

January 3, 1963

**Record of Conversation between Soviet Ambassador
to North Korea Vasily Moskovsky and North Korean
Foreign Minister Pak Seongcheol**

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Summary:

A very detailed account of the conversations around the table at an ambassadors dinner hosted by the North Korean Foreign Minister in which North Korea's relations with China and the Soviet Union are discussed.

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Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

3 January 1963

In the evening the Minister of Foreign Affairs Pak Seong-cheol held the New Year's dinner, to which ambassadors and charges d'affaires and their wives were invited. From the Korean side, the minister, his deputies, and heads of departments of the MFA DPRK were present at the reception.

At the beginning of his speech directed towards the ambassadors, Pak Seong-cheol touched on the successes of the DPRK in conquering the 6 economic heights. Then he went into lengthy and broad propaganda [agitatsiei] regarding the necessity of strengthening friendship with the peoples of the Soviet Union and China, [and] the friendship of all socialist countries with them [Soviet Union and China].

In order to defeat imperialism, he said, we must [display] cohesion, we must strengthen unity.

After the first toast, permeated by insincere babbling about unity, the minister, his deputies, and the Chinese charge d'affaires, who was sitting right in front of me, pronounced another 4-5 toasts for unity. With this, the Korean comrades tried to play [the role of] a kind of mediator between countries that did not have unity between themselves.

Having listened to all of these calls for unity, I asked the minister what could explain [the fact] that all his deputies and the Chinese charge d'affaires are calling for unity all evening. Has the unity between the DPRK and the USSR been broken, what's the matter here?

The minister started explaining to me again that it is necessary to strengthen the cohesion of all countries of the socialist camp and strive towards full isolation and contempt [sic] of the imperialists. After this I asked those who were sitting at the same table with me to hear my point of view on this question. I said that the Soviet people are building communism. You, the Korean and the Chinese comrades, also drew socialism and communism on your banner. This means that we have one goal, and we are united. However, despite the fact that [we have] one goal, the roads to this goal have become different for some time. There are two roads to achieve this goal - the first is the bloody road, the second is the peaceful [road], but with intensified class struggle.

All the Soviet people stand on the second road, but the Albanian leaders and some Chinese comrades prefer the first road. Our people believe in the decision of their party and we will follow only the road of peaceful co-existence. We do not have one opinion with the Albanian and the Chinese comrades on this question, and it is very bad that they were afraid for a long time to tell us openly about this, but played a bad game, directed at the sabotage of the unity of the socialist camp.

I noted further that the second question, regarding which much has been said today, is the question of unity on [the basis of] principles of Marxism-Leninism. I was listening for a long time and with attention to your statements on this issue, and one gets the impression that someone among those present [has] retreated from the principles of Marxism-Leninism, and that you want to direct someone towards the true road, but whom - you do not say.

We have a proverb: "the hat burns on the thief's [head]." I am not concerned about this question, and I do not go into the discussion of this question, for I know firmly that the CPSU is true to Marxism-Leninism and correctly applies this teaching. You, on the other hand, all evening display [your] concern regarding someone's alleged unfaithfulness to Marxism-Leninism.

During the five months of my stay here I read a great number of articles from the Chinese and the Korean press that had many overt and covert accusations addressed to someone, to the effect that these unknowns, under the cover of a creative approach, are allegedly perverting Marxism-Leninism. You have not stressed this here, but in the press you come out against the creative application of the Marxist-Leninist teaching.

One can see a dogmatic approach to this teaching from your articles in the newspapers. But, indeed, V.I. Lenin permitted and even decreed that we use his teaching creatively. What do you want then, with whom are you fighting in this question - with Lenin? And so you, our dear Chinese charge d'affairs, are saying today that [you] are for principled unity on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, [and] you are prepared to get so drunk at this reception as to fall under the table. To fall under the table and to pull you out of there is not a difficult thing, and it is not the first time that we will have to pull you out. But to pull you out onto the right Leninist course - this is a more difficult issue, and in the course of one evening at this reception [this is] simply impossible.

The comrades listened to me and did not get into polemics, and the minister again offered a toast to friendship and unity.

Then the Polish ambassador, comrade Dryglyas, [transliteration from the Russian spelling] remarked that we should speak frankly among ourselves, that the Poles have a saying, similar to a Russian one, something like "what a sober man has on his mind, a drunk man has on his tongue." Today at the New Year's party, the Ambassador said, we have had a little to drink, so let's talk frankly. The minister supported this proposal [and] suggested that we have another drink and then have a talk.

I said that this saying in no way fits us as communists. If you treat someone [to a drink] in order to extract something from him [while he is] under influence, then this is an unprofitable method in relations between communists. As far as I know, we [in the Soviet Union] impose party sanctions for these methods. Bourgeois diplomats use such methods, but in the circle of ambassadors of socialist countries, as I see it, comrade minister, this is inappropriate. One should and must talk about politics only when sober.

The minister and the Polish ambassador agreed with me.

After this I asked to raise a toast to the minister's wife and to his children. I wished the minister's family health and many joys in life and said that the joy for children and for all of us would be, first of all, peace in the world. The minister's wife added in response that the happy and joyful life for her and her children also depend on the unity of the socialist countries. Having noted that I tried to avoid a political toast, but tried in vain, [I] offered to join my common toast with a political addition of the minister's wife, but still to drink to their family's happiness. Happiness of a friend's family, with whom we work on the solution of common problems is a matter of concern for us. Everyone agreed, felt flattered, and the conversation on political subjects ended at this, though the tipsy Chinese charge d'affaires went on mumbling to himself something about unity. [...]