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Response by Simei Qing, James Madison College, Michigan State University

to “Serious Concerns: Discrepancies between Qing’s Citations and Her Sources,”

by Chen Jian, Cornell University. URL: <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/RT-XI-44-ChenJian-SeriousConcerns.pdf>

Re: H-Diplo Roundtable Review of Simei Qing, *From Allies to Enemies: Visions of Modernity, Identity, and U.S.-China Diplomacy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007. Published on 13 October 2010. URL: <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XI-44.pdf>

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Response by Simei Qing, James Madison College, Michigan State University

I welcome Professor Chen Jian’s critique of my work. I appreciate greatly that the H-Diplo roundtable gives me this opportunity to respond. Professor Chen raises serious questions and grave concerns about my research findings and scholarship. It is my responsibility to respond, and I am happy to do so. I hope this spirited debate may further deepen the discussions of the H-Diplo roundtable.

I. Regarding the Historical Evidence

Professor Chen’s critique may be divided into two major parts in this regard: one concerns the supporting historical evidence I provide on the crucial role of the 38th parallel in China’s participation in the Korean War; and the other relates to historical evidence provided regarding the CCP leadership’s primary economic and strategic concerns from late 1949 up to the outbreak of the Korean War in late June 1950.

1. The Historical Evidence with regard to Mao Zedong's and Zhou Enlai's Conversations on the 38th Parallel as the Bottom Line or Precondition in China's Participation in the Korean War

i). Mao Zedong's conversation of Sept. 23, 1956 regarding the crucial role of the 38th parallel in the CCP leadership's final decision to enter the war:

Among Professor Chen's critiques of my work, of the gravest nature is his startling assertion that Mao's conversation on the 38th parallel as the "bottom line" in China's entry into the war on September 23, 1956 does not exist at all. In his words, "In the source, however, it is in fact the argument of the two authors, Pang and Li, that 'whether or not China should dispatch troops (to Korea), Mao Zedong actually had a 'bottom-line,' and it was whether American troops would cross the 38 parallel.' In Professor Qing's quote, however, she mistakenly turns the views of the two authors into Mao's own words, and changes the original text's third person reference to Mao into a first person reference."¹

Should this assertion be true, it would indeed, as Professor Chen suggests, raise issues of most troubling nature, "concerning the norms, standards, and codes of behavior in an age of multiarchival, multi-source and multilingual research."²

Given the grave nature of Professor Chen's assertion, I feel obligated to present pages 7-8 of Pang's and Li's book here. The authors' quotation from Mao Zedong appears in the last paragraph of page 7 and the first line of page 8, and the footnote about the quotation is in the last lines of page 8.

¹ Chen's comments, pp. 4-5.

² Chen's comments, p. 5.

是一长三短。三个弱点是：第一，战线太长，从德国柏林到朝鲜；第二，运输路线太远，隔着两个大洋，大西洋和太平洋；第三，战斗力太弱。”

尽管如此，毛泽东并没有轻敌大意。他在讲话里提出要防备美帝国主义乱来，打第三次世界大战的问题。他说：“所谓那样干，无非是打第三次世界大战，而且打原子弹，长期地打，要比第一、第二次世界大战打得长。我们中国人民是打惯了仗的，我们的愿望是不要打仗，但你一定要打，就只好让你打。你打你的，我打我的，你打原子弹，我打手榴弹，抓住你的弱点，跟着你打，最后打败你。”^① 这些极而言之话，真实地反映了毛泽东不惧怕任何敌人和任何困难的革命气势。毛泽东已经作了最坏可能性的准备，在迫不得已的情况下，要同美国这个不可一世的强国直接较量。

但是，中国出不出兵，毛泽东有一个“底”，这个“底”就是美军是不是过三八线。“美帝国主义如果干涉，不过三八线，我们不管，如果过三八

^① 毛泽东在中央人民政府委员会第9次会议上的讲话，1950年9月5日。《毛泽东文集》第6卷，人民出版社1999年6月版，第92—94页。

线，我们一定过去打。”^①

九月十五日，朝鲜战局发生急剧变化。美军七万余人在仁川港登陆，二十八日占领汉城，切断位于朝鲜半岛南部洛东江边的朝鲜人民军主力的退路，使之腹背受敌，朝鲜人民军被迫实行战略退却。

九月十八日，中国驻朝鲜大使倪志亮发回电报，报告了朝鲜民主主义人民共和国首相金日成谈最近朝鲜战况并准备长期作战的情况。二十日，周恩来复电倪志亮，要他向金日成转告中共中央对目前朝鲜战局的意见。毛泽东审阅并修改了这个电报。复电说：“我们认为你（指金日成。——引者注）的长期作战思想是正确的。朝鲜军民的英勇是令人感佩的。估计敌人在仁川方面尚有增加可能，其目的在于向东延伸占领，切断朝鲜南北交通，并向三八线进逼。而人民军必须力争保住三八线以北，进行持久战方有可能。因此，请考虑在坚持自力更生长期奋斗的总方针下如何保存主力便于各个歼灭敌人的问题。”复电还提出一些具体建议，并

^① 毛泽东会见苏共中央代表团时的谈话，1956年9月23日。

In the following, I will provide the text of the Chinese paragraph Professor Chen refers to (on the left),³ and my English translation, word-by-word, of this Chinese paragraph (on the right):

The Chinese paragraph I quote from	The English translation of this paragraph and the footnote of the authors' quotation, word-by-word
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³ Pang Xianzhi and Li Jie: *Mao Zedong he kangmeiyuanchao (Mao Zedong and the War of Resisting America and Aiding Korea)* Beijing: Zhongyang wenxianchubanshe, 2000), pp. 7-8.

