

October 11, 1966

Protocol No. 34 of the Romanian Executive Political Committee Meeting

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Summary:

This document is an excerpt of the protocol from a Romanian executive political committee meeting during which the recent visit of Paul Niculescu-Mizil and Ion Gheorghe Maurer to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and China was discussed.

Original Language:

Romanian

Contents:

Translation - English

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□Participants in the meeting were: Nicolae Ceausescu, Chivu Stoica, Gheorghe Apostol, Alexandru Barladeanu, Alexandru Draghici, Paul Niculescu-Mizil, Maxim Berghianu, Petre Borila, Constantin Dragan, Leonte Rautu, Gheorghe Radulescu, Stefan Voitec, Iosif Banc, Dumitru Coliu, Florian Danalache, Ianos Fazekas, Mihai Gere, Petre Lupu, Manea Manescu, Dumitru Popa and Vasile Valcu.

□Invited to the meeting were comrades: Mihai Dalea, Vasile Patilinet, Virgil Trofin, Patan Ion, Matei Stefan, Militaru Aldea, Giosan Nicolae, Constantinescu Stefan, Fulger Cornel and Taigar Simion.

□The meeting began at 1800 hrs.

□Nicolae Ceausescu presided.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: Now I propose that comrade Paul Niculescu-Mizil should give his report on the results of the visit of comrades Maurer and Niculescu-Mizil to Hanoi.

Cde. Paul Niculescu Mizil: The Standing Presidium of the Central Committee has examined the issues related to the situation in Vietnam along many lines. On the basis of these analyses it decided to request a meeting with the Vietnamese comrades, in order to exchange views with regard to a series of conclusions and opinions reached by our party leadership. The Vietnamese comrades responded that we have recently had a meeting where we expressed our positions, that their positions remain the same, and that if we wish to see them then we should go on an unofficial visit.

□At the same time, we addressed the same request to the Chinese comrades, informing them that we were going to Vietnam and that we would like to pass through Beijing on our return and should have discussions with them. The response of the Chinese comrades was that we have recently had discussions, on the occasion of the visit of Zhou En-lai in Romania and, therefore, they do not see the benefit of a visit.

□We also informed, at the same time, the Soviet comrades about our intention to go to Hanoi and eventually, on our return, to discuss with them in Moscow as well.

□Comrade Ion Gheorghe Maurer and myself left for Hanoi. We were especially well received. First we passed through Beijing. That was at the time of the 1 October reception [for China's National Day]. We met Chen Yi. In the meantime their position had changed. That evening Zhou Enlai gave a dinner in our honor and we agreed to have discussions with them on our return from Hanoi. That demonstrated that their position had changed.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: Afterward, a head of section said that although the Romanians had not requested to have discussions in Beijing too, they would probably have discussions there nonetheless.

Cde. Paul Niculescu Mizil: In Beijing we were received with friendship, which they purposefully emphasized.

□In Hanoi we were also well received. We had discussions with Pham Van Dong, member of the Politburo of the Workers Party of Vietnam; Nguyen Duy Trinh, Politburo member and Minister of Foreign Affairs; and with Xuan Thuy, head of the International Relations Section of the Central Committee. On our arrival, after they received us at the airport, we went to a residence where Ho Chi Minh and the other members of the Politburo received us. Ho Chi Minh, who also held a dinner in our honor, accompanied us at our departure.

□Judging from the manner in which protocol was arranged - even though the visit was informal - a great deal of attention was accorded the Romanian delegation. Several days before, (Czechoslovak Prime Minister) Lenart was there on a visit. The protocol of our visit was superior to that given to the first ever visit of Lenart. I tell you this to

underscore the attention that they gave to the Romanian delegation and, respectively, to their relations with our party.

□Regarding the discussions. We had a mandate from the Standing Presidium to present the following positions: Our party supports the struggle of the Vietnamese people. We consider that Americans are committing aggression in Vietnam, that the war which the Vietnamese conduct against them is a just war and that they should prosecute this war with all of their forces. We support the goals of this war: liberty, independence, the right of the Vietnamese people to decide their own fate, and the reunification of their fatherland. We support the position of the Vietnamese government.

