

December 17, 1957
Journal of Soviet Ambassador to the DPRK A.M.
Puzanov for 17 December 1957

Citation:

"Journal of Soviet Ambassador to the DPRK A.M. Puzanov for 17 December 1957", December 17, 1957, Wilson Center Digital Archive, AVPRF F. 0102, Op. 14, Delo 6, Listy 14-25. Translated for NKIDP by Gary Goldberg.
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/115956>

Summary:

Kim Il Sung discusses his plans to send a letter to Mao Zedong about the withdrawal of the Chinese volunteers from DPRK and to convene a Party conference as well as the current situation with trade in pork and progress of the conference of agricultural cooperative workers.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from ROK Ministry of Unification

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

JOURNAL

of Soviet Ambassador to the DPRK A. M. PUZANOV
for the period 14 through 20 December 1957

[handwritten: To Cde. Torbenkov, N. Ye. This copy needed to be sent to the CC]
[illegible initials]]

...17 December 1957

I visited Kim Il Sung at his invitation. In the conversation which took place Kim Il Sung informed me about the following issues:

First. Today we're sending a letter to Cde. Mao Zedong via the ambassador. Taking into consideration the Chinese friends' suggestion about withdrawing the Chinese volunteers from the DPRK, a thought is expressed in this letter about the procedure for discussing and deciding this question. The substance comes down to the following: the session of the Supreme People's Assembly which is scheduled for January 1958 will turn to the PRC government with a request to withdraw the Chinese People's Volunteers from the DPRK in 1958 and send a message to the UN about the withdrawal of American forces from South Korea. It was done this way in 1948 when we turned to the government of the Soviet Union about the withdrawal of Soviet troops and to the US government, about the withdrawal of American troops. The Soviet government immediately gave a positive response and withdrew its troops from North Korea in 1948. The Americans dragged out the withdrawal of troops until the middle of 1949. The sympathies of the population of Korea and world public opinion were on the side of the Soviet Union. It seems to us that now, with the agreement of the Chinese friends to our suggestion, that the population of South Korea, and indeed the world community, will exert strong pressure on the Americans and insistently demand the withdrawal of American troops from South Korea.

Second. We sent an official invitation to Zhou Enlai to visit the DPRK in 1958. We consider May to be the most favorable time.

Third. In accordance with a KWP CC Plenum resolution the KWP CC Presidium adopted a resolution to convene a Party conference on 17 February 1958. It has been decided that the conference is to discuss:

- a) the five-year plan for the development of the DPRK economy;
- b) an intra-Party issue.

I asked Kim Il Sung what is the reference being made to in the second, intra-Party issue? To the issues of fighting the factionalists or to issues of strengthening Party educational work among TWP members?

Kim Il Sung gave this explanation: it will be necessary to sum up the results of the fight against the factionalists. But this is not the main thing, inasmuch as the factionalists have been exposed and beaten. Emphasis will be placed on strengthening ideological educational work in the Party. A separate short decision will be made with regard to the factionalists, which will probably not be published. Those who fled to China and also Choe Chang-ik, Pak Chang-ok, and some others will have to be expelled from the Party. A number of comrades who joined the factionalists will have to criticize themselves at Party conferences. The measures of punishment will depend on their behavior and sincerity. The Party conference will fill the CC with candidate KWP CC members to replace the CC members who were pushed out and expelled.

I noted for my part that of course if only the issue of the factionalists is especially

raised at the Party conference then the impression would be created that this group has serious strength and a considerable number of supporters. Actually, the main thing in Party work is strengthening Party educational and ideological work among Party members. Right now many of the senior Party officials say that the decision of last August's KWP CC Plenum with regard to the factionalists was correct. By this they want to say that the decision of the September KWP CC plenum was incorrect. But it seems to me, without going into a discussion of the issue of the correctness of reexamining the decision about punishing the factionalists, that one ought not to forget that that September KWP CC Plenum played a large role in restoring the Leninist norms of Party life, in strengthening the collegiality of the leadership, and...

Kim Il Sung, continuing my idea, said, "...and in strengthening the Party's ties with the masses".

I formed the impression that Kim Il Sung agreed with my statements.

Kim Il Sung then said that, just like at the KWP CC Plenum, Kim Du-bong and Pak Ui-won were subjected to sharp criticism at the Pyongyang City Party activists' meeting for ties with the factionalists.

Pak Ui-won was associated with the factionalists, said Kim Il Sung; evidently he did not know of their designs to overthrow the KWP CC leadership and DPRK government. They are criticizing him for conceit and arrogance.

With regard to Pak Ui-won I said that insofar as I had formed an impression Pak Ui-won was an honest person who was devoted to the Party and the people. He was obviously connected with the factionalists not for political motives of factional activity but knew them from work together in the Cabinet of Ministers. In all likelihood he shared a whole series of critical comments. But it seems to me that he approached this in a Party-like manner, wishing to uncover existing shortcomings in work and eliminate them together with the KWP CC leadership, whereas the factionalists wanted to use the shortcomings to attract Party members and the population to their side for selfish ends.

