

July 7, 1970

Discussion between Mao Zedong and Kaysone Phomvihane

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Summary:

Mao Zedong meets with members of the Laotian People's Revolutionary Party and gives them his support.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

MAO ZEDONG AND KAYSONE PHOMVIHANE^[1]

Beijing, The Great Hall of the People, 3-4 p.m., 7 July 1970

Kaysone Phomvihane: During our delegation's visit to China, we have reported the situation in Laos to the Chinese party. According to the new situation at the current time, we have formulated a plan for the struggle in the coming three years. The purpose of this plan is to promote further our struggle of resisting America and saving our country, in order to pursue even greater victories.

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Mao Zedong: After fighting for so many years, do you feel short of manpower and material power?

Kaysone Phomvihane: We are short of a few things.

Mao Zedong: What are they?

Kaysone Phomvihane: For example, in terms of manpower, when we want to recruit new soldiers there are very few available. Because we have inadequate manpower, we also encounter difficulties when we try to organize production. We also have difficulties in improving our production to serve the need of the front lines, and to improve the quality of life of the masses.

Mao Zedong: It seems that the war will be prolonged.

Kaysone Phomvihane: This is also the result of our analysis. It is very possible that the war will be prolonged. This is because the imperialists are very stubborn, and their military and economic potential are also very strong. Although the war will be prolonged, we are determined to continue the fighting.

Mao Zedong: This is fine. When you encounter difficulties, you need to have determination. There is nothing more serious than difficulties, lack of manpower, and lack of materials.

Kaysone Phomvihane: What Chairman Mao has said is right. Our difficulties are the ones emerging in pursuing victory whereas the difficulties facing the U.S. imperialists and their running dogs are ones leading to defeat.

Mao Zedong: Yes. Last time I mentioned to you whether or not you could organize an army to fight in Thailand. This is because the Thais attacked you. If you can attack me, why cannot I attack you?

Kaysone Phomvihane: I have clearly remembered these words of Chairman Mao's.

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Mao Zedong: What is he [Mao points to Sisavat^[2]] doing?

Kaysone Phomvihane: He is the chief of the general staff of our army.

Mao Zedong: You are in charge of fighting. Do you know our chief of general staff Comrade Huang Yongsheng?

Sisavat: I met Comrade Huang Yongsheng during my last visit to China. The relationship between us is very close.

Mao Zedong: That is not necessarily reliable. Is it true that our support to them is not enough?

Zhou Enlai: We have satisfied all the requests they have put forward. Now the main problem is the difficulty involved in transportation.

Mao Zedong: Haven't we constructed a road?

Zhou Enlai: It has not been fully completed.

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Mao Zedong: The world has changed. This has also been proved as far as Laos is concerned. Imperialism has dug the grave for itself. Its purpose is to occupy more territory, and it will find more people to bury it. We have experience [in this regard]. For example, Japan had occupied more than half of China, many places. Except for Sichuan and several other provinces, all had been occupied by it. Consequently it helped us. The common people all rose to resist it. At the time of its surrender, the number of our troops had passed one million. When the war against Japan began, we had only 20,000 troops. The Japanese have educated the Chinese. Then the Americans helped Jiang Jieshi to attack us. After Japan's surrender, Jiang Jieshi signed a peace agreement with us. But when he had completed the preparations, he began to use force to attack us. Therefore, we do not quite believe in such things as treaties and signatures. There are some reasons there. For example, there is no treaty between our two sides, and we have not signed anything, but we mean what we have said. The imperialists, including America's running dog Prince Souvanna Phouma, do not quite mean what they have said. Something, such as organizing a coalition government, is fine. But you need to prepare for something else. The purpose of organizing a coalition government is to destroy the coalition government.

Kaysone Phomvihane: That is correct.

Mao Zedong: A permanent coalition government? There is no reason to believe in it.

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Mao Zedong: In Vietnam, or in Cambodia, or in Thailand, or in Burma, it is all like this. Now the guerrilla forces in Burma and Thailand have achieved some development, although their scale is not large. The guerrilla force is a school for training cadres. The capitalist class will never train cadres for us.

Kaysone Phomvihane: What Chairman Mao has said is right.

Mao Zedong: The military forces of it [the capitalist class] want to eliminate us. That is fine, and we will fight. If you want to fight, you need to have a military force, and this force is capable of training cadres [for you]. We should make it clear that we need the people and we need the soldiers for the military force. But the people and the soldiers need the leadership of the cadres, and without the leadership they are dispersed.

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Mao Zedong: In history, wars have never ended. I told Comrade Le Duan the last time I met him that it seemed to me that our world was not so peaceful. The imperialists are still making trouble in the world. In my opinion, the people in various countries, including those in the imperialist countries, are about to rise. Some are making pacifist movements; some are fighting guerrilla wars; some are considering problems; but there are still many others who are yet to be awakened. Who believes that there have been the [Russian] October Revolution, the Chinese revolution, the Vietnamese revolution, and the Laotian revolution, and no revolution will happen in other places? That is impossible.

Lin Biao: Wherever there is oppression and exploitation, there is revolution.

Mao Zedong: If no revolution is to happen in other places, that means that Marxism-Leninism is out of date. Lenin said that imperialism is dying capitalism. Otherwise we will need to change it so that imperialism is rising capitalism. The imperialists do not feel so comfortable. Can you say that Nixon feels so comfortable?

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Mao Zedong: For economic and military [matters], you can talk to these people [who are sitting here].

Kaysone Phomvihane: Let us report to Chairman Mao, the economic aid group and the military aid group have done their job. We have met with them and have had very good discussions. In the face of the new situation at the current time, we also request that the Chinese Communist Party strengthen the support and aid to us.

Mao Zedong: Yes, so long as you request. But you must request, otherwise who will know it?

Kaysone Phomvihane: Yes, we have put forward the request.

Mao Zedong: You have made the request, there are ways to resolve it. You certainly can talk to them. You do not need to be nervous. (laughs and points to Qiu Huizuo) They are now making revolution.

Kang Sheng: In the economic respect, with Comrade Li Qiang in charge, basically the problems have been resolved. As far as the requests they have put forward, so long as we have what they need, and so long as we are in a position to help, basically the problems can be resolved.

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Kaysone Phomvihane: We are very happy to meet Chairman Mao today. The Chairman has discussed many important problems with us today, including problems concerning the Laotian revolution and problems concerning the world revolution. These words of Chairman Mao are of great importance in directing our revolutionary struggles.

[1] Kaysone Phomvihane (1920-1992), General Secretary of the Laotian People's Revolutionary Party (the Communist party of Laos) from its formation in 1955 until his death. On the Laotian side, participants in this conversation included Sisavat, Saman Vignakhet, Khampang; on the Chinese side, participants included Lin Biao, Zhou Enlai, Kang Sheng, Huang Yongsheng, Qiu Huizuo, deputy chief of staff and head of the PLA General Logistics Department, and Sheng Jian, deputy head of the CCP CC External Liaison Department.

[2] Sisavat Keobounphan, later vice-president of Laos.