*North Korea and the Armistice Negotiations*

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Among the myriad consequences of the Korean War, one of the most long-lasting is the set of attitudes the North Korean leadership developed toward its allies over the course of the conflict. While Kim Il Sung and his inner circle began the war as confident, willingly subordinate members of the communist bloc, they emerged from the devastation with a notably altered posture. All but ignoring the decisive roles played by their allies, they began to present the war, at least to their domestic audience, as a great victory won by the North Korean people alone. At the same time, confident that their allies would continue to provide the aid essential for their survival, they boldly presented their demands for assistance. Pyongyang’s distinctive combination of resentment of outside influence along with a sense of entitlement deepened over the postwar years, infuriating and repelling North Korea’s allies.

This paper argues that the manner in which the war was prosecuted on the communist side during the two year-long armistice negotiations fostered North Korea’s distinctive attitudes toward its allies. Pyongyang had little voice in the negotiations and was compelled by Moscow and Beijing to prolong the war, despite the vast destruction it brought North Korea. At the same time, Soviet and Chinese determination to tie down American forces in Korea in order to allow time for the socialist bloc to rearm necessitated that they provide enough aid to the DPRK to enable it to continue the fight. Thus, while the North Korean leadership resented their helplessness, they came to believe that the DPRK’s “special status” as foremost victim of “American imperialism” and defender of the front line in the global anti-imperialist struggle entitled them to virtually unlimited assistance. This status moreover enabled them to develop a heterodox ideological posture of supposed “self- reliance” – *Juche* – without losing their essential ties to their communist allies.

This paper is based primarily on Russian documents the author obtained from several archives in Moscow: the Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, which houses the records of the Soviet Foreign Ministry; the Russian Center for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Recent History, the repository of documents of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; and the collection of high-level documents on Soviet involvement in the Korea housed in the Presidential Archive. Most of the documents cited from the first two repositories are examined here for the first time. The records from the Presidential Archive have been published previously and are examined here from a new perspective.

**The Roles of the Communist Allies in the Armistice Negotiations**

As the Chinese historian Shen Zhi-hua has shown, once Chinese armed forces entered Korea in October 1950 to save the DPRK from imminent defeat, the PRC took over the day-to-day command of the war. Though this process was quite predictable, and in fact mirrored what happened in the South following the US entry into the war, it nonetheless caught Kim Il Sung by surprise. Kim initially resisted PRC requests to establish a unified command structure. It was only after Stalin ruled in favor of the Chinese plan that Kim agreed to create a joint command structure led by Peng Dehuai, with Koreans playing a supporting role. Chinese commanders and their superiors in Beijing then took the lead in deciding tactical questions, such as how far to advance, and in managing North Korea’s infrastructure, particularly the railroads. Whenever disputes arose between the Chinese and Korean leaderships, the issue was brought to Stalin for resolution and the Soviet leader invariably sided with the Chinese.[[1]](#footnote-1)

This basic structure of allied decision-making continued with regard to the armistice negotiations, with the exception that Stalin became more actively involved in this aspect of the war. Since the Soviet leader was far more experienced in diplomacy than was Mao Zedong and Soviet interests were more directly at stake in negotiations with the United Nations Command, Stalin intervened more often in questions regarding the negotiations than he did with respect to military tactics. Thus, when UN Commander Matthew Ridgway directed his proposal to open negotiations in June 1951 to Kim Il Sung – since the Chinese were participating only as “volunteers” and the Soviets were not openly belligerents – it was Mao Zedong who wrote to Stalin requesting instructions on how to respond. The Soviet leader then sent a draft reply, with instructions that it be signed by both Kim Il Sung and Peng Dehuai, explaining that the Americans would not take it seriously if it were signed only by the Korean leader.[[2]](#footnote-2) As the Chinese and North Koreans prepared to begin the negotiations, they agreed that the Chief of Staff of the Korean People’s Army, Nam Il, would head their delegation. However, Stalin quickly made it clear that Koreans would not play the leading role in the negotiations. When Kim Il Sung wrote Stalin requesting approval of the proposed agenda for the talks, the Soviet leader upbraided him for not having first worked out the proposal with the Chinese.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Once the negotiations began, the communications channel generally originated with Li Kenong, the chief Chinese representative, who sent reports on the course of the talks and requests for instructions to Mao Zedong, with copies delivered to Kim Il Sung and Peng Dehuai. Mao then forwarded to Stalin these reports and queries, as well as the instructions he sent to Li in reply.[[4]](#footnote-4) On certain fairly low level issues, such as the work of journalists in Pyongyang, Mao instructed Li to ask Kim Il Sung for his assistance.[[5]](#footnote-5) On particularly important questions, however, Li sometimes communicated solely with Mao, without sending a copy to Kim Il Sung. For example, on 13 August 1951, Li sent a lengthy message to Mao alone stating his view of the enemy’s intention regarding the dispute over setting the Military Demarcation Line and the tactics the communist side should pursue. Li urgently asked for Mao’s instructions on the matter, and made no reference to having discussed the issue with the North Koreans.[[6]](#footnote-6) Later in the negotiations, when Mexico advanced a proposal in September 1952 for resolving the issue of repatriation of prisoners of war, Mao requested Stalin’s instructions on how to respond; Stalin obliged, and neither made reference to Kim Il Sung’s opinion.[[7]](#footnote-7)

At other key moments, the Chinese included Kim Il Sung’s recommendations in their reports to Stalin but the Soviet leader disregarded the Korean view. For example, following the strafing of the negotiations site at Kaesong on 22 August 1951, Mao informed Stalin that the delegation had temporarily ceased negotiations, and sent the Chinese assessment of the broader situation as well as Kim Il Sung’s suggestion that they invite representatives of neutral states to monitor the site.[[8]](#footnote-8) Stalin replied to Mao that he agreed with the Chinese leader’s assessment of the strafing incident but did not support Kim Il Sung’s suggestion to invite representatives of neutral states to serve as monitors, “since the Americans will view it as an indication that the Chinese-Korean side has more need quickly to reach an agreement about an armistice than do the Americans.” But, he taunted, if Mao was indeed “of such an opinion,” he should communicate this view to Kim Il Sung.[[9]](#footnote-9) Predictably, Mao replied to Stalin simply that he agreed with the Soviet leader’s view and that he had “already communicated this to Comrade Kim Il Sung.”[[10]](#footnote-10) In other words, Stalin communicated only to Mao on this important issue, leaving it to the Chinese to communicate their decision to Kim Il Sung.

