

**September 15, 1959**  
**Mikhail Zimyanin's Background Report for**  
**Khrushchev on China (Excerpt)**

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**Summary:**

Mikhail Zimyanin, head of the Soviet Foreign Ministry's Far Eastern department, reports to Khrushchev on the "new stage" in Sino-Soviet relations after the victory of the people's revolution in China; China and the Soviet Union now share the common goal of developing socialist societies in their respective countries.

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The victory of the people's revolution in China and the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic marked the start of a qualitatively new stage in relations between the peoples of the Soviet Union and China, based on a commonality of interests and a unity of goals in constructing a socialist and Communist society in both countries.

...

When discussing the overall success of the development of Soviet-Chinese relations during the first three years after the formation of the PRC, we must not overlook several negative features of these relations connected with the violation of the sovereign rights and interests of the Chinese People's Republic, as reflected in bilateral agreements signed between the Soviet Union and PRC, including, for example, agreements to prohibit foreigners from entering Manchuria and Xinjiang (14 February 1950), to establish Soviet-Chinese joint stock companies, and to set the rate of exchange for the ruble and yuan for the national bank (1 June 1950), as well as other such documents.[1]

Beginning in 1953, the Soviet side took measures to eliminate everything that, by keeping the PRC in a subordinate position vis-a-vis the USSR, had impeded the successful development of Soviet-Chinese relations on the basis of full equality, mutuality, and trust.[2] Over time, the above-mentioned agreements were annulled or revised if they did not accord with the spirit of fraternal friendship. The trip to China by a Soviet party and state delegation headed by Comrade N. S. Khrushchev in October 1954 played an important role in the establishment of closer and more trusting relations. As a result of this visit, joint declarations were signed on Soviet-Chinese relations and the international situation and on relations with Japan.[3] In addition, a communique and additional agreements were signed on: the transfer to the PRC of the Soviet stake in Soviet-Chinese joint-stock companies responsible for scientific-technical cooperation, the construction of a Lanzhou-Urumchi-Alma Ata railroad, the construction of a Tianjin-Ulan Bator railroad, and so forth. [4]

The 20th Congress of the CPSU was of exceptionally great importance for the further improvement of Soviet-Chinese relations. It created an atmosphere conducive to a more frequent and more amicable exchange of candid views. The Chinese friends began to speak more openly about their plans and difficulties and, at the same time, to express critical comments (from a friendly position) about Soviet organizations, the work of Soviet specialists, and other issues in Soviet-Chinese relations. The CPC CC [Communist Party of China Central Committee] fully supported the CPSU's measures to eliminate the cult of personality and its consequences. It is worth noting, however, that the CPC CC, while not speaking about this directly, took a position different from ours when evaluating the activity of J. V. Stalin.[5] A bit later the Chinese comrades reexamined their evaluation of the role of J. V. Stalin, as reflected in Mao Zedong's pronouncements when he was visiting Moscow.[6] For example, he said: "...Overall, in evaluating J. V. Stalin, we now have the same view as the CPSU." In a number of discussions Mao Zedong gave a critical analysis of the mistakes of J. V. Stalin.

Soon after the 20th CPSU Congress, a campaign was launched in China to combat dogmatism, and a course was proclaimed to "let a hundred flowers bloom." [7] In connection with this the Chinese press began, with increasing frequency, to express criticism of specific conditions and of works by Soviet authors in the fields of philosophy, natural history, literature, and art. This inevitably gave strong impetus to hostile statements by rightist forces who denounced the Soviet Union and Soviet-Chinese friendship. The rightists accused the Soviet Union of failing to uphold principles of equality and mutuality, and they alleged that Soviet assistance was self-interested and of inferior quality. They also asserted that the Soviet Union had not provided compensation for equipment taken from Manchuria, and they insisted that the Soviet Union was extracting money from China in return for weapons supplied to Korea, which were already paid for with the blood of Chinese

volunteers.[8] In addition, they lodged a number of territorial demands against the USSR. The airing of these types of statements during the struggle against rightists can in no way be justified, even if one takes account of the tactical aims of our friends, who were seeking to unmask the rightists and deliver a decisive rebuff against them for all their statements. It is also worth noting that the Chinese friends, despite crushing the rightist elements, did not offer any open condemnation of statements expressed by them about so-called “territorial claims on the USSR.”

