

July 3, 1972

**From the Journal of Y.D. Fadeev, 'Record of
Conversation between I.T. Novikov, Deputy
Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, and Kim
Il Sung, General Secretary of the KWP CC and
Chairman of the DPRK Cabinet of Ministers, 28 June
1972'**

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Summary:

Novikov and Kim Il Sung discuss the DPRK's trade and economy, emphasizing the increasing cooperation among the socialist countries through the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon). In addition, Kim Il Sung mentions that the North has secret contacts in South Korea in order to gain a better understanding of the internal situation in Seoul.

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RECORD OF A CONVERSATION

between I. T. Novikov, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, and KIM IL SUNG, General Secretary of the KWP CC and Chairman of the DPRK Cabinet of Ministers

28 June 1972

Cde. Kim Il Sung received Cde. I. T. Novikov who had arrived in the DPRK as head of a Soviet delegation to the eighth session of the Intergovernmental Soviet-Korean Consultative Commission on Economic, Scientific, and Technical Questions and had a lengthy conversation with him in which Soviet Ambassador in the DPRK N. G. Sudarikov and Deputy Chief of a CPSU CC Department O. A. Chukanov took part from the Soviet side and Deputy Chairman of the DPRK Cabinet of Ministers Jeong Jun-taek and First Deputy Chief of the KWP CC International Department Kim Yong-nam from the Korean side.

After mutual greetings I. T. Novikov said that he has a welcome assignment, to pass on the interlocutor a cordial greeting and friendly wishes from Cdes. L. I. Brezhnev, N. V. Podgorny, and A. N. Kosygin.

Kim Il Sung asked that the Soviet leaders be given his deep appreciation for this and asked about the health of the Soviet leaders.

I. T. Novikov said that the CPSU CC and Soviet government constantly devote great attention to questions concerning Korea, attaching great importance to the development of political ties between the Soviet Union and the DPRK. He noted, consequently the KWP CC invitation to the CPSU delegation to visit the DPRK was received favorably in Moscow.

As is well-known, continued I. T. Novikov, the foreign policy of the 24th CPSU Congress is being successfully put into practice.

[handwritten at the bottom of the first page: Varseyev dated 16 August 1972, "15D/6", and an illegible name with possibly the same date; there are four illegible signatures in the left margin]

Great events of the international scene have demanded serious attention and intensive work from the CPSU CC Politburo and Cde. L. I. Brezhnev personally. As a result a path has been marked out toward a reduction of tension in Europe, treaties have been concluded with the FRG, and the state borders have been strengthened of the GDR, which is ever-increasingly receiving recognition among the capitalist countries. Negotiations have been held between the Soviet leaders and Nixon, who visited Moscow at his own initiative. The CPSU CC information about these negotiations has already been passed to you by Ambassador N. G. Sudarikov.

I. T. Novikov said that there is an instruction from Cde. L. I. Brezhnev to add some lines to how the Korean question was raised in the negotiations with Nixon. The

conversations held in Moscow with Cde. Pak Seong-cheol, and also with Minister of Foreign Affairs Heo Dam, whom Cde. L. I. Brezhnev received, have allowed the DPRK position to be understood more deeply and the wishes of the Korean comrades to be fully taken into consideration in the discussions with the US President. The questions of the withdrawal of American troops from South Korea and also that the US not interfere in the peaceful reunification of Korea and not interfere in the internal affairs of the Korean people were very firmly raised with Nixon. The words of Cde. L. I. Brezhnev that the Soviet Union has been and remains a loyal friend of the DPRK made a special impression on Nixon. On the whole the Korean question was raised with Nixon just as definitely as the question of the cessation of American aggression in Vietnam.

I. T. Novikov stressed, all the political acts of the Soviet Union, and especially our steps after the 24th CPSU Congress, are encountering deep understanding and support from the countries of socialism. In particular, the results of the Soviet-American meeting in Moscow are on the whole being assessed by a majority of the socialist countries and progressive world public as a great victory of the peace-loving foreign policy of the CPSU.

I. T. Novikov noted the successful development of various forms of cooperation between the countries of the socialist camp and in particular through Comecon channels, and reported about the next planned conference of the heads of Comecon countries for the beginning of July for the discussion of specific questions of cooperation, including in the sphere of economic integration.

I. T. Novikov briefly informed Kim Il Sung about the situation in the Soviet economy. He noted that the results of the first year of the five-year plan approved by the 24th CPSU Congress were quite successful in all sectors of the economy. The state plan for the first five months of the current year has also been fulfilled ahead of schedule. In agriculture matters are developing more complexly due to the fact that more than 10 million hectares of winter crops were killed by frost in the winter, but at the present time a drought is being noted in a number of regions. Evidently the grain harvest will be less than last year's.