On occasion, Mao Zedong instructed Li Kenong to inform Beijing of Kim Il Sung’s view of the negotiations, such as when the talks resumed in October 1951.[[11]](#footnote-11) However, Kim Il Sung’s reply in this instance suggested that he viewed the request as *pro forma.* His curt message to Mao stated simply “I received your telegram of October 24 which gives the situation regarding the course of the negotiations. I agree with you.”[[12]](#footnote-12) Likewise, in a lengthy message to Stalin on 14 November 1951 regarding the reasons for abandoning their earlier insistence on the 38th parallel as the demarcation line, Mao mentioned that Kim Il Sung was of the same opinion; “this time it also was done with his agreement.”[[13]](#footnote-13)

While the allies sometimes took into account Kim Il Sung’s opinions, the Soviets forcefully rebuffed Korean efforts to take the initiative regarding the negotiations. On 19 November 1951, DPRK Foreign Minister Pak Hon-Yong broadcast over the radio, without prior approval from Moscow or Beijing, an appeal to the United Nations for an immediate cessation of military operations. Pak called for the withdrawal of troops from the front line, the creation of a two kilometer wide demilitarization zone, and a decision to make those guilty of prolonging the war accountable for their actions. Alarmed by Pak’s appeal, the Soviet Politburo sharply rebuked the ambassador in Pyongyang for allowing it to be broadcast and instructed him to advise the Koreans to cease the initiative. As the Politburo explained to Ambassador Razuvaev, the Korean statement “could be evaluated in the present situation, in conditions of blackmail by the Americans, as a sign of weakness on the Chinese-Korean side, which is politically disadvantageous.”[[14]](#footnote-14)

Russian records of the war for the period after Stalin’s death on 5 March 1953 suggest that the new collective leadership that assumed power in Moscow may have more readily solicited Kim Il Sung’s opinion. On 25 March 1953, Stalin’s former second-in-command V. Molotov asked the Soviet embassy in Pyongyang to communicate Kim Il Sung’s answer to Moscow’s suggestion that they respond positively to a request from the French government for information about French POWs.[[15]](#footnote-15) On the most important questions, however, the Soviets continued to control decision-making. Thus, on 19 March the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union, having decided to bring the war in Korea to an end, approved letters to Mao Zedong and Kim Il Sung with instructions on the steps the DPRK and PRC should take to reach an armistice agreement.[[16]](#footnote-16) Prior to the signing of the armistice, Moscow informed the North Koreans that they considered it inadvisable for Kim Il Sung to travel to Panmunjom to sign the agreement, because the South Koreans might stage an anti-Kim Il Sung provocation.[[17]](#footnote-17)

**The Utility of Prolonging the War**

Moscow was alarmed by Pak Hon-Yong’s aforementioned call for immediate cessation of hostilities in November 1951 because already at the beginning of that year, as soon as Chinese forces had eliminated the danger of an American conquest of the DPRK, Stalin had begun to regard the war in Korea as advantageous to Soviet interests. Romanian archives have revealed that in January 1951 Stalin summoned the political and military leaders of the East European fraternal states to a secret meeting in Moscow to discuss the opportunities created by the American failure in Korea. “The opinion arose in recent times,” the Soviet dictator began, “that the United States is an invincible power and is prepared to initiate a third world war.”

As it turns out, however, not only is the US unprepared to initiate a third world war, but it is unable even to cope with a small war such as the one in Korea.

It is obvious that the US needs several more years for preparation. The US is bogged down in Asia and will remain pinned down there for several years.

The fact that the US will be tied down in Asia for the next two or three years constitutes a very favorable circumstance for us, for the world revolutionary movement. These two to three years we must use skillfully.

The US has atomic power; we have that too. The US has a large navy, but their navy cannot play the decisive role in a war. The US has a modern air force, but theirs is a weak air force, weaker than ours.

Our task consists of using the two to three years at our disposal to create a modern and powerful military force. This we are capable of doing, we have all the prerequisites for this. China has created a better army than those of the People’s Democracies. It is abnormal that you should have weak armies. This situation must be turned around. You in the People’s Democracies must, within two to three years, create modern and powerful armies that must be combat-ready by the end of the three year period.

Stalin concluded the meeting by reminding his vassals that “the three years at our disposal are not for sleeping, but for arming, and arming well…This is necessary in view of the imperialists’ way of thinking: they are in the habit of attacking unarmed or weakly armed countries in order to liquidate them, but they keep away from well armed countries. This is why you need to arm during this respite, and arm well, in order that the imperialists respect you and keep away from you.”[[18]](#footnote-18) The East European communist states and the Soviet Union accordingly began rapid and massive rearmament in 1951, which reached a peak the following year.

It seems unlikely that when Stalin cited two to three years as the length of time the US would be engaged in the war in Korea, he was simply making a forecast. After all, he could not have known that UN forces would rebound sufficiently in the spring of 1951 to prevent a complete Chinese/North Korean victory, or that the Americans would make demands in the ensuing armistice negotiations that the Chinese were unlikely to accept. It appears, therefore, that Stalin was not so much forecasting a likely course for the war as he was indicating his intention to prolong it for two to three years in order to exploit the advantages it brought to the communist camp.

Thus, when Mao Zedong informed the Soviet leader on 14 November 1951 that he expected the talks would be drawn out for another year and a half, Stalin readily agreed, adding that “although the Americans are dragging out the negotiations, nonetheless they have more need to rapidly conclude them. This is based on the overall international situation.” In order to ensure the Americans would be denied a quick resolution of the war, Stalin informed Mao that the Soviet leadership “considers it correct that the Chinese/Korean side, using flexible tactics… continue to pursue a hard line, not showing haste and not displaying interest in a rapid end to the negotiations.”[[19]](#footnote-19)

Mao Zedong was also determined to continue the war so that the Chinese could obtain a politically advantageous position from which to end it, but by early 1952 the North Korean leadership began to voice a desire to bring their suffering to an end. With American bombing causing intolerable damage, on 16 January 1952 Pak Hon-Yong ventured to express to Peng Dehuai his opinion that “the Korean people throughout the country demand peace and do not want to continue the war.” As a loyal communist, however, Pak added that “if the Soviet Union and China consider it advantageous to continue the war, then the Central Committee of the [Korean] Workers’ Party will be able to overcome any difficulties and hold their position.”[[20]](#footnote-20)

After a further six months of stalled negotiations and devastating bombing, Kim Il Sung asked Stalin to relieve North Korea’s suffering by strengthening their antiaircraft defenses and allowing them to prepare for more active ground and air operations. Kim noted that during the past year of negotiations “we have virtually curtailed military operations and moved to a passive defense,” as a consequence of which “the enemy almost without suffering any kind of losses constantly inflicts on us huge losses in manpower and materiel.” He cited as an example the recent destruction of all of North Korea’s electrical power stations. Since US bombing made it impossible to restore the power stations, he noted, the North Korean economy was being severely weakened. Kim also mentioned the bombing of Pyongyang on 11-12 July that killed more than 6,000 inhabitants. He expressed agreement with the Chinese view that the enemy’s demands at the negotiations were unacceptable, but asserted that while preparing for more active military operations, “we need simultaneously to move decisively toward the soonest conclusion of an armistice, a ceasefire and transfer of all prisoners of war on the basis of the Geneva Convention.”[[21]](#footnote-21)

Kim Il Sung apparently communicated his opinion to Li Kenong as well, for Mao Zedong immediately informed the Korean leader that he rejected his proposal to reach an immediate agreement on an armistice. “At present,” Mao stated, “when the enemy is subjecting us to furious bombardment, accepting a provocative and fraudulent proposal from the enemy, which does not signify in fact any kind of concession, is highly disadvantageous to us.” The Chinese leader explained that the only harmful consequence of rejecting the enemy proposal will be further Korean and Chinese losses. However, he argued, since China began to aid Korea, the Korean people have been standing “on the front line of defense of the camp of peace of the whole world.” Moreover, through the sacrifices of the Korean people, both North Korea and Northeast China have been defended from American aggression. An additional benefit is that “the people of Korea and China, especially their armed forces, have received the possibility of being tempered and acquiring experience in the struggle against American imperialism.”[[22]](#footnote-22)

