet Union or from other revisionist countries.

On the third point, Mao Zedong expressed his disagreement; he was against conducting negotiations in principle. For the Vietnamese it is necessary to implement consistently the promotion of the "four points"⁴ for the solution of the conflict.

From his side, Mao Zedong implored Ho Chi Minh that the Vietnamese comrades display clearly and decisively their standpoint with regard to revisionism. In this respect, he once more demanded strongly from Vietnam to commit itself.

Mao Zedong talked [in a] similar [vein] to such a point [?] [;] that he [even] told Ho Chi Minh that he [Ho] should not think that the war would really last 10-15 years. The war might end at any moment, as soon as it has reached a favorable situation.

Thus, it is advisable to keep in view that the Vietnamese comrades think from the present on about the situation in which they will find themselves after the end of the conflict. The entire industry, a great part of transport and communications of Vietnam will be destroyed, the government will not possess any resources; this will put them [the Vietnamese] in yet a more difficult position. Mao Zedong recommended to Ho Chi Minh to increase from this moment on the demands for aid from those European socialist countries that are rich. The Vietnamese must not demand weapons for themselves, but machines and equipment for the outfitting of the new industrial enterprises and the rehabilitation of the old industry which suffered from the bombardment. It is not necessary that these materials be delivered to Vietnam; the Chinese government takes up the task to store them in China, and after the end of the war will give them to Vietnam.

It is said that Cde. Ho Chi Minh was left with much disappointment and pain after these talks with Mao Zedong.

1. This unofficial visit could not be verified through other sources.

2. Pham Van Dong was in Moscow after official talks in Beijing on 9 October 1965. See: "Zhou Enlai and Pham Van Dong, Beijing, 4 p.m. 9 October 1965," Westad, et al., eds., "77 Conversations," 89-90.

3. Dates not clear. See **Document #14**.

4. Pham Van Dong presented the so-called Four Points on 8 April 1965, as a proposal to end the Vietnam War through negotiations. They contained the following points: US troop withdrawal from South Vietnam, respect for the 1954 Geneva agreements, the demand that internal affairs of South Vietnam must be settled by the South Vietnamese themselves in accordance with the program of the NLF, and the requirement that the peaceful reunification of Vietnam must be settled by the Vietnamese people themselves.



DOCUMENT No. 16

Reception by Soviet Vice Foreign Minister V. V. Kuznetsov for the General Director of the PRP FMA, Cde. Jerzy Michalowski, 24 January 1966

[Source: AVPRF, fond 0100, opis 59, delo 5, papka 525, 1-6. Translated from Russian by Lorenz Lüthi.]

I received Comrade Michalowski [on 15 January 1966] at his request.

Michalowski said that in addition to the information on his talks in Beijing and Hanoi,¹ which he has already sent to Moscow, he would like to give his impression on the course of the talks on the whole. In his opinion, regardless of the lack of concrete results, the trip was useful. The Vietnamese comrades did not conceal their astonishment about the candid expositions of views, which were characteristic for the talks by Comrade Michalowski in Hanoi. They constantly stressed that they trust the Polish side and highly value its help and attention.

In the words of Comrade Michalowski, the character of the meetings and talks with the leaders of the DRV sharply contrasted with the reception that had been given in Beijing, when he conferred with the vice minister for foreign affairs of the PRC, Wang Bingnan, and the head of the PRC FMA department, Yu Zhan. Michalowski remarked that he briefly laid out to them the contents of the talks with [US Ambassador-at-Large Averell] Harriman in Warsaw, but did not say anything about the Polish point of view. The Chinese sharply criticized the American 14 Points aimed at solving the Vietnamese problems, which they characterized as yet another trick, aimed at the masking of their preparations for the broadening of war in Vietnam. They also greatly stressed that the Americans run into great difficulties in the course of their military activities, that even within the United States the wave of protest against the war in Vietnam increased and that the Vietnamese cdes. threaten the well-being of the military allies of the US in view of the negative views of some of the partners on the American policy in Southeast Asia. In the words of the Chinese, peaceful negotiations are in principle possible, but only after a military victory, because “nobody [ever] won [a war] at the green table.” Wang Bingnan, in particular, stated that he cannot speak for the Vietnamese, but he believes that they [will] answer in a similar way. He raised the astonishment that the Polish comrades transmitted such “one-sided proposals,” [and] that they refuse to expose and condemn the maneuvers of the Americans. It is noteworthy, Comrade Michalowski said, that, on the day of my arrival, an article on “the black spirit, which flies over Asia” was published in one of the Beijing newspapers.

Furthermore, Michalowski talked about his meetings in Hanoi, where he was received by cdes. [Pham] Van Dong and Ho Chi Minh, and also conferred with the vice prime minister and minister for foreign relations, Cde. Nguyen Duy Trinh. According to the words of Cde. Michalowski, he spoke in detail on the talks with Harriman and laid out, without any reference to

the PUWP [Polish United Workers' Party], their [the American] point of view on the question.

The essence of the answer by Cde. Nguyen Duy Trinh was similar to the Chinese. In essence, he said that we have to wait, that a new victory of the type of the battle of Dien Bien Phu is necessary, and only then can [one] dictate one's own conditions.

In Comrade Michalowski's evaluation, the talk with Cde. Pham Van Dong was the most interesting. The latter stressed that the Vietnamese leaders “think day and night of how to end the war,” however, they consider that “it has been still insufficiently proven to the Americans how difficult this war is for them, the Americans.”

Cde. Pham Van Dong attentively listened to the communication by the Polish side about [the view] that a more complicated, peaceful settlement of the Vietnamese problem [will] follow [only after] the further escalation of the war in Vietnam, [and] that the DRV negates the possibility of the American public to speak out against the war. As an answer, he said, the DRV trusts the PUWP, that the Polish friends acted correctly, giving the DRV the contents of their talk with Harriman, and that he [Pham] does not agree with regard to the criticism of the Chinese.

The talk with Cde. Ho Chi Minh left a hostile impression on Michalowski. It was a pathetic moment; he spoke in pompous, vague phrases. Comrade Ho Chi Minh stated that the situation is well known to him, but the DRV [will] win the war, that at their time the French also were strong, but there was Dien Bien Phu. Now the DRV has become much stronger, and it has a great socialist family. Cde. Ho Chi Minh also mentioned his disagreement with the Chinese criticism with regard to the mediation of the PPR [Polish People's Republic], however, this was the only critical statement at the address of the Chinese.

The minister for foreign affairs, Cde. Nguyen Duy Trinh, in the course of the talk stated that, although now is not the time for talks, one should not let slip the banner of political struggle from the hands. It is necessary to conduct political work as well, and the statement of the DRV MFA of 1 January of this year should be judged just on that level. He gave to understand that the Vietnamese comrades do not completely reject the thought of the possibility of negotiations. What concerns the trip of the American public figure [Norman] Cousins, he said that the Vietnamese comrades agree to speak with him, but only outside of Hanoi. It will be better if he turns to one of the ambassadors of the DRV in any country. It would be good if he also would meet with representatives of the NLF.

Comrade Michalowski further said that he has the impression that, besides the channels known to them for contacts of DRV representatives with Americans, the Vietnamese comrades still have some possibilities to maintain direct contacts with the American side. This, in particular, the vice-head of the permanent representation to the UN [Charles W.] Yost gave to understand at the time of the meeting in New York with the permanent representative of the PRP to the UN, [Bohdan] Lewandowski.

As a result, Cde. Michalowski gave the following conclusion.

1. The Vietnamese leaders see their situation in a rosy light, overestimate their military successes, do not realize the readiness of the US for war on a broad scale, [and] underestimate the military potential of the US

2. The Vietnamese comrades do not see that they lose on a political level [by] turning down negotiations, do not take into consideration the changes in the correlation of forces in Asia and Africa (the events in Indonesia, the military revolutions in Africa), and overestimate the possibility of public opinion in the US to speak out against the war in Vietnam.

3. The Vietnamese friends understand the serious character of their difficulties, but do not want peaceful negotiations at the current time. They fight against a peace conference, because, in their views, the start of peace negotiations will be perceived in the whole world as capitulation of the DRV.

4. The impression emerges that relations of the DRV with the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, whose leaders are under great influence of the Chinese, are highly complicated. Hanoi fears that if the DRV joins negotiations, the NLF could perceive this as a concession from the side of their northern allies [in exchange] for the cessation of [American] bombardments of the DRV. They [the North Vietnamese] observe that success is making the leaders of the NLF increasingly dizzy. They [the NLF leaders] think that, [after] winning light battles, they could go from victory to victory. Besides military action, they do not know other possible means of struggle.

They [the NLF leaders] are frightened by the possibility of the establishment of a coalition government, which supposedly would lessen the influence of the NLF. The complicated character of relations between Hanoi and the Front, in particular, was supported by the talk with the minister of defense of the DRV, Vo Nguyen Giap, who is most often forced, given his position, to deal with the leaders of the NLF.

Furthermore Comrade Michalowski remarked that a great part of armaments of the South Vietnamese patriots at the time are Chinese-produced since Soviet armaments remain in the DRV.

5. It is felt that some people in the DRV do not agree with the Chinese; however, the influence of the PRC on the Vietnamese friends remains still great. This can be shown by the negative answer of the DRV to the Polish mediation. According to a series of signs, one can judge that the Chinese tried to render pressure on the DRV before the trip to Hanoi of the Soviet delegation headed by [CPSU Secretary] Cde. [Alexander N.] Shelepin and at the evening of the preparations for the 23rd CPSU Congress.

According to the evidence we have, a center for the coordination of armed activities in Southeast Asia was created not long ago in Beijing. Given Beijing's view of the war in Vietnam, one of the units is called "struggle against imperialism."

6. In the talks, the Vietnamese friends hinted at the desirability that the socialist countries render more aid to the DRV. If they said earlier that they do not want to drag the socialist countries into a world war, now they do not stress that proposition. Moreover, Cde. Nguyen Shu Chin stated in one of the talks that, if the Americans broaden the conflict and unleash a

great war, then this will be a war of the socialist camp against the capitalists.

7. The Vietnamese comrades, using their channels of contacts with the Americans, will try to delay in every way the resumption of the bombardments of the DRV, [and] strive to suspend the unfolding of the American military machine.

According to Cde. Michalowski, on the way back he was informed in Delhi that in the last days, large military actions from the side of regular parts of the Army of Liberation could not be observed in South Vietnam. It is possible that this is simply a coincidence of circumstances, Cde. Michalowski said, but it is [also] possible that this is the response to Harriman's proposal "to lower the temperature in South Vietnam."

At the end of the talk, Cde. Michalowski was interested in our opinion on how the Polish side should act with regard to Johnson's communication and how they should reply to the Americans. According to the words of Cde. Michalowski, when he asked Cde. Ho Chi Minh, what to transmit to the Americans as an answer to their communication, he advised them [to read] the statement of the representative of the DRV MFA of 4 January 1966. In addition, cdes. Ho Chi Minh and Pham Van Dong stressed in the talks that a temporary cessation of bombardments of its [North Vietnam's] territory is not convenient for the DRV because the Americans must [first] stop the constant blackmailing of the DRV through air raids.

I thanked Cde. Michalowski for the information. I remarked that his conclusion corresponds to our conclusions. I said that we can give a more complete answer to Michalowski's question after the Soviet delegation headed by Cde. A. A. Shelepin returns to Moscow; the Polish side will be given corresponding information about the results of that visit.

[...]

1. Michalowski traveled from Warsaw to Moscow, Beijing, Hanoi, and returned via India through Moscow and on to Warsaw between 30 December 1965 and 15 January 1966.



DOCUMENT No. 17

Letter from GDR Foreign Minister Otto Winzer to [SED Politburo Members] Comrade Walter Ulbricht, Comrade Willi Stoph, Comrade Erich Honecker, and Comrade Hermann Axen, 8 March 1966 [Excerpts]

[Source: SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/3667, 197-204. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi]

Below I transmit excerpts of a piece of information on the visit of a Soviet delegation to Hanoi headed by Comrade Shelepin, which the ambassador of the USSR in the DRV, Comrade Shcherbakov, provided to some ambassadors of the socialist countries.

Comrade Shcherbakov explained, among others, the following:

Some questions related to the rise of aggression were planned to be discussed, questions with regard to negotiations and questions with regard to aid, which had remained open after [the visit of] the Le Thanh Nghi delegation.¹ Another task was to clarify the attitude of the Chinese, especially in relation to the publication of the article of 11 November 1965. Even the Vietnamese maintain that the moment has come to demonstrate close bonds to the Soviet comrades, and this especially with regard to the US 14 Points.²

Yet the [Vietnamese] views on the delegation were not uniform. Individual Vietnamese comrades, who stand for close bonds to China, had raised concerns about the visit. They gave reasons to ponder that the Soviet Union exerts some pressure on the DRV to force it to capitulate to the US imperialists. The forces, which were against the visit, spread the rumor that the SU wants to detach the DRV from the PR China [and that the SU wants] to receive the support of the DRV for the 23rd party congress. The proponents of the invitation eventually carried the day on the basis of the situation mentioned. The opponents to the visit of the delegation had to realize that their concerns were unjustified. Apparently Comrade Truong Chinh was the one who the most stubbornly raised ruckus against the delegation. But he had no influence on the attitude of the Politburo, as all of the discussions were conducted in an extraordinary warmhearted and considerate way. Comrade Truong Chinh, as a delegation member, took part in the welcome of the [Soviet] delegation, but did not attend the discussions due to "health reasons," and did not receive, in his function as president of the national assembly, the delegation of deputies of the Supreme Soviet, which accompanied the Soviet delegation, but was replaced for the said reasons. In the same way, [National Assembly Standing Committee Vice-Chairman] Comrade Hoang Van Hoan, who is on medical treatment [*Kur*] in China, was missing.

Four or five encounters had been planned.

While Comrade Vo Nguyen Giap reported on the military events in 1965, Comrade Pham Van Dong gave the general political report on the overall development and on the conclusions, which had been drawn during the December plenum.

[...]

On individual questions:

They [the Vietnamese] repeated that with their activities in the south they had wrecked an American attack. The NLF prevented the unfolding of actions by US units. The Soviet comrades replied that they believe that the Americans have not yet launched a major attack, but that only skirmishes [*Vorgefecht*] had occurred that had gone awry for the Americans. The Americans simply are not yet ready with their preparations for a major attack. It has also been revealed that their 11 bases have not yet been completely established. And they have recognized correctly that their forces are not yet sufficient, and that there are difficulties in South Vietnam with the use of

modern technology, whose employment in South Vietnamese conditions is complicated. The Vietnamese comrades do not estimate the situation correctly. The American troops still need three to five months of experience.

The Vietnamese comrades explained that they checked the weak and strong sides of the adversary, and that they know them now. The breakdown of the Saigon army and regime can be noticed; that is why the Americans have shouldered the most difficult battle tasks. The majority of the people are against the Americans. The moral strength is to be found with the NLF, while the fighting morale of the Americans as well as of the Saigon troops is low. That's why they concluded that the American units can be beaten and defeated. Now, individual strikes are executed in order to break their measures step by step and to attack their bases. But since the US potential is big [and] that of the Vietnamese small, one cannot bring about a Dien Bien Phu.

The initiative is and remains in the hands of the NLF, even the diplomatic initiative. (The Soviet comrades expressed the view that this opinion is not correct and that they [the Vietnamese] overestimate their own strength, while they underestimate [the strength] of the Americans.) From that one has to conclude, the Vietnamese comrades said that the war will carry on and that it might come to a broadening of the war. They deduced that the bombing of the DRV in the past year had brought no victory for the US, while the defensive forces of the DRV on the basis of aid by the SU and the other socialist countries have increased multifold. The losses of and damage to the DRV are relatively small. The population has put up with the bombing, so that even here the losses are irrelevant. (According to the opinion of the Soviet comrades this does not conform to facts.)

The Vietnamese are not interested in broadening the war but want to limit it to South Vietnam. But the US wants to blockade the DRV and South Vietnam from the sea; and even blockade China as well as the roads to Laos. Furthermore, the Ho [Chi Minh] Trail is supposed to be smashed.

Further, it is planned to intervene in south and central Laos, whereas Thailand serves as jumping board, and the blockade of Cambodia supposedly has been tightened. That is why it is necessary to turn to the socialist countries for aid also in 1966. For 1966, the Vietnamese plan a series of raids in the south in order to convince the Americans that there is no question about their victory and that the solution of the Vietnam problem is only possible on the basis of the Vietnamese program. Following the [December] plenum, they are convinced of the correctness of their position. That's also what they wanted to convince the [Soviet] delegation of. They are concerned only about the passive attitude which the countries of Asia and Africa assume.

Questions on the solution of the Vietnam question

Basically both sides agree to the necessity of solving this question. The Vietnamese comrades do not deviate from the four points; but they say that the right moment has to be

awaited. They think a lot, Pham Van Dong explained, about how a peaceful solution, a political solution could be brought about, and [how to determine] when the opportune moment has come. (In that regard, Comrade Shcherbakov remarked that it is new that they consider these questions, which had not been the case some months ago.) They are not against the initiatives of the Hungarian³ and Polish comrades, but [actually] value them. In this respect, they also are different from the Chinese, Comrade Shcherbakov added, because they acknowledge the necessity of creating a diplomatic and political front against the Americans. They consider the 14 Points proposal as a step, one which does not bring anything new, but is only a bluff, because the Americans are in a complicated position. The Soviet comrades replied that one has to see it as a measure to escape the affair, because [the Americans] realize that there is nothing for them to win, and that maybe now the moment has come [for the Vietnamese] to take them by the word and to unmask [them]. This is not a capitulation, but a struggle with other means. How one should approach [this], the Vietnamese comrades explained, they themselves are not completely clear about, and they have made no decision yet. Thus they want to counsel with the Soviet and Chinese comrades, what [moment] should be judged as the right moment. Tentatively, they will keep up the contacts, but [they will] not rush. "We will always think about it."

SU-DRV Relations

[...]

In general, the talks with the Vietnamese comrades were heartfelt and sincere, and there were many consenting declarations on basic questions. For example they said that they completely agree with the Soviet policy towards America and with the efforts of the Soviet comrades to maintain peace. The Soviet comrades estimate that [their] relations [with the Vietnamese] have improved through these bilateral talks and that a significant step forward was taken. There are some among the Vietnamese comrades who did not say openly their opinion. They desired that we support the Vietnamese policy completely in the communique. They also wanted us to appreciate [*würdigen*] Chinese aid. The Soviet comrades pointed out that negotiations are taking place between the CPSU and the VWP, and thus a reference to Chinese aid is inappropriate. Furthermore they conveyed [the opinion] that the Vietnamese comrades should not underestimate the US with regard to its military strength. They [the Americans] are in a position to destroy Vietnam completely. It is in the interest of the socialist camp and of the struggle for peace that the war stays limited to South Vietnam, and the Soviet comrades believe that the Vietnamese comrades do not want to give the Americans the opportunity to broaden the war. In this respect the Soviet comrades proposed to increase the number of specialists who [could] strengthen and re-organize anti-aircraft defense. Moreover, they desire that the Soviet specialists have the opportunity to gather experience and to study the tactics of the Americans [in the battlefield]. At the same time, operational assistance could be provided [in

return]. The Vietnamese did not reply immediately.

On the question of the solution of the Vietnam question, the Soviet comrades advised that the Vietnamese comrades increase their initiative and explain the Four Points much more to the world's public. The front against imperialism must be enlarged, and the SU will provide any aid for that purpose. One has to fight the Americans on all positions. They [the Vietnamese] were clearly told [by the Soviets] that the Americans would not leave Vietnam solely on the basis of the outcome of the war. Thus it was urgently necessary to increase political activities through talks, solidarity, collective actions of the socialist camp. The US has to be checked on its readiness [to negotiate]. Now is the moment when one has to launch [such] measures actively. For that purpose, trilateral talks should be discussed again and the necessity [should be] recognized to focus on a collective defense. That is the weakness of the socialist camp. The Vietnamese comrades have recognized this as well, but asked the Soviet comrades to talk to the Chinese ("We agree with that and approve of it"). They explained that they had to find out in talks with the Chinese that the latter reject their proposals.

Comrade Shcherbakov explained that the Vietnamese comrades agree too quickly with the Chinese comrades in talks and do not appear tough enough. The influence of the Chinese and the dependency of the Vietnamese [on them] is too great. The Soviet comrades explained the damaging attitude of the Chinese to the Vietnamese comrades. As a matter of fact, the Chinese help to increase the aggression of the US, and thus they shoulder a heavy responsibility toward the Vietnamese people. The Vietnamese always stress that they are a small country and a small party, and they hint that they could not stand up to the Chinese. They emphasize that the Chinese help them politically, morally, and economically, especially with food and labor. Later Ho Chi Minh explained in a private talk that the military aid of the Chinese is insignificant. They say that the Chinese have difficulties with their transport system. The Soviet comrades replied that they are ready to help at once. But they could not agree [to the circumstance] that the Chinese wanted to force them to carry out transports by sea. In the end, the Gulf of Tonkin is a war region, where the SU could clash with the US immediately.

Comrade Shcherbakov concluded that one could ascertain that there is no unity within the leadership of the VWP on these questions. Apart from comrades who follow the Chinese line, there are also comrades who recognize that the Chinese harm the national interests of the Vietnamese and that the great power interests of China clash with the national interests of Vietnam. They are on edge over the fact that the Chinese carry the disagreements [with the Soviets] over into the Vietnamese question. They harbor the great hope for aid from the CPSU and the other socialist countries. Even if they appear to be timid, they are for collective action. The Chinese for their part are on edge that the Vietnamese comrades waver and are not hard enough in the question that only the war can solve these questions, as much as they have expressed this attitude before. That's why

the Chinese spread slander with regard to the policy of the SU. That's why they have sent to the NLF [their own] representatives, who were supposed to render pressure so that the NLF would not listen to Hanoi, because it is wavering.

Le Duan held back in the talks, made only remarks. Comrade Ho Chi Minh acted similarly; [Politburo member] Le Duc Tho said absolutely nothing. The talks were carried out only by Pham Van Dong. The vice head of the CC department for international relations, Cde. Tran Chi Hien, also appeared positively [in the talks].”

1. Le Thanh Nghi was in Moscow in late December 1965.

2. Pronounced by Johnson on 29 December 1965, as a basis for negotiations.

3. In early 1966, the Hungarians as well as the Mongolians, the Czechoslovaks, the Bulgarians and the East Germans sent letters to the Chinese trying to nudge them to assume a less uncompromising attitude with regard to the Vietnam War. See Hershberg, “Peace Probes and Bombing Pause.”



DOCUMENT No. 18

Note on Two Conversations with the Minister Counselor of the DRV Embassy, Comrade Hoan Muoi, on 26 January 1966, in the Cuban Embassy, and on 27 January 1966, on the Occasion of a Farewell Visit to Our Embassy, 27 January 1966 [Excerpts]

[Source: PAAA-MfAA, VS-Hauptstelle, Microfiche G-A 332, 45-50. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.]

Comrade Hoan Muoi expressed the desire to meet the Cuban ambassador and me for a relaxed conversation in the Cuban embassy before his departure. It took place on the evening of 26 January 1966 in the Cuban embassy. On this occasion he also expressed the desire to visit me in our embassy on 27 January 1966 for a goodbye visit.

Contents of the opinions expressed by him on some questions and certain [pieces of] information:

[...]

2. On the proposal by the Polish party and on the letter¹ by [PUWP First Secretary] Comrade [Wladislaw] Gomulka:

This letter has been written in true “communist spirit,” and he considers it to be a sincerely intended document. As much as the Vietnamese party desires the implementation of the proposals mentioned in the letter, he believes that this is currently not possible. Vietnam will not participate in any international conference, which will not be attended by either the PR China or the Soviet Union. He considers the acceptance of the Polish proposal on the part of the CCP completely impossible. Anyway, the question exists that, if the PRC might even be

ready to attend such a conference, its success is cast in extreme doubts. A failure of such a conference would have unfavorable consequences for the struggle in Vietnam.

3. On the visit of Comrade Shelepin to Hanoi:

Two political questions were especially discussed by the Vietnamese side during the visit of the delegation: the further strategy and tactics of the Vietnamese party for the struggle in Vietnam, and questions of the situation in the international communist world movement.

Regarding the first question, the Vietnamese party expressed its standpoint that it will continue the struggle against US imperialism decisively, and holds the opinion that this struggle will be terminated successfully with the support of all socialist countries. At the same time, the Vietnamese party is ready to start negotiations at an opportune moment, possibly combining negotiations with the continuation of the struggle for some time.

Concerning the second question, the Vietnamese party leadership stated that the Soviet Union itself especially has to try to normalize the relations with the CCP. Shelepin replied that the CPSU has already done everything, but without positive results.

The Vietnamese comrades expressed the standpoint that, nonetheless, the CPSU should improve relations especially with China but also with Albania and the Japanese Communist Party. In this regard, Vietnam cannot start a special initiative if such an initiative could raise the danger of a worsening of relations with China.

On this question he also wanted to express a personal opinion: Vietnam at the moment has to subordinate all questions to the conduct of a successful struggle against US imperialism. Each misstep could have grave consequences for Vietnam. A unilateral bond to either the Soviet Union or China would greatly damage this struggle. Both socialist great powers see questions of the communist world movement with different eyes and with a different attitude from the small socialist states. Both want to gain influence in Vietnam. According to his opinion—and the opinion of the Vietnamese party—China's reservations against Soviet aid are unjustified. This aid is a significant strengthening of the Vietnamese position in the struggle against US imperialism and means in no way that Vietnam subordinates itself to the Soviet Union. Comrade Shelepin did not make any such conditions with regard to the increase of Soviet aid.

Khrushchev greatly damaged the communist world movement, especially with regard to relations with China and Albania. If the CPSU does not publicly evaluate Khrushchev's mistakes, it will be very difficult to normalize relations with the PR China. Khrushchev's mistakes had great emotional impact on the cadres of both parties. This feeling has to be taken into account in concrete politics. During a visit to the PR China, the Chinese comrades took him to the Soviet-Chinese border. He could convince himself how tense relations between the Soviet Union and China are. He could see strong military units on the Chinese side, on the Soviet side barbed wire, tall observa-

tion towers, and powerful floodlights which beamed far into the Chinese territory.

The only positive opportunity he sees rests in the increased support of all socialist countries for Vietnam. In the course of this joint support of all socialist countries for Vietnam and [in view of] the expected victory of Vietnam, relations could be relaxed and mutual trust slowly restored.

[...]

9. He deems all attempts by certain parties to mediate between the Soviet Union and the CCP, [or] between other parties, problematic. The experiences of a trip of a Hungarian party delegation to the DPRK and, among others, its stay in China had proven that such attempts have more negative than positive results.

[GDR ambassador to the DPRK Horst] Brie

1. Letter was sent on 28 December 1965, announcing the arrival of a special envoy, Jerzy Michalowski, to Beijing and Hanoi with the purpose of starting international peace talks. Letter is in AAN, KC PZPR, XI A/10, 681-682.



DOCUMENT No. 19

Telegram from GDR Deputy Foreign Minister Hegen to Ulbricht, Stoph, Honecker, and Axen, 8 July 1966

[Source: SAPMO-BArch, NY 4182/1222, 129-131. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.]

Dear comrades,

Enclosed I am sending you the copy of the telegram from our ambassador in Beijing, Comrade Bierbach, for your information.

With socialist greetings,

Hegen

Enclosure

During a stay of Comrade Ho Chi Minh in the PRC,¹ the Chinese side rejected a political solution [of the Vietnam War] and stated that this problem can only be solved by the crossing of the 17th parallel. The troops of the DRV should advance more actively into South Vietnam while Chinese troops in the DRV will be strengthened ([China] has already made preparations for [the next] four years). US aerial forays against Chinese territory are possible, but a great war on land is unlikely. The PR China in any case will be a reliable hinterland for Vietnam.

[The Chinese side continued that] the Soviet Union should

attack the 7th US Fleet and other US bases with missiles. Furthermore, Comrade Ho Chi Minh was assured that the PR China will not take any steps in South Vietnam behind his back [über seinen Kopf hinweg].

Evaluating remarks:

The facts mentioned above as well as the Chinese statement of 3 July and the corresponding editorial² in the *People's Daily* [Renmin Ribao] reveal the [Chinese] effort to exacerbate the Vietnam conflict in order to exploit it for [its own aims] in foreign policy and domestic affairs.

The DRV is being pushed to [undertake] actions in the South, while the Chinese side is able to station more troops in the DRV (there is no line which delineates the war), in order to strengthen its positions in the DRV and eliminate elements [there] it does not like. [The possibility of] a direct conflict [of China] with the US also would be [thereby] eliminated. As before, a political solution of the Vietnam problem is rejected.

The principal Chinese ambition is to provoke a confrontation between the SU and the US. The Chinese leadership seems to be ready, as the most recent developments in relations between the PR China and the Soviet Union reveal, to play up border questions with the Soviet Union and to exploit the theory of "SU-US cooperation" as a justification for the prospect of lesser help for Vietnam, etc.

The Chinese declarations on aid supplies, which we consider necessary, reveal that the Chinese leadership reserves for itself any decision [that is] in its own interest.

[signed] Bierbach

1. CCP Central Documents Research Office, ed. [Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi bian], *A Chronicle of Zhou Enlai's Life: 1949-1976* [Zhou Enlai nianpu, 1949-1976], volume 3, 37.

2. The Chinese condemned the US bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong on 27 and 28 June 1966, and announced that these acts would free China from any constraints to aid Vietnam. See: *NYT*, 4 July 1966, 1, 2.



DOCUMENT No. 20

Note on a Talk with the Soviet Ambassador, Comrade [Ilya] Shcherbakov, on 28 October 1966 in the Soviet Embassy in Hanoi, 10 November 1966

[Source: PAAA-MfAA, VS-Hauptstelle, Microfiche G-A 355, 11. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.]

Comrade Shcherbakov reported on the position of the Vietnamese comrades, that they are not always open and trusting, that in a series of questions, as e.g. with regard to the situation in South Vietnam and the economic and military situation in the DRV, they are reserved, even if they always talk about friendship and thank for aid. They emphasize their

independence and autonomy, and that they will make decisions without any [outside] influence.

But it has become known to the Soviet comrades that Comrade Ho Chi Minh last summer¹ had to promise the Chinese leaders that the Vietnamese comrades would not have any talks with the Americans without consultation of the Chinese, and that they would not request volunteers from socialist countries without consultation. Else, [the Chinese] would withdraw their “construction troops.”

After Comrade Ho had made that promise, the Chinese provided aid worth 700 million yuan. While 100 million are earmarked as military aid, food will be delivered for 600 million, namely [in the form of] 300,000 tons of hulled rice and 500,000 tons of unprocessed rice; moreover 500 tons of fabrics and cotton, and the [salary] payment for the road construction crews will eventually also be included in that sum.

1. Possibly the June 1966 visit to China.



DOCUMENT No. 21

Note on a Conversation with the First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy, Comrade Sverev, on 8 July 1966 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:40 p.m. at the Soviet Embassy in Hanoi, 9 July 1966

[Source: PAAA-MfAA, VS-Hauptstelle, Microfiche G-A 321, 13-16. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.]

The conversation occurred on our initiative and took place in an extraordinarily open and comradely atmosphere [and] without any interpreter.

We first discussed questions which were related to the impending flooding and the possible bombardment of dams by the US imperialists. [...]

