

March 6, 1970

Embassy of the GDR in the PR China, 'Note about the Club Meeting of the Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors of Hungary, the GDR, Czechoslovakia, the USSR, Poland, Bulgaria, and Mongolia on 24 February 1970 in the Embassy of Czechoslovakia'

Citation:

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Summary:

Socialist bloc ambassadors discuss China's domestic and foreign policy, with some emphasis on Shanghai and Guangzhou.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY)

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

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Beijing, 6 March 1970

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Domestic Policy

The Hungarian Ambassador, Comrade Halasz, informed about a dinner with the Deputy PRC Minister of Foreign Trade, Li Qiang, at the occasion of signing an agreement about the delivery of special equipment to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam [DRV]. Asked about the areas of agricultural cultivation in China, Li Qiang said about 120 million hectares are cultivated. Since there are two harvests in the South, the overall area of cultivation consists in fact of 180 million hectares. (Comrade Halasz remarked this means the area of cultivation has increased by about 10 million hectares since 1958 because back then it amounted to between 108 and 110 million hectares). Li Qiang called it a very realistic target to raise one pig per Mu. [1] Problems do exist regarding fertilizer supply. China has to import a lot of artificial fertilizers. Those purchases are made with the International Fertilizer Consortium or are coming from Japan. [Li Qiang:] China would buy fertilizers below world market prices since it is importing very large amounts of them. China is exporting a lot of rice in order to balance the payments for its grain imports. The cotton harvest was said to be very good in 1969. Li Qiang was interested in production of heavy trucks and car cranes in Hungary as well as of ships of a size between 1,000 and 1,500 tons.

The Acting Mongolian Ambassador, Comrade Badamragchaa, talked about the air raid shelters built in each courtyard. They are 6 to 7 meters in depth and linked to each other through tunnels. The people are afraid that everything will be flooded in case of high water.

Some bookstores in Beijing had displayed photos in their dressing windows about the Chinese provocation on Damansky Island.

Bulgarian Acting Ambassador Comrade Bossew reported about a talk with the new DRV Ambassador who had recently visited a People's Commune near Beijing. The DRV Ambassador got the impression that members of the commune are doing pretty well. Cattle breeding is very well developed. Each commune member is earning 80 Yuan annually and receiving 200 kilograms of grain.

On the Situation in Shanghai and Guangzhou

Polish Acting Ambassador Comrade Wisniewski informed about a large public trial assembly on 27 January 1970 in People's Square in Shanghai in which about 300,000 people participated. People were called to the rally over loudspeakers. At the beginning, a representative of Shanghai's 'Revolutionary Committee' gave a speech threatening all those with liquidation who are speaking out against the Central Committee, the Revolutionary Committee and the war preparations. He defined as the main task the smashing of U.S. imperialism and 'Soviet revisionism'. Following the speech, for about 1 hour and 17 minutes names and short biographies of about 100 defendants were read out. Comrade Wisniewski listed the following people who, among others, were sentenced:

1. Man, 77 years old: organizer of a counter-revolutionary group, death sentence.
2. Woman, 19 years: theft of 20 Yuan, 20 years in prison.
3. Man, 28 years: theft of fabric and clothes ration coupons, 20 years in prison.
4. Man, 22 years: hooliganism, slacking at workplace, 60 years in prison.
5. Man, 23 years: counter-revolutionary, who had murdered three workers during the Cultural Revolution; death sentenced
6. Man, 37 years: big saboteur, death sentence
7. Woman, 49 years: counter-revolutionary, death sentence
8. Man, 46 years: splittist and faction leader, death sentence
9. Man, 21 years: opponent of the Mao Course, death sentence
10. Man, 21 years: rowdy, 15 years in prison.

One defendant was accused of having ties to a "revisionist" state. All of those crimes were said to have been committed during the "Cultural Revolution".

Comrade Wisniewski reported further that the build-up of lower level party structures in Shanghai is a complicated process. Some "restructured" party organizations were dissolved again because they had not been established according to the Maoist ideology. There are many slogans and cartoons against the Soviet Union in the city where leading comrades of the Soviet Union are insulted. There are calls to the youth to resettle to the provinces of Heilongjiang, Xinjiang, Anhui, Jilin, Fujian, and Inner Mongolia.

On 1 February 1970 a large show trial was held in the sports stadium where 23 defendants were sentenced to prison terms of 8 or more years, or to death. Thirteen of them were sentenced for counter-revolutionary activity and gangsterism, two for espionage and eight for criminal acts. Now also people are accused who previously were fought by political means, for instance also young people who are returning from the countryside.

