

March 29, 1962

**Note about a Conversation between Comrade Stark
and Comrade Torbenkov, Counselor at the USSR
Embassy in the DPRK**

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Summary:

Stark and Torbenkov discussed North Korean plans for reunification with South Korea. They considered the Korean Department of Foreign Affairs argument for a confederation with the South to be dangerous. The Korean press supported this plan.

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SED Central Committee
Department of International Relations
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GDR Embassy in DPRK
Pyongyang, 29 March 1962

Note

about a Conversation between Comrade Stark and Comrade Torbenkov,
Counselor at the USSR Embassy in the DPRK, on 28 March 1962

The conversation was held upon request of the Soviet comrades. Comrade Kirsten [female] joined the conversation as an interpreter. Comrade Torbenkov expressed the grave concern of the Soviet comrades about the current development in the DPRK. The USSR Ambassador to the DPRK, Comrade Puzanov, had a meeting with Comrade Kohousek, the Czechoslovak Ambassador to the DPRK. There Comrade Puzanov learned about some aspects of the conversation between Comrade Stark and Comrade Pak [Jeong-guk (Jung Guk)] from 26 March. As Comrade Torbenkov explained, Comrade Puzanov himself intended to discuss this matter with Comrade Stark, but he got a scheduling conflict due to his meeting with the [DPRK Foreign] Minister.

[So] Comrade Torbenkov now asked about opinions of our [East German] comrades on some issues of the [26 March] meeting. Comrade Stark extensively informed the Soviet comrades about his talk with Comrade Pak from the 1st Division of the DPRK Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Comrade Stark emphasized, the Korean comrades themselves had launched that discussion. Comrade Stark demonstrated how there are tendencies on display leading towards a serious and dangerous development. Those tendencies include a non-peaceful solution of the Korean question. The tendencies are in violation of basic principles like peaceful coexistence and the decisions made at the Moscow meetings. Furthermore, Comrade Stark indicated how it is possible to observe these tendencies in the Korean press. Remarks by Comrade Pak also included charges directed against the policy of our party [SED] concerning the issue of peaceful coexistence and the German question.

Comrade Torbenkov confirmed how Comrade Stark had expressed a correct opinion [in his discussion with Pak], which is probably shared by all the other ambassadors. The conversation [between Pak and Stark] holds quite some news to the Soviet comrades. It displays grave danger and serious tendencies. The Soviet comrades will further ask about this in their meetings with Korean comrades. Torbenkov himself stated, he is in full and complete agreement with Comrade Stark's opinions expressed towards Comrade Pak. The Soviet Union is monitoring this development with great attention, diligence, and seriousness.

Comrade Torbenkov indicated that materials and decisions of the 4th KWP Party Congress do not contain peaceful proposals concerning the South and the confederation issue. In talks with the Korean side, the Soviet comrades inquired why the 4th Party Congress concluded this way. The Korean comrades explained, there is a reactionary junta in power in South Korea which is arresting the people. This is why decisions and the appeal of the KWP Party Congress do not include according aspects. An appeal for a confederation would certainly have triggered positive reactions in South Korea, and then those people would have been arrested.

In addition, Comrade Torbenkov referred to a memorandum on the Korean question forwarded [by the DPRK] on 23 September 1961 to all embassies. This memorandum was directed towards the neutral states and advocated a confederation with the South. When talking to the Korean side, [the Soviet comrades] were assured that decisions from the 4th Party Congress will remain valid. Based on the memorandum and information provided by the Korean comrades, the Soviet comrades thought that official DPRK government policy towards the South continues to be based on a peaceful resolution - in spite of certain publications and information from other embassies.

Comrade Torbenkov then stressed how recently the Soviet comrades attentively monitored publications in the Korean press for references to the liberation of South Korea. What ought one make of that? Comrade Puzanov thinks these issues have to be studied very exactly and thoroughly. The Soviet comrades are of the opinion that [above mentioned] statements by Comrade Pak cannot just resemble his personal opinion. He must have outlined the official opinion. If the Soviet comrades will discover new aspects in talks with Korean comrades, they will inform our embassy about those.

In addition to Comrade Ambassador, also Comrade Golosov, attache at the Soviet embassy, will attend the upcoming session of the [DPRK] Supreme People's Assembly. Furthermore, Comrade Torbenkov informed Comrade Stark that Comrade Walter Ulbricht proposed at the meeting of the National Council of the National Front of Democratic Germany new steps for building a confederation and applying the principles of peaceful coexistence to the two German states. Comrade Torbenkov provided Comrade Stark, who was already informed about this, with a copy of the TASS [Soviet news agency] statement.

Comrade Stark asked about progress regarding the signing of a cultural working plan [between USSR and DPRK]. Comrade Torbenkov replied the working plan will be signed this year in Moscow. The extent of activities proposed by the USSR for 1962 is identical with last year's level, whereas the DPRK proposal aims at a reduction. The Soviet comrades do not agree here and will express their positions during negotiations due to start within the coming days.

Comrade Stark and the other comrades of our embassy can ask the Soviet comrades for conversations and consultations at any time. The Soviet comrades will always be ready for them. Again Comrade Torbenkov stated his gratitude for our conversation.

[signed]

Stark

Acting Ambassador

CC:

1x Central Committee (Foreign Policy Division)

1x Comrade Schwab

1x Comrade Stude

1x Information Division

1x Embassy