

**December 7, 1983**

**Memo to the Secretariat of the Central Committee  
[of the Communist Party of France]**

**Citation:**

"Memo to the Secretariat of the Central Committee [of the Communist Party of France]", December 7, 1983, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Cote 305], Archives du Parti communiste français, Archives départementales de la Seine-Saint-Denis. Obtained by Joseph Torigian and translated by Salomé Tulane.  
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/208844>

**Summary:**

A summary of the CCP delegation's visit to the French Communist Party, covering the significance and composition of the delegation and domestic and foreign policies affirmed by the delegation.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from MacArthur Foundation

**Original Language:**

French

**Contents:**

Translation - English

POLEX - 7 December 1983

MEMO TO THE SECRETARIAT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

DELEGATION IN FRANCE OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY

From November 23 to December 3, 1983, a delegation of the Chinese Communist Party stayed in France, at the invitation of the French Communist Party. That delegation was responding to the trip in China of a delegation of the French Communist Party headed by Georges Marchais, in October 1982.

• Composition of the delegation of the Chinese Communist Party

Xi Zhong Xun

Member of the Political Bureau, Secretary of the Central Committee

Qiao Shi

Deputy member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee

Li Shu Zhong

Deputy member of the Central Committee

Wang Linjin

Collaborator of the Central Committee

As well as four other comrades

The delegation was accompanied at all times by the Chinese ambassador to France.

• Composition of the delegation of the French Communist Party

Maxime Gremetz

Member of the Political Bureau, Secretary of the Central Committee

Pierrette Joachim and Jean Garcia

Members of the Central Committee

Max Zins and Alain Roux

Collaborators of the foreign policy section

Jacques Denis, member of the Central Committee, attended a series of interviews.

• Significance of the delegation

The visit of the delegation of the Chinese Communist Party was a significant event.

Several elements highlight the importance the CCP has attached to this visit:

Xi Zhong Xun's personality:

he is considered to be the "right arm" of the CCP's Secretary-General, Hu Yaobang; he is one of the top Party officials and a renowned veteran in China. His biography indicates he was completely overshadowed from 1962 to 1978, that it is during the entire period of leftist drift. His return at the forefront of the political stage fits in with the new direction of Chinese policy.

The timing of the visit

the day after the delegation left France, another delegation of the CCP arrived in France, at the invitation of the PS.<sup>[1]</sup> It is all the more remarkable that the CCP responded to the PS after they paid us a visit that the invitation was extended by Mitterrand in March 81 (trip of the First Secretary of the PS to China).<sup>[2]</sup> The delegation to the PS is also clearly of an inferior level (Geng Biao is neither a member of the Political Bureau, nor a member of the Central Committee; he was, however, during the previous period; he is only a permanent member of the Commission of the Popular Assembly's advisors).

The letter of Hu Yaobang to Georges Marchais

given by Xi Zhong Xun, it is warm and notably delighted about the positive development of relations between the two parties since they have taken their delegations up again.

Quality of the political interviews

Four series of interviews took place (about fifteen hours). Additionally, Georges Marchais received Xi Zhong Xun for a long time. All of these interviews unfolded in a warm and brotherly atmosphere. The exchanges were direct, free of formalism, marked by the two parties' willingness to better understand their respective positions and situations, in respect of each other's viewpoints and on the basis of the shared principles that were drawn during Georges Marchais' visit to China.

- On domestic policy

The Chinese delegation has largely informed us of the situation in China and of the Party's policy, without attempting to conceal its difficulties. The CCP has estimated that China's economic situation was currently improving and that the first successes accomplished after the disastrous period of the Cultural Revolution were even better than expected. Information given on that topic corroborates what is being written in various articles of the French bourgeois press (Le Monde notably).

The Party's situation is also estimated to be much better. Considerable results were obtained, we were told, in connection to the consolidation of the Party, the readjustment of command teams to superior and middle levels, the Party's unity. Next year should be marked by the continuation of this sustained effort, notably as far as it concerns the consolidation at the party's lower levels and when it comes to its unity.

