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Cable from the Chinese Embassy in Albania to the CCPCC International Liaison Department and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Albania’s Reactions to Khrushchev’s Removal'

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Summary:

The Chinese Embassy conveys Mehmet Shehu's comments on the removal of Khrushchev.

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Albania’s Reactions to Khrushchev’s Removal

CCPCC International Liaison Department and Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

The following is a report on Albania’s reactions to Khrushchev’s removal:

1. In meeting with our women’s delegation this afternoon, Mehmet Shehu said: The removal of Khrushchev is not as simple as it seems. The Soviet Union is facing a revolution and this is the beginning of a transition and the result of the country’s internal anti-Khrushchev campaign. But since the successor is still a member of the Khrushchev clique, what happened is not the transition itself, but just something he [Khrushchev] cooked up in an attempt to fool the Soviet people and salvage what it is that still can be salvaged. Khrushchev’s removal is a thirty-degree turn rather than a U-turn [for the Soviet Union]. In order for the Soviet Union to return to the Soviet Union of 5 March 1953, they have to rehabilitate Stalin’s name, denounce Tito and the revisionism of the 20th and the 22nd Congresses (of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) and reinstate the correct lines of policy towards the capitalist countries and the fraternal parties. Now since those that have come to power are still Khrushchev’s people, there won’t be a drastic turn (in the Soviet policy); a mere thirty-degree turn will be more likely and then things will just go back to what they were. Shehu continued [that] I hope that the Romanians won’t think that with Khrushchev’s removal, all problems are solved. No Marxists should have any illusion about Brezhnev or Kosygin, and any such illusion will be equivalent to saving these people [from defeat]. What one should do now is to crush his [Khrushchev's] chance of recovery with a fatal blow. Shehu also said [that] Tito is a hundred times more dangerous than Khrushchev in ideology, and if Khrushchev is the trunk of a tree, Tito is the root of that tree. Khrushchev stepped down, but Tito is still there. Shehu believes that these few days are crucial days for the Soviet Union as well as the entire communist movement. There is great hope, but it’s still too early to draw any conclusions.

2. There are a lot of talks and guesses among the cadres and the people in Albania regarding Khrushchev’ removal and they display three kinds of attitudes toward the event:

(1) Excitement. For example, hearing of Khrushchev’s removal, two majors of the Albanian army hugged each other and drank a toast to celebrate. A major general of the Ministry of Defense said: There are two big events today: one is Comrade Hoxha’s birthday; the other is Khrushchev’s removal.

(2) The opinion that this is a scheme orchestrated by Khrushchev himself and “it’s change in name only” and therefore it is advisable to be even more vigilant.

(3) The opinion that it’s too early to draw any conclusions and time will decide whether this is really a good thing or a bad thing.

Chinese Embassy in Albania
16 October 1964