The Soviet government’s declaration of 30 October 1956 [endorsing the principle of equality in relations between the Soviet Union and other communist countries—ed.] was received with great satisfaction in China.[9] In January 1957 a government delegation headed by Zhou Enlai visited the Soviet Union, leading to the signature of a joint Soviet-Chinese Declaration.[10] The Declaration emphasized the complete unity of the USSR and PRC as an important factor in unifying the whole socialist camp, and it exposed the groundlessness of far-fetched claims about a “struggle between the CPSU and CPC for the right to leadership of world Communism.” In accordance with the Declaration, the Soviet Union devised and implemented concrete measures aimed at the further development of Soviet-Chinese friendship and cooperation on the basis of equality, mutual interest, and complete trust.

In 1957 a series of consultations took place between the CPSU CC and the CPC CC on common, concrete matters pertaining to the international situation and the Communist movement. The Chinese friends actively participated in the preparations and conduct of the Moscow conference of officials from Communist and workers’ parties in November 1957.[11] While the Chinese delegation was in Moscow, Mao Zedong spoke approvingly about the positive experience of such consultations and the constant readiness of the Chinese comrades to undertake a joint review of these and other matters. [12]

The steps to reorganize the management of the national economy in the USSR were greatly welcomed in the PRC. The CPC CC fully supported the decisions of the June [1957] and other plenary sessions of the CPSU CC, although the Chinese press did not feature an official commentary or reactions to the decisions of these sessions. After details about the activity of the Anti-Party faction had been explained to the CPC CC, the friends began to speak more resolutely about these matters. “If Molotov’s line had prevailed within the CPSU,” Mao declared in Moscow, “that would have been dangerous not only for the USSR, but for other socialist countries as well.” [13]

Taking account of the divisive activity of revisionists and the surge of imperialist propaganda, which tried to use several ideological campaigns in China in 1957—and, in particular, the campaign to “let a hundred flowers bloom” as well as the publication of a work by Mao Zedong “On the Question of Correctly Resolving Contradictions Among the People”—to provoke a schism in relations between the Soviet Union and PRC, the leadership of the CPC CC and the government of the PRC emphasized the close unity of the socialist camp and the leading role of the CPSU among Communist and workers’ parties. Mao Zedong stated this very definitively in his speech to Chinese students attending Moscow State University (November 1957), and he spoke about it at length with officials from Yugoslavia and also during meetings that PRC government delegations had with delegations from Poland and other countries of the socialist camp. [14] In 1959 the CPC CC, having reexamined the proposal of the CPSU CC to clarify its formula about the leading role of the Soviet Union in the socialist camp, again affirmed that this formula must be preserved in the future.

The durability of Soviet-Chinese relations and the role of Soviet-Chinese friendship gained new strength as the international situation deteriorated in the Middle East and also in connection with the provocations by the USA around the Taiwan Straits in the summer of 1958. The most important political event that year in Soviet-Chinese relations, which had an enormously positive influence on the development of the whole international situation, was the July-August meeting in Beijing between

Comrades N. S. Khrushchev and Mao Zedong. [15] During an exchange of views they considered a number of matters pertaining to Soviet-Chinese relations and, in particular, questions of military cooperation. [16] The speech by Cde. N. S. Khrushchev, including his statement that an attack on the PRC would be regarded as an attack on the Soviet Union itself, was fervently greeted with expressions of gratitude and approval in China. [17] The government of the PRC displayed great satisfaction at our assurance about our readiness to launch a nuclear strike in retaliation for a nuclear strike against China.[18] In turn, the Chinese government declared that the PRC will come to the assistance of the USSR in any part of the globe if an attack is carried out against it.

The letter from Cde. N. S. Khrushchev, and a variety of reports from the CPSU CC—about the provision of assistance to the PRC to continue strengthening its defense capability, about a reduction in the number of Soviet specialists in the PRC and the elimination of the network of Soviet “adviser-consultants,” about the CPSU CC’s views of the Yugoslav Communist League’s draft program, and about other matters—had important political benefits.

