

August 20, 1957
Journal of Soviet Ambassador to the DPRK A.M.
Puzanov for 20 August 1957

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Summary:

Puzanov visits the construction site of a furniture factory built with USSR aid and comments on its production capacity and shortcomings. He also informs PRC Ambassador Qiao Xiaoguang of Soviet feedback on the DPRK's draft five-year plan and the internal political situation of the KWP leadership.

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SOVIET EMBASSY IN THE DPRK TOP SECRET

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The Journal of Soviet Ambassador to the DPRK A. M. PUZANOV
for the period 16 through 30 August 1957

Pyongyang

SECRET

[...]

20 August 1957

I visited the construction of a furniture factory in Pyongyang along with Pak Ui-wan and Counselor Makarov. The factory is being built with the aid of the Soviet Union for one billion rubles of free aid. All the equipment was made in the USSR. The construction of the factory is concluding. The tentative commissioning is set for the first days of September. The daily production of the factory will be: up to 500 chairs, 200 desks, up to 120 cabinets. The factory makes a good impression. It will be the first in the country to produce good factory-produced furniture, but it will only be possible to really use the production capacity of the factory after commissioning of the plywood production factory in [Kilju], which is also being built at the cost of one billion rubles of free aid. The commissioning of this factory is planned for the first half of 1958. The [following] should be classed among the shortcomings at the factory:

the low quality of construction work in a number of cases;

electric motors of the wrong (lesser) power than needed for production purposes were sent from the USSR and installed in the drying shop. Now they are being replaced with motors produced in the DPRK;

they were late with the training and instruction of personnel for work at benches. Only in recent days has a staff of workers and tool adjusters been selected whom our Soviet specialists are beginning to train. I directed Pak Ui-wan's and Makarov's attention to this. They agreed and gave instructions about careful work to train the workers and tool adjusters.

According to the approved design there should also be built: a warehouse to store hardwoods and an open area for the remaining wood, a fence, and some other minor facilities. It is planned to build them this year and in the first half of 1958.

I directed Pak Ui-wan's attention to the fact that it is hardly advisable to waste metal

on the manufacture of the framework of part of the factory fence. Pak Ui-wan replied that this was done with his permission and only for the front part.

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I held a luncheon at the dacha for Chinese Ambassador Qiao Xiaoguang. Together with the Ambassador were First Secretary Cheng Wenjin and Attaché Wang Baoming (interpreter); on our side were Counsellors V. I. Pelishenko, V. I. Makarov, and somewhat later, Trade Representative I. A. Gladkov.

At the request of the Chinese friends Makarov provided details about the comments and suggestions of Gosplan and the USSR State Committee for Economic Relations about the draft of the first DPRK five-year plan.

Qiao Xiaoguang expressed gratitude for the information and said that the Korean comrades, as they have reported to him, will now make amendments to the draft in accordance with the recommendations received in the USSR and the trip to the PRC at the end of August.

Qiao Xiaoguang then reported about the amounts of the deliveries of grain, coal, sulfur, cotton, and other goods from the PRC requested by the Korean friends.

In accordance with an MFA instruction I familiarized the Ambassador with materials known to me about the case of Choe Chang-ik, Pak Chang-ok, and others (only the Ambassador and his interpreter were present during the conversation on this issue). He did not express any assessment or his own opinion when this was being done.

Qiao Xiaoguang listened to my report with great attention, expressed gratitude very seriously, saying in the process that he had known nothing about this issue and he has no opportunity to find out if the Korean friends do not inform him. He added that he will immediately inform me of whatever he finds out.

Qiao Xiaoguang invited me and also Embassy officials and family members to visit the HQ of the Chinese People's Volunteers in the next few days. I accepted the invitation and we finally arranged to set the time of the visit for 23 August...

[...]

SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN THE DPRK

[signature] (A. PUZANOV)

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