The Chinese delegation has indicated in substance that it would continue in that endeavour to fight against past deviations (out of 40 million Party members, 17 million have joined during the Cultural Revolution) and at the same time that it would start fighting against right-wing tendencies that the policy of the years immediately following the end of the Cultural Revolution have provoked amongst the Party and society (what is called in China ideological pollution). The overall objective appears to be the serene, slow, step-by-step modernisation of socialist China.

This evolution must be positively assessed by our party. It marks a major step forward compared to the past decade. It is certainly not completed, including at the highest level of the Party's leadership and of the State. But it is a token of the full recovery of the situation.

- On foreign policy

The delegation of the Chinese Communist Party has reaffirmed China's main foreign policy orientations as set out to the PCF's delegation in October 1982. We will limit ourselves to highlight key evolutions:

1. Equidistance

The CCP has rejected that idea: we do not equate the USSR and the United States' responsibilities regarding international tension. For instance, nowadays, we estimate based on actions (Central America, Middle East, Africa) that the United States are the ones causing the greatest international tension.

2. Peace and disarmament

Emphasis is clearly placed on these two objectives. The current powerful, grassroots movements across the world and in Europe stem from a "right aspiration" of peoples. "This is why - the CCP delegation has indicated - we would like to show our full understanding and our support". It has also estimated that the deployment of American missiles would contribute to further the rivalry between the two superpowers, which is a bad thing.

3. Relations with the USSR

They are ongoing. The Chinese delegation has indicated its willingness to move forward in order to achieve positive results. It has reiterated the rise of bilateral trade. It has stated that during the interviews that have already taken place, "both sides have explained in greater detail their respective viewpoints on the normalisation of state reports, in a serene and open atmosphere". It has also informed us that the next series of discussions would be taking place in a few months, in Moscow.

4. Afghanistan

China made the USSR concrete proposals to resolve the conflict (Soviet proclamation of a withdrawal of troops according to a timetable, followed by talks). That had not happened in Beijing in October 82.[\[3\]](#) This evolution is a positive step forward.

#### 5. Cambodia, Vietnam

Noteworthy is the fact that the emphasis was placed more than before on bilateral Sino-Vietnamese talks in order to reach a political settlement. Everything happens as if China was tending toward acknowledging more and more the specificity of its dispute with Vietnam, without going (or less so) through the USSR and by considering less than before that Vietnam only is a Soviet pawn. That evolution, obviously connected to the thaw in Sino-Soviet relations, is positive in that it potentially brings closer the moment where a resolution of the Sino-Vietnamese dispute and the Cambodian question will be possible. It should also help alleviate Vietnam's fears of seeing Beijing and Moscow settle the Cambodian question at its expense.

#### 6. Japan

The CCP's delegation told us it was "vigilantly" following Japan's evolutions. It has not given us the impression of being overly alarmed regarding the Williamsburg summit. On this question, it seems to be underestimating American imperialism and overestimating both Japan-United States inter-imperialist contradictions and the blocking role Japan's public opinion plays against Washington's plan in the region.

#### 7. Taiwan, Hong Kong

The delegation has very strongly placed emphasis on China's unity.

- Relations between the two parties

The CCP's delegation is extremely pleased with the CCP/PCF bilateral relations. These have, in fact, developed well in 1983; both delegations have adopted a cooperation programme for 1984 that will allow us to go further in this direction.

As far as it is concerned, the PCF's delegation has informed the CCP of the situation in France and of our Party's foreign policy.

- Delegation's program

The delegation, accommodated in Nanterre, was hosted by the Essonne, Paris and Gironde federations. Everywhere, the very warm welcome indicated the real sentiment of satisfaction within our party regarding the development of normal relations with the CCP. The delegation notably showed its interest for modern aspects of French development. It was able to visit companies, farms, research laboratories, various city undertakings. At the end of their visit its members warmly thanked our Party for the (genuine) efforts it made to host them.[\[4\]](#)

[\[1\]](#) Translator's note: French Socialist Party, then in power.

[\[2\]](#) Translator's note: In May 1981, François Mitterand was subsequently elected President of France.

[\[3\]](#) Translator's note: In Beijing, no concrete proposals were made by the Chinese regarding the resolution of the conflict.

[\[4\]](#) Translator's note: The Chinese delegation's words of thanks were well deserved as the French actually made a lot of efforts to welcome them.