



**Wilson
Center**

Digital Archive
International History Declassified

digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org

May 13, 1967

**Memorandum on Audience for Comrades Heintze
and Breitenstein with Comrade Pak Seong-cheol**

Citation:

"Memorandum on Audience for Comrades Heintze and Breitenstein with Comrade Pak Seong-cheol", May 13, 1967, Wilson Center Digital Archive, MfAA, C 1088/70. Translated for NKIDP by Karen Riechert. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/113364>

Summary:

Based on remarks made by Kim Il Sung, Pak Seong-cheol discusses North Korea's military policy, relations with the United States, the Vietnam War, and the state of the communist bloc.

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

GDR Embassy in the DPRK
Pyongyang, 13 May 1967

Memorandum

on Audience for Comrades Heintze and Breitenstein with Comrade Pak Seong-cheol [Pak Song Chol], Member of the Politburo, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, 12 May 1967, 5.20 p.m.

Further persons present:

Comrade Strauss, Acting Ambassador

From the Koreans:

A Deputy President of the Korean Trade Union

Comrade Shin Tae-in [Sin Thae In] as interpreter

Comrade Heintze thanked us for the invitation and acknowledged the success of the Korean workers in rebuilding their homeland and economically strengthening the Republic. He also mentioned some of his impressions, e.g. from the mass demonstration or from the visit to the Pioneers' Palace, which proved to be gratifying to the Foreign Minister.

Comrade Pak Seong-cheol then made the following remarks:

"The population of the DPRK is a united front behind Comrade Kim Il Sung. After the speech of Comrade Kim Il Sung at the Party Conference in October 1966, we have to concentrate at the same time on strengthening defense and on developing the economy. A share of 30 percent of our budget is for defense matters. Because we have to make really large efforts in this field, we cannot introduce the five-day-week, as you recommended at the occasion of your 7th Party Congress. We are unable to do that, because the enemy stands right across. He provokes every day, almost every day blood is shed."

"If the enemies attack, we will inflict a crushing defeat on them. In order to do that, we have to increase defense capabilities. We aspire to equip everybody with arms, to modernize the weapons and to build a cadre army. We already succeeded in almost all of this, but there are still many efforts needed. You saw our worker militias on May 1st. Some said: 'Maybe this was the army, only wearing different uniforms?' But why should we do that? Those were all workers from the factories. We have plenty of them. Within ten minutes all of them would be ready for action."

"The enemy is threatening us with the nuclear bomb. But we are not afraid. Of course the nuclear bomb is dangerous, because it is a weapon of mass destruction. It is bad, however, to be just afraid. There are also ways to fight it. We are, for example, prepared, to protect all our people in underground facilities. Before long we will operate an underground transportation system. It is under construction for already 12 years. In times of peace it will serve as an underground train, in an emergency it will protect our people. We dig the underground everywhere; for more than 17 years now all over the country. We are prepared, and not afraid of the nuclear bomb."

"During the war (1950-1953), the Americans dropped thousands of tons of bombs every day and destroyed our country, but the people stayed. The U.S. may have modern technology, but they don't have good infantry. Therefore it doesn't make sense for the Americans to occupy Korea. Because this would mean they would have to surrender even in the case of victory, since they don't have a good infantry (Comrade Pak Seong-cheol obviously seemed to allude to guerilla warfare). One has to understand that. If you don't understand that, you cannot fight U.S. imperialism. Vietnam had at the beginning only its fists and the Americans came with plenty of

weapons and ammunition. Of course this was sort of a disadvantageous situation. But now the Americans have reached an impasse. They got the tiger by its tail, but can neither regain their grip nor can they let the tiger go. If you consult history, you will find out that a just war never ended in defeat. Besides, of all those American troops in Vietnam less than half of them are really counting for soldiers. A quarter of them have to carry out transportation duties. Another quarter is constantly on shift. Furthermore the American soldiers willfully let mosquitoes bite them and intentionally fill water into their boots, which were supposed to protect them from the swamps. They do not want to fight."

"Why do I mention all that? For one should not be too afraid of the U.S. Currently there is such huge propaganda for fear of the nuclear bomb. But that is not justified. The American troops are scattered all over the world. Therefore it is necessary to unite the forces of the Afro-Asian and Latin American people, to actively carry out the battle against U.S. imperialists and to inflict wounds on them everywhere. Although currently the socialist camp is not really united. There are differences of opinion between the Soviet Union and China. Kim Il Sung said at the conference in October that the socialist camp should come together, put aside disagreements and unite. China rants against the Soviet Union, the latter replies. The Soviet Union has to reply, of course."

At this point Comrade Heintze remarked that the Chinese leadership is also ranting against us and everybody.

Comrade Pak Seong-cheol replied : "Yes, against everybody." He continued: "The U.S.A. applauds these disagreements. Some even think the Americans in Vietnam could expand the war because of the Chinese attitude. However, we think the arguments are an internal matter. Whether China or the Soviet Union commits mistakes-they both claim to be right-they both need to move towards each other."
[.....]