

September 5, 1964

**Minutes of Conversation between Kim Il Sung and
the Chinese Economic Goodwill Delegation**

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Summary:

An exchange of views between Kim Il Sung and the Chinese Economic Goodwill Delegation on economic development in the DPRK and China. Kim says that North Korea appreciates the technical assistance and support from China. Further, they discussed the Soviet revisionists' activities against North Korea.

Credits:

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Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Location: Korean Workers' Party Central Committee Office Building

Personnel from the Korean Side: Nam Chun-hwa [Nam Chun Hwa], Chief of the Cabinet Foreign Economic Bureau

Personnel from the Chinese Side: Fang Yi, Head of the Government Economic Goodwill Mission and Chairman of the Foreign Economic Relations Commission; members of the delegation. The [Chinese] Ambassador to [North] Korea Hao Deqing was also present

Recorder: Zhang Xianwu

Summary of Comrade Kim Il Sung's Conversation: Thanking China for supporting [North] Korea's economic development. [North] Korea's economic development began from scratch, [but] now that there is a basic framework in place, the main objective is to improve the quality [of development]. This year there were agricultural disasters, but the [crop] yield can still be maintained last year's levels. Northeast China is [North] Korea's rear area. A [North] Korean delegation visited [Northeast China] to strengthen ties and study the experience of the machine, steel, and chemical industrial sectors. The Soviet revisionists' sabotage activities against [North] Korea are now more obvious than before, [but] [North] Korea intends to take countermeasures. Pravda named [North Korea] in an attack, [and] [North] Korea intends to name [the Soviet revisionists] in response.

Greetings (skipped)

Director Fang Yi (hereafter referred to as Fang): Chairman Mao [Zedong], Chairman Liu [Shaoqi], and Premier Zhou [Enlai] extend their greetings to Comrade Premier [Kim Il Sung].

Kim Il Sung (hereafter referred as Kim): Thank you. Is Chairman Mao well? Because of his age, [he] should take care!

Ambassador Hao Deqing (hereafter referred as Hao): [Chairman Mao] is not young, but he is still very lively. [Chairman Mao] can still swim even when the water is only 18 or 19 degrees [Celsius].

Kim: Exercise! Comrade Choe Yong-geon [Choe Yonggon] can also swim in water which is only 18 degrees, [but] I cannot swim in water below 25 degrees. The enemy is saying that Comrade Zhou Enlai has fallen ill, is this just a rumor?

Hao: Premier Zhou was at the hospital for a small surgery.

Fang: He has already been discharged from the hospital.

Kim: That is good then. Have you visited any places [in Korea]?

Fang: We visited Jueul [Chuul] Spa and met with Vice Premier Ri Ju-yeon [Ri Ju Yon]. We also visited Hoeryeong [Hoeryong], Hyesan, Cheongjin [Chongjin], and Hamheung [Hamhung].

Kim: Is this your first time visiting [North] Korea?

Fang: This is the first time.

Kim: You have been to many places for your first time [here]. Hoeryeong has a sugar factory. It is new and I still have not seen it yet. I have not been to Hoeryeong for almost three years.

Fang: The Premier is quite busy.

Kim: One could say I am busy, but one could also say that I am not. When things come up, then I am busy.

Hao: The Premier travels frequently, but it is impossible to visit every place often.

Kim: We enthusiastically welcome your visit! This is especially so because you are the comrades who are directly responsible for helping us. We express our deepest gratitude to you. With your help, our national economy has done very well. Of course, we still cannot call it flawless. The basic direction is, [however], from nothing to something. [Our] main focus this year is on raising the quality of light industries. Since we have started, we found many inadequacies. There are some small things in which we need to raise the quality of; otherwise [our] overall economic development will be restricted. There are only a few large factories in which [we] cannot resolve problems. The direction we give to [our] lower ranking comrades is to have the small things up and running, to add [things] up. In our language, we say this is adding muscle. The skeleton is already in place, and we can complete it by adding some muscle. At present, no matter the quality, the main thing is to use the items which we have produced on our own. From this [strategy], we can train and educate our people. [As we] go from nothing to something, it is impossible to be perfect and have everything. [But] gradually we can produce some things. [Our] accomplishments [were] obtained only as a result of your help. We express our gratitude once again.

