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# Transcript of Conversation between Deputy Premier Chen Yi and Romanian Ambassador to China Barbu Zaharescu

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## Summary:

Chen Yi and Ambassador Zaharescu discuss the unity of the socialist bloc.

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## Original Language:

Chinese

## Contents:

Translation - English

Transcript of Conversation between Vice Premier Chen Yi and Romanian Ambassador to China, [Barbu] Zaharescu

Time: 10am March 1, 1961
Location: Meeting room, the Office of Foreign Affairs under the State Council
Attendants: Dong Luo, attaché of the Romanian Embassy; Yu Qi, the deputy director
Translator: Ding Yuanhong
Transcript: Shen Zhiwei

Ambassador Zaharescu: Personally I felt regretful that our government called me back for another task. [I am] coming today to say farewell to Premier Chen. I have worked in China for a very short period.

Vice Premier Chen: [You] came in 1959 right? It has been more than two years.

Dong Luo: The letter of commission was delivered on February 17, 1959.

Chen: It has been exactly two years. The decision had been made by your government. Of course, I could not keep you anymore. Which country will you be transferred to? Or you will work [in your own country]?

Zaharescu: I don't know yet. Our government has not notified me yet. They only want me to go back to Bucharest. In these two years, I tried my best to know China, make friends with the Chinese, and to make efforts to strengthen the friendship of our two countries. Of course, it is not my personal line, but the line of our party and government. Therefore, undoubtedly, my departure from China will not change the relations between the two countries. But for me it is regretful, China is a beautiful country and Chinese people are friendly and warm. Frankly speaking, I regret departing from people I have become acquainted with. However, we are all Communists; undoubtedly, we will meet again in [our] future work. From now on, whether in China or abroad, I will be a friend of the Chinese Communist Party members. I appreciate all for kindness Comrade Chen Yi extended to me and for help in my work.

Chen: Well said. In the two years, especially last year, there has been intense debate between our fraternal parties, but we achieved unity in the Moscow Conference. It's better to carry out discussions like this between fraternal parties than to hide the problems without any discussion. The Western bourgeoisie are disappointed, and they hope we are divided. Lenin once said, imperialists are glad to see any argument among Marxists, but they are bound to be disappointed, because we will achieve unity. It has been a good experience from Bucharest Conference to Moscow Conference. Bucharest is your capital. It's a wonderful thing for fraternal parties to argue and achieve new unity through discussion and negotiation. [We have] such a big socialist camp, including 12 fraternal countries with varying conditions. It is impossible to arrive at total agreement on everything. But [we] can be and should be unanimous, and must be unanimous in the political direction, and general line for socialist construction and transition to Communism. Imperialism oppresses us to be unanimous, and people of different countries ask us to be unanimous. We are not worried about the Sino-Soviet solidarity. [When we] have issues, as the Moscow Conference pointed out, [we could] reach unanimity through consultation and exchange of ideas. Some people feel anxious about different opinions and arguments among our fraternal countries; it is unnecessary. I can assure comrade ambassador that we don't mind that many fraternal parties brought up much sharp criticism. [We should] accept good criticism. Even incorrect criticism, we may consider as well. On the contrary, for the CCP such a big party, as China is a big country, it might not be very helpful to just say good words. We welcome other people to put forward some useful suggestions. The Moscow Declaration is our common language, common

guiding principle; it has boundless vitality. We have to live up to it together. In my personal opinion, today the central issue is to unite, which is a very good thing. But it does not harm or undermine de facto or explanatory difference, and we don't pay attention to it.

Zaharescu: What does "explanatory difference" refer to?

