

October 20, 1988

Record of Conversation between Hwang Jang-yeop and A. Yakovlev

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Summary:

The North Korean CC KWP secretary meets with the Soviet CC CPSU secretary and discusses the problem of the expansion of U.S. imperialism in the Asia Pacific. The North Korean CC KWP secretary stresses the issue of the unification of Korea and express the hope that the CPSU will influence other socialist countries so that they do not attempt to establish political relations with South Korea.

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CC CPSU

I am submitting a record of the main content of a conversation with a secretary of the CC of the Korean Workers' Party Hwang Jang-yeop, which took place on October 18, 1988.

[Signature]

□□@kovlev

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20 October 1988

RECORD OF THE MAIN CONTENT OF CONVERSATION

of a member of the Politburo, secretary of the CC CPSU A.N. Yakovlev with a secretary of the CC of the Korean Workers' Party Hwang Jang-yeop.

18 October 1988

Secretary of the CC KWP Hwang Jang-yeop, who was in Moscow en route from Sophia to the motherland, was received in the CC CPSU on his request.

Hwang Jang-yeop expressed gratitude to the CC CPSU for sending a high-ranking delegation of the USSR to the commemorations of the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the DPRK (9 September). He emphasized that the working people of the DPRK, supporting a statement by Kim Il Sung at the ceremonial meeting on the occasion of the anniversary of the republic and the call of Kim Jong Il: "live and work like heroes," are reaching a high level of work enthusiasm.

The CC KWP secretary informed [me] about the situation on the Korean peninsula and in this connection expressed certain considerations on the question of the reunification of Korea. He argued that the political life of South Korea had not seen any substantial changes. In his words, there remains [in South Korea] a puppet, anti-people's regime, "a status of a USA military base." Hwang Jang-yeop expressed his disagreement with the actions of a certain socialist country (he had in mind the H[ungarian] P[eople's] R[epublic]), which established relations with South Korea on the pretext that this, allegedly, "corresponds to new thinking, based on realities." The Korean representative expressed his confidence that in accordance with the ideas put forward by M.S. Gorbachev in Krasnoyarsk, the Soviet comrades will consistently maintain a principled position with regard to South Korea. He stressed that the Korean people, building socialism under the conditions of immediate confrontation with American imperialism, treasures the traditional Korean-Soviet friendship. The Korean Workers' Party, Hwang Jang-yeop said, supports the Soviet leadership headed by esteemed comrade Gorbachev M.S., the CPSU policy of perestroika and sincerely wishes success in its implementation. (A written statement of the information is attached).

Hwang Jang-yeop conveyed an invitation [for me] to visit the DPRK. We will be happy, he said, to welcome you in Pyongyang next year. We believe that your visit to the DPRK will logically fit the foreign policy of the USSR with regard to the Asia Pacific [and] the Korean peninsula.

Hwang Jang-yeop reminded that the invitation to V[adim] A. Medvedev to visit the DPRK, conveyed earlier, is still in force, they are ready to receive him in Pyongyang

at any time.

A.N. Yakovlev thanked for the information regarding the situation on the peninsula, expressed gratitude for the invitation to visit Korea.

The world has changed and it now substantially differs from what it was before the war, or after the war, what it was 20 years or 10 years ago, even 3 years ago-stressed A.N. Yakovlev. A question arises: are these changes profitable to the interests of socialism? Our party believes that these changes are in accordance with the interests of socialism, the interests of the socialist countries. The process of the perestroika, which has begun in the USSR, coincided in time with a reassessment by the ruling circles of the USA and the West of the current situation and the distribution of forces in the world, for a bid on a confrontation, on force, had not resulted in any real [gains]. The world public opinion tends in favor of a move from a state of confrontation to the necessity of establishment of international relations on the basis of the socialist conception of peace.

We clearly realize, continued A.N. Yakovlev, who was and remains the initiator of the state of confrontation, what is imperialism, and what is imperialist policy; we know well who our friends and who our enemies are. The new situation demands new approaches-such [approaches], which would make the situation more profitable, more effective for socialism, the socialist countries.

Determined common struggle lies ahead. It lies ahead in the Asia Pacific, where the USA would like to monopolize their influence on the situation, on the possible way of solving this or that problem. Naturally, the peoples of this region must do a lot themselves. It is necessary to look for ways, which would allow the peace-loving forces to expand their influence, narrow the sphere of sway of the USA. The imperialists have been able to persuade the peoples of this region that in the Asia-Pacific, too, "the threat is coming from socialism." But this is a lie.

The leadership of the DPRK, other socialist countries, stressed A.N. Yakovlev, pursue a peaceful policy. One should find new ways of our influence. Using the same tactical tricks in the course of a long time is not effective, the adversary adjusts to them. We need new ways, new approaches, which would put the adversary at a loss, force him to make mistakes, to unmask him, as they say.

