

September 24, 1963

Record of Conversation between Kim Il Sung and Liu Shaoqi

Citation:

"Record of Conversation between Kim Il Sung and Liu Shaoqi", September 24, 1963, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 203-00566-04, 101-106. Obtained by Shen Zhihua and translated by Jeffrey Wang and Charles Kraus.
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Summary:

Chairman Liu Shaoqi and Premier Kim Il Sung exchanged views on many agricultural issues including irrigation, incomes of farmers, alternation of land, mechanization and electrification.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from MacArthur Foundation

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Time: 24 September 1963, 9:30AM

Location: Moranbong Guest House, Pyongyang

Participants:

From China: All delegation personnel and Ambassador Hao Deqing

From [North] Korea: Comrade Kim Il, Comrade Pak Geum-cheol [Pak Kum Chol], Comrade Pak Seong-cheol [Pak Song Chol], Comrade Pak Yong-guk [Pak Yong Guk], Charge d'affaires ad interim Jeong Bong-gyu [Jong Pong Gyu]

Translators: Kim Sun-ho [Kim Sun Ho] (Korean side), Kang Ryong-gu [Kang Ryong Gu]

Documentation: Zhang Ruijie

(Greetings)

Premier Kim [Il Sung] (to be abbreviated as Kim): You traveled a great distance yesterday. This time, you have visited practically every part of North Korea. You only missed South Korea.

Chairman Liu [Shaoqi] (to be abbreviated as Liu): We traveled by automobiles and by trains, [but] we did not walk. We saw many things. Yesterday we saw your reservoir, you have built it well. [You are] not afraid of atomic weapons.

Kim: It is not a problem. The reservoir was built after the armistice and it took a lot of effort. When construction began, a Soviet advisor went to see it with Comrade Kim Il. He said the Koreans cannot build it-they [the Koreans] have no machines, how can you build with bare hands? [But] after two months, when the Soviet advisor went to visit the site again, he was very shocked at how many people he saw working. He admitted that [North] Koreans can do it and said that people from the East are very strange. Afterwards, the advisor met with me and said that [North] Korea is backwards and has backward ways. I said the [Chinese People's] Volunteer Army and the [Korean] People's Army defeated the advanced weapons of the United States with backward weapons. We are [building] with this same spirit. He said that is correct. At the beginning, the Soviet advisor (an agriculture advisor) said the project will require six years, [but] the outcome was that we started providing water within a year and the project was completed within two and a half years.

Liu: He did not know that the Koreans and Chinese are particularly good at digging tunnels. During the War to Resist America and Aid Korea, it was not just the military digging tunnels, but the people as well. The main thing with the reservoir project is to dig tunnels and have a small dam. This does not require very many materials.

Kim: The underground pipes can irrigate 50,000 jeongbo of land. [They] were originally designed to irrigate [only] 30,000 jeongbo, but after [we] completed construction it was increased to 50,000 jeongbo of land. We are preparing to create a small reservoir further downstream in order to save water during the winter and increase irrigation capacity.

Liu: Yesterday we also went to see the plains. They are increasing by 20,000 jeongbo, [and] the people are particularly happy because [this] is beneficial to them.

Kim: Life is improving very rapidly [for the people]. At present, [the people] are all well-to-do middle peasants [so] things are already very good. However, this area cannot produce anything else other than crops, [so] this is a weakness. In the

mountainous areas, [we] can also engage in some sideline production, such as fruit farms and animal husbandry. The cash income there [in the mountainous areas] is higher than here [in the plains], because they [farmers living in the plains] can only produce crops.

Liu: China also has this kind of situation. How to increase the cash incomes of farmers growing rice in the plains...

Kim: Prepare to work two seasons: one season to produce feed and develop animal husbandry. It is better to grow oats and cut young crops to feed livestock than to use grains.

Liu: We have also done that, cutting off immature crops to feed livestock. It does not affect the transplanting of rice seedlings.

Kim: This increases the use of the land.

Liu: Broad beans can also be used to feed livestock. Broad beans have a kind of bacteria which is beneficial to rice.

Kim: This way we can increase income. The semi-mountainous/semi-plains regions have an abundance of food and cash income. The area you saw yesterday has more food than cash. The peasants all favor the semi-mountainous/semi-plains regions.

Liu: Yesterday from the road, we saw many tractors [being used] to cultivate land, cutting down crops, and pumping water.

Kim: The plains can take advantage of tractors.

Liu: By taking the train and riding in automobiles we saw what [North] Korea looks like for the most part. We saw three of your large factories-the Yellow Sea Ironworks and two chemical plants. Yesterday I talked with Comrade Choe Yong-geon [Choe Yonggon], [and learned that] in the ten years since the 1953 armistice, you took the North Korea which was completely destroyed by war and basically built a new [North] Korea. Everything is new. Hamheung [Hamhung] is new, and I am afraid that other cities and villages are also new.

