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Journal of Soviet Ambassador in the DPRK A.M.
Puzanov for 26 March 1960

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Summary:

So Wan-seon briefs Puzanov on a cement plant in North Korea while Kwon Hong-ryeol offers a report on repair shops in Sariwon.

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[Handwritten notations:
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JOURNAL

of Soviet Ambassador in the DPRK A. M. Puzanov for the period
25 March through 11 April 1960

Pyongyang
[...]

26 March 1960

I visited the Madong Cement Plant and the Sariwon repair shops together with
Counsellor V. A. Zharkov.

So Wan-seon, director of the Novo-Madonsky cement plant, said the following in a
conversation:

last year the Novo-Madonsky cement plant produced 357,000 tons of cement against
the plan of 350,000 tons. Both plants, the old and the new, produced 534,096 tons of
cement in 1959. The 1960 plan provides for the production of 370,000 tons of cement
at the new plant, that is, 20,000 tons more in comparison with last year. The 1960
plan provides for the production of 620,000 tons at both plants.

In January 1960 the new plant produces 33,625 tons of cement and 34,246 tons in
February. The February monthly plan was exceeded by 8,585 tons of cement. The
new plant is under medium maintenance at the present time, from 18 to 29 March. A
replacement of the refractory brickwork is being done in both of the rotating furnaces
for the first time. Last year, as the director said, it was hard to get high-quality
refractory brick since there is no chrome magnesite in Korea. The plant experiences
some difficulties in producing high-quality cement. This year they achieved success at
the cement plant in Haeju in the production of substitutes for chrome magnesite for
the refractory. In the director's opinion, these are very good substitutes and with the
aid of the plant in Haeju in June or July the Madonsky plant will master the production
of such refractories for its own needs itself.

We asked how the Korean comrades assess the work of the Soviet specialists at the
plant, whether there were any complaints, comments, etc.

So Wan-seon replied that there are no comments, the Soviet specialists have given
much help both in the construction and in adjustment of the plant's equipment. To
date the plant has maintained ties with the Soviet specialists working here.

In reply to the question how the automatic equipment is working, the director replied
and chief engineer Jin Chan-hu confirmed that whereas in the past year only 40% of
the work was automated, this year it is planned to bring the mechanization and
automation at the plant up to 100%.

The plant mainly produces cement 170 grade and higher. Cement of the highest grades (up to 200) are exported to the USSR and PRC. Last year the plant produced 52,000 tons of high-grade cement for export. This year the plant's workers are striving to bring the grade of the cement produced to 250.

In reply to the question about the number of workers at the plant So Wan-seon replied that there were 3,200 workers at both plants. This year 200 workers will be sent from the plant for the needs of agriculture. Thus, the number of workers at the present time is 3,000. In spite of the reduction of the number of workers the plant provides substantial aid to the peasants of the district of Bongsan, where the plant is located. The plant workers have committed themselves to produce 1,000 horse-drawn plows, 20 grinders for the production of feed, and 1,5000 cultivators from the metals which the cooperatives collect and sent to the plant.

Speaking of the prime cost of the output being produced So Wan-seon noted that last year the actual prime cost of one ton of cement was 10 won, 47 chon. The planned prime cost this year is 10 won, 42 chon. However, the actual cost of one ton of cement for the two months of this year was nine won 72 chon. Thus, the plant's income from reducing the prime cost of production has been 45,576 won this year.

Then, So Wan-seon replying to a question, talked about housing construction for the plant's workers. There are 1,600 apartments in the workers' community at the present time, although 2,000 apartments are needed. A residence building for 500 bachelors and single workers is being built.

Continuing the conversation, one of the members of the plant's Party committee said that at the present time 102 senior plant workers are engaged in a political education network on Saturdays (from 1500 to 1800).

So Wan-seon noted the good reception of radio broadcasts from Moscow organized for the DPRK audience and stressed that in each apartment of the workers' community there is a loudspeaker which allows the broadcasts from Moscow relayed via Korean radio to be heard.

Replying to the question of how the national periodical press comes to the plant he said that the newspapers are delivered with a delay of about a day (although they come to the post office on time). In the future, said a Party committee member, they will try to achieve timely delivery of national newspapers and other periodical publications to the plant. "Rodong Sinmun" (250 copies), "Minju Choson" (only for district officials and the plant management) are among the newspapers that come to the plant.

In the course of the conversation we were joined by Kim Cheon-ho, chairman of the district KWP Party committee, who had come to the plant. He talked briefly about the agricultural work at the present time. Preparing for the new agricultural year the peasants have carried an average of 30-35 tons of fertilizer per jeongbo to the fields, that is, 5-10 tons more than last year. This year another 1,800 jeongbo of wasteland, abandoned land, etc. have been reclaimed and newly irrigated. The district planned to sell the state 38,000 tons of grain this year.

I expressed gratitude for the information about the operation of the plant and the workers' lives. I told the Party and administrative leadership of the plant and the district (a total of 15-20 people were present) about Cde. N. S. Khrushchev's visit to France, about the latest measures of the Soviet government about the issues of disarmament and the prohibition on the testing of nuclear weapons, and the position of the USSR and the Western powers on these issues.

Embassy Counsellor V. A. Zharkov took part in the conversation. The conversation was interpreted and recorded by Embassy interpreter B. M. Morozov.

The Sariwon repair shops

In the conversation which took place director Kwon Hong-ryeol and Chairman of the KWP Party Committee Kim Gi-man said that in the current year had concentrated efforts on the repair of just tractor engines and the production of spare parts, whereas last year repair of the entire tractor was done and also the production of several types of agricultural machines (for example, 133 tractor drills were made)

At the plant, which has 364 workers and 150 students, the repair of 400 tractor engines and the production of 103 kinds of spare parts are planned.

Last year the value of the repair work and all the output produces was 11,710,000 won. This year, in connection with the reduction of the amount of the repair work, this amount is being reduced to 9,710,000 won.

The average cost of repair of one tractor engine is 850 won. When this is done sometimes the agricultural machine stations hand over for repair badly worn-out engines and the cost of repair rises to 900 won and more.

In the course of the conversation while touring the workshops I told the leadership about the experience in the Soviet Union when turn-in stocks of engines are created in such workshops in order that there be no tractor idle time in the fields.

The plant director and other Korean comrades noted the productive work of the Soviet specialists in the organization of the production and repair work, and in equipping the high-frequency electrical installation to harden parts. The plan is now corresponding with Soviet specialists about the most diverse production issues.

In the course of the conversation Kwon Hong-ryeol stressed that the plant needs several measuring devices and instruments: micrometers (75-mm and 100-mm), Vernier calipers, and displays.

We inspected the room to study the revolutionary activity of the KWP. Essentially materials about the life and activity of Kim Il Sung are collected in it, beginning with his youth. Inasmuch as all the materials were typographically-printed in the form of posters it can be assumed that such rooms also have the same materials in other plants.

I expressed gratitude for the conversation in which Embassy Counsellor V. A. Zharkov took part. The conversation was interpreted and recorded by Embassy interpreter B. M. Morozov.

[...]

USSR AMBASSADOR IN THE DPRK

[signature]

(A. PUZANOVO)

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Drafted by Puzanov

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