

February 23, 1979

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

Citation:

"Report, Embassy of Hungary in North Korea to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry", February 23, 1979, Wilson Center Digital Archive, MOL, XIX-J-1-j Dél-Korea, 1979, 81. doboz, 82-5, 002289/1979. Obtained and translated for NKIDP by Balazs Szalontai. <https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/110134>

Summary:

The Hungarian Ambassador in North Korea reports on the construction of the Kori Nuclear Power Plant in South Korea, highlighting that South Korea's projected power output would eventually surpass North Korea's by three-fold. As a result, North Korea was anxious to build its own nuclear power plant and perhaps even an atomic bomb.

Original Language:

Hungarian

Contents:

Translation - English

[...]

The construction of the first [South Korean] nuclear power plant began in March 1971 in Gori, near Busan, and was completed in May 1978. The nuclear reactor and the turbines were put in their final place in October 1974, and the first shipment of enriched uranium, with which the test operation was started, arrived in Gori in June 1975.

However, this is just the beginning, for the South Korean government prepared a long-range plan to construct additional nuclear power plants by 2000. The first stage of this [plan] will last until 1986, by which time 6 additional [nuclear power plants] (one per year) will be built. By 1986 the amount of investment will be 156 billion won and 174 million US\$. The most important investors are the American Westinghouse Electric Corp., ITT, the British GEC, various French companies, and, of course, several South Korean enterprises, such as the newly created Korea Nuclear Energy Co.

[...]

With the nuclear power plant in Gori included, the output of electric power generation in South Korea reached 6.59 million kW. With the completion and activation of the sixth nuclear power plant, in 1986 its output will reach 20 million kW. By the end of 1986 they want to complete and operate 7 nuclear power plants, 5 hydroelectric power stations, 24 thermal power stations, and an ebb and flow power plant. 26 nuclear power plants will be built by 2000 [...].

If we compare the output of electric power generation that South Korea plans to reach by the end of 1986 with that of the DPRK (since the DPRK will also complete its 7-year plan by that time), the South Korean output is about three times that of the DPRK. This may explain why, from this year on, but also earlier, the DPRK strongly urged the socialist countries-for instance, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and China-to provide it with equipment for nuclear power plants or even to build a nuclear power plant. It tries to make up for its lag behind South Korea in this way, with the hidden intention that later it may become capable of producing an atomic bomb.

Ferenc Szabó
Ambassador