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N. G. SUDARIKOV

Record of a conversation

with Cde. KIM IL SUNG, General Secretary of the KWP CC and Chairman of the DPRK Cabinet of Ministers

17 March 1969

Today Cde. Kim Il Sung received Cde. S. A. Skachkov, Chairman of the State Committee of the USSR Council of Ministers for Foreign Economic Relations, who arrived in the DPRK for the celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Soviet-Korean Agreement on Economic and Cultural Cooperation. The Soviet Ambassador was also invited to the meeting.

1. Cde. S. A. Skachkov passed Cde. Kim Il Sung greetings and good wishes from Cdes. L. I. Brezhnev, A. N. Kosygin, and N. V. Podgorny, expressed gratitude for the invitation to visit the DPRK, and presented the text of a telegram of greetings to Cdes. Kim Il Sung and Choe Yong-geon.

Cde. Kim Il Sung expressed gratitude for the greetings, the warm regards, and requested that cordial greetings and the very best wishes be passed to Cdes. L. I. Brezhnev, N. V. Podgorny, and A. N. Kosygin, and also to other senior Soviet comrades.

Noting the aid of the Soviet Union given to the DPRK, especially in the area of economics, Kim Il Sung expressed appreciation for the great attention for the great attention to the requests of the Korean side, and asked [about] the impressions gained during [his] visit to the DPRK.

Cde. S. A. Skachkov talked in detail about the visit to the Pyongyang Thermal Power Plant, the construction area of the Bukchang [Pukchang] Thermal Power Plant, the exhibition of the achievements of the economy, and the conversations with Kim Gen-ren [sic; proper Korean spelling unknown], Chairman of the Committee for Foreign Economic Relations, and other comrades. He noted that the impressions were very good, the firm leadership of the Party, the high level of organization, the discipline, and the labor enthusiasm of the population are felt in everything.

He noted that, in the opinion of Cde. N. D. Mal'tsev, Deputy Minister of Power Engineering and Electrification, and other comrades who had come to the DPRK in the Soviet delegation, at the Pyongyang Thermal Power Plant whose installed capacity is 500,000 kwt and the loading is 400,000 kwt, one can get additional loading from a more regular repair of the boiler units and an improvement of other technical and economic indicators. If the Korean side wishes, a group of Soviet specialists can be assigned to the DPRK who could make appropriate recommendations. The realization of them would allow a considerable increase of the loading of the Thermal Power Plant's units to be achieved by the end of the year.

He expressed the appreciation of the Soviet government for the selfless efforts of the Korean medical personnel displayed in saving the life of specialist P. I. Bocharov, who received very severe burns as a result of an unfortunate accident during work at the Pyongyang Thermal Power Plant. He reported that three Korean medical personnel had been awarded the medal, "For Labor Valor" by a Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Kim Il Sung expressed gratitude for the high appreciation of the efforts of the Korean medical personnel, and said that he knows about this incident very well, and stressed that the doctors were given instructions to do everything possible to save Cde. Bocharov, and expressed satisfaction that the life of the patient was not out of danger.

Then he touched on the situation at the Bukchang Thermal Power Plant, and said there are difficulties there inasmuch as work was done with insufficient energy in the summer of last year and right now it is necessary to catch up on the backlog [of work]. Everything possible needs to be done to put the first unit into operation in May. Only this can save us.

Cde. S. A. Skachkov reported that during the visit to Bukchang one could have been convinced that energetic measures are being taken there to accelerate the construction work and install the equipment. He said that the most serious attention is being devoted to this facility in Moscow, and the shipment of yet-undelivered equipment is being strictly monitored.

Expressing satisfaction at this, Kim Il Sung noted that with the coming of warm days the tempo of construction work will be accelerated even more, and the backlog will be overcome, particularly with the construction of the intake station. He requested that the necessary assistance be given to accelerate the construction and installation of equipment. He stressed that the greatest difficulty in the country is the shortage of electrical power, especially in the past two years. An unprecedented drought has had an effect. The Yunfeng Hydroelectric Station on a river bordering China with a capacity of 400,000 kwt has been completely shut down, and has not operated for five months; the Sup'ung [Shuifeng] Hydroelectric Station with a capacity of 700,000 kwt, repaired and expanded with the aid of the Soviet Union, is operating well, but has recently been operating with reduced loading because of a lack of water: only two units are operating, each with a capacity of 100,000 kwt, and have a total loading of 35,000 kwt. There is little water at the Chandangan [sic; proper Korean spelling unknown] Hydroelectric Station. If not for the Pyongyang Thermal Power Plant all the factories in the area of the city and its outskirts would have to shut down.