The results of the CPSU’s 21st Congress provided a great boost to the practical activity of the CPC in overseeing socialist construction in the country. [19] It is worth noting that after the publication of the theses of the report by Cde. N.S. Khrushchev at the CPSU’s 21st Congress and during the proceedings of the Congress, the Chinese friends, while giving a generally positive evaluation of the achievements of socialist construction in the USSR, made almost no mention of the theoretical portions of the report by Cde. N.S. Khrushchev and said that those portions related only to the practice of socialist and Communist construction in the USSR. [20]

In a similar vein, the provisions adopted at the Second Session of the CPC’s 8th Congress (May 1958) regarding a struggle against “blind faith” and regarding the need to foster sentiments of national pride among the people, as well as some preliminary success in implementing the “Great Leap Forward,” caused a number of cadre workers in the PRC to take on airs.[21] They began excessively emphasizing China’s uniqueness and displaying a guarded attitude toward Soviet experience and the recommendations of Soviet specialists. Some began declaring that the Soviet Union had stayed too long at the socialist stage of development, while China was moving valiantly ahead toward Communism. The Chinese press quite actively featured criticism of the socialist principles implemented in the USSR for the distribution of material goods in accordance with one’s labor, for the compensation of labor on a job-by-job basis, and so forth. Some authors essentially argued that communes were incompatible with kolkhozes.

Later on, after studying materials from the Congress and after numerous mistakes arose during the establishment of the peasant communes and during the implementation of the “Great Leap Forward,” the CPC began to display a more proper understanding of matters considered by the 21st Congress, such as the question of the significance of creating a material-technical base and increasing the productivity of labor for the construction of socialism, the question of the role of the principle of material incentives and labor distribution under socialism, and other questions.

The CPSU’s position in offering a principled explanation of a number of Marxist-Leninist precepts and laws of the building of socialism and Communism, which were ignored in China during the implementation of the “Great Leap Forward” and the establishment of communes (see the report and speech by Cde. N. S. Khrushchev at the 21st Congress and the speeches that followed), helped the Chinese comrades to evaluate the situation correctly and to begin rectifying the mistakes and shortcomings that had arisen. The statement by Cde. N. S. Khrushchev about the permanent foundations of Soviet-Chinese friendship swept the rug out from under imperialist and Yugoslav revisionist propaganda, which was intended to sow mistrust between our countries and provoke a deterioration of Soviet-Chinese

relations.

...

An analysis of Soviet-Chinese relations over the past decade confirms that relations of fraternal amity and fruitful cooperation have been established on a lasting basis and are growing wider and stronger with every passing year. These relations are a decisive factor in the further growth of the might and cohesion of the world socialist camp and in the consolidation of world peace and the security of nations.

[1] The provisions excluding foreigners from Manchuria and Xinjiang were not made public in February 1950 and indeed had not been publicly disclosed at the time Zimyanin was drafting his report. The existence of these agreements first came to light in 1969 when a secret speech delivered by Mao in March 1958 was published in a collection entitled *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui* ("Long Live Mao Zedong Thought"), 159-172. An English translation of the speech was published in *Issues & Studies* (Taipei) 10:2 (November 1973), 95-98. Mao emphasized that these provisions relegated Manchuria and Xinjiang to the status of "colonies." For other documents cited here by Zimyanin, see "Soglashenie mezhdru Soyuzom Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik i Kitaiskoi Narodnoi Respublikoi o Kitaiskoi Chanchun'skoi zheleznoi doroge, Port-Arture i Dalnem," 14 February 1950; "Soobshchenie o podpisanii soglasheniya mezhdru SSSR i Kitaiskoi Narodnoi Respublikoi ob uchrezhdenii dvukh Sovetsko-kitaiskikh aktsionernikh obshchestv," 29 March 1950; and "Soobshchenie o podpisanii soglasheniya mezhdru SSSR i Kitaiskoi Narodnoi Respublikoi ob uchrezhdenii Sovetsko-kitaiskogo aktsionernogo obshchestva grazhdanskoi aviatsii," 2 April 1950, all in I. F. Kurdyukov, V. N. Nikiforov, and A. S. Perevertailo, eds., *Sovetsko-kitaiskie otnosheniya, 1917-1957: Sbornik dokumentov* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Vostochnoi literatury, 1959), 221-222, 227-228 and 228-229, respectively. For further commentary on these agreements, see Chang, *China's Boundary Treaties and Frontier Disputes*, 9-38, and for a detailed contemporary assessment of the inequitable nature of the joint stock companies, see the top-secret memorandum "O nedostatkakh deyatel'nosti Sovetsko-kitaiskikh obshchestv Sovkitmetall i Sovkitneft' v Sintszyane," from N.V. Vazhnov, secretary of the CPSU branch at the Soviet Embassy in Beijing, 25 February 1954, in TsKhSD, F. 4, Op. 9, D. 1933, Ll. 18-38.