Mao further emphasized the international importance of the war in Korea. The increased might of the Korean and Chinese people in the course of this war, he asserted, “is inspiring the peace-loving peoples of the whole world” in the struggle against aggressive war and is facilitating the development of the movement for defense of peace throughout the world.” This international support “limits the mobility of the main forces of American imperialism and makes it suffer constant losses in the East.” Moreover, with US forces bogged down in Korea, the Soviet Union, “the stronghold of peace throughout the world,” can accelerate its rebuilding from World War II and “exercise its influence on the development of the revolutionary movement of peoples of all countries. This will mean the delay of a new world war.”[[23]](#footnote-23)

With the international stakes so high, Mao Zedong admonished his Korean “younger brother” that accepting the enemy’s proposal would “bring great harm.” To agree to the enemy’s proposal “under the influence of its bombardment” would put China and North Korea in a disadvantageous position both politically and militarily. Rather than bringing any lasting peace, it would encourage the enemy to further pressure them and make new provocations. Since the Koreans and Chinese would then be in a disadvantageous position, they would possibly fail to rebuff the new enemy provocations. In that case, the advantages the war has brought to the global struggle against American imperialism will be lost. Consequently, even if the enemy does not make a concession and the negotiations are further delayed, or if the enemy breaks off the negotiations, Korea and China must continue military operations until they find “a means for changing the present situation.”[[24]](#footnote-24)

Kim Il Sung replied by accepting Mao’s analysis without elaborating. At the same time, he also accepted Mao’s encouragement “not to be ashamed to raise questions about the assistance we need.” Interpreting the latter as a reference to military aid, Kim insisted that they must move to more aggressive military operations, since otherwise “the enemy will continue furious bombardment for the purpose of putting military pressure on us.” Kim proposed that they increase their anti-aircraft artillery strength, adopt a more active strategy for Korean and Chinese air units and improve their command. Although Stalin had sharply limited the range of Soviet air operations to the Yalu River corridor when the Soviet air force entered the war in November 1950,[[25]](#footnote-25) Kim Il Sung now boldly declared that allied fighter units must now extend their operations to the border of Pyongyang. At the same time, their bomber units must go deep into enemy territory and their infantry units must attack at several points along the front line.[[26]](#footnote-26)

We have no record that Mao replied to Kim Il Sung’s proposals for more offensive operations, but when Zhou Enlai discussed the status of the war with Stalin the following month, in a series of meetings covering a broad range of international and domestic issues of concern to Beijing, he mentioned that the North Koreans were ready to end the war by accepting the UN offer to return 83,000 POWs.[[27]](#footnote-27) Zhou made it clear that the Chinese did not take the Korean view seriously. As the historian Chen Jian has documented, Mao Zedong regarded the issue of POW repatriation as a serious political struggle worth continuing the war in order to resolve to their advantage.[[28]](#footnote-28) Zhou thus explained to Stalin that the Koreans “have not considered the crafty game that America is playing here – out of the 83,000, only 6,400 are Chinese, and the rest Koreans…This clearly shows that they are out to provoke us, by trying to drive a wedge between China and Korea.” While Mao Zedong, Zhou reported, believed they should hold firm in their demand that all POWs be repatriated, the Koreans “believe that the continuation of the war is not advantageous because the daily losses are greater than the number of POWs whose return is being discussed.” Mao, on the other hand, “believes that the continuation of the war is advantageous to us, since it detracts the USA from preparing for a new world war.”[[29]](#footnote-29)

Stalin agreed with Mao’s view that prolonging the war was advantageous and dismissed the Koreans’ concerns with the memorable comment that they “have lost nothing, except people.”[[30]](#footnote-30) The Chinese and Koreans do not need to accept the American terms, Stalin declared, because the US knows it will have to end the war. The communist allies must therefore endure and be patient. “Of course,” he conceded, “one needs to understand Korea – they have suffered many casualties. But it needs to be explained to them that this is an important matter. They need patience and lots of endurance. The war in Korea has shown America’s weakness. The armies of twenty-four countries cannot continue the war in Korea for long, since they have not achieved their goals and cannot count on success in this matter.”[[31]](#footnote-31)

To ensure that the war continue until the US gives up, Stalin was ready to assist North Korea by providing additional weapons and supplies. He asked Zhou Enlai specifically about the food situation in Korea, asserting that the Soviets can help the Koreans. Zhou reported that Korea “is having difficulties in this regard,” but that the Chinese had told Kim Il Sung that they would give them food and clothing and “everything they ask for, but that they cannot give weapons.” Stalin quickly offered to fill that gap by giving Korea additional weapons. “We will begrudge nothing to Korea,” the Soviet dictator declared.[[32]](#footnote-32)

Returning to the issue of the armistice negotiations, Zhou repeated that they cannot yield to the Americans. Stalin countered, however, that “if the Americans back down a little, then you can accept, assuming that negotiations will continue on questions still unresolved.” Zhou agreed but added that “if the Americans don’t want peace, then we must be prepared to continue the war, even if it were to take another year.” Stalin voiced agreement with China’s determination to continue fighting. Zhou then emphasized his agreement with the Soviet leader’s view that “this war is getting on America’s nerves and that the USA is not ready for world war.” He added grandly that “by playing the vanguard role in this war,” China was staving off a world war for fifteen to twenty years. By that time, “the USA will not be able to unleash a third world war at all.”[[33]](#footnote-33)

Not content with Zhou’s declarations of determination to continue the war, Stalin warned that “if America does not lose this war, China will never recapture Taiwan.” Moreover, appealing to Chinese pride, Stalin asserted theatrically that the Americans were not even a worthy opponent.

Americans are merchants. Every American soldier is a speculator, occupied with buying and selling. Germans conquered France in twenty days. It’s been already two years, and the USA has still not subdued little Korea. What kind of strength is that? America’s primary weapons, comrade Stalin joked, are stockings, cigarettes, and other merchandise. They want to subjugate the world, yet they cannot subdue little Korea. No, Americans don’t know how to fight. After the Korean war, in particular, they have lost the capability to wage a large-scale war. They are pinning their hopes on the atom bomb and air power. But one cannot win a war with that. One needs infantry, and they don’t have much infantry; the infantry they do have is weak. They are fighting with little Korea, and already people are weeping in the USA. What will happen if they start a large-scale war? Then, perhaps, everyone will weep.[[34]](#footnote-34)

After further discussion of tactics for reaching agreement on POW repatriation, Zhou brought up Kim Il Sung’s proposal that they start bombing South Korea. Presenting it as a request for advice, he explained that the Koreans “are not sure whether it’s the right way to go.” By this time Soviet air units based in Manchuria had trained both Chinese and Korean pilots, hoping to turn the air war over to them. Stalin was nonetheless unwilling to have allied pilots engage the enemy over South Korean territory. He also rejected Kim Il Sung’s suggestion that they launch a new offensive. “When armistice negotiations are taking place,” Stalin declared, “they should not be launching either strategic or tactical offensives.”[[35]](#footnote-35)

The Soviet leader informed Zhou that he would give China everything it needed to continue the war, and then asked about Korean morale. Zhou answered that the bombing of the electrical power station on the Yalu River had affected the Koreans’ morale. Although the Americans had failed to frighten Korea with their bombardment, “Korea is wavering somewhat. They are in a slightly unsteady state. Among certain elements of the Korean leadership one can detect a state of panic, even.” In response, Stalin simply acknowledged that he had been informed of this.[[36]](#footnote-36)

**North Korean Attitudes**

The Soviet leader was, in fact, kept well-informed about the morale of the North Korean leadership and population and their attitudes toward their allies as the negotiations progressed. After the first round of talks in July/August 1951, Ambassador Razuvaev reported to Stalin that when the North Korean leadership received the news that the Soviets had proposed armistice negotiations, they greeted this news “with some caution, without direct and frank statements.