<p>但是，中国出不出兵，毛泽东有一个“底”，这个“底”就是美军是不是过三八线。“美帝国主义如果干涉，不过三八线，我们不管，如果过三八线，我们一定过去打。”^①</p> <p>^① 毛泽东会见苏共中央代表团时的谈话，1956年9月23日。</p>	<p>However, whether China would send its troops, Mao Zedong had a “bottom line,” this “bottom line” was whether American troops would cross the 38th parallel. “Should American imperialists intervene, and would not cross the 38th parallel, we would not intervene, should they cross the 38th parallel, we would certainly send troops to Korea.” (1)</p> <p>(1) Mao Zedong’s conversation with the delegation of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, September 23, 1956</p>
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From the above comparison of the Chinese text and the English translation, one may see that when looking into the source, Professor Chen neglects entirely the authors’ quotation from Mao Zedong, and ignores completely the footnote about the quotation, which indicates when, and on what occasion, Mao discussed the question of the 38th parallel as the “bottom line” in China’s participation in the war.

It astonishes and saddens me to have to ask these questions: in the paragraph Professor Chen refers to, aren’t there quotation marks? What are the contents inside the quotation marks? Don’t they deal with the “bottom line” and “the 38th parallel?” Isn’t there a footnote for the quotation on the last lines of page 8? Doesn’t this footnote say: “Mao Zedong’s conversation with the delegation of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party on September 23, 1956”? These questions are not about political ideology, not about different interpretations, but about a simple fact. I would welcome any response Professor Chen would like to make on these questions.

It is crystal clear that at his meeting with the delegation of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party on September 23, 1956, Mao Zedong did emphasize the 38th parallel as the “bottom line” in the final decision to enter the war. In Mao’s words: “Should American imperialists intervene, and would not cross the 38th parallel, we would not intervene, should they cross the 38th parallel, we would certainly send troops to Korea.”

ii). Zhou Enlai’s conversation with Soviet ambassador Roshchin on July 2, 1950: Did Zhou discuss the crucial importance of the 38th parallel in China’s participation in the war?

Professor Chen Jian writes that

“Qi’s discussion focuses on how, in early July 1950, Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and the Chinese leadership already anticipated that American troops could conduct landing operations in the Korean People’s Army’s rear area.

Nothing in Qi’s article supports the contention that “on behalf of the CCP leadership, Zhou Enlai set down the precondition for China’s entry into the war: ‘If the American troops do

not cross the 38th parallel, the Chinese troops will not cross the Yalu. However, should the American troops cross the 38th parallel, the Chinese troops would enter the war.”⁴

The Qi article Professor Chen Jian refers to is, in fact, not the Qi article I quoted from in my Roundtable discussion.⁵ However, even in the Qi article Professor Chen refers to, it does talk about the question of the 38th parallel when discussing Zhou’s conversation with Roshchin on July 2, 1950 and Stalin’s reply to Zhou’s message

The key point is, certainly, whether Zhou Enlai did discuss the crucial role of the 38th parallel in China’s participation in the Korean War at his meeting with the Soviet ambassador Roshchin on July 2, 1950.

To end the controversy, I would like to present the Russian archival record of Zhou Enlai’s meeting with Roshchin on July 2, 1950, which was reported and translated into English by Russian scholar Evgueni Bajanov, and published in the Woodrow Wilson Center’s *COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL HISTORY PROJECT BULLETIN*, issues 6/7, winter 1995:

“On 2 July 1950, Zhou Enlai in a conversation with Soviet Ambassador Roshchin complained that the North Koreans had underestimated the probability of American military intervention, ignoring Mao Zedong’s warnings back in May 1949 and 1950. Zhou passed on Mao’s advice to the North Koreans to create a strong defense line in the area of Inchon, because American troops could land there. The Chinese leadership feared landing operations by Americans in other parts of the Korean peninsula as well. **In this conversation Zhou Enlai confirmed that if the Americans crossed the 38th parallel, Chinese troops, disguised as Korean, would engage the opponent.** Three Chinese armies, 120,000 men in total, had already been concentrated in the area of Mukden. Zhou inquired if it would be possible to cover these troops with the

⁴ Chen’s comments, p. 4.

⁵ The Qi article I quoted from is a revised version of the journal article to which Professor Chen refers. However, even in this journal article from which Professor Chen quoted, Qi also deals with the question of the 38th parallel. Under two different subtitles, Qi discusses Zhou’s conversation with Roshchin on July 2. Under the subtitle “Who first predicted American troops’ Inchon Landing,” he discusses Zhou’s conversation, which is what Professor Chen quotes from. And under the subtitle “Did Huang Yanpei first propose the name of ‘Volunteer Army,’” Qi’s journal article discusses again Zhou’s conversation with Roshchin on July 2 and Stalin’s reply to Zhou on July 5, which said “We consider it correct to concentrate immediately 9 Chinese divisions on the Chinese-Korean border for volunteer actions in North Korea in case the enemy crosses the 38th parallel.” http://www.3x88.net/history/xiandaishi/20100526/52554_3.shtml

Moreover, Qi is not the only Chinese scholar who revisits the context of Zhou’s conversation with Roshchin and points to the question of the 38th parallel on July 2, 1950. For instance, in Shen Zhihua’s article “The Sino-Soviet alliance and China’s decision-making of dispatching troops to Korea: a comparison between Chinese and Russian archival documents,” he emphasizes that in Zhou’s conversation with Roshchin on July 2, 1950, **“Zhou Enlai set down the precondition for China’s participation in the war, that is, American troops crossed the 38th parallel.”** (Emphasis added) <http://www.aisixiang.com/data/detail.php?id=4258>

Soviet air force.⁶ (Emphasis added)

It is important to note that from the beginning, Mao and other military leaders of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) believed that the strategic objective of American troops' Inchon landing was to cross the 38th parallel. That was why, after discussing again the probability of American troops' Inchon landing, Zhou Enlai immediately stated that "if the Americans crossed the 38th parallel, Chinese troops, disguised as Korean, would engage the opponent."⁷

Zhou Enlai's emphasis on the critical role of the 38th parallel in China's participation in the war on July 2, 1950, was specifically reaffirmed in Stalin's reply to Zhou's message three days later, on July 5, 1950:

"We consider it correct to concentrate immediately 9 Chinese divisions on the Chinese-Korean border for volunteer actions in North Korea **in case the enemy crosses the 38th parallel**. We will try to provide air cover for these units."⁸ (Emphasis added)

The two documents – Zhou Enlai's conversation with Roshchin on July 2, 1950 and Stalin's reply to Zhou on July 5 – can be reviewed online on the website of the Cold War International History Project Bulletin, issue 6/7, winter 1995, at the Woodrow Wilson Center. The online link to the part of "New Evidence on the Korean War" in this issue is http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/CWIHPBulletin6-7_p2.pdf (Zhou's conversation of July 2, 1950 is on pp. 88-89, and Stalin's reply is on p. 43)

It is therefore true that on July 2, 1950, during his conversation with Roshchin, after assessing the probability of American troops' Inchon landing, Zhou Enlai, on behalf of the CCP leadership, emphasized the crucial role of the 38th parallel in China's participation in the Korean War. Stalin reaffirmed the CCP leadership's precondition for China's entry into the war on July 5, 1950.