Chen: I say it exists, but don't pay attention to it. The central issue is unity. Some people emphasize anti-revisionism, some emphasize anti-dogmatism, and some emphasize anti-revisionism and anti-dogmatism. We don't attach importance to these. We say modern revisionism is the major danger. [We] need to oppose [it]. So does the dogmatism. The revisionism we mentioned is referring to the Tito group, who betrayed the Marxism-Leninism. We emphasize unity and [the need] to look forward. Unity is predominant and prevailing. In future international life and international affairs, there may be serious disputes among the eighty-one fraternal parties. But in line with the spirit of unity, [we] should be able to solve [them]. We are optimistic. Before the publication of the Moscow Declaration, we finished speaking of all of [our] opinions. For the sake of unity, we must speak out. After the publication of the declaration, we emphasize speaking of unity. Comrade Ambassador, you are in Beijing and [you] know what the People's Daily and the Red Flag magazine are talking about. In my personal opinion, any opinion can be published as long as [it is based] on the premise of not undermining the Communist great unity. Discussing and debating issues are beneficial. Comrade Ambassador, we don't have any dispute, never in the past and at present.

Zaharescu: We can dispute now.

Chen: Comrade Ambassador, you are a good man. Be cautious in speech. You said you are first in diplomatic work. I see you are an experienced diplomat.

Zaharescu: I said I was not a diplomat, but it doesn't mean that I am not good at speech. I have been a party member for thirty-eight years. For every task that the party delivered to me, I have done my best to complete the task. As for what Comrade Chen Yi just mentioned, without doubt we had quarrels before. But it was due to the difference of interests. The same ideal motivates us. In the common struggle, [we develop] different opinions on major international issues. These different opinions are not due to the difference of interests. Precisely because of this, our disagreement can be eliminated through discussion. It applied to both the B conference and the Moscow Conference. During the Moscow Conference, many diplomatic envoys questioned us closely: "What are you quarrelling about?" The Ambassador from Norway and the agent from Netherlands kept asking me about the Moscow Conference. I replied that you need not have any illusions. In Moscow it was the fraternal parties who were conducting friendly discussions, exchanging opinions; we were sure to achieve understanding. They asked why it had taken us so long. I said that you could do your own calculations. Eighty-one fraternal parties carried out brotherly, friendly discussion. It might take one month for every party to deliver its own opinion. After the publication of the conference bulletin, I ridiculed them, saying that you don't have to worry about.

Chen: Well said.

Zaharescu: The unity among different countries within the socialist camp is the principle of development at present. It is impossible to have any other principle. Our party once did its utmost to strengthen unity of all the communist parties and labor parties based on Marxism-Leninism, rather than on non-principle. Our party, like the Chinese Communist Party, has its glorious past. Like the CCP, this year our party will celebrate the forty-year anniversary of its founding. Our party is a little bigger than the CCP, because it was founded in May while the CCP was founded in July. The CCP

has glorious history of struggle, which was the finest page of international workers' movement. We are familiar with and have deep affection and admiration for CCP's glorious history of struggle. Our party also has a glorious history. It struggled to contain the spread of Fascism and made great efforts. The struggle of the Romanian Communist Party against Fascism was a splendid page in the history of the European workers' movement. Romania also played a major role in defeating the Fascist Germany. From the point of the participating forces and population, Romania was only second to the Soviet Union, the United Sates and the Great Britain. The troops Romanian provided was even more powerful than the one France [provided]. It is based on such past that we have rich experiences to develop our own opinions on international issues. Our party played a positive role in drafting the Moscow Declaration. As for the fact that someone emphasizes anti-revisionism, some emphasizes anti-dogmatism, and some equates these two things; it is all wrong because the Moscow Declaration clearly pointed out that the major danger in the international communist movement at present is revisionism. It is also of the opinion of our party. However, Lenin once mentioned that, at a certain political moment, either left-leaning or right-leaning might become the major danger. At present we have to abide by the Moscow Declaration from the words and the spirit. I fully understand your opinion: the unity of the socialist camp has decisive significance. Our unity must be principled. We must weigh our policy to make it right. Unity based on bad policy will lead to the international workers' movement to the wrong road. Quite clearly, our policy not only matters to the destiny of people of the socialist countries, but to that of working people across the world. And the working people in African, American and Asian countries, and the people under bourgeois exploitation and imperialist oppression, are all watching our unity and our stand and asking how they should do. Therefore, our policy has decisive significance for humankind's destiny. I appreciate the nice words Comrade Chen Yi said about me. I am here not thinking of myself as an ambassador, but a comrade, a party member.

