

August 2, 1958

**Third Conversation of N.S. Khrushchev with Mao
Zedong, August 2, 1958, in Fengziyuan**

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Summary:

Mao and Khrushchev have a conversation about international affairs, including NATO, CENTO, and SEATO, relations with the USA and Japan, and the situation in the Near East. They also expressed their views on the situation in Latin America, and preparations for a third world war. According to the Soviet record of the conversation, they also discussed domestic problems in the two countries. Specifically, Mao spoke at length to Khrushchev about the successes of the Great Leap.

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THIRD CONVERSATION OF N.S. KHRUSHCHEV WITH MAO ZEDONG
August 2, 1958, in Fengziyuan[1]

Present [at the meeting]:

Cdes. Khrushchev, Malinovsky, Kuznetsov, Ponomarev, Antonov;

Cdes. Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, Peng Dehuai, Chen Yi, Lin Biao, Peng Zhen, Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, Wang Jiaxiang, Yang Shangkun, Hu Qiaomu.

MAO ZEDONG speaks briefly about the development of the PRC economy. He provides information on the production of steel and ferrous metals.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV says that the increase in the production of cast iron in the Soviet Union this year will be 4,700 thousand tons; he observes that generally in the Soviet Union the production of steel exceeds that of cast iron since scrap is also used in the smelting of steel.

MAO ZEDONG says that in China for now it is the reverse.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV notes that such a situation will exist in China until such time as China had more machines. Generally, more cast iron is produced in the initial period of industrialization, and later more steel.

They switch to international issues.

MAO ZEDONG. Today we can talk about NATO, the Baghdad Pact, and SEATO. These are undoubtedly aggressive organizations by nature. Westerners say these are defensive organizations, but we consider them offensive. I think that the propaganda of both sides correctly reflects their interests. They cannot call these pacts offensive, and we cannot call them defensive. How should we assess the situation factually? I remember that I spoke about this in Moscow and adduced the example of the encapsulation of tuberculosis that inhibits the penetration of bacilli. The same with these pacts. They are created to protect the capitalist countries against penetration by communist "bacteria" and the downfall of capitalism. Sometimes their side engages in sorties as occurred in Hungary.[2] Without our counterattack they would have established their system in Hungary and unleashed a struggle in other people's democracies, that might also have caused huge shocks. Speaking of sorties, I have in mind a convenient case for them that might set them thinking why not attack and liquidate us. But in other respects, they act more realistically, since they know that there is no chance that counterrevolution in the USSR and in China would succeed. From the lesson of Hungary, we can strengthen people's power in the people's democracies. Our strength is growing. From this perspective the pacts are defensive against the communist "bacteria." You said then that the organism that had tuberculosis is not strong. That means, in any case, that the communist "bacteria" will penetrate these countries. Do you remember this conversation?

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. I remember it well.

MAO ZEDONG. I think what was said then is correct. These pacts have long since been rather weak. Events in the Middle East have demonstrated the lack of unity in their ranks.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Now when they cut off Faisal's head in Baghdad, the Americans say to the Turks and the Iranians, "When the same thing happens to you, we will help you," that is, they will come when the Shah's head is cut off. I think this is weak consolation for the Shah of Iran. SEATO is also a weak organization; it is pretty much in the same situation as the Baghdad pact, behind whose back Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and the countries of North Africa are battling against colonialism.

MAO ZEDONG. In other words, the Baghdad pact is squeezed between these countries on one side and the socialist camp on the other. This dividing line is very fine. It is being attacked from two sides, moreover, the foundation of the dividing line is fragile. This foundation - Turkey, Iran, Pakistan; and in the East, Thailand, Pakistan, the Philippines, where the situation is likewise fragile.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. In Thailand, for example, an interesting situation has developed. The parliament has come out against military bases. This is typical. The situation is fragile even in the Philippines.

MAO ZEDONG. Yes. The deputy mayor of Manila was in Beijing.[3] One could sense

that he was very dismayed. He said there were many military bases in the country, and that in case of war there would be a disaster. He tried to learn our intentions. He was sent to China by the president of the Philippines.[4] The Americans tried to abort his trip, but they failed. In conversation with me, he wanted to know whether we would sell machinery to Filipinos. Evidently, the U.S. is not providing them technology. We also know that the leader of the opposition party in the Philippines parliament also intends to visit China.[5]

CHEN YI. It is unlikely that the U.S. will succeed in placing the Philippines under its full control.

MAO ZEDONG. There's little hope of this in Thailand either. This wall is fragile. Its weakness comes on the one hand, from its being surrounded on one side by India, Burma, Ceylon, and Indonesia, and by the PRC on the other. Of the three pacts, NATO is in the best position since its members are located more closely together, more compact. As for the Baghdad pact and SEATO, they have enemies on all sides, strong enemies. These, in the first place, are peoples fighting for their national independence in the Middle East and in Southeast Asian countries. There is also a fourth pact - the Pan American Union - but it is growing weaker every day.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Agreed.

MAO ZEDONG. Therefore, we often talk now of the struggle in unison for national liberation in the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Earlier the movement in Latin America did not appear so distinct. There was a time when we emphasized the movement for national independence in countries of Asia and Africa but left Latin America out of view. Now we place Asia, Africa, and Latin America in one rank. In my view Latin America has already stood up.

In addition to these contradictions, there is also a serious conflict between Canada and the United States of America. You obviously know this better.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. The U.S.A. tries to suppress Canada economically. This provokes counteraction from the Canadian bourgeoisie. Therefore, there's been a change of ruling parties in Canada. A conservative party has come to power which opposes the dominance of U.S. monopolies.[6]

How do we assess the pacts? The ones closest to us are NATO and the Baghdad Pact. The largest, aggressive forces, it seems, are collected in NATO. The most fervent anticommunists are there. At present this pact is weakened. If one considers preparations for a summit meeting, there is no unity among them. De Gaulle occupies a somewhat special position. This is not yet a split, but neither is it concord. The foundation of the pact is unstable. The U.S. and England demanded the creation of defensive pacts, pointing to several phenomena that took place. The postwar situation frightened them - the defection from capitalism of a whole number of countries, the outbreak of war in Korea, the Berlin blockade, the war in Vietnam. They believed that the socialist countries undertook active military measures to enlarge their sphere of influence. Then they began talking about creating defensive organizations and created three pacts. New events occurred thereafter. The war in Korea ended. The Soviet Union and the countries of people's democracy undertook a series of measures aimed at peace and co-existence. We shut down a military base in Finland,[7] concluded a peace treaty with Austria,[8] withdrew our troops from there and undertook other measures. Through all these measures we succeeded in convincing the Laborites who say we have no warlike intentions. This is important, because it was the Laborites who organized NATO and established military bases in England. Now they say we are not an aggressive country; this is a success for us. Even in the United States they say that we will resolve our disputes with capitalism not by war, rockets, or hydrogen bombs, but ideology. To be sure, they don't say "ideology," although this is what they have in mind, but point to economics and the possibility of the Soviet Union competing in world markets. Consequently, the elimination [*ustranenie*] of small nations by communism is weakening [*This is an obvious typo; instead of ustranenie it must be ustrashenie that is the intimidation. - A.P. & N.P.*]. For example, Norway and Denmark's refusal to host missile bases in their countries is of great significance.

MAO ZEDONG. This is very important. The countries of Northern Europe - Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and Finland could become a zone of peace.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Juridically this is still far from being so. Norway and Denmark are still in NATO. But we have already sufficiently influenced the peoples of these countries, weakening their sympathy towards America and reassuring them about us. A movement toward weakening NATO is occurring. Holland and Belgium are also weak links.

MAO ZEDONG. And Luxemburg.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Yes, this is the scariest adversary.

MAO ZEDONG. It is also a link.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Greece is a member of NATO only formally. It has a conflict with the Turks and the English.

