

December 1, 1972

**Note on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign
Minister Comrade Ri Man-seok on 28 November
1972 for the Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors
of Poland, Czechoslovakia and the GDR between
1200 and 1330 hours in the Foreign Ministry**

Citation:

"Note on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister Comrade Ri Man-seok on 28 November 1972 for the Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors of Poland, Czechoslovakia and the GDR between 1200 and 1330 hours in the Foreign Ministry", December 1, 1972, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. Obtained and translated by Bernd Schaefer.

<https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/114566>

Summary:

Ri Man-seok provides a brief on the fourth session of Red Cross negotiations held in Seoul and the domestic political situation of South Korea under the Park Chung Hee regime.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

GDR Embassy to DPRK
Political Department
Pyongyang, 1 December 1972

N o t e

On Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister
Comrade Ri Man-seok [Ri Man Sok] on 28 November 1972 for the Ambassadors and
Acting Ambassadors of Poland, Czechoslovakia and the GDR
Between 1200 and 1330 hours in the Foreign Ministry

Comrade Ri Man-seok informed based on a written manuscript about the 4th session of Red Cross negotiations, as well as about the referendum held in South Korea and ensuing changes in its constitution. Comrade Ri Man-seok said about the following:

The 4th session of Red Cross negotiations was held on 22 November 1972 in Seoul. Due to the overall situation, a fierce class struggle erupted during this 4th session. It occurred at a time when the leader, Comrade Kim Il Sung, has proclaimed a course of comprehensive cooperation with the South. Yet the South Korean puppet clique has declared the state of war after a prior declaration of a state of national emergency. They also changed the constitution in South Korea. The ballots [for the constitutional referendum] were opened the day our delegation arrived. The agents of Park Chung Hee's puppet clique were lined up every 10 meters along the street and controlled the passers-by. Initially the 4th session was scheduled for 21 November but the enemies moved it to 22 November. They combined the day of the session with the vote for the referendum. The enemies want to achieve a consolidation of the nation around Park Chung Hee. They wanted to sell the welcome of our delegation by the South Korean people as a support for the referendum. We agreed with moving the 4th session from the 21st to the 22nd and delivered to the enemies a strong political blow.

The meeting was held behind closed doors. During negotiations we discussed the already known first agenda item of the main negotiations—the search for separated families and identification of their addresses. Our delegation repeated again in more concrete terms the proposals made already during the 3rd session of the Red Cross talks in Pyongyang. We suggested including our compatriots living in Japan into the search for separated families and the identification of their addresses. In conjunction with the search for addresses of separated families and relatives we demanded guarantees for expressions of free will by the people concerned and for the safeguard of their democratic rights. The South Korean side, however, opposed these proposals. They rejected the guarantee of democratic and social liberties and opted against direct searches of, and contact with, the families. The South Koreans proposed to conduct the search for families with the help of questionnaires only. This would be in accordance with international rules of the International Red Cross, they said. Our delegation responded that not every international custom of the Red Cross is adaptable to discussions of internal national issues.

Except for the idea concerning the questionnaire, the South Korean side did not come up with any other proposal. Then our delegation proposed to establish a joint organ of the two Red Cross societies and a joint office at Panmunjeom. The South Koreans agreed in principle with our proposals.

Following a South Korean request, our delegation agreed to set up via phone the dates for the 5th and 6th session of Red Cross negotiations. A group of experts was tasked with working out a draft for a joint agreement. The South Koreans suggested establishing a sub-committee in Panmunjeom so they do not have to travel to Pyongyang or Seoul. Although the respective organs, which were ultimately agreed

upon, are not yet operating, the solution of one problem after the next will result in the ideological unmasking of the South Korean representatives.

During its stay in South Korea our delegation visited two chemical factories, two department stores, and a movie theater. Lee Hu-rak gave a dinner for our delegation. The South Korean side undertook all kinds of efforts to minimize the influence of our delegation on the South Korean people as much as possible. For instance, initially it was agreed with our delegation that Lee Hu-rak will host a reception. Yet there was just a dinner. Representatives of South Korean political parties and social organizations were excluded from this dinner. During the visits to the factories which just lasted for a few minutes, our representatives could not have any conversations with South Korean workers. The secret police shielded our delegation from the population.

At the same time during our delegation's stay there was a broad "anti-communist" campaign going on in South Korea and serious provocations were organized. For instance, on 22 November South Korean cadets demanded the democratic unification of the country without one of the current two systems serving as a framework. Instead, unification should occur on the basis of "material prosperity" and the "victory over communism."

Also a South Korean aspirant named Seo Sin-hui^[1] was sentenced to death. Furthermore there were attacks and slander against our delegation in the South Korean press. By all this the South Korean side aims at stimulating its people with a feeling of enmity towards the DPRK.

Our delegation was taken to an anti-communist movie performance and demonstratively walked out of the auditorium. After the protest of our delegation, the South Korean side admitted that this step with the movie was not correct. In the future something like that will not happen again, they said.

The 4th session was fierce class struggle for our delegation. The enemy suffered hard blows. Thanks to the active assertiveness of our representatives the South Korean side was pushed into a passive role. This way we were able to increase our influence on the South Korean people.

Everywhere the DPRK delegation was welcomed by South Korean people with emotions running high. Individual people secretly sneaked to our representatives to express their respect and reverence for Comrade Kim Il Sung and their love for the leader. They talked full of hope that they will soon be united with the North under the leadership of Comrade Kim Il Sung.

Then Comrade Ri Man-seok stated the DPRK's expectation towards the socialist countries to further unmask the South Korean puppet clique and exert pressure on them in the international arena.

Comrade Ri Man-seok finally addressed the referendum held in South Korea and made the following statements:

The fuzz made by the South Korean puppet clique about the large turnout and the broad approval of the constitutional changes is stupid and cynical. It has never happened during the entire history of the Far East that you could voice your opinion freely during a state of national emergency or of war. So far all elections in South Korea have been fraudulent. The South Korean people were not allowed to state their opinion about the draft constitution as such was blocked by special orders. The election result was rigged. The new constitution was implemented under the cover of peaceful unification. In reality, however, it is a reactionary document to solidify the

dictatorship and the power of one single person.

Comrade Ri Man-seok further declared that the DPRK is expecting from our countries to expose this constitution. Third countries must continue with their unmasking of the South Korean puppet clique irrespective of the dialogue between South and North Korea. The socialist fraternal countries must continue to isolate the South Korean puppet clique in the international arena. This will create favorable conditions for the continuation of the [inter-Korean] dialogue.

Responding to a question by the Polish ambassador about the content of the new constitution in South Korea, Comrade Ri Man-seok declared:

Although the draft of the South Korean constitution does not contain explicit anti-communism, in reality anti-communism continues in South Korea in practical terms. The fact that explicit anti-communism has been left out from the draft is a result of pressure from the DPRK and the South Korean people on the South Korean regime.

Yet the slander against the DPRK and the patriotic people in South Korea is continuing. The entire constitution is an evil deception. With this Park Chung Hee has achieved concentrating the power in his hands for a long time.

At the end Comrade Ri Man-seok thanked for the attention to his statements.

Hofer
Attache
Initialed: Merten

CC:
1x Foreign Ministry, Far Eastern Department
1x Central Committee, Department IV
1x Embassy

[\[1\]](#) The name could not be confirmed from other sources.