

June 21, 1975

**Conversation Record of Chairman Mao Zedong's
Meeting with Pol Pot, Secretary of the Central
Committee of the Communist Party of Kampuchea**

Citation:

"Conversation Record of Chairman Mao Zedong's Meeting with Pol Pot, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kampuchea", June 21, 1975, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Song Yongyi, ed., Zhongguo wenhua dageming wenku (Chinese Cultural Revolution Database), 3rd ed. (Hong Kong: Universities Service Centre for Chinese Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2013). Translated by Caixia Lu. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/122052>

Summary:

This records contains the full transcript of the talks between Mao and Pol Pot (an excerpt was originally published in CWIHP Working Paper #22, '77 Conversations between Chinese and Foreign Leaders on the Wars in Indochina'). Mao Zedong muses on the nature of the struggle between the capitalist and socialist forces within China. He tells Pol Pot not to blindly follow the Chinese model, but adopt Marxist theory to the Cambodian realities.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Henry Luce Foundation

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Conversation Record of Chairman Mao Zedong's Meeting with Pol Pot, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kampuchea
[Not Reviewed by Chairman Mao]

Time and Date: 21 June, 1975, 5.15pm to 6.20pm

Venue: Zhongnanhai

Participants:

Cambodia—leng Sary, Member of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kampuchea [CPK]; Ming Shan, Member of the CPK Central Committee and Minister of Armaments [of the GRUNK]; Du Mu, Member of the CPK Central Committee; Peng, Member of the CPK Central Committee. [\[1\]](#)

China—Deng Xiaoping

Interpreters: Xie Yue'e, Qi Zonghua

Minutes: Wang Hairong, Tang Wensheng

[Chairman Mao shakes Secretary Pol Pot's hand warmly]

Secretary Pol Pot: My respects for Chairman Mao!

Chairman Mao: Welcome!

Pol Pot: Thank you!

Chairman Mao: VERY WELCOME! [Mao says "very welcome" in English]

Pol Pot: We are very happy to be able to meet the great leader Chairman Mao here today.

[Chairman Mao shakes hands with leng Sary]

Chairman Mao: [Raises two fingers] This is the second time we meet!

leng Sary: I wish Chairman Mao a long life!

Chairman Mao: [pointing to the Cambodians] LONG LIVE YOU! [Mao says "long live you" in English]

[Chairman Mao shakes hands with Ming Shan]

Ming Shan: Chairman Mao is an excellent leader [Chairman Mao waves his hand]

[Chairman Mao shakes hands with Du Mu]

Du Mu: My respects for Chairman Mao!

[Chairman Mao shakes hands with Peng. The guests take their seats]

Chairman Mao: My eyes are not good, my legs are not good either and I can't speak properly. I can't do it anymore, I will have to depend on you!

Pol Pot: We are very glad to do so, we are very happy to meet the Chairman.

Chairman Mao: Your fighting, WAR [Mao says “war” in English], political, military, economic, foreign policies and the united front—I won’t talk about it. [Referring to Deng Xiaoping] I agree with what he says, he said you were right.

Pol Pot: Thank you. It warms our hearts to hear the Chairman say so.

Chairman Mao: We approve of what you do. Much of your experience is better than ours. China is not qualified to criticize you. We committed errors of the political lines for ten times in fifty years—some are national, some are regional (The mistakes made by) Chen Duxiu, Qu Qiubai, Li Lisan, and Luo Zhanglong had nothing to do with the Soviet Union. (Those made by) Wang Ming, Zhang Guotao, Gao Gang, Peng Dehuai, Liu Shaoqi, and Lin Biao involved the Soviet Union. They opposed us and divided the party, but they all failed. The party remained undivided and they were excluded. Thus I say that China has no qualification to criticize you, and can only agree with you. You are basically correct. I am not sure whether you have any shortcoming. There are bound to some and you’ll rectify by yourself. RECTIFICATION [Mao says “rectification” in English]. I won’t talk about all these. Let this fellow surnamed Deng do it. [Laughters]

There is one point I’d like to talk about. Currently you are on the transition from democratic revolution to the socialist way. SOCIALIST WAY [Mao says “socialist way” in English]. There are two possible outcomes: one is socialism, the other is capitalism. We are still struggling between the two possible outcomes now. Wang Ming, Zhang Guotao, Gao Gang, Peng Dehuai, Liu Shaoqi, and Lin Biao—they wanted to build capitalism. In the next 50 or 100 years, there will still be a struggle between these two lines. In the next ten thousand years, there will still be a struggle between the two. Even when Communism is achieved, there will still be a struggle between the two. Otherwise we aren’t Marxists. The unity of opposites, UNITY OF OPPOSITES [Mao says “unity of opposites” in English]. If we only talk about one, that’s metaphysics; if we talk about two, then it’s the UNITY OF OPPOSITES [Mao says “unity of opposites” in English], STRUGGLE OF OPPOSITES [Mao says “struggle of opposites” in English]. I believe in what Marx and Lenin said.