MAO ZEDONG. There are reports that in the past few days more than a thousand persons have been arrested in Cyprus.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. A struggle over this island is going on. The Turks want to divide it between themselves and England. Greece wants the island returned to it. There will be no reconciliation in this struggle.

In Turkey strong anti-American moods have appeared, the opposition democratic party has been active in connection with the events in Iraq.

The U.S., the main conductor of these aggressive pacts, burdens these countries with large military budgets that drain their economies. America only provides military assistance. If they give one dollar of aid, the recipient must add five of their own. The U.S. renders help to no one to develop their economy. If they give help, it is only foodstuffs for consumption. They fear development of the economic potential of these countries. The American imperialists cannot give money from fear of competition.

One observes strong opposition to the U.S. even in the main capitalist countries of NATO. These countries want to tear free from dependency and develop their economic ties independently despite the embargo. I will cite a concrete example. We are negotiating with Krupp about their selling us several chemical factories. Soon it is likely that we will sign an agreement for the purchase of equipment for two enterprises. The Krupp firm monopolizes a certain method of producing plastics in bulk. Even the U.S. has bought a chemical factory from them. Part of the equipment being sold to us is embargoed. Therefore, the representatives of the firm say: let's write into the contract that such-and-such equipment we will make according to your blueprints. We are ready to do this, but, of course, there are no such blueprints. The Germans do this to pacify the U.S. Here's NATO for you. If we continue to play our cards right, we will break up these pacts. But, in addition to clever policies, we also need military potential. Only wisdom and strength will avert war. Our successes in recent years have impressed the West. I think that certain developments in Thailand, the Philippines, Cambodia, and even in Pakistan and other countries are the result of the influence of Chinese economic growth. The development of the economy, of culture, and increase in the standard of living in the PRC will have a decomposing impact throughout the East.

MAO ZEDONG. Yes, these are the communist "bacteria."

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. And no pacts can help against them.

Now we are commencing a struggle for West Germany, A competition between the two Germanys is underway. The standard of living of the population of East Germany is higher than ours, but I think we must make it higher than the FRG. Therefore, we declined payments for the upkeep of our army to provide an opportunity for the GDR to further increase its economic potential. We likewise provide more orders to the GDR to increase the utilization of its cadres and its labor force.

We need to elevate Albania to make it attractive for the Arab world and demonstrate the superiority of a socialist economy. Of course, that example is not especially significant since Albania is a very small country.

MAO ZEDONG. Are the Albanian people of Arab descent?

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. No, but they are Muslim.[\[9\]](#)

It is very advantageous for us to welcome delegations from India, Pakistan, Indonesia and other Asian countries to our southern republics - Turkmenistan, Tadzhikistan, Uzbekistan since they have a high standard of living and of agriculture. Trips there by

foreign delegations give us a strong weapon. If previously they came to condescend toward us, we are now able to do this to them. The capitalists, evidently, will be afraid to send their own people to us. If we can achieve our program of housing construction, of food and chemical production, and we will achieve this while simultaneously fulfilling our program of heavy industry, that, evidently will take ten to fifteen years, then we will be first in the production of many of the most important products.

MAO ZEDONG. Per capita consumption?

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Yes. That by itself will dissolve the blocs.

The launch of the sputniks shook the West, given that an illiterate Russia achieved such a high level in forty years.

Therefore, it makes no sense to get rid of the pacts through military means. Our strength lies in economic and cultural development.

MAO ZEDONG. Correct.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Finland was an anti-Soviet advance post. Now the strongest force in their parliament is the communists.

The Finnish communists requested our help to strengthen their authority among the people. They have unemployment, friends asked us to provide construction workers opportunities to work. We proposed to the Finnish government that Finland construct an electric power station costing about 250 million rubles for us on the territory of the Soviet Union, according to Soviet specifications and with our equipment. A thousand Finnish workers, who will be working for a socialist state, will be employed in construction. This help the Finnish communists with their work among the masses. The Finnish bourgeoisie, as in other countries, fears an economic crisis. We say that we can give them orders, but in payment we propose they take our machines and raw materials. This strengthen our positions and the positions of the Finnish communists.

Norway also asks us to employ some of their labor force. We should build a hydraulic electric power station near our border with Norway. We may award the construction to Norwegian workers. This is also a means of influence.

The Austrian government has asked us to link our economy more closely with that of Austria. We promised to consider it.

Right now, we are floating a trial balloon in Turkey. The Turks and the Iranians fear us like the devil fears incense, but we have not refrained from trying to break them apart. They are poor as church mice. Very likely the poorest countries are Turkey, Greece, Spain, then Iran and Italy.

I think the situation in the socialist countries is very good. The capitalist world is not ready for war. History is on our side. The pace of economic development in the socialist countries is outstripping the capitalist countries. America is left behind, they are even regressing, certainly no rapid development.

MAO ZEDONG. Our program for rapid development in agriculture - forty points - was planned to take twelve years. Now we figure that five years will be enough to complete it. Two and a half years have gone by. We think we may even overfulfill our goals. We will surpass England in steel, if not this year, then next year, although publicly we say we will in fifteen years. In coal we are already catching up with England this year. Last year we produced 5,400 thousand tons of steel, this year it will be about 11 million tons, and next year from 25 to 30 million tons. Production in England next year will probably be at the level of 25 million, if there is no contraction due to a recession.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Those are stupendous achievements. I must say we have seen prospects ourselves, fast tempos, but what you are doing will be a real shock to your neighbors if you fulfill your plans, and you will.

MAO ZEDONG. We always employ a comparative method in our work. Socialism can be built in different ways - at slow or fast tempos. We think the tempo we have chosen is better and we will achieve it.

Most important for the country is steel and grain. One way to develop industry is according to the principle: less, slower, worse. According to another: more, faster, better. We chose the second method and, as in war, we mobilized the entire nation to

fulfill the plan. The people are full of enthusiasm and fight successfully to make it a reality.

The grain question is very important for China. China is a very poor country. We have put forward the slogan "Struggle and work hard for three years," starting this year. Then, after three years, we will have 1,000 or 1,500 kilograms of grain per capita. For now, we will not publish these figures.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. One to one-and-a-half tons per capita? That is really a lot!

MAO ZEDONG. In the press we write that in three-to-five years we will have one ton or about one ton per capita. In fact, in three years we will have more than a ton. One can choose to go long and slow, or one can go faster and better. We chose the second path.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. This is a Marxist, creative development of theory. Any illiterate could grasp this theory, since they could see what came earlier and what has come now. This will have a strong impact both on the West and on the intelligentsia. Here we can introduce a good comparison. India became independent only two years later than China.^[10] But look at the pace of development of these countries. When we were in India, I looked around and became convinced they were just marking time, no tempo. At the time I said to Nehru: look at the scale of the Chinese. Nehru asked for our help in building an airplane factory. I told him there was no such thing as a single factory building airplanes. For that one needed dozens, perhaps hundreds of factories. He wanted to have one factory, and China is building hundreds.

If we make wise use of our strength and maintain unity, then no NATO, SEATO, or Baghdad pacts will be terrifying. It's interesting how the Americans judge this. We wrote Eisenhower a letter requesting help in developing the chemical industry.^[11] We did not count on getting help. It was a propaganda gesture. Eisenhower gave a good reply.^[12] We did not publish it, because this took place at the time of the events in Iraq when we needed to print bad letters, not good ones. We will print it later. Now we have many proposals from American firms about supplying equipment for the chemical industry. We will sign agreements with them.

MAO ZEDONG. This is good.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Several firms agreed to take our raw materials, and if there wasn't enough by way of payment for the equipment, they promised to extend us credit. Eisenhower could not extend us government credit, but the firms could. Although we were not counting on receiving their credit, we do not refuse it.

MAO ZEDONG. I am acquainted with Eisenhower's letter to you on this matter. It was published in the American press.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Yes, but they didn't publish our letter. It would have been more favorable for us had they published our letter so Americans could know about the opportunity of earning money from us.

