

September 28, 1955

**Letter from the Polish Ambassador in the DPRK to
the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

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Summary:

The Polish Ambassador in the DPRK requests a correspondent to be sent to the DPRK and mentions that the Polish Embassy is not getting any films.

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The Embassy of Polish People's Republic in Pyongyang

Pyongyang, 28 th September, 1955

[stamp and handwriting] Cabinet of the Minister CM No. 2114/55 - 10 X

[handwriting] No. 2421/top secret/55

Secret

To: Comrade Vice-Minister Naszkowski

[handwriting] Comrade H[ead of the] D[epartment] S?ucza?ski 10.10.55 [sign]

[stamp and handwriting; stamp not stamped properly] Foreign Affairs 5th Department
[...] 10.10.55 5643/5/K/55

[handwriting; too illegible to read; followed by date] 10.10.55

I would like to point out some questions regarding [my] current work; I also want to introduce you with the subject [of Korea]. I am not experienced with those kinds of work frames. I have been having many issues. I myself sometimes doubt whether this way of conducting my duties does not cross the border of properness. Please do not get the wrong impression; I am - at least in my own conviction - far from intentions of patronising in my speech. The reason that I approach you is because I want to present my own opinion. I want to ask questions; I want to ask for advice, or to ask to be given some equipment. If I am wrong, I ask for an explanation, or for some guidance on the matter. It could be possible that sometimes I would look for something that is not even there [orthographic mistake underlined]. But, if you find that some of these problems exist I shall ask for help.

The alleged impossibility of the Polish Army's Ensemble's visit to Korea - I discussed it thoroughly in the code message to Min. Skrzyszewski and I will not repeat it, nor go over it again.

During my visit in Poland earlier this year, and also before that, I requested a correspondent to be sent to the DPRK; there has not been one in Korea for a year now. Thus, they [the correspondents] did not see the restoration of the country, not to mention the fact that none of them have seen the struggle of Polish professional groups either. He [the would-be correspondent] did not support them, although that would have been greatly appreciated.

He was unable to recognise what was valuable not only for that trip itself, but also not for a person who would come. Neither did he recognise the often high ideological stage and devotion of our comrades, and - on the other side - he also did not note or properly mark the repulsive political rudeness of some comrades - the rudeness, whose origins were not from abroad [i.e. Korea]. Correspondents from different countries went to meet them: Soviet, Czech, even Japanese, these correspondents even wrote about them (I mentioned it in my last report). There were Czech, Hungarian, Mongolian correspondents in Panmunjeom, but no Polish ones.

Let me be clear: Comrade Bielicki paid an emergency visit to our experts. His whole trip was rather peculiar since he applied to the Embassy for his 20 day stay in Korea himself (I wrote about that in my report). I supported that request.

Initially, the Press & Information Department only permitted him a period of 10 days at first (a single trip from Pyongyang to Cheongjin lasts 3 days - over 1600 km). After

the intervention, they agreed to 20 days.

Regardless of how comrade Bielicki is perceived, his [a word handwritten between the lines] second book about Korea has been published recently. It was published in chapters by several Soviet magazines and it is being translated to Korean. The Koreans like him very much. They always ask warmly about him in the Foreign Affairs and Culture and Propaganda Ministry. It is a shame that at the Wonsan plant, where our experts work, after spending only two days with our experts he learned from Korean comrades more than we all did in a year.

A few words about the films and festival film chronicle - I do not want to take too much of your time going over details. I shall try to discuss it as briefly as I can. The Embassy is not getting any films. They are sent to the Polish Mission at Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission. Using them after they are returned by Panmunjeom - according to the Department's advice - is not easy. It takes months before the films get through all the missions. In some cases, we do not even have a chance to show them. The current moments, or extemporate possibilities are completely lost. For some time now I have been asking for those films for the Embassy's and notable groups of Polish specialists' use only. More about it I wrote in the note regarding decease of comrade Pascal (No. 2421/26/55/secret).

As a result, we received a Film Festival Chronicle recently, with a note saying, 'Send to Panmunjeom immediately'. I cannot understand it. And that's why I did not follow that instruction, taking responsibility for it myself. We lent that chronicle to our Korean comrades and the Soviet Embassy for a few days; we also presented it in Seo-Pyongyang.

Panmunjeom had already complained that the embassy holds out its films. I would not be surprised if comrade Morski demanded to send films directly, leaving the Embassy out. [two words handwritten between the lines] Serving Pyongyang is not the most important duty of the Mission. But does it mean it was wrong to make good use of that film, or we did the right thing by not showing it frantically to the Diplomatic Corpse (some comrades were upset about that), to Polish workers or to the Koreans working in the plants where Polish experts worked, especially in the light of the fact that Polish experts did not always present what is worth to be seen and results of those actions are sometimes misinterpreted, and not only locally.

(As comrade Niedzielski told me after coming back from the last trip to Wonsan there had been an incident there, when all the women workers from the Korean ensemble refused to dance with our specialists at one of the meetings. Those are unimaginable things in Korean terms. I do not want it to be presenting it as alarming. I did not check that case. We discussed these questions in the Embassy. On first half of the next month I want to go to Wonsan with Minister of Communication and then I shall inform separately).