2. The Historical Evidence with regard to the CCP Leadership's Primary Economic and Strategic Concerns from Late 1949 up to the Outbreak of the Korean War

⁶ "Roshchin cable to Moscow, 2 July 1950," quoted from Evgueni Bajanov: "Assessing the Politics of the Korean War, 1949-51," *COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL HISTORY PROJECT* (Hereafter *CWIHP*) *Bulletin* 6/7, Winter 1995; pp. 88-89. http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/CWIHPBulletin6-7_p2.pdf (With permission of the Woodrow Wilson Center)

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ "5 July 1950, ciphered telegram, Filippov (Stalin) to Chinese Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai (via Soviet ambassador to the People's Republic of China [PRC] N.V. Roshchin)," *CWIHP Bulletin* 6/7, Winter 1995; p. 43 (document #18). http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/CWIHPBulletin6-7_p2.pdf (With permission of the Woodrow Wilson Center)

i). Mao's telegram to Stalin on the Korean question on October 21, 1949 and Stalin's reply on November 5, 1949

Professor Chen quotes me as saying in the roundtable discussion that "Kim Il Sung then appealed to Mao and the CCP leadership to support his plan. On October 21, 1949, Mao informed Stalin of Kim's request and the CCP leadership's view that this plan should not be implemented under the current situation. On October 26, 1949, Molotov drafted a telegram for Stalin to reply to Mao's telegram: 'We agree with your view that at present, the Korean People's Army should not (yet) launch an offensive campaign. We have also pointed out to Korean friends that their offensive campaign should not be implemented, because militarily and politically this offensive campaign is not ready.' ('yet' was added by Stalin on the draft). Qing source: 'Shen Zhihua, ed., *The Korean War: Declassified Russian Archival Documents* (Taipei, Sinica Academia, 2003), p. 276." Then Professor Chen emphasizes that the quote does not exist on p. 276 of Shen's book.

While this document does exist, I did make a mistake about the documentation of Molotov's draft telegram. After p. 276 of Shen Zhihua ed., *The Korean War: Declassified Russian Archival Documents*, it should be added: Shen Zhihua: "Stalin, Mao Zedong and Reconsideration of the Korean War – the Most Recent Evidence from the Russian Archives," in *Shixue jikan*, September 2007, no. 5, pp. 52-53.⁹

These two documents are about the exchange of telegrams between Stalin and Mao Zedong concerning the Korean question in late 1949. The document on Molotov's draft telegram, to which Professor Chen refers, reveals Mao's view on the Korean question at that time. And the document on p. 276 of Shen's book is Stalin's reply to Mao's telegram. These two documents are discussed together in my previous response.¹⁰

On November 5, 1949, Stalin sent Mao a telegram:

"Comrade Mao Zedong: Given your view on the Korean question as expressed in your telegram of October 21, we think we must inform you that we support your opinion concerning the question discussed, and we will offer our advice to Korean friends according to this spirit."¹¹

⁹ I would like to thank Professor Chen Jian for identifying the lapse in my documentation of Molotov's draft telegram of Oct. 26, 1949.

¹⁰ "Author's Response by Simei Qing," *H-Diplo Roundtable Review*, Volume XI, No. 44 (2010), 13 October 2010; pp. 54-55. The online link to this issue is

<http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XI-44.pdf>

¹¹ "SD11808: Andrei A. Gromyko's telegram to Kovalev regarding Stalin's reply to Mao Zedong, Nov. 5, 1950," in Shen Zhihua ed., *The Korean War: Declassified Documents from the Russian Archives, Vol. 1* (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 2003); p. 276.

To supplement this telegram, Molotov's draft telegram for Stalin's reply reveals what Mao wrote about on the Korean question:

"We agree with your view that at present, the Korean People's Army should not (yet) launch an offensive campaign. We have also pointed out to Korean friends that their offensive campaign should not be implemented, because militarily and politically this offensive campaign is not ready." ("yet" is added by Stalin) ¹²

The exchange of telegrams between Stalin and Mao indicates Moscow's and Beijing's approach to the Korean question in late 1949.

ii). Zhou Enlai's conversation with Roshchin on Chinese financial and economic situation on Nov. 15, 1949

Professor Chen quotes me as saying that "On November 15, 1949, one month after the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC), Zhou Enlai candidly told Soviet ambassador N. V. Roshchin that his primary concern was 'the financial and economic difficulty' the new China was facing. Domestic economic recovery would become 'the key factor' in 'safeguarding the fruits of the revolutionary victory' in the new China. At this critical moment, Zhou emphasized, if China had to be involved in a war, it would be a 'fatal blow' to the Chinese economic recovery." He writes, "In Professor Qing's source, *Dangdai zhongguoshi yanjiu* (Contemporary China Studies), No. 2, 2006, p. 116, the quotation in the above paragraph does not exist." He continues, "I then checked the transcript of Zhou Enlai's meeting with Roshchin on November 15, 1949. The content of the meeting does not support Professor Qing's description and citation at all. Zhou talked about the financial difficulties that China was facing at that time, but he stated that these difficulties were 'neither unpredictable nor irresolvable.' Zhou said that 'we believe that after two years we can resolve all of the financial and economic difficulties that we are now facing.'" ¹³

