

X/15 RUSSMOSCOW REHABILITATES KAO KANG

F-104

MUNICH, 9 June 1966 (Communist Area Analysis Department:

The following item by Christian Duevel appeared in the Radio Liberty Research bulletin of June 5, 1967:

KAO KANG, the leader of Communist China's "anti-party bloc" liquidated in 1954, was rehabilitated by Radio Moscow on 1.6.67. A correspondence on latest events in China broadcast by Radio Moscow's "Mayak" program at 1930 CET said that

"Peking propaganda is now heaping abuse on the former Deputy Premier of the State Council, Kao Kang, who was arrested back in 1954 on a false denunciation and died (skonchalsya) in prison under most unclear circumstances." (emphasis supplied)

Even in the early period of the Sino-Soviet conflict Moscow had adhered to the official Chinese version condemning Kao Kang as an anti-party conspirator. Thus, the Malaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya (vol. 4, p. 1058, passed for printing on 11.4.59) notes that

"in 1954 the CCP liquidated the anti-party conspiratorial group of Kao Kang - Jao Shu-shih, which had aimed at splitting the party and seizing the leadership into its hands."

This was some "progress" over the Large Soviet Encyclopedia (vol. 10), which had at first included a detailed biography of Kao Kang, but after his downfall asked subscribers to tear out pp.213-214 (with Kao Kang's biography) and insert instead a new page which treated the fallen Chinese leader as an "unperson" and included instead an article and picture of a tiny town in Tibet of 15,000 inhabitants. The Kao Kang affair had been the principal subject of a CCP national party conference in March 1955, the documents on which were published in Peking in early April and reproduced in full by Pravda. The point is that according to these official documents made available to the Soviet public Kao Kang did not "die in prison under most unclear circumstances," as Moscow now puts it, but "committed suicide as an expression of his ultimate betrayal of the party" (Pravda, 6.4.55). In these circumstances the present Soviet formulation can only mean that it is not at all clear whether Kao Kang committed suicide or met his death in some other way, which is tantamount to insinuating that he was probably murdered on the orders of Mao Tse-tung.

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