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Report on the Delegation of the Albanian Labor Party's Meeting with Kim Il Sung

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Summary:

Manush Myftiu, the leader of the Albanian delegation, reports on the meeting with Kim Il Sung during the 4th Congress of the Korean Workers' Party. He relates their discussion about the divisions within the communist camp and describes Kim Il Sung's position on the matter and towards Albania.

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- English Translation

REPORT ON OUR MEETING WITH COMRADE KIM IL SUNG

On 25 September, 1961 from 6 to 8.30 PM, our meeting with Comrade Kim Il Sung was held at the CC of the Korean Workers' Party. From the Korean side there were also present Comrade Ri Hyo-sun, Vice Chairman of the CC and the Korean ambassador to Albania.

At the start Comrade Kim Il Sung asked about the health of Comrade Enver Hoxha and presented his desire that Comrade Enver Hoxha come to visit Korea if it is possible. Then he asked us about our impressions of the proceedings of the 4th Congress of the Korean Workers' Party as well as about the situation of this year's agriculture in Albania. He took this chance to stress the need that our country secure the production of bread in-country so that it may be able to better withstand the difficulties it faces.

He spoke well of the struggle of our party against the revisionists and the antiparty elements, about the unity of our party around Comrade Enver Hoxha, and about its close links to the masses.

Then he spoke at length about the difficulties and the problems that the Korean Workers' Party has faced and about the tough struggle it has had to wage against the antiparty elements.

In 1953 and later in 1956 many elements came out who did not agree with the party line on the development of heavy industry and who sought to use the assistance that they got from other socialist countries to buy consumer goods and develop light industry. These people were urged on by Ivanov, then the ambassador of the Soviet Union in Korea, "Who," said Comrade Kim Il Sung, "was a very bad man," and things got so bad that Mikoyan and Peng Dehuai had to come in. "The problem had grown so large that they wanted to cut off my head," said Comrade Kim Il Sung. "We did not have to accept these conditions, but we thought it would be better if the Plenum of the CC were gathered and there our opponents could speak openly, and Mikoyan and Peng Dehuai could assist in the process. The issues were openly discussed in the Plenum. When they saw the unity of the Plenum of the CC and how the mistaken points of view of these elements were attacked, they took off running. The last time Kozlov was here he told me that Ivanov was a bad man, while in Moscow they told me that the entire fault rests with Mikoyan." (These last words were spoken ironically.)

He said that he, "did not go to the 20th Congress, but in 1957 in the Moscow Conference I spoke to Comrade Mao Zedong and they accepted all their faults. In the meantime the Soviets expected me to speak against them like Gomulka used to, but I never said anything about this. We did not notify through letters the other parties about these contradictions. We simply remained silent, but today when they see our successes tell us that we have been doing a good job and praise our efforts."

"I told all this to Comrade Enver Hoxha then," he said very touched by this and his eyes filled with tears. Then he told me that he is very sorry about what is happening with our party and country and asked that these disagreements with the Soviet Union be smoothed over as soon as possible. "Despite the fact that you have not been asked by the Political Bureau to deal with such issues," he said to me, "please make sure to transmit these personal thoughts of mine to Comrade Enver Hoxha."

"It is getting close to a year since the Moscow conference ended. The contradictions must not go on any longer because it is to the detriment of the general revolutionary movement and to the detriment of the socialist camp and the construction of socialism in our countries. The ideological disagreements will continue for a long time. They will not be smoothed over right away. But the inter-governmental disagreements must be solved immediately and there is not much time for this. The exchange of official letters does not help at all. It only makes things worse. Of course," Comrade Kim Il Sung said, "I cannot teach you what to do. I do not even pretend to be doing anything of the kind because you know your situation better. We are just doing this urged by our

desire that a course that solves problems is found. I personally think that the best way to find a solution is to sit down together and talk about the disagreements in a bilateral talk. In solving such issues there are and there cannot be any arbiters." Then he reiterated, "Please transmit this to Comrade Enver Hoxha. Do not worry about losing face or your prestige.² For the sake of our common cause you must take the initiative and Comrade Enver Hoxha himself along with some comrades of the Political Bureau should courageously go to Moscow, sit down, and openly discuss matters while criticizing the flaws and mistakes, whether from your side or theirs, if there are any." He said that, "The soviets will never take the initiative on such a step because they are afraid of losing face and they consider themselves a large country despite the fact that Marxism does not care about large or small countries. The soviets have no interest in continuing the quarrel with you. On the contrary, this is to their detriment. That is why I think that they will never refuse starting talks with you and it is entirely possible that after such talks you will come out smiling." He said that, "The most serious of the disagreements has to do with the military base in Vlora and it is possible that, while talking, all those issues that today seem insolvable or very difficult to solve, could be easily smoothed over. Even in the Moscow Conference," he said, "there were many great disagreements, but in the end the majority gave way to the minority because that was the right thing to do and everyone agreed to it."

He also pleaded with us that we transmit to Comrade Enver Hoxha his points of view on Khrushchev. "Whether Khrushchev is good or bad," he said, "we cannot separate him from the CC of the CP of the Soviet Union and from the party. Whether we want to or not, he is today the leader of the CP of the Soviet Union and we must never forget this reality. That is why there is no one else to try and smooth this over with. Lately, Khrushchev has started to make changes in foreign policy and to abide more closely to the Moscow Declaration, because he has started to speak more against the American imperialism.

