

[to the] CPSU CC

A conversation with the Chinese comrades was held today, [inserted by hand: 18 September], which lasted from 1800 to 2200. Our delegation and Cdes. Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Peng Dehuai, Deng Xiaoping, and Wang Jiaxiang were present. The conversation was mainly about the issue of the situation in the Korean Worker's Party.

We said that the CPSU CC had charged us with exchanging opinions with the CC of the Communist Party of China about the situation in the Korean Worker's Party. We do not have complete information about this situation, but the facts which are known to us demonstrate an [in the handwritten version: ~~absolutely~~] unhealthy situation and a violation of the Leninist norms of Party life in the KWP. We then provided information about the advice which was given Kim Il Sung during his last visit in Moscow. As is known, Kim Il Sung promised to take into account the comments of the CPSU CC Presidium and to correct the situation in the Party. However, the facts show that Kim Il Sung is acting to the contrary, which was clearly demonstrated by the 3rd KWP CC plenum, where a number of CC members who had criticized the shortcomings which exist were expelled from the Party.

After the plenum Kim Il Sung informed the Soviet ambassador in Pyongyang that the situation had been normalized after the expulsion of several CC members from the Party and Party unity had been strengthened. [Translator's note: in the handwritten version the following sentence was inserted at this point, then crossed out: "We completely disagree with such an assessment"] We still do not have a final opinion, which we will draw up after familiarization with the situation on the scene.

Cde. Mao Zedong provided information about what that they have on this issue. Their information matches ours. In addition, Cde. Mao Zedong provided information that many Party members in Korea had been arrested, whose entire fault was that they criticize the situation in the Party. Pak Il-u, who is known to the Chinese comrades as a good Communist and honest person, has long been under arrest.

After a mutual [exchange] of information we said that both our Parties ought to help the KWP leadership correct the mistakes, saying at the same time that we trust Kim Il Sung but we cannot regard the unacceptable methods in the work of the KWP leadership with approval. We proposed sending a joint delegation of the CPSU and CCP to Pyongyang, stating that Cdes. Mikoyan, Mukhitdinov, and Ponomarev could go from our side.

Mao Zedong agreed with our proposal. Half-seriously, half in jest, he said that a tension had been created in the relations between the USSR and the PRC, on the one side, and the KWP leadership, on the other, had been created as a result of all the actions of Kim Il Sung. Cde. Mao Zedong said that Kim Il Sung has a feeling of hostility toward our Parties. Right now he thinks that our Parties are acting with respect to the KWP the same way as they acted with respect to Yugoslavia at one time. In response to this we said that mistakes were made then with respect to Yugoslavia. Right now both our Parties are acting correctly. We cannot regard the fate of the KWP indifferently and consider it our international duty to help correct the situation in it.

Agreeing with [in the handwritten version: ~~the issue we raised~~] this, Cde. Mao Zedong noted that Kim Il Sung understood that we do not want to overthrow him, but want to help him. It is necessary to let Kim Il Sung know all the same that he cannot remain in the leadership without correction of the mistakes. But, said Mao Zedong, it is necessary to be prepared for extreme steps from Kim Il Sung. He might even raise the issue of the withdrawal of the Chinese volunteers from Korea. Of course, the Chinese units want to return home, but we know that the Americans are strengthening their positions in South Korea and we consider it necessary to leave our volunteers in Korea.

We said that we are excluding such a posing of the question on the part of Kim Il Sung.

Cde. Mao Zedong declared that our proposal about a trip to Pyongyang by CPSU CC and CCP CC representatives for talks with the KWP leadership is fortuitous and the only correct [proposal].

Peng Dehuai, Nie [Rongzhen], and a third comrade might go from the CCP CC. The Soviet and PRC ambassadors to the DPRK ought to also take part in the meeting with the Korean comrades so that they are informed and, remaining after the departure of the delegation from Korea, might observe the implementation of what the delegation agrees with the KWP leadership.

Cde. Mao Zedong suggested that the KWP CC adopt at least a brief resolution during the delegation's stay in Pyongyang which ought to be published in the press. Otherwise, he said, it might happen that Kim Il Sung would give a promise to correct the mistakes but everything would remain the old way. We agreed with him.

[We] discussed the issue of where was more suitable to consider the situation which had been created, in the presidium or in the KWP CC plenum. We came to the following conclusion. At first our joint delegation will talk frankly with Kim Il Sung, declaring to him that we intend to support and help him, to reconcile the quarrelling sides in the Party, and rally [them] around him. But this is possible only if the mistakes which have been committed are corrected [deleted in the handwritten version: ~~reprisals against honest Party members are halted~~], and the Leninist norms of Party life are observed.

At first Cde. Mao Zedong said that [we] ought to suggest returning to the DPRK and reinstating the KWP CC members who fled Korea. But when we noted that this would put Kim Il Sung [inserted by hand in the handwritten version: and the CC plenum] in a difficult position and he could not agree to this because of prestige, especially since he had bound the CC members with the resolution which had been adopted about the expulsion of these CC members from the Party, then Mao Zedong agreed with this.

It was arranged that the delegation would declare to Kim Il Sung that our Parties would take steps so that the Korean Communists who had refused to return to the DPRK would not pursue work [in the handwritten version: ~~speak out/act~~ *vystupili*] against the KWP leadership.

Mao Zedong said, it would be incorrect right now for one group to overthrow another in Korea since the group which had been overthrown might begin the struggle all over again, which would lead to a serious crisis in the DPRK. Cde. Mao Zedong expressed doubt that Kim Il Sung might agree to convene a CC plenum. To this we replied that Kim Il Sung has no political motives for such a refusal.

It was evident from everything that the issue about relations with the KWP has become a painful issue for the Chinese comrades. During the conversation Cdes. Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, and Peng Dehuai more than once made comments demonstrating their critical attitude toward Kim Il Sung and that they had discussed this issue recently and had been informed about all the details of the situation in the KWP CC.

Peng Dehuai asked that we reply to the questions of KWP CC members (and such will turn up) about the case of Pak Heonyeong.

We replied that there is no sense for us to stir up this matter right now. It is necessary not to deal with old matters, but to discuss the issue of the correction of the shortcomings which exist in the KWP and about the establishment of a normal routine in the work of its governing bodies.

We suggested that Cde. Choe Yong-geon, the leader of the KWP delegation to the 8th CCP congress, inform Kim Il Sung about the trip of our delegation to Pyongyang, and that the former go with us to Pyongyang. Cde. Mao Zedong agreed with this. He said that he will invite Choe Yong-geon to his place right now, talk with him, and send him to us.

We favored finishing work in Pyongyang in two or three days. Peng Dehuai said that it would take a week. Mao Zedong thinks that it will take five days for this. It was arranged not to set a deadline today so that the necessary work would be done on the scene without dragging out the matter.

At the end of the conversation Mao Zedong said that the success of the matter depends on the CPSU delegation since the Koreans do not listen to the advice of the Communist Party of China. In connection with this we said that, as is well known, Kim Il Sung agreed with the advice of the CPSU CC, but acted otherwise.

To this Mao Zedong noted that the KWP leadership does not listen to the CCP advice 100%, and it does not listen to you 30%. We said that we will try to take every step in order to carry out those steps about which we agreed just now together with the Korean comrades in Pyongyang.

We fly to Pyongyang on 19 August [SIC] at 7 A. M. together with the Chinese and Korean comrades.

19 September 1956

A. MIKOYAN

[handwritten: authenticated: V. Chistov

MFA 19 September Spets N 1423-1427]

[Translator's note: a handwritten version of the preceding document follows]