

April 8, 1963

**The Influence of the Chinese Communist Party on
the Policy of the Korean Workers Party**

Citation:

"The Influence of the Chinese Communist Party on the Policy of the Korean Workers Party", April 8, 1963, Wilson Center Digital Archive, SAPMO-BA, Berlin, DY 30, IV A 2/30/253. Translated by Bernd Schaefer.
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/110111>

Summary:

An East German diplomat analyzes the behavior of the Korean Workers' Party in 1962 and 1963, and concludes that the Chinese Communist Party has a great influence on North Korea because of the traditional relationship and Korea and China.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from ROK Ministry of Unification

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

SED Central Committee
Department of International Relations
SAPMO-BA, Berlin, DY 30, IV A 2/30/253

[GDR Ministry for Foreign Affairs]
1st Extra-European Department
Section Korea

Berlin, 8 April 1963

The Influence of the Chinese Communist Party on the Policy of the Korean Workers Party

Today policy of the KWP is shaped to wide extent by strong influences from the CCP. This is in part result of strong traditional ties of [past] joint struggle, as well as it is due to the large economic dependency of the DPRK on the PR China.

During the conflicts between the Marxist-Leninist parties and the dogmatic opinions held by the CCP and the Albanian party, the KWP maintained essentially a centrist position until the XXII CPSU Party Congress [1961]. Statements made by the KWP delegation at this XXII Party Congress, as well as its evaluation by the 2nd Session of the KWP Central Committee in November 1961, have to be qualified as un-Marxist but still centrist; although there already was visible Chinese influence evident. On the one hand, the KWP recognized the importance of the XXII Party Congress, its program, and the leading role of the CPSU in the international communist movement. The KWP also arrived at clear positions on important international issues (German question, disarmament, fight against colonialism). Yet it adopted opportunistic positions on the decisive discussions of the XXII Party Congress (cult of personality, anti-party group, anti-Leninist attitude of Albanian leaders). The KWP evaded a Marxist standpoint on issues of personality cult and its damaging effects, as well as on the un-Marxist positions of the Albanian leadership, by declaring the following:

"This Party Congress broadly discussed issues generated through internal developments within the CPSU, such as Stalin's cult of personality and the anti-party faction. For a long time, Stalin had been the leader of the CPSU and his rule had also great impact on the international communist movement. The name of Stalin is known among communists and peoples of the entire world. However, the communists of the CPSU know better than anybody else about Stalin. How to assess his rule and his role in the Soviet Union is an internal matter of the CPSU. Also, the issue of the anti-party faction is entirely an internal matter of the CPSU. We always hold the opinion that no party is entitled to interfere in any way into the internal affairs of the fraternal parties. This is one of the basic principles all fraternal parties must adhere to in their mutual relations. This is why the issues of Stalin and the anti-party faction in the CPSU is not the concern of our party. It cannot be subject of our party's discussion. [...]"

"The XXII Party Congress also discussed the Albanian issue. Recently there had been differences of opinion on a variety of issues between the CPSU and the Albanian Workers Party. Mutual relations have become abnormal. At the CPSU Party Congress there was much said about this issue. Yet even after the Party Congress relations with the Albanian Workers Party have not improved. This issue remains a problem without a solution. To the contrary, now relations between CPSU and Albanian Workers Party have become even more difficult. If this situation continues, it will create serious damage to the unity of the socialist camp, the coherence of the international communist movement and to the overall development of these movements. It will

only benefit our enemies. [...]."

There was no condemnation of positions held by the Albanian leaders from the KWP. Instead the DPRK called the confrontation with the un-Marxist positions of the Albanian leaders "differences of opinion", which need to be eliminated in the interest of the unity of the communist movement through "patient efforts for achieving mutual understanding".

After the XXII Party Congress the influences by the CCP on KWP policy increased further. This became particularly evident when in March 1962 Chinese articles were reprinted [in the Korean press] whose tendencies clearly went against the disarmament proposals made by the Soviet Union. It also showed in 1962 through an inconsistent and vacillating reunification policy pursued by the KWP. The slogan of "reunification and liberation of the brothers in the South through our own force" became dominant.

