

**September 11, 1964**

**Letter from the Korean Workers Party Central  
Committee to the Central Committee of the CPSU**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

The Socialist Unity Party of Germany reports on a critique by North Korea concerning the Soviet Union's effort to call a meeting of all socialist/communist countries. In the attached letter, North Korea expresses concern for a split between socialist countries.

**Credits:**

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**Original Language:**

German

**Contents:**

Translation - English

SED Central Committee  
Department of International Relations  
Archival Signature: SAPMO-BA, Berlin, DY 30, IV A2/20/251

SED Internal Message  
To: Comrade Ulbricht  
From: Department of International Relations, Dr. Ku/Schr  
Date: 11 September 1964

Dear Comrade Ulbricht!

Attached we send you a copy of the response letter by the Central Committee of the Korean Workers Party to the Central Committee of the CPSU in reply to the latter's letter from 30 July 1964. The material was handed to our embassy in Pyongyang without a cover letter or comment and without an address on the envelope.

The attached German translation was done by comrades from the embassy.

With socialist greetings  
[signed]  
Schön [illegible]

Attachment

Unofficial translation of copy of letter from the KWP Central Committee to the Central Committee of the CPSU

Dear comrades!

The Central Committee of the KWP has received the letter from the CPSU Central Committee of 30 July 1964. Over the course of time, differences in opinion coming up in recent years in the international communist movement have become ever more aggravated. These differences in opinion arose as an internal issue within the ranks of the fraternal parties. Today they have developed into acrimonious open polemics before the eyes of the enemies. They exert a grave negative influence on the development of the international communist movement and on state-to-state relations of the socialist countries. Traditional friendship and unity in communist fighting spirit, created during long revolutionary struggle, have suffered great damage. Today we cannot ignore the fact that unity of the socialist camp and cohesion of the international communist movement are under severe strain and in danger to lead to a split. Such a situation within the international communist movement gives joy to the imperialists and class enemies of all sorts. However, it leads to deep concern within ranks of the communists and the working class of the entire world. Currently there exists the most sacred, and most urgent, internationalist duty of all communists to prevent the split within the ranks of the communist movement and defend its unity. The circumstances now existing demand thoughtful and principled actions by the communist and workers parties in the interest of the revolution, in the name of the great cause of the working class. So far the KWP consequently fought with all its energy to defend the purity of Marxism-Leninism, and to protect the unity of the socialist camp and the cohesion of the internationalist communist movement.

From the beginning, our party insisted together with a number of fraternal parties to overcome differences of opinion internally within the ranks of the communist movement through honest and comradely consultations. Unfortunately, however, the leadership of the CPSU did not want to listen to the honest advice and suggestions from the fraternal parties. You [CPSU leadership] have undertaken persistent activities to force your erroneous positions systematically on the fraternal parties. You were spreading those within the international communist movement. In violation of the international norms of relations between the fraternal parties, you exerted pressure and struck against other parties that did not want to follow you slavishly.

Because of all that, today we have such a complicated situation within the international communist movement. Recently the Central Committee of the CPSU has demanded to convene as soon as possible an international conference of the communist and workers parties. In your last letter you proposed to appoint a review commission in order to prepare for an international meeting of the fraternal parties. Do you really believe that convening such a meeting in the current situation would yield even the smallest benefit to the interests and unity of the international communist movement?

As it was stated in the declaration by the conference of representatives of communist and workers parties in 1960, the fraternal parties can, if necessary, hold an international meeting in order to secure uniform positions and actions in the struggle for their joint objectives.

If all parties would openly state their positions and experiences, and would make collective efforts based on the principles of proletarian internationalism, then such a meeting of the fraternal parties would make an important contribution to enrich the treasures of Marxism-Leninism and solidify the cohesion of the international communist movement.

Our party has always advocated the convening of such an international meeting. However, today there exist major obstacles working against the convening of an international meeting of the fraternal parties.

Recently, the CPSU leadership has even more aggravated the differences in opinion. It has embarked on a course to worsen relations between the fraternal parties. You [CPSU leadership] call for decisive standpoints against the Marxist-Leninist parties. You even went so far as to openly declare the struggle against the fraternal parties as the most urgent task today.

In such a situation, it has basically become impossible to hope that, in case representatives of the fraternal parties would gather around a table, they would be able to find ways to eliminate the differences in opinion in a comradely atmosphere. If under current circumstances such an international meeting would be convened, it is absolutely obvious that this meeting would turn into an arena for the most fierce polemics. Who can indeed guarantee that such a meeting will not lead to a split of the international communist movement?

