

September 4, 1956

**Memorandum of Conversation with the Ambassador
of the Peoples Republic of China to the DPRK Qiao
Xiaoguang**

Citation:

"Memorandum of Conversation with the Ambassador of the Peoples Republic of China to the DPRK Qiao Xiaoguang", September 4, 1956, Wilson Center Digital Archive, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 410, Listy 322-325. Obtained and translated for NKIDP by James F. Person. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/113373>

Summary:

Ambassador Ivanov in the DPRK speaks with PRC Ambassador on the four Koreans who spoke against Kim Il Sung that are being held at the Chinese border. Ivanov states that the Soviet Union is against criticizing Kim Il Sung.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

From the Diary of the Ambassador of the USSR in the DPRK,
Comrade Ivanov V.I.
29 August - 14 September

During a reception on 2 September organized by the Vietnamese Embassy in the DPRK on the occasion of the 11th anniversary of the declaration of the Republic, I approached the ambassador of the PRC in the DPRK, Qiao Xiao Guang, with a request to meet for a discussion. The meeting took place on 4 September at the Embassy.

Qiao said that he came to share his thoughts on two issues. Regarding the issue of the PRC providing further support to the DPRK, he said that on 21 August of this year Kim Il Sung told him in a conversation that the Korean government could not accommodate the material needs of the people in the new Five-Year Plan and requested further support from the PRC. Concrete figures of the amount of support that the Korean friends would like to receive from the PRC in the coming Five-Year Plan were not mentioned in the discussion. However, while specifying the plan for trade between the two countries for 1957 it became known that the aggregate output of supplies to the DPRK from the PRC in 1957 must consist of 185 million yuan, of which 85 million should be used to cover commodity circulation, 50 million to [cover] the expense of remaining unpaid labor and the government of the PRC requested to allot 50 million Yuan.

Qiao said that the question that was advanced by the Korean side with regard to additional assistance was transmitted to the government [in Beijing] and that he had still not received an answer.

Coming to the second issue, Qiao told me that during the work of the Plenum of the CC KWP, an extremely serious event occurred concerning the relations between the DPRK and the PRC. On 3 September the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DPRK, Li Dong-geun [Li Dong Gun], explained that on the night of 30-31 August of this year, four Korean citizens: Minister of Trade Yoon Gong-heum [Yun Kong Hum]; Chairman of the CC of United Unions Seo Hw [So Hwi]; Deputy Minister of Culture Kim Chang-il [Kim Chang Il]; and the Head of the Department of Construction Materials, Li Pil-gyu [Li Pil Kyu], crossed the Korean-Chinese border in the region of Andun and were detained by Chinese border guards. Li Dong-geun lodged a petition by the Korean government about returning the guilty individuals to the DPRK.

Qiao said the government of the PRC was immediately informed about what had occurred. Korean border guards urged the above-mentioned individuals to return to the DPRK; however, they all categorically refused.

In response to the request of the Korean government it was announced that the noted individuals were not simple border crossers and that their forcible return was impossible.

At the same time, Qiao said that on 1 September he was invited by Choe Yong-geon [Choe Yong Gon] and Kim Chang-man [Kim Chang Man], who told him about the course of events at the plenum. Minister of Trade Yun Gong-heum spoke during the discussion on Kim Il Sung's address. His speech contained malicious and libelous attacks on the leadership of the KWP. He accused the leadership of the KWP of poorly putting into practice the decree of the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU about the personality cult. As a result the leadership of the KWP had supposedly committed serious mistakes, conveying in the absence of democracy within the party incorrect distribution of cadres, and displaying incompetence in handling the difficult welfare situation of the Korean people. Yun's speech was cut short, and after lunch, he, together with the three other above-mentioned individuals did not show up at the meeting. As has become known, they ran away to China. At the demand of the

participants, Yun was expelled from the ranks of the party.

Qiao also told me that he was informed that the anti-party activities of the above-mentioned individuals were noticed before the departure of the government delegation to the people's democratic republics. However, they became more obvious during Kim Il Sung's absence. Before the plenum, Kim Gwan [Kim Kwan] traveled several times to the town of Haeju supposedly to prepare for an escape to South Korea. After being convinced that it would be difficult to carry out, however, he fled to China.

Qiao asked what my thoughts were on the course of the work of the plenum as well as on the four individuals.

In response, I informed Qiao that Korean functionaries shared several aspects of the work of the plenum in talks. They said that even before the opening of the plenum, Seo Hwi and other individuals spoke with a series of rather serious accusations directed at the CC KWP and in particular about the issue of cadres. However, all of these issues were touched upon in the address of Kim Il Sung and approved by all members of the Presidium. Nonetheless, at the Plenum these issues were once again raised. Yun Gong-heum raised the issues about which Qiao spoke.

Choe Yong-geon and Kim Chang-man also informed him that several disgruntled functionaries who visited the Soviet embassy claimed that the CC of the CPSU sent a special official to the Soviet embassy who was entrusted with the task of investigating the status of overcoming the personality cult in the KWP. At the beginning of the conversation the incorrectness of such a message was explained to Qiao and that it had also been told to the Charge d'Affaires by the Korean leadership, with which it agreed.

Concerning the course of the work of the Plenum and answering Qiao's question about my thoughts on all of the incidents, I said that the issues which arose in the KWP were serious and were not stimulated by any outside factors, Soviet or Chinese, but were a domestic process taking place within the KWP.

Qiao expressed total agreement with the observations I made, at the same time asking a second time about my thoughts on the individuals who fled to the PRC. I commented that since the named individuals were located in the PRC, the Chinese side is apparently more aware of their reason for leaving. I added that I did not know those individuals personally and did not yet have anything to say about the reason for their fleeing. I also knew that the Korean government accuses them not only of anti-party activities, but also of disrupting work, of amoral crimes and of the embezzlement of state funds.

Qiao commented that from the moment of his coming to the DPRK he had meetings with Seo Hwi and Yun Gong-heum and added that he was also aware that the embezzlement of about one million won has been attributed to Yun Gong-heum and others.

The meeting was attended by and translated by Attaché Kurbatskii M.N. and translator Wang Bao-min.