

November 16, 1972

**From the Journal of N.G. Sudarikov, 'Record of a
Conversation with Kim Yong-nam, First Deputy Chief
of the KWP CC International Department, 19
October 1972'**

Citation:

"From the Journal of N.G. Sudarikov, 'Record of a Conversation with Kim Yong-nam, First Deputy Chief of the KWP CC International Department, 19 October 1972'", November 16, 1972, Wilson Center Digital Archive, RGANI, f. 5, op. 64, d. 423, ll. 128-136. Contributed by Sergey Radchenko and translated by Gary Goldberg.
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/134147>

Summary:

Kim Yong-nam insists that South Korea should be blamed for establishing an anti-communist policy, which violates the third principle of reunification. He also discusses the special declaration of Park Chung Hee, which was released on October 17, 1972.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Kyungnam University

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

[handwritten in the
upper left-hand corner:
RGANI, 5-64-423, ll. 128-139]

[CPSU CC stamp:
22 November 1972 37901]
SECRET Copy N° 1
16 November 1972
Outgoing N° 329
from the journal of
N. G. SUDARIKOV

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION
with Kim Yong-nam, First Deputy Chief of the KWP CC International Department

19 October 1972

I met with Kim Yong-nam in the KWP CC at his invitation.

Kim Yong-nam said that Cde. Kim Il Sung himself wanted to inform the Soviet ambassador, but he is very busy right now (he is at a conference) and charged him with quickly providing information about events of recent days in South Korea.

Kim Yong-nam provided information about the following*

1. The 1st meeting of the co-chairmen of the Coordination Committee of the North and South of Korea was held in Panmunjom on 12 October at the initiative of the South Korean side. [My] interlocutor said, it ought to be noted that up to this time the South Koreans had not been interested in the work of the Coordination Committee, and whereas they have now raise the question of a meeting of the co-chairmen then this can be explained by the pressure put on them by our side.

* The substance of the conversation was promptly reported to Headquarters - N. S.

Pak Seong-cheol, the Second Deputy Chairman of the DPRK Cabinet of Ministers, and Lee Hu-rak, South Korean CIA Director and South Korean co-Chairman, took part in this meeting (Kim Yong Ju, a co-Chairman of the Committee and Chief of the KWP CC Organizational Instructional Department, could not attend by reason of illness).

As we had already declared earlier, the dialog between the South and North and the struggle for the peaceful reunification of the motherland represent a keen class struggle between socialism and capitalism, patriots and traitors, democracy and fascism, the ideas of *juche* and the ideas of admiration of foreign powers, and the forces of proletarian internationalism and the united front of the bourgeoisie. Therefore we sharply criticized the South Korean side at this meeting.

[handwritten at the bottom of the first page of the document: "Reported to Cde. K. F. Katushev. 11 November 1972 [illegible signature]]"

Cde. Pak Seong-cheol, who spoke first, expressed a protest against the South Korean side not observing the agreed principles of the 4 July joint statement of the North and South. He presented in critical terms all the facts, actions, and statements of Park Chung Hee, Premier Kim Jong Pil, and Lee Hu-rak that demonstrate this.

Initially the Southerners greeted this criticism with hostility. But we told them frankly: are you in the final account for a peaceful reunification of the motherland or for anti-Communism? If you want to collaborate then you should abandon anti-Communism, but if you want to continue an anti-Communist policy then why is dialog needed?

Such a formulation of the question put the South Koreans in a very difficult position. Lee Hu-rak was forced to admit the correctness of our criticism. He said that he himself was doing everything possible to observe the agreement recorded in the joint statement and had even given instructions to the appropriate organizations to halt the anti-Communist propaganda but, he said, they aren't listening, society is very complex, etc. Nevertheless Lee Hu-rak also repeated at this meeting, for example, that he does not regard "the UN troops" in South Korea as outside forces interfering in the reunification of Korea.

In response to this he was told that the UN Charter prohibits the interference in the internal affairs of other countries, but American troops are in the South under the UN banner. Why then in such an event are they not an outside force? Lee Hu-rak admitted that if the question is raised this way that he is actually wrong.