I wrote all that neither with the intention of complaining about these or those comrades or problems, nor to be granted the solutions for the problems directly (which does not mean that in my opinion the way to solve them, timing and tactic are not important).

What do I have in mind is that I have a feeling that abovementioned incidents are expressing a certain attitude towards Korean affairs; they are not important anymore.

I cannot illustrate it with quotes since I did not collect them, but I met this kind of attitude in the country very often.

Opinions of this kind were overwhelming in comrade Lenobl's speech during his last trip here (these were his first words when he spoke to me). He was extremely

preoccupied with new contracts in India and Egypt, [saying that] 'these are bigger issues'.

I do not know if these bigger issues can be more significant when 'smaller' ones are neglected. It is not the point that we cannot afford it. If Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Mongolia can afford to send ensembles (in full or part of them), Czechoslovakia (regular correspondent), Hungary, and Mongolia can afford to send correspondents, GDR [German Democratic Republic] and Albania can send a delegation, nobody would believe (and they will be right) that Poland cannot afford to do this.

Certainly, anybody in that particular situation would consider the affairs of the country of residence the most important and documents of this kind are - as I reckon - usually read with indulgence.

One cannot turn back the clock. I do not want to claim that German issues are less important than Korean ones, but I still do not think, that the question of Korea has been set aside completely. Even if the "bigger" [a word crossed out and handwritten again over the typing] importance is indeed bigger, it does not mean that one can just turn away from the smaller one. USA's opinion may not be the most authoritative one, still USA reduced help by 17 % for Asian countries this year, but that reduction was just a symbolic... 1 % for Korea. That help (for Korea) counts in over 1/2 million dollars. The Soviet and Chinese help for the DPRK is very significant.

And on the other hand, there are not a lot of the countries in the world which are rebuilt by help of the countries of the peace bloc. I do not know, maybe my approach is too romantic... but I think that this is the way of new forms of building socialism, which is developing not only in the country, but in the whole world; that is how the socialist cadres are born. I do not know if for the literary is it less important than a Tibetan issue.

Of course, the Egyptian issue is important, as a responding country's issue, but even so, I am not sure if Korean affairs are definitely less important than Egyptian Bridge as well.

Not a long time ago the former vice premier of the "RFSSR" [Russian Federative Soviet Socialist Republic, quotation marks in the original text] arrived to pay a longer visit as the representative of the institution for technical co-operation (this term might be a little bit inaccurate, I will explain it more precisely in the next note). Certainly, this is not a crucial argument showing the importance of Korean affairs, but it is definitely not against it either.

One more thing - all of "my" issues can be answered briefly: you did not sign the agreement about cultural co-operation between Poland and Korea and that is why there is nothing for you to complain about. Well, there is the excuse for me in this situation but I would not want to articulate it (and not because I am too modest in that case). With all the abovementioned countries, the DPRK's relations are progressing similarly; i.e. co-operation is being discussed and this is not the point of that issue.

Siedlecki Jerzy [sign]
PPR's Ambassador in the DPRK.

PS. In the code message sent to Minister Skrzyszewski, which was about the issue of Polish Army's Ensemble, I mentioned the "precedent" considering the unfortunate moments in Polish-Korean relations.

Before the 22nd of July, we enquired the Koreans to organize a presentation of Polish films in Pyongyang. We were informed that it would be an unnecessary disturbance in the already set cinema schedules and one film would be enough. I was surprised with such an attitude, since lately there had been arranged the one week presentation of Czech movies celebrating a Czech Day, and another show of Polish [a word handwritten between the lines] films celebrating the inauguration of a Polish hospital in Hamheung.

The II secretary, comrade Jó?wiak, who is setting relations very well, conducted the conversation. After some time, comrade Jó?wiak told me that he was taken aback with the Korean Foreign Affairs' response as well, and referring to that he reminded me of how [a sentence underlined] he witnessed the talk of the personnel of Department Five with the DPRK's embassy staff during the work-study in our Foreign Affairs.

[handwriting on the margin] 1. He did not witness 2. Koreans themselves suggested showing only one film

During that talk, they also replied to a Korean proposal of showing some Korean films (there are good ones) that one would be enough.

Comrade Jó?wiak had scruples about speaking of that matter, which were, in my opinion, unnecessary. Just like now, I mentioned it in the letter to you not to do it behind the back of the comrades in Department Five, but since that incident refers to the matter I wanted to approach you about it (everyone can make a mistake, and if one thinks that is right, let one substantiate his opinion).

I mentioned that in the abovementioned code message, since I suppose we cannot allow this unpleasant grind in the Korean-Polish relations. And the regarded incident gives the crucial concept of the circumstances essential in this case. That is why I used the expression that if we do not send the ensemble, we will cut Korean comrades to the quick.

Siedlecki Jerzy [sign]
PPR's ambassador to the DPRK

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