I. T. Novikov also briefly told about the main tasks of capital construction in the USSR, stressing the special role of scientific and technical progress in this field.

I. T. Novikov shared impressions received by the Soviet delegation from a trip throughout the DPRK and from visiting a number of industrial facilities built with the aid of the Soviet Union. He expressed the opinion that the refinery in [Ungi] will be able to begin to yield finished output in its first phase in September of this year on condition that the pace of some work be stepped up. Touching on the course of construction work at the Kim Chaek metallurgical plant he said that, in his opinion, it would be necessary to increase attention to the questions of organizing the construction at this facility and evidently to give the construction supervisors solid help. I. T. Novikov said that in spite of certain difficulties it has, the Soviet side could help with some additional aid and, in particular, send two or three Soviet engineers to the facility in order to help the Korean friends organize the matter taking into consideration the startup schedule and the material support conditions. Of course, the Korean organizations also should help normalize the pace of construction.

Touching on the state of trade turnover between the USSR and the DPRK, I. T. Novikov said the following:

According to the contract obligations almost every year the trade turnover plan between our countries is not being performed, and this relates to a greater degree to the Korean side. We know of the difficulties which the Korean comrades face and we regard your requests about deferments of payments of credit indebtedness with

understanding. At the same time it is necessary to think together about at what cost can the volume of Korean deliveries to the USSR can be increased. The visit to industrial and agricultural exhibit in Pyongyang convinces us that this can be done, in particular, by increasing the deliveries to the Soviet Union of hardware items, ceramic fixtures, plumbing fixtures, some sewn products, rubber shoes, and other goods. The production of a number of new kinds of products for export to the USSR could be organized in the DPRK, for example, equipment for high- and medium-pressure pipelines, inasmuch as the production of alloy steels is well-developed in the DPRK.

The export of machine-tool equipment to the USSR could also be increased. In connection with this we have come to agreement to consider and raise the question in the Commission of the production of modular machines [agregatnye stanki] in the DPRK.

It is also entirely possible to establish cooperation between a number of DPRK plants and a number of Soviet plants, in particular, ones located in the Far East. Part of the assemblies of a particular machine tool or machine can be manufactured in the USSR and another part, in the DPRK. The exchange of such specialized production would allow production to be increased both there and here. This is a good socialist principle of production cooperation that has justified itself, and it could be employed not only in industry, but also in construction.

I. T. Novikov noted that the visit to the DPRK allowed him and members of the delegation to be convinced that the Soviet and Korean workers and specialists in the DPRK are working well and amicably and have brotherly feelings for one another. In the name of the Soviet delegation I. T. Novikov expressed gratitude for the warm reception of the delegation in the DPRK, and for the creation of good conditions for the work of the eighth session of the Intergovernmental Soviet-Korean Consultative Commission on Economic, Scientific, and Technical Questions.

Listening closely to the interlocutor, Kim Il Sung expressed gratitude for the information and the comments expressed about the state of Soviet-Korean trade and economic cooperation, and expressed satisfaction at the good state of affairs in the Soviet Union.

He said, we are glad that the Soviet Union has achieved great political successes in Europe. It deeply satisfied us that the USSR has good relations there, both with socialist as well as capitalist countries. We welcome these successes which we at the same time also consider our own.

Kim Il Sung stressed, pass on to Cde. L. I. Brezhnev that we are glad to hear that during the talks in Moscow with the US President that pressure was put on the latter about the question of Korea and that Cde. L. I. Brezhnev has vigorously supported our position. This is deeply pleasing and inspires us, and delivers a blow to our common enemies. Pass on to Cde. L. I. Brezhnev and the CPSU CC Politburo our sincere gratitude for this on behalf of the KWP CC and myself personally.

It pleases us that in general the Soviet Union achieved great success in the talks with the US. Striving to get out of a difficult position Nixon visited Moscow and Beijing. This means not only your victory, but the victory of all the socialist countries, our common victory. We congratulate you on all these successes. Please also pass our opinion on to Cde. L. I. Brezhnev.

In reply to I. T. Novikov's comment about the desirability of reflecting this opinion officially Kim Il Sung said that he will think about this.

Then Kim Il Sung said the following while providing information about the situation in

Korea:

Our struggle for the reunification of Korea is moving ahead successfully. Right now we are waging an active peace offensive which the enemy fears more than an armed attack. Our peace offensive deprives the South Korean puppets of grounds to ask the US for new tanks and aircraft.

