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## Overconfidence Shattered: North Korean Unification Policy, 1971-1975

By Bernd Schaefer

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**NKIDP**





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**Overconfidence Shattered:  
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Bernd Schaefer

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## **Preface**

“Evil deception” – this is how in November 1972 North Korea’s Deputy Foreign Minister Ri Manseok characterized the new constitution imposed on South Korea by President Park Chung Hee, thus establishing himself as ruler for life. The North saw its overconfident drive toward peaceful unification and socialist orientation of a Korean peninsula under Kim Il Sung shattered, while the Seoul regime rejoiced in thwarting Northern plans and reaffirming its grip on the South. But if “deception” existed at all, it was mutual and reciprocal. The early 1970s represent a unique period in the history of the Korean Cold War; North Korea held its last best chance to unify the peninsula under its auspices in the wake of Sino-US rapprochement via the bridge of inter-Korean dialogue, shortly before the growing economic gap between the two Koreas widened to the insurmountable advantage of the South.

This paper deals with North Korea’s unification policy about 40 years ago. It was mostly conceived in Seoul<sup>1</sup> in 2009, when Pyongyang detonated a nuclear device and tested several long- and short-range missiles. Simultaneously, South Korea experienced some domestic trouble of its own. Whether we speak of the current situation, or of an historical episode that nearly 40 years past, the basic Cold War dynamic of the Korean peninsula looks eerily constant: North Korea’s overweening ambitions, South Korea’s domestic challenges, and the presence of the United States military.

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<sup>1</sup> I want to thank the Institute of Far Eastern Studies of Kyungnam University and the University for North Korean Studies in Seoul for their generous support during my stay.

## I. The China Factor

For most of its history, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) maintained closer ties with the People's Republic of China (PRC) than with any other country. This was true until 1965, and again with gradually increasing intensity from 1970. For the study of North Korean unification strategies after 1970, therefore, the Chinese factor is essential and paramount.<sup>2</sup> Yet, so far this dynamic has been largely absent from analyses of the North's strategies for unification.<sup>3</sup>

Before 1966, China had advocated leftist radicalism and did not exclude military adventurism as a solution to the Korean problem. In 1962 in particular, Soviet diplomats and their Eastern European allies in Pyongyang suffered through war scares and feared the outbreak of another devastating conflict on the Korean peninsula. However, with the launch of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, China became preoccupied by domestic events and the DPRK was suddenly left to its own devices on how to pursue reunification. When North Korean leader Kim Il Sung defied China's strong requests to emulate the Cultural Revolution in his own country, his position at the helm of the DPRK became endangered by spillovers of China's Cultural Revolution into Korea and demands for his overthrow. Yet at the same time Kim daringly went on the ideological offensive to cast himself as East Asia's preeminent socialist leader with global appeal.

Simultaneously, the Vietnamese struggle to reunify a communist North and a capitalist South through the latter's revolutionary uprising inspired constant rivalry and contest between Pyongyang and Hanoi. North Korea was jealous of North Vietnam's global revolutionary pedigree, and claimed in its propaganda to be playing in the same league. Vietnam looked down on North Korea for its failure to turn South Korea into a battleground for revolutionary advancement, as North Vietnam had succeeded in doing in South Vietnam. Not that the DPRK

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<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed account: Bernd Schaefer, *North Korean Adventurism and China's Long Shadow, 1966-1972*, CWIHP Working Paper # 44, Washington D.C. 2004

(<http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/swp44.pdf>). Also: Chin O. Chung, *Pyongyang between Peking and Moscow: North Korea's Involvement in the Sino-Soviet Dispute, 1958-1975* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1978).

<sup>3</sup> Chung Chong-Shik / Kim Hak-Joon, *Korean Unification Problems in the 1970s* (Seoul: Research Center for Peace and Unification, 1980); Kim Hak-Joon, *The Unification Policy of South and North Korea: A Comparative Study* (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 1977).

failed to try; Kim Il Sung indeed longed for Korean reunification through upheaval in the Republic of Korea (ROK) and hoped to achieve this goal within his lifetime. Yet the plot to assassinate ROK President Park Chung Hee in January 1968 with the hope of triggering an uprising, thus in part emulating the Vietnamese Tet Offensive that started a few days later, failed completely.

Following a period of PRC-DPRK tensions during the Cultural Revolution that reached the point of military skirmishes in the vicinity of Paekdu Mountain and a showdown along the Yalu River in March 1969, Sino-North Korea relations improved beginning in September of that year with a bilateral meeting held in Beijing on the DPRK delegation's return trip from Ho Chi Minh's funeral in Hanoi. From 1970, China and North Korea swiftly restored their ties and moved toward closer cooperation. Their reconciliation was based on respective tolerance of their divergent paths during the previous four years, as well as on mutual acceptance of the global propaganda and domestic personality cult of the two leaders. It was absolutely vital to Kim Il Sung's political survival to gain relief from a threat on **one of** the two simultaneous fronts: the northern and southern borders of the DPRK. With China's return as a close ally, a supportive northern hinterland was now safeguarding the existence of the DPRK and strengthened it in its upcoming approaches vis-à-vis Seoul and its American ally.

On 12 April 1971, the North Korean Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) issued a decree containing an essentially peaceful formula for reunification in the form of an Eight-Point Declaration that demanded the withdrawal of American forces from Korea, the installation of a new government in the ROK, followed by the establishment of a confederation of North and South Korea and a united central government on the basis of free elections in both parts of the country. Liberation through military intervention and violent revolutionary upheaval were left unmentioned. When Kim Il Sung met Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu on 10 June 1971 in Pyongyang, he outlined the North Korea's complex strategy in detail. In a lengthy conversation, he defined Korean unification to be only feasible "by peaceful means." He maintained that any other "solution" could "trigger a global-scale war" which "the peoples of the world will not welcome," and stressed that neither the PRC nor the USSR wanted "to get involved in such a confrontation."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party 43/1971, Minutes of Conversation on the Occasion of the Party and Government Delegation on behalf of the Romanian Socialist Republic to the

Therefore, unification on Northern terms could be brought about only through the “growing revolutionary impetus” in South Korea and the withdrawal of US forces, provided Japan would not step into the military vacuum left behind by the United States. As Kim Il Sung asserted, all depended on Park Chung Hee being ousted and the establishment of “genuine democracy” in South Korea. According to Kim, Park’s long-time political rival and opponent in the 1971 presidential election Kim Dae Jung, “resembled our position regarding the unification of the country,” though he failed to call for the withdrawal of US forces. Kim Il Sung contended that Park Chung Hee was only able to hold onto power in the 1971 presidential race against Kim Dae Jung through electoral fraud. In conclusion, the North Korean leader stated, “victory through elections” is impossible “as long as the Americans continue to stay” in the South. “In the absence of the Americans in South Korea, or of any other foreign forces, the South Korean people could install a democratic progressive government through their own force, and the establishment of such a government would draw us very close to each other so that, without fighting, we could unify the country.”<sup>5 6</sup>

Within a few months, an unexpected improvement in Sino-US relations altered the regional balance of power and increased Kim Il Sung’s hopes of reunifying Korea on the terms outlined above. On 11 July 1971, US National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger concluded a secret visit to Beijing, heralding a Sino-American rapprochement. North Korea, like all of China’s allies, had not been notified of the meeting in advance, despite the presence of a high-ranking emissary from Pyongyang in the Chinese capital to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the 1961 Sino-DPRK “Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance.” Although Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai met with the North Korean emissary, and even informed Kissinger of the meeting, there is no indication that Zhou ever mentioned the impending Sino-American rapprochement to his North Korean interlocutor.

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Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Pyongyang, 10 June 1971. North Korea International Documentation Project (NKIDP), *Document Reader* No. 3, “New Evidence on Inter-Korean Relations, 1971-1972,” ed. James Person (Woodrow Wilson International Center, Washington D.C. 2009), Document #1. Obtained for NKIDP by Mircea Munteanu and translated for NKIDP by Eliza Gheorghe.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party 43/1971, Minutes of Conversation on the Occasion of the Party and Government Delegation on behalf of the Romanian Socialist Republic to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Pyongyang, 10 June 1971, North Korea International Documentation Project (NKIDP), *Document Reader* No. 3, “New Evidence on Inter-Korean Relations, 1971-1972”, ed. James Person (Woodrow Wilson International Center, Washington D.C. 2009), Document #1.

Immediately following Kissinger's departure from Beijing, Zhou Enlai traveled to Hanoi and then to Pyongyang to explain the PRC's new policy toward the US. In stark contrast to his mission to Hanoi on 13 and 14 July, Zhou's visit to Pyongyang from 15 to 17 July was quite successful. Zhou briefed Kim Il Sung in two meetings lasting seven hours.<sup>7</sup> Upon learning of the breakthrough, the North Korean leadership initially hesitated and requested time to deliberate. However, it did not take long for the North Korean leadership to perceive the Sino-US rapprochement as an opportunity to achieve their goal of reunifying the Korean peninsula on their own terms and driving the US off the Korean peninsula with Chinese support. On 30 July Kim Il Sung dispatched First Deputy Prime Minister Kim Il to Beijing for further discussions. Kim brought with him a new DPRK Eight-Point Proposal addressed to the US which included a list of categorical demands that Zhou Enlai was to present to Kissinger during the American's next visit to Beijing.<sup>8</sup>

Zhou Enlai convinced Kim Il Sung to seize upon the prospect of Sino-US rapprochement to drive the Americans from the peninsula, just as the PRC was hoping to achieve in Taiwan through its contacts with the US. While North Korean hopes to gain something tangible from Sino-US rapprochement might have been facilitated by Zhou's successful selling techniques, they were also clearly nurtured by a statement that Kissinger had made in his conversation with Zhou on 9 July 1971: "If the relationship between our countries develop as they might, after the Indochina war ends and the ROK troops return to Korea, I would think it quite conceivable that before the end of the next term of President Nixon, most, if not all, American troops will be withdrawn from Korea."<sup>9</sup>

Receiving North Korean support for its rapprochement with the United States was a major diplomatic achievement for the PRC. At the time, Maoist China regarded only four states

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<sup>7</sup> Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001). p. 269.

<sup>8</sup> Choi Myeong-hae, *The China-DPRK Alliance* (Seoul: Oreum, 2009), p. 285 (based on: Taiping Wang, *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Waijiaoshi* [Diplomatic History of the PRC], Vol. 3 (1970-1978), Beijing: Shijie Zhishi Chubanshe, 1999). I am grateful to Seuk-Ryule Hong from Sungshin Women's University in Seoul for pointing out this reference to me. See also: Seuk-Ryule Hong, "U.S.-China Relations and Inter-Korean Relations in the early 1970s," Conference Paper, East China Normal University Shanghai, 4 June 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Memcon Zhou Enlai - Kissinger, 9 July 1971, 4:35-11:20pm. *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) 1969-1972, Vol. XVII, China 1969-1972*, ed. U.S. Department of State (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2006), p. 390.

as truly “socialist,” i.e. not “revisionist” or “pro-Soviet”: Albania, North Vietnam, North Korea, and, to a lesser extent, Romania. Of those four, only North Korea, and to a lesser degree, Romania, expressed support for China’s new course vis-à-vis the United States. Albania and North Vietnam were highly suspicious and did not hesitate to convey their skepticism to the Chinese leadership. For the time being, the fallout of Kissinger’s trip to Beijing established the DPRK as Maoist China’s closest international ally. On 6 August 1971, during the visit of Cambodian government-in-exile leader Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Kim Il Sung publicly endorsed the Sino-American contacts. The North Korean leader portrayed Nixon’s upcoming visit to China as a “great victory for the Chinese people and the revolutionary peoples worldwide,” and as the “march of the defeated” to Beijing with the “white flag” of surrender.<sup>10</sup>

Kim also used this speech to propose direct bilateral talks with South Korean parties, organizations and individuals, to begin on 20 September. In addition, he emphasized North Korea’s willingness to meet representatives of South Korea’s governing party.<sup>11</sup> On 12 August, less than a week after Kim Il Sung proposed inter-Korean dialogue, the South Korean Red Cross proposed talks with its Northern counterpart. The DPRK accepted the proposal, and open Red Cross talks aimed at helping reunite an estimated 10 million family members divided by the Korean War started on 21 September.

During a later visit to Romania, Jeong Juntaek, a member of the Korean Workers’ Party’s Politburo, explained how North Korea had perceived the changed international situation as an opportunity when he noted: “Up until now, we used a wide range of methods in South Korea, but we have achieved nothing. In these circumstances, we can’t wage war. What should we do? Taking the current situation into account, we thought the best thing to do is to launch a peace offensive.”<sup>12</sup>

Inter-Korean Red Cross meetings starting in September 1971 served as a convenient cover to explore and initiate deeper contacts for both sides, leading towards more substantial and general negotiations. Such contacts were to pick up steam in due course and with surprising pace. Just two months later, beginning on 20 November 1971, behind-the-scenes talks by authorized

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<sup>10</sup> Chen Jian, *Mao’s China and the Cold War*, p. 273-275.

<sup>11</sup> Schaefer, *North Korean Adventurism and China’s Long Shadow*, p. 34.

<sup>12</sup> Minutes of Conversation between Nicolae Ceausescu and the economic delegation from the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Bucharest, 22 September 1972, NKIDP Document Reader “New Evidence on Inter-Korean Relations, 1971-1972,” Document #28. Obtained for NKIDP by Mircea Munteanu and translated for NKIDP by Eliza Gheorghe.

representatives from both Korean states were held alternately in Seoul and Pyongyang to facilitate higher-level political negotiations at a later stage.

Kim Il Sung may have put increasingly more faith into inter-Korean dialogue to achieve Korean unification under Northern auspices after returning from a secret visit to Beijing from 1 to 3 November 1971.<sup>13</sup> There he probably heard from Zhou Enlai that during Kissinger's second visit to Beijing, the US national security adviser had reacted rather frostily when on 22 October Zhou presented the DPRK's Eight-Point Proposal, delivered to Beijing by First Deputy Prime Minister Kim Il on 30 July. Still, Kissinger stated that "our present plan is to withdraw a substantial percentage of our forces from South Korea in the next years. If the tensions in the Far East continue to diminish, the number of forces in Korea can be expected to be very small." Kissinger also dismissed Zhou's repeated fears that Japanese forces might replace departing US troops in the ROK.<sup>14</sup>

On 26 January 1972, a North Korean delegation headed by Deputy Prime Minister Pak Seongcheol, and comprised mostly of specialists from the Foreign Ministry, flew to Beijing to prepare together with their PRC counterparts for the Korean component of the upcoming Chinese talks with US President Richard Nixon. Some members of the North Korean delegation even remained behind in the Chinese capital throughout Nixon's visit in late February. Allegedly, Kim Il Sung himself had paid a secret visit to Beijing earlier that month, a trip North Koreans officials denied but Soviet diplomats confirmed.<sup>15</sup> Soviet diplomats did not exclude the possibility of a meeting between North Korean representatives and members of Richard Nixon's delegation in Beijing.<sup>16</sup> When the US president ultimately visited the PRC from 21-28 February 1972, however, nothing of this sort happened; the Chinese hosts kept the DPRK representatives in Beijing at a distance from Nixon. The Chinese side did, though, raise the Korean issue during

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<sup>13</sup> Choi Myeonghae, *The China-DPRK Alliance*, p. 291-92.

<sup>14</sup> Memcon Zhou Enlai – Kissinger, Beijing, 22 October 1971, 4:15-8:28 p.m. *FRUS, Volume E-13, Documents on China 1969-1972*, Document #44.

See: <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve13/d44>.

<sup>15</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Memorandum on a Conversation with the 1st Secretary of the Embassy of the Soviet Union, Comrade Kurbatov, on 15 February 1972. PolA AA, MfAA, C 6853. Soviet specialists based at Pukch'ang military airport in the DPRK, from where Kim Il Sung probably departed to Beijing after February 3, were prohibited from leaving their quarters for some days close to that date. Also, Soviet observers in Beijing noted how the DPRK embassy there shopped for disproportionately high amounts of food on February 6.

<sup>16</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Memorandum on a Conversation with the 2nd Secretary of the Embassy of the Soviet Union, Comrade Gorovoy, on 18 February 1972. PolA AA, MfAA, C 6853.

the negotiations and a general clause about Korea was included in the final Sino-American Shanghai Communiqué.

Apparently the DPRK was quite pleased with China's advocacy on its behalf to achieve the objective of forcing the American troops out of South Korea. According to Soviet diplomats, the North Korean leadership was "continuously informed by secret material about the course of negotiations" with the American president during his stay in China.<sup>17</sup> Kim Il Sung's public statements after Nixon's visit indicated further North Korean willingness to talk to the existing ROK regime and constituted an indirect recognition of the Park Chung Hee regime for the first time. Different political and social systems were no longer considered an insurmountable obstacle to national reunification. Only the American presence in the South was defined as such.<sup>18</sup> In a unique interview with two journalists of *The New York Times* in May 1972, Kim Il Sung suggested that American détente and Washington's change of policy vis-à-vis the PRC and Soviet Union demonstrated how there no longer existed a need for American troops to remain in the ROK to "protect the latter from communism."<sup>19</sup>

A June 1972 East German analysis based on background information gathered in Pyongyang aptly identified the two most important factors behind the shift in the DPRK's unification strategy this way:

- Concerning China, the United States will reduce their assistance to Taiwan and possibly drop it in the foreseeable future. There is therefore a realistic chance that the US could also be driven out of Korea with the support of the PRC;
- Japan's influence will be on the rise in the ROK and will foster economic development there. Thus, Korean unification must be achieved before the economic gap between the ROK and the DPRK widens further to the latter's disadvantage. Pyongyang presumes that the population of South Korea is still in favor of reunification, but this might soon change due to rising individual and collective prosperity that comes with Japanese investment.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on a Conversation with the 1st Secretary of the Embassy of the Soviet Union, Comrade Kurbatov, on 10 March 1972. PolA AA, MfAA, C 1080/78. **[DOCUMENT 1]**

<sup>18</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Monthly Report on the Policy of the PRC (February/March 1972), 10 March 1972, p. 11, PolA AA, MfAA, C 507/72.

<sup>19</sup> *The New York Times*, 31 May 1972, p.14.

<sup>20</sup> GDR Embassy Beijing, New DPRK Position on Korean Reunification, 21 June 1972. Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der DDR, Berlin (PolA

No evidence has come to light about North Korean views on South Korea's growing economic superiority at the time, as it would have run counter to officially held DPRK beliefs. Still, the proclamation made in 1970 by a 1,000-member commission of ROK economists and technicians that during 1969, the GDP per capita of the ROK (\$205-208) had surpassed that of the DPRK (\$194-197) for the first time since the division of Korea, could hardly have gone unnoticed by the North Korean leadership.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, there were no signs that this trend would reverse. Nonetheless, according to Lee Dongbok, chief of staff to KCIA Chief Lee Hurak, Kim Il Sung still harbored the illusion that the North was far more prosperous until his delegates returned from a round of inter-Korean talks held in Seoul and described the actual conditions in the thriving Southern capital.<sup>22</sup>

By 1972, a fundamental modification of the Northern position on how to bring about Korean unification on Northern terms had occurred. The North Korean leadership was so serious about the prospects for diplomatic success with the South that they discussed with Soviet leaders (and probably with Chinese leaders as well) the possibility of abrogating the 1961 Treaties of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance with the USSR and the PRC in order to pressure the ROK into doing the same concerning its own bilateral agreements with the United States and Japan. The Soviets, however, balked at the idea and advised Kim Il Sung to wait until it was clear that the two Koreas were really going to unify.<sup>23</sup>

Between 20 September 1971 and 16 June 1972, DPRK and ROK Red Cross delegations, on both sides staffed primarily with intelligence personnel, met twenty times to agree on an extensive humanitarian agenda for subsequent "main negotiations" about the exchange of visitors, family reunions, and postal communication. During this period, DPRK officials showed

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AA, MfAA) [Political Archive of the Foreign Office, GDR Ministry for External Affairs, Berlin/Germany], C 951/76.

<sup>21</sup> Statement by Ambassador Kang Indeok, former ROK director of the North Korea Bureau of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) under President Park Chung Hee, "Crisis and Confrontation on the Korean Peninsula, 1968-1969: A Critical Oral History" (Washington, DC; Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2010), pp. 87-88. Ambassador Kang: "I can't forget how President [Park Chung Hee] was overjoyed with this report."

