

June 22, 1954

**Report on the Performance of the Embassy during
the First Term of 1954 (Excerpt from the Embassy
Report no. 2296/1954)**

Citation:

"Report on the Performance of the Embassy during the First Term of 1954 (Excerpt from the Embassy Report no. 2296/1954)", June 22, 1954, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Archive of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (AMAE), Year: 1954; Issues 20 221 10 4 33 92 120 613 614; Country: the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Obtained and translated for NKIDP by Eliza Gheorghe.

<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/116502>

Summary:

A report on the Romanian Embassy's exchange with officials from the DPRK, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and the Soviet Union.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from ROK Ministry of Unification

Original Language:

Romanian

Contents:

Translation - English

With the arrival of the new comrades, our activity [experienced a boost], a fact which was reflected in our work plan.

Generally, the tasks stipulated in the [work] plan have been completed. In some fields, however, because [our comrades] did not take into account our real capabilities, for instance [our capabilities] for cultural work, as well as for administrative tasks, [our] tasks have not been fully completed.

In the area of liaison, we continued to keep in touch both with the diplomatic corps, and with the organizations and institutions in the DPRK.

On January 18, thanks to [the efforts] of the [DPRK] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, comrade Stere and comrade Alexeenco visited the Deputy Minister of Constructions, to discuss the possibilities of building our Embassy in Pyongyang. On the same day, we visited the president of the People's Council in Pyongyang, together with whom we went to the area reserved for Embassies and he allotted our terrain, according to our proposal.

On January 27, comrade Alexeenco paid a visit to the Protocol Directorate in the DPRK Ministry of Foreign Affairs to request the dates of birth of comrade Nam Il, the DPRK Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Choe Yong-geon, the Vice-President of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of National Defense, which were requested by our Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On this occasion, we were asked, once again, to provide the list with the members of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers' Party and [that with the members of the] People's Republic of Romania government. We would like to add that a similar list, which we received from the Korean authorities, was sent to you with the last courier; that list was requested by our Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On February 21, comrade Alexeenco paid a visit to the Third Directorate - Liaison within the DPRK Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and, asked that in the future, our train freight carriages with aid for the Korean people, be sent by Romania to the DPRK Committee for the assistance of war victims, with the specification 'for the Romanian medical team in Nampo,' because until now they faced difficulties at the border and they had to pay heavy taxes for transportation, etc. A few days after [this visit] we received a positive answer, which we communicated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bucharest.

We also made a few visits to Office for Foreigner Assistance, where we discussed certain aspects about the Korean staff at our Embassy.

Comrade Ambassador visited Comrade Susdalev, the Ambassador of the USSR, twice. Both times, the visits [focused] on the issues of moving to Pyongyang and on the future buildings of the [two] embassies. After we told him we did not have instructions in this respect, Comrade Susdalev told us that they would receive 13 barracks, which they would install on the plot of land they currently occupy and that they did not plan on moving to Pyongyang.

At the end of January, comrade Stere paid another visit to the Hungarian Embassy to learn about a few technical details about the building of their Embassy and about the performance of Hungarian specialists in the DPRK.

In January [comrade Stere] paid a visit to the Polish chargé d'affaires, Czerwitzki, to see the barracks [which they received] for the future building of the Polish Embassy and to learn about certain technical details related to putting those barracks

together.

Before having departed for Romania, comrade Ambassador paid visits to all the diplomatic representatives in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as to the Deputy Foreign Minister, comrade Ri Dong-yeong [sic]. The purpose of the visit was to learn about certain matters regarding Romanian [construction] specialists [in the DPRK] and about the dispatch of [building] materials from the people's democracies to the DPRK, as well as the future construction of embassy buildings in Pyongyang.

On March 26, the wife of the Hungarian ad interim chargé d'affaires, who had recently arrived in the DPRK, paid a visit to the wife of comrade Ambassador, [a visit] which was attended by her husband, comrade Pastor, and on behalf of our Embassy, by comrade Alexeenco. On March 30, the wife of comrade Ambassador returned this visit. On this occasion, during the conversation, comrade Pastor said that among other things, the Hungarian [building] specialists who would be building a few plants in the DPRK as part of Hungary's assistance to the DPRK, would start arriving in June 1954, and that with them another specialist who would work within the Embassy, coordinating the work of Hungarian specialist in Korea, would also arrive. Also he said they put themselves in an unpleasant situation, because they invited a delegation of the Korean Workers' Party to the Congress of the Hungarian Workers' Party, which was ultimately postponed.

