

December 8, 1976
**Report, Embassy of Hungary in North Korea to the
Hungarian Foreign Ministry**

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Summary:

The DPRK requests economic aid and technology from the Soviet Union. The Soviets repeatedly ignore or refuse the requests.

Original Language:

Hungarian

Contents:

Translation - English

In February 1976, at the time of the session of the Soviet-Korean Intergovernmental Economic, Technical, and Scientific Consultative Commission, [Deputy Premier] Kang Jin-tae, the head of the Korean delegation, handed a letter from Pak Seong-cheol to Comrade Kosygin. There were three concrete requests in the letter:

- 1) The 1973 agreement on the component supply of the set of rollers in the Kim Chaek industrial combine should be modified. [...]
- 2) Four additional blocs, each with an output of 100,000 kw, should be built at the thermal power plant in Bukchang.
- 3) The Soviet Union should construct a nuclear power plant in the DPRK.

The Soviet side did not give a concrete reply to the letter. At the session of the commission, the Soviet negotiating delegation took a stand on the extension of Bukchang and on the construction of the nuclear power plant by [declaring] that they could not discuss these two issues before the 1980s.

Returning from his tour in Africa, in October DPRK Minister of Foreign Trade Gae Eung-tae broke up his journey in Moscow. During official discussions, he declared that the Korean side was waiting for a concrete reply to Pak Seong-cheol's letter. On this occasion, the construction of a nuclear power plant was already missing from the list of urgent questions. Gae Eung-tae was given a promise that an official reply would be sent as soon as possible.

As directed by the center, the Soviet charge d'affaires ad interim sought an audience with Deputy Premier Kang Jin-tae, who received him on 12 November. The charge d'affaires gave him the verbal reply of Comrade Kosygin. (After careful consideration, they decided not to reply in writing.) Their reply was that the Soviet Union was still unable to deal with the extension of the Pukchong thermal power plant before 1980 and also insisted on keeping the original agreement with regard to the issue of supplying Kim Chaek with components. [...]

Kang Jin-tae was very dissatisfied with the reply.

On 13 November Gae Uung-tae asked for an appointment with the Soviet charge d'affaires. He said that the DPRK was in a difficult economic situation and needed immediate assistance from the socialist countries, including the Soviet Union. His concrete request was the following: 200,000 metric tons of oil and 150,000 metric tons of coking coal, as early as this year. (On the basis of the intergovernmental protocol that is in force, this year the Soviet Union supplies the DPRK with slightly more than 1 million metric tons of oil and 1.2 million metric tons of coking coal. By 1 November they completed over 70% of the shipments, and by the end of the year they will send the whole amount without interruptions.) The charge d'affaires acknowledged the request, and promised to forward it without delay. In the opinion of the Soviet diplomat who told me this information, there is very little likelihood of fulfilling the request. To his knowledge, in the case of Korea the Soviet Union will not satisfy unexpected demands in the future either. Exceptions can be made only in very justified cases. The Soviet side also takes every possible opportunity to make the Korean side understand that it is the COMECON countries that have priority when [the Soviets] decide on unexpected demands.

[...] Ferenc Szabo
ambassador