

June 5, 1956

Memorandum of Conversation with Choe Chang-ik

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Summary:

Ambassador Ianov and Choe Chang-ik discuss the visit of the DPRK government delegation to Eastern Europe and the USSR and the policies of the Korean Worker's Party.

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DIARY

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

Pyeongyang [Pyongyang]

5 June

A meeting was held with Cde. Choe Chang-ik [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. He informed cde. Choe Chang-ik of the progress of the construction and turned to him with a request to increase the number of workers at the construction site by 200 men in order to completely finish the construction of all production facilities of the meat-packing plant by 15 August. Cde. Choe Chang-ik 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 Chang-ik 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 the Soviet Union would unquestionably bring great benefit to the Korean people.

In reply to cde. Choe Chang-ik's opinion about the presumed nature of the meetings between the DPRK delegation and the leadership of the Soviet Union, cde. Choe Chang-ik remarked evasively that he could only share his personal ideas about this issue. Cde. Choe Chang-ik 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 post-liberation period, and also experience in fighting external aggression in the period from 1950 to 1953, and that if the collective leadership develops further, the DPRK would achieve new successes in solving the problems which are common to all the countries of the people's democracies and the USSR.

Cde. Choe Chang-ik agreed with this comment but noted cautiously that, in spite of all the successes that had been achieved, it would be desirable to improve work in this direction inasmuch, as he put it, different opinions exist about whether collective leadership has been fully developed in Korea or not. The conversation ended with this. It was evident that cde. Choe Chang-ik has his own ideas on this issue and in view of this I proposed a new meeting to cde. Choe Chang-ik. We agreed to meet at my apartment on the evening of 8 June.