MAO ZEDONG. We didn't understand why you wanted to receive credit from them. But now it's clear.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. It's a tactical matter. But if they extend credit to us, we'll buy something from them.

MAO ZEDONG. That will be proper.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. We wanted to secure opportunities for more favorable propaganda, since the Americans assert that we are developing only heavy industry, and that we don't care about consumer goods industry. The development of the chemical industry provides an opportunity to produce both goods for defense as well as consumer goods. Therefore, we requested that the Americans help us develop industry to satisfy the people's needs. If they had responded negatively, then we would have told both our people and theirs that they don't want an improvement in our living standards and are trying to weaken our potential. This is the main point of the letter - to obtain a propaganda advantage. When I was in Germany, I said the Americans are giving aid to Tito, but not to us. But this doesn't bother us, we know they won't give it to us.

MAO ZEDONG. You have explained the situation well. We are satisfied with your measures to develop your own forces and to undermine the strength of the enemy. In the East there is another region formally not united into a bloc. This issue concerns

Com. Fedorenko. I am speaking of Japan, Taiwan, and Korea.

ZHOU ENLAI. And South Vietnam.

MAO ZEDONG. There is a possibility of organizing them into a bloc NEATO [Northeast Asia Treaty Organization], hitched to the American chariot. Whether it will be possible to knock together such a bloc or not depends on Japan. The difficulty for Japan of creating such a bloc is it would offend China. As for Taiwan and Korea, that is a long-standing insult. Japan faces a different problem – whether to stand with Taiwan or with us. It's already been three months since we severed all commercial ties with Japan.^[13] We're prepared to stick to this position for another three months. Japan is upset by this and has already been trying to alter this position via four or five channels. Special representatives from the Japanese Socialist Party have come to Beijing regarding this issue. The Japanese have also tried to persuade us to abandon this policy by enlisting the help of Com. Nesterov, the chairman of your All-Union Chamber of Commerce.^[14] We think we can negotiate with them on this, but there's no hurry. We stipulate the following conditions:

First – Japan accepts responsibility for the PRC flag incident in Nagasaki.

Second condition – not to conduct any hostile activity vis-à-vis China, and not create any kind of “Two Chinas” situation. In the past three months, Kishi has behaved very rudely towards us, cursing us for severing commercial relations.^[15] We advised him to trade with the U.S. and Chiang Kai-shek, since we can manage without trade with Japan. Considering this we think it imperative to put forward this political condition.

Third condition – not to place obstacles in the restoration of relations between China and Japan. It's likely that we will not succeed in restoring diplomatic relations right away, but it is important that there be no obstacles from their side. We suppose that they can live without us, of course, but that it's harder for them than for us.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. The conditions are different. China can live without Japan, but it is harder for the Japanese.

MAO ZEDONG. Moreover, this is connected not just with China, but also with the countries of Southeast Asia. The Chinese living there have also cut off commercial relations with Japan and declared a boycott of Japanese goods.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. This is serious pressure.

LIU SHAOQI. Reference is to the Chinese bourgeoisie who control the economy of these countries.

ZHOU ENLAI. This refers to the Chinese living in Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, partly in Burma, the Philippines, and in South Vietnam.

MAO ZEDONG. Formally these are representatives of one country, but actually of two.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. In a word, if one sums up our policy in the East and West, it boils down to developing economic relations with all countries, developing cultural ties, and having more contacts. We will gain more from this. But we must be careful that they don't send spies; we must not be simpletons. In a word, we need to launch a peaceful economic offensive and give them a fright.

MAO ZEDONG. Sometimes this is absolutely necessary.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Now our main antagonist is the U.S.A. They are far from us. Their positions are somewhat different in comparison with European states, but their bases are in Europe near us. We say to the Western powers: your bases are located close to us, but ours, too, are not far away. To the Turks we declare: Your friends – the U.S. – are far away, but we are close by, and if necessary, we will destroy you just with missiles, without employing aviation and the navy. We issued the same warning to the FRG and England. They understand our warning. It's for real. If they attack us, nothing living will remain, we don't want to attack.

MAO ZEDONG. It's necessary, moreover, to convey this thought: if you unleash a war, then we will crush you.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Correct.

MAO ZEDONG. It needs to be said clearly, who will perish in war – we or they.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Yes, capitalism will perish. This will be the last war unleashed by the capitalists.

MAO ZEDONG. We need to be prepared for war. First, we need to be spiritually

prepared. Our people are engaged in peaceful construction. We need to explain to them not to be afraid of war. War is terrible, but if it is unleashed, there is nothing to fear. We say to the imperialists: If you really want to fight, go to it. We don't have atomic bombs, only grenades, but the Soviet Union has atomic bombs. When it comes to fighting, we will hold nothing back. We have just begun to construct, if you destroy this, then we will start again after the war, and then we will build better and more calmly since there will be no capitalism. That would be the case if the imperialists unleashed a war. But we don't want war.

Right now, in our country we will introduce universal military training to teach the entire population how to handle weapons.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. I think in general that is correct. But one should not induce hysteria in our adversaries, and create the apprehension that China is preparing for war. Our policy is to have an army and be ready for war, but not to give our adversary an opportunity to accuse us of the desire to unleash a war.

MAO ZEDONG. We undertake this only for defensive purposes. We can show any of the capitalists how things stand with us. We will give weapons to all the cooperatives, and we will say: look if you attack us, things will go badly for you. We don't need someone else's land. We have enough people. Don't provoke us.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. This year we didn't have an air force parade. To be more precise, we staged it as a sporting event, but didn't include either bombers or fighters. This produced a good impression.

MAO ZEDONG. You have two parades: November 7 and May 1. We don't have a parade on May 1, but only on our national holiday October 1.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. We should think it over and perhaps do as you do. May 1 is the international laborers' holiday, and November 7 is our national holiday. Direct logic. We need to think it over.

MAO ZEDONG. I think we can guarantee another seven years of peaceful coexistence, and perhaps fifteen.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Ten years is enough and then we can say: there will be no war.

MAO ZEDONG. I am judging on the interval between the first and second world wars. The gap was twenty years. It's been thirteen years since the Second World War, there are seven years left. In my view, peace is secure for another seven years, that is, until 1965, and in seven years our strength will grow significantly.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Then everything will be different. Then the imperialists will tremble at once as soon as they hear of our meeting.

MAO ZEDONG. If we succeed in maintaining the peace for seven years, then perhaps the term will extend for up to twenty years or longer.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Look at Dulles' policies. At first his policy was called a policy of "rollback." The idea was to roll communism back to its prewar borders. Whom did they succeed in rolling back? No one. Then Dulles pursued a policy of "containment." Whom did they contain? Now they've lost Iraq.

ZHOU ENLAI. They've contained themselves.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Yes, they lost Nasser. Now there is nationalism in Egypt. It is our gain.

MAO ZEDONG. France has lost Morocco and Tunisia.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. A war is going on in Algeria. The war of colonial peoples is on an upswing, and not in decline. Our successes will stimulate the struggle of colonial peoples for their independence. I think our cause is going well. Eisenhower is reassuring the Shah of Iran: if you suffer the fate of Faisal, we will come to your rescue. But by then the Shah would be in his grave. Very good "support."

MAO ZEDONG. There's no way to help Iraq. Faisal is in the grave.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Yes, that help would be a poultice for a corpse.

MAO ZEDONG. In the past few weeks important events have also occurred in Latin America. In the first place, the landing of American Marines in Haiti.[\[16\]](#)

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. It's still early to draw a conclusion, but do you think we may be at the start of a period when the bourgeoisie who, during the period of their struggle

against feudalism employed democratic slogans to win the support of the people and parliament, are now discarding these freedoms, refusing the support of parliament, and transitioning to dictatorship.

MAO ZEDONG. I think so.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. A very interesting phenomenon. The sores of capitalist society are now so blatant that the bourgeoisie can no longer mask their rule via parliament.