Fang: The main purpose of our visit this time is to learn from the Korean comrades. Our visit has had a deep impression upon us. The Korean comrades' path of self-reliance has obtained great achievements.

Kim: You have flattered us! You should not compliment us in front of other comrades. This way, they will become conceited, arrogant, and no longer hard working. Of course, it is undeniable that there are some achievements. It is wrong to deny achievement. However, we should not overemphasize achievements. There are still many things to do.

Fang: We have indeed observed many great achievements. Comrade Premier mentioned China's assistance, [but] it has been very limited. At the same time, our work has many shortcomings. [For example] the equipment we provided has quite a few flaws. During our visit, we also want to see what equipment is of poor quality; what needs repaired, what needs exchanged. Comrade Premier knows that China's industrial standards are still not high.

Kim: I have praised your equipment [in front of] our comrades. The standard is high. Last year, I spoke to [some] comrades after I visited the Hyesan Paper Factory. I said, in the past, China, when it was under Jiang Jieshi's [Chiang Kai-shek] rule, had almost no machine-building industry. But since liberation, [the machine-building industry] has [already] reached this [high] level, it is especially praiseworthy. When you manufacture equipment, [you] often absorb new things and this is very good. We want to learn from you. You have made many things. I often pay close attention to the People's Daily. I can see that you produce many things. We still have not found any problems with the equipment you provided. We have not found any major issues.

Kim (after asking Chief Nam Chun-hwa, said): Our comrades have high regards for the

[Chinese] produced ten 75-ton boilers. Our chemical fiber factories in Shineuiju [Sinuiju] and Cheongjin [Chongjin] all use your boilers.

Fang: Our equipment has many problems. There are many aspects that require improvements.

Kim: I am a layman, so it is not clear. You are the expert, you would know. If you see potential for improvement, then make them. From our side, we do not have any suggestions. We have many shortcomings when it comes to equipment usage and management.

Fang: We have not seen any. We supply the equipment, [but in terms] of process, [we] have a long ways to go compared to the advanced world. Whatever the industry or science, they develop by 1000 li each day [and] new production technologies [emerge] daily. For example, the equipment at the Hyesan Paper Factory is considered excellent by China's current standards, but compared to the world's standards-such as the newest American equipment-we cannot compete.

Kim (laughing): If [you] want to catch up, it cannot be done in one day! I have not been to the United States, so I do not know the standards of American equipment. But from what I see, the standards of your equipment are very high. How is China's agriculture this year?

Fang: It is better than last year. Last year we had floods in Henan and Hebei. Grain and cotton production are likely to increase this year.

Kim: That is good. This year there were several typhoons. [According to] initial estimations, [we] might lose 300,000-400,000 tons [of crop output]. Due to the typhoons, some of the maize [crop] was broken. When Premier Zhou visited last time, not long after he returned [to China], a typhoon struck. There was some damage. The other crop yields seem okay. However it is often overcast during August, [so] there is not enough sun and many of the rice shells are empty. This will have some impact [on agriculture]. This year the rain has been concentrated, like shooting all at once. The damage from torrential rain is not that big, [and] the main losses are due to lack of sunlight. [But] this year's harvest will still meet the level of last year's [harvest]. If there were not disasters, [we] estimate that we would have produced 500,000 tons more [crop output] than last year. [As long as we] maintain last year's [harvest] level, sustenance should not be an issue. This year, the disasters in South Korea are relentless. The drought is severe. The crops in North and South Gyeongsang [Kyongsang] Provinces and Daegu [Taegu] are all dead [because of] drought. The areas around the north have been affected by floods and typhoons. However, they did not plant maize so the impact of the typhoon has not been that bad. Your crops have grown well this year. There will be a good harvest; it will be a joyous occasion. It will be important [in the struggle] against revisionism. The revisionist countries have had bad harvests every year. Harvests have been a problem in Eastern Europe-Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia. [The situation in] Romania seems okay. Vice Premier Kim Il has just returned from there. It was said that their agriculture is doing well and they are preparing to store one year's worth of food. To still have one year's worth of food after providing for the entire country, that is pretty good. It seems that Romania will be wealthy, while the other Eastern European countries are done for. [I] heard that agriculture in Vietnam this year is also not bad. Their harvest of spring crops did well. We also do not wish to raise living standards to too high [of a level]. As long as we have things to eat and wear, we can [conduct] revolution. To not go hungry while [staging] revolution, that is good enough. What other plans does Director Fang have? What other places do you plan to see?