In Jin Dongji's article, there is indeed a discussion of Zhou Enlai's talk on the Chinese financial and economic situation at his meeting with Roshchin on Nov. 15, 1949. (p. 113)

I have just reviewed the transcript of Roshchin's memorandum regarding his meeting with Zhou on Nov. 15, 1949. Zhou's conversation focused heavily on the runaway inflation in urban centers in October and November, the nationwide land reform campaigns for helping the peasants and developing the economy, and the great importance of financial stability

¹² Shen Zhihua: "Stalin, Mao Zedong and Reconsideration of the Korean War – the Most Recent Evidence from the Russian Archives," in *Shixue jikan*, September 2007, no. 5, pp, 52-53.
<http://wenku.baidu.com/view/b66ff3c30c22590102029d6a.html>

¹³ Chen's comments, p. 2.

and economic recovery for the newly founded PRC. ¹⁴ I am afraid Prof. Chen's summary of Zhou's conversation does not reflect the key points of this transcript.

In the roundtable discussion, I did not quote Zhou's conversation directly from the Russian original text, yet I thought the brief discussion of Zhou's conversation with Roshchin in Jin's article was consistent with Zhou's writings and talks on the topic in late 1949. I would like to present Zhou Enlai's own writings during the same period, which may provide a fuller context for understanding Zhou's conversation with Roshchin, and reveal more clearly his general ideas and deep concerns over new China's financial and economic situation right after the establishment of the PRC.

For instance, on December 22 and 23, 1949, in his discussion with CCP cadres concerning the national budget for 1950, Zhou Enlai said that current domestic revenues could not match expenditures. Among the expenditures in 1950, the military would account for 38.8% (mainly for the preparation of the Taiwan campaign), the administration 21.4%, economic construction and education 30%, and emergency fund (such as natural disasters) 10%. Zhou emphasized that only 82% of the expenditures for 1950 could be met by various domestic taxes, 7% would depend on government bonds, and the rest would rely on issuing currency. "Could we borrow foreign loans? We need foreign aid. Friends' aid is welcome, because it is sincere. However, China's economic construction should mainly depend upon self-reliance." ¹⁵

Could the biggest cost in the 1950 budget – the military expenditures -- be reduced? Not yet, Zhou said. Not only would there be the urgent need of preparing for the Taiwan campaign, but also the need to provide for captured and reorganized KMT troops, the number of which was estimated to reach 5.5 millions in 1950. "At their request, three people's meals will be divided among five people, to take them all in."¹⁶

It was not surprising that Zhou Enlai emphasized the vital importance of recovering and developing the economy:

"If we do not focus on production, what shall we rely on to support the military campaign and the consolidation of our victory? Production is the basic task of our new China.... **As comrade Mao Zedong said, (we should use) 3-5 years for economic recovery, and 8-**

¹⁴ "№09845: Roshchin's memorandum on his conversation with Zhou Enlai on Nov. 15, 1949; from Roshchin's diary," АВПРФ, ф.07, оп.22, п.36, д.220, л.57-66. I would like to thank Professor Shen Zihua for providing me with his Chinese translation of this Russian document.

¹⁵ Zhou Enlai: "Current Financial and Economic Situation and Several Relationships of the New Chinese Economy, December 22-23, 1949," in *Selected Papers of Zhou Enlai on Economy* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1993), pp. 26-27.

¹⁶ Ibid., 23.

10 years for economic development.... If we don't have food to eat, we won't be able to do anything else at all."¹⁷ (Emphasis added)

In April 1950, when commenting on the difficult financial and economic situation in China proper (south of the Great Wall), Zhou wrote that

"Chairman Mao said the reasons why the economic situation in the Northeast can achieve a basic turn for the better are because of the following three conditions: successful land reform, industrial recovery, and the increase of production expenditures. However, in China proper, these three conditions won't exist within 1-2 years. In fact, **it will take 2-3 years to complete the nationwide land reform campaigns, it will take even longer for industrial recovery**, and the production expenditure currently only accounts for 13.9% of the budget... Thus, in China proper, we have not yet consolidated the foundation for a balance of payment and price stability."¹⁸ (Emphasis added)

In explaining why Zhou Enlai was so deeply concerned about the new China's finance and economy, Tong Xiaopeng – who worked with Zhou since 1937 and became the director of Zhou's executive office (1958-1966) – described the dire conditions the PRC faced at the time: On the eve of the establishment of the PRC, Chinese agricultural and industrial productions fell to the lowest levels in decades: In agriculture, for instance, before Japan's invasion in the 1930s, China's food production had reached 280 billion *jin*, but in 1949, amounted to only 224 billion *jin*. "Even if the food production in 1950 could increase by 10 billion *jin*, it would still be far behind the highest level in prewar China." In industry, hyper-inflation flooded urban centers throughout 1949, and "the price of consumer goods in the market was 2 million times as high as that in prewar China." As for transportation, "entire China only had railroads of over 20,000 kilometers, most of which were waiting for reparations." To make things worse, in October and November 1949, right after the establishment of the PRC, the hyper-inflation rate in Shanghai and Tianjin went wild, from worse to the worst, like "uncontrollable runaway horses," and "spread rapidly to other urban centers in China."¹⁹

That is the reason, as I discussed at the roundtable, that at his first meeting with Stalin on the night of his arrival on December 16, 1949, Mao Zedong started the conversation with the following statement: ²⁰

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁸ Zhou Enlai: "Balance of Payment and Price Stability, April 29, 1950," in *Selected Papers of Zhou Enlai on Economy* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1993), p. 37.

¹⁹ Tong Xiaopeng: *Fengyu sishinian (Forty Years of Wind and Rain)*, Vol. 2 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1996), pp. 53-55.

