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Journal of Soviet Ambassador to the DPRK A.M.
Puzanov for 22 August 1957

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Summary:

Puzanov and Pak Ui-wan discuss the construction of the Soviet Embassy in North Korea, the KWP CC leadership's suspicions against factionalists, and Pak Ui-wan's efforts to clear himself of suspicion. Later, Puzanov meets with Nam Il and discusses railroad construction, the second session of the World Meteorological Organization, settling citizenship issues, and the sale of goods for agricultural products from collective farms in the Soviet Union.

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SOVIET EMBASSY IN THE DPRK TOP SECRET

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The Journal of Soviet Ambassador to the DPRK A. M. PUZANOV
for the period 16 through 30 August 1957

Pyongyang

SECRET

[...]

22 August 1957

I visited Pak Ui-wan about the issue of the conclusion of the construction of the Embassy. I told Pak Ui-wan that work was somewhat intensified in the first days after the 5 August meeting at his place, but then a completely insufficient number of workers remained at the construction site. The majority of the planned measures were not done at the established deadlines. Therefore a danger is created that the end of construction will drag out one and a half or two months. I asked Pak Ui-wan to personally take additional steps so that all the construction work on the Embassy and consulate buildings and also the main work on the amenities of the grounds are finished no later than 15 September.

Pak Ui-wan expressed indignation that the supervisors present at his place during the last meeting had not fulfilled their obligations and his instructions. He gave assurances that he would take all necessary steps to finish the work by the planned deadline.

In the conversation which took place Pak Ui-wan told about a speech at an open Party meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers' Administration of Affairs by former Administrator of Affairs Yang Gye concerning the anti-Party activity of the group of Choe Chang-ik, Pak Chang-ok, and others (I knew about this speech from reports of Ivanov and Kim Il Sung). Telling who was among the leaders of the group, Pak Ui-wan declared, "I am astonished that Kim Seung-hwa (former Minister of Construction, a Soviet Korean) was among the leaders. How this could happen I do not yet understand. Kim Seung-hwa had very close and good relations with Kim Il Sung. They come from the same area. Kim Il Sung always listened to Kim Seung-hwa on construction matters more than me, and usually accepted all his suggestions. What could have influenced Kim Seung-hwa to go against Kim Il Sung? Possibly he was offended that he was in the CC Presidium until the 3rd KWP Congress (before the 3rd Congress besides the Presidium there was still the Political Council. Therefore the tasks of the Presidium were approximately the same as the tasks of the organization committee at the present time), but after the 3rd Congress Kim Seung-hwa was not elected a member

of the Presidium. In any event, I had absolutely no idea and did not at all think that Kim Seung-hwa could end up in the anti-Party conspiratorial group. It seems to me it will be more correct and advisable to summon Kim Seung-hwa here and look into all the issues in his presence and determine the measures of punishment".

Pak Ui-wan then said that at the present time it seems to him that the attitude toward him from Pak Jeong-ae [Pak Jong Ae] and other Deputy Chairmen of the KWP CC has become colder. I know that after the 15 August demonstration the deputy chairmen of the KWP CC met at a country dacha, and there were also meetings on 16 August; however I was not invited. As regards the attitudes toward me from Nam Il and Pang Hak-se, they are good, as before.

I asked that Kim Il Sung receive me in connection with the fact that my name was listed among the deputy premiers intended by the anti-Party group, said Pak Ui-wan. Kim Il Sung twice declined to meet, citing [his] workload. The third time I asked him by telephone why did he not want to receive me, a candidate member of the CC Presidium? Kim Il Sung replied that he would of course receive him, but he could not do this earlier because of [his] workload. The conversation took place on 13 August, when they summoned me from inspecting the buildings of your Embassy which are again under construction. At the start of the conversation with Kim Il Sung I apologized to him for my speech at the September KWP CC plenum in the presence of Cdes. Mikoyan and Peng Dehuai with regard to the sharp criticism of the work of the CC organization department inasmuch as became known to me this criticism was unacceptable to Kim Il Sung. Then I said that my name figured in the government list planned by the anti-Party group of Choe Chang-ik, Pak Chang-ok, and others, but I have no connection to this anti-Party group. I have worked and am working honestly and devotedly, and I speak frankly about shortcomings in our work, but I do this in order to eliminate them and, as is known, I am planning and will carry out measures together with the CC leadership to overcome existing shortcomings, to develop the economy, and increase the population's standard of living. It astonishes me how Kim Seung-hwa, who enjoyed your unlimited trust and support, could act against you and besides, how could some Soviet Koreans act against the KWP CC leadership and DPRK government inasmuch as all of us who were sent from the Soviet Union to work in the DPRK were always emphatically instilled with the need to personally give you every possible support.

In Pak Ui-wan's words, Kim Il Sung replied that he ought not pay special attention to what the factionalists spoke about one of us. They can say what they want. Continue to work without any doubts. As regards what some Soviet Koreans could do against the KWP CC leadership, well in the Communist Party itself, as you know, there were recently found leaders in the persons of Malenkov, Kaganovich, and Molotov who acted against the CPSU CC leadership. As regards Kim Seung-hwa, then he was actually very close to me and I trusted him. Possibly he ended up a conspirator because he was offended at one of my sharp criticisms of his work and also because he was not elected to the CC Presidium after the 3rd KWP Congress.