We know that the imperialists' words frequently differ from their actions. These days one can hear statements in the USA about the necessity of changing attitude towards the DPRK. And in South Korea there is a talk of the need to pull out American forces. The key problem is how to quicken the movement from words to deeds. One should encourage the adversary in this direction. At all times new opportunities, new ways should be sought in the conditions of a sharp struggle and a competition. One could say that the current period is more difficult than the period of the state of confrontation in the past years. It is probably necessary in foreign policy activities, as well as in the economy, the science and the agriculture, to make a judgment based on the ultimate results. And in this sphere one should move from arithmetic to algebra.

[A.N. Yakovlev] told the interlocutor about the results of the September (1988) CC CPSU Plenum, in particular about the reorganization of the party apparatus. Briefly informed [Hwang] about the situation in the country, about the course of the perestroika, [and] about the deepening of internal party democracy.

The process is not without complications; there are costs as well. However, we consider the political situation to be normal [and] healthy. There are many problems, which must be solved. There is some movement in the economy, although

dissatisfaction with its development remains. In the agriculture a policy was adopted to introduce a lease system. The questions of the agricultural policy of the party will be looked into at the Plenum. The task of expedited resolution of the food problem has been put forward.

Hwang Jang-yeop thanked for the information, for the expressed thoughts on the questions of the international politics.

Having stressed that the problem of unification of Korea is the most pressing one for the Korean Workers' Party, Hwang Jang-yeop expressed a hope that the CPSU will pay due attention to this problem, [and] influence other socialist countries so that they do not attempt to establish political relations with South Korea.

This is a difficult task, A.N. Yakovlev, remarked, for all countries act independently. Deputy head of the Department of the CC CPSU G.S. Ostroumov, ambassador of the DPRK in the USSR Kwon Hui-gyeong [Kwon Hui Gyong], deputy head of a sector of the International department of the CC KWP Lim Hae-seon [Im Hae Son], counselor of the Embassy of the DPRK in the USSR Kim Hui-su [Kim Hui Su].

The conversation was recorded by a referent of the Department of the CC CPSU Irgebaev A.T.

Attachment

Written text of the information of the Korean side

On the occasion of our meeting today, I would like to express some thoughts on the questions of the problem of the reunification of Korea and the situation in South Korea.

We note that some of our friends say that today the existence of two states on the Korean peninsula is an indisputable fact, and that therefore the establishment of relations with South Korea corresponds to new thinking based on realities. However, one must not accept as truth everything that exists in reality. This is a basic issue [propisnaia veshch] for communists.

Like all other problems, the state and the change of the Korean problem should be looked at from a historical view point.

Our country is split between the North and the South, where different governments exist. This situation has not come up today; it has existed for 40 years already.

The point is not that there are two governments on the peninsula, but that of the character of the government which exists in South Korea, the kinds of transformations it went through.

From a historical point of view there is no doubt that the South Korean regime was manufactured by the American imperialists. They created a pro-American puppet regime in South Korea with the aim of using it as an aggressive military base and an anti-communist base to avert the influence of socialism. Up to the present day the South Korean regime loyally serves the USA as a weapon for the implementation of their aggressive and anti-communist aims and therefore it fully and completely exposed its essence as a puppet government.

Can one suppose that some substantial changes in the status of South Korea as a

military base, as an anti-communist base of the USA have taken place? We believe that there have been no substantial changes.

On the contrary, in our view, the position of South Korea as a military base of the USA has not weakened, but has strengthened even more.

After the departure of the USA from South Vietnam in 1975 South Korea became the only American military base located on the Pacific coast of the Asian continent. Beginning in 1976, i.e. the year after [their] departure from South Vietnam, the USA began to conduct annual large military exercise in South Korea, the "Team Spirit." The main aim of this military exercise is, in the shortest time, to move to South Korea contingents of American forces located on the territory of the USA, in the Philippines, in Japan and other regions of Asia and the Pacific basin. This fact alone shows that the USA considers South Korea to be the most important military base in the Asia-Pacific region.

In our view, the position of South Korea as an anti-communist base has strengthened even more.

Now Japan has turned into an economic power, becoming the largest creditor state. The USA is trying to further strengthen the alliance with Japan, form an American-Japanese community and, in this way, maintain their hegemonic position, which has been weakening even further in the capitalist world, and firmly keep in their hands the control over the Asia-Pacific region, the prospects of development of which appear great.

In order to firmly keep Japan in their hands, the USA are putting forward as a pressing the task of further strengthening of South Korea, which directly confronts socialism, as a base of struggle against communism.

Previously the USA considered such countries as Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore as important strategic points to encircle socialism, and now they put South Korea at the first place. This is explained by the fact that South Korea, in comparison with the other countries, is located closer to Japan and has a huge political, economic and military potential.

We also believe that the puppet character of the South Korean regime has not changed. With the development of the economy and the growth of democratic forces in South Korea, the social-political basis of the South Korean regime has weakened even further. This is a fact.

However, up to now the South Koreans considers its main mission to be the implementation of the aggressive ambitions of American imperialists who are trying to use South Korea as an aggressive military base and an anti-communist base. The South Korean regime also believes it to be their vital task to keep the American military base and [maintain] the presence of the American forces in South Korea, [it] considers anti-communism to be its "state policy." This means, on one hand, that democratic forces are strengthening and voices are growing stronger against American imperialism, for independence and reunification of the motherland, and, on the other hand, that the anti-people, treacherous character of the South Korean regime is getting increasingly worse.