²⁰ Mao's conversation with Stalin on Dec. 16, 1949 is discussed in my previous response, p. 55. The link to this issue of H-Diplo Roundtable Review is <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XI-44.pdf>

“The most important question at the present time is the question of establishing peace. China needs at least a period of 3-5 years of peace, which would be used to bring the economy back to pre-war levels and thus to stabilize the country....With this in mind the CC CPC [Central Committee of the Communist Party of China] entrusted me to ascertain from you, comr[ade]. Stalin, in what way and for how long will international peace be preserved.”²¹ (Emphasis added)

Mao’s statement was fully consistent with Zhou’s deep concerns during the same period, demonstrating the CCP leadership’s sense of priority with regard to the vital question of how to consolidate the revolutionary victory right after the founding of the PRC. Mao’s above statement can be reviewed online in the Virtual Archives, Collection of Sino-Soviet Relations, the Cold War International History Project of the Woodrow Wilson Center. The link to Mao’s conversation with Stalin on Dec. 16, 1949 is http://legacy.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1409&fuseaction=va2.document&identifier=5034F49F-96B6-175C-9FCF896060A0A734&sort=Collection&item=Sino-Soviet%20Relations

iii). Mao Zedong’s order to transfer four more corps to the Taiwan Strait region on June 23, 1950

Professor Chen emphasizes that “In my research, I have not come across any Chinese source indicating that ‘On June 23, 1950, Mao ordered the transfer of four more corps from Shanghai areas to the Taiwan Strait region.’ I would appreciate it very much if Professor Qing could provide documentary support for the statement.”²²

Su Yu was appointed by Mao Zedong as the Commander-in-Chief of the Taiwan campaign from mid-1949 to mid-1950. In *Su Yu Zhan (Biography of Su Yu)* (2000 edition), *Su Yu Nianpu (Chronicle of Su Yu)* (2006), and other works on the topic, there is rich documentary evidence, which directly points to the fact that Mao ordered the transfer of four more corps to Su Yu’s command in the preparation for the Taiwan campaign on the eve of the outbreak of the Korean War.

First, ***on June 23, 1950, in his report on the preparation for the Taiwan campaign to Mao Zedong and the Central Military Commission, Su Yu requested that 3-4 more corps from other field armies be transferred to his command.*** He also suggested that should

²¹ “Conversation between Mao and Stalin, 12/16/1949,” CWIHP Virtual Archives, Collection: Sino-Soviet Relations. (With permission of the Woodrow Wilson Center)

²² Chen’s comments, p. 3.

there be no “absolute certainty” for the success of the Taiwan campaign, it would need to be “postponed.”²³

The reason for Su Yu’s request for 3-4 more corps from other field armies in the Taiwan campaign is that in May 1950, after the PLA occupied Hainan island (May 1st) and Zhoushan islands (May 19th), the KMT troops there were mostly withdrawn to Taiwan, thus Taiwan’s troops were increased to 400, 000. During that time, Su Yu commanded 12 corps of the Third Field Army, altogether 500, 000 troops, the combat forces of which were between 300, 000 and 380, 000. In terms of comparative military power, Su Yu believed, his force was not in a particularly advantageous position in the upcoming Taiwan campaign.²⁴

Second, by the end of June 1950, Su Yu’s force was increased from 12 to 16 corps, or from 500, 000 to 650, 000 troops. Su Yu “commanded the entire Third Field Army,” 12 corps and 500, 000 troops, “as well as four more corps from other field armies, altogether 650, 000 troops,” for the upcoming Taiwan campaign.²⁵ That is, Su Yu’s request for four more corps on June 23, 1950 was approved by Mao and the Central Military Commission.

The above two critical pieces of important information point to one question: When did the Central Military Commission approve Su Yu’s request of June 23, 1950 and when did Mao order the transfer? Since the Korean War broke out on June 25, 1950, one may ask: when between June 23 and June 25, 1950 did Mao order the transfer of four more corps from other field armies to the Taiwan Strait region?

Given the urgency of Su Yu’s request of June 23, 1950 and the place of the Taiwan campaign in Mao’s and the Central Military Commission’s strategic thinking prior to the Korean

²³ Su Yu Zhuan Bianxiezu: *Su Yu Zhuan (Biography of Su Yu)* (Beijing: Dangdai Zhongguo Chubanshe, 2000) (Thereafter *Su Yu Zhuan (2000)*, p. 646; Zhu Ying and Wen Jinghu: *Su Yu Nianpu (The Chronicle of Su Yu)* (Beijing: Dangdai Zhongguo chubanshe, 2006) (Thereafter *Su Yu Nianpu, 2006*), pp. 497-498.

²⁴ *Su Yu Zhuan (2000)*, pp. 505-6; I would like to thank Prof. Chen for pointing out the incorrect page number of *Su Yu Zhuan* in my roundtable discussions; and Chen Donglin: “Why couldn’t Mao Zedong order to begin the Taiwan campaign in 1949,” in Yang Bo, Hu Diyun, Cheng Zhongyuan, and Chen Donglin: *Xin Zhongguo wangshi (Past Events of New China)* (Beijing: Dangdai Zhongguo Chubanshe, 2006); Chen Donglin’s article can be reviewed online at http://military.china.com/zh_cn/history2/03/11027561/20060301/13133187_5.html

²⁵ Zhang Xiongwen: *Wumian Yuanshuai: Yige zhenshi de Su Yu (Uncrowned Captain: a Real Su Yu)* (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2008) (Thereafter: *A Real Su Yu, 2008*), Chapter 2 of Part III: “The First Candidate for the Commander-in-Chief of the War of Resisting America and Aiding Korea;” This chapter can be reviewed online at “http://vip.book.sina.com.cn/book/chapter_58761_39761.html

Also in Shen Zhihua: “The policy changes and constraining factors of the CCP’s Taiwan campaign,” he emphasizes that Su Yu’s force for the Taiwan campaign was “increased from initially planned 8 corps, to 12 corps by the end of 1949, and to 16 corps in June 1950.” This article can be reviewed online at <http://www.aisixiang.com/data/detail.php?id=28451>

War,²⁶ Mao probably ordered the transfer immediately on June 23, rather than on June 24, 1950.