With regard to the question of the continuous change in the attitude of the party and the government of the DRV, Comrade Sverev made the following statements:

The great and constantly increasing aid of the Soviet Union has contributed to the positive changes in the attitude of the DRV. Unfortunately, one is unable to perceive this in daily life, because the propaganda apparatus of the DRV, important ministries, or rather their most important departments (defense, security), are still permeated by pro-Chinese forces. Nevertheless, one cannot overlook positive trends.

For example, the polemics against the USSR and the CPSU have ceased following the CPSU October plenum in 1964. The book sellers in the DRV have not carried any new Chinese literature published after 1965. Only those pieces that have been published before 1965 are still being sold. The splittist policy of the Chinese comrades does not fall any longer on fertile ground in the DRV, but meets growing incomprehension and

increasing refutation. The Vietnamese comrades start to turn around their propaganda, stressing more and more the unity of all communist parties.

While the VWP CC has commented unanimously on “modern revisionism” during the 9th plenum of the VWP in November of 1963, a significant change has taken place in the VWP CC as a result of the difficulties of the war, Soviet aid, and the peculiar attitude of the PR China—that means as a result of the hard realities of life. The bloc of the opponents of “modern revisionism” does not exist any longer. Pro-Chinese forces in this bloc have taken up centrist positions, at any rate (Comrade Sverev did not mention any names).

With its unselfish solidarity aid, the USSR has contributed much to the changes in the positions of the Vietnamese comrades. They [the Vietnamese] regard the support of several 100 million rubles (500 million rubles/year) highly. In contrast, the policy of the PRC appears suspicious in the eyes of the Vietnamese comrades. Before the bombing of the DRV [started], the PRC boisterously claimed that it would consider each attack on the DRV as an attack against itself, [now] it has become more and more restrained while the escalation of American bombardments increases. Conversely, it pressures the DRV to continue the war.

During the 23rd CPSU Congress, the PRC reduced its aid to the DRV and supplied only food.

The Vietnamese comrades hinted to Soviet representatives that they consider the Chinese attitude as reprisal for their political flirtation with the SU, and that they [now] were in a position similar to the [one of the] Cuban comrades at the beginning of the year (when the Chinese stopped rice [deliveries]). Comrade Sverev emphasized the incomprehensible diffidence of the government of the PR China following the bombardments of Hanoi’s and Haiphong’s suburbs.¹ While the SU and other fraternal countries protested already on 30 June and 1 July the PR China only came out against it on 5 July 1966.²

The contradictions between the DRV and the PR China on principled questions are mounting. The PR China for example increasingly pressures the DRV not only to continue the war but also to expand it. It is well known that the DRV does everything to prevent the war of aggression from spilling over to its neighboring countries.

On the basis of realistic conditions, one has to state that the position of the DRV toward “Mao Zedong ideology” in the most recent “Cultural Revolution” must be judged to be negative. Contradictions on such principled questions like the attitude toward the international communist movement, the SU, the polemics, aid, and tactics in South Vietnam are obvious.

Of course, the comrades of the DRV do not think about severing their close contacts with the Chinese, but they want to document that they like to decide those questions that concern Vietnam by themselves. They want to protect their independence in all principled questions.

The Vietnamese greetings to the CC on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the CCP can be judged as an interesting reaction to Chinese attempts at blackmail. Whereas exuber-

ant greetings, signed by Ho Chi Minh, Le Duan, and Pham Van Dong, were sent to Mao and the corresponding persons [in the CCP] in the previous year, the greetings this year were only from CC to CC, without signatures. Furthermore, neither members of the Politburo nor of the CC took part in the celebrations in Beijing or Hanoi.

Moreover, it is also illuminating that the Vietnamese comrades view Chinese propaganda with astonishment, [such as, for example, the claim that] Mao is a second Lenin.

The Vietnamese reaction to the Chinese "Cultural Revolution" is also reserved. In talks, Vietnamese comrades dismissed it as the internal affair of the PR China. Chinese demands that the DRV support the "Cultural Revolution" were not adhered to.

Comrade Sverev stated that according to their [Soviet] information more than 200,000 Chinese soldiers are stationed between Hanoi and the Chinese border. Their task is to repair damaged thoroughfares, to construct military bases, and to assume anti-aircraft defense [tasks] in some of the aerial corridors.

Seen: Bergold
Ambassador

Schumann
1st Secretary

1. Refers to US bombing raids on 28 June 1966 and after.

2. China actually published its protest on 3 July. See: *New York Times*, 4 July 1966, A1, 2.



DOCUMENT No. 22

Information, [undated].¹

[Source: *Archiwum Akt Nowych (Archive of Modern Records; AAN)*, Warsaw, Poland, KC PZPR, XI A/81, 530-538. Translated from Russian by Lorenz Lüthi.]

On an especially entrusted order, [we hereby] inform [you] that, on the invitation of the CPSU CC and the Soviet government of the Soviet Union, a party-government delegation of the DRV, which arrived in the following composition, was [in Moscow] from 10 to 16 August of this year: Prime Minister of the DRV and Member of the VWP CC Politburo Pham Van Dong, Defense Minister and Member of the VWP CC Politburo Vo Nguyen Giap, Deputy Prime Minister of the DRV and Member of the VWP CC Politburo Le Thanh Nghi, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DRV Hoang Van Tien, and Ambassador of the DRV in the USSR and Member of the VWP CC Nguyen Van Kinh.

As it is known from information which has been sent to the Polish friends at the time, meetings between the Soviet and Vietnamese sides have occurred repeatedly last year on the

level of party-government delegations, and have dealt mainly with questions connected to the moral-political support rendered by the Soviet Union and to material aid to struggling Vietnam. In the current case, the new reason to invite a delegation was the question of providing the DRV with military and economic aid in 1967, which, as the Vietnamese comrades told us, they were prepared to discuss with the Soviet side.

Instead, this time the CPSU CC and the Soviet government had the aim to obtain information from the Vietnamese comrades on the situation in North and South Vietnam and to exchange opinions with them on questions which flow from the situation that has currently emerged in Indochina. Such an exchange, in our opinion, was required in view of the widening American aggression in Vietnam, of the statement by the Chinese leaders on their rejection of the Geneva agreements and of their respect for the 17th parallel, and, finally, [in view] of the lack of clarity in the position of the Vietnamese leaders themselves on some questions related to the lack of relevant information from the leadership of the VWP CC and the DRV.

The CPSU CC made the proposal to carry out this meeting on the highest level, and invited Cdes. Ho Chi Minh, Le Duan, and Pham Van Dong to participate. As a reply to the invitation, the VWP CC sent a delegation headed by the prime-minister of the DRV, Pham Van Dong, to the USSR. Cdes. [Leonid I.] Brezhnev, [Alexei N.] Kosygin, [Nikolai V.] Podgorny and other representatives of the CPSU CC and the Soviet government took part in all talks with the Vietnamese delegation.

During the negotiations, the Vietnamese comrades informed the representatives of the CPSU and the Soviet government on the situation in North and South Vietnam, [and] on their further plans to solve the Vietnam question. As before, they evaluated the situation in the north and in the south of the country optimistically, and stated that the Americans "constantly suffer defeat in military and political terms."

Like in previous meetings, the Vietnamese comrades think that the US imperialists are not successful in carrying out the task, which they took upon themselves, of unfolding an air war against the DRV. In their words, the Americans are unable to paralyze economic life in the [DRV]. Regardless of the destruction, communication links, which guarantee transport and are necessary for rendering aid to the South Vietnamese patriots and for the strengthening of the defense potentials and for the needs of the economy, continue to function. Regardless of the intensification of the bombardment, the number of victims among the population of North Vietnam and the soldiers of the NVA [Vietnamese People's Army] is not high; the number of killed and wounded stands at a little bit more than 20 thousand people.

"In their escalation [of the war] against North Vietnam," Cde. Pham Van Dong stated, "the American aggressors save special place [in their strategy] for strikes against Hanoi. The attacks on Hanoi, which is the capital of the socialist government, of course have a special meaning. What concerns the destruction which could be inflicted on Hanoi, it does not cause us any insecurities. We don't fear if they destroy dwell-

ings in Hanoi.

The Vietnamese comrades mentioned that the war potential of the Vietnamese People's Army grows in the course of repelling the American imperialist aggression. In that [struggle], aid from the socialist countries plays a big role. They underline the meaning of [their] statements, which had been sent to the congresses of fraternal parties [and] parliamentary sessions, and also of the statement of the Bucharest [Warsaw Pact] meeting.²

The delegation of the DRV was completely aware of the meaning of aid for the consolidation of the government of the country. "[...]Soviet aid has a very important meaning," Pham Van Dong stated, "your aid for the strengthening of the government is very valuable for the defense of North Vietnam. The forces of the government of the DRV rely on your aid, for the most part only on your aid [...] . We defend our own country—North Vietnam—and at the same time we continue to develop its economic potential. Given all of that, we are grateful for your aid.

Aside from Soviet military and economic aid, Soviet specialists who work in Vietnam make a very great contribution to our cause. These people participate together with us in our struggle, [some] among them were wounded and killed."

Reporting to the Soviet side on the situation in South Vietnam, the party-government delegation of the DRV stated that the American imperialists suffer defeats in their "special war," which they try to win using puppet soldiers. In the words of the DRV delegation, in recent times the US suffered military and political defeats in the local war, their losses grow incessantly and thus they have to intensify their aggression. The American imperialists are not successful in carrying out [their] basic task in South Vietnam: the destruction of the Liberation Army, the capture of the densely populated regions, and the stabilization of the Saigon regime. At the same time, the Vietnamese friends noted that the Americans intend to unfold a new offensive in the "dry season" and try to achieve some victory at the end of 1966 or the beginning of 1967 in order to compel the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the NLF of South Vietnam to negotiate in conditions that are beneficial to the Americans. The Vietnamese comrades said that, from their own side, they also are ready to defeat the enemy in the period of the "dry season" in 1966-1967. They intend to destroy the forces of the occupiers and of the puppet army. Another goal consists of preserving liberated regions, ensuring still a greater range of movement among the city population, and also preserving the supply routes to the South.

At the same time, the Vietnamese comrades acknowledge that the patriotic forces of South Vietnam now meet significant difficulties. However, as they say, in the opinion of the VWP CC Politburo, these difficulties are not insurmountable and they cannot prevent the task of fulfilling the above goals.

Proceeding from the situation that has emerged in North and South Vietnam in recent times, and also from the analysis of the forces that take part in the war, the delegation of the DRV states that their strategic line of the implementation of

war remains unchanged. Under these conditions, in the opinion of the VWP leadership, the following tasks stand before the DRV, the Soviet Union, and the other socialist countries:

"1. Fight to victory.

2. Mobilize the people of the whole world [and] world public opinion for wider and more powerful statements of protests against the American aggressors, in support of the struggle of the Vietnamese people.

3. Take up principled positions on the solution of the Vietnam problem and at the same time adopt flexible and soft tactics."

Over the course of the talks, the party-government delegation of the DRV stated that the Vietnamese, while striving for the victory over the American imperialists, try to organize the war in such a way that the framework in which it is currently carried out does not permit it to grow into a world war. It [the delegation] emphasized that the line of the VWP in this question remains unchanged. "We prepare for the possibility of organizing the war within a small framework while at the same time we defeat the American aggressors," Cde. Pham Van Dong said. At the same time, the Vietnamese comrades do not dismiss the prospect of a widening of the war. They said that in this respect the American imperialists, who endure defeat in South Vietnam and do not achieve their goals with bombing the DRV, might try to take their military actions to the territory of North Vietnam and Laos. In the DRV, according to their words, they have prepared for such a change of events, and they think that in this case the defeat of the Americans is inevitable.

In response to the question of the Soviet delegation to explain what the Vietnamese comrades understand under "flexible tactics" in the problem of a political solution, Cde. Pham Van Dong said that the Four Points of the government of the DRV and the Five Points of the NLF SV are "very correct slogans;" they "correspond to the interests of the Vietnamese people, and also to the interests of the security of the world and the safety of all people of Southeast Asia This is sacred, this is unchangeable, this is impossible to break." Concerning the "flexible tactics," according to the words of Cde. Pham Van Dong, this means "establishing contacts for the time it will be necessary to carry out negotiations" with the representatives of a government that raises the question of a political solution. Time and again, he stated that "flexible tactics" in the DRV now stand for support of contacts with the adversary, and not for raising any new proposals that differ from the Four [Points] and Five Points. As to the confirmation of "flexibility" of its tactics, the delegation of the DRV talked on a general level about the talks with [Jean] Sainteny, de Gaulle's representative, with the Canadian [envoy Chester] Ronning, and also with the American emissaries in Burma, Algiers, and in France. As one can see from this information, the Vietnamese prepared for the repeated emphasis of the well-known Four [Points] and Five Points.

In reply to our question the Vietnamese comrades repeated that the conditions for negotiations for the solution of the

Vietnam problem are still not ripe, since the US intends to talk with the Vietnamese "from a position of force." Under these conditions, the only conclusion, in the opinion of the leadership of the VWP, is the continuation of armed struggle with the aim to achieve a great military victory, which might change completely the correlation of forces.

In this regard, the Vietnamese comrades said that in the [currently] unfolding situation they need a further increase of Soviet military and economic aid.

They raised the request for additional supplies of Soviet armaments and equipment aimed at the strengthening of the country's government, in particular of anti-aircraft missiles and guns, fighter airplanes, coastal defense guns, various naval vessels, means of transportation, ammunition, etc.

Furthermore, they raised a series of requests regarding the supply of economic aid for 1967. The DRV requested the delivery of steel and metal structures, oil products, electricity generators, machine tools, automobiles, construction materials, transport equipment, fertilizer, food stuffs, etc. Attention was drawn [to the fact] that the Vietnamese request for aid for 1967 is the largest one the Vietnamese had addressed to the USSR at any time. In that respect, the Vietnamese side [also] presented a request for urgent, additional supplies in 1966 of means for the storage and transport of fuel-based lubricants.

The delegation of the DRV was told by our side that all requests by the Vietnamese friends will be considered attentively and satisfied according to [our] capabilities.

Over the course of the talks with the Vietnamese comrades the Soviet delegation expressed its complete solidarity with the struggle of the Vietnamese people and informed it about the work, which we carry out in the USSR and in the international arena in support of Vietnam, underlining the usefulness of holding meetings and regular exchanges of opinion and of information on questions of mutual interest, and thanking the VWP CC for its high regard of Soviet military and economic aid.

Our opinion regarding three basic issues, which have been raised by the VWP Central Committee in recent times, was conveyed to the Vietnamese delegation.

The complete agreement of the CPSU CC with those positions which the Vietnam Workers' Party CC has raised was expressed. We agreed that it is necessary to continue the struggle and take it to the adversary with mighty blows. We agreed that it is necessary to make the effort to mobilize the world's public opinion in support of the just struggle of the Vietnamese people. We agreed that, while guarding one's own main, principled positions, it is good to publicize [more] the renowned Four Points of the DRV and the Five Points of the National Liberation Front, which we completely support, [and] it is necessary to use flexible political tactics.

The CPSU CC and the Soviet government, as before, raised the view to the VWP leadership that the war in Vietnam needs to be kept within a confined framework and the circumstance of letting it spill over into new regions or even more [of letting it] eventually grow into a world war should not be permitted.

The Soviet Union expressed its agreement with the first

of the proposals that we render and will render military and other aid to the DRV. What concerns the second proposal, we have already talked time and again about the implementation of work by our Central Committee and the Soviet government with regard to the organization of a united front of those forces that stand up against American aggression. In the future, we will take all [necessary] measures in that direction.

What concerns the proposal raised by the Vietnamese comrades regarding the principled position in the question of solving the Vietnam problem and regarding "flexible and soft tactics," our side said frankly that they have not been used sufficiently, as it seems to us. We supported and support the idea, which was expressed by Cde. Le Duan, Pham Van Dong and other comrades in earlier talks, that, in the struggle against the aggressors, not only military but also political means should be exploited to a full degree. We are convinced that one should not give the Americans the possibility to trick the people. [But] the political struggle must be carried further to the point where the banner of peaceful negotiations, which [US President Lyndon B.] Johnson uses for the purpose of cheating [the people], is snatched from his hands so that it can lead him to the well-known fruits on the next stage.

We gave the Vietnamese comrades to understand that it is necessary to parry the political maneuvers of the American imperialists, for example, by publicizing [more] one's own positions, by raising the Four [Points] and the Five Points [with the aim] to start negotiations; or by entrusting some third country to carry out an exploratory mission [*sondazh*]; or by proposing to convene [a meeting of] all signatories of the Geneva agreements. Or else it should be demanded that negotiations start soon, [and one should] make one's own proposal for that point of time while [concurrently] unmasking the true aims of the US.

The Vietnamese delegation refrained from making any judgment on this question, stating that this point of view of the CPSU CC and the Soviet government will be conveyed to the VWP Central Committee Politburo.

At the time of the talks, the Soviet side turned time and again to the question of the necessity of coordination and unity of the forces of all socialist countries in the supply of support and aid to Vietnam.

We touched upon [the issue] that the military-political situation would be somewhat more beneficial to the Vietnamese friends, if China would participate in the coordination of agreements of the activities by the socialist countries. All efforts by the CPSU and other fraternal parties to achieve unity with China have ended, unfortunately, without result. Now we are forced to deal with a situation not only of a lack of unity with China but also of openly hostile positions of the PRC in relation to the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Such is the position of China that, given the circumstance that the USSR and socialist countries of Europe are far away from Vietnam, not a single fraternal country, including China, provides airfields and military bases close to Vietnam, [thereby] weakening its ability to use the necessary number of air force squadrons and other defensive

means which would enable [Vietnam] to rebuff the American aggressors and to defend the DRV.

In the course of the talks with the Vietnamese delegation it was stated that the Chinese propaganda organs in recent times have embarked on an anti-Soviet campaign in relation to the war in Vietnam, [and] have slandered the Soviet military and economic aid to the DRV. The Soviet people do not understand why the Vietnamese comrades, who know that the attacks of the Chinese leaders are baseless, do not refute these slanders.

The Vietnamese comrades were told that the CPSU does not carry out polemics against the leadership of the PRC in any considerable way, because, taking into account the interests of Vietnam, it does not want to complicate the situation, in which heroic Vietnam carries out its struggle, even further. We strive to create conditions [beneficial] to the current effort of the socialist countries in support of the Vietnamese people.

The Soviet delegation mentioned that not long ago the Chinese officially provided us with the news that they cannot transport more than 9-10 thousand tons of our goods per month by rail through their territory to Vietnam, that means not more than 100-120 thousand tons per year; that means that our only ordeal ahead [for the remainder of the year?] is transporting 50 thousand tons, around 30 million projectiles, millions of bullets, 1000 missiles, tools and other military property and equipment. Furthermore, the aid from the socialist countries of Europe also has to be carried through Chinese territory.

Assuming that the Americans can completely incapacitate the harbor of Haiphong or blockade it with the forces of the [US Navy] 7th Fleet, the consideration concerning the value of having a reserve harbor in China close to the border of Vietnam, which in the first place [would serve] the unloading of oil products from ships, and which would deliver aid from the USSR and other socialist countries, was explained to the Vietnamese delegation.

The Soviet side proposed to the Vietnamese comrades that they themselves negotiate with the Chinese leaders on all these questions.

The attention of the [Vietnamese] delegation was also directed towards the unilateral statement of the leaders of the CCP that the Geneva agreements ceased to exist, that the 17th parallel does not play the role of a demarcation line. The party-government delegation of the DRV stated in their reply that the point of view of the VWP on this question remains unchanged: as before, the DRV believes that the Four Points are the concentrated expression of the Geneva Agreements. Concerning the 17th parallel, the DRV replied that the Geneva Agreements regard it a "temporary line of demarcation," and opposes the aim of the government of the US to convert the 17th parallel into a state border between North and South Vietnam.

At the end of the talks, the communique of the 9th [11th] plenum of the CCP,³ which, as it is well known, affirmed the complete agreement which was reached on the measures "intended for future action" in the support of aid to Vietnam against American aggression, was addressed and shown to the Vietnamese comrades. The Vietnamese comrades neither com-

mented nor refuted it, and said nothing about the understandings [the DRV had] reached with China.

[...]

1. Sent by the CPSU CC to the PUWP CC probably in early September 1966.
2. The Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact met on 4-6 July 1966, in Bucharest, adopting resolutions on the Vietnam War and on Security in Europe.
3. Took place on 8 August 1966.



DOCUMENT No. 23

Information on the Visit of a Czechoslovak Party and Government Delegation Headed by [Czechoslovak Prime Minister] Comrade Lenart in the DRV, 24-28 September 1966

[Source: PAAA-MfAA, *Botschaft Moskau—Politische Abteilung, Microfiche 001170, 8-9. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.*]

Talks, whose contents we summarize here, occurred on several occasions between comrades of the embassy and [Czechoslovak] comrades, who accompanied the [Czechoslovak] delegation as specialists or journalists. The [following] comments should be considered as initial information. A more detailed report will follow after the receipt of information already announced on the results of the visit by the [Czechoslovak] MFA.

1. The Czechoslovak comrades gained the impression that leading Vietnamese comrades do not have a clear political conception on the solution of the national problem. In talks with them, no clear strategy or tactic of the party, bearing in mind national and international aspects and influences, could be discovered. The one-sided thesis of victory through people's war, on which political mass work is focusing, is dominant.

2. There are discrepancies between the evaluation (by the Vietnamese comrades) of the situation, especially in the military field, and the actual situation. The military successes of the heroically fighting Vietnamese people, which doubtlessly exist, are overestimated, while the military strength of the US and the possibility of the exacerbation of the situation by the US are underestimated.

3. During the complicated discussions on the contents of the communique, which lasted 44 hours all in all, different opinions on the attitude of China existed. The [Czechoslovak] comrades made a statement in which they condemned the Vietnamese position. The Vietnamese comrades did not accept the [Czechoslovak] point of view, and opposed to include a passage on the position of the leaders of the CCP in the communique, and pointed out that they receive aid from China,

among other things, rice for the provisioning of the population. According to the opinion of the [Czechoslovak] comrades, the Vietnamese comrades cannot adopt officially any other attitude, because otherwise effects will occur which they will experience negatively. But in personal talks, some Vietnamese comrades expressed that they don't agree with Chinese positions. The [Czechoslovak] comrades hold the opinion that a clarification process occurs [at the moment] within the leadership of the Vietnamese party in this question.¹

[...]

1. For Czechoslovak evidence see James G. Hershberg, "A Half-Hearted Overture: Czechoslovakia, Kissinger, and Vietnam, Autumn 1966," in Lloyd Gardner and Ted Gittinger, eds., *Vietnam: The Search for Peace in the Johnson Years, 1964-1968* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 292-320.



DOCUMENT No. 24

Note of Comrade Bergold, [GDR] Ambassador in the DRV, with the Polish Ambassador in the DRV, Comrade Siedliecky, 10 November 1966

[Source: SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/3667, 213-214. Translated from German by Lorenz Lüthi.]

The visit had been requested by the Polish ambassador. After an exchange of opinion, he conveyed that the Polish delegation is not going to visit the DRV in November of 1966 but, at a Vietnamese request, in the first quarter of 1967. Then he provided some information on the statements of Comrade Le Duan, which I present here as they have been uttered.

He said that Comrade Le Duan was received by Zhou Enlai on his return [trip] from the 23rd CPSU Congress. The latter presented him with a list, on which all dates and places had been recorded, where Le Duan had made statements against the Chinese leaders. The Chinese comrades reject Le Duan. It was hence decided in Hanoi that Le Duan should not accept the invitation by the Soviet comrades, which had been directed to Ho Chi Minh, Pham Van Dong, and Le Duan, this summer, in order to prevent the position of the Chinese towards the DRV from worsening.

Analyzing the reports of the 23rd CPSU Congress, after the August Plenum (before Pham Van Dong's trip to the Soviet Union) Le Duan made statements on a couple of questions, which party cadres have posed. On the question of what he has to say about the Cultural Revolution, he replied: "We don't support the Cultural Revolution, but we are not going to do anything against it. We let [it be] the internal affair of the Chinese."

On the question of what he could say about the policy of the SU with regard to the MPR [Mongolian People's Republic], to Japan and to India (with that [question] the supposed encircle-

ment of the PR China was hinted at), he replied: Our position towards the Soviet Union has not changed since the October Revolution. We would not sit here if the October Revolution had not occurred. My statements in Moscow are not new. If the SU makes the effort to build up good relations with India, then this complies with Lenin's advice. The SU had good relations with the MPR from the very beginning; that, too, is nothing new. What concerns Japan, he said, the DRV would make the effort to build up good relations with Japan, if Japan were the neighbor of the DRV.

Regarding the question of the economic policy of the DRV, he explained that each country, according to its situation, follows its own, independent economic policy. For example, the GDR had to react in its own manner [when it came] to strengthening its economy, [at the time] when it constructed the anti-Fascist protective barrier [the Berlin Wall] with the aim to defend its economy against the policy of West German imperialism.

On the question about Soviet revisionism, he supposedly replied: "The Soviet Union is like the sun. I want to label revisionism as clouds. Clouds sometimes can cover the sun, but it will always get through."

On the question of aid from the Soviet Union and China, he supposedly said: "The SU helps us from its heart and provides us with more than we can use, and China helps as well."

Finally, Comrade S. informed me that the composition of the party delegation of the VWP to the Bulgarian and Hungarian party congresses has been changed. Instead of Comrade Nguyen Duy Trinh and the Vietnamese ambassador to Moscow, comrades Le Duc Tho and Ung van Kiem have been designated.

This information is interesting because it would confirm our estimate that the position of Comrade Ung Van Khiem has been strengthened.



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Romania and the Sino-American Rapprochement, 1969–1971: New Evidence from the Bucharest Archives¹

By Mircea Munteanu

Romania's story in the Cold War, especially in the first decade of Nicolae Ceausescu's twenty-four year-long reign, is one of Bucharest's increasing attempts to stake out its own foreign policy within the Soviet bloc. For ten years between 1965 and 1975, Bucharest wormed its way into the ante-rooms of the White House and the Western European chancelleries, tweaked the Soviet nose, and painted itself as a maverick communist state ready and able to serve as a bridge between the two camps. It did so by combining communist orthodoxy—especially in domestic policies—with public stances on the international stage that gathered increasing public support for the Bucharest regime.

Upon taking the reins of the Romanian Communist Party (RCP) following Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej's death in 1965, Ceausescu entered the world stage cherishing his nonconformist role in the communist bloc. In this balancing act, he tried to depict himself as a valuable and reliable player in the world of diplomacy. From 1967 onward, Romanian foreign policy seemed to follow a different track than its Soviet counterpart, including the recognition of West Germany in January 1967, Romania's refusal to break relations with Israel after the Six-Day War in June, and its public, maverick support of China in the Sino-Soviet split. Bucharest's stance was not limited to refusing to follow Moscow's foreign policy line. Starting in the early 1960s, Bucharest moved increasingly toward reducing its economic dependence on the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc. Increased access to Western markets, also meant increased political access for the Romanian leadership, and, increased opportunities to put such access to use by attempting to mediate between the two camps. Of the numerous attempts at mediation by the Romanian leadership, the most telling for Bucharest's success at playing the independent card was the Romanian attempt to mediate the opening of Sino-American talks during the Nixon administration. By 1969, Bucharest was building on the well-received, if ultimately unsuccessful, attempt to mediate talks between the US and the North Vietnamese through the so-called Packers Channel.² The public closeness between Beijing and Bucharest offered the Romanian leadership a chance to sell itself as a valuable go-between in Nixon's triangular policies.

Bucharest's channel to Beijing has generally been discounted, until now, as doomed to failure. In his memoirs, former US Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger suggested that the Chinese "proved too wary [to discuss rapprochement through the Romanians], perhaps fearful of Soviet penetration of even a country as fiercely independent as Romania."³

The Romanian channel, however, should not be so summarily discounted. New evidence from the Romanian archives shows that, by the end of 1970, the Chinese leadership was willing to open discussions with the US, and was ready to do so through any available channel. At the time, the Romanians were not discounted as a possible intermediary by either the US or the Chinese leaders. Ceausescu's success in publicly projecting a strongly independent position from the Soviet line, and especially its support of China in the Sino-Soviet split, was viewed in Washington as conferring on the Romanian leadership the needed credibility to pass important communication to the Chinese at a level where such communications would get appropriate notice. The Chinese, for their part, left it to the Americans to decide the channel through which communications would proceed. The final decision, taken by Nixon and Kissinger in December 1970 and January 1971, was to use the Pakistani channel. That decision, at least in part, stemmed from a decision made by the Romanian leadership not to transmit a critical Chinese response to the US before that same message reached Washington via Pakistan. Given that the Pakistanis had been inadvertently delayed by national elections and the November 1970 floods in East Pakistan, Bucharest's decision to delay relaying the Chinese message is difficult to explain.⁴

First Steps: Nixon's Visit to Bucharest, August 1969

President Nixon's historic visit to Bucharest in August 1969 led to the first concerted effort by both the US and Romania to work together on Sino-American rapprochement. The Romanian leadership's interest in facilitating the normalization of relations between the PRC and the US went deeper than Bucharest's official statements regarding the need for equality and cooperation among all countries of the world. The RCP

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leadership was in the midst of a struggle with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) leadership over Bucharest's latitude in interpreting Marxist-Leninist dogma as well as Romania's freedom to establish and carry out its own foreign and domestic policy. Against the backdrop of the expanding Sino-Soviet conflict, which had flared into actual fighting along their disputed frontier earlier in 1969, Bucharest sought to ensure that it would be able to resist whatever pressure Moscow would bring to bear.⁵ Throughout the mid-late 1960s, Bucharest sought to position itself outside the sphere of direct Soviet influence, and use that position to facilitate the implementation of its own policies, whether regarding economic development, foreign and defense policy within the Warsaw Pact, or the Vietnam War or Sino-Soviet polemics.⁶

The reasons for the Romanian leadership's desire to carry out a more independent foreign policy varied. Like all other Soviet satellites, Bucharest had at first unwaveringly followed the Kremlin position, irrespective of its contradictions. Yet by 1960, economic plans put forward by Bucharest began clashing with those developed in Moscow. Nikita Khrushchev's vision of an economic cooperative zone of the communist countries, and the socialist division of labor that that cooperation required, relegated Romania to an unenviable position: that of an agricultural hinterland to the more industrially developed East Germany and Czechoslovakia. Bucharest, on the other hand, was interested in heavy industrialization and urbanization. The Romanian leadership viewed both goals as a means of gaining legitimacy with the people, especially as its collectivization of agriculture was finalized in the late 1950s. What began as a clash over economic ideas soon after expanded into other areas including inter-party relations and foreign policy. Starting slowly, Bucharest became increasingly assertive in the mid-late 1960s. By the end of the decade, Ceausescu and the Romanian leadership had become a public relations thorn in the side of the Soviets and a *cause celebre* in the West.⁷

During the 2 August 1969 discussion between Nixon and Ceausescu in Bucharest, the US president's interest in gauging Romania's policy latitude was apparent. Several times Nixon reiterated US interest in maintaining Romania's independent position within the Soviet bloc and voiced concern that the close US-Romanian relationship could cause Moscow to place undue pressure on Bucharest. Ceausescu and Prime Minister Ion Gheorghe Maurer, however, dismissed Nixon's concerns, confident that they would be able to continue the balancing act between signaling their differences with Moscow and stressing their similarities.⁸

Nixon's message was simple: the US was ready to open discussions with the PRC over a broad range of issues of mutual interest, and hoped that, due to the special relationship between Bucharest and Beijing, the Romanians would be able to facilitate an opening between Washington and Beijing. What the Romanians did not know at the time—and would not find out until two years later—was that Nixon had passed the same message to another friend of the Chinese leadership, Pakistani president Yahya Khan.⁹ This was the beginning of a dual chan-

nel to Beijing that would ultimately lead to the biggest diplomatic coup of the Nixon administration—Kissinger's secret trip to Beijing in July 1971 and Nixon's groundbreaking visit the following February.

