

June 4, 1958
Journal of Soviet Ambassador in the DPRK A. M.
Puzanov for 4 June 1958

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Summary:

Surina agrees with Puzanov that the KWP CC is strengthening the solidarity and unity of Party ranks on the basis of Marxism-Leninism but is concerned that senior North Korean officials do not study the Russian language.

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Torbenkov

Samsonov"]

JOURNAL

of Soviet Ambassador in the DPRK A. M. Puzanov during the period 31 May through 11 June 1958

[handwriting off the left margin with some names and initials]

Pyongyang

[...]

4 June 1958

I received Czechoslovak Ambassador Mikulas Surina in connection with his recall to his homeland. We exchanged opinions about the state of affairs in France and Yugoslavia and also the DPRK.

Surina noted for his part that the behavior of the Yugoslav leadership headed by Tito is outright treason to the cause of Communism, the cause of our socialist camp. The Yugoslav leaders obviously hoped that the Polish comrades would support them to some degree. However, in spite of quite a number of serious mistakes, Gomulka and the Politburo of the Polish United Workers Party have taken a correct position in assessing the draft program of the SKYu and the behavior of the Yugoslav leaders at the congress. This strengthens the unity and solidarity and of our Communist and workers Parties.

Surina then said that he was at Kim Chang-man's and expressed my genuine admiration to him about the great work done by the Party and government to lift the economy and standard of living of the population during the time that he, Surina, has been here in the DPRK (since the second half of 1956).

Surina completely agreed with my thoughts that the KWP CC is consistently and persistently pursuing a policy of strengthening the solidarity and unity of Party ranks on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, is pursuing a correct policy against the American imperialists, and is devoted to our common camp of socialism. Then Surina noted that he had personally formed the firm conviction that the DPRK leadership is especially devoted to the CPSU and the Soviet Union, and values and guards a friendship with the Soviet people. He also said that the Korean friends' relations with the Chinese comrades had recently noticeably improved, which was facilitated by Kim Il Sung's meeting with Mao Zedong in Moscow and the visit to the DPRK by the PRC government delegation headed by Zhou Enlai.

Surina also expressed some complaints - it is not completely clear why the Korean leadership does not take steps so that senior DPRK personnel, ministers, and other leaders study the Russian language for some certain time. Surina said, there are even cases which are difficult to explain, for example, some DPRK ambassadors who have returned (Heo Guk-bong from Poland, Pak So-chan [sic] from Czechoslovakia) had the opportunity but did not study Russian although it is completely apparent that knowledge of Russian provides an opportunity for direct contacts and the ability to read Pravda and other Soviet newspapers and magazines themselves.

Then Surina shared his impressions about ambassadors. He spoke highly of GDR Ambassador Richard Fischer as a very energetic, deeply Party official. He spoke well of Polish Ambassador Jerzy Siedlecki, who is a quite cultured, experienced person having correct views about international and political issues. Chinese Ambassador Qiao Xiaoguang enters into conversations guardedly and speaks exactly as his interlocutor speaks to him. It is true, added Surina, that the trouble might be that things have to pass through an interpreter. About Hungarian Ambassador Prat Karoly, he said that he took a clear and correct position at the difficult time of the counterrevolutionary uprising in Hungary and did not carry out quite a number of direct orders from his MFA, which was under the control of the traitors in the first days of the uprising. He spoke of the other ambassadors with restraint, referring to the fact that he had not had close relations with them.

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I visited Nam Il at his request. At the instructions of the Government Nam Il delivered a letter addressed to Chairman of the Council of Ministers Cde. N. S. Khrushchev about accelerating deliveries of equipment for the linen mill and the plant to produce polyvinyl chloride.

I told Nam Il that the text of the letter would be telegraphed to Moscow today.

Nam Il said that the issue of construction in Pyongyang had been examined at a KWP CC Presidium meeting on 3 June. The Presidium decided that Pyongyang was to be properly built up by the 15th anniversary of the liberation of Korea, 15 August 1960, and become a modern capital. To this end it was decided to make additional appropriations for construction besides the appropriations allocated for the current year and in accordance with the five-year plan for 1959-1960: 40,000 apartments, dormitories for students and the necessary educational buildings, an opera theater with a capacity of 2,000, a hotel for 800 guests, a Palace of Youth, a Pioneer Palace, a good building for receptions, etc. All the streets of Pyongyang and the exits from the city will be paved with asphalt and planted with trees. The civilian airfield will be moved to the location of the current military airfield, Mirim, where a terminal will be built. The grounds now occupied by the civilian airfield will be devoted to the construction of six- to eight-story buildings. But this will be in the next five-year plan.

Nam Il then said that reports and draft decisions of the KWP CC Plenum were examined at the Presidium meeting today.

In the name of the government Nam Il asked that three children of Pak Yong (a CC Secretariat official) be accepted for study in the Soviet Union. Nam Il said, this request is occasioned by the fact that the CC Presidium has decided to appoint Pak Yong as trade representative to the United Arab Republic and inasmuch as he is a Soviet Korean his children do not know Korean well and at the present time the school in Pyongyang with instruction in Russian is being reorganized.

I told Nam II that the request will be sent to Moscow.

[...]