<sup>22</sup> Statement by Dr. Lee Dongbok, former Chief of Staff to Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) Director Lee Hurak made during the critical oral history conference "The Rise and Fall of Détente on the Korean Peninsula, 1970-1974," hosted by the North Korea International Documentation Project and University of North Korean Studies at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars on July 2 2010.

<sup>23</sup> Mikhail Stepanovich Kapitsa, *Na Raznykh Parallellakh. Zapiski Diplomata* (Moskva: Kniga I Biznes, 1996), p. 240.

keen interest in East German experiences with travel and communication between the GDR and West Germany. The North Koreans were surprised to hear about the cautious East German approaches and advocated instead for “completely free mutual traffic” between both Korean states. Apparently they followed the line expressed in an overly confident metaphor Kim Il Sung had once used during a conversation with Soviet Ambassador Sudarikov: “White is easily colored over red, but it is much harder to color red on white.”<sup>24</sup>

In addition, Pyongyang facilitated secret top-level negotiations between the North and South that resulted in joint Korean action with unprecedented speed. The DPRK stayed in close contact with the PRC to prepare for the eventual Korean “Joint Declaration of South and North” much in advance of 4 July 1972 when the declaration’s text was announced to the public. Its three principles were known in Beijing well before its eventual publication. In contrast, the Soviet Union had received only vague information no earlier than 23 June 1972. Confirmation of the secret visits by South Korean intelligence chief Lee Hurak to Pyongyang (2 to 5 May) and North Korean Foreign Minister Pak Seongcheol<sup>25</sup> to Seoul (29 May to 1 June) was finally given to surprised Soviet and Eastern European ambassadors in Pyongyang by a DPRK deputy foreign minister on 3 July 1972 who declared with hardly veiled confidence: “South Koreans have adopted the correct policy of the DPRK government. This policy is correct since it represents the path to [our] victory.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister, Comrade Ri Manseok, on 8 June 1972 for the Ambassadors of the European Socialist Countries (except Albania). 9 June 1972. PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. **[DOCUMENT 2]**

<sup>25</sup> Pak Seongcheol replaced Kim Il Sung’s brother Kim Yeongju as negotiator after the first Pyongyang meeting. This involved a lesser personal risk for the ruling Kim family in case of troubled negotiations. Indeed, when the DPRK-ROK talks went sour in 1973, the meanwhile popular Pak Seongcheol was demoted by the end of that year. However, another interpretation by a close contemporary ROK observer hints at Kim Yeongju having just lost the power struggle for the DPRK’s Number Two against Kim Il Sung’s son Kim Jong Il: Statement Dr. Lee Dongbok, former Chief of Staff to KCIA Director Lee Hurak, 2 July 2010. Conference “The Rise and Fall of Détente on the Korean Peninsula, 1970-1974: A Critical Oral History,” organized by North Korean International Documentation Project Washington D.C./University of North Korean Studies Seoul, Woodrow Wilson International Center, Washington D.C., 1 and 2 July 2010.

<sup>26</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister, Comrade Kim Ryeongtaek, for Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors of Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, Romania, Hungary, and GDR on 3 July 1972 in the DPRK Foreign Ministry. PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. **[DOCUMENT 3]**

## II. The Korean 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1972

The “Joint Declaration of South and North,” issued simultaneously in the DPRK and the ROK on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1972 was based heavily on the linguistic input of Kim Il Sung himself. The Declaration was agreed upon during Lee Hurak’s May 1972 visit to Pyongyang, at which time the DPRK had made strenuous efforts to impress its Southern visitor through the orchestrated display of its capital showcase city before the envoy from Seoul was going to meet with Kim Il Sung. With this declaration, North Korea was optimistic it had reached “a turning point for the unification of the fatherland.”<sup>27</sup> The agreed text emphasized the following three key principles to achieve Korean unification:

- No foreign interference but through self-reliance of the Korean people;
- Peaceful and non-violent implementation;
- Building one unified nation regardless of ideological and social differences.<sup>28</sup>

Based on this conceptual framework, DPRK deputy foreign minister Ri Manseok briefed the Soviet ambassador and his Eastern European colleagues in Pyongyang on 17 July 1972 on current assessments of the ruling Korean Workers Party (KWP) Plenum that had been held between 1 and 6 July 1972, during the time when the “Joint Declaration” was issued. Ri Manseok called the “North Korean peace offensive” necessary to attack the 1969 ‘Nixon Doctrine,’ defined by Ri as “Asians should fight Asians.” The deputy foreign minister further asserted that the DPRK had to counter Japanese attempts “to infiltrate the ROK” to ensure that Seoul had no support from any third side. After “the cut-off of the puppets from Japan and the United States,” the ROK would ultimately have to rely on the DPRK. For the DPRK, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Declaration symbolized a defeat of the “South Korean puppets’ policy,” and “stands in contrast to the policies of South Korea’s ruling elites.” The North Korean hope was that acceptance of DPRK proposals by Seoul would create oppositional momentum in the South and give rise to demands to repeal anti-communist laws and emergency rule. Though socialist reunification was impossible, according to Ri Manseok, there now existed realistic hope for a

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> See Kim Il Sung, *On the Three Principles of National Reunification. Conversations with the South Korean Delegates to the High-Level Political Talks between North and South Korea. May 3 and November 3, 1972* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House).  
<http://www.kcckp.net/en/book/reading.php>.

new regime in Seoul as a first step towards this goal; the DPRK “peace offensive” denied the ROK regime any “excuse to suppress democratic forces.”<sup>29</sup>

The unspoken assumption behind such internal statements by North Korean officials was Pyongyang’s clear conviction that the vast majority of South Koreans would prefer the Northern system if given the choice. It was believed that broad visitor exchanges would result in convincing South Koreans of the DPRK’s superiority after seeing Pyongyang with their own eyes. North Korea expected broad momentum in South Korean society to undermine Park Chung Hee’s grip on power and make him willing to enter into a confederation. Through the gradual steps of a presidential election in South Korea that would oust Park, followed by a general Korean-wide popular election, the DPRK harbored a long-term strategy of creating a pro-Northern “democratic unified government” to conduct a joint foreign policy without provoking “the Americans and Japanese” along the way to “stage another coup.” This new Korean government would successfully ask US forces to leave the peninsula peacefully and withdraw their UN mandate.

In another Foreign Ministry briefing for socialist ambassadors after the first inter-Korean Red Cross “main negotiations” in Pyongyang in late August 1972, the DPRK official proudly touted the “peace offensive” as a successful model for “[opening] the door between the North and the South.” DPRK officials were confident that Seoul’s tactic “to buy time” would fail when more South Korean representatives were added to Red Cross delegations, an addition that the North and “democratic forces” in the ROK demanded and at which the Seoul regime balked. Though the DPRK official deemed the Red Cross talks a “fierce battle between socialism and capitalism,” he was bursting with Northern feeling of superiority. He was confident that the latter was realized by the ROK delegation during their stay in Pyongyang, where they were exposed to extensive sightseeing and cultural events.<sup>30</sup>

In turn, for the second “main negotiation” meeting in Seoul on 13 September 1972, the Northern Red Cross delegation had to encounter the South. Even more so than the August

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<sup>29</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister, Comrade Ri Manseok, for Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors of Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, Romania, Hungary, and GDR on 17 July 1972 in the DPRK Foreign Ministry, PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. [DOCUMENT 4]

<sup>30</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Information Provided by the Head of 1<sup>st</sup> Department of DPRK Foreign Ministry, Comrade Kim Jaesuk, about the First Main Negotiation of Red Cross Committees from DPRK and South Korea on 12 September 1972. PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. [DOCUMENT 5]

meeting in Pyongyang, the same DPRK Foreign Ministry official now described this follow-up as a “fierce class struggle” requiring parallel “offensive and defensive fight” by DPRK representatives. Allegedly defying an order by the Seoul regime not to give a warm welcome to the Northern delegation, “one million South Koreans had tears in their eyes” when it arrived. DPRK Foreign Ministry official Kim Jaesuk commented that the “ROK population reveres our leader Kim Il Sung,” “our delegation unmasked the decay of the ROK,” and in particular the Southern intelligentsia would support the DPRK “energetically.” Though the South Korean side will now “attempt to delay further negotiations, the overall situation will become more favorable to us, and thus they will not succeed.”<sup>31</sup>

Internally, to the skeptical Soviets and their allies, DPRK leaders admitted that the July 4 Declaration was merely tactical, especially its third provision of building one state regardless of societal differences; in the end, unified Korea would have to be a socialist state according to the Northern model.<sup>32</sup> DPRK Foreign Minister Heo Dam told the GDR ambassador in Pyongyang on 26 August 1972 that North Korea would never give up its socialist system, its class-based ideological positions, and Marxism-Leninism.<sup>33</sup> A DPRK deputy prime minister became even more explicit during a visit to the GDR on 11 October 1972, claiming that the Joint Declaration amounted to a strategy to achieve victory for socialism in all of Korea. Subordinate to class struggle, the national question was mentioned for tactical reasons only. First, the minimal solution of confederation must be accomplished, followed by elections, after which there would be no other alternative but reunification. A war was no option because it might result in a global conflict involving the Soviet Union and China against the United States.<sup>34</sup>

On 12 October 1972 the first meeting of the high-ranking “North-South Coordination Committee,” an outgrowth of the July 4 Declaration, was held in the border village of Panmunjom, with the DPRK delegation led by Pak Seongcheol and the South Korean delegation led by Lee Hurak. When DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister Kim Jaebong later briefed the Soviet

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<sup>31</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Information Provided by the Head of 1<sup>st</sup> Department of DPRK Foreign Ministry, Comrade Kim Jaesuk, [about the Second Main Negotiation of Red Cross Committees from DPRK and South Korea] on 3 October 1972. PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76.

<sup>32</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Conversations with the 1st Secretary of the USSR Embassy, Comrade Kurbatov. 15 September 1972. PolA AA, MfAA, C 6853. [DOCUMENT 6]

<sup>33</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Visit of Ambassador Everhartz with DPRK Foreign Minister Ho Dam on 26 August 1972. PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76.

<sup>34</sup> GDR Foreign Ministry, Statements by DPRK Deputy Prime Minister Jeong Juntaek to Hermann Axen on 11 October 1972. PolA AA, MfAA, C 154/75.

and Eastern European ambassadors in Pyongyang on this meeting, he described it as acrimonious in atmosphere and asserted that the North Korean delegation put Lee Hurak on the defensive. Except for the actual regime, prior to the meeting a pro-unification “movement had developed with different parties, various groups, and among the people of South Korea.” Kim Jaebong asserted that the “the anti-imperialist, anti-fascist struggle in South Korea is on the rise.” He quoted extensively from allegedly direct exchanges between Pak Seongcheol and Lee Hurak at Panmunjom where the South Korean delegation was “fiercely” criticized of violating the July 4 Declaration by maintaining its anti-communist security laws and the “external force” under the UN command. Pak Seongcheol also took issue with Park Chung Hee’s claim to unify Korea “on the basis of a free democracy,” claiming it meant to impose “the capitalist order on the DPRK.” Lee Hurak was portrayed as defensive throughout and quoted as repeatedly appealing to the North Korean side to trust his intentions. Two future meetings of the Coordination Committee were agreed for November in Pyongyang and Seoul.<sup>35</sup>

### III. ‘Yushin’ and the two Presidents

A decisive turning-point in evolving intra-Korean dynamics occurred on 15 October 1972 when a South Korean proposal to convene a sudden inter-Korean meeting arrived via phone in Pyongyang. This meeting then took place on 16 October and the South Korean representative conveyed the following messages to the North Korean head of the Coordination Committee, Kim Il Sung’s brother Kim Yeongju: “We want to achieve unification at any cost” during the lifetimes of both Kim Il Sung and Park Chung Hee, “i.e. during the 1970s.” Furthermore, when listening to the tapes of the 12 October Coordination Committee meeting at Panmunjom, the ROK side realized it had “committed mistakes.” DPRK criticism there was “justified,” and therefore it was necessary “to launch new measures from our side.” The South Korean message continued by stating that Park Chung Hee and Lee Hurak wanted to unify the country, “yet many in South Korea are against this. Therefore order must be established.” The North Korean side was advised to listen attentively to Park Chung Hee’s upcoming declaration on 17 October.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Information by DPRK First Deputy Foreign Minister, Comrade Kim Jaebong, for Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors of Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, Hungary, and GDR on 19 October 1972 in the DPRK Foreign Ministry. PolA AA, MfAA, C 6855. [DOCUMENT 7]

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

On 17 October 1972 South Korean President Park Chung Hee declared martial law, dissolved the National Assembly in Seoul, banned political parties, closed the country's universities, and ordered arrests of opposition figures. One hour before Park's declaration, North Korea received another advance phone call from the South and an invitation to a further inter-Korean meeting for 18 October. There, Lee Hurak forwarded a message to Kim Il Sung's brother arguing that the international situation had changed, and that South Korea must "solve the national question through our own means without the reliance on the United States and Japan," who both opposed Park Chung Hee's new emergency measures. The ROK government thus hoped to have a new constitution adopted to "correspond to the peaceful unification of the country" and to counter American and Japanese efforts against South Korean "self-determination." Lee Hurak contended that there was domestic opposition in the ROK against the July 4 Declaration, as it violated the current anti-communist South Korean constitution. To overcome these obstacles, he claimed that the ROK therefore needed emergency rule and order to "avoid chaos in our country" while drafting the new constitution in accordance with the July 4 Declaration.<sup>37</sup>

A high-ranking Soviet diplomat in Pyongyang bluntly analyzed these moves in South Korea as Park Chung Hee's "attempt to repress the emotions of the people and strengthen his position" in order "to exploit the principles of the Joint Declaration for his own purposes." Yet, the observer concluded, the DPRK is reacting with "restraint" despite martial law in the South because "it is still eager to continue the dialogue."<sup>38</sup> Indeed, the Political Committee of the KWP Central Committee was initially mystified about Park Chung Hee's moves and discussed whether this was in effect a "pro-communist" or a "pro-rightist" turn in the ROK. It concluded that the "current situation" there is "very complicated," "like in the old China under Jiang Jieshi." The committee further claimed that Park Chung Hee was "unsettled" by the "growing hope for socialism like in North" among "the opposition parties, the people's masses, and the students." The South Korean leader, according to the KWP analysis, "wants to have dialogue and political meetings with us just by his own." With opposition parties and other groups from the South included, "the score in those meetings would not be 1:1 but 2:1 in favor of the North." With his increased powers, Park had now secured "the monopoly to conduct the dialogue with us," so "the

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Memorandum on a Conversation with the 1st Secretary of the Embassy of the Soviet Union, Comrade Kurbatov, on 18 October 1972 in the GDR Embassy. PoLA AA, MfAA, C 1080/78. **[DOCUMENT 8]**

score is back to 1:1.” Initially, Pyongyang decided to react in “polite form” but to nonetheless publish articles decrying the dissolution of the ROK parliament and the closing of the universities on order to “prove that repression of the South Korean people under the pretext of peaceful unification is unjustified and wrong.”<sup>39</sup>

However, the KWP ultimately abstained from publishing such articles. Criticism of the measures in the South was voiced only in internal meetings. According to Deputy Foreign Minister Ri Manseok, North Korea wanted to continue the inter-Korean dialogue through the still “open door between North and South.” The North Korean official articulated the DPRK position this way: “Therefore we have arrived at the conclusion not to provoke the closing of this door. If we criticize their [the South Koreans’] actions, it will result in further repression of the opposition parties. This way we would lose both options [BS: peaceful unification and Southern uprising]. The South Korean side has only opened the door to the North since it was forced to do so. Currently it is looking for reasons to withdraw from this commitment. It is our conclusion that we must not provide them with a pretext: This way we will lose all opportunities to unfold in South Korea the activities of political opposition parties, and other activities as well.”<sup>40</sup>

At the third Red Cross negotiation on 24 October 1972 in Pyongyang, the DPRK continued to advocate for a confederation as a step towards Korean unification. The ROK delegation, which the DPRK suspected to consist of 50 percent KCIA agents (it also thought 80 percent of the Southern journalists were agents), stuck to purely humanitarian issues such as reuniting separated relatives. The South Koreans were said to “test” the Northern delegates on their opinions about the state of emergency in the ROK. Tellingly, in his briefing about this third main negotiation, DPRK foreign ministry official Kim Jaesuk returned to using scathing epithets like “adversary,” “puppets,” and “enemy” when he described the ROK regime.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Information by DPRK First Deputy Foreign Minister, Comrade Kim Jaebong, for Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors of Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, Hungary, and GDR on 19 October 1972 in the DPRK Foreign Ministry. PolA AA, MfAA, C 6855.

<sup>40</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister, Comrade Ri Manseok, for Ambassadors of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and GDR on 8 November 1972 in the DPRK Foreign Ministry. PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. **[DOCUMENT 10]**

<sup>41</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Information by the Head of 1<sup>st</sup> Department of DPRK Foreign Ministry, Comrade Kim Jaesuk, [about the Third Main Negotiation of Red Cross Committees from DPRK and South Korea] for Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors of GDR, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria on 31 October 1972. PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. **[DOCUMENT 9]**

The second meeting of the more important Coordination Committee in Pyongyang from 2 to 4 November 1972 was the last opportunity for the North to turn the tide while relations with the regime in Seoul seemed to be in danger of deteriorating. Yet when the meeting was over the DPRK ultimately arrived at a sober conclusion: the “main objective” of the Southern regime was “to stay in power and petrify the status quo.” Even the North Korean leader’s personal appeals had not changed the currents. For the second time in 1972, a direct meeting between Kim Il Sung and Lee Hurak was arranged for 3 November upon the latter’s request. There the North Korean leader suggested that unemployed South Koreans should come to the DPRK to develop resources jointly. Furthermore, he came up with detailed trade proposals, ideas for joint fishing, common irrigation projects, and the joint “purification of the Korean language” from Japanese and American words. Also, he hinted at joint movie production, historical research, and integrated sports teams. A reduction of military forces to 100,000 each would free both Pyongyang and Seoul to spend resources and money for other purposes.

The North Korean leader repeated the proposal to create a confederation of both Korean states with their respective political systems intact. Lee Hurak allegedly hinted at the possibility of Park Chung Hee endorsing the confederation idea, but otherwise he avoided taking clear stands and promised to relay Kim’s ideas to Park. In addition, during regular negotiations the DPRK pushed strongly for the end of anti-communist propaganda in the ROK, for “free speech, press freedom, and the right of assembly” in the South, to reinstate rights of the opposition, to release political prisoners and to stop executions of opponents. The ROK pushed back, as those features were hardly part of DPRK reality either. In the end, after lengthy discussions over the wording of a joint communiqué, both sides reached a weak agreement. The South Korean delegation had opted against a Korean term for “cooperation,” *hapjak*, which reminded them of the temporary alliance between Chinese nationalists and communists that facilitated the eventual takeover by the latter. Ultimately both sides found a Korean expression, *himeul hapchyeo gati saeophaneun*, meaning “working jointly with united efforts.” When Lee Hurak proposed a future meeting between Kim Il Sung and Park Chung Hee, the DPRK coolly replied that there was no time left in 1972.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister, Comrade Ri Manseok, for Ambassadors of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and GDR on 8 November 1972 in the DPRK Foreign Ministry. PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76.

A few days later, on 6 November 1972, Kim Il Sung confidentially remarked to a deputy prime minister of the Soviet Union: “Once South Korean people know about all our proposals, they will rise up against Park Chung Hee.” However, Kim expected the talks between North and South to stretch for three to five more years, and believed the DPRK could not allow “the enemies” to close a door opened under Northern pressure.<sup>43</sup> Thus a third North-South coordination committee meeting was held on 13 and 14 November 1972 in Seoul. The DPRK delegation was led by Pak Seongcheol, who also had a 30-minute meeting with Park Chung Hee; apparently exchanges were quite confrontational. The North, for instance, complained about anti-DPRK reports in Southern media and asked to have them stopped. The South retorted it had a harder task than the North; there, all media is state-controlled, while in the ROK the press could not be completely checked. If this is the case, the DPRK replied, why did the South initially co-sign the agreement to refrain from mutual slander? According to DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister Ri Jin Mok, this meeting in Seoul “absolutely demonstrated that the enemies follow duplicitous tactics. They show that they have no interest in the country’s unification whatsoever. They just want to negotiate with us about some accumulation of forces and coexistence. This way they want to harness us.” The ROK is “afraid about socialist influence from the North on its people,” but we “intend to democratize society in South Korea and ignore their duplicity.”<sup>44</sup>

Another acrimonious Red Cross meeting, the fourth “main negotiation,” was held on 22 November 1972 in Seoul at the same time as the referendum on the new ROK constitution. The Northern delegation was kept at arms length from South Koreans, and the ROK press criticized the North. The DPRK delegation walked out of a movie because of “anti-communist content.” DPRK deputy foreign minister Ri Manseok issued a clear verdict on 28 November to the socialist ambassadors convened in Pyongyang: this meeting was “fierce class struggle,” and we “delivered hard blows to the enemy.” Referring to the South Korean side as “the enemies” throughout, Ri stated that the new ROK constitution passed by electoral fraud and was implemented under the pretext of peaceful unification. He argued that it represented a “reactionary document to stabilize dictatorship and power of one person in Seoul.” This

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<sup>43</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Meeting of Ambassadors of USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Mongolia, and GDR on 16 November 1972 in the Embassy of Hungary. PolA AA, MfAA, C 942/76.

