

January 8, 1965

Report, Embassy of Hungary in North Korea to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry

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Summary:

The Hungarian Embassy to North Korea reports on information obtained through Soviet ambassador to North Korea, Vasily Moskovsky. The report summarizes negotiations between Alexei Kosygin, Soviet Council of Ministers Chairman, and a North Korean delegation to Moscow. The visit included discussions on the Soviet Union's military support to North Korea, particularly North Korea's distrust of Soviet support. The report notes, topics of discussion included the Cuban Missile Crisis, Gulf of Tonkin incident, and national liberation struggle in Asia and Africa.

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In mid-December [Soviet Ambassador] Comrade Moskovsky returned from Moscow, and [...] told me the following about the negotiations which had taken place between Comrade Kosygin, the chairman of the Soviet Union's Council of Ministers, and the Korean party and government delegation that went to Moscow on the occasion of the November celebrations:

In the presence of Comrade Kosygin, Kim Il, the head of the delegation, raised the issue of certain injuries (pretensions), which were the following:

1) The Korean leaders were distrustful of the CPSU and the Soviet government, they could not count on that the Soviet government would keep the obligations related to the defense of Korea it assumed in the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, Kim Il said, and therefore they were compelled to keep an army of 700,000 and a police force of 200,000. These huge armed forces constituted enormous expenses for the national economy of the DPRK, and this is why neither industry nor agriculture had made headway in the last two years, they [the KWP leaders] could not invest substantial sums in these [sectors].

Comrade Kosygin asked him what caused this distrust. In the view of Kim Il, the Soviet Union had betrayed Cuba at the time of the Caribbean crisis, and later it also betrayed the Vietnamese. For instance, it happened as late as 8 days after the Tonkin [Gulf] provocation that the Soviet government made a mild pro-DRV statement.

Thereupon the chairman of the Council of Ministers replied the following: It was incomprehensible to him how could the Korean leaders be so uninformed, they had not the slightest idea of how costly it had been for the Soviet Union to protect the freedom and independence of Cuba. At the time of the Caribbean crisis, Comrade Kosygin said, the whole Soviet merchant fleet and several warships had been busy with shipments to Cuba. They shipped Cuba everything it needed. Before the crisis, Cuba had faced American imperialism, which was armed to the teeth, almost unarmed. Apart from the known missiles, the Soviet Union provided Cuba with all the modern arms, including the most up-to-date aircraft, tactical missiles, and other military equipment, that now enabled it to resist the pressure of American imperialism efficiently. He set forth in detail what sort of and how many aircraft, tanks, etc. had been shipped to Cuba as aid. Comrade Kosygin then added that at the time of the Caribbean crisis, it was neither China nor Korea but the Soviet Union that had stood on the brink of war, face to face with the United States.

As for the Tonkin provocation, Comrade Kosygin went on, for one thing, the Soviet government had assumed the Chinese and Korean military forces to be strong enough to protect the Democratic Republic of Vietnam against the American imperialist attacks, for these [countries] were closer to Vietnam than the Soviet Union. Secondly, the Korean leaders once again revealed their lack of information, for instance, they did not know that right after the Tonkin provocation, at the request of the government of the DRV the leaders of the Soviet state had paid particular attention to the situation in Vietnam, and decided that efficient modern arms should be urgently given to the Vietnamese comrades as aid. As a consequence of this decision, various military equipment of an adequate quantity was launched for Vietnam. The Chinese government gave its consent to their transport via China by air and by rail. To his knowledge, Comrade Kosygin said, the airborne units had already arrived in Vietnam, while the trains transporting other military equipment were on their way. Then he enumerated everything that had been sent to Vietnam in recent weeks. After that, Comrade Kosygin said that he was sorry to see that the Korean comrades, due to their lack of information, raised the issue of distrust with regard to the Soviet Union for no reason.

In the view of Kim Il, the Soviet Union did not support the national liberation struggle of the Asian and African peoples. Thereupon Comrade Kosygin asked him whether the freedom fighters of Africa were not equipped with Soviet arms, whether it was not the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and other socialist countries that shipped these arms to the Africans.

2) Kim Il also found injurious that in 1956 the leaders of the CPSU had organized a conspiracy against the supreme leaders of the Korean Workers' Party, [Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet] Mikoyan and [Marshal of the People's Liberation Army] Peng Dehuai travelled to Pyongyang for this purpose, and it was Ivanov, the Soviet ambassador of that time, who organized this action against them [the KWP

leaders]. [...]