The Bucharest discussions covered a wide range of issues of mutual concern, including Export-Import Bank (EXIM Bank) credits for Romania and the perennial Romanian desire to obtain Most Favored Nation (MFN) status. Yet discussion of Vietnam and China took priority in the conversation between the two leaders. This was not the first time the topic of Sino-US relations was approached between the US and the Romanians. Two years earlier, during Nixon's visit to Bucharest in 1967, this time as a private person, he had met with the Romanian leadership and discussed his ideas about the People's Republic of China (PRC). Both Ceausescu and Maurer had listened closely to Nixon's idea about the need to engage China and pushed wholeheartedly the idea of engagement. Even before that, on the occasion of a discussion between Maurer and US Ambassador to Bucharest William A. Crawford in 1965, the Romanian prime minister had brought up the idea that the PRC could no longer be ignored by Washington.¹⁰ The 1969 visit, however, was the first time that the discussion had taken on such importance for both sides.

Following the discussions with Nixon in Bucharest, the Romanians turned their attention back to dealing with the Soviet Union and the fallout of the US president's visit. The visit had been arranged abruptly, forcing the Romanians to postpone their party congress by several days. On 4 August 1969, Ceausescu informed the RCP CC Permanent Presidium (RCP Politburo) of the discussions he had with Nixon, including those on Sino-American rapprochement. Though Ceausescu did not go into detail regarding Nixon's desire to use the Romanians as an intermediary for messages to the Chinese, he did mention Nixon's concern over the Sino-Soviet border conflict and his interest in ending China's diplomatic isolation. Just as importantly, Ceausescu believed he was creating a good personal rapport with Nixon. Both Ceausescu and Maurer seemed impressed that Nixon and his team were attentive to Bucharest's interpretations of the status of the international system. "[The Americans] developed on a different basis and do not have this feudal mentality, bureaucratic lordship, that you can even see with certain communists," Ceausescu told the Politburo. Nixon especially had made an impression on Ceausescu. "[Nixon and his staff] were lacking the arrogance which afflicts others, even though he is the president of a great power, not just of a capitalist country, which today, to be honest, is the greatest economic power in the world. He did not come here from the position of a great power, we went to the market, [Nixon] shook hands with all the farmers. Of course, he, too, was a farmer; until 20 years old he sold vegetables. From the point of view of social origins, he has a better background than many communists. His wife is a miner's daughter. [...] Many called him 'comrade' Nixon [...]."¹¹

[Document #4] The Romanian leaders' impression of having a personal rapport with Nixon would affect their handling of

US messages later on, as well as their understanding of the role Romania was to play within the White House's initiative.

Maurer's October 1969 Trip to Asia and his Meetings with Zhou Enlai

A few weeks after Nixon's discussions with the Romanian leadership, the communist world was shaken by Ho Chi Minh's death in Hanoi. The Vietnamese leader had deftly played the Soviets and the Chinese off each another to ensure that the Vietnamese would receive as much aid as possible from both sides. In death, he would play a role in bringing the two communist powers together once more.

Ho Chi Minh held an almost mythical position, not only among the Vietnamese communists, but also among other communist parties. His funeral brought to Hanoi a procession of foreign leaders and delegations from all the communist parties. For the first time since Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin's talks with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in 1965 the Soviet leadership met with their Chinese counterparts. The funeral also provided the first opportunity for the Romanian leadership to meet with the Chinese leadership following Nixon's visit to Bucharest in August. Since the Chinese leadership had excused itself from sending a delegation to Bucharest for the 25th anniversary of Romania's joining with the Allies in World War II, Ho's funeral offered the first and best chance Bucharest had to pass along Nixon's message to Beijing at the top level. Against the backdrop of the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese had informed the RCP leadership that they were unwilling to participate at the 10th Congress of the RCP and the 25th anniversary of 23 August 1944, due to of the participation of the "traitorous cliques, led by the Soviet revisionists" at these events. The Romanian DCM in Beijing, Ion Dorobantu, who reported the answer to Bucharest on 18 July 1969, stressed that the refusal had been firm but delivered in a friendly atmosphere by Cheng Jian, the general secretary of the International Relations Department of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee (CCP CC). The reply from the Chinese leadership expressed the hope that Beijing's refusal would not sour relations between the Chinese and Romanian people.¹² To reinforce the Chinese desire for maintaining good relations with the Romanians, Zhou Enlai, Vice Premier Li Xiannian, and other Chinese leaders attended the reception organized for the occasion by the Romanian embassy in Beijing, and openly stressed the friendly relations between the Romanian and Chinese people.¹³ **[Document #5]**

The Romanians had previously informed the Chinese leadership, in general terms, of the discussions with Nixon in Bucharest. But when Ceausescu met with the Chinese ambassador in Bucharest, he did not go into detail, preferring to pass the information directly to the Chinese leadership through a high-level delegation.¹⁴ Ion Gheorghe Maurer, the president of the Council of Ministers (effectively the Romanian prime minister) and Zhou Enlai's official counterpart, was chosen to lead the delegation traveling to Beijing and Hanoi.¹⁵

[Nixon] shook hands with all the farmers. Of course, he too was a farmer [...] From the point of view of social origins, he has a better background than many communists [...] Many called him "Comrade" Nixon.

The Romanians and Chinese met twice during Maurer's trip to Hanoi, both times during Maurer's stopovers in Beijing. The first meeting, took place shortly after the Romanians arrived in Beijing on 7 September, and lasted several hours. Maurer informed Zhou of his and Ceausescu's discussions with Nixon. There were strong tendencies in the US toward normalizing relations with the PRC, Maurer told Zhou. US Ambassador-at-Large Averell Harriman had talked to Maurer about this issue, as had Ambassador John Kenneth Galbraith on behalf of Robert Kennedy before the latter's assassination. While the Romanians had informed the Chinese before of Washington's desire to improve Sino-American relations, Maurer wanted to make sure that the Chinese premier clearly understood the context of the August discussion between Ceausescu and Nixon in order to understand the importance of the message sent by the White House. Bucharest, Maurer added, believed that the message represented a genuine desire on behalf of the top US leadership to open a dialogue with Beijing.¹⁶ **[Document #6]**

Nixon was also concerned with the continuation of the Vietnam War and with a possible escalation of the conflict between China and the Soviet Union, Maurer explained. The Vietnam War, especially, held Nixon's attention, and, according to Maurer, Nixon believed that if the Vietnamese would not negotiate in good faith by November 1969, the Americans would be forced to "reassess" the situation. The most likely explanation of Nixon's comments is that Nixon was sending a warning through the Romanians in August 1969 to ensure that the actions he would order in October 1969—the readiness increase of US nuclear forces—would be noticed in the Soviet Union (and possibly in China as well). The Romanian prime minister had no idea what Nixon had in store, and it is unlikely that, if he did, he would have been so open in his praise of Nixon's desire to resolve the Vietnam conflict through negotiations.¹⁷ Following the discussion on the Vietnam War, the conversation turned to relations within the socialist bloc, and Soviet pressure on Romania.

Zhou Enlai's answers focused on the Vietnamese issue. Advising the Romanians to stay out of the cauldron as much as possible, Zhou stressed that the Chinese position remained that it was up to the Vietnamese leadership to decide whether to end the war through negotiation or fighting. Zhou did not concentrate on the message from Nixon, other than to say that

the US and China could discuss various issues in Warsaw.¹⁸ **[Document #6]**

The second discussion, which took place on 11 September, as the Romanian delegation returned from Hanoi, focused even more on the Soviet Union than the discussions during the first meeting. After four polemical years of political, and military clashes, the Soviet and Chinese premiers, Kosygin and Zhou, had just met in Beijing.¹⁹ While their meeting did not resolve any of the outstanding issues between the two superpowers, it did at least lead to an agreement to pull back some of the troops on the Sino-Soviet border in order to prevent future border clashes that might otherwise escalate. Maurer arrived just minutes after the departure of the Soviet delegation and was again received by Zhou at the airport. Aside from a brief exchange about Kissinger's personality—Maurer described Nixon as being very trusting of Kissinger—the discussion concentrated on the Soviet Union and the international communist movement.²⁰ **[Document #8]**

Apparently, the message from Nixon had come a little too early. Mao Zedong was not yet fully ready to reach a rapprochement with the Americans.²¹ The Chinese also worried about their status in the international communist movement, and were worried that any rapprochement with the Americans would be interpreted as a reaction to fear of the Soviet Union. But Mao had already started the process by which he was to justify the incoming policy shift. Changing the focus from American imperialism to the dangers of Soviet revisionism combined with the emergence of the new concept of “socialist imperialism” to allow the Chinese leadership to maintain its revolutionary credentials while pragmatically dealing with the geo-strategic dangers it faced from the Soviet Union. It also fit into Mao's ideological view of the international system.

To the White House it seemed feelers to the Chinese had been rebuffed. Yet starting in February 1969, Mao Zedong, through Zhou Enlai, had ordered four Chinese marshals who had been marginalized during the Cultural Revolution to study the problems of the international system and produce options for consideration by the Central Committee and at the CCP Congress. Shortly after Chen Yi's 17 September report, a decision was made that contacts with the US were to begin.²² The Nixon administration was also moving toward forcing a beginning of contacts. Walter Stoessel, the US ambassador in Warsaw, had been directly instructed by Nixon to attempt to make contact with the Chinese chargé, Lei Yang, possibly at a reception.²³ Having done so—and been rebuffed by the Chinese diplomat—Stoessel decided to wait until the Chinese embassy received guidance from Beijing.²⁴ On 11 December Lei and Stoessel met informally at the Chinese embassy, where the US ambassador proposed the resumption of ambassadorial-level talks. While in his report to Beijing, Lei Yang suggested that the Chinese adopt a “wait and see” attitude to the American proposal, Mao met with the Pakistani ambassador in Beijing and asked that a message be passed to the US that “if President Nixon intends to resume contacts with China” he should first try to use “the official channel of communication in Warsaw.”²⁵ Pakistani ambassador

to the US, Agha Hilaly, met with Kissinger on 19 December to deliver that message.²⁶

On 17 December, two days before Mao's message through Pakistan was to be relayed to the White House, Romanian Deputy Foreign Minister George Macovescu met with Kissinger in Washington to discuss bilateral relations, the Vietnam negotiations, and China. According to Kissinger's notes, Macovescu began his presentation by saying that the Chinese were interested in the possibility of contacts with the Americans, but offered no specifics.²⁷ He then moved on to the Vietnam issue.

Without access to Macovescu's instructions, it is difficult to judge why Zhou Enlai's message, given to Maurer on 7 September 1969 and suggesting possible discussions through the Warsaw ambassadorial channel, had apparently not been transmitted to Washington. It is possible that Macovescu had not been fully briefed on the Maurer-Zhou discussions in Beijing. He was not a member of the politburo and would not automatically see the full minutes of conversation when they were distributed to the other politburo members. Even his boss, foreign minister Corneliu Manescu, was merely a candidate member to the politburo and thus invited to participate only in certain discussions. Much less likely is that Macovescu, given his involvement in the Vietnam War issue over the previous two years, overlooked the importance of the message and concentrated more on the messages from Hanoi.²⁸ Kissinger certainly would have noted and recorded any comments from Macovescu suggesting that the Chinese leadership would approve a resumption of contacts in Warsaw. Though the only record available is the US version of the memorandum of conversation, it is unlikely that Kissinger would miss something that important given his interest in the subject and the resumption of unofficial contact in Warsaw only a week earlier. Whatever the reasoning behind it, the Romanians failed to transmit the Chinese leadership's interest in holding exploratory discussions in Warsaw. It was the first of a series of decisions taken by the Romanians about their timing that would ultimately lead to their exclusion from the secret contacts, and, at least partially, affect their standing with the Chinese.

Ceausescu's Trip to Washington in October 1970 and the Renewal of the Romanian Channel

Though initial Sino-US discussions in Warsaw showed progress, a series of unfortunate coincidences delayed the resumption of talks indefinitely. The public nature of the ambassadorial talks, and the bureaucratic procedures that the White House had to follow to clear messages for Beijing through that channel, hampered substantive exchanges. The White House went through the good offices of Pakistan to send another message to the Chinese, suggesting the establishment of a secret communication channel between Washington and Beijing, a channel in which information that could be effectively controlled by the White House staff. The Chinese, however, delayed their response to the overture.²⁹



Mircea Munteanu (CWIHP/GWU) presents his findings on Romanian diplomacy in the Cold War at the State Department conference on Sino-American Rapprochement, October 2006.

The 25th anniversary meeting at the UN in October 1970 offered the chance to renew the secret messages to the Chinese, again through the highest levels. Both Ceausescu and Yahya Khan came to New York and Washington, and both met with Nixon in the Oval Office for detailed discussions with the president on various issues, including reopening a channel of communication with the Chinese. Nixon sent the same message through both interlocutors: the US, and he personally, remained interested in discussing avenues of normalization with the Chinese leadership, including potential high-level meetings, an ease of trade and travel restrictions, and other issues short of full diplomatic relations. This, Nixon stressed in his discussion with Ceausescu, was to be accomplished at a later time, after the two countries had established a rapport. Ceausescu promised to pass along any information that Nixon deemed necessary to send to Beijing. If the US had specific proposals, he would also pass them along. The Romanians, Ceausescu said, had been trying to persuade the Chinese for 15 years to improve their relations with the Yugoslavs, and finally relations between the PRC and Yugoslavia had improved. Sino-American relations, too, had to begin somewhere.³⁰

While Nixon had not made any additional concessions to the Chinese, his messages through the Romanian and Pakistani channels certainly reiterated his interest in renewing contact. Nixon remained interested in maintaining contact, the Romanians told the Chinese, first through the Chinese ambassador in Bucharest, and later, directly to Zhou Enlai during the trip of Gheorghe Radulescu, the Romanian vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers (deputy premier) to Vietnam and China. Radulescu's primary mission to Beijing was to negotiate the further development of Sino-Romanian economic cooperation and obtain credits for freely convertible currency and turn-key factories. Yet Radulescu was also instructed to give Mao Zedong a letter from Ceausescu and describe to the Chinese leadership the conclusions reached by

the Romanian leadership following Ceausescu's trip to New York and Washington. He met with Zhou on 21 November, his first day in Beijing, and had a four-hour conversation with the Chinese premier. On 12 December 1970, in a report to Ceausescu following his return from Beijing, Radulescu recounted his conversations with the Chinese leadership. While the minutes of that meeting are not currently available, Radulescu quoted extensively from the minutes of his conversation with Zhou in his report. After receiving Nixon's message indicating his desire to restart the dialogue, Zhou, according to Radulescu's report, stated that "Nixon knew that Comrade Ceausescu would inform the Chinese leadership of this message. What the Americans say now is not of any major consequence. Between China and the US there is only one problem—the issue of Taiwan." Radulescu asked if this was what the Romanian leadership should transmit to Washington. Zhou responded that, after having discussed this issue in the Central Committee, and stressing that this was authorized by Mao Zedong and Lin Biao, the message the Romanians should transmit to Washington was verbatim the message that the Chinese would send through the Pakistani channel, including an offer for President Nixon to visit the PRC.³¹ **[Document #9]**

A few days later, Zhou Enlai repeated the same message in a discussion with Yahya Khan.³² Preoccupied with the East Pakistan floods and the Pakistani national elections (which began on 3 December 1970), Khan delayed transmission of the message to Washington until the first week of December. Pakistani ambassador Hilaly would deliver that message to Kissinger on 9 December. Not having heard anything, either from the Pakistanis or from the Romanians, Kissinger had thought that the Chinese were once again delaying their response, and that, at the very least, Khan's visit to Beijing had not revealed any new Chinese reactions.³³ It might have been that the Chinese, and Mao specifically, had another message in store, and that they had requested from both the Pakistani and the Romanians to delay transmission of the message to Washington until a later date.³⁴ Whatever the reason for the delay on the Pakistani side, the Romanian delay was even more puzzling.³⁵ The Romanians waited until 11 January 1971, when Corneliu Bogdan, the Romanian ambassador in Washington met with Kissinger and told him of the Chinese communication.³⁶ Just as in September 1969, Bucharest took its time passing the message to Washington.

Choosing the Pakistani Channel

If there had been a reason for the Chinese to request that the Romanians (and the Pakistanis) delay transmission of Mao's message to Nixon, that delay will remain a reason for continued speculation unless a more complete set of discussion transcripts emerges from the Chinese side. Whatever the reasons, the Chinese also used other means to ensure that the US "got the message." The invitation extended by Mao to American journalist Edgar Snow, and the coverage received by his visit

and meeting with Mao in the Chinese press can also be interpreted as a message that the Chinese leadership was preparing for contacts with the US. The White House, however, missed the message. Kissinger later recalled that “the inscrutable Chairman was trying to convey something. [...] Eventually, I came to understand that Mao intended to symbolize that American relations now had his personal attention, but by that point it was a purely academic insight: we had missed the point where it mattered. Excessive subtlety had produced a failure of communication.”³⁷ But the message was also meant to be seen in China, and was also directed at the Chinese people.³⁸

When Ambassador Bogdan met Kissinger on 11 January 1970 to deliver the message from Zhou Enlai and the Chinese leadership, the cards had already been dealt. Nixon, hopeful that the Pakistani channel would continue to work better than the Romanian channel, told Kissinger to cool contacts with the Romanians as to “not appear too eager [to the Chinese] and wait for them [the Chinese] to respond to our initiative.”³⁹ No message was sent again through the Romanian channel. On 29 January, Bogdan called again on Kissinger to inquire, prior to his departure to Bucharest, if a response was forthcoming from the White House. Kissinger only suggested that the US was prepared to talk, wherever the Chinese were willing, and that the US was not committed to having discussions through the Warsaw channel.⁴⁰ This was simply a courtesy response to the Romanian ambassador. Part of the reason for the US reticence toward responding via Bucharest was a fear in Kissinger’s inner circle that the Romanian leadership had been penetrated by the Soviet intelligence services. Given the premium on secrecy the administration placed on the rapprochement with the PRC, the fear that the Soviets (and subsequently the media and the Taiwan lobby in the US) would find out about the thaw between Beijing and Washington before the administration was ready to make it public effectively closed the door on the Romanian channel.⁴¹

Washington was not the only place where the Romanians found themselves excluded, as the Chinese also cut off communications through the Bucharest channel. On 23 March 1971, when Vice Premier Radulescu was again in Beijing to finalize the economic agreements reached in the fall of 1970, he informed Zhou of Bogdan’s discussion with Kissinger. Zhou simply thanked the Vice Premier, stating that similar messages had been delivered through other channels, and that, given the difference between the US and Chinese positions on Taiwan and Indochina, China had nothing to talk about with the United States.⁴² **[Document #10]**

Preparations for the historic meeting between Kissinger and Zhou were made via Pakistan, while the Romanians remained on the outside. When Ceausescu visited Beijing in June 1971, during his meeting with Mao, the Chinese leader asked what Ceausescu thought of his “ping-pong diplomacy.”⁴³ Concerning the Sino-American rapprochement, the discussion with Mao was limited to a few comments. The conversations with Zhou and other Chinese leaders have not yet been released in Romania or China. However, given the

advanced nature of discussions through the Hilaly channel, it is unlikely that Zhou would have mentioned anything of substance to the Romanian delegation. The special relationship between the Romanians and the Chinese did offer Bucharest a small success: on 16 July, a few hours before the world was to learn that Nixon and Kissinger had succeeded in the opening to China, the Romanian ambassador was called to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where he was told about Kissinger’s secret visit and the agreement for a presidential visit.⁴⁴

Communication Breakdown?

It will remain a matter of speculation what would have happened had the Romanians transmitted, in a timely fashion, the two communications they received from the Chinese in September 1969 and November 1970.⁴⁵ The question remains as to how far the Chinese were willing to go through the Romanian channel, knowing full well the balancing act the Romanians had to perform in order to maintain their independence of action vis-à-vis Moscow. Throughout the discussions between the Romanians and the Chinese, Beijing asked if Bucharest had informed the Soviets of the American position; the Romanians answered affirmatively. It is unclear how much the Romanians had actually told the Soviets, most likely passing on general ideas without any specifics.⁴⁶ Even so, the Romanian channel was much more open to Soviet influence than the Pakistani channel, something that both Washington and Beijing were keenly aware of.

What the documents—some of which have been translated and are included below—do make clear is that the Chinese were not, as previously thought, entirely averse to using the Romanians as a liaison. Having adopted the marshals’ suggestion to “play the US card,” Mao was willing to use whatever means at his disposal to make sure that the US did not miss his message. Concerned or not about Soviet penetration, the messages the Chinese were sending through the Romanians and the Pakistanis were, until the final decision, virtually the same. For all of his mistrust of the Romanians, Kissinger too was ready to deal with Bucharest. Yet the Romanian delay in transmitting the messages meant that the situation would, in the end, resolve itself: Pakistan had been the preferred option, and now it seemed like Pakistan was better able to play the role of an intermediary. By 11 January 1971, Nixon had already decided to cut the Romanians out of the loop, and Bucharest remained on the outside until the end.

Unless evidence surfaces that the Chinese had requested that Bucharest not pass the messages on to Washington until after a certain date, Ceausescu’s decision to delay transmission remains inexplicable. Possibly Ceausescu decided to transmit the message based on his own schedule, hoping that he might be able to combine a successful Romanian initiative with additional requests for foreign aid and preferential treatment from the White House. Such an explanation would take into account the increasing self-importance Ceausescu was beginning to display in his dealings with the world.

It is also possible, though unlikely, that Ceausescu intentionally delayed the transmission of the message so as not to be faced with the possibility of being held responsible by Moscow for bringing the Chinese and the Americans together. That Romania was openly arguing that Sino-American rapprochement would aid world peace was one thing, and Ceausescu relished the position of a maverick in the Communist bloc. Yet he may have considered the possibility of the Soviets holding him responsible for bringing Washington and Beijing to the discussion table as too high a personal risk. More information from the Romanian archives on the internal discussions of the issue are needed to shed additional light on this question.

What seems clear from the documents is that Bucharest chose, for its own reasons, to delay passing Chinese messages to the White House. Even so, Bucharest's decision did little to affect its relations with Washington. The Romanians were able to maintain open channels of communication with the White House, and continued to secure support from the administration on its requests for credits, and economic aid. In the end, however, the White House was unwilling to spend any political capital to push for MFN status for Romania. While it supported Romania's admission to GATT in November 1971, it made little to no effort to push Congress to pass any exemptions for Romania from the Fino Amendment. As several international crises were coming to a close in the early 1970s, Bucharest's importance to the Nixon and subsequent administrations began to diminish. With the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 and the signing of the Helsinki Accords, human rights began to take center stage in East-West relations rather than the *realpolitik* on which Ceausescu's room for maneuver was based. With few exceptions, Ceausescu's domestic record began moving to the forefront, and by the 1980s his maverick foreign policies could no longer outweigh his gruesome domestic human rights abuses in the world's eyes.



Notes

1. The author is grateful to the efforts made by Ambassador Romulus Ioan Budura in Bucharest for the declassification and publication of Romanian documents on Romanian-Chinese relations. The collection he edited, *Relatiile Romano-Chineze, 1880-1974, Documente*, (Bucharest, 2005), provides the basic documentary text for those interested Sino-Romanian cooperation. Information on the collection is available on CWIHP's Romanian Initiative webpage, which can be reached from www.cwihp.org.

2. The "Packers Channel" was a State Department codename for the Romanian attempts to convince the North Vietnamese to begin negotiations with the United States. Benjamin H. Read, Special Assistant to Secretary Dean Rusk recalled during his oral history interview that the channel was codenamed after the Green Bay Packers "because it looked like a winner." (BHR interview II, p. 20, available at the LBJ Library online, www.lbjlib.utexas.edu).

3. Henry A. Kissinger, *White House Years* (Little, Brown, and Co, 1979), p. 181. He repeated this view in 2004 during a short conversation with the author at the Woodrow Wilson Center.

4. The Pakistani version of the Chinese message was transmitted to Henry Kissinger at the White House on Dec. 9, 1970, nearly three weeks after it had been received by President Yahya Khan; see F. S. Aijazuddin, *From a Head, to a Head, through a Head* (Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 43-44.

5. For additional documents on the Sino-Soviet split and its effects on the Sino-American rapprochement see Chen Jian and David Wilson, "All Under The Heaven Is Great Chaos" in *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* No. 11, pp. 155-176; Christian Ostermann, "New Evidence on the Sino-Soviet Dispute, 1969-71" in *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 6-7, pp. 186-193. For discussions of the Sino-Soviet dispute and its effect on the Chinese position toward the US, see Chen Jian, *Mao and China's Cold War* (UNC Press, 2000), also William Burr, "Sino-American Relations, 1969: The Sino-Soviet Border War and Steps Toward Rapprochement" in *Cold War History*, 1:3, pp. 73-112, as well as the documents in this issue of the *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*.

6. See Vladimir Tismaneanu, "Gheorghiu-Dej and the Romanian Workers' Party: From de-Sovietization to the Emergence of National Communism," *Cold War International History Project Working Paper* No. 37, www.cwihp.org, and *Stalinism for All Seasons* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2003), chapter 7, pp. 187-232; see also Liviu Tirau, *Intre Washington si Moscova: Romania 1945-1965* (Bucharest, Tribuna: 2005), esp. p. 453-498.

7. See Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for all Seasons* and Tismaneanu, CWIHP Working Paper No. 37. See also Mihail Ionescu and Denis Deletant, "Romania and the Warsaw Pact, 1955-1989," *Cold War International History Project Working Paper* No. 43, and Tirau, *Intre Washington si Moscova*.

8. Memorandum of Conversation between President Richard Nixon and President [sic] Nicolae Ceausescu, Aug 2, 1969, Bucharest, Nixon Presidential Materials Project [NPMP], National Security Common Files [NSCF], Box 1023, Memcons—President Nixon—President Ceausescu August 2-3, 1969, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

9. See Aijazuddin, op. cit., and Kissinger, op. cit., pp. 180-81.

10. The conversation was described by Mircea Raceanu, former political officer in the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the US desk and later political officer in the Romanian Embassy in Washington during a discussion with the author. Raceanu participated at the Maurer-Crawford meeting as a translator and note-taker on the Romanian side.

11. Minutes of the Meeting of the RCP Politburo, 4 August 1969. ANIC, Chancellery, RCP CC, 109/1969, republished in Budura, op. cit., p. 936, available also in the CWIHP Virtual Archive at www.cwihp.org.

12. Telegram from Ion Dorobantu to Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Re the Reply of the Chinese Communist Party, AMAE, Telegram, Pekin, vol. II, 1969, p. 212-13. Republished in Budura, op. cit., p. 928-9; available at www.cwihp.org.

13. Telegram from Aurel Duma to Corneliu Manescu, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Re discussion with Zhou Enlai, Premier of the Council of State of the PRC, 23 August 1969, AMAE, Telegram, Pekin, vol. II, 1969, pp. 264-68. Republished in Budura, op. cit., p. 939-41; available at www.cwihp.org.

14. The minutes of the conversation between Ceausescu and the Chinese ambassador was not located, however, Maurer refers to it in his conversation with Zhou Enlai in 7 Oct. 1969.

15. While Maurer was in fact the Prime Minister, and, at least

theoretically, in a higher position than Ceausescu—who was the Secretary General of the RCP—there was no doubt that Maurer was not, in any way, a contender to Ceausescu's power within the Party. The distinction is, however, important because of a quote that has been extensively publicized concerning Zhou's reaction to the message from Nixon through Khan: "this is the first time this message has been received from a head [of state], to a head, through a head."

16. Minutes of Conversation between I. Gh. Maurer and Zhou Enlai, Beijing, 7 September 1969, ANIC, CCRCP International Relations Section, folder 72/1969, p. 4-30; Republished in Budura, *op. cit.*, p. 943-59; available at www.cwihip.org.

17. Nixon had not explained how he would reassess the situation, and, so Maurer was unable to tell Zhou anything other than the fact that the White House would be reassessing its position vis-à-vis negotiations. It now appears likely that Nixon was referring to the 1969 "Joint Chiefs of Staff Readiness Test" of October 1969, an attempt to test "the Mad-man theory" and push the Soviets to change their policy in Vietnam for fear that Nixon was ready to use nuclear weapons in Vietnam. For more information, see William Burr's analysis and Electronic Briefing Book at the National Security Archive www.nsarchive.org.

18. Zhou was making a reference to the possibility of opening up a dialogue with the Americans through ambassadorial talks in Warsaw, which while still ongoing on paper, had not been held for years. Minutes of Conversation between I. Gh. Maurer and Zhou Enlai, Beijing, 7 September 1969, ANIC, CCRCP International Relations Section, folder 72/1969, p. 6-30; Republished in Budura, *op. cit.*, p. 943-60; available at www.cwihip.org.

19. See Qiang Zhai, "Beijing and the Vietnam Conflict, 1964-1965. New Chinese Evidence," in *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 6/7, p. 232-42, and esp. 239-40;

20. Minutes of Conversation between I. Gh. Maurer and Zhou Enlai, Beijing, 11 September 1969, ANIC, CCRCP International Relations Section, folder 72/1969, pp. 35-65; Republished in Budura, *op. cit.*, p. 963-82; available at www.cwihip.org.

21. For a detailed discussion of the Chinese thinking on Sino-American rapprochement see "The Sino American Rapprochement, 1969-1972" in Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (UNC Press, 2001), p. 238-76. See also Nikolas Khoo, "Realism Redux: Investigating the Causes and Effects of Sino-US Rapprochement," *Cold War History*, 4:5, November 2005, p. 229-49.

22. Chen Jian, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

23. Memorandum of Conversation, "Conversation with the President," Sept 9, 1969, RG 59, SN 67-69, POL Chicom-USSR; copy from the National Security Archive.

24. US Embassy Cable 3706 to SecState, December 3, 1969, "Contact with the Communist Chinese," RG59, SN67-69, POL Chicom; copy from the National Security Archive.

25. Chen Jian, *op. cit.*, p. 251

26. Memorandum of Conversation, Agha Hilaly and Henry Kissinger, White House, December 19, 1969, NPMP, NSCF, box 624, Pakistan Vol. II; copy from the National Security Archive.

27. Memorandum of Conversation, Gheorghe Macovescu-Henry Kissinger, December 17, 1969, NPMP, NSCF, CF-Europe, Box 704, Folder Macovescu (Romania) [December 1969-November 1973].

28. Macovescu had been the lead Romanian Foreign Ministry official involved with in the Packers channel, and had traveled several times between Hanoi and Washington during the Romanian efforts to jump-start negotiations. The discussion on China accounts

for a mere 1.5 pages while the Vietnam discussion takes up two thirds of the nine pages memo.

29. For a discussion of the Pakistani channel and the messages sent during 1970, See Aijazuddin, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-44; see also Chen Jian, *op. cit.*, p. 254.

30. Memorandum of Conversation, Nicolae Ceausescu-Richard Nixon, Oval Office, October 26, 1970, NPMP, NSCF, box 936—VIP Visits.