[2] For Khrushchev's version of these efforts, see *Vospominaniya*, Vol. 5, Part G, pp. 25-31.

[3] "Sovmestnaya deklaratsiya pravitel'stva Soyuzu Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik i pravitel'stva Kitaiskoi Narodnoi Respubliki," 12 October 1954, and "Sovmestnaya deklaratsiya pravitel'stva Soyuzu Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik i pravitel'stva Kitaiskoi Narodnoi Respubliki ob otnosheniyakh s Yaponiei," 12 October 1954, both in Kurdyukov, Nikiforov, and Perevertailo, eds., *Sovetsko-kitaiskie otnosheniya*, 299-301 and 301-302, respectively. 89. "Sovetsko-Kitaiskoe kommyunike o peredache Kitaiskoi Narodnoi Respublike sovetskoi doli uchastiya v smeshannykh obshchestvakh," 12 October 1954, "Sovetsko-Kitaiskoe kommyunike o stroitel'stve zheleznoi dorogi Lan'chzhou-Urumchi-Alma Alta," 12 October 1954, "Sovmestnoe kommyunike pravitel'stv Soyuzu Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik, Kitaiskoi Narodnoi Respubliki i Mongol'skoi Narodnoi Respubliki o stroitel'stve zheleznoi dorogi ot Tsenina do Ulan-Batora i organizatsii pryamogo soobshcheniya v 1955 g.," 12 October 1955, *ibid.*, 303-304, 305, and 305-306, respectively.

[4] Zimyanin's chronology here is slightly amiss. In private discussions with Soviet officials as early as March 1956 (a few weeks after Khrushchev's secret speech), Mao began condemning the "great and serious mistakes committed by Stalin," including his "erroneous and ill-considered" actions vis-a-vis China. See "Zapis' besedy s tov.

Mao Tsze-dunom, 31 marta 1956 g.," Report No. 209 (TOP SECRET) by P. F. Yudin, Soviet ambassador in China, 5 April 1956, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 30, D. 163, Ll. 88-99. Only after the upheavals in Eastern Europe in October-November 1956 did Chinese leaders express strong reservations about the de-Stalinization campaign. Zimyanin is right, however, that Mao had been uneasy about Khrushchev's secret speech from the very start. For reasons discussed above, it is unlikely that Mao's aversion to the reassessment of Stalin stemmed from any great feeling of personal warmth toward the late Soviet dictator. The more probable reasons for Mao's hostility toward the de-Stalinization campaign were threefold: (1) his irritation that Khrushchev had not consulted with him before delivering the secret speech; (2) his concern that attacks on the "cult of personality" could affect his own status as the supreme, all-wise leader of China; and (3) his belief that the chief features of Stalinism, especially the crash industrialization program of the 1930s, were still relevant, indeed essential, for China. Later on, after the Sino-Soviet split emerged, Chinese support for Stalin was largely rekindled, no doubt to retaliate against Khrushchev. For a lengthy Chinese statement from 1963 defending Stalin (while acknowledging that he made a few "mistakes"), see "On the Question of Stalin: Comment on the Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU (2) by the Editorial Departments of People's Daily and Red Flag," 13 September 1963, in Peking Review 6:38 (20 September 1963), 8-15.

[5] The reference here is to Mao's trip in November 1957, his first visit to Moscow (and indeed his first trip outside China) since early 1950. On the point discussed in the next sentence, see Khrushchev, *Vospominaniya*, Vol. 5, Part G, p. 105.

