

July 2, 1945

Record of a Meeting between T.V. Soong and Stalin

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Summary:

Notes taken during meetings between the Chinese nationalist government and the Soviet Union in Moscow during Sino-Soviet treaty negotiations.

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Transcript - English

Notes taken at Sino-Soviet Conferences
Moscow, 1945

2 July 1945, 8:00 - 10:30 p.m.

[Joseph] Stalin: No news.

Soong: Good news.

Stalin: Are you familiar with this document bearing signature of Stalin (shows Yalta agreement).

[T.V.] Soong: It has been communicated to us. The U.S. communicated to us very much the same way.

In addition to this Americans stated to us that Stalin has taken some undertakings.

Stalin: In conversation with Hopkins what (?) of Chiang [Kai-shek] transmitted?

Soong: No. Truman communicated to us pledges of Stalin.

Stalin: Let's read.

(Pavlov reads translation)

Stalin: An official of whom, China?

Soong: Yes.

Stalin: All is true. It's my first point of view on condition that you recognize as correct what is said further in this document.

Soong: May I discuss some points?

Stalin: Please.

Soong: Petrov discussed twice with Chiang. Presume he reported these conversations.

Stalin: Yes.

Soong: May I go point by point?

Stalin: O.K.

Soong: As to Outer Mongolia, as Chiang said, this is not a question that can be solved now. Time will solve. Put in abeyance. We will not raise it.

Stalin: Do you want me to reply or you'll go on.

Soong: No, this is first point.

Stalin: We cannot agree to this.

Soong: May I ask reason why?

Stalin: Outer Mongolia has a geographical position from where one can overthrow Soviet Union position in Far East. Before last war Japan near Chita, Irkutsk, tried to advance. If we had no juridical right to defend ourselves in Outer Mongolia the whole of the far East would have been lost to us. Japan will not be ruined even if one accepts unconditional surrender, like Germany. Both of these nations are very strong. After Versailles, all thought Germany would not raise. 15-20 years, she recovered. Same would happen with Japan even if she is put on her knees. For such cases we must have legal right to defend ourselves in territory of Outer Mongolia. If we are strong it is in China's interest. Should not like to be fools. Outer Mongolia people do not want to join either China or Soviet Union. They want to be independent. More advantageous for China to sever Outer Mongolia. If this does not happen Outer Mongolia will be rallying point for all Mongolians. It's to the detriment of China and us, the unifying of Mongolians, from Inner and Northern Mongolia. Leaders of Outer Mongolia find that to their South there are many Mongolians. So much for Outer Mongolia. This is what guided Russians when they signed that document, and offer it now to Chinese consideration.

Two considerations:

1) Strengthen its strategic position against Japan. As Russia proposes have alliance with China with united forces of China, Russia, America and Great Britain, will vanquish Japan. Port Arthur [Lüshunkou], Chinese Eastern Railway, Southern Sakhalin [sic], Outer Mongolia, all is guided by consideration of strengthening our strategic position against Japan. Neither of them is of interest from point of view of profit.

2) We are fighting since four years, shed much blood. People understand we must fight when attacked, as for Germany. But people would not have gone to war with as much fervour if we had attacked first.

Now we are expected to attack Japan who is making eyes at us and is very quiet.

If we attack Japan what will the people say? We finish four years of war and you start a new war. Japan does not touch you and you attack Japan. How shall I be able to justify attack only by saying that we are strengthening ourselves. Please take these two considerations into account in our further discussions.

Soong: As to Outer Mongolia it seems that Stalin does not understand our situation.

Stalin: Please explain it.

Soong: We are in a difficult position. We cannot tell our people that we are giving up any part of our territory. Stalin said that these are part of strategic importance against Japan. We do not raise question now. Let sleeping dog lie. If we are to recognize status quo in Mongolia which has many times been recognized by Soviet Union as integral part of China our position as a government will be badly shaken before our people. Stalin said he wanted to see stable united China. Surely best thing is not to create difficulty on questions which are not essential.

These are my observations on first point. Would like to enter into detail on certain points. As to former right of Russia violated by treacherous attack of Japan in 1904, need analysis as it is too general a statement.

Stalin: You are right.

Soong: Sakhalin, etc. We are only too happy to Support Stalin's position. Dairen [Dalian] internationalized - what does Stalin mean by internationalized?

Stalin: Commercial international port where ships of all nations can enter, with safeguard preeminent position of Soviet Union. Special agreement is necessary.

Soong: Do you mean free port?

Stalin: If China wishes so.

Soong: What do you mean 'safeguard preeminent position' ...

Stalin: Administration of port, special harbour for Soviet Union. This is improvement upon Sino/Russian treaty of 1898. Good thing to take this treaty and make certain and make certain improvements on it.

