

November 27, 1974

**Report, Embassy of Hungary in North Korea to the
Hungarian Foreign Ministry**

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Summary:

Hungarian Charge d'Affaires Janos Taraba reports on the "personality cult reigning in the KWP," and describes the two camps that have emerged in response to the question of the succession of Kim Il Sung

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Translation - English

A new manifestation of the personality cult reigning in the KWP is that in September 1973, Kim Jong Il, the eldest son of KWP General Secretary Kim Il Sung, was elected a secretary of the KWP Central Committee. This [step] further increased the number of those high-ranking leaders occupying important party and state functions who belong to the family of Kim Il Sung. Kim Jong Il's growing prominence indicates that the Political Committee of the KWP wants to ensure that the leadership of the KWP be remain under the control of the so-called revolutionary family in the future, too. The events which occurred since last September indicate that Kim Jong Il has become more than a mere CC secretary, and in later times he should be the one to succeed Kim Il Sung.

This assumption is already confirmed by many phenomena. During the recent months, meetings were held all over the country, and at these so-called loyalty meetings the workers pledged to complete the six-year plan one year ahead of schedule, that is, by 10 October 1975, the 30th anniversary of the creation of the KWP, and made a pledge of loyalty, and of the full acquirement of the chuch'e ideology, to Comrade Kim Il Sung and the party center. The source of this information is the Soviet embassy in P'yongyang, as their technical experts personally made sure of its validity. At several such so-called loyalty meetings, one could see not only the photo of Kim Il Sung but also that of Kim Jong Il, and the speakers also mentioned Kim Jong Il in their speeches. This may be related to what DRV Charge d'Affaires Ta Quynh told me on November 8th. To their knowledge, the Political Committee of the KWP issued a letter to the party organizations, in which it suggested that the later leadership of the party should be handed over to Kim Jong Il, who is an outstanding member of the revolutionary family. In the corridors of various public buildings in P'yongyang, there have already appeared citations and slogans whose author was Kim Jong Il. These [citations] have been seen and read by several [observers]. Among others, citations from Kim Jong Il were displayed in the building of the radio and television, in the building of the Central Committee of the League of the [Socialist] Working Youth of Korea, and elsewhere. In the radio, the photo of Kim Jong Il was also displayed. One of the citations from Kim Jong Il starts with the term "Kimilsungism."

In recent days, in parallel with the increasing prominence of Kim Jong Il, there have been rumors - which were, by the way, publicized by Radio Seoul and Radio Tokyo, too - that a sharp debate over the issue of succession has emerged within the family of Kim Il Sung. In essence, two camps have been formed, of which one has brought Kim Jong Il to the fore. The younger brother of Kim Il Sung, Kim Yong-ju, is also considered to belong to this side. In addition to family members, Pak Song-ch'ol also joined this group, and allegedly this is why he managed to regain his Politburo membership in a short time. As the Vietnamese put it, "Pak Song-ch'ol has been in cahoots with Kim Jong Il." The other group is supposedly led by Kim Song-ae, the wife of Kim Il Sung. However, according to the information we received, she has been compelled to back down. If these speculations are true, Kim Song-ae has indeed backed down, because in recent conversations she emphatically praised "the eldest son of the general secretary of the KWP." The fact that this year on all soul's day the first wife of Kim Il Sung (the mother of Kim Jong Il) was commemorated with unprecedented pomp is also considered to be related to the present result of the aforesaid intra-family dispute. In the cemetery to be found on the side of Mt. Taesong, many people laid wreaths at the grave of Kim Chong-suk, the first wife of Kim Il Sung. Not only the wreaths of the family were there but also those of the mass organizations, the district women's unions, etc. According to the information received from the Vietnamese, on all soul's day the [authorities] also set up a bronze bust of Mrs. Kim Chong-suk in front of her grave.

[...]

Janos Taraba
(Charge d'Affaires ad interim)