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Chairman of the Special Region**

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Summary:

Godunov reports on Lin Zuhan's comments on relations between the Kuomintang the Chinese Communist Party, the situation in Chongqing, and recent developments in Xinjiang.

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RECORD OF A CONVERSATION

WITH CDE. LIN ZUHAN [Lin Boqu], CHAIRMAN OF THE SPECIAL REGION [Yan'an]

5 June 1944

In conversation Cde. Lin Zuhan reported that he had already been in Chongqing for two weeks. During this time, that is from 19 May through 5 June, Cde. Lin had several meetings with leaders of the GMD [KMT] and government, and in particular had conversations with President Chiang Kai-shek [Jiang Jieshi] (21 May), General He Yingqin, Chairman of the Executive Yuan Sun Fo, General Zhang Zhizhong, at the present time the official representative of the government of Chiang Kai-shek in talks with the CCP, Doctor Wang Shijie, and other GMD leaders.

Cde. Lin briefly reported the history of the origin of these talks. It seems that:

With the goal of settling differences with the CCP, Chiang Kai-shek charged General Xu Yongchang with sending a telegram which laid out a proposal to the CCP leadership, that is, Mao Zedong, Lin Zuhan, Zhu De, Zhou Enlai, and others and asked them to come to Chongqing for personal meetings and talks about settling the differences between the GMD and CCP. A telegram of such a nature was sent to Mao Zedong on 19 December 1943.

Having received the telegram the CCP CC gave consent to the talks and sent a reply to the GMD in which it reported that Lin Zuhan, the Chairman of the Special Region, had been appointed as the delegate to the talks. Chongqing agreed with this candidate and Lin Zuhan left Yan'an in two trucks on 29 April, passed through the blockade zone, and arrived in Xi'an on 2 May accompanied by a group of comrades. On the 4th of May General Zhang Zhizhong and Doctor Wang Shijie flew from Chongqing for an official meeting with Lin in Xi'an.

In the conversations with the GMD representatives, Cde. Lin raised a number of issues for discussion and asked that replies be given to them.

The issues raised for discussion [were]: the legalization of the CCP; the official recognition of the Special Region in its present structure and state; a final resolution of the issue of the armed forces of the Special Region; material support to the 18th AG [Army Group] and its detachments with medicines and weapons; the lifting of the military and economic blockade from the Special Region; and the rapid implementation of a democratic form of rule throughout the entire country.

The GMD representatives immediately telegraphed all these issues to Chongqing and tried at the same time to find out from Cde. Lin the real strength of the CCP and its units' weapons. Lin let them know that the CCP and Special Region leadership wished to have at its disposal five armies consisting of 16 divisions with a total strength of 470,000. Zhang Zhizhong did not reply to this question, and only said that the resolution of this issue needed to be deferred until a visit to Chongqing. The Generalissimo himself would answer all these questions in Chongqing. So the preliminary talks ended in Xi'an and were moved to Chongqing.

On arrival in Chongqing Cde. Lin raised a number of issues for discussion in a conversation with Chiang Kai-shek: the use of a radio station, the release of arrested Communists, and a number of military issues and the democratic restructuring of the country.

Concerning the first issue Chiang Kai-shek suggested Cde. Lin come to an arrangement with He Yingqin, and did not begin to answer the other questions at all, but to the last question he said that there would be democracy after the war.

At the instruction of the CCP CC, Cde. Lin laid out all the demands to the GMD in writing and wanted to pass them to Zhang Zhizhong, but the latter did not accept them and informed [him] that the GMD was itself preparing its own "demands" which it would present to the GMD and on the basis of them would hold a discussion of talks after the close of the 12th GMD plenum.

Thus, two weeks have already passed from the day of arrival of the delegate from the CCP, Cde. Lin, but there have been no apparent results of the talks. Chiang Kai-shek and Zhang Zhizhong, his representative for the talks, have taken a wait-and-see policy.