Although the majority of them understood the situation and agreed with the necessity of an armistice, nonetheless, from private observations it was possible to conclude that the Korean leaders were depressed by the awareness that the war, which has destroyed the country, has not led to the unification of Korea and that now they are forced to reconcile themselves to the restoration of the prewar status quo under significantly worse conditions.[[37]](#footnote-37)

Careful to avoid angering Stalin, Kim Il Sung expressed his frustration by blaming the Chinese. He described the speech by Soviet Ambassador to the United Nations Ia. Malik on 23 June, which had signaled willingness to open negotiations, as an indication that China wanted to reach an armistice to free itself of the burden of having to assist Korea. Razuvaev reported that Kim had been disappointed in the Chinese attitude when he travelled to Beijing in July to discuss the negotiations, but he nonetheless had “objectively evaluated the forces of China, its possibilities and interests, and equally the role of Korea in the general struggle of the democratic camp.”[[38]](#footnote-38)

Kim Il Sung’s “objective” attitude consisted in avoiding any suggestion that the Soviet Union should ensure victory in the war by sending its ground forces to Korea – holding to the condition Stalin had set forth when first sanctioning the attack on South Korea.[[39]](#footnote-39) As Razuvaev reported, Kim repeatedly stated that the Soviet Union “represents the main reserve of the democratic camp” and therefore it is “premature” to introduce Soviet forces into the conflict. The ambassador noted the same attitude among the Korean population. On the one hand, “a general fatigue from the war is felt, and the wish to avoid further trials” while on the other hand, “a disappointment was widely felt” because an armistice would mean the “destruction of hope for final victory.” Nonetheless, “the Korean friends” wish to reach an armistice as soon as possible.[[40]](#footnote-40) For the remainder of the negotiations period, the embassy in Pyongyang sent regular reports on conditions in Korea, including the morale of the population and leadership.[[41]](#footnote-41)

Embassy reports reveal that while the Korean leadership continued to avoid questioning Soviet strategy regarding the war, they began pointedly to ignore the support they were receiving from the fraternal countries. In June 1952 the Soviet Foreign Ministry felt compelled to revise a draft resolution of the Political Council of the Central Committee of the KWP regarding the party’s tasks in the period of the armistice, noting that “point two doesn’t mention the help to the Korean people from the Chinese People’s Volunteers and from the whole camp of peace and democracy headed by the Soviet Union.” Their corrected text read, “To make clear to the Korean people that they could gain victory in the war against the American aggressors and their satellites thanks to the fraternal help of the Chinese People’s Volunteers and the material and moral support rendered to the Korean people on the part of the camp of peace and democracy, headed by the Great Soviet Union.”[[42]](#footnote-42)

The Soviet Foreign Ministry also noted that the KWP resolution said nothing about the need to strengthen relations with the PRC. Moscow’s corrected version resolved that the task of the KWP was

In every way to strengthen the political, economic, and cultural ties with the peoples of the democratic camp, and first of all with the people of the Great Soviet Union, the Chinese People’s Republic, and the countries of people’s democracy. The unity of the peoples of the democratic camp is the hope of a guarantee against the brigand intrigues of the imperialists. The friendship with the peoples of the Great Soviet Union, the Chinese Peoples Republic and the countries of the people’s democracy is the hope that guarantees freedom, independence, and successful development of the DPRK.[[43]](#footnote-43)

On rare occasions – exceptions that proved the rule – North Korea did express gratitude for Soviet assistance. In October 1951, after Stalin presented a gift of 50,000 tons of wheat flour, the DPRK held 6,255 rallies to “allow its people to express thanks, with cries of “Long live the great Stalin!” The Korean press published numerous articles about the “powerful demonstration of international solidarity of the camp of peace, democracy, and socialism.” The party and social organizations of the DPRK successfully elucidated to the “broad masses of workers the colossal significance of the Stalinist gift to the Korean people, tying this act with the policy being carried out by the Soviet Union of unselfish aid to the Korean people, the policy of peace and respect for the sovereign rights of large and small peoples.” Moreover, the embassy reported, Stalin’s gift and the measures connected with it have raised the fighting spirit of the population and the army.[[44]](#footnote-44)

**Wartime Exports to the Soviet Union**

Throughout the period of the armistice negotiations, the Soviet embassy in Pyongyang compiled detailed records of the nature and scope of the destruction wrought by US bombing and the results of allied efforts to rebuild. Thus, for example, the “Account of the Work of the DPRK Ministry of Communications for the first half of 1951” recorded that over this period of time, North Korean railroads suffered the following losses: 452 of the prewar total of 559 factory buildings; 396 out of 624 station buildings; 543 out of 878 service premises; 1928 out of 2410 warehouses; 11 out of 12 schools; 40 out of 43 hospitals; 3687 out of 4500 housing structures; 2779 km out of 5644 km of rail lines; 67 out of 508 tunnels; 443 out of 1861 bridges; 73,500 km out of 99,000 km of telephone/telegraph lines; 2320 km out of 2760 km of electrical lines, stations and substations; 114 out of 368 pumping stations; 1036 out of 1249 locomotives; 830 of 945 first-class rail cars; 13,114 out of 16,986 cargo rail cars. The ministry had 15,000 people working in reconstruction, who, together with Chinese rail reconstruction workers, succeeded in keeping trains moving, though with some disruption. The report also details the Ministry’s efforts to mobilize workers for this task and the organizational measures it adopted.[[45]](#footnote-45)

Despite the massive destruction it was experiencing, North Korea was compelled to maintain its exports of valuable mineral resources to the Soviet Union. It will be recalled that when Stalin first informed Kim Il Sung in January 1950 that he would, at last, support a North Korean attack on the South, he coupled this offer with a request that the DPRK provide the USSR with a yearly minimum of 25,000 tons of lead.[[46]](#footnote-46) Even though the course of the war proved disastrous beyond anything Kim Il Sung had envisaged, his Soviet patron held him to his promise. Thus, as the abovementioned report on the work of the DPRK Ministry of Communications noted, the ministry paid extremely great attention to ensuring that the transport of lead and other ore exports continued without interruption.[[47]](#footnote-47)

