

Few events since the end of the 1950-1953 Korean War have had such enduring political relevance in the 60-year history of the North Korean party-state as the three-year dispute in the Korean Workers' Party (KWP) over development strategies that culminated in the summer of 1956. Yet, due to the secretive nature of the regime and the paucity of documentary evidence from Korean and other archives, little has been known about this pivotal event until recently. While accounts of the episode have appeared in many histories of modern Korea,<sup>1</sup> they have largely focused on the August 1956 Plenum of the KWP Central Committee (CC), which is generally portrayed as the climax of a decade-long power struggle between four factions: the so-called "Soviet faction" composed of ethnic Koreans who lived in the Soviet Union and were sent to serve in administrative positions; a group of Koreans who lived in China during Japan's occupation; a group of Koreans who lived in the Soviet Union and were sent to serve in administrative positions; and a group of Koreans who lived in China during Japan's occupation.<sup>2</sup>

Recent accounts by Russian scholar Andrei Lankov and James F. Person on the actions of key actors in the weeks and months before the August Plenum.<sup>3</sup> Drawing on newly released materials from the Soviet and Chinese archives, Lankov and Person detail the clandestine efforts of the "Soviet" and "Yan'an" factions to challenge the KWP leadership, hastily organized during North Korean leader Kim Il Sung's absence from the country while on a month-long trip to fraternal communist countries. Their conclusions about the severity of the threat to Kim Il Sung, however, differ rather sharply. Lankov argues that from the beginning, Kim's opponents sought to unseat him.<sup>4</sup> Despite agreeing with Person that the "Soviet" and "Yan'an" factions were not serious

challenges, Person concludes that the attack on Kim Il Sung's policies at the August Plenum "was a desperate attempt to turn the tide rather than a serious challenge to Kim's rule."<sup>5</sup>

The documentary evidence on post-war North Korea has been greatly enhanced recently through the release of documents from the post-Stalin Central Committee archive. These documents, some of which are presented below, originated with the Central Committee Department for Relations with International Communist Parties, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union's (CPSU) own foreign policy organ.<sup>6</sup> Some of the documents were also analyzed by Japanese scholar Nobuo Uekusa, who in his Working Paper No. 52,<sup>7</sup> the new documents reveal that contrary to the common wisdom on factional power struggles, a myriad of factors and motivations played into the pivotal events of 1956. Kim and his opponents did not simply compete for raw power, they also had clear ideological and practical preferences and differences. Indeed, as the newly available materials seem to suggest, the precipitating cause of events at the August 1956 Plenum was not a factional power struggle or Kim Il Sung's prolonged dispute over socialist development strategies, opponents of Kim Il Sung's vision for modernizing the DPRK leader to adopt post-Stalin Soviet-style "New Course" economic reforms. Moreover, they sought to rid the party of nationalist and growing personality cult in North Korea.

In light of the new documentary evidence, the events of 1956 can no longer be examined with a narrow focus on a power struggle between groups with diverse revolutionary backgrounds. Such an approach to a large degree mirrors North Korean leader Kim Il Sung's supremacy over all [...] political challenges, from within and without.<sup>8</sup> Factional rivalries, the documents suggest, were exaggerated by Kim Il Sung as a pretext to purge policy opponents. Rather than a factional power struggle, the events of

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1956 have to be seen in the context of the broader theme of com-

in advance for what he apparently perceived as a showdown, and threatened those who sympathized with his policy opponents with blackmail. The members of the “consumer goods group” were thus easily silenced during the plenum. They were subsequently purged and declared factionalists. Curiously, the

in documents until 1953. For a full history of the group, see the

ing the execution. Infuriated by this, and by Ivanov’s personal observation that carrying out the sentence would be inexpedient, Kim suggested the party had already reached a unanimous decision on the matter, and that those making individual inquiries were in breach of the principle of democratic centralism. As this and other documents in this collection reveal, throughout the spring and summer Kim’s patience was being tested by those violating the iron will of the party.

**Documents #4 and #10** are memoranda of conversations between North Korean ambassador to the Soviet Union, Li Ucpilq."cpf"vyq"Uqxlkv" Hqtgkip" Okpkvvt{"qhLekcnu"jgnf"ujqtvn{" after Li returned to his post in Moscow following the Third Eqpi tguu" qh" vjg" MYR" Y jknq" dqvj" o ggvpkiu" ygtg" qhLekcnu{" arranged to discuss Kim Il Sung’s upcoming trip to the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries, Li used the opportunity to voice his displeasure with the outcome of the Third Party Congress. By the time of the two meetings, Li was already an outspoken critic of Kim Il Sung’s cult of personality, the post-war reliance on heavy industry, and the party’s ideological yqtm" Vjgug" o go qtcpc" ctg" ukipkLecpv" ukpeg" Nk" gpeqwtcigf" Uqxlkv"ngcfgtu."urgekLecnu{"Pkmkvc"Mj twujejgx."vq"etkvek|g" Mko" Il Sung and the North Korean government delegation during their visit to Moscow. The promotion of Kim’s nationalistic former guerrilla allies to leadership positions within the KWP ycu" dgeqokpi" uq" rtqokpgpv" vjcv" Nk" cpf" qvjgt" rctv{" qhLekcnu." especially the Soviet-Koreans and those former members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), considered outside intervention necessary to complement the direct criticism of Kim and his ex-comrades-in-arms that was taking place inside the DPRK. The “consumer goods group” thus took a multi-front approach to encourage Kim Il Sung to adopt post-Twentieth Party Congress-style reforms and to purge the KWP leadership of nationalist elements: direct criticism at home, coupled with the dressing-down of Kim during his trip to the USSR, Eastern Europe, and Mongolia.

DPRK Deputy Prime Minister Choe Changik, who according to most accounts was the leader of the so-called “Yan’an [Chinese] faction,” met with Ivanov twice in early June [**Documents #7 and #9**]. During these meetings, Choe expressed many of the same sentiments Li Sangjo shared with Uqxlkv" Hqtgkip" Okpkvvt{" qhLekcnu" wrqp" tgvwtpki" vq" jku" rquv" kp" Moscow. Most notably, Choe also considered outside intervention necessary in order to correct the policies of the KWP, claiming that he did not see the necessary forces inside the party to do this on their own.

Choe also noted that the KWP leadership had developed the “harmful” practice of selecting cadres based not on their professional or political qualities, but based on their revolutionary backgrounds, i.e., those who lived in China, the Soviet Union, or remained in Korea. This practice, Choe alleged, was fgukipgf" vq" gpi gpgt" opgrqvku o o" cpf" eqp tkv" c o qpi" ecftgu" Prominent Soviet-Korean Bak Uiwan expressed the same concern with Ambassador Ivanov just days before [**Document #6**], noting that Kim Il Sung was dividing workers into “Soviet, local, Southerners, and partisans” and consciously sought to

maintain “proportions” in the party leadership.

Curiously, Choe also spent a considerable amount of time defending the Soviet-Koreans who had come under increasing attack since the end of 1955. Although it can be argued that Choe did this only because he was in the presence of the Soviet ambassador, this does not explain Choe’s request for

lutionary activities abroad (i.e. Soviet-Koreans and returnees from China), warning against attempting to “emulate or imitate others.” This was in response to what Kim perceived as the dogmatic adherence of the Soviet-Koreans and returnees from China to developments in the fraternal parties. As the prominent Soviet-Korean Bak Uiwan noted, “more than ever before, the Soviet-Koreans, Chinese-Koreans, and domestic Koreans, does not strengthen the party, but weakens it.”<sup>14</sup> Bak Uiwan was not alone in observing this threat to party unanimity. Indeed, the alleged “factions” actually resented and resisted being categorized as such. For example, as DPRK Ambassador to Moscow Li Sangjo explained [Document #21], “Comrade Kim Il Sung and his supporters took revenge on the comrades who spoke [at the August Plenum], declaring them ‘the anti-party Yan’an group’ and ‘conspirators’ trying to overthrow the party and the government.” Moreover, “Korean Communists who had come from the USSR were called ‘the nepotist group’ [...]. Only the partisans who had fought under the leadership of Kim Il Sung and members of the ‘Korean Fatherland Restoration Association in Manchuria’ did not belong to groups and comprise the main backbone of the party.” “Characteriz[ing] under various names by groups,” he claimed, has “cast the shadow of anti-party activity on them.” Thus, according to Li Sangjo, “the so-called Yan’an group [...] which in fact did not exist in nature, was fabricated. As a result, intra-party democracy and party unity were undermined even more.” Those who were not former comrades-in-arms of Kim Il Sung, Li suggested, “must wear the stigma of factionalism.”

Although it has been stressed that Li Pilgyu’s visit to the U.S.S.R. was a result of the “reconciliation, <sup>15</sup>” between the Soviet-Koreans and returnees from China, the fact that Li Sangjo had to explain the alleged “factions” within groups, such as the acrimony between Soviet-Koreans and returnees from China that would have prevented Li from visiting the Soviet embassy. Indeed, the manner in which the Soviet-Koreans and returnees from China cooperated in encouraging Kim Il Sung to learn from the successes of the U.S.S.R. should raise questions about the notion of deep factional divisions. Moreover, Li Pilgyu spent two years in Moscow at the ERUW, where he was involved in something that was not unusual for members of the other alleged “factions,” either.

Li Pilgyu appears to have been very forthcoming with the range of criticisms being made against Kim Il Sung and the KWP leadership. These included the distortion of revolutionary history, encouraging the cult of personality of Kim Il Sung, and cronyism. Second, Li indicated the extent to which the oppo-

nents were prepared to go in order to correct the course of the party. After engaging in sharp criticism and encouraging self-criticism, they sought to “replac[e] the present leadership.” Taken in isolation, this statement appears to support the claims that the group sought to carry out a *coup d’etat* or that replacing Kim Il Sung would have no reason to be concerned about the “Great Leader’s” attitude toward the party.





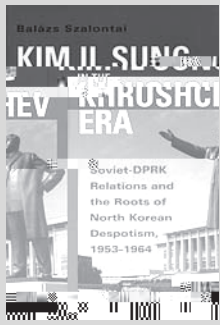
as well as the strained relations between the DPRK and the PRC following the joint Sino-Soviet intervention. In addition to suggesting that Pyongyang improve relations with Beijing, the document provided criticism of North Korean development strategies.




1. See for example: Robert Scalapino and Chong-sik Lee, *Communism in Korea: The Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972); Adrian Buzo, *The Making of Modern Korea* (New York: Routledge, 2002).
2. For accounts of the August Plenum of the KWP CC, see Robert Scalapino and Chong-sik Lee, *Communism in Korea: The Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972); Koo Woo Nam, *The North Korean Communist Leadership, 1945-1965: A Study of Factionalism and Political Consolidation* (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1974); Dae-sook Suh, *Kim Il Sung: The North Korean Leader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); and Adrian Buzo, *The Making of Modern Korea* (New York: Routledge, 2002). For a description of the plenum as an attempt to replace Kim Il Sung, see Andrei Lankov, *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung: The Formation of North Korea 1945-1960*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 154.
3. See Andrei Lankov, *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung: The Formation of North Korea 1945-1960*; and *Crisis in North Korea: The Failure of De-Stalinization, 1956*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005); Balazs Szalontai, "'You Have No Political Line of Your Own' Kim Il Sung and the Soviets, 1953-1964," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 14/15 (Washington: 2004) and *Kim Il Sung in the Khrushchev Era: Soviet-DPRK Relations and the Roots of North Korean Despotism, 1953-1964* (Wilson Center Press: Washington, 2005).
4. Lankov, *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung*, 154.
5. Szalontai, "'You Have No Political Line of Your Own,' 91.
6. Not willing to allow the state-run Ministry of Foreign Affairs to maintain a monopoly over foreign relations, the CPSU's International Department was created in 1943 when the Comintern was abolished to take over the task of uniting the world's Communist parties under the leadership of the Soviet party. From the spring of 1957, relations with

ruling Communist parties were handled by the newly formed Department for Relations with Foreign Communist Parties. The documents cited in this paper are filed under the Department for Relations with Foreign Communist Parties, although they in fact predate the existence of this Central Committee department by one year. For a history of the International Department, see Mark Kramer, "The Role of the CPSU International Department in Soviet Foreign Relations and National Security Policy," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 3. (July 1990), pp. 429-446.

7. James F. Person, "'We Need Help from Outside': The North Korean Opposition Movement of 1956," CWIHP Working Paper 52, August 2006.
8. Young Chul Chung, "The Suryong System as the Institution of Collectivist Development" *Journal of Korean Studies* 12, no. 1 (Fall 2007): 47.
9. See Charles K. Armstrong, "'A Socialism of Our Style': North Korean Ideology in a Post-Communist Era," in Charles K. Armstrong and Samuel Kim ed., *North Korean Foreign Relations in the Cold War Era*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
10. Though it should be noted that documents this author worked with from 1998 to 2002 have since been reclassified and are not scheduled to be re-examined at least in the coming year. As the director of RGANI informed this author during a conversation in March 2006, a list of materials to be reviewed by a declassification panel is compiled one year in advance. Scholars can request that specific materials be included on that list by submitting a petition to the director of Rosarkhiv.
11. Third Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea: Documents and Materials April 24-29, 1956 (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1956): 387.
12. See Charles K. Armstrong, "The Myth of North Korea," in Bruce Cumings, ed., *Chicago Occasional Papers on Korea* (Chicago: The Center for East Asian Studies, The University of Chicago, 1991).
13. Andrei Lankov, "Kim Il Sung's Campaign Against the Soviet Faction in Late 1955 and the Birth of *Chuch'e*," *Korean Studies*, Volume 23, (University of Hawaii Press: 1999): 45.
14. Memorandum of Conversation with Deputy Premier Comrade Bak Uiwan, 24 January 1956. RGANI, f. 5, o.28, d. 412, ll. 67-69.
15. See Lankov's discussion of the Li Pilgyu visit in *Crisis in North Korea*.
16. Lankov, *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung*, 163.
17. Memorandum of Conversation between Kim Il Sung and Manush [Myftiu], composed by Albanian ambassador to the DPRK, Hasan Alimerko, 4 Oct 1961, AQPPSH, MPP Korese, V. 1961, D4.