□At the same time, on the basis of some recent contacts with communist and workers parties, with numerous governments of socialist countries, with numerous capitalist governments, some of which are part of Western alliances like NATO and SEATO, and from the contacts with the representatives of other capitalist states, we reached the conclusion that, at present, there exists favorable conditions for supporting the struggle of the Vietnamese people, that the idea is increasingly gaining ground - even among bourgeois political circles - that the Americans are conducting a war that is neither popular nor just; that there exists sympathy even in these bourgeois circles for the struggle of the Vietnamese people; that at present, apart from military means, political and diplomatic means are not sufficiently used in connection with the war in Vietnam.

We explained that in numerous cases the leaders of some Western states who have given support to the Americans ask why the Vietnamese do not discuss with the Americans, why they do not try to conduct talks in order to take one of the weapons from the Americans that they employ with such cleverness. With all of their efforts to camouflage the intensification of the war, the actions of the Americans with regard to negotiations are of a nature to sow confusion in many parts of the world and gain an echo in countries and governments. We explained that it would be necessary for them to join the battle well-armed and, at the same time, to employ diplomatic, political means in order to take the political weapon and the diplomatic weapon from the hands of the Americans.

□We underscored that we saw no possibility of stopping the armed struggle except when the Vietnamese people are assured with certitude of their right to decide their own destiny. That was our principled position. We explained that we are of the opinion that little has been done in the political and diplomatic domain for assisting the Vietnamese people. We said that all of the socialist countries, including Vietnam and Romania, do too little in this regard; that there exists a large array of possibilities for exploiting the political and diplomatic battleground, in order to support the struggle of the Vietnamese people, in order to achieve the goals of the Vietnamese people.

□This was our position explained in general lines. What was the reaction of the Vietnamese comrades?

□In the first place, they said that in principle they agree. Then they placed the accent on their decision to continue the war, based on the idea that the conditions for carrying out negotiations with the Americans are not yet ripe.

□After that, they probably had an exchange of views amongst themselves and they reflected on what we had said. In the afternoon of the same day they ameliorated their position somewhat, in the sense that they had further discussed the problem of the possibility of carrying out negotiations. They spoke about the contacts that they have with the Americans in different European capitals at the moment. But they again reached the conclusion that the conditions are not yet ripe for political actions.

□The second day they asked us a series of pointed questions. All of these questions sought to clarify what we wanted. Do we really want them to renounce the liberation of the South, to renounce the armed struggle? That was the general context and direction of their questions. What opinion did we have about the proposals of U Thant, etc.? We had a very broad discussion on these issues, after which Pham Van Dong expressed their opinion on the problems raised by us.

□After they convinced themselves that we advocated their use of political action in order for them to obtain victory more quickly - probably others have come to them

advocating solutions that tended towards capitulation - they made a very clear appreciation referring to our visit and discussions in Vietnam. They said, this time, that they are in full agreement with the position of our party. All of the arguments that we had brought them were profoundly well thought out. They told us that, basically, they proceeded in this manner with the French, and that the battle of Diem Bien Phu occurred long after discussions with the French had begun, only a day before the opening of the Geneva Conference. They had made contact with the French long before it.

□ They said that after their Political Bureau had analyzed it, they are thankful for the discussion with the Romanians, because such exchanges of views were useful and indispensable. They declared that they agree with all of the reflections of the leadership of the Romanian Communist Party. But they declared, again, that, in their opinion, the conditions for beginning discussions with the United States do not exist at present. Underscoring the fact that Romania has diplomatic relations, very powerful international relations, which permit it a more detailed knowledge of the international situation, they would like to profit from these relations, they will think seriously about the things that we have said to them - which are especially important - and that, in parallel with military operations, they also are interested in developing political and diplomatic activity.

□ If, on the preceding day, Pham Van Dong presented the diplomatic actions of Vietnam as a peace offensive to us, they even brought us an article on the topic, now he said that they recognize that they have not done as much as they should for developing political and diplomatic activities, that they should do much more in this regard, and they must take the initiative.

□ Yet once more they were grateful that our party had sent this delegation. They appreciate the full value of this gesture, which is the expression of our solidarity with the struggle they are conducting. They said that the best response to this gesture is that they will take the arguments that our party has brought to them under the most serious consideration. At the same time, they thanked us for the aid that we give to the struggle of the Vietnamese people, underscoring that this is a generous assistance, the second largest, in its dimensions, relative to the size of our country, it is a great help and, in the third place, that the development of negotiations with Romania has been very easy and especially fruitful.

