

to Cde. KIM IL SUNG!

I want to remind you that such a situation has been created in the country as a result of the gross violation of intra-Party democracy and the persecution of honest Communists which makes a return to my homeland impossible for me, although I have fought with other comrades for the liberation of the motherland and people's power for 25 years.

Consequently, I consider it necessary to write you an open letter in which I will try to lay out my views.

As regards the intra-Party question, I ask you to seriously consider my written statement addressed to the CC of the Worker's Party and which was sent to Pyongyang.

First, I want to say that in the necessary conditions I will try to make my statement, removing all materials from there strictly regarded as secret, [or] the property of other Parties. Such a step will be dictated by the fact that fraternal Parties have been informed about the situation in the Korean Workers Party.

Of course I do not desire this, but in the interests of the Party I want to solve all the burning issues from positions of Communist principles.

In a situation when power is concentrated in the hands of a few people and when it manifests its properties in all spheres of government and Party life, it actually becomes impossible to eliminate serious shortcomings in Party work through intra-Party struggle. I think that you will not deny this fact.

The Party leadership is using the Party press organs and its organizations of all levels for the sake of the achievement of unjust ends, and subjects honest Communists to persecution. I remind you of this to soberly assess the situation which has been created inside the Party. If you take a principled position in the solution of Party problems then it is not too late to eliminate the serious mistakes in our Party and government work.

Please consider the comradely comments made by the CPSU and CCP representatives before the September CC Plenum in Pyongyang again more deeply and comprehensively. It is true that you are trying to conceal this fact from the Party masses. But, as you know, almost everyone in Pyongyang knows about this.

You should be aware that your unjust actions are forcing many comrades from our Party and fraternal Parties to think about the situation which has been created in Korea. We should all recognize with sorrow the fact that the international authority of the Worker's Party has been undermined as a result of the violation of Communist principles.

You also should be aware that in reports about Korea published in the pages of the press of fraternal Parties everyone increasingly tries not to connect the achievements of our country with the name of Kim Il Sung. Why are they acting this way? Yes, because several words of praise said to our Party are immediately used as a weapon to suppress the critical comments of individual comrades and as political capital to smother a voice against the cult of personality.

With the aid of the power which has been concentrated in the hands of sycophants and Cde. Kim Il Sung an atmosphere of fear and naked subjection has been created in the country in the conditions of which Communists and all the people now live. You yourself well know what all this has cost. At the present time in Pyongyang even cadre avoid meeting one another since they are afraid.

Cde. Kim Il Sung! It is necessary to understand that it is extremely unjust when they try to preserve caprice and lawlessness with the method of pressure. If you think so, then this is a big mistake. The method of pressure and violence in Party work is incompatible with the Communist principles expressed in the international workers movement. You also know that history develops in accordance with the objective laws of social development.

As historical experience shows, with the aid of a government injustice, including lawlessness, can take on the coloration of justice for a certain time. But some time will pass and history will submit all these injustices for the condemnation of public opinion. Some comrades who fought against Japanese domination in Korea itself are now occupied with the investigation of the matter of the murder of one comrade who was Chairman of the Kangwon Province Party committee immediately after the liberation of Korea. His body was discovered near Pyongyang under the snow in spring of the next year. It is known that he opposed a reassessment of the revolutionary activity of Cde. Kim Il Sung at one meeting, and was killed after the meeting. The organizer and murderer of this comrade needs to be finally exposed. We also know that right now they are looking for those comrades who went missing at one time.

The exploiting classes punish with the method of terror. How many people who opposed Kim Il Sung at one time were left alive? They also wanted to get Cde. Pak Il out of the way, but fortunately he was saved with the aid of foreign friends. This fact is not a secret to anyone. Impermissible, unscrupulous methods of fighting have also been used in the course of the current intra-Party struggle and all possible slanders have been created against those who criticized the cult of personality. We all know that the family members of Cde. Yun Kong Hum, S[o] Hwi, and Ri Pil-gyu, who are now in China, are being persecuted. It is time to put an end to this shameful fact. I am personally demanding this. Cde. Kim [Chang Hym], who is being treated in Moscow, was immediately summoned to Pyongyang only because he had the courage to hurl several critical comradely comments directed to Cde. Kim Il Sung. Before his arrival in Pyongyang, they had already managed to take away the car reserved for him and the telephone from his apartment. After the August Plenum Cdes. Choe Chang-ik and Pak Chang-ok were evicted from [their] apartments at the order of Cde. Pak Geum-cheol himself.