Thus, although planned exports to China were suspended during the war, the DPRK continued to deliver substantial quantities of precious minerals to the Soviet Union. For the first eight months of 1951, the following resources were delivered to the USSR: 5,346 tons of gold/silver ore (52.7% of the planned amount for 1951); 37,840 tons of copper ore (32.6% of plan); 902 tons of tungsten concentrate (50.8% of plan); 7,600 tons of non-ferrous metal ore (58.8% of plan); 22 tons of molybdenum concentrate (30.5% of plan); 0.84 tons of beryllium concentrate (2.8% of plan); 1.29 tons of niobium concentrate (32% of plan); 2,579 tons of zinc concentrate (8.5% of plan); 13,290 tons of zinc cake (122% of plan); 186 tons of zinc (143% of plan); 75 tons of carbide (15% of plan); 588 tons of ferrosilite (106.9% of plan); 978 tons of instrumental steel (133% of plan); 13,322 tons of lead concentrate (86% of plan); 1,062 tons of lead ore (44% of plan); and 8,443 tons of lead (120.4% of plan).[[48]](#footnote-48)

Since North Korea could not provide the required mineral exports without the help of Soviet technicians, Moscow had dispatched fifteen geologists to North Korea as early as April 1950 to do exploratory work. Despite heavy losses of personnel and equipment from the bombing, the Soviet team not only carried out their work but also trained Korean specialists, with a total of 161 trained in 1951-1952.[[49]](#footnote-49)

**Fraternal Assistance**

In order to ensure that the DPRK could maintain the war effort despite the bombing, the Soviet Union sent technicians and trainers in various fields. For example, in September 1951 Moscow dispatched three specialists in the production of artificial limbs, as well as technical documentation and equipment.[[50]](#footnote-50) In 1952 and 1953 the Soviet Ministry of Communications sent technicians and equipment to build an underground radio broadcast station on the outskirts of Pyongyang.[[51]](#footnote-51) The Soviet Ministry of Defense Industries provided technical assistance in the construction of two underground defense plants.[[52]](#footnote-52)

The Soviet Union also ensured that China and the East European fraternal countries sent essential goods to North Korea. For 1951 the remarkable list of deliveries included: 240,000 tons of coal, 300 tons of coking coal, 300 tons of coal pitch, 12,000 tons of cast iron, 200 tons of nails, and 300 tons of wire from China; 2,100 tons of fittings from Poland; 260 tons of iron pipes, 80 tons of steam-fired pipes, 330 tons of gas pipes, 430 tons of water pipes, and 840 tons of smoke stacks from Hungary; 4 air compressors, 1150 amp meters, 350 battery meters, 250 volt meters and 1,000 universal wrenches from Romania; 25 locomotives from Czechoslovakia and 22 from Poland; 15 cargo engines from Poland; 25 passenger locomotives from Czechoslovakia and 3 from Poland; 20 4-ton trolleys, 500 hand trolleys and 380 air brakes from Czechoslovakia; 1,000 sewing machines, 100 stocking machines, 100 knitted fabric machines, and 45 silk machines from Czechoslovakia; two button presses, 27 tons of offset ink and 10 tons of typographical ink, and 32,500 meters of driving belts from Romania; 27,000 tons of auto parts and 1,250,000 tons of handicraft equipment from China; 80 telephone switchboards and 5,500 telephones from Poland; 5,000 bicycles from Czechoslovakia and 500 from China; 5,000 radio receivers from Hungary; 6 offset machines and 6 x-ray units from Czechoslovakia; 150 areometers from Romania; 150 x-ray machines from Hungary; 150 sets of dental equipment, 5 mobile dental clinics, 100 microscopes and 50 sterilizers from Czechoslovakia; 10,000 syringes and 20,000 dozens of needles from Hungary; 100 million units of penicillin from Czechoslovakia; 500 kg ether, 2,000 kg permanganate potassium acid, 21,500,000 doses of medicine, 50 tons of cotton wool,1,000,000 meters of gauze, 1,000,000 meters of bandages from Hungary; 500 tons of plain paper, 20 tons of glossy paper from Romania and 1,000 tons of newsprint from China; 500 tons of wrapping paper, and 2,000 tons of paper for textbooks from Romania; 150 tons of cardboard bindings from Romania and Bulgaria, each; 10,000 meters of imitation leather and 1,000 tons of cotton from Romania; 100 tons of cotton yarn from Bulgaria; 2,000,000 meters of cotton fabric from Poland; 80,000 rolls of sewing thread from Bulgaria and 700,000 from Romania; 100,000 towels, 3,000,000 pairs of heavy-duty stockings from Bulgaria; 100,000 meters of woolen fabric from Romania and Bulgaria, each; 1,000,000 meters of cloth of various types from Hungary; 5,000 workers’ tents from Bulgaria; 100,000 pairs of army boots from Romania; 500,000 pairs of workers’ boots from Czechoslovakia and 100,000 from Poland; 2,000,000 dozen pencils and 237,000 toothbrushes from Czechoslovakia; 500,000 sewing needles, 40,000 tons of millet, and 20 tons of vegetable seeds from China.[[53]](#footnote-53) While the author did not obtain copies of equivalent reports for 1952 and 1953, there is no reason to believe this assistance did not continue for the remaining months of the war.

**Requests for Aid for Postwar Reconstruction**

As soon as the armistice was signed, Kim Il Sung displayed a new level of assertiveness in presenting Moscow with requests for postwar reconstruction. We have no records that directly reveal Kim’s thinking at this time, but from his actions it appears that the North Korean leader believed his allies owed him whatever was required to rebuild his country, since much of the destruction of the DPRK had resulted from their insistence on continuing the war for the benefit of the entire socialist camp. The pattern of aid established during the war may have strengthened this view and the passing of his fearsome patron in Moscow must have emboldened the young Korean leader. In any case, just four days after the armistice was signed, Kim confidently informed Soviet Chargé d’Affaires Suzdalev, who took over the embassy after the departure of Razuvaev, that the DPRK had decided to invite sixty-two Soviet specialists to spend six months in North Korea in order to ascertain the scale of the reconstruction work, establish the requirements for equipment, materials and workers, draw up estimates for the reconstruction of industrial enterprises, establish priorities for reconstruction, and fulfill other tasks.[[54]](#footnote-54)

A week later Suzdalev relayed to the collective leadership in Moscow his assessment of the situation regarding Korean requests for reconstruction aid. He informed them that the DPRK intends to appeal to the Soviet government and to the governments of the people’s democracies for assistance in reconstructing the industrial enterprises that have been destroyed. The Soviet Union’s share of the work will be the restoration of six large enterprises: the Kim Chaek ferrous-metallurgical plant in Chongjin, the steel foundry in Songjin, the non-ferrous metallurgical plant in Nampo, the Hungnam chemical plant, the cement factory in Sunchon, and the Supung hydro-electric power station. Moreover, Kim Il Sung intends to ask the Soviet government to create a Soviet-Korean joint share society to restore the liquid fuel plant in Aoji, which they expect will produce liquid fuel from coal and refine the oil received from Sakhalin Island.[[55]](#footnote-55)

