

**March 28, 1964**

**Conversation Notes from Zhou Enlai's Reception of a  
Delegation of the DPRK Academy of Sciences**

**Citation:**

"Conversation Notes from Zhou Enlai's Reception of a Delegation of the DPRK Academy of Sciences", March 28, 1964, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 106-01232-04, 96-97. Obtained by Shen Zhihua and translated by Jeffrey Wang and Charles Kraus.  
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/115331>

**Summary:**

In a meeting with a delegation of the DPRK Academy, Zhou Enlai emphasizes the need for transparency as well as China's intentions to help its North Korean comrades with the establishment of agencies for electronic engineering.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from MacArthur Foundation

**Original Language:**

Chinese

**Contents:**

Translation - English

Foreign Relations Department of the Chinese Academy of Sciences

Record of Conversation between Premier [Zhou Enlai] and a Delegation of the DPRK Academy of Sciences

On 28 March 1964 Premier Zhou [Enlai] received a delegation of the [North] Korean Academy of Sciences. Premier Zhou exchanged some viewpoints with the head of the delegation and Vice President of the Academy of Sciences Cheon Du-hwan [Chon Tu Hwan]. The main points of the exchange were as follows:

1. Nothing is withheld between China and [North] Korea. Whatever the [North] Korean comrades want to see, they can just say so. In addition to visiting research organizations, you can also visit production units and cultural organizations. You can also visit new product exhibitions, new technology exhibitions, and the Guangzhou Export Commodity Trade Fair. The visits can be organized by the Academy of Sciences, but the unit personnel will officer introductions and explanations. During the introductions, the process must be elaborated upon, and past experiences, mistakes, and methods of success must be explained [by unit personnel]. When I visited 14 countries, I always discussed the revolutionary process, but we must also discuss our past errors so that others can learn from them. If our units protect [their reputations] by not discussing their past errors in defense of short-term interests, then there will be no progress. This will not be of assistance. We hope that you can assist us in this area; should you discover any unit which avoids discussing their past errors, then you should call me. Your thorough questioning and repeated discussion will help stimulate [our research units]. The Academy of Sciences must have a scientific attitude towards this issue.

2. In coming here, you may want to resolve several issues, [and] because the Academy of Sciences cannot handle [this visit] individually, we have also invited leading comrades of the Science Committee, Economic Committee, Culture Committee, Ministry of Foreign Commerce, and the Foreign Economic and Trade Bureau. If you want to set up several agencies for electronic engineering, you will need several thousand products, pieces of equipment, and devices to get started. If you have such a laboratory, it would mean that we would have an additional laboratory. The Academy of Sciences cannot resolve this matter alone. There are items that must be imported, and we can handle the burden of paying [for these] with foreign currencies. [You] also need to organize production. [We] probably cannot [meet] your desire for a response before 1 April [1964]. [But] we can respond to you today and we will certainly do our best to resolve any problems, but the date of the specific response will have to be in mid-April. If you require foreign currencies for imports, we can help you to resolve that issue. [What I am saying now] is equivalent to an approval. It is not necessary to exchange official documents. We can hold a meeting led by Guo Hongtao, Deputy Director of the National Economic Council, and with Li Qiang, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Commerce, Yang Lin, Deputy Director of the Foreign Economic Trade Bureau, and others. Otherwise, the Academy of Sciences can send the documents which will be approved by me. I am afraid that we cannot complete these arrangements before you return to [North] Korea, so today I have gathered all of the necessary comrades to complete these arrangements, and they are required to respond to you by mid-April. This is the best anti-bureaucratic method. Sometimes there are cases when a document does not leave the organization's offices after a whole week. Our organization is large and our personnel are many. These days the old depend on the young to handle matters, but the young handle matters slowly. I say the best way to handle urgent matters is through using the telephone, but even then most people do not follow this method. This also needs a revolution. Today it would be better for me to speak about resolving specific issues rather than politics or principles. This is because we have issued many articles and our views are identical, [so] there is no need for further discussion. We want to use your establishment of an electronics industry to reduce our bureaucratic ways.

After the guests were sent off, Comrade Du Runsheng asked the Premier: How should we respond if our [North] Korean guests request items related to nuclear power? The Premier instructed: We do not withhold [materials] from them, but we should study the specific needs of [North] Korea. Zhang Aiping, Deputy Chief of the National Defense Science and Technology Commission, can hold a meeting to resolve their wish to send [North Korean] cadres [to China] for training.

(On the afternoon of the same day, the Premier's office notified deputy director Zhang [Aiping] about the Premier's instruction. The next day, the National Defense Science and Technology Commission held a meeting to make arrangements.)

This document was sent to the Premier's office, the Foreign Affairs Office, and other relevant departments and leading cadres.