At the end of March, comrade Franta Iosif, the new chargé d'affaires of Czechoslovakia, together with the Third Secretary of the Czechoslovak Embassy, paid us a visit. During our conversations, he asked us when we would be moving to Pyongyang, and he asked about the performance of our medical team. He said that their barracks for the Embassy building were on their way and that one of their specialists who, although he had been here for almost a month, did not start the preparatory work because he lacked the necessary work force and building materials, such as cement, bricks etc., which had been promised by the Korean authorities. We asked them about the reply they received from the Korean government about the signing of a cultural agreement between Czechoslovakia and the DPRK. Comrade Franta said they had not received an answer to this matter yet.

On March 25, comrade Czerwitzki, the Polish chargé d'affaires paid us an unofficial visit; on that occasion we discussed several matters related to the reconstruction of the DPRK. He gave us a series of facts about the three-year railways reconstruction plan in North Korea, fact which he claimed he had obtained from Polish specialists who reside here.

This term, we organized two dinners. The first took place on January 24 and was given in the honor of comrade Susdalev, the Ambassador of the USSR. He was accompanied by the First Secretary of the Embassy, comrade Biakov. The second dinner, given at the beginning of February, was given [in honor] of comrade Nam Il, the Minister of Foreign Affairs [of the DPRK]. Comrades Ri Dong-yeong [sic], the Deputy Foreign Minister, and Kim Ion Din [sic], Deputy Foreign Minister, together with their wives, also attended. The reason for inviting [them] was that both comrade Nam Il and Deputy Minister Kim Ion Din [sic] were recently appointed [to these positions], but also because we only see them very rarely; we organized this dinner to know each other better and to draw closer to each other.

All dinners took place in a friendly atmosphere. Discussions held on these occasions did not have any particular theme. We talked to comrade Susdalev about the possibility to screen a Romanian movie in the hall of the Soviet Embassy club. We also talked about the future embassy buildings in Pyongyang.

To obtain more information, we made two trips: the first trip to Panmunjeom as

guests of the Czechoslovak Embassy to the Neutral Repatriation Commission, about which we already sent you a brief report, and a second trip to Wonsan, which is a port to the Sea of Japan, together with the Chargé d'affaires of the Hungarian Embassy.

Moreover, we attended, as guests, the debates of the Supreme People's Assembly of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which took place in January, and the country-level gathering of the Top-Ranking Workers in Agriculture which took place in Pyongyang in February.

To keep the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed about the situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we are aiming to write a report which reflects the class struggle in its current phase. We have not yet written this report, because the documents and materials which we have studied so far, and the observations we have made during fieldtrips, do not provide us with sufficient information.

To obtain more information, we put together a binder, according to the orders of the Ministry. We have difficulty filling it in, because the official data which the North Koreans have published so far reflect the general situation of various fields only to a very small extent.

In our cultural work, as we have already pointed out, we have completed our tasks without taking into account our concrete possibilities. In this respect, we had planned to organize a film gala, an exhibit showcasing folk art objects, etc. We could not do all of this because the films did not arrive on time, also the exhibit could not be arranged because we lacked the necessary space, which was promised to us by the Korean comrades. In general, however, our cultural liaison tasks have been completed. We put together a series of panels with photographs we received from Romania, which we displayed in various institutions, factories and construction sites in Pyongyang, Nampo, Wonsan, etc. These panels were viewed by thousands of Korean citizens. For example, the photos displayed in factories in Wonsan were visited by approximately 8,000 workers. An exhibit with Romanian folk art objects, sent by the IRCS, was displayed in the hallway of the Art Theatre in Pyongyang.

The bulletins of our embassies in Moscow and Beijing were distributed in 200 copies each.

The cultural group of our medical team also contributed to increasing the popularity of our country, by performing an [theatre] play in a factory in Pyongyang.