“Apparently,” Suzdalev explained, the North Koreans intend “that the Soviet Union will take on the restoration of the six above indicated enterprises, i.e. the provision of engineering-technical personnel, equipment and materials, as the rendering of promised assistance.” The DPRK expects that the total request for goods from the Soviet Union for 1954 will be covered in part by Korean exports and in larger measure by long-term credit. Suzdalev noted drily that it is evident from the plans the Koreans have drawn up that “the fundamental calculations are based not on the maximal use of domestic resources but on receipt of maximum aid from the Soviet Union and the people’s democracies.”[[56]](#footnote-56)

Kim Il Sung’s confidence was well-placed, as the Soviet Union and the other fraternal countries did in fact provide a remarkable quantity of aid to the DPRK. This assistance enabled the North Korean economy to recover from the war far more quickly than did South Korea’s, and in the process even to be touted by some Western observers as a model for developing countries.[[57]](#footnote-57) According to Soviet scholars, during the first postwar planning period, the Three Year Plan for 1954-1956, 75.1% of all capital investments were financed through grants from the communist bloc; 24.6% of the state budget came from direct aid, much of it through credits; and fraternal aid and credit financed 81.5% of imports.[[58]](#footnote-58) In addition, thirty-four divisions of Chinese People’s Volunteers remained in North Korea to provide free labor for postwar reconstruction.[[59]](#footnote-59)

Suspicious of integrating North Korea’s economy with those of his communist allies as he devised plans for reconstruction, Kim Il Sung held to the autarkic model the Soviets had followed under Stalin, even though the post-Stalin leadership in Moscow had abandoned that approach on the grounds that it was an inefficient use of resources. Soviet and East European leaders criticized Kim Il Sung for stubbornly holding to an autarkic strategy, both immediately after the armistice and throughout the postwar period, but they nonetheless continued to support the DPRK.[[60]](#footnote-60)

**Conclusions**

It is fair to assume that as Stalin and Mao shaped their strategy toward the war in Korea once the armistice negotiations began in July 1951, they gave little thought to the long-term consequences that might result from North Korea’s response to that strategy. Instead, with full conviction in the rightness of their ideological prescriptions, they improvised tactics for the Korean situation in a manner that seemed logical and prudent. However, as was true of their treatment of their own people as well, their disregard for the well-being of their Korean allies produced unintended consequences. The Korean War left Moscow, Beijing, and the other fraternal states with a badly damaged, resentful ally they were compelled to support.

It is also fair to say that when Kim Il Sung doggedly pressed Stalin and Mao to support a full-scale invasion of the South, he could scarcely have imagined that a little over a year later his patron and his ally would insist on prolonging the destruction of his country the war unexpectedly brought, in order to advance the cause of the communist camp worldwide. North Korea’s experience of fraternal relations during the two years of the armistice negotiations thus left a toxic and paradoxical legacy. On the one hand, it created resentment and suspiciousness that have made it difficult for the DPRK to engage constructively in relations with other countries, while on the other hand, it ensured a continued flow of aid that has enabled North Korea to perpetuate these detrimental attitudes.