As a matter of fact, I was not the first one who reached this conclusion regarding Mao's primary military or strategic concern on the eve of the Korean War. For instance, in *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (1993), Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai emphasize that

“On June 23, the then deputy commander of the units chosen for the invasion of Taiwan, Su Yu, asked the Central Military Commission to transfer three or four corps (*Jun*) to East China as a reserve force for the later campaign in the Taiwan Strait. Mao approved this proposal. Riveted to the long-term preparations for that campaign, Mao paid no special attention to Korea, where the conflict would break out 48 hours later.”²⁷

The source of the above statement in their book is listed as the following: Zhou Jun: “A Study on the Reasons why the PLA Aborted Its Plan to Attack Taiwan Soon After the Founding of the New China,” *Zhonggong Dangshi Yanjiu*, No. 1, 1991, p. 69; He Di: “‘The Last Campaign to Unify China’: The CCP’s Unmaterialized Plan to Liberate Taiwan, 1949-1950,” unpublished article; and “interview with a well-informed Chinese specialist, Oct. 1991.”²⁸

The core of the issue, surely, is not precisely when Mao ordered the transfer of four more corps between June 23 and June 25, 1950, but whether the CCP leadership's main military or strategic focus was on the Taiwan Strait prior to the outbreak of the Korean War.

Su Yu's “new appointment” after the outbreak of the Korean War may exemplify the shift of the CCP leadership's major strategic/military concerns. On July 7, 1950, at the National Defense Conference, attended by top military leaders of the PLA and most members of the Central Military Commission, and chaired by Zhou Enlai, two decisions were made: To establish the Northeast Frontier Defense Force, and to appoint Su Yu as the Commander-in-Chief of the Northeast Frontier Defense Force.²⁹ On August 26, 1950, Zhou Enlai formally announced the decision to delay the Taiwan campaign and to focus, instead, on the Korean

²⁶ Zhang Zhen: *Zhang Zhen Huiyilu (The Memoir of Zhang Zhen)*, (Zhang Zhen was Su Yu's Chief of Staff in the preparation for the Taiwan campaign.) pp. 392-3. Zhang Zhen describes vividly how Su Yu repeatedly made this request of adding 3-4 more corps from other field armies from late May to June 1950.

²⁷ Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai: *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993); pp. 152-153.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 332.

²⁹ *Su Yu Nianpu* (2006), p. 499. On October 8, 1950, the Northeast Defense Frontier Force was changed into the Chinese People's Volunteer Army. Due to Su Yu's serious illness at the time, Peng Dehuai was appointed as its Commander-in-Chief.

War situation at the preparatory meeting of the Northeast Frontier Defense Force.³⁰ Thus, by the end of August 1950, the drastic change of Beijing's primary military focus from Taiwan to Korea was completed.

II. Regarding the Interpretations

In my response to H-Diplo roundtable discussions, my comments on the Korean War were not intended as a comprehensive review of Professor Chen Jian's book, but simply as a response to the specific questions raised at the roundtable, particularly the scholars' concerns that I did not compare and contrast the historical evidence in my book with Professor Chen's on several important issues of the US-China military confrontation in Korea. For instance, Professor Gregg Brazinsky points out that

"According to Qing, Mao drafted his crucial telegram to Stalin explaining Beijing's motives for entering the Korean War on the morning of October 2 and only after that attended a Central Committee Secretariat meeting (154-155). Chen Jian on the other hand writes that Mao drafted his lengthy telegram to Stalin 'right after the meeting' which occurred at 3:00 PM on 2 October 1950, ..." and "The relative timing of the meeting and telegram and the nature of the discussions that occurred at the meeting are important to answering the question of when exactly Mao decided to enter the war."³¹

What Professor Brazinsky refers to is Mao's draft telegram to Stalin on October 2, 1950 (unsent). According to Professor Chen, Mao's telegram was drafted *after* a Central Committee Secretariat meeting in the afternoon of October 2, wherein Mao succeeded in persuading the CCP leadership to agree to immediately send Chinese troops to Korea. Thus, *Mao's draft telegram, sent or unsent, represented a consensual view -- the final decision of the CCP leadership to enter the Korean War on October 2.* Afterward, in the early morning of October 3, Zhou met with Indian ambassador Panikkar, asking him to deliver a message to the Truman administration concerning the crucial importance of the 38th parallel for China's participation in the Korean War. Obviously, with such a construction of the sequence of events (or his construction of the "timing" of Mao's draft telegram and the "nature of the discussions that occurred at the meeting"), Professor Chen raised serious doubts about the purpose of Zhou's message on the crucial role of the 38th parallel, and made a compelling argument in his book:

"Why did Zhou send off this message after top CCP leaders had made the primary decision to enter the Korean War? In the past, without an understanding of the relationship between Beijing's decision to enter the war and Zhou's issuance of this warning, many scholars of

³⁰ Zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi ed., *The Chronicle of Zhou Enlai (1949-1976)*, Vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1997); pp. 69-70.

³¹ "Review by Gregg Brazinsky," *H-Diplo Roundtable Reviews*, Vol. XI, No 44 (2010), p. 9 and footnote. The online link to this issue is <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XI-44.pdf>

the Korean War took this as evidence that Beijing did not want a direct military confrontation with the United States. This warning served as the last chance to avoid direct Chinese-American confrontation, scholars argue, and if Washington had responded seriously to this warning and ordered the UN forces not to cross the 38th parallel, China's military intervention could have been averted. Zhou's warning has thus been taken by many scholars both in the West and in China as the single most important piece of evidence supporting the argument that the Beijing leadership sent Chinese troops to Korea only to protect the safety of the Sino-Korean border.

We now know that top Chinese leaders had made the primary decision to enter the war before Zhou's warning, not after it.³² (Emphasis added)

Accordingly, by overthrowing, in Professor Chen's words, "the single most important piece of evidence," he turns upside down Allen Whiting's thesis of the centrality of the 38th parallel. Based on Zhou's delivery of the urgent message on the 38th parallel, Whiting argued that had the UN forces not crossed the 38th parallel, the US-China military confrontation in Korea could have been avoided.³³

I think that is the reason why Professor Brazinsky requested my response to the questions of the "timing" of Mao's draft telegram on October 2, and the "nature of the discussions that occurred at the meeting" in that afternoon of October 2.