This term, the DPRK press published 18 articles about Romania, one of which was signed by a female worker who spent her vacation in Romania, and 5 of those articles reflected various aspects of the activity of our medical team. The articles were accompanied by 10 photographs. In addition to these articles, there were also 15 pieces of news and notes regarding various events.

In a discussion we had at the Ministry of Culture and Propaganda, we were told not to give our articles directly to the news rooms of various newspapers, but to give them through the News Department in this Ministry. Beforehand, very few of the articles we gave [to newspapers] were published. After we had started to give articles to the News Department, a few of our articles started being published at the beginning of April.

The main shortage in our news liaison work for this term was the fact that we did not check the work of the translators well enough.

In our secretarial work we closed the file of the Embassy Archive for 1953. Also we

checked all the documents which were produced last year and we introduced a few new files, we added a file with strictly confidential data, and a register to track the timely resolution of various current matters.

To coordinate the work of our medical team, we continued to keep in touch with them, by means of regular visits to the hospital undertaken by our comrades in the Embassy. Moreover, the head of the hospital had visited us repeatedly, asking for our support with solving the problems of the hospital. Comrades from our Embassy also take part in the work analysis meetings which take place in the hospital, they express their views about the activity of the medical team, and they make proposals about how to improve their work. For example, in February, comrade Ambassador took part in the work analysis meeting. At that meeting, they discussed the quarrels between comrade Marin, the head of the medical team, and doctor Frincu. These quarrels were also the result of the fact that their responsibilities were not specified before they left Romania. Because of this, doctor Frincu, who proved to be unskillful in leadership matters, also proved lazy and he got in the way of the person responsible for the political affairs of the team. At our proposal, doctor Frincu was replaced by Dr. Naftali. Comrade Marin was also criticized for his shortcomings, who [is not a good team player], tends to take decisions on his own, without asking for the opinion of his fellow comrades.

On cultural matters, the medical team received support and guidance from the Embassy, both with respect to their work within the hospital and with respect to the training of the cultural team for visits to various factories where they performed.

Also, during this time, we helped our comrades prepare the speech they had to deliver for the International Women's Day and for Youth day, which were celebrated in the Moranbong Hall in Pyongyang.

We talked to the North Korean and Chinese authorities about the delivery of the wagons sent from Romanian for [our] hospital, because they were dispatched to the wrong address.

We think that the work of our comrades in the hospital has improved lately. There are still shortcomings in terms of cleanliness and order; we had to talk about it with them, because comrade Marin himself was not persuaded by this.

On administrative matters, the tasks have been generally completed, although there were tasks which went beyond our real capabilities. We made walking paths in the Embassy yard, we built a shack, two toilets, and we arranged for a flower bed.

We had to repair the engine of the Pobeda car, and other small repairs for the Gaz car and the Dodge, without which we could not do our work properly. We would like to mention that the repairs for these cars were made in the workshop of our medical team in Nampo.

Shortcomings in our administrative work. As the work plan was very intense, comrade Pop worked for its completion while neglecting the cleanliness and order of the Embassy yard and shacks. Although we had a meeting with the Korean staff, comrade Pop is not sufficiently taking care of coordinating and training them, especially with respect to cleanliness and other issues.

With a view to successfully completing the tasks, we held a work meeting at the end of each month, and at the end of the trimester, we held a work analysis meeting. During these meetings, based on our discussions, we pointed out a series of shortcomings, such as the insufficient collaboration between various sections, and between various comrades, as it was the case with comrade Florescu and comrade

Neamu, between comrade Enache and comrade Pop, who does not sufficiently collaborate with other comrades in his work. During the work analysis meeting, we realized we do not inform ourselves enough regarding the situation on the ground in the DPRK, that we are content with the data offered by the written press, which in general releases few facts about the matters we are interested in.

Shortcomings. As we pointed out above, because we did not take into account our real possibilities when we conceived our term plan, some of the tasks could not be completed.

With a view to informing ourselves about the situation in the DPRK, although comrade Florescu received the task to take care of this, he could not do much because comrade Alexeenco and comrade Neamu only translated a small part of the necessary materials.

There was no regular control over the work of the sections [of the Embassy], nor was there enough collaboration between the comrades.

In our future activity for the next term, we will take into account the shortcomings mentioned above.

Signed
Chargé d'affaires
Alexeenco Simion