If the socialist countries, in spite of this, establish relations with the South Korean regime, it will mean that they accept the South Korean regime as an independent government; this will lead to the justification of the anti-people, treacherous actions of the South Korean regime, which is actively in favor of keeping the military occupation of the USA and the American military base, and brutally suppresses the

South Korean population. This will also amount to a mockery of the South Korean people, struggling for the unification of the motherland under the banner of struggle against American imperialism, for independence, mockery of the entire Korean nation, which so passionately wants to see the date of the reunification of its motherland.

The seriousness of the question is that it is not some country, standing on the side of American imperialism, or a neutral state, but a socialist country, which until now fraternally closely cooperated with us, that, having betrayed all hopes and the trust of the Korean people, takes such a step.[1]

The Second World War was carried out for us under the banner [of struggle] against fascism, in defense of democracy and national liberation. The Soviet Union played a huge liberating role in this war.

If one is to take as the starting point the anti-fascist and national-liberation character of the Second World War, the Korean people who, under the colonial rule of one of the instigators of the Second World War, Japanese imperialism, lost their livelihood and lived through all kinds of suffering and calamities, by right they must be the first to return to a life of a nation of a united sovereign independent state.

But because of the occupation of South Korea by the American imperialists since 15 August 1945, when Japanese imperialism suffered a defeat, and up to the present day our people cannot fully restore their national sovereignty and go through suffering because of the division of the country.

If, as a result of the Second World War, Japan, which is to blame for this war and brutally massacred and robbed the peoples of Asia, were split in half, it would be another thing. However, the Korean people who more than anyone suffered because of the Japanese militarists have suffered for almost half a century now because of the split of the nation. One could say that this is the greatest tragedy in the history of the national liberation movement, this is one of the greatest crimes of the American imperialists.

All states-the victors and the vanquished, which participated in the Second World War, and all people of good faith of the world, who support the national liberation struggle of the peoples, must pay intense attention and take up a fair position and approach in relation to the fact that the question of the rebirth of the Korean nation, which had to be urgently decided immediately after the Second World War, has not been solved until now, when the colonial system of imperialism had [already] suffered collapse. Only one nation is split into two parts because of the American imperialists and has to suffer a great national tragedy.

When socialist countries, which stand for Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalist acts, which accept and encourage the occupation of South Korea by the American imperialists and their ploys to fabricate "two Koreas," this exceeds our imagination.

All socialist countries, including the Soviet Union, provided sincere internationalist aid to our people during the National liberation war of our people against the armed aggression of the imperialists of the USA and their running dogs, and during the period of postwar reconstruction. Our people never forget about this and are grateful to them for this aid.

The change and development of the world cannot be anything but its change and development along the road of socialism and communism.

The circumstances change, science and technology develop, but one cannot change the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, which unite all socialist states and the international communist movement.

Our people, immediately confronting the huge forces of American imperialism and defending the eastern forward post of peace and socialism, attaches special and great significance to the internationalist solidarity of the socialist countries.

All countries of socialism, be it great or small, are independent, but none of them can take the role of the Soviet Union in the task of defending and protecting peace in the entire world and the common task of socialism, communism.

We hope that the Soviet Union will, as before, consistently support our people in their efforts to reunify the motherland and in accordance with the position, which it maintains, apply its comradely and internationalist influence in the task of support for and solidarity with the struggle of our people for the reunification of Korea.

Esteemed comrade Gorbachev M.S. in his speech in Krasnoyarsk said: "I think that, in the context of a general amelioration of the situation on the Korean peninsula, opportunities can also be opened up for arranging economic ties with South Korea."

For the amelioration of the situation on the Korean peninsula one must first and foremost evacuate the American forces from South Korea and put an end to the anti-people, treacherous activities of the South Korean regime.

For this aim it is necessary to conclude a peace agreement between the DPRK and the USA, implement the evacuation of American forces from South Korea, liquidate American military bases, adopt a declaration on non-aggression between the North and the South, cut the numbers of the military forces of each side to 100 thousand and less, and thereby decrease the military confrontation.

Simultaneously with this, in South Korea, one must revoke the "anticommunist law" and the "law on state security" and thereby provide for free activity of the South Korean people for the reunification of the motherland and create a situation of trust between the North and the South.

Inasmuch as the division of our country has lasted for 50 years already, the foremost task for the reunification of the motherland is to create preconditions for this. Our party struggles for creating preconditions for the reunification of the motherland, for amelioration of the situation in Korea.

In this sense we support the statement of comrade Gorbachev M.S. about the amelioration of the situation on the Korean peninsula.

We are confident that, in accordance with the idea put forward by comrade Gorbachev M.S., the Soviet comrades will consistently maintain a principled position with regard to South Korea.

We hope that in the future the Soviet comrades will assist the efforts of our party, aimed at the reunification of Korea.

[1] This refers to the decision by Hungary to exchange permanent missions with South Korea at the level of ambassadors and begin negotiations regarding the establishment of diplomatic relations. [footnote in the original]