MAO ZEDONG. Yes, especially true of the U.S.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. What about France, de Gaulle?

MAO ZEDONG. Yes, to all intents and purposes there is already no parliament there.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. In Guatemala, American troops chased out a legal president,[\[17\]](#) and now they have landed in Lebanon.

MAO ZEDONG. The bourgeoisie use parliament when it suits their purpose. But when they have no other choice, they turn parliament into a pure formality. Under de Gaulle, parliament has become consultative, not a legislative organ. The parliamentary system in America is especially a formality, since Congress only discusses the budget and supplementary appropriations. It possesses the right only to discuss issues, how much to add or reduce dollars for one measure or another. What the government says is what counts.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Yes, an interesting phenomenon.

MAO ZEDONG. Now let us talk about tension. Whom does it benefit? Of course, the West is responsible for tension. Westerners think it is good for them. But I think that if the West continues to exacerbate tension for a certain time, they will soon find that it benefits us, since the communist "bacteria" will spread everywhere. The bourgeoisie cannot justify military appropriations therefore it leads to tension. Recently tension culminated in the events in the Middle East, but this was of greatest benefit to the people because everyone could see what was going on. During the first week of the events in the Middle East, it seemed there was a threat of war. It's clear to us that America is afraid of war, and England is even more afraid. However, initially it seemed they were ready for war, and this shocked people like Nehru. The peoples of the world were upset by events in the Middle East, and Nehru and others like him were dismayed. The prolongation of tension for a longer period is not advantageous to the West. I think it would be better for us if the American troops remain there for a long time.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Agreed, let's propose that to Dulles.

MAO ZEDONG. It would be good if they stayed there another half year. This would not be a bad propaganda theme. Otherwise, if they withdraw their troops, they might again appear to be peace-loving. It wouldn't be bad to keep their troops there.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. I think the question can even be put differently. Dulles must stay in power a while longer. Then he will think up a new Lebanon for us. For example, Venezuela.

MAO ZEDONG. Yes, I agree. The events in Venezuela show that the capitalist world is aging, and we are on the upswing.[\[18\]](#)

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Today I read Eisenhower's response.[\[19\]](#) He gave us a good opportunity to answer him in the manner the Zaporozhians answered the Turkish sultan. There is such an old model in diplomatic correspondence. You're not acquainted with it? I can send it to you if you want. There, for example, is such a reply to the sultan. (Following an excerpt was cited.)[\[20\]](#)

MAO ZEDONG. So, ask Eisenhower to do the same.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Today I already dictated a draft reply to Eisenhower on the model of the Zaporozhians.[\[21\]](#) He places small countries under his protection and says we don't take them into account because they have few divisions, and we have many. I have not yet consulted with comrades in the Presidium, but I think perhaps it would be worth proposing to include Iraq, Sweden, Norway, and perhaps an Asian country, Cambodia for example, among the participants in the conference.

MAO ZEDONG. Cambodia and Sweden are good countries.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. And Norway, too, though it is a member of NATO, but the premier there is a good person.[\[22\]](#)

To be sure, there's no way of knowing what may come of it. It's not even known if there will be a conference. Our interest lies in the process of struggling to hold the conference, and not in the meeting itself as such. I agree with you that we need not be distressed about tension, since it doesn't exist between us, but between the socialist and the capitalist countries.

MAO ZEDONG. Lenin said that the world must still expose itself to education for several years. He was thinking of war, since war is the greatest lesson, it requires the mobilization of all the nation's forces, above all, spiritual. War can awaken the consciousness of the people. There is no war right now, but the danger of it. In current circumstances, with the existence of the hydrogen bomb, the emergence of conflict, as in Lebanon, immediately makes people anxious. In conversation with Com. Yudin, I cited the following arguments in our favor.

First - the imperialists have few troops.

Second - they lack unity in their countries. Thus, for example, there is the contradiction between the Laborites and the Conservatives, disagreements among members of the American government, and so forth.

Third - lack of unity among allies, Canada, France, and Japan are dissatisfied with U.S. actions.

Fourth - the upsurge in the movement for national independence and peace. The contemporary movement for peace is not just the Stockholm Congress,[\[23\]](#) but also those who entered the arena after the events in Iraq. Even the prime minister of Japan had to admit that the revolution in Iraq was a people's revolution. The potential upsurge of the national-liberation struggle in the East is unlimited. Therefore, in connection with events in the Middle East, many people have come forward who had not been involved in the movement of the proponents of peace. The demand for peace and condemnation of war - these are powerful threats to imperialism. The imperialists are beginning to sense this is not to their benefit. They are trying to do something that will enable them to emerge dry from the water. In Eisenhower's response to your letter, there is, for example, the notion that there is no danger of war now; he decided not to say anything more on this subject, but it's obvious that he himself is more than anyone else scared of war.

Fifth - under the banner of the struggle for peace the revolutionary movement is advancing. We can affirm that peace movement is developing against imperialism and colonialism. As you can see, all that is needed are the right conditions for the struggle to flare up. Who would have thought there was so much gunpowder in Iraq. However, a revolution took place and the king's head was cut off.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. And Nuri al-Said's, more than a thousand men were removed.

MAO ZEDONG. This is a bourgeois-democratic revolution against imperialism and feudalism - one of the allies of our revolution. Struggle is taking place wherever the people are oppressed. Such events benefit progressive forces in Western countries. This leads not to an exodus from communist parties as happened after Hungary, but, on the contrary, aids their growth.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Yes, this opens things up.

MAO ZEDONG. In the eyes of broad public opinion, the imperialists appear unjust; truth is not on the side of the U.S. For example, the German Democratic Republic sent a note to the FRG protesting West Germany providing a base for sending troops to the Middle East. The FRG authorities were forced to reply that their side had done nothing wrong, that the Americans were the guilty party. The reply itself is revealing. Earlier West Germany would not have replied to any sort of communication from the GDR, but ignoring such an appeal now was impossible. Even Tito felt compelled to denounce U.S. aggression.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. The U.S. is now supporting Yugoslavia's candidacy for the chairmanship of the UN General Assembly. They even have an agreement about this. In the past, Czechoslovakia proposed Nosek for the post of chairman of the General Assembly.[\[24\]](#) Yugoslavia promised to support their candidate. Now, when the Yugoslavs were reminded of their promise, they said they would not support Nosek's candidacy since they had their own candidate - Popovich.[\[25\]](#) It's difficult to say which of these two Popoviches is worse: the one who was ambassador to you,[\[26\]](#) or the one who is being proposed for the post of chairman of the General Assembly.

Both are dung.

MAO ZEDONG. Comparing the period that followed the First World War with the period that came after the Second, it's impossible not to note the relative calm and stability after the first war, although after it the Soviet Union did come into being.

There were major events after the first war: the miners' strike in England, revolution in Morocco and revolution in China. However, the strike ended, and revolution in Africa suppressed. In China, Chiang Kai-shek triumphed as a result of the Northern Expedition, and he organized a purge of the Guomindang, in other words, repression against communists. However, these events did not cause any great tremors in the world.

After the Second World War, it was relatively calm for only the first two years. In July 1947 [*this is a typo; the year must be 1946. - trans.*], Chiang Kai-shek launched his attack against the CCP. In 1949, we were victorious. In 1950, the war in Korea began and lasted for exactly three years, and then there was war in Vietnam. It's true that at first in Vietnam there was initially the possibility of a compromise with France, but later events likewise led to war.

The difference between the periods after the First and Second World Wars was that after the first war England maintained its colonial domination in India, and Holland in Indonesia. The liberation of India was a result of the Second World War. New sovereign states came into being, apart from India there were also Indonesia, Ceylon, Egypt, Iraq, Tunisia. There is a national liberation war in Algeria. Imperialism suffered a defeat in Suez, unlike anything after the First World War. Even if the Americans withdraw their troops from the Middle East, it will still have been an unprecedented event in comparison with the period after the First World War, since it would signify a public admission by a big country of its mistake.

