

**October 22, 1973**

**Note on Conversation with Comrade Denisov,  
Counselor at USSR Embassy, on 12 October 1973 in  
the GDR Embassy**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

A note on conversation covering North Korea's unification policy, a change of Kim Il Sung's personal adviser, the relationship between North Korea and Syria, and the importation of grains from Soviet Union.

**Original Language:**

German

**Contents:**

Translation - English

GDR Embassy to DPRK  
Political Department  
Pyongyang, 22 October 1973

During our conversation we talked about the conference held in Pyongyang with KPA members. They [the Soviets] know, Comrade Denisov noted, that officials from the Central Committee apparatus also participated. They discussed issues of unification policy and the tasks coming with them for the KPA. It cannot be excluded that the DPRK still aims to unite the country by military means. Comrade Denisov opined about the 4th of July North-South Joint Declaration which the Korean comrades have portrayed as a tactical step: Its goal is to strengthen democratic forces in South Korea in order to make them to request the DPRK to come to their assistance.

In this context one must pay attention to O Jin-u [O Jin U]. There are opinions within the diplomatic corps that he has become a personal adviser to Kim Il Sung. We have to note that O Jin-u has also good relations with leading PRC officials. One cannot exclude the possibility that Kim Il Sung wants to have O Jin-u under tighter control. In Comrade Denisov's mind, the following motives might have played a role for Kim Il Sung:

□□ In the light of close friendship and coordinated policy between DPRK and PRC on military matters Kim Il Sung wanted to have O Jin-u reporting directly to him.  
□ Kim Il Sung was displeased with O Jin-u's role in the Army, hence he was appointed to an honorary job.

□□

It is an important question which forces in the Army are behind O Jin-u, for instance. Currently the situation requires the Korean comrades to consider positions of both the U.S. and China, as well as those of the Soviet Union. We must pay attention to recent DPRK troop movements towards the DMZ.

Comrade Denisov further informed about a talk he had with Syrian Ambassador Farra. The latter told him about his conversation on 6 October with DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister Ri Jang-soo (who is in charge of Arab countries) [translator's note: appears in original as Lee Jan Soo. Spelling could not be confirmed from other sources.]

The Deputy Foreign Minister presented a personal message from DPRK President Kim Il Sung to the Syrian President. Orally the Deputy Foreign Minister informed the DPRK is ready to provide Syria with any assistance it may want.

For 9 October the Syrian ambassador was invited by Deputy Prime Minister Choe Jae-u [Choe Jae U] to come to another conversation. In this talk Choe Jae-u repeated the DPRK willingness to provide every possible assistance to the Arab peoples, including military support in an according fashion.

Ambassador Farra told him [Denisov] he had no instructions by his government whatsoever to ask the Korean leadership for any kind of assistance. He [Farra] was aware of how the Chinese leadership, notwithstanding its general support for the struggle of the Arab peoples, has undertaken a step not in the interest of the Arab peoples. In this context Farra referred to a Chinese statement according to which both the U.S. and the Soviet Union are held responsible for the situation in the Middle East. He, so Ambassador Farra, does not agree with this. Thus he will not make any active steps towards the DPRK government. In this vein he informed his government [in Damascus].

Furthermore Comrade Denisov mentioned an information obtained by the Soviet embassy according to which the DPRK has purchased this year in re-export 500,000

tons of flour from France, South Africa, and Argentina. From the Soviet Union the DPRK imported 130,000 tons of grain annually. One cannot exclude the possibility that the DPRK is stocking up strategic reserves. Yet there is also the chance that the DPRK delivers grain to other countries like Japan via re-export.

Comrade Hoffer, attaché at the GDR Embassy, was also present during this conversation.

Signed: Merten  
Counselor

CC:  
1 x Foreign Ministry/Far East  
1 x Central Committee/International Relations  
1 x Embassy/Political Department