**Kim Il Sung in the Khrushchev Era: Soviet-DPRK Relations and the Role of North Korean Despotism, 1953-1964**



Concentrating on the years 1953-64, this history describes how North Korea became more despotic even as other Communist countries underwent de-Stalinization. The author's principal new source ku"vjg" J wpi ctkcp" fkrnq o cke" cte jkxgu." y jke j" eqpvckp" gzvgpukxg" tgrqtkpi" qp" Mk o "Kn" U wpi" cp f" P qtv j" Korea, thoroughly informed by research on the period in the Soviet and Eastern European archives and by recently published scholarship. Available from Wilson Center Press and local booksellers.



his article examines Russian archival documents that illuminate how the Kim Il Sung regime reacted to the challenge posed by Soviet leader Nikita S. Khrushchev's campaign against Stalin's 'cult of personality,' as well as foreign and economic policies launched in his famous secret speech at the Communist Party of the Soviet Union's (CPSU) Twentieth Congress in February 1956. Khrushchev's secret speech sent established under Stalin's banner viewed Moscow's "New Course" as a serious political threat. In North Korea, party members who opposed Kim Il Sung's political and economic decisions embraced Khrushchev's criticism of Stalin, using it as an instrument to restrict, or eliminate, the power of Stalin's Korean protégé. Their unsuccessful move against Kim Il Sung at the Korean Workers' Party (KWP) Plenum in August 1956 marked an important turning-point in the political history of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). As a result of the failed challenge to Kim's authority, the regime in

of these events based on documentary evidence, drawing from records held in the Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF).<sup>2</sup> Documents existed within the KWP prior to the August 1956 incident. The documents printed below, from the CPSU Central Committee archive (RGANI), shed additional light on this still murky history.<sup>3</sup> Since the CPSU International Department was responsible for relations with foreign communist parties, including the KWP, its records are a rich source for the political history of 1956. The most valuable documents orpl

sonality, consolidating under his authority all power within the party, government, and military, and with causing severe damage." During his visit to Moscow in late April 1955, Kim's political course and economic policy were severely criticized by Soviet leaders, and Kim had to admit his errors by July, especially in regard to economic issues.<sup>7</sup>

In December 1955 a KWP plenum admitted that the procurement campaign. Nonetheless, the plenum took an important step towards granting Kim Il Sung near-dictatorial power by appointing his comrade-in-arms, party vice chairman Choe Yonggeon, despite opposition by the majority of the KWP Presidium. Choe, who had been nominal chairman of the Democratic Party, was an 'old guard' Chinese Communist Party (CCP) member who had been close to Kim Il Sung during his years as an anti-Japanese partisan in Manchuria.<sup>8</sup>

These allegiances remained important in the development of the KWP which was formally established in 1949 by merging the South Korean Workers' Party with the North Korean Workers' Party. In reality, however, the northern party absorbed the southern party and the KWP remained divided into four factions: the "Soviet faction," composed of Soviet citizens of Korean ethnicity who had been brought to North Korea to meet of party members who had fought the Japanese alongside the E faction, the small group who had, along with Kim Il Sung, taken refuge in the Soviet Union in the early 1940s.<sup>9</sup>

Beginning in the Korean War years, Kim Il Sung used Stalinist tactics against rival leaders, isolating them one at a time. The faction became the target of a show trial in 1953 and was sentenced to death in December 1955. Former Minister of Interior Bak Ilu of the Yan'an faction had been arrested at the beginning of 1955. Kim Il Sung claimed that the KWP had been weakened by the practice of admitting cadres upon recommendation by the Soviet and Chinese parties, and charged that Bak Ilu was "not armed with Marxism-Leninism and conducted anti-party activities from personal ambition."<sup>10</sup> Alexander he had an organizational base in the KWP Organizational-Instruction Department, where he was accused of "at parties, and



that “enemies were organizing anti-Soviet and anti-socialist campaigns using this ‘unhealthy phenomenon’ within social-ku o 06” J q y g x g t . ” j g ” c t i w g f . ” v j g ” U q x k g v u ” f g e k f g f ” v j c v ” v j k u ” e w m v ” q h ” personality phenomenon was not the result of socialism itself. Moreover, the KWP had overcome the cult, because it was

of Foreign Affairs Nikolai Fedorenko met with Li two days later. Li asked that his letter to Khrushchev and his account of the present situation of the KWP be read by Khrushchev on 10 September and gave a fuller description of the political situation in the DPRK. Finally, he wrote a lengthy letter to the KWP CC in October, and its translation was given to Fedorenko.<sup>55</sup> Li pointed out in his lengthy letter that Foreign Minister Nam Il used the name of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party to suppress criticism of Kim Il Sung and Choe Yonggeon. The actual advice given by the CPSU had been kept secret by Kim Il Sung, Nam Il and Bak Jeongae, and those who had addressed the cult of personality were expelled from the party.<sup>56</sup>

Li attributed Kim's cult of personality to the unconditional subordination to authority that Koreans had experienced under Japanese colonial rule. Moreover, cadres were scarce and Korean feudal traditions also promoted the tendency towards a personality cult. In order to bring together the four factions was elevated to the status of Lenin or Mao Zedong. Even the vice chairman of the KWP complained that "those who criticize Kim would end their public life, and the door of the jail is open."<sup>57</sup>

Kim Il Sung, Bak Jeongae, and Nam Il, according to Li, had tried to conceal the CPSU letter from the masses. Those who favored democracy were branded as conspirators or as members of the Yan'an faction, whose existence Li denied. "Is

Observing the growing tensions within the DPRK, the CPSU Presidium discussed the North Korean issue on 6 September 1956. Mikoyan chaired in Khrushchev's absence, with Malenkov, Kaganovich, Voloshilov, Suslov, Ponomarev, Brezhnev and Gromyko in attendance. The Soviet leaders heard Ivanov's reports on the KWP's August Plenum. They concluded that Boris Ponomarev, head of the Department for Relations with Foreign Communist Parties, should consult with the DPRK ambassador, and the Soviet delegation to the 8th Congress of the CCP, scheduled for that month, should consult with the Koreans in attendance in Beijing.<sup>69</sup> Thus, Ponomarev and Mikoyan, who had taken the leading role in purging the Jwp i ctkcp"Uvcnkpkuv"ngc fgt"Ocv {cu" Tcmquk"v jcv" Lwpg." ygtg" fku-patched to Beijing. They would then travel on to Pyeongyang, since Kim Il Sung had canceled his plans to attend the CCP Eighth Congress.

After consultations in Beijing, the Soviets and Chinese decided to send a joint delegation to Pyeongyang, headed by Mikoyan and Peng Dehuai, who had commanded Chinese troops in Korea during the war of 1950-53. The delegation went to Pyeongyang on 23 September 1956. Unfortunately, the available RGANI documents do not include any records



Opis 28, Delo 410, l.79.

1956. Record of the Talks with Gim Sunghwa (Minister of Construction) on 3 March 1956, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 412, l.129-130. Kim Il Sung persuaded her not to speak openly, because if she dared to do so, Nam Il and other famous Soviet Koreans would follow (l. 130).

14. Diary of ambassador V. I. Ivanov from 8 Feb. to 27 March 1956, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 411, l.163.

15. Record of the Talks with Bak Uiwan on 21 February 1956, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 412, l. 72, 74.

16. Diary of ambassador V. I. Ivanov from 8 Feb. to 27 March 1956, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 411, l.164.

17. Diary of temporary ambassador Petrov from 2 to 14 March 1956, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 411, l.178. Ambassador Ivanov's report is absent between 19 February and 19th March due to a trip to Moscow.

18. Report of the CC KWP dele19 F0 r19e CC PSRGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28,



68. *Ibid*, 1. 295.

69. Presidium TsK KPSS 1954-64, tom 1, M., 2003, p.961; tom 2.2006, p. 421-422.

70. Vasilii Kovyshenko had been political officer of the 25th Army of the Red Army and was thus close to Kim Il Sung in 1945-8. Later, as a Japanese specialist, he was appointed by the March 1950 decision of the Soviet Politburo to watch the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), when the JCP was split by the Cominform criticism of S. Nosaka in January 1950. Perhaps he had been responsible in the CPSU Central Committee for both the JCP and KWP until 1963, when the JCP came closer to the CCP. He was to be replaced by the less sophisticated Japanologist I. Kovalenko.

71. N. M. Shesterikov diary from 14-24 September, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 412, l. 303.

72. On the situation of the KWP and DPRK, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 486, l. 1-17.

73. Diary of ambassador V. I. Ivanov from 27 September to 8 October 1956, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 486, l. 22.

74. Diary of ambassador V. I. Ivanov from 11 October to 29 October 1956, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 412, l. 344. Kim Il Sung said to ambassador Ivanov who came to convey the dissatisfaction from the Chinese and Soviet parties that they did not want to change the decisions by the pressure of the foreign parties (RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 412, l. 345). The families of the refugee members were provided with food ration cards again, but Gim Chang-man said that they should not return to the DPRK.

75. Diary of ambassador V. I. Ivanov from 27 September to 8 October 1956, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 486, l. 28-34. Kim Il Sung told that the publication would only profit the South Korean authorities.

76. *Ibid*, l. 36. Prior to this, the party meeting of the local party representative severely criticized the factionalists, according to Kim Il Sung.

77. *Ibid*, l. 18; To the CPSU CC, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 410, l. 296.

78. Diary of ambassador V. I. Ivanov from 11 October to 29 October 1956, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 412, l. 347.

79. Record of the Talks with DPRK Foreign Minister Nam Il on 9 March 1957, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 486, l. 72.

80. RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 486, l. 46.

81. Report of the Soviet Embassy of the Chinese Peoples Republic for 1956, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 409, l. 142. Chinese secret sources told the Soviet Embassy in Beijing that Officers in the Chinese Volunteer army had negated this rule and engaged in criminal acts, and had intervened in the Korean domestic matters (RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 409, l. 412).

82. *Ibid*, l. 141.

83. On the situation of the KWP and DPRK, RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 486, l. 1-17.

84. This issue again is raised by scholars, especially after the emergence of new documents on the Soviet historical sources, among others by A. Lankov. See also B. Szalontai (*Kim Il Sung in the Khrushchev Era, Soviet DPRK Relations and the Roots of North Korean Despotism 1953-1964*, Stanford University, 2005).



. 1

**Memorandum of Conversation with the DPRK Vice Premier of the Cabinet of Ministers and Member of the KWP CC Presidium, Bak Changok, 12 March 1956**

[Source: Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (hereafter RGANI), Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 410, Listy 73-85.]



other Soviet-Koreans was started. Cde. Kim Il Sung began to express more and more displeasure with my work, the work of

directed the attention of Cde. Kim Il Sung to the fact that only Soviet-Koreans are being discussed, then what of the mistakes made by local functionaries of which there is no mention anywhere. Furthermore, it has already been over two months that the party leadership and all local organizations have discussed the activities and mistakes of the Soviet-Koreans, distracting us from our primary duties.

Cde. Kim Il Sung argued with me for a long time. Later he on the question under discussion. They essentially agreed with me, and Kim Il Sung agreed with us that all of this needed to actively in the post of deputy premier and head of the State Planning Committee.

J qy xgt. "qp 3: "Lcpwct{ "k" ycu" qpeg" cickp" uw o o qpgf" vq" a meeting of the KWP CC Presidium where I was asked to read a draft decision of the presidium that had already been accepted by the Political Council. Cde. Kim Il Sung suggested that I express my opinion about the matter under discussion to all members of the Presidium. None of the members of the Presidium demonstrated that Bak Yeongbin and I had carried out factional anti-party activities against the party.

In my speech I did not agree with the abovementioned decision of the presidium but at the end of the meeting said that they should decide as they wish, and demanded that they relieve me from the duties of head of the State Planning Committee and demote me to ordinary work. I made this declaration because I was so worn out that I could not explain to the Political Council and comrade Kim Il Sung about the incorrectness of the line of accusations made against me and other Soviet-Koreans.

Kim Il Sung came out against my suggestion. On another day I once again asked to be relieved from all of my posts. Comrade Kim Il Sung considered my request as unwillingness to agree with the decision of the Central Committee Presidium. I twice raised the matter of being dismissed. The Political Council accepted my suggestion and released me from the posts I had occupied.

Bak explained that I once again asked comrade Kim Il Sung to send me to common work but he categorically rejected the suggestion.

Later, Bak indicated that comrade Kim Il Sung will soon become convinced of the incorrectness of several accusations produced against me, comrade Bak Yeongbin, and other Soviet-



. 2

Remarks on the Draft Statutes of the KWP

[Source: RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 410, Listy 22-25. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by James F. Person.]

Secret. Copy No. 1

5 March 1956

Department of the CPSU CC

Comrade Shcherbakov, I.S.

I am sending you "remarks on the draft statutes of the Korean Workers' Party," prepared by the embassy of the USSR in the DPRK.

Attachment: referred to on three pages / your eyes only/ vkh No. 812s-dv/

Deputy Director of the Far Eastern Division of MFA USSR

/S. Suzdalev/

To the archive

The material was used in preparing the conclusion of the draft statutes of the KWP.

I-VP/NM  
No. 567-DV  
5.3.56

I. Shcherbakov  
31-III-56

Remarks on the Draft Statutes of the Korean Workers' Party

Vjg"ftch"ejctvgt"ycu"uwwfkgf"d{"g o dcuu{"qhLekcnu"cpf"chvgt" an exchange of opinions it was decided to make the following remarks.

1st Paragraph 4. Remove the word "anti-Japanese" and substitute the following wording: "The Korean Workers' Party is the successor of the glorious revolutionary tradition of the masses of our country who fought for national independence and liberation against the foreign colonizers.

Uwej"yqtfxpi"yqwnf" o qtg"uweekpevn{"tg l gev"vjg"jkuvqt{"qh"vjg" national-liberation struggle not only against the Japanese, but also against the American colonizers and that this struggle was carried out not only by the working class, but also by the peasantry.

2nd Paragraph 3. Replace the wording with, for example, the following: "The Korean Workers' Party advocates all possible support to the people of south Korea in their struggle for lib-

eration from imperialism and feudal exploitation..." eliminate the words "American" and "pro-American."

Such a wording must not be interpreted as meaning that the KWP sets before itself a task with such a warlike character.

3rd Paragraph 1. The wording needs to be changed and the following given: "The Korean Workers' Party struggles for the hwwtg" hqtkLecvkqp" qh" vjg" rgqrnguø" fg o qetcvke" u{uvg o" cpf" vjg"

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**Report by N. T. Fedorenko on a Meeting with DPRK Ambassador to the USSR Li Sangjo, 29 May 1956**

[Source: RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 412, Listy 190-196. Obtained for CWIHP by Nobuo Shimotomai and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

Distribute to members and candidate members of the CC [Central Committee] Presidium and CPSU [Communist Party of the Soviet Union] CC Secretaries

30 May 1956 [illegible surname]

[Stamp:  
CPSU CC  
20340

[date too faded to read]  
subject to return to  
the CPSU CC General Department]

HTQO"VJG"LQWTPCN"QH"  
N. T. FEDORENKO

Top Secret Copy N° 10  
30 May 1956  
N° 104/nf

]Jcpfytkwgp"cv"vjg"dqwwq"qh"vjg"Łtuv"rcig"õVq"vjg"ctejkxgu"  
The document was used in the preparation of recommendations to the leaders of the DPRK arriving in Moscow in June 1956. V. Gorbunov. 25/VII. I. Shcherbakov. 23-VII-56. [one illegible signature]."

