

June 14, 1949

Cable, Mao Zedong [via Kovalev] to Stalin

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Summary:

Mao (via Kovalev) responds to Stalin's earlier cable and asks advice on several questions, including: the creation of a government in China, military tactics, the supplying of troops, the state of the civil war, and how to show the friendship between the USSR and China to other countries.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

[...]

Reporting: on 12 June Cde. Mao Zedong gave me his report for transmitting to you. The text of the report follows:

1. I received your telegram dated 26 May through Cde. Kovalev.

Besides those points, which I conveyed to you through comrade Kovalev, I will write to you the present report. From the time of the previous report, which I wrote to you on 19 and 21 March of this year, already two and a half months have passed. Now there are a number of questions, about which I must report to you and request your instructions.

2. Question on the creation of a government.

Now we decided to form a government in the months of August-September of this year. All the preparatory work must be completed before the middle of the month of August. In the middle or in the second half of the month of August one can call the political consultative meeting and form the government.

The preparatory work amounts to the following:

a) At the all-China level there are 44 various parties, public organizations, groups and non-party figures. 500 delegates and personal invitees will be selected from these organizations [to take part] in the political consultative meeting.

b) Development of the organizational position and rights of the consultative committee.

c) Development of a draft of the general political program of the consultative meeting and its discussion.

d) Development of the structure, of the organizational basis and the composition of the government with a preliminary exchange of opinions.

In view of the fact that a number of provinces in the area to the south of the Yangzi River will be quickly integrated into our territories, the number of the delegates, and of the organizations that send them to the political consultative meeting, will be greater than we previously supposed. Therefore, the consultative meeting will represent more than a half of the territory and the population of China.

In connection with the fact that the war is nearing its end, the general political program, developed earlier with the gravitation center of gaining victory in the war, must be reviewed and composed on the basis of restoring and developing the economy of China. The organizational structure and the composition of the government must also be developed for solving this task.

All of this preparatory work with a great exertion of effort can be implemented by the middle of August. Therefore the consultative meeting may be called in the middle or in the second half of September. Both from the point of view of internal and of external policy, this is a suitable time.

All circles hope that this meeting will go well and give positive results. Representatives of all circles place great hopes on this meeting. The opinion of some democratic figures, who believed that the meeting must be called after the taking of Canton and Chongqing, is no longer supported by them.

3. Judging by the internal and external situation, there is a possibility and the necessity for our army to take the [following] cities in winter of this year: Canton, Nanning, Kunming, Guiyang, Chongqing, Chengdu, Qinghai, Ningxia[.] [W]ith the aim of preventing a possible economic blockade and military intervention on the part of the imperialist powers, one should take the following measures:

a) As quickly as possible to wipe out from the face of the earth the lackeys of imperialism—the remnants of the Guomindang. This is the main thing. If the Chinese mainland does not have lackeys of imperialism, then it will be difficult or almost impossible for the imperialists to carry out economic blockade and intervention.

b) To create the defense of the coastal line.

c) To prepare for economic self-sufficiency, so as not to be dependent on a possible economic blockade.

4. The development of events is occurring faster than we previously supposed. Difficulties, arising in the connection with the fact that units of our forces do not rely on the supply from the rear but are supplied from the local resources (human replenishment, ammunition, foodstuff, clothing and so on), which the PLA encountered in the Guomindang areas are also less than we previously estimated.

The resistance force of the Guomindang has lessened considerably; with the exception of a part of the Guomindang forces numbering more than 200 thousand people, who still have some battle capacity, the rest of the forces no longer have this battle capacity. The breaking up and the falling apart of the Guomindang forces is the characteristic trait.

In the course of military operations over 50 days, from 21 April until the present time, our army, at the price of 60 thousand killed and wounded destroyed 580 thousand Guomindang forces.

As a result of three years of the liberation war, our army killed in all 5 million 590 thousand people. The Guomindang army in general, including regular and irregular units, apparatus of the rear service, military schools and others, now count no more than one and a half million people. These are insignificant remnants of the Guomindang forces. It will not take too much time to destroy them.

The discipline of the PLA, with the exception of some units, is on the whole very high. Our forces displayed people's heroism in a revolutionary upsurge, received the support of all levels of the population and were solemnly greeted by the people in the liberated areas, the battle capacity of our army has reached an unheard of level, the three months political and military preparation, which the PLA forces underwent in the spring of this year, gave positive results. The entire army with all seriousness and decisiveness, in complete order, moved forward and accomplished a great military march unheard of in Chinese history.

Workers, peasants, intelligentsia, national bourgeoisie (with the exception of some rightist elements, which are wavering) unanimously support our party, our army in the struggle against the Guomindang.