Soong: I made inquiry with President Truman on this point. I asked whether it meant free port. He said yes but then administration should be Chinese. Of course Russia being largest shipper, predominant trade will be Russian and Chinese.

Stalin: The masters should be Russian and Chinese. There should be special agreement.

Administrators of the port.

This document states only basic principles.

Soong: Has Foreign Office a prepared document giving a more concrete view?

Stalin: Best to take old treaty and improve.

Soong: Former treaty even without war would have expired. It was a proclamation by Czar. I presume we will not use it as basis.

Stalin: No. Perhaps you have something.

Soong: Our idea of free port is open to commerce of all nations. If Stalin wants Chinese sovereignty over all Manchuria, I think administration should be Chinese. I shall have occasion to make some general observations.

Stalin: It is false idea. There is no need to negotiate treaty for trade. We hope to trade in Canton, Tientsin. If we sign treaty it is to have more rights. Not open port to all nations but implies that there should be administration of preeminent role safeguards.

Soong: Preeminence even compared with China?

Stalin: Compared to China and other countries.

Soong: Does it mean Soviet Union have more rights than China?

Stalin: Perhaps, yes. What does it mean free port? That's what that document implies. What's the use of Chinese Eastern Railway if we do not have certain rights in port?

Soong: Do you mean Russian administration?

Stalin: Joint Sino-Russian Society. Chairman Chinese, Russian Chief of Administration, profits to be divided half and half. We are not for concessions. We prefer joint society.

Soong: Port would probably not be profit making. In the interest of trade.

Stalin: After construction it may be profitable. After defeat of Japan, China will need goods. Japan will not import goods into China as Americans are destroying. For long time (10 - 15 years) China will not produce such goods. They will come from the USA. We can sell some commodities, but not on large scale. England will not be able to deliver much. Dairen will be entry port for Russia and export port for beans. I think this port will be of some importance.

Soong: No doubt. But ports are for facilities and not to make benefits.

Stalin: You are not interested?

Soong: Not for ports. We are more interested in trade.

Stalin: Inner trade.

Soong: We will not tax trade to Russia, in this port.

Stalin: We will see that later. Income from ports is important.

Soong: For Dairen we will not tax. It is different for non free ports where we pay duty. But that is customs tax and not port dues.

Stalin: Document provides for internationalized port but not for free port.

Soong: If there are customs duties then of course they go to China.

Stalin: Half and half. (He laughs).

Soong: Otherwise you kill port of Dairen. Because there are other ports in Manchuria. If we halve income we will naturally send our goods through other ports. It's human.

Stalin: Must discuss in detail.

Soong: Even under Czar it was free port, and under Japanese.

Stalin: Right. I don't want to be more to the right, rather more to the left of Czarists.

Soong: Lease of Port Arthur. Chiang told Petrov: we are willing make port for joint use. For obvious reasons we do not want to have leased territories, but willing use jointly.

Stalin: It would be possible to find here a common language in order to meet wishes of China. Should not like create precedence, harmful to China.

Soong: Thank you.

Railways. What do you mean by joint Sino-Soviet Company?

Stalin: For operations.

Soong: How about ownership of railway?

Stalin: Who has built it?

Soong: Old terms 60 years?

Stalin: Old terms 80 years after construction.

Soong: 1924 changed to 60 years.

Stalin: I did not know.

Soong: There was also condition to redeem.

Stalin: Yes. Even under Czars it was provided.

Soong: What do you want for Chinese Eastern Railway?

Stalin: Term

Principles of operations

Aim: use rail for Port Arthur. Link also between Vladivostock and Siberia.

Soong: What term?

Stalin: Joint company. Profits to be divided.

Soong: Ownership joint?

Stalin: Operations joint. Soviet Union first owner, then China will take over. Formerly China had a small share. Joint disposal of ownership not proper term. For certain period after which Russia will leave railroad.

Soong: How long?

Stalin: Prolong Port Arthur. Shorter for railway. And find an average 10 - 15 years. Which do you prefer? (He laughs)

Soong: I want to explore some more things. What do you mean by preeminent interest of Soviet Union in railroad.

Stalin: Same as for Dairen, not financial privilege, not to station troops but chief of railroad should be Russian.

Soong: Do you intend use railroads for troops?

Stalin: Yes, in case of war with Japan.

Soong: That is reasonable. Not move troops in time of peace.

Stalin: No need. We will have few troops, but on the eve of outbreak of war against Japan. Do you pity Japan?

Soong: I would welcome, but I mean in time of peace you do not intend to send troops to Manchuria.

Stalin: We will agree. No need of recrudescence an part of Japan, China, if we have treaty, will ask herself for movement of troops.

Soong: We must have understanding.

Stalin: You are afraid we go to Peking. We have no intention.

Soong: No. Soviet had foreign troop on its soil. We had also bitter experience.