<sup>44</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister, Comrade Lee Jinmok, for Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors of Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania and GDR on 9 December 1972. PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. **[DOCUMENT 12]**

constitution, Ri Manseok stated, is an “evil deception;” Park Chung Hee had now achieved absolute power for an indefinite period of time.<sup>45</sup>

On 13 December 1972, President Park officially ended martial law and announced the new “*Yushin*” (“restoration”) constitution. After several previous steps that increased Park’s authority, these new reforms provided him with wide-ranging powers to appoint one-third of the National Assembly, the authority to appoint and dismiss the prime minister and his cabinet, to issue decrees that became laws, and to serve an unlimited number of six-year-terms rubber-stamped by an unelected electoral college.<sup>46</sup> As Shin Jongdae notes, “domestically, the Park regime could propose the justification for the *Yushin* system as needed to compete eye to eye with the tightly controlled North Korean system.” The inter-Korean talks had served as “a useful resource to support the basis of the regime and [the] transition to [an] authoritarian system” in a period when the ROK perceived and drummed up a “security crisis” following the American rapprochement with China.<sup>47</sup> “Even to this day,” the KCIA North Korea Bureau chief at the time remembered in 2008, “I wonder whether [KCIA] Director Lee Hurak had *Yushin* in mind when he first initiated North-South dialogue” in Korea.<sup>48</sup> Lee Hurak’s chief of staff at the time corroborated this version in 2010 when he described the KCIA director as plotting a lifetime presidential system in the ROK since 1971 after Park Chung Hee had barely survived the election challenge from Kim Dae Jung. In early 1972, Lee Hurak had sent delegations abroad to study the presidential dictatorships of Jiang Jieshi in Taiwan, Francisco Franco in Spain, and Juan Peron in Argentina. In this context, Lee is said to have taken advantage of the inter-Korean dialogue to create a reason for the implementation of constitutional changes in South Korea.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister, Comrade Ri Manseok, for Ambassadors of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and GDR on 28 November 1972 in the DPRK Foreign Ministry. PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. **[DOCUMENT 11]**

<sup>46</sup> Gregg Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans, and the Making of a Democracy* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), p. 160.

<sup>47</sup> Shin Jongdae, “The Perception of ROK on Sino-US Rapprochement and its Ensuing Responses,” Conference Paper, East China Normal University Shanghai, 4 June 2009, pp. 3, 14.

<sup>48</sup> Statement Ambassador Kang Indeok, former ROK Director of the North Korea Bureau of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) under President Park Chung Hee, 9 September 2008. Conference Summary, “Crisis and Confrontation on the Korean Peninsula, 1968-1969: A Critical Oral History,” North Korean International Documentation Project Washington D.C./University of North Korean Studies Seoul, p. 138.

<sup>49</sup> Statement Dr. Lee Dongbok, former Chief of Staff to KCIA Director Lee Hurak, 2 July 2010. Conference “The Rise and Fall of Détente on the Korean Peninsula, 1970-1974: A Critical Oral History,”

In December 1972 the DPRK also issued a new constitution of its own, reaffirming *Juche* as the guiding doctrine for domestic and foreign policy. As the organized personality cult of the Kim family reached unprecedented heights in North Korea, Kim Il Sung now assumed the title “President” like Park Chung Hee had done long before. During the course of the following year, foreign socialist diplomats in Pyongyang observed for the first time serious indications that Kim Il Sung’s son, Kim Jong Il, who in September 1973 was appointed to key KWP positions in the organization and propaganda departments, was being groomed to succeed Kim Il Sung, who had just turned 60. However, any official hints of hereditary succession were still carefully camouflaged, or denied, by the North Korean regime in order to avoid charges of “feudalism” and Marxist-Leninist ideological heresy by its socialist international partners.

Although further inter-Korean Red Cross and Coordination Committee meetings continued without results during the first half of 1973, both sides seemed to look for a face-saving way out that would allow them to blame the other side for bearing responsibility for the breakdown. On 20 April 1973, KWP politburo member and Central Committee secretary Kim Dong-Joo stated that an implementation of the Joint Declaration had become highly unrealistic because Park Chung Hee had proved unhelpful in this enterprise. Only the influencing of South Korean opposition parties geared towards regime change in Seoul would work to achieve unification. Thus there was no option left for the DPRK but to continue “unmasking” the ROK “before the entire world” as the state torpedoing Korean unification, “in spite of 80 to 90 percent support by the population of South Korea for peaceful unification.”<sup>50</sup>

#### **IV. Return to Confrontation**

In early June 1973 Kim Il Sung confirmed his strategy for reunification before a visiting delegation of the Polish Communist Party headed by Central Committee Secretary Stanislaw Kania. He defined his main objective: “to create a democratic regime in the South in favor of unification.” If a regime change in the South was impossible by peaceful means such as inter-Korean negotiations, Kim reasoned that then “a revolutionary situation” must bring about

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organized by North Korean International Documentation Project Washington D.C./University of North Korean Studies Seoul, Woodrow Wilson International Center, Washington D.C., 1-2 July 2010.

<sup>50</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on Dinner by Ambassador Everhartz for Comrade Kim Dongju, Member of Korean Workers Party Politburo and Central Committee Secretary on 20 April 1973, PolA AA, MfAA, C 6852.

“change.” He hoped that the inclusion of “all parties and organizations from the South, including representatives from culture and academia” would lift up forces in South who disapproved of the partition of Korea.<sup>51</sup> Soon, two major actions by South Korea provided the DPRK with formal pretexts to back out of the inter-Korean talks without appearing to be the party that abandoned peaceful efforts for unification.

The first opportunity came on 23 June 1973, when the ROK government declared that it would seek relations with socialist countries and advocate for the simultaneous accession of both Korean states to the United Nations, following the model of divided Germany. This declaration was strongly opposed by the DPRK. North Korea proceeded to have the PRC and USSR threaten to veto ROK accession to the UN. The DPRK also prevented any socialist country from “defecting” by establishing diplomatic relations with the ROK. Furthermore, the DPRK accused the South of violating the “one Korea” principle, propagating the permanent division of the peninsula. With North Korea’s insistence that it was the healthy core of “one undivided nation,” the DPRK resembled and even surpassed a similar nation concept embraced by capitalist West Germany, to the embarrassment of the DPRK’s socialist East German ally. The GDR asserted the existence of two nations in Germany, one being “bourgeois-imperialist” and the other “socialist,”<sup>52</sup> though the GDR and DPRK always aimed to gloss over differences and emphasize “socialist unification” as their common goal.<sup>53</sup> On 16 July 1973 Kim Il Sung mentioned that South Korea would not want “independent and peaceful unification” to the Hungarian ambassador in Pyongyang. Kim claimed that while Park Chung Hee wanted dialogue in order for Southern ideas to infiltrate the DPRK, just the opposite has happened, with Northern ideas infiltrating the South. Because South Korean leaders were not willing to talk seriously about unification for the foreseeable future, Kim believed there was no alternative but “to revolutionize” the people of South Korea.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> GDR Embassy Warsaw to GDR Foreign Ministry Berlin/Section Poland, Excerpt from Information Report 34/73 from 3 July 1973: On the Visit of a Polish Party and Parliamentary Delegation to the DPRK. PolA AA, MfAA, C 294/78.

<sup>52</sup> GDR Foreign Ministry, Statement, 12 July 1972. PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76.

<sup>53</sup> Bernd Schaefer “Differences in Self-Confidence: East Germany, North Korea, and their Concepts of the Nation,” Conference Paper, Dong-A University Busan, 15 April 2009; Hankuk University for Foreign Studies Seoul, 23 May 2009.

<sup>54</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Memorandum on a Conversation with the Acting Ambassador of the Hungarian Embassy to the DPRK, Comrade Dr. Taraba, on 19 July 1973 in the Hungarian Embassy. PolA AA, MfAA, C 6854.

The DPRK finally seized upon the second opportunity to suspend and then downgrade unification talks: the 129-hour kidnapping of South Korean opposition leader Kim Dae Jung on 8 August 1973 in Tokyo by ROK intelligence agents. This operation was conducted on orders of Lee Hurak in order to orchestrate Kim's final political downfall in South Korea, although ROK President Park Chung Hee, with whom Lee wanted to regain favor after some troubles in their relationship, pre-approved the measure.<sup>55</sup> Subsequently, North Korea cancelled the next round of inter-Korean talks scheduled for 28 August 1973. Eventually the North just allowed for lower-level Panmunjom meetings between December 1973 and March 1975, following Southern requests and the dismissal of Lee Hurak as KCIA chief in the ROK. During this period, ten vice-chairmen of the North-South Coordination Committee met regularly without any tangible results.

In analyzing a major conference of the North Korean People's Army chaired by Kim Il Sung together with members of the KWP Central Committee, Soviet observers suspected as early as October 1973 that the DPRK was once again trying to achieve Korean unification through military means, probably following a "request" for help from "democratic forces in South Korea."<sup>56</sup> In November 1973 the first of a series of minor inter-Korean sea clashes occurred in the West Sea around the Northwest Islands (NWI), near the unofficial Northern Limit Line (NLL).<sup>57</sup> Diplomatic observers in Pyongyang speculated that the DPRK aimed to aggravate the economic situation in the ROK by forcing the South to spend precious fuel in order to deal with a flurry of Northern military activity on land, sea and in the air. Yet DPRK hopes for the removal of Park Chung Hee in March or April 1974 due to economic shortages in South Korea were not realized.<sup>58</sup>

In the context of the West Sea incidents and debates at the United Nations about the dissolution of the UN Command in South Korea, in March 1974 the DPRK made a move that

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<sup>55</sup> See based on a report by the ROK "National Intelligence Service Committee for Clarifying the Past": "Park Chung Hee Tacitly Approved Kidnapping of Kim Dae-Jung in 1973," *The Korea Times*, 24 October 2007; Lee Wan Bom, "Korean-Japan Conflicting Relationship under the U.S. Alliance in the 1970s: Kim Dae Jung Kidnapping Incident and the Assassination Attempt on Park Chung Hee," Conference Paper, University of North Korean Studies/Institute for Far Eastern Studies Seoul, 2 May 2008.

<sup>56</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Memorandum on a Conversation with Comrade Denisov, Attache of the Embassy of the Soviet Union on 12 October 1973 in the GDR Embassy. PoA AA, MfAA, C 6854.

<sup>57</sup> Whereas the 1973/74 incidents were provoked by the DPRK, the ROK also had a stake in naval engagements two years later in 1975.

<sup>58</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Memorandum on a Conversation of Comrade Steinhofer, 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary with the 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary of the Romanian Embassy, Comrade Laser on 30 January 1974. PoA AA, MfAA, C 6854.

highlighted its abandonment of hopes to reach an inter-Korean agreement to facilitate a withdrawal of American troops from South Korea. Foreign Minister Heo Dam proposed a detailed plan for a bilateral peace agreement with the United States before Pyongyang's Supreme People's Assembly, followed by a respective letter to the US Congress. Accompanied by recent naval tensions, and due to the outlandish provision requiring US forces to withdraw before the conclusion of any treaty, the DPRK proposal gained nothing but propagandistic attention from its domestic and international supporters.

While this Northern move represented a diplomatic smokescreen, another action soon created heightened tension on the peninsula: An attempt to assassinate Park Chung Hee had been in the making for at least two years. The attack in Seoul on 21 September 1974 failed, but succeeded in killing his wife. Assassin Mun Segwang, a Japanese citizen of Korean descent, apparently acted independently but was driven by his pro-North Korean political convictions. Though Mun indeed wanted to trigger a revolution in the South by killing its president, the DPRK was as much caught by surprise by Mun's actions as the ROK. Nonetheless, the incident was exploited by the Seoul regime, which alleged that Mun Segwang acted on North Korean orders and attempted to force the Japanese government to crack down on the pro-North Korean General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (*Jae Ilbon Joseonin Chongryeonhaphoe* or *Chongryon*) association based in Japan.<sup>59</sup>

When he received the Soviet ambassador in Pyongyang on 25 October 1974, Kim Il Sung repeatedly stated that the DPRK did not want to attack the ROK. Yet he claimed that "an attack by the South would actually accelerate unification," meaning the North would be victorious and unify the peninsula. During the inter-Korean unification talks and Northern proposals made during the course of negotiations, Kim asserted, it became clear to everybody "who is for unification, and who is against." The DPRK "no longer believes in negotiations with Park Chung Hee," he stated: "Like his masters in the United States, he rhetorically talks peace but in fact he is against it." Also, Kim Il Sung rejected the notion that the North would export revolution to the ROK, saying that resistance in the South resulted from Park's "repression," demonstrating that "religious people and students are not communists!" The DPRK leader also stated that his country "rejects individual terror," and he accused Park Chung Hee of falsely associating the

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<sup>59</sup> Lee Wan Bom, "Korean-Japan Conflicting Relationship under the U.S. Alliance in the 1970s: Kim Dae Jung Kidnapping Incident and the Assassination Attempt on Park Chung Hee," Conference Paper, University of North Korean Studies/Institute for Far Eastern Studies Seoul, 2 May 2008.

North with the assassin Mun Segwang.<sup>60</sup> However, a few weeks later, the public discovery in the South of up to 17 North Korean tunnels into the ROK under the DMZ further aggravated the situation by apparently undermining Kim Il Sung's claims that the DPRK was not interested in attacking the ROK.<sup>61</sup>

## V. Kim Il Sung's Indochinese Inspiration and Realism

A month after the indefinite suspension of North-South talks in March 1975, Kim Il Sung traveled to Beijing from 19 to 26 April, a few weeks before the fall of Saigon but right after the "revolutionary liberation" of Phnom Penh. Kim had not left his country, at least for officially announced business, for almost a decade. The Vietnamese model of successful revolution in the South with military assistance from the North had nurtured North Korea's aspirations to become an East Asian vanguard of revolutionary unification as well. Drawing on the text of the joint communiqué that ultimately concluded Kim's April 1975 visit to Beijing, the White House suspected the DPRK leader "may have traded off PRC unwillingness to support Pyongyang in more aggressive tactics to reunify the Peninsula in return for greater Chinese military and economic aid, and more vigorous diplomatic backing."<sup>62</sup>

Indeed, events in Cambodia and the upcoming fall of Saigon had raised Kim Il Sung's hopes that riots in South Korea and calls from supporters would enable the DPRK to send "revolutionary assistance" down South. The Vietnamese and other socialist diplomats in Pyongyang frequently hinted at domestic image problems for the North Korean leader created by the communist victories in Indochina. Any exposure of the DPRK population to the military triumphs of North Vietnam implicitly raised the question of respective North Korean shortcomings in South Korea and the wisdom of Kim Il Sung's strategies.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Memorandum on a Conversation with Comrade Pimenov, Attache of the USSR Embassy to the DPRK, on 29 October 1974. PoIA AA, MfAA, C 293/78.

<sup>61</sup> Cho Jaekwan, "The South-North Relations in Perspective of National Security and Regional Peace," in *Inter-System Détente in Germany and Korea* ed. Gottfried Kindermann (München: Tuduv, 1976). See also: Bernd Schaefer, "Die Koreanische Demokratische Volksrepublik: Wiedervereinigungs- und Sicherheitsstrategien 1966-1989" [DPRK Reunification and Security Strategy, 1966-1989], *Die Friedens-Warte: Journal of International Peace and Organization* 81 (2006), pp. 119-132.

<sup>62</sup> Memo Richard Solomon to Henry Kissinger, An Evaluation of Kim Il-song's Visit to Peking, 29 April 1975. GFPL, NSA, NSC East Asian and Pacific Affairs Staff Files, Box 13.

<sup>63</sup> GDR Embassy Pyongyang, Note on conversation between Ambassador Dietrich Jarck and SRV Ambassador Le Trung Nam, 13 September 1978. PoIA AA, MfAA, C 5464.

Yet in 1975 a Northern-supported “revolution” in the ROK was inconceivable without at least tacit Chinese support. Kim Il Sung did not fail to attempt to garner PRC approval. In his first public appearance in Beijing in April 1975 he declared Asia to be on a “high tide of revolution.” If war was to break out in Korea, he said, “we have to lose only the Military Demarcation Line but will gain the country’s reunification.” It will be “up to the US whether there will be war in Korea or not.” He also declared that “as members of the same nation,” Koreans in the North will not stand by “with folded arms” if “revolution” breaks out in South Korea; the DPRK would “energetically support the South Korean people.”<sup>64</sup>

In 1975, however, Mao Zedong was no longer in the mood to talk about a “high tide of revolution.” The Chinese leader was badly disappointed with the failure of global revolution and its limited regional achievements. In this context, the DPRK clearly fell into the “failing” category. Following his 1973 theory of the “three worlds,” Mao had increasingly shifted his focus from unsuccessful struggling revolutionary movements to anti-Soviet governments of various provenances, and by 1974 he declared, “we may not mention that the current world tide is revolution.”<sup>65</sup> Accordingly the final PRC-DPRK communiqué of April 1975 defined the “correct path to solve the problem of Korean reunification” by quoting Kim Il Sung’s own three principles from 1972 (peaceful, without foreign interference, national unity despite different systems) and by another “peaceful” DPRK Five-Point-Program of 1973. The PRC was also obviously eager to prevent the Korean question from affecting its relations with the US and Japan or to get dragged into a military conflict on the Korean peninsula.<sup>66</sup>

After his sobering visit to China, Kim Il Sung traveled on to Eastern Europe where he paid state visits to Romania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. In Bulgaria, where he stayed between 2 and 5 June 1975, Kim held extensive talks with Communist Party leader Todor Zhivkov, openly discussing with him the relevance of the Vietnamese experience for North Korea. He seemed to grudgingly accept that military realities on the peninsula were not in his favor. Kim Il Sung began with the statement that the “attention of the world” was now focused on Korea after the US defeat in Indochina. He then claimed that Western news agencies directed by the Americans

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<sup>64</sup> *Renmin Ribao*, 19 April 1975; GDR Foreign Ministry, On Kim Il Sung’s Visit to the PRC 18-26 April 1975. PoA MfAA, C 300/78.

<sup>65</sup> Yang Kuisong and Yafeng Xia, “Vacillating between Revolution and Détente: Mao’s Changing Psyche and Policy towards the U.S., 1969-1976,” *Diplomatic History*, Volume 34/Number 2, April 2010, p. 421.

<sup>66</sup> GDR Foreign Ministry, On Kim Il Sung’s Visit to the PRC 18-26 April 1975. PoA MfAA, C 300/78.

and the South Korean “puppets” would relentlessly report that the DPRK would attack South Korea inspired by the Vietnamese example. However, Kim argued, this would represent nothing but a pretext for repressing “democratic forces” in South Korea.

In his meeting with Zhivkov, Kim Il Sung then outlined the military and political situation on the peninsula. He defined the ROK army (760,000 forces) as stronger than the DPRK forces (500,000), not even counting the 42,000 US troops and their “equipment superior to North Korea’s.” With only 16 million people and a shortage of workers, Kim said, it would be very difficult to recruit and mobilize even more young people for the army. Instead, the DPRK would maintain relations with South Korean opposition parties forming the mostly middle-class “People’s Front for the Unification of Korea.” The Marxist “Revolutionary Unification Party” in contrast had to operate illegally with only 3,000 members, Kim stated. In order to avoid the liquidation of this party, they were instructed to work undercover and join the ranks of the legal opposition parties., Kim Il Sung identified the students organizing mass demonstrations as one of the most important forces “in the struggle for democracy” in the ROK. For the North Korean leader, the ratio between supporters and opponents of Korean unification were 2:1 in favor of the former when including the DPRK into the count.