In places reached by our army, the majority of the Guomindang-ists move away from the reactionaries, remain at the places, protect the apparatus of the government, institutions, enterprises and cultural-enlightenment institutions, waiting for our arrival

so as to pass them into our hands, so that we decide the question of their life and work.

Our underground party organizations and guerrilla regiments in the villages very effectively combined their activities with the military operations of the PLA and with work to take over the city economy. All of this allowed the PLA to solve comparatively successfully the difficult problem of supply at the localities, and not from the rear.

The present situation gives us an opportunity to exceed the scale of the military operations stipulated in the previous plan. In accordance with that plan, about which I personally told Cde. Andreev [Mikoyan], we intended to take 10 provinces this year: Jiangsu, Anhui, Zhejiang, Fujian, Hunan, Hubei, Jiangxi, Shaanxi, Gansu. However, in the 50 days from 21 April we already took five provinces: Jiangsu, Anhui, Zhejiang, Hubei and Shaanxi, and also a part of provinces Jiangxi and Fujian.

Considering the estimate of the time and military forces, another 8 provinces can be taken already in winter of this year: Guangdong, Guangxi, Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan, Gansu, Ningxia, Qinghai. The ones that remain are only Xinjiang, Xikang (i.e. the Western part of the Sichuan province), Formosa and the Hainan Island, the taking of which will be put off until next year.

In case the Guangxi forces of Bai Chongxi retreat without a battle to Yunnan province, then the taking of this province possibly will also be put off until the spring of next year.

The situation in Tibet is special (spetsyficheskaia); perhaps its question will still not be solved next year.

If we stick to this plan, this will shorten the length of war considerably and will allow to cleanse [ourselves] quickly from the lackeys of imperialism on the continent. Then the third part of the PLA in the fall and winter of this year will not be inactive and the question of the foodstuff for the regular army of 2 million 150 thousand people will be solved in better conditions as it will be supplied from 16 provinces, and not from 10 provinces as it was supposed by the previous plan.

[...] [Here follow details on military planning.]

9. At the present time not only can we not cut back the number of our forces—on the contrary, in all taken provinces one will have to create local forces in the process of implementing the land reform, the number of which will reach, perhaps, one and a half million forces.

Therefore, if one counts the regular army numbering 2 million 150 thousand people, forces directly responsible to the center and the local forces of the old northern areas, counting in total one and a half million people (including the military apparatus of the rear), then the full strength of our army at a certain stretch of time will reach 5 million people. When we reach this number, then one will be able to cut back gradually the number of our forces. Then it will be enough to have about 3 million forces (including regular and local forces—the protection regiments) in China. Now we are turning not to cutting the forces, but to cutting the military industry.

In old liberated areas to the north of Yangzi River we have 160 military industry enterprises, which employ 100 thousand workers and employees.

Considering the necessities of the Civil War we will not need now to manufacture arms and ammunition. Our field armies can fight using the trophies captured in the

battles and the military industry received from the Guomindang in order to satisfy the needs of war. If there is no intervention on the part of the imperialists, we will be able to gradually begin the preparation for cutback and transfer of the military industry to peaceful products. Otherwise, one will have to produce unnecessary products, which is very unprofitable for us.

With the aim of creating long-term defense of the country it will be necessary for us to stipulate and include into our general economic plan a suitable plan for creating new military industry, which would be suitable to the aims of protecting the state. In this we need help on the part of your specialists.

11. At the present time we still do not have a plan of wide propaganda and demonstration of friendly relations of China with the Soviet Union. Our opinion is to use the occasions of trips of various democratic parties on excursions to the USSR and the countries of new democracy of Eastern Europe in order that they see for themselves and sense the friendly relations of the USSR to China so as to dissipate some erroneous views, which some of them have on this account.

This will thereby ease the official formalization of treaties with the USSR on the loan and the Soviet specialists after the formation of a democratic government. At the same time this will help the Soviet specialists to work in China officially.

In view of the fact that the government will be formed in the month of August and, jointly with us, the democratic figures should complete in June-July the preparatory work to call the consultative meeting and the creation of the government (the work is very tense), their trip to the USSR therefore will have to be postponed and carried out only after the formation of the government. Now, as of yet, we have not exchanged opinions with them with regard to their trip to the USSR.

12. I fully agree with your observations that the structure of the economic center of the future Chinese government must not be bulky but flexible, suitable to the conditions in China.

13. The list of the number and the profile of the Soviet specialists, whom we need, was sent to you by a telegram dated 9 June.

With Bolshevik greetings,
Mao Zedong 11 June 1949

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