RECEPTION

of LI SANGJO, Ambassador of the DPRK to the USSR

29 May 1956

[handwritten in the left margin:  
"To Cde. Ponomarev. [M. Suslov]"

I received Li Sangjo at his request.

1. Li Sangjo reported that during his trip through Moscow on the way to the European people's democracies, Kim Il Sung is counting on meeting with the leaders of the Soviet government. "cv"y jkej"vk o g" jg"kpvgp fu"vq"kpht o"vjg o"qh"vjg" fkhŁewnties being experienced by his country and to ask the Soviet Union for additional economic aid to the DPRK. During these meeting, the ambassador pointed out, the Korean delegation will raise the questions it has in order to discuss these issues on [their] return from Warsaw to Moscow after the Soviet

Government has studied them.

Li Sangjo then said that Kim Il Sung's trip to the European countries of people's democracy has as its goal an expression of solidarity for the aid which these countries are giving. In the GDR and Czechoslovakia, Kim Il Sung also intends to discuss several issues concerning trade volume between these countries and the DPRK.

Kp"tgrn{"vq"vjg"swgvkqp"qh"y jcv"urgekŁe"kuwgu"Mk o"Kn"Uwpi" intends to raise in Moscow, Li Sangjo said that evidently this y knm"dg"cdqww"vjg"geqpq o ke" fkhŁewnvkgu"qh"vjg"eqwvpt{"cpf"vjg" fkhŁewnv" o cvgtkc"ukvvcvkqp"qh"vjg" rqrwncvkqp"qh" Pqtvj" Mqtgc" The Korean leaders, said Li Sangjo, informed Cde. Brezhnev about this when he was in Pyongyang and Cde. Brezhnev said that if there are requests of the Soviet Union then it would be advisable to raise them before the Soviet Government.

2. Li Sangjo asked whether I knew about the upcoming trip vq"vjg"WUUT"qh" c" fngg i cvkqp"qh"qhŁekcnu"qh"vjg" FRTM"Okpkvnt{" of Internal Affairs in order to study the work experience of the corresponding Soviet institutions. At the same time the ambassador asked that the corresponding Soviet organs devote some attention to this delegation and familiarize it with the latest approaches in the work of the USSR MIA. The ambassador uvtguugf"vjcv"vjg" Mqtgcp"qhŁekcnu"qh"vjg" rwdnke"ugewtkv{"qt i cpu" are in great need of assistance from Soviet comrades inasmuch as an erroneous method of operation of the organs has existed to date in the DPRK and this ought to be decisively changed. It y qwnf"dg"xgt{"k o rqtvcpv."uckf"Nk"Ucpi lq."hqt"vjgug"qhŁekcnu"vq" become deeply familiar with and master in practice the CPSU CC's approaches regarding the strictest observance of revolutionary legality. They would understand what importance was attached to this question in the USSR and would draw the appropriate conclusions from this for their practical activity in the DPRK.

I replied to Li Sangjo that I will inform the appropriate organs about his request which, I hope, will offer the proper assistance.

3. In connection with the fact that Li Sangjo just returned from the DPRK, where he took part in the work of the KWP Third Congress as a delegate, I asked him to tell about the conditions in the country and how the Congress went.

Speaking about the conditions in the country, Li Sangjo stressed that the DPRK is experiencing very severe economic fkhŁewnvkgu." c" mggp"ujqtvcig"qh" hqqf." jqwukpi" fkhŁewnvkgu." c" neglect of agriculture, etc. As regards the Congress, he continued, the KWP CC leadership thinks that the Congress "went well and revealed the complete unity of the party." But, Li Ucpi lq" rkpvgf"qww." vjku"ku" qpn{"vjg"qhŁekcnu" rkpvn"qh" xky"qh" leadership of the KWP CC. Li Sangjo then said that as ambassador of the DPRK, he ought to have strictly limited himself



vq"vjku"kpht o cvkqp0" J qy gxgt."kp"hev."Nk"Ucpilq"uvtguugf."vjgte"  
are other opinions and sentiments about this question and  
as regards his, Li Sangjo's opinion, he also thinks that there  
were substantial shortcomings in the work of the Congress  
vjcv"tg fge"ugtkqwu"cdpqt o cnkvku"kp"vjg" y qtm"qh"vjg"JMtgcpc\_"  
Workers Party and the DPRK government.

The unfavorable state of affairs is primarily indicated, Li

During the course of the conversation Li Sangjo at times

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/G. Samsonov/

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**Memorandum of Conversation with Vice Premier and  
 Minister of Light Industry Bak Uiwan, 5 June 1956**

[Source: RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 410, Listy 203-205.  
 Obtained for CWIHP by James F. Person and translated for  
 CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

Embassy of the USSR in the DPRK  
 No. 179  
 "13" June 1956

Top Secret  
 Copy No. 2

DIARY

Ambassador of the USSR in the DPRK, Cde. Ivanov V.I.  
 For the period from 24 May to 11 June 1956.

Pyeongyang

5 June

I received Bak Uiwan at his request. Bak said that before the departure of the government delegation to the GDR he had raised the issue of leave with Kim Il Sung and asked to go to the Soviet Union since his wife needs a spa cure. At the same time, said Bak, he expressed doubt to Kim that, since he had accepted Korean citizenship, they wouldn't start accusing his trip to the Soviet Union of being a vacation. Kim agreed to the trip and said that he would give the necessary instructions to Choe Yonggeon.

I replied that the necessary steps would be taken to organize the cure for him and his wife.

Bak then expressed the hope that Kim Il Sung's trip would bring changes in economic policy and with regard to the peo-  
 rŋgŋ" J g"uckf"vjcv" Mko" jcf" dgiwp"vq"ejcpi g" hqt"vjg" dgvg"t"dw"  
 makes mistakes in leadership and it is hard for him to correct  
 them and abandon them.

In maintaining his thought, Bak pointed out that three Soviet-Koreans were promoted to leadership posts at the 29 May political council meeting.

In recent times not one Soviet Korean was in leadership posts in the KWP CC apparatus since a certain policy had been pursued that only local Koreans ought to work in the Central Committee and therefore all Soviet-Koreans had been removed.

Completely unexpectedly for Bak, at the 29 May CC Presidium [SIC] Kim proposed the appointment of former chief qh"vjg"Hktuv" Fgrctvo gpv" I q" Jko cp"cu"MYR'EE"Vtcurqvtvcvkp" and Construction Department deputy chief. Bak pointed out in urkvg"qh"vjg"cr rqpvo gpv"vjcv" I q" Jko cp"ycu"pqv"uwkvgf" hqt"vjku" yqtmŋ" J qy gxtg. "Mko" fkf"pqv"ci tgg"cpf"pqvgf"vjcv" I q" Jko cp" could be appointed Minister, he deserved it, but there were already many Soviet-Koreans in these posts, meaning Nam kn. " I ko" Ugwpi jyc. "Dcm" J qpi ugqm. "Dcm" E jcp iqm. "cpf"kv"ycu" allegedly necessary at the same time to maintain certain pro-  
 rqtvkpu"kp"cr rqp vkpi "qhŁekcnuŋ

Bak Uiwan noted that Kim Il Sung continued to divide workers into Soviet, local, Southerners, and partisans, and thinks that necessary proportions need to be considered when appointing workers to leadership positions.

[Tak Yangik] was promoted to Deputy Chairman of Gosplan and Bak Wungu was promoted to the post of Deputy Minister of Machine building at this same CC Presidium meeting. Both of these comrades are Soviet-Koreans.

Then Bak pointed out that the Czechs are designing a general machine building factory for them, where cable products and electrical instruments are to be produced. At one time [Vice

vcnmkpi"ykvj"Dcm."Jqpi"O{gppi jwk"vqnf"jko"vjcv"jg"ku"92" {gctu" old and, not being a party member, he does not serve just to make a living but because he loves the DPRK system. While he was younger he was not tempted by a Japanese offer and fkf"pqv"ugtvg"vjgo"Jg"ycu"vjgtghqte"uwtrtkugf"cv"vjg"yqtfu"qh" Mko"Kn"Uwpi."yjq"fgenctgf"vq"Jqpi"O{gppi jwk"vjcv"jg"fkfpøv" work much, that there were many hard workers without him, cpf"vjcv"vjg{"pggf"jko."Jqpi"O{gppi jwk."cu" c"ŁiwtgjgcF" [ ]).



**Memorandum of Conversation with Choe Changik, 5 June 1956**

[Source: RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 410, Listy 206-207. Obtained for CWIHP by James F. Person and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

Embassy of the USSR in the DPRK  
No. 179  
"13" June 1956

Top Secret  
Copy No. 2

DIARY

Ambassador of the USSR in the DPRK, Cde. Ivanov V.I.  
For the period from 24 May to 11 June 1956.

Pyeongyang

5 June

A meeting was held with Cde. Choe Changik, Deputy Chairman of the DPRK Cabinet of Ministers. Our conversation lasted one hour and 10 minutes.

Cde. Bobylev, the chief of the group of Soviet specialists engaged in the construction of the meat-packing plant in Pyeongyang, was present at the beginning of the conversation. Jg"kphtogf"Efgø"Ejqg"Ejcpikm"qh"vjg"rtqitguu"qh"vjg" construction and turned to him with a request to increase the number of workers at the construction site by 200 men in order vq"eqo røngvgn{"Łpkuj"vjg"eqpuvtwevkqp"qh"cm"rtqfwevkqp"hccknkvgu" of the meat-packing plant by 15 August. Cde. Choe Changik promised to grant this request.

The conversation then turned to the topic of the visit of the DPRK government delegation to the European people's democracies and the USSR. In response to the question of what results were expected from the visit to the USSR, Cde. Choe Changik said that this visit, like previous visits to the USSR, would bring the DPRK favorable results in the matter of its economic and political development. I noted that the USSR had always and

would henceforth give material aid and moral support to its friends and that the visit of the DPRK government delegation to vjg"Uqxkgv"Wpkqp"yqwnf"wpswgwukqpcdn{"dtkpi"i tgcv"dggpŁv"vq"vjg" Korean people.

In reply to Cde. Choe Changik's opinion about the presumed nature of the meetings between the DPRK delegation and the leadership of the Soviet Union, Cde. Choe Changik remarked evasively that he could only share his personal ideas about this issue. Cde. Choe Changik said that it seems to him that, besides economic issues, the issues touched upon would be those associated with the political leadership of the party and the country in the interests of accelerating the social development of Korea. In reply to this, I noted that at the present time the party and country were being led by people who had very rich experience in revolutionary struggle, experience in economic policy in the

[DPRK Minister of Construction] Gim Seunghwa, whom I had invited to dinner, visited the Embassy construction site in the evening. Gim Seunghwa passed on a letter from [Deputy Prime Minister] Choe Changik who asked [me] to organize a meeting with him at my apartment but expressed a desire that the conversation be conducted without an interpreter, with only him present.

of workers have been elected to the KWP CC Presidium who cannot meet the demands imposed on their professional and political qualities. Jeong Ilyong, Bak Geumcheol, and [Deputy Chairman of the KWP CC] Gim Changman are regarded as such workers. They do not have the necessary education and work experience and handle the responsibilities with which they are entrusted poorly. Along with their poor training and features such as sycophancy and servility. They are not able

to Chao als tcnside itwrng theatalmostot hAlong54(ws )-1(tsaid)-TJ/-1.266 -.316 TDd[(Cat)-37(he )-37hCng es ehe he  
tens CT-170ha-170he-170hl-170he-170ha-170hd-170he-170hr-170hs-170ha-170hi-170hp-170ho-170hf-170ht-170ha-170he-170hC-170he-170hn-



ngc fgtu jkr 0" J qy gxgt. "wphqtvwpcvgn{ "vjg"uwvf{ "qh"vjg" o cvgtkcnu" of the Twentieth Congress in the KWP was done hastily and without the necessary depth. The shortcomings of the intra-party life of the KWP were neither criticized at the Congress nor after the Congress. Many members of the Workers' Party see and understand these shortcomings. They are inwardly dis-ucvkuŁgf"y kvj"vjg"ukvwcvkqp"kp"vjg"rctv{ "dvw"fgkfg"pqv"vq"qrgpn{ "criticize these shortcomings, fearing persecution.

Therefore, continued Li Sangjo, help is needed from the outside, and it would be best if Cde. Khrushchev or Cde. Mao Zedong talked with the KWP leadership about this issue. When doing so it is advisable that critical comments by Cde. Khrushchev or Cde. Mao Zedong become known not only to Kim Il Sung and the people close to him, but to a broader cir-eng"qh"MYR"qhŁekcnu0

The statements of several comrades of the KWP leadership that there were no violations of legality in the DPRK are incorrect, Li Sangjo continued. In 1954, for example, many serious excesses and incorrect pressure on the peasants and low-level cadres took place during the collection of taxes in kind. In conditions where only 5% of the peasants had extra bread, almost everyone was forced to hand over grain. There were many cases of suicide among low-level party cadres in the countryside in connection with this, after which they were expelled from the party for their "inability" to ensure v jg"hwŁnn o gpv"qh"vcz"kp"mkpf"cuuk i p o gpvu0"Hqt"gzc o rng."kp"vjg" province of North Pyeongyang where Bak Jeongae went and where there were many people expelled, 130 people committed suicide.

Serious violations of legality were also committed in the security organs and "Japanese" methods were employed.

In connection with this, Li Sangjo said, it is very important that they work closely with the DPRK MIA delegation in the USSR at the present time and familiarize it with the goals concerning the strictest observation of revolutionary legality.

It would also be very important, Li Sangjo pointed out, to gzgtv" c r r t q r t k c y g" k f g q n q i k e c n" k p l w g p e g" q p" v j g" f g n g i c v k q p" q h" Korean journalists arriving in the USSR. This could facilitate a correction of the tone of DPRK press propaganda on the issue of the attitude toward the South.