31. Report by Gheroghe Radulescu to Nicolae Ceausescu, Secretary General of the RCP CC, "Regarding the visit of the Romanian governmental delegation in the PRC and DRV from 15 to 26 November 1970," 12 December 1970, ANIC, RCP CC Foreign Relations Section, 98/1970, p. 6-35; published in Budura, *op. cit.*, pp. 1021-42; available at www.cwihip.org. The text of the Chinese message is well known, and has been published repeatedly. See the text of the version given to the Romanians in the documents below. For the version given to the Pakistanis, see Aijazuddin, *op. cit.* As there was no break in the discussion with Radulescu—and thus Zhou Enlai had no chance to confer with Mao and Lin Biao—it should have been clear that the Chinese had received a similar message from other sources, and that the Romanians were, in effect, competing for the leadership of the channel to Beijing.

32. See Aijazuddin, *op. cit.*, pp. 42-43. Aijazuddin gives the date of Zhou Enlai passing the message to Yahya Khan as Nov. 23, 1970. See also Chen Jian, *op. cit.*, p. 254. Using Chinese sources, Chen Jian gives the date of the conversation as 14 November 1970. It is likely that Khan transmitted Nixon's message on 14 November but he received his reply from Zhou to the message only on the 23rd.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 45; Kissinger, *op. cit.*, p. 700

34. Kissinger raises this possibility, Kissinger, *op. cit.*, p. 700; Chen Jian suggests that this was the reason why the Romanians and the Pakistani did not transmit the information, Chen Jian, *op. cit.*, p. 254. There is no mention of that request in Radulescu's report to Ceausescu—though certainly that could have been transmitted orally to Ceausescu prior to writing the report.

35. There is a mention of a meeting between Deputy FM Macovescu and Kissinger on 17 Dec 1970 in the FRUS 1969-1976, Volume XVII, pp. 239-240. Most likely that editorial note refers to the 17 December 1969 meeting between Macovescu and Kissinger. If indeed, a meeting took place between Macovescu and Kissinger in December 1970, Macovescu would have had to transmit the Chinese message to the White House.

36. Memorandum for the President from Henry Kissinger, Re: Conversation with Ambassador Bogdan, 12 January 1971, NPMP, NSCF, box 1031, Exchanges leading up to the HAK Trip to China, Dec. 1969-July 1971 (1); copy from the National Security Archive.

37. Kissinger, *op. cit.*, 699.

38. Chen Jian, *op. cit.*, p. 256

39. Memorandum for the President, January 12, 1971. Nixon wrote his comments on the border of the memorandum.

40. Memorandum of Conversation, Ambassador Bogdan and Henry Kissinger, The White House, January 29, 1971, NPMP, NSCF, box 1033, Miscellaneous Memoranda Relating to HAK trip to PRC, July 1071, copy from the National Security Archive.

41. Author's conversation with William Smyser, former NSC assistant to Henry Kissinger, 24 October 2006, Woodrow Wilson Center. Mr. Smyser suggested that Kissinger was concerned with the possible penetration of the Romanian leadership by the KGB; given the possibility of using the Pakistani Channel, there was no need to

assume the security risk of going through the Romanians.

42. Beijing to Bucharest, Telegram from Ambassador Aurel Duma to Nicolae Ceausescu, Re: Talk with Zhou Enlai during the reception offered for Vice Premier Radulescu, AMAE, Telegrams, Peking, vol. I, 1971, p. 291, published in Budura, op. cit., p. 1057; available at www.cwihp.org

43. Memorandum of Conversation, Nicolae Ceausescu-Mao Zedong, RCP CC, Foreign Relations Section, 39/1971, pp. 3-20; republished in Budura, ed., p. 1068. available at www.cwihp.org

44. Telegram, Aurel Duma to FM Corneliu Manescu, July 16, 1971, AMAE, Telegrams, Peking, vol. II, 1971, pp. 293-5, published in Budura, op. cit., p. 1090; available at www.cwihp.org

45. Mr. Smyser was clear in that respect: as long as the possibility of a more secure channel existed, the Romanians would not be used.

46. The minutes of conversation between the Soviet Ambassador and Ceausescu following Nixon's visit to Bucharest is still unavailable. It is unlikely that the Romanians had gone into details about what was discussed with Nixon regarding China, especially as far as a regular diplomatic channel was concerned. For Maurer's response to Zhou Enlai's question about informing the Soviets, see the 11 September 1969 I. G. Maurer-Zhou Enlai conversation.



DOCUMENT No. 1

Telegram from Romanian Ambassador in Beijing Aurel Duma to Foreign Minister Corneliu Manescu Regarding Conversations with Representatives of the PRC Ministries of Trade, Foreign Affairs, and Defense, 13 May 1969

[Source: A.M.A.E., fond Telegrams, Beijing, vol. II, 1969, f. 24-28. Published in *Relatiile Romano-Chineze, 1880-1974 [Sino-Romanian Relations, 1880-1974]*, edited by Ioan Romulus Budura, (Bucharest, 2005), pp. 918-920. Translated for CWIHP by Madalina Cristoloveanu.]

No. 56 201
Confidential
Urgent

13 May 1969 Beijing
3:00 pm

On 12 May of this year we visited Qiao Guanhua, [China's] Deputy Foreign Minister. During the same day we held a dinner party attended by Li Qian, Vice Minister of Foreign Trade (member of the Chinese Communist Party, elected at the 9th Congress), Qiao Guanhua and Pan Zhenwu, the Director of the Foreign Relations Division of the Ministry of Defense.

We relate the following points from the conversations we had on these two occasions with the Deputy Foreign Minister:

1. Sino-Soviet Relations.

The armed clashes in the Bao Island area have continued over the past weeks. Military incidents of smaller proportions are also taking place in the Western sector of the border

(Xinjiang region). The Western media presents the incidents in this area of the border as being of great proportions. This news is of Soviet origin, which indicates certain intentions on the USSR's part. We can indeed expect incidents of greater proportions. The Soviet side has recently been intensifying military preparations along the border: troop dislocations, increased military technology, conducting [military] exercises, etc. According to the Chinese government's opinion, these actions constitute attempts at intimidation by the Soviet leadership, which does not believe in anything but the power of weapons and imagines that it could intimidate other states with nuclear weapons. Qiao Guanhua stated that this is a miscalculation, seeing that since Romania cannot be intimidated, how could China be intimidated?

China's consistent position is that these problems need to be resolved peacefully, through treaties, while maintaining the status quo until a solution is found.

The Chinese position, stating that the negotiations need to be based on the treaties signed by the two states in the second half of the last century, could be reconsidered only if the USSR would not stubbornly persist in its obstructionist attitude. Regardless, the Chinese government does not intend to claim the 1 million km squared of territory [in question].

Of course, in order to find a solution, an atmosphere of calm that is lacking at the moment is needed.

Under these conditions, the Chinese side looks with skepticism at the possible results of the meeting between the permanent commissions for navigation issues, scheduled to take place in mid-June in Khabarovsk.

Commenting on Podgorny's visit in the near future to Mongolia and to the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, Qiao Guanhua expressed his opinion that this is part of the [USSR's] attempts to encircle China.

2. Sino-American Relations.

The Chinese side continues to assess that no changes have occurred in the American position towards the People's Republic of China. As it continues to occupy Taiwan and lead a two-Chinas policy, the United States persists in its hostile position towards the People's Republic of China.

The American probing of China's position is part of the United States' duplicitous politics of combining aggression with negotiations. The Chinese government will assess the US attitude in regards to China's actions, not declarations.

The Sino-American talks in Warsaw were suspended as a result of the provocative actions of the American side. Resuming these talks will depend on the evolution of America's attitude.

3. The Vietnamese Question.

The Chinese government has no information on the situation in Vietnam other than the news related by the press.

At the 9th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, China reaffirmed its position regarding the fight of the Vietnamese people. The Chinese side considers that finding a solution

to the Vietnamese problem falls under the jurisdiction of the Vietnamese comrades.

Qiao Guanhua expressed his opinion that the contradictions remaining between the US and the Saigon regime only concern secondary matters, while their principal positions continue to be identical (the American intention of staying in South Vietnam and the wish of the Saigon regime to support the Americans).

Referring to the National Liberation Front, the Deputy Minister assessed that this represents a significant political and military force, adding, however, that the force will not be capable of reaching its goal if a deficient political road is taken (alluding to the politics of negotiations).

4. Sino-Indian Relations.

The recent incidents on the Sino-Indian border had no particular significance. If the Indian government truly wants improved relations with China, it should have not used these cases as propaganda. China had a confrontation with India (in 1962), it knows what it can do, and that is why it does not pay any more attention to these incidents.

As a matter of fact, the Indian propaganda around these incidents is coordinated with the Soviet [propaganda] in order to present China in an unfavorable light in front of international public opinion.

According to the Chinese government, India cannot give up its anti-Chinese propaganda because it would not be able to enjoy American and Soviet aid.

Recently, the Soviet leadership undertook new actions with the purpose of bringing about an Indo-Pakistani rapprochement targeted against China. These attempts are bound to fail since the Kashmir problem will never allow such a rapprochement.

5. Certain aspects of China's relations with the European socialist countries.

Currently, in certain European socialist countries a strong anti-Chinese campaign is taking place regarding the 9th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party and the incidents at the Sino-Soviet border. The most active are the Bulgarians, the Poles, and the Germans, while the Hungarians are the most moderate. The Chinese side understands the influence played by the presence of Soviet military forces in the territory of these countries on their attitude towards the People's Republic of China.

6. China's position on Israel

Israel is an artificial creation and represents an instrument of imperialist politics. The People's Republic of China does not recognize this country and does not maintain any relations with it.

Currently, certain Arab states have a reconciliatory position towards Israel under pressure from the Soviet Union, which is pursuing the consolidation of its position in the Near East.

Israel has committed an aggression and the People's Republic of China is supporting the cause of the Arab states against this aggression; however, China differentiates between Israel's leading circles and Israel's people. The Chinese gov-

ernment does not support the idea of annihilating Israel, yet it considers that under current conditions, supporting Israel's existence as a historical reality implies support for aggression.

To sum up, Qiao Guanhua informed that the Chinese side is working on sending an ambassador to Bucharest and hopes that he will arrive in his post before 23 August.

(ss.) A. Duma



DOCUMENT No. 2

Telegram from Aurel Duma to Corneliu Manescu Concerning the Information Passed to the PRC Foreign Ministry Regarding the Organization of the 10th RCP Congress and the Intention of Certain American Senators to Visit China, 3 June 1969

[Source: A.M.A.E., *fond Telegrams, Beijing, vol. II, 1969, f. 74-77. Published in Relatiile Romano-Chineze, 1880-1974 [Sino-Romanian Relations, 1880-1974], edited by Ioan Romulus Budura, (Bucharest, 2005), pp. 921-923. Translated for CWIHP by Madalina Cristoloveanu.]*

No. 56 228

3 June 1969, Beijing

Confidential

1:30 pm

Urgent

1. During the meeting on 2 June of this year, I presented to Qiao Guanhua, Deputy Foreign Minister of People's Republic of China, the contents of the decision concerning the convocation of the 10th Congress of the RCP and the CC theses for the congress of the party.

Qiao Guanhua carefully listened to my exposition but did not ask any questions or express his opinion. He thanked me for it and declared that the document composed by the RCP CC would be closely examined by the Chinese leadership.

Furthermore, the deputy minister inquired about the state of the Romanian economy. I briefly mentioned to him our current concerns regarding this matter.

2. On the occasion of the same visit, I informed Qiao Guanhua about the intention of certain American senators to make an unofficial visit to China.

The deputy minister expressed thanks for the information and made the following comments in regards to it:

"You are familiar with the position of the Chinese government towards the US. It is known that in February 1950, Truman, the American president at that time, declared that the Taiwan issue is China's domestic problem, but only a few months after this declaration, the Americans occupied this Chinese territory and the Taiwan Strait with troops, and eventually announced the idea of creating two Chinas.

We support peaceful coexistence with all states, including the US, but the principles of this policy cannot be applied to a state that occupies a Chinese territory and leads a policy hos-

tile to China.

In our opinion, the American initiatives towards bilateral relations with China do not represent a new policy, but rather new methods of the Nixon administration, which realized that the US was not able to obtain results by promoting power politics vis-à-vis China. In fact, Nixon's policy is still reactionary, warlike, and hostile towards China.

The Chinese nation has not accepted the American policy towards China even in the past, when it was even less prepared both politically and economically. Thus, it will be even less disposed to accept this policy now.

In regards to the creation of two Chinas, even Jiang Jieshi [Chiang Kai-shek] is against this but, of course, also for other reasons. On one side, he aspires to regain China, and on the other side, he expresses the general feelings of Taiwan's population, which does not wish to live separately from China.

It is [interesting] to point out that the Soviets are vigorously pushing towards the creation of two Chinas; a convincing example attesting to this is the participation of the Jiang-Jieshi-ists at a conference in Bulgaria. We consider that there is a possibility that the Soviet Union will send an ambassador to Taiwan."

In response to my remark that the main problem would be the American withdrawal from Taiwan, Qiao Guanhua pointed out that "prior to the American withdrawal from Taiwan and from the Taiwan Strait, a problem discussed at the ambassadorial level for over ten years, the tensions in Sino-American relations cannot be reduced [and] other matters cannot be discussed." He then continued, stating that "the Chinese government never believed that the Americans could ever be driven out of Taiwan by diplomatic means [alone]. We consider that this problem will not be solved for a long time to come, due to the fact that the Americans will not easily renounce their hostile policy towards China."

Referring to certain aspects of the situation in Taiwan, Qiao Guanhua stated that at the Guomindang [Kuomintang] Congress that recently took place, Jiang Jingguo [Chiang Ching-kuo] was named as successor of his father, Jiang Jieshi. He added that, even though the alliance between Taiwan and the US is very close, Jiang Jieshi does not allow American control of his army. In fact, the deputy minister underlined, there are not many American troops in Taiwan, but this territory is controlled by the American Navy, which patrols the Taiwan Strait.

While relating the above mentioned issues, Qiao Guanhua spoke in a [calm] distinguished tone.

I pointed out the fact that the deputy minister did not declare that he would inform the leadership about the American senators' intention to visit China and did not promise that he would give an answer.

3. On a separate note, Qiao Guanhua pointed out that the Soviet reaction to the Chinese government's declaration on 24 May of this year, concerning the border issues between the two countries, temporarily manifested itself as an intensifi-

cation of the provocations at the border. Regarding the Joint Commission for Navigation Issues, he mentioned that the Chinese side agrees that it should meet in June, but he did not specify whether the Chinese government has accepted the 18 June date proposed by the Soviet side.

When asked about the visit to Beijing of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam's chief delegate to the Paris talks, the deputy minister indicated that he made contact with Chinese officials and emphasized that the Chinese side knows about the Vietnamese problem better than is depicted in the press. Qiao Guanhua stated that, according to some statements, the Vietnamese are determined to fight until they obtain final victory. He underscored that as long as Vietnam would continue the fight, the Chinese government will strongly support it. (I believe he was alluding to president Ho Chi Minh's recent speech before the higher military leaders, which was fully published in the 30 May 1969 edition of the *Renmin Ribao* [*People's Daily*] newspaper.)

The meeting, which lasted an hour, took place in a close comradely atmosphere. From the Chinese side participated Li Lianqing, deputy director, and a Ministry Official as translator. I was accompanied by First Secretary I. Dorobantu.

(ss.) A. Duma



DOCUMENT No. 3

Telegram from Ion Dorobantu, Romanian Charge d'Affaires in Beijing to Corneliu Manescu Regarding the Reply of the Chinese Communist Party to the Invitation to Send a Delegation to the 10th Congress of the RCP, 18 July 1969

[Source: A.M.A.E., fond Telegrams, Beijing, vol. II, 1969, f. 212-213. Published in *Relatiile Romano-Chineze, 1880-1974* [*Sino-Romanian Relations, 1880-1974*], edited by Ioan Romulus Budura, (Bucharest, 2005), p. 928. Translated for CWIHP by Madalina Cristoloveanu.]

No. 56 312

18 July 1969, Beijing

Confidential

Urgent

On 18 July of this year, Sheg Jian, general secretary of the Foreign Affairs Department of the CCP CC, presented me with the letter of reply from the CCP CC to the letter signed by Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu, general secretary of the RCP CC, in which a delegation of the CCP CC is invited to participate at the meetings of the 10th Congress of the Romanian Communist Party.

The Chinese letter holds the date of July 1969, it is addressed to the RCP Central Committee and begins with "Dear comrades."

In the first paragraph of the document, the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee confirms the receipt of

the letter from the RCP Central Committee and expresses its gratitude for the extended invitation.

In addition, the letter contains the following [text]:

“As we know, the traitor cliques together with the Soviet revisionists will participate at the congress of your party. We do not wish to be seated next to them, these acolytes of American imperialism, traitors of Marxism-Leninism.

Under these circumstances we do not feel comfortable sending a party delegation to your congress. We hope that you will understand our motivation.

China and Romania are allies, the Romanian people and the Chinese people are allies, and the Chinese people will support, as in the past, your struggle to defend your country. We express our conviction that the relations between our countries will continue to grow.”

I assured Sheng Jian that I would immediately pass on the message of this letter in the country.

In answer to a question, the interlocutor stated that the CCP CC Foreign Affairs Department did not receive an answer from the leadership of the communist parties in Thailand and Burma to the letters addressed to them.

The consultation took place in a close, friendly atmosphere.

We mention that diplomats from the socialist countries are persistently inquiring about the reply of the Chinese Communist Party to the invitation to send a delegation to the X Congress of the RCP.

I replied that I am not aware of a response from the Chinese side to this invitation.

We kindly ask you for [further] instructions.

(ss.) I. Dorobantu



DOCUMENT No. 4

Minutes of the Meeting of the RCP CC Executive Committee Regarding US President Richard Nixon's Visit to Romania (2-3 August), and the Discussions that Took Place on that Occasion, 4 August 1969

[Source: A.N.I.C. fond CC of RCP—Chancellery, file 109/1969, f.2-10. Obtained by Mircea Munteanu. Also published in *Published in Relatiile Romano-Chineze, 1880-1974 [Sino-Romanian Relations, 1880-1974]*, edited by Ioan Romulus Budura, (Bucharest, 2005), pp. 929-936. Translated for CWIHP by Madalina Cristoloveanu.]

Transcript
of the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the RCP CC
4 August 1969

[Excerpts]

[...]

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: We thought of making a short presentation of Nixon's visit and the discussions we had.

In regards to the visit, you are familiar with the way it took place, so I can't tell you anything more about it.

The discussion took place on two occasions due to the short time available. Comrade Maurer represented us in the discussion of the more important issues, while Kissinger represented the Americans. Other participants from our side were the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of International Trade and from their side several of Nixon's deputies and counselors who discussed in greater detail economic issues and the development of relations in the fields of culture and science.

During the discussions we had with Nixon, we tackled two main sets of issues: the first one involved bilateral relations while the second dealt with international issues.

[...]

Regarding more general international affairs issues, he [Nixon] began with a broad statement regarding his visit to Romania, saying that he considered this visit to represent an expression of the American wish to develop relations with Romania and other socialist states and that he did not come to Romania with the intention of contributing to a further deterioration of relations between Romania and other socialist countries, but on the contrary, he wished for Romania to have good relations with the other socialist countries. He stated that they understood that Romania had a different social regime, but that they were determined to respect Romania's independence and social regime, and that they wished to develop relations under these conditions.

I told him that if we had believed that this visit would have as an ulterior motive the deterioration of relations between Romania and the other socialist states, we would have not agreed to the visit.

He subsequently stated: “let's talk like we did when I wasn't president.” In fact, he is a man who does not show disapproval when told things he does not agree with or when he has a different point of view, like others do.

Therefore, first of all, I would have told him not to come if I had had this impression. Then, I told him that we also view this visit in the spirit of cohabitation between us and states with other forms of social regimes.

In the discussion of international issues, more general issues were discussed, in a more theoretical setting [*pe principii inalte*] so to speak, regarding the principles that relations between states should be based on; the prospect of the development of international life; we spoke more broadly of principles such as the equality of rights, sovereignty, and non-interference in domestic affairs; we tackled the fact that the US supports a set of reactionary, retrograde, and feudal regimes, and we do not understand why the United States of America, which was itself supported by France in the fight for national freedom and considered this as fair, is supporting today reactionary regimes.

In principle, he stated that they, too, believe that relations

should be based on mutual respect, on respect for sovereignty, and on the right of every country and nation to develop independently, and that they are prepared to, and wish to, respect these rights of every nation.

He spoke to us about the visit to India and Pakistan, about the concerns he had regarding the conflict between India and Pakistan, and conveyed that they were making use of extensive resources for arming themselves even though they had a low standard of living and could make better use of their resources to develop their economies. However, the situation was rather complicated and he could not see signs that the conditions existed for these problems to be resolved. And so he got to China.

He asserted that according to the American view, the People's Republic of China leads an aggressive policy in its relations with neighbors and referred particularly to the border conflict with India and Chinese intervention in Korea.

Here we brought up history and further discussed the issues. Kissinger, being a historian, stated that there were no instances in India's history when it led an aggressive policy. Here the Korean issue was also raised. I told them that the Chinese intervened there under special conditions, during war, but that after the armistice they withdrew, proving that the Chinese were not interested in territorial gains.

I explained to him that, in our opinion, it was necessary to renounce the policy of refusing to recognize China and admit it to the United Nations, since this policy did not help in solving international problems, considering not only issues in Asia, but even broader issues, a point with which he agreed. He asserted that in 25 years China would have a billion inhabitants and would certainly be a great power.

In this context, he also expressed his concern in regard to the border conflict between China and the Soviet Union, underlining that the main reason they were particularly concerned was that a conflict between China and the Soviet Union would not limit itself to these two countries and would have grave consequences. Thus, they were worried by the possibility of an escalation of this conflict.

At this point, I explained our position and told him that it would be truly serious if the situation escalated into a conflict, but that we believed things would not get to that point, and that if anything was to be done, it should be finding a way to avoid such a situation.

I say here what Nixon said and I don't know what he truly thinks, but in any case, this was his point of view and his analysis of the situation.

Since we are here—I am not following the actual order of discussion—I will move to the Vietnam issue. In fact, this topic took us the whole morning yesterday. The Vietnam issue occupied a very important place in our discussions. He broadly explained the point of view of the United States. Surely, it is not the history [of its involvement that matters], since we agreed that it is not necessary to talk about history, but of how to conceive a solution to this problem. He declared several times that one of his goals is to bring this war to an end. He

explained that they felt that progress had been made but that they did not manage to start actual talks with North Vietnam and with the National Liberation Front, and that this worried him, given that they would have to reevaluate the situation to see what they can do next if within the next three months—until November when there will be one year since the cessation of the bombardments—they would not manage to reach a resolution. He said that they were ready to withdraw their troops within a year, under the condition that North Vietnam withdraws its troops and a newly elected, internationally-controlled government was accepted.

Of course, the discussion was more complex and I don't want to get into any details, but we asked questions. We explained our point of view and the fact that we understood that North Vietnam was ready and wished to reach a solution through negotiations, but that this involved the cessation of the war, the withdrawal of troops and putting together a coalition government, as the National Liberation Front demanded. There was a longer discussion surrounding this topic with questions and answers.

What mainly resulted from this is that in the end, it is possible to have discussions and the solutions can be diverse, but the main point is finding a solution. Their main concern is that these discussions will take into consideration the existence of [South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van] Thieu, the government in the South. He talked about a commission and said that, in any case, they did not interpret this as abandoning the Thieu government and that they definitely wished—and he repeated this even during the meal—to end this war, but on reasonable terms that would not harm American interests or reputation.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Generally, he stated that the government would definitely be the result of elections, but they would not accept a solution that would eliminate Thieu without popular consent.

[...]

Ceausescu: To what extent he will go all the way, we will have to see.

We explained to him that, according to the contacts we made with United States allies, we also noticed in their case a wish to find ways to sort out relations and build up European security and we consider that this would be very important for the future development of relations, by leading to a lasting peace—as they say they desire.

These were the issues approached in our discussions.

The following could be said as a general conclusion:

First, it was a manifestation of the American interest in developing relations with Romania. He expressed several times that they truly wished that this visit would lead to the growth and progress of relations between our countries. Then, he expressed his desire to expand relations with all other socialist countries of Europe and even revealed his wish and intention to visit other European socialist states. During the exchange with the Bulgarian and Yugoslav ambassadors he



China and Eastern Europe from the 1960s to the 1980s, Beijing, 24-26 March 2004

Former East-bloc diplomats Doncho Donchev (Bulgaria) and Joachim Schroeter (Germany) at the conference sponsored by the Parallel History Project. For more information see <http://www.cwihp.org>

actually stated that he hoped to have the opportunity to visit these countries. He also told [Soviet Ambassador to Romania Aleksandr] Basov that he wanted to visit the Soviet Union. Basov wanted by all means to find out when, but did not manage to get an answer. Overall, I left with the impression that the United States was contemplating a policy that would create conditions for the improvement of relations with the socialist countries and, while placing relations with the Soviet Union at the forefront, it wishes to simultaneously develop relations with the other socialist countries, a correct position in my opinion. I believe that if these opportunities will be used wisely we will have a lot to gain, generally vis-à-vis relations with socialist countries and world peace.

Another conclusion that I drew from these discussions—from the official ones and from the ones on the road and at the dinner—it seems that they are preoccupied to a certain extent with reorienting their policies in a way that would help them find solutions to disengage militarily from Vietnam and avoid engaging in similar military actions in the future. Of course, it is probably not only his position but also the position of America's leading circles, which are beginning to understand that this military intervention strategy has no prospects, that it has not had any positive results so far and that in the future it is unlikely to provide any results at all. In fact during the general conversation—in 1967 and now—I made the following comment: “The US is definitely the leading power now; but in the future there will be others.” He asked: “And China?” I told him: “yes, China, too.” I explained to him that this situation was not permanent, a fact that he agreed with. He said that they were of the same opinion, that circumstances were forcing them to renounce their old ways and look toward a new approach. Of course, this does not mean that they will fully abandon their policies, but that they will simply look for new means that will bring better results than the military approach. I believe that this fact is not without importance and proves

that they are approaching the situation wisely and realistically.

I think that we can conclude that Nixon's visit to Romania was good and useful, not only for the expansion of relations between Romania and the United States, but also because it contributed to the creation of a better environment for cooperation, proving that it is possible for two countries with distinct social orders and size to develop good relations if they abide by certain principles we know and practice, a fact confirmed several times by both sides. They even publicly confirmed this fact. We believe that in the context of the current international environment, this visit has a broader significance that is not limited to Romania. It seems that the United States understands it the same way and confers on it the same significance.

These were broadly the issues we discussed. If Comrade Maurer has anything else to add or if he has any other questions...

Maurer: I have nothing to add.

Cde. Ianos Fazekas: I propose to agree on this.

Cde. Gheorghe Stoica: I fully agree with the tone set by these discussions and I think we can congratulate Comrade Ceausescu and Comrade Maurer who achieved these results. Of course, imperialism remains imperialism.

However, we should not forget that Vietnam taught the Americans that it is better to take the chestnuts [out of the fire] with someone else's hand.

Ceausescu: They talked more about the fact that the third goal of American foreign policy was supporting developing countries.

He told us that there were 35,000 killed and 200,000 wounded in Vietnam, if the translation was correct.

Maurer: Yes, it is true, indeed; they have 200,000 wounded.

Stoica: It is very interesting, now they realize they cannot go on this way.

Ceausescu: They are concerned with the state of affairs in Asia and Africa, or the countries left behind, and it is in this context that he was looking at the one billion Chinese. I told him that this was not only about the one billion Chinese, but also the Indians, Pakistani, even the Japanese, who are all Asian and who will, always, remember this situation and show solidarity. It seems like they are starting to think more about these realities, not so much [about] today, but what things will be like tomorrow, and thus look at things from the point of view of the future and the changes that will intervene.

They are surrounded by many scholars and scientists who think [about tomorrow] and make all kinds of calculations. Generally, all of them were young. They are all people from university environments who evaluate, who compare; they cannot ignore all these [facts] and the future.

He started telling us what things could be like when China's population would reach one billion and then I told him that there would actually be even more [in number] since the other Asians should also be counted.

Stoica: I suggested to Comrade Dalea to forward the toast Cde. Ceausescu made during lunch, which is not without

significance.

Ceausescu: One thing that I would like to point out is that generally, we were able to discuss most things openly with Nixon. In the toast I also mentioned Vietnam, however, without mentioning that I discussed this topic with him. He knew beforehand what I would say during the toast about this and he did not say anything, but stayed and listened.

Naturally, they openly expressed their opinions as well. They simply concluded that this was the situation and that nothing more could be done.

As you saw, I took them to the market. They were quite lacking in the haughtiness that characterizes so many other leaders, even though he [Nixon] is the president of a great country, not only capitalist, because to be honest, today, from an economic standpoint, it is the most powerful country in the world. He did not come as if he was representing a great power, but went to the market and shook hands with all the grocers. From the perspective of social origin, he has a better background than some communists. His wife is a miner's daughter.

Cde. Dumitru Coliu: At the lunch, I sat next to [Assistant Secretary of State Joseph J.] Sisco, and during discussions with him, he told us about his life, and he told us that: "You know, if I lived in Romania, I would be the best communist." He said his father was a peasant.

Ceausescu: You know, they developed in a different way, they do not have the same feudal mentality of a bureaucratic liege [*birocratie boiereasca*], that you can find with some communists. Of course, here is not only a question of people, but rather a question of the changes that are taking place in American society. The fact that they landed on the Moon, that they reached such results in scientific exploration, cannot be without repercussions in the way people think. There, 70 percent of the population is made up of the working class. They are the most industrialized country. And, on top of that, the percent of intellectuals also grew, and these people cannot stop thinking, cannot be without influence.

I had a meeting with that group of American professors. There were about 50 professors there.

Stoica: All of them are simple people.

Ceausescu: I was looking at them, you would not believe that they were professors, based on how they dressed. Thus, from this point of view, we can learn some things from the imperialists. They were very modest, they asked questions, I answered them, at the end they applauded. I gave them that interview, the one you read. Of course, it's difficult to convince them that they need to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. They understand socialism, but not the way it's manifesting here, or in the Soviet Union, or China. It is, after all, difficult for them to grasp it. This is not understood even by the people who live there [in the US]. As a matter of fact, they will never reach socialism, if they continue with this [Western] mentality.

Cde. Leonte Rautu: The communists do not exist in the US.

Cde. Ilie Verdet: Kissinger stated that at least half [of the

CPUS] are members of the security services [FBI], and do not worry that their life is not secure. They only do one thing: report on one another; some report to the police, some report to the party.

Ceausescu: That's about it. Many called him "Comrade Nixon," including the radio announcer. The Americans liked the buildings they saw in the neighborhoods we visited.

Rautu: It is a very important success.

Ceausescu: We will inform our friends about these discussions. I already informed Basov, it took me an hour and a half. I told him all these things. Even Basov said that [the Americans] are straightforward people [*oameni simpli*].

That's it. The session is adjourned.