Fang: I want to visit Pyongyang for two days, then head to Shineuiju and return to China from there.

Kim: Stay for a few more days! Making a trip here is not easy. You still have not been to Geumgangsan [Kumgangsan]!

Fang: The original plan was [to spend] twenty days [in Korea]. However, because China's National Day is coming up, there will be many foreign delegations [arriving in China]. We need to return a little earlier. We can still come [again] in the future.

Kim: We welcome you to visit again in the future. I want to go to Northeast China soon, to learn a bit.

Fang: You are too hospitable!

Kim: I am planning on heading to China right after [Korea's] Independence Day and will stay for ten days or so. Other than sending a delegation, we will also be sending an observation group. There will be many people traveling [to China].

Hao: They set off today. I am here while the [Embassy] Counselor went to send them off.

Kim: We have sent many people [to China]. After I saw the roster for the observation group, I criticized them for sending too many people. They said it is necessary for them to go.

Hao: It is quite all right to send more.

Kim: Is it all right? Some of them are going to learn about the machine-building industry, automobiles, mining machinery, and cranes. We have these things according to Soviet designs. [Even] after doing this for a few years, we have never done it well. We still have not figured out what the problem is. We do not know if it is an issue with the design or if we did not follow the plans closely enough. So we are going to [China] to learn. Secondly, we are working on a chemical plant which was started by the Japanese before liberation. Since they abandoned it, we are preparing to complete it. According to our technical personnel, there is a chemical plant of the same nature in Jilin, China. So there are some people from the chemicals industry who want to go to Jilin for a visit. In addition, some comrades from the steel industry are preparing to visit Anshan and Benxi. It is said that there is a one-million ton steel factory with great abilities in Benxi. The comrades going to China are mostly from these three aforementioned fields. They are all experts, [so] they will learn something. I am not an expert, [so my] going [to China] is just for a cursory look, to see the size of the factories and whether there is anything new. Northeast China has a very close relationship with us. It is our rear area. It has been and always will be this way. Chairman Mao often tells us that China's Northeast is [North] Korea's rear. With this visit [to the Northeast], our relationship will become even closer. Last year, comrades from the Northeast Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee came [to Korea] [and we] negotiated that [I] will visit [China] this year. With this sort of back and forth [visiting], [our] relationship will become even closer and [we] will become more familiar with [one another's] situations. If something happens, we can fight side by side. Since Northeast China is our rear area, if anything were to occur, we will need to rely on the Northeast. During the Fatherland Liberation War [the Korean War], almost all of North Korea escaped to Northeast China. Children, women, hospitals all went over. Even Comrade Choe Yong-geon went over [so he could] reorganize the new forces. Northeast China is indeed a very good rear. The Korean people will never forget this. In the future, if war ever breaks out, Northeast China will also play the same role. In this [upcoming] visit, I want to [build] trust with the comrades of the Northeast Bureau. Our relationship with Northeast China is brotherly, one of flesh and blood.

Hao: Our comrades in the Northeast enthusiastically await Comrade Premier's visit. You are going to the rear area this time to provide the spot guidance!

Kim: What on the spot guidance!

Hao: The comrades in the Northeast were all very happy when they heard that Comrade Premier is going to visit. They have long been awaiting [your visit].

