

May 17, 1961

**Report, Embassy of the Hungarian People's Republic
in the DPRK to the Foreign Ministry of Hungary**

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Summary:

Hungarian Ambassador Károly Práth reports on a conversation with Soviet Ambassador Puzanov about the cult of personality in North Korea and leadership within the Korean Workers' Party

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The Embassy of the Hungarian People's Republic.

Top Secret.

9/1961

Pyongyang, 17 May 1961.

Subject: Conversation with Soviet ambassador Puzanov on the cult of personality and the policy of the DPRK.

On 15 May, I made a farewell visit to Comrade Puzanov, the Soviet ambassador. During the friendly conversation, the topic of the May Day parade also came up. I mentioned to Comrade Puzanov that in my opinion the Korean comrades organized the parade well, the small number of Kim Il Sung portraits was striking, etc. (See my report No. __)

Comrade Puzanov agreed and pointed out that the slogans were chosen carefully as well; they did a good job of symbolizing the achievements and tasks of the DPRK, but he found the Kim Il Sung statue to be superfluous.

Concerning the above issue, the question of the "cult of personality" was also raised. Comrade Puzanov expressed his view that the question cannot be decided merely based on the number of portraits, etc. What one has to look at, he said, is how the Leninist norms of inner party life prevail. In his opinion, the Central Committee of the Korean Workers' Party holds regular meetings, and in its work often involves experts and functionaries from different fields.

During the last months, there were a number of nationwide Korean professional meetings, in which leading comrades also took part. Comrade Puzanov also mentioned that Comrade Kim Il Sung and other leading comrades spend a lot of time in the countryside visiting factories and collectives, etc. The so-called Chongsan-ri method proved to be a good one.

Following this, when talking about the policy of the Workers' Party, Comrade Puzanov told me that the party leadership is mature, and that it has learned from past mistakes and is correcting them itself. He did not experience mistakes being "hushed up" by the party leadership. As an example, he mentioned the "great leap." It is known that in 1958, Korean comrades adopted this slogan from the Chinese, and they wanted to double the plan target in 1959. The consequences were very negative, and a number of difficulties were caused in agriculture. The Korean party realized this, corrected the mistakes, and emphasized the necessity of the proportionate development of the national economy.

I request that this report be sent to leading comrades.

[To comrade foreign minister Budapest]

signature

Ambassador Károly Práth