DOCUMENT No. 5

Telegram from Aurel Duma to Corneliu Manescu Concerning the Conversation with Zhou Enlai, 23 August 1969

[Source: *A.M.A.E., fond Telegrams, Beijing, vol. II, 1969, f. 269-270. Also published in Relatiile Romano-Chineze, 1880-1974 [Sino-Romanian Relations, 1880-1974], edited by Ioan Romulus Budura, (Bucharest, 2005), pp. 939-941. Translated for CWIHP by Madalina Cristoloveanu.]*

No. 56 349

23 August 1969, Beijing

Strictly confidential

Urgent

During the reception organized on 22 August of this year on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Romania's liberation, Premier Zhou Enlai sent his greetings to the Central Committee of the RCP and sent thanks for the reply to the message of the Chinese Communist Party addressed to the 10th Congress of the RCP and wished Nicolae Ceausescu, Ion Gheorghe Maurer and the other Romanian party and state leaders new successes in the fight for building the nation and defending the national independence and sovereignty. He stated that the Chinese government and people support this fight and consider it just.

[...]

With regard to Sino-Romanian relations, the premier stated:

"Smaller or larger clashes occurred at the Sino-Soviet border, permanently or systematically. The Soviets are pursuing several aims: intimidating China, internationally portraying China as the aggressor and convincing the Soviet people of the Chinese threat. According to our opinion, all these will turn against them. As far as we know, the Soviet people are unhappy and concerned by the anti-Chinese actions organized in the Soviet Union. We noticed on different occasions, for example, during the presence of the delegation in Khabarovsk at the meeting of the Joint Sino-Soviet Commission regarding the navigation

on border waterways, that the Soviet population and even the Soviet soldiers have a friendly attitude towards China.

The Soviets often talk about negotiations with China, but in practice they proceed in a different way. They prearranged incidents, even during the workings of the Joint Commission, concerning navigation on border waterways. The scope of these incidents was to delay the workings of the Commission. We made a great effort towards reaching an agreement at least in technical matters, which was obtained. According to the maps attached to the Sino-Soviet treaties, the region where the last incident occurred—Xinjiang—belongs to China. The Soviets do not recognize this anymore; with the help of 50 tanks they interrupted circulation in that particular passage, which belongs to China and connects to Chinese districts. Under these conditions, the Chinese leadership continues to take measures and to treat these conflicts with gravity. Only internal preparations and a stern opposition could temper the Soviets. We are intensely preparing to defend ourselves, but we are not excluding the idea of negotiations and we will not be the first to attack. The problem is that the Soviets have not shown honesty regarding the issue of negotiations.

We are currently preparing an answer to the Soviet declaration [made in] June, which was addressed to the State Council of the People's Republic of China by the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union.

Besides this declaration, sent through a verbal note, we have not received any other messages from the Soviet leadership.”

Referring to the 20th anniversary of the proclamation of the People's Republic of China, the premier stated:

“As of now, no concrete plan of action in this regard has been established, since the *Fight! Criticize! Reform!* movement prevails in everything. Such a plan will be discussed in the near future, but for now we don't even know the site [for celebrations] of this anniversary.”

In my interventions I talked about the significance of the act of 23 August 1944,¹ about the domestic and foreign policy of the RCP and the government of the Socialist Republic of Romania, particularly underlining the special documents adopted at the 10th Congress of the RCP.

During the discussions the atmosphere was relaxed, close and friendly, and the premier was kind and in good spirits.

(ss). A. Duma

1. *Editor's Note:* Romania officially declared war on Nazi Germany on 23 August 1944.



DOCUMENT No. 6

Minutes of Conversation between Ion Gheorghe Maurer, Paul Niculescu Mizil, Zhou Enlai, and Li Xiannian, 7 September 1969

[Source: *A.N.I.C., fond CC of RCP—External Relations Division, file 72/1969, pp. 4-30. Published in Relatiile Romano-Chineze, 1880-1974 [Sino-Romanian Relations, 1880-1974], edited by Ioan Romulus Budura, (Bucharest, 2005), pp. 943-959. Translated for CWIHP by Madalina Cristoloveanu.*]

Minutes of Conversation

between Comrade Ion Gheorghe Maurer, member of the RCP CC Permanent Presidium Executive Committee, president of the Socialist Republic of Romania Council of Ministers and Comrade Paul Niculescu Mizil, member of the Permanent Presidium Executive Committee, secretary of the RCP CC,

[and] with Comrade Zhou Enlai, Chinese Communist Party CC Politburo Permanent Committee member, People's Republic of China State Council Premier and Comrade Li Xiannian, People's Republic of China CC Politburo member, State Council Vice Chairman.

– 7 September 1969 –

Witnesses to the discussions: Qiao Guanhua, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yu Zhan, director of the MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] Department for the Soviet Union and Eastern European Countries, Ding Yuehong, Romanian translator, Ion Dorobantu, Chinese translator and Viorica Ivascu, stenographer.

The discussions began on 7 September 1969 at 11:45 p.m. and ended on 8 September at 2:20 a.m.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: First of all, I wanted to send greetings—and I am glad I can do this—to Comrade Mao Zedong, Comrade Lin Biao, to you personally, and to the other comrades, from Comrade Ceausescu and our party and state leaders.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: I thank you for these greetings. How is Comrade Ceausescu doing?

Maurer: He is in good health.

Zhou Enlai: I noted from the photo that he seems very healthy. How is Comrade Bodnaras doing? I heard that he is not doing too well.

Maurer: He had a heart attack but he was able to get through it. He is convalescing right now.

Zhou Enlai: He did not participate in your congress.

Maurer: No, because it took place while his heart attack was announced so he could not participate.

Then this sad event occurred in Vietnam, spurring this trip in order to express our condolences. And we thought that on

this occasion it would not be a bad idea to make a quick political tour. We haven't seen each other in a long time, Comrade Zhou Enlai. Many events have taken place in the world since then.

Zhou Enlai: We haven't seen each other in two years.

Maurer: But a lot has happened in the world in these past two years and we figured it would not be a bad idea to make a little tour.

First, we wish to thank you for participating in the festivities that we had this year at the Congress of the Party celebrating the 25th anniversary of the liberation of our country. The participation of the Chinese state and party proved your strong support during the difficulties we encountered in trying to establish fair rapport between socialist countries. We thank you for this.¹

Zhou Enlai: I noticed that the telegram I sent you caused the Soviet revisionists to leave the room where the congress was taking place.

Maurer: If you would have sent another one... (laughs).

Zhou Enlai: We are afraid we could cause you further difficulties. Even though our telegram was written in rather moderate terms, they have put pressure on you.

Maurer: The problem now is this: we view your position towards us as one that has been of use to us and that has helped us.

Likewise, we also appreciated the fact that things were expressed with great care and we would like you to know that we are grateful for your support and count on it. It is exactly for this reason that we wish to expand relations, obviously, within the limits of mutual interest and possibilities. We have previously talked about this matter. We talked with your comrade ambassador to our country and with the comrade deputy minister of foreign trade.

Zhou Enlai: Yes, on the occasion of the visit he made to Romania.

Maurer: We showed our interest in further developing relations; this refers to economic relations, exchanges of merchandise, an eventual cooperation in production and in special production. Of course, we have to look at all these in a reasonable and realistic manner.

Our political relations are developing. We never tried to hide our desire to develop these relations. On the contrary, we have affirmed our wish to develop these relations as an essential element of our policy.

I insisted on making a couple comments concerning our bilateral relations so you could meditate on them and see what we can do to develop these relations multilaterally. Of course, we wished to make this tour in the light of certain recent political developments. It seems to me that Nixon's visit to Romania has raised much interest and that is why I wish to begin with this.

Comrade Ceausescu communicated through your ambassador the content of this visit. I told the ambassador, however, that there are certain aspects that could be better explained during a direct conversation, so this is why I will concentrate on

this visit. Of course, since the discussions with Nixon were so long, several things were discussed during the visit. Some of these, such as European security, would probably be of less interest to you; others are of more importance to you.

First of all, Nixon expressed without any reservation his wish of finding a way to normalize relations with China. He articulated this very clearly and asked us to help in this matter if we can. I am not sure how we can help (smiling); I told him that what we can do is inform the Chinese leadership about the situation. I told him, however, that it seems to us that there is a series of issues towards which the Chinese leadership has taken a stance and for which you should find solutions, and maybe, by seeking solutions for these problems, will find a way to normalize relations with China. One of these problems is Taiwan (Zhou Enlai laughed).

Of course, we didn't discuss any details such as what has to be done with Taiwan or what doesn't. It is not our business to discuss such matters. If you will set a date to discuss this, then this discussion will be between you and them, but the man expressed this wish.

Our impression was that this wish was sincere, in other words, it corresponds to certain important American interests. We could not figure out what the American interests corresponding to this wish are. We know well that in the opinion of the American public, the wish to normalize relations with China has been present for quite some time. They talked to us about this wish several times. At one point, [Harvard economist John Kenneth] Galbraith conveyed to us Robert Kennedy's wish, when he was still alive, to come and discuss with us, among others, this problem and see what our opinion is vis-à-vis this situation. The visit never took place due to particular circumstances; later it didn't take place due to Kennedy's tragic end.

It was during the discussions with Harriman that I became aware of this preoccupation with establishing normal relations with China. I had a pretty long discussion with Harriman.

Somebody has already communicated all these things to you, but I want to explain them in this context, because I am under the impression that Nixon—and this is our opinion and the reasoning of the party leadership concerning this issue—that Nixon wants to implement this tendency that is rather markedly present in public opinion and certain leading circles.

In relation to this issue, we also discussed the escalation of the Sino-Soviet conflict. Nixon stated firmly that he did not intend to support the Soviet Union in any way if it has any aggressive intention against China.

He talked about the Soviet Union's wish to achieve this Asian security pact. Nixon showed us that the United States would not enter this [pact] in any way and that, in the discussions he had in the countries he visited—India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand—he revealed this position to his varied interlocutors. During these discussions, he clearly showed the United States' position, which does not wish to enter this system or to support in any way the creation of this Asian security pact.

He was very concerned by the possible escalation of the conflict between China and the Soviet Union and noted that

in his opinion, if this escalation would tragically lead to a confrontation, this would be the most serious threat to world peace. I understood, according to Nixon's remarks, that he did not make a secret out of this before the Russians. He didn't express it directly but he said it in such a way as to make his position known to the Russians.

On multiple occasions, Nixon expressed his wish and concern with finding a way to normalize relations with China.

Of course, within the framework of these discussions, we deplored the fact that as a result of a series of prior acts, China did not participate in the United Nations, because in the end none of the major international issues could be resolved without China's participation. Considering this, we deemed as fair his wish to normalize relations with China. This was one of the problems. Of course, we could not discuss any actual means, but estimated that Nixon's intention of normalizing relations with China was a positive sign.

We explained to him: it seems to us that the analysis of the problems between the United States and China sets the tone of this normalization. If these problems are resolved, normalization will ensue and we told him that we will communicate this discussion to the Chinese government.

In regards to this matter, Nixon categorized the Vietnam issue as being another element that worsens the international state of affairs and that bores the United States which wishes to liquidate it.

He told us that he reached the conclusion that the Vietnam issue could not be solved militarily, that they had concluded that the situation in Vietnam would have to be resolved through political channels and that he was prepared to find a political solution. He said that at the moment the most important thing was not trying to decide whether they made a mistake or not by engaging in Vietnam or if they made a mistake in the way they conducted the Vietnam War, but the problem was how to find a solution.

Due to a confluence of favorable conditions—he stated—they reached the Paris talks. However, for a while now, the Paris talks have been idle, so to speak. He said: "We are willing to discuss absolutely any problem from the ten points of the provisional government to the four points of North Vietnam government and the eight points that we, the Americans, proposed, to any other point that could come up, but we want to discuss these to reach a conclusion and move forward. But for a while now we have been coming up against an attitude in Paris and we reached the conclusion—he said—that probably the Vietnamese realized that they have to apply the following strategy: to delay the peace talks and to set in motion a military offensive in South Vietnam hoping that this way the American public opinion, which was against the war, would become increasingly strong and would force the United States to capitulate and withdraw troops under unfavorable conditions." Nixon continued with the following remarks: "If the Vietnamese reached this conclusion, they are wrong. It is true that a good part of the American public opinion wants the end of the Vietnam War, and I myself want the end of this war—

Nixon said—but the Vietnamese are mistaken in thinking that this war will end by having the American public force the president of the United States to capitulate or accept unfavorable conditions."

He said: "I am willing to wait until November, when there will be a year since the beginning of the Paris talks. If the current discussion won't make any progress by November, the United States will be forced to reassess its position."

Of course, we asked: "And what does this reassessment of your position entail? Does it mean that you will further intensify the war?"

He didn't say yes or no. He only said that the situation will need to be reevaluated.

Naturally, we tried to show: but look, they want to propose a solution, to install a provisional government in which all the sides in Vietnam would participate and that, after your withdrawal, they would organize elections. We asked: "Do you think that the election that will take place under the presence of American soldiers in South Vietnam will be free and fair?"

To this he replied: "I am willing to withdraw from there, of course, under the condition that North Vietnamese troops will also withdraw. I have nothing against respecting the decision of the Vietnamese people. If the South Vietnamese people say: the government in Saigon has to leave, I am not against it. If they say that they want to unite with North Vietnam, I will not be against it but this decision has to be made freely, under international watch and with all possible guarantees."

I said: "If the government in Saigon remains there, will the election be free?"

He said: "Saigon should not organize the elections."

"Then why are you not agreeing with the solution of the provisional coalition government?" we asked.

He said: "We cannot agree with this, because this provisional coalition government will not include any of the Saigon government officials, and if I would agree to this it would mean condemning the Saigon government before the Vietnamese people could express their position, and—Nixon said—I cannot agree with this."

So what can we conclude? This is our interpretation: the man is searching for a solution. This is all. The reasons why he is looking for a political solution are pretty clear to us at this time: the war in Vietnam is becoming increasingly unpopular in international public opinion as well as in the American public opinion.

The man has all the interest, then, to find a solution. We think that this is why he is looking for a solution. Of course, he is looking for a solution that will be as convenient as possible. But in the end, since he is looking for a political solution, this war, too, will have to end. It is a good thing if it ends as a result of discussions, and in our opinion, a solution could be reached that would respect the fundamental aspirations of the fight of the Vietnamese people. Of course, the discussions won't be easy and will take place over an entire evening session. But there are some objective conditions—in our opinion—to force the American administration to make

concessions over the course of these discussions. In our opinion, this should be tried. Of course, it is not something that will be solved quickly, but it is a matter which, if approached rationally and skillfully, could lead to the mobilization of large popular masses that could push the United States to make these substantial concessions that have to be won by the Vietnamese peoples, either during the discussions or militarily. We believe that promptly solving the Vietnamese issue is very indicated under the current circumstances, Comrade Zhou Enlai. Of course, not any solution will do. Nobody is thinking about this, but this needs to be settled under the condition that it assures that the Vietnamese people will have the possibility of taking control of their own future.

Why do we think that under the current circumstances there is an additional reason to wish that the conflict in Vietnam will be solved more quickly? We want this because of an escalation of the conflict between the Soviet Union and China and we are afraid that the existence of this war in Vietnam—I tell you exactly what we think about the situation—could encourage the Soviet Union to do something hasty. It would not be the first time that this would happen. Ultimately, it's only been a year since the intervention in Czechoslovakia, which, in our opinion, first of all, was the direct result of the fact that they did not think beforehand and did not analyze the situation or the consequences of their actions. In other words, we are very close to a situation which shows us that the Soviet leaders take action, at least sometimes, in very critical instances and circumstances, literally, in a manner other than rational, calm or wise. They are not capable of evaluating the situation realistically or having a sensible vision of the future. That is why we think that this ongoing conflict in Vietnam could be considered by these people as something that invites a hasty act. They're probably thinking that the Americans are on this side, China supports South Vietnam [NLF], we are coming in the North and doing a little cleansing, a preventive action—or whatever else you could call it. There are a couple other hypotheses but facts show us that very often these people are not able to evaluate situations and particularly their consequences in a rational, judicious manner.

This is why we think that this is the moment to find a solution to end the conflict in Vietnam as quickly as possible. It is clear that this solution, to a certain extent, represents an advantage for America. The fact that America ends the war in Vietnam is a good thing for it. The question is, how will it bring it to an end? If it finishes it ensuring that the Vietnamese people will be able to decide their own fate, then this solution is, in our opinion, more advantageous to the Vietnamese and all of us, than to the Americans. We also think that this solution might be reached during the discussions. What is important, though, is to conduct these discussions with enough skill and to take into consideration the fact that what probably constitutes for them—so to speak—the major holdback is [the need] to save the prestige of the United States, so that the United States won't come out of this completely humiliated. If a solution that will ensure this is found, it is our opinion and conviction



Zhou Enlai with Ion Gheorghe Maurer, on a visit to Romania in June 1966 (courtesy PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives)

tion that during these discussions, the fundamental objectives of the Vietnamese people can be reached.

In any case, we think that this has to be tried. This does not mean that the armed conflict has to end as a result of initiating more involved discussions regarding this matter; this can continue as long as a more acceptable result is reached. What we are not in favor of is the stalemate of the Paris talks.

This is what I wanted to express in regards to this matter, which I believe is one of the most important problems.

We tried to open discussions with him on the subject of the Near East. He showed relatively very little interest concerning this matter.

Zhou Enlai: Why?

Maurer: I don't know.

Zhou Enlai: It's very interesting that he didn't want to discuss this matter with you.

Maurer: The point is that the longest discussion centered on the problems that I just described.

Zhou Enlai: Couldn't the fact that they didn't want to discuss this issue with you mean that they have already reached an agreement with the Soviets?

Maurer: I don't know if they did or if they didn't. The only thing he said about the Near East is that if they did not find a way to eliminate this problem, this could become a dangerous matter. But how or what will it be...?

More than that, during the official address, we approached the Vietnam issue openly and very publicly, the way we normally do it, including the issue of American troop withdrawal. Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu stated this very clearly in his speech. Nixon very briefly mentioned this issue in his public speech. He didn't say yes or no. He said that the United States wanted peace, but would respect the commitments it had made. Basically, he avoided any polemic directed at this chapter. He did not want to make any public declaration or to take a public position, and this is how we concluded that the man was looking to facilitate the possibility of an arrangement.

These are the issues in Asia, as they resulted from the discussions with Nixon.

Of course, other than these, we also discussed issues related

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to European security and the United Nations... and on this occasion I told him: "How do you think you will be able to solve issues related to the UN, to disarmament and nuclear disarmament and all other problems without China? He admitted that it was impossible to solve the major international issues without China and said that they have to find a way to normalize relations with China. This was the discussion with Nixon and the conclusions that we drew in the light of this discussion.

Of course, Nixon's visit to Romania set off some problems and I would like to inform you of those as part of this discussion.

On the occasion of the visit we made to Moscow, at the international conference of communist and workers' parties, it was decided that Brezhnev and Kosygin would come to Bucharest to sign the Friendship Treaty.

Cde. Paul Niculescu Mizil: The Friendship Treaty that has been agreed on for several months now and is ready to replace the one which expired over a year ago.

Maurer: We told the Soviets that Nixon would come here [to Romania].

Niculescu Mizil: They sent an official letter signed by Brezhnev and Kosygin to the Romanian side, informing us that they would come here on 15-16 July and asking for our consent. We consented immediately and the visit was arranged.

Maurer: And when Nixon's visit took place we made it known to them. Later, we received another letter also signed by Brezhnev and Kosygin, in which they stated that they regretted that they could not make it on July 15-16 due to unforeseen circumstances that would prevent them from coming.

Niculescu Mizil: The extent of their concern is what they didn't foresee... (laughs)

Maurer: Yes, this concern does not allow leaders at their level to come here. They said that they regret this since the treaty, which has particular importance, was going to be signed during this visit, but that they plan on doing this in the fall.

Niculescu Mizil: They proposed to sign the treaty in the fall.

Maurer: At a date that would be later established though common accord.

Zhou Enlai: Yes, unforeseen events... On the occasion of President Ho Chi Minh's death, Kosygin cancelled the reception of the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, but later changed his mind and received him; this means that he granted more importance to Japan than to you. They do not keep their word to a socialist country.

When they found out about the death of President Ho Chi Minh, they decided to leave immediately for Hanoi. But, after-

wards, when they heard that we were in Hanoi and that the funeral was taking place later, they postponed their departure. After finding out that we had returned, they rushed again to leave for Vietnam.

The Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs was received as soon as he arrived in Moscow. We can see what attitude they have towards the Minister of Foreign Affairs of a militant country like Japan, to which they grant so much attention. In their heads the only countries that exist are the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan and then England and France. Those are their greatest friends.

This is the main problem.

Maurer: In any case, what we are concerned with is that during this whole affair our independence and sovereignty are respected.

Zhou Enlai: In our bilateral relations, we respect these principles and this is a condition that favors our friendship.

I have told you before and I want to tell you again, I also told the same thing to our Vietnamese comrades, that our guiding principle is not interfering in Vietnam's domestic affairs or asking them to continue the war or start negotiations. We will support them when they will ask us, when they need our support, according to our capabilities. I told the same thing to the current Vietnamese leadership.

Ho Chi Minh was a close friend of ours during periods of conflict; there were strong class feelings between us. However, the Vietnamese Party and state have solved and continue to be able to solve their problems independently.

Comrade Ho Chi Minh has participated at the revolutionary movement in China in 1920-1930-1940. President Ho Chi Minh's passing represents a loss not only for the Vietnamese nation, but also for the Chinese and nations around the world.

As you are aware, I wasn't able to leave the country for three years because of daily preoccupations. Yet these strong ties between our parties and the Chinese and Vietnamese nations determined me to leave the country for one day to go to Vietnam. Li Xiannian will lead the delegation that will participate at the funeral. Not attending the funeral would be a sign of disrespect on our part. I wasn't able to stay there more than a day; even though I was there during the first day, I was late. When I arrived the body was being embalmed.

When they found out that I was back in Beijing, the Soviets were relieved. They cannot understand these ties between us. There is not only a difference in our position but also in our feelings. This means that we are not going in the same direction.

What do you think of Soviet policy? They exercised so much pressure against Czechoslovakia! Likewise, they are putting great pressure on you and East Germany, while they allowed elections in West Berlin, which means selling out West Berlin. Currently, a large number of troops are concentrated to the north of China. They are trying to do too many things at once. Just as the Americans, they are involved in too many issues; they are active in the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, not to speak of the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic, and

they have even been in the Caribbean for a while.

Maurer: This is true, and we too are thinking of all these things, Comrade Zhou Enlai.

Zhou Enlai: What results from these facts is that all current Soviet leaders are the same, and they are all crazy.

Maurer: We are thinking the same thing, Comrade Zhou Enlai. But there is one difference. We are smaller than China, much smaller actually, and the care with which we are looking at all these things is much greater than theirs.

I want to tell you that there are many things that are very hard to explain or the explanations are very sad. But we have to take in account that the Soviet Union is right next to us. The only thing dividing us is a river not even 40 meters wide. The Soviet Union has great military capabilities. The crazier its leaders are, the more dangerous it becomes. Of course, we are by no means trying to cause a conflict. We are trying to find some common ground with the Soviet Union, not just in any way, but based on a set of principles. If the Soviet Union tries to do in Romania what it did in Czechoslovakia we will fight back. Of course, we don't have the pretension to crush the Soviet army, to reach Moscow and dictate peace in the Kremlin...

Zhou Enlai: You can't have these pretensions.

Maurer: ... We cannot do this, but we will fight in Romania the same way that the Vietnamese are.

Zhou Enlai: Just like you, we don't have these intentions either, even though they say that we are some sort of successors of Genghis Khan. We tend to ignore this calumny and we can tell you that we don't have these intentions either.

Maurer: Now, the truth is that we are worried about the deterioration of relations between China and the Soviet Union and I can tell you why: because this can cause the Soviet Union to do something stupid in China, but it can just as well do something stupid in Europe just to be able to say: my hands are free, I can do whatever I want to do there.

This situation does not only worry us but many others, too. I believe that many countries are worried about this situation; their preoccupation revolves around finding a solution to help avoid the conflict between these two great powers. Not to mention how this would affect socialism. It would be the war that started between two very powerful socialist countries and that could end up endangering international peace. We are taking this very seriously, Comrade Zhou Enlai, very seriously. The Soviet Union has put a lot of pressure on us, you know this well, to take the Soviet Union's side, to embrace its points of view, to be able to say: China leads a policy of aggression. It hasn't been easy but we thought we had to do this, it is mandatory to do this.

Zhou Enlai: Yes, we know this, and both the party and our nation appreciate your position because this is a fair position. It is not easy for you.

Maurer: We thought that for us, the only fair position is our main position.

Niculescu Mizil: And we clearly specified in the discussions between comrades Ceausescu and Brezhnev that we

would never be the ones advising the Soviet Union to fight China, or the Chinese to fight the Soviets. In our opinion, the position that corresponds to the Soviet Union's interests—because we were discussing this with them—and international peace and socialism is trying not to intensify the conflict.

Maurer: Declarations of this nature have not been received calmly, Comrade Zhou Enlai. This is clear. But we thought that it is good to do this and I think that one of the things we accomplished at the Moscow talks, that took place the way it did, is that there was a fairly large number of communist parties that stood up against condemning China. It is not a secret for anyone that one of the objectives of this conference was to denounce China. When? After we agreed that there would be no denunciations at the conference. The Paraguayan was the first to stand up.

Niculescu Mizil: The Paraguayan... this was the form.

Maurer: Yes, the form. Exactly.

Niculescu Mizil: Comrade Ceausescu had a discussion with Brezhnev before the conference.

Maurer: Comrade Ceausescu stood up and said: "This is something that we will not accept," and he wasn't alone. In my opinion it was a significant occurrence, maybe one of the most notable of the entire conference as certain things were prevented that could not previously be stopped. Comrade Ceausescu and Comrade Mizil, who talked for a long time with an entire group of parties, detected the preoccupation of an important number of parties with finding ways to improve relations with the Chinese Communist Party. The Italians expressed this wish together with the Spaniards and others.

Niculescu Mizil: This is where the following happens: certain actions undertaken by the Soviet Union, especially the intervention in Czechoslovakia, had a good side too—if we can put it this way—in the sense that they woke up a number of communist parties. An extremely important aspect, Comrade Zhou Enlai, was what I had the possibility to discover during the contact we made with various parties. This relates not only to the problems in Czechoslovakia, because there are parties that, after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, are examining their position [in the communist world] in more general terms. You see, we are giving much importance to the fact that in Moscow, a significant number of parties presented their own point of view and they clearly affirmed a party's right to independence, a fact that led to the [Soviet] failure to achieve the initial goals of the conference. The initial plan was to bring together a large number of parties that could all raise their hand in approval of the same idea, with the same discipline—so to speak—in front of which there could be only one leader. And this is not what happened since an important number of parties clearly exposed their own positions.

I have to tell you that according to the contacts I made with numerous other parties, many of the comrades in the leadership of these parties and central committees are reexamining the way they have perceived the Chinese problem until now. It is also an important aspect of the international communist scene.

There are parties, as I have informed you about some of these at the time, serious parties, which consider that it would be good to find a possibility to contact you, to hold discussions and meetings with the Chinese Communist Party and that affirm in official documents their wish to reexamine their former positions vis-à-vis the Chinese Communist Party. I am referring to the Spanish Communist Party, the Italian Communist Party and the Indian Marxist Communist Party with which I had a few meetings and which came to our Congress. I am referring to parties that are not necessarily big, but that hold a certain position, such as: the Communist Party from Reunion, a series of European communist parties, the English Communist Party, the one in Switzerland and the ones in the Nordic countries. We decided to develop contacts with these parties. I can honestly tell you, since our relations are based on complete sincerity, that the Chinese Communist Party could offer support in this process of building new relations within the workers' movement, against the infringement of principles of norms dictating relations, such as the intervention in Czechoslovakia.

Maurer: The affirmation of the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine.

Niculescu Mizil: Limited sovereignty.

These are some interesting reactions and we think that, as far as we are concerned, we should closely follow and stimulate them.

Regarding the same matter, I wish to tell you that during the contacts I made I had the opportunity to notice that many communist parties are concerned with the conflict at the Sino-Soviet border. There is a great effort to present China in a negative light. This is why, during the discussions we had with these parties, we clearly showed our position to the effect that we would not take the position that our Soviet comrades were trying to dictate [their views] and that our attitude centered on the effort to do everything possible to avoid a potential intensification of the conflict and to try to solve it by political means.

I want to underline that changes are occurring in Latin America, in the Dominican Communist Party, the Mexican Communist Party—we have good relations with both. There are some interesting positions even within the Communist Party of Venezuela, even though there are still some possibilities to maneuver things there. And there is a progression of tendencies and new aspects in the workers' movement that are worthy to mention and sustain.

Finally, with regard to the question that you posed, Comrade Maurer responded but I want to add one thing: our position is very clear. We will militate for the development of relations with all socialist countries. We will not do anything to worsen these relations, but we will firmly base these relations on the principles that we believe in and that we have already affirmed. And, to publicly state these principles, independence, the right of every nation, of every party to decide in its own country; you realize that, given our situation, it is not easy, but very difficult. I am telling you this for two reasons.

First of all, to show you that we are aware of the difficulties that we face; [but] we believe [in] stating these prin-

ciples—and this is clear not only for a group of people, for Ceausescu, Maurer, for a few others, it is clear for the entire Central Committee, for the entire party, it is clear for the entire nation. The congress that we just organized, we organized it in this spirit, to clearly portray our position and that of the entire nation regarding this problem.

The second reason that comrade Maurer pointed out is the fact that we consider the development of relations between Romania and China to be extremely important in this context. In other words, we believe that the development of economic, political and military relations between China and Romania is not just another issue, or just another set of bilateral relations between two countries, but a matter that at the same time represents an important element in the promotion of the principles of independence, sovereignty, equality of rights and that helps Romania to promote these principles.

Maurer: All these show in our opinion, Comrade Zhou Enlai, that there are developments in the international communist and workers' movement, and in our opinion, it would be wise for the Chinese Communist Party to see if it could do something about these things. This is one of our concerns that we have emphasized. We believe that an intervention by the Chinese Communist Party within the framework of this debate on principles that is shaking up an entire group of parties could help clarify it, and this is why we believed it proper to raise these issues with you.

Of course, there are many problems in this world, but if we are going to discuss all of them, we would never get to sleep. But these are some of the issues that we wanted to bring to your attention. Maybe we will see each other upon your return, if you have anything to communicate to us.

Zhou Enlai: Will you stay here another night?

Cde. Gheorghe Maurer: But why not?

Niculescu Mizil: We can spend the day here, too, not only the night.

Cde. Gheorghe Maurer: Why not? If we've come all the way here and we made this trip, we can at least sit down and talk. It's clear.

Zhou Enlai: Your stop in Beijing is interpreted as a very unpleasant event by many people in Moscow.

Cde. Gheorghe Maurer: This is true.

Zhou Enlai: Considering the fact that you are the only ones stopping in Beijing. The Korean comrades have also stopped here. The others traveled through Afghanistan, Pakistan.

Cde. Gheorghe Maurer: This is exactly why we wanted to go through Beijing and why we wish to stay here another day.

Zhou Enlai: The Korean comrades will also stay.

Niculescu Mizil: I said: we first of all prefer this road because we know it and we prefer to take the roads we are familiar with rather than the ones unknown to us.

Secondly, I heard that several delegations took the same flight.

Maurer: All, except the Soviet delegation.

Niculescu Mizil: We preferred to take our own plane.

Zhou Enlai: And the Koreans came on their own plane, too. Albania, being a smaller country, could not send its del-

egation on its own plane but had to travel on a foreign plane.