There are two options to achieve unification, Kim continued to Zhivkov, using either diplomatic or military means. The DPRK would be committed to the first option but success would require “American withdrawal, Park Chung Hee’s international isolation, and the outbreak of an uprising in South Korea.” There is always a chance, Kim said, for a revolt while US forces are still present. Yet the DPRK advised “democratic forces” in South Korea to refrain from such a revolt for the time being, though “there is always the option they do not listen to us and rise up.” Korean territory, Kim Il Sung continued, was less favorable to combat than Vietnam’s. South Korea had no neighboring support territories, unlike Vietnam, which had Laos and Cambodia. When moving into the South of the Korean peninsula, Northern forces were in danger of getting trapped and encircled. Also there is no fertile ground for a guerrilla war. Kim explained that the “forces of the adversary are strong and small unit fighting cannot be successful.” For all these reasons, the DPRK did not favor a military method to solve the unification problem, Kim Il Sung concluded. Yet this did not mean the DPRK would be unable to defend itself if attacked. Its mountain ranges and submerged rice paddies were natural obstacles for any enemy trying to move forward rapidly. The enemy could use air power, but

countermeasures were already implemented, such as underground bunkers, factories, power plants and so on. Finally, Kim Il Sung concluded, there was the huge supportive hinterland of China and the Soviet Union.

Because of these factors, the KWP and DPRK aimed to “[solve] the question of Korean unification peacefully.” As Kim had summarized it to Zhivkov earlier: “If they attack us, we are ready to fight them. However, we will never attack first. We even intend to have talks about a peaceful unification of the country in case there will be a democratic change in the [South Korean] leadership.”<sup>67</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The brief but intense inter-Korean unification drive during the early 1970s fueled the international competition between the DPRK and ROK to establish diplomatic relations with other countries. In early 1973 the DPRK sent delegations to more than 80 countries to this end. At the same time, Kim Il Sung insisted that the Korean states should enter the UN as a confederation only and rejected ROK proposals that did not embrace this condition. Over 90 states worldwide recognized the DPRK by the mid-1970s, thereby almost equaling the number of countries that maintained diplomatic relations with the ROK. In 1973 the “United Nations Commission for the Unification and Reconciliation of Korea” (UNCURK), a remnant of the Korean War and the UN resolutions of the 1950s, was dissolved. Furthermore, the DPRK secured memberships in institutions like the World Health Organization (WHO) and established observer missions with the United Nations in New York and Geneva.

During the period of inter-Korean talks between 1971 and 1973, North Korea also achieved de-facto recognition of Kim Il Sung’s regime by the ROK, mirroring the DPRK’s de-facto recognition of the rule of Park Chung Hee. However, this sort of mutual recognition of personal regimes in the North and South did not yet constitute a respective acceptance of two sovereign Korean states. No permanent representations were established, and the heavily guarded DMZ continued to seal off the DPRK and ROK from each other as firmly as ever. North Korea still pressured its allies to isolate the ROK globally even while direct talks between North

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<sup>67</sup> GDR Embassy Sofia to Hermann Axen, SED Politburo Member and Secretary of the Central Committee International Relations Department, Letter and Translation of Information by the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party on talks between Todor Zhivkov and Kim Il Sung, 18 June 1975, pp. 18-21 and 4. PolA AA, MfAA, C 294/78. [DOCUMENT 13]

and South were held. Rather inconsequentially, the North allowed non-socialist states to hold diplomatic relations with both the DPRK and the ROK, but successfully pressured its ideological allies to refrain from any kind of diplomatic recognition of South Korea.

These barren diplomatic outcomes capped North Korea's unsuccessful drive for Korean unification on its own terms during the early 1970s. They cannot disguise the fact that a delusional Pyongyang saw its last best chance for a socialist peninsula evaporate. Throughout the course of inter-Korean negotiations, the DPRK had entertained inaccurate and unrealistic perceptions of Southern support for the Northern system and Kim Il Sung in person. According to an East German diplomatic commentator in Pyongyang, the DPRK expected to capture the South through the triumphant Caesarean method of "Veni, Vidi, Vici" ("I came, I saw, I conquered"). The DPRK harbored illusions about its superiority, and Southern sympathy for unification was wrongly equated with preference for the Northern system. Progress of "Americanization" in the South and the attractiveness of "Western life style" were underestimated. In particular, the DPRK underestimated the shrewdness, and what it called "evil deception," of ROK President Park Chung Hee and his KCIA Chief Lee Hurak, who used inter-Korean talks to expand and fortify the dictatorial system in the South.

In contrast to North Korea, socialist Vietnam had managed to rally the communist movement and the Third World to a much greater extent. Hanoi commanded an extremely strong guerrilla force in South Vietnam, ultimately overcame the Americans despite enormous losses and hardships, and achieved socialist reunification of its divided country. Kim Il Sung had hoped the DPRK would be similarly successful on all accounts. Between 1968 and 1975, the North Korean leader had therefore attempted to emulate and supersede the Vietnamese model on three occasions, by using his own version of "evil deception" to eliminate or outsmart his South Korean counterpart Park Chung Hee. Yet Kim Il Sung failed at all three of them: The 1968 Blue House raid in Seoul to assassinate Park and instigate a revolt in the ROK did not even faintly achieve the limited results of the Vietnamese Tet Offensive a few days later; the 1972/73 inter-Korean unification talks did not result in American withdrawal as negotiations between the United States and Vietnam ultimately did; and in April 1975, China refused to let Kim and the Korean peninsula join the "high tide of revolution" on display in Indochina when the North Korean leader had come to Beijing with this intention. Kim Il Sung ultimately failed to live up to the challenge of Vietnam's revolutionary unification model. He was outfoxed despite his own

deceptions by his South Korean counterpart Park Chung Hee, thus creating nagging doubts about any feasibility of Korea's socialist unification and sapping North Korean confidence in years to come.

## DOCUMENT APPENDIX

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### DOCUMENT 1

*[Source: PolA AA, MfAA, C 1080/78. Obtained for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer, translated for NKIDP by Karen Riechert.]*

GDR Embassy to DPRK  
Pyongyang, 13 March 1972

#### Note

on a Conversation with the 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary of the USSR Embassy, Comrade Kurbatov, on 10 March 1972 in the GDR Embassy

During the conversation there was an exchange of opinions on the following questions:

#### The DPRK Position on the Nixon Visit to Beijing and its Influence on the Situation in Korea

Based on a written draft, Comrade Kurbatov asserted the DPRK reaction demonstrates how the Korean leadership is very content with the result, in particular with the inclusion of the Korea Problem into the [Shanghai] communiqué between China and the United States. It [Korean leadership] is very pleased with the support of the DPRK Eight-Point-Proposal and the demand to dissolve UNCURK [UN Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea]. The Korean leaders think that the Chinese maintained a firm position on Korea. As “Nodong Sinmun” writes, the Korean leadership is viewing this as a great assistance “by the fraternal Chinese people.” During Nixon’s actual stay in Beijing, the Koreans stated how the DPRK position was laid out in Kim Il Sung’s speech from 6 August 1971. Nixon would not arrive in Beijing as a victor but as a defeated. This Korean position had been reiterated in the [Kim Il Sung] interview in [the Japanese newspaper] “Yomiuri Shinbun” [in January 1972]. The Nixon visit was interpreted as forced upon the American president. This way the Korean side assisted China’s policy and agreed to the discussion of the Korean question in the talks.

In its publications the Korean leadership attempts to hide from its people the parallel interests of China and the United States. It is pursuing its nationalist course and fails to notice the anti-Soviet aspect of rapprochement between the Chinese leadership and the United States. The Korean leadership asserts China is a “socialist power”, “stands firm on the basis of proletarian internationalism”, and so on. The Korean leadership’s position entirely consists of a course of pragmatism. In their policy toward the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, the Korean leaders are increasingly guided by pragmatic considerations. They are eager to achieve Korean unification primarily with Chinese assistance. It became evident that, in preparation for the talks

with Nixon, Chinese leaders were not interested in tensions on the Korean peninsula (like, for instance, during the declaration of a state of emergency in South Korea). The Chinese were successful in moving the Korean leadership from its entrenched position. The inclusion of the Korean question into the talks in Beijing, which had occurred not without the knowledge of the Koreans, speaks to new elements in relations between the DPRK and China and to new aspects in the Chinese leadership's policy towards the DPRK. The Chinese increasingly take matters to solve the Korean question into their own hands.

Kim Il Sung's visit to Beijing –which allegedly did not occur in early February according to the official version- served the purpose to finalize the exact joint position on the Korean question for the talks with Nixon. Also the stay of a group of Koreans in Beijing in constant contact with the Chinese side further demonstrated the increased stability of relations between both sides. The Korean side denies a visit by Kim Il Sung to Beijing. Yet Chinese diplomats do not express denials but indicate how permanent consultations are possible, and a visit would not have been unusual. It can be assumed that the Koreans and Chinese recently had another exchange of opinions about the Nixon visit. The ["Nodong Sinmun"] editorial of March 4 seems to be an indication of that. It can be expected in this context that steps will be taken to create a favorable situation for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea. The Korean leadership views such as its main objective in the near future. Information exists according to which the Korean leadership has been continuously informed by secret material about the course of negotiations with Nixon. The talks with him in Beijing proved that China and the United States have common interests and want to resolve Asian and other problems without the Soviet Union. He [Kurbatov] also referred to differing assessments of the Nixon visit by DPRK and DRV.

I thanked Comrade Kurbatov for his presentation and informed him in turn about the evaluation of the Nixon visit by our Embassy.

Note: A comparison of the text of the [Shanghai] communiqué between China and the United States and the published version in the DPRK press shows that it was printed almost verbatim with only few omissions: The last sentence in the first paragraph, the third paragraph, the term "Republic [of] Korea", and the last paragraph.

#### Conversation of Comrade Brezhnev with Foreign Minister Ho Dam in Moscow

Here Comrade Kurbatov remarked that Comrade Ho Dam told Comrade Brezhnev that the DPRK will assume a new position towards Japan. There are also new elements in Japan's attitude towards the DPRK. Another aspect of the talks with Comrade Brezhnev were Comrade Ho Dam's statements concerning the United Nations. The DPRK, according to Comrade Ho Dam, is expecting the Soviet Union and the socialist countries to support and defend DPRK positions in the U.N. The PR China would stand up and support the DPRK there as well. Comrade Ho Dam continued how it would be positive if the socialist countries will act in the U.N. in a coordinated and identical fashion with China's positions.

The issues of Japan and the U.N. were not included in the “Joint Message” [of USSR and DPRK on the visit]. Comrade Brezhnev just listened to the statements on Japan and remarked about the U.N. that this question warrants close study.

Comrade Kurbatov stated furthermore that currently the Soviet Union is excluding an attack by the South against the North.

On DPRK-PRC relations, Comrade Ho Dam noticed the improvement of relations, though they had not occurred at the expense of DPRK relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Moreover, Comrade Ho Dam said in his talk [with Brezhnev] that the Chinese side will be fully informed about what the Korean side expressed in its talk with the Soviet comrades.

Although it is an important question, there had been no [Korean-Soviet] consultations about party relations [KWP-CPSU] on this level [Brezhnev-Ho Dam].  
Later Ambassador Sudarikov will inform more extensively about the Ho Dam visit.

### Some Aspects of KWP Activity in the Communist World Movement

Based on a written draft, Comrade Kurbatov made the following remarks:

In 1971 and 1972 the KWP continued relations with communist and workers’ parties. It participated in party congresses of several parties and practiced exchanges of delegations. It invited delegations from different parties to the DPRK. As previously, the KWP builds its party relations on a bilateral basis and refrains from multilateral cooperation. It increases its efforts to summarize the ideology of *juche* into a comprehensive system and declares Kim Il Sung’s *juche* ideology as the only basis for party activities. The 5<sup>th</sup> Party Congress pushed through a petit bourgeois, nationalist line contradicting socialist development. These nationalist tendencies and the strengthening of relations with China have increased some negative tendencies in the communist movement and in KWP relations to the communist and workers movement. Despite official KWP declarations about the need to build relations with individual parties on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, by its actual activities in the international communist movement the KWP is contradicting Marxism-Leninism with the nationalist *juche* ideology, and proletarian internationalism with “autonomy” and “independence.”

The KWP leadership does not consider the experiences of the communist world movement, and it does not follow the collectively agreed decisions of fraternal parties. Instead it praises Kim Il Sung as an eminent leader of the communist and workers movement and praises him as a genius of the revolution. The KWP is guided by his works where he “provided wise analysis of the features in the current international situation.” It is guided by Kim Il Sung as “a leader of the anti-imperialist forces” because his ideas “accelerate the demise of imperialism and guide the world revolution on the path of victory.” Kim Il Sung’s works, his statements during internal meetings with foreign party officials, and his published speeches invite the assumption that he has a negative view of theory and practice of the construction of socialism and communism in the Soviet Union and the socialist fraternal countries. Apparently he sees the path to socialism in the DPRK as the “only correct and exemplary one for other countries.” For instance, he declared

in a conversation with the delegation of the leftist Party of Swedish Communists visiting the DPRK that he does not agree with the CPSU course to develop the Soviet Union as a people's state, since in his opinion such leads to a weakening of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

According to Kim Yeongnam, Deputy Head of the [International] Department IV in the [KWP] Central Committee, who based his statement on sayings by Kim Il Sung, "individual countries where the proletariat has risen to power cannot ignore the facts of a danger of imperialist aggression and the restoration of capitalism through encirclement by the international capital, before communism will be eventually established on a global scale."

Based on Kim Il Sung's ideas, the Korean propaganda is currently leading a broad campaign that defines all parties as supporters of revisionism which do not agree with positions of Kim Il Sung on questions like personality cult, dictatorship of the proletariat, class struggle, and so on. In this context a couple of embassies from the socialist countries have reached the conclusion that such a campaign leads to the development of camouflaged anti-Sovietism in the DPRK.

All this said and considered, the appeals by the Korean leaders for unity and closeness of the communist movement are just declaratory in nature, dishonest, and they are not corroborated by practical measures. The tendency becomes ever more clear that the KWP leadership does not focus on the unity of the communist world movement but aims at the revolutionary peoples of the world, of which the so-called united front of the revolutionary people in Asia constitutes the core (Korea, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos). This approach testifies to a gradual departure from the class position of proletarian internationalism for a transition towards a nationalist, pragmatic position. In this context internal Korean propaganda has begun to claim that the "socialist countries have lost their revolutionary spirit and therefore can currently serve only as a material base for the struggle of the revolutionary peoples." In public propaganda this position was to be found in somewhat modified form in the "Noding Sinmun" article "Let us defend the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Proletarian Democracy."

As the KWP is counting China among the revolutionary countries, and based on the ideological and political closeness of positions [between DPRK and PRC], we have to conclude that the KWP is on the path to solidify party relations with China. Since 1971 they exchange party delegations. Korean propaganda welcomed the "assignments for the struggle" by the so-called 9<sup>th</sup> Party Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), as well the implementation of the so-called "Cultural Revolution." A "Nodong Sinmun" article celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> CCP Anniversary claimed, "after the Cultural Revolution, the CCP turned into an even purer, steeled and strong party."

KWP and PRC have established contacts and organize informational changes. The Chinese journal "Hongji" continues to be circulated in the DPRK. In pursuing its own goals, the KWP leadership does not pay attention to the anti-Soviet aspects of China's foreign policy. At the same time it comes close to Chinese positions, as it showed in particular concerning the events in Sudan, India/Pakistan and the Middle East.

Recently the KWP has increasingly activated its relationship with the Albanian Workers Party. So far DPRK efforts have not resulted in desired Korean reactions on the Albanian side, they

only activated bilateral relations on the state level. For the occasion of important anniversaries they exchanged congratulations to underline traditional and friendly relations. The most active development of relations is the one with the Romanian Communist Party (RCP) on a nationalist base and under the labels of “autonomy” and “independence” of the parties. Contacts between KWP and RCP are activated according to an agreement from 1971.

KWP participation in the party congresses of the fraternal parties in 1971 (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, GDR, Poland, Soviet Union) has not resulted in progress of relations between the parties. The gatherings were used by the KWP leadership as a podium to propagate its special positions in front of the international communist movement, namely to emphasize “autonomy” and “independence” of parties as the base for their mutual relations.

The KWP leadership is departing from an exchange of experiences and delegations with the fraternal parties. For instance, despite respective agreements there were no party officials sent in 1971 for vacations in our respective countries. The KWP leadership pays close attention to the tendencies of parties that deviate from the documents of 1969 [the international communist and workers parties meeting in Moscow]. It is anything but coincidence that after the 1969 Moscow meeting certain parties have paid visits to the DPRK (Sweden, Spain, Norway, Italy, Reunion).

In its relations with the parties of capitalist countries the KWP leaders aim at, in our opinion, influencing these parties according to KWP policy and using them as a vehicle to establish diplomatic relations. We must pay close attention -and this is a dangerous phenomenon- that the KWP might establish relations with pro-Chinese splittist groups. For the first time ever, a congratulatory telegram to the KWP was published by the Communist Party of Thailand, which is completely in sync with Chinese positions.

An important vehicle to increase influence abroad is the propagation of Kim Il Sung ideas through the dissemination of his works and the founding of circles. Recent observations show that more attention is paid to those circles. They attempt to include communists in them in order to create permanent organizations. The Korean leadership tries to gain increasing ground through ideological infiltration into the international communist and anti-imperialist movement. There are ever more publications of congratulatory telegrams to Kim Il Sung with praises of his personality. Those congratulatory telegrams and messages cannot hide their Korean authors. Among other things, they want to manipulate the Korean people into believing that the entire world is studying the works of Kim Il Sung.

The slide of the Korean leadership into the nationalist *juche* ideology, the proclamation of this ideology’s universal character, and its dissemination abroad, creates a ever growing danger for the socialist community of states and the communist world movement. It requires us to pay increasing attention and to hold consultations between our parties how to approach and deal with these KWP activities.

I thanked Comrade Kurbatov for his statements and expressed that we are in agreement about the assessment of KWP activities in the International Communist Movement.

#### Note

A public demonstration of DPRK-PRC relations are facts like how the PRC Embassy in France organized a friendship meeting when on 25 February the DPRK “Mansudae” Ensemble visited France (telegram of 29 February 1972). When the ensemble arrived in Geneva on 8 March, it was welcomed at the train station by, among others, the Chinese Ambassador to Switzerland and employees of the Chinese Embassy. In the evening of the same day the Chinese side hosted a reception in Geneva in honor of the ensemble (telegram of 10 March 1972).

### 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Kim Il Sung on 15 April

At the end of our conversation, Comrade Kurbatov asked whether the GDR will give a present to Kim Il Sung or wants to award him an order. This is a very problematic question and the [Soviet] embassy has so far not reached a result in its discussions. Here I remarked that so far I only know that we are preparing a congratulatory letter. My personal opinion: A present should have symbolic character, if a present will indeed have to be given.

Comrade Gensicke, attaché of our Embassy, also attended this conversation.

Merten  
Acting Ambassador

CC  
1x Far East Department [Foreign Ministry]  
1x Central Committee, Department IV  
1x ZID [Foreign Ministry Central Information Service]  
1x Embassy, Political Department

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## DOCUMENT 2

*[Source: PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. Obtained for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer, translated for NKIDP by Karen Riechert]*

GDR Embassy to DPRK  
Pyongyang, 9 June 1972

### Note

on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister, Comrade Ri Manseok, on 8 June 1972 for the Ambassadors of the European Socialist Countries (except Albania)  
(content already reported in telegram of 9 June 1972)

Comrade Ri Manseok had invited us to provide the following collective information. He orally informed us extensively about the historic course of the Red Cross Organization talks between the DPRK and South Korea:

They had begun on 20 September 1971 on the DPRK's initiative in accordance with the DPRK course of peaceful and independent unification. The South Korean side had to agree to these talks following domestic and external pressure.

During the entire course of talks the South Korean side applied delaying tactics. Yet the patience and perseverance of the DPRK in defense of the justified national interest of the entire Korean people led to a certain interim result.

In order to reach a final agreement on the proposed agenda for substantial content negotiations, the preparatory meetings were interrupted through confidential senior-level negotiations that took place in the time between 21 February and 5 June 1972. The most recent senior-level meeting resulted in the following agreed upon agenda for the content negotiations:

1. Research and transmission of addresses and the fate of family members and relatives scattered over the North and the South;
2. Implementation of free visits and free reunions between family members and relatives scattered over the North and the South;
3. Implementation of free postal exchange between family members and relatives scattered over the North and the South;
4. Re-integration of family members and relatives scattered over the North and the South on the base of declarations of free will;
5. Other questions to be resolved on humanitarian grounds.