I asked Kim Il Sung how Pak Ui-won's work is assessed.

Kim Il Sung replied that Pak Ui-won is a capable official but works unevenly, at times passionately, but sometimes without enthusiasm.

Fourth. At the present time a tense situation has developed among us with trade in pork. The total head of swine has grown in comparison with last year, which has provided an opportunity to increase procurement. There is pork in the stores but it sells badly [berut plokho] because of the high price. One kilogram of pork costs 290 won, but one kilogram of fish is an average of 30 won. Of course it is more beneficial to buy fish. Right now we are studying how best to act to sell pork to the population at more affordable prices and maintain the agricultural cooperatives' and peasants' [material] interest in increasing pork production. For the time being the selling price of pork has been reduced to 260 won per kilogram and [economists] have been charged with calculating how much more we can lower prices without the state incurring a loss. Locations have been organized in the provinces to slaughter pigs and process sausage links and sausages. By the new year we plan to sell the workers part of the available pork at reduced prices, 100 won per kilogram.

I told Kim Il Sung what measures the Party and government had taken and do take in the USSR to improve the production of meat and pork and lower their prime costs and retail prices.

I asked Kim Il Sung how the population is reacting to the introduction of a grain monopoly?

Kim Il Sung replied that the responses are positive. However, in some cities there was dissatisfaction on the part of the population caused by the late opening of the locations that sell grain to citizens who don't receive ration cards. We introduced the state monopoly on the procurement and sale of grain to fight speculation and did it as is being done in the PRC.

I expressed concern that this measure, while playing a positive role in the fight against speculation, might at the same time seriously reduce the [material] interest of the agricultural cooperatives and peasants in producing grain. I told Kim Il Sung about our organization of the business of procuring and purchasing grain and other agricultural products in the USSR. Before 1953 at the beginning of the grain procurement the government annually decided to prohibit the free sale of grain before the oblast', kray, or republic fulfilled the established grain procurement plan; such decisions are no longer made. Indeed, there is no need for them. In the Charter of the cooperative association [artel'] it said that the first priority task of the cooperative association is meeting their obligations to the state. Accordingly not a one of our collective farms can ship out grain or other agricultural products for sale on the market until it meets its obligations to the state.

Kim Il Sung noted that such a provision of a cooperative association Charter is also very well suited for their agricultural cooperatives.

Fifth. Kim Il Sung talked about the progress of the conference of agricultural cooperative workers of the province of South Hwanghae in summing up the results of the current agricultural year. Representatives of 700 cooperatives were present at the conference. Up to 350 people spoke in the sections. We took the prepared statements of the remaining participants and included them in the stenographic record. This is very important for such work. We will also do the same for other provinces. The conference went energetically, with great enthusiasm. Increased commitments for the production of agricultural products in 1958 were undertaken. There were very interesting speeches. For example, one of the chairmen of an agricultural cooperative of a mountainous region, a former front-line soldier, said that after the organization of the agricultural cooperative they had only one cow for a draft animal but at the present time they have 120 cows. The cooperative has 65 households. Whereas last year an average of one ton of grain was produced per household, this year it was two tons. I gave this chairman of a cooperative a bicycle. There were also many other examples. The chairmen of cooperatives from those districts which were in South Korea before the armistice had good comments.

Sixth. Kim Il Sung reported that the second congress of the United Democratic Patriotic Front of Korea opens tomorrow, 18 December. Six hundred delegates and up to 200 guests will be present. The Appeal of the Anniversary Session of the USSR Supreme Soviet, the Declaration, and the Peace Manifesto will be discussed at the congress.

I thanked Kim Il Sun for the information and in return informed him about the following issues:

a) the progress of the shipment of instruments for the Heungnam chemical fertilizer plant.

According to report from Minister of the Chemical Industry Cde. Tikhomirov as of 13 December 33 of the 49 fans have been shipped; 13 will be shipped in December and three in January; six of the seven reducers for the gas blowers will be shipped in

December, and one in January; of 3,564 fixtures 2,832 were shipped in December and 732 will be shipped in January; of 550 instruments 484 have been shipped and the remaining 66 will be shipped in December and January; 700 meters of cable will be shipped in December.

Kim Il Sung thanked [me] for the report.

b) I reported that the DPRK request has been granted about getting radio equipment in the USSR and installing it in the DPRK Embassy in Moscow for communication with Pyongyang.

c) I informed [him] that the talks and the signing of the Treaty and Convention went successfully. I thanked the DPRK government for the creation of favorable conditions for the work of the delegations and the diligence toward consideration of the Treaty and Convention.

Ri Dong-geon [sic] was present at the conversation, which lasted one hour and 30 minutes.