[6] In May 1956 the Chinese authorities promulgated the slogan "Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom, Let a Hundred Schools of Thought Contend"; and in the spring of 1957, after the CCP Central Committee published a directive inviting public criticism, many Chinese intellectuals took advantage of the opportunity to express remarkably bold and pointed critiques of the Communist regime, far exceeding what Mao had anticipated. After six weeks of growing ferment, the authorities launched a vehement crackdown under the new slogan "the extermination of poisonous weeds." Hundreds of thousands of "rightists" and "counterrevolutionaries" were arrested, and more than 300,000 eventually were sentenced to forced labor or other punitive conditions. For a valuable overview of this episode, see Roderick MacFarquhar, ed., *The Hundred Flowers Campaign and the Chinese Intellectuals* (New York: Praeger, 1960), which includes extensive documentation as well a lengthy narrative and critical commentaries. For a perceptive analysis of the fundamental differences between the Hundred Flowers campaign in China and the post-Stalin "Thaw" in the Soviet Union, see S. H. Chen, "Artificial Flowers During a Natural 'Thaw'," in Donald W. Treadgold, ed., *Soviet and Chinese Communism: Similarities and Differences* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967), 220-254. Useful insights into Mao's own goals for the Hundred Flowers campaign can be gained from 14 secret speeches he delivered between mid-February and late April 1957, collected in MacFarquhar, Cheek, and Wu, eds., *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*, 113-372.

[7] These particular complaints were expressed by a high-ranking Chinese military officer, General Lung Yun, the vice chairman of the PRC National Defense Council, in the newspaper Xinhua on 18 June 1957, at the very end of the Hundred Flowers campaign. He declared that it was "totally unfair that the People's Republic of China had to bear all the expenses of the Korean War," noting (accurately) that China had been forced to pay for all the military equipment it received from the Soviet Union. Lung contrasted Moscow's position with the "more suitable" policy of the United States during World War I and World War II, when Allied debts were written off. He also emphasized that China's debt to the Soviet Union should be reduced in any case as compensation for the large amount of industry that the Soviet Union extracted from Manchuria in 1945-46. Lung's appeals went unheeded, and the Chinese government continued to pay off the bills it had accumulated, equivalent to nearly \$2 billion. The debt was not fully repaid until 1965. During the "anti-rightist" crackdown after the Hundred Flowers campaign, Lung was punished for his remarks, but he managed to regain his spot on the National Defense Council in December 1958. See

MacFarquhar, *The Hundred Flowers Campaign and the Chinese Intellectuals*, 50. See also Mineo Nakajima, "Foreign Relations: From the Korean War to the Bandung Line," in MacFarquhar and Fairbank, eds., *The People's Republic, Part I*, 270, 277.

[8] See "Deklaratsiya o printsipakh razvitiya i dal'neishem ukreplenii druzhby i sotrudnichestva mezhdru SSSR i drugimi sotsialisticheskimi stranami," *Pravda* (Moscow), 31 October 1956, 1. For the CPSU Presidium decision to issue the declaration, see "Vypiska iz protokola No. 49 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK ot 30 oktyabrya 1956 g.: O polozenii v Vengrii," No. P49/1 (STRICTLY SECRET), 30 October 1956, in APRF, F.3, Op. 64, D.484, Ll. 25-30. Zimyanin's description of Chinese policy is accurate. The Chinese authorities immediately hailed the Soviet statement and cited it approvingly on many occasions later on. During a trip to Moscow, Warsaw, and Budapest in January 1957, for example, Chinese prime minister Zhou Enlai repeatedly praised the October 30 statement as evidence of Moscow's "determination to eliminate certain abnormal features of its relations with other socialist states."

[9] "Sovmestnoe Sovetsko-Kitaiskoe Zayavlenie," 18 January 1957, in Kurdyukov, Nikiforov, and Perevertailo, eds., *Sovetsko-kitaiskie otnosheniya*, 330-335. Zimyanin's characterization of this declaration (see next sentence) is accurate.

