

October 1, 1968

Conversation Between Mao Zedong and Beqir Balluku

Citation:

"Conversation Between Mao Zedong and Beqir Balluku", October 1, 1968, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Chinese Communist Party Central Archives (CCA)
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/111239>

Summary:

In a conversation between Mao Zedong and Beqir Balluku, they changed views towards the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the revisionists of Soviet Union, and its invasion of Bulgaria.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Mao Zedong: We have not seen each other for quite a while. When did we meet the last time? Did Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping also attend one of our meetings?

Balluku: That was in 1964. The last time I met with you was in February 1967, that is, twenty months ago. I came together with Comrade Kapo.

Mao Zedong: Oh, yes. At that time, all under the heaven was great chaos, and the working class had just been mobilized.

Balluku: Now you have realized your own strategic plans. At that time, you told me and Kapo that the Cultural Revolution was facing two possibilities, success or failure, and that the problem concerning which path [socialism or capitalism] would overwhelm the other had not been solved. But now this great revolution has achieved great victory.

Mao Zedong: Now the working class dominates everything in the major cities. In most areas in the countryside, the peasants occupy a dominant position too. In the past, until the first half of this year, the students were the vanguards of the revolutionary movement, but now they have lagged behind.

Balluku: Yesterday, our delegation visited the Beijing Textile Knitting Plant. There a cadre who had committed mistakes in the past used his personal experience to give us a vivid introduction, which for me was a good lesson of class education. He had committed mistakes, and originally was not convinced by the criticism of the masses. But later he not only accepted the criticism of the masses, but also recognized and corrected his mistakes.

Mao Zedong: How is he now?

Balluku: He has been elected vice chairman of the factory's Revolutionary Committee. The revolutionary masses helped him with Marxist-Leninist patience. In our country, a Revolutionization Movement is now under way. We should educate our cadres and expose the bad elements. Some traitors and rich peasants have penetrated our state agencies. A revolutionization movement like this one will provide good education to the youth.

Mao Zedong: Many young people have not lived a bitter life. (Mao pointed to the interpreter) The Foreign Ministry has been divided into two factions. The one headed by Wang Zhongqi is an ultra-leftist faction, and has been strongly influenced by anarchism. (Pointing to the interpreter) He stood at the middle at that time and did not stand on the side of Wang Zhongqi's ultra-leftist faction. Even among that faction, ultra-leftists were only a small minority, and the majority can be won over to the correct side. The Foreign Ministry is a big department, with more than 3,000 people working there. Intellectuals are piled up there.

Balluku: The ministry should be downsized in the future.

Mao Zedong: Downsize it by ninety percent.

Balluku: In the Soviet Union there emerged the Khrushchev revisionism. This is a bad thing, but revolutionary communists in various countries have learned a lesson from it.

Mao Zedong: In a historical sense this is only a temporary phenomenon.

Balluku: During such turmoil, it is surprising that no significant [anti-revisionist] activities exist within the Soviet Union.

Mao Zedong: There are some small organizations, and they are secret organizations. It is true that the Soviet Union is bad, but it can still provide material supplies [to its people]. For example, it does not have enough food, but it can buy from abroad. Unless a famine erupts there, the people there will not rebel. Another example is France, a capitalist and imperialist country. Although a big rebellion movement emerged there in May this year, it did not stop providing material supplies to the people. It is difficult to try to overthrow a government under such circumstances.

Balluku: Will your Party soon convene a national congress?

Mao Zedong: Yes. We need to sum up our work and elect a new central leadership.

Balluku: The comrades at the Textile Knitting Plant also introduced us to the problem of rectifying the Party organizations.

Mao Zedong: All factories must go through reforms. All people's communes, schools, and party and government organs must go through reforms. We should mobilize the masses. For a department as large as the Foreign Ministry, with 3,000 people working there, nothing can be done without mobilizing the masses. Among the ambassadors we dispatched to your country, two are bad. We did not know this in the past. One issued an anti-Communist statement in the newspaper, and the other, though no evidence to show that he had issued such a statement, surrendered to the enemy. They have not just committed mistakes; their problems belong to the category of the contradiction between ourselves and the enemy.

Balluku: As far as those who have committed mistakes are concerned, as you have taught us, we should save them by curing their disease. "Cure the disease and save the person." But we certainly should not do the same thing toward the enemy. When the masses have been mobilized, everything is easy to handle. This is your genius teaching: We must trust the masses.

Mao Zedong: We have no other choice. Because they will not listen to us, but they will have to listen to the masses. The Bulgarian news agency, in negating so-called "rumors," claimed that no [Soviet] foreign troops were stationed on Bulgarian territory. But our embassy has learned that foreign troops are there.

Balluku: We have intelligence reports to prove that Soviet troops are stationed on Bulgarian territory. The Italian ambassador to Bulgaria revealed to us that the Soviet Union has nine to ten airborne divisions in Bulgaria.

Mao Zedong: That many?

Balluku: Yes. Because these are airborne divisions, each with 3,000 to 4,000 soldiers, the total number of soldiers is between 35,000-40,000. They also have missile units stationed on Bulgaria's naval and air bases. The Soviet troops are wearing Bulgarian uniforms.

Mao Zedong: For what purposes does the Soviet Union send troops to Bulgaria?

Balluku: First, the situation in Bulgaria is not stable, and great chaos exists in Bulgaria. The Soviets know that Zhivkov is without authority. They thus are afraid that he will collapse, and that the leftists will take the power. They are also afraid that a pro-Western, Dub...ek-style revisionist may seize power. Second, they claim that they are there to prevent the North Atlantic Treaty Organization from attacking

Bulgaria. But now there is no sign for such an attack, and no such possibility exists.

Mao Zedong: Even Tito becomes quite nervous. Yugoslavia thus becomes our indirect ally. It has problems with the Soviet Union, and we must utilize the contradiction between them. If we include the Romanians and Dub...ek, East European countries are now divided into two groups. The Soviet Union occupied Czechoslovakia by using force, and many in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and East Germany are not satisfied with it. They do not support the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Balluku: Yes. Even among the [Soviet] occupation forces there are many problems. Between the commanding officers and the soldiers there are problems. Now the Soviet Union sends soldiers from such Soviet republics as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan who do not speak Russian to Czechoslovakia to take over defenses there. At present Yugoslavia is strengthening its border defense against Bulgaria, preventing the Soviet troops from attacking the territory of Yugoslavia from Macedonia.