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Report from Etre Sándor, 'Information from the leader, and the referent of the Hungarian subdivision at the DPRK's Foreign Affairs Ministry.'

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Summary:

A report by Etre Sandor on his visit to North Korea, in which he spoke with the North Korean Foreign Ministry about Hungarian-Korean relations and Korean reunification.

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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Regional Division IV

Korean Branch

Etre Sándor

TOP SECRET!

Produced in 5 copies for:

- Comrade Péter
- Comrade Puja
- Comrade Marjai
- Comrade Barity
- Department □□ □□

Record

Subject: Information from the leader, and the referent of the Hungarian subdivision at the DPRK's Foreign Affairs Ministry.

I was staying in Pyongyang between 1972 April 4 and 11. During this time I met the leader, and the referent of the Hungarian subdivision at the DPRK's Foreign Affairs Ministry the following three times:

- I made a visit of courtesy to the Foreign Affairs Ministry.
- I participated in the dinner they arranged in my honor.
- I was at the informal ambassadorial meeting.

I am reporting the issues and information that arose during the discussions with my Korean colleagues at these events below.

Hungarian-Korean relations

The Foreign Affairs Ministry of the DPRK wishes to coordinate the collaboration between our countries in the spirit of the Hungarian visit of Comrade Pak Seong-cheol [Pak Song Chol] in 1972. They consider our relations good and would like to further improve on them. (Concerning the bilateral relations, the Hungarian subdivision leader Comrade Bang Jong-gap asked whether we noticed how Foreign Affairs Minister Comrade Heo Dam wrote that relations must be improved in all fields in his April 4 greeting letter to Comrade Péter János.) The Korean party would like to continue the exchange of high and medium ranking delegations. They pointed out that this is the only way to increase mutual trust and honesty towards each other.

They are satisfied with our political relations. They think that Hungarian-Korean economical and trading collaborations need to be improved. In their opinion, a good foundation and possibilities were established for further economic collaboration by the Korean visit of the Hungarian economical experts' delegation led by Szili Géza, the heavy industry vice minister. The DPRK's economy is developing and the current situation requires economic cooperation more than ever with the socialist countries.

They regard the collaboration between the Foreign Affairs Ministries good. Foreign Affairs Vice Minister Comrade Ri Man-seok [Ri Man Sok] sent his greetings to Comrades Marjai and Barity, and said that he did not forget about the pending invitation. He would like to visit Budapest before the end of this year (perhaps in order to provide information on suggestions for reunification). They expressed thanks for the American materials that were provided through diplomatic channels and

requested similar materials in the future as well. Foreign Affairs Minister Comrade Heo Dam [Ho Dam] is very busy but he also did not forget about the invitation of Comrade Péter János, who, according to my colleagues, reminded him of this during Comrade Heo Dam's short trip through Budapest in the beginning of March. In the name of the leadership of their ministry, they expressed their gratitude for the support we provided for their ambassador in Budapest. They especially thanked Comrades Marjai, Barity, Kádas, and myself. Ambassador Pak Gyeong-sun [Pak Kyong-sun] reported home that thanks to this support he could overcome the first difficulties that come with a new diplomatic assignment more easily.

The Korean comrades emphasized the good collaboration on internal affairs. Their aim is to extend this good and close cooperation to other ministries too.

They let me feel that they are not quite satisfied with the cultural cooperation. They are awaiting an answer from the Institute of Foreign Affairs and Trade regarding their suggestion for the supplementary report of the cultural work plan for 1972.

They stated that Comrade Pak Seong-cheol is very pleased with his visit and his negotiations in Hungary.

The issue of reunification

Since the Hungarian visit of Comrade Pak Seong-cheol a month ago, there has been no new significant change in the Korean situation-stated the Korean comrades. A new aspect is that the South Korean puppet regime increased its provocations against the DPRK, and is building new military bases and objects at the Southern side of the demilitarized zone. They are increasing the tension on the Korean peninsula with these actions. The emergency state issued earlier by the Park Chung Hee regime is working against the warming of the relations between the two countries. Answering my inquiries, the Korean comrades stated that the American government was supposedly not pleased with the intensifying South Korean provocations and hostile actions either. But at the same time they pointed out that the nature of American imperialism had not changed and they would not have false illusions towards the American imperialists.

