

May 12, 1957

Brief Summary of Conversation between Comrade Mao Zedong and the Delegation of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Albania

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Summary:

Comrade Mao mentioned that the communism belief closely united western and eastern countries in the socialist camp, and the Asian, African and Arab states are our allies in the war against imperialism. Comrade Rita answered Mao's questions about Albania's domestic situation, such as religion and domestic consumptions. Mao also depicted Chinese ancient tale the Monkey King to Rita, explaining the revolution situation in China.

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After inquiring about the timing of the delegation's arrival in China, comrade Mao asked whether the delegation was tired from the journey. He then expressed pleasure that the delegation had made this trip, and finally noted that we [the Albanians] are expected with open arms in China and should feel at home here.

Comrade Rita [Marko]: We are very pleased to be visiting your country and do feel at home here.

Comrade Mao: Of course, in the Western countries we are referred to as Eastern countries but even within the socialist camp-within our camp-there are western and eastern countries endowed with different characteristics, mores, and languages. However, they are all united by one essential trait-communism-so that we all speak one common language, whereas in the capitalist countries, like England, America, France, and so on, they do not have a common language such as this.

They-the capitalists-are afraid from our cause and the road of the construction of socialism and communism, so they try to divide us. Do you have representatives of the Western states in your country?

Comrade Rita explains [Albania's] diplomatic and trade relations with Western countries and especially with the Arab states.

Comrade Mao: These latter ones, meaning the Arab states, are better than the former ones, like France, Austria, and Italy.

The representatives of the Western states often try to get useful information from us. They are always trying to fish for something, but this never works with us; we are not fooled by them.

The world will undergo changes, and as far as Albania is concerned, if Italy will undergo changes, this would be a good thing, just as it is good for us when Japan undergoes changes, because both of our countries share a sea with these countries. There are hopes for Italy; the Italian Communist Party is very powerful.

Do you have relations with the Italian Communist Party and Togliatti?[1]

Comrade Rita explains that we have normal relations with the Italian Communist Party and that leading cadres from that Party have visited our country and that we have also invited comrade Togliatti to pay a visit. A Society for Albanian-Italian friendship exists in Italy, under the guidance of the Italian Communist Party. Additionally, we maintain ties and good contacts with parties in the Arab countries.

Comrade Mao: The Asian and African states constitute the allied armies of our countries. Our countries as well as the Western states-all of us-try to attract these states to our side. These states are non-aligned and they boast massive populations, but they are joining our side, which means that our camp is becoming greater and more powerful than the capitalist states. The Arab states are not really all that different from us; they are nationalists, which is to say that they are our allies in the war against imperialism, and this is the reason why the imperialists try to break this unity.

Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Syria, South Vietnam, South Korea, Taiwan and Japan are under the influence of the Americans, but despite this fact, Japan will break away from them.

What plans do you have for your visit in our country? Of course, it must last around fifty days, or at the very least one month.

Comrade Rita: We will arrange this.

Comrade Mao: Of course this must be arranged because our country has enough to feed you; we have everything here except for the birds you hunt in Shkodër.[2] We say that we have everything here except for the eastern winds...This is a popular expression from the past...

We have everything in our country, and all the conditions exist here but the only thing we do not have is oil. I have heard that you have oil in your country - this pleases me. The cultural level in our country is also low. We ask that you help us in the realm of propaganda, so that we may build our industries.

The imperialists castigate us and they do not want to have trade relations with us. They try to impede the development of our industries, but the Soviet Union assists us without reservations, in addition to the other socialist countries. And we will be building our industries over the next 100 years.

Comrade Rita: Sooner.

Comrade Mao: In any case, even if we subtract 50 years from that, we will most certainly need 50 years. How old are you, comrade Rita? (He answers: 37) Then you will be able to see this for yourself.

Comrade Mao asked about the health of comrades Enver and Mehmet and said that he had had heartfelt conversations with them, that they are very good comrades.