We understand very well that you are in a difficult situation. Is it inevitable to have these Warsaw Pact maneuvers on your territory?

Maurer: Now I want to tell you one thing, so that we can be very clear. We had certain agreements—regarding the clarification of the Warsaw Pact problems—which were very rigid and gave the Soviets the right to do almost everything until the end. We asked that these agreements be abandoned and that a new agreement be signed that would ensure the rights of every state participating in the Warsaw Pact, [as well as] the [Military] Command. The discussions took approximately two years. They were very heated, but in the end we imposed our point of view that no troops can be deployed from one state or on the territory of a state without the consent of that state. Of course, this new agreement establishes joint exercises, in other words, the Command is responsible for organizing the preparation for battle of the armies participant in the Warsaw Pact. During this preparation, the armies do various exercises. We agreed on an exercise on our territory right before the invasion of Czechoslovakia, in which other states were meant to participate. Before the invasion of Czechoslovakia, we decided to postpone the exercise until the fall of this year. Now they came and said: “it’s time, let’s do the exercise.” Our Chief of the General Staff is in Moscow right now. He has instructions to show clearly that we cannot hold any military exercises this year because we had a series of [other military] activities [*serie de actiuni*], so military exercises are out of the question. He also has instructions to sustain the idea of staff exercises, only the commanders, on the map, without troops.

Niculescu Mizil: In any case, we told them that during the fall of this year we simply cannot do any exercises.

Maurer: And we wish to only have general staff exercises even in the upcoming years. However, we think that until the very end we will push these exercises further and further. In any case, this is the position we are taking. It is clear that they cannot impose these exercises on us. It is true that the operating rules of the Command give it the right to organize exercises, but they do have a say in the way the exercises are done and in all these other aspects. Or, we are determined to push further the military exercises involving troops on our territory.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: I wish to thank you for this report at such a late hour. Even though there might be differences in our points of view, such a direct exchange of ideas between our countries is necessary. As you said earlier, when you will return here, we will talk more about a series of issues. Now I briefly want to deal with certain issues.

First of all, regarding the Vietnamese issue. I can tell you clearly: whether the resistance movement against the Americans continues or whether the Paris talks continue, it all depends on the Vietnamese. We exchanged opinions on a couple topics with them, especially on the topic of South Vietnam and the resistance fight against the Americans. This exchange of ideas referred to the way we are going to support them and what we can learn from this. In regards to the way this war

will continue, what proportion it will have, greater or smaller, these are their problems. Considering that our countries are neighbors and that our nations are connected by a long, revolutionary friendship, it is natural for us to help them. Vietnam is a neighboring country and I told them that China represents the back of their front. The nation of South Vietnam, of only 14 million inhabitants, operating on a limited surface of only 170,000 km squared, has been able and continues to resist an army of over 1,100,000 soldiers, including 500,000 Americans. It is amazing that such a small country has been able to put up resistance against such a big army for over five years. Because of this, there is nothing else we can do other than offer our financial and moral support. Considering that this is their war, our help can only be indirect. The situation is different in the Korean War where we directly participated with troops.

We believe that the Vietnamese people thus contribute to the cause of the proletarian internationalism, to the fight of nations across the world against imperialism. We talked about this several times in the past. This idea deserves to be emphasized by all of us, especially the Chinese nation. The Vietnamese people deserve our respect.

Regarding the Paris talks, we have never intervened in this matter. We don’t have to intervene. We did not intervene and we do not want to intervene; not only that, but we are not interested in the way these talks are unfolding, if they are stalling or not. We know a few things about these negotiations from the reports that our Vietnamese comrades present us.

In connection with this issue, I wish to make one proposition: it is necessary for you to make known the position of the Americans concerning the Vietnamese problem, considering that you have discussed this with the Americans and that you would not be peaceful if you did not. But when looking at the way the talks are unfolding, I think it is better that none of us interferes.

Maurer: But we can’t even do it, we don’t know.

Zhou Enlai: Maybe the Soviets are interested to have the treaties go faster in some situations and slower in others.

Matters like the West Berlin, the Middle East, and the Vietnamese and Czechoslovak issues are viewed by the Soviets as advantages in their negotiations with the Americans. It is likely that a number of well intentioned parties hope that the Americans will withdraw their troops from Vietnam and stop this war of aggression, but the Soviets do not look at things in this way. All their problems are subordinated to their external affairs, and their external policies are based on their alliance with the Americans, and this way these two big countries will determine the world’s fate. They are building a friendship with the Americans but are at the same time clashing with them. This is why today’s world is full of contradictions. In the context of these contradictions, your situation is more difficult than ours. We understand this. It is extraordinary how by promoting an independent foreign policy, you are not following the Soviets in their anti-Chinese acts and do not consider China as an aggressor country. We thank you for that.

If the war in Vietnam will end as a result of negotiations

with unfavorable results for the Vietnamese people, the Soviets will be responsible for this, not us or you. If you would intervene in this matter, they would blame it on you. They would say that the Romanian comrades intervened in this matter and spoiled everything. You can express these good intentions, but without getting involved. We clearly told the Vietnamese comrades, as Comrade Mao Zedong clearly told Comrade Ho Chi Minh, that the way this war will be conducted—fight or negotiations—will be decided by the Vietnamese. We also told them that if they will need our help in continuing this war, we will offer them this help, according to our possibilities.

Regarding the relations between China and the United States, you know that there are direct contracts between us and the Americans. You said it that, as a matter of fact, it is about China's place at the UN and Taiwan. We are discussing these problems with the Americans for the past 14 years. In any case, they know our position very well, and we know theirs. You put it very well that one day, sooner or later, these problems will be solved. Kennedy could not solve them. If Nixon won't solve them, there will be a Kennedy II and a Nixon II. In any case, we do not owe them anything, they owe us; they took over Taiwan and have to recognize the fact that Taiwan is ours.

In regard to our relations with the Soviet Union, I can tell you concisely that the border incidents that took place in the past months have been deliberately provoked by the Soviets. Their goal is to divert the population's attention from domestic problems.

Our first principle is not to provoke and the second is to resolve issues through equitable treaties. You know that we sent a delegation to Khabarovsk. In the beginning, they did not want to reach an agreement in not even one of the technical issues. However, we did reach an agreement in the end. They didn't foresee this so they proceeded to a number of calumnies.

Our attitude is based on not refusing negotiations, better said, on looking for equitable negotiations. We expressed this position in our declaration: until the issues are resolved the status quo shall be maintained and incidents shall be avoided. This is our position. During the last incident, which took place in Xinjiang, they took two prisoners and killed 22 of our people. They don't want to free the prisoners, not even the two in Xinjiang or another who was taken prisoner in the eastern sector of the border.

On the subject of the Soviet propaganda [claiming] that we would start a nuclear war, not even the Western press believes it. You understand that the only reason why we are trying to develop nuclear weapons is so we could destroy their own nuclear monopoly. Every time we tested nuclear weapons we published communiques stating that we will not be the first to use these weapons and that we seek the convocation of a conference bringing all countries together in order to ban these weapons altogether. Now they are making propaganda that they will bomb China's nuclear bases. But doesn't this mean war? Doesn't this mean an undeclared war? This will be war, it is an aggression, it can't be something else. They can say that

the Americans are the first to have started bombing and now they can do the same.

In February 1965, this Mr. Kosygin stopped in Beijing on his way to Hanoi. His visit coincided with the beginning of the bombardments. At that time, Kosygin did not have any objections towards this. If the Soviets will take the same stand towards China as the Americans did towards Vietnam, we will not stand quiet, we will not allow this.

Vietnam has its own situation. They wanted to separate the war in South Vietnam from the bombardments in North Vietnam. They wanted to separate the two areas of Vietnam. You were in that country and are aware of this. China's situation is, however, different. China is a united country. In spite of this, there might be a number of crazy leaders who are considering taking action against our country. Maybe this is why Brezhnev said that it is time to create a collective security system in Asia. But we can discuss about this later, when you will return.

Vietnam needs our help.

Let's stop here and continue when you will come back.

Cde. Ion Gheoghe Maurer: This is what we will do. We will stop by upon our return and we will try to continue our discussions about the most relevant topics and if you are interested we will also update you on other issues. Maybe you have specific questions.

One last thing, Comrade Zhou Enlai. Maybe we would not have anything against sending a press announcement stating that we have met and discussed. If it doesn't bother you, we could do this.

Zhou Enlai: It doesn't bother us.

Niculescu Mizil: It is better, so nobody will say that we had a secret meeting.

Zhou Enlai: You stayed in Beijing, we saw each other...

Maurer: Yes, that we stayed in Beijing and had a friendly conversation.

Zhou Enlai: Go ahead.

1. *Editor's Note:* The Chinese did not participate, but sent a message to the RCP Congress. Soviet delegate Konstantin F. Katushev walked out of the Congress and returned only after the message had been read.



DOCUMENT No. 7

Note of Conversation between Ion Gheorghe Maurer and Zhou Enlai, 11 September 1969

[Source: A.N.I.C., fond RCP CC—External Relations Division, file 72/1969, f. 31-34. Published in *Relatiile Romano-Chineze, 1880-1974 [Sino-Romanian Relations, 1880-1974]*, edited by Ioan Romulus Budura, (Bucharest, 2005), pp. 943-959. Translated for CWIHP by Madalina Cristoloveanu.]

Note

concerning the conversation of Comrade Ion Gheorghe Maurer, RCP CC Permanent Presidium Executive Committee member, Socialist Republic of Romania Council of Ministers President, with Comrade Zhou Enlai, Chinese Communist Party Politburo Permanent Committee member, People's Republic of China Premier, which took place on 11 September 1969 at 4 p.m. in the car from the Beijing airport to the guesthouse.

Premier Zhou Enlai stated that, according to the previous agreement, he is ready to continue the discussions started on 7 September 1969 and proposed they begin as soon as they arrive at the guesthouse, so that the Romanian delegation, according to its wish, will be able to leave Beijing during the morning of 12 September. The premier mentioned that during the evening of the same day, after the conversations with the Romanian delegation, he will also have a conversation with the delegation led by Comrade Toi En Ghen, who expressed this wish.

Comrade president Ion Gheorghe Maurer agreed with the proposition.

Further, premier Zhou Enlai referred to Kosygin's visit to Beijing, stating the following:

"I said goodbye to Kosygin 15 minutes ago, after a three hour conversation that I had with him at the airport. He came to Beijing by making a great detour. This is because he didn't receive our consent to pass through China until pretty late, three hours after his flight's take-off. After receiving our consent, he continued his trip through the capital of one of the Central Asian republics. Having arrived here, he contacted Moscow, had consultations with the other leaders and later headed for Irkutsk, from where he arrived in Beijing.

The decision to come to Beijing demonstrates that the Soviets consider that Sino-Soviet relations are too strained and intend to ameliorate the situation in order to use this to attenuate the numerous internal contradictions in the Soviet Union.

As part of the conversation I had with Kosygin, several other problems were tackled, but, most of all, we discussed aspects of our bilateral relations, particularly the border conflicts.

I will discuss the conversation with Kosygin in greater detail during the exchange that we will continue at the guesthouse where Comrade Kang Sheng will also be present. Right now, I only want to present the main points of the discussions.

Regarding the border conflicts, we reached a verbal agree-

ment which contains the main points of our position, that I described to you on 7 September, more exactly, as the maintenance of the status quo until a final solution is found for the problems at the border and avoiding clashes.

I added one more point to this: the withdrawal of troops by both sides from the contact areas.

We agreed that I will notify Comrade Mao Zedong and our Politburo about this agreement, after which he will notify the CPSU Politburo and, after approval by both leaderships, this will take the form of a written agreement.

I explained to Kosygin that in order to resolve the issues at the border, one has to recognize the inequitable character of the border treaties imposed on the Chinese and Russian nations by the imperial and tsarist regimes, under conditions in which both nations were devoid of rights. I also explained to him that China has no territorial aspirations vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, but only wishes to settle the issues through an equitable treaty that will replace the unfair old ones. I told Kosygin that we wish to use the unfair treaties as a starting point of the negotiations and that during these we wish to find a solution, in the spirit of mutual understanding and concession, to the problem of the ownership of the currently disputed territories. This resolution has to account for the national sentiments of the inhabitants of the respective territories as well as for the economic activity that they have been conducting for generations.

I also agreed with Kosygin that we have a two-week deadline to exchange the drafts of the agreement on the discussed matters.

I showed Kosygin, as I told you on 7 September, that the flagrant violation of our land and air space, or the bombing of our nuclear facilities, will be considered acts of aggression and will mark the beginning of war.

Regarding the possibility that China will undertake a nuclear attack against the Soviet Union, I told him that not even the Western propaganda believes this idea, which is meant to incite the Chinese and Soviet nations against each other.

Kosygin did not attempt to defend the Soviet Union vis-à-vis the troop concentration at the Sino-Soviet border, including the Mongolian border, and did not even deny this fact. He refused to engage in conversations on this subject, proposing to leave aside those particular matters. His effort to avoid a polemical discussion was evident.

I told Kosygin that there are great differences between us in political and ideological matters that cannot be easily settled, but that they should not hinder the attenuation of tensions between states or the settlement of certain aspects of our bilateral state relations.

Kosygin also brought up the issue of aerial and railway transport as well as the subject of trade between our countries. He deplored the fact that there is no trade agreement between China and the Soviet Union, but only contracts and expressed his wish to start negotiations for concluding a trade agreement by 1970. He also solicited consultations and negotiations for a trade agreement over the extent of the upcoming five-year plan. He asked for the improvement of the balance

of exchanges of goods, in which the Soviet Union is currently running a deficit.

I replied to Kosygin that the one responsible for the current state of trade relations is not China but the Soviet Union, which annulled a number of treaties, and used the example of the cancellation of the agreement on supplies of pork products (the Chinese side) and supplies of wooden products (the Soviet side). In regards to commercial exchanges for the future five-year plan, I told him that we are not ready for it.

Kosygin brought up the issue of Czechoslovakia, showing that the acts undertaken in this country were just, since it [the Soviet Union] was convinced of the fact that socialism in Czechoslovakia was at risk.

I replied that we cannot accept this point of view and that our opinion remains different than theirs.”

Comrade president Ion Gheorghe Maurer intervened, showing that we have also expressed our point of view, which differs from the one of the Soviet leadership, in this matter.

Premier Zhou Enlai continued, pointing out: “I told Kosygin that there are many, very many, too many problems, which would take not three hours to discuss but three months.”

Comrade president Ion Gheorghe Maurer expressed his opinion that, even though the problems are numerous and complex, the meeting between Zhou Enlai and Kosygin represents a good start that will possibly lead to a solution towards solving some of these problems.

The conversation lasted 40 minutes.

The translators were Ding Yuanhong, translator in the People's Republic of China MFA and Ion Dorobantu, First Secretary at the Socialist Republic of Romania Embassy in Beijing, Chinese translator.



DOCUMENT No. 8

Minutes of Conversation between the Romanian Delegation to Ho Chi Minh's Funeral, Led by Ion Gheorge Maurer, and the Chinese Delegation, Led by Zhou Enlai, 11 September 1969

[Source: A.N.I.C., fond RCP CC—Foreign Affairs Department, file 72/1969, f. 35-65, published in Relatiile Romano-Chineze, 1880-1974 [Sino-Romanian Relations, 1880-1974], ed. Ambassador Romulus Ioan Budura, (Bucharest, 2005), pp. 963-982. Translated for CWIHP by Madalina Cristoloveanu.]

Minutes

Minutes of conversation between comrades Ion Gheorghe Maurer, RCP CC Permanent Presidium Executive Committee member, Socialist Republic of Romania Council of Ministers President and Paul Niculescu-Mizil, Permanent Presidium Executive Committee member, RCP CC secretary, [and] with

Zhou Enlai, CCP CC Politburo Permanent Committee member, People's Republic of China State Council Premier, Kang Sheng, CCP CC Politburo Permanent Committee member, National General Assembly Permanent Committee Vice President and Li Xiannian, CCP CC Politburo member, People's Republic of China State Council Vice Premier.

The following individuals were [also] present at the conversation that took place on 11 September 1969 between 4:50 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.:

- from the Chinese side: Qiao Guanhua, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs; Yu Zhan, MFA, Soviet Union and Eastern Europe Department, Director; Han Xu, MFA Protocol Department Acting Director; Ding Yuanhong and Deng Gaozhong, MFA translators.
- From the Romanian side: Stefan Peterfi Istvan, RCP CC Candidate Member, vice president of Council of State; Duma Aurel, the ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Romania in Beijing, Gheorghe Rosu, RCP CC, Foreign Relations Division Chief; Ion Dorobantu, First Secretary of the SRR [Socialist Republic of Romania] embassy in Beijing—Chinese translator.

Referring to his conversation with the president of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, A. Kosygin, which took place in Beijing on 11 September 1969, Premier Zhou Enlai related the following:

Kosygin briefly talked to me about the Vietnam issue. He stated that, in his opinion, Nixon wishes to leave South Vietnam, but that the US president is relying on the Saigon government. Kosygin continued by saying that he considers this support as unfit, but did not go into details and did not express his opinion regarding [possible] solutions for solving the Vietnamese predicament. It was clear from this that he tried to avoid a contentious discussion.

Kosygin tackled the situation of the Near East, showing that this is very complicated. He said that recently, Israel organized attacks against the UAR [United Arab Republic; Egypt] along the Suez Canal. I did not ask any questions on this subject and he didn't make any assessments.

I told Kosygin that the disaster in the UAR in 1967 was the result of the Soviet attitude. He did not admit this and stated that the defeat occurred because the UAR was too weak. Kosygin also asserted that the US will not be able to obtain favorable results in the Middle East.

My conversations with Kosygin were centered on the main theme of Sino-Soviet relations.

During the conversation I tried everything in order to obtain the weakening of the tensions at the Sino-Soviet border. We agreed that the status quo will be maintained until the final resolution of these border issues, that clashes will be avoided and that troops from both sides will be withdrawn from the contact areas. This way we agreed on a ceasefire. This means that the Soviet military ships should not undertake any instigating acts against our ships, that their airplanes should not violate the Chinese airspace etc. Through this, Kosygin admitted that they

organized the previous instigating acts.

We agreed that in the disputed territories, the economic activity in which the Chinese population has been involved for generations will no longer be disturbed. This, however, does not signify the establishment of a border. We decided to report to the Politburo of our parties the contents of the agreement that we reached and to later transform it into a document that we can sign.

Kosygin raised a number of issues as I also did. He tackled the issue of the amelioration of tensions in our state relations.

I told him that there are many divergences of principle in political and ideological matters, divergences that cannot be suddenly solved but that should not hinder the talks on relaxing tensions.

Kosygin agreed with this, but asked us to refrain from using insulting appellations when referring to the Soviet Union.

I reminded him of the way Lenin fought against revisionism during his time. I told Kosygin that there are many problems between us that would necessitate three month discussions not a three hour discussion.

Therefore, in regards to the border disputes, we agreed for now on certain temporary measures. Concerning the way in which the negotiations will take place and what problems will need to be solved, I told him that we will state our opinion in a more ample document taking in consideration that their declaration analyzed a period of 2000-3000 years. This document will be prepared by the MFA and will constitute the answer to their declaration.

Kosygin expressed his wish that China will respond as soon as possible to the Soviet declaration and that the document won't contain offensive words.

Kosygin didn't deny the concentration of Soviet troops along the Sino-Soviet border, including the People's Republic of Mongolia, but asked not to discuss this matter.

Intervening, Comrade Kang Sheng pointed out that the Soviet Union has 69 divisions concentrated in those areas.

Carrying on, premier Zhou Enlai stated: "I asked Kosygin against whom these troops are concentrated and I told him just as I told you on September 7 what a Soviet attack against China would mean. I mentioned to him that this would mean the beginning of the war. And the 69 divisions can only fit in Central China.

In regards to the possibility of an atomic attack by China directed against the Soviet Union, I told him that everyone laughs when they hear about something like this. He did not defend himself but asked not to discuss this issue.

During the conversations, Kosygin approached the issue of Czechoslovakia. He stated that in this country there was a real danger of a coup and this determined the Soviet Union's intervention.

I replied that, in our opinion, the situation in Czechoslovakia was different from the situation in Hungary in 1956, when it was necessary to overthrow the Hungarian government. I told him that, undeniably, in some socialist countries there is the danger of a coup and I added that even the peaceful evolu-

tion towards capitalism, which is taking place in certain socialist countries, represents the possibility of instating capitalism without a coup. In this matter, the discussion was polemical. I could see from the discussions that the Soviets are in a very tense state. It can be affirmed that there are people in the Soviet Union who want war. Until now, no decision has been taken in this matter and this is why Kosygin was in a hurry to take action in the direction of easing up the tension.

It can be said that this act of Kosygin's was only probing. We don't know what they will do in the future so that is why we have to be vigilant.

Cde. Kang Sheng: As far as I know, Nixon stated that it is very hard for his kind of people to avoid mistakes. This represents an instigation.

Do you know [Konstantin F.] Katushev, what kind of man he is, what he occupies himself with?

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Katushev was with Kosygin. It seems like he is very young. He is approximately 41 years old. We haven't seen him until now.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: As a matter of fact, he has become part of the leadership only recently.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Is he in the Politburo?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: No, he is secretary of the Central Committee.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: He is secretary of the Central Committee and works with the socialist countries. [Boris] Ponomarev works on relations with communist parties in communist countries. Katushev is an engineer.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: There might be no more noise at the border anymore.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: From a certain perspective, China and Romania are in a similar situation: they're neighbors in the same way with the Soviet Union. There is a difference, though: you are very big and we are very small. However, what unites us is the respect for the principles of independence and self-determined development. If the USSR will ensure that these principles are respected in its relations with China, this will mean an alleviation of their respect for us too. This is a support for us.

Cde. Kang Sheng: India is a large country, but it is not unified; Romania is a small country, but it is unified. Which is the bigger country in this case?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Of course, we can look at the issue this way.

The fact that we looked at things [in a] very determined [way] during difficult times protected us from very, very difficult hardships. We said at that time: If someone will come in [our country], we will fight. We will see how it will turn out, but we will fight. And we are convinced that this firm attitude was very, very rational; it wasn't an adventurous act, lacking reflection, but a rational act.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Is it possible, maybe, that the discussions and a weakening of tensions with us, even if just formal, could be used to put pressure on you?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: If the tensions between you



Henry Kissinger and Zhou Enlai, 9 July 1971, during Kissinger's secret trip to Beijing, courtesy US National Archives and Records Administration

will weaken, it will become harder to put pressure on us.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: So you are seeing things different then us!

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Yes!

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Do you see another justification that they could use against you?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: For us, the situation will become very tense, very serious if the tension with you would become greater, because at this time, the Soviets would say to us: you [must] choose between China and the USSR. As a matter of fact, they already told us. At this invitation, we answered as always: we do not choose. We have good relations with China that we are seeking to develop, just like the relations with the other socialist countries. We want to develop relations with the USSR also. This is why we tell them: you can't pose the issue this way. We will not take a position against China. We believe that whoever takes a stance against China is making a mistake.

If the situation becomes very tense between you, then the problem would become more acute for us.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: Our party supports a relaxed evolution of relations with China, a point of view that we have always sustained.

There were also attempts to condemn China, but we opposed them. In Budapest, as part of the Warsaw Pact, so in a military alliance, an anti-Chinese resolution was proposed. Romania said: no! Ceausescu and Maurer opposed this and obstructed the adoption of such a resolution. After that, a resolution on the issue of European security was adopted, which is something completely different. We clearly expressed our point of view in relation to China during the discussions between Brezhnev and Ceausescu: we have to take the approach of weakening tensions; the policy of tensions and clashes at the border does not serve well Romania or the Soviet Union.

Later, the international conference of communist parties took place. The entire world knows that Romania firmly stood up against such a trend. I participated at the conference and found out with this occasion that a large number of parties were categorically against the resolution condemning China. And the

Soviets are aware of this. Even some parties that attacked China in their speeches, did this as a result of great pressure; certain parties showed this in intimate circles and said that they do not agree with such an attitude, but that they are forced to do this. The Soviets, of course, have to take this into account. The Moscow Conference was not, however, successful in its fundamental tendency of condemning the Chinese Communist Party.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: This was the main unsuccessful objective.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Could it be possible that they are trying to use the same pretexts as in Czechoslovakia, in other words, to maintain that there is chaos and liberalization [in your country]?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: The political mood in our country is very good. I could say it hasn't been better. Never in the way people are rallying around the leadership. There were moments of popular enthusiasm during the takeover of power, a period with a wide mass audience. This was followed by difficult periods that determined a cooling off, until people started understanding some things. Today, a granite-like unity has formed around the leadership and one of the causes of this unity is our orientation towards defending fair principles in relations between states—independence, sovereignty, equality of rights, and noninterference in internal affairs. It is not the only reason, but it is one of the main reasons for this unity.

Therefore, if at this moment, we would analyze the possibilities of provoking an internal act, we would have to ascertain the following: this has no base within the framework of the party; not in the general party, not in the leadership. We don't have a right or a left, so it is impossible to provoke something.

There are problems that could be speculated, by looking to cause divergences between the co-inhabiting nationalities—Hungarians, Germans, but this is not something feasible. We have been very careful in judging the status of these nationalities and we can say that from this point of view, a stirring up of one of these nationalities is impossible. The remnants of chauvinistic nationalism that might have existed among the Romanian nationalities are of zero significance.

From the perspective of the large social categories—workers, peasants, and intellectuals, we can say the following: building socialism is not void of difficulties; there are difficult moments in one area or another. We have not had, though, any kind of widespread dissatisfaction among the workforce, no type of manifestations from unhappy unions—not among workers, or peasants or intellectuals. We have been very careful with these groups: being hard to come from the outside with their tanks to teach us, they could reorient themselves and try to organize something from within.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: The events that took place here in the summer of 1968 are interesting. We were among the first socialist states to find out, accidentally, from our correspondent who called us from Prague around 2 a.m., that Soviet troops had invaded Czechoslovakia. As a result, during the morning of August 21 we already held a meeting of

the Presidium, the Executive Committee, and the Plenary of the Central Committee. The members in the leadership of the party went throughout the entire country: we discussed this with all social classes and found out that they are all supporting our position. We organized the workers' guards. We gave weapons to workers, peasants, intellectuals; Romanians, Hungarians, Germans, all nationalities. The problem was that we were unable to cope with the organization of all the people who wished to join the guards. These weapons are held until today in the workplace.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: It is very light armament, infantry type.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: What is the approximate size of these armed squads?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Approximately 300,000. Besides these, there are the army units. There is close collaboration between the military units and the patriot guards. These are instructed by officers; instruction is done regularly, including shooting. The mobilization plans include: the troops of the armed forces, the militia, the Securitate, the armed guards, and the patriotic formations. We have now moved to the organization of schools for the personnel of the fight formations in the patriotic troops for preparing military leaders.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: This is an aspect.

Another aspect is that some have said that [Czechoslovak leader Joseph] Smrkovsky has ties with the West and that he has his people organized in Czechoslovakia. Do you think that there is a possibility to use the same pretexts in other countries?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Of course there is a possibility to use pretexts, but they've proved to be illogical and unrealistic. You know the story of the lamb and the wolf. Pretexts can always be invoked. But not even in the smallest trace of reality is such a pretext possible in Romania, under no circumstance and in relation to no one. Of course, you are familiar with the reproaches made to the Romanian Communist Party. They usually are: nationalistic orientation; then some maintain that the party is becoming intellectualized, which is rather unrealistic from a data perspective; there is a number of intellectuals in the party, but the categories of workers and peasants are predominant, approximately 70%. Thus, from this point of view they can find no real hope of making such an accusation plausible.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: The accusation of nationalism is based on the fact that we sustain the principles of defending national independence. We were even told in a discussion: why are you talking so often about defending national independence? What, is someone attacking you? And we replied: if there is no problem, the more we don't see why we are being reproached for the fact that we emphasize these ideas!

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: From this perspective, it seems to us that there is no potential to justify suspicions of such nature.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: In connection with the possibility of embarking on the road to reinstate capitalism, the imperial-

ists, too, wish that socialist countries in Eastern Europe will adapt to their demands and embark on the way to capitalism. If there is even a reduced number of such people—which can be said of Soviet Union also—could this matter be solved in those countries? How do you look at this problem?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: I will tell you what the situation is in our country and what the situation was in Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

The development of socialist industry poses the question of organization. It is normal, in any society that develops, that leadership issues start to come up. One of these issues is the organization, planning, and leadership of the national economy. In Czechoslovakia, a number of issues were raised in the Czechoslovak economy concerning the difficulties that existed at the end of Novotny's period of leadership, which convinced many specialists and party members to think of different ways to solve them. One of the people who wrote a book and militated for a number of measures for the improvement of planning and management of the economy was [Czechoslovak economist] Ota Sik.

He stipulated a method for the planning and management of the economy that placed more emphasis on market laws and represented the introduction of a system of broad liberalization of the economy. The Soviets accused the acceptance of this point of view by the Czechoslovak leadership as being a possibility of returning to capitalism. No ideas exactly like Sik's, but ideas fairly close to his were introduced in the management and the planning of the Hungarian economy. In fact, these ideas were sustained and experimented with by the Soviet Union. Even now, they are discussing in the Soviet Union about the need to revisit the methods of planning and management of the economy. However, these do not have at all the character of a so-called liberalization that Sik's system had and that Hungary's current system has. Never, not even in one Soviet publication has there ever been a critical remark about the measures for improving the management and planning of the economy taken in our country. The measures that we've taken in order to create a property of an economic activity are of minimal importance from an economic standpoint and cannot become the object of criticism. For example, instead of giving employees of the establishment the possibility to sell ice cream or refreshment in the streets, we gave it to people who do it for a commission. But these cannot be considered as measures of reinstating capitalism.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: Our position, both theoretic and practical, was to criticize liberalism in the management of the economy. We did not openly criticize Lieberman's concepts, or Ota Sik's, or the Yugoslav ones. There was, however, a very clear indirect polemic in which we emphasized the role of the state and of the planned management of the national economy, while our measures of perfecting the management of the economy are based on perfecting the role of the state as the organizer. We reaffirmed this theoretical and practical position at our last congress. Therefore, they can't criticize us here either.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Nor concerning the people's earnings. Raising the standard of living has a general character.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: We took measures to eliminate great disparities in income.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: What is the difference between the highest and the lowest income?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Nine times.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: We have also worked on raising the social salary, eliminating the assistance unconnected to work, rent differences, taking measures against illicit earnings.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Is the situation in Hungary similar to the one in Czechoslovakia?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: I don't think so. In Hungary, the opposition against the official government policy is rather pronounced. In Hungary, the opposition toward the participation at the intervention in Czechoslovakia is expressed rather openly. It can be seen in theater production and jokes.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: To what extent is Hungary's economy relying on the Soviet Union?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Hungary has wide external economic ties with the Soviet Union, but it also develops these ties with the Western countries. It concluded a number of treaties with the Japanese, with the Federal Republic of Germany, with the United States. Hungary is not the only one doing this. Poland, the German Democratic Republic, the majority of socialist states have a volume of foreign trade that surpasses ours.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Does Poland rely more heavily on the Soviet economy?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: The economies of Poland and the German Democratic Republic rely to a great extent on the Soviet economy, especially when it comes to raw materials, but the Bulgarian economy relies on it overwhelmingly.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: This is interesting: the Hungarian troops that entered Czechoslovakia and were sent to the regions inhabited by a Hungarian population were very poorly received by the Hungarian population. This had a very bad resonance in Hungary. We shouldn't forget the fact that Soviet troops have been in Hungary for 13 years. In 1956, as part of the Declaration of the Soviet government it was shown that the presence of Soviet troops in Hungary was dictated by the circumstances of the time and that they will be withdrawn. Thirteen years have passed since then and the troops are still there. So this also carries a certain weight in the mood of the Hungarian population.