"We had some bad opinions of Khrushchev, but now we have been able to clarify some of them. Whether Khrushchev is or is not in the leadership of the Soviet Union is something that does not depend on us, just like whether Comrade Enver Hoxha or I are in the leadership of our respective parties does not depend on Khrushchev." He brought up as an example a Korean proverb saying that, "When two people quarrel, the weaker of the two, when he sees he cannot take the other down, then he changes course and tries by other methods to achieve his goal."

He reiterated that these were his own personal opinions and that he had discussed these issues neither with the soviets, nor with the Chinese. "We," he said, "are very troubled by this situation. I have discussed this with my comrades as well and we are of the opinion that it should be solved."

As to the communist and workers' parties in Europe, he said that, "Once you smooth things over with the Soviet Union, they will quickly change their behavior toward you." When we reminded him of the visit that Comrade Ho Chi Minh wanted to make to Albania and of the reasons why we did not agree to it, he said that, "the soviets will try to use this tactic wherever it works. With you, for example," he added, "such a tactic will never work. We support you," he said, "and we will in the future continue to stand by your party. We like the letters you write, but we think that this practice should not go on any longer. I tell you this as a brother in arms. We truly feel the consequences of such a situation, because we have suffered such problems ourselves, and we also think that your situation is much more difficult than ours. The only safety net for such a situation is the strengthening of the unity of the party around Comrade Enver Hoxha. Had we been a little closer to each other, we would have met Comrade Enver Hoxha; we would have given him our advice. The problem is that this is very difficult to do through ambassadors, because our thoughts and opinions cannot be understood correctly."

During the conversation I also interrupted several times explaining to him our party's position and the pressure that we have to withstand. "Though I am not authorized by my party to give an opinion here," I said, "I see it prudent that I clarify for you some important issues that have to do with the lowly and antagonistic war that they are waging against our party. We understand

your preoccupation with these issues, but these disagreements have very deep roots and it is not easy to solve them right away. We are right and that is why we do not kneel and we do not withdraw. They want to overthrow Comrade Enver Hoxha and Comrade Mehmet Shehu and place their revisionist elements at the helm of the party. This will never happen, because we have full unity. You are well aware of the disagreements up until the 4th Congress of the ALP, but even after the congress they continued with an ever increasing intensity the attacks against our party starting with the lowliest of acts and going all the way up to the economic, political and military blockade they have put in place against our Republic. All these acts were thought out immediately after the Bucharest Meeting.” I brought as an example the things they said against our party and country at that time. We told him about the threatening posturing of Malinovski in the meeting of the Chiefs of Staffs over the expulsion from the Treaty of Warsaw and that in the last meeting they did not even ask us to attend. “In Bucharest we defended Marxism-Leninism and did our internationalist duty. The soviet leadership fights us based on anti-Marxist principles. They continue to send us very nasty letters, and it seems that they are preparing a greater campaign against our party.”

“They have started to use another tactic, as they did when they used Ho Chi Minh who set off for Tirana to solve our disagreements without first analyzing their source and without first going to the very people that wage these pressures. The soviets have worked in such a way with the Vietnamese to make it seem that we are the ones at fault and it is a fact that the leader of the Vietnamese delegation to our congress, a member of the Political Bureau, kept a very cool stance toward us. But we think that our disagreements cannot be solved superficially without delving deeper, because our disagreements are deep and they need to be analyzed very well before they can be solved. The leaders of the Soviet Union and of the popular democracies in Europe must recognize their own mistakes and the first step they should take is to cease all the pressure they are exerting against us. We have said it openly to Khrushchev and to Pospilov when he came for the 4th Congress, that even if we are left without bread, we will never backtrack from our correct Marxist-Leninist position and we will never kneel.”

When he said that lately Khrushchev has changed, I replied that, “lately he has only changed in some of the words he says, but whatever he says in the morning, he does not say at night. And as far as the antagonistic behavior against our party is concerned, that goes on even worse than before. In fact, lately we have received a very derogatory letter from him.”

At the end he asked me numerous times to please transmit to Comrade Enver Hoxha this opinion. Before we left, when we asked him whether we can increase the amount of trade with clearing since the Soviet Union and others might stop even this, he immediately said that, “We agree to this. We are not afraid of anyone.”

Our opinion is that Kim Il Sung spoke openly to us and he told us all that had happened with their party, but we think that by discussing their experience for such a long time, he wanted to convey to us that he agrees with us in principle, but that the method (tactics) we are following should be changed. In other words, we should kneel.

My conversation with him gave me the impression that he does not see in detail the source of these disagreements and the danger that the Khrushchev clique poses for the communist international movement and the socialist camp. I got the impression that he is self-righteous about the latest results that he has achieved in Moscow and sees these problems through the narrow prism of his own shell (i.e. in relation to Korea.)

Their Congress went on in a very peaceful way and it left the impression that nothing of concern was going on in the communist international movement. Comrade Kim Il Sung himself (at least on the outside) seemed to have a friendlier attitude toward Kozlov than toward Deng Xiaoping.

In his report to the Congress very little was said about the international situation and always keeping to the official frameworks of the Moscow Declaration. Both in the report and in the

discussions more was spoken about the internal successes and the goals of the seven year plan. The main leaders did not analyze the international situation in their discussions either.

Manush Myftiu

[Signed]