All these facts demonstrate how groundless are the accusations made against Cdes. Choe Chang-ik, Yun Kong Hum, S[o] Hwi, Pak Chang-ok, and Ri Pil-gyu. These accusations concern their personal lives, their biographical data, etc. I demand that an end be put to this shameful fact.

I know from personal experience that your accusations are false. You well know that similar accusations are being made against me, too. This can be judged from the telegram I have received from Pyongyang.

During our troops' retreat I was in Northeast China at the order of the Government where I was performing an important assignment of the Party and Government with the aid of the Chinese comrades. When I returned to Pyongyang you, the Commander-in-Chief of the People's Army, and Cde. Nam Il, suggested that I work as Chief of the Intelligence Directorate. At first I intended to decline this work, but I agreed to work in this position at your insistence. After three months they sent me to Kaesong for the negotiations on an armistice in Korea as a member of the delegation. When I left for Kaesong I asked you and the Minister of National Defense to organize a review of my activity, especially with regard to finances, in order to avoid any gossip and discussions on this score in the future. As a result of the review it was revealed that I had committed no infractions, which you then confirmed yourself.

After I was released from the responsibilities of chief delegate in the Military Armistice Commission I also asked you and the Chief of the General Staff of the KNA [Korean People's Army] to conduct a corresponding review of my activity. It was established as a result of the review that there were no shortages of material assets. You know all these facts very well. And, in spite of all these evident facts, how is one to explain the content of the enciphered telegram in which it is suggested that I go to Pyongyang in order to clear up questions concerning my past activity in the field of finances[?]. I explain this as nothing other than an attempt to take revenge on me for directly expressing my attitude toward the issue of the cult of personality of Kim Il Sung in our Party at the 3rd congress.

I have developed a certain suspicion that you have been working out a plan of political and physical destruction against me since am one of those who know more than others of the violation of the norms of Party life, secret information in the relations of our Party and Government with fraternal parties and Governments, and the

weak points of the sycophants who have wormed themselves into power.

It is true, I do not know under whose supervision such a malicious plan is being hatched with respect to me but one thing is clear, that such a plan cannot be assessed as anything other than the act of a coward and unprincipled politician.

Is it really acceptable to you to organize all sorts of sycophants and careerists around yourself who even yesterday spoke only Japanese and shouted at every intersection, "Long live the Emperor of Japan!". You are pushing really honest revolutionaries away from yourself with this.

Is it possible for us to work together in current conditions, when the slightest critical statement against sycophants is assessed as an attempt to "overthrow" the leadership of the Party and Government? Can one place dependence in the Party leadership in such a situation?

Cde. Kim Il Sung! We have embarked upon the path of a revolutionary struggle not for those sycophants who have gathered around to persecute and insult us, and not for this did we fight foreign colonizers while risking our lives. You ought to think about this. Further, we did not take part in a revolution under the banner of the KKP [Korean Communist Party] and fight in the underground in order to occupy high posts and ensure [our] personal welfare.

When we fought on the front lines and in the enemy's rear, we did not know that whether we would see our homeland liberated in our lifetimes. But we firmly knew that we stood on the right path illuminated by the Communist idea, and therefore we had no fear of death.

I well know why Cde. Kim Chang-man, whom you love very much in your own way, now occupies the post of Deputy Chairman of the CC. In his activity he tries in every way to belittle the role of those comrades who fought in China and returned from Yanan. Their revolutionary past has been trampled on. Cde. Kim Chang-man has stubbornly preached the theory that only the partisan struggle of Kim Il Sung and the activity of the "Society for the Rebirth of the Fatherland" constitute the history of the anti-Japanese struggle of the Korean people. We do not regard such as political figures, if [I] may say so. We want to say with pride that, without sparing our own lives, we fought the enemies of our homeland at a time when you were in Khabarovsk.

