

June 21, 1955

**Record of Conversation with Deputy DPRK Minister
of Culture and Propaganda Jeong Ryul**

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Summary:

Jeong Ryul provided a brief on the concluding meeting of the KWP CC Presidium, in which steps to further develop agriculture were discussed.

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Record of conversation
with Deputy DPRK Minister of Culture and Propaganda
JeongRyul

21 June 1955

Today I met Jeong Ryul, who visited the Embassy at his own initiative. Jeong Ryul said that he had come to the Embassy to provide information about the concluding meeting of the KWP CC Presidium held on 20 June, and tell how this meeting had gone.

Kim Il read out a draft decision about steps to further develop and improve agriculture. Then Kim Il Sung asked each chairman of provincial Party committees whether he had any comments about the draft decision. All expressed complete agreement with the draft. Then the draft decision was adopted unanimously. Kim Il Sung made a closing speech at the end of the meeting.

The decision of the expanded meeting of the KWP CC Presidium says that the Party should take every step to fundamentally improve agriculture.

In the words of Jeong Ryul, the decision comes down to the following:

I. Identify additional capital investments this year of 2.730 million won to create a material base for the development of agriculture, chiefly for the construction of irrigation structures and to produce agricultural machinery, implements, and chemical fertilizer; reexamine the economic plan for the second half of this year for this purpose and hold the Ministry of the Chemical Industry responsible for stepping up the rate of production of chemical fertilizer with the expectation of producing 120,000 tons of chemical fertilizer this year and 130,000 tons next year; hold the Ministry of Heavy Industry responsible for increasing the production of agricultural machinery and implements; and involve the 1st Directorate of the Cabinet of Ministers in the production of agricultural tools;

[Handwritten at the bottom of the first page: "to Cde. V. I. Petrukhov"]

Hold Gosplan is responsible for quickly drawing up a request for the required quantity of agricultural machinery and implements which cannot be produced in the country for them to be purchased in the countries of people's democracy.

II. To raise the activity level and material interest of agricultural cooperatives individual farm owners allow them to sell their surpluses of any agricultural products on the market.

III. Concerning the agricultural tax in kind

Reduce the agricultural tax in kind in mountainous areas from 23% to 15%, and on irrigated crops from 27% to 25%. Prohibit the reclamation of virgin land in mountainous areas. Encourage the reclamation of virgin land in plains, releasing the peasants from the tax in kind for three years on the harvest from virgin lands that have been worked.

Complete releasing peasants from the payment of tax in kind from melons and other crops cultivated in plots adjacent to farmhouses.

Hold the Central Bank responsible for releasing peasants from partial repayment of the loans given during and after the war in conditions when the peasants were not able to repay these loans.

Lower the prices for chemical fertilizers.

To improve animal husbandry, make a practice of distributing brood mares to agricultural cooperatives and individual farm owners.

Release peasant youth from being drafted into the army this year.

Limit the quantitative growth of cooperatives throughout the entire republic. Direct main attention at the organizational and economic strengthening of agricultural cooperatives.

It is noted in the decision that along with the development of industry, the development of agriculture is to be considered the first priority operational task of the Party and the entire people.

Kim Il Sung spoke after the adoption of the decision. He said that no planned grain purchase would be conducted this year. The procurement of crops will be conducted freely in markets through consumer cooperatives. Then Kim Il Sung said the economic plan was drawn up unrealistically: it was planned to produce 3,200,000 tons of grain this year. In recent days it has been calculated that the harvest this year will be no more than 2,300,000 tons. If this is managed to be achieved then the country will be supplied with the least amount of agricultural products since 2,800,000 tons of grain were produced in the best harvest year since liberation, 1948, of which 100,000 tons were exported.

Kim Il Sung stressed that all officials of Party organizations and government bodies ought to take care that there is no discontent among the peasants about questions of imposing an agricultural tax in kind.

Kim Il Sung called upon all the participants of the meeting to tirelessly pursue a policy of economizing food. Prohibit the production of moonshine and limit the number of restaurants and cafeterias.

The pool of manual laborers and office workers (860,000) is not to be increased this or next year. Seek an increase of the harvest yield by employing advanced agricultural techniques, plowing virgin lands, increasing the production of chemical fertilizer, machinery, and implements, and the construction and improvement of irrigation systems.

Involve military units in agricultural work. Pay special attention to improving the work of cattle-hiring [skotno-prokatnye] stations and augment them with personnel.

Increase the production of cement for the construction of irrigation systems.

Involve rural youth who finish incomplete and secondary school in agricultural production. This year 70,000 people will finish such schools, of which 30,000 will enter higher educational institutions, technical schools, and various schools, but 40,000 will need to engage in agriculture. Train 900 beginning agricultural specialists in six- or seven-month agricultural courses this year. No less than 1,000 officials of ministry and institutional headquarters staffs are to be sent to work in the countryside. Convene a CC plenum in September or October at which the progress of the implementation of this decision is to be discussed.

I asked Jeong Ryul how the participants of the expanded KWP CC Presidium meeting assess the decision adopted by the Presidium and the speech of Kim Il Sung.

Jeong Ryul replied that the participants of the meeting, especially local officials, remained very satisfied and in conversations among themselves expressed the opinion that if the Presidium's decision and Kim Il Sung's speech were publicized the peasants would shout "hurrah" from joy.

I thanked Jeong Ryul for the information.

□□□□□[signature]

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