

November 30, 1960

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

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Summary:

Report from Hungarian Ambassador Károly Práth on the conciliatory measures being
adopted by the DPRK towards the Jang Myeon administration in the South.

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On 30 November Comrade Deputy Foreign Minister Kim Tae-hui gave the Ambassadors accredited in Pyongyang the proposals the 8th session of the DPRK's Supreme National Assembly had made with regard to the unification of Korea (the report of Comrade Choe Yong-geon, the letter addressed to the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, etc.). With regard to that, the Comrade Deputy Minister pointed out that these proposals meant the further concretization of the ones Comrade Kim Il Sung had mentioned in his speech of 15 August, and at the same time they specified the North Korean people's tasks concerning unification. [...] They intend to carry out unification by their own efforts, through general elections. Since the UN lent its flag to US aggression, it is at war with the DPRK, and thus it cannot be an "observer" of the Korean elections, etc.

In what follows, Comrade Kim Tae-hui briefly outlined the proposals concerning the confederation and the establishment of a committee for economic cooperation, and with regard to the program aimed at assisting South Korea he pointed out the primary importance of the peasant question and land reform, for 70 percent of the South Korean population was composed of peasants. The DPRK's proposal concerning carrying out the South Korean land reform (purchase by the state, distribution for free) is different from the land reform carried out in the DPRK, but, if one takes the circumstances into consideration, it is a Marxist-Leninist answer to the question. [...] The ruling circles of the USA have not adopted an official policy yet, they try to deal with the South Korean situation somehow indirectly. In these circles, a certain anxiety is noticeable, they do not completely trust the Jang Myeon government, and, among others, the USA openly declared that if the South Korean authorities wished to negotiate with the representatives of the North in Panmunjom, this would require the previous consent of the "UN High Command." In South Korea, the proposals [of the DPRK] are already widely known and discussed among the intelligentsia, the students, and the youth. Characteristically, a great number of South Korean correspondents came to the 29 November session of the Panmunjom Armistice Commission, and 50 percent of them made statements in favor of the DPRK's proposals, while the others represented the official standpoint [...]. The South Korean National Assembly was also obliged to discuss the issue of economic and cultural contacts, then the Cabinet also dealt with it. While Jang Myeon called [the proposals] "propaganda" in his statement, Foreign Minister Jeong Ilhyeong supported the idea of [accepting] electric power [from the DPRK] as long as no political strings were attached, though later he took back his word.

[...]

The tone of the [Supreme] National Assembly's session is typical of [the present attitude of] the DPRK. Both the reporter [Choe Yong-geon] and the speakers spoke about the South Korean leaders in a very moderate tone, the various attributes they had hitherto used were largely absent, and they began to speak officially about the "Republic of Korea" instead of "South Korea" (it even appeared in newspapers). Of course, as the Korean comrades correctly pointed out, the primary obstacle in the way of the peaceful unification of the country is the presence of the US troops. [...] it is not likely, however, that one can achieve their withdrawal solely through domestic (Korean) channels; the given international situation, and its development, will play an important role in it.

Károly Práth
Ambassador

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Károly Práth