

August 28, 1954

**Report from the Romanian Embassy in Pyongyang to
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Second Division
Liaison, August 28th 1954, 533/5**

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Summary:

In a report to the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tatu speaks about his conversations with Kim Il Sung. Topics range from currency in North Korea and the industrial development to the condition of hospitals and the care of Korean orphans. Also discussed are the ambassador's return visits to Bucharest, where the question of moving the Soviet embassy to Pyongyang is mentioned.

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Regarding the presentation of Ambassador Tatu Jianu's letters of credence and the visits made on the occasion

After receiving a telegram from Beijing announcing the arrival of Comrade Ambassador and his wife, we contacted the Protocol Division informing them of the visit.

Due to unfavorable weather conditions, the plane had a two hour delay, landing the second day in Pyongyang at 11 am. The following officials welcomed our Ambassador at the airport: on behalf of the Foreign Ministry, Deputy Minister Comrade Ri Dong-geon [Ri Tong Gon], Head of the Protocol Division Comrade Pak San Cic [sic] and Head of the Third Division Comrade Tei Hak Ion [sic]; on behalf of the diplomatic corps, the Soviet Embassy's chargé d'affaires ad interim accompanied by 5 advisors and the First and Second Secretaries; on behalf of the Chinese Embassy, the chargé d'affaires ad interim accompanied by the First and Second Secretaries; the Ambassador of the People's Republic of Hungary accompanied by an attaché; the Ambassador of the People's Republic of Mongolia; the Ambassador of the German Democratic Republic; the Polish Embassy's chargé d'affaires ad interim; and the Czechoslovak chargé d'affaires. A representative of the Korean Central News Agency was also present. On behalf of our embassy, the attendees were Comrades Alexenco and Florescu with their wives and Comrade Neamu. The introductions were made by Comrade Alexenco. After a short conversation, our Ambassador bade farewell and headed to the embassy.

We note that the Ambassadors of the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, and the People's Republic of Bulgaria, who arrived recently, were greeted on behalf of the Foreign Ministry only by the heads of the Protocol and Third Divisions. The Soviet Ambassador - who was supposed to arrive in the same plane, but was unable to do so due to the bad weather conditions - was greeted by the Foreign Deputy Minister and Soviet advisors.

In view of presenting the letters of credence, Comrade Ambassador Tatu Jianu met with Foreign Minister Comrade Nam Il on August 7th, handing him the necessary documents. The Head of the Protocol Division and Comrade Alexenco also participated in the meeting. The discussion lasted an hour. Comrade Nam Il inquired about the Korean children in Romania, this year's harvest and other matters of little importance. Comrade Nam Il toasted to friendship and the Romanian people, who are helping the Korean people. Comrade Jianu also made a few toasts. During the discussions, Comrade Nam Il exhibited his willingness to help and assured Comrade Jianu he will inform the Presidium of his wish to present his credentials as soon as possible.

We also visited the Protocol Division on this occasion and the head of the division explained in detail how the presentation ceremony would occur.

The ceremony took place on August 9th at 12.30 PM, in the building of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly, located 25 km from Pyongyang. At 10.30, the Head of the Protocol Division greeted Comrade Ambassador at the embassy and escorted him to the Presidium. Comrade Ambassador was followed by Comrades Alexenco, Dobrin, Florescu and Neamu.

We were greeted by the Commander of the Honor Guard just outside the Presidium, after which followed the guard's performance and the orchestra's performance of Romanian national anthem.

Comrade Ambassador delivered a speech, also translated into Korean, to Chairman of the Presidium Comrade Kim Du-bong, Secretary of the Presidium Kang Ryang-uk,

Foreign Minister Nam Il and Deputy Foreign Minister Gi Seok-bok. He then handed the letters of credence to Chairman Kim Du-bong. This was followed by Comrade Kim Du-bong's speech, which we will forward to you in Russian.

After Comrade Ambassador introduced his collaborators, Comrade Kim Du-bong invited him in a separate room, where they discussed for approximately 15 minutes. The discussions revolved around unimportant matters. Foreign Minister Comrade Nam Il, Deputy Foreign Minister Comrade Gi Seok-bok and Comrade Alexenco also participated. After the discussion, we had our photograph taken. We note that the Korean heads of the Protocol and Third Directorate also attended the ceremony.