At the present time this tone abounds in useless cursing and f q g u" p q v" j c x g" v j g" p g g f g f" l g z k d k n k v{." y j k e j" j c t o u" v j g" e c w u g 0

Speaking of the reasons for the large number of mistakes committed by the KWP leadership and Kim Il Sung, Li Sangjo said that to a considerable degree they might be explained by





The collection was accompanied by beatings, murder and repression. On the spot party work is based not on persuasion, but on violence, collectivization occurs on the basis of violence. In the opinion of Li Pilgyu, the party must sincerely tell them that times are very tough. At the same time, tell them about the perspective future. Now they write in the newspapers

Regarding individual members of the party leadership and government, Li Pilgyu said: [Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly] Gim Dubong was not a communist before and the Chinese Communist Party did not pay much attention to him. In general he is very quiet, ll them

The main issues of criticism will be the erroneous methods of leadership of the KWP CC and of Kim Il Sung personally, Kim Il Sung's personality cult, incorrect dealings with the Soviet-Koreans, and other issues in party and state life. Bak expressed the hope that if Kim Il Sung and other members of the presidium and also from several heads of local party organizations. Bak said that it would be desirable for Nam Il to join that group and speak out with sharp criticism of Kim Il Sung at the KWP CC Presidium and at the Central Committee Plenum. The possibility of [Vice Chairman of the KWP] Choe Yonggeon taking part in the criticism of Kim Il Sung has not been ruled out.

In connection with this, Nam Il, in his own words, wanted serious criticism of Kim Il Sung from Bak Changok and others would be improper. Such sharp criticism of the problem of the personality cult in the Korean context as Bak Changok and others are preparing to do would lead to undesirable consequences. It might undermine the authority of the existing leadership of the party and government, discredit Kim Il Sung in the eyes of party members and the entire nation and stimulate considerable discussion within the party.

Further, Nam Il noted that the observations of the KWP CC about several shortcomings and mistakes in the work of the KWP were correctly and frankly perceived by Kim Il Sung. Kim Il Sung told Nam Il and several other members of the government delegation that he would take measures in order to completely and fully amend these errors and shortcomings, including the issue of the personality cult. In the opinion of Kim Il Sung, these shortcomings and errors will not be eliminated immediately, not by discussing these issues in a full-scale investigation in the Central Committee Plenums or in discussions in party organs, but little by little without involving the entire party in the discussion of these issues.

Kim Il Sung all kinds of assistance in eliminating errors and mistakes, there is nobody in the DPRK who could replace him, Kim Il Sung was always quite correct in relation to Marxism-Leninism, the general line of the KWP Central Committee is correct, and Kim Il Sung personally, although a bit distressed, correctly perceived the criticisms directed at him by the leadership of the CPSU CC.

In connection with the visit of Bak Changok, he, Nam Il, feels himself in a very awkward position. On the one hand, he should, as a member of the Central Committee Presidium, inform Kim Il Sung about the conversation that took place with Bak Changok and identify him as one of those active-

ly preparing to speak out against Kim Il Sung, while on the other hand, since Bak Changok is a Soviet-Korean, he would





period from 29 August to 14  
September 1956

Pyeongyang

1 September

Today Kim Il Sung invited me and told me about the results of the KWP Plenum which was held 30-31 August.

Kim said that in personal conversations during the course of the preparations for the plenum with Choe Changik, [Trade

In conclusion, Kim Il Sung pointed out that during a meeting with Embassy Counselor Petrov on 2 August, the latter expressed the concern which the CPSU CC is displaying in connection with the situation in the KWP. Kim Il Sung asked that the CPSU CC be informed of the decisions that were adopted. The report and the decisions will be sent to the Embassy after they are translated.

In connection with Kim Il Sung's report concerning Gim Dubong's comment about a fraternal Communist Party, [Vice Premier and Minister of Light Industry] Bak Uiwan explained to us that Gim Dubong's remark in the Presidium had been distorted by Kim Il Sung. Gim Dubong only said that it was not imperative to engage in questioning witnesses at the Presidium cpf"vjcv" Mko "Kil"Uwpi"eqwnf"dg"ejctigf"ykvj"vcnmkpi"ykvj"vjgo=" such methods are feasible and they are employed in fraternal parties.

Ambassador of the USSR in the DPRK

/V. IVANOV/

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Pql"6/"vq"vjg"£ngu

Drafted by Ivanov

Typed by Alekseev

No. 940



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**Memorandum of Conversation with Chinese Ambassador to the DPRK, Qiao Xiaoguang, 4 September 1956**

[Source: RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 410, Listy 322-325. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by James F. Person.]

Embassy of the USSR in the DPRK

No. 251

“15” September 1956

Top Secret

Copy No. 3

DIARY

Ambassador of the USSR to the DPRK V.I. Ivanov for the period from 29 August to 14 September 1956

Pyeongyang

4 September

During a reception on 2 September organized by the Vietnamese Embassy in the DPRK on the event of the 11th

anniversary of the declaration of the Republic, I approached the PRC ambassador to the DPRK, Qiao Xiaoguang with a request to meet for a discussion. The meeting took place on 4 September at the embassy.

Qiao said that he came to share his thoughts on two issues. Regarding the issue of providing further support to the DPRK from the PRC, he said that on 21 August of this year, Kim Il Sung told him in a conversation that the Korean government could not accommodate the material needs of the people in the new Five-Year Plan and requested further support from vjg"RTE0"Eqpetgv"£iwtgu"qh"vjg"coqwpv"qh"uwrrqtv"vjcv"vjg" Korean friends would like to receive from the PRC in the coming Five-Year Plan were not mentioned in the discussion. Jqy gxgt."y jkn"urgek{kp"vjg"rncp"hqt"vtcf"dgvy ggp"vjg"vyq" countries for 1957, it became known that the aggregate output of supplies to the DPRK from the PRC in 1957 must consist of 185 million yuan, from which 85 million should be used to cover commodity circulation, 50 million to the expense of remaining unpaid labor, and the PRC government requested to allocate 50 million yuan.

Qiao said that the question that was advanced by the Korean side related to additional assistance was transmitted to the government and that he had still not received an answer.

Coming to the second issue, Qiao told me that during the work of the KWP CC Plenum an extremely serious event occurred concerning the relations between the DPRK and the PRC. On 3 September, the DPRK Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yi Donggon explained that on the night of 30-31 August of this year, 4 Korean citizens: the Minister qh"Vtcf" [wp" Iqpi jgw o="vjg" Wpkvgf" Wpkqpu" EE" Ejckt ocp" Ugg" Jyk="vjg" Fgrwv{" Okpkvgt"qh" Ewnvwtg" Iko" Ejcpikn="cpf" vjg" Fgrctv o gpv" qh" Eqpuvtwevkqp" Ocvgtkcnu" Jgcf" Nk" Rkni {w

the KWP of poorly implementing the decree of the CPSU Twentieth Congress about the personality cult, and as a result the leadership of the KWP has supposedly committed serious



]J cpf ytkwgp"cv"vjg"dqwwq o "qh"vjg"Łtuw"rc ig<δVq"vjg"cte jkxgu0"  
The letter of Li Sangjo was distributed to members of the CPSU CC Presidium. See of 6 and 15 September 1956 [SIC, a caret at the bottom of the reproduced page suggests that a document reference was inserted at this point] for the decision on the question of the situation in the DPRK [signatures and dates are off the reproduced page.]"

RECEPTION

of LI SANGJO, Ambassador of the DPRK to the USSR

5 September 1956

[handwritten in the left margin:

δVq"Efg0"Rqpq o ctgx="]O0"Uwunqx\_ö

I received Li Sangjo at his request.

1. Li Sangjo made a request to pass to N. S. Khrushchev

N° 286-nf  
5.IX.56

Fgct"Eqo tcfg"P0"U0"MJ TWUJE JGX#

I hope you have received a report from Pyeongyang in which you were informed of those serious events that are occurring in the Korean Workers' Party. You probably know well that our party has committed serious mistakes and blunders in its activity. Therefore, some comrades pointed out his shortcomings to Cde. Kim Il Sung in the form of comradely criticism kp"qtfgt"vq"gnk okpcev"vjg" okuvcmgu"cpf"ujqtveq okpi ul" Jg"ycu" also subjected to comradely criticism at the Central Committee Rtgu kfw o " oggkpi 0" Jqyngxgt." jg"fkf"pqv"vcmg"vjg"qrkpkpu"qh" the comrades into consideration. Then this issue was raised at the Central Committee Plenum held on 30 August, at which severe party criticism developed.

The substance of the criticism at the plenum comes down to the following:

The cult of personality in our party was subjected to criticism at the plenum in order to overcome the consequences of Kim Il Sung's personality cult.

Those sycophants and careerists who spread the cult of personality in every way were subjected [to criticism] at the ple-pw o 0" Yqtmgtu"qp"vjg"kf gqni kech"htqp"y j q"hcnu kŁgf"vjg"jkuvqt{" qh"qwt" rctv{" wpgt"vjg"kp ħwgpeg"qh"vjg"rgtuqpcnkv{" ewnv" ygtg" also subjected to criticism at the plenum. The comrades who were critical at the plenum pursued only one goal: to eliminate the serious consequences of the personality cult in our party and completely ensure intra-party democracy and collective leadership in complete accordance with the statutes of our party.

Jqyngxgt."vjg"eqo tcfgu" yjq" ygtg"kp" rgygt"vqqm"tgxgpi g" on those who courageously and in a party way offered criticism directed at the elimination of the consequences of the personality cult and the elimination of the serious shortcomings in our party.

Several Central Committee members, including Central Committee Presidium members who had a wealth of experience kp"tgxqmwkqpct{" uvtwi ing" ygtg" wplwukŁcdn{" gzrgmgf"htq o" the party. These events created a serious and complex situation inside the party.







Central Committee about the transfer of four senior DPRK  
Pyongyang deserve the most serious attention. We are alarmed  
by all the events that have taken place. A CPSU delegation to  
the Communist Party of China Eighth Congress has instruc-  
tions to discuss this issue with the Korean delegation and talk  
with the Chinese comrades about the situation in the Korean  
Workers' Party.

Li Sangjo was told that, as he obviously knows, during Cde.  
Kim Il Sung's visit to Moscow, a conversation was held with  
him in the CPSU CC Presidium. Cde. Kim Il Sung stated that  
he agreed with the CPSU CC advice about the need to over-  
come the cult of personality in the DPRK and develop intra-  
party democracy and self-criticism.

In connection with the fact that Cde. Li Sangjo is raising  
the question about the need for advice and recommendations  
on the part of the CPSU and the Communist Party of China to  
the leadership of the Workers' Party about intra-party issues,  
he was told that in principle fraternal communist parties can  
give advice and recommendations, but it needs to be borne in  
mind that the Korean Workers' Party is an independent party.  
Therefore, there cannot be interference in its affairs and inter-  
nal life, and the complexity of the situation needs to be under-  
stood

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In his letter, Cde. Li Sangjo basically describes the issues of the situation of the Korean Workers' Party already known to the CPSU CC and adds some new facts.

Cde. Li Sangjo expresses his disagreement with the decision that the following questions should have received solutions at the plenum:

1. A review of previous plans to restore and develop the economy in order to stress the development of [practical] measures directed at the material improvement of the population.

2. The elimination of the consequences of Kim Il Sung's personality cult in order to ensure genuine intra-party democracy and collective leadership in the party.

3. Restoration of the history of the national liberation struggle of Kim Il Sung's personality cult.

60"V j g"gnk o k p c v k p p"q h"v j g"u j q t v e q o k p i u"k p"v j g"Ł g n f"q h"r c t v {" propaganda, which even today is divorced from the reality of the party.

5. The removal from leadership positions of a number of people who are interfering with the strengthening of the unity and cohesion of the party.

f q o k p c v g u " k p " v j g " r c t v { 0 " G x g p " v j g " o q u " u g p k q t " q h L e k c u " j c x g " b e i n g f o r c e d t o w o r k i n a n a t m o s p h e r e o f f e a r a n d u n c e r t a i n t y . T h e t e x t s o f s p e e c h e s a t C e n t r a l C o m m i t t e e P l e n u m s a r e b e i n g s t r i c t l y m o n i t o r e d i n o r d e r t h a t t h e s p e a k e r s a y s w h a t " i s n e c e s s a r y . " T h i s i s a l s o b e i n g d o n e f o r d e p u t i e s . T h e t e x t s o f t h e s p e e c h e s o f t h e d e l e g a t e s o f t h e K W P T h i r d C o n g r e s s w e r e c a r e f u l l y c h e c k e d a n d u n c e r m o n i o u s l y c o r r e c t e d w i t h o u t a s k i n g f o r t h e o p i n i o n s o f t h e d e l e g a t e s .

The Constitution is being violated in the country, writes Cde. Li Sangjo. A majority of the representatives of provincial people's committees are not deputies of local people's committees, but according to regulation they must be elected.

There are more than 30,000 people in prisons as a result of the violation of socialist legality. In the army alone the number of those arrested is more than one division. Eight thousand have been accused of counterrevolution and about 10,000 have been convicted of other crimes. Thus, one out of every 300 people in North Korea is a criminal.

This fact tells what "counterrevolutionaries" are. Two thousand years for only having made a book cover from a piece of newspaper containing Kim Il Sung's portrait.

Kim Il Sung gave instructions according to which the existing term of punishment, including the death penalty.

Cde. Li Sangjo then writes that Cde. Bak Ilu (a former member of the Politburo) was arrested and his family expelled from Pyongyang for daring to object to Kim Il Sung about the issues of the tax in kind and the party policy about reactionaries, declaring that severe repressive measures cannot be employed without review.

The letter talks about the distortion of the history of the national liberation struggle of the Korean people in contemporary literature. The role of the partisan detachments of Kim Il Sung, which actually ceased to exist in 1940, is exaggerated. The partisan raid at Bocheonbo is presented as a great battle. The role of the "Korean Fatherland Restoration Association in Manchuria," whose membership did not exceed 100 men, is also exaggerated.

In addition, the activity of the Korean communists who fought together with the Chinese against the Japanese, Jiang Jieshi's forces, and the American interventionists is ignored.

Enormous mistakes have been made in economic policy and in the issue of increasing the material and cultural level of the population. For example, the construction of an automobile

plant, the Pyongyang meat-packing plant, a cannery, etc. was planned, but there were no raw materials for these plants in the country. At the same time, the country is experiencing great

Cde. Li Sangjo writes about his conversation with Cde. Mao Zedong was then already alarmed about the possibility of an invasion by a large force of American troops. Cde. Li Sangjo reported this to Kim Il Sung, to which the latter replied that we do not expect to make a retreat and therefore there is no need to listen to this advice.

At the end of the letter Cde. Li Sangjo states that he is not against Cde. Kim Il Sung remaining in the party leadership, but inasmuch as the questions of principle that he pointed out were not properly resolved at the August Central Committee Plenum, he requests that the Korean Workers' Party Central Committee inform the members and candidate members of the Central Committee of this written statement.