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1. Shen Zhihua, “Sino-North Korean Conflict and its Resolution during the Korean War,” *Cold War International History Project Bulletin,* 14/15 (Winter 2003/Spring 2004): 9-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ciphered telegram from Stalin to Mao Zedong, 30 June 1951, Archive of the President of the Russian Federation [hereafter APRF], Fond 45, Opis 1, Delo 339, Listy 95-96. Also found in Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation [hereafter AVPRF], Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Delo 4, Papka 11, Listy 14-15. For the text of the document see Kathryn Weathersby, “New Russian Documents on the Korean War,” *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 6/7 (Winter 1995/1996): 64-65. This document, as well as others cited below, has two archive locations because copies of the collection of documents on the war assembled in preparation for President Yeltsin’s gift of such documents to ROK President Kim Young Sam in July 1994 were deposited in the Foreign Ministry Archive, Fond 059a. Since foreign researchers do not have access to the Presidential Archive, it is particularly helpful that a copy of this collection was placed in the Foreign Ministry archive. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ciphered telegram from Stalin to [Soviet Ambassdor to the DPRK] Razuvaev with a message for Kim Il Sung, 1 July 1951, APRF, Fond 45, Opis 1, Delo 340, List 5. For the text of the document, see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” p. 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See, for example, Ciphered telegrams from Mao Zedong to Stalin, 31 July 1951 (APRF, N 67 II, N 68 II, N 69 II); 2 August, N 70 II); 3 August 1951 (APRF, N 72 II); 4 August 1951 (APRF, N 73 II); 5 August 1951 (APRF, N 74 II, N 75 II); 11 August 1951 (APRF, N 77 II); 12 August 1951 (APRF, N 78 II, N 79 II, N 80 II); 13 August 1951 (APRF, N 81 II, N 83 II); 15 August 1951 (APRF, N 84 II); 17 August 1951 (APRF, N 85 II, N 86 II, N 87 II, N 88 II, N 89 II); 20 August 1951 (APRF N 91 II); 19 October 1951 (APRF, N 95 II); 25 October 1951 (APRF, N97 II, N 99 II, N 100 II); 26 October 1951 (APRF, N 101 II, N 102 II); 31 October 1951 (APRF, N 103 II); 1 November 1951 (APRF, N 105 II, N 106 II); 22 November 1951 (APRF, N 108 II, N 109 II); 30 July 1951 (APRF, N 65, II). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ciphered telegram from Mao Zedong to Stalin, 2 August 1951 (APRF, N 71 II). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ciphered telegram from Mao Zedong to Filippov [Stalin] conveying the 12 August 1951 telegram from Li Kenong to Mao regarding the armistice talks (APRF, Fond 45, Opis 1, Delo 341, Listy 56-58). For the full text see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” pp. 67-68. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Hand-delivered note from Zhou Enlai to Stalin conveying telegram from Mao to Zhou, 16 September 1952, APRF, Fond 45, Opis 1, Delo 343, Listy 94-96, and AVPRF, Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Delo 5, Papka 11, Listy 96-98. Hand delivered letter from Filippov [Stalin] to Mao Zedong, 17 September 1952, APRF, Fond 45, Opis 1, Delo 343, Listy 97-103 and AVPRF, Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Delo 5, Papka 11, List 99. For the full text see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” p. 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ciphered telegram from Mao Zedong to Filippov [Stalin], APRF, Fond 45 Opis 1, Delo 340, Listy 86-88 and AVPRF, Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Delo 5, Papka 11, Listy 51-53. For the text of the document, see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” pp. 68-69. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. VSP9b) CC Politburo decision with approved message from Filippov [Stalin] to Mao Zedong, 28 August 1951, APRF, Fond 3, Opis 65, Delo 829, Listy 4-5 and AVPRF, Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Delo 5, Papka 11, Listy 54-55. The telegram was sent to Beijing on 29 August. For the text of the document, see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” pp. 69-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ciphered telegram from Mao Zedong to Filippov [Stalin], 30 August 1951, APRF, Fond 45, Opis 1, Delo 340, List 97 and AVPRF, Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Delo 5, Papka 11, List 56. For the text of the document, see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” p.70. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ciphered telegram from Mao Zedong to Filippov [Stalin], 25 October 1951 (APRF, N 98 II). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Ciphered telegram from Mao Zedong to Filippov [Stalin], 31 October 1951, transmitting the reply from Kim Il Sung (APRF, N104 II). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Ciphered telegram from Mao Zedong to Filippov [Stalin], 14 November 1951, APRF, Fond 45, Opis 1, Delo 342, Listy 16-19. For the text of the document, see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” pp. 70-71. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Politburo decision with approved message from Gromyko to Razuvaev, 19 November 1951, APRF, Fond 3, Opis 65, Delo 829, Listy 44-45 and AVPRF, Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Delo 5, Papka 11, Listy 65-66. Gromyko to G.M. Malenkov, attaching draft telegram to Razuvaev, APRF, Fond 3, Opis 65, Delo 829, Listy 46-48 and AVPRF, Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Delo 4, Papka 11, Listy 27-29. For the text of the documents, see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” pp. 72-73. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Ciphered telegram from Molotov to Soviet Ambassador in North Korea, 25 March 1953, APRF, N 78, I. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Resolution, USSR Council of Ministers with draft letters from Soviet Government to Mao Zedong and Kim Il Sung and directive to Soviet delegation at United Nations. 19 March 1953, APRF, Fond 3, Opis 65, Delo 830, Listy 60-67, and AVPRF, Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Delo 4, Papka 11, Listy 54-65. For text of the document, see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” pp. 80-83. For a report on Kim Il Sung’s statement of full agreement with Moscow’s decision, see Ciphered telegram from Kuznetsov and Fedorenko in Pyongyang, 29 March 1953, AVPRF, Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Delo 5, Papka 11, Listy 120-122. Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” p. 83. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. To Presidium of the TsK KPSS [Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union] to Comrade G. M. Malenkov and Comrade N.S. Khrushchev, from V. Molotov, 23 July 1953, APRF, No 88, I. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Notes by Emil Bodnaras on the meeting with Stalin in Moscow, 9-12 January 1951, published in C. Cristescu, “Ianuarie 1951: Stalin decide inarmarea Romanei” [January 1951: Stalin Decides to Arm Romania], *Magazin Istoric* [Bucharest], no. 10 (1995): 15-23. Translated by Vladimir Socor. The author is grateful to Vojtech Mastny for providing a copy of this document. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Politburo decision of 19 November 1951, approving the attached answer to Comrade Mao Zedong, APRF, Fond 3, Opis 65, Delo 828[9], Listy 42-43, and AVPRF, Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Papka 11, Delo 5, List 64. For the text of the document, see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” p. 72. For a more extensive discussion of the Soviet role in prolonging the armistice negotiations, see K. Weathersby “Stalin, Mao, and the End of the Korean War,” in Odd Arne Westad, ed., *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-1963* (Washington DC and Stanford CA: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Stanford University Press, 1998): 90-116. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Ciphered telegram from Mao Zedong to Filippov [Stalin] 8 February 1952 conveying telegram of 22 January 1952 from Peng Dehuai to Mao and 4 February 1952 reply from Mao to Peng Duhuai. APRF, Fond 45, Opis 1, Delo 342, Listy 81-83. For the text of the document, see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” pp. 75-76. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Ciphered telegram from Kim Il Sung to Stalin via Razuvaev, 16 July 1952, APRF, Fond 45, Opis 1, Delo 348, Listy 65-68 and AVPRF, Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Delo 4, Papka 11, Listy 40-43. For the text of the document, see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” p. 77. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Ciphered telegram from Mao Zedong to Filippov [Stalin] 18 July 1952, conveying the telegram from Mao to Kim Il Sung on 15 July 1952 and the reply from Kim to Mao on 16 July 1952. APRF, Fond 45, Opis 1, Delo 343, Listy 72-75 and AVPRF, Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Delo 5, Papka 11, Listy 90-93. For the text of the document, see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” pp. 78-79. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. For an examination of the Soviet air war based on documents from the Russian Ministry of Defense, see Mark O’Neill, “The Other Side of the Yalu: Soviet Pilots in the Korean War Phase One, November 1950-April 1951,” PhD dissertation, Florida State University, 1996. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Ciphered telegram from Mao Zedong to Filippov [Stalin] 18 July 1952, conveying the telegram from Mao to Kim Il Sung on 15 July 1952 and the reply from Kim to Mao on 16 July 1952. APRF, Fond 45, Opis 1, Delo 343, Listy 72-75 and AVPRF, Fond 059a, Opis 5a, Delo 5, Papka 11, Listy 90-93. For the text of the document, see Weathersby, “New Russian Documents,” pp. 78-79. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Record of Conversation between Comrade I.V. Stalin and Zhou Enlai, 20 August 1952, APRF, Fond 45, Opis 1, Delo 329, Listy 54-72. Translation by Danny Rozas. For the full text of the document see “Stalin’s Conversations with Chinese Leaders,” *CWIHP Bulletin* 6/7 (Winter 1995/1996): 10-14. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Chian Jian, *Mao’s China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of Carolina Press, 2001): 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Record of Conversation between Comrade I.V. Stalin and Zhou Enlai, 20 August 1952, APRF, Fond 45, Opis 1, Delo 329, Listy 54-72. Translation by Danny Rozas. *CWIHP Bulletin* 6/7 (Winter 1995/1996):12. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. *Ibid.* Translation by the author. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. *Ibid.* p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. *Ibid.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. *Ibid.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. *Ibid,* p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Report from Soviet Ambassador to the DPRK Razuvaev, “The Political Mood and Korean-Chinese Relations in Connection with the Negotiations for an Armistice.” [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. For documentation of the terms Stalin laid out to Kim Il Sung in April 1950 see K. Weathersby “Should We Fear This? Stalin and the Danger of War with America,” Working Paper No. 39, Cold War International History Project (July 2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. *Ibid.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. See, for example, “On the Political Mood of the Population of North and South Korea in Connection with the negotiations in Kaesong,” sent to the Foreign Ministry 11 September 1951 by B. Ivanenko, Advisor of the Soviet Embassy in the DPRK, AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Delo 54, Papka 30, Listy 93-114; “Notes of Conversation of Advisor of the Soviet Embassy in the DPRK Comrade Ivanenko with the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers’ Party of Korea, Comrade Li Syn Ep” 1 October 1952, AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 8, Delo 7, Papka 3a, Listy 22-27; “Report on the Political Mood of the Population of the DPRK, January-June 1951” AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Por. 53, Papka 30, Listy 107-127; “Report on the Trip to South Pyongan Province 17-19 September 1951,” by Adviser of the Embassy of the USSR in the DPRK , V. Ivanenko, AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Delo 54, Papka 30, Listy 126-140; “Report on the Trip from 15-20 November 1951 to North Pyongan Province” by Adviser of the Embassy of the USSR in the DPRK, V. Ivanenko AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Delo 7, Papka 25, Listy 2-4, 25-47; “Report on the Meetings of the Activist Workers in Industry and Transport Carried out by the Ministry of Industry of the DPRK in the First Quarter of 1952,” by Attache of the Embassy of the USSR in the DPRK, A. Yulin, AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 8, Por. 63, Papka 41, Listy 34-49. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. From V. Zorin to Grigorian at the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, sending the comments of MID [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] on the draft resolution of the Politsoviet of the Central Committee of the Workers’ Party of Korea about the tasks in the period of the armistice. Russian Center for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Recent History [hereafter RTsKhIDNI], Fond 17, Opis 137, Delo 947, Listy 82-86. This repository holds the records of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party though the Stalin era. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. *Ibid.* For other examples of Soviet supervision see “Annotations of Bulletins No. 8 and No. 9 of the North Korean Press for the Period from 15 April to 15 May 1951, dated 15 August 1951, AVPRF Fond 102, Opis 11, Delo 2, Papka 14, Listy 10, 14, 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. “About the Political Mood and Response of the Population of the DPRK in Connection with the Receipt from Gen. Stalin of the Gift to the Korean People of 50,000 Tons of Flour,” RTsKhIDNI, Fond 17, Opis 137, Delo 947, Listy 114-119. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. “Account of the Work of the DPRK Ministry of Communications for the First Half of 1951,” by S. Lazarev, First Secretary of the Embassy of the USSR in the DPRK, 7 September 1951, AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Por 54, Papka 30, Listy 45-54. See also “Report on the Damages to the National Economy of the DPRK by the American Interventionists,” by Third Secretary of the Embassy of the USSR in the DPRK B. Akimov, 6 June 1951, AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 77, Por. 64, Papka, 32, Listy 7-25; “Report on the Condition of Agriculture of the DPRK in the Period of Preparation and Implementation of Spring Sowing,” by First Secretary of the Embassy of the USSR in the DPRK S. Lazarev, 2 September 1951, AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Por. 54, Papka 30, Listy 55-76; “Gross Output of Production in the First Half of 1951 by Branch of Industry,” AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Por. 54, Papka 30, Listy 29-44; “Results of the Work of the Industry of the DPRK for the First Half of 1951,” by Advisor to the Ministry of Industry, M. I. Ivliev, AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Por. 54, Papka 30, Listy 1-28; “Measures of the DPRK Government in the Area of the Economy for the First Quarter of 1952,” by First Secretary S. Lazarev, 2 April 1952, AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 8, Por. 63, Papka 41, Listy 20-32; “Report on the Energy Resources of the DPRK and the Consequences of the American Bombardment of the Hydroelectric Stations of the DPRK,” by A. Yulin, 1 October 1952 , AVPRF, Fond 102, Opis 8, Por. 63, Papka 41, Listy 80-108; “Brief Report on the Circulation of Money in the DPRK,” by First Secretary S. Lazarev, 3 December 1951, AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Por. 54, Papka 30, Listy 222-227; “Brief Report on the Collection of Tax in Kind in the DPRK for 1951” by Third Secretary of the Embassy of the USSR in the DPRK, G. Soldatov AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Por. 54, Papka 30, Listy 228-236; “Brief Survey of the Condition of the Mining Industry of the DPRK, by First Secretary of the Embassy S. Lazarov, December 1951, AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Por. 54, Papka 30, Listy 192-221 . [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Kathryn Weathersby, “To Attack or Not to Attack? Stalin, Kim Il Sung and the Prelude to War,” *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995): 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. “Account of the Work of the DPRK Ministry of Communications for the First Half of 1951,” p.52. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. “On the Fulfillment of the Export-Import Plan of the DPRK for 1951, as of 1 September 1951,” by B. Akimov, Third Secretary of the Embassy of the USSR in the DPRK, APRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Delo 54, Papka 30, Listy 77-92. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. “Report on the Technical Assistance of the Soviet Union to the Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea,” by Second Secretary of the Embassy P. M. Petrov, January 1954, AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 10, Por. 22, Papka 53, Listy 1-39. The report gives detailed information about the mineral resources in the regions of the DPRK where the teams worked and the results of their work. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. *Ibid.* pp. 4-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. *Ibid.* pp. 23-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. *Ibid.* pp. 27-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. “List of Goods Delivered to the DPRK in 1952 by China, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria,” AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, “On the Fulfillment of the Export-Import Plan of the DPRK for 1951, as of 1 September 1951,” by B. Akimov, Third Secretary of the Embassy of the USSR in the DPRK, APRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Delo 54, Papka 30, Listy 77-92.