I know that you won't like this letter. At the same time I realize that this letter will force you to think up all sorts of false accusations against me and my relatives.

However, no difficulties and obstacles will force me to reject revolutionary truth and I am ready to continue my struggle for the sake of the triumph of justice.

If the government in Korea were anti-popular then I would organize an underground struggle without hesitation.

However, we firmly know that, in spite of the gross mistakes and shortcomings in Party life, our country is going along the path of building socialism under the leadership of the Party. That is why for my part I will help you in this struggle in every possible way.

I think that the Party feeling of a Communist is not determined by his unquestioning subordination to a incorrect one-sided decision of the leadership. But, on the contrary, the genuine Party feeling of a Communist assumes his uncompromising struggle with shortcomings in the interests of truth and the proletarian class. In other words, a Communist armed with a Marxist-Leninist world view, dialectical materialism, is obliged to persistently fight for the elimination of shortcomings and mistakes which are at odds with the truth in order to strengthen the Party ranks and raise the Party's authority. It is precisely a Communist, acting this way, who can consider himself a real Party member in whom Party feeling is strong.

Nowhere is it said in the classic works of Marxism-Leninism that a Communist unquestioningly subordinates himself to those leaders whose actions violate the principles of Marxism-Leninist truth. In not a single fraternal Party do they demand that a Communist unconditionally bow his head before those leaders whose policy clearly violates Marxism-Leninist principles.

I well know with what purpose you are recalling me from Moscow. You want to force me to write a "self-denunciatory" letter in which I would slander myself and my comrades for belonging to a group you have invented. You want to subject me to house arrest and then you want to knock me off-balance by threats and intimidation. And when life itself is nothing for me you will fabricate all sorts of materials against me. I well know that you and your subordinates are experienced people in this matter.

Right now you are demanding such materials from [Ko Bon Gi], who was subjected to house arrest. I know that you also want to use me as one witness confirming the correctness of your invented materials.

I will never become such a perjurer. For such an action of mine you will class me as a Communist who does not obey Party CC decisions and a violator of Party discipline. And you will punish me on the basis of this. Formally, I am not actually obeying that Party discipline forcibly established by you by force but in fact you are committing illegal acts, unjustly classing honest Communists as anti-Party elements and punishing them undeservedly.

In such a situation it is better to be stigmatized than to be a scoundrel against what is true and right.

I have children and relatives on whose heads are also coming down persecutions only because they are children and relatives of an "anti-Party factionalist". I personally will not put up with this.

As a revolutionary I chose a path of difficulties and obstacles in the interests of the triumph of truth. As a revolutionary my conscience does not allow me to embark upon the path of sycophancy and servility. But I firmly know that history will describe the current intra-Party struggle in our Party from correct positions. For my part, if possible, I will exert efforts to write a truthful book about the struggle of the Korean revolutionaries.

I will also try to publish a book or article in which I will try to truthfully tell the story of the anti-Japanese movement of the Korean people. I understand that such articles are hard to print but I firmly believe that the time will come and these articles will see the light.

I have lived and fought for truth to triumph. I will live the same way. By virtue of these reasons I cannot be a devoted "revolutionary" to you and therefore do not have an opportunity to return home right now. My native land, in whose name I have fought, risking my life, is very dear. My old parents, brothers and comrades, live in this land, I was born and grew up in this land, and it is endlessly dear to me.

But in conditions when truth and right not allowed in life I am forced to temporarily refuse to return home. I consider it necessary to say that all these negative events in our life are a typical manifestation of the cult of personality in our Party.

On the basis of the above I request the Central Committee of the Party to consider the following request of mine:

1. Take care that I could live on Soviet or Chinese territory and transfer my Party affiliation to the CPSU or CCP. The number of my Party card is 00010. As you know I joined the ranks of the Communist Party of Korea before the liberation of Korea. Documents of my Party membership are in the Party records department of the CC.
2. Please accept my assurances that henceforth I will fight for the interests of the people and Party on the whole. However, this does not mean that I will not fight against individuals who are now in senior positions and with whom I have different views on principled questions of Party life.

