

June 2, 1966

**Minutes of Conversation between Nicolae Ceaușescu
and the Shah of Iran, Bucharest**

Citation:

"Minutes of Conversation between Nicolae Ceaușescu and the Shah of Iran, Bucharest", June 2, 1966, Wilson Center Digital Archive, ANIC, CC RCP, FRS. Contributed and translated by Roham Alvandi and Eliza Gheorghe, and included in CWIHP Working Paper, "The Shah's Petro-Diplomacy with Ceaușescu" (2014).
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/119596>

Summary:

During a visit to Bucharest in June 1966 Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi told Ceaușescu that the 'small powers' in the international system must try to 'get along' in order to allow the superpowers to 'cut down on the responsibilities they took upon themselves intentionally or not, wisely or not.'

Original Language:

Romanian

Contents:

Translation - English

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[exchange of pleasantries]

The Shah: I would add that this sort of amiable relations between my country and your country, despite the fact that they have different political regimes, but having [as a basis] such principles as [mutual] understanding between people to serve the cause of peace, humanity, to improve economic and social [life] and civilization in general, will contribute to an even better understanding between all people which are motivated by the same feelings [as us]. This would help both great powers as well as small powers, it would enable them to consolidate their independence in a world of peace, security, and mutual respect.

I would even go further to say that if small powers got along, then the tasks of superpowers would be even easier, allowing them to cut down on the responsibilities they took upon themselves intentionally or not, wisely or not, and this would give an opportunity to all countries to live peacefully.

[...]

The Shah: There are some events in the Middle East which provide food for thought.

For us, the essential thing is peace. Maybe it is selfish of us, because we are a country which has a future, we are rich, especially in the area of human resources, our people are good, hard-working. That is why all we want is the opportunity to develop our country.

We were talking earlier about the responsibilities that some powers take upon themselves for the sake of our peoples. But sometimes we see smaller countries which claim to take certain decisions and resolutions regarding the fate of other small countries. This is why it never ends.

I think that in this respect too, the principle which should prevail is that of the opportunity for all countries to express themselves freely.

This arms race in our region is ridiculous. They are depriving themselves of everything else just to buy or produce weapons, which by the time they are produced, are already obsolete, and they spend huge amounts of money on subversive operations, instead of using these resources to improve the standard of living of our peoples. And, despite our good faith, precisely because of UN's inaction, we must also think of our future.

In addition to the wisdom of the leaders and peoples in these regions, the only means I see as effective is the UN authority.

[...]

Nicolae Ceaușescu: I would like to tell you that we can agree with you on many of the issues you brought up.

Of course, the Vietnam [War] must eventually be solved politically. But this, of course, means that the Vietnamese people are allowed to solve their own issues, and that no foreign troops are stationed in Vietnam. Whatever regime the Vietnamese choose, it is their own issue. Even if they eventually choose the socialist path, you

saw that it is not so bad, because [in effect] socialists takes care that the people in question [enjoy a better life]. Of course, others think other forms [of government] are necessary. This is their own business.

Maybe China's accession to the UN would indeed solve many problems. I think you are right, but let's help [China] join the UN. In this case, I can say that small countries should demonstrate their ability [to solve] this thing. They form a majority at the UN, and they could achieve this. We previously supported [the matter of China's accession to the UN] and we are thinking about re-iterating this issue at this year's session. Isolating China does not help strengthen peace. Of course, I do not share your views on the attack on India, because, according to the information we had, things were not [really] like you said they were and those who launched the attack were not the ones you indicated - but this is not an issue we should discuss now. But China's accession to the UN would be extremely important, of course, and this is a topic to which we could contribute. Whenever someone is isolated, it is forced into a position of distrust towards others, and of course things will not go according to plan. So, of course, it would be very good, it would be in the interest of peace if we could achieve China's accession to the UN.

Regarding the matter of [military] blocs, as you know, we do not really like them. We believe they are obsolete and in time, they will be dismantled. But they will not disappear on their own. We must all take action in this respect, especially to build trust between nations, so as to eliminate distrust, and fear. And then these blocs will increasingly look like something which is no longer needed. Of course, we have no illusions about dismantling NATO and the Warsaw Pact tomorrow, but by developing relations between countries in Europe, for instance, by developing trust among them, we believe we'll achieve [their dismantling]. And this is valid for other continents as well, for other blocs, and in this respect, through our developing relations, we believe we are contributing toward bringing about the right circumstances [for the disappearance of military blocs].

The problem of illiteracy is indeed a very serious one. Of course, advanced countries can help poor countries. But they are not very generous. Ultimately, it depends on each people to solve its problems as it sees fit. Twenty years ago, 60% of [our] population was illiterate. We undertook great efforts to get rid of this problem. I couldn't say that we receive foreign aid to eliminate this state of affairs.

Ion Gheorghe Maurer (Prime Minister): Not even morally.

Nicolae Ceaușescu: Morally, everybody pitied us. Of course, this is also important, although pity is not enough, work must be done.

When we talked to various African countries, we told them that the problem of development cannot be solved other than through the development of internal production forces. There are some who started with stadiums, palaces; this does not help at all. Without industry, without agriculture, one cannot even eliminate illiteracy, and in general, we cannot speak of civilization, as life itself proved.

We are still exporting raw materials, also to your country, as we receive little money for them. This depends very much on each country. Of course, countries must provide each other with assistance [when they need it], and we agreed with this, and at the conference which took place in Iran we supported this position so that developing countries are being provided aid to expedite finding a solution to very difficult problems, but, indeed, ultimately, it depends on each country.

The same applies to the problem of famine. Many countries afflicted by famine have so many riches that, if used properly, would result in quickly finding a solution to

these problems, but in today's world, there is not much assistance being given to solve these problems. The Americans are providing a lot of weapons, others are also providing weapons.

Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Others give advice.

Nicolae Ceaușescu: But the problem cannot be solved this way. Only peaceful, collaborative relations can help solve the problem.

I could say that it seems that our countries share many views; we have very similar views on many international issues and we could, indeed, help solve some problems, without having any illusions that we could change the situation, but we could help.

[...]