    “Report on the Technical Assistance of the Soviet Union to the Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea,” by Second Secretary of the Embassy P. M. Petrov, January 1954, AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 10, Por. 22, Papka 53, Listy 1-39. The report gives detailed information about the mineral resources in the regions of the DPRK where the teams worked and the results of their work.

    *Ibid.* pp. 4-5.

    *Ibid.* pp. 23-27.

    *Ibid.* pp. 27-30.

    “List of Goods Delivered to the DPRK in 1952 by China, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria,” AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 7, Delo 5, Papka 75, Listy 15-18. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Letter from Kim Il Sung to S.P. Suzdalev, Charge d’Affaires of the USSR in the DPRK, 31 July 1953. Attached to the letter is information on the most important enterprises of the Ministry of Heavy Industry that are targets for restoration and a detailed plan for placement of the Soviet specialists. AVPRF, Fond 0102, Opis 9, Por. 4, Papka 44, Listy 55-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Ciphered telegram from Suzdalev on 7 August 1953 to Malenkov, Molotov, Voroshilov, Khrushchev, Bulganin, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Saburov, Pervukhin, Gromyko, Zorin, Pushkin, Podtserob, Ilichev. APRF, No. 24, I. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. For example, British scholar Gordon White concluded that the DPRK was “a model in the application of economic policy to safeguard and extend national political independence.” See “North Korean Chuch’e: The Political Economy of Independence,” *BCAS* (April-June 1975): 44-53. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Erik van Ree, “The Limits of *Juche*: North Korea’s Dependence on Soviet Industrial Aid, 1953-76,” *The Journal of Communist Studies,* Vol. 5, No. 1 (March 1989):50-73. See also Karoly Fendler, “Economic Assistance and Loans from Socialist Countries to North Korea in the Postwar Years, 1953-1963,” *Asien* (Hamburg), No. 42 (January 1992): 39-45. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Shen Zhihua and Yafeng Xia, “China and the Postwar Reconstruction of North Korea, 1953-1961,” Working Paper No.4, North Korea International Documentation Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, May 2012. For a discussion of fraternal aid as a whole, see Charles K. Armstrong, “’Fraternal Socialism’ The International Reconstruction of Korea, 1953-62,” *Cold War History* 5, No. 2 (May 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. For a discussion of East German aid and criticisms of Kim Il Sung’s policies, see Bernd Schaefer, “Weathering the Sino-Soviet Conflict: the GDR and North Korea, 1949-1989,” *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 14/15 (Winter 2003/Spring 2004): 25-71. For a detailed discussion of Soviet interactions with the DPRK see Balazs Szalontai, *Kim Il Sung in the Khrushchev Era: Soviet-DPRK Relations and the Roots of North Korean Despotism, 1953-1964* (Washington, DC and Stanford, CA: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Stanford University Press, 2006); and Andrei Lankov, *Crisis in North Korea: The Failure of de-Stalinization, 1956* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004) [↑](#footnote-ref-60)