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Journal of Soviet Ambassador to the DPRK A.M.
Puzanov for 5 August 1957

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Summary:

Pak Ui-wan and Puzanov discuss the recent arrest of suspected factionalist KWP members. Pak expresses anxiety for Soviet Koreans.

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The Journal of Soviet Ambassador to the DPRK A. M. PUZANOV
for the period 1 through 15 August 1957

Pyongyang

[...]

5 August 1957

I visited Pak Ui-wan at his invitation in connection with the fact that issues had been discussed at a conference in his office relating to the conclusion of construction work on new Embassy buildings.

The conversation took place after the conference. Pak Ui-wan said that several days ago (1 August) Kim Il Sung had held a meeting of deputy chairmen of the KWP CC at the KWP CC at which Nam Il was also present. He, Pak Ui-wan, was not invited. Materials of an investigation were discussed at this meeting which were received in the course of an interrogation of people recently arrested who were associated with the anti-Party group of Choe Chang-ik.

Pak Ui-wan stressed that the matter is taking on a wider scale. Up to 200 people have been arrested. An investigation is to be conducted over two months.

I told Pak Ui-wan that I had corresponding information from the Korean leadership. The number of those arrested he mentioned, 200 people, is clearly exaggerated. Obviously, this is about measures being conducted in the DPRK at the present time to halt subversive activities of an enemy agent network and partisan elements infiltrated from the South. Several people have been arrested who are related the case about the anti-Party group (we know of 13-20; Pak Ui-wan did not speak of the number). This means to carefully investigate the [one word faded, possible "well-known"] illegal activity of the group of Choe Chang-ik to distinguish who did not commit acts from those who were making secret criminal preparations for a violent

change of leadership.

Pak Ui-wan agreed with this. Then Pak Ui-wan said that now the picture is being drawn that evidently Choe Chang-ik engaged in factional activity for a long time and prepared himself for the post of chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers. For example, through his sympathizer Yang Gye, former administrator of affairs of the Cabinet of Ministers, he spread rumors that after the overthrow of Kim Il Sung Choe Chang-ik would take his post.

This is also explained that the main figure in the campaign against Soviet Koreans organized at one time was not Choe Yong-geon, but Choe Chang-ik. Evidently he had long been preparing for and finally achieved the removal of Soviet Koreans from many senior positions and, then with the aid of intrigues, he used their dissatisfaction and some were possibly drawn to his side to fight the KWP CC leadership and government.

Pak Ui-wan then said that he was very worried for former Soviet Koreans Pak Chang Ok and Kim Sung Hwa. He, Pak Ui-wan, had also previously sought the rehabilitation of Soviet Koreans, and now it is clear in the light of new facts that the persecution of Soviet Koreans was the work of Choe Chang-ik. This needs to be frankly and widely stated.

In response to this I told Pak Ui-wan that in the situation which had developed the main thing is to closely and comprehensively look into the activity of Choe Chang-ik's group and make the correct decisions. He also agreed with this.

Counsellor V. I. Pelishenko was present at the conversation.

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