We have been pursuing an active peace offensive since I gave a speech on 6 August of last year in which [I] expressed our readiness for talks with the ruling Democratic Republican Party of South Korea. In reply, the Southerners agreed to contacts through Red Cross channels.

The official talks in Panmunjom between the Red Cross Societies of the DPRK and South Korea are moving ahead slowly. This is also understandable, inasmuch as we have had no contact for more than 20 years and questions are not resolved in one or two days.

However, the opening of the talks in Panmunjom has led to an increase of sentiments in South Korea in favor of peaceful reunification. Park Chung Hee was forced to introduce a "state of emergency" with reference to "the threat of aggression against the South". But this is a lie, the South Korean rulers are not afraid of "aggression", but their own people.

In the South the public is not so homogeneous and united as we are; people there can behave as they wish. Therefore Park Chung Hee does not trust his subordinates. We are still officially informing the Soviet comrades through the Ambassador about the situation in South Korea and about the progress of the talks in Panmunjom.

But, besides the contacts through Red Cross channels we have secret contacts with the South. Thanks to the latter we have come to better understand the domestic situation in the South. [Translator's note: this paragraph was highlighted in the left margin].

We have raised the question of the reunification of the country with the South Koreans several times, and to Park Chung Hee through these confidential channels. We have suggested that Park Chung Hee accept the following three principles:

first, the Korean question needs to be solved by the Koreans themselves, without outside interference, in particular, from the US and Japan;

second, we will not impose socialism on the South; let the Southerners choose a social system for themselves; the South and North ought to be above their political convictions and ideals in the interests of national unity;

third, inasmuch as neither the South nor the North will impose their systems on the other, then we will have no reason to fight; therefore, let us solve the problem of reunification by peaceful democratic means.

The Southerners accepted these three principles. But they are afraid of one thing, to announce this publicly, inasmuch as in this event Park Chung Hee's government will collapse. Thus Park Chung Hee is more afraid not of us, but those around him. He is requesting he be given a little more time for him to be able to think about it. [Translator's note: this paragraph was highlighted in the left margin].

Park Chung Hee is afraid of the Japanese and pro-Japanese elements in the South. Of

course, he himself is oriented toward the US and Japan, but right now he would like to retreat from this orientation. However, Park Chung Hee is afraid of his friends, who are pro-American and pro-Japanese, and extreme nationalists, who would immediately accuse him of treason to their anti-Communist policy. Park Chung Hee is also afraid of the opposition, the students, and the intelligentsia, and therefore cannot work up the courage. We are thinking of giving him some more time. [Translator's note: this paragraph was highlighted in the left margin].

We will also increase our peace offensive with other ways. I have often met with foreign journalists recently - Japanese, American, and others. Some days ago I gave an interview to a Washington Post correspondent. If this interview is published by the American newspaper without distortions then we won't publish it ourselves. In this interview I proposed mutually reducing the armed forces of the South and North to 150-200,000 men and to do this even before the withdrawal of American forces from South Korea in the interests of relaxing tensions in Korea. [Translator's note: the last sentence of this paragraph was highlighted in the left margin].

Park Chung Hee is afraid of our public proposals on the question of reunification, and therefore we are not doing this openly and officially right now and have also decided to hold off with the adoption of an appeal to the parliament of South Korea in the name of the DPRK Supreme National Assembly. However, in conversations with journalists I can naturally touch on any question.

Some days ago the next meeting was held in Panmunjom through Red Cross channels. South Korean correspondents brought foreign newspapers with them with my interview given to American journalist Salisbury. They said approximately this about this interview: "Premier Kim Il Sung correctly says that it is necessary to accept his proposals". Previously Park Chung Hee would not permit newspapers to be delivered to South Korea with such a publication, but now this has become possible.

The Southerners have now begun to listen more to what the DPRK proposes and says. We are even successful in averting the complication of incidents which arise at the armistice line. We use the telephone communications established by agreement between the DPRK and South Korean Red Cross Societies in Panmunjom for this. For example, not long ago the Southerners opened fire in the demilitarized zone. We told them on the telephone that we can open return fire if they didn't stop. And they immediately gave an order to cease fire. Today there was one more such incident. We asked the Southerners on the telephone who bore the responsibility for the shooting - the government or some military unit. They answered us that some irresponsible elements were guilty of this who will be punished for it.