Since the start of the border conflict between China and India the DPRK supported PRC policy without reservations. In their positions on the events in Cuba, the Korean comrades did not adopt the principle of peaceful coexistence. They consider the Soviet Union's policy as a retreat in the face of American imperialism. Simultaneously, during this period strong nationalist tendencies were furthered in the DPRK featuring the slogan "everything through our own force". Anti-Soviet tendencies were allowed under the cover of fighting against modern revisionism.

It also showed during the course of 1962 how the KWP moved away from the position of centrism and adopted the Chinese position more openly. The open transition to the Chinese position was ratified at the 5th Plenum of the KWP Central Committee in December 1962. Also, the statements by the KWP delegations at the party congresses of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party, and the SED confirmed how the KWP has completely moved towards Chinese positions.

Where do we currently see complete congruence between KWP policy and CCP policy?

□□□ the basic question of war and peace.

□□

Like the Chinese comrades, the Korean comrades espouse here an un-Marxist and adventurist position. It resembles a rejection of the policy of peaceful coexistence, and it excludes any negotiations and compromises with the imperialists in the interest of preserving the peace. According to the opinion of the Korean comrades, negotiations with the imperialists only increase their aggressiveness and the danger of war; also they would be a rejection of Marxist-Leninism. In order to eliminate the danger of war, one is not supposed to beg the imperialists but give them hard blows. Here one must not be afraid of nuclear war, as the force of revolutionary spirit is more powerful than any atomic bomb.

These positions were broadly expounded at the 5th Plenum of the KWP and at the party congresses mentioned above. They are reflected in speeches by leading Korean comrades at the anniversary of the Korean People's Army on 8 February 1963, also in articles published about differences in opinions with Comrades [Palmiro] Togliatti and [Maurice] Thorez.

In its coverage of the 5th KWP Plenum, the party newspaper "Rodong Sinmun" published the following statements:

"One cannot talk about a struggle for peace, if one does not talk about the fight against imperialism. Today the modern revisionists palliate and pet imperialism. They create fear of war and preach compromise with, and surrender to, the imperialists. They spread illusions about the imperialists to induce the people's masses to lay down the arms in front of imperialism. Peace will only be preserved if all anti-imperialist forces lead a committed and persistent struggle against imperialism; not by begging, however, as the revisionists claim."

"You have to strike blows to imperialism on its front and back. You have to exert pressure and tie hands and feet of the imperialists everywhere."

" The force and revolutionary spirit of the Korean people to protect its fatherland is more powerful than any atomic bomb or missile. With this, any aggressor will be smashed."

In the context of those positions, one has to view the decision by the 5th plenum about the arming of the people. It is getting implemented following the Albanian slogan "The gun in one hand, hammer and sickle in the other hand". The decision on arming the people is not based in any military need whatsoever. At the same time, it discredits the policy of peaceful reunification and confederation proclaimed at the 11th Session of the Supreme People's Assembly in June 1962 and the government declaration by Kim Il Sung from 23 November 1962. This will have to hamper the development of people's struggle in South Korea.

Also, in KWP policy concerning the resolution of the German and West Berlin question this tendency is on display. For instance, Deputy Prime Minister Ri Ju-yeon [Ri Ju Yon] said during the visit of a GDR party and government delegation to the DPRK in September 1962 that August 13, 1961 [erection of the Berlin Wall] was only a half-hearted measure. Negotiations are fruitless, and it is high time to close the deal in Berlin. The imperialists will not go to war over Berlin. You just have to seize courageously on the favorable situation.

□□ the attitude towards Soviet Union and CPSU.

□□

The leading Korean comrades still talk about the socialist camp led by the Soviet Union and the PR China at the occasion of official anniversaries or other events (KWP letter to the VI SED Party Congress). However, in reality there is an increase in anti-Soviet tendencies in the KWP. The role of the Soviet Union as a most eminent factor of peace is completely ignored. In contrast, there is growing emphasis of the role of Asian people's democracies as factor of peace and the revolutionary center. Such corresponds with the Chinese position about the shift of the revolutionary center.

The 5th Plenum of the KWP Central Committee stated here:

"Thanks to the existence of the DPRK, the PR China, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and other socialist states, Asia has entered the arena of history as a bulwark of peace and as a mighty factor of the international revolutionary movement."