On the Supreme People's Assembly session of April 20, the leadership of the DPRK will officially announce the suggestions for peaceful reunification, which they have already wrote up and consulted about with other countries of the world, including us. They will summarize and incorporate suggestions for peaceful reunification previously declared by the eight points of April 8, 1971, and stated in speeches and declarations by Comrade Kim Il Sung on August 6, 1971, January 1, 1972, and January 10. According to their current plans, the finished declaration will be sent to our government. Our ambassador in Pyongyang will be notified of this in due time. Regarding foreign journalists and such, the Pyongyang accredited Comrade Baracs too; there has been no decision whether they could attend the session or not. According to the established practice however, foreign mission leaders in Pyongyang will be invited.

The Korean side thinks that it is of utmost importance that the socialist countries stand united beside the DPRK. They plan to create an action unit among the socialist countries for the unification of Korea. (An obvious reference to the remarks made by the Hungarian side during Comrade Pak Seong-cheol's negotiations in Budapest.) They are paying distinguished attention towards the unity of socialist countries, especially in relation to the Korean issue. (It is interesting to note that during the visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Korean comrades mentioned the significance of the socialist order.)

They wish to demonstrate the unity and unified action towards the cause of the DPRK on the April 25 celebrations by the presence of delegations of socialist countries and countries with diplomatic relations with the DPRK. They are making their best effort so that there would be no arguments between the representatives of the countries that send delegations to Pyongyang. They have made internal arrangements regarding this matter. Our Korean friends implied that they will have their answers soon for the anti-imperialist world summit and ascertained that as the DPRK is a small country, they wish to be on good terms with both the Soviet Union and China. They would like to receive their support in achieving international recognition of their country.

About the embassy

The two Korean comrades repeatedly expressed their gratitude for the support we have given to their embassy in Budapest. They said that they are upholding a similar good relation and cooperation with our embassy in Pyongyang. They are aware of the fact that they cannot satisfy all the requirements of our embassy or fulfill them on time. They apologized for this and promised to give even more information to our diplomats in the future. They are observing Comrade Sebestyén's health with great care and pleasingly acknowledged my gratitude for the Korean medical help that Comrade Sebestyén received. They let me feel in an extremely subtle way that they find it problematic that as Comrade Sebestyén cannot participate on official Korean events, Comrade Karsai is representing him in these receptions, even though he is not the appointed official. During my visit to the Foreign Affairs Ministry, the two Korean comrades commented appreciatively in particular on the work of Comrade Dr. Eperjesi József and the good relations he established with various Korean organizations.

South Korean efforts towards destabilization

The Korean comrades talked about the previously known subject that the current South Korean regime is making efforts to establish relations with "non-hostile communist countries". They referred to their previous observations very carefully: they hope that our country has no relations with South Korea, not even trade relations. As a friendly remark, they said that their previous observations rely on the information they received from the illegal South Korean People's Revolutionary Party. They had information that a Hungarian company, Hungarotex, placed an order to a South Korean company from Vienna. They regard this as a fact.

"Fulfilling their obligation as colleagues" the comrades noted that from time to time, but nowadays more frequently the Hungarian press uses expressions such as "South Korean government", "South Korean army", the "president", etc. instead of puppet government, puppet army, puppet president etc. that they requested. They are aware that this is not the official Hungarian standpoint, but merely errors in journalism. Nevertheless it is critically important for them who is regarded as the lawful international representatives of the Korean nation.

For these two remarks, I quoted the official response of Comrade Fehér Lajos and the Hungarian government that had been given already many times. They were satisfied with my response, and thanked me.

Other

On their own initiative, they said that the reason why they could not fulfill the otherwise realistic request of Comrade Eperjesi to let him travel to Panmunjeom [Panmunjom] to a Red Cross conference is that there are currently negotiations there that "are not yet concerns of foreigners". They paraphrased it, but obviously gave me the idea that secret negotiations are taking place there. At the same time, they are

renovating the hotels and buildings in Kaesong, building new roads, etc. When there is a way, they will make it possible for Comrade Eperjesi to visit Panmunjeom. (My side note: currently the Czechoslovak and Polish members of SEB can only commute by train between Pyongyang and Kaesong, whereas previously this was allowed by car as well.)

In my statements and answers, I relied on the Hungarian standpoints that were expressed to Comrade Pak Seong-cheol this year during his visit to Budapest. I emphasized that according to the guidelines I received from my leaders, I am also trying to further improve the relations between our countries.

I expressed my gratitude for my reception, the cordial conversations, and the information regarding the preparation for our invited military delegation. (These are already known by the leader comrades.)

On behalf of our embassy, I thanked the Foreign Affairs Ministry of the DPRK for commemorating the 27th anniversary of our nation's independence.

Budapest, 1972, April 14.