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Journal of Soviet Ambassador to the DPRK A.M.
Puzanov for 12 August 1960

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Summary:

Pak Seong-cheol and A.M. Puzanov discuss the publication of North Korean newspaper articles regarding the postponed visit of Khrushchev to the DPRK.

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of Soviet Ambassador in the DPRK A. M. PUZANOV for the period
10 through 23 August 1960

Pyongyang

[...]

12 August 1960

I visited Jeong Il-yong together with Trade Representative I. A. Gladkov and the director of the Soviet exhibition N. S. Ivanov and had a conversation with him. Present at the conversation from the Korean side were chief of the Korean administration of the exhibition Pak Yeong-seon and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ri Jeong-sik.

At the beginning of the conversation I told Jeong Il-yong that yesterday an agreement was reached during a meeting with Kim Il Sung about opening the Soviet industrial and agricultural exhibition in Pyongyang on 14 August. The Soviet Ambassador to the DPRK was entrusted with opening the exhibition. I asked who from the Korean side will speak at the opening ceremony on behalf of the DPRK government.

Jeong Il-yong replied that Deputy Chairman of the DPRK Cabinet of Ministers Ri Ju-yeon would speak.

I then informed Jeong Il-yong that all the exhibits of the exhibition had been fully prepared for the opening and the collectives of the Soviet and Korean workers of the exhibition were ready to open the exhibition on 14 August. In the name of the Ambassador, the Trade Representative, and the director of the exhibition I expressed deep appreciation to Jeong Il-yong for the active and effective assistance in building the exhibition. I also thanked Pak [Yen Sen], the chief of the Korean administration of the exhibition, for the great help in organizational work.

Then suggestions about the procedure for conducting the exhibition opening ceremony, the raising of the national flags, and the inspection of the exhibition were discussed and coordinated. The suggestions of the Soviet side, read by I. A. Gladkov, were accepted by Jeong Il-yong without objection. The time of the opening of the exhibition was set at 1100. It was arranged that the ambassador, trade representative, and director of the exhibition would invite KWP and DPRK government leaders, leaders of public organizations, and the diplomatic corps, a total of 200 people for the opening of the exhibition; the rest, a total of up to 3,000 people [would be invited by] the Korean side.

The conversation was interpreted by Embassy Third Secretary D. A. Priyemsky.

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I visited Pak Seong-cheol at my own initiative and had a conversation with him. At the start of the conversation I said that yesterday, 11 August, during a conversation with Cde. Kim Il, the text of a report about the upcoming visit of Cde. N. S. Khrushchev to

the DPRK had been coordinated and agreement had been reached to publish this text in the Soviet and Korean press. However, in the newspapers Rodong Sinmun and Minju Choson published today, 12 August, a very important detail was left out of the report: the sentence "CPSU CC and Soviet government accepted this invitation with great satisfaction" was published in the Korean text without the words "with great satisfaction". I asked what caused the agreed text to be distorted and the words excluded from it which characterized the attitude of the CC of our Party and our government toward the invitation to Cde. N. S. Khrushchev to visit the DPRK.

Pak Seong-cheol replied that he knew about the coordinated text of the report inasmuch as he himself was present at this conversation. However, he said, we wanted to publish not in the third person, but on our own behalf, from the KWP CC and DPRK government, to express our own attitude toward the visit of Cde. N. S. Khrushchev to the DPRK.

I said that I could not agree with such an explanation since I consider it incomprehensible how the text of a report coordinated between both sides could be willfully changed and the words excluded from it which express the attitude of the Soviet side, of the CPSU CC and Soviet government, toward the invitation to Cde. N. S. Khrushchev to visit the DPRK.

Pak Seong-cheol replied in embarrassment that they had initially wanted to publish the text of the report in the coordinated form, but then a question arose in the publication organizations, in whose name is this report being published. If it had been indicated there that this was a TASS report or a CPSU CC letter then that would be another matter, but inasmuch as the source of the information was not indicated it was decided to express the attitude of the KWP CC and DPRK government toward the upcoming visit of Cde. N. S. Khrushchev to the DPRK in this report. Pak Seong-cheol said that the arguments and the discussion about in what form to publish the report continued until late at night.

I objected that I consider it incomprehensible for what reasons Pak Seong-cheol made reference to information agencies since according to elementary procedure in the established practice of international relations these organizations publish what was previously coordinated and cannot change a coordinated text at all. If any question arise it should be discussed with the other side.

Pak Seong-cheol said that during the discussion of in what form to publish the report the opinion was expressed that the words "with great satisfaction" could be said by the Soviet comrades, but that the Korean side should express its attitude toward this event. Therefore at the end of the report a phrase was added expressing the great satisfaction with which the KWP CC received the report that the CPSU CC and Soviet government have accepted the invitation to Cde. N. S. Khrushchev to visit the DPRK. Pak Seong-cheol said, late at night the chief of the KWP CV Agitprop Department wanted to talk with the Ambassador about this issue on the telephone but for some reason did not do this.

Then Pak Seong-cheol repeated that, in changing the text of the report the Korean side was guided by exclusively the issues of form and the exclusion of the words "with great satisfaction" in no way signifies any political considerations. Pak Seong-cheol said, we wanted to make it best, and therefore this misunderstanding resulted.

I asked, whether Cde. Kim Il Sung knew about the publication of the altered text of the report

Pak Seong-cheol initially said that he does not know, but then added that he has not

yet reported himself, possibly comrades from the KWP CC have reported.

I told Pak Seong-cheol, please understand that the Ambassador is insisting on the obligatory mutual consultations on all issues affecting the interests of both sides, but is in no way inserting himself into issues within the competence of the DPRK MFA or, what is more, the KWP CC. I said that such consultations on all issues, moreover, follow from the close friendly relations which exist between our countries.

Pak Seong-cheol agreed with this and admitted that the misunderstanding in this case occurred from the Korean comrades wanting to make the joint coordinated report "their own". He admitted that the publication of the altered text was an incorrect action by the Korean side. Pak Seong-cheol said, tomorrow the text of the report which was published in the Soviet press will be printed in our newspapers in some form.

I asked in what form it was proposed to publish the text of the report in the form in which it was coordinated during the conversation with Cde. Kim Il Sung on 11 August.

Pak Seong-cheol replied that he does not know exactly, they will consult.

I said for my part that if they, as the Minister said, publish the report in the press again then, in my opinion, they ought to add only the words "with great satisfaction" to the text published today.

Then, at Pak Seong-cheol's request, I told about the procedure for opening the Soviet exhibition in Pyongyang coordinated with Jeong Il-yong.

Pak Seong-cheol expressed gratitude for the information.

Pak Seong-cheol also asked whom I would like to invite from the Embassy officials to a lunch at Cde. Kim Il Sung's on 16 August and what time would be convenient.

I replied to Pak Seong-cheol that previously usually Embassy counsellors, the military attaché, and trade representative had been invited to such meetings. I noted that anyone whomever Cde. Kim Il Sung wants to invite to his place will come and any time is convenient.

At night at the Minister's instruction his interpreter reported that the text of the report would be published in the 13 August newspapers in the coordinated form.

Third Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in the DPRK D. A. Priyemsky was present at the conversation.

[...]

SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN THE DPRK [signature] (A. PUZANOV)

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