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**A. Putintsev and V. Gorovoy, 'Key Aspects of  
Korean-Chinese relations in 1972'**

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**Summary:**

A letter from the Soviet Embassy in Pyongyang reviewing developments in Sino-North Korean relations in 1972, including the effects of China's anti-Soviet campaigns and Beijing's seeking of closer ties with the US and Japan.

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#### KEY ASPECTS OF KOREA-CHINA RELATIONS IN 1972 (summarized)\*

The development of Korean-Chinese relations in 1972 was influenced by the overall easing of international tensions as a result of the constructive foreign policy of the Soviet Union, aimed at long-term results, changes in the alignment of forces in East Asia as a consequence of improved Chinese-American relations, and the normalization of relations between China and Japan.

The active efforts of the Soviet Union aimed at strengthening and promoting Soviet-Korean friendship and cooperation had a restraining effect on the rapprochement between the DPRK and China in 1972.

\* NOTE: During the entire year the Embassy has systemically informed Headquarters of the state of Korean-Chinese relations.

Translator's note: an arrow was drawn between "development" in the first paragraph and "restraining" in the second paragraph.

I.

It is known that for a number of years Beijing has persistently strived to turn the DPRK into their obedient partner in pursuing an anti-Soviet policy. All resources, including political and economic pressure, , praising the domestic and foreign policy of the Korean leadership, etc. were directed towards achieving this goal.

To some extent all this could be observed in 1972 both in Chinese propaganda and well as in the practical questions of China-Korea relations.

[Translator's note: there is some handwriting at the bottom of the first page, some of which is partly off the page, plus a surname, possibly "Bavrin"]

By the same token on the DPRK side, in the statements of the leaders of the KWP and in Korean propaganda there could clearly be observed a tendency of the Korean comrades to appease their big and perfidious neighbor, with whose assistance they believe the DPRK would feel more confident in its confrontation with the South.

Korean representatives at various levels have repeatedly stated that they intend to develop relations with China without damaging their relations with the Soviet Union. However, the DPRK is essentially wants to derive the maximum practical benefit from their relations with from both the Soviet Union and China.

A number of facts pertaining to 1972 confirms such a policy of the Korean leadership.

Without going in detail regarding the consequences for the DPRK of the rapprochement between China and America and China and Japan, since these issues were previously covered in detail in the Embassy information reports sent to Headquarters it can be noted that the Korean comrades apparently were expecting

more from the visits of Nixon and Tanaka to Beijing. However everything indicates that Beijing did not want to complicate its negotiations with the American president and Japanese Prime Minister because of Korea.

After Nixon's and then Tanaka's departures from Beijing, everything remained essentially the same on the Korean Peninsula - the American troops continue to remain in the South, and the Japanese are penetrating the South Korean economy even more deeply.

Seeing that the Beijing leaders primarily look after their own interests and only in passing briefly remember about the DPRK as an afterthought, the Korean leaders have started to increasingly underscore their full "independence and self-sufficiency". At the same time they declare that they are prepared to improve the relations with the US and Japan, and everything depends solely on the policy and practical actions of these imperialist powers towards the DPRK; Pyongyang keeps its doors open, they say, and everything depends on Washington and Tokyo.

The Korean comrades are so far trying to use the new situation that is taking shape in the USA-China-Japan triangle in terms of stepping up the negotiations with the South on a quite important issue which is vital for the Korean people - the issue of the reunification of the country. There is a growing conviction in Pyongyang that these three great powers will now no longer quarrel over Korea, and if the opportunity presents itself, and will prefer to divide the spheres of their influence [among themselves]. Japan is content with [its] current growing influence in South Korea, and China has no intention of giving up its positions in the North.

There are reasons to think that the current state of affairs on the Korean Peninsula suits both China and Japan more than a unified Korea with its 50-million population. Taking a guess, the Korean leaders are currently watching this apprehensively, not wanting to end up being a bargaining chip in a big game between China and Japan, since the Koreans are familiar with the behavior of the Chinese and the Japanese from their long and hard history.

In order not to provoke Beijing's irritation and to at least superficially appease them, Korean representatives and the DPRK press are depicting the steps towards normalizing the relations between China and the US, and China and Japan, as a "great victory of the PRC's foreign policy". And indeed, the Korean comrades are themselves not averse to having a different type of relationship with the USA and Japan, so that Beijing keeps this in mind in any event.

Right now, of course, one can still not make final conclusions from that new situation which is unfolding in the Pacific Ocean region, especially as many things, and maybe even more significant things, have not been revealed as of yet. The internal displeasure of the Korean leaders at the results of the Chinese-American and Chinese-Japanese rapprochement is almost undetectable on the surface. Korean-Chinese relations in 1972 continued to seem quite active, and representatives of both sides have assured one another of the devotion and firmness of [their] friendship and cooperation.

II.

In 1972 both the Chinese and the Koreans, guided by their own interests, have exhibited a mutual desire to develop relations in almost all areas.

