

January 3, 1966
**Transcript of Discussions of a Governmental
Economic Delegation from the Democratic Republic
of Vietnam with Nicolae Ceausescu and Ion
Gheorghe Maurer**

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Summary:

This document describes the lunchtime conversation between Nicolae Ceausescu, Ion Gheorghe Maurer, and Le Thanh Nghi, during which they discussed US policies in Vietnam and the necessity of maintaining solidarity between the communist parties of Eastern Europe and Vietnam.

Original Language:

Romanian

Contents:

Translation - English

[...]

Communication made by Le Thanh Nghi, member of the Political Bureau of the Vietnamese Workers Party, Vice-President of the Council of Ministers of the Government of D.R. Vietnam to comrade Nicolae Ceausescu, General secretary of the RCP CC and comrade I. Gh. Maurer, President of the Council of Ministers, Government of the Socialist Republic of Romania, on 3.I.1966

[...]

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: On the other hand, the American imperialists continue to intensify their political and diplomatic activity, continuing to make noisy but lying propaganda about so-called "peace negotiations." The American maneuvers, however, are clear: they desire to box-in South Vietnam through all means, first to encircle the South and to isolate it from North Vietnam with the aim of destroying the revolutionary forces. At the same time they prepare public opinion through intense propaganda regarding peaceful negotiations, negotiations without conditions, but they deceive it in order to conceal their intentions to extend the war in Vietnam.

Given that, at the present moment, on the one hand we must give counterblows and we should annihilate the instruments of intensifying the war in South Vietnam and we should successfully riposte against the war of destruction carried out by the American imperialists in North Vietnam.

On the other hand, we must intensify the political and diplomatic struggle in the global arena in order to unmask the dirty tools of the American imperialists and in order to clearly express the right and just cause of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam. Here, the role, position and political and diplomatic activity of the Soviet Union and of other sister socialist countries is very important.

[...]

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: We consider that the unity of the communist and workers parties, of the socialist countries is decisive in the struggle against the imperialists. Unfortunately, however, things do not stand so well in this direction and we are worried that public polemics may be started again.

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: Our party is worried about that as well.

[...]

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: Regarding what comrade general secretary Nicolae Ceausescu said, we will report to our Central Committee. We are totally in agreement with the remarks of the comrade general secretary regarding the polemic within the international communist and workers movement. We will exert perseverant efforts in order to bring our contribution to strengthening the solidarity and cohesion of the international communist and workers movement.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: We must understand that we have the best occasion to criticize the Americans together rather than have them criticize us.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: In any case this polemic serves only the imperialists and reactionary forces in general.

[...]

(during lunch)

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: The Americans juggle with the peace issue, but they must also be unmasked here because, basically, they do want to renounce the war of aggression and leave Vietnam.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: From the information presented by comrade Le Thanh Nghi the Central Committee of the Vietnamese Worker's Party has recognized this; and it is well that it has understood it, but the appropriate means for achieving this unmasking must be found, in order to cut short the American maneuvers; this is very important.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: It is no accident that the U.S.A. has sent the most able, most significant men - Harriman and Humphrey - to London, Warsaw, Tokyo and to a series of countries in Asia.

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: The reality is that the National Front of Liberation maintains control over the greatest part of South Vietnamese territory, with a population of 10 million inhabitants, however the Americans have negated the presence of the N.L.F. at the peace negotiations.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: Now they appear to be inclined to accept the idea of the participation of the National Liberation Front as an independent unit.

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: In the end the imperialists must recognize the National Liberation Front, because they are fighting in South Vietnam with the Vietnamese people.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Here it is not only an armed struggle; it is also a contest of intelligence, and of deception. If the Americans are tricky then we must be trickier still.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: How are the political forces of South Vietnam characterized? There are both Catholics and Mohammedans [Muslims]. What position do they have towards the National Liberation Front?

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: There are political parties and religious sects that support the National Liberation Front. Only a small part of the Catholics follow a pro-American policy.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: We had an interesting experience in this regard. During the war in 1941-1944, the overthrow of Antonescu took place when German troops were occupying the country, however, we succeeded to make contact with the most diverse circles - both military and political - on a single basis: to liberate the country from the German Hitlerists and to put an end to the war. We even collaborated with the King. We succeeded so that the entire army passed to our side, turning its weapons against the Hitlerists. We put no other conditions, except for the struggle against Hitlerist Germany.

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: That is an interesting experience. The National Liberation Front is a large organized force. We even attract soldiers from the ranks of the [South Vietnamese] puppet army.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: In any case, the fact that the Americans are in South Vietnam creates the possibility that all of these forces should rise against them, because they come there with an arrogant position, one of master. And this can be exploited as well. Certainly, the armed struggle must be combined with this political work, about which we have spoken with you.

[...]

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: Do you have many cohabiting nationalities?

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: About 86% of the population is formed of ethnic Romanians; and then in order are the Hungarians, Germans, Jews, Serbs and others in smaller quantities.

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: Is this because you have borders with these peoples?

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: It is especially because there were conditions for them to come and live better here; I refer to those of older peoples.

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: In Vietnam there are 30 cohabiting nationalities.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: In general there is a great mix of populations in Asia.

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: And the national problem is a serious one for us.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: This is a problem for the entire world, especially, however, in Asia where there are many nationalities.

Cde. Gogu Radulescu: The so-called national problem exists for the entire world. Not only in Asia but also, for example, in England.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: Not to mention the U.S.A., where there is a serious national and racial issue. Properly speaking, from this perspective, we do not have this problem. Today, speaking clearly, we do not have a national problem in Romania.

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: The manner how the national problem was resolved is also reflected in the international communist and workers movement. If we know how to solve this problem well, we also can obtain better results for strengthening the unity of the international communist movement.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: We are speaking of the problem of nations, which is something else altogether. Certainly, within any state, where there is a majority nation, there are also cohabiting nationalities and the problem of equality of rights between nations is an understandable problem. However, the principal problem, in our opinion, is the just understanding of relations between national states and, of course, even more so between socialist states. Recently there have been many theories to accredit the opinion that nations have lived their life and no longer have a role. This creates many difficulties regarding the relations between states and between parties, which basically have the same origin.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: The problem of nations, of states is one of the most delicate problems.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: Now there are many theories that attempt to present imperialist occupation as beneficial for peoples. [They argue] in every way possible that being more advanced countries, they had brought progress to countries that were more backward than the countries that occupied them. Tsarist Russia is cited as such a case, even though it was the most backward. Today it is presented as bringing benefit to the peoples that it occupied.

Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer: They speak of "the civilizing mission of Peter the Great."

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: That would mean that the oppressed nations would not have developed if they had not been occupied!

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: So South Vietnam must be happy that it is occupied by a more civilized country and it should not only refrain from fighting against the Americans, it should thank them. Unfortunately, these theories are disseminated not only by imperialists but also by some calling themselves Marxist-Leninists.

Cde. Le Thanh Nghi: I thank you again for this cordial welcome. We are convinced that the relations between our parties and peoples will continue to develop.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: Once again we ask you to transmit our wishes for the health and success of the entire leadership of your party, especially comrade Ho Chi Minh.

(The discussions and meal lasted until 1530.)