Kim: Thank you. Because we are close friends, they would want me to visit. This visit is mainly [so we can become] even closer and more familiar [with each other].

Hao: Ten days are too short. It will be tiring. If possible, it would be best to extend [the trip] by a few days. [You should] revisit some familiar places. We can visit the places where Comrade Premier once waged a guerilla war. [You] can visit villages and small cities.

Kim: This will not be the only visit. I will visit again in the future. [We] are not prepared to visit villages and small cities this time, mainly just large cities. Next time, we will not be going to large cities. We will go to Tonghua and the Liao River.

Hao: You have been to all the villages there.

Kim: If a war breaks out, the forests in Linjiang and Tonghua will become important rear areas for us. So I want to visit again. Northeast China is very close to us. It is not like traveling to a distant country. If the will is there, we can go any time.

Hao: In a sense, you [North Korea] are the rear area for the Northeast. Because of revisionism in the north [the Soviet Union], we can no longer rely on them. We need you.

Kim: This is cause for concern. From the newspapers, we learned that there is some border dispute with the Soviet Union in Xinjiang.

Hao: It is common to have small disputes in the areas near Kazakhstan.

Fang: They incited some border residents to flee [to the Soviet Union]. After they left, they regretted it and wrote back to report starvation and doing hard labor there.

Kim: The Soviets have also committed a number of sabotage activities against us recently. Of course, it was this way in the past as well, but their recent actions have been relatively undisguised. According to our present contract with the Soviet Union, the Soviets were supposed to provide equipment for our wool spinning factory and the thermal power plant in Pyongyang. The Pyongyang Power Plant has about forty or so Soviet specialists, and recently they have been propagandizing Khrushchev's views, publicly disseminating [them]. They even attempted to buy off some of our Russian language translators in order to translate Soviet files into Korean and incite the Korean people to flee to the Soviet Union. The file clearly stated "please go to the Soviet Union." The Soviet technical specialists distributed these files everywhere-there are still some circulating on the public buses. Some were repudiated on the spot. Some comrades took the files for references and then turned them over to organizations of the [Korean Workers'] Party. The Soviets are doing such bad things! Based on our contract with the Soviet Union (which expires in 1965), we sent a group of forestry workers to the Soviet Far East area to work as lumberjacks. We provide the labor and they provide the equipment and woodlands. Of all the logs, [North] Korea receives 40 percent and the Soviet Union receives 60 percent. Just like

renting land. (Hao says: landlords and poor peasants split [the crop yield] 60 percent and 40 percent [respectively]). Khrushchev wantonly published [about] this affair, stating, "are you not self-reliant? Why are you coming to our Far East for lumber?" They made quite a show with these broadcasts, [acting as if] they are providing us with some great benefit as if this kind of propaganda is not enough. They stopped providing [us] with the woodlands last year. In order to pressure us, they even said that our workers do not abide by rules and Soviet law. At the same time, they encouraged our workers to stay in the Soviet Union. Since our workers did not bring their families, going over as single men, [the Soviets] sent women to seduce them. As a result of this kind of seduction, many of our workers have stayed. Although the contract did not yet expire, we are preparing to deliver a memorandum to the Soviet Union. We are no longer fulfilling the contract. The contract is unfair and unreasonable. [Even] without wood, we must still continue [the contract]. So we are preparing to recall our workers. The Soviets recently criticized us through Pravda. Regarding the Asia Economic Forum, they wrote an article, the content is really negative. Since they pointedly criticized us, we are also preparing to pointedly criticize them. We also have a mouth! We cannot let them criticize us! We have some students studying abroad in the Soviet Union. They returned with Soviet wives. The Soviets have purposely allowed these women to marry our students, so that they can insert people for espionage activities. So we have assigned these returned students to work [at different] locations. However, the Soviet women did not follow them. They stayed behind in Pyongyang to do evil things. There are still twenty or so of them. They messed around with ruffians and engaged in prostitution. When we discovered this situation, we educated our youth and they no longer mess around with Soviet women. So this gang of Soviet women has turned to seduce Albanian students. We have many Albanian students, [but] among the international students, they abide by the rules the least. They often visit the Soviet women. Our Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the Albanian Ambassador of the situation and asked him to control it. As a result, Albanian students do not visit Soviet women as much. These [Soviet women] then turned to African students (there are also quite a few of them). These women mess around and disrupt social order. Their impact is quite negative. We are currently preparing to expel them all from the country. First, they disrupt social order. Second, they openly oppose our government's policies. We can expel them with these two reasons [alone]. Right now there are only twenty of them. There used to be a lot of them, 70 or 80 of them. Most of them we politely sent away. Some left but returned, saying that there is no food in the Soviet Union. If they want food, then they must abide by the rules in order to return. Only this way would we allow them to stay. But they do many bad things, often visiting the Soviet Embassy. It seems that the Soviet Embassy is constantly providing them with missions. Their situation has worsened over time. [We] have been polite for the remaining twenty or so people, and they have not left; [so] the only option left is to expel them [from Korea]. We have suffered a lot because of the Pyongyang Power Plant. We originally were even prepared to ask the Soviet Union to provide equipment so that we could establish the Bukchang [Pukchang] Thermal Power Plant. We do not want it anymore. The contract was already drafted. It seems they want to mess with us for a bit, [so] they will not stop yet. They messed with the Japanese Communist [Party] for a bit. It will probably be worse for you.

