

**March 31, 1978**

**Telegram to the Minister of Foreign Affairs from the  
Ambassador in the United Kingdom**

**Citation:**

"Telegram to the Minister of Foreign Affairs from the Ambassador in the United Kingdom", March 31, 1978, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Roll 2008-29, File 03, Frames 8-11, South Korean Foreign Ministry Archive  
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/118385>

**Summary:**

Report on the meeting between Councilor Kim, Jae-Sung and J. Thorold Masefield, acting director of the Far East Bureau.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Kyungnam University

**Original Language:**

Korean

**Contents:**

Translation - English

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Receiving telegram

Category :

File No. : UKW - 03114                      Date : 311805

To : Minister of Foreign Affairs    Cc (copy) :

From : Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Related report file no. : Dae [Embassy] WUK - 03107, 03127

On March 20, Councilor Kim, Jae-Sung visited J. Thorold Masefield, acting director of the Far East Bureau and had conversation with him. Below is the report of what was confirmed during the meeting and what the acting director stated about the political circumstances in Communist China and the North Korean puppets:

1. Premier of the Communist China Hua Guofeng's visit to the North Korean Puppet Regime:

a. No other information has been obtained so far except that the Communist Chinese government has never mentioned anything about the rumor of Hua's visit to the North Korean puppets and the their ambassador to Beijing told that he knew nothing about it at a cocktail party. However, the British Foreign Ministry analyzed that Hua's visit to Pyongyang would be likely to take place.

b. Background of the Possibility of the Visit

i. The Hua administration aims to strengthen the foreign relations which had been stagnant for a long time, and, especially, to keep the friendly relations with neighboring countries, focusing on surrounding Asian countries, in order to check the rise of Soviet influence. In an effort to do so, Deng Xiaoping has already visited Burma and Nepal, and Li Xiannian went to the Philippines and Bangladesh. In the same way, there is no reason why Hua should not visit the North Korean puppets. Moreover, the competition between Communist China and the Soviet Union for influence over the North Korean puppets makes their position all the more important.

ii. One of the reasons for Hua's visit to the North Korean puppet regime being a strong possibility is that he plans to visit Yugoslavia, Romania, and France in Europe as well as one or two countries in the Arab region in the near future to strengthen its external relations. No Chairman of the Communist Party of China has gone abroad for last twenty years so far; accordingly, Communist China has been paying keen attention to the overseas trips of the chairman of its party. Therefore, Communist China would consider the North Korean puppets the place to "rehearse" before visiting other countries and therefore Hua is most likely to visit the North Korean puppets first.

iii. The British acting director of the Far East Bureau, however, thinks that Hua's visit to the North Korean puppets will not bring any changes in Communist China's policies toward the Korean Peninsula.

2. Kim Il Sung's Visit to the Soviet Union

a. According to the report by the British Ambassador in Moscow, the Soviet government sent an invitation to Kim Il Sung, and he accepted the invitation. Thus,

Kim's visit to the Soviet Union is certain to happen; its time is predicted to be this spring or fall.

b. As for the background of Kim's visit to the Soviet Union, it is generally analyzed that the Soviet Union, which has been in competition with the Communist China in terms of the relation with the North Korean puppets, needs to revive the relation with the North Korean puppets, which has been long stagnant or strained, in response to Communist China's active approach to the North Korean puppets. In particular, this measure is taken in consideration of the strategic importance of North Korean puppets in the expansion of its influence in the Far East. The North Korean side wants to build active relation with the Soviet Union in order to keep the equidistant diplomacy between China and the U.S.S.R., to secure economic assistance and military aid from the U.S.S.R., and to preclude Korea from approaching the U.S.S.R.

c. According to the report by the British Ambassador to Moscow, relations between the Soviet Union and the North Korean puppets had been extremely stagnant so far. However, it is slowly "strengthening" as follow

i. On January of this year, D. Kunayev (or D. Kunaev), a member of the Soviet Politburo, headed the Soviet delegation to visit Pyongyang. During his visit, Kunayev delivered the Order of Lenin to Kim Il Sung, following up on the decision to bestow him with the Order in 1972.

ii. The cultural agreement between the both parties was renewed to extend.

iii. And trade between the two countries has increased.

### 3. Communist China's Foreign Policy:

The British acting director visited Korea, Japan, and Communist China from the end of February to the middle of March. During his visit to Communist China, he came in contact with officials in charge of the economy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and commented as the following on what he detected from those contacts with Chinese officials:

a. Communist China will pursue active economic and technological cooperation with the West in order to achieve the economic development plan announced this year; thus, Communist China is expected to strengthen its external relations.

b. There is no any change whatsoever in Communist China's anti-Soviet attitude. For example, the Chinese officials vehemently denounced the Soviet Union's penetration into Africa.

c. Communist China is expected actively maintain economic and technological cooperation with Japan. Communist China considers its geographic conditions, economic necessity of Japan while Japan considers Communist China's supply of oil energy as well as long-term marketability.

d. Within this year, Communist China's Foreign Minister Huang Hua is certain to visit the Great Britain. In the acting director's observation, Huang's planned visit will be concretized when (illegible) Cortazzi from the British Foreign Ministry visits Communist China in April.

e. As Geng Piao was appointed as vice premier of the State Council in charge of foreign affairs at the Fifth National People's Congress in February, Huang's status as

foreign minister has been that much more weakened.

#### 4. Prospect of the Attitude of the North Korean Puppets

The British acting director exchanged views with Japanese foreign ministry officials in a discussion on possible attitudes of the North Korean puppets and summarized its main points as follows:

a. The North Korean puppets are predicted to take one of the following attitudes:

i. To keep the status quo

ii. To attack Korea before any further enhancement of Korea's national strength, using a certain pretense

iii. To strengthen relations with the Soviet Union and China and at the same time pursue economic and technological cooperation with the West in concentrating on economic development in order to prevail over Korea in economic competition.

b. If North Korea chose the second method, the Soviet Union is sure to assist North Korea immediately. However, the Soviet Union is deeply involved in Africa now and its relation with the United States is increasingly becoming strained due to the situation in the Middle East and arms race. Under these situations, the Soviet Union will not want to confront the United States with new conflicts on the Korean Peninsula; thus, the Soviet Union will force the North Korean puppets to accept a truce under conditions deemed appropriate. Communist China's current preoccupation with domestic problems such as economic development and military modernization and rivalry with the Soviet Union would prevent it from offering substantial aid to the North Korean puppets. Therefore, As a result, it is certain that the North Korean puppets would not be able to accomplish its aims.

c. Accordingly, the most probable choice would be the third method. The North Korean puppets are likely to strengthen relations with Communist China and the Soviet Union and actively pursue cooperation with the West for economic development. Recent rumors of the North Korean puppets' new foreign loan and of pursuing a contract for offshore developing oil are analyzed as a way to induce economic and technological cooperation with the West. (Europe Division 3, North America Division 2, Information Division 2, Korean Central Intelligence Agency)