[10] The reference here is to a two-part conference in Moscow on 14-19 November 1957 marking the 40th anniversary of the Bolshevik takeover. The leaders of all 13 ruling Communist parties were invited to the first session on 14-16 November, but at the outset Yugoslavia declined to take any further part. As Zimyanin accurately observes below, China joined the other participants in issuing a statement that reaffirmed the CPSU's preeminent role in the world Communist movement. See "Deklaratsiya Soveshchaniya predstavitelei kommunisticheskikh i rabochikh partii sotsialisticheskikh stran, sostoyavshegosya v Moskve 14-16 noyabrya 1957 goda," *Pravda* (Moscow), 22 November 1957, 1-2. Yugoslav officials refused to endorse the 12-party statement, but they agreed to participate in the second phase of the conference, which was held immediately afterwards, on 16-19 November. A total of 64 Communist parties from around the world took part in that session, which culminated in the adoption of a so-called Peace Manifesto.

[11] "Rech' rukovoditelya delegatsii Kitaiskoi Narodnoi Respubliki Mao Tsze-duna na yubileinoi sessii Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR," *Pravda* (Moscow), 7 November 1957, 2. See also Khrushchev, *Vospominaniya*, Vol. 5, Part G, pp. 42-46.

[12] This is a paraphrase of what Mao said in a speech at the 64-party conference on 18 November 1957, the only time he is known to have offered direct support for Khrushchev against the Anti-Party Group. Excerpts from the speech were later published in *Renmin Ribao*, but all references to Khrushchev and the "Molotov clique" were omitted. As a result, until the mid-1980s Western scholars assumed that Mao had never spoken out against the Anti-Party Group. Fortunately, in 1985 the full text of Mao's 18 November 1957 speech was published, along with the texts of two other unpublished speeches he gave during the November 1957 conference, in a collection entitled *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui* ("Long Live Mao Zedong Thought," the same title used for eight earlier compilations of secret speeches by Mao). All three speeches were translated into English, introduced, and annotated by Michael Schoenhals in "Mao Zedong: Speeches at the 1957 'Moscow Conference,'" *The Journal of Communist Studies* 2:2 (June 1986), 109-126. Mao's comments about the Anti-Party Group were as follows: "I endorse the CPSU Central Committee's resolution of the Molotov question. That was a struggle of opposites. The facts show that unity could not be achieved and that the two sides were mutually exclusive. The Molotov clique took the opportunity to attack when Comrade Khrushchev was abroad and unprepared. However, even though they launched a surprise attack, our Comrade Khrushchev is no fool; he is a smart man who immediately mobilized his forces and launched a victorious counterattack. That struggle was one between two lines: one

erroneous and one relatively correct. In the four or five years since Stalin's death the situation in the Soviet Union has improved considerably in the sphere of both domestic policy and foreign policy. This shows that the line represented by Comrade Khrushchev is more correct and that opposition to this line is incorrect. Comrade Molotov is an old comrade with a long fighting history, but this time he made a mistake. The struggle between the two lines within the CPSU was of an antagonistic variety because the two sides could not accommodate each other and each side excluded the other. When this is the case, there need not be any trouble if everything is handled well, but there is the danger of trouble if things are not handled well."

[13] "Vstrecha Predsedatelya Mao Tsze-duna s kitaiskimi studentami i praktikantami v Moskve," *Pravda* (Moscow), 22 November 1957, 3.

[14] "Kommyunike o vstreche N. S. Khrushcheva i Mao Tsze-duna," 3 August 1958, in Kurdyukov, Nikiforov, and Perevertailo, eds., *Sovetsko-kitaiskie otnosheniya*, 403-406.