Translation from the Korean

VQ"V J G"EGPVTCN"EQO O K V V G G " Q H " V J G " M Q T G C P " WORKERS' PARTY

The recently held Korean Workers' Party Central Committee Plenum attracted the universal attention both of Korean communists as well as fraternal communist and workers' parties. The discussion of issues at this plenum about the visit of our government delegation to fraternal countries and other issues, did not achieve resolution at the Korean Workers' Party Third Congress, the resolution of which would have permitted the elimination of the serious shortcomings in party and government work. In particular, a discussion of the issue about overcoming the cult of personality of Kim Il Sung and its consequences which have become widespread in our country was expected at the plenum. In doing this we should have relied on the historical decisions of the CPSU Twentieth Congress which decisively spoke out against the cult of personality and on the international workers' movement. All the fraternal parties have launched a broad ideological struggle to eliminate the cult of personality and its consequences on the basis of the historic decisions of the CPSU Twentieth Congress.

Cu" o q t g " u r g e k L e c m { " t g i c t f u " v j q u g " k u u w g u " y j k e j " t g s w k t g f " t h e i r r e s o l u t i o n a t t h e p l e n u m , t h e y b o i l e d d o w n t o t h e f o l l o w i n g :

- 1. The issue of reviewing previous plans to restore and develop the economy in order to stress the working out of practical steps directed at an improvement of the material



well-being of the population.

2. The issue of the elimination of the consequences of Kim Il Sung's personality cult in order to ensure genuine intra-party democracy and collective leadership in the party.

3. The issue of the restoration of the history of the national `nkdgtevkqp"uvtwi iing"qh"vjg"MQtgcp"rgqrng"vjcv"jcf"dggp"hcnukŁgf"` under pressure of Kim Il Sung's personality cult, whose merits `ygtg"kpetgfkdn{"kpłcvgf0`

4. The issue of the elimination of the shortcomings in the `Łgnf"qh"rctv{"rtqrcicpfc."yjkej"gxgp"vqfc{"ku"fkxqtegf"htqo"` the reality of the people.

5. The issue of the removal from leadership positions of sycophants who are preventing the strengthening of the unity and cohesion of the party.



uvkmm"qhŁekcnu"y j q"vt{"vq"cuetkdg"cmn"etgfkv"vq"qpg"ōdquu0ō"V j g u g" circumstances played a decisive role in the formation and development of Kim Il Sung's personality cult. All power was concentrated in the hands of one personality, in violation of Leninist organizational principles. All power was concentrated in the hands of Kim Il Sung, especially during the war when the foreign invaders who had intervened in the Korean War expanded the scale of [their] military operations.

In wartime conditions, an excuse was found for a restriction on democratic principles in the party and in the country. But when the country entered the period of peaceful development, such a restriction gave rise to negative consequences for the party and the country. Nevertheless, in our country the cult of personality of Kim Il Sung has not only not been overcome, but on the contrary, attempts have been made to reinforce it. As a result, Cde. Kim Il Sung has set himself above the party, the government, and the people, and he himself has ended up as an untouchable personality.

In light of these facts, might it be said that there were exceptionally favorable historical conditions in Korea that allowed [it] to avoid those errors which give rise to a cult of personality? It needs to be recognized that in Korea not only were there no such conditions, but on the contrary all the objective conditions in our country facilitated the formation and spread of the personality cult in greater measure than in other fraternal eqwvptkgu0" J q y g x g t. "kpuvgc f" qh" t g u r g e v k p i " v j g" q r k p k q p" q h" v j q u g" comrades who had worked in various communist groups in the past in order to assure and strengthen party unity, Cde. Kim Il Sung has such a high opinion of himself that he has completely stopped considering the opinions of comrades.

With the appearance of the personality cult, as night follows day, all kinds of careerists and sycophants follow Kim Kŏn"Uwpi"y j q"vt{"vq"Ł i j v"v j g k t" y c {"vq"r q y g t" c v" c p {"r t k e g 0" V j g {" have raised the name of Kim Il Sung to an unattainable height by all permissible and impermissible means. If one explains

ality cult in Korea. Until recently there was a rule to issue as a booklet all the speeches of Kim Il Sung that touched on even o kpqt"kuuwguUvcvg o gpvu"cdqvw"kpuk i pkŁecpv"kuuwgu"rwv"hqy ctI" in the publications immediately became political slogans of the party. The statements he made without any preparation became a party appeal that they hung on every street. For example, the words "rice is socialism" or "spinning is an art" which he threw out became party slogans. Artists were mobilized to tgŁgeV"vjgug"unqicpu"kp"rckpvkpiu0" Cnn"vjku"rtqxqmg"ncwi jvgt" from sensible people. It is not enough that these slogans are hung on city streets, but dramatists have been found who have written a play on the basis of the slogan "spinning is an art," which was staged in Pyeongyang. Similar facts not only provoke laughter but also pain.

Thanks to the spread of the personality cult Cde. Kim Il Sung has concentrated all power in his hands and his authority has turned out to be above the party, government, and the people. Any speech of his at any meeting, whether it expresses the opinion of a majority of party members or not, is considered cp"ōwnvk o cvg"vtwvj 0ō"Gxgp"kh"jku"Łpcn" fgekukqp"eqpvtcfkevgf"vjg" party statutes and established law, no one would be so bold as to oppose it. As the recent plenum has just shown, Kim Il Sung and his supporters crudely trampled on the party statutes and other norms of intra-party democracy. Therefore, the fact that the Central Committee Deputy Chairman openly declared that

ōy j qgxt"ku"ci ckpuv" Mk o "Kn"Uwpi."vjgkt"rqnkvecn"nkhg"ku"qxgt="vjg" doors of the prisons where they put enemies of the people are open to them" is no accident. Does this really cause no serious alarm in the party? Does this all really not undermine the unity of our party?

We all remember well how at every conference and meeting Cde. Kim Il Sung abused the name of one comrade who was known in the past for his active factional activity. But at one party activists' meeting after the CPSU Twentieth Congress he had only to declare that Cde. Kim Il Sung is the true pupil of Lenin, after which he was immediately appointed a minister. Y jgtg"ku"vjg"rctv{"ŁfgnkV{"vq"rtkpekng"jgtgA"Kv"ku"pq"itgcV"fkH-Łewnv{"hqt"Ef g0" Mk o "Kn"Uwpi"vq"xkqncvg"vjg"rctv{"uvcvwvgu."iqx-gtp o gp"nc y u."cpf"eq o o wpkuv"rtkpekrgu0" J g"pgxgt"ugtkqwun{" listens to the voice of the party members, not to mention that he does not consider the opinions of the overwhelming majority of party members. If we say that "force is truth" for Cde. Kim Il Sung and that his opinion is more authoritative than any government law, then this would not be a great exaggeration. If such an idea had predominated before the CPSU Twentieth Congress, then after it everyone began to understand that this is not the party style of operation. The popular masses, who blindly believed in Kim Il Sung as a god, have gradually begun to purge their consciousness of the personality cult. Some ngc fkp i"eq o tcfgu."kp" fghgp fkp i"vjg"rqukvq"qh"ŁfgnkV{"vq"rctv{" principles, expressed their critical remarks to Kim Il Sung and organized criticism of the personality cult.

kpuvge f"qh"jggf kpi"vjg"eq o tcfgn{"etkvkeku o"cu"dgŁvu" c"eq o -munist, he embarked on the path to merciless reprisals against those who bravely and openly criticized the cult of personality. For Kim Il Sung and his supporters, the documents of the CPSU Twentieth Congress about the issue of overcoming the cult of personality have become scarier than a tiger and therefore they hate them.

Can a real Communist regard the most important document of the CPSU Twentieth Congress this way? If we do not eliminate a negative phenomenon in our life like this, if we do not gpuwtg"kpvtc/rctv{" fg o qetce{"cpf"Łpcn{"kh" y g"fq"pqv"eq o -pletely restore the Leninist principle of collective leadership, then many more honest communists will become victims of tyranny and lawlessness.

## II. The August Central Committee Plenum did not resolve



fabricated. As a result, intra-party democracy and party unity were undermined even more.

It is well known that some comrades have already criticized Cde. Kim Il Sung privately and he assured [them] that he accepts these comradely comments. And somewhere behind vjg"dcemu"qh"vjgug"eq o tcfgu."Łevkqwu"öecuguö" ygtg"etgcvgf" about their factional activity, calling them the Yan'an "group." Therefore, at the Central Committee Plenum an open intra-party political struggle developed instead of a discussion of pressing issues.

In conditions when the elementary norms of intra-party democracy are not observed, the comrades who openly criticized Kim Il Sung and his sycophants performed a genuinely courageous act. In spite of the threat that hung over their fate, in the interest of the party and the people they bravely and openly criticized Cde. Kim Il Sung and various sycophants. By no means can their actions be assessed as an attempt to seize the posts of prime minister or chairman of the party Central Committee, although there are people who have lost all conscience and are representing their actions as such an attempt.

The comrades who spoke knew that the automatic majority of the plenum collected by threats and intimidation would expel them from the party. Already on the eve of the plenum supporters of Kim Il Sung openly declared that those who criticized the "leadership" of the party would be expelled. Were the comrades who spoke really concerned about their own personal interests? No. Those who criticized the cult of personality were only guided by the interests of the party and were trying to restore the truth.

These repressive measures on the part of Kim Il Sung and his small number of supporters have added a shameful page to the history of our party that is unprecedented in the history of the international workers' movement. Can such reprisals be considered measures taken in the interest of personality were only

in order to strengthen their dominance, bring public opinion to their side, and head off extreme anti-people activities on the part of individual bureaucrats, individual kings created a state council in their court whose members had the right to speak

So it is asked, why can we party members not initiate criticism directed against individual leaders? Those leaders who persecute criticism from below are trying to subjugate all party members and with the aid of authority demand unquestioning obedience. For it is clear that Kim Il Sung and his supporters are not yet the entire party and not the entire government.

Let's even assume that someone spoke openly against Kim Il Sung and individual leaders. Can such an act be called an act directed at overthrowing the party and government? Of course not. To overthrow the party and the government in the true sense means a change of the existing people's democratic system. If one takes such a position then one ought to explain the changes in the leadership in a number of fraternal parties as an overthrow of the previous parties and governments. If one thinks that Kim Il Sung is the Leader [vozhd] and should be in the post of prime minister and chairman of the Central Committee for life, then what is the difference between him and a king? Who appointed him to the post of prime minister and chairman of the Central Committee for life? And if someone had suggested releasing Cde. Kim Il Sung from the posts he holds in order to eliminate the shortcomings that exist in improving the material situation and cultural life of the population, in order to overcome the cult of personality the history of the liberation struggle of the Korean people, and in order to ensure the collective leadership of the party and country in practice, then there is nothing anti-party or criminal advance such a demand, but limited themselves to a suggestion to release several sycophants from the positions they hold who are harming the party and the people by their improper actions. What is criminal and anti-party here?

The supporters of Kim Il Sung say that one ought not to hold private conversations on political topics. Is this really not an absurd demand? Are there political leaders who do not hold private conversations amongst themselves on political topics? There are no such leaders. Is there a communist or workers' party that prohibits holding private conversations on political topics? There are no such parties. Does Kim Il Sung himself really not hold private conversations on political topics? I have personally talked privately with Kim Il Sung about politics over a dinner table on more than one occasion. Can such an act be classed as factional activity? Every party member feeling a responsibility for his party cannot agree with such a Kim Il Sung and several of his supporters, each of us has been afraid to meet together in order to eat dinner or celebrate some

occasion, since they have been searching for signs of a "plot" in any "assemblage." Does the covert surveillance of career work? Cde. Li Pilgyu privately expressed critical comments to Kim Il Sung even before the plenum. When this became known to KWP CC Organizational Instructors Department Deputy Chief, Cde. Gim Yeongju (he is a younger brother of Kim Il Sung), the latter demanded that the primary party organization chairman in which Cde. Li Pilgyu was registered establish unremitting monitoring of him and then suggested expelling him from the party





the Central Committee has consistently upheld, and on the line and policy of the Workers' Party." This is what was recorded in the Resolution of the August Central Committee Plenum of our party.

On the basis of this Resolution it seems that the cult of personality has spread in the activity of the Workers' Party to a negligible degree, but as regards its consequences, there are none. Thus, having formally accepted the existence of the personality cult, in fact they have refused to eliminate its consequences.

Vjqg'hcevu'jcv'yg'jcxg'cntgcf{"wugf"ctg"uwłŁekgp"vq"ujqy" how the cult of personality, which became more widespread vjcp"kp"qvjgt"htcvgtpcn"rctvkgu."jcu"gzgtvgf"c"rgtpkekqu"kpłw- ence on the activity of the party.

Can we accept the actions of those senior comrades who spoke at the August Central Committee Plenum in spite of threats and intimidation as anti-party acts directed at "overthrowing" the party and government and as acts directed at forging an anti-party group? The more so because they were inspired to these deeds by the historic decisions of the CPSU Twentieth Congress and the measures of fraternal parties directed at overcoming the harmful consequences of the personality cult in their ranks.

By their crude tyranny the supporters of Kim Il Sung have

In conditions where the basic norms of intra-party democracy are lacking, any speech differing from the opinion of the leading comrades is viewed as factional activity and “anti-State” crimes. Where is the creative initiative of ordinary party members here? Can collective leadership be ensured in the party in the conditions of an absence of freedom of speech? It will be no exaggeration if we say that in the past, at meetings of a leading party body one person pompously mouthed the truth and others just listened and supported him.

When they began to stress the need to strengthen the principles of collective leadership after the Twentieth Congress, Cde. Kim Il Sung said one day: “Collective leadership is not like that. No one favors it.” In fact, who dares to oppose a suggestion of Kim Il Sung with their own opinion? It is clear to everyone that after such a critical statement it is hard to stay in one’s job. Naturally, Kim Il Sung, who considers himself above everyone, increased his opinion of himself and began to take on airs.

After the CPSU Twentieth Congress, Cde. Kim Il Sung began to say that holding meetings ensures collective leadership in the party. In a situation where intra-party democracy is not assured, it is impossible even to consider holding a thousand formal meetings as a sign of collective leadership.

The cult of personality in Korea has also led to a gross violation of socialist legality, as a result of which thousands of people have been illegally arrested and put in prison. At the present time, the number of prisoners in Korea is more than 30,000 people. It has been established that in the army alone the number of those arrested is more than one division. In addition, 8,000 people have been accused of crimes stipulated in Articles 72-76 of the DPRK Criminal Code, on the basis of which people are convicted of counterrevolutionary crimes. It will not be a big mistake if we say that besides this number, about 1,000 people have been convicted of other crimes. If one compares the total number of the population of North Korea (9 million people) with the number of people convicted then every 300th person is a criminal. Is this not a striking fact?