Chen: Well said. People of all nations are looking at us, hoping we could provide support in their struggle against bourgeois exploitation and imperialist oppression, even hoping us to tell them what they should do. They are all right. The Moscow Declaration answered their question. To Act based on the Moscow Declaration is very much expected. We treat the glorious history of the Romanian [Communist] Party and its role in international affairs with respectful mood. We treat ambassadors from all the fraternal countries as comrades and party members, different from [our treatment] of peaceful, neutral countries and capitalist countries. What I said as follows doesn't criticize anybody. I have no right to criticize other parties' affairs, because it's up to the individual party to decide its own policy. The CCP never wants to enlarge a quarrel between fraternal parties to state-to-state relations, and [we] never extended the relations between fraternal parties to the scale of the whole party and people. [The CCP] thinks it good to limit [the quarrel] rather than to expand. I have examined that during the period of intense debate after the Bucharest conference, ambassadors who stayed here from fraternal countries still received the same respect as in the past. [I was wondering] whether ambassador or other comrades in the embassy encountered any disrespectful or impolite things.

Zaharescu: Comrade Chen Yi asked me this question straightforwardly. As a party member, frankly speaking, I never link small difficulties to the quarrel between the two parties. Because I think small misunderstandings are not worth mentioning. Small misunderstandings only [are] with the Diplomatic Service Bureau. I never associate these [misunderstandings] to the quarrels between the two parties. I would like to know, the ideological disagreements should not apply to state relations. On the contrary, I think the better, the closer the state relations, the more helpful to solve the ideological disagreement. As for this point, we put forward the suggestion to expand the bilateral economic and cultural relations. We suggest increasing the trade more than last year and expanding cultural connections.

Chen: What I said was the method of the CCP. I did not expand the disagreement to state relations, and did not mention the entire party and the entire people. [I don't

want to] make things complicated. [I] don't want to criticize someone. We don't mind these things. During the period of disagreement, our ambassadors residing in some fraternal countries in East Europe encountered many difficulties.

Zaharescu: Does it include Romania?

Chen: I don't want to talk about these any more. [All is] already gone. Now [we are] united and should look ahead. I hope after you return to your country, help Ambassador Xu Jianguo more. As for expanding economic and cultural relations, we agree on principle. [We need to] decide through negotiations specifically. We prepare to notify diplomatic envoys from fraternal countries of our domestic situation. Ambassador, [you] will not depart immediately, will you?

Zaharescu: [I] prepare to say farewell in Hanoi. [I will] stay for one week in Vietnam.

Chen: Do we have agency here?

Zaharescu: Yes. If Deputy Premier Chen thinks it necessary for me to stay here, I could change my plan.

Chen: Not for sure now. [We] will notify you in a couple of days. It will be much better if the ambassador could participate.

Zaharescu: I prepare to leave China in late March.

Chen: Today's conversation is very good. It is not diplomatic conversation, but conversation between Communist Party members. It demonstrates the great solidarity of Communism. Have you been able to get out [of Beijing] a lot?

Zaharescu: Quite a bit. [I have] visited almost every provinces along the coast.

Chen: You could visit Guangxi a bit before you go to Vietnam.

Zaharescu: I am so sorry that I don't have enough time.

Chen: About the notice of our domestic situation, [we could] arrange it before you go to Vietnam, or after you return from Vietnam.

Zaharescu: Thank you! My wife gets along with Comrade Chen Yi's wife. [She] hopes to see her before [we] leave.

Chen: Fine. She [Mrs. Chen] will meet Mrs. Ambassador.