

September 18, 1956

Summary of Conversation from Chairman Mao Zedong's Reception of the Indonesian Ambassador to China Soekardjo Wiriopranoto

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Summary:

Mao Zedon and Amb. Wiriopranoto discuss Chinese-Indonesian relations, including dual citizenship of overseas Chinese in Indonesia, relations with Singapore, and prospects for a Japanese invasion.

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Minutes: Xu Cunyao

Chairman Mao Zedong met Indonesian Ambassador to China Soekardjo Wiriopranoto on 18 September 1956. The gist of the conversation is recorded as follows:

The ambassador said, one of the most important issues between Indonesia and China is the issue of the overseas Chinese in Indonesia. Although the treaty concerning dual citizenship has been signed and can soon be sent to the Indonesian parliament for debate and passed, but the treaty resolves the issue only in form and not in substance. Most of the overseas Chinese in Indonesia have bourgeoisie ideas and they also control Indonesia's main economic lifelines. These people have close links with Singapore. Indonesia's rubber is all being smuggled by them to Singapore. Singapore is a free port and an economic stronghold of the British in the Far East. As long as the current situation in Singapore exists for a day, it is impossible for the overseas Chinese in Indonesia not to be influenced by them. To change the thinking of the overseas Chinese, the issue of Singapore must be thoroughly resolved. Malaya may gain independence in the future, but not Singapore. The British will hang on tightly to Singapore and not let go. In Indonesia, there are also some Indonesians who are engaging in activities that hurt the country's economic interests. The various factions are disunited, and there are even Indonesians who are still with war with fellow Indonesians. All these circumstances cause Indonesia's economy to face great difficulties.

Chairman Mao said, the Chinese government has always encouraged the overseas Chinese to abide by the laws of the country they are in and not engage in political activities, and also encouraged them to use their manpower and financial power to serve that country's interests. Of course, it is possible that some overseas Chinese would have done things detrimental to Indonesia's interests but this has nothing to do with the Chinese government. If such a thing happens, the Chinese and Indonesian governments should work hard together to educate them. The interests of the overseas Chinese and businessmen should be protected, but to those profiteers who break the law, and deceive and exploit the people should be punished. We currently have no diplomatic relations with Singapore. If we establish diplomatic relations in future, we can also work on educating the overseas Chinese there. To protect its political independence, Indonesia must first ensure economic independence, and it should build up its own industries. There should be a time limit imposed on foreign investment.

On the issue of Japan, The ambassador said that he did not believe that Japan would change its intention to invade, and that Japan had not the slightest

Chairman Mao said, is it possible for Indonesia to lower the reparations amount that it is seeking from Japan? The problem may be easily resolved if you can lower your demands a little. Japan had caused countless loss of life and property in China. Currently, as a matter of principle, we don't say that we want Japan to pay reparations. Nor do we say that we don't want it to do so. Eleven years have passed since the war ended and Japan's situation has changed. It is now being bullied by others. We can forget about the past and are willing to be friendly to Japan. The Japanese people have a strong sense of national pride. They will not be willingly oppressed by others in the long term. Japan's situation will change. The United States wants to arm Japan's military and make use of Japan. This is not an easy thing to do. Japan is now like a horse ridden by others. Perhaps this horse will shake its rider off one day and run around wildly on its own. It's only because Asian countries such as China, Indonesia, India, and Burma are growing stronger as well staying together, so that they form a wall that the Japanese horse cannot leap over.