The guard marched past again whilst exiting the building and the orchestra played the Korean national anthem. The Head of the Protocol Division escorted Comrade Ambassador back to the embassy. Light refreshments were served. Comrade Ambassador expressed his intention to visit Comrade Kim Il Sung and other government and party members. Comrade Pac Sin Cic [sic] will inform his superiors about the Ambassador's wishes.

Visits

On August 11th, two days after presenting his credentials, Comrade Ambassador Tatu Jianu, accompanied by Comrade Alexenco, was received by Comrade Kim Il Sung. Half an hour prior to the meeting, the Ambassador met with Foreign Minister Comrade Nam Il, who facilitated the visit and escorted Comrade Jianu in his personal car. They were welcomed in the Cabinet building. Comrade Nam Il also participated in the discussions. After asking about the Ambassador's health, Comrade Kim Il Sung showed interest in certain issues regarding our country. As such, he asked about this year's harvest, which of the harvest's yield had been the biggest, how husbandry was going and what type of cattle was most common. He also inquired about developing the production of cotton and silkworms, and about other measures in order to improve the commercial industry. After having his questions answered, Comrade Kim Il Sung deemed our Party's policy in the matter appropriate, mentioning that the only way to rally the masses to the Party is to constantly tend to the people's needs.

Comrade Kim Il Sung noted that their harvests have been satisfactory this year, although some tens of thousands of hectares were flooded due to heavy rains, and that more than 300 million tons of cereals are harvested annually in North Korea, with 130 million tons coming only from one province (out of the seven). Regarding husbandry, the Koreans are less advanced but are concentrating their efforts on making more progress.

Comrade Kim Il Sung then noted that, to his knowledge, we harvest and consume a large amount of corn and asked whether he had factories that could process the different types of corn products. Prior to the war, the Koreans had a plant that processed over 20 different types of corn products harvestable in the DPRK. The plant will return to its fully operational capacity in 1955. I answered that we did indeed have such factories.

Comrade Kim Il Sung noted on the basis of a report presented to him by the Minister of Chemical Industry and Building Materials, regarding the construction plan for a new cement factory Romania was about to build, that the site exploration and other such analyses have not been yet completed and, therefore, it is necessary that the Korean and Romanian specialists revise together the possibilities of building the factory. He personally believes the raw materials required for construction exist in large quantities in Korea. Comrade Kim Il Sung further mentioned that large amounts of nonferrous metals could be found in the country. The Koreans have placed great emphasis on creating [industrial] plants to process them and hope to be able to export them to partner countries shortly, in exchange for other products needed for

the development of the national economy. Comrade Kim Il Sung showed great interest in the current offices of our embassy and the future construction of the Embassy. He apologized for still working under difficult circumstances, saying that they were obliged to ensure the construction of the embassy's new building. He was informed that the Romanian government decided to cover all expenses related to the Embassy building given the current hardships of the Korean people. However, he believes it unacceptable for us to bring from Romania those materials that the DPRK can provide and they will ensure the supply of bricks, cement, roof tiles and lumber required for the construction of the Embassy building. He expressed his wish to complete the works and move to Pyongyang in 1955. Comrade Kim Il Sung expressed particular gratitude to our government for supporting the Korean people, noting that our country was amongst the first partner countries to offer care and assistance to Korean orphans, bearing the high costs of their rearing. He thanked Comrade Jianu for the good news regarding the Korean children, whom he visited prior to his departure from the country. He further mentioned that he often received letters from the Korean children residing in Romania, informing him of the enjoyable life in our country.

After an hour's worth of discussions, Comrade Kim Il Sung invited the Ambassador in another room where refreshments were served. He dedicated a few toasts to friendship and the achievements of the Romanian people. Comrade Jianu also toasted to Comrade Kim Il Sung's health and to the heroic Korean people.

Before parting, Comrade Kim Il Sung assured Comrade Jianu of his support, requesting the Ambassador address him directly should any work related issues occur. We note that the Ambassador was received in a comradely manner. The simplicity and the manner in which issues were raised left us with a pleasant impression of the meeting.

At 6 in the afternoon on the same day, Deputy Foreign Minister Comrade Gi Seok-bok organized a dinner party for Comrade Ambassador and his wife at a restaurant in Pyongyang. The Heads of the Protocol and Third Divisions as well as Comrade Alexenco and his wife also attended. The dinner lasted 2 hours and the atmosphere was friendly. We toasted to friendship, health and collaboration. Discussions revolved around unimportant matters.