In conclusion Pak Ui-wan said that after all the anti-Party group matters are investigated and examined and it will be evident that he, Pak Ui-wan, had no connection to their conspiratorial activity - and that it will be so, he was convinced of this - he will ask permission to return to the Soviet Union. At this point Pak Ui-wan added that such a sentiment (returning to the USSR) did not arise in him in connection with the activity of the anti-Party group but considerably earlier, about which he once told Ambassadors Shtykov and Ivanov.

For my part, I made the following comment: I do not understand why Pak Ui-wan apologized to Kim Il Sung for his speech at the September CC plenum. Representatives of the fraternal Parties, the CPSU and the CPC, came with the goal of helping the Korean friends correctly look into the events which were occurring in the Party and country and deciding intra-Party issues correctly, correcting the mistakes

which had been made, restoring Leninist Party norms of intra-Party life, strengthening the Party's ties with the masses, and paying more attention to issues of raising the material welfare of the workers. Therefore it would be completely incomprehensible if shortcomings in the work of the KWP leadership were concealed from fraternal Parties, and some secrets were being made of this. The task of KWP CC Presidium members was first to discover all the shortcomings in work and with the aid of the representatives of fraternal Parties to collectively chart out measures to eliminate them. As regards Pak Ui-wan's sentiments to return to the USSR then I consider this completely incorrect. For the past 12 years which you have been in the DPRK you have learned much, and gained much experience in government and economic work. I think that in working here you are making an immeasurably greater contribution to our common cause of building socialism and strengthening the unity and solidarity of the socialist countries than in any other place. It seems to me that you first need to carry out the great government responsibilities entrusted to you just as energetically, persistently, and confidently.

Pak Ui-wan said that he would continue to act persistently and energetically, but he can work confidently when he knows that he is trusted. If he feels that he is not trusted then he will abandon leadership work.

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I visited Nam Il at his invitation.

Nam Il presented me with the KWP CC letter to be passed to the CPSU CC of which Kim Il Sung spoke in the 21 August conversation.

Nam Il reported that at the present time talks are being held in Khabarovsk between delegations of the USSR and DPRK railways ministries on the question of the construction of the permanent railroad bridge across the Tumen-Ula River in the Khasan-Tumangan span. The talks are going successfully and agreement has been reached on all points. However, agreement has not been reached about one point, the wages of the Korean workers. As our Minister of Railways said to me today, it is proposed to set the ratio of the wages of the Korean and Soviet workers at 4:6. We don't understand this at all. I wonder if I can give him an explanation on this issue.

I said for my part that I do not understand at all what the ratio is about (Nam Il said that he himself does not understand this issue at all) and therefore I cannot say anything. At the first opportunity I will try and clear up these issues and provide the necessary explanations (on 23 August I asked Cde. Kurdikov by telephone to clear up this issue in the USSR Ministry of Railways). He promised to do it and report).

I informed Nam Il that at the suggestion of the GUGMS [the Main Directorate of the Hydrometeorological Service] under the USSR Council of Ministers a decision had been made to hold the second session of the regional association of the World Meteorological Organization in Tashkent in August and September 1958. It is planned to invite 90-100 foreign representatives to take part in the work of the session for 15-20 days. The USSR MFA was charged with asking the opinion of the Korean friends in advance about the issue of entry visas to the USSR for representatives of South Korea. I then noted that, in our opinion, it is advisable to issue visas to representatives of South Korea.

Nam Il said that he agrees with the opinion of the USSR MFA and considers it advisable to issue visas for representatives of South Korea to enter the USSR for the session of the Asian regional association of the World Meteorological Organization. He then noted that this will to some degree facilitate the establishment of contacts between North and South Korea.

I also informed Nam Il that there will be talks between the USSR and the European countries of people's democracy in the near future about the conclusion of bilateral conventions to settle issues of the citizenship of people with dual nationality, agreements on legal aid on civil and criminal matters, and a consular convention. In this regard I asked the DPRK government to consider the issue of whether it wishes to conclude an agreement with the USSR on these issues. I said that for reference we can send the draft conventions on citizenship issues and the consular convention prepared by the USSR MFA, and also that the draft of an agreement about legal aid on civil and criminal matters will be sent separately. Then I said that the Soviet side is ready to consider any suggestions of the Korean side regarding the conclusion of the aforementioned agreements.

Nam Il said that they will examine these proposals and asked that he be sent the drafts of the aforementioned agreements, which I have done.

In connection with Nam Il's display of interest I told him in detail about the procedure in the Soviet Union for the sale to collective farms of construction and household materials, vehicles, equipment, etc. in exchange for grain and other agricultural products purchased in the collective farms.

Nam Il thanked [me] and noted that this system is very interesting, creates a [material] interest among collective farmers, and perhaps it ought to be adopted by us in the DPRK...

[...]

SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN THE DPRK
[signature] (A. PUZANOV)

Five copies printed:

- 1 - Cde. Gromyko
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