

January 28, 1957

**Cable from the Chinese Embassy in Hungary,
'Chinese Embassy to Hungary's 1956 Annual
Summary and the Submission of the 1957 Work
Plan' (Excerpt)**

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Summary:

The Chinese Embassy in Budapest describes some of the problems which occurred as the Embassy attempted to follow and react to the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.

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[...] The question of the embassy's work during the counterrevolutionary rebellion:

As the incident began, work circumstances and conditions changed fundamentally. The difficulties were great. At the same time, on the one hand, the need was even greater to follow the progression of the incident, and quickly report to the Center, and on the other, we had to be completely prepared to fend off the counterrevolutionary attack, to guard secrecy, and to guarantee security.

The state of affairs changed rapidly in the confused situation, all kinds of meetings and personal contacts ceased, newspapers were difficult to procure, no telegraph connection to the Center was guaranteed. In order that we take the situation in hand immediately, and that we be able to report home swiftly, the Party Committee immediately implemented night-and-day collective service, and did everything possible, for example: special twenty-four-hour radio monitoring was introduced; we were in telephone contact with the embassies of fraternal countries and with certain Hungarian people; staff were sent into the streets to gather newspapers and so on, so that we were able to take the situation in hand. The Party Committee went into session immediately, and wrote reports immediately. When the Hungarian Post and Telegraph Office signal went down, we found the means to send messages home via the [Hungarian] Foreign Ministry and the [Hungarian] Embassy in China. Some reports we sent twice, to ensure against loss. A later investigation found that although all our telegrams were sent to the Center, there were certainly some that arrived late, especially those reports sent around 30 October, when the entire telegraph equipment was down for a few days, and messages sent via the Soviets and Czechs [reached their destination] slower. There were some reports that arrived late by eight days. This serves as a lesson on what the consequences will be from not having our own radio equipment in emergency situations.

Every editorial article on Hungary in Renmin Ribao was sent in English or Russian to the Hungarian Party and relevant government authorities and to the embassies of fraternal countries, thus making the position and opinion of our country in connection with the Hungarian events known. In this way we deepened and broadened our influence. Judging by the Hungarian leaders' responses this was, for them, help arriving at precisely the right time.

In the days of the counterrevolution's storm and the white terror, incidents took place on the streets involving the ambassador's car, the embassy staff and scholarship students. The reactionary Hungarian police guards at the entrance of the Embassy monitored our movements, and they threatened the embassy. We judged that the danger of the counterrevolutionaries breaking into the embassy was great, and thus strictly followed, adhering to every detail, the instructions of the Foreign Ministry, which guided us to act "calmly, tolerantly, carefully and preparedly"; we also instructed the entire guard of our staff and the scholarship students. We took several measures systematically, step by step, burned classified documents and telegrams and ordered that nobody leave the building without permission, debate was not permitted if the enemy insulted us, the big must not be lost because of the small, scaremongering must be opposed, incitement must be opposed. At the same time we organized night-and-day guard, defended the doors, wrote down all the non-police telephone numbers, and prevented the counterrevolutionaries from breaking in. On the eve of the arrival of the Soviet army in the city we thought that the street battles would surely be serious, and ordered the scholarship students to the embassy to protect them from harm. In summary, during the incidents, we reacted to the serious situation with active work, and a high degree of organization and discipline, based on the unity of all comrades, and fundamentally fulfilled our tasks and defended security.

To experience such serious events in foreign surroundings served as training and a test for each comrade. There were some comrades in the Embassy - in particular one section of the scholarship student comrades - who displayed a certain degree of fear

and, referring to such, requested that they continue their studies in the Soviet Union or in Czechoslovakia, or to return home. A good number of comrades did not clearly see the Hungarian way of thinking and frame of mind, but after thorough criticism they showed great improvement, even if they have not yet defeated [their incorrect views] [...]

Embassy in Hungary
28 January 1957