The level of tension after the Second World War, in its proximity to war, is like nothing before. This testifies to the fact that the capitalist system is unable to maintain its dominance. I agree with you that we should not yield an inch of the socialist camp and we will fight for peace within our present borders, extending from the Elbe to the 38th parallel in Korea and the 17th parallel in Vietnam.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. In these borders for now.

MAO ZEDONG. We will strive for a peaceful period of another seven years and look to fifteen.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Then the imperialist world will be shaken by failures, its strength will be depleted as the result of events like those in Iraq.

MAO ZEDONG. Yes, such events will take place in a zone lying between us and the U.S. This is the widest zone in the world.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Iran, for example, is also a weak place in the imperialist camp.

MAO ZEDONG. And Thailand.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. And Pakistan.

MAO ZEDONG. And Saudi Arabia.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. The earth there is probably shaking right now.

MAO ZEDONG. Latin America is also a weak spot.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. We should direct our efforts there to divert the attention of the imperialists away from Europe and Asia and tie a knot. There is much combustible material there.

MALINOVSKY. Nixon's trip is especially revealing.[\[27\]](#)

MAO ZEDONG. Yes, he was received badly. It's evident that Eisenhower is something of a nervous wreck. During Nixon's visit to Venezuela, the last country he visited, they had to send in a Marine detachment to rescue him.[\[28\]](#) What happened in Iraq is a repetition and continuation of the events linked to Nixon's trip. It will be easier for us to attend to our affairs and harder for Eisenhower.

Following a break

MAO ZEDONG touches upon a question of the nature of party congresses in the PRC, saying that in China the congress is a permanent organ, delegates are elected to five-year terms, and meet in session once a year.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. It is like a party parliament.

MAO ZEDONG. Yes. The last session of our Congress went well; we summed up our experience in the past period, and worked out a current formulation for the party's general line.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Our congress should take place in 1960. Obviously, it would be better for us to convene our congresses after five years, since our economic plans are based on five years.

It's very good that we changed our industrial policy and untied our hands; we came through a big struggle against the anti-party group.[\[29\]](#) Now we are preparing for a major reform of middle and higher schools. This will be a very big deal. We will have a Central Committee Plenum in the fall on this issue.[\[30\]](#)

MAO ZEDONG. Combining study with tempering the labor force is absolutely essential.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Now middle school prepares people for entry into higher educational institutions. However, only a small part of those who graduate enter the institutions, although everyone attending school is prepared for this. Middle schools should train literate persons for work in production. Maybe it should not be a ten-year course, but seven or eight years. After finishing school, all the graduates must go into production: factories, mills, collective farms. At the production sites trade schools will be established that will provide supplementary education for entry into institutes and the opportunity to acquire a profession. Not everyone will study there, however, only those who want to. From among those who graduate from these schools, party, trade union, and Young Communist League organizations will select the best to send to the institutes. In such a system, everyone will prepare to take part in labor activity. Mothers now sometimes tell their children, if they are poor students, "If you're a bad student, you will remain an idiot, and wind up working in a factory." The result is lack of respect for physical labor. As if everyone working in a factory is an idiot. But in the new system, everyone will be trained to work. It is more democratic. At present there are few children of workers and peasants in our institutes of higher education. This is understandable, because the intelligentsia are better able to prepare their own children for admission to institutes, they have more opportunities for this. We will uproot this system when everyone must first go to the factory, at which there will be a public selection, when the problem will be solved not by parents, but by the working collective. At present, many young people don't know what direction they should take, what specialty they should study. The result is that when they graduate from an institute of higher education, they feel dissatisfied and do not want to work in the field they studied. In the new system, people will try out their own abilities, and define their own interests. There will be a better selection for study in the institutes. The question of school reform is being actively discussed now in party organizations. Later we will open it up for broad discussion. We think this will be a very correct measure. It will enable us to choose the best of the best for the institutes. We will be guided by the principle of accepting into the institutes only those with a minimum of two years of labor.

MAO ZEDONG. A good measure. Perhaps workshops should be established in the institutes where students could acquire practical experience.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. I haven't finished talking. Workers and peasants will study in the institutes of higher education; they will study and work. From their workday they will allocate some time for study, perhaps 20-50 percent of their time. For their final courses, they will be relieved more, perhaps entirely. The institutes of higher education will be attached to the factories and mills.

MAO ZEDONG. Right.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. These will be highly qualified specialists.

MAO ZEDONG. Work is the best training.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. It tempers people.

MAO ZEDONG. Book learning alone is no good. In the new system students will not have to get support from their family because they will have income from their labor. Labor education should also take place in middle school.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. We also think that agricultural institutes of higher learning should

be attached to the state farms so that students may work and study.

MAO ZEDONG. Now we have sent students from all the institutes of higher learning to work in the countryside.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. We have, for example, the Timiriazev Agricultural Academy. Students there are mostly from Moscow. After graduation they are ready to work as floor-polishers, but not to leave Moscow. Why do we need such specialists? But when the agricultural institutes of higher learning will be closer to production, then workers and peasants will go there, and we will have good specialists. It will be a vitally important selection.

MAO ZEDONG. Perfectly right.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Now there is intellectual ferment around this issue. One can't help but note an interesting phenomenon. After our successful launch of sputniks, the Americans sent their professors over to us to study our system of education. On returning to America, they gave very high marks to our system of education, and a year later . . . we are reorganizing it.

ZHOU ENLAI. A good reorganization. We are heading in the same direction.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. If you want, we can send you the Central Committee letter on this question, which we sent to party organizations down to the municipal level.[\[31\]](#)

MAO ZEDONG. We would very much like to receive it.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Then I will send it.

MAO ZEDONG. We are now studying the question of reorganizing the schools. We are experimenting.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. From the letter you can acquaint yourself with what we are doing, although your conditions are different.

MAO ZEDONG. The main thing is to combine education with work.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. The anti-party group attacked us because of our intention to reorganize the schools. Molotov, for example, said, "Khrushchev needs to change everything - the situation in agriculture, the management of industry and construction, now he is getting to the schools," This is a man who is afraid of everything new.

MAO ZEDONG. He is separated from the masses.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Yes, but an honest man.

MAO ZEDONG. I doubt he is truly honest.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. He is devoted to the working class; he's our own man, but a fool. Sometimes a fool is more dangerous than an enemy. It's easy to spot an enemy, but harder to spot our own fool.

Now we are reorganizing the schools, we will strengthen our forces and the cadres will be better and cost the state less.

MAO ZEDONG. We held an All-China conference on national education, prepared a draft resolution, and distributed it to the provincial party committees for comment.

[\[32\]](#) Our general direction is pretty much like yours. It's necessary that students don't only bury themselves in books, but that they study half-time and work half-time.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. After the Hungarian events, the most trouble came from the institutes of higher learning. Probably because the people there are not connected with work.

MAO ZEDONG. We have already attached most of the institutes of higher learning to factories even before the official decision to implement a system of student participation in labor. Thanks to this, we have achieved in several months what previously took several years.

Our cadre workers also take part in labor. The directors of enterprises and factory engineers also must spend time working at the machines.

ZHU DE. Divisional commanders spend some time as soldiers.

MAO ZEDONG. For a period, the commanders should be subordinate to the soldiers they command. When all the commanders spend some time in their place, then they will understand the needs and the moods of the fighters. At some time, all our

commanders were once soldiers. But that was long ago, they have already lost touch with a soldier's life. I served as a soldier for half-a-year. But this was long ago. Perhaps our minister of defense will command me to become a soldier, then I would change my work habits. That wouldn't be bad.

ZHOU ENLAI. It has also been decided that all ministers, starting in August of this year, engage in actual production work for not less than two months a year.

PENG DEHUAI. In our army we have the practice of holding meetings of commanders at four levels. At the highest-level meetings, army, corps, divisional, and regimental commanders participate. At the lowest-level meetings, it is battalion commanders and below. At these meetings they engage in criticism of each other, without regard to their service position.