If you have not changed the previously adopted decision with respect to me please send me to the CPSU CC Higher Party School for study, releasing me from the post of Ambassador beforehand.

I hope that you will at least grant one of these requests in an organized manner.

If you refuse to grant my request in an organized manner I will be forced to decide all these questions myself through my own efforts. Firstly, I will write appropriate statements to Cde. K. E. Voroshilov and N. S. Khrushchev. In addition, I will try to enter into talks with representatives of fraternal Parties.

The solution to the problems depends entirely on the principled position you will take. I do not preclude the possibility that you will officially ask the Soviet Government to escort me to the border, or you will try and create a difficulty or other obstacles for me. But I will say in advance that it won't turn out your way. You will not be able to destroy me physically.

Personally, I would not like for misunderstandings to arise between our countries because of me. But if you continue your persecutions against me then I will try to place your unjust actions which fly in the face of the truth before the court of public opinion. I imagine that all this will cause a temporary commotion in our Party, but in the long term we will be able to eliminate the dictatorship in the Party, ensure intra-Party democracy and collective leadership, and save many honest comrades from systematic persecution.

Again, I repeat that I would like for all these issues to be decided through an intra-Party procedure. Recently Cde. Go Hui-man, the Chief of the CC Industry and Transportation Department, who was in Moscow in a Parliamentary delegation, gathered Embassy officials to tell of the results of the August CC Plenum. In his statement he said that Yun Kong-hum had misappropriated an enormous number of pigs and cows while Minister of Trade. He then said that beef and pork had not become tasty for Yun Kong-hum, and therefore he switched to chickens. One could detect flagrant contradictions in his very statement. How is it that a person who ate predominantly chicken meat suddenly misappropriated hundreds of head of cows for the purpose of consumption as food.

For my part, I can say the following: when I was at the 3rd Party congress Yun Kong-hum twice invited me to lunch. And it needs to be noted that he treated me, a guest, to only fish. Nowhere did I see beef or pork.

Right now a group of sycophants are fabricating all sorts of stories if only to slander honest people. Right now they are bringing his past activity out of the woodwork. We all know very well, but he himself did not conceal that Yun Kong-hum studied in a civil aviation school in Japan when he was 20. They present this fact as service to Japanese imperialism. But meanwhile we know with what goal he entered this school. His goal was to drop a bomb on the building of the Japanese Governor General on a Japanese plane and throw out propaganda leaflets. When his plot was discovered they threw him in prison, where he spent several years. After he got out of prison he went to China, where he joined the rank of the KKP.

They are also fabricating imaginary cases with respect to Ri Pil-gyu, S[o] Hwi, and others for the purposes of slander and personal insult.

If you tell the truth then why are you silent about yourself[?] For until recently there were ZIS-110 cars, an armored ZIS, a ZIM, a Pobeda, the best American comfortable automobile, and two Willys at your disposal without any need. In addition, you have spent unlimited state money as Prime Minister, while by law you have a firm set salary.

You built an enormous European house for your relatives in your home village, [Mangyungbong], with state money. Moreover, you made a grave to your mother like an imperial one. An enormous amount of state money was spent for all this.

You ought to listen to the voice of the people, which says that one could build a school, hospital, and other institutions of social amenities with this money.

I am personally demanding the reinstatement in the Party of those comrades expelled from the Party after the August CC Plenum for opposing the cult of personality. I also demand that they be reinstated in those posts they had before expulsion. It is time to halt any propaganda of slander and insults against comrades who have been expelled from the Party.

And, finally, I insistently demand the removal from the Party leadership of all the ardent sycophants and bootlickers, Pak Geum-cheol, Kim Chang-man, Pak Jeong-ae, Nam Il, Han Sung-do, and others. And, finally, I demand that Pang Hak-se, who illegally arrested thousands of people and thereby violated the sacred duty of a Communist, be put on trial.

I await a rapid response to my letter.

RI SANG-JO

The orthography and punctuation are as in the original.

Authenticated: [signed] B. Vereshchagin

25-me/MB.

22 October 1956