Comrade Rita speaks on the backward state of [Albanian] agriculture and the assistance granted by the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. The exchange of delegations will be necessary in the future as well.

Comrade Mao: The exchange of delegations will indeed be important in the future. We used to be poor, but even the poor have good things to offer. We have the party; we carried out the revolution.

There is no revolution in the American states because they are wealthier but they are not very revolutionary, therefore Western Europe will not make much progress politically, because their standard of living is better. We will make progress politically and this will be thanks to the revolution we carried out.

The Asian and African states are populous but they are very poor because they have been exploited by the imperialists, therefore they uniformly oppose capitalism. The time will come when the wealthy will not stand anymore because the poor will overthrow them, so poverty has many good sides to it, but one must emphasize that we must build socialism for a better life, to build our industry, because only then we will be capable of taking measures to defend ourselves, to successfully mount resistance against the imperialists.

Take, for example, the United Nations Organization, which they have under control,

and where they have the majority of votes. It would be better if the Soviet Union and China turn more of these states over to our side so that we have more votes (laughs).

Comrade Rita speaks on the latest's conversations with the Soviet party and state delegation, on the assistance that they have granted by forgiving credits and issuing new ones, technical assistance, assistance with fisheries and hunting, and so on.

Comrade Mao asks whether the Albanians eat a lot of fish. (Receives a response.) He goes on to say that the Albanian side should catch more fish in order to export it, and that instead of eating other kinds of meat, they should consume more fish. Maybe even by telling people that it is actually chicken (laughs).

After inquiring about the religious beliefs of the Albanian people, says: Then, it seems that you have many gods. In Suez, two gods fought against one another. The Egyptian one is a more progressive one.

We too have a god of the heavens in our country, but it seems that he has too large a bureaucracy. At one point there was a revolution there too - one of our legends says so.

One time the Monkey King objected to the king of the heavens, and god captured him. After a while, the Monkey King went into exile, just as Lenin went into exile from the Tsar. The celestial soldiers often face difficulties, just like the soldiers of Jiang Jieshi, and just like the celestial soldiers were defeated, the imperialists will be defeated-like the heavenly god was defeated by the Monkey God (that is to say, by the people, by the revolution). So there is hope that the industry will be developed, that the life of the people will be improved, and that the imperialists will be weakened. There are Monkey Gods everywhere-we have them and you do too.

The tsar was defeated by the October revolution, by the people, and there was nothing the imperialists could do to bring him back.

The stronger we become, the better it will be. If there won't be another war during this century, our camp will grow much stronger. The Asian and African states would unite with us (the Monkey Kings) and the people would overthrow the tsars.

Comrade Rita explains that our people and party have learned a great deal from the Chinese revolution and that the Albanians learn everyday from the rich Chinese experience. Our people now make better calculations-they are not alone because they have powerful friends like the Soviet Union, China, and the whole socialist camp.

Comrade Mao: Small states sometimes win over big ones; they succeed over those better armed, and the weak overcome the strong. We had nothing but our own two hands whereas those who had the weapons, like Jiang Jieshi, who wanted to kill us, they lacked the courage. We fought hard and we won. We did not have a single airplane, whereas Jiang Jieshi had hundreds of them. We are strong now. In Korea, the Americans had far more weapons than our forces. One of their divisions had 800 artillery guns; one of our armies had 50. They ruled the sky; we fought only on land but despite this, the Americans saw only defeat. They got really angry and accused us of being sneaky. They are striving to keep us out of the United Nations and they do not want to conduct trade with us. They accuse us of being aggressors.

They fear us greatly but we also fear them a little bit-we do not want war. They have fear because they also have contradictions amongst themselves.

I concur with the plan of your visit here. You are far ahead of me because you will see

some places that I have not yet seen.

We had a good conversation, in a friendly atmosphere.

[1] Trans. note-Palmiro Togliatti (1893-1964), leader of the Italian Communist Party.

[2] Trans. note-One of Albania's main cities, located in the north of the country.