On August 12th, we made a visit to the Soviet Ambassador, Comrade Susdalev. Amongst others, we discussed how building the Embassy where we were currently residing would cause difficulties since all embassies and institutions were located in Pyongyang and we were too far away. Comrade Susdalev mentioned they would use their current quarters as private houses after moving to Pyongyang. Before parting, he noted that we could address them without much protocol whenever we needed advice in order to mutually help each other. Furthermore, he invited us to go see the movies screening at their club more often.

In the afternoon, we visited the Ambassador of the People's Republic of Mongolia. He asked when we intended to move to Pyongyang, as they would shortly move into a lodging arranged by the Korean comrades. We discussed other issues of lower importance.

We also visited the Ambassadors of the People's Republic of Hungary and the German Democratic Republic on the same day.

The discussion with the Hungarian Ambassador also focused on the construction of the Embassy. He mentioned that their current quarters are completely unsatisfactory. He asked when we would move to Pyongyang. I told him we will begin the main construction works and not build any temporary accommodation.

At 8 in the evening, we met with the German Ambassador. Since their Embassy building is not ready yet, he received us at the hotel in Pyongyang where he was temporarily residing. The comrade was interested in the progress of the construction work on our Embassy building and where we procured our supplies from. He mentioned they would receive from the GDR everything they required to refurbish their Embassy building. The discussion then revolved around the struggle of the German people, aided by the the USSR and people's democracies. Before parting, the comrade expressed his hopes for mutual assistance, meeting more often and going hunting or on trips together.

Return visits

On August 17th, we received a visit from the Soviet Ambassador, Comrade Susdalev. Amongst others, we asked his opinion in regards to building the full quarters of our embassy in Pyongyang this year. The comrade deemed it suitable to proceed in this manner so as to avoid incurring unnecessary costs. He noted they were also in the situation of moving to Pyongyang due to the distance from the Korean institutions and diplomatic corps already located in Pyongyang. From a political standpoint, it is not good to remain isolated.

He added that the issue of moving to Pyongyang was currently under revision. They will keep and use their current Finnish-style accommodation as private houses. As such, they plan on building a large water tank where they can bathe and the water can be used for other purposes as well. He advised us to keep our current lodgings and employ them as villas in case we move to Pyongyang. Regarding the construction materials and the workforce, he believes the Korean comrades can provide them, except for the materials currently not available in the DPRK.

On the same day, we received the visit of the Bulgarian envoy, Comrade Grigorov. Among others, the comrade mentioned that the Koreans were working on a large building where they would move temporarily. Afterwards, the comrade inquired about the issue of our remuneration. We told him that the issue has not been fully resolved yet due to the situation in Korea. In regards to the cultural agreement, he told us they had not signed one either because the Korean comrades had not responded favorably so far. He further mentioned that the Bulgarian Army orchestra would arrive in the DPRK most likely in October and would visit the People's Republic of China for the first time.

On August 18th, we received visits from the Mongolian and Hungarian Ambassadors and the Chinese envoy.

Since the Mongolian Ambassador is the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, we discussed certain issues related to protocol. We pointed several deficiencies in the performance of the Foreign Ministry's Protocol Division. Such are the cases when either we do not receive invitations at all, or they are so severely delayed that we are unable to join a series of events attended by the party and government leadership, which puts us in a very unpleasant situation that can be easily misconstrued. The comrade also noted these shortcomings. Following the request of diplomatic corps representatives that the Foreign Ministry establish rules of protocol currently non-existent in the DPRK, he talked to the Foreign Minister who informed him that the Ministry plans on organizing a deliberation with the diplomatic corps, where this issue can be discussed and, based on its proposals and the experience on partner countries, they can institute the rules more easily.

Asked about his health, the comrade noted that, thanks to the doctors from our hospital, his ear improved and he recovered from an illness he had been suffering from for years.

The talks with the Chinese chargé d'affaires focused on unimportant matters and were held in a comradely manner. Before parting, the comrade expressed his wish to meet more often and offer mutual assistance.

The Hungarian Ambassador's visit lasted 2 hours. We discussed mostly work related issues. In answering a question, the comrade noted that they were also remunerated in Chinese currency and received a small part of the payment in wons, which they collected on a monthly basis from the Korean National Bank, as per their bilateral convention.

Given the special situation in Korea, he believes it necessary to receive payment in Chinese currency since they make their essential purchases from China. In regards to this, the comrade noted that they would not be able to make their purchases from China as they had done before, when all items required for both for the embassy and the hospital they took care of could be bought [from China], because the Chinese comrades denied their request to acquire certain objects such as electrical materials, pipes etc.

