

July 18, 1960

Note, the Soviet Embassy in Beijing to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China

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Summary:

The Soviet Embassy reports that in response to Chinese dissatisfaction with Soviet experts, as well as Chinese disrespectful behavior towards the Soviets, the Embassy is recalling all Soviet experts and advisors from the country.

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Strictly confidential

The Embassy of the Union of the Socialist Soviet Republics in the People's Republic of China has been instructed to inform the Government of the People's Republic of China of the following:

In strict observation of the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance between the USSR and the PR of China, the Soviet Government sends, in compliance with the request of the Chinese Government, a considerable number of experts to work in China. For this purpose, the Soviet organizations have selected the best and most experienced experts, often bringing disadvantages to the national economy of the USSR. By taking part in the socialist construction of the PR of China, the Soviet experts consider their activities as fulfilling their brotherly international obligations towards the friendly Chinese people. All the while, the Soviet people staying in the PR of China, in true observance of the instructions they have received, refrain from any statements or action that could be interpreted as interference in the internal affairs of the PR of China or as criticism of this or that aspect of the domestic or foreign policy of the Communist Party of China or the Government of the PR of China.

During the visit of Soviet leaders to the PR of China at the beginning of August 1958, the Chinese side expressed their dissatisfaction with some of the Soviet experts and advisors. This could be understood as a reproach directed at the Soviet Union. It is, however, well known that the Soviet Union had never forced its specialists and advisors on anyone. Already at the end of 1956 and the beginning of 1957, the Soviet Government presented to the PR of China and the other socialist countries the proposal to recall the Soviet experts, taking into consideration that these countries had by then trained their own cadres and were, in the opinion of the Soviet Government, well capable of solving by their own efforts the practical tasks they were encountering in the fields of economic and cultural developments. The majority of the people's democratic countries had at that time agreed to the proposal of the Soviet Government, and the Soviet experts were recalled from these countries to their motherland. After the Chinese leaders had expressed their critical attitude toward the Soviet experts in the year 1958, the Soviet Government once again presented to the Government of the PR of China the proposal to recall the Soviet experts. But this time, just as in the year of 1957, the Chinese side pronounced that it favored prolonging the stay of the Soviet experts by claiming that they were needed in the PR of China.

Recently, the Chinese side, when dealing with the Soviet experts working in the PR of China, began to pursue an apparently unfriendly line toward the Soviet Union, which was incompatible with the obligation of the treaty as well as with the norms prevailing between socialist countries. Following the instructions from their superiors, Chinese officials distribute specially compiled material in Russian language among the Soviet people propagating views directed against the position of the CPSU and of other brotherly parties. They make efforts to draw Soviet experts living in the PR of China into discussions on questions where certain differences of opinions exist between the CPSU on the one side and other brotherly parties on the other; they make efforts to impose their viewpoints upon the Soviet experts and try to lead them into opposition to the CPSU and the Soviet Government.

The leading officials at the Chinese institutions and enterprises where Soviet experts are working persistently try to draw them into discussions on the above-mentioned questions. So, for instance, on May 19, the office director of the Scientific Research Institute for Electric Industry of the PR of China in Guangzhou proposed to the Soviet experts working in the institute to discuss the questions raised in an anthology especially published in the Russian language under the title "Long Live Leninism," as well as to express their opinions on the articles included in this anthology. Among several groups of Soviet experts in Beijing and other cities of China, Chinese officials forced every Soviet expert to accept copies of this anthology, which, as it was known,

contained anti-Leninist theses to which the Soviet people cannot give their agreement. The deputy chief of the general staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, Yang Zhengwu, and the head of the Propaganda Department of the General Political Department of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, Fu Zhong, both used a consultation meeting attended by a group of Soviet military experts to propagate their views on questions about war and peace, as well as an assessment of the current international situation, that are incorrect, faulty and in contradiction to the basic theses of the [November] 1957 Moscow Declaration of fraternal [communist] parties. There exist also a whole series of other cases in which leading officials of Chinese institutions and enterprises endeavor to draw Soviet specialists into discussions, to put them under pressure, and to influence them by suggesting to them viewpoints quite different from the positions of the CPSU.

The Soviet experts working in the PR of China consider such activities on the part of the Chinese authorities as open disrespect of themselves and of their work, as activities intolerable in relations between socialist countries, and, in fact, as an open agitation against the CC of the CPSU and the Soviet Government.

The Soviet experts, taking into their consideration a variety of facts, have been compelled to conclude that they no longer have the trust of the Chinese side they need in order to fulfill the tasks put before them, not to mention the respect these experts have earned by providing assistance to the Chinese people for [China's] economic and cultural development and military build-up. There exist several cases in which the opinions of the Soviet experts were grossly ignored, or in which there openly existed no wish [on the part of the Chinese] to take their recommendations into consideration, despite the fact that these recommendations were based upon the well-founded knowledge and rich experiences of these experts. This even went so far that the documents prepared by the Soviet experts, which included respective recommendations and technical rules, were demonstratively burned.

This information leads to the conclusion that the Soviet experts in the PR of China are being deprived of the opportunity to fulfill their useful functions and to contribute their knowledge and experiences to the fullest degree. They are practically put into such a situation that their selfless work is not being appreciated, and that they are encountering ingratitude from the Chinese side.

In view of these facts it is difficult not to believe the information provided by some [of our] experts indicating that they are being spied on. The meaning of these measures is at a minimum incomprehensible to the Soviet people who came to the PR of China with the deeply felt desire to help the Chinese people in building socialism.

Of course, all of this hurts the feeling of the Soviet experts and, even more so, it has caused such a just indignation that they, due to the fact that they are being denied the trust they need, are forced to present to the Soviet Government the request that they be allowed to return to their motherland.

The Soviet Government deems it necessary to declare that the afore-mentioned actions on the part of the Chinese side are unfriendly towards the Soviet Union. They are in contradiction with the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance between the USSR and the PR of China, according to which both sides have committed themselves, in the spirit of friendship and cooperation and in accordance with the principles of equality and mutual interests, to developing and consolidating the economic and cultural relations between them. Such activities on the part of the Chinese side make it practically impossible for the Soviet experts to continue to stay in the PR of China.

The Embassy is instructed to inform the Government of the PR of China that the Soviet experts and advisors, including the military, will be, in accordance with their

own wishes, recalled to their motherland. While coming to this decision, the Soviet side has also taken into consideration the fact that the Government of the PR of China itself, in the past, has raised the question of ordering a number of Soviet experts working in the PR of China to return to the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Government expresses the hope that the Government of the PR of China will understand correctly the causes that have led to this decision.