

To: the Romanian Embassy in Pyongyang

From: the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the First Directorate)

From: Date: November 1st, 1978

For your information and that of [your] assistants, we are sending you the following Soviet assessments of the main features of Soviet-Korean relations:

1. In general, bilateral party and state relations can be regarded as normal. Party and state delegations take part in ceremonies marking important events taking place in the other country. [The two countries] are exchanging delegations for documentation and experience exchanges on party and mass organizations management. The Soviets continue to build economic facilities in the DPRK, on loan. Commercial exchanges increased and their flow, both ways, is developing much better than in 1977.

According to the Soviets, however, the development of bilateral cooperation is hindered by some attitudes of the Koreans, such as:

a. The postponement of comrade Kim Il Sung's visit to the USSR. The Koreans did not reply to the January and February messages sent by the Soviet leadership, which asked the Koreans to set the date for the visit. It would be possible for the visit to take place in 1979, because President Kim Il Sung is supposed to visit the GDR and Czechoslovakia.

b. In the party documents and speeches of the Korean leadership, the role of the USSR in the liberation of Korea and the assistance offered by the USSR and the other socialist countries [in Europe] during the American aggression is ignored; this assistance contributed to the survival of the DPRK. Moreover, the congratulatory telegrams sent to the Soviet leadership avoid mentioning that 'bilateral relations are taking place on the basis of Marxist-Leninist principles.'

c. The provocative [inclusion] in the August 1st issue of *Nodong Sinmun* of the article written by the Chinese Defense Minister, and published in the 8th issue of *Huntzi* [sic] magazine, dedicated to the anniversary of the Chinese People's Liberation Army - which included virulent, Chinese-style attacks on the USSR. The explanations given to the Soviet Chargé d'affaires ad interim to Pyongyang by the leadership of the *Nodong Sinmun* newspaper and by Kim Yeong-nam, a member of the Politburo, and secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, who said that the publication of the Chinese article was the result of a 'technical' error, and the *Nodong Sinmun* issue was withdrawn from the news stands, was not [enough] to give satisfaction to the Soviets. If the content of the Chinese article did not reflect the position of the Korean leadership, then a public denouncement in this respect should have been made. 'The Inclusion of the aforementioned article shows that the Korean comrades took the side of the PRC in its dispute with the USSR, receiving in turn a certain reward.'

The Korean action prompted the Soviet leadership not to give way to the Korean proposal that the Soviet party and state delegation which took part in the celebrations of the 30th anniversary of the creation of the DPRK was headed by a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU.

d. The absence of any mention about Soviet-Korean relations in the Korean documentary on the creation of the DPRK. The parts about the visit of President Hua Guofeng to the DPRK, included by the DPRK Embassy in Moscow, caused great dismay to the Soviet guests, which included the representatives of the Foreign Relations Section of the Central Committee of the CPSU.

3. The attitude of the Koreans on the DPRK's relations with the USSR, as well as on some international matters shows that the DPRK is distancing itself from the countries of the socialist camp, drawing closer to China and giving increasingly more attention to the DPRK's membership in the Third World.

4. A diplomat from the DPRK embassy in Moscow said to a Romanian diplomat that:

The DPRK's political relations are better with the PRC than with the USSR. The Chinese press is publishing more materials on Korea than the USSR press. In turn, the Korean press releases more materials about China than about the USSR.

The DPRK's economic relations and commercial exchanges are better with the USSR than with China.

c. The Soviets are striving to persuade the Koreans that Beijing's official statements in support of the DPRK do not chime with their concrete, back-stage actions. While China declares it supports the reunification of Korea, in reality the Chinese leadership tries to perpetuate America's presence in South Korea.

d. The Koreans are closely monitoring China's position, but they do not have the necessary evidence to assert that [Beijing's] actions do not chime with its official declarations. [The DPRK] does not believe the PRC would be capable of giving up its support for the cause of the peaceful and independent reunification of Korea, without external interference.

Signed

Vasile Sandru