Why do we stress the construction of the Bukchang Thermal Power Station so much? Because if there is a drought this year we will have to "throw up [our] hands", and the economy will be completely paralyzed. If we manage to put a capacity of 200,000 kwt at the Bukchang Thermal Power Station into operation this year, then the situation will be substantially alleviated. We are asking for everything possible to be done to help us. Our only hope is Bukchang.

As regards the Pyongyang Thermal Power Plant, you have expressed interesting ideas. We would welcome the arrival of Soviet specialists to study the possibilities of obtaining additional loading, and will discuss the question of the more regular repair of the boilers. This is a good idea.

Cde. S. A. Skachkov noted that in Moscow they regard with understanding the situation which has been created with electric power, the efforts of the Korean side, and its wishes. He expressed the opinion that in the course of the conversations with the Korean comrades in Pyongyang and Moscow great prospects were charted out for the development of economic cooperation between our countries. We also favor such a development.

In this connection it was noted from our side that a backlog was observed in January through March in the shipping of Korean goods intended for shipment to the USSR according to the trade turnover protocol, which puts our enterprises in a difficult position.

Kim Il Sung replied that he knows about this, but as a consequence of the shortage of electrical power it didn't seem possible to rectify the situation. Many plants were shut down or have not been operating at full capacity. Only the chemical fertilizer complex in Hamhung is operating at full capacity. The calcium carbide production plants have been shut down, which led to the cessation of the production of Vinyon. Electric furnace plants and, to put it briefly, all the energy-intensive enterprises are not operating. The situation is very difficult. We will evidently not fulfill the plan for the first half of the year, and this has had and is having a serious effect on foreign trade. If such a situation continues we will not be able to fulfill the annual plan in both industry and foreign trade. Talk about this in Moscow so that the appropriate organizations regard this with understanding.

A large amount of electrical energy will be required beginning with the middle of April to ensure the supply of water to the fields. Usually we use 300,000 kwt of capacity for these purposes, but we will be forced to economize on this. But there is no choice – the needs of agriculture have to be provided, even if it will be necessary to shut down industrial enterprises.

2. I informed Cde. Kim Il Sung about the latest session of the Political Consultative Council [PKK] of the Warsaw Pact Member Countries which opens today in Budapest. I noted that the complex international situation requires a further perfection of the military-political mechanism of the socialist countries.

Kim Il Sung wished the PKK session success and said that this is a necessary and timely matter. He stressed, we also have a tense situation. The Americans are holding large maneuvers in the south of Korea, and have airlifted more than 2,000 soldiers and combat equipment from the US. The day before yesterday (15 March) there was an armed clash in the region of the demilitarized zone. The Americans initially behaved calmly, but then unexpectedly shelled our posts, firing 800 rounds. We responded. Six from that side were killed or wounded. The Americans wanted to take them out on a helicopter. But the helicopter was shot down and 10 more died, 16 in all. Today a meeting of the Military Armistice Commission is being convened at our suggestion. We will declare a firm protest in connection with the shelling.

The same day, 15 March, an incident occurred on the Korean-Chinese border, but without the use of weapons. Approximately 50 Chinese crossed the Tumen River border and moved on a small Korean village located 200 meters from the shore. We don't know with exactly what purpose, possibly they wanted to take residents away with them. There were only militiamen in the village. A detachment of Korean border guards headed to the village to detain the violators, but they fled, seizing several bulls and carts.

After the incident on the Soviet-Chinese border on 2 March the Chinese increased the demonstrations on their shore and shouted, "Down with Kim Il Sung!" and "Down with the Korean revisionists!". It's like this every day. We have only an uneasy situation on the border with China, and the border is several hundred kilometers long.

We told Kim Il Sung in detail about the armed provocation of the Chinese in the region of Damansky Island on 2 March, and the new provocations on 14 and 15 March.

Listening to the information closely Kim Il Sung noted that the latest incident on the Chinese-Soviet border coincided with the incident on the Chinese-Korean border. It is necessary to closely investigate whether this coincidence is accidental or not. We have prepared a protest note in connection with the incident on the Korean-Chinese border.

In reply to the question, how he assesses the actions of the Chinese, and what they want to achieve by seeking armed provocations and other insidious methods Kim Il Sung replied: right now Mao Zedong is no different from Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese militarists.

