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Cable from the Chinese Embassy in North Korea to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Trade

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Summary:

An exchange of views between Kim Il Sung and Li Xiannian on Chinese technical assistance to North Korea, U.S. imperialism, economic situation in North Korea, and China-North Korea friendly foreign realtions.

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[To] the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Trade:

Today at 10:00 a.m., Premier Kim Il Sung came to visit Vice Premier Li Xiannian at the guest house. They talked until 1:15 p.m. and then had lunch together. Kim Il and Ri Ju-yeon [Ri Ju Yon] were both present.

The main points of the conversation with Premier Kim were as follows:

(1) [Kim Il Sung] thanked us for promptly understanding [North] Korea's problems and for providing assistance.

(2) The American imperialists are afraid that the tense situation in Korea will be detrimental to their war of invasion against Vietnam. Therefore, recent provocations along the 38th parallel have decreased, although more spies have been dispatched. Every month 100 people are caught. But [North] Korea is also intensifying work to dispatch personnel into South Korea.

(3) In the direct confrontation with American imperialism, [we] cannot let our guard down. Therefore, war preparations are being intensified. Since the armistice, [North] Korea has consistently been preparing for war. First it was digging infantry tunnels. Three-lines [of tunnels] have been dug. There are also tunnels for tanks, planes, warships and torpedo boats. Some of the factories necessary during wartime are underground, especially the newly constructed machine works for military use. They are all underground. There is also some underground storage for ammunition, gasoline, grain, and military supplies. Only civilian bomb shelters have not been [built]. The Pyongyang underground railway is also for air defenses. Digging these tunnels uses up 300,000 tons of cement each year, 400,000 stere of wood, and 150,000 tons of steel. It seems it will take another two or three years [before completion]. Originally they wanted to supply themselves with military materials, including artillery shells, but because of shortages of explosives and copper as well as equipment, this will not work. In the future, the [North] Korean military wants to have detailed consultations with the Chinese military about artillery shells.

(4) Most of the landlords are still in North Korea. If something happens, they may stir up trouble. The Korean [Workers'] Party is presently reactivating class struggle, mainly to educate young people and make them hate landlords, capitalists, American imperialism, and Japanese imperialism. In particular, [the Korean Workers' Party] wants them to not be afraid of war, nuclear weapons, and re-destruction.

(5) The South Korean peoples' lives are very poor. Their population is 25 million, but there are 17 million people with tuberculosis and pulmonary infections. But the South Korean people have a rich revolutionary history. Particularly the peasants from Gyeongsang [Kyongsang] and Jeolla [Cholla] Provinces have revolted many times throughout history. In the future, one day there will be a revolution in South Korea. But right now the Korean [Workers'] Party's work in South Korea is very weak. There is no mass base like that in South Vietnam. It seems that [the Korean Workers' Party] must continue to prepare. Once [it] is prepared, the problem will be easy to handle.

(6) Economic issues. Life in [North] Korea is not that good right now; there is just enough to eat and wear. Cotton-padded clothes and quilts are still not right and will take an estimated three years to fix. There are not enough non-staple foods, but [the situation] is passable. Economically, foreign exchanges are the biggest problem. Each year, [North] Korea exports 80 million rubles to the Soviet Union and imports 600,000 tons of oil, 10,000 tons of cotton, and coal, rubber, alloy steel, and machine parts. All together this is a significant sum and, with annual debt, creates a deficit of 15 million to 20 million rubles. They do not have foreign exchanges. Additionally, the Soviet Union takes away nonferrous metals, apples, and fish. This affects the lives of the

people. Actually, China is also presently helping [North] Korea to pay back its debts. You [China] give us [North Korea] tungsten ore, and we [North Korea] refine it into high speed steel, which we sell 10,000 tons to the Soviet Union. This in turn generates 20 million rubles. The quality of the thermal power plants provided by the Soviet Union is poor and greatly affects industrial production. [North] Korea has already made serious protests [towards the Soviet Union]. There is too much capital construction, and this is another reason for [North Korea's] economic problems. It has already been decided that no new factories will be constructed and only those that have already been started will be finished.

(7) China and [North] Korea are brothers that will always share a common destiny. If something happens, [China and North Korea] must fight side-by-side. Nothing can change the relationship between China and [North] Korea. Imperialism and revisionism have set off on an anti-China movement and are attempting to isolate China. We [North Korea] stand together with China and will resolutely struggle against isolating China. [We] are determined and prepared to be isolated alongside China. Some people say that China is going it alone. We also want to go it alone with China. There are not many issues between the two countries, just some different views of the new leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The new leadership of the CPSU are revisionists, but are they enemies? We [North Korea] think we must still wait and see. Nevertheless, you [China] say they are enemies and are exposing them. We are not opposed to this. By exposing them, [the Soviets] will not dare to conduct treacherous activities. Whether the [Soviet Union's] support to Vietnam is true or false, this must be discussed with the Vietnamese comrades. When the Vietnamese comrades say their [the Soviet Union's] support is false, we [the North Koreans] will reach the conclusion that it is false. Of course, we also do not believe that their [the Soviet Union's] assistance to Vietnam is in good faith. They are helping Vietnam [because] of international pressure and pressure from the Soviet people and to take off the hat of modern revisionism. In sum, it is a measure that they had to take. In any case, since they said they want to aid Vietnam, then let us test them. The differences between us [China and North Korea] are only differences of understanding. Our [North Korea's] basic position against revisionism is unchanged. In the future, we will fight on the same side with China. Vice Premier Li [Xiannian] thanked Premier Kim for personally coming to the guesthouse and expressed that [he] would report the situation of the talks with Premier Kim to the Central Committee [of the Chinese Communist Party]. At the same time, [Li Xiannian] introduced China's war preparations and socialist education movement as well as China's experience overcoming economic difficulties. Additionally, the Korean side expressed agreement with the three draft documents [written by] China. Vice Premier Ri Ju-yeon will accompany [you] to the theater tonight and to the Ryonggang Hot Springs tomorrow to relax and visit Premier Kim's former residence and village. On 28 [December] [we] will return to Pyongyang for the signing. [The Chinese] are scheduled to return to Beijing on 29 [December].

Special Report.

[Chinese] Embassy in [North] Korea
26 December 1965