Kim: Indeed, the destruction was thorough.

Liu: But in ten years' time you have basically built a new [country]. Most areas have electricity. The peasants all use electricity.

Kim: It is very beneficial to us.

Liu: It is a very favorable condition. You have many tractors. I only saw one place which used ox ploughs.

Kim: The mountainous areas still use a lot of ox ploughs, [but] they have to use oxen.

Liu: The one I saw was also in the mountains. Your mechanization, electrification, and irrigation are already on a great scale. Peasant villages mainly depend on chemical fertilizers. The four modernizations of the rural villages are already on a great scale. The production relationship is collective and ownership is universal. Collective ownership, as I saw it, is quite consolidated. This is a new [North] Korea. The old

[North] Korea was destroyed by war. The war helped you exterminate land owners, wealthy peasants, urban bourgeois, and religion. There are very few remnants of the old. All the developments are new.

Kim: There are not many [North] Korean landowners left. During land reform, there were 44,000 households, [but] most of them were small landowners. In South Korea, you still have large landowners, but in North Korea most of them are small landowners. During land reform, many of them fled to South Korea, which was not at all a bad thing for us. Although in the future [landowners] will cause troubles, at the moment [their absence from North Korea] is still a positive thing. Some of them were killed during the war, [so] not many of them are left. Those who behave well have been left alone, but we have exiled the trouble makers to [areas near] the Tumen and Yalu Rivers to control [their] production. If they want to run away, they can only run to your side [China], so it does not matter. Party Committees in all regions have a very clear grasp of all of the impure elements, [so] they cannot make trouble.

Liu: The urban small business owners have also been eliminated.

Kim: They all went bankrupt during the war, [so] there was no need to confiscate their property. Actually, we had to supply their food, so now they have to listen to us.

Liu: There were once wealthy farmers, [but] during the war, they were made into poor peasants. The cities have turned proletariat; there is not a penny to one's name. With this as a foundation, [you] have developed by relying on the government's strength, not on private power, [and so] the people are grateful to the government. It is not okay to rely on individuals. Only through the collective can reconstruction be achieved. [This] has resulted in the conditions for your superbly organized socialist economy.

Kim: Which is why it has been easy to create urban and agricultural cooperatives, because they have needs and it is impossible for them to achieve them individually.

Liu: Going at it alone does not work. The people have to rely on the state for bowls, plates, and even bricks.

Kim: The state provides farm cattle but only to collectives. If the people would like to use the cattle then they would have to organize.

Liu: After the war, all daily commodities had to be provided.

Kim: Even clothes had to be provided.

Liu: The free assistance given to you by the Soviet Union and China had an effect in helping you restore daily life.

Kim: A very significant effect.

Liu: Without this assistance, I am afraid you would also have difficulties. With no exports, it would have been very difficult for [you] to have produced your own bowls, dishes, and pots. [You] would have had to buy them from abroad.

Kim: A very significant effect.

Liu: If you had to repay these two sums of money right now with interest, then you

would [face] even more difficulties.

Kim: The assistance given to us was very significant. It gave the people additional confidence.

Liu: The assistance allowed the people to continue daily life and labor. The rest of the assistance went to creating factories.

Kim: There are two sides to this. On the one hand, after being trained by war, the people had the determination to fight to the end. On the other hand, with internationalist assistance, the people were encouraged. They felt that they were not developing in isolation, [but] that there was hope. This emboldened the people. By directly participating in development, the [People's] Volunteer Army greatly helped us. During the first day of our meeting, I mentioned that the Engineering Corps of the [People's] Volunteer Army helped to build a brick kiln and directly participated in the construction of the capital [Pyongyang]. In 1952, the Gyeonryong [Kyon Ryong] Reservoir was bombed and destroyed by American aircrafts. Two divisions of the [People's] Volunteer Army and one division of the [Korean] People's Army repaired [the reservoir] under the cover of anti-aircraft artillery. When American aircrafts appeared, we opened fire. When American aircrafts were absent, then we rushed to repair [the reservoir]. So next to the reservoir there is a cooperative named the Korean-Chinese Friendship Farm. This reservoir can irrigate 4,000 jeongbo of land, mostly [land] near Pyongyang. When the reservoir was destroyed, many houses in the area were washed away, [but] the [People's] Volunteer Army, within three or four months, made repairs. Later on the Americans came to conduct reconnaissance, but since there was nothing they could do, they never came again. Anti-aircraft artillery was deployed until the armistice.

(Premier Kim invited Chairman Liu to visit an agriculture exhibit and conversation concluded.)