

February 24, 1960
Journal of Soviet Ambassador in the DPRK A.M.
Puzanov for 24 February 1960

Citation:

"Journal of Soviet Ambassador in the DPRK A.M. Puzanov for 24 February 1960",
February 24, 1960, Wilson Center Digital Archive, AVPRF fond 0102, opis 16, delo 6,
p.72-122. Translated for NKIDP by Gary Goldberg.
<https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/116175>

Summary:

Kim Il Sung describes his kidney disease in a conversation with the Soviet Ambassador and provides information on agriculture and ongoing administrative restructuring in North Korea.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from ROK Ministry of Unification

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

USSR EMBASSY IN THE DPRK [faded USSR TOP SECRET

MFA stamp: Copy N° 3

N° 58 0767s

25 March 1960 9 April 1960]

[handwritten:

"to Cdes. [[N. P. Varnov?]] and Samsonov, G. Ye.

9 April 1960 [[illegible signature]]"]

JOURNAL

of Soviet Ambassador in the DPRK A. M. Puzanov for the period

16 February through 24 March 1960

Pyongyang

[...]

24 February 1960

I visited Kim Il Sung and passed him [word] from the CPSU CC that the Soviet comrades are concerned about the state of his health and express readiness to help his treatment. I also said that if you want to receive corresponding medical consultation from Soviet specialists the everything necessary will be done.

Kim Il Sung listened with great attention and said with some emotion:

Please pass [my] heartfelt gratitude to the CPSU CC leadership for the display of concern and attention. The Soviet comrades have always treated me very attentively and offered help. So it was during the war and afterwards. Soviet professors came from Moscow last spring. Soviet doctors are here at our government hospital who also help me. In fact, there was a serious aggravation of my illness (a kidney stone) in the fall and winter but it presents no danger to my life. Right now I feel OK. I am working normally. The truth is, the pain appears if I sit at a meeting for a long time. If I feel worse then I will immediately make us of the CPSU CC's offer of help. Then Kim Il Sung again expressed gratitude for the attention and concern.

Kim Il Sung then talked in detail about the circumstances of the arrival of Chinese doctors last November.

Kim Il Sung said, last year I was in Peking for the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the formation of the PRC and during lunch I explained to Zhou Enlai the reason for my refusal of the Maotai vodka offered because of kidney disease. Zhou Enlai recommended the use of methods of Chinese folk medicine. Therefore two Chinese doctors came to Pyongyang last fall. Initially they posed the problem of removing the stone without surgical intervention. Then the doctors decided to halt the growth of the stone and to make the operation of the kidney normal. They gave another medicine for this purpose. We'll see what comes of it.

The following issues were touched upon in the natural, comradely conversation which took place.

1. Concerning preparations for the spring planting. I shared with Kim Il Sung my observations and impressions from the trip to the province of South Hwanghae where the peasants had begun field work.

Kim Il Sung said that last year a grain harvest of 3,400,000 tons was gathered, that is, 300,000 tons less than in 1958. Kim Il Sung said, after the consolidation of agricultural cooperatives our senior officials and members of agricultural cooperatives had no experience of working on large farms. In addition, much of the labor force was taken away for irrigation work. All this had a considerable effect on gathering the harvest, but in return the watered areas were increased by more than 300,000 jeongbo. I think that these 300,000 are of greater importance than the shortfall of 300,000 tons compared to the 1958 gross grain harvest. This year the situation has changed: work experience has been accumulated, more fertilizer has been produced, and a very small number of members of agricultural cooperatives are engaged in irrigation construction.

I said that officials of our Embassy were interested in the materials published in Rodong Sinmun about the plenum of the Kangso district Party committee held with your participation.

Kim Il Sung talked in details about he was convinced that the methods and style of work of district Party committee are sharply behind the times. District Party committee, like provincial ones, send decisions, instructions to the ri and demand information. But now the situation in the ri has sharply changed, which the district officials are not taking into account. The number of officials in the district Party and people's committees is up to 140-150. Now, when there is only one agricultural cooperative in a ri, the task of district Party committees is to help the leadership of ri agricultural cooperatives and Party committees to organize work practically and to educate people. The meetings of four ri Party committees and primary Party organization of the Kangso district Party committee I held showed the detachment of district Party committees from the real specific situation. The plenum of the district Party committee with the presence of the leaders of other district committees of the province of South Pyeong-an was held with this purpose. Some materials of this plenum were published in the press. But some issues we could not publish. Therefore yesterday a conference of all chairmen of provincial Party and people's committees was held in the KWP CC at which I gave a five-hour report..

For my part I said that beginning with the September 1953 CPSU CC Plenum the CPSU CC Presidium, especially Cde. N. S. Khrushchev, has devoted a great deal of attention to leaders of Party organizations dealing with agricultural issues specifically and with knowledge of the matter and that, as the remarkable experience of the Ryazan' Oblast' CPSU Committee has shown, putting these instructions of the CC into effect produces remarkable results.

Further in the conversation the issue of the restructuring of industrial management conducted in January was touched upon.

Kim Il Sung said that this was done with the goal of, on the one hand, eliminating narrowly-departmental tendencies and, on the other, of increasing the responsibility of provincial Party committees for the operation of all enterprises located on the territory of the province, that is, both centrally subordinate enterprises as well as local industrial enterprises. Now, said Kim Il Sung, the provincial Party committees will receive industrial development plans which include not only local industrial enterprises but also centrally subordinate enterprises, to whom in turn the plan is directly conveyed by the Committees of the Cabinet of Ministers. In connection with the fact that senior officials of provincial Party committees do not have the technical knowledge and work experience in industry provincial economic management committees have been organized to help them to which have been sent groups of specialists who know the operation of particular industrial sectors.

I asked Kim Il Sung for what reasons the Ministry of the Timber Industry was left.

Kim Il Sung said that this was done as a consequence of the dispersion of the facilities of this ministry and the great difficulty with supplying the economy with timber. But, Kim Il Sung added, in a year or two the Ministry of the Timber Industry will be included in the Committee for Heavy Industry.

He then said that Jeong Il-yong was appointed Chairman of the Committee for Light Industry because one can only further improve and develop light industry enterprises on a scientific and technical basis. Mun Man-uk, the Minister of Light Industry, although he has proved himself to be an experienced, energetic, and devoted official, but he is not a specialist and does not have the necessary technical information to manage an important sector of the economy.

At the end of the conversation the issue of the work of the session of the Supreme People's Assembly opening 25 February was touched upon.

Kim Il Sung said that there will not be anything new in the question of legislation, but the session will adopt a law about paid medical help, although in practice it started to be implemented right after the war.

At the end of the conversation Kim Il Sung again warmly thanked the CPSU CC for the display of attention and concern.

[...]

USSR AMBASSADOR IN THE DPRK

[signature]

(A. PUZANOV)

Five copies printed

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2 - Cde. Yu. V. Andropov

3 - Cde. DVO, USSR MFA

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5 - to file

Nº [208]