Stalin: Agrees.

Soong: Kuriles. We are very glad.

Stalin: We are closed up. We have no outlet. One should keep Japan vulnerable from all sides, north, west, south, east, then she will keep quiet.

Soong: We fully understand position of Soviet Union as regards Manchuria. Soviet Union want outlet through Dairen. Ready and anxious to give this outlet. But number of things here which need precise understanding. For instance when agreement made not put restore rights treacherous attack because Dairen, Port Arthur have expired. Chinese Eastern Railway theoretically sold to Japan. South Manchurian railway expires in very few years.

Stalin: It applies to Portsmouth Treaty, not implies that are restored with regard to China. We do not want restoration of old rights of Czarist Government vis à vis China. Treaty with China will be drafted differently. Here it is not treaty but principle directed against Japan.

Soong: Glad to hear that. 1924 Soviet Union first to relinquish its privileges and gave example to other countries.

Stalin: That's why Chang Tso-lin [Zhang Zuolin] arrested Russian Manager. Curious way to thank.

Soong: Chang and Czar are gone. God rest their bones.

Stalin: Chang did not like Japanese. He had good features. That's why Japs killed him.

Soong: Yes. Terms of lease Stalin said 40 - 45 years.

Stalin: 60 for railway - 25 for Port Arthur - take uniform term - after the term whole thing will be terminated.

Soong: What do you mean Port Arthur can you have map prepared, not whole Liaotung peninsula.

Stalin: We will prepare map if you have no definite proposal?

Soong: I shall be grateful to be more precise. Chiang's views were 20 - 25 years for Port Arthur and railway.

Stalin: Too short. We must still construct. When Czar provided 25 years he foresaw prolongation and deceived China. 25 years too short. Czar wanted to remain and move further South. We have no such intention.

Soong: I am sure of that. 4th point Soviet Union wants to conclude a treaty of friendship and alliance. We have been hoping that but because of German war Soviet Union could not.

Stalin: Chiang asked always. We were tied by Germany. Now we can.

Soong: Do you have your draft?

Stalin: No. We must accept principle, then we can draft.

Soong: We need clarification on some points Stalin is not clear himself.

Stalin: I can give clarification.

Soong: We have gone over Dairen.

Stalin: Did not come to final conclusion.

Soong: We must know what each side means. Why Stalin cannot accept that Dairen must be administered by China and be open port. We will give facilities to Soviet goods, not tax them. It seem all interests of Soviet Union are taken care of.

Stalin: I don't know. Then there would be no need to make treaty. I did not say that there should be Russian administration but Russo-Chinese. Why don't you want to accept?

Soong: When Stalin speaks of sovereignty in Manchuria it should include Dairen.

Stalin: That's administration of port.

Will it be like under Chang Tso-lin, several treaties?

Soong: We had revolution to unify China.

Stalin: High time.

Soong: Another question. Outlet to Dairen. I presume it's for trunk line, not branches.

Stalin: I think so.

Molotov: Coal district.

Soong: They are not on main line. Coal mine can be operated separately and coal sold to railway.

Stalin: Transportation of coal should be safeguarded. We do not want to operate these branch lines. But understanding should be reached for safeguarding coal supplies.

Soong: We want railway to prosper as it will be joint business, so question of supply of coal does not arise.

Stalin: If China undertakes safeguard coal then O.K. We don't want branch lines.

Soong: Appeal again to Soviet Union re Outer Mongolia. Inseparable for Chinese Government.

Stalin: Why?

Soong: We have been speaking of territorial integrity. Why will Stalin not help us on this question. We cannot present to Chinese people.

Stalin: Mongols don't want to stay with China. We renounced Poland (Warsaw) and Finland. I understand it is difficult but should be overcome. We cannot find anything else. For Port Arthur we yielded. You should make concession on this question.

Soong: We are not raising any question on Outer Mongolia.

Stalin: But it will come up and give rise to frictions. We are concluding pact before, so that all reasons of conflict should be eliminated. Soviet Union recognized Outer Mongolia as a part of China. True. But lesson of war changed our views. It will be better for China and Russia if Outer Mongolia is independent with right of passage for Russian troop in case threat from Japan.

Soong: We are not contesting this.

Stalin: Yes. But this sore point should be eliminated.

Soong: It did not cause us any pain. We are not making any protest against presence

of Russian troops.

Molotov: Press publishes about those who want spoil our relations.

Stalin: Outer Mongolia is not wealth to you or us, but geographical position is important.

Soong: Chinese people since Sun Yat-Sen, brought up on integrity of Chinese territory. I do beg Stalin to reconsider this.

Stalin: Sign treaty for independence of Mongolia but make it public after defeat of Japan when China regains her territories.

Soong: I will have to communicate with Chiang Kai-shek. Meanwhile hope Stalin will understand our difficulty and help us.