We are closely examining the measures recently adopted in the South. Not long ago the commanding generals of the 1st and 2nd armies and the chairman of the committee of the chiefs of staff were replaced. These people represented a danger to the Park Chung Hee regime and moreover were also quite objectionable to us. We are intently observing this and it seems to us that Park Chung Hee wants to put his entourage in order, and remove those who might try and make a coup. Inasmuch as Park Chung Hee has accepted our three principles we hope for good results. But while we are looking, we are waiting. [Translator's note: the last part of this paragraph was highlighted in the left margin].

Thus there is definite progress in the result of our official (through Red Cross channels) and unofficial contacts with the South. Park Chung Hee is afraid that we will enter into talks with the opposition parties of the South, which he would like to push away from contact with us. But we have a chance to establish ties with the opposition.

On the whole in such conditions we have a basis to definitely declare that a war will

not arise in Korea and that there is an opportunity to thaw the current relations between the South and North. [Translator's note: this paragraph was highlighted in the left margin].

Kim Il Sung said, please pass what I have said to Cde. L. I. Brezhnev personally. We are speaking for the first time only with you about these new aspects in relations with the South. Yes, and only a quite restricted circle of people in our Party know about this. When the situation becomes more definite we will additionally inform the Soviet comrades through the Soviet ambassador or by sending our special representative to Moscow with this purpose.

Then Kim Il Sung dwelt on the situation in the DPRK economy. [Translator's note: this sentence was highlighted in the left margin].

He said, in recent years our industry suffered great damage because of an extreme shortage of electric power which until recently we developed only at hydraulic power stations: Supung [Shuifeng], with a capacity of 700,000 kW (shared equally with China), Chanding [sic; proper spelling unknown] - 300,000 kW, Unbong [Yunfeng] - 400,000 kW (shared equally with China), Khochkhongan [sic; proper spelling unknown] - 350,000 kW, and Pudengan [sic; proper spelling unknown]. There is not enough water for the GEhS [hydroelectric stations] because of a chronic drought. No rain has fallen in the Yalu River basin for five years. The GEhS['s] have been operating at hardly half of their capacity. The Pyongyang TEhTs [thermal power plant] and the Bukchang TEhS [thermal power station], built with the aid of the Soviet Union, have helped during this difficult period, as a result of which the chronic shortage of electrical power was overcome to a considerable degree. However, this has nevertheless been insufficient. Besides electrical power we have also been experiencing a shortage in petroleum products. When they have not been coming from the Soviet Union normally this has led to a stoppage of enterprises.

Almost all the chemical plants, primarily [the ones] for the production of calcium carbide, have stopped. The Kansen and Sondin [sic; proper spelling unknown] foundries (each with a capacity of 400,000 tons of steel a year) have reduced production because of a lack of electric power. In general all the enterprises have been operating for four years at an average of 40-50% of their capacity. In just this period has our trade debt with the USSR appeared. [Translator's note: this paragraph was highlighted in the left margin].

However, beginning last year the situation changed. The reservoirs filled with water and right now we are not setting any limitations on the supply of electric power. Whereas previously we received petroleum products only from the Soviet Union now we also get them from China, inasmuch as Soviet oil alone is not enough for us. Therefore we use Chinese petroleum products when Soviet petroleum products do not arrive in time because of the limited abilities for shipping.

In a word, the situation with electric power and petroleum products has become somewhat better, and industry is operating normally. Therefore, this year we will not remain in debt to the Soviet Union. We have confidence that we will fulfill our obligations in goods deliveries to the USSR both for the first as well as the second half of this year. [Translator's note: this paragraph was highlighted in the left margin].

We are doing much capital construction. We are building a GEhS on the [Sodusu] River with a capacity of 450,000 kW, oil refineries, a superphosphate [and] ball-bearing plant, and cement plants. We are expanding the Kim Chaek metallurgical plant and the Bukchang TEhS [heat and power station] (up to 1,200,000 kW), the vinalon plant (from 20,000 to 50,000 tons of vinalon a year), and the plant to produce vinyl chloride (from 30,000 to 50,000 tons of vinyl chloride a year). While this is being done we are experiencing a shortage of construction materials, especially steel. The

KWP CC is criticizing the Cabinet of Ministers for too much construction , for scattering capital investments. As they say, we have mounted the horse and we can't climb off it. For example, there's no way we can abandon the extremely necessary work to expand the Chongjin Kim Chaek metallurgical plant and have therefore decided to expand the plant with Soviet aid.

Things are taking shape not badly in agriculture. We are getting normal harvests every year. We have recently decided to somewhat change the direction of development of our agriculture, directing the main efforts on animal husbandry, the production of meat, and other "incidental", as we say, food products.