Cde. Kang Sheng: It was communicated in the press that the countries which participate in the Warsaw Pact will use Bulgaria's national day—September 9—to hold a conference. Do you know anything about this? This conference, even if it takes place without you, will discuss the attitude towards you.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: The international press wrote about such intentions in the past. These things are not impossible. They could happen. At this moment, however, such a

meeting is not likely, at least from a logical perspective.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: In Czechoslovakia's case, though, logic did not function at all (laughs).

Cde. Zhou Enlai: On September 7, when the discussion with you took place, you were saying that your Chief of the General Staff will go to Moscow for discussions. Has he gone to Moscow?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: He was supposed to leave for Moscow on Monday, and we left Saturday, so I don't know what has been discussed.

Cde. Kang Sheng: Has [Marshal Andrei] Grechko, the Commander of the Warsaw [Pact] troops, come to see you?

Cde. Zhou Enlai: And Zaharov?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Grechko is not the Commander of the Warsaw [Pact] troops. He is the War Minister of the USSR; he wasn't here last year or this year. But [Marshal Ivan] Yabukovski was here a couple times. He is the Commander of the Warsaw [Pact] troops. Zaharov was here also during his vacation and as part of the delegation sent to the 25th anniversary of Romania's liberation. I had long discussions with Yabukovski regarding the organization of the statute of the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact. These were heated discussions. On one side [was] the Soviet Union and the other countries, on the other side, Romania. The Soviet Union and the other countries had the intention of drawing a statute that would totally subordinate all the armies of the countries participating in the Warsaw Pact to the supreme commander, which was supposed to be a Soviet officer. It is true that it stipulated that he can be changed, but only a Soviet officer could be elected.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: So a supranational organization.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Clearly.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: This issue was brought up for the first time in Bucharest at the Political Consultative Committee (PCC) in 1966. Back then, the issue of the statute was a very relevant issue. A document was presented which strengthened the role of the commander and subordinated the national armies to him. We showed that we do not agree and all was delayed, following that the ministers of the armed forces would start a preliminary, preparatory work. In Sofia in 1968, they tried to reintroduce this statute. We opposed discussing it and it was decided that the ministers of the armed forces would work again.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: The discussions took place on several levels. The discussions of the Ministers of the Armed Forces were followed by discussions at a higher level and so forth. Until the very end, the statute was drawn taking in consideration the Romanian point of view. We declared that we will not sign such a statute, the way it was conceived. During these discussions, Yabukovski came to Romania several times. Ceausescu and I received him. We discussed, we bickered, and, at the very end a statute that did not include such dispositions was adopted. It anticipates that the national armies are under the command of the party and the government of that country, which establish a system of relations and col-

laboration during peacetime and also certain attributes of the supreme commander; he has to study and bring forth proposals to member countries concerning organization and armament, after which the countries will make the decisions.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: Any measure regarding the armed forces is taken only by the government or the organizations responsible in that country.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Procedures for wartime are also outlined: the countries will assemble and decide how the commander will exercise his function. There are also special texts, in the sense that no foreign military unit can enter the territory of another country without the permission of that country and based on certain preliminary procedures showing the way to station and withdraw these [troops].

Cde. Kang Sheng: Usually, the Soviet Union does not respect these. They could respect them in the case of Romania, but when it comes to the other countries, what do you think?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: I have doubts even when it comes to Romania!

Cde. Kang Sheng: Romania can use this statute to fight for its observance; but the other countries?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: We did not sign an act that they can use to come to our house whenever they want to.

Cde. Kang Sheng: Romania can therefore do something like this, but the other countries?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: The other countries agreed with the draft statute that we fought against and did not accept.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Can the other countries fight to keep the statute if pressure will be put on them?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: I think that until the very end it is impossible for people who believe in socialism not to rise against this unjust policy. When and how this will take place, I don't know. In any case, there are signs. There is discontent in Hungary, in Poland, in the German Democratic Republic; there is discontent even in the Soviet Union. It is hard to say how widespread or strong these are, but there are signs of this discontent. I found out from certain reports that a few days ago in the Red Square there was a demonstration against the intervention in Czechoslovakia. It might have not been big, there might have not been ten thousand people, but the fact is that a number of people got together and demonstrated against the intervention in Czechoslovakia. This is a sign. Kang Sheng, you know the Soviet Union well and for a very long time; I know it too.

Cde. Kang Sheng: A number of writers from the magazines *Youth* and *New World* oppose the intervention in Czechoslovakia. On the other side, the magazine *October* is situated on the *Pravda* side.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: These phenomena don't occur only among writers. I saw some reports about an entire series of other categories. There is a strong enough opposition towards an entire series of acts.

Cde. Kang Sheng: Recently, there was a meeting of literary figures during which they were asked to write about the

fight against China in the Far East. The writers asked: "what should we write?" They were told to write about the tension and even war. One of them said: "If the Chinese are taken prisoners, how will their food be ensured?"

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: It is normal for these reactions to different things to exist. People [in the USSR] ask themselves: we don't get along with China, we don't get along with Czechoslovakia, the same with Albania, with Romania. Likewise with large communist parties.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: These issues were raised during certain party briefings.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: These issues will inevitably arise. Likewise, communist countries in capitalist states such as: the Spanish party, the Italian party, parties that fight in Latin America—Dominican, Mexican. People wonder: is this policy fair, if it leads to strained relations with an entire world, and first of all with the socialist countries?

Cde. Kang Sheng: In the Soviet Union there is a fairly large number of people who think about these problems. We have proof from Soviet passengers who pass, even from soldiers, who showed us these things.

It is true that Suslov was not that active during the June conference in Moscow?

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: These can be only impressions. You cannot know what hides behind them. I, too, have the impression that Suslov, both at the preparatory meeting and at the international conference played a much smaller role than at the first conference in Budapest. This is my personal opinion since I participated in Budapest and at the other meetings. I cannot figure out what significance this could have.

Cde. Kang Sheng: We had the same impression, too. We are not sure about the real meaning though.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Last time, when we discussed, you told us that Nixon also discussed with you the issue of European security. Has he showed you how he sees things in this matter? Does he see European security as a result of the agreement between the two military sides?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Nixon said that this is a problem in whose discussion the United States should also participate. Nixon showed that he believes that it is useful to organize European security and that adequate preparations need to be made in this sense. We raised this issue because it was more in our interest and [we] wished to show him our point of view concerning the organization of European security.

The main point was that European security has to be organized not between military pacts, but between countries, and all countries should equally participate in this. In addition, during the discussion we emphasized the fact that we don't believe it is fair for the organization of European security to be accomplished by two pacts: Warsaw and NATO—and even less to let the organization of European security be the result of discussions between the two great powers—the Soviet Union and the United States. We showed that this would mean the creation of an area of hegemony, which would not lead to a lasting solution to the problem.

He showed interest and listened. Nothing was concretely discussed, though. Nixon said that the United States is willing to get in touch with all the states that want this. He is willing to speak with the other socialist countries the same way he is discussing with Romania. The only problem that he raised is that the United States has to participate in the organization of European security. This is indeed a problem that many European states have raised; almost all European states that are not socialist that we talked to raised this issue: [i.e.] Italy, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and Sweden.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Was the Soviet Union informed about your point of view?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Of course, the Soviet Union knows our point of view. Ceausescu informed the Soviet ambassador about the discussion with Nixon. But the Soviet Union knows our position even from before.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Is the Soviet Union unhappy with the fact that you are members of the Warsaw Pact but develop an independent foreign policy at the same time?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Within the framework of the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet Union tends to organize all acts of foreign policy. There was the tendency to create within the Warsaw Pact a branch that would decide, with a majority vote, foreign policy affairs. The tendency to establish supranational bodies existed: in military affairs—in the organization of the United Commandment; in economic affairs—in the organization of Comecon as a supranational body, as well as in external political affairs. We opposed all these tendencies and said: the treaty that established the Warsaw Pact shows that the participant countries will consult on matters that they deem important and that they agree to consult on. Therefore, every country, as an expression of its sovereignty, has the right to practice the foreign policy that it wishes to practice, taking in account the engagements it made. I think that the Soviet Union is unhappy with the fact that we are leading an independent foreign policy. We had a different position from the Soviet Union on an entire series of issues. To answer your question, I don't believe that the Soviet Union is pleased with us.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: There is some news showing that Nixon considers that he cannot monopolize European affairs through NATO and that he would wish to secure certain rights in Europe with the help of European security.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: I couldn't answer. Many states, including members of NATO, embrace the idea of European security, in the sense that this has to be accomplished not through the understanding between two pacts, but through an understanding among all states. This point of view, being embraced by many European states, including members of NATO, could make Nixon believe that he has to take part in the organization of European security, especially since a number of countries asked for this. Stewart told us that if the Soviet Union would participate in the Pact on European security while the United States would not, a disproportion or influence gap would result. Denmark, Sweden, and Italy told us the same thing.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: The socialist countries' members of the Warsaw pact discussed the topic of European security several times. There are two basic documents on this theme: the one from Bucharest from 1966 and the one from Budapest from 1969. There also was an idea to ensure European security between two pacts. Our categorical position was that we see in European security not the strengthening of the existing military treaties, but the organization of European issues with the participation of all European states, including the German Democratic Republic—an organization that would lead to the dissolution of NATO—and, in this case, as we jointly declared, we are prepared for the simultaneous dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. These documents have the signature of all states in the Warsaw Pact. This is how we interpret European security.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: And this is not a secret.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: This is a lengthy issue. Nixon said that so long as the issue of Vietnam is not solved, the issue of the Near East won't be solved, nor the issue of European security, including the one of West Berlin.

Has Brezhnev talked to you about the security system in Asia? He has not even raised this issue with us in today's discussion. He talks [*trambita*] about it though. They are taking action in this direction, but there are not concrete ideas. They are following the creation of a pact of countries that are opposing China, but it is not easy.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: I also think it is not easy. This results from a report we received: it seems that during a conference, as part of the discussion between [US Secretary of State William] Rogers and [Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei] Gromyko, the United States will declare that they do not support the idea of organizing Asian security and that they should not count on US support in the escalation of the conflict with China. I told you that Nixon talked to us very clearly about this matter and showed that the United States, during the discussions it had with countries in Asia through which it passed on its way to Romania—more exactly Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and India—does not support this.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: The Rogers-Gromyko meeting is set to take place in September.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Has Rogers come to see you, have you met him?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: No.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Have you met Kissinger?

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Yes, he came with Nixon. He is a close friend of his. Kissinger gives the impression that he is a very well-informed person. He is a close collaborator of Nixon's; he [Nixon] had very appreciative things to say about Kissinger. He always presented him as some kind of celebrity "the famous Harvard professor." He is a history professor, a great specialist in matters of history, a great scholar. During the discussions I think he proved he has an analytical, penetrating character. He rarely intervened in the discussions.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: At the previous meeting you were saying, Comrade Mizil, that you wish to discuss certain issues on a party line. Comrade Kang Sheng is present, so we can

discuss.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: I would like to say a few things. First of all, how do we interpret the meeting that took place in Moscow? You are aware that the initiative of the meeting dates a long way back. We had a point of view that we maintained until the end, more exactly that the conditions for a meeting of communist and workers' parties are not met.

First of all, a large number of parties from socialist countries are missing, among them being some frontline parties in the fight against imperialism; parties from capitalist countries are missing; serious anti-imperialism movements from Africa and Asia—that have generally been weakly represented—are missing. The most important fact that led us to this conclusion is the existence of the tense situation in the international communist movement. In spite of all these, we decided to participate at the conference. The way events took place reinforced this initial opinion. By participating at the conference, we had the possibility to tell our opinions more broadly and to reaffirm our point of view concerning the necessity of certain relations between communist and workers' parties, based on mutual respect, independence of parties, noninterference in the affairs of other parties, the right of every party to decide its internal issues, its political stance and its entire activity. The event in Czechoslovakia had the opportunity to reinforce this position. In Budapest, in 1968, we were the only party that expressed such a point of view. Later, a great number of parties expressed the point of view with clarity.

In regards to the meeting itself, it was seeking, first of all, to obtain a condemnation of the Chinese Communist Party. In spite of all these, the well known attacks took place during the meeting. We believe that one clear thing in this issue is that they did not manage to obtain a condemnation of the Chinese Communist Party. A resolution condemning the Chinese Communist Party was proposed by the party from East Pakistan—I am not even sure such a party exists; I did not see its representative at the Moscow meeting.

Cde. Kang Sheng: He is Indian.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: We intervened and demanded that this project not be discussed by any branch. Comrade Ceausescu demanded and had a discussion with Brezhnev on this subject. He asked clearly not to discuss this project, under any circumstance, not in the conference, nor in its committees.

We realized with this occasion that a large number of parties, even some of the ones that spoke against the Chinese Communist Party, did not agree with such a resolution. In the end, this project was not even discussed in the preliminary commissions. At the Secretariat meeting, the Soviet representative said that, since the issue is not on the agenda and we are too busy, we should not even bother with it.

The first conclusion that we reach is that the plan to condemn the Chinese Communist Party did not succeed.

Secondly, this conference was summoned with the goal of reestablishing a certain discipline among the communist parties, of reestablishing the supremacy of the CPSU in the

communist movement. In our opinion, not even this objective was reached in the end. A large number of parties—14—either didn't vote for the document, partially voted, or voted with reservations. If during the preliminary meetings the idea of subduing the minority in front of the majority frequently appeared, during the conference, almost no party invoked this principle. They realized they had no chance to win.

We consider the right of every party to participate or not participate at a conference, the right of every party to be sovereign in its decision, to sign or not to sign the documents, was recognized at the meeting.

The third thing that we consider important is that during the conference, a number of parties largely expressed their opinions openly concerning the relations between socialist countries, between communist parties. These were: the Romanians, the Spaniards, the Dominicans, the Swiss, the one from Reunion and others. These points of view were published in the press—and this thing is extremely important—including, partially, the Soviet press.

We interpret as positive the fact that the main document contains the principles of relations between socialist countries, between communist and workers' parties. Regarding this, we had a large number of propositions that were included. Of course, this document contains some things that we don't agree with. But the fact that these principles are written in a joint document has a certain political significance; if they will be respected or not, this is a different matter.

Finally, we consider extremely important the principle of the development of relations between the parties that participated and even parties that did not participate at the meeting. This hints at new possibilities of development among communist parties. In what we are concerned, we give great attention to this principle. Both parties that were at the meeting and parties that were not at the meeting participated at the congress of our party.

We don't have any illusions and realize that the affirmation of the new principles in the communist movement will be the result of a long process. As part of this process we wish to have an active role, to develop relations with all parties, and especially, with parties that have new points of view concerning principles in relations between socialist countries and communist parties.

I wish to emphasize that we made contact with a large number of communist parties both during the preliminary conference and during the conference. We became familiar with new positions, new points of view in a series of parties regarding relations with the Chinese Communist Party. An entire series of parties share the opinion that the respective parties feel the need to revisit their previous positions on the Chinese Communist Party and their relations with it. A series of parties told us openly that they would want the Chinese comrades to know their opinion and their wish of having contacts and develop relations with the Chinese Communist Party. During this [meeting], we transmitted to you these wishes. Among these are, first of all, the Spanish party, Santiago Carillo came to

see us a couple times and discussed with Comrade Ceausescu; he raised this issue. The Italian Communist Party, with which we have good relations and in whose press we can observe a process of reevaluating their position towards the Chinese Communist Party. Likewise, the Mexican Communist Party raised this issue, the Workers' Party in Switzerland—I was in Switzerland a couple months ago and the comrades raised the issue of a possibility of contact with the Chinese Communist Party [while] the Communist Party from Reunion, whose secretary general we met in Hanoi, [raised the issue] the day before yesterday. Likewise, the Communist (Marxist) Party of India, which sent a delegate to our congress, mentioned that it wishes to have contact with the Chinese Communist Party. Also, the parties from Northern European countries, the Australian Communist Party and others.

We believe that it is our duty to inform you about this new element that has appeared in the communist movement, and that, in a series of parties, the process of fighting for the organization of their relations based on certain new principles is also associated with the wish of normalizing relations with the Chinese Communist Party. We also reached the conclusion that we laid out for you, that the Chinese Communist Party can bring, by respecting its relations with other countries, an important contribution to this process of respecting, within the framework of the communist movement, of equality of rights, noninterference in other [countries'] affairs, mutual respect and independence of every party.

Here is, in brief, what we wished to tell you.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: Indeed, there are tendencies in the communist movement towards the independent development of parties instead of joint actions. The communist movement is developing in this direction. There was an Informative Office that functioned in your country. Between 1957-1960 we made efforts to bring a contribution to the development of the movement through the convocation of meetings and the adoption of declarations. It proved, however, that the declarations did not play any role for the communist parties. It was exactly these declarations that some parties did not accept. Since then, every party develops independently; there are problems that some see in one way, others in another way; there are divergences from a theoretical standpoint. These are a result of the fact that imperialism is headed for a fall, while socialism [is headed] for a victory. There are common and distinct elements between us. Even the common elements have to be looked at creatively, taking in consideration the concrete conditions in every country, not in a dogmatic manner. From this perspective, the role of the Warsaw Pact is of enclosure, of restricting the development of the participant countries. The Warsaw Pact functions in the same way as NATO, CENTO [the Central Treaty Organization].

All these point out that the world is transitioning through a period of discord. The communist parties are proceeding through a trying period. It will be proved which parties are capable of leading the revolution.

The international meetings cannot solve the problems. We

understood your intentions of opposing China's condemnation at the meeting, creating an organization, promoting the principle of noninterference. Only these parties that maintain the principles of independence can lead the revolution. The parties that follow others cannot do this—how the parties from Pakistan or Bagdad are just like many others. Presently, parties have to follow a policy of bilateral relations. Otherwise, it would mean letting the revisionist Soviet party work its magic wand.

We told you that we are not interested in this meeting. We have different points of view in this matter. Think that there are countries where there are more parties; actually, this is the way it was in Russia with the Bolshevik party. This is an inevitable problem in the development of the international communist movement, which has to go through this trial of the practice and that will show which grouping in that country is capable of leading the revolution. Even though we opposed the conference, Comrade Mao Zedong showed, several times, that we do not intend to call another conference. This is a matter of principle.

Cde. Kang Sheng: Between us there is the common point of view that the conditions for the convocation of the meeting were not met. But there are differences in the way we look at this conference. We showed that we are not interested. In fact, we didn't even publish anything regarding this conference. Our answer is actually included in the article published in March of 1965. We saw your good intentions of opposing the resolution condemning China. We consider that it doesn't matter if China is not condemned in the document, since after the conference an anti-Chinese campaign was unleashed. The declarations from 1957 and 1960 did not play a role. In this matter, our points of view differ. I am not even personally interested in this conference, even though in the past I participated at many conferences. I believe that it would have been better if at the conference a resolution condemning China would have been adopted. Of course, you wouldn't have signed. But if the Soviets want the gallows, it is better to give it to them, instead of reaching a situation where the condemned is neither dead nor alive. We do not want to deny the good intentions of the Romanian comrades, in the sense that they opposed China's condemnation at the conference.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: The Albanians had a different position and published a series of articles. If they want to criticize, they can criticize, we cannot reproach this to them. They did not participate. Yugoslavia did not participate either. We do not reproach to you the fact that you participated. If we would have published a serious critique, we would have raised the importance of the conference with this, and the Soviets would have been happy if we would have cursed at them.

Cde. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: We want you to know that we think the same on many topics that you presented to us. Regarding the document adopted at the conference, you shouldn't think that we give it too much importance. We didn't even publish the document in the form of a brochure. We filed it, we are keeping it, but if anyone will reproach us anything because of our relations with a party or another, then we can



Mao Zedong meeting Richard Nixon, 21 February 1972. The photo was airbrushed by the Chinese to conceal the presence, standing between Mao and Nixon, of Mao's personal secretary, Zhang Yufeng (courtesy US National Archives and Records Administration)

invoke this document at any time.

Even though the conference did not take place in appropriate conditions and even though it could not solve the numerous problems that our movement is dealing with, it was nonetheless an opportunity to clearly expose the points of view regarding the organization of relations in the communist movement based on the right of every party to decide on its own its policy. And this new development is valuable. An entire series of parties declared that they oppose the politics of coordination. It is true that there are numerous parties that do not oppose being coordinated, but a large number of parties, including some serious parties, said that they oppose this policy. And we believe that this is also valuable. Therefore, it is not the document that gives the conference its value, but the fact that the position of an important number of parties developed here.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu expressed clearly, at the end of the conference, our reservations concerning the document. We believe that the idea of developing bilateral relations is fair and we widely practice this method. We want to continue to develop relations with numerous communist and workers' parties, to discuss the new problems, what we have in common, what makes us distinct, our differences in opinion. This action has a very important value for our country. It gives us the opportunity to express our solidarity and to feel, in turn, the solidarity of other communist parties. In addition, it gives us the opportunity of affirming our party's point of view concerning the necessity of organizing relations of solidarity in our movement based on the principles that you have also mentioned.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: To sum up this discussion: the document adopted at the meeting is a model of lack of logic and of triviality. What is affirmed on the first page is contradicted on the second. From this point of view, the document has no value. At the same time, it can cause problems, since everyone can find something arguable within it. And since the most valid interpretation is that of the strongest, the document poses some risks.

We believe, however, that we did the right thing by going to the conference. The conference was dealing with two main

issues: reestablishing the conductor's baton [*bagheta*] and China's condemnation. We were interested in both issues. Whether China considers that its condemnation has a value or not, that is your problem. If nobody that was opposing this would have been present at the meeting the baton would have been established. We said: we are going to fight this, especially since we believe that many parties had an oscillating attitude. We adopted positions different that the Soviet Union concerning the baton and concerning China. And we succeeded. This does not mean much for China. For us, however, it is something big: we legalized the right of having a point of view—which can be good or bad. If it is bad, it is fought with ideas, through discussions, not with clubs. This is what we won in Moscow. If you won or lost something, you will analyze this. This was, however, our rationale when we went to the meeting.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: In the international communist movement at the moment there is the tendency of independent self development of parties. There will again come a time when there will be solidarity. There can't be a revolutionary party that has no influence in its country.

Cde. Kang Sheng: Let's not be naïve in relation to the fact that the document includes the principles of relations among parties. You said that the most valid interpretation is that of the strongest, so I don't know if the Soviets will respect them.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: I am really afraid that it is true.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: You are right when you emphasize the fact that more and more parties do not listen to the baton anymore. You rose against the baton and fought against it from the inside, at the meeting. We fought against it from the outside. Let's fight so that all parties can develop independently!

A last problem before finishing up, since we have more discussions tonight with the Korean comrades, who are leaving tomorrow.

We will soon have the 20th anniversary of the People's Republic of China. We don't have the initiative of inviting guests from abroad, being preoccupied with the great cultural revolution, which continues. Additionally, we don't want to incur high financial expenses. If our friend countries wish to participate, then they can send delegations. For example, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam asked to send a delegation.

If you wish to send a delegation or to delegate your ambassador—we delegated our ambassador to you—then you can proceed as you see fit. In other words, we will salute the delegation or the ambassador. I believe you understand well what I am telling you?! We ask you to inform Comrade Ceausescu, the Romanian Communist Party CC Permanent Presidium about this matter and to decide as you see fit.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: We understood well the meaning of what you have told us and we will explain the meaning of the decision we will adopt. In any case, I am convinced that the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party knows the extent to which the Romanian Communist Party values its friendship with the CCP. We told you: for us, the support of the Chinese people, of the Chinese Communist Party,

of the Chinese state in the promotion of our policy of independence, national sovereignty is extremely valuable. If there would be only this reason and we would show to what extent our people and our party are standing by the Chinese people and party at the 20th anniversary of the proclamation of the republic. Of course, I will report this matter to our leadership and we will be careful to show in detail and in a clear manner why we will adopt a decision or another, being convinced that you will understand well he reasons why we will adopt that decision. There cannot be any misunderstanding.

09/17/1969



DOCUMENT No. 9

Memorandum of Conversation between Romanian Deputy Premier Gheorghe Radulescu and Zhou Enlai, 12 December 1970

[Source: ANIC, CC RCP Fond, Foreign Relations Section, file 98/1970, p. 6-35; published in *Relatiile Romano-Chineze, 1880-1974 [Sino-Romanian Relations, 1880-1974], ed. Ambassador Romulus Ioan Budura, (Bucharest, 2005), pp. 1021-42. Translated for CWIHP by Mircea Munteanu.*]

(fragments)

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12 XII 1970/1333

Memorandum about the friendship visit of the Romanian government delegation in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) and the People's Republic of China (PRC).

At the invitation of the governments of the DRV and the PRC, a government delegation, led by Cde. Gheorghe Radulescu, member of the [RCP CC] Executive Committee, of the [RCP CC] Permanent Presidium, Council of Ministers Vice President, made a friendly visit in the DRV between 15-20 November 1970, and, between 20-26 November 1970, a friendly visit in the PRC. Other members of the delegation were Cdes. Radu Constantinescu, vice president of the Governmental Commission for Technical and Economic Cooperation, as well as Constantin Babeanu, Romanian Ambassador to Hanoi during the portion of the visit in the DRV, and Aurel Duma, Romanian Ambassador to Beijing, during the delegation's activities in the PRC.

[...] [text of the memorandum on Vietnam not translated] [...]

B. The Visit to the People's Republic of China

The purpose of this visit was to examine the possibilities of continual development of economic relations between the Socialist Republic of Romania (SRR) and the PRC. With

this occasion, a meeting took place between the leader of the Romanian governmental delegation and Zhou Enlai, Premier of the State Council of the PRC, during which—per the indication of the [party] leadership—the Chinese side was informed of certain issues of interest that arose from the discussions held by Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu during his activities at the anniversary session of the United Nations (UN), as well as from the discussions he had during his visit to the United States of America (US). During the same meeting, the leader of the Romanian governmental delegation informed the Chinese side of certain aspects concerning the activity of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA).

[...] [discussion of economic issues not translated] [...]

2. Other topics expressed by the Romanian side during the meeting with Cde. Zhou Enlai.

Before the start of the discussions, the leader of the Romanian delegation informed Cde. Zhou Enlai that he has a written message from Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu for transmittal to Cde. Mao Zedong. Cde. Zhou Enlai replied that both Cde. Mao Zedong and Cde. Lin Biao are in vacation and that during this period they have not received any foreign delegation, and asked that the message be delivered to Cde. Zhou Enlai for transmittal to Cde. Mao Zedong.

Following [that exchange], the discussions between the leader of the Romanian governmental organization and the Premier of the Council of State of the PRC focused on the following topics:

a. Certain issues regarding the legitimate role of the PRC in resolving the international issues touched upon by Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu on the occasion of the UN anniversary session and during the conversations he had during his visit to the US.

Regarding these issues, we told the Chinese side that, both during the meetings Cde. Ceausescu had with heads of state that participated at the UN anniversary session and during the discussions he had during his visit in the US, special emphasis was placed on PRC's role in today's world. Both at the UN and in the discussions during his US visit, Cde. Ceausescu argued firmly that without the participation of the PRC, of the great Chinese people, none of the major international issues facing today's world can be resolved.

The Chinese side was informed that, during the conversations with US President [Richard M.] Nixon, he stated that he understands this, and agrees with Cde. Ceausescu's position. Also, we pointed out that, during the discussions with R. Nixon and Rogers, it became clear that they are preoccupied by finding ways to normalize relations between the US and the PRC. As a matter of fact, R. Nixon stated that the US is ready to carry out negotiations on any issue toward the goal of improving Sino-American relations, in any way and at any

time, and asked Cde. Ceausescu to inform the PRC that the US desires the develop economic, technical, and scientific bilateral relations. R. Nixon let it be known that, if Warsaw does not prove itself to be the right venue for Sino-American contacts, the venue can be changed.

During the meetings Cde. Ceausescu had with representatives of the financial and industrial circles in the US, a clear concern was evident on their side for improving Sino-American relations.

It was expressed that, during discussions with R. Nixon concerning his speech at the UN, Cde. Ceausescu expressed his impression, and the impression of other heads of state, that the US president was specifically addressing the Soviet Union, in a way that implied that the US desires to discuss world problems exclusively with the USSR. Nixon denied such a thing, stating that it is not his intention to approach and resolve global problems this way, and stating that in the draft of his UN speech there was a passage that was favorable to the PRC, but that he took it out after his conversation with Gromyko, so as not to upset the Soviets.

In his response to the topics raised, Premier Zhou Enlai stated that the entire Chinese people express warm thanks to Cde. Ceausescu for the position to take at the UN regarding the need to reestablish the legitimate rights of the PRC in this organization and the removal of the Chiang Kai-shekist clique. Also, he stated that the Americans have been, for a long time, amenable to the reestablishment of the PRC's legitimate rights in this organization, under the condition that Taiwan remains a member of the UN, as an independent country. Some are of the opinion that Taiwan can become an autonomous region within the PRC, and remain a member of the UN, the same way Ukraine is a member. In a situation like this, India could ask that Tibet, which is an autonomous region within the PRC, also become a member of the UN. The Soviets could ask that Xinjiang, another autonomous region, also become a UN member. In this way, one can say that the PRC would end up having more votes at the UN than the Soviet Union. It could be said that, in the end, the UN would chose this solution to the issue of Chinese representation. The party, the government, the people of China would never be able to accept such a solution. Twenty five years have passed since the UN was founded, and in 25 more years things will be the same.

Cde. Zhou Enlai stated that this in no means precludes Romania's activities in the UN in support of reestablishing the legitimate rights of the PRC and toward throwing out the Chiang Kai-shekist clique from the organization.

Regarding this topic, Cde. Zhou Enlai stated that: "A right cause will always remain right, truth will always be truth." For example, the draft proposed by Algeria, Romania, and other countries, was adopted by 51 votes, 25 abstained, one country did not vote, and another representative went to get some coffee. But there was another resolution draft proposed there, the American one, which passed with 66 votes for, 52 against, and 7 abstentions. Because of this, the representative of Tunis stood up and proposed that the Chinese issue be sent

to the Secretary General as a special issue for consideration. On this issue, [Tunisian President Habib Ben Ali] Bourguiba tried to speculate, the same way he did on the issue of the Middle East. It is known that he sent the Prime Minister in Jordan on the premise of mediation, but that he was on the side of [Jordanian King] Hussein. The solution of transforming the Chinese problem into a special issue [for the Secretary General] is worse than the American solution of two-thirds of the votes. The Americans have made public the idea that China does not desire and has not requested membership in the UN. But it is well known that China is a founding nation of the UN. After the Second World War many countries changed their leadership. [Egyptian President Gamal Abdel] Nasser made a republic out of a kingdom, and the most recent change took place in Libya. But no one had requested that these issues be considered important or special. France, Algeria, other countries, took a very just position on the issue raised by Tunis, which is why the representative of that country withdrew his proposal. As far as the Chinese party is concerned things will not stop here. The Americans will change their attitude on this issue only when Nixon, or another American president, will dig themselves into a hole.