[15] The "questions of military cooperation" discussed at this meeting were essentially fivefold. First, China sought new weapons and broader military backing from Moscow for a possible operation against Taiwan (see above). Second, Khrushchev sought, once again, to persuade China to permit a long-wave military communications center to be established on Chinese territory by 1962 for Soviet submarines operating in the Pacific. This idea was first broached to the Chinese by Soviet defense minister Marshal Rodion Malinovskii in April 1958, and over the next few months the two sides haggled over the funding and operation rights. At the summit, Khrushchev and Mao concurred that China would build and operate the station with Soviet funding and technical assistance, and a formal agreement to that effect was signed. (The withdrawal of Soviet personnel from China in mid-1960 left the communications center only half-completed, but the Chinese eventually completed it on their own.) Third, Chinese prime minister Zhou Enlai requested Soviet aid in the development of nuclear-powered submarines, a proposal that Khrushchev quickly brushed aside, as he had in the past. Fourth, Khrushchev renewed an earlier proposal for a joint submarine flotilla, which effectively would have been a reciprocal basing arrangement for Soviet submarines at Chinese ports and Chinese submarines at Soviet Arctic ports. Mao summarily rejected this idea, just as he did when it was first raised via the Soviet ambassador in China, Pavel Yudin, ten days before Khrushchev's visit. Fifth, the question of nuclear weapons cooperation came up. In accordance with the NDTA, the Soviet Union at the time was training Chinese nuclear weapons scientists and was providing information needed to build nuclear weapons. But unbeknownst to Chinese officials, Soviet leaders had decided in early 1958 not to transfer a prototype nuclear bomb to China, despite having made a pledge to that effect in the October 1957 agreement. Mao raised this matter during the talks with Khrushchev, but got a non-committal response. Information here is derived from: (1) an interview with Oleg Troyanovskii, the former Soviet ambassador and foreign policy adviser to Khrushchev, who accompanied the Soviet leader during this trip to China, in Cambridge, Massachusetts on 6 October 1995; (2) Lewis and Xue, *China's Strategic Seapower*, 14-15; and (3) Khrushchev, *Vospominaniya*, Vol. 5, Part G, pp. 76-78.

[16] Khrushchev declared that "an attack against the Chinese People's Republic, which is a great friend, ally, and neighbor of our country, would be an attack against the USSR itself. True to its duty, our country will do everything necessary, in conjunction with People's China, to defend the security of both states." This statement was repeated, in more or less identical phrasing, in numerous high-level Soviet statements. See, e.g., "Poslanie Predsedatelya Soveta Ministrov SSSR N. S. Khrushcheva Prezidentu SShA D. Eizenkhaueru po voprosu o polozhenii v raione Taivanya," 7 September 1958, in Kurdyukov, Nikiforov, and Perevertailo, eds., *Sovetsko-kitaiskie otnosheniya*, 411. According to Khrushchev's memoirs, as soon as



this statement was issued, Mao expressed doubt that the Soviet Union had any intention of fulfilling it; see Vospominaniya, Vol. 5, Part F ("Mao Tsze-dun"), pp. 4-5. This assertion is problematic, but there is not yet (and perhaps cannot be) any direct evidence to contravene it.

103. The clearest statement to this effect came in a letter Khrushchev sent to President Eisenhower during the Quemoy crisis, warning that "those who are concocting plans for an atomic attack against the PRC should not forget that it is not only the USA, but the other side as well that possesses atomic and hydrogen weapons and the means of delivering them, and that if such an attack is carried out against the PRC, the aggressor will be dealt a swift and automatic rebuff in kind." See "Poslanie Predsedatelya Soveta Ministrov SSSR N. S. Khrushcheva Prezidentu SShA D. Eizenkhaueru o polozhenii v raione Taivanya," 19 September 1958, in Kurdyukov, Nikiforov, and Perevertailo, eds., *Sovetsko-kitaiskie otnosheniya*, 417. At the time, the Chinese authorities warmly praised Khrushchev's statement, describing it as "a lofty expression of our fraternal relations." See "Sotsialisticheskii lager v sovremennoi mezhdunarodnoi obstanovke," *Pravda* (Moscow), 10 November 1958, 3. Mao himself said he was "deeply touched by [the Soviet Union's] boundless devotion to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and internationalism" and wanted to "convey heartfelt gratitude" to Khrushchev for his support during the Taiwan Straits crisis. Several years later, however, Chinese leaders shifted their view (in accordance with the polemics of the time) and expressed contempt for Khrushchev's pledge, arguing that "Soviet leaders declared their support for China only when they were certain there was no possibility that a nuclear war would break out and there was no longer any need for the Soviet Union to support China with its nuclear weapons." See "Statement by the Spokesman of the Chinese Government: A Comment on the Soviet Government's Statement of 21 August," 1 September 1963, in *Peking Review* 6:36 (6 September 1963), 9. New evidence suggests that these accusations were unfounded, and that Khrushchev's pledge was far more meaningful than the Chinese authorities later claimed; see Lewis and Xue, *China's Strategic Seapower*, 15-17 and Whiting, "The Sino-Soviet Split," 499-500. For an earlier study reaching the same conclusion, see Halperin and Tsou, "The 1958 Quemoy Crisis," 265-303.