MAO ZEDONG. At a meeting of the highest command staff about two thousand persons participate, the meeting lasts for almost two months, and they criticize Marshal Peng Dehuai and me as chair of the Military Commission. Holding such meetings was the initiative of our minister of foreign affairs Chen Yi. A long time ago, we commanded those who were at the conference. Let them command us for at least a while and state what they found painful. We consciously gave them the opportunity during eight weeks to "swear at" us. They did criticize us, but not only us, but almost all those, especially those, with more defects.

PENG DEHUAI. As a result of the criticism at the conference, some commanders now say, that it was good that they were sworn at. Thanks to this, others understood that their criticism of the lower ranks was sometimes incorrect.

MAO ZEDONG. We implement a similar system with respect to cadre workers up and down the line. In essence, first, all must engage in physical labor; second, we give the lower ranks an opportunity to criticize their superiors. This is useful because not only do we engage in criticism, but we are in a position where they can criticize us. We call this a movement to correct style. The English call this "purification."

The movement to correct style is conducted everywhere, all 600 million are involved. Without it, it would be impossible to implement the Great Leap. The masses would not participate in making decisions targeted at achieving the Great Leap in the development of our country. It is unlikely they would be so enthusiastic in achieving the targets were our cadres not closer to the masses because of this movement. All workers in the central apparatus must spend two months annually at the grass roots level. This will not harm the work of the government; on the contrary, it will be useful. We involve the masses in the broadest discussion of issues such as the elimination of superstition, of games of chance, and of theft.

PENG DEHUAI. This is a very good method for dealing with disciplinary problems. We have done away with detention cells in the army, because there is no one to put in there.

MAO ZEDONG. Many decisions were made at a recent military conference, including a special decision that under daily circumstances all commanders should dress the same as soldiers.^[33] Wearing dress uniforms is permitted only on national holidays and other ceremonial occasions. On ordinary days there should be no distinction in dress between officers and soldiers. By doing this, we are restoring the practice we had during the revolutionary war. After the end of the war, for a time officers were remote from their troops by virtue of the difference in their material position and for other reasons.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. After the revolution, our party undertook several elements of such a rectification of work style. Lenin, for example, did volunteer work on weekends, and everyone did this. Ranking cadres were sent to work on the shop floor, and shop workers were elevated to work in offices. This was essential for increasing the percentage of workers in our administration.

MAO ZEDONG. We have resolved that all members of the CC must spend a minimum of four months a year in productive labor, in the countryside. We must free ourselves from working only with documents. We must be present at the grassroots. Many conferences can be held locally. For example, we can convene an All-China conference on irrigation where this would be appropriate, or a conference on agriculture where there has been a good harvest. It makes no sense to hold these conferences in Beijing. Beijing, in my view, is the most boring place; I am thinking of

the CC. You can see nothing from here. This year we held plenums in Nanning and Chengdu,^[34] and a session of the [party] congress in Beijing. In the second half of the year, we also intend to meet in the provinces.

PENG DEHUI. Our fighters will spend two months helping the peasants. Not only does this not harm military training, on the contrary, it helps them do better.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Our marshal does not agree with this.

MALINOVSKY. When the CC decides, we always provide help.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. We often employed the army in harvesting, especially in the virgin lands in recent years. But last year and this year we decided not to.

MAO ZEDONG. One can institute a system in which military units help in agriculture for two months a year. This will not harm their military training.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. It's obviously impossible for us to do this. It would impact the acquisition of a high level of technology, and the collective farms would refuse such help.

MAO ZEDONG. One can have enterprises attached to the military units in which the soldiers can engage in work.

MALINOVSKY. Soldiers' service is itself work.

MAO ZEDONG. Military training alone is one-sided. After demobilization it's hard for them to reenter normal life. We have now, but not yet everywhere, agricultural enterprises attached to the military units where the soldiers take part in labor.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. We had an experiment in which agricultural enterprises were attached to military units, especially in the Far East. But it did not catch on.

PENG DEHUI. Our military units everywhere are implementing a system in which they are responsible for supplying their own vegetables, fruit, and so forth.

MAO ZEDONG. Military units are tasked with supplying their own meat and vegetables for half the year.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. We have military construction units that perform construction for military purposes. We cut back sharply on their numbers, because their labor turned out to be more expensive than that done by qualified workers. In such units there was low labor productivity and low-quality work, since the soldiers lacked experience. The cost was increased by the need for many administrators: insofar as these military units required instruction in military affairs, they needed officers; but insofar as they were engaged in construction work, they needed qualified engineers. We wound up with many officers and few workers. It turned out to be a bad deal for the state to construct things this way, so we decided to give it up.

ZHU DE. We demobilized forty divisions. All those demobilized went into production and became qualified workers.

MAO ZEDONG. Regular military units should spend some time in productive labor.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Military service is for two to three years. This is how long it takes to train them properly. After three years, we demobilize the fighters and take in new ones. In such a case, the army is only a school, not service. During this time, we won't make them into workers or fighters. This would be very costly for the state.

MAO ZEDONG. We don't expend state funds on this. The fighters themselves are earning money.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. What about feeding, providing uniforms, and pay for the officers? Moreover, a Red Army man will do three times less work than a worker and can only perform unskilled labor.

MAO ZEDONG. We also have them do only unskilled work: they grow vegetables, build roads, construct irrigation systems.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Obviously, this question depends upon the level of mechanization. You, evidently, have a surplus of labor as we did twenty to thirty years ago. Now we only use machines to work in the fields. In such a situation, excess labor would become a costly extravagance. When we built the Moscow-Volga canal, all the earth work was done with shovels, back then the more laborers the better. Now everything is done with machines; there are few people. If the construction is done by soldiers, it will be more expensive than machines and a qualified work force.

MAO ZEDONG. For an army, the main thing, of course, is military training, participation in labor is a secondary matter.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. When we built the subway in Moscow, we regularly employed many Saturday and Sunday volunteers. Everyone took part, Kaganovich and Bulganin volunteered on Sundays.^[35] I was secretary of the Moscow Committee and also took part. We worked with shovels. Now if we went there, the builders would not let us in, because we would only spoil things. These days the subway is built with power excavators, not shovels.

MAO ZEDONG. Nevertheless, I think that even after ten thousand years, cadres should engage in labor.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. There will be no fighters then.

MAO ZEDONG. But there will still be cadres.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. We now face the following issue – apparently, we now often must employ permanent cadres in the army to operate certain kinds of weapons. For example, to launch rockets. How could one assign a soldier to do this; he would burn himself up and the rocket would not be launched. And this is an expensive business. Engineers are required. Or service on submarines. Can one teach a soldier how to do this in two years [?] For these purposes engineers and technicians are needed, using them will cost less. I think that for certain kinds of military purposes we will have to transition to a system of career military service.

MAO ZEDONG. This is specialization.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Yes. How much does a rocket or a hydrogen weapon cost? This is gold and one needs gold cadres to operate them.

MAO ZEDONG. Such cadres are necessary and must always focus on their specialty. But this involves a small number of people. However, it is still possible to have them raise vegetables.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Such vegetables will be very expensive. No one will buy them in the market.

MAO ZEDONG. You can invite a specialist agronomist to supervise them. Here, for example, is Com. Fedorenko. He is a literary specialist, but his weakness is that he doesn't know how to grow vegetables.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. And we won't assign him to that task – he will screw up.

MAO ZEDONG. He could learn, and you could invite a specialist and assign a hundred persons like Com. Fedorenko to him. He was and will remain a literary scholar, but he will also learn how to perform auxiliary tasks. His main work is literary studies – so this will be a useful add-on. In our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for example, there are 900 people. These, strictly speaking, are the upper stratum of the intelligentsia; they never had to engage in physical labor. We sent three hundred of them to the countryside for three years. They will return at the expiration of this period, and another three hundred will take their place. In this way, in the space of nine years they will all have graduated from the school of labor.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. We did something of the sort in the past to proletarianize the intelligentsia, the apparat. We sacked the old officials and put workers and peasants in their place. This was a temporary revolutionary measure.