We reminded the Southerners that in his 1 October speech on the occasion of the anniversary of the creation of the South Korean Army Park Chung Hee advocated the reunification of the country on the basis of "a free democracy". Doesn't this mean that you want to impose your ideology, your bourgeois system on us[?] For we have agreed on a great national consolidation regardless of differences in ideology, views, and social systems. Doesn't this mean that you intend to continue the policy of anti-Communism?

Lee Hu-rak admitted here that they have been acting incorrectly. And he nevertheless tried to squirm out and cast blame on others, declaring that in editing this speech of Park Chung Hee he had left out these statements in it but, he said, journalists had put them back in. He finally assured us that in the future they would keep to the principles of the joint agreement and we did not return to this question again.

The South Korean side proposed forming a Coordination Committee. In their opinion, the Committee should include five representatives from each side. We said that there was no difference to us how many members will be in the Committee, and as a result the sides agreed to specify its composition in the future.

In the course of the meeting Lee Hu-rak displayed interest in the system of confederation of the South and North proposed by Cde. Kim Il Sung. He was told that this means the formation of a Supreme National Committee of representatives of the North and South while preserving the existing social systems here. A confederation would allow joint actions to be undertaken in foreign policy terms, and domestically to cooperate with one another politically, economically, culturally, and in other areas. Lee Hu-rak asked whether the Coordination Committee might develop into a confederation if its composition and functions are expanded in the future. We replied affirmatively, but stressed that the will of the popular masses be freely expressed to do this.

Lee Hu-rak was satisfied with our explanations. At the end of the meeting he asked us to trust them, calling [on us] not to fight and not to quarrel, but to peacefully coexist.

Thus at the 1st meeting of the co-chairmen of the Coordination Committee the South Korean side admitted its fault for not observing the 4 July agreement, apologized, and asked [us] to regard it with trust in the future. It was agreed that the next meetings of the co-chairmen would be held in Pyongyang and Seoul in turn; in particular, the

2nd meeting will be held on 2 November in Pyongyang and the 3rd in Seoul after 20 November.

2. Interesting events happened after this meeting of the co-chairmen, said Kim Yong-nam.

On 15 October the Southerners called us on the direct telephone line which now, as is well-known, connects Seoul with Pyongyang and asked for a meeting of the representatives of both sides. Our representative agreed to this meeting. There the South Koreans declared that at the direction of CIA Director Lee Hu-rak he would like to pass on the following:

The South and North of Korea ought to achieve the reunification in the '70s at whatever cost, that is, during the period when the leadership of the North is being exercised by Kim Il Sung, and the government in the South will be under President Park Chung Hee. We did not fully understand you at the 1st meeting of the co-chairmen of the Coordination Committee but upon returning home we studied our records and came to the conclusion that your criticism is entirely justified and we were at fault for everything. Therefore we have decided to take appropriate steps.

In reply to our question what steps this means, the South Korean replied that Park Chung Hee and Lee Hu-rak passionately desire the reunification of the country, but inasmuch as a very strong opposition exists in the South it is necessary to bring order to the country. At this time the South Korean asked us to listen and closely study the important statement which it is being proposed to publish in the South on 17 October. If you have any comments or opinions, he said, then inform us of them.

On 17 October, one hour before the publication of Park Chung Hee's declaration the South Koreans asked us on the telephone to listen closely to the radio for an important statement at 1900. They also proposed holding a meeting of liaison representatives the next day.

A "special declaration" of Park Chung Hee was actually published in Seoul on 17 October. Evidently you have already been familiarized with it, said Kim Yong-nam, and therefore I won't disclose its content.

On 18 October a meeting of liaison representatives was again held. The South Korean read approximately the following text:

"At the present time the situation around Korea has substantially changed. The US-USSR bipolar system has undergone special changes, and also the situation around the US, USSR, China, and Japan themselves. In these conditions we also have started to think that one cannot rely on the US and Japan and it is necessary to resolve questions with our own resources. That is why the adoption of the 4 July joint declaration of the South and North became possible and the dialog between us was begun.