[17] "Vneocherednoi XXI S"ezd Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soyuza: O kontrol'nykh tsifrakh razvitiya narodnogo khozyaistvo SSSR na 1959-1965 gody — Doklad tovarishcha N. S. Khrushcheva," *Pravda* (Moscow), 28 January 1959, 2-10; and "Vneocherednoi XXI S"ezd Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soyuza: Zaklyuchitel'noe slovo tovarishcha N. S. Khrushcheva," *Pravda* (Moscow), 6 February 1959, 1-3. These speeches and other materials from the Congress were republished in *XXII S"ezd Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1962).

[18] Zimyanin's characterization of the Chinese response to Khrushchev's report (especially the section on "The New Stage in Communist Construction and Certain Problems of Marxist-Leninist Theory") is accurate. Beijing's tepid initial response appeared in the main daily *Renmin Ribao* on 5 February 1959, and a much more extended commentary was published in the theoretical journal *Hongqi* on 16 February.

[10] Zimyanin is referring here to the momentous Second Session of the CPC's 8th Congress, which adopted a "General Line" of drastically accelerated economic development and ideological fervor. The hallmarks of the new line, as it evolved over the next few months, were: (1) the Great Leap Forward, a crash program of industrialization relying primarily on China's own resources; (2) the establishment of huge "people's communes" (the "basic social units of a Communist society"), which were intended to replace collective farms and to combine agriculture with industry (including "backyard" steel furnaces) all around the country; (3) the elimination of virtually all remaining forms of private property; (4) the further leveling of social classes and systematic deprecation of expertise; (5) the abandonment of earlier birth control efforts; and (6) the conversion of the army into a full-fledged people's militia (via the communes) and the establishment of an "Everyone a Soldier" campaign

requiring Chinese military officers to spend at least one month a year performing the duties of a common soldier. Chinese leaders' hopes of achieving immediate, rapid growth via the Great Leap Forward were evident from the goals they set for steel output (to cite a typical case). In 1957 steel production in China had been 5.9 million tons, whereas the target for 1958 was nearly twice that, at 10.7 million tons, and the targets for subsequent years were even more ambitious. Not surprisingly, these goals proved unattainable, and the whole effort turned out to be a debilitating failure.

The communes (which became smaller but more numerous after 1958) produced equally disastrous results, causing widespread food shortages and starvation in the early 1960s. The Chinese armed forces also suffered immense damage from both the demoralization of the officer corps and the disarray within the military-industrial complex. Of the many Western analyses of Chinese politics and society during this period, see in particular MacFarquhar, *The Great Leap Forward*.

[20] This was indeed the thrust of China's campaign against "blind faith in foreigners" (quoted by Zimyanin in the previous sentence), as formulated in the spring and summer of 1958. Although Chinese officials and military commanders at this point were still hoping for an increase in Soviet military-technical aid, they wanted to limit the political and doctrinal effects of Soviet assistance. (In other words, they wanted to receive Soviet weaponry and sensitive technology, but to use these in accordance with China's own doctrine, strategy, and political goals.) At Mao's behest, Chinese officials began speaking against the "mechanical imitation of foreign technology" and "excessive reliance on assistance from the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries," and warned that "there is no possibility for us to make wholesale use of the existing experiences of other countries." They emphasized that China "must carry out advanced research itself" instead of "simply hoping for outside aid." For more on this point, see Ford, "The Eruption of Sino-Soviet Politico-Military Problems, 1957-60," esp. 102-104; Lewis and Xue, *China's Strategic Seapower*, 3-4, and MacFarquhar, *The Great Leap Forward*, 36-40, *passim*. For a good example of Mao's own thoughts on the topic, see his secret "Address on March 10" at the Chengdu Conference, published in *Issues & Studies* 10:2 (November 1973), 95-98.

[21] For Soviet officials' views of these ideological disputes, see the voluminous files in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 30, Dd. 247, 301, 398, and 399.