Fang: Over the past few years, the complete sets of equipment which the Soviet Union gave to China were all second and third rate. They do not give us first rate [equipment]. Many industries in the Soviet Union, particularly the chemical industry, are behind. [So] we have made agreements with capitalist countries to import complete sets of equipment, [as] we found that Soviet technologies are far behind. Their machinery is unwieldy, takes up a lot of space and requires a lot of personnel. [They] are unreasonable to use. We have many factories that require modifications. It seems that some Soviet industries are not bad, [but] others are not good at all. According to what we know, Soviet equipment is difficult to market on the national market.

Kim: The economically backward socialist countries are forced to use their [the Soviet

Union's] equipment.

Hao: We do not want it. They will have to put the backlog in storage.

Fang: We do not want their equipment anymore. We are spending foreign exchanges either way, [so] we can buy better equipment.

Kim: Absolutely correct.

Fang: The Soviet Union still says it offers "selfless assistance" to us, as if it were free "assistance." I read an article in Pravda which bragged that they "assisted" with the construction of [North] Korea's Heungnam [Hungnam] Chemical Fertilizer Plant. When I went to Hamheung [Hamhung] and visited this chemical fertilizer plant, I found out that what they have been saying is not true at all.

Kim: The Soviet Union only provided a set of nitrogen fertilizer equipment. We paid for that in gold. It was not included in the one billion old Rubles they gave us as aid. They were only willing to provide that set of nitrogen fertilizer equipment if we paid in gold. At the time we did not have any other way, so we could only pay in gold. They even claimed that they "assisted us" in building the Sup'ung Dam. There was indeed some equipment which was provided through Soviet aid. But two electrical equipment stations [at the Dam] were Japanese. The Soviets took [this equipment] and then returned it as part of the one-billion old Rubles aid package. (Comrade Nam Chun-hwa cuts in: The two stations counted as twenty or thirty million old Rubles)

Fang: Soviet equipment is a lot more expensive than capitalist [equipment].

Kim: Expensive, backwards, and with many conditions attached [to the equipment]. If we purchase equipment from capitalist countries, they are very thankful. But if we purchase equipment from the Soviet Union, they display such haughtiness. As if it was free "assistance". You are very correct.

Fang: I am very thankful that Comrade Premier was able to receive us. We have taken up a lot of Comrade Premier's precious time. We will take our leave now.

Kim: Thank you all. Please send my greetings to Chairman Mao, Chairman Liu, and Premier Zhou.

[Chinese] Economic Goodwill Delegation in [North] Korea
(16 September 1964)