In my response to Professor Brazinsky's questions, I presented declassified Russian and Chinese documents to show that Mao's telegram of October 2 had been drafted *before* the Central Committee Secretariat meeting, and that this draft telegram was never sent, because of *differing views in the Central Committee Secretariat meeting in the afternoon of Oct. 2, 1950.*

Roshchin's report on his conversation with Mao Zedong after the Central Committee Secretariat meeting in the afternoon of October 2 delivered the following message to Stalin: "We originally planned to move several volunteer divisions to North Korea to render assistance to the Korean comrades when the enemy advanced north of the 38th parallel. However, having thought this over thoroughly, we now consider that such actions may entail extremely serious consequences."³⁴ One of the reasons was that

³² Chen Jian: *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); p. 180.

³³ Allen S. Whiting: *China Crosses the Yalu* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1968, c1960)

³⁴ "CIPHERED TELEGRAM No. 25199," quoted from "Document 12: Ciphred telegram from Roshchin in Beijing to Filippov [Stalin], 3 October 1950, conveying 2 October 1950 message from Mao to Stalin;" CWHIP *Bulletin*, Issues 6/7, Winter 1995; p. 114. The online link to the part of "New Evidence on the Korean War" in this issue is: http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/CWIHPBulletin6-7_p2.pdf (With permission of Woodrow Wilson Center).

“Many comrades in the CC CPC [Central Committee of the Communist Party of China] judge that it is necessary to show caution here.”³⁵

Mao also said more discussions in the CCP leadership would take place to reach a final decision:

“We will convene a meeting of the CC, at which will be present the main comrades of various bureaus of the CC. **A final decision has not been taken on this question.**”³⁶ (Emphasis added)

After Mao’s meeting with Roshchin on October 2, Zhou met with Panikkar at 1:00 am, October 3, 1950, to deliver an urgent message on the crucial role of the 38th parallel in China’s entry into the war. Zhou particularly emphasized that should the American troops, rather than the South Korean troops, cross the 38th parallel, China would join the war.³⁷ By making a distinction between the South Korean troops that had already crossed the 38th parallel on October 1, and American troops that had not yet at the time, Zhou, again, emphasized the primary role of the 38th parallel for China’s participation in the war.

On October 3, 1950, the State Department received Zhou’s message. In the summary of Zhou’s message by the Office of Chinese Affairs at the State Department, Zhou’s distinction between South Korean troops and the UN forces was noted:

“South Korean forces are put into a different category from UN forces – is the purport of this differentiation good or bad?”³⁸ (Emphasis added)

It is important to point out that in the decision-making process of the CCP leadership at the time, the “bottom line” for China’s entry into the war was not about the Sino-Korean border, but about the 38th parallel. The only difference in the emphasis between Zhou’s conversation with Roshchin on July 2 and Zhou’s urgent message to the Truman administration is that on October 3, Zhou made an especially clear distinction between South Korean and American troops: Only when American troops crossed the 38th parallel, would China join the war. As discussed in my book and the roundtable response, the 38th parallel represented a balancing or tipping point between the CCP’s concepts of “revolutionary internationalism” and Chinese nationalism or “patriotism,” as defined or interpreted during that historical period.³⁹

³⁵ Ibid., p. 115; http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/CWIHPBulletin6-7_p2.pdf

³⁶ Ibid., p. 115; http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/CWIHPBulletin6-7_p2.pdf

³⁷ *The Chronicle of Zhou Enlai*, p. 83.

³⁸ “Office Memorandum: Chou En-lai Demarche re Korea, October 3, 1950,” File of the Office of Chinese Affairs, October 1950; Lot file, National Archives of the United States, College Park, Maryland.

³⁹ Qing: *From Allies to Enemies*, chapter 5: “Two Sides of One Coin: The CCP’s Policies toward the Soviet Union and the United States,” and my previous response to the roundtable discussions, pp. 65-66. The online

Professor Chen comments that my above response to Professor Brazinsky's question at the roundtable discussions, in particular, demonstrates that "Professor Qing's citations are highly selective—she cites only the sources that seem 'useful' to her points and ignores others, even some of the most important ones." What were "some of the most important ones?" In the footnote of this critique, he says that "One example in this respect is Professor Qing's almost dismissive treatment of Mao Zedong's draft telegram to Stalin dated October 2, 1950 (see Professor Qing's essay, p. 63). Although we now know that the telegram, most likely, was not dispatched, it remains one of the central texts in which Mao's motivations and calculations related to China's entry into the Korean War are extensively discussed by Mao himself."⁴⁰

I have to admit that I feel a bit puzzled by Professor Chen's comments here. Professor Brazinsky's question concerning the sequence of events in the Beijing headquarters on October 2, in fact, did not ask me to analyze the content of Mao's unsent draft telegram (I discussed it in my book). The important issue here is, of course, whether Mao's draft telegram of October 2, which pledged to dispatch the Chinese troops immediately, contradicts Mao's emphasis on the 38th parallel as the "bottom line" for China's entry into the war. In effect, this draft telegram further confirmed Mao's persistent emphasis on the 38th parallel. Mao wrote that the Chinese troops would be deployed north of the 38th parallel, "to prepare to fight against any enemies who would dare to invade the north of the 38th parallel:"

"Under the current conditions, we decide to dispatch 12 divisions in South Manchuria to station in the appropriate areas of North Korea (not necessarily along the 38th parallel), to prepare to fight against any enemies who would dare to invade the north of the 38th parallel."⁴¹ (Emphasis added)

As discussed in my book, after drafting this telegram Mao attended the Central Committee Secretariat meeting in that afternoon; since American troops had not yet crossed the 38th parallel at the time, many at the meeting did not agree to dispatch the Chinese troops right away. Thus Mao's draft telegram was never sent. That is probably why Professor Brazinsky at the roundtable specifically asked me to respond to the question of when Mao drafted this telegram on October 2: "before" or "after" the CCP Central Committee Secretariat meeting. (While Professor Chen said "**after**" the meeting, thus Mao's draft telegram represented a

link to this issue of H-Diplo Roundtable Review, Volume XI, No. 44 (2010) is http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/CWIHPBulletin6-7_p2.pdf

⁴⁰ Chen's comments, p. 1.