I will cite several facts that describe a “counterrevolutionary.” Two thousand people were released before the plenum under pressure from comrades recently expelled from the party, and also [from] public opinion. Among them was a “criminal” y j q' j c f' d g g p' u g p v g p e g f' v q' L x g' { g c t u' q p n { " d g e c w u g' j g' o c f g' c' book cover from a magazine page on which a portrait of Kim Il Sung was drawn. There was even a case where an honest comrade, from good motives, corrected a badly drawn portrait q h' M k o' K n' U w p i 0' H q t' v j k u' j g' y c u' u g p v g p e g f' v q' L x g' { g c t u' k o r t k u- onment. Is this not a scandalous matter?

There is no way that these cases can be put in the frame- y q t m' q h' q t f k p c t { " e q w t v' e c u g u 0' C m n' v j g u g' h c e v u' c t g' e q p L t o g f' d { " reliable matermhat mere areortrd abyaha aDeut yaMniotedraf

movement of Kim Il Sung and the activity of the “Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland” constitute the history of the national liberation struggle of the Korean people.

J qy gxt."v jg" hcev" uc{ "qv jgt y kug" Cp" ct o gf" cpk/Lc rcp g" struggle broke out even before the appearance in Korea of the partisan detachment of Cde. Kim Il Sung. A workers', peas- cpvuø." cpf" uvwfgpvuø" o qxg o gpv" fgxgqrgf" wpgt" v jg" kp l wpg" of the Great October Socialist Revolution [in Russia]. The

Korean revolutionary movement. While conceding the entire... however impossible to agree with such an assessment, as we want to remain in the framework of Marxist-Leninist historical science.

Cnn"vjgug"hcvu"vguvkh{"vq"vjg"gzeguukxg"kpłcvkqp"qh"vjg"rgt-sonal merits of Cde. Kim Il Sung and the attempts to create a personal history of Kim Il Sung.

For an example we again turn to the materials of the Pyongyang Museum of the National Liberation Struggle.

The entire territory of Manchuria and Northeast China was shown as an area of combat operations of the partisan detachment of Kim Il Sung. This does not correspond to reality.

Some words about the "Korean Fatherland Restoration Association in Manchuria." The matter is presented this way, as though the Society exercised overall leadership in the Korean revolution, but again this is incorrect. Further, the platform of the Society is called a general platform of the principles of Kim Il Sung. The historical facts say that the Society's platform was based on the decisions of the Comintern about a united people's front and of the Chinese Communist Party... called the creation of Kim Il Sung?

To say this means to falsify history. The supporters of Cde. Kim Il Sung are trying to depict the matter this way, as though "Korean Fatherland Restoration Association in Manchuria" had its local organizations in all corners of Korea. This also does not correspond to historical reality. Who does not know... of revolutionaries? Let those people tell of this who were really in the society. Then it will be clear to everyone.

If one is to believe Kim Il Sung and his supporters, then it turns out that this Society united tens of thousands of revolutionaries around itself.

At the same time, whoever acted at the instructions of this Society in villages and district centers (and this fact needs to be viewed as exaggerated), the number of its members did not exceed 100.

There was no organization in the history of the underground revolutionary movement in Korea that would have united tens of thousands of revolutionaries. In addition, one needs to consider that in the conditions of an underground struggle, a revolutionary organization does not have the task so much of increasing its membership as of increasing the combat effectiveness of the organization.

Every historian describing the issue of the activity of the

"Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland" is obliged from a Marxist standpoint to cover such questions as the length of time this society existed, how many members were in this society, what kind of movement it developed, and how long it continued. After taking these facts into account, a historian will be able to give a proper assessment of the activity of this society. In bringing up these questions about the history of the national liberation struggle of the Korean people, we want the partisan movement headed by Cde. Kim Il Sung, a constituent part of the anti-Japanese struggle of the popular masses of Korea, to receive a correct historical assessment. Are we doing the correct thing when we represent the anti-Japanese partisan movement headed by Cde. Kim Il Sung as the story of the entire liberation struggle of the Korean people of 30 years? As regards the anti-Japanese armed struggle of the Korean people, we cannot discount the armed struggle of the Koreans in China against the Japanese imperialists. Korean military subunits not only fought against the Japanese, but also fought against Chiang Kai-shek's [Jiang Jieshi] troops and the American interventionists. Five divisions of these Koreans participated in the Korean War, not to mention others who performed important work in Korea and China.

The entire Korean people know about the heroism and courage of the Korean divisions who arrived from China. This fact



could get only 150,000 tons of grain (instead of the 3 million tons provided by the plan).

I reported to Cde. Kim Il Sung personally about this serious situation of the peasants and expressed my opinion that in the event the grain purchase campaign was carried out in the area of Gaeseong, this campaign could only be conducted here by force. In addition, I added, the forcible grain purchase in newly liberated areas was leading to some weakening of the ties between the party and government and the popular masses and causing unrest among broad sections of peasants. They agreed with my argument and the grain purchase campaign was not conducted in the area of Gaeseong. Can this policy be called a correct Marxist one, meeting the interests of the people and the state? Of course not. Nevertheless, Cde. Kim Il Sung and some other leaders continue to maintain that "the policy was basically correct." In spite of this obvious fact, Cde. Kim Il Sung still jcu"pqv"qpeg"urqmgp"ugnh/etkvekcm{"qp"vjku"kuuwg" Jg"vjgtgd{" is ignoring the interests of the party and state and once again shows himself to be a party member standing above everyone and not subject to party criticism.

I recently asked a question of a DPRK Deputy Minister of C itkewnwvtg<õJqy" ocp{"fc{u"kp"c"{gct"fq"rgcucpvu"yqtm"hq" labor service [*trudovaya povinnost*] without compensation?" Jg"tgrnkf"vjcu"qp"cxgtcig"vjg"rgcucpvu"yqtm"72/82"fc{u"c"{gct" for the labor service. But this year they will work somewhat more than 40 days. If one does the calculation, it turns out that the peasants work once a week for the labor service. All this is being done after the end of the war in Korea, and after this, how is one to believe the statements of those leaders who say that the peasants are voluntarily going to work for the labor service?

I want to touch on another question, the question of tax policy. A tax policy directed at eliminating private commercial and industrial enterprises has been implemented without any preparatory work or consideration of the real conditions in the eqwpt{"Jcu"kv"tgcm{"dgeqog"gcukgt"hq"vjg"rgqrng"cpf"vjg"ucvvg" that our statistics mention the 100% socialist sector economy? Not at all. In conditions where the country is divided into two parts, such a policy should be implemented on the basis of a deep, comprehensive study of the problem. After some time the Cabinet of Ministers was forced to adopt another solution to this problem, inasmuch as this decision did not correspond to the real state of affairs in the country. In publicizing such facts, I am not at all undertaking the task of classifying these acts as a leftist deviation in our policy. I only want to say that any decision made by the government needs to be discussed collectively and prudently with consideration for all the circumstances of putting the government decision into effect. But these facts are evidence that the decisions were made solely by Cde. Kim Il Sung with the support of several comrades. They can [not] object to the fact that the decisions I am talking about were made at meetings of the Central Committee Politburo

democracy and which promotes a spread of bureaucratism in the party. After this, how can one deny the existence of the personality cult in the theory and practice of our party?

Everyone knows that the standard of living of our people is extremely low. Of course, this is explained by the fact that a considerable part of industry was ruined and agriculture suf-

hgtgf"ugtkqwu"fcoci g"kp"vjg"eqwtug"qh"vjg"Łgteg"vj tgg/{gct"yct"vjcv"ycu"kpłkevgf"qp"wu"htqo"ykvjqwv0"Cv"vjg"ucog"vkog."yg"qwi jv"vq"uc{"vjcv"qwt"rctv{"ku"fkurnc{kpi"kpwhŁekgpv"eqpegtp" about improvement of the life of the population. There is no

pggf"vq"ogpvkqp"vjcv"qwt"ocpwen"ncdqtgtu."rgcucpvu."cpf"qhŁeg"

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First, there was the possibility of throwing the invaders from the Busan bridgehead into the sea and completely liberating all of Korea. But it was extraordinary limited.

Second, Cde. Mao Zedong expressed the thought that after concentrating his forces, the enemy would undertake a large counteroffensive in the area of Busan.

Third, he said, there existed a direct threat of a landing operation in the rear of the Peoples' Army. Then a further offensive on the Busan bridgehead is precluded and the enemy will try to cut the lines of communications of the Peoples' Army in order to perform an encirclement of the units of the Peoples' Army. At the same time he pointed out that plans for military operations need to be drawn up on the [basis of the] most likely possibility. Therefore, corresponding organizational work needs to be conducted in the entire party.

J g' gzrtguugf" c" urgekLe" ykuj" hqt" vjg" tguvtwewtkpi" ]perestroika] of our work in a direction according to which all the ugpqkq"qhLekcnu"qh"vjg"rctv{"cpf"vjg"qhLegtu"cpf"uqnfkgtu"qh"vjg" army be imbued with the realization of a possible strategic retreat.

To do this, as he said, it is necessary for the party to correctly and comprehensively explain to the popular masses the possible danger.

Only in this way can the people's morale be prepared for any eventualities.

In the conditions that developed, where units of the Peoples' Army could not advance a step in the area of Nakdong, it was necessary to make a strategic retreat so that the enemy dispersed his forces when advancing. Where it's harder for a engpejgf"Lu"vq"dtgcm"vj tqwi j"vjcp" hqt" cp"wpengpejgf" qpg"ku" y jgp"uvtkmgu"ecp"dg"ncwpejgf"qp"gej"Epigt" Y jgp"vjg"ggp o {" is concentrated at one point and is waging defensive battles, vjcv"ku"vjg"uc o g"cu" c"engpejgf"Lu." cpf"vjgp"kvou" pgeguuct {"vq" ncwpej"uvtkmgu"qp"kv0"Dwv" y jgp"vjg"ggp o {"wpengpejgu"jku"Lu." that is, disperses his forces, then it's easier to launch strikes on each group of the enemy. It seems to me, Cde. Mao Zedong continued, that this proven tactic needs to be used in the Korean War.

After some time, the words of Cde. Mao Zedong came true. Actually, the course of military operations in Korea completely



fastly ensuring collective leadership in the party, and eliminating bureaucratism in the country, we [will be] in a position to correct all our mistakes and eliminate the shortcomings. Based on this, I think that the repressed comrades need to be supported.

I vigorously oppose the cult of personality of Kim Il Sung in order to support the main principles of party life, the collective nature of the leadership, and intra-party democracy.

Personality and bureaucratism will enjoy support and sympathy inside our party and the international worker's movement. I submit my following suggestions for the consideration of the Central Committee:

Inasmuch as these questions of principle did not receive a proper resolution at the Central Committee Plenum that was held, I request that the Central Committee convey my written statement to the members and candidate members of the Central Committee.

In offering this suggestion, I am guided by the 3rd point of the 2nd section (subparagraphs b, c, and e) of our party statutes.

. 24

**CPSU CC Memo on the Situation in the KWP, 17 October 1956**

[Source: RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 410, List 298. Obtained for CWIHP by James F. Person and translated for CWIHP by Yuliya Zeynalova.]

To the Central Committee of the CPSU

In a meeting with Soviet Ambassador Cde. Ivanov, Cde. Kim Il Sung revealed that the decisions of the August and September plenums of the KWP CC on questions of intra-party conditions had been sent to all party organizations, and at the present moment are under review in the plenary sessions of provincial party committees, where these decisions are being widely discussed.

For the time being, Cde. Ivanov has not reported on the course of the discussion in the KWP on the abovementioned decisions and of the conditions within the party after the August and September plenary sessions of the KWP CC.

I consider it imperative to inquire with the Soviet Embassy in Pyongyang regarding this question.

Deputy Director of CPSU CC Department of Relations with International Communist Parties.

(I. Vinogradov)

“17” October 1956

No. 25-C-2261



. 25

**CPSU CC Directive to Soviet Ambassador Ivanov**

\*pq"fcvg"urgekLgf+

[Source: RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 410, List 299. Obtained for CWIHP by James F. Person and translated for CWIHP by Yuliya Zeynalova.]

PYEONGYANG

SOVIET AMBASSADOR

According to your report, Comrade Kim Il Sung has declared that the full text of the decision of the September plenary session of the KWP CC will be sent to party organs for thorough discussion. You further reported that the provincial

party committees are currently conducting plenary sessions, in which the results of the August and September plenary sessions of the KWP CC are being discussed. Until this time no [new] information regarding this question has been received from you.

Tgrqtv"wtigpvn{"jcu"vjg"hwmm"vgzv"qh"vjg"fgekukqpu"qh"vjg"September plenary session of the KWP CC been sent to the party organs, how are the discussions of these decisions progffkpi0" Jgpeghqtvj." rncug"ugpf" tgiwact" tgrqtvu" qp" vjku" question.



. 2

**Letter, Li Sangjo to the KWP CC, 12 October 1956**

[Source: Library of Congress, DK949.32 K6 Korea Cage. Obtained for CWIHP by James F. Person and translated for CWIHP by Choe Lyong.]

Dear Comrades who attend the Central Committee Plenum:

This year our government delegation visited the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries and received large amounts of international aid.

These huge amounts of aid are important since they will improve the material well-being of our people. In particular, the support of the Soviet Union demonstrates once again how much the Communist Party, government and people of the Soviet Union have a great interest in lives of the people of North Korea.

As a member of the government delegation, an ambassador delegated from the party, nation and people, and a candidate member of the Central Committee elected during the party congress, I feel the need to introduce to our comrades the aid from the Soviet Union.

I am presenting these issues in writing because it is possible that some delegates of our government will pay no attention to several important issues, nor even mention several fundamental issues in presentations to the party's Central Committee..

Vjku"{gct."kp"cf fkvkqp"vq"Łpcpekcñ"uw r rqtv."vjg"Eq o o wpkuv" Party and government of the Soviet Union gave us valuable advice about camaraderie and political and ideological problems.

Government delegates were supposed to forthrightly present the friendly advice from the Communist Party of the USSR to our party's Central Committee and publicly correct the problems. When we refer to these problems, we need to cite the work of our Soviet comrades after the 20th Party Congress.



she said that some Soviet goods are not very high quality.

Under these conditions, can we say that collective leadership is guaranteed in the party? Even if we hold meetings more than one million times, the number of meetings does not guarantee the quality of the collective leadership itself.