The Chinese leaders have applied great effort to the development of ties between the Korean Worker's Party and the Communist Party of China. One of the forms of the development of these ties being used by the Chinese was tour groups, friendship

delegations, and groups of vacationers who arrived in the DPRK in 1972, as a rule, headed by members or candidate members of the CPC CC, city Party Committee secretaries, or their deputies.

In September and October of this year a group of CPC officials headed by Wang Shoudao, a CPC CC member and Secretary of the CPC Committee of the province of Guangdong, who, as the Korean newspapers reported, had come here to rest. This group was given the highest signs of attention from the Korean side as an official CPC delegation. It was even received by Kim Il Sung.

According to some information during the visit of the Chinese to the DPRK discussions were held in the KWP CC concerning the questions of the development of Party contacts between the KWP and CPC between 1972 to 1978. In accordance with this plan a visit to China by a group of KWP officials is planned as an exchange.

At a reception in the KWP CC Wang Shoudao, the head of the group of CPC officials, noted "The Korean Worker's Party created by the great leader of the Korean people, Cde. Kim Il Sung, has achieved great victories employing the common truths of Marxism-Leninism in the specific reality of the Korean revolution". This statement was not ignored by the Korean leaders. At a rally in Pyongyang Kang Sung Sang [sic; proper spelling unknown], the Executive Secretary of the city KWP Committee, persuaded those present that "the Communist Party of China under the wise leadership of Cde. Mao Zedong, employing the common truths of Marxism-Leninism in the specific reality of China has correctly organized the creative enthusiasm of the masses and opened a new era of socialism on Chinese land".

According to information available to the Soviet Embassy such a description of the activity of the CPC was highly appreciated by both the members of the group of Chinese Party officials as well as Chinese diplomats in Pyongyang.

III.

In many cases the foreign policy activity of the Chinese leaders meets with an approving response from the DPRK. The official statements of the PRC government and the Chinese MFA, the materials of Xinhua, and the articles of Chinese newspapers on questions of foreign policy - all this finds reflection on the pages of the Korean newspapers to one degree or another. The Korean press also reports about the majority of visits to the PRC by high-ranking delegations from third countries, the establishment of diplomatic relations with China by other countries, and the signing by China of agreements and protocols providing to granting economic aid to the DRV, Cambodia, and countries of the third world.

At the same time it ought to be noted that the DPRK press and radio omit the Maoists' attacks on the Soviet Union while covering the foreign policy activity of the Chinese leadership. The Korean comrades have managed to persuade the Chinese to refrain from anti-Soviet attacks in their public statements at events held in the DPRK.

The ambition of the Chinese leaders to classify the PRC with the Third World does not arouse support or, possibly, understanding in the DPRK. As before, Korean propaganda stresses that China is a great socialist power which in this capacity allegedly "actively supports the struggle of all revolutionary peoples of Asia and the world against the aggression of American imperialism, and firmly supports the anti-imperialist, anti-colonial struggle of the peoples of the three continents in the international arena, including at the UN\*

\*Rodong Sinmun, 1 October 1972

In turn, the Chinese give foreign policy support to the DPRK to the extent necessary.

In the lead article of Renmin Ribao, "A Remarkable Beginning", published on 9 July of this year, that is, the fifth day after the appearance of the 4 July joint statement of the South and North of Korea, it noted that "the successes achieved at the summit talks are a remarkable victory for the policy which the KWP and DPRK headed by Cde. Kim Il Sung are pursuing for the independent reunification of the country". A favorable attitude was expressed in this article and also in statements of Chinese leaders toward the three principles for the reunification of the country proposed by the DPRK in events in connection with Korean holidays and memorable dates.

In October of this year at the 12th session of the UNCTAD Council in Geneva the Chinese delegation published a statement which noted that in the conditions when a new situation was created in Korea and an agreement was achieved between the South and North on the principles for the independent reunification of the country the one-sided participation of South Korea in the work of the session is illegal.

At the request of the Korean side the Chinese supported the DPRK position at the 24th UN General Assembly session during the discussion of the Korean question.

At this stage China is evidently arranging a shift from military confrontation to a lengthy peaceful dialog on the Korean peninsula since this eliminates a reason for unnecessary friction between the PRC and the US and Japan. In this connection the fact stands out that the Chinese representative at the UN behaved on the whole passively during the discussion of the question of Korea without aggravating relations with the West, but the Chinese leaders did not mention Korea at all in the communiqué about the results of the talks with Tanaka about normalization of relations between the PRC and Japan.

#### IV.

Korean-Chinese relations in the field of trade and economic cooperation are receiving further development.

The trade protocol for 1972 signed in Pyongyang in January of this year provides for an increase of the trade turnover between the DPRK and the PRC of 20% compared to 1971. The amount of reciprocal deliveries should come to approximately 180,000,000 rubles.

This year agreements on cooperation in the area of fishing and an intergovernmental Korean-Chinese agreement about economic and technical cooperation in the field of geology were concluded.