⁴¹ Li Jie: "From the Decision-Making of Dispatching Troops to the Five Campaigns," the author is currently the deputy director of the CCP Archival Documentary Research Division; **in the direct quote from Mao, "North Korea," instead of DPRK, was used in Mao's draft telegram to Stalin. In Stalin's telegrams to Mao, he often used the name of North Korea as well.** <http://www.zclw.net/article/sort024/sort025/info-26491.html>

consensual view or the final decision to enter the war immediately, the declassified Chinese documents indicate that Mao had drafted this telegram “**before**” the meeting). Furthermore, Professor Brazinsky specifically asked me to analyze “the nature of the discussions that occurred at the meeting.” (While Professor Chen said the CCP leadership made the *final decision* to enter the war immediately at that meeting in the afternoon of October 2, Roshchin’s report to Stalin on October 2 indicates that there were *differing views* at that meeting and *no final decision was made on Oct. 2.*) As a result, Professor Chen and I come up with essentially different views with respect to the purpose of Zhou’s urgent message to the Truman administration on October 3, 1950. ⁴²

The following are copies of the declassified report by Roshchin to Stalin with respect to Mao’s message on October 2, 1950 (The English translation of Roshchin’s report is in the *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, issues 6/7, winter 1995, pp. 114-115; http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/CWIHPBulletin6-7_p2.pdf), and a declassified State Department document on Zhou’s urgent message of October 3, 1950.

⁴² While Whiting’s specific historical narratives in his book *China crossed the Yalu* may be updated 50 years after its publication, his main thesis of the 38th parallel can be further substantiated by the declassified Russian and Chinese as well as American archival documents. In particular, his emphasis on the study of perception and misperception of each other’s intentions in crisis management deserves more serious reflection.

MAO TO STALIN, 2 OCTOBER 1950: THE RUSSIAN VERSION

ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЕ УПРАВЛЕНИЕ ТЕЛЕГРАММ И ТЕЛЕФОНОВ

ТЕЛЕГРАММА № 1000
Секретарь ЦК КПСР

№ п/п	Имя	№ п/п	Имя	№ п/п	Имя
1	И. СТАЛИН	4	И. СТАЛИН	7	И. СТАЛИН
2	И. СТАЛИН	5	И. СТАЛИН	8	И. СТАЛИН
3	И. СТАЛИН	6	И. СТАЛИН	9	И. СТАЛИН
4	И. СТАЛИН	7	И. СТАЛИН	10	И. СТАЛИН
5	И. СТАЛИН	8	И. СТАЛИН	11	И. СТАЛИН
6	И. СТАЛИН	9	И. СТАЛИН	12	И. СТАЛИН

Время отправления: 10.00.00

Кому: И. СТАЛИН

От кого: Секретарь ЦК КПСР

Тема: Доклад о работе ЦК КПСР за 9 месяцев 1950 года.

Докладчик: Секретарь ЦК КПСР

Содержание: Доклад о работе ЦК КПСР за 9 месяцев 1950 года. Докладчик: Секретарь ЦК КПСР.

Ваше письмо от 2 октября 1950 года получено. В нем вы сообщаете, что в ЦК КПСР в настоящее время нет секретаря, а это обстоятельство не способствует нормальному ведению дел. Мы считаем, что это обстоятельство не должно влиять на работу ЦК КПСР. Мы просим вас сообщить, как вы намерены решить этот вопрос.

В настоящее время в ЦК КПСР нет секретаря, а это обстоятельство не способствует нормальному ведению дел. Мы считаем, что это обстоятельство не должно влиять на работу ЦК КПСР. Мы просим вас сообщить, как вы намерены решить этот вопрос.

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DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 82001
By fat NARA Date 10/16/00

Office Memorandum

~~TOP SECRET~~

Bureau of
Far Eastern Affairs
OCT 3 - 1950
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
Department of State

no Memor of
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
#13p

TO: FE: ITA
FROM: CA: fat
SUBJECT: Chou En-lai Demarche re Korea.

DATE: Oct. 3, 1950

OFFICE OF CHINESE AFFAIRS
OCT 6 1950
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Re the morning's developments, the following points seem of passing interest, although their significance is unclear:

- 1) Chou made his demarche to Pannikar, instead of directly to either UN or USA;
- 2) South Korean forces are put into a different category from UN forces - is the purport of this differentiation good or bad?
- 3) USSR did not take a joint stand, but is known to be in the background - is the move to support USSR UN "peace plan" or would Chinese intervention lead to USSR intervention through Feb 14 alliance?
- 4) The move, if not made publicly, cannot be viewed with certainty as pure bluff, in the light of parallel Chinese and Soviet interest in the area, recent public announcements, and the disposition of military forces.

Of major interest in this connection may be The Hague's telegram No. 483, October 2 quoting Stricker as saying that (he) "had received absolutely authentic source he not at liberty disclose, report which appeared indicate to him Chinese Comms preparing major military move."

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 8212001
By Mel NARA Date 3/20/01

CA:ORGLUBB:ee

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I would greatly appreciate any indication from Professor Chen on how he would respond, in a fair and comprehensive way, to Professor Brazinsky's question about the "timing" of Mao's draft telegram of October 2 and the "nature of the discussions" at the Central Committee Secretariat meeting in that afternoon. These are by no means trivial questions. The reply to these questions is directly relevant to the assessments of the intentions of Zhou's urgent message to the Truman administration on October 3, 1950, and to the historical lessons one might learn from the US-China military confrontation in the time of crisis.

All the above profoundly different views, I believe, are an integral part of normal and necessary academic discussions and debates. These very different interpretations are essential to the vitality and development of the field of diplomatic history and international relations, and particularly important to the study of how to minimize the chance of war and maximize the opportunity for peace in U.S.-China diplomacy.

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