

July 18, 1960

Letter, Khrushchev to the Central Committee of The Socialist Unity Party of Germany, regarding Soviet Specialists in China

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Summary:

Khrushchev reports Chinese dissatisfaction with Soviet specialists that had been placed in China to aid in socialist economic, cultural, and military development. He notes that despite the dissatisfaction, the CCP insists that they remain in China. However, due to recent complaints by the specialists about being propagandized by the Chinese against the CPSU, the Soviet government has decided to withdraw the specialists from China.

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Completely Secret

TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST UNITY PARTY OF GERMANY

Dear Comrades!

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union considers it necessary to inform you of the following issue.

For many years the Government of the Soviet Union at the request of the Government of the Chinese People's Republic has sent to China a significant collection of specialists to render aid to the PRC in economic, cultural, and military construction. At the present time in China there are approximately 1500 specialists.

The Soviet specialists, as the Chinese leaders have many times noted, have rendered significant help to the Chinese people in the construction of its economy, culture, and the defense of the country, and in the preparation of technical cadres. Our workers, deeply aware of the importance of the tasks that have been charged to them, have tried to pass on to the Chinese cadres their knowledge and the rich production and technical experience accumulated in our country. They have established their relations in a fraternal way, based on friendship and in light of directives to refrain from any sort of activity that might be viewed as an intrusion into the internal affairs of the PRC.

Having sent its specialists to the countries of the people's democracies at the request of the fraternal parties, the CC of the CPSU and the Soviet Government always have considered this important measure to be only temporary. Still, at the end of 1956 we suggested to the government of the PRC and the other socialist countries that we withdraw the Soviet specialists, as already [the bloc countries] had acquired a sufficient collection of their own cadres capable of successfully resolving the practical problems of socialist construction. The fraternal parties at that time agreed with this suggestion, and the quantity of Soviet specialists in most of the people's democracies was sharply reduced. At the request of the government of the PRC it was necessary for us to leave in China a large group of our specialists.

After that, in 1958 the Chinese leaders expressed their dissatisfaction with several Soviet specialists, and we again suggested to the CC of the Chinese Communist Party that the specialists be removed. The Chinese comrades again insisted that the Soviet specialists remain there, and in the interests of our common work we agreed.

However, recently the CC CPSU has begun to receive numerous reports regarding the impossible conditions of work for our specialists in the Chinese People's Republic.

Chinese workers, acting on orders from above, have begun extensively to propagate among the Soviet people mistaken views and notions in regard to a series of contemporary issues. For these goals they make use of the working areas of the Soviet specialists, distribute there among them specially prepared material in the Russian language, and attempt to engage them in discussion on matters in which the CCP, on the one hand, and the fraternal parties, on the other, have had disagreements.

Our specialists rightfully view these actions as attempts to turn the Soviet people against the CPSU and the Soviet government.

Our specialists, working in China, often have to deal with the reality of this lack of trust. Their attempts to correct the incorrect and mistaken steps of the Chinese

workers in the resolution of technical questions in production are frequently rejected, and their advice, based on contemporary scientific knowledge and technical experience, is loudly declared to be outdated and conservative.

The Soviet specialists in China are in a deceitful predicament [lozhnom polozhenii], in which in essence they have been deprived of the possibility of successfully fulfilling their tasks and of using their knowledge and experience. Soviet people, arriving in the PRC with the passionate hope of helping the Chinese in the construction of socialism, naturally, are unable to understand why they are treated this way. They cannot endure this environment of distrust and suspicion, in which they must fulfill their responsibilities. It is therefore not surprising that many of the Soviet specialists have begun to request to be allowed to return to their homeland.

In light of all of this we have come to the conclusion that the further presence of the Soviet specialists in the PRC is in practical terms impossible. We have instructed our ambassador in Beijing to communicate to the government of the PRC this decision of the Soviet government to withdraw the Soviet specialists in accordance with their own wish. We have noted all of these circumstances, including the fact that the government of the PRC earlier itself requested the dispatch of a whole series of specialists. We are convinced that this measure is necessary in the interests of correct mutual relations between the Soviet Union and China.

A copy of the note that we sent to the government of the PRC, in which all this has been communicated, is included here.

With communist greetings,

N. KHRUSHCHEV

18 July 1960