These talks first of all have the goal of engaging the public opinion of the country and abroad and thereby showing that the GMD is persistently striving to settle the issue with the CCP "peacefully".

No practical improvement of relations between the GMD and CCP is being observed. Repression against Communists and peddlers of *Xinhua ribao* [Xinhua Daily], the legal CCP publication continues here in Chongqing and in Chengdu. Further, the military and economic blockade has still not yet been lifted from the Special Region and there is not even the slightest sign that the GMD plans to lift it in spite of the serious, even catastrophic, military situation which has been created at the present time for the Kuomintang [Guomindang] forces on the Hunan and Henan fronts. In spite of the defeat of the military formations of Tang Enbo and Hu Zunan [SIC, Hu Zongnan] by the Japanese the units blockading the Special Region are not being withdrawn from the positions they occupy around the Special Region. The troops of General Tang Enbo quartered in Henan have had to endure many difficulties and clashes with the local population since the soldiers of this general have begun pillaging and looting the population of these regions. Tang Enbo's units have suffered defeat as a result of battles with Japanese units and clashes with their own local population and have scattered to a large degree. The same fate has touched the troops of General Hu Zunan. At the present time only two of his divisions have been withdrawn from the third line of the blockade deployed along the western bank of the Huanghe [Yellow River], which is at the Tonguan Pass. The Special Region remains blockaded by three blockade lines. At the first line alone the Kuomintang has constructed 1,500 permanent pillboxes and earth-and-timber emplacements. All attempts by the administration of the Special Region to smuggle anything in have suffered failure. The same failure has overtaken the medicines sent by the Americans to the Special Region through the Red Cross.

The situation in the Special Region is not bad, the mood of the population is good, everyone is working, and they support themselves with everything necessary. There are few medicines and nowhere to get them.

Last year a good harvest was gathered and this year a rather good harvest of cotton, beans, potatoes, corn, and rice is expected.

The situation in Xinjiang remains uncertain only because Sheng Shicai made one irreparable mistake, which cost him the entire province. Beginning in 1941 he took an especially clear anti-Soviet position, smashed all the progressive organizations in Xinjiang, and arrested Communists and progressive people. He did all this in the period when the situation at the Soviet-German front was developing not in the USSR's favor. He assumed that the USSR would suffer defeat in this war and wanted to profit at its expense somehow, but this did not happen. He invited the Kuomintang government to help him and for support in work. Since this time various "authorized representatives", "experts", "researchers", and "confidants" of Chiang Kai-shek and the GMD have come to Xinjiang. Sheng Shicai's position has become difficult and now he does not know how to get out of this situation. There are no less than 100 important bureaucrats from the GMD in Xinjiang right now and they are actually deciding the fate of Xinjiang. In order to finally secure Xinjiang for themselves, the Kuomintang leadership has introduced its forces into the province of Xinjiang, taking advantage of the conflict on the border between the MPR and Xinjiang, and now Sheng Shicai will not likely be soon free of his "patrons" and "defenders".

Here in Chongqing and throughout the country the broad masses have remained dissatisfied with the decisions of the 12th GMD TsIK [Central Executive Committee] plenum. This time the population was nevertheless expecting some radical decisions from the plenum which might alleviate the difficult situation in the country to a minimal degree. The CC [Central Club] Clique [*Sisisty*] dominate in the GMD apparatus, and they are organizing and producing lawlessness.

The position of the central government and its pressure on the peripheral bodies will be reduced and accordingly the influence of the GMD on provincial bodies should inevitably weaken in connection with the decision of the 12th plenum about transferring the right to collect the agricultural tax from the peasants to the provincial governments. This in turn will lead to a strengthening of provincial governments and an increase of their independence and toward separatism. This decision was carried out only because in past years those authorized to collect the taxes who came from

headquarters to the field did not achieve real success in collecting taxes. Right now all the taxes have been handed over to the local governments.

D. Godunov recorded the conversation

5 July 1944

Chongqing