

TELEGRAM 066560

To: the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

From: the Romanian Embassy in Pyongyang

Subject: the current concerns of Democratic People's Republic of Korea about agriculture

Date: April 5, 1977

Classification: Secret

One of the main internal concerns of the Korean party and state' leadership is the agriculture. The call made by the President Kim Il Sung, "agriculture first," is still on.

From the beginning of the year an intense activity is carried out in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to achieve the tasks set by the 12th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea in October 1976. It approved the 5-point plan of natural environment modification as well as the call upon [the members] of the Workers' Party of Korea at the beginning of the current year to obtain 8.5 million tons of cereal in 1977.

Completing these tasks will allow the accomplishment of one of the ten points of the development plan – obtaining 10 million tons of cereal. An emphasis is put on the prevention of the cold air front and drought. In this context, the agricultural year of 1976, when the peasantry cooperative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea obtained the biggest harvest in the history of the country – 8 million tons of cereal – in spite of unfavorable climatic conditions, is given as an example.

In many articles and commentaries on the radio and television, an emphasis is put on the importance of the help offered by the working class to the peasantry. This support is appreciated as a "logical requirement for the consolidation of the working class-peasantry alliance," "a main condition for the quick development of the agriculture," and "a contribution to the acceleration of the abolition of the differences between the rural and the urban lifestyle".

After solving problems related to the irrigation and the electrification of agriculture in May, there are now new tasks regarding the chemicalization and complex mechanization for the modernization and the industrialization of agriculture.

In his New Year message in 1977, Kim Il Sung highlighted the great successes obtained by the Korean people in accomplishing the tasks set by the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea in October 1976. In the last 2 months of the previous year, the surface of irrigated land has increased by 82,000 hectares, 2,600 hectares have been terraced, and over 14,600 hectares of new lands have been utilized.

Nutritive pots for corn are currently being prepared, the rice for seedlings sowing has started, and there is a large activity for pumping increased quantities of water in the accumulation lakes.

From materials published by the [North Korean] press, discussions with the locals and personal observation, there is an accentuated drought during the first trimester that affects un-irrigated land and leads to difficulties in the electric energy production and industrial production. A drought is foreseen for the next period as well.

Currently there is an intense activity to accelerate the spring agricultural work and to prevent the evaporation of the soil's humidity.