Stalin: Sign treaty now.

Soong: If this is done we will have difficulty with Thibet. In Washington (Pacific Conference) Churchill made statement on independent Thibet. I had heated argument. We do not want retrograde movements China since revolution has restored many of her rights. Soviet Union has been helping us. For that reason Stalin has to consider other method than lease for Port Arthur.

Stalin: Outer Mongolia is question of defense. Siberian rail can be cut off from Outer Mongolia and whole Siberia is gone. Japan tried. We cannot station troops on Chinese territory. It is graver question than Port Arthur (shows map).

Soong: Allow me to consult Chiang.

Stalin: Please.

Soong: Stalin said you'll welcome representatives of Chiang with troops.

Stalin: Yes.

Soong: Are you ready to enter in agreement.

Stalin: Yes if all this is accepted. I don't like empty words. What I said are you going to bring in some more troops.

Soong: Will talk frankly. Hope Stalin will also be frank. Talk not like diplomat but as realist government undergoing changes, more is going on. We tried to come to agreement with communists last March, wanted war cabinet to introduce Chinese communists which Stalin considers more like agrarians as Hurley said.

Stalin: Good patriots. As to communists question mark...

Soong: We will bring them in. I said I would fly to Yen-an. That was late March. They did not want me to go though I had full powers and was Acting Prime Minister. We want united army, 1 central government. We don't want Chang Tso-lun war lords or any party with separate government and army. If Chinese communist is only party having army and government want to join us, we are ready to introduce them in War

Cabinet in government. No intention to persecute them.

Stalin: I mean not only communists during war with Japan. There are now liberals also, not communists only. China must have one government with predomination of Kuomintang. But one Kuomintang will not be able to cope with situation.

Kuomintang must guide, but advantageous to China to have non Kuomintang also in government. This is affair of China. I speak only by the way. I asked because I am interested in the fortunes of China.

Soong: I appreciate what Stalin said. I know it in is interest of China.

Frankly: government wants enlist other people, not Kuomintang. It is our sincere wish. Kuomintang wants to be leading part in Government. Therefore does not want coalition government which may be upset when other parties withdraw.

Stalin: This is rightful wish of Kuomintang. It's obvious from history of China. What other parties?

Soong: To be brutally frank, no other party. National socialist party would not be allowed anywhere else. Members count on fingers. Youth party: back of it: landlords of Szechuan. Lin Wen-hui, largest landlord supports it. So called democratic front: communists, national socialists, youth is only a fiction set up in juxtaposition to central government. It's blunt facts. There are plenty liberal good men in China but so far have no organized party.

Stalin: Chiang can send his representatives to our army to set up administration as our troops advance.

Soong: Trusteeship for Korea to which you gave your approval. In San Francisco everybody had his own opinion an to trusteeship. How do you think.

Stalin: As Molotov.

Soong: What are your views?

Molotov: You discussed more with Americans. I understand them: trusteeship by one or several states. For Korea four States as proposed by USA. It will be complicated. No precedent. Must find solution in practice. But in principle we accepted.

Stalin: Without army. I stated that if troops are to be sent we will not accept. Roosevelt said no troops. There will be Council of four Powers to supervise so as to prepare country for end of trusteeship. It will be temporary. Must prepare conditions for its abolition with independence in the end. But that was only exchange of views. No binding decision. Verbal agreement.

Soong: Who will maintain order.

Stalin: Koreans themselves. What would be better according to you?

Soong: Some sort of police will be necessary.

Molotov: International?

Soong: Any kind to maintain order. When Japan withdraws, for some time there will be confusion.

Stalin: Should Korea be independent or do you have other plan?

Soong: I don't think Korea can be independent now.

Stalin: But in long run.

Soong: Yes.

Stalin: Is Korean language [the] same as Chinese?

Soong: The written one is the same.

Stalin: Is difference greater between Korean and Manchurian, than between Manchurian and South Chinese.

Soong: Yes.

Stalin: Why China does not adopt phonetic alphabet?

Soong: Some day it will come. Six weeks in American army to acquire great vocabulary. We intend to fight illiteracy with Soviet methods, radio, movies.

Stalin: Has China intention to annex Korea?

Soong: None whatever. People different, separate history.

Stalin: But it was part of China.

Soong: Yes, but we don't want Korea.

Stalin: I oppose police, stationing troops in Korea. Re Trusteeship in San Francisco our views were different from those of the USA and of

Great Britain. We consider it as step to independence. British consider it as step to colonization. USA (Roosevelt) had views close to ours. But now seem to have got closer to British.

Molotov: Only our and Chinese draft mentioned independence.

Soong: In 1943 discussed with Roosevelt. He wanted trusteeship for all colonies.

Stalin: But Churchill burst into tears and it was dropped.