

April 02, 1962
**Memorandum of Luncheon Given by Richard Dvořák,
Ambassador of Czechoslovakia to Moscow, for Comrade
Ri Song-un, Ambassador of the DPRK, on 30 March 1962.**

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Summary:

A memorandum of a meeting between Ambassador Dvorak and Ambassador Li Songun, in which Li Songun expresses serious concern about Albania's defection to the capitalist camp and his devotion to the international communist movement.

Original Language:

Czech

Contents:

- English Translation

Moscow. 2 April 1962

Memorandum of Luncheon Given by Richard Dvorák, Ambassador of Czechoslovakia to Moscow, for Comrade Ri Song-un [Ri Song Un], Ambassador of the DPRK, on 30 March 1962.

On 30 March, I invited Ambassador of the DPRK Comrade Ri Song-un for luncheon for several reasons. During the luncheon, mainly at the guest's initiative, a discussion took place that deviated from the normal kind of conversation that takes place on such occasions. Ri Song-un reacted to my remarks about the need for unity of the international communist and workers' movement especially at the present time and in the course of our four-hour conversation he stated the following:

The West has been waiting to exploit the differences within our camp to its own advantage. It is therefore our duty to do all we can to preserve our unity.

Those who assume that the Korean side has only been maintaining a neutralist position are not right. This is not the case. This can explain why Korea has not been following the Chinese model in several issues such as for example in regard to the communes. I personally believe that China has many assets but also several liabilities. The Korean position is determined by the fact that thanks to the Soviet victory in 1945, the country could be established at all in its present form of a people's democracy. The second factor is the fact that today's economic successes of the DPRK would not be possible without constant Soviet assistance. On the other hand, Korea's position in regard to Korea is determined by the fact that China is its neighbor and that tens of thousands of Chinese soldiers were killed in the struggle for the DPRK's independence. These two facts must not be ignored by the Korean side.

In the current situation, the unity of the socialist camp requires first of all a clarification of the relationship between the CPSU and CPC. Here all other parties should be helping as effectively as possible. He further asked the question of what, in my opinion, Korea should do in order to improve this relationship. After my response that I did not consider myself sufficiently qualified to answer that question on behalf of the party, although the CPCZ had explained its position in a special letter to the Chinese comrades, Comrade Ri Song-un inquired about the reasons for some of our economic difficulties. After receiving an explanation of the internal and international reasons for these difficulties, he continued and focused in particular on the relations with Albania.

He said that an abnormal situation had developed. Diplomatic relations with Albania had been severed while relations with Yugoslavia at the state level were being maintained, as are fully those with the most rabid imperialists, such as the United States, Great Britain, and others. If Albania left our camp, it would be a loss for all of us. Korea has been following this development very closely with regard to the reaction of public opinion in the southern part of the country. Every dispute within our camp is being immediately effectively exploited to weaken the generally favorable situation in South Korea regarding the country's unification on the basis of people's democracy. It is also for these reasons that we should all strive for an improvement of the current situation. I objected by saying that if the Albanian leaders had at least a pinch of communist feeling and at least a rudimentary sense of political reality, they would have to resign in the interests of their party, their country and the international communist movement. Comrade Ri Song-un responded that this is not now the main issue. Now everything is at stake. We need to realize that Albania may go over to the other side. This must be prevented. The same goes for China. What would it mean for our camp if that country, too, went over to the other side! Therefore we have to forget about prestige and first of all prevent defection to the capitalist camp. Now we should emphasize the attitude of the older reasonable brother who graciously helps the younger brother despite so much misbehavior on his part.

I objected by saying that after all that had happened, I did not see any practical possibility of resolving the question in the way that Comrade Ri Song-un sees it. He responded by saying that precisely because matters have already become almost unsolvable, a way out should be

thought of in order to prevent the worst. Because of its experiences, the CPSU has considerably greater weight in the international communist movement than it otherwise might have in terms of its size, and therefore its word would carry weight even now.

I objected by saying that at issue now is perhaps not the attainment of mechanical unity at any price, but rather positions on basic issues, emphasized by the 20th and 22nd congresses. I tried to show on at least one example, namely that of the cult of personality, that both our party and others after a deep analysis had found the conclusions of both congresses fully confirmed as correct for our conditions. In response, Comrade Ri Song-un pointed out several examples from the Korean party experience by which he tried to prove that there is no problem of personality cult in Korea. I explained that the purpose of my remark was not to accuse the Korean side of maintaining a cult of personality. Comrade Ri Song-un then said that we should consider whether it is correct projecting automatically conclusions reached by one party into the life of another party where the conditions might be different.

Comrade Ri Song-un then returned again to the question of Albania. He stayed with this issue until the end of our conversation, which I had to terminate because of other commitments. In this part of the conversation, Comrade Ri Song-un said that Kim Il Sung as early as the time of the fourth congress of the Korean Workers' Party, through the intermediary of the head of the Albanian delegation at this congress, sent the Albanian leadership a message in which he said that if there are disputes then nothing else can be done but sit down at the table with the Soviet comrades, discuss, and find a solution. His advice at that time, unfortunately, was not heeded. In his opinion, however, now the situation is such that even the Albanian side has been considering a way out.

The Korean side sees some signs of that. According to the Korean information, after the 22nd congress, the Albanians did not expect the severing of diplomatic relations. In Comrade Ri Song-un's opinion, the Albanian leaders have been searching for a way but they should be given a helping hand. I asked what are the grounds for his conclusions for his making such conclusions. After brief hesitation, Comrade Ri Song-un answered that he was referring to embassy reports. But he did not specify them.

In conclusion, he said that thus far he had not held in Moscow such a comprehensive discussion about these questions, not even with Soviet comrades, and that he had not considered it appropriate to respond to a similar question by the Romanian ambassador on a recent occasion.

The reason for his having spoken at such length today is his serious concern about the further fate of Albania and his devotion above all to the unity of the international communist movement.

Moscow 2 April 1962