The road is winding. Lenin’s Soviet Union changed under Khrushchev and Brezhnev. In future, it will still return to the Lenin’s path. The same goes for China. It could become revisionist in the future, but eventually it will follow the path set by Marx and Lenin.

We are now a capitalist country without capitalists, as said by Lenin. This country wants to protect the legal rights of the capitalist classes. People’s wages are not equal. It perpetuates unequal systems under the guise of slogans of egalitarianism. That’s what we are like right now and this will continue for many years before we achieve Communism. Communism will also have two lines of struggle, and the struggles between the progressive and the backward. We can’t talk about it comprehensively as yet. These are what we openly say in the newspapers.

That’s all I have to say.

Pol Pot: We are very honored to be able to pay our respects to Chairman Mao here today. We have always respected Chairman Mao and learned from your works. Your writings have guided our revolution until we achieved a nationwide victory. We are able to meet Chairman Mao in person today and hear Chairman Mao talk about the issue of the lines. This is a very important and strategic issue. We will be sure to do as you say from now on. I studied many of Chairman Mao’s works from a young age, particularly your work on the people’s war. Chairman Mao’s works guided our entire party while we were engaged in the political and military struggles. We made use of it in our actual struggle and achieved results. When our struggles entered the most

difficult stage , we studied the work The Struggle in the Jinggang Mountains, and it steeled our resolve. We also paid close attention to the experience of the Chinese people led by Chairman Mao after China was liberated. We read articles talking about China's experience very closely. Chairman Mao's earlier comments on the issue of the line struggle...

Chairman Mao: Uh huh.

Pol Pot: We also study it within the party. We pay close attention to class struggle and line struggle. We will study and learn from the experience of China until we achieve the final victory.

Chairman Mao: Don't copy China's example completely. Master Shi said, whoever attempts to be like me will get sick. Master Shi is named Kumarajiva, living during the ear of the Southern and Northern Dynasties. He was a foreigner who could speak Chinese and he translated many Buddhist texts. We have to figure it out on our own. As Marx said, their teachings could only serve a guide and are not doctrines. Marx said so himself. Kumarajiva's words were quoted by a Chinese scholar called Yan Fu . Yan was a translator. This quotation is from (the introduction of) On Evolution translated by Yan. Yan said he was not "translating", but was "expressing the original texts elegantly," and that was what was he did for this book [referring to On Evolution]. But he translated literally the other works such as those about political economies. This was written by (Thomas Henry) Huxley, HUXLEY [Mao says "Huxley" in English]. He was British and a supporter of Darwin and called himself "Darwin's Bulldog." He came up with the idea of "agnosticism., German [philosopher Immanuel] Kant talked about agnosticism. Huxley said the agnosticism talked about by Kant, only knew what was on the surface but not the substance. He [note: referring to Huxley] was a materialist in his understanding of the natural sciences and idealist with regards to the social sciences. He endorsed Indian Buddhist philosophy. Thus Marx called him a "shamefaced materialist."

I've never said so much to other people on the things I've said to you.

Pol Pot: Thank you. This is a great honor to us. Chairman Mao has received us today and talked to us about so many things and given us a great deal of inspiration. It is a treasure trove for our party and people. Please allow us to express our deepest thanks once again.

Chairman Mao: Don't thank me. Thank Marx and Lenin. There are 30 works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, in big type, that I wish to gift to you. Marx and Lenin said it very well, better than myself.

Pol Pot: We are glad to receive them. We will study them very hard and apply them in accordance with the conditions in our country. We also want to continue learning Chairman Mao's works.

Chairman Mao: I am not satisfied with myself.

Alright, thank you!

Pol Pot: We are taking our leave. I wish Chairman Mao a long life! I represent our delegation, our party and all our fighters in wishing Chairman Mao longevity! Farewell!

Chairman Mao: Thank you.

Pol Pot: Goodbye!

Ieng Sary: I wish Chairman Mao good health!

[Chairman Mao shakes hands with the comrades of the Central Committee Members of the CPK]

[\[1\]](#) The names of the three CPK Central Committee members are in Pinyin. The Romanized names could not be identified.