At the present time the annual consumption of rice per person is 240 kg, but in Japan it is 90 kg. We imagine if you look in the stomach of a Japanese there will be some rice among other things, "incidental" food, but if you look into the stomach of a Korean, there will be several other foods among the rice. You need time in order to correct the food allowance of a Korean, of course. This needs to be done gradually. [Translator's note: this paragraph was highlighted in the left margin].

Not long ago we asked one Japanese figure who visited the DPRK why Japan was so bound to the US. He replied that Japan buys 12 million tons of wheat and five million tons of corn from the US annually, and that the Japanese would have nothing to eat if they did not get this quantity of grain from the US. In Japan their own production of rice is a total of 100 kg per person per year. The Japanese have switched to a European food regime. And we also want to strongly develop poultry farming, pig farming, and fishing now. If we consume more meat, fish, and other high-calorie products, then the rice will be completely sufficient for us. [Translator's note: the last two sentences of this paragraph were highlighted in the left margin].

We are doing much work right now in the area of animal husbandry; however we have poor knowledge, traditions, and equipment in this respect. We are adopting the experience in this field from other countries. There are some successes in poultry farming and in the training of professional specialists.

Right now, in conditions of the ensuing peaceful contacts with the South we are setting a goal of a rapid increase of the population's standard of living with the purpose of more clearly showing the advantages of socialism. Of course, right now we have these advantages: we have no one unemployed, poorly-clothed, or unshod, there is free education, etc. When people from the South come to us they are surprised at these advantages if only they look without prejudice. We need to do still more in this field, to build more housing and develop light industry more rapidly. The entire country and Party are mobilizing right now to fulfill this task. We are confident that the Soviet Union will help us better display the advantages of socialism to South Korea in the area of the material welfare of the population.

Touching on the question of the work of the Soviet specialists in the DPRK Kim Il Sung expressed satisfaction that their activity is promoting the strengthening of the traditional Korean-Soviet friendship.

However, Kim Il Sung said, we are not yet supplying the Soviet specialists with everything needed for everyday purposes. The way of life is not the same for Soviet people and Koreans. Our workers on site evidently do not take this circumstance into consideration, and we criticize them for this. We will give instructions to correct the matter and improve the living conditions of the Soviet specialists in our country.

Kim Il Sung expressed gratitude for the comments stated by I. T. Novikov regarding the pace of construction of the Kim Chaek metallurgical plant. We will consider the suggestion about sending two or three Soviet specialists to this plant to help, said

Kim Il Sung. We will also ask for the Soviet comrades to help us in supplying this facility with metalwork.

I. T. Novikov noted that they are experiencing great need of metalwork in the Soviet Union.

Kim Il Sung said [in response] to this that, in the words of the Korean specialists it is impossible to do the construction work at the plant without getting metalwork from the USSR. Only after putting this facility into operation will the DPRK be able to meet its needs in rolled metal. We will try to put a hot rolling shop in operation this year. Of course the Soviet Union might have its difficulties but your country is big and you could help us all the same. Please pass this request to Cde. L. I. Brezhnev.

I. T. Novikov said that before his flight to Beijing Cde. L. I. Brezhnev asked him to ask Cde. Kim Il Sung whether he could visit the Soviet Union this year to rest and talk.

Kim Il Sung expressed gratitude for the attention and said the following: I think that the improvement in relations between the South and North of Korea which has emerged will allow me to make such a trip. I intend to visit the Soviet Union this year besides other countries and to exchange opinions with Cde. L. I. Brezhnev on a broad range of questions, including the Korean question.

At the conclusion of the conversation Kim Il Sung asked that Cdes. L. I. Brezhnev, N. V. Podgorny, and A. N. Kosygin be passed fraternal greetings and best wishes from the KWP CC Political Committee and himself personally.

Ri [Syn Khek] (who translated the conversation), an official of the DPRK MFA, and Yu. D. Fadeyev, a counsellor of the Soviet Embassy in the DPRK, were present at the conversation, which lasted about three hours and took place in a warm, friendly atmosphere.

Note; this record of the conversation was not looked over by Cde. I. T. Novikov.

Yu. Fadeyev,
counsellor of the Soviet Embassy in the DPRK
made the record of the conversation

[signature]
(Yu. Fadeyev)

5-mb

1 - to Cde. K. F. Katushev
2 - to Cde. I. T. Novikov
3 - to Cde. V. V. Kuznetsov
4 - to the USSR MFA 1st DVO [Far East Department]
5 - to file
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