However, the various opposition forces in South Korea became more active after the publication of the joint declaration. Numerous critical voices began to be heard that, they said, what is being done is "a violation of the Constitution".

Kim Yong Ju, Chief of the KWP CC Organizational Instruction Department, has repeatedly accused us of creating obstructions in the path to the motherland's reunification. However, we are not guilty of this. We are striving to observe the agreement with the North, but the opposition is strongly interfering with this. That is why the current special declaration of the President has as its goal making changes to

the current Constitution. The previous Constitution was developed during the bipolar West-East international system and it left no place for compromise. We want a new Constitution to meet the new international situation and the task of national reunification".

The South Korean replied that this time they had informed the US about the substance of Pak Chung Hee's declaration only several hours before its publication. He added that the US and Japan are dissatisfied with these actions of the President of South Korea, and together they are against the very principle of an independent approach to the problem of the reunification of Korea. In spite of such opposition from the US and Japan, said the Southerner, the South Korean authorities want to make changes to the Constitution and create such a political system in South Korea headed by a President which would allow a dialog with the North to be conducted on a constitutional basis.

In reply to a question of the liaison representative from the DPRK as why a state of siege needed to be introduced to do this, the South Korean replied that it was impossible to resolve this domestic question with the usual measures without causing disorders in the South. He also directed our attention to the fact that there in nothing in the special declaration that would hurt or concern the North, and again asked [us] to express our opinions after deep study of the 17 October declaration of President Park Chung Hee.

Kim Yong-nam noted, actually, aspects in Park Chung Hee's declaration are deserving of attention and there is nothing else that would be openly directed against the DPRK.

The interlocutor continued, the Southerners tell us that right now the most diverse opinions and predictions are being expressed in the South. For example, right-wing elements ask themselves the question: isn't the President's declaration directed against them[?] Others ask, isn't this a pro-Communist coup[?] Yet others express the fear, does this not mean an abandonment of dialog between the South and North[?]. There are also those who are inclined to the thought that South Korea is now going to the right.

The South Korean liaison representative said, in order to overcome such gossip the new Constitution clearly formulates the task of national reunification and provides for the creation of such a parliament which would support holding a peaceful dialog with the North. Thus, concluded the Southerner, the intention of President Park Chung Hee to reexamine the Constitution does not mean the abandonment of dialog, but on the contrary, a desire to step it up.

Kim Yong-nam said, this is the main substance of the discussions which we recently have held with the South Koreans. The KWP CC Political Committee has analyzed the development of events in South Korea in recent days, but has not yet come to a final conclusion. The general impression is such that Park Chung Hee is trying to suppress any democracy in the South, using the idea popular among the people of the reunification of the country, but behind the scenes he makes fine gestures in our direction.

Kim Yong-nam continued, the KWP CC Political Committee tentatively assesses the current complex situation in the South as follows:

After the adoption of the 4 July joint declaration the desire for a peaceful reunification of the motherland increased extraordinarily and the activity of the opposition party intensified. The South Korean authorities were frightened of this. According to information which has come to us from the South during the period since 4 July they have arrested 90 active figures who oppose the government. It is a simple fact that

the South Korean rulers remain hard-core anti-Communists.

The economy of South Korea is in a serious condition, and many midsized and small enterprises are on the edge of bankruptcy. The harvest of food crops was very bad this year. Natural disasters have caused great losses.

Park Chung Hee has launched a so-called "movement for a new countryside". But whereas in the DPRK housing is built for peasants at state expense, in the South peasants have to borrow money from the government for these purposes. The peasants are displeased at this "movement".

Corruption and demoralization are strong in the Army and among civil servants. Many think that the situation in South Korea is largely reminiscent of China in the period of Chiang Kai-Shek's rule.

As a result of all of this sentiments in favor of the socialist North are growing among the population of the South. Since 4 July, the student movement, which has gone through a period of calm, has become more notably active.

Park Chung Hee is afraid that the opposition and students will oppose his recent actions. Therefore he has disbanded parliament, prohibited the activity of political parties, and closed higher educational institutions. The authorities have even removed the signs from the premises of the opposition parties and public organizations.