The comrade further mentioned that they had experienced inconveniences due to the negligence of the Foreign Ministry's Protocol Division and that the Ministry's decision to establish rules of protocol will be most welcome.

On August 19th, the Ambassador of Czechoslovakia, accompanied by the First Secretary, made the first visit as he arrived in Korea a few days later. Among others, he mentioned that the slow pace of the Korean workers caused a severe delay in assembling the barracks sent from his country, which are to be employed as the embassy's temporary accommodation. He hopes to move to Pyongyang only in the winter. He mentioned that the barracks cost 150,000 korunas, but transportation costs amounted to 145,000 korunas. I told him we also wanted to begin the construction works on our Embassy building in order to move to the city sooner.

In regards to the hospital, the comrade noted that the Koreans insist on building as much as possible, but cannot be bothered to handle their own workers. He will take this up with the Ministry of Health and also raise the issue of providing more direct assistance so as not to devolve all responsibilities to the local authorities. We pointed to the difficulties with our own hospital, in that we had provided it with 400 beds, but only had enough staff for 130.

The comrade mentioned that they cover all expenses for both the embassy and the hospital from the account in wons they have at the Bank. Hospital related expenses have reached 35 million wons thus far.

On August 20th, Comrade Ambassador Tatu Jianu together with Comrade Alexenco made a visit to the Ministry of Health. The talk lasted for over 2 hours.

On the occasion, Comrade Jianu raised certain issues regarding improvements at the hospital in Nampho. After noting that the barracks sent from Romania have been installed and the hospital can now accept 400 patients courtesy of the Romanian government, he pointed that we were facing difficulties with the current Romanian and Korean medical personnel since they could barely oversee 130 beds and, due to lack of staff, the hospital could not handle a higher number of patients. Another issue raised was that the performance of the hospital's Korean staff was substandard and our comrades were left with handling their work. It would be better if the hospital received more assistance directly from the Ministry rather than rely solely on the local authorities who were overwhelmed by these problems. He exemplified the issues by underlining the lack of a clear inventory of the goods sent from Romania, of the demand to hire younger staff in addition to our specialists, and the lack of other

such proposals.

Comrade Minister said that they were lacking sufficient medical staff as a result of past regimes and the war. Only 100 students graduated this year from the Medical Institute and a large proportion of them will be assigned to the hospital in Nampho for training. Following a Cabinet decision, all medical personnel assigned to other lines of work during the war will also be made available to the Health Ministry. The Minister also noted that, in order to eliminate deficiencies within hospitals maintained by partner countries, the Ministry would organize a deliberation on August 28th-29th with the Korean leadership from these hospitals and the heads of the medical staff from partner countries. At the meeting, the Korean directors will present reports on the performance level in these hospitals, positive and negative aspects, future plans, the amount of aid received hitherto etc.

Comrade Minister requested that we provide them with an inventory of all the materials received from our country so far, given that they did not have such a record. He inquired whether the hospital was financed by the state or the Romanian Red Cross. The comrade further mentioned that they would like the specialists from partner countries to teach at their medical schools once the academic year begins.

The comrade noted they would not build new hospitals, but solely focus on small restorations due to the high investments in the most important sectors of the national economy, which would be allocated on the basis of a three-year plan. His implied hope was that the medical personnel from partner countries would remain in the DPRK during this period, mentioning that frequent staff changes were detrimental since the employees did not have enough time to become familiar with their work.

We hope that in light of these discussions, several measures for amending current shortcomings will be taken.

Due to preparations for August 23rd, we deferred for the time being the visits we are supposed to make to several party and government officials.

Regarding Comrade Jianu's arrival in the DPRK and the presentation of the letters of credence, the central newspapers published short materials on the matter. This was also broadcast on the radio.

We note that the presentation of his credentials and the visits made on this occasion progressed in a friendly and very simple manner, especially since there is not much emphasis placed on the rules of protocol like in other countries. This is partly because only envoys from partner countries are in the DPRK and thus the meetings and talks take place in a friendly atmosphere. As such, certain visits lasted over 2 hours, such as the visits of the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Ambassadors.

The meetings held on the occasion of presenting the letters of credence and during all the visits will ease our work in the future, in that we have managed to become personally acquainted with several representatives of the diplomatic corps and officials from the Korean government.

Signed: Ambassador