

March 4, 1961

**Cable from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
'Chairman Mao's Conversation with Cuban Women's
Delegation and Ecuadorian Cultural Delegation'**

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Summary:

The Cuban women's and Ecuador cultural delegations questioned Mao Zedong's opinions on distinguishing the different categories of revolutions, such as the People's Revolution and Colonial Revolution; different approaches of revolutions, such as the Cuban Revolution versus Latin American revolution; and how to protect physical cultural resources.

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The main points of the talks between Chairman Mao's meeting with the Cuban women's delegation and the Ecuadorian cultural delegation on December 24, 1960, are summarized as follows:

1. On the Issue of the Attitude to Be Taken Towards Different Kinds of War

Vera, a member (journalist) of the Ecuadorian delegation said that we are a peace-loving people opposed to war. What is our duty with respect to the local wars or world wars that U.S. imperialism is stirring up?

Chairman Mao said that we need to address war and peace separately and distinguish between local wars and world wars. Wars of liberation are included in local wars. If it is a people's revolutionary war, then we support it. If it is a war stirred up by imperialism, then we oppose it. The Cuban war for example, was a war initiated by the people and not a war initiated by imperialism. With respect to wars being initiated by the imperialists, we apply pressure before the war starts and after the war starts, we oppose it even more vigorously. The number of people in the world who have woken up to this is increasing every day. That is a good thing.

2. On the Cuban Revolution

Vera asked Chairman Mao if he believes that the Cuban Revolution represents a new path opened up by the people of Latin America. Will the people of Latin America be able to apply the tactics of the Cuban Revolution to achieve liberation?

Chairman Mao said that is something that the people of Latin America must decide for themselves. I think myself that it is probably possible. The Chairman said that the Cuban people have done a good thing. Only a small group of opponents and the U.S. imperialism say that they have done a bad thing. We stand on the side of the Cuban

people. Most of the people of Latin America stand on the side of the Cuban people as well. Now there are some people who have not woken up yet but they will wake up later. As for whether the other nineteen Latin American countries should adopt the methods of the Cuban Revolution and when they should adopt them, that is something that the people of each individual country will have to decide for themselves.

Cuba had a revolution and not a coup d'état. Many Latin American countries often have a coup d'état to change their governments. A coup d'état is different from a revolution. The Cuban people carried out a thoroughgoing revolution to oppose imperialism and feudalism. The Cuban Revolution was accomplished by the masses of the Cuban people. The United States misunderstood Cuba. They thought that Castro was carrying out a coup d'état. They wanted to cooperate with Castro and thought that they could peel off Castro and that he would obey them. Later they discovered their mistake.

The Cuban Revolution thoroughly smashed the old state apparatus that represented imperialism, feudalism, and comprador forces. Cuba set an example for Latin America and wherever in the entire world a country is ruled by the running dogs of U.S. imperialism. The Cuban Revolution demonstrated that those kinds of oppressors -- the running dogs of the United States -- can be overthrown. Some people say that the USA is very strong and can't be beaten. How can it be then that Cuba defeated them?

3. On Making Full Use of Our Country's Cultural Heritage

Vera asked the Chairman if China's cultural heritage can be fully utilized. Oswaldo Guayasamín of Ecuador also said to Chairman Mao that some painters make the mistake of not valuing their national heritage and blindly copying western painting techniques.

As to the first question, the Chairman said that we should make full and critical use of our national heritage. The so-called thousands of years of civilization are the civilization of the feudal era. The things that belong to the people are opposed to feudalism. We need to consider separately the things that are feudal and the things that are not feudal. Not all feudal things are bad. When feudalism appeared and during its development, it contained many good things. Anti-feudal civilization can't be used uncritically either because folk art produced during the feudal period was influenced to a greater or lesser degree by the feudal governing classes. We need to be good at analyzing these things. We should be critical in our use of feudal civilization. Naturally, anti-feudal civilization is better than feudal civilization. However, we still need to make critical use of it and discriminate between those parts we should use and those that we should not use. That is our present line.

As for the question from Ecuador, the Chairman responded by saying that that kind of copying has been going on for decades, for nearly a century, especially the copying of European things. Some look down on the cultural heritage of their own country and devote all their energies to copying Western things. We have been criticizing that for some time. That is not a good practice. That goes not only for painting but for music as well. There are always people like that copying Western things while they look down upon their own things. That goes for literature as well but the situation is a bit better in that area.

After Chairman Mao received the Cuban Women's Delegation and the Ecuadorian Cultural Delegation, he discussed the issue of learning from the West in the methods of creating Chinese cultural and art works. He gave instructions to the relevant comrades. The Chairman said our Chinese arts such as painting, music and literature should learn from the creative methods of other countries. It will be enough if the great majority studying our own things and a few people study foreign things. We will

solve this problem.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
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