I think this is how things will go for us: more and more people will have a chance to get a higher education. That way we will be able to solve the cadre problem in the state apparat in a more democratic fashion and change cadres more often. There will be many cadres then. Some will go into production and others will stay in place. The democratization of the state administration is likely to occur in this manner.

MAO ZEDONG. It's not very good to do the same thing one's whole life.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. So, what can be done? You are not going to train Marx in the institutes. Mankind has produced only one Marx. No one can substitute for Lenin either. Thus, it seems that a certain number of people will have to do the same work continuously. For example, Com. Mao Zedong, would it be better for you to be sent to a collective farm and made to grow cucumbers and to govern the state?

MAO ZEDONG. Cucumbers can be grown part-time.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. But you would have to concern yourself with affairs of state at the

same time.

MAO ZEDONG. During that time, I can abstain from affairs of state.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. These are words. Now we will have the first major clash between the Soviet Union and China.

MAO ZEDONG. One can raise cucumbers when there are no particularly important matters. During events in the Middle East, for example, I will not do it.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. But you need to harvest the cucumbers at that time.

MAO ZEDONG. I will not be spending all my time on the cucumbers.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. I will tell you about myself. The Presidium decided to make me a good offer. According to a resolution of the Presidium, members of the Presidium older than sixty should work five-hour days; the others work from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. with a one-hour lunch break. According to this resolution, the working day for me, Mikoyan, and Kuusinen^[36] is from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. I say, how cunning, the protocol has made me an invalid, but I still must work for ten hours. I have already worked today; I dictated a response to Eisenhower. I am supposed to have three months of leave per year: two months in the summer and one in the winter. But I would trade these three months for one actual month such as all citizens enjoy. What sort of leave is this? The mail keeps coming in as usual. I bathe in the sea, and the telephone and the High Frequency radio link are on the shore. I go for a swim, and they say, "Moscow is calling." According to the protocol, for one quarter of the year I do nothing. But they go off and vacation normally, but this is how my leave is spent.

MAO ZEDONG. My situation is different. I tear myself away and don't read any mail or listen to any reports. During my leave I will travel around the country and won't even read the newspapers. Now here is Zhou Enlai who was on leave. For a month we sent him nothing and left him alone. This is when there are no particularly important matters at hand and there is someone who can stand in for him. But during the events in the Middle East we sent for him. During the Hungarian events it was also impossible to take a leave.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. And what about during the events in Egypt, Syria, Indonesia? It would be good to get away from it all, and grow mushrooms, for example.

MAO ZEDONG. In January next year, I will resign my post as head of state. Presently, I combine two posts: head of state and chair of the party. I will retain only the latter. And I will devote only half-time to those matters. I will travel around the country more and spend less time in Beijing.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. I am not a believer. But I want to say that we are conscious of our highest debt to the country. If even they free you from all your duties, then no one will free you from your responsibility for China, for the Communist party. Then what?

MAO ZEDONG. Yes, perhaps.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. You shouldn't grow cucumbers.

MAO ZEDONG. No, it's still possible.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Then come to my dacha. I have them there. You can grow cucumbers.

MAO ZEDONG. I must be somewhere where I can swim, and where there's no phone. At your place, I will not even speak to Beijing by phone.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. I concede that this is possible for a week if everything is in order. But read a newspaper, keep up with events and don't step away from your affairs.

MAO ZEDONG. When I was in Canton, I didn't read the central newspapers.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. In my view, people engaged in politics are hopeless, like alcoholics. Everything draws them to politics.

MAO ZEDONG. Yes, that's true. But it's necessary to find time to travel in the provinces.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Very good.

MAO ZEDONG. I am ready to leave Beijing for four months of every year and become a tramp.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Me too.

MAO ZEDONG. Then, let's do it. We'll both be tramps.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Yes, to some extent.

MAO ZEDONG. We have a resolution according to which we must be tramps for no less than four months.

ZHOU ENLAI. I even overfulfill this, since I left the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and turned things over to Chen Yi.

But we must admit that you have more concerns relating to international affairs than we do.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Not necessarily.

ZHOU ENLAI. We are not in the UN, have diplomatic relations with just ten countries or so.^[37] But you here in Moscow have more than sixty diplomats.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Yes, all diplomatic affairs come before the Presidium of the CC. Sometimes not a session of the Presidium, but a collegium of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

ZHOU ENLAI. That's because the authority of the Soviet Union is higher, and each question must be resolved seriously. Things are calmer with us. We have relations with only a few capitalist states and are in no hurry to establish them with others. Better if that happens later. Even if Japan satisfies our three conditions, we will not open any posts there so as not to create a situation of "two Chinas." In the future, until we establish diplomatic relations with Japan, we will not have semi-official trade relations with it as we did before. Nor will we renew an agreement with Japan on fisheries. We will conclude a treaty and agreement only with the government when we establish diplomatic relations. We will gradually resolve the issues at a governmental level. This will provide us more active positions. Earlier we thought that the development of semi-official relations with Japan would facilitate the establishment of diplomatic relations, but it turned out that it merely pacified the Japanese side. Now because of the breach Japan has more difficulties. We, however, have not experienced special problems. The breach with Japan provides an opportunity for the Japanese people and trading companies to exert pressure on the government. Now we can exert pressure on Japan from two sides: officially from your side and unofficially from ours. Our government has approved this approach toward Japan.

FEDORENKO. Perhaps the Chinese comrades have some suggestions for the Soviet ambassador to Japan?

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Perhaps consider having one of the Chinese comrades become a Soviet citizen and sending him to work as a counselor in our embassy in Tokyo.

MAO ZEDONG. But he wouldn't look like a Russian.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. That doesn't matter. The main thing is for him to have a Soviet passport. We have Soviet Chinese.

CHEN YI. Yes, we can think about this. But it would probably make the Japanese apprehensive.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. It would be desirable that this person know Russian.

MAO ZEDONG. It would be hard to find someone who knows Russian and is knowledgeable about Japanese affairs. Moreover, it wouldn't fool the Japanese. It can't be excluded that embassy employees would accidentally divulge it.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. That is out of the question.

ZHOU ENLAI. This would make extra trouble for you. Right now, our newspapers and journals circulate in Japan, the embassy can read them to know what our policy is.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Such a person would be an advisor to our ambassador.

MAO ZEDONG. Still, it would be better if Fedorenko were also our ambassador.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. I want your adviser for our ambassador, and you want our ambassador to be your adviser.

MAO ZEDONG. Then we would be able to reduce our staff by one ambassador.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. I am making a serious proposal.

ZHOU ENLAI. It will be difficult to find someone who knows both Russian and Japan. As a rule, those who are knowledgeable about Japan are known in Japan.

MAO ZEDONG. This would only make trouble for the Soviet ambassador.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. The Japanese would not welcome him anyway. For example, the Swiss ambassador in Moscow is Russian, the son of a Russian factory owner who fled to Switzerland back in the day.[\[38\]](#)

MAO ZEDONG. Lenin once said that an Englishman was a representative of the Soviet Union.[\[39\]](#)

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. In Geneva during a meeting of heads of government, Eden's interpreter was Russian. Why can't a Chinese be a staff member of the Soviet embassy in Japan?

MAO ZEDONG. It's possible in principle, but practically speaking, whom would we send?

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. That's something for you to think about.

ZHOU ENLAI. We agree that someone who knows contemporary Japan should be sent to work there. It's not enough to send one person to the embassy. Our policy toward Japan often changes, and he would have a hard time finding his bearings. It will be better if we inform the Soviet embassy in Japan of our steps via Moscow.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV indicated his agreement.

We must resolve the question of a communiqué. We could do this tomorrow before we depart for Moscow.

