

217/1961

Presenter: Fendler Károly

Top Secret!

Pyongyang, 1961 September 23

Reference: Report on job offerings

Produced in 2 copies for:

- Central (2 copies)
- Embassy (1 copy)

Subject: Celebration of the Korean Worker's Party's 4th Congress

The central aspects of the life of the DPRK's internal affairs since announcing the convocation of the 4th Party Congress (1961 March) were naturally its preparations. In our referenced report we have already covered the work race that was taking place in honor of the congress. This time I only wish to talk about the events etc. that were related to the congress.

The 16th anniversary of the liberation, August 15, were celebrated very modestly this year in Korea. No parades or processions were held, but by moving the Sunday holiday to a different day, they held a three-day long general public holiday. Not holding celebrations were explained due to the congress by the Korean comrades. After closing the congress, they were planning to hold a monumental procession, and they did not want to – understandably – organize processions, decorations, etc. twice in a very short period of time.

In honor of the congress, Pyongyang, and almost the whole country too, took on a festive look. In barely a few weeks, Pyongyang's main roads were equipped with mercury-vapor lamps, and larger public buildings and monuments were decorated citywide with electric garlands. Many electric signs and slogans were installed, and all these gave the previously rather grim capital a rather impressive look. Many shops mainly selling food and public necessity products had opened throughout the city, with a significantly greater and much wider variety than before. From a sanitation point of view the city had already painted a positive picture due to various cleaning movements in the past as well, but this time it could have competed with any big city in the world.

We know from various sources that general preparations for the congress had been discussed during party members' and other meetings. Most of the population were wearing their glad rags during the congress. The cars of the delegations were received with all kinds of cheering, and hand waving, and during their visit to Pyongyang and countryside facilities (factories, villages, etc.), the delegations of the 32 sister parties who attended the congress were greeted with almost indescribable enthusiasm.

In my opinion, this was obviously not just an "issue of organization", but a rather serious and significant political, proletarian international demonstration as well. I have already informed the Central about the cultural and sport events directly connected to the congress in my previous telegrams detailing these, and now as a conclusion, I would like to say a few words on the grandiose mass demonstration that was held on the occasion of the closure of the congress and the visits of foreign delegations.

There has been nothing like the September 19th 300-thousand mass demonstration and colorful procession in Korea before. The several-hour-long procession was not only imposing in its size, but was a rather positive and successful political expression of the results that the Korean people have achieved so far, the future perspectives, and the power and unity of the socialist camp led by the Soviet Union. The foreign delegations seated in the grandstand, the leaders, and delegates of the congress were continuously applauding at the marching, imaginative mockups, and slogans. The processions was closed by the disciplined thousands of the Korean Worker's militia units.

On the same day during the evening, on the Central Committee reception, fireworks were held for approximately 30 minutes, which was, in its size and technique, a worthy closure for the celebrations organized in the honor of the 4th Congress. (I will mention it here that the Mongolian comrades invited Korean firework technicians for the 40th anniversary of their revolution, who organized the Ulaanbaatar fireworks.)

Kovács József
Ambassador