The senior-level talks stretched over some time as the South Korean side wanted to propose another course through its delaying tactics. The South Korean side desired to have the first

reunion between such family members and relatives in Panmunjom, or another location to be decided under control of the Red Cross organization. Also the exchange of letters should be conducted under the supervision of the Red Cross. The DPRK, however, demanded all along to have free visits and free reunions at a location to be chosen by family members and relatives themselves. During the course of meetings the South Korean side finally ran out of arguments and agreed to the correct position of the DPRK.

With the agreement on a proposal for a joint agenda the confidential senior-level meetings have now ended. During the next, the 20<sup>th</sup>, meeting of the preliminary talks scheduled for 16 June 1972 this joint proposal must now be finally confirmed. Those preliminary meetings also have to decide on the composition of delegations and the date for the first meeting of content negotiations, as well as on additional procedural matters.

The DPRK wants to start the content negotiation as soon as possible “to minimize the suffering of the people and to serve as a springboard to unification.” The DPRK is expecting further delaying tactics by the South Korean side, but it will continue also in the future to display patience and perseverance. Swift progress on this question now depends entirely on the South Korean positions.

USSR Ambassador Comrade Sudarikov thanked for this information in the name of the ambassadors present and asked for a continuation of this form of information policy. He wished the Korean comrades the best to achieve their just objectives.

### Addendum

Comrade Ri Manseok did not mention that the DPRK also had made concessions during the course of negotiations. In our assessment, this applies in particular to the fact that the term “friends” was eliminated from the original DPRK proposal of “family members, relatives and friends.”

During all our recent conversations, in the Foreign Ministry as well as in the KWP Central Committee department, the Korean comrades showed vivid and concrete interest on how visits are organized between West Germany and the GDR, as well as between West Berlin and the GDR. They asked straightforward whether the same extent of visitor traffic between West Berlin and the GDR is also organized between the GDR and West Germany, and the GDR and West Berlin. I explained the political reasons still advocating against a wide extension of the latter direction of visitor traffic. I expressed our principled and cautious approach on this issue. The Korean comrades always responded that they desire “completely free mutual traffic.” Ambassador Sudarikov told me during a conversation that Kim Il Sung had once used this metaphor: “White is easily colored over red, yet it is much harder to color red on white.”

There is no doubt that the DPRK comrades are harboring certain illusions on the question of unification in general, as well as on the issue of visitor traffic. Obviously we support through our remarks and statements the meanwhile more realistic DPRK position to the fullest extent and wish for its success.

Henke  
Ambassador

CC  
Please see back! [page not provided]

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### DOCUMENT 3

*[Source: PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. Obtained for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer, translated for NKIDP by Karen Riechert]*

GDR Embassy to DPRK  
Pyongyang, 4 July 1972

Note  
on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister, Comrade Kim Ryongtaek,  
on 3 July 1972 for the Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors of Poland, Bulgaria,  
Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, Romania, Hungary, and the GDR  
at 20:40 hours in the DPRK Foreign Ministry

The Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs released important information on the problem of Korean unification. Reading from a written manuscript, he made the following statements:

The problem of unification of the country has to be solved without any interference from outside, without foreign forces, with the forces of the Koreans alone, and in a peaceful manner. The party and government of the DPRK have focused all their efforts in this direction and recently achieved important results through contacts and meetings. He [Kim Ryong Taek] defined the Red Cross talks in Panmunjom as low-level contacts with South Korea. With the agreement on an agenda their first phase has come to a certain conclusion.

Between 2 and 5 May 1972 Lee Hurak, head of the South Korean intelligence service, visited the DPRK and had talks with Kim Yeongju (Note: brother of Kim Il Sung). Among other things, during his visit he was also received by Kim Il Sung.

From 29 May to 1 June 1972 Pak Seongcheol, and not Kim Yong-ju, visited Seoul and talked to the intelligence chief [Lee Hurak] and Park Chung Hee.

The three principles of unification were instantly agreed upon, and they will be publicized at an appropriate time. Afterwards there was another meeting where a joint declaration was agreed to become public simultaneously in the DPRK and in South Korea on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1972 at 10:00 hours. Yet prior to this publication, the DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister emphasized, the Foreign Ministry wants to inform the ambassadors of the fraternal countries. Then Kim Ryongtaek provided more details of the joint declaration:

1. The unification of the fatherland is supposed to occur on the basis of the agreed upon three principles:

- a) The problem must be solved without any interference from outside with the Korean people's own forces;
  - b) Unification must be implemented without any arms involved, it has to be realized in a peaceful manner;
  - c) Notwithstanding all the ideological and other differences of the political systems, national unity, and a great, unified nation, is supposed to be created.
2. An atmosphere of mutual good faith and trust has to be created. Thus all slander and military provocations have to cease in order to exclude a sudden military incursion;
  3. There was a complete accordance of opinion that exchanges between North and South Korea shall be opened up on all areas and levels.
  4. Both sides will work towards the success of the Red Cross talks.
  5. There was an agreement about the installation of a direct phone line between Seoul and Pyongyang to exclude a military attack and to solve all upcoming operational questions.
  6. In order to increase the speed in implementing the points mentioned above, in particular the unification of the fatherland on the basis of the agreed principles, a committee for coordination and guidance shall be established with Kim Yong-ju and Lee Hurak as chairmen.
  7. Both sides are convinced that the points agreed upon reflect the will of the people and shall be realized.

The declaration was signed by Kim Yeongju and Lee Hurak.

Comrade Kim Ryong Taek continued:

- The agreement became reality since the South Koreans have adopted the correct course of the DPRK government. It is correct since it represents the path to victory.
- The joint agreement can become a turning point for the unification of the fatherland.
- Despite the agreement there are still many issues unresolved, and the struggle for the solution of the problems is complicated.

Deputy Foreign Minister Comrade Kim Ryong Taek requested that we inform our governments as soon as possible about the above-mentioned issues. He voiced the expectation for even stronger support of the struggle of the Korean people for the unification of the country.

Note: On 3 July our Embassy was invited to a press conference for 4 July at 10:00 hours to be held by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputy of the Prime Minister, Park Seongcheol.

Merten

Embassy Counselor

CC

1x Foreign Ministry, Far East Department

1x Central Committee, Department IV

1x ZID

1x Embassy/Political Department

1x MA Comrade Grünberg

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## DOCUMENT 4

[Source: PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. Obtained for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer, translated for NKIDP by Karen Riechert]

GDR Embassy to DPRK  
Pyongyang, 20 July 1972

Note  
on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister, Comrade Ri Manseok,  
on 17 July 1972 between 16:40 and 18:00 hours in the Foreign Ministry

The invitation had gone to the ambassadors and acting ambassadors from the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Hungary, Bulgaria, Mongolia, and Romania. An additional participant was the head of the DPRK Foreign Ministry's 1<sup>st</sup> Department, Comrade Kim Jaesuk .

Comrade Ri Manseok remarked at the beginning that he has been tasked with informing the ambassadors and acting ambassadors present about the 4<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the KWP Central Committee and the current situation in Korea after the publication of the "Joint Declaration."

Then Comrade Ri Manseok provided the following information based on a prepared written text:

The KWP 4<sup>th</sup> plenary was held between 1 and 6 July. Two items to be discussed were on the agenda:

1. The implementation of the party's policy on the peaceful unification of the country after the 3<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Session and questions how to proceed;
2. Implementation of compulsory 10-grade-schooling

Kim Il Sung spoke on the first issue. He talked about the work of the KWP Central Committee and the lower-level party organizations after the 3<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Session. Comrade Kim Il Sung gave the assignments for the unification of the fatherland. The plenum unanimously agreed that thanks to Kim Il Sung's correct course, major progress has been made in the implementation of measures to unify the country. At the 3<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Session, Kim Il Sung provided the further course to unfold a major campaign for the independent and peaceful unification of the country in accordance with the international situation. The DPRK peace offensive was a major blow to U.S. imperialism and the "Nixon Doctrine", as well as to the two-faced policy aiming at inciting "Koreans against Koreans." A peace offensive was warranted to deprive Japanese militarism of any pretext to penetrate South Korea and thus further the division. The South Korean clique despises democracy and conducts a fascistization of life in South Korea. This DPRK peace offensive aims at denying the South Korean side the option of assistance from third parties, in

case the aid by the U.S. and Japan for South Korea is cut off. U.S. imperialism's aggressive policy in Asia will be thwarted. In light of internal dissent, Japanese militarism will be no longer able to assist it [U.S. imperialism]. When the South Korean clique will receive no more aid from the United States and Japan, it will turn to us, the DPRK.

Regarding the North-South Joint Declaration, Comrade Ri Manseok stated the dialogue that had occurred does represent a success in itself. After the milestone speech by Comrade Kim Il Sung on 6 August 1971, the Red Cross talks started. Then meetings on a high level and the Joint Declaration North-South were arranged. The main content of the Joint Declaration resembles in essence the proposals by the KWP and Comrade Kim Il Sung, as summarized in the three principles of the Joint Declaration. These three principles were put forward by Comrade Kim Il Sung in his meeting with Lee Hurak when he visited us on order of Park Chung Hee. These principles were completely agreed by Park Chung Hee. Afterwards, Pak Seongcheol traveled to South Korea and was received by Park Chung Hee. There Park Chung Hee reiterated his support for these principles. Both sides agreed to implement a couple of respective measures according to these principles. At the same, both sides agreed to publish the declaration at an appropriate date and keep this declaration absolutely secret in the meantime.

The declaration was published on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. The principles of independence and the peaceful, great, national unification signify in fact a defeat of the South Korean puppets' policy. The South Korean rulers have accepted the DPRK principles, i.e. they have agreed to the proposals for unification. The 4<sup>th</sup> [KWP] Plenary Session unanimously stated that the course for unification, as taken by Comrade Kim Il Sung, is correct, and the Plenary Session welcomed this correct course of Comrade Kim Il Sung. This is a great event that cleared the path to unification of the country. In light of current negotiations and forthcoming talks, the Plenary Session concluded to increase ideological and political education of the workers and to accelerate socialist build-up in the political, economic, cultural and other fields. Thus the absolute superiority of socialism over capitalism will be proven in order to be able to further pursue the correct course of unification.

Following instructions by Comrade Kim Il Sung, the Plenary Session also agreed to start compulsory 10-grade-schooling and implement it in full by next year. There will also be the introduction of one-year mandatory kindergarten. Preparations for that will already start now. Kindergarten education will aim at preparing the children for school. In fact, all this amounts to an 11-year compulsory schooling. This was, in short, a summary of the main content of the KWP Plenary Session.

Then Comrade Ri Manseok continued to elaborate on developments after the publication of the Joint Declaration:

The situation turned out favorably for the peaceful and independent unification of Korea. The South Korean population unanimously agrees that this declaration is a great event and supports it with joy and enthusiasm. There is much talk among the South Korean people that the Joint Declaration cleared the path to travel, to listen to DPRK radio, to exclaim "Long Live Kim Il Sung," and other things.

Opposition parties and prominent individuals in South Korea protested against the government for resuming direct talks with the North without involvement of the parties. The opposition parties demand the suspension of the Anti-Communist-Laws and emergency laws. Also, world opinion comes out positively for the Joint Declaration and the course designed by Comrade Kim Il Sung. Its global resonance confirms the importance of the Joint Declaration not only for peace in Korea but also for Asia and the world.

These developments create major complications for the ruling circles in South Korea. There are notable differences among the South Korean rulers since the three principles stand in contrast to the policies of South Korea's ruling elites. Lee Hurak said during a press conference that dialogue with the North will expand, that the Anti-Communist-Laws, as well as the State Security Law, will be amended according to real conditions, and there has to be a new order created. He also continued that visitor traffic between societal institutions of both parts of the country must be improved, also for individual visitors and for sports athletes. According to unofficial news, the South Korean authorities want to rename the League for Anti-Communism into a League for Peace. There are also voices in South Korea's Education Ministry to liquidate the anti-communist education system. Yet South Korean Prime Minister Kim Jong-pil stated in response to questions by South Korean parliamentary deputies that there is no need for changing the Anti-Communist and emergency laws, and that nobody, except the clique, will be able to travel to the North. It would not be allowed to listen to North Korean radio. Thus he turned the declaration on its head.

South Korean Foreign Minister Kim Yongsik does not join this discussion. He is of the opinion that the U.N. and U.S. troops are not foreign forces.

The United States rhetorically welcomes the Joint Declaration, yet on the other hand it supports the puppets and wants to come to their assistance. On 5 July the U.S. State Department declared that, [intra-Korean] negotiations notwithstanding, the modernization of the South Korean army will continue. U.S. forces will not be reduced in size. Unification should occur under U.N. supervision. [Ri Manseok commented:] The Korean people have suffered from division for a long time but now they sit together at one table. The United States wants to torpedo this which is like pouring cold water on a wedding table. The KWP will fight a persistent struggle to leave the South Korean rulers no room for evasion, and force them also in the future to meetings and comprehensive negotiations. The DPRK will work towards cutting off the South Korean puppets from Japan and the United States, and make sure they receive no more assistance from them whatsoever. Another DPRK focus consists in forcing the United States and Japan to no longer interfere into internal Korean matters. Through active measures, the existing wall between the South and the North must be removed and wide and comprehensive ties established.

Then Comrade Ri Manseok posed the following requests to the present representatives of the socialist countries:

1. It would be desirable that the fraternal socialist countries force the South Korean puppets to resume comprehensive negotiations with us [the DPRK], thereby isolate them consequently in both internal and external respects. It is important that the fraternal socialist countries are not going to win over the South Korean puppets but, in reverse,

isolate them even more through persistent and not abating pressure. We expect from all of you to contribute actively and comprehensively to a further isolation of the South Korean puppets. Thus we hold the opinion that, also in the future, you must not maintain any contacts and meetings with the South Korean puppets nor visit South Korea, and not allow South Korean representatives to enter the territories of your countries.

2. It would be desirable if you activate your efforts to support our struggle in international organizations and in international conferences. Based on the principles of equal participation of South and North Korea, we request you to demand identical representation also for North Korea in those international organizations and international conferences where only South Korea is represented. Yet if such demands fail, it is necessary to keep pressure on the Adversary and isolate South Korea, like by unmasking the unfair unilateral representation of South Korea through leaving the meetings halls, or by boycotting the meeting if, for instance, a South Korean representatives takes the microphone.
3. We like to ask you to continue consequently with unmasking all attempts by the American imperialists and the Japanese militarists to interfere with the independent unification of the country and the internal matters of the Korean people, as well as all attempts to perpetuate the division of the country.  
We think that, if we will successfully conduct the struggle for unification and the socialist countries as our class brothers will provide us with good support, our struggle will achieve its goal – though this struggle will be complicated and prolonged.

In conclusion, Comrade Ri Manseok expressed thanks to our governments for the previous solidarity and support for the struggle of the Korean people.

Responding to a respective question by the Acting Soviet Ambassador, Comrade Ri Manseok explained that the coordination committee will be of legal character and that its establishment will occur in the near future.

Ri Manseok underlined the following tasks:

- a) Internal task: Strengthening ideological and political education; strengthening socialist build-up in the North to demonstrate Northern superiority over the South.
- b) External task: Following through with a determined struggle, in order not to provide South Korea with pretexts or options to leave the initiated path.  
To force the South into comprehensive and broad contacts with the North.  
To untie the South from the forces of American imperialism and Japanese militarism, and thus accelerate the unification of the country.

Merten  
Acting Ambassador

CC

- 1x Deputy Foreign Minister Comrade Fischer
- 1x Comrade Markowski [Central Committee, Department IV]
- 1x Comrade Schneidewind [Foreign Ministry, Far East Department]
- 1x Comrade Grunert [Foreign Ministry]
- 1x Embassy/Comrade Merten

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## DOCUMENT 5

*[Source: PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. Obtained for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer, translated for NKIDP by Karen Riechert]*

GDR Embassy to DPRK  
Pyongyang, 15 September 1972

Note  
on Information Provided by Head of 1<sup>st</sup> Department of DPRK Foreign Ministry,  
Comrade Kim Jaesuk, about 1<sup>st</sup> Main Negotiation of Red Cross Committees  
from DPRK and South Korea on 12 September 1972

This information was provided to ambassadors and acting ambassadors of several socialist countries (among others Poland, Czechoslovakia, GDR, Mongolia, Hungary, Cuba) simultaneously in territorial departments concerned [in DRPK Foreign Ministry].

Main elements of the information were as follows:

- The 1<sup>st</sup> Main Negotiation was a victory for the course of Comrade Kim Il Sung, and a result of the peace offensive by party and government.
- The peace offensive was started last year to create favorable conditions for the realization of South Korean revolution and the unification of the fatherland.
- In his historical speech of 6 August 1971, Kim Il Sung declared the DPRK's willingness to negotiate with all political parties and associations of South Korea, including the Democratic-Republican Party, in order to launch the peace offensive.
- The DPRK wanted to achieve by this peace offensive: to thwart the Nixon Doctrine which intends to have Asians fight Asians and, in our case, Koreans against Koreans; to counter efforts by the U.S. imperialists to modernize the South Korean puppet army, to further divide Korea and turn South Korea into a military base; to thwart the further penetration of South Korea by the Japanese imperialists; to prevent further negotiations between South Korea and the U.S., respectively between South Korea and Japan, that were to serve the purposes mentioned above. Another objective of the peace offensive is the elimination of fascist repression in South Korea.

- The South Korean puppet regime has attempted, using the pretext of alleged DPRK plans for a “march toward the South”, to increase the fascist repression against the South Korean people.
- The DPRK has no intentions whatsoever “to march toward the South.” This is supposed to be proven to the South Korean people. At the same time the South Korean government apparatus must be deprived of the pretext to suppress the people and the democratic forces. The growth of revolutionary forces in South Korea ought to be strengthened as soon as possible. In order to achieve such, the repressive measures and anti-communist hysteria by South Korea’s reactionary circles must be stopped.
- With its peace offensive, the DPRK wanted “to open the door between North and South” in order to influence the South Korean people in the spirit of the ideas of the DPRK and thus achieve democratization in South Korea.
- The South Korean puppet clique was forced
  - to agree to the proposal of preliminary Red Cross negotiations
  - to sign the joint declaration containing the three principles
  - to agree to hold the 1<sup>st</sup> Main Negotiation of both Red Cross Delegations in the city of Pyongyang.

On DPRK Positions in Red Cross Negotiations, especially the 1<sup>st</sup> Main Negotiation:

- The DPRK will do what it can to lead the Red Cross negotiations toward success.
- Through negotiations and the proposed exchange of people’s visits between the South and the North a base for the unification of the country ought to be created. It is intended to have meetings between representatives of parties and public associations in addition to the Red Cross delegates. In contrast, the South Korean side wants to limit the Red Cross talks only to the discussion of “humanitarian issues” in order to buy time.
- More than 80 percent of participants in South Korea’s Red Cross delegations are members of the intelligence service. They pursue tactics to cheat the world, to support U.S. imperialism’s policy of aggression, and to achieve a “victory over communism.” Therefore the preliminary negotiations were this tedious, and these intentions also influenced the main negotiation.
- The DPRK proposed to invite to the negotiations members of the respective advisory team which, in the North Korean case, is composed of representatives from various parties and mass organizations. After initial resistance, the South Korean side agreed to form advisory teams according to this composition. The South Korean side insisted that this agreement neither be entered into the official documents nor made public.

- Furthermore, the South Korean side attempted to turn the 1<sup>st</sup> Main Negotiation into an expert meeting. On this question the DPRK position also prevailed. With a speech given by a member from the South Korean advisory team, the South Korean side itself created the opportunity that representatives from the advisory teams could give speeches during the negotiation.
- A number of receptions and sightseeing visits were arranged for the delegation members. This was reported all over the world, even in the press and broadcasts of South Korea. Thus the South Korean people were informed of the participation of the democratic forces from the North in the 1<sup>st</sup> Main Negotiation.
- During the entire course of negotiations, the DPRK was eager to solve the entire problem according to the ideas of “juche.”
- Meeting a request from the South Korean side, its delegates were given the opportunity to visit Kim Il Sung’s birthplace, the “cradle of the revolution.” They also visited the new residential quarter in Pyongyang and a primary school. To influence the South Koreans in an “anti-imperialist and national spirit”, the delegation was shown the “revolutionary opera” “Sea of Blood” and the movie “The Flower Girl.” They also watched a performance by the “Pyongyang Ensemble.”

