

February 24, 1956

**Excerpts from Tsedenbal's diary on his conversation
with Soviet leader Anastas Mikoyan on Soviet
Economic Cooperation and Aid to the People's
Republic of Mongolia (Fragments)**

Citation:

"Excerpts from Tsedenbal's diary on his conversation with Soviet leader Anastas Mikoyan on Soviet Economic Cooperation and Aid to the People's Republic of Mongolia (Fragments)", February 24, 1956, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Budyn Sumya (ed.), Gerel Suuder: Yu. Tsedenbalyn Khuviin Temdeglelees (Light and Shadow, From Yu. Tsedenbal's diary) (Ulaanbaatar: Ulsyn Khevreleliin Kombinat, 1992), pp. 91-94. Translated by Sergey Radchenko. <https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/110480>

Summary:

Tsedenbal's diary entry on his conversation with Anastas Mikoyan regarding Soviet economic aid and cooperation with the Mongolian People's Republic. Tsedenbal asks Mikoyan to forgive upcoming payments due and provide additional materials and Soviet workers for construction of railroads. Mikoyan tells Tsedenbal that the Soviets will help, but that Mongolia must prepare its own workforce and not be dependent on Soviet or Chinese help. The two also discuss trade issues and Chinese designs on Mongolia.

Original Language:

Mongolian

Contents:

Translation - English

24 February 1956

At the [20th Soviet Communist Party] Congress A[nastas] I. Mikoyan told me that he will meet with me afterwards. [...] This meeting took place on 5 March [19]56 in the Kremlin. The conversation continued for one hour. I raised the following questions:

1. I requested an additional loan of construction technology for the objects, specified by the August (1955) agreement: construction materials, plumbing and auxiliary equipment. [...]

2. In 1956 we will not pay 40 million tugrug for the construction of the Ulaanbaatar-Zamyn-Uud railroad. If possible, [we would like to] discuss [the idea of] not paying for this at all.

The answer was: we can discuss this.

3. I requested that this year the Soviet side accepts 245 people to colleges and universities.

The answer was: we support this idea. If need be, the number can be increased.

Mikoyan spoke about the following questions:

1. [The Soviet] geological ministry is in the MPR and its trust carries out exploration work in your country. But you don't know what they are doing; nobody approves its work plan. This is why we want this trust to be turned into a joint-stock company, and for its plan to be approved by the two governments.

2. The news that Soviet and Mongolian parts of the Dornod railway have been connected should be given to the press.

3. [We] have agreed to your request regarding the building of 40-50 thousand square meters worth of housing instead of the [Mongolian traditional felt] gers. We thought the corps would build the railroad. But they need to be pulled out of Mongolia. In the future the railroad soldiers will probably be pulled out. That's why we will give you a credit (ready-made doors, etc). We are ready to give you engineer-technical cadres. But you must have your own workforce. Think and calculate by what time you want to finish construction.

4. Young people should be called to railroad work. The working class will grow rapidly, the Mongolians are talented people. ([Ambassador Vasily] Pisarev said that [they] will give more than 3000 Soviet railroad workers).

Mikoyan: that's a bit too much. For you to take the Soviet workers is very expensive. You need to have yourselves, not the Russians, not the Chinese on the railroad. If need be, we will help. You need to prepare people in technical colleges in Ulan-Ude and Chita. You need to think about it and make calculations.

Pisarev said: From the 8 thousand rail road workers, 7 thousand must be Mongolians. [...]

6. [Mikoyan]: There is a need for a special trade customs tax. The absence of the customs tax is a legacy of the past. Our bureaucrats still look at Mongolia as one of their provinces. Before, when the Soviet army was stationed in Mongolia, it was correct to supply it with goods tax-free. Because that army defended your independence. Now the situation has changed. The military are carrying out civic responsibilities. (I said that will strengthen our finances and expressed thanks).

7. [They] expressed interest in the financial situation of the MPR. I said that the situation with our state's finances was difficult. This year there will be less income from the railroad than in 1955. The ton per kilometre cost of rail road transit is only 74 mungu. I said that with the money earned from transit, we need to buy goods [from abroad] and sell them at retail prices. Another related question is that we have lots of [domestically-produced] goods, and we asked the Soviet trade representatives to buy some goods from us by special trade.

Mikoyan answered: our trade representative must meet with a relevant person. Pisarev said: this is a question of goods amounting to 15 million tugrug. But the question of price has not been agreed upon yet. [...]

8. After the corps leave, buildings will be transferred to the MPR. He said we needed to use them. I: expressed a wish for a discount agreement. Mikoyan: said I had to define just what kind of discount was needed.

[...]

10. [We] talked about the Chinese workers; he was interested in their number. He said that he heard that we could not find work for them to do early on. I: there was such a shortcoming, this year over 3 thousand families [of Chinese workers] will come.

Mikoyan: In order for you not to end up with mainly Chinese working class, you should develop your own working class. During this conversation Mikoyan asked what kind of relations we had with Inner Mongolia. I: we do not have any special relationship, we have mainly cultural relations.

He asked whether Inner Mongolians came to our Embassy in China, and I replied "no". Mikoyan: there are definitely afraid.

I said: recently one man from the Chinese Foreign Ministry came to our Embassy. He wanted to go through Inner Mongolia. At the time of the opening of the rail road, the deputy head of the Inner Mongolian government Namjilsuren told our deputy [Sonomyn] Luvsan that the border between us two should be opened. Luvsan said this is the matter of future (communism), that he could not give an answer.

Mikoyan said: Mao Zedong twice put forward to us the question of joining the MPR to the PRC (one time, when Mikoyan went to China in 1949, the other time when Khrushchev, Bulganin and Mikoyan went in 1954). We answered that this question must be decided by the Mongolians themselves. (It came to my mind that when Choibalsang was in Sochi, he talked [about this] with Stalin. At the time Mikoyan was also there).

Mikoyan asked me whether the Chinese put this question to us, and I answered "no".