Cu"nqpi"cu"vjgtg"ku"c"uk i pkŁecpv Ò

Ou te a pi {u × c gp

Sung's anti-Japan partisan campaign, there were numerous anti-Japanese movements performed by Choe Yonggeon, Iko" Ejcgm." cpf" [k" Jppi i y cpi" y jqug" Mqtgcp" o kkvkcu" fought against Japan in China, as well as other militias in Korea. In spite of this fact, how can we ignore all of them and only consider Kim Il Sung's anti-Japanese partisan militia as the basis and tradition of our party and communists forces? Describing this history (just describing the history of Kim Il Sung and his campaign) does not coincide ykvj" vjg" vtwj0" J qy" o cp{ "uwtxkxpi" eq o tcfgu" }ctg" vjgtg." in our party who participated in the campaign of Kim Il Sung and the association of an independent nation? There ctg"xgt{ "hgy#

Before the independence of Korea, there were so many eq o wpkuv" Łi jvgtu" y j q" fkf" pqv" jcxg" cp{ " tgnckqpu" y kvj" comrade Kim Il Sung who had worked in Korea or other countries, China, the USSR, and Japan. Why are their struggles ignored?

Ignoring their struggles is ignoring and fabricating our j kuvqt{#

Therefore, we, communists, cannot consent to this.

We need to clarify the incorrect aspects of our history o c f g" w r" d{ " Dcm" I g w o e j g q n." J c p" U c p i f w." [k" Km{ g p i." [k" Cheongwon. This unjust behavior can destruct the unity of the party and lead to discontent among party members.

To be sure, the campaign of the Northeastern anti-Japanese partisan movement was glorious and deserves to be tgur gev f0" J q y g x g t." v j c v" e c o r c k i p" o w u v" d g" h c k t n{ " g x c n w c v g f" and must not be described as the accomplishment of one individual.

We should equally evaluate the role of Choe Yongjin, Gim Chaek and other comrades with that of comrade Kim Il Sung. In contrast, we need to indicate the defects of anti-Japanese partisan campaign.

We can point out that even though the campaign was glorious, it also had some defects in terms of the principles of a communist revolutionary campaign. Technically, in actual fact, the Northeastern anti-Japan partisan campaign y cu" Ł p k u j g f" k p" 3; 620" E n g c t n{." y g" e c p p q v" f g p{ " v j g" k p v g t p c i" and external conditions that resulted in the end of the campaign in actual fact. Related to that, the Japanese imperialists invaded China and prepared to attack the Soviet Union, Japan increased the military pressure on the Northeastern anti-Japan partisan campaign, and this was a serious threat to the existence of the campaign.

Then, did the anti-Japanese partisan group completely disappear? I do not think so. We need to look for the reasons that the group stopped its campaign in 1940. That is, it was because that the campaign was not able to run parallel with people's movements, so the group did not get enough support from people. Namely, the group was not able to organize a broad-based people's movement.

Then, after 1940, do you think that there were no underground campaigns against Japan in the Northeastern part qh" E j k p c A" V j g t g" y g t g# k" y c u" c n u q" c" o g o d g t" q h" v j g o" y j q"

experienced how much people required the leadership of revolutionary groups.

Who can deny that at that time, even in Korea, there were so many underground movements, and people who evaded being drafted by Japanese troops formed mountain troops even though they were relatively small and unsystematic groups?

The surviving revolutionaries and comrades who attend v j k u" e q p x g p v k p" e c p" e q p Ł t o" o { " e n c k o 0"

I urge some of our comrades to stop the stupid behavior of fabricating history. And I also propose that they should change the contents in the museum of the revolution, or just change the name of museum to the museum of Kim Il Sung's revolution.

According to the rumor that I heard, the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee has the documents about Northeastern anti-Japanese partisans. We need to review the documents and correct the distorted history. I assert that we should dismiss the comrades working in Central Committee with the wrong point of view and appoint comrades, real Marxists, who write the real history of our party. Do you think that this is not the result of the personality cult? If not, how can you explain this distorted history?

Third, the Soviet comrades talked about the faction of Ł c w g t g t u 0" Y j g t g" v j g t g" k u" v j g" e w n v" q h" r g t u q p c n k v{." v j g t g" k u" c n u q" v j g" h c e v k q p" q h" Ł c w g t u." I w u v" c" u j c f q y" q h" v j g" r g t u q p c n k v{ " cult. It is no coincidence that if power is concentrated in the hands of one individual, there will be some people who Ł c w g t" v j g" k p f k x f w c n" k p" q t f g t" v q" u w e e g g f" k p" n k h g 0" C u" e q o t c f g u" M j t w u j e j g x" u c k f." v j g" y q t f u" q h" Ł c w g t g t u" c t g" u y g g v." d w v" p q v" helpful to the work of communists. Who can disagree that these people succeed in their lives by harming good comrades with calculated malice? Is it wrong of me to say that v j g t g" k u" c" h c e v k q p" q h" Ł c w g t g t u" k p" q h" Ł e k c n f q o" y j g t g" v j g" e w n v" of personality exists?

I advise the party central committee to investigate these Ł c w g t u" c p f" c r r q k p v" e q o t c f g u" y j q" e c p" t g r t g u g p v" v j g" k p v g t e s t s of party and most of party members.

Fourth, the Soviet comrades talked about the propaganda of our party. Is it necessary to cover wrong things up and beautify the poor lives of our people? On this issue, we have numerous defects and theoretical problems.

I will not refer this issue so much but will hypothesize that this is closely related to the cult of personality and that there are serious problems caused by the cult of personality. It is unnecessary that our party achieved so many accomplishments thanks to the endeavors of party members and people. In order for today's meeting to be more fruitful, we need to point out our mistakes and try not to make those mistakes [again], rather than to emphasize our accomplishments in the past.

Even the mistakes that we made in the construction of the economy and culture over the past two or three years are serious. The procurement of grain is an example of

those mistakes. Do you know how serious of a problem we are confronted with as a result of procuring grains without cp{"uekpvkE" o gvjqfA

Since our party was founded, there had been no cases where our party was estranged from our people. As you know, about 300 people committed suicide because of coercion to get too much grain from people. In this case, can we say that the policy was right but carried out incorrectly? If the policy was reasonable, then why did it make 300 people commit suicide, and why should the government release more grain from the national storage than it procured? Except those not free from the cult of personality, do you think that people regard this as a policy for people?

If we insist that this is the reasonable policy, then this dgjcxkqt" owuv" dg" vjg" gzrtguukp" qh" cp" qhLekcfqo" vjcv" ignores all people.

If we consider what the leader decided was the true and obvious behavior before the Twentieth Party Congress, today we should criticize this problem by ourselves in front of the party's members. The all-party workers on the dcwngLgnf"mpqy"vjcv"kh"vjgtg"jcxg"dggp"pq"tgkphqteg o gpvu" qp"vjg"dcwngLgnf."pw o gtqwu" rgucpvu" yqwnf" jcxg" fkgf" qh" starvation.

Who does not know that someone led our society to confusion by using the unreasonable tax policy in order to eliminate private companies? We do not intend to evaluate this policy in order to determine if it is a left-wing or right-wing opportunistic policy. As our fraternal parties did, we should review our work by publicly introducing the facts that some people deify one person by ignoring the laws of socialism, [introduce] what the few schemers raised by the ewnv"qh" rgtuqpcnk{ "fkf."cpf"jlpvtqfweg\_ yjcv" fcvgtgu" rnvq- ted to do to harm good comrades. We have to identify how many people have been imprisoned and executed illegally in our work. Comrade Brezhnev said to comrade Kim Il Sung that if there are leaders in prison, you need to reconsider their crimes. Yet, we did not yet start this task.

Who believes that there is no one imprisoned secretly in our internal organizations exactly replicating Stalin's gulag system and that we have observed the socialist law?

In Germany, 20,000 imprisoned people were set free, and other fraternal parties [illegible]. And then why are we not able to reform our internal organizations?

Can we accept that so many people are imprisoned illegally in order to maintain one individual's dignity, that people had been executed under the pretext that their behavior was anti-party and anti-nation, and that their families have been punished because of them? Why can't these problems be discussed in the Central Committee plenum every term? We need to disagree to this abnormal idea and eagerly discuss it.

I propose that we delegate one person to begin working on this, giving this individual the authority which allows him to work without any interference.

I assert that we should do away with the old method that

allows only a few leaders to know of our work under the pretext that they are internal party secrets.

Right after the start of the Korean War, I visited Beijing under the instructions of comrade Kim Il Sung. I cannot forget the friendly advice of Mao Zedong for our party at that time. I consider it my duty to report his advice to you. Comrade Mao Zedong gave us valuable strategic and tac- vkecn" cfxkeg" yjgp" yg" ecttkgf" vjg" Lijvkpi" vq" vjg" Pcmfqp" river.

The following is the advice from Mao who heard about the progress of war at that time: Above all, he mentioned that the enemy who Korean people confront is the powerful American imperialists and explained three possible situ- cvkqu" tgi ctfkpi" vjg" rtqitguu" qh" yctw" Jg" cumgf." oku" vjgtg" any possibility that Korean leaders retreat?" and said, [illegible]

The second possibility is that we cannot push the enemy down to Busan, and with reinforcements, the enemy can orchestrate a counterattack against our forces. Third, Mao also said that it is also possible that we cannot advance any more, and the enemies can try to make a raid behind our lines and cut our supply routes. About this possibility, he indicated that we should organize our works premised on the worst-case scenario.

Jku" eqpetvg" qrkpkqp" ycu" vjcv" yg" ujqwnf" tgeqipk|g" that most of the leaders and combatants of our party could retreat strategically, that we should prepare the ideological work based on the whole party's efforts, that we should loosen our siege around the Nakdong river in order to let our enemy disperse and then crush them since the defense qh" c" enwvutgf" gpg o {"ku" cu" Lt o" cu" c" Lt on {"engpejgf" Luv." while to attack a dispersed enemy is as easy as attacking gcej" Lpigtl" Jku" cfxkeg" ycu" eqpLt o gf" d {"vjg" fgxgnr o gpv" of the war, especially by the enemy's landing in Incheon. I believe that you know this already since the Korean ambassador to China, comrade Li, already told you.

When I reported this valuable advice to Kim Il Sung, he said to me that we do not have any plan to retreat, that we do not need to do so, and that I should not let other people know about this advice.

Jqy" xcwcdng" ycu" vjg" cfxkegA" K" fqwdv" vjcv" kv" ycu" informed to the government committee, not to mention the Central Committee.

I publicly announced this fact because there are so many classes in our party, that we conceal so many of our defects, and we ignore the valuable advice from our fraternal allies.

I, as the individual who conveyed the friendly advice of the Soviet Union, propose to the committee that we should specify the individual faults of those who intend to conceal the facts, and press them because this way is neither the way of the party nor the way of Bolsheviks.

During plenums, I suggest we correct all of our defects, especially the non-Marxist way of the personality cult by engaging in self-criticism. We can correct our errors and defects only through sharp criticism and self-criticism.



26 October

I received the charge d'affaires of the PRC in the DPRK, Comrade Chao Kaelyan with the aim of informing him about a meeting with Comrade Kim Il Sung on matters related to the *wpqhLekcn"xkukv"qh"C0K0"Okmq{cp"cpf"Rgpi"Figjwck"vq"vjg"FRM0*. I told Chao Kaelyan that in spite of promises of the Korean leadership given to Comrades Mikoyan and Peng Dehuai to publish the decrees of the KWP CC August and September Plenums, the Korean comrades published a pithy summary of *vjg"MYR"EE"Ugrvgodgt"Rngpw o"qpn{"chvgt"Łxg"fc{u"hqmqykp i"* the September Plenum, on 28 September. Two important items *yggt"fkuewuugf"kp"vjku"uw o o ct{0"Vjg"Łtuv"kvgo"eqpegtpu"ugnh/* criticism of the KWP where it was pointed out that the decree on organizational issues of the KWP CC August Plenum was decided successfully, but the course of reaching this decision was absent. The second item contained a call to the party to observe Leninist norms and principles in party life.

*Mk o"Kn"Uwpi"gzrnckpgf"vjcv"vjg"Łtuv"kvgo"y cu"q o kvvgf"eqp-* consciously since the decree of the August Plenum was not published and in his opinion there is no need to report in the press that these decrees were rash. The KWP CC has never published its decrees on organizational issues and for this reason it is necessary to start publication with a good decree and not with a bad one. Regarding the second question related to the instructions of Leninist norms in party life, Comrade Kim Il Sung declared that the report about the CC September Plenum was published without his involvement while he was away on vacation and that he regrets that the second issue was omitted.

In response to my observation that all that was omitted can be resolved by publishing the decrees of the August and September Plenums, Kim Il Sung answered that the decrees of these plenums and his speech at the September Plenum will be published in a separate brochure and distributed for discussion in party organizations, adding that the section in which he quotes from Mikoyan and Peng Dehuai will be omitted from his speech, that on the council of the latter the decrees of the August Plenum will be reviewed. By this, according to Kim Il Sung, the aim of not revealing the very fact of the visit of Mikoyan and Peng Dehuai to Korea is achieved, not giving the party masses reason to believe that the decree of the September Plenum was passed under pressure from fraternal parties and that fraternal parties were interfering in our internal affairs.

I informed Chao Kaelyan of the claim of Kim Il Sung that he supposedly did not promise Comrades Mikoyan and Peng Dehuai to publish the decrees of the August and September Plenums of the KWP CC, but only promised to consider the matter, moreover Kim Il Sung said that while discussing the overall results of the September Central Committee Plenum among provincial party activists many party functionaries expressed doubts in the advisability of commuting the sentences of Choe Changik, Bak Changok and others.

Chao Kaelyan was interested in where Bak Changok and Choe Changik are now. I answered that Bak Changok works *cu"vjg"fgrwv{"fktgevqt"qh"cu"cy/okm"kp"vjg"vqyp"qh"J{gucplkp.* while Choe Changik, it seems, at the present moment is ill.

Chao Kaelyan in turn said that he had not held any special *oggvkpiu"ykvj"vjg"Mtqgcp"ngcftgjujkr"qp"vjgug"kuuwgu="jyqgx-* er, the Chinese embassy learned several facts related to these matters, the authenticity of which he is not convinced. Like, for example, in a meeting of the Pyeongyang city party activists dedicated to the discussion of the results of the September Plenum, the party Pyeongyang City Committee department of agitation and propaganda deputy director gave a speech, criticizing the breach of democratic centralism in defense of those comrades restored to the party and Central Committee, after which he was excluded from the party. Party Pyeongyang City Committee Chairman Yi Songwook incorrectly spoke out, declaring that comrades Mikoyan and Peng Dehuai came to *R{gppi{cpi"vq"Łpf"okuvcmgu"cpf"ujqtveqokpiu"kp"vjg"Yqtmgtuø* Party, but were convinced of the opposite. Chao said also that rumors reached the Chinese embassy that Gim Changman belligerently declared to the opposition that no matter how hard they tried, we have a MIA [Ministry of International Affairs] and an army.