The Mongolian Acting Ambassador added that according to reports in the Hong Kong paper "Minbao" from 14 January 1970 war preparations in Guangzhou have been already completed. A tunnel of 4 kilometers length is connecting the city to a nearby hill.

On Foreign Policy

On Relations between Hungary and the PR China

The Hungarian Ambassador informed about a talk between the Beijing correspondent of MTI[21] with the HNA[31] correspondent recently dispatched to Budapest. The HNA reporter voiced his disagreement over the Hungarian correspondent's report on war preparations in China and emphasized there would exist no war psychosis but a revolutionary situation in China. The Soviet Union is preparing for an attack on China, therefore all preparations have to be undertaken. The Soviet Union has deployed large military units along the Chinese-Soviet border and wants to destroy the Chinese nuclear facilities. [The USSR] has already provoked bloody incidents at the border. Asked about the status of Soviet-Chinese border negotiations, the HNA correspondent referred to the Hong Kong paper "Da Gong Bao" of 9 January where an article was published about the negotiations.

Czechoslovakia

Ambassador Comrade Kohoušek provided the following assessment of a "Renmin Ribao" article from 22 February 1970 about Czechoslovakia: This article is an

expression of extreme [Chinese] displeasure about the development in Czechoslovakia, especially regarding the Marxist-Leninist course[4] of the KSČ[5]. This way the Chinese leadership is undertaking an attempt to support those anti-Soviet forces who are hostile towards the party [KSČ] and the Soviet Union. In addition, they want to further confuse those forces abroad which have not understood the situation in Czechoslovakia until today. Comrade Kohoušek floated the idea that the KSČ Central Committee might write an (open?) letter to fraternal parties where it umasks the open [Chinese] support for anti-socialist elements in Czechoslovakia against the current Marxist-Leninist course of the KSČ; or that there will have to be another form of statement (for instance, by the KSČ delegate at a potential international event in Moscow at the 100th anniversary of Lenin's birthday).

DRV

Comrade Kohoušek added the Chinese side did not agree to a proposal by the DRV Foreign Ministry to exchange telegrams at the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations [between PRC and DRV]. The Chinese side referred to "internal problems". The Vietnamese comrades, however, think that this is not the real reason. This information is coming from the Czechoslovak embassy in Hanoi.

DPRK [Democratic People's Republic of Korea]

Acting Soviet Ambassador Comrade Yelisavetin reported about his talk with the DPRK Ambassador. The latter told him he was received by Zhou Enlai shortly after his arrival in Beijing. The DPRK wants to maintain good relations with both the Soviet Union and the PR China. In light of the threat from the South, normal relations with the PRC are essential, especially since both share a long common border. Korean-Chinese trade talks have been ongoing in Pyongyang for 4 weeks already. Comrade Yelisavetin is assuming the DPRK Ambassador might have handed over a letter from Kim Il Sung[6]. Korean comrades had stated the Ambassador was sent to check out the Chinese position. After the appearance of large wall posters attacking Kim Il Sung, he had returned to Korea on short notice.

PR South Yemen

Comrade Yelisavetin also informed that China granted the PR South Yemen in October 1969 a loan over 750,000 Pound Sterling. The PRC provided free uniforms and equipment for 5,000 members of the South Yemeni army. Furthermore, the Chinese promised to send another team of physicians. Apparently the Chinese are setting their hopes on pro-Chinese elements in South Yemen.

On the Situation in the Middle East

Referring to American sources, Comrade Yelisavetin provided the following numbers concerning the balance of forces in the Middle East. The five Arab states directly confronting Israel (Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Sudan) have a population of more than 63.5 million people. Israel has somewhat over 2.5 million people. The five Arab states have 800 fighter aircraft and 2,300 tanks; Israel has 300 fighters, 100 supply aircraft and 1,200 tanks. The armed forces of the five Arab states have 430,000 men, while the Israelis have 290,000 (including reservists). However, Israel has a large number of good pilots, a very well working counterintelligence and a higher level of education among its people. Moreover, the army leadership is organized according to modern principles in accordance with modern technological equipment. In the armies of the Arab states the level of discipline is very low. Another deficit is the lack of coordination between the armies of the five Arab states.

Signed [Heribert] Kunz
3rd Secretary

CC:

1. [GDR] Foreign Ministry, Far East Department (2x)
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[1] One Chinese Mu equals 614.4 square meter or 6,613.34 square feet.

[2] MTI (Magyar Távirati Iroda, "Hungarian Telegraphic Office") was a Hungarian news agency operating from 1880 to 2015.

[3] HNA (Hsinhua News Agency), today's Xinhua. News agency of the CCP since 1931.

[4] Meaning "pro-Soviet".

[5] Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

[6] In the original always referred to by his Russian name Kim Ir Sen.