It seems like Park Chung Hee is also afraid of the Army. This time he has prohibited aircraft from taking off, soldiers leaving the barracks, and even servicemen returning to their units from leave (usually when introducing a state of emergency servicemen are called upon to return to their units).

Kim Yong-nam noted, all this demonstrates that evidently the current actions of Park Chung Hee have a more domestic nature and are calculated on bringing "order" inside South Korea, and consequently do not present a direct threat to the DPRK in a military sense.

In our opinion, with his recent actions Park Chung Hee is pursuing the following goals:

First, Park Chung Hee would like to conduct a dialog with us "one on one", that is, without the participation of the opposition forces from the South. Therefore he is intent on throwing the opposition overboard and single-handedly deciding all matters in South Korea. In other words, he would like to strengthen the fascist military dictatorship even more, put an end to the revolutionary forces, and establish procedures in which he could remain in power for a long time, conduct a dialog with the North "one on one", and coexist with us. What this will lead to, the future will show.

Second, with the aid of references to a "state of emergency" and "martial law" he is trying to achieve even greater material support from the US and Japan.

By the way, noted Kim Yong-nam, in the special declaration of the South Korean President there is an aspect which deserves special attention. It is Park Chung Hee's statement that if the popular masses reject the draft revision of the Constitution in a referendum then he will take this as the people's reluctance to continue dialog with the North and will seek new measures for a peaceful reunification of the country. The interlocutor repeated, this aspect requires that it be studied a little better.

Kim Yong-nam continued, the question of what position the DPRK should take with respect to the recent steps of the South Korean leaders was discussed in the KWP CC Political Committee. It is obvious that our silence would be taken as connivance in the suppression of the popular masses in the South and as approval of the anti-Communist actions of the South Korean authorities.

Therefore there are these alternatives: first, publish articles in the press which state that the popular masses cannot be suppressed under the banner of the peaceful reunification of the country and, all the better, that peaceful reunification is in the interests of the popular masses.

Second, in the name of the political parties of the DPRK who are in the United Front publish a declaration with condemnation of the disbandment of the political parties in South Korea. Third, our students and young people might declare a protest against the closure of the educational institutions in the South. The tone of these articles and declarations will be restrained, and there will be no mention in them of Park Chung Hee.

I expressed gratitude for the information and promised to report it to Headquarters. I noted that these explanations of the Korean comrades will allow [us] to better understand what is happening in South Korea and the prospects of the development of a dialog between the North and South.

3. At the instructions of Headquarters I passed the content of the rough draft program of the visit of foreign delegations in the Soviet Union for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the formation of the USSR.

At this time I let Kim Yong-nam know that we are awaiting official confirmation of the acceptance of the invitation to a DPRK Party-government delegation by way of a reply to the corresponding CPSU CC letter. I also expressed a request to report the composition of the delegation to us in advance.

Kim Yong-nam expressed gratitude for the communication, promised to report [it] to the Party leadership. He noted that Cde. Kim Il Sung has already spoken of the decision of the KWP CC to send such a delegation to the Soviet Union in order to note this remarkable date with the Soviet people.

Kim Yong-nam declared, like the Great October Socialist Revolution, the formation of the USSR was an event of world historical importance which meant the victory of Lenin's national policy and the material embodiment of the principles of proletarian internationalism. He said, besides sending a delegation to Moscow, we intend to widely note the 50th anniversary of the formation of the USSR as our own holiday.

Kim Yong-nam added that our wishes will be passed to the KWP leadership.

[Kwon Min Dyun], chief of a sector of the KWP CC International Department, Kim [Kha], DPRK MFA official, and Yu. D. Fadeyev, Counsellor of the Soviet Embassy in the DPRK, were present at the conversation.

SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN THE DPRK [signature]
(N. SUDARIKOV)

Four copies printed mg

1 - to the CPSU CC department to Cde. K. F. Katushev

2 - to the USSR MFA, to Cde. V. V. Kuznetsov

3 - to the USSR MFA, the 1st Far East Department

4 - to file.

mp N° 643

13 November 1972

[faded handwriting at the bottom of the last page, possibly "see [[one word indistinct]]