Given all these circumstances, it is anything but coincidence that many fraternal parties voice their opinion to say it is difficult to convene an international meeting under current conditions. They correctly advocate to undertake thorough and patient preparing efforts prior to such a meeting in order to achieve actual success.

Together with the Marxists-Leninists of the entire world the KWP cannot support at all the convening of such an international meeting. It would lead to the split of the international communist movement. The KWP will not participate in such a meeting.

Only such a meeting of fraternal parties would serve the demands and interests of the working class which can defend the principles of Marxism-Leninism and solidify the unity of the international communist movement.

In order for an international meeting of the communist and workers parties, and the according preparatory consultations, to really become a gathering for unity and cohesion the following is required:

1. To conduct in advance a consequent preparation with the objective to create an atmosphere required for the convening of an international meeting of the fraternal parties and preparatory consultations. Here it would be first and foremost required that you [CPSU leadership] and some other comrades cease from their splittist activities conducted against the Marxist-Leninist parties. It cannot serve any constructive purpose to solve the issues, if polemics against the fraternal parties become ever more aggravated and, when doing so, you hide behind hypocritical phrases of "unity".

Moreover, it is necessary to establish the contacts and consultations needed in order to gradually achieve mutual understanding. If all parties do not spare any efforts in that direction, then a path will open for creating the conditions and comradely atmosphere allowing for the convening of an international meeting of the fraternal parties and an according preparatory consultation. For such a preparation a certain amount of time, patience, and honesty is required. Mostly one has to take care of creating such a situation, where comradely consultations could be held and not of rushing towards convening such a meeting.

Convening a meeting without sufficient advance preparation would represent an action only leading to a further aggravation of polemics. It will inevitably push the international communist movement on the path of an open split.

Given the facts that differences in opinion have occurred between the fraternal parties, and even aggravated to the point reached today, you [CPSU] should seriously think about your deeds. You ought to ask yourself in all honesty: Did you not deviate from the principled positions of Marxism-Leninism? Did you not throw overboard the revolutionary spirit of the declaration of the meeting of representatives of the fraternal parties [in 1960]?

You are blathering that the others are guilty of everything and pursuing splittist activities. Yet at the same time you yourself act in contradiction of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and of the spirit of the declaration and the meeting [1960]. This will only lead to an aggravation of polemics. Never will there be an opportunity to come closer to a common opinion. Paying back advice with polemics against the fraternal parties, exerting pressure, and even threatening to apply collective measures- instead of listening to advice from the fraternal parties- such a mode of operation is by no means acceptable in comradely relationships common to the Marxist-Leninist parties.

For communists, principled criticism and self-criticism is the most powerful weapon of progress. We are obligated to stay committed to Lenin's advice that it is a sign of the revolutionary party to courageously correct its own mistakes and not close its eyes from its mistakes in this process. Those who commit splittist activities within the socialist camp and the international communist movement should look back to the past. They ought to take to heart in all honesty the advice from fraternal parties and commit to self-criticism for their mistakes. We believe this to be beneficial to our common cause. Furthermore, given the conditions that these polemics are conducted openly before the eyes of our enemies, there is no need to be afraid of admitting someone's mistakes. It has already become impossible to hide those mistakes without having them get noticed. Everybody who is a communist is required to immediately correct any mistakes committed. Only this way, one can find a path to

overcome the problems facing the international communist movement today. Only this way, positions can move closer toward each other. If one approaches the advance preparation to the meeting in this spirit, patiently and honestly, then the success of the meeting will be guaranteed. Then the bonds of cohesion will become firm.

We must not give up hope that we will find an actual path to overcome the differences in opinion, if all fraternal parties remain committed to the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism and really care for the fate of the international communist movement.

2. One cannot allow such actions that unilaterally enforce the positions of any individual party in advance on a meeting of the fraternal parties. You [CPSU leadership] make the situation even more difficult by raising conditions and imposing your positions on others concerning the issues supposed to be discussed by a new international meeting. This way you have announced from the onset your intention to impose your opinions on others also at the upcoming meeting. The international meeting of fraternal parties cannot serve as a vehicle where the policy of any individual party gets approved and validated. An international meeting can also not serve as a vehicle where condemnations, evaluations or sanctions are issued vis-a-vis any individual party.

At previous international meetings already, attempts to impose the course of any individual party as mandatory for the entire international communist movement have met with decisive rejection by a number of fraternal parties.

It is extremely unfortunate that, despite all this, there are still comrades who did not get rid of their superpower manners.

Such actions would actually signify to place one party above the international communist movement and bestow the right upon this party to rule over the other parties.

All parties are equal and autonomous. There is no such thing as a leading party or a party to be led. No party has the right to command other parties, to control them, and place itself at the center.

