

June 8, 1958
Journal of Soviet Ambassador in the DPRK A. M.
Puzanov for 8 June 1958

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Summary:

Puzanov learns about North Korea's involvement in COMECON and the agricultural situation in Jagang and South Hwanghae Provinces.

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Pyongyang

[...]

8 June 1958

I met with Pak Gil-yong and Deputy Gosplan Chairman Jang Yong-jin [sic] while fishing at the Chin-San [sic] Reservoir and had a conversation with them.

Pak Gil-yong told about the KWP delegation's participation in the Conference of Representatives of Comecon Member Communist Parties and about the reception of Kim Il, Jeong Il-yong, and Ri Jeong-ok by Cde. N. S. Khrushchev. Then Pak Gil-yong spoke about the following:

Jeong Il-yong and Ri Jeong-ok advised Kim Il not to speak at this Conference; however he spoke in spite of their advice. In a prepared speech Kim Il proposed saying considerably more about the fraternal aid of the Soviet people in restoring and developing the DPRK economy. Pak Gil-yong said, when I did this Jeong Il-yong, who had familiarized himself with the text of the prepared speech, noted that everything that concerns aid ought to be excluded. I reported to Kim Il about this, who said that everything ought to be left as it was and not to listen to any orders.

Jeong Il-yong said that on return from Moscow Ri Jeong-ok gathered Gosplan officials and provided information in detail about the results of the discussions between the DPRK delegation and the delegation of the Soviet Union headed by Cde. I. I. Kuz'min about long-range plans for the development of the economy and reciprocal deliveries for 1959-1965.

In Jang Yong-jin's words, Ri Jeong-ok said that the delegation was completely satisfied both with the organization of the work itself, and the careful examination of all the issues raised by the DPRK delegation. The Gosplan officials received Ri Jeong-ok's report with great satisfaction. Jang Yong-jin also said that members of the KWP CC Plenum at which he was present greeted Kim Il's report about the May Conference and about the conversation with Cde. N. S. Khrushchev with great satisfaction and applause.

We exchanged opinions about the condition of the crops. Jang Yong-jin, who deals with agricultural planning in Gosplan, said that the wheat and barley crops are suffering to a strong degree from drought. He noted, it is true that all the planted area is approximately 180,000 hectares. Good rain fell in places on 6 and 7 June. For example, in the province of South Hwanghae the rain reached 20, and in places, 30 cm. The same good rain fell in the province of Jagang. There was considerably less rain in the province of South Hwanghae where the crops are suffering more from drought. However the corn crops look good everywhere. Speaking of the cotton seedlings, Jang Yong-jin noted that with those methods of cultivation which are being employed right now it is an extraordinarily labor-intensive crop since all the work is being done by hand. In a conversation with Kim Il Sung the peasants said bluntly that they deal with cotton crops only because the KWP recommends it, but the cotton crops are not yet creating a material interest for peasants and the expenses for the production of cotton are far from being recovered. Therefore the peat pots in which cotton is cultivated and replanted in a field are called "golden pots".

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