MAO ZEDONG expresses his agreement, saying the document can be signed an hour before take-off.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. How will we sign the document: two, three, or four?

MAO ZEDONG. The two of us.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Good. We will say who participated in the meeting.

MAO ZEDONG. Good. How many names will be mentioned from your side?

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Will we mention the military participants?

MAO ZEDONG. Yes, the ministers of defense. We will mention as many comrades from our side as you do from yours.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Mentioning the military participants will impart a somewhat different tone to the Communiqué. Our side will name four comrades: Malinovsky, Kuznetsov, Ponamarev, and chargé d'affaires Antonov.

How will we sign the Communiqué: on a party or party-government basis?

ZHOU ENLAI. We will not indicate the nature of the delegation. We will write: "Communiqué on the meeting of Coms. Mao Zedong and Khrushchev."

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Will we indicate at the end "First Secretary of the CPSU CC, etc. or not?"

MAO ZEDONG. We can.

N.S. KHRUSHCHEV. Good. May the imperialists' heads ache while we raise cucumbers.

MAO ZEDONG suggests ending the meeting at this point.

Conversation transcribed by

N. Fedorenko

A. Filyov

RGANI. Collection 52. Inventory 1. File 498. Sheets 108-150. Typescript N.S. Khrushchev's Copy.

[\[1\]](#) Actually, the conversation took place in Yiniantang Hall in Fengzeyuan Garden.

[\[2\]](#) Reference is to the anticommunist disturbances in Hungary in the autumn of 1956, that were suppressed by Warsaw Pact troops.

[\[3\]](#) Jesus M. R. Roces (1918-1998) – vice-mayor of Manila in 1952-1959.

[\[4\]](#) Carlos Polestico Garcia (1896-1971) – president of the Philippines in 1957-1961.

[\[5\]](#) Diosdado Macapagal (1910-1997) – president of the opposition Liberal Party of the Philippines in 1957-1961.

[\[6\]](#) Reference is to the election of March 31, 1958, when the Progressive Conservative

Party won a majority in the lower house of the Canadian parliament.

[7] The Porkkala Soviet base in Finland which operated from 1944 was liquidated in early 1956.

[8] Reference is to the Austrian State Treaty signed on May 15, 1955.

[9] Khrushchev was mistaken. Muslims are barely 60 percent of the inhabitants of Albania.

[10] In fact, India pronounced independence in 1947 whereas the Chinese Communist Party seized power in 1949.

[11] The letter was written on June 2, 1958. See *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents*, vol. 3: 1958, 846-49.

[12] Eisenhower answered on July 14, 1958. See *ibid.*, 849-50.

[13] On May 2, 1958, a visitor to the Japanese department store Hamaya in Nagasaki tore down the flag of the PRC that was displayed at an exhibit of stamps and paper cutouts mounted by the Japan-China Friendship Association. The Japanese government took no actions since it did not recognize the PRC and maintained diplomatic relations with the Republic of China on Taiwan. In response, the PRC severed all commercial and cultural relations with Japan.

[14] Mikhail Vasil'evich Nesterov (1892-1971) was the chairman of the Presidium of the All-Union Chamber of Commerce in 1944-1970.

[15] Nobusuke Kishi (1896-1987) was the prime minister of Japan in 1957-1960.

[16] The reference is to an attempted military coup d'état in Haiti on July 28-29, 1958. Mao was mistaken. It was not U.S. Marines who landed in Haiti, but eight adventurers among which were five Americans.

[17] The reference is to a CIA operation codenamed PBSuccess of June 18-27, 1954, the result of which was the pro-American dictator Carlos Castillo Armas (1914-1957) came to power.

[18] The reference is to the Venezuelan democratic revolution of January 22, 1958 against the military dictator Marcos Peres Jimenez.

[19] The reference is to Eisenhower's letter to Khrushchev of August 1, 1958. The President of the United States was considering meeting the heads of states of the members of the Security Council. See *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents*. Vol. 3: 1958, 1018-1019; *Background of Heads of Government Conference: 1960*, 281-82.

[20] Judging from Mao's rejoinder, Khrushchev evidently quoted the following sentence: "Such a day for us, like for you, kiss on our ass for this!" The Zaporozhian Cossacks demanded nothing else from the sultan, they simply spoke crudely to him.

[21] This response was sent to Eisenhower on August 5. Khrushchev proposed convening a session of the UN General Assembly. See *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower: 1958*, 577-79; *Background of Heads of Government Conference: 1960*, 282-84.

[22] Einar Henry Gerhardsen (1897-1987) was leader of the Norwegian Labor Party, premier of Norway in 1945-1951, 1955-1963, and 1963-1965.

[23] The Stockholm Congress for disarmament and international cooperation took place July 16-22, 1958.

[24] Václav Nosek (1892-1955) - minister of foreign affairs of Czechoslovakia in 1945-1953 and minister of labor and social affairs in 1953-1955.

[25] Koča Popović (1908-1992) was minister of foreign affairs of Yugoslavia in 1953-1965.

[26] Vladimir Popović (1914-1972) - was Yugoslav ambassador to the PRC in 1955-1958.

[27] U.S. Vice-president Richard M. Nixon (1913-1994) made a tour of Latin American countries in April-May, 1958.

[28] On May 13, 1958, Nixon's automobile cortege was attacked by a crowd in Caracas, the capital of Venezuela.

[29] On June 29, 1957, a plenum of the CC CPSU named three members of the Presidium as participants in the anti-party group: Georgy Maximil'ianovich Malenkov (1901-1988), Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich (1893-1991), and Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov (1890-1986), who opposed Khrushchev at a session of the Presidium, June 18-21, 1957. It was said that Dmitry Trofimovich Shepilov, a candidate member of the Presidium and minister of foreign affairs, sided with the group.

[30] This plenum took place on November 12, 1958. It approved a draft Theses of the Central Committee of the CPSU and Council of Ministers of the USSR "On Strengthening the Links of Schools with the Life and Further Development of National Education in the Country."

[31] Reference is to N. S. Khrushchev's note of June 5, 1958, on the system of national education in the USSR. It was examined at a session of the Presidium of the CC CPSU on June 12, following which it was distributed to all the members and candidate members of the CC, to members of the Central Auditing Commission, to the CCs of the communist parties of the republics, regions, and municipalities. See Fursenko, *Prezidium CC KPSS. 1954-1964* (Presidium of the CC CPSU. 1954-1964). vol. 2, 835.

[32] Probably reference is to the conference on questions of national education of March 7, 1957, in Zhongnanhai, at which Mao delivered a major speech. See Mao Zedong, *Mao Zedong wenji* (Collected Works of Mao Zedong), vol. 7 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1999), 245-48.

[33] Reference is to an enlarged meeting of the Military Commission of the CCP CC that took place in Beijing from May 27 to July 22, 1958.

[34] A conference of leading party cadres in Nanning (the Guangxi-Zhuang autonomous region) took place in January 1958, and a conference in Chengdu in March of that same year. Plans for the Great Leap were discussed.

[35] Kaganovich oversaw construction of the Moscow subway as first secretary of the Moscow Municipal Committee of the AUCP(b) in 1931-1934. Nikolai Aleksandrovich Bulganin (1895-1975) was chair of the Executive Committee of the Moscow Soviet in 1931-1937.

[36] Anastas Ivanovich Mikoyan (1895-1978) was first deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers in 1955-1964; Otto Vil'gel'movich Kuusinen (1881-1964) was secretary of the CC CPSU in 1957-1964.

[37] Zhou Enlai consciously spoke an untruth. Although the PRC really wasn't a member of the UN, at that time it had diplomatic relations with thirty-eight states. Zhou, of course, must have known this.

[38] Alfred Zender (1900-1983) - Swiss ambassador to the USSR in 1957-1961.

[39] The reference most likely is to the English writer Herbert G. Wells (1866-1946) who visited the Soviet Union in 1920.