I asked Chao what the Korean comrades undertook with regards to the request of comrade Peng Dehuai to release *htq o"eqpŁpgogpv"cpf"ugpf"vq"Ejkcpc"hqt"uwfkgu"Dcm"Knw"yjq"* was locked up in prison. Chao responded that so far, it seems nothing is known. Comrade Peng Dehuai, being with Kim Il Sung, communicated to him that if the Korean comrades do not require, but on the contrary, are troubled by the arrival of *Dcm"Knw"cpf"Dcp"Jqucp"kp"Mtqgc."vjgp"vjg"Ejkgpug"iqxgtp-* ment agrees to their return to China. To the question where *Dcp"Jqucp"ku."Ejqc"cpu ygtgf"vjcv"JEq o o cpcfcp"qh"vjg"Yct"* *Eqmgig\_"Dcp"Jqucp"cnuq."nkmg"Dcm"Knw"ku" c" Ejkgpug"Mtqgcp"* *Jg"jcu" o clqt"cee q o rnkuj o gpvu"kp"tgxqnvkqpcf{"cevkxkvkgu"kp"* North-eastern China, later he served in the Korean Peoples' Army and commanded one of the armies. Presently, he works as a simple laborer in a mine.

*Ejqc"kphtogf"og"cnuq"vjcv"rtgugpvn{"vjqug"yjq"Łgf"vq"* *Ejkcpc."[wp" Iqpijgw o."Ugq"Jyk."Iko"Ejcpikn"cpf"Nk"Rkni{w"* do not receive rations. The wife of Gim Changil turned to the Ministry of Culture and Propaganda but the minister did not receive her and directed her to the chief of the economic section, who performed her wedding, but he too refused to give rations.

I thanked Chao for the discussion.

In the evening I attended a reception organized by Kim Il



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The meeting was translated by the translator of the Chinese embassy, Wang Baomin.

CODCUUCFQT"QH"V JG"WUUT"KP"V JG"FRMT /N. IVANOV/

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. 2

Memorandum of Conversation with Bak Uiwan, 22 November 1956

[Source: RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 412, List 295. Obtained and translated for CWIHP by James F. Person.]

22 November

After a meeting at the home of [Vice Premier and Minister of Light Industry] Bak Uiwan where we examined the suggestion of Soviet specialists, we had a discussion at his request.

J g"uckf"vj cv"vjg"ukvwcvkqp"kp"vjg"MYR"ku"uvknn"pqv"eq o rnvgn{" defused, the atmosphere continues to be tense and under certain circumstances, there may emerge a situation similar to that prior to the KWP CC August Plenum.

J g"gz rncpgf"vj cv"chvgt"vjg"xkukv"qh"eq o tcfgu"Okmq{ cp"cpf" Peng Dehuai the Korean friends did not do what would have been the correct thing and in their work they poorly carry out the Leninist norms in party life. During one of the meetings of the Central Committee Standing Committee held after the departure of Comrades Mikoyan and Peng Dehuai, Kim Il Sung claimed that he agreed with their suggestions only because he did not desire to make the conditions of their visit fkhLewnv."cpf"kp"guugpeg."jg"eqwnf"pnc"ejtyg"mj cv"vjg"fgekukp"qh" the Central Committee August Plenum was rash and erroneous. Bak Uiwan stressed that only after he and Nam Il emphatically demonstrated the need to carry out the decision of the September Plenum of the KWP CC did Kim Il Sung agree to do it.



. 30

CPSU Central Committee Report on the Situation in the KWP and the DPRK, 9 January 1957

[Source: RGANI, Fond 5, Opis 28, Delo 486, Listi 1-17. Obtained for CWIHP by James F. Person and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

Stamp: [CPSU CC 00215 ?9 Jan 1957 [[handwritten: DPRK]] Subject to return to [[2-3 words typed over]] CPSU CC]

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V JG"UKVWCVKQP"KP"V JG"MYR"CPF"V JG"FRMT

]J c p f y t k w g p" cv" v j g" v q r" n g h v" q h" v j g" Ł t u v" r c i g<" ö V q" E f g l" R q p q o c t g x l" U w u n q x ö-" j c p f y t k w g p" cv" v j g" d q w q o" q h" v j g" Ł t u v" page: "To the archives. An informative document used in the work [1-2 words illegible]. Shcherbakov. 15.II.57"

1956 was a year of substantial change in the life of the Korean Workers' Party. In April 1956 the KWP Third Congress was held after an eight-year interval. Its decisions determined the future direction of the economic and political development of the country and also the DPRK's goals in the area of foreign policy. In view of this, the KWP Third Congress was an event of great political and practical importance for the party and the country.

At the same time there were serious shortcomings in preparing for and holding the Congress. The greatest of these shortcomings were that the most important enactments of the CPSU Twentieth Congress and the conclusions resulting from them t71(was )-1714Tm

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to develop intra-party democracy, criticism, and self-criticism.

During the visit to the DPRK by Cdes. Mikoyan and Peng Dehuai it was arranged with the KWP leadership that there would be a reexamination of the decisions of party committees with respect to other party members who were called to account in connection with the Choe Changik and Bak Changok mat-vgt0" J q y g x g t " v j g " M q t g c p " n g c f g t u j k r " k u " d g i k p p k p i " v j g u g " u v g r u " x g t { " u n q y n { 0 " C h v t " v j g " U g r v g o d g t " R n g p w o " u g p k q t " q h L e k n u " q h " v j g " K W P P y e o n g y a n g C i t y C o m m i t t e e a n d a l s o t h e S e c r e t a r i e s o f t h e S t a t e U n i v e r s i t y P a r t y C o m m i t t e e , t h e c o n s t r u c t i o n d e p a r t m e n t , a n d t h e C e n t r a l C o m m i t t e e o f t h e u n i t e d t r a d e u n i o n s , a n d t h e M i n i s t r y o f T r a d e w e r e r e m o v e d f r o m t h e p o s t s t h e y h a d o c c u p i e d a n d s e n t t o t h e p r o v i n c e s f r o m w h e r e t h e y , t o o , l e f t f o r C h i n a .

With respect to former Political Council member Bak Ilu, who is under arrest, an agreement about his release was reached between Cdes. Mikoyan and Peng Dehuai and Kim Il Sung. It was decided in October at the KWP CC Presidium to t g n g c u g " j k o " h t q o " e q p L p g o g p v " w p f g t " j q w u g " c t t g u v " c p f " u w i i g u v " v j c v " j g " i q " v q " E j k p c " v q " u w w f { " k h " j g " y k u j g u 0 " J q y g x g t . " v j k u " f g e k s i o n h a s n o t y e t b e e n c a r r i e d o u t , w h i c h i s e x p l a i n e d b y t h e g e n e r a l a g g r a v a t i o n o f t h e p o l i t i c a l s i t u a t i o n .

K p " v j g " q r k p k q p " q h " D c p " J c m u g . " O k p k u v g t " q h " K p v g t p c n " C h h c k t u . " c o n s i d e r i n g t h e c u r r e n t i n t e r n a t i o n a l s i t u a t i o n , i t i s i m p o s s i b l e t o e x c l u d e t h e p o s s i b i l i t y o f u n d e s i r a b l e s t a t e m e n t s b y s o m e u g p k q t " q h L e k n u " k p " v j g " e c r k v c n " c p f " k p " v j g " r t q x k p e g u " y j q " h c x q t " m o r e d e m o c r a t i c m e t h o d s o f l e a d i n g t h e P a r t y a n d c o u n t r y a l t h o u g h t h e A u g u s t C e n t r a l C o m m i t t e e P l e n u m a l s o c o n d e m n e d s u c h s t a t e m e n t s a s f a c t i o n a l a n d a n t i - p a r t y a n d t o o k u g x g t g " o g c u w t g u " y k v j " t g i c t f " v q " v j g u g " m k p f u " q h " q h L e k n u 0 " k p " v j g " L t u v " r n c e g " u w e j " u v c v g o g p v u " o k i j v " e q o g " h t q o " E j q g " E j c p i k m . " a C e n t r a l C o m m i t t e e m e m b e r w h o c o u n t s o n t h e s u p p o r t o f G e n e r a l - L i e u t e n a n t G i m U n ( D e p u t y M i n i s t e r o f N a t i o n a l F g h p u g + . " D c p " J q u c p " \* h q t o g t n { " c " I g p g t c n / N k g w v g p c p v " c p f " h t q p v " c o m m a n d i n g g e n e r a l a n d n o w w o r k i n g a s d e p u t y d i r e c t o r o f a m i n e ) , a n d G o B o n g i , C e n t r a l C o m m i t t e e m e m b e r , ( C h a i r m a n q h " v j g " M Y R " U q w v j " J y c p i j c g " R t q x k p e k c n " E q o o k v v g g + 0 " K p " D c p 0 " o p i n i o n , a t a c r i t i c a l m o m e n t o n e c a n e x p e c t a c o m p a r a b l e s t a t e m e n t f r o m G i m D u b o n g .

The above is evidence that Kim Il Sung, having repeatedly resorted in the past to the removal of his political opponents in order to strengthen his position and having sometimes over-indulged in repressive measures, is at the present time still slowly changing [his] methods of leadership, reluctantly correcting past mistakes, and switching halfheartedly to measures to convince and educate.

It ought to be noted along with this that the events of this year in both the international and domestic life of the DPRK, especially the above manifestations of acute dissatisfaction d { " c " e g t v c k p " p w o d g t " q h " q h L e k n u " y k v j " v j g " M Y R " n g c f g t u j k r " c p f "

also Kim Il Sung's summer trip to the countries of the people's f g o q e t c e { = " j k u " x k u k v " v q " v j g " U q x k g v " W p k q p " c p f " v j g " e q p x g t u c v k q p u " h e l d i n M o s c o w w i t h C P S U a n d S o v i e t g o v e r n m e n t l e a d e r s c d q w w " s w g u v k q p u " q h " r c t v { " r q n k e { = " v j g " c f x k e g " t g e g k x g f " k p " O q u e q y " a b o u t i m p r o v i n g t h e e c o n o m i c m a n a g e m e n t o f t h e c o u n t r y a n d i n c r e a s i n g a t t e n t i o n t o w a r d q u e s t i o n s o f t h e m a t e r i a l s u p - r q t v " q h " v j g " y q t m g t u = " c p f " y q t m " f q p g " k p " R { g q p i { c p i " d { " E f g u 0 " O k m q { c p " c p f " R g p i " F g j w c k . " e q w n f " p q v " j c x g " h c k n g f " v q " t g t g e v " c " e g t v c k p " r q u k v k x g " k p t w g p e g " q p " v j g " M Y R " n g c f g t u j k r 0 "

v jg" J w p i p c o " e j g o k e c n " h g t v k n k | g t " r n c p v 0

The party and government are doing a great deal of work to organize agriculture into cooperatives. At the end of October of this year 79% of all peasant farms had been formed into cooperatives. It can be assumed that the organization of agriculture will be completed by the end of next year.

The implementation of a number of economic measures in industry and agriculture is evidence that after the government delegation's visit to the USSR and the countries of the people's democracies the Central Committee leadership has begun to more realistically approach the question of the rates of growth and economic possibilities of industrialization and to display great concern about increasing the standard of living of the country's population.

The Party Central Committee has recently planned and implemented a number of measures in this area. Beginning in 1953 the number of workers in industry and construction were increased by 35%. New wage scales have been

products are also issued irregularly.

Market prices for foodstuffs are extraordinarily high. For example, rice 100, potatoes - 30-40, a liter of bean oil - 600 won, 10 eggs - 130-150 won, etc. It is also the same situation with prices for manufactured goods. Market and commercial prices for textiles, clothing, and shoes are very high and almost unaffordable for the majority of the country's population.

In the three postwar years the state built more than 3,500,000 [square] meters of housing. Nevertheless, about one-third of the urban population continues to live in half-dugouts and *legkogo tipa* houses made of stalks of kaoliang and clay. In the winter the urban population experiences an acute need for fuel and school buildings and some institutions are almost unheated.

The material situation of the peasants improved somewhat since taxes in kind for land, water, and MPS [machine rental] work, for two or three months a considerable number of the peasants of the northern regions nevertheless do not have enough food until the next harvest.

Thus the conclusion should be drawn that, in spite of some improvement in the material condition in the country, the standard of living of the population is extremely low. Many chronically underfed, do not have an opportunity to obtain

ousness in conditions where the country is divided. It should be kept in mind in this context that in South Korea, a mainly agricultural country, the food situation of the population is

Admission into the party was actually halted beginning in 1954, the same year that a campaign was conducted to verify rctv{" o g o dgtujkr="cp" gzejcpi g"qh" rctv{" fqewogpvu"ku" dgkpi" carried out in the current year.

After the Third Party Congress, the Central Committee carried out a number of measures to restructure ideological work. Secondary school and higher educational study programs are being reexamined, especially the socioeconomic disciplines, and work has begun to republish textbook and training aids in order to remove statements in them explaining the events of public life from the position of the personality cult.

Jcxkpi" eqpfg o pgf" fqi o cvku o " kp" kfgqn

Q

of skilled worker and foreman at enterprises. The awarding of bonuses to leading production workers also ought to be at the recommendation of worker's collectives.

All the demands and critical comments of party members which came to light during the discussion of the decision of the September Plenum are being summarized in the KWP CC and will be taken into consideration in practical work.

Criticism in the party from below is become somewhat more often in the practical work of party committees and management by decree and command has become less frequent. The ties between the masses and party and government bodies are being strengthened.

A number of materials have been published in the national party press about the results of the October Central Committee Plenum in which special attention was paid to the need for the method of persuasion as the main method of educating party members.

In some party organizations the cases of expulsions from the party in connection with the decision of the August Plenum were reexamined after the September CC Plenum. In particular, two deputy chairmen and the chief of the organization department of the Pyeongyang City Party Committee were recently again expelled from the party as not wanting "to be corrected."

We think that a shift is being noted in the party after the September KWP CC Plenum in the direction of observing Leninist principles of collective leadership and the norms of the question.

After the KWP Third Congress and the September CC Plenum the friends began to implement some measures to democratize the political life of the country.

Elections were held to local government bodies on 20 and 27 November 1956. An absolute majority of the population