3. In accordance with instructions we informed the interlocutor of the obstacles created by the Chinese authorities to the transportation of weapons being sent for Vietnam from the USSR and other socialist countries. We stressed that the Vietnamese comrades are seriously afraid that the Chinese will completely prohibit the transportation of freight through Chinese territory and are isolating Vietnam from the Soviet Union.

Kim Il Sung characterized the behavior of the Chinese authorities as "barbarism". It is hard to understand what they want, he added.

The Chinese are increasing the provocations in all sectors. Probably Mao thinks that China is a great power, and therefore it alone ought to rule the entire world. He wants to set his people against the Soviet Union. It's the same with respect to the DPRK. The Chinese people do not agree with this. In my opinion, [we] need to display restraint and calm, and not give in to provocations. Preparations are underway in China for a Party congress. Evidently, Mao Zedong is striving to use his provocations before the congress to strengthen anti-Soviet sentiments among the people, and to thereby justify his line. I think that Mao will hardly go to war with the USSR.

I don't think that he will begin a war with us, either.

The Chinese assert that we are revisionists, and want to exacerbate relations between our peoples. They consider us revisionists because we are developing and will develop relations with the Soviet Union and do not oppose the line of the Soviet comrades. Their main goal is to oppose the Soviet Union. Mao Zedong hopes that if the authority of the Soviet Union is damaged then his, Mao's, chances are increased.

4. We reported that a meeting of the Commission to Prepare for the International Conference on Communist and Worker's Parties opens today in Moscow. We mentioned the invitation to take part in the Conference sent by the Soviet Ambassador at the instructions of the CPSU CC.

Kim Il Sung replied that the question of the participation of KWP representatives was repeatedly touched on in conversations with Cde. D. S. Polyansky and the Soviet Ambassador. The KWP CC Politburo has discussed this question more than once. But it is hard for us to make a favorable decision.

I have already said that our relations with China right now have become much worse, and the situation is tense. We don't want to give the Chinese an excuse to think that we are attacking them first. Participation in the Conference might lead to an open split with China. Of course, we don't want a worsening of our relations with the CPSU, with the Soviet Union, [or] with the Soviet people. We want to develop these relations. But it is very important for us how relations with China take shape. This does not mean we fear the Chinese, we don't fear them, but we don't want to give the Chinese a reason to accuse of taking part in an anti-Chinese campaign. Possibly, questions connected with China will not be especially touched on at the Conference. But the Chinese will all the same assert that the Conference had an anti-Chinese orientation.

We have a small border with the USSR, but a long one with China. Every day the Chinese might try provocations. This is a serious question for us. In the south there is one enemy, the Americans, in the north, another – the Chinese. Anything is possible. We are forced to swallow the bitter pills which the Chinese throw us. In connection with the recent incident, in connection with the slogans against Kim Il Sung and the Korean leadership our young people suggest giving the Chinese a rebuff since it's impossible to tolerate any more. But I personally think it's necessary to exhibit restraint.

Our situation is difficult, said Kim Il Sung. We ask [you] to understand and report all this to Cde. L. I. Brezhnev and the other Soviet leaders.

Again I want to stress, we don't want to give the Chinese an excuse to launch hostile anti-Korean propaganda still wider. If the Chinese attack us, then that is another matter.

Let the representatives of the Communist and worker's Parties meet in Moscow and discuss questions, this is a good thing.

5. At the end of the conversation we touched on the question of his trip to the Soviet Union.

Again thanking Cde. L. I. Brezhnev for the invitation, Kim Il Sung said: I am going. I have talked about this to Cde. D. S. Polyansky and the Ambassador, and have promised to go. Now I am confirming [it]. When? It needs to be discussed. I have already been in the Soviet Union more than once, it can be said, [as] a private guest. I will go this year without fail.

We have invited Cde. N. V. Podgorny to come to us. Will he come?

We replied that Cde. N. V. Podgorny plans to visit the DPRK in spring of this year.

In conclusion Kim Il Sung again asked that greetings be sent to Cdes. L. I. Brezhnev, N. V. Podgorny, and A. N. Kosygin.

We expressed gratitude for the conversation, which lasted about two hours.

Choe Won-sik, chief of a sector of the KWP CC International Department, and V. S. Nemchinov, Counsellor of the Embassy, were present at the conversation.

SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN THE DPRK [signature]

(N. Sudarikov)

6-gp

1 – to Cde. K. F. Katushev

2 – to Cde. V. N. Novikov

3 – to Cde. A. A. Gromyko

4 – to Cde. K. V. Rusakov

5 – to Cde. V. I. Likhachev

6 – to file

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