In collaboration with Cuba, the Korean comrades have moved towards direct slander of the Soviet Union's policy of peace. For this reason, as well as in the context of negotiations by a DPRK military delegation about obtaining modern weapons from the Soviet Union, it was said in [KWP] meetings: Due to the attitude of the Soviet Union towards Cuba, and the Soviet rejection to provide modern missiles to the DPRK, we cannot believe any more the assurances of the Soviet Union.

□□ transferring differences of opinions to state-to-state relations.

□□

In various statements (letter to the VI SED Party Congress, article in "Rodong Sinmun" from 30 January 1963 about the VI SED Party Congress), the KWP has emphasized that differences of opinion are not supposed to be discussed in public and must not be transferred to state-to-state relations. However, the Korean comrades published all articles by the Chinese comrades directed against the policy of the Marxist-Leninist parties. Furthermore, the Korean comrades have worsened bilateral relations. This shows in the withdrawal of Korean students from the GDR in 1962, the rejection to participate in most meetings and conferences in the GDR, the non-attendance of the Leipzig Fair, the limitations to working conditions of the GDR Embassy in Pyongyang, and in the cooling of relations with the Korean Embassy in Berlin.

□□□ furthering nationalist tendencies and increasing the cult of personality

□□

Nationalist tendencies have been substantially on the rise in the DPRK and featured through the slogan "Everything through our own Force". With the 5th Plenum they were expanded to the military area. Currently they are prevalent in all fields (political, economic, military, cultural). At the 5th Plenum the above slogan was called the "Banner of the KWP". The immediate consequences of those nationalist tendencies are to be found in the KWP's unification policy (by our own force - arming the people - military industry in order to become independent), in its economic policy (construction through our own force - rejection of cooperation in Comecon - rejection of any cooperative relations with the socialist countries), and in its cultural policy (rejection not just of socialist cultural heritage, but also of the world's cultural heritage; see our assessment on questions of development of the DPRK's cultural revolution from 18 February 1962.)

□□□ calling the Albanian Party a "Marxist-Leninist Party"

□□

The official congratulatory telegram by Comrades Kim Il Sung and Choe Yong-geon [Choe Yong Gon] for the Albanian national holiday on 28 November 1962 stated:

"The Albanian people honorably defend the revolutionary achievements through uncompromising struggle against the imperialists, their lackeys, the Yugoslav revisionists, and all the other class enemies. It fights with determination for security in the Balkans and for world peace. All those successes of the Albanian people are results of the correct policy of the Albanian Workers Party".

□□□ the attitude towards Yugoslavia

□□

The KWP is against a rapprochement of the socialist states and communist parties with Yugoslavia. In speeches and articles, the leaders of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia are called "Tito Clique", "Bandits", and "counterrevolutionary spearhead of U.S. imperialism in Europe". When Comrade Brezhnev visited Yugoslavia and Comrade Tito the Soviet Union, the DPRK press published a series of articles against Yugoslavia and the efforts undertaken by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries to improve relations with Yugoslavia.

Where do we have differences between the policy of the KWP and the policy of the CCP?

These differences are mostly evident in the DPRK's economic and domestic policy.

□□□ here frequently were indicators in the area of economic policy of Chinese influences regarding the theory of economic development in leaps. Actually, however,

the DPRK conducts economic policy of its country based on a planned and proportionate development of the economy. Disproportions in the economy generated within the first Five-Year-Plan were substantially reduced in 1961 and 1962.

□□

□□ Concerning agricultural policy the Chinese principle of people's communes was not adopted. Development continues on the basis of Artels [Soviet-style cooperatives] .

□□

□□ Also, in DPRK economic policy the principle of material incentives is widely applied.

□□

□□ Trade with European socialist countries is not decreasing as rapidly as China's respective trade. For instance, the DPRK signed again a [trade] agreement with the Soviet Union with higher numbers than the one it signed China. With the GDR as well a relatively favorable trade agreement was signed for 1963.

□□

[signed]

Schneidewind

Department Head

[signed]

Stark

Associate

CC:

1x Information

1x Central Committee, Foreign Policy Division, Comrade Schmidt

1x Embassy Pyongyang

1x Section Korea