



Chinese Help to Restore the Kuznetsov

OE Watch Commentary: Much has been written over the past several years regarding the improved relations between Russia and China, particularly in the military realm. This relationship became ever more important for the Kremlin leadership after its aggression against Ukraine and subsequent sanctions from Western countries. Having been restricted from accessing key markets in the west, Russia has increasingly looked east for trade and the acquisition of essential products. The accompanying excerpt from the *Colonel Cassad* blog site describes how China plans to provide Russia with both the necessary equipment and personnel expertise to help repair Russia's sole, much beleaguered aircraft carrier, Admiral Kuznetsov.



The Admiral Kuznetsov in 2012.

Source: Mil.ru via Wikimedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Admiral_Kuznetsov_aircraft_carrier.jp,g CCA 4.0 Intl

As described last month (see: “No Dock for the Kuznetsov?” *OE Watch*, May 2020), Russian plans to construct a new dock to repair this carrier have run aground, and as the excerpt points out, “Russia is powerless to change this situation [on its own], since the design and construction of an aircraft carrier is a very complex process, and Russia does not have auxiliary equipment and even modern shipyards.” Enter China. The article describes how “Russia has ordered a 1,000-ton gantry crane and an 800-ton crane in China, and China will also send appropriate technical personnel to participate in the construction of the Russian shipyard.”

While there is no mention of what this assistance will cost, the article does suggest that China is not about to make such a gift, pointing out that “it’s better to teach a person how to fish than just give him one.” The article concludes with rich hyperbole regarding the brotherly warmth between the two countries, asserting that this deal “also allows Russia to understand the correct choice of China as a partner,” and that “relations between China and Russia are a bit like gentlemen’s relations - simple and pragmatic.” One comment from a Russian helps to balance such hyperbole: “China has no partners, only satellites. Partnership is only between equals.” **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)**

“China’s actions show its sincerity, and this also allows Russia to understand the correct choice of China as a partner...”

Source: “Понять правильность выбора Китая в качестве партнера (Understand the correct choice of China as a partner),” *Colonel Cassad* blog, 14 May 2020. <https://colonelcassad.livejournal.com/5867053.html#cutid1>

The Chinese boast that they will help Russia with the equipment and personnel for the new Russian shipyard, where large-capacity ships are to be built. At a crucial moment, China gave Russia a generous gift. The Russian Navy is very pleased. It is worth making friends with such a partner....

...The Russian Navy has not received new warships for a long time. The only aircraft carrier, Admiral Kuznetsov, was damaged and cannot be used during operations. Therefore, under the double pressure of external concerns and internal problems, Russia began to actively cooperate with China, trying to turn the tide. The giant energy agreements reached between China and Russia last year are of great importance for Russia’s economic development.

As you know, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Navy inherited only one aircraft carrier - Admiral Kuznetsov. Today, this already insufficiently powerful veteran cannot satisfy the needs of the Russian Navy at all. Russia is powerless to change this situation [on its own], since the design and construction of an aircraft carrier is a very complex process, and Russia does not have auxiliary equipment and even modern shipyards.

However, at present, Russia has ordered a 1,000-ton gantry crane and an 800-ton crane in China, and China will also send appropriate technical personnel to participate in the construction of the Russian shipyard. As the old proverb says: “It’s better to teach a person how to fish than just give him one.” At the same time, China’s actions show its sincerity, and this also allows Russia to understand the correct choice of China as a partner.

In fact, relations between China and Russia are a bit like gentlemen’s relations - simple and pragmatic. We cannot ignore each other’s real difficulties. This year marks 70 years since the establishment of Sino-Russian diplomatic relations. I hope that through the joint efforts of the two countries the world can become more peaceful and stable in the new year!

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