

1. For some time the diplomatic corps has been speculating about the fact that starting with the second half of April, Ri Hyo-sun [Ri Hyo Sun] and Pak Geum-cheol [Pak Kum Chol], members of the Politburo Presidium and of the WPK Central Committee Secretariat, have not been seen in public.

2. These speculations have been confirmed. For instance, in a conversation with Ionescu Teofil, the Second Secretary from the Hungarian Embassy, Karoy, said that several Koreans informed him about the removal from the superior party and state leadership of several people, among whom he mentioned Ri Hyo-sun, Pak Geum-cheol, Go Hyeok [Ko Hyok], Vice-President of the Council of Ministers, and Kim Do-man [Kim To Man], secretary of the Central Committee.

The Hungarian diplomat told us that the North Koreans avoid directly answering any questions about the reasons for the purge of these officials. They only say that while they can tolerate deviations from the party line, they can't tolerate a lack of respect for the leader - Kim Il Sung.

3. In our discussions on these matters, Polish and East German diplomats confirm that the purge of the aforementioned officials, together with many more from the Ministry of Culture, Health, Railway Transportation, Light Industry, as well as the assignment of the members of the Pyongyang party committee to do menial work, marks the re-emergence of Kim Il Sung's cult of personality after the removal of the aforementioned officials in March-April. In the period before the October 1966 party conference and immediately afterwards, the cult of personality was visibly diminished, and the role of the Party and of the people in Korean life and in the accomplishment of their successes to date was much more emphasized. Given the positions of the aforementioned purged officials, it can be inferred that they opposed the cult of personality in one way or another, favoring instead the introduction of collective work, and the leading role of the party.

Some diplomatic sources suggest that they were the partisans of an independent and principled foreign policy, equidistant towards the USSR and the PRC and in line with the efforts meant to strengthen the unity and the cohesion of the socialist bloc.

In this respect, our office was informed by telegram in the eve of the October 1966 Party Conference that Kim Il Sung had encountered objections to his exclusivity policy with the USSR.

4. Pak Geum-cheol was in charge of ideological and political matters in the Politburo; until the Party Conference, Ri Hyo-sun was in charge of organizational affairs and the South Korean problem. After the party conference, he was responsible only for South Korea, as his organizational responsibilities were passed on to Kim Yeong-ju [Kim Yong Ju], Kim Il Sung's brother (recently promoted to the rank of deputy member of the Politburo and secretary of the Central Committee). Go Hyeok was responsible for cultural matters. Kim Do-man was the head of the Propaganda Section within the Central Committee.

We will continue following these matters and keep you informed.