

June 8, 1961

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

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Summary:

Hungarian Ambassador Károly Práth reports on party membership and purges in the Korean Workers' Party based on a speech delivered by Kim Il Sung.

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Translation - English

According to information we received from an acquaintance of ours who is a party member working in a ministry, on 27 March Comrade Kim Il Sung delivered a lecture at the party center on some issues regarding proletarian dictatorship in Korea. His speech was recorded, and it is studied together with the Red Letter and collectively listened to by party and state cadres down to the middle level.

Kim Il Sung called attention to the country's complicated situation in cadre policy. Only about 0.5 percent (!) of the population has no relatives who live in the South, were collaborators of the Japanese or the Americans, or are elements of class-alien origin, etc. Nonetheless, the party leadership is firm and experienced [...]. He condemned dictatorial methods in party and mass work, citing Heo Gai as an example of someone who was unmasked during the liquidation of factions and who, as the secretary of the CC, had disciplined 500 thousand party members out of 700 thousand in the course of the [1950-1951] retreat (later he committed suicide). He emphasized that the primary task of the Communists was to provide well-being for the popular masses, and they had to do their work primarily through re-education. In spite of its complicated composition, the 99.5 percent of the population cannot be considered as enemies, for in this case the Ch'ollima movement, etc. would be out of the question. The enemy wishes that the Communists make mistakes, that there are dissensions in their ranks, and that the relationship between Communists and non-members becomes tense. For instance, during the short period of occupation the Americans did their best to establish as many [anti-Communist] organizations as possible so as to provoke the Communists into forming suspicions about as many people as possible and [creating] sharp tensions within the population [...] after their [the Americans'] retreat. One must see that, and we must not bring grist to the enemy's mill through our actions.

In what follows Com. Kim Il Sung pointed out that in the DPRK, the [sharp] edge of proletarian dictatorship was directed against the former collaborators of the Japanese and the Americans, the former landlords, capitalists, and kulaks, then he proceeded to analyze these categories.

Those who occupied various minor administrative posts, were members of the civil defense, etc., before liberation cannot be reckoned among the collaborators of the Japanese.

It must be taken into consideration that almost every Korean over 30 was compelled to work [under the Japanese] so as to make a living, and neither they nor their children can be qualified as "bad people" for that. It is the former highranking officials, provincial etc. functionaries, confidential clerks, factory owners, police leaders, etc. who are considered friends of the Japanese.

Nor is the dictatorship directed against all religious people, only against the priests who collaborated with the USA. Religion is essentially a superstition, and the same holds true of Christianity, but the latter, due to its foreign origin, always remained foreign to the Korean people.

Superstitions of Korean origin must be weeded out through education. Comrade Kim Il Sung cited as an example that his grandmother had also prayed for him while he was still fighting with the partisans. Kang Ryong-uk (Kim Il-Sung's uncle, now the chairman of the Democratic Party and the vice-chairman of the presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly) also was a good priest, he prayed a lot, but his children protest against being called "priest's children".

After liberation, the landlords opposed land reform, and the kulaks stood up against collectivization; therefore, proletarian dictatorship is directed against them as well. However, Kim Il Sung declared emphatically that proletarian dictatorship had never been directed against the middle strata of peasantry, then advised the leaders not to

underestimate the masses, no matter how complicated the cadre situation was. He dealt separately with the issue of those who had been collaborators under the temporary occupation. The great majority of them were forced to do some service for the occupying troops, for the most part they did it unintentionally. He remarked that they wished Koreans had not served in the South Korean puppet army either, but one had to reckon with these circumstances as well. Several former collaborators later held their own bravely in the [Korean] People's Army and in peacetime work. One must also take into consideration that the landlords, etc. often did not participate in person in the various actions but forced others to carry them out, and they themselves attempted to remain in the background. Similarly, one must draw a distinction between those who fled to the South and the members of their families who remained here.

The aforesaid could not mean the weakening of class struggle, Kim Il Sung said, the latter went on, but it was directed only against the objects of proletarian dictatorship.

With regard to intra-party re-education, he pointed out that one had to look after those who had made mistakes, they had to be judged, or rehabilitated later, on the basis of their work. Within the party, the struggle may take two shapes: purge or re-education. Comrade Kim Il Sung considers the latter as the more appropriate and progressive, even in those cases when some people kept their class background, etc., secret from the party but held their own in work. In conclusion, he emphasized that "if we were incapable of carrying out re-education work within the party, how could we re-educate and transform the masses?", and "if we do not complete this work in the North, we will not be able to obtain results in the South either".

According to our informant, the aforementioned issues are studied primarily in the party organs of the offices, in enterprise and factory party organizations they constitute a lesser problem. [...]

Károly Práth
Ambassador