□ This in short is the result of the discussion with the Vietnamese. Aside from that we also had the mandate to raise the possibility of some undertaking to improve the relations within the International Communist and Workers Movement, at least on the issue of Vietnam.

□ We expressed our point of view again. They responded that they agree with us, with the activities that we have developed recently, when we proposed a common manifestation of solidarity with Vietnam. They are also in agreement that everything must be done to realize, if it is possible, an understanding among the socialist countries on the issue of Vietnam but they harbor no illusions in this regard, they are skeptics. They said that they have not engaged in any of the Sino-Soviet disputes, that they receive as much aid from the Soviets as they need and the Chinese transport the aid as required. When they go to the Soviets and to the Chinese the Vietnamese tell their opinion to each, speaking well of the Chinese to the Soviets and visa versa, but they are especially skeptical.

□ That was the visit to Hanoi. On the return home we stopped in Beijing. Zhou Enlai and Chen Yi received us at the airport, and also accompanied us during the departure. We had discussions with them, in the course of which we expressed, in short form but very well-argued, our position on the two problems, both on the problem of using the discussions as a combat weapon in the Vietnamese problem and on the problem of unity among the socialist countries on the Vietnamese problem.

□ We must say that we received a very sharp response on both topics from the Chinese comrades. They believe that only the armed path must resolve the problem in Vietnam. They agree with the current position of the Vietnamese Workers' Party, that the terrain is not appropriate, that the conditions are not ripe for discussions. The principal cause of the current situation within the workers' movement is the betrayal by the CPSU leadership - and here they took up the refrain - that the new CPSU leadership does not want to break relations with the Americans, that they are afraid

of war, that they are afraid the war with spread to them, etc. At present there is a great pressure exerted on the Vietnamese, many delegations go there and they, the Chinese, have decided they should no longer permit their passage through China, except for those delegations that are requested by Vietnam. Regarding the unity of action of the socialist countries, it is trap; there can be no unity of action with the revisionist clique in the Soviet Union. That was the response of Zhou Enlai.□

□We did not enter into a debate with them, we only informed them. In conclusion we said that we are happy that we had this exchange of opinions. It clearly results that we hold different positions.

□It is interesting to underscore the following thing. Aside from the fact that the position of the Chinese comrades changed regarding the passage of our delegation through Beijing - where, at the beginning, they said that they saw no utility in a discussion, after which they discussed with us - Zhou Enlai, on his own initiative raised the issue of relations between China and Romania. He expressed the desire that these relations should progress. We, in our exposition, deliberately avoided entering into the topic of bilateral relations. We had no mandate, but neither did we want to link them to the Vietnamese problem. It is significant that Zhou Enlai raised the issue of developing the relations between our peoples.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: They reopened the Romanian exhibit in Beijing, which had been closed during the time of the actions of the Red Guard. Li Xiannian participated at the opening, saying, in a discussion, that it had been closed so that it would not be damaged, that it should be understood that everyone makes mistakes.

Cde. Alexandru Barladeanu: Comrade Gheorghe Maurer said that Zhou Enlai spoke more about relations between countries and peoples, but did not emphasize the relations along party lines.

Cde. Paul Niculescu Mizil: This was the impression of comrade Gheorghe Maurer. It did not seem so to me. At the dinner Zhou Enlai gave an interesting toast, in which he expressed a very high appreciation of the relations between Romania and China. He said that these are friendly relations even when we had different opinions. What characterizes both sides is that those differences are expressed openly, between comrades, and that this is a sign of our longstanding relations, between our countries are also such relations that do not exist with other socialist countries. He expressed yet once more the desire to develop these relations. In this toast he spoke at one point also of the relations along party lines. Certainly, he spoke about the countries, our peoples, but always he said: I say this to you so that you can say it to comrade Nicolae Ceausescu, to comrade so and so. Comrade Gheorghe Maurer had the impression that relations along party lines were not emphasized. This did not seem so apparent to me.

