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Conversation with Comrade Mao Zedong [and Beqir Balluku], on 1 October 1968 during the parades organized on the occasion of the 19th anniversary of liberation on Tiananmen

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The conversation took place between comrade Mao Zedong and comrade Beqir Balluku

Comrade Mao Zedong: We have not met in a while. When was the last time we met? As far as I can recall, we met in the presence of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. Is that correct?

Comrade Beqir Balluku: Yes, that meeting took place in 1964. Whereas our last meeting was in February of last year, so about 20 months ago. Comrade Hysni Kapo was also in that meeting. At the time, he was in China.

Comrade Mao Zedong: Yes, I remember. During that time we were undergoing a great deal of turbulence here. The working class had not yet risen to their feet.

Comrade Beqir Balluku: Your tactics and strategy worked out. The Proletarian Cultural Revolution is triumphing. I recall that at the time you told us that there were two possibilities—that the Revolution might triumph or end up in failure. At the time it was not yet clear which of the two lines would prevail. (Comrade Mao confirmed this.) But now this Revolution has achieved great victories.

Comrade Mao Zedong: Today, the working class in all of the major cities is fully in control over everyone. This also includes the overwhelming majority of rural provinces where the working peasant class is in charge.

Before this, up until the first six months of this year, the Revolution's vanguard consisted of students, but now they have been left behind.

Comrade Beqir Balluku: Yesterday, our delegation visited the textile combine in Beijing. One leading cadre there, who had made a number of mistakes, told us some interesting things. Although this individual had been in error for a long time, he refused the criticism of the masses. But the workers, who showed great Marxist-Leninist patience, helped him and he finally admitted his mistakes and is now showing improvement.

Comrade Mao Zedong: How is this cadre doing now?

Comrade Beqir Balluku: He has now been elected deputy chair of the revolutionary committee of the textile combine.

(Comrade Beqir spoke to comrade Mao about the work underway in Albania on the revolutionizing of life in the country and particularly on the education of youth in a revolutionary spirit.)

Comrade Mao Zedong: There were two groups in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A lot of young people worked there. They had not suffered much in the past.

(Turning to the translator, asked: Have you suffered? The translator responds that he has, and that he is of poor urban origin. His father died when he was 8 years old.)

In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there was the group of Wang Zhongqi, an ultra-leftist group, which had some major anarchist tendencies. The ultra-leftist

elements of this group were in minority, whereas the overwhelming majority of this group could be set on the right path.

In an institution like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which employs three thousand people, the intelligentsia is widespread.

Comrade Beqir Balluku: It ought to be cut down.

Comrade Mao Zedong: Yes, it ought to be, and we will cut it down by 90%.

(The translator explained that Wang Zhongqi is an employee at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who along with some of his friends enacted a kind of "rebellion" at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. Later, he turned to anarchism, encouraged by a great evil-doer, Wang Li, and attacked the proletarian staff. For a while, this group attacked the leadership of the Cultural Revolution in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After 1 September of last year, the group began losing power and its leadership has now been completely eliminated.)

Comrade Mao Zedong: The manifestation of revisionism in the Soviet Union is a temporary historical phenomenon.

In the Soviet Union, there are today some illegal Marxist groups. It must be said that the Soviets, despite the economic situation, which is not good, are able to furnish their masses with consumer goods, wheat, and so on. Even if they have a hard time to obtain these products domestically, they can import them. Except in the event of an environmental disaster, which might have an impact on the economy, there can be no rebellion there.

Let us take another example. France is a capitalist country. But in May of this year there was a great movement there, but this movement was not led by the party, and it did not encompass the masses. In these conditions, it is difficult to overthrow the bourgeoisie.

Comrade Beqir Balluku: Very true.

When do you plan to hold the 9th congress of the party? This would be an important event.

Comrade Mao Zedong: Yes, we will review our work and elect the leadership of the party and government.

Comrade Beqir Balluku: The comrades at the textile combine also spoke to us about the issue of the organization of the party.

Comrade Mao Zedong: There will be a transformation in all of our industrial enterprises, as well as in the people's communes, in schools, other institutions, and elsewhere. To effect this kind of transformation, the masses must be mobilized. In a ministry like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where there are three thousand people, if the masses do not mobilize, the problems cannot be solved.

Of the ambassadors we have sent to Tirana, two have been bad. We did not know this in the beginning. One of these, many years ago, had issued an anti-communist declaration, which he had published in the reactionary press at the time. The other one had capitulated in front of the enemy. We do not know of anything that this one might have also published, like the former one. This matter is not a simple one. It is

not only that these two have erred; this has to do with the contradictions between us and the enemy.

Comrade Beqir Balluku: When it comes to cadres who have made mistakes, your lessons must apply, meaning that those that can be cured from the disease must be offered medication. But, of course, enemies must be treated harshly.

Comrade Mao Zedong: In many cases, we are unable to do this, because some people do not pay any mind to us. But they pay attention to the masses.

The Bulgarian Telegraphic Agency issued a clarification, that supposedly there were no foreign troops on Bulgarian soil. This is a lie. Honest Bulgarians have told our ambassador that there are Soviet troops in Bulgaria.

Comrade Beqir Balluku: We have information that there are Soviet troops on Bulgarian soil. The Italian ambassador in Bulgaria has told us that there are 9-10 air divisions.

Comrade Mao Zedong: That many?

Comrade Beqir Balluku: Yes. The general number goes to 35,000-40,000 troops, and each division consists of some 3,000-5,000 individuals. They also have missiles. All of these troops have been positioned along Bulgaria's sea and air bases. Soviet troops wear Bulgarian military uniforms.

Comrade Mao Zedong: What's the Soviet Union's purpose in sending military troops to Bulgaria?

Comrade Beqir Balluku: They have two goals: First, they do not want the situation in Bulgaria to get out of hand, because there is great unhappiness in Bulgaria due to Zhivkov. Second, under the pretense of defending themselves against NATO, they want to pressure and blackmail Yugoslavia.

Comrade Mao Zedong: Tito is very worried also. Yugoslavia has now become our indirect ally, because it had contradictions with the Soviet Union. We should exploit these contradictions. Moreover, Romania also has contradictions with the Soviet Union, as does Czechoslovakia—[Alexander] Dubček.

The countries of Eastern Europe have split in two. The military occupation of Czechoslovakia by Soviet troops has produced much displeasure among people in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland, East Germany, and elsewhere. There are those who do not approve this aggression.

(The other leaders invited Comrade Mao Zedong and comrade Beqir Balluku to get on the tribune so as to be able to follow the parade of the forces of the army, the arts, culture, and of literature. The conversation came to an end.)