Ties between various ministries and departments of the two countries continued to strengthen. Ke Hyon Sung [sic; proper spelling unknown], the Minister of the First Ministry of Machinebuilding of the DPRK; delegations of Korean printers; and officials of civil aviation, transportation, banks, the meteorological and hydrographic services, and the ship inspectorate went to China. Chinese delegations of the chemical industry, banks, and the central meteorological directorate were in Pyongyang.

The next meetings of mixed Korean-Chinese commissions were held on the use of electrical power developed on the Yalu River, on cooperation in the field of navigation on border rivers, and on border rail transportation.

It ought to be noted that per the observations of the Soviet Embassy and Soviet specialists working in the DPRK, both in Pyongyang as well as in the periphery,

Chinese specialists are constantly present, including military [ones], too. According to some information three large Chinese military delegations have come to the DPRK within the framework of a 1971 intergovernmental agreement about China granting the DPRK free military assistance.

The Korean comrades are carefully concealing the true dimensions of Korean-Chinese economic and military cooperation. Per the assessment of diplomats of the Romanian Embassy in Pyongyang the visible part of Korean-Chinese economic and military cooperation is about one-fifth of what indeed takes place.

V.

Scientific and cultural ties are developing between the PRC and DPRK. A DPRK AN [Academy of Sciences] delegation headed by [Academy of Sciences] Vice-President Choe Khyn Su [sic; proper spelling unknown] signed a plan for scientific exchange between the DPRK AN and the PRC AN for 1973 and 1974.

A delegation of the DPRK Academy of Agricultural Sciences headed by Cho Byong Kho [sic; proper spelling unknown] was in China.

A delegation of the AN of China to study polymers and a Chinese delegation of agricultural technicians headed by the general secretary of the Academy of Agriculture and Forestry have visited the DPRK.

The appearance in the DPRK of the Shanghai Dance Troupe has been the greatest event in the development of cultural cooperation affecting the field of ideology. Everything that the Chinese artists showed received enthusiastic appreciation on the pages of the Korean press and was characterized as "a revolutionary combat art praising the high revolutionary spirit of the Chinese people".

The 30th anniversary of Mao Zedong' speech in Yanan on questions of literature and art was noted in the DPRK.

A DPRK cultural delegation headed by Minister of Culture Li Chkhan Sung [sic; proper spelling unknown] went to Beijing at the invitation of the PRC government.

A delegation of officials of the Korean foreign language publishing house visited China in accordance with the plan of cultural exchange.

An agreement was signed between the DPRK documentary film studio and the central film studio of current affairs films of China about an exchange of newsreels.

VI.

Contacts are being maintained between public organizations of the DPRK and PRC. A delegation of the SSTMK [League of Socialist Working Youth of Korea] headed by Li Hwa Chong [sic; proper spelling unknown], Deputy Chairman of the CC of the Union, went to China. A delegation of Chinese youth headed by a candidate member of the CPC CC and deputy chairman of the revolutionary committee of the province of Guangdong made a return visit to the DPRK.

A delegation of the League of Democratic Women of Korea headed by Li Chen Sung [sic; proper spelling unknown], a CC Secretary, visited the PRC at the invitation of the Chinese Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries.

Friendly ties are being organized between the cities of the two countries. A delegation of Beijing headed by Liu Shaowen, Secretary of the CPC City Committee, was in the DPRK at the invitation of the people's committee of Pyongyang.

Tourist exchanges continue to be made between the sides.

Regular reciprocal visits of relatives living in Dandong and Sinuiju have been organized.

VII.

Sports exchanges between the DPRK and China received further development. In 1972 a delegation of the DPRK Committee for Physical Culture and Sports Matters, a soccer team, a delegation of specialists in athletic equipment, men's and women's volleyball teams, and a team of basketball players went to China.

Teams of Chinese basketball players, gymnasts, female army basketball players, tennis players, and two Chinese soccer teams were in the DPRK.

The Korean sports delegations were received in China with accentuated attention. Rallies and banquets covered in the press of both countries were organized in their honor.

The DPRK table tennis association took part in Beijing discussions concerning the creation of a new organization as a counterweight to the "Asian Table Tennis Federation" which, as was entered in the communiqué based on the results of the talks, will "really represent table tennis in Asia".

The development of Korean-Chinese relations in 1972 has occurred against the background of a further strengthening of the friendship of the peoples of Korea and China created by the propaganda of the two countries.

However, individual signs, including an increase of independence in the foreign policy activity of the Korean leadership, demonstrates that deep processes which worry the Korean comrades are occurring in Korean-Chinese relations.

For their part, the Chinese are strenuously stepping up their activity in attempts to weaken the "Soviet onslaught" on the DPRK.

This again confirms that the pursuit of an active policy from our side with respect to the DPRK proceeding from a long-term perspective is an effective tool impeding an increase of Chinese influence here and keeping the DPRK in positions of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union.

Counsellor of the Soviet [signature]  
Embassy in the DPRK (A. Putintsev)

First Secretary of the Soviet  
Embassy in the DPRK  
[faded signature] (V. Gorovoy)

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1 - to the CPSU CC Department

2 - to the USSR MFA 1st Far East Department

3 - to file

8 December 1972

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