□In Moscow we were met at the airport by Kosygin and we had discussions with Kosygin and Andropov. We stated the mandate of our party leadership: the discussions with the Vietnamese, a very short resume of our position, what the Vietnamese said. We explained that we were also in Beijing, where we had discussions. The Soviet comrades were interested in our position. They appreciated that, basically, the Soviet comrades and ourselves stand on the same position. From what Kosygin said there are certain differences regarding those positions. He said, for example, that at a certain moment they also proposed to the Vietnamese comrades the solution of beginning negotiations at the same time as armed struggle continued. From that it results that they also proposed the solution of stopping the fight in order to conduct negotiations. Kosygin positively appreciated the fact that we passed through Moscow and informed them.

□Zhou Enlai, likewise, said "We thank you very much for stopping by and informing us and now you can be sure that we will act upon it."

□In conclusion, our opinion, those who were there, is the following: the initiative of sending this delegation to Vietnam was a very good one. Our visit strengthened our friendship with the Vietnamese, the relations which we have with them, and, at the same time, gave the Vietnamese, in an effective way, thought-provoking material

regarding the issues that we raised with them.

□ Likewise, the visit in China was positive also for the fact that it demonstrated a self-standing position, our own thinking, that of our party. When we have a point of view we know how to express it and support it. This led to the strengthening of our relations. In our opinion the discussion with Zhou Enlai regarding the development of relations between the two countries was significant.

□ Several things also emerged. We discussed, for example, the problem of halting the bombing of Vietnam. From the discussion with Pham Van Dong it resulted that they would be very interested in having the socialist countries place a greater accent on the issue of halting the bombing of Vietnam. He asked us if we read his last speech at the meeting with Lenart, in which he placed a greater accent on this issue. It resulted that they await more from the socialist countries in this regard. I believe that this is one of the problems to which we must turn our thoughts.

□ A second issue regarded the UN. The resolution foreseen by the Americans in the UN was discussed very much. The Chinese said that [they knew] we will oppose this resolution at the UN, but that they have no illusions that [our opposition] will succeed to prevent the resolution because there is a great effort by the Americans at the UN and many people have been deceived.

□ I told Zhou Enlai our opinion. After leaving, Zhou Enlai sent us a telegram in which he said: It is better to obtain a strong resolution that is not adopted than to have a weak resolution approved. It results, therefore, that our position has likewise given him some food for thought and reflection.

□ Likewise, it is worthwhile underscoring the doggedness with which the Chinese spoke against the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons [treaty]. They presented that issue as an action directed against the Chinese.

□ These are, in resume, the principal problems discussed. Certainly, things developed over a great expanse of time, but I have recapped that which is essential.

Cde. Nicolae Ceausescu: We started out on the basis of the idea that we must do more to help Vietnam. Not only us but all of the socialist countries. We also raised this idea at the Bucharest meeting [of the Warsaw Pact in July 1966] and you know how those discussions turned out. However, in practice, aside from the adopted Declaration nothing was done.

□ In discussions with other parties that we have met, it resulted that we all are in agreement in the appreciation that more should be done from the political and diplomatic point of view and that very little is being done. Even [American communist leader] Gus Hall was of this opinion.

□ Give that, we have proposed to the Vietnamese comrades that, along with the armed struggle, they should conduct a larger political and diplomatic activity. Aside from the material aid that we give to Vietnam, we should develop a greater political activity in order to persuade the Americans to end the war. It is clear that [military] victory at the front in today's conditions, even with the aid that Vietnam receives, is not possible. But, the combination of military actions with political actions could determine the Americans to renounce this war. The conditions in the entire world are favorable for this.

□ From this basis the comrades went and discussed with the Vietnamese. I agree with comrade Paul Niculescu-Mizil that this visit truly was a good. Certainly, we also must reflect on the problems raised, but the general conclusion is that we must act. The issue of halting the bombing of D.R. Vietnam must be placed at the center of attention. It would be a very great success if we could obtain this.

□ I propose the approval of the activity of our delegation to Vietnam (all comrades agreed). We will also inform the Central Committee on these issues.

□ The Executive Committee of the RCP CC unanimously approved the activity and the results obtained by comrades Ion Gheorghe Maurer and Paul Niculescu-Mizil on the occasion of the visit that they undertook to the D.R. Vietnam, the Chinese P.R. and the USSR.