#### On Successes Achieved Through the 1<sup>st</sup> Main Negotiation:

- The superiority of the social system in the Northern part of the country, and the desire of its people for peaceful unification, was clearly proven to the South Korean people.
- The attempt by South Korean agencies to influence the DPRK people with phrases about “freedom” was thwarted.
- It worked to tie the Red Cross negotiations closely to questions concerning the unification of the fatherland. This is evident by the fact that South Korea’s opposition parties already demand from the Park Chung-Hee clique the South Korean advisory team should include representatives from other parties and social organizations.
- The members of the South Korean delegation recognized the political-ideological unity within the Northern population. They rally monolithically around the party and Kim Il Sung as their “leader.”
- Some of them stated, General Kim Il Sung is such a great personality and unprecedented in Korean history.
- The course of KWP and General Kim Il Sung was acknowledged as correct. One has emphasized that the planned economy of the DPRK is more successful than the “free economy” in the South.

- South Korean delegates could convince themselves [by seeing the North] of the lies spread about the DPRK in Southern coverage.
- The DPRK people displayed a high level of class conscience during the presence of the South Korean delegation. They welcomed the delegation without enthusiasm but friendlily, and during encounters they performed very uniformly and conscientious.

On further Perspectives of Red Cross Negotiations:

- The Red Cross negotiations are a fierce battle between socialism and capitalism.
- The DPRK does not live under illusions that these negotiations will run without problems. It is completely up to the South how long they will last. The DPRK is interested in their quick conclusion.
- The DPRK will continue its peace offensive. Future Red Cross negotiations will be held once in the DPRK and once in South Korea.
- The South Korean side will certainly do everything to delay negotiations. They fear the economic, political and military strength of the DPRK.
- The Three Principles, as it became clear during the Main Negotiation, are a proper foundation for a peaceful and independent unification of the country.

Comrade Kim [Jaesuk] used the opportunity to thank the governments of the GDR, Poland and Czechoslovakia for their support of the DPRK's struggle. The DPRK has high expectations for further support on questions of the independent and peaceful unification of the country.

Note: This information was read out from a manuscript and must be considered as uniform DPRK official playbook language, as other conversations held on different levels demonstrate.

Helga Merten  
3<sup>rd</sup> Secretary of Embassy

CC:  
1x Foreign Ministry  
1x Central Committee, Department IV  
1x ZID [Foreign Ministry]  
1x Embassy

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## DOCUMENT 6

*[Source: PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. Obtained for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer, translated for NKIDP by Karen Riechert]*

GDR Embassy to DPRK  
Political Department  
Pyongyang, 12 October 1972

### Note

on Information Provided by Head of 1<sup>st</sup> Department of DPRK Foreign Ministry,  
Comrade Kim Jaesuk, [about 2<sup>nd</sup> Main Negotiation of Red Cross Committees  
from DPRK and South Korea] on 3 October 1972 during 12:00 and 13:30 Hours

[Further] Participants:

Comrade Sin Tae In, Division Chief in Foreign Ministry  
Comrade Ri, Translator from Embassy

Based on a written manuscript, Comrade Kim Jaesuk read out information about the 2<sup>nd</sup> Main Negotiation of DPRK and South Korean Red Cross Committees held on 13 September 1972 in Seoul.

He stated the following: The 2<sup>nd</sup> Main Negotiation was fierce class struggle. Negotiations were only held in the morning of 13 September. Otherwise there were just receptions, meals, and sightseeing for the delegation. The DPRK assigned major importance to this negotiation in particular in political terms. These negotiations were supposed to lay the foundation for the peaceful unification of the country. The other objective was to reiterate the official DPRK position on an independent and peaceful unification, and communicate this accordingly to the South Korean population. If there were an opportunity, the DPRK delegation would have talked to the South Korean people. However, the South Korean side paid attention to technical issues only and placed just humanitarian issues on the agenda. The DPRK delegation stayed in Seoul for just four days. During these days the delegation had to conduct both a policy of offense and defense.

It all started with the DPRK delegation having to fight for a decent meeting room for the negotiations. The South Korean side had not properly prepared the meeting room. Though it was a newly built room, it was very primitive. Thus another location had to be selected for the negotiations. Also, the DPRK delegation noted that the South Koreans do not entertain a sovereign notion of the nation. At the entrance to the meeting room there were the flags of the

United States, Japan and Taiwan on display. Our side could not accept that, as it is a blatant disregard of the nation. Thus we demanded to remove those flags immediately. If the demand would not have been met, the delegation would not have been able to participate in the negotiations. As there were many South Koreans hanging around the entrance, the South Korean side had no other choice than to meet our demand. The South Korean people who observed this argument stated the North Korean side was right in complaining. Thus the South Korean plot was thwarted.

Our delegation also fought a tough struggle for the participation of representatives from parties, organizations and the observer group in the negotiations. The South Koreans threw tantrums and did not want to allow our representatives giving their speeches: Only one representative ought to give a speech, since during the 1<sup>st</sup> Main Negotiation in Seoul also only one representative of the South Korean observer group was allowed to make a statement. Yet in Seoul the South Korean side now had to agree on a compromise: Eventually, the North Korean side could field two speakers (the head of the Education Department in the KWP Central Committee and the Deputy Chairman of the Japanese Koreans) and the South Korean side three representatives (the Chairman of the South Korean Red Cross Committee, the [female] Director of the University in Seoul, and a member of the observer delegation).

In the speeches we outlined our course for unification, as previously sketched by the leader Kim Il Sung. The South Korean side gave long speeches on humanitarian issues only and did not talk about unification. Thus it expressed that it actually does not want unification.

Difficulties also came up when the protocol of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Main Negotiation was to be finalized. It was agreed to hold future negotiations in turn in Pyongyang and Seoul. Initially this proposal had always been rejected [by South Korea]. The South Korean side proposed to establish a small committee and open a liaison office in Panmunjom. They wanted to have future negotiations to be held in Panmunjom only. The South Koreans arrived at this position after they had been in Pyongyang and saw everything with their own eyes. They wanted to spread their free democracy there and had to realize that our people were prepared for that.

In contrast, when our delegation travels to Seoul it is a demonstration to the South Korean people of what we are fighting for. Now the South Koreans are afraid to have negotiations in Pyongyang and Seoul. Yet they had to agree to our proposal. The next negotiations will be on 24 October in Pyongyang and on 29 November in Seoul.

Lee Hurak, who led the talks with our side, the Mayor of Seoul, and others held receptions for our delegation. Representatives from opposition parties, other parties etc. were also invited. As there is nothing worth to see in Seoul, the so-called tourist program only included cultural sites outside of the city.

With the 2<sup>nd</sup> Main Negotiation we have achieved a major political victory. The way our delegation asserted itself has provided hope to the South Korean people. The people welcomed our delegation with feelings for the nation, and as a delegation sent by the venerable and beloved leader Kim Il Sung to pursue a mission of uniting the country. The South Korean government told the people not to receive our delegation. But things developed differently. The people stood

along the streets and heartily welcomed our delegation with tears in their eyes. Over one million residents of Seoul welcomed our delegation. The South Korean people love and honor our venerable and beloved leader Kim Il Sung. They always carry his name in their hearts as one of a legendary hero. The South Korean people demonstrated that their whole heart belongs to the venerable and beloved leader. Though there were a lot of police in the streets, the people still succeeded in asking our delegation how the venerable and beloved leader Kim Il Sung is doing. They told our delegation: We are certain to live together with the leader soon. The people said: Kim Il Sung is really an eminent leader, he is our leader. Others stated they hoped and wished to celebrate together with the venerable and beloved leader Kim Il Sung his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday in Seoul. The people said they are longing for unification.

Our delegation demonstrated through its visit to Seoul the superiority of socialism and our republic. It disproved South Korea's previous propaganda according to which communists are terrible people and there is no freedom in the Northern part of Korea. The South Korean minds of our delegation recognized that the people from the North are moral and true people, that the communists are new humans.

Our delegation unmasked the rottenness in South Korea. The South Korean people were excited about the society in the North and asked our delegation members whether there could really exist such an eminent society.

Our delegation achieved a great victory, and it stated our firm position to unite our country without foreign interference. Especially the South Korean intelligentsia is energetically supportive of our position. We have to stop the servility towards the big powers and unite our nation independently. Obviously those who are very rich do not agree with this. The South Korean people pursue unification and expressed that they are placing the cause of unification in our hands. Also in the opposition party our position did resonate big.

Our delegation had to work in difficult conditions. In Pyongyang we had provided cars to the South Korean journalists. In Seoul our journalists received a bus where doors were always closed and the windows were tinted.

In future Red Cross Negotiations we will continue to fight a fierce struggle of offense and defense. Though the South Korean side will attempt to delay further negotiations, the overall situation will become more favorable to us, and thus they will not succeed. We will continue to negotiate and to fight. We are counting on the support of the fraternal countries in unmasking the South Korean doings.

I thanked Comrade Kim for the information and asked which concrete items will be on the agenda for the next Main Negotiation on 24 October. Here Comrade Kim remarked it will primarily be concerned with technical questions. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Main Negotiation will not be public but conducted behind closed doors. He himself does not know more details.

In addition I inquired whether, in context of the establishment of the Regulation Committee, there have been decisions and agreements with the South Koreans, for instance, on economic and

cultural matters. Comrade Kim responded that he is not aware of details here. To his mind, they are still working on the establishment of this regulatory committee.

Note: This briefing concerning the 2<sup>nd</sup> Main Negotiation was also provided to other embassies by the Korean Foreign Ministry on the basis of the same written manuscript.

[... Bilateral Issues:

- Postal Agreement GDR – DPRK
- GDR-Zambian issues during visit of Zambian delegation to DPRK]

Merten  
Embassy Counselor

CC:

1x Foreign Ministry, Far Eastern Department  
1x Central Committee, Department IV  
1x ZID [Foreign Ministry]  
1x Embassy, Political Department

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## DOCUMENT 7

[Source: PolA AA, MfAA, C 6855. Obtained for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer, translated for NKIDP by Karen Riechert]

GDR Embassy to DPRK  
Political Department  
Pyongyang, 23 October 1972

Note  
on Information given by the 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Foreign Minister of the DPRK,  
Comrade Kim Jaebong on 19 October 1972 in the DPRK Foreign Ministry  
for the Embassies of Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Mongolia and the GDR during  
17:00 and 19:00 hours

Present: The Ambassadors of Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Mongolia, Hungary, the Polish Acting Ambassador, Comrade Merten (Ambassador Comrade Everhartz was away in Hamhung) and further diplomats from these embassies.

Based on a written manuscript, Comrade Kim Jaebong gave information about the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the co-chairmen of the Coordination Committee North-South on 12 October 1972 in Panmunjom and about the declaration of martial law in South Korea on 17 October 1972. Comrade Kim Jaebong stated the following:

As Kim Yeongju, Head of the Organization and Instruction Department of the KWP Central Committee, was unable to participate in the [Coordination Committee] talks due to his health, negotiations were led by Comrade Pak Seongcheol, 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputy Prime Minister, and on the South Korean side by intelligence chief Lee Hurak. During the three months since the publication of the Joint Declaration North-South with its three principles of unification outlined by Comrade Kim Il Sung, a movement toward consent has developed with different parties, various groups, and among the people of South Korea. Efforts for peaceful unification have increased, and the anti-imperialist, anti-fascist struggle in South Korea is on the rise. Especially after the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Main Negotiations of the Red Cross Committees, an ever growing feeling of respect and veneration towards the venerable and beloved leader, Comrade Kim Il Sung, was on display among the South Korean people. The revolutionizing influence of *juche* and the positive example of socialist construction in the Northern part of the Republic steadily grew.

The South Korean authorities use disingenuous tactics, they run a defamation campaign against the DPRK, they are leaning on foreign powers, they enforce military preparations and anti-

communism. The objective of the DPRK during the negotiations was this: To criticize the South Korean side fiercely in order to stop their despicable machinations behind the scenes.

As already known, the North-South dialogue and the struggle for peaceful unification is both an offensive and defensive battle. It is a battle between defenders of the nation and traitors, between *juche* and deference, between the united revolutionary forces of internationalism and the united forces of the bourgeoisie, between capitalism and socialism. Given the fact that the struggle for peaceful unification is in essence a class struggle, it was required to criticize the policies of the other side.

Pak Seongcheol who spoke first criticized the non-compliance with the Joint Declaration of 4 July 1972 by South Korea and bolstered this criticism with many examples. He proved when, where, and with what statements, Park Chung Hee, Lee Hurak and Kim Jong-pil acted in South Korea in violation of the principles from the Joint Declaration.

Pak Seongcheol asked the following alternative questions to Lee Hurak: Do you want to support, together with us, peaceful unification, or do you want to continue anti-communism? If you want to join forces with us, then there must be no more anti-communism. If anti-communism continues to exist, then where will your policy lead to? Lee Hurak, who got confused by the force of the evidence, had to recognize this. He stated that he had actively supported compliance with the Joint Declaration. However, due to the complicated domestic structures of South Korea and its society, there was no chance to control the implementation of his instructions with regard to anti-communism.

Pak Seongcheol: What you are telling us here, is actually stated by a close confidant and personal friend of Kim Jong-pil. You are after all no ordinary people but those who govern South Korea.

Lee Hurak: I am innocent.

Pak Seongcheol: You assert the United Nations is not an external force. We do not understand that.

Lee Hurak: The United Nations is indeed not an external force.

Pak Seongcheol: The American forces in South Korea act in the name of the United Nations and serve in South Korea under the U.N. flag. Isn't that an external force? The Charta of the United Nations prohibits interference in internal matters.

Lee Hurak: If you pose the question that way, then the criticism is justified.

Pak Seongcheol: At the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the foundation of the South Korean army, Park Chung Hee declared that Korea ought to be unified on the basis of a free democracy. This means that he wants to impose the capitalist order upon us. Since we agreed to achieve the unification of the nation without taking into account the differences in our systems, how can his statement be reconciled with this principle? This is anti-communism.

Lee Hurak: I acknowledge that mistakes have been made. When I wrote speeches for Park Chung Hee I did not use such words. It is very likely that journalists added such lines to reports on their own.

Pak Seongcheol: What kind of dialogue is this when Park Chung Hee speaks on one hand in the spirit of anti-communism, and on the other hand supports the dialogue between North and South?

Lee Hurak: I cannot assume responsibility with regard to the statement that the United Nations does not constitute an external force, and that unification ought to occur on the basis of free democracy, as well as for other words of Kim Jong-pil.

After this exchange, there were discussions about the establishment of the Coordination Committee. Our proposals had already been turned in earlier. So we were interested to hear what the South Korean side was thinking about them. The South Koreans suggested to have a Coordination Committee with five members from each side. We stated that we do not mind, and the number of members is actually of not much relevance. We agreed to return to the problem of the levels to be represented in the Coordination Committee later on.

Lee Hurak posed the question, with reference to a quote from Kim Il Sung, what we actually envisage by a confederation? Pak Seongcheol replied that, under preservation of the different systems in North and South, a Supreme National Committee should be established with a unified position in public and the task to solve internal questions through joint effort.

Lee Hurak: If you would expand the Coordination Committee, would it serve as a nucleus for the establishment of a confederation?

Pak Seongcheol: There is the possibility to do it this way. Yet important is a statement of will from the masses that have to decide this question on a democratic basis.

Lee Hurak: I have understood everything. You should trust me. I am in favor of not fighting against each other in the future but living together in coexistence between both systems.

It was agreed to hold the next meetings of the co-chairmen in turn in Pyongyang and in Seoul. The 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting will be held on 2 November 1972 in Pyongyang, the 3<sup>rd</sup> on 20 November 1972 in Seoul.

On 15 October there arrived a proposal from South Korea via telephone to convene a meeting between representatives from North and South on 16 October. The meeting took place. The South Korean representative asked to submit the following messages to Kim Yeongju:

1. We want to achieve unification at any cost as long as Kim Il Sung and Park Chung Hee are still personally in power, i.e. during the 1970s.
2. The content of the North Korean speeches during the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting was not fully comprehended. After repeated listening to the tapes, we can now say that the criticism

voiced [by the DPRK] is justified. We have committed mistakes. Therefore it is necessary to launch new measures from our side.

We asked: What kind of measures?

The South Korean side responded: Park Chung Hee and Lee Hurak want to unify the country. Yet many in South Korea are against this. Therefore order must be established. On 17 October Park Chung Hee will publish an important declaration to which North Korean should listen to attentively. If it has comments, it can ask questions about it.

Then Comrade Kim Jaebong continued:

One hour before the publication of Park Chung Hee's declaration there came a phone message from South Korea that it will be made public at 1900 hours. Also it was proposed to have a meeting on 18 October. On 17 October the extraordinary declaration of Park Chung Hee about the state of emergency became public. On 18 October a meeting between representatives from North and South Korea took place.

The following message was transmitted from Lee Hurak to Kim Yeongju:

The situation in Asia has very much changed in the seventies. In particular there are changes in the bipolar system USA-USSR, and also in relations between the four powers USA-USSR-China-Japan. Given these circumstances, we hold the opinion that we have to solve the national question through our own means without the reliance on the United States and Japan.

That is the reason why the Joint Declaration of 4 July was published and the dialogue between North and South began. After this declaration became public, there were many groups formed in South Korea that were against it. There have been many accusations against the government that the Joint Declaration has violated the [South Korean] constitution. This was behind Kim Yeongju's criticism of the current disturbances in South Korea against the line of peaceful unification. The opposition existing in South Korea has interfered with the implementations of obligations [from the Joint Declaration of 4 July]. The extraordinary declaration [of 17 October] to impose a state of emergency aims at changing the constitution. The current constitution was written under the influence of a bipolar situation. It is based on a doctrine of anti-communism, and there are no options for compromise.

The current South Korean constitution does not correspond to the peaceful unification of the country. Therefore we want to adapt the new constitution according to the new conditions. The United States and Japan are against these intentions. Yet we have nonetheless made the decision to solve these questions on the basis of *juche* and in the spirit of the principles of national self-determination. Although the United States and Japan are against this self-determination, we still have the intention to create a system that serves the purpose of dialogue between North and South and which will have a President in its center after the amendment of the constitution.

We asked this question: Why was martial law declared? What kind of new system is this supposed to be?

The response from the South Korean side: Since our domestic questions are irresolvable by normal means, we want to guarantee the drafting and acceptance of a new constitution through a state of emergency. This way we avoid chaos in our country. When we draft a new constitution, we have to ascertain that no new misunderstandings occur. If you have questions about this, we are ready to answer them. [end of quote]

Currently there are many opinions in South Korea. The rightist elements think those emergency measures are directed against them. Others do not know where this 17 October declaration will lead South Korea. There are questions whether this might be a pro-communist turn and non-abandonment of dialogue [with the North]. There are also discussions whether this new development might signal a turn toward the right. The new constitution is said to fully address the question of unification. A National Assembly is supposed to be established that could guarantee a peaceful dialogue between North and South. There are intentions to amend the constitution in such a way that it will serve as a legal basis for the process of dialogue. Amending the constitution does not mean to abandon dialogue but to enforce it.

The Political Committee of the KWP Central Committee has examined and analyzed all aspects of the situation in South Korea. So far we have not arrived at final conclusions. For now we can say, however, that the current situation in South Korea is very complicated.

After the publication of the Joint Declaration, aspirations of the South Korean masses for peaceful unification have grown. Activities by the opposition parties and within the population increased. This is unsettling for the South Korean government. They are afraid. According to our information, after the publication of the Joint Declaration of 4<sup>th</sup> of July, 90 progressive cadres were arrested in South Korea. Anti-communism continues to exist. The South Korean economy is currently facing major problems. Small and medium businesses are going bankrupt. The agricultural situation is bad. There will be a poor harvest. People's suffering is on the rise. Currently Park Chung Hee pursues the so-called "New Village Movement." This movement is about the forced creation of new villages. Peasants are putting up resistance against it. The implementation of "agricultural reform" has resulted in a numerical increase of large landowners, as well as in corruption and so forth. Currently the situation in South Korea is similar like in the old China under Jiang Jieshi. Therefore the hope for socialism like in North is growing among the South Korean people. Up to the publication of the Joint Declaration there was a standstill in the students' movement. After the 4<sup>th</sup> of July the movement became jolted again. Park Chung Hee is much afraid of the opposition parties, the people's masses and the students. This is why parliament has been dissolved, the activities of all political parties have been suspended, and the universities have been closed.

