

March 14, 1958
Journal of Soviet Ambassador to the DPRK A.M.
Puzanov for 12 March 1958

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Summary:

Park Gil-ryong informs Puzanov on the recent conference, in which Ri Sin-pal criticizes the work of the Ministry of Domestic and Foreign Trade, and consults Puzanov regarding his desires to return to the Soviet Union.

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I received Pak Gil-ryong at his request.

At the beginning of the conversation Pak Gil-ryong informed [me] about a conference of ambassadors which had begun at which Ri Dong-yong had spoken. He then said that the Ambassador in the Soviet Union, Ri Sin-pal, said in his speech that recently attention to the Embassy's work had increased, especially after the DPRK Party-government delegation participated in the celebration of the 40th anniversary of October in Moscow; more help was being given, and the atmosphere was more favorable for work. Ri Sin-pal sharply criticized the work of the Ministry of Domestic and Foreign Trade because part of the goods being delivered to the Soviet Union are of poor quality and poorly-packaged, which sometimes delays the fulfillment of trade agreements for a number of goods, etc.

Then Pak Gil-ryong addressed a personal question. The substance is that although he himself has received DPRK citizenship, but [his] wife and children remain Soviet citizens. I have worked here in Korea for 12 years, said Pak Gil-ryong, but I and [my] wife have no desire to stay and work in Korea. We want to return to the Soviet Union, especially as [our] son (who is in the 3rd grade) cannot study in a Korean school because he does not know Korean and is not studying. The wife cannot find work. Therefore we have come to the conclusion that first the wife needs to go to the Soviet Union and then some time later I will seek to be released. I came to consult with you about this issue.

I told Pak Gil-ryong that as far as I know he had done good and serious government work during [his] time in the DPRK. It seems to me that the KWP CC thinks well of you, and values your work (Pak Gil-ryong completely confirmed this). During this time local national cadres have appeared with certain assistance of the Soviet Koreans; however the need for cadre is very great and naturally Pak Gil-ryong can be used here in Korea to great benefit. Therefore it is hardly advisable and correct to seek to return to the Soviet Union.

Pak Gil-ryong replied to this that he and his wife have firmly decided to return to the Soviet Union and in the few days the wife will request an entry visa to the USSR.

I replied that in my opinion it will be incorrect for the wife to go first, and then for him to raise the question of his return to the USSR. If there is a pressing need to decide this issue then he, Pak Gil-ryong ought to raise this issue with the KWP CC leadership not now, but some time later. If the leadership agrees to his, Pak Gil-ryong's, return to the Soviet Union and consequently to a change from DPRK citizenship to Soviet citizenship then he ought to raise the issue with us after getting agreement.

Pak Gil-ryong thanked [me] for the advice and said that he will talk more with his wife about this issue but he asked at the same time that the head of the consular department, Zakhar'in, give his wife the same advice on this issue when she comes to him.