Regarding what was sent through from Nixon, Cde. Zhou Enlai thanked Cde. Ceausescu, stating that "Nixon knew that Cde. Ceausescu will inform the Chinese party of these things." He continued by stating that: "What the Americans stated is not that important. Between China and the US, there is one main issue—the issue of Taiwan. Taiwan is an integral part of China, and this was recognized in many international documents, including the [27 November 1943] Cairo Declaration. After the surrender of Japan, the Chinese government of Jiang Jieshi took over the administration of Taiwan. [US President Harry S.] Truman sent troops to occupy Taiwan only after the start of the Korean War; but before that he too recognized that Taiwan is an integral part of China."

Referring to the presentation made by the leader of the Romanian delegation, that the American side is preoccupied with the normalization of relations with the Chinese side, Cde. Zhou Enlai stated that: "If Nixon truly wants and has the solution to resolve this key problem, then the Chinese government will welcome a special envoy [of president Nixon] to Beijing."

When asked if Cde. Ceausescu can pass this reply to Nixon, Cde. Zhou Enlai said that the following can be passed [to Washington]: "Taiwan is an integral part of China. Freeing Taiwan is an internal issue of China, and there can be no outside interference in this matter. The basic problem behind the tense Sino-American relations is that the US has occupied Taiwan and the Formosa Straits militarily. The PRC government has always come out in favor of resolving this issue diplomatically. This issue has been discussed for 15 years, without any results. Now, finding through Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu that Nixon desires to carry out negotiations with China, at any time and in any place, we reply that if Nixon truly has the desire and the solution to resolve this issue, then the Chinese government would welcome a special envoy [of President Nixon] to

Beijing.” Zhou Enlai continued by saying that “Nixon could even come to Beijing, not just a special envoy. He was able to go to Belgrade and Bucharest, so why would he not be able to come to Beijing?”

Cde. Zhou Enlai asked that we transmit to Cde. Ceausescu that the PRC leadership discussed the issue of Sino-American relations in the [CCP] Central Committee, together with Cdes. Mao Zedong and Lin Biao, and that [the above statement] is the position of the Chinese party and government.

[...] [CMEA and CSCE sections not translated] [...]

3. Certain topics presented by Cde. Zhou Enlai during the discussion with the Romanian delegation.

Premier Zhou Enlai also described certain Chinese considerations with respect to the state of Sino-Soviet relations, the rebirth of Japanese militarism, and [Democratic People's Republic of Korea] DPRK-USSR relations.

a. Regarding Sino-Soviet relations

Cde. Zhou Enlai stated that, during the meeting he had on 11 September 1969 with Cde. Alexei Kosygin, he discussed the issue of resolving border disputes “peacefully, without threats.” Concerning this, Cde. Zhou Enlai stated that: “the Chinese side suggested that, before the issues at hand be resolved, the two parties should finalize an agreement that would include: maintaining the status-quo at the border; avoiding skirmishes, disengaging from the disputed zones.

Cde. Kosygin asked what do we mean by disputed zones, he acted as if he did not understand. He was told that, on the basis of the accords agreed upon in the 19th Century, the two countries' borders drawn on their respective maps intersect at certain points. The territories between two lines are territories in dispute. In these territories, border guards from both countries continue to patrol, which is why there are skirmishes. The Chinese proposal is that the troops of both countries be withdrawn from these regions. When Cde. Kosygin asked what would happen to the civil administration now present in those areas, he was told that they should remain in place, as they are now, until the border is finalized. It was mentioned that, by agreeing to this, negotiations can begin on the main issues concerning the demarcation line. Cde. Kosygin agreed to the proposal, and asked for a draft [of the understanding], also asking how long it will take the Chinese side to come up with the document. He was told that the Chinese side can send the document in one week, and, on 18 September, the document was sent. After that, on 20 October, the negotiations began, but there have been no results to this day. The main topics discussed are the disputed zones, which are different in size—some smaller, some larger. In principle, we are talking about the islands on the Amur and Ussuri rivers. Those [islands] are disputed because the Soviets do not accept the international practice regarding borders on rivers, meaning they do not accept thalweg [valley profile of the

river]. In the West, the area of the disputed zones is larger, the largest one is in the Pamir plateau. In that area, the border was never settled. The Chinese side said that its guiding principle in the negotiations is the following: starting from the situation on the ground, and through mutual understanding, the necessary changes should be made [to the border]. On the basis of this principle, [China] has resolved its border issues with all its neighbors, except for India and the Soviet Union. The Soviets refuse to accept border changes because they are afraid of a chain reaction. They have issues with all their neighbors, without any exception, starting with Japan and going to Finland, but are insisting that their present borders are just. They are very afraid to create a precedent.”

b. Regarding the revival of Japanese militarism

Regarding this issue, Cde. Zhou Enlai said the following:

“From an economic standpoint, Japan is now number two in the world, ahead of England, France, and even the [Federal Republic of Germany] FRG. Attention must be paid to the fact that the Japanese economy is not growing naturally. It does not possess raw materials, and it does not have a [domestic] market. In these conditions, it purchases resources from the US and the third world, and must find a market to sell its products. The Americans, for fear of competition from Japanese products, began adopting a protectionist tariff policy. Given the situation, Japan is orienting itself toward the markets of other countries, especially Asian countries. Last year, Japan had a trade surplus of approximately 4 billion dollars. This money came, especially, from Asian countries. Thus, Japan, as a country without raw materials and without a domestic market has no other options than economic expansion. It cannot do that without basing [its designs] on the support of a great power—the US. The economic expansion of Japan will be the source of military expansion.” That is why the US-Japanese security treaty has been extended indefinitely.

The Japanese economic expansion requires the expansion of its rearming plans. As it is well known, Japan had had certain rearming plans. The funds set aside for this goal for the 1972-1976 period are 15.8 billion dollars, thus twice as much as the total sum used in the period covered by the first three plans. Thus, their position as a great economic power will mean their expansion as a military power. In this context, it must be stated that the [Japanese Prime Minister Eisaku] Sato—Nixon declaration clearly states that South Korea and Taiwan are indispensable to the security of Japan.

The Japanese are very interested in Indochina. In the past 25 years, Japan has become very rich, taking advantage of the wars in this part of the world, which, even though they did not spread to become a world war, were, nevertheless, continuous. The first was the civil war in China, which lasted for three and a half years. This one, even though it was carried out with American equipment, was of great benefit to Japan, which gained transport [revenues]. Following that Japan benefited from the Korean War, where it participated with logistical support and reparations. In 1959, the Vietnam War started,

which expanded in 1965. This war is now carried out throughout Indochina, and there is a possibility that it be expanded to Thailand. Malaysia is also fearful that it might extend there.

Japan is not prepared for a global war, and even less so for a thermonuclear war. [Japan] is interested in the existence of limited wars. Presently, [Japan] is developing its naval and air forces with the declared goal of protecting the investments it has made abroad. The Japanese defense minister has publicly stated that the Malacca Strait is a vital [logistical] line for Japan. The same declaration was made prior to the start of the Pacific War.

Japanese militarism is being reborn, step by step, and Japan must be seen as a base for defending American interests in the Far East and Asia.

In this issue, the DPRK, the PRC, and the Indochinese countries—Cambodia, represented by [Cambodian leader Norodom] Sihanouk, and Laos, represented by the Pathet Lao—have common points of view.”

Cde. Zhou Enlai referred to the problem of Japanese militarism in the context of Soviet-Japanese relations, stating the following: “On the occasion of the recent meeting I had with the Soviet ambassador in Beijing, I asked him: do you remember that we are part of an alliance, and against whom this alliance is directed? The Soviet ambassador replied that the alliance was created against Japanese militarism. Then I told him that, presently, the USSR has very intimate relations with the Japanese, that it opened Siberia’s doors [to Japan], and that would lead to [economic] concessions. The Soviet ambassador said that there were no deals reached yet, and said that China [also] has intense economic relations with Japan. The Soviet ambassador was told that [Japan]¹ is trading with private firms from Taiwan, South Korea, and South Vietnam.

When the Soviet ambassador stated that Japan was the aggressor country, and that there is a danger of future Japanese aggression, not only against China, but also against the Soviet Union, I told him that we cannot speak only of possible future aggression, since that danger exists even now. Japan is moving toward the rebirth of militarism, which constitutes a great danger for the [Far] East, for [North] Korea, for China, for [North] Vietnam. The US is planning for the withdrawal of a part of its armed forces from South Korea (approximately 20,000 soldiers), first, under the condition that Japan and South Korea sign a military alliance, and second, under the condition of the creation of a political alliance—formally named the Consultative Conference—between Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.”

c. Regarding USSR-DPRK relations

Regarding this issue, Cde. Zhou Enlai said the following: “Why did the Korean comrades have a dispute with the Soviet comrades? As it is known, the Americans are behind the Japanese in the creation of a Japanese—South Korean alliance, and at the same time, they are behind the Seoul clique, supporting its provocations at the 38th parallel. For Indochina, there are already a series of decisions adopted at an interna-

tional conference, decisions that have, after all, already been trampled over, and regarding Korea, there is only an armistice, and no peace treaty. During the first part of the Geneva Conference, nothing was settled on the issue of Korea, that is why the [North] Koreans have no other choice but to continue fighting. But the Soviets, not only do they no longer deliver airplanes and cannon, and no longer deliver parts for weaponry, but they accuse them of capturing, downing, and sinking American and South Korean spy planes and espionage vessels. More so, the Soviets send a ship to help in the recovery effort of an American spy plane downed by the [North] Koreans. In such a case, how can the Korean comrades still consider the Soviet Union as a fraternal, socialist country?”

During the visit in the PRC, the leader of the Romanian governmental delegation had a conversation with Penn Nouth, the Prime Minister of the Royal Government of National Unity of Cambodia, since Prince Norodom Sihanouk was in a trip through certain provinces of the PRC.

On this occasion, [Penn Nouth] was told that the Romanian people remain united behind the just struggle of the Cambodian people against foreign, imperialist, intervention, and—in light of the speech given by Cde. Ceausescu at the Anniversary Session of the UN—the position of the SRR on the struggle of the Khmer people was expressed. Penn Nouth thanked [the delegation] for the communication, and for the sympathy and solidarity showed by the Romanian people to the Cambodian people, stating that, being convinced of the just nature of its goals, the Khmer people will continue their struggle until they reach victory.

During the official conversations and the negotiations, our interlocutors have repeatedly referred to the friendship and solidarity of the Chinese people toward the Romanian people, and to the strong and enduring relations between our parties and governments. The Chinese side manifested a clear desire that the negotiations reach a concrete conclusion, through the finalization of the [negotiated] accords. The Chinese side mentioned that, these accords reflect relations of mutual assistance, that they are not advantageous only for the Romanian side, but also for the PRC, because “Romania is on the same side of the battle line as the PRC.”

On the basis of the results obtained, and of the atmosphere in which the visit of the Romanian delegation took place, we conclude that the CCP and the PRC government are giving our country an exceptional level of attention, and are animated by the desire to continue the development of those relations in multiple respects. We also noticed that the internal and foreign policies of the Romanian party and government are well received, and receive the trust, appreciation and support of the Chinese party and state leadership.

1. The country mentioned in the transcription is the PRC. This is either an error by the transcriber or a mistake in the memorandum.



DOCUMENT No. 10

Minutes of Conversation between Nicolae Ceausescu and Mao Zedong in Beijing, 3 June 1971

[Source: ANIC, CC RCP fond, Foreign Relations Section, file 39/1971, p. 3-29; published in *Relatiile Romano-Chineze, 1880-1974* [Sino-Romanian Relations, 1880-1974], ed. Ambassador Romulus Ioan Budura, (Bucharest, 2005), pp. 1064-71]. Translated for CWIHP by Mircea Munteanu.]

Cde. Mao Zedong: Welcome comrades.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: Thank you very much. We thank you for the very warm welcome we received.

We would like to express our satisfaction with the possibility we have to visit the People's Republic of China, to meet with you and the other leaders of the Chinese party and state.

Mao: When was the last time you were here?

Ceausescu: Seven years [ago].

Mao: In these seven years some things have changed; did you notice this?

Ceausescu: We saw the people, hundreds of thousands of people; we visited Tsinghua University. We were impressed by the positive attitude and the joy of living displayed by the people in the capital; also, especially, [we were impressed] by the preoccupation with perfect education, to tie it to production, to life, to the construction of socialism.

Mao: That is the way we think about it as well; now we are experimenting.

At the same time, we have to continue to use older teachers and professors, bourgeois; we still don't have other people. They, however, have to listen to us, to listen to workers and peasants. In their words, they listen; however, in their mind, they blame. There is need for more time, slowly, slowly; 21 years passed since [the success of the revolution.] It's true, even in the past there were some successes in education; we can't negate everything. But in what you mentioned just now, the revolutionizing of education, this only happened in the past years.

With you[r country] the activity went forth with a lot of progress.

Ceausescu: It's true, in the past years we had good results. We are also concerned with changing education, to tie it better to production. We are preoccupied with attracting the working class to the management of the institutions, and tying the party to the popular masses.

We can say that, generally, things go forth in good order. Of course, we have lots of deficiencies, but we are trying hard, together with the working class, with the people, to ensure the construction of socialism.

Mao: If we talk about deficiencies, then we too can say we have plenty.

Ceausescu: There is not one country that does not have deficiencies. The difference is that some work to resolve them, while others try to hide them.

Mao: Deficiencies cannot be hidden, because sooner or later—in a day, a year, or future centuries—these deficiencies will be revealed. It is better if we tell people what's what; people cannot be deceived. [Deceiving] can only go on for a short time. People cannot be deceived for decades.

Ceausescu: This is very true, especially today, with today's communication and information methods, reality cannot be hidden for very long.

Mao: It is very true. Even they know this.¹

Ceausescu: After all, conflicts appear where they try to hide reality from people.

Mao: In some places, conflicts did not appear yet.

Ceausescu: But it is inevitable that conflicts would appear.

Mao: That is so.

Ceausescu: Of course, if they will take no action to straighten up things, and remove [deficits].

Mao: There are certain [communist] parties that insult other parties; they think that truth is on their side, that the other parties always make mistakes. We are called dogmatic, warmongers, that we have a dictatorship. That is what they say, that here we have a military bureaucratic dictatorship.

Ceausescu: Unfortunately, it is true, that there still exists this practice of name-calling, of insulting other parties.

Mao: There are certain parties, like yours, that do not say that. Recently, I read a speech of yours. In a very open way, there was the recognition that there have been mistakes in the past; other parties cannot come to terms with such things. Certain parties insulted us for over ten years, and we did not respond with even a word. They are forced to insult us. We can show understanding toward such occurrences. At the same time, we are happy that we have the quality of being insulted. This is very good. The meeting that took place in Bucharest in 1960, was that not imposed on you?² At that time, Cde. Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej had lots of difficulties. Can we impugn you for this?!

Ceausescu: It is true that the meeting took place there, and in a way, we too are at fault, since we could have refused to hold that meeting. Today such a meeting could not, and does not, take place in Romania.

Mao: At that time it was hard to refuse to host the conference. On the occasion of the Chinese Communist Party's 8th Congress, which took place in 1956, I had an interesting conversation with Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej. He told me some things straight from the heart. It was, of course, difficult to put up with such things. The Cominform was disbanded then, and that gave rise to debates. Criticism was necessary for this to happen.

Ceausescu: It is true that there were some hard times; even today there are some hard times. There are new designs to create different leadership formats that would take away the independence of other states and parties.

Mao: It would be good if the whole planet would be the domain of one single country!

Ceausescu: It's hard; even what is available now it's too much.

Mao: Is it really too much?!

Ceausescu: We feel that the best way is to have relations based on equality among all nations in the world.

Mao: Irrespective of their size, even [countries] as small as San Marino, which has a population of 16,000 people; we were sincerely glad to be able to establish diplomatic contacts with such a country.

Ceausescu: Of course, on this globe there are countries that are very large, large, medium countries, small and very small [countries], but all nations desire to build their lives freely; of course, in close cooperation with other states, with other nations, but without subordinating one to the other.

Mao: There is another issue, and that is that, on the occasion of the [Party] congresses, there are other parties invited; during the congress, for example during the Czechoslovak congress, insults and blaming takes place. Would it not be better to change this practice? Better not to invite any foreign delegations to the congresses. We did not invite anyone to the 9th Congress. It is true that the sky did not fall.

Ceausescu: It is true that such a tactic could be adopted, as long as the congresses are being used for insults, to hurl insults at other parties.

Mao: Recently, the Korean Workers' Party did not invite foreign guests to their congress. Cde. Kim Il Sung visited our country last year; he asked us: "are you inviting anyone?" We told him: no, we are not inviting anyone; it is difficult to invite other people. The more they insult and judge other people, the worse things will go for them.

There are more guests present, and they do not have identical opinions; it is better to have bilateral relations, like, for example, the fight against imperialism; then we fight. They want to have united action; it is hard because there are different opinions. A few years back, we talked with a few comrades, we told them that we cannot reach such accords; even then the sky did not fall, and the planet continues to revolve.

Ceausescu: Of course, it would be good if we reached an end to the insults and labeling. I have to tell you that many parties are calling for this, that even at the [Moscow] congress of the [fraternal] parties in 1969, and at the CPSU congress, a lot of parties—even big parties—refused to ally with the condemnation of the Chinese Communist Party, and are trying to find ways to establish relations with the CCP.

Mao: It is better to do these things bilaterally, like for example the relationship between the two of us.

Ceausescu: This is exactly what these parties want, for example the Italian, Spanish, [and] others. When we left to come here, they asked us to transmit their desire to reestablish contacts.

Mao: We can reestablish them, but the question remains what we do with their debt to us, because they have cursed and insulted us a lot in the past.

Cde. Zhou Enlai: And there is the issue of interest on their debt.

Mao: We have such calculations. If they no longer insult us, at least they should say something about the debt they owe us, the same way you did. There is no need for much, just a

few words.

Ceausescu: Some have already said it, and we talked to them: they are ready to recognize that the past way was not good.

Mao: Not just that they were not good, they were wrong.

Ceausescu: Yes, wrong.

Mao: They were wrong. Things developed in an unbelievable fashion. What can we say of the great family, of the internationalist proletariat, of unity, when in reality there was a schism. It's not a big deal, if they want a schism, a separation in many parts. Even if the entire Italian party wants to come to China, they are welcome here. They are allowed to curse us in their newspapers and magazines, but they must allow others freedom of expression as well. We will respond to any who shit on our head (*isi fac scaun in capul nostru*), irrespective of the size of the country, irrespective of the number of bombs they have. You can visit our modern shelters. We have built them in case of a war.

Will you visit the North-West of China? We have to be prepared for any possibility.

Ceausescu: It is true that the schism has caused much damage. Of course, there have been many mistakes made, but we have to put right the mistakes and I believe that we all have to work in this direction.

Mao: We will not put anything right, and will continue in our dogmatism; even [for] ten thousand years.³ One time, when [Soviet Premier Alexei] Kosygin visited, we reduced that time by 1000 years; one time, during the visit of the Romanian delegation, we reduced it again by 1000 years; at once we reduced 2000 years from this period. It is very dangerous, there are only 8000 years left.

Ceausescu: We can reduce some more!

Mao: Not even one year can be taken off. They can sit on our heads, but we must answer back. We do not do this when it comes to small countries. We cannot say a word toward them, but with regard to the big countries, we do not take anything into consideration. We will not be moved by any messengers [*purtatori de cuvanti*], who give advice; the more advice they give us, the worse things will go, since we here, all of us, are bureaucrats and militarists, we betrayed Marxist-Leninism, we do not have the qualities necessary to be part of the great family. You do, we do not.

Ceausescu: Now we are nationalists.

Mao: You too are being labeled.

Cde. Ion Gheroghe Maurer: Fewer [labels], but there are some, Cde. Mao Zedong.

Mao: You have so been labeled because you are resisting the pressure. For us, the labels are not too many, and not too few—8000 years. Everybody should listen up. Now militarism has taken center stage—it is certain that we will no longer reduce [any years]; he (points to Lin Biao) is the head of the militarists. But I too, am part of the militarists and the bureaucrats. They are very smart. Khrushchev developed Marxism-Leninism in a very creative way. I asked [Kosygin], a man as good as Khrushchev, who developed Marxism-Leninism, why have you marginalized him? It was difficult for him to

give me any motives. Then I told him: if you no longer need him, give him to us; we invite Khrushchev to come to Beijing University, to hold classes on Marxism-Leninism. Kosygin could not answer then. I have to conclude that such a country is not a good one. I will tell you one thing: we publish [their] articles in our press, but they do not publish our replies in their press. Here there must be a reason. Articles published by dogmatists, by countries where there is a military-bureaucratic dictatorship, have to be repudiated. The entire Soviet people should know them, so they can repudiate them. But they did not publish them. In this instance, they are even behind some imperialist countries; American newspapers have dared publish our articles about them. Especially, I speak of the New York Times.

You have been in the United States of America, but all of us here, we have not been. We sent a ping-pong ball over there.

Ceausescu: It seems it was well placed.

Mao: Do you agree with this ball?

Ceausescu: We agree.

Mao: I read an article published in Budapest; even there they are showing their agreement with this ball. What is so great in the game of ping-pong? The US Vice President—[Spiro] Agnew—said that he is not for it. The leader of the ping-pong delegation that was here said that we do not play ping-pong, rather table tennis. He was trying a play on words.

Ceausescu: Yes, ping-pong is a very interesting game, especially since you have very good players.

Mao:⁴ But the leader of the delegation was stupid; we criticized him. They have done this thing chasing only prizes, thinking only to win; they did not want to lose; they took four of the seven medals, and they were not satisfied. How is that possible, to chase only prizes[?] The leaders from the Committee for Physical Education and Sport are, indeed, bureaucrats and great power chauvinists. Our country has such instances of great power chauvinism, quite widespread; they are always trying to defeat other countries. At the same time, they were incapable, since aside from the fact that we won, they boasted everywhere. One of them was here, and I had a fight with him. He said only good things about China. I told him that there is not truth in what he's saying. He gave the example of China's launch of a satellite. I told him that presently there are 2000 satellites revolving around the Earth, and we only placed one of them in orbit at that time, while you, the French, launched one, and Japan, another one, a total of three, and over 2000 satellites are launched by other countries. It is not good to gloat; how can we gloat?

Ceausescu: It is true, it's only a beginning, but it is a good beginning, because the other countries started with one as well.

Mao: That is very true. I agree, this corresponds to reality.

They even went to the moon; presently, we do not have such possibilities. At the same time, however, we do not have an interest in doing so, and we do not admire those who got to the moon. In this instance, we are equal in right; neither us, nor you, have reached the moon.

Ceausescu: We do not think of doing this in the future either,

it is very expensive.

Zhou Enlai: Especially since there is no water or air there!

Ceausescu: And without any results, aside from scientific ends, and out of curiosity.

Zhou Enlai: Not all issues here on Earth have been resolved, and they have already gotten to the Moon.

Ceausescu: But this race to the Moon is very expensive.

Zhou Enlai: The monopolists are making nice profits from this, because they receive orders; even the land of the Moon has been divided up.

Ceausescu: Even so, the people are paying a lot for this race.

Mao: All the people?

Ceausescu: Those who undertake it.

Mao: Two people. What are the superpowers?

Ceausescu: It's hard to give a definition.

Mao: Those that have more nuclear weapons and have taken over many territories; they can control other countries, while other countries cannot.

Until now we have only said unlucky words at the expense of others. We have begun by cursing the superpowers.

Zhou Enlai: In my speech tomorrow I will make a reference to this. They will not leave if we speak of the superpowers.

Mao: That's fine; they will not leave if we speak of socialist-imperialism. We gave it a name—socialist-imperialism. We did not say this, it was Lenin; in words they are socialists, in deeds they are imperialists.

Zhou Enlai: We began using this term with the occasion of the reception hosted by [Romanian] Ambassador [Aurelian] Duma on 23 August 1968. It was brought forth by the events in Czechoslovakia.

Mao: On the occasion of Cde. [Emil] Bodnarus visit here, he told us that what Cde. Zhou Enlai said with regard to these events was useful; we did not notice, we did not feel that; he told us it was useful.

Ceausescu: We appreciated the speech of Cde. Zhou Enlai, and looked at them as aid to our country and to the communist movement. After all, many, many parties have condemned the invasion.

Mao: I wonder what the reasons were for their invasion, to send troops there and to occupy places under cover of darkness; troops were parachuted in.

Ceausescu: We were in Czechoslovakia a few days before the invasion, and we met with the party leadership, with the working class, there was no danger to socialism.

Mao: But they said that there was a grave danger, that they have to defend socialism.

Ceausescu: There was only one danger, and that was that there were serious criticisms against the [Soviet] policy of domination.

Mao: Yes, that was it, and only this. At that time they had great plans, not only against Czechoslovakia, but also against you and Yugoslavia.

Ceausescu: Maybe they thought about it, but then, and now, we were, and continue to be, set not to accept any such actions.

Mao: Because you are prepared, especially in the military

field. If they shall come, you will fight first and foremost.

Ceausescu: We are a small country, but we do not want to live under [foreign] domination. Of course, we have friendly relations with everyone, we greatly appreciate friends and friendly relations, but we consider that Romania's problems are first and foremost to be solved by the party, the working class, the Romanian people.

Mao: In my opinion, that is good.

Ceausescu: If we work poorly, our working class, our people, will judge us.

Mao: If you are prepared, they will fear you.

Vietnam is also a small country; Cambodia is an even smaller country, and Laos is smaller still. They carried out a ten-year war, not including the war against the French. There are conclusions that we should be considered warmongers. We will respond to anyone who comes here. We are helping those who fight against the invasion. You are helping the fight of the Indochinese countries to save their motherland.

Ceausescu: From the very beginning we have helped Vietnam, Laos, and now Cambodia. We also offer aid to the fight of African people who fight against colonialism.

Mao: That is very good. We have identical positions.

Maybe we should stop here. Cde. Zhou Enlai said that you will speak this afternoon. Do fight with him!

Ceausescu: I don't think we will fight with him.

Mao: The third world war will start. The two of you will fight, I will not take part, since I am a bureaucrat.

Ceausescu: Well, that's good, then there will be someone to make peace between us.

Mao: With Cde. Maurer, we have similar names. My name begins with Mao as well.

Ceausescu: Then, it is even more important to have good relations, to collaborate well. We appreciate very much the relations between our two countries and parties.

Mao: Don't give it too much appreciation. Just so, it is well. We do not fight. Of course, sometimes we fight a little, like we'll fight this afternoon. There have to be discussions.

Ceausescu: I hope we'll have discussions, but I don't believe we'll fight.



Participants at the July 2006 Summer School at the Sighet Memorial for the Victims of Communism, Sighet, Romania.

At the summer school, CWIHP Director Christian Ostermann delivered a lecture and contributed to an international exhibit on the Cold War, created by Romanian scholars and activists Ana Blandiana and Romulus Rusan.

1. It is unclear who "they" are. Given the context of discussions, it is possible that Mao is referring to the Soviet leadership.
2. Mao refers to the Congress of the Fraternal Parties that took place in Bucharest, 26 June 1960. During the congress, the Soviet delegation attacked the Chinese delegation for deviationism and factionalism.
3. 10,000 years in Chinese has an idiomatic meaning of eternity.
4. The paragraph is somewhat confused, making it unclear which person or delegation Mao is talking about. The historic visit of the US team to China took place on 12 April 1971.



Excerpt from CWIHP e-Dossier No. 14:

“The History of North Korean Attitudes toward Nuclear Weapons and Efforts to Acquire Nuclear Capability”

Report, Embassy of Hungary in North Korea to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 15 February 1963

[Source: XIX-J-1-j Korea, 6. doboz, 5/d, 0011/RT/1963. Obtained and translated for CWIHP and NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) by Balazs Szalontai]

The December session of the KWP [Korean Workers Party] Central Committee passed a resolution to reinforce the defense of the country. According to the resolution, a strong defense system must be established in the whole country, the population must be armed, and the country must be kept in a state of mobilization.

From what I hear, large-scale work is going on throughout the country; not only entrenchments but also air-raid shelters for the population are being built in the mountains. As the Soviet Ambassador informed me, Kim Il Sung explained to him in a conversation that the geographical conditions of the country (a mountainous terrain) give a certain advantage to them in case of an atomic war, for the mountains ward off the explosions to a substantial extent, and a lot of such bombs would be needed to wreak large-scale destruction in the country. The construction of these air-raid shelters is presumably related to this theory.

The Czechoslovak ambassador informed me that the Koreans propagated a theory that cited the South Vietnamese events as an example. In that country, there is essentially a war against the Diem government and the American imperialist troops, and, as is well known, the partisan units have succeeded in winning over more and more territory from the influence of the Diem puppet government. In spite of all this, the Americans make no attempt to use atomic bombs. Does anything support the assumption that the Americans would act otherwise in case of a South Korean war, then? It is obvious that there is nothing to support such an assumption.

Czechoslovak Ambassador Comrade Moravec also told me that at the dinner party held by Deputy Foreign Minister Gim Daehui [...], Major General Jang Jeonghwan, the Korean representative on the Panmunjom Armistice Commission, approached him after dinner, and put the following question to him: “What would you do if some day the enemy took one of the two rooms of your flat?” Comrade Moravec replied, “Whatever happens, I would resort to methods that did not run the risk of destroying the whole building or the whole city [...]” Thereupon [Major] General Jang threw a cigarette-box he had in his hand on the table, and left him standing. [...]

I had a conversation with Soviet Ambassador Comrade Moskovsky about these issues. He told me the following: Recently he paid a visit to CC Vice-Chairman Pak Kumch’ol, to whom he forwarded a telegram from the competent Soviet authorities that invited several persons for a vacation in the Soviet Union. During his visit he asked Bak Geumcheol what his opinion was of the fact [...] that Park Chung Hee and the South Korean military leaders recently had a talk with Meloy, the commander of the “UN troops,” about the defense of South Korea. In the view of the CC Vice-Chairman, for the time being no adventurist military preparations were to be expected because of the following two reasons: 1) The transfer of power to civilian authorities was going on, that is, they were putting other clothes on the Fascist dictatorship, and they were busy with that. 2) The South Korean economic situation was difficult, and it was inconceivable under the circumstances that they would make serious preparations to pursue adventurist aims.

The CC Vice-Chairman also expounded their viewpoint concerning South Korea. After Syngman Rhee had been driven away, when Jang Myeon was in power, but even as late as the beginning of last year, their view on the South Korean situation was that a successful opposition to the Fascist dictatorship, led by the students and the intelligentsia, was possible. By now it has become obvious that there is no chance of it, and Park Chung Hee has even succeeded in improving the country’s economic situation to a certain extent. In these circumstances one cannot negotiate with the Fascist dictatorship on peaceful unification, and the process of the country’s unification drags on. [...]

As regards the resolution of the CC, Comrade Moskovsky also thinks that arming the population and keeping it in a state of mobilization is a rather unusual measure in peacetime. The economic situation of both North Korea and China is quite difficult, they have a lot of problems. Under the circumstances a military action is hardly to be expected from them. Or on the contrary? “Would their economic difficulties possibly plunge them into some adventure?” Comrade Moskovsky asked. It is not easy to say yes or no to such questions. The first sentence of the resolution of the December plenum begins as follows: The development of the international situation is favorable to the Korean revolution. However, the remaining part of the resolution tries to refute that, while Bak Geumcheol said they were not threatened by any southern adventurist provocation. If they look upon the situation in that light, [...] why are these unusual defense measures needed?

[...]

Jozsef Kovacs
(ambassador)

The full e-Dossier is available at <http://cwihp.org>.