After the 19<sup>th</sup> of April, Park Chung Hee has implemented a militaristic-fascist upheaval. At the end of last year a state of emergency was declared. Now martial law has been added. Why did Park Chung Hee declare a state of emergency and martial law? Park Chung Hee thinks the opposition parties will go against him if, in the current situation, he wants to have dialogue and political meetings with us just on his own. [If opposition parties would join], then the score in those meetings would not be 1:1 but 2:1 in favor of the North. This is why the opposition parties,

freedom of speech, and freedom of the press have been abolished and Park Chung Hee is establishing a one-man-rule.

This is an enforcement of militaristic-fascist dictatorship, an attempt to repress the revolutionary movement, and to secure the further stay of Park Chung Hee in power. This way he will have the monopoly to conduct the dialogue with us, and the score is back to 1:1. Park Chung Hee fears a military conflict. Therefore he wants to solve the unification question peacefully. His objective is to create a system that is favorable to dialogue and peaceful unification.

Park Chung Hee is acting from an autonomous position. However, what kind of autonomy does he have if, on the other hand, he is dependent on the United States and Japan and wants to receive their aid. Park Chung Hee is afraid of his own army. By declaring martial law, he barred all airplanes from flying over South Korean territory. Military employees were barred from leaving the barracks. Those on leave were prohibited from moving around. All army movements have been banned.

What is our position now? If we do not do anything, it will mean we are closing our eyes from the repression of the people [in South Korea]. Therefore we must not remain passive. If we stay passive, we remain silent in the wake of South Korea becoming anti-communist.

We will take up the two following measures:

1. We publish an article in our newspaper and prove that repression of the South Korean people under the pretext of peaceful unification is unjustified and wrong. The more the masses will participate in peaceful unification, the better.
2. There will be a statement published in the name of all political parties to unmask the reasons behind the dissolution of the South Korean parliament. A similar statement is supposed to be issued in the name of the students of North Korea concerning the closing of universities in South Korea. In all that, we will conform to the polite form common so far.

Park Chung Hee's extraordinary declaration contains an interesting passage we will have to analyze in the near future: "Our measures will lead up to a referendum. If the new constitution will not be accepted, it will mean that the South Korean people do not want the dialogue between North and South. Then it will be necessary to look for new steps toward unification."

In conclusion, Comrade Kim Jaebong asked everybody in attendance to forward this information to the politburos of their respective parties.

Signed: Gensicke, Attache

Initialed: Merten

CC:

1x Comrade Fischer [Deputy Foreign Minister]

1x Comrade Markowski [Central Committee, Department IV]

1x Comrade Schneidewind [Foreign Ministry, Far Eastern Department]

1x Comrade Grunert [Foreign Ministry, ZID]  
1x Embassy, Political Department

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## DOCUMENT 8

*[Source: PolA AA, MfAA, C 1080/78. Obtained for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer, translated for NKIDP by Karen Riechert]*

GDR Embassy to DPRK  
Political Department  
Pyongyang, 24 October 1972

### Note

on a Conversation with the 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary of the USSR Embassy, Comrade Kurbatov,  
on 18 October 1972 in the GDR Embassy

At the begin of our conversation, I informed Comrade Kurbatov about the stay of [West German Foreign Minister Walter] Scheel in Beijing and about the Chinese positions toward the GDR and the policy of the community of socialist states in Europe. I also remarked that the Confidential Bulletin of the DPRK news agency devotes some attention to Scheel's visit to Beijing. Comrade Kurbatov asserted, the Koreans take it for an irreversible fact that China will be recognized by capitalist states. In his opinion, the DPRK cadres were informed about all nuances of Scheel's talks in Beijing through the Confidential Bulletin. It is certainly anything but uninteresting that Foreign Minister Ho Dam stays in Beijing during the PRC visit of [Japanese Prime Minister] Tanaka as well as during the Scheel visit. As far as he [Kurbatov] knows, there are currently numerous West Germans in the DPRK for business reasons. Apparently the DPRK is interested to establish economic ties with West Germany.

During the following course of conversation, we exchanged opinions about the declaration of a state of emergency and martial law in South Korea.

Comrade Kurbatov noted that he can only voice his initial opinion. Park Chung Hee is eager to solidify his position to lead the negotiations with the North from a position of the strongman. Kim Yeongnam, 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Head of the International Department in the KWP Central Committee, said during a conversation that Pak Seongcheol will actively join the talks with Lee Hurak and will not just be a listener. Pak Seongcheol will exert pressure. Apparently the DPRK as well as the South do think that negotiations are only feasible from a position of strength. He [Kurbatov] thinks, the South Korean side will not abandon the concept to achieve unification on its own terms. The concept of unification has the attention of both the North and the South.

The question is from which position the respective side begins with. South Korea is eager to implement unification from a capitalist angle. Like Kim Il Sung, Park Chung Hee has declared he views unification as a historic mission. Park Chung Hee will attempt to hold on to his position

and win certain concessions from the DPRK. The emergency measures speak to that. The DPRK wants to move Park Chung Hee into a corner using the principles of the Joint Declaration. The DPRK's restraint after the declaration of martial law [in the South] demonstrated that it is still eager to continue the dialogue. The DPRK aims its demands at the abolition of anti-communist security laws and the creation of a democratic situation [in the South].

Kurbatov knows that Pak Seongcheol asked Lee Hurak in a meeting why the anti-communist laws were not repealed. Lee Hurak responded that there are no communists in the South and their activities are restricted. The communists would come from the North. Therefore the laws are not directed against the South Korean population but against the intruders from the North.

Park Chung Hee will attempt to repress the emotions of the people and strengthen his position. He will also try to build up South Korea economically. He will attempt to exploit the principles of the Joint Declaration for his own purposes. South Korea's efforts to establish relations with socialist countries show that the South Korean regime wants to be recognized as a state and have the realities of Korea acknowledged.

Comrade Kurbatov also informed about a meeting organized by the KWP Central Committee with comrades from the Soviet Embassy for the occasion of the 27<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the foundation of the KWP. Kim Yeongnam, 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Head of the International Department in the KWP Central Committee, participated. Similar meetings were arranged by the Central Committee for the embassies of China, Vietnam and Cuba on different days and at different locations.

Furthermore Comrade Kurbatov remarked that currently KWP party cells are studying a Red Letter from Kim Il Sung. There is not much known about its content except that it deals with questions of unification policy and ideological questions for the KWP, namely increasing implementation of the *juche* ideology.

Merten  
Embassy Counselor

CC:  
1x Foreign Ministry, Far Eastern Department  
1x Central Committee, Department IV  
1x Embassy, Political Department

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## DOCUMENT 9

*[Source: PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. Obtained and translated for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer]*

GDR Embassy to DPRK  
Political Department  
Pyongyang, 08 November 1972

Note  
on Information by the Head of the 1<sup>st</sup> Department of the DPRK Foreign Ministry,  
Comrade Kim Jaesuk, on 31 October 1972 for Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors of the  
GDR, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Secretary of the Embassy, Comrade Barthel, attended this briefing on behalf of the GDR Embassy in the DPRK since Acting Ambassador Comrade Merten was not available.

The head of the 1<sup>st</sup> Department requested the presence of the Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors to inform about the course of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Main Negotiation of the Red Cross talks between North and South Korea on 24 October 1972 [in Pyongyang].

He explained that negotiations were held in public in the morning and during a closed session in the afternoon. After the recent declaration of martial law in South Korea they took place in difficult times. For both sides the 3<sup>rd</sup> Main Negotiation served the purpose to state their opinions and proposals about the first item on the Red Cross talks agenda, namely the search for separated relatives. The DPRK expressed its position that issues on the agenda of Red Cross talks will only be solved conclusively when the question of Korea's unification is settled as well. It argued that those problems are a result of the country's division, and therefore they can only be solved through overcoming this division. In contrast, the South Korean side just made proposals limited to strictly humanitarian issues. Then Comrade Kim explained the DPRK's five basic principles and four proposals on the first agenda item, as already known through press publications. He stated that those principles fully reflect the desires of the nation and are in accordance with the spirit of the Joint Declaration of North and South from the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and the principles of humanity.

Concerning the position taken by the South Korean side he declared, as stated above, that it was limited to purely humanitarian questions. The South Koreans argued the Red Cross is a humanitarian organization based on the principles of humanity and neutrality. Thus the South Korean Red Cross could only provide helpful services, but not contribute towards removing legal and social obstacles to a solution on the question of searches for relatives, as demanded by the

DPRK. The South Korean side just proposed to establish an office in Panmunjom and organize an exchange of forms to identify the existence and addresses of separated relatives. He [Kim] commented, apparently the South Koreans are afraid of meetings between their people and DPRK citizens.

The South Korean side dismissed the DPRK's proposals to remove legal and social obstacles to a search for separated relatives as not relevant to the issue. It said with such proposals the DPRK would violate previous agreements. During the closed afternoon session the DPRK protested against this slander and criticized the South Korean side for its superficial proposals. Its slander of the DPRK would be tantamount to non-compliance with previous agreements. Therefore the DPRK repeated its proposals during the closed session. The South Koreans justified their position with the argument that the Red Cross is not legitimized to convey South Korean official political statements or implement social changes. They recognized that the issues to be solved by the Red Cross are closely related to the country's unification but they refused to commit to further steps. Following a South Korean demand negotiations were subsequently adjourned. As already reported to the press, there was agreement to admit five more journalists each to the next round of negotiations.

Comrade Kim elaborated that the "adversary" attempted to solicit DPRK opinions on the declaration of martial law in South Korea during unofficial conversations. Such exchanges came about at the initiative of the South Koreans. There they contended that the announcement of those [emergency] measures [in the ROK] was actually supportive to the Red Cross talks and would contribute towards achieving the goal of Korean unification.

Then Comrade Kim made further remarks about some marginal occurrences during the stay of the South Korean delegation. According to DPRK assessment, about 50 percent of delegation members and 80 percent of journalists were agents of South Korean intelligence services. It turned out that they did not speak their opinions freely when they appeared in groups. Yet in individual conversations, like during a car ride, a major part of the delegates made respectful statements about the *juche* idea of Comrade Kim Il Sung. One journalist said that no Korean is against the *juche* idea of Comrade Kim Il Sung. South Koreans as well despise pandering towards great powers and are against a dependence on foreigners. One adviser to the delegation asked for books about the revolutionary personal history of Comrade Kim Il Sung and for his collected works to study, as he said, the *juche* idea of Comrade Kim Il Sung. Another adviser stated: "Every Korean knows that Kim Il Sung conducted a long and hard anti-Japanese struggle and everybody respects him for that. The policy of Comrade Kim Il Sung is a good policy for the people. We South Koreans have been raised as anti-communists. Yet if that, what we saw in North Korea, is communism then this is not bad. Kim Il Sung is a true man of the people, and the Korean people should be proud and happy to have him."

Another example for how respectful members of the South Korean delegation and the journalists behaved towards the *juche* idea of Comrade Kim Il Sung: During the visit of the great museum of the Korean Revolution one journalist continuously taped the explanations presented by the guides. Some South Koreans stated that the Korean communists are actually the real patriots. When they visited the opera "O Forest – please tell us" a major part of them were moved to tears. Some of them said the South Korean young people under the age of 28 no longer know what

home and nation means. Unification must come about during the lifetime of Comrade Kim Il Sung without foreign interference and in an independent process. Through this visit the delegation could enrich its knowledge about the DPRK and was impressed about its superiority. Yet there also were some delegation members and journalists who were “reactionary gangsters and anti-communists.” For instance, one of them made a statement by walking out of the movie “The Girl from the Diamond Mountains” and locked himself in his room because this movie shows the responsibility of U.S. imperialists for Korea’s division.

In conclusion, Comrade Kim informed that the next round of negotiations will be held on 22 November 1972 in Seoul. The DPRK is expecting controversial discussions due to serious differences in respective proposals. Despite sticking to its principled positions, the DPRK is still eager to achieve a positive conclusion of these negotiations as soon as possible. Kim requested the support of socialist fraternal countries for the DPRK to isolate the South Korean puppets and this way exert pressure on them.

Note: In the course of his statement Comrade Kim frequently used terms like “the adversary” and “puppets.”

Barthel  
2<sup>nd</sup> Secretary  
Initialed: Merten

CC:  
1x Foreign Ministry, Far Eastern Department  
1x Central Committee, Department IV  
1x Embassy, Political Department

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## DOCUMENT 10

*[Source: PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. Obtained and translated for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer]*

GDR Embassy to DPRK  
Political Department  
Pyongyang, 9 November 1972

### Note

#### on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister

#### Comrade Ri Manseok on 8 November 1972 for the Ambassadors of Czechoslovakia and Poland and the Acting Ambassadors of the GDR in the Foreign Ministry

Comrade Ri Manseok informed the comrades in attendance about the results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the North-South Coordination Committee in Pyongyang between 2 and 4 November 1972. Based on a written manuscript he outlined the following:

When analyzing the behavior of the North Korean side, we have to conclude that their main focus is to stay in power and cement the status quo. During the meeting's first day already, it was notable that the Southern organs were not prepared for negotiations and focused only on those questions raised from our side. The North Korean delegation spoke first. We talked about the question of coexistence and cooperation and actively raised the role of the North-South Coordination Committee. The South Korean side was unable to propose concrete measures.

Right after his arrival, Lee Hurak stated his wish to talk with the dear and beloved leader Comrade Kim Il Sung. He [Lee] requested to organize for him to be received by him [Kim Il Sung]. On 3 November the dear and beloved leader Comrade Kim Il Sung received before the resumption of talks Lee Hurak and his entourage and outlined the DPRK position in programmatic fashion.

After he had proposed last time [during his meeting with Lee Hurak in June 1972] the three principles and concrete paths towards independent peaceful unification, this time he talked about specific measures and made smart proposals for cooperation between the North and South in various areas. General Secretary Comrade Kim Il Sung stated that dialogue between North and South has to be a dialogue in the name of cooperation and unification rather than of confrontation and division. The Coordination Committee is an organ of cooperation and not of confrontation. Initially it is necessary to cooperate on economic and cultural fields, and later on political ones as well. Regarding the question of economic cooperation, General Secretary Comrade Kim Il Sung explained how there are many unemployed in South Korea and how they are sold to other countries. Such actions have to come to a halt. There is the option to mine resources through joint labor. On a basis of economic exchange between North and South we have the option to employ South Korean unemployed. The North could deliver machines, equipment, iron ore and other mineral resources; the South could export to the North products from agriculture and light industries. There is also the possibility of joint fishery with free usage of the seas of both the North and the South. The North could help the South in the building of

irrigation systems based on extensive Northern experiences in this field. We could develop a division of labor between North and South. On the question of cooperation in the areas of science and culture, General Secretary Kim Il Sung stated that, for instance, the mother language in South Korea is permeated with Japanese and American terms. With joint efforts by linguistic experts from both sides the language could be unified and problems of science and culture solved.

On military cooperation Kim Il Sung proposed the option to reduce arms, military production, and the number of armed forces. We could agree that both South and North Korea will have an army of 100,000 men each sufficient for the defense of the country.

Concerning political cooperation, Comrade Kim Il Sung proposed to create a system of confederation. While maintaining the socialist order in the North and the social order in the South, we can build a confederation and create comprehensive cooperation and broad exchange in political, economic, cultural, and military areas.

If Lee Hurak would have rejected these proposals by General Secretary Comrade Kim Il Sung he would have shown his true face as a traitor to the nation. For that reason he replied that everything represents a good and necessary cause. He raised no objections against the building of a confederation. Although he had not eyed himself the need for a confederation, he said it is possible that Park Chung Hee might see its necessity. After his departure to Seoul he will inform Park Chung Hee about his talk with General Secretary Kim Il Sung. Thus we can assess that the proposals of the dear and beloved leader Comrade Kim Il Sung have been accepted by the South Korean side.

Guided by the line as instructed by General Secretary Kim Il Sung concerning cooperation between North and South, we talked at the meeting about basic questions which must necessarily be solved in order to realize the cooperation.

For the realization of cooperation between North and South we proposed to realize the primary requirements of halting the anti-communist policy, implementing the withdrawal of American forces, and to end the revived aggression of Japanese imperialism in South Korea. In South Korea you need to allow for broad democracy, to secure political freedoms for the people's masses, like freedom of speech, freedom of the press, right of assembly, to organize, to demonstrate, etc.; to facilitate political activities of opposition parties, and to release political prisoners. We demand that activities of those in South Korea will have to be made illegal who come out against peaceful unification. Lee Hurak refrained from giving a comprehensive answer. He agreed that anti-communist propaganda must end, and he stated that after elections and the adoption of the constitution restrictions against political parties will be lifted. The South Korean side will review the question of releasing political prisoners. We added to our proposal that, if the prisoners cannot be released right away, one ought at least halt executions. Lee Hurak agreed to review this request.

According to the line provided by the dear and beloved leader Comrade Kim Il Sung, the "Agreement on Composition and Protocol of the Coordination Committee North-South" and its

joint announcement was passed and made public accordingly. The North Korean draft proposal for both documents was approved in principle by the South Korean side.

During the talks the South Korean side argued against an authoritative Coordination Committee that could fully claim its functions. The South Koreans objected to a clear outline on questions of cooperation between South and North as one of the Coordination Committee's assignments, and against an exact framework for its members and their roles. It was the South Korean aim to delay solutions to this question and to create a crippled institution. We insisted that the Coordination Committee must consist of representatives with the rank of Ministers or their deputies in order to turn it into an authoritative organ. Ultimately a decision was made according to our proposal.

During negotiations it was also discussed to end in the future broadcasts directed to the other side of the country and along the DMZ, and to refrain from dropping leaflets on the other side's territory. The South Korean side informed that anti-communism and polemics ad slander against the North will end. They requested us to act accordingly. We agreed with this.

While drafting the agreement and the public announcement we had tedious discussions about the problem of cooperation between North and South. The South demanded not to include the term "cooperation between North and South" in the public announcement. They argued the term "cooperation" is a reminder to the cooperation between the Chinese Communist Party and the Guomindang Party which ultimately resulted in turning China into a communist country. This phrase, they said, will be perceived negatively by the educated elite in South Korea. Therefore it was agreed to choose a true Korean term for cooperation that can be translated as "working jointly with united efforts." We hold the opinion that this term essentially expresses the same that we had proposed. Thus the South Korean side was forced to acknowledge the issue of cooperation as proposed by Kim Il Sung, and to undertake another step towards the realization of the Joint Declaration. As evidence for the complicated discussions we had, there was the fact that the South Korean delegation initially wanted to fly out of Pyongyang at 900 hours but eventually left at 1300 hours.

During the talks Lee Hurak proposed to hold talks between both sides on the highest level. Yet both sides agreed that such talks are not realistic any more during the current year though they might be realized in the future.

Note: Probably this refers to a meeting between Kim Il Sung and Park Chung Hee.

In general we can say, Comrade Ri Manseok continued, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session was successful. It will be interesting to watch how the South Korean side will implement the tasks we agreed upon. The South Korean side treats these questions very formally, they want to fix the status quo, and thus they are not sincerely interested to implement the tasks. For these reasons we think that a long and tough struggle is still ahead of us.

Comrade Ri Manseok then commented on DPRK positions towards the state of emergency and constitutional revisions in South Korea. He stated the following:

The essence of declaring a state of emergency and revise the constitution reflects the aim to secure Park Chung Hee's hold on power for a long time, to repress the political parties, and to level the score in the [North-South] talks to 1:1. According to the constitution, they will form a

“National Assembly of Unification and *Juche*” to elect the President. His term will be unlimited. As a pretext to change the constitution Park Chung Hee declared such necessary to conduct the dialogue [with the North], as the old constitution would contain anti-communist provisions.

The KWP Political Committee frequently discussed whether we should condemn events in the South, or whether we should better wait with this. We are of the opinion that, if we condemn the events, the currently open door between North and South will be slammed shut. As a consequence, the country would continue to be divided. Therefore we have arrived at the conclusion not to provoke the closing of this door. If we criticize their [the South Koreans'] actions, it will result in further repression of the opposition parties. This way we would lose both options [BS: peaceful unification and Southern uprising]. The South Korean side has only opened the door to the North since it was forced to do so. Currently it is looking for reasons to withdraw from this commitment. It is our conclusion that we must not provide them with a pretext: This way we will lose all opportunities to unfold in South Korea the activities of political opposition parties, and other activities as well. This year of travel between North and South was helpful for us as we gained options to exert a certain direct influence. This is why we changed our original plan to publish an article condemning the emergency measures in South Korea. We criticize them fiercely internally in the country without letting this criticism filter into the public. We have the intention to continue with implementing our line with patience, and to further develop the peaceful offensive.

