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Conversation with Comrades Pimenov, Witek and Shicha on 27 October 1963

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Summary:

The Council of UDSSR Embassy Pimenov and the First Secretaries of the Polish and Czech Embassy discussed the problematic economic cooperation between North Korea and socialist countries, accusing North Korea of exploiting the help offered.

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GDR Embassy in DPRK
Pyongyang, 8 November 1963

N o t e

about a Conversation with Comrades Pimenov, Witek and Shicha on 27 October 1963

Comrade Pimenov, Counselor at the USSR Embassy, invited the First Secretaries of the Polish and Czechoslovak Embassy, Witek and Shicha, as well the undersigned [Winkelmann], to a field trip in the vicinity of Pyongyang. The following interesting facts from conversations are noteworthy:

□□□ Until 27 October the Soviet comrades were not yet successful to talk with representatives from the DPRK Foreign Ministry about the program to commemorate the 46th anniversary of the October Revolution. The Soviet comrades hope they will have the opportunity to give speeches in a factory and in an agricultural collective.

□□

□□□ Comrade Pimenov informed that trade negotiations between representatives of DPRK and USSR in Moscow are very protracted and very complicated. The DPRK wants to deliver as few non-ferrous and precious metals as possible, but it still wants to import solid goods. Now the Soviet comrades raise much more insistently issues of quality. For instance, they do not accept towels any more if they do not meet the standards. Comrade Pimenov thought it no longer possible to just deliver aid as demanded by the Korean side. Trade has to be based on strict reciprocity. Comrade Witek also referred to the problems during the Polish negotiations. He stressed their main problem is the import of magnesite, which concerns 75 percent of the entire trade volume with the DPRK. There is no agreement yet about the quality standards demanded by the Polish side. Comrade Shicha said their [Czechoslovak trade] delegation is probably expected [in the DPRK] by mid-November. Everybody agreed that the DPRK attempts to a certain extent, at the expense of our countries, to expand trade with foreign capitalist countries (see increasing trade with Japan and preparations to send a DPRK trade delegation to England). We have to carefully monitor these developments.

□□

□□□ Comrade Pimenov informed that Park Chung-hee has published a book titled "The State, the Revolution, and I". There he wrote about the current situation in South Korea, the stabilization of the economy and the life of the population, about a free market economy, and South Korea's independence and national development. A full chapter is dealing with the so-called Bonn economic miracle, where he claims he adapts West German experiences to South Korea. We should try to get a copy of this book.

□□

In our conversations we shared the overall opinion that, despite all problems, the Park Chung-hee government has somewhat become stabilized. The high voter turnout of over 80 percent is an expression of that.

□□□ During a longer discussion about the increasingly closer ties of the DPRK to China it was noted how, especially after Liu Shaoqi's visit, a complete turn of the DPRK towards the Chinese course has occurred. Evidences for this are, for instance, the two articles in support of the Chinese position and the strongly increasing exchange of

delegations between both countries. Comrade Pimenov thought that today we can finally no longer talk about a fluctuating position e.g. of the DPRK. He found the question interesting whether the KWP leadership will recognize the leading role of the CCP and Mao Zedong, if it would come to a split [of the communist movement]. Comrade Pimenov said this issue of recognition is an extremely important one, but given the current relationship between both countries it is no longer a matter of principle. The leaders of the CCP would certainly proceed skillfully in order not to hurt the nationalist feelings of the KWP leadership. They would also not touch the personality cult around Kim Il Sung as it fully fits into their own concepts.

□□

□□ During a brief talk about the role of the Cuban ambassador in the DPRK Comrade Pimenov advised caution. It is certain that he reports everything to the Chinese as well as the Koreans. Due to the policy he follows in the DPRK, he is completely in the pocket of the Koreans. In contrast to previous times, he now also supports their policies.

□□

[signed]

Winkelmann

CC:

1x 1st Extra-European Affairs Department/2 (Foreign Ministry)

1x Central Committee, Department Foreign Policy

1x Embassy/Comrade Winkelmann