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Report, Embassy of Hungary in North Korea to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, 28 December 1956.

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On 27th December this year, [...] Comrade Füredi invited Macuch, the Counsellor of the Czechoslovak Embassy, to coffee. [...] Comrade Macuch dwelt upon the Korean situation, and described all the main shortcomings which had been noticeable in the development of the DPRK's economy and still existed in many places. [...] for instance, he related how senselessly industry had been developed in the DPRK; in his view, what was most characteristic of this was that the Hungarians and the Czechoslovaks were building plants of completely similar type and capacity in Kusong and Huich'on respectively, albeit the DPRK's demand for the machines produced there could be abundantly met by just one such factory. In his view, the Korean leaders are thinking of long-range plans for exporting machines as well to the South-east Asian countries in the future. In his view, this will continue to lack any real basis for a long time. They have built many factories where they cannot provide the workforce, the skilled workers, the engineers, etc. There are also frequent disorders in the supply of raw materials, because they have neglected the development of mining industry [...]. Although the 3rd Congress of the Korean Workers' Party had already dealt with these mistakes, they set such guidelines for industrial development which essentially could not prevent [the repetition of] the earlier mistakes. Later, the CC plenums held in August and December finally modified the earlier plans, and instead of new industrial projects, they set themselves to enlarge the already existing ones and improve their technical standards. In addition, they are laying more and more emphasis on the improvement of living standards, for there are still serious problems in this field.

As far as he knew, Comrade Macuch said, in South Korea the population's living standards were higher, which was made possible by the fact that the substantial aid given by the USA provided employment for the industrial workers in certain branches of light industry, and by that they did not invest so much in industry as it was the case in the war-torn DPRK. In his view, peasants also live better in South Korea, for there is more and better land at their disposal, and they use much more artificial fertilizer – 800 000 metric tons in 1955, as opposed to the DPRK's 125 000 metric tons. – Of course, this does not mean that the South Korean population lives well, it merely lives relatively better than the population of the DPRK.

[...] Comrade Macuch said that the Americans were doing their best to curtail the influence and authority of the N[eutral] C[ontrol] C[ommission]. Various disturbances and provocations are constantly occurring in the frontier zone; for instance, recently Rheeist provocateurs came over to a frontier village, killed the chairman of the cooperative, and

kidnapped several youths. In Comrade Macuch's view, it is not right that the press of the DPRK does not deal concretely and publicly with these and similar cases but always writes merely about the "Syngman Rhee clique," the "gang," the "traitors" etc. (To our knowledge, the press did write about that border incident; Comrade Macuch was misinformed in this case.) In his opinion, this form is not right, for the South Korean population also keeps an eye on it, and the latest elections also showed that more than half the population supported Syngman Rhee. It would be more sensible if the attitude of the government of the People's Republic of China toward Jiang Jieshi and other leaders active on the island of Taiwan became a lesson for the DPRK. Recently, the following policy is being pursued there: they [the GMD leaders] are called upon to return home [...]. In our opinion, the DPRK cannot follow completely the Chinese example in this field, for the greater part of the population [lives] in South Korea, and conditions are entirely different. [...]

Károly Práth
Ambassador