Based on the real situation it finds itself in, each party must determine its policy autonomously and act according to its assessments and decisions. Any kind of attempt to arrogantly impose on the international meeting of the fraternal parties one's own positions, to put on trial those parties not subservient to one's positions, and arbitrarily control and dominate the meeting, are by no means acceptable. All these actions would, from the very beginning, block the path towards consultations between the fraternal parties and actually undermine the convening of the conference as such.

We have the revolutionary principles of the declaration and statement from the meetings of representatives from the fraternal parties [1957 and 1960]. They were collectively drafted and unanimously agreed by these parties. No party is entitled to make its positions, which stand in contrast to the revolutionary spirit of this declaration and statement, the basis for discussion. There is no such party that might have the monopolistic right to develop the theory of Marxism-Leninism. Only under conditions of respecting the rights of all parties and of guaranteeing all of them the opportunity to voice their opinion in full and unabridged, can such an international meeting provide a clear analysis of questions raised by our lives and draw the correct conclusions from them.

3. In order for the preparatory commission to serve the interests of cohesion, an

agreement between all parties must be reached to establish the commission on a fair and reasonable basis. The work of a preparatory commission has to play an important role for a successful convening of an international meeting and the improvement of the entire atmosphere. Therefore an agreement between all parties has to be reached, beginning already with the question of the composition of the preparatory commission. No party has the right, arrogantly and without consultation with all fraternal parties, to appoint members of the preparatory commission; and even less so, to impose this on other parties. However, the Central Committee of the CPSU has appointed, without consent by the fraternal parties, the members of the review commission from the 1960 Moscow Conference as members of the preparatory commission of the new international meeting. It has invited the representatives of these parties to come to Moscow until 15 December 1964.

As it is known to everybody, the review commission established in preparation of the meeting of representatives from communist and workers parties in 1960 had prepared, with the general consent of all parties, the documents for this meeting. It ceased its existence with the end of this work. It was not commissioned to serve in the function of a permanent organ.

Thus, there is no reason whatsoever that members of the review commission, established in preparation of the meeting of representatives of the fraternal parties in 1960, will automatically be appointed to members of the preparatory commission for the new international meeting. There are deep differences in opinion on this issue between the fraternal parties. As a consequence, one has to undertake a serious discussion in order to arrive at a common opinion between the fraternal parties - as far as the composition of the preparatory commission, as well as the list of the participants at the international meeting, are concerned.

4. Convening a meeting of fraternal parties should be exclusively based on efforts to achieve cohesion. It has to be conducted based on a strict democratic procedure. In relations between fraternal parties one cannot apply the principle that the minority is subjugated by the majority. Those who today advocate the application of disciplines of democratic centralism in the international movement suffer from anachronism in the fullest sense of this word.

The attempt to convene a meeting by force and base itself on an automatic majority is fraught with grave mistakes from the very beginning. If one is sincere to really overcome differences in opinion and prevent the split, then one should convene a meeting under the conditions of unanimous agreement between all fraternal parties. A meeting convened under the cover of a "majority" would make the Marxist-Leninist parties stay away and face the communists of the world with the fait accompli of the split. Notwithstanding all that, the Central Committee of the CPSU informed in its letter that the review commission will assume its task even if any of the 26 communist parties appointed by the CPSU as members of the review commission will not delegate their representatives.

Such an attitude, displayed by you [CPSU leadership] in the course of exchanging opinions with the fraternal parties, demonstrates how you already intend to guide this meeting towards other objectives.

To talk about the need to sit together at one table in order to eliminate differences in opinion, and at the same time to talk about convening a meeting even without the participation of parties with other opinions- this certainly does not correspond to logic, and there is hardly a desire for cohesion to find here.

Indeed, such actions cannot be judged as being anything other than the attempt to split the international communist movement in organizational terms. The communist and workers parties, seriously holding high the great cause of the international working class, must view the problem to convene a new international meeting and a preparatory commission in all sincerity and without bias. All parties must thwart with

joint forces the attempt to convene a meeting of division. Those people who despite all that convene such a meeting of division, which would cause great damage to the international communist movement, will bear the full responsibility for the consequences of that.

Our party is strictly against the split of the international communist movement. It sincerely advocates the unity of this movement.

We again call on you from the bottom of our hearts to recognize your historic mission towards the working class of the entire world; and we hope that you will, based on this foundation, make efforts for the benefit of the unity of the international communist movement.

Like in the past, the Korean Workers Party will do everything in the future as well to defend both the purity of Marxism-Leninism and the unity of the socialist camp as well as the cohesion of the international communist movement, based on the principle of proletarian internationalism.

With communist greetings

Central Committee of the Korean Workers Party

Pyongyang, 28 August 1964