Comrade Kosygin repudiated this charge, [declaring that] it was groundless and did not correspond to the facts, then asked Kim Il whether the Soviet Union had not demonstrated its friendship toward Korea after 1956 as well, when it gave utmost assistance to Korea [...]. This support substantially contributed to the postwar reconstruction of the national economy of the DPRK and to the creation of several new branches of industry.

3) Finally, Kim Il found injurious that the leaders of the CPSU as well as the Soviet government had branded the leaders of the KWP nationalists because of that the latter propagated the [idea of] regeneration through one's own efforts [Kor. Jaryeok Gaengsaeng], which was, in his view, a right standpoint, this way they took full advantage of the local conditions and developed their national economy.

Officially the Soviet government never accused the leaders of the KWP of nationalism, the chairman of the Council of Ministers said, otherwise they [the KWP leaders] knew him (Kosygin), he had been to Korea two times, could one call him an enemy of Korea? True, it did occur that Pravda had published such stuff, but now he was negotiating with the Korean delegation as the head of the Soviet government. In his view, if one took the present technological standard into consideration, [the conception of] regeneration through one's own efforts and economic isolationism actually hindered the development of a country. Such an economic policy indeed revealed a nationalist tendency. If the leaders of the KWP pursued a more reasonable economic policy, they would have half as many difficulties as they had now.

The policy of economic isolationism, which was in practice aimed at isolation from the Soviet Union, other socialist countries and the COMECON, by no means accelerated the development of the DPRK's national economy. We made no secret of that there were still some problems in the COMECON, which had to be solved, and we would solve them. But one also had to take into consideration that this organization was in essence a new economic association, and despite that, practice had already proven - for the Soviet Union too - the usefulness of the economic cooperation of the socialist countries and of the common efforts they made in order to take a better advantage of the local conditions. The Soviet people were convinced of that the earlier the DPRK got involved in economic cooperation with the Soviet Union and the socialist countries, the faster the pace of the country's development and that of the construction of socialism in Korea would become.

In the presence of Comrade Kosygin, Kim Chang-man [Kim Chang Man], a member of the Korean delegation, stated that the conversation they had had with him was a load off the minds of the Korean leaders.

Hereby I also would like to give an account of the visit Comrade Moskovsky paid to Kim Il Sung, on which occasion he passed on the New Year greetings of the leaders of the Soviet party and government.

During the conversation the Soviet ambassador asked Kim Il Sung what he thought of the situation that had come into existence in the international Communist movement and of the [probable] development of relations between the Soviet Union and Korea in 1965 [...].

Thereupon Kim Il Sung replied with a question: The development of the relationship between the CPSU and the Japanese Communist Party, which was not entirely friendly and there were indications that it might become even worse, was incomprehensible to him. He wanted to get a reply from the leaders of the CPSU to [the following question:] what was the cause of that, how could one explain these disagreements? Comrade Moskovsky promised that he would forward that question to his party, then repeatedly insisted on getting a reply to his own question. Kim Il Sung said the following:

One could restore the unity of the international Communist movement only by settling the matters in dispute with the Chinese party. After that, it would be easy to restore the good relationship between the Korean Workers' Party and the CPSU, for the differences of opinion between them were insignificant. Otherwise, they set forth the KWP's standpoint in detail in the article published on the occasion of the 4th anniversary of the 1960 Moscow Declaration [...].

Khrushchev had had big-power ambitions, he, as the leader of a big party, wanted

to force his will upon the smaller parties, Kim Il Sung said. They [the KWP leaders] pursued an independent policy, one could not make them go out of their way by putting pressure on them. Although Korea was a small power, they knew it better than others which political line they should adopt and how the Korean people should be led on the path of revolution.

Kim Il Sung repeatedly emphasized that the matters in dispute should be settled first with the leaders of the Chinese party, [then] it would be easy to settle them with them, i.e., with the KWP. Comrade Moskovsky asked him whether he thought that the CPSU should make concessions of principle to the Chinese party. He did not say that, Kim Il Sung replied, but in his view these matters should be settled, first of all, with China.

[...]

József

Kovács

(ambassador)

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