In conclusion of this information, Comrade Ri Manseok asked the fraternal countries to continue their active support for the struggle of the Korean people, to exert pressure on the puppets in the South and to isolate them, and thus contribute to the continuation of the [North-South] dialogue. Naturally, the conduct of this dialogue will remain an internal matter of the Korean people.

In response to this statement, the Czechoslovak ambassador thanked in the name of the comrades in attendance for the provided briefing.

Merten  
Acting Ambassador

CC:  
1x Foreign Ministry, Far Eastern Department  
1x Central Committee, Department IV  
1x Embassy, Political Department

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## DOCUMENT 11

*[Source: PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. Obtained and translated for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer]*

GDR Embassy to DPRK  
Political Department  
Pyongyang, 1 December 1972

### Note

on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister  
Comrade Ri Manseok on 28 November 1972 for the Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors of  
Poland, Czechoslovakia and the GDR  
between 1200 and 1330 hours in the Foreign Ministry

Comrade Ri Manseok informed based on a written manuscript about the 4<sup>th</sup> session of Red Cross negotiations, as well as about the referendum held in South Korea and ensuing changes to its constitution. Comrade Ri Manseok said about the following:

The 4<sup>th</sup> session of Red Cross negotiations was held on 22 November 1972 in Seoul. Due to the overall situation a fierce class struggle erupted during this 4<sup>th</sup> session. It occurred at a time when the leader, Comrade Kim Il Sung, has proclaimed a course of comprehensive cooperation with the South. Yet the South Korean puppet clique has declared martial law after a prior declaration of a state of emergency. They also changed the constitution in South Korea. The ballots [for the constitutional referendum] were opened the day our delegation arrived. The agents of Park Chung Hee's puppet clique were lined up every 10 meters along the street and controlled the passers-by. Initially the 4<sup>th</sup> session was scheduled for 21 November but the enemies moved it to 22 November. They combined the day of the session with the vote for the referendum. The enemies want to achieve a consolidation of the nation around Park Chung Hee. They wanted to sell the welcome of our delegation by the South Korean people as a support for the referendum. We agreed with moving the 4<sup>th</sup> session from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> and delivered to the enemies a strong political blow.

The meeting was held behind closed doors. During negotiations we discussed the already known first agenda item of the main negotiations – the search for separated families and identification of their addresses. Our delegation repeated again in more concrete terms the proposals made already during the 3<sup>rd</sup> session of the Red Cross talks in Pyongyang. We suggested to include our compatriots living in Japan into the search for separated families and the identification of their addresses. In conjunction with the search for addresses of separated families and relatives we

demanded guarantees for expressions of free will by the people concerned and for the safeguard of their democratic rights. The South Korean side, however, opposed these proposals. The rejected the guarantee of democratic and social liberties and opted against direct searches of, and contacts with, the families. The South Koreans proposed to conduct the search for families with the help of questionnaires only. This would be in accordance with international rules of the International Red Cross, they said. Our delegation responded that not each international custom of the Red Cross is adaptable to discussions of internal national issues.

Except for the idea concerning the questionnaire, the South Korean side did not come up with any other proposal. Then our delegation proposed to establish a joint organ of the two Red Cross societies and a joint office at Panmunjom. The South Korean agreed in principle with our proposals.

Following a South Korean request, our delegation agreed to set up via phone the dates for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> session of Red Cross negotiations. A group of experts was tasked with working out a draft for a joint agreement. The South Koreans suggested to establish a sub-committee in Panmunjom so they do not have to travel to Pyongyang or Seoul. Although the respective organs, which were ultimately agreed upon, are not yet operating, the solution of one problem after the next will result in the ideological unmasking of the South Korean representatives.

During its stay in South Korea our delegation visited two chemical factories, two department stores, and a movie theater. Lee Hurak gave a dinner for our delegation. The South Korean side undertook all kinds of efforts to minimize the influence of our delegation on the South Korean people as much as possible. For instance, initially it was agreed with our delegation that Lee Hurak will host a reception. Yet there was just a dinner. Representatives of South Korean political parties and social organizations were excluded from this dinner. During the visits to the factories which just lasted for a few minutes, our representatives could not have any conversations with South Korean workers. The secret police shielded our delegation from the population.

At the same time during our delegation's stay there was a broad "anti-communist" campaign going on in South Korea and serious provocations were organized. For instance, on 22 November South Korean cadets demanded the democratic unification of the country without one of the current two systems serving as a framework. Instead unification should occur on the basis of "material prosperity" and the "victory over communism."

Also a South Korean aspirant named Seo Sinhi was sentenced to death. Furthermore there were attacks and slander against our delegation in the South Korean press. By all this the South Korean side aims at stimulating its people with a feeling of enmity towards the DPRK.

Our delegation was taken to an anti-communist movie performance and demonstratively walked out of the auditorium. After the protest of our delegation, the South Korean side admitted that this step with the movie was not correct. In the future something like that will not happen again, they said.

The 4<sup>th</sup> session was fierce class struggle for our delegation. The enemy suffered hard blows. Thanks to the active assertiveness of our representatives the South Korean side was pushed into a passive role. This way we were able to increase our influence on the South Korean people.

Everywhere the DPRK delegation was welcomed by South Korean people with emotions running high. Individual people secretly sneaked to our representatives to express their respect and reverence for Comrade Kim Il Sung and their love for the leader. They talked full of hope that they will soon be united with the North under the leadership of Comrade Kim Il Sung.

Then Comrade Ri Manseok stated the DPRK's expectation towards the socialist countries to further unmask the South Korean puppet clique and exert pressure on them in the international arena.

Comrade Ri Manseok finally addressed the referendum held in South Korea and made the following statements:

The fuzz made by the South Korean puppet clique about the large turnout and the broad approval of the constitutional changes is stupid and cynical. It has never happened during the entire history of the Far East that you could voice your opinion freely during a state of emergency or martial law. So far all elections in South Korea have been fraudulent. The South Korean people were not allowed to state their opinion about the draft constitution as such was blocked by special orders. The election result was rigged. The new constitution was implemented under the cover of peaceful unification. In reality, however, it is a reactionary document to solidify the dictatorship and the power of one single person.

Comrade Ri Manseok further declared that the DPRK is expecting from our countries to expose this constitution. Third countries must continue with their unmasking of the South Korean puppet clique irrespective of the dialogue between South and North Korea. The socialist fraternal countries must continue to isolate the South Korean puppet clique in the international arena. This will create favorable conditions for the continuation of the [inter-Korean] dialogue.

Responding to a question by the Polish ambassador about the content of the new constitution in South Korea, Comrade Ri Manseok declared:

Although the draft of the South Korean constitution does not contain explicit anti-communism, in reality anti-communism continues in South Korea in practical terms. The fact that explicit anti-communism has been left out from the draft is a result of pressure from the DPRK and the South Korean people on the South Korean regime.

Yet the slander against the DPRK and the patriotic people in South Korea is continuing. The entire constitution is an evil deception. With this Park Chung Hee has succeeded concentrating power in his hands for a long time.

At the end Comrade Ri Manseok thanked for the attention to his statements.

Hofer

Attache  
Initialed: Merten

CC:  
1x Foreign Ministry, Far Eastern Department  
1x Central Committee, Department IV  
1x Embassy

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## DOCUMENT 12

[Source: *PolA AA, MfAA, C 951/76. Obtained and translated for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer*]

GDR Embassy to DPRK  
Political Department  
Pyongyang, 12 December 1972

Note  
on Information by DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister  
Comrade Lee Jinmok on 9 December 1972 for the  
Ambassadors and Acting Ambassadors of Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania,  
and the GDR between 1000 and 1125 hours

Comrade Lee Jinmok informed the attendance based on a written manuscript about the third meeting of the Joint Chairmen of the Coordination Committee and about the 1<sup>st</sup> Session of the South – North Coordination Committee on 13 November in Seoul.

Comrade Lee Jinmok reported about the following:

Both meetings were held in closed sessions. There had been agreement between South and North to hold the 1<sup>st</sup> Session of the Coordination Committee in Seoul. Our side agreed to conclude the third meeting of the Joint Chairmen with a public announcement on the formation of the Coordination Committee, and then start right away with the opening of the 1<sup>st</sup> Session of this committee. The formation of a Coordination Committee had been agreed upon earlier.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Session of the Coordination Committee lasted for two days. On the first day our side gave a general address. The second day the South Koreans had their say. In our speech we offered more concrete details on proposals we already tabled during the second meeting of the Joint Chairmen, including questions on reduction of armed forces. During the 1<sup>st</sup> Session our side completely took the initiative. We had to notice that the adversary had not studied our proposals we previously made during the second meeting in Pyongyang.

As the dear and beloved leader had taught, one must trust each other in order to serve the great cause of the nation. Reduction of armed forces and the end of the arms race are expressions of such trust.

However, the South Koreans did not address our proposals. Then the enemy side declared that this question must be resolved once the level of trust between both sides has increased.

The South Korean side blabbered that it is buying arms since all along the border there had been attacks by the DPRK against South Korea. Thus it would be dangerous to reduce the armed

forces. We refuted the preposterous claims of the enemies and stated that actually there had been attacks from South Korea towards the Northern side. We demanded from the enemies to refrain in the future from this kind of statements.

U.S. imperialists are still occupying South Korea. Spy plane over-flights and surveillance from respective ships is conducted against the Northern part of the republic. There is no DPRK intention to attack the South. The Korean People's Army is of defensive character against U.S. imperialism. We do not intend to impose our opinion on the South Korean side. Yet we will consequently pursue the goal to lower the mistrust between each other.

The South Korean side stated, however, that mistrust towards the Northern part is still strong among [South Korean] people. For that reason we cannot talk about disarmament yet. In any case, this question must be resolved on higher levels, they said.

We made more detailed proposals for concrete steps of cooperation between North and South. We suggested to start with the field of culture. First we should conduct joint analysis of the language, and then cooperate jointly in the fields of art and historical research. We further proposed joint movie production, to field joint sports teams, and to create a respective committee to coordinate cultural cooperation.

Concerning cooperation in economic areas we offered joint exploitation of iron ore resources in the North. Also we proposed a joint search for mineral resources in the South, a joint fishery, to build irrigation projects in the South, and to create a respective committee for economic cooperation. However, the side of the enemy did not respond to our proposals.

They replied to limit cooperation only to a few selected cultural and economic projects and gradually increase this cooperation. Economic cooperation, according to the enemy side, should consist of an exchange of trade. There could not be cooperation in certain cultural areas as those touch on ideological questions. Therefore this would be extraordinarily difficult, they said. Also the South Korean side declared that there is no need for a joint organ on cultural cooperation.

We proposed to publish a joint announcement about the meeting. The South Koreans agreed, yet insisted to include only secondary issues in the announcement.

Comrade Lee Jinmok then addressed this meanwhile published Joint Announcement and continued: Our side raised during the meeting the question of ending the slander against the Northern part. We declared we will act reciprocally if the South Korean side halts its slanders against us. Yet the side of the enemy attempted to camouflage the slander against us with the argument that not all broadcast and print media can be controlled in the South. We [in North Korea] would have it much easier, as all broadcast and print mass media are under state control. Therefore we should stop our slandering of the South. We retorted if this is the case, then why did the South Korean side initially accept the agreement about the cessation of mutual slander? With this question we completely pushed the other side into a cul de sac.

Deputy Minister [Lee Jinmok] reported the following on Pak Seongcheol's reception by Park Chung Hee: At the meeting with Park Chung Hee five people each were present on both sides.

The talk lasted 30 minutes. We stated that unification by our own force must be achieved at all costs. Yet the main preconditions are mutual trust and disarmament. We asked Park Chung Hee what he wants to do in this regard. He did not respond to the content of this question. He just remarked one has to approach the tasks step by step. Today the North as well as the South does employ armed forces, the maintenance of which exceeds the potential of both sides. Yet the time has not matured to discuss questions of disarmament. It has to be addressed at a different time. Currently issues of [inter-Korean] rapprochement must be dealt with in the Red Cross negotiations. In the economic field issues of trade between both Korean parts ought to be addressed.

These remarks by Park Chung Hee absolutely demonstrated that the enemies follow duplicitous tactics. They show that they have no interest in the country's unification whatsoever. They just want to negotiate with us about some accumulation of forces and coexistence. This way they want to harness us. The South Korean side is afraid about socialist influence from the North on its people. Though this is not our goal, we do intend to democratize society in South Korea and ignore their duplicity.

As the dear and beloved leader stated, we will not allow the enemies to shut the door pushed open through our pressure.

In answering questions by the ambassadors of Poland and Bulgaria, Comrade Lee Jinmok also stated this:

- The question of diplomatic cooperation was not addressed during the 1<sup>st</sup> Session of the Coordination Committee. It was only briefly touched upon during the discussion on questions of cultural cooperation.
- The issue of foreign credits also played no role in the talks. We are able to build irrigation projects with our own people, and with our own material. Yet in ignorance of this the enemies attempt to solicit foreign aid.
- Influential circles in Japan have come out in favor of recognizing the DPRK. Yet the South Korean government attempts to undermine this. Under the cover of peaceful unification of the country, the South Korean puppets try to enhance their international prestige. Given these conditions, it is of great importance that the fraternal countries continue to unmask the South Korean puppets in the international arena. This will support the struggle of the DPRK people.

Erich Merten  
Acting Ambassador

CC:

1x Foreign Ministry  
1x Central Committee, Department IV  
1x Embassy

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## DOCUMENT 13

[Source: PolA AA, MfAA, C 294/78. Obtained and translated for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer]

GDR Embassy to the People's Republic of Bulgaria  
Sofia, 18 June 1975

To:  
Member of Politburo and  
Secretary of SED Central Committee  
Comrade Hermann A x e n  
B e r l i n

Dear Comrade Axen!

Enclosed I forward the original and two copies of a translation of an "Information for the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party about the Talks between Comrades Todor Zhivkov and Kim Il Sung during the Visit of the DPRK Party and Government Delegation to Bulgaria from 2 to 5 June 1975."

This material was handed over by Comrade Tellalov to the ambassadors of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and myself in 17 June to forward it to our party leaderships and governments. It is also still supposed to be shared with the Mongolian and Cuban comrades.

[...]

With socialist greetings  
Wenning  
[GDR Ambassador]

Enclosure

CC:  
1x Central Committee, Department IV, Comrade Markowski  
1x Foreign Ministry, Comrade Minister Fischer  
1x Foreign Ministry, Comrade State Secretary Dr. Krolikowski

Working Translation

For Personal Information only, highly confidential!

About the Talks between Comrades Todor Zhivkov and Kim Il Sung during the Visit of the DPRK Party and Government Delegation to Bulgaria (2 to 5 June 1975)

During the official talks between the party and government delegations of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the DPRK, and in private talks between Comrades Todor Zhivkov and Kim Il Sung, a wide range of questions were discussed and positions of both countries outlined.

I. Questions discussed during official meetings of both delegations

[...]

2. [Kim Il Sung:] For Korean Unification

The second issue we are working on is strengthening the revolutionary movement in South Korea, the struggle for the withdrawal of foreign troops from South Korea, and the creation of conditions for peaceful unification of the country.

- a) The movement for democratization of the society and the unification of the fatherland is growing in South Korea and is very active. A deficit is the lacking active participation of workers and peasants in this movement. The intelligentsia is unable to deeply penetrate the village and the working class and exert respective influence. This is a result of the heavy repression in South Korea. The struggle for democratization of South Korean society is still active on a high level. In the past, as well as in the current year, the students were uprising for mass struggle. Educational institutions were closed down, a major part of students were drafted into the army, and another part ended up in prisons. That is the situation in South Korea.
- b) We were forced to freeze peaceful dialogue with South Korea since they insist on creating two Koreas. This means in fact the eternal division of Korea. Such happens on instructions of the U.S. and Japan. By demanding the creation of two Koreas they aimed at shutting down the talks. We think we cannot achieve any results by talking to them. Moreover: What benefit would we have from talking to the dictator [Park Chung Hee] in a situation where the South Korean people are actively against him?
- c) We are against creating two Koreas. The United States attempts to turn South Korea into an American base. That is why they insist on petrifying the division. Japan has identical goals. The Japanese strive at maintaining the South Korean territory as a market for their goods and define the DMZ at the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel for the fight against communism. They claim, in light of the changed situation in Indochina, we will attack the South as well. In this context they make noise and continue to agitate against us. As a result, compared to previous years the tension has increased. In South Korea they unfold an anti-communist campaign with new forms, and frequently they talk about a war with the DPRK.
- d) Kissinger and the U.S. Defense Secretary repeat over and over again that they will not tolerate in South Korea what happened in Indochina, and that they will continue their commitments. There are additional troop deployments in South Korea. Obviously the Americans cannot achieve anything anymore. Their forces are spread out over many

countries. This leads to the assumption that they cannot fight successfully any longer. Yet they are still imperialists.

- e) We have to increase our vigilance and combat readiness. If they attack us, we are ready to fight them. However, we will never attack first. We even intend to have talks about a peaceful unification of the country in case there will be a democratic change in the [South Korean] leadership. We have not refrained from using the slogan of the peaceful unification of the fatherland. We continue to insist on the three principles to achieve unification, namely autonomously, without foreign interference, in peaceful ways, and independently from ideological differences.
- f) In the context of increasing the fight of the Korean people for unification, we deem it necessary that ever more peoples from different countries in the world will raise their voice for the withdrawal of American forces from South Korea.

[...]

## II. Issues discussed in private talks between Comrades Todor Zhivkov and Kim Il Sung

Comrades Todor Zhivkov and Kim Il Sung talked to each other in Varna for about three hours. They also talked while traveling there [from Sofia]. The following topics were discussed in these talks:

[...]

### 6. On Korean unification

Comrade Kim Il Sung stated, after the U.S. defeat in Indochina, attention of the world is now focusing on the Korean question. Western news agencies would relentlessly report the DPRK will attack South Korea inspired by the Vietnamese victory. This is directed by the Americans and the South Korean puppets to increase repression against patriotic and democratic forces who fight for the democratization of society [in South Korea] and the unification of the fatherland.

The South Korean army (760,000 men) is stronger than the DPRK forces (500,000). The number of American forces was increased by 4,000, and now amounts to 42,000 troops. With only 16 million people and a shortage of workers in the DPRK, it will be very difficult to recruit and mobilize even more young people for the army. Also the U.S. forces have equipment superior to North Korea's army.

Talking in more detail about the situation in South Korea, Kim stated the DPRK maintains relations with the New Democratic Party. It forms together with the Party of Democratic Unification and the Social-democratic Party the People's Front for the Unification of Korea. Religious leaders are also members of the People's Front advocating a democratization of society and Korean unification. Yet mostly representatives of the middle class are part of the People's Front. Their relations with workers and peasants, as well as their influence among them, is still weak.

The Marxist party in South Korea, the Revolutionary Unification Party, is weak in numbers. It has about 3,000 members. They have a central leadership and leadership structures in the provinces. They have representatives in several factories but they are illegal and their activities are much impaired. Making active efforts among workers and peasants, and fighting openly against Park Chung Hee, would result in the liquidation of its leaders. This is why we have instructed the members of the Revolutionary Party to join the ranks of the legal opposition parties and increase their influence from there under the workers and peasants.

An important force in the struggle of the South Korean people for the democratization of society and Korean unification are the students that organize mass demonstrations against Park Chung Hee. All these forces are fighting an active struggle. Kim underlined that the *de facto* score between the forces fighting for Korean unification and those advocating the eternal division of the country and the creation of two Koreas, is 2:1 in favor of the former when including the DPRK into the count.

Comrade Kim Il Sung explained that there are low-level contacts between DPRK and U.S. representatives in Panmunjom. The Americans declared that U.S. forces will leave South Korean territory if the DPRK makes an official statement not to invade South Korea. The DPRK has frequently made such declarations, yet there are still American forces in South Korea.

There are two options to achieve the unification of Korea, either peacefully with diplomacy, or by military means. Kim stated the DPRK continues to be committed to the first option and has not given up the slogan of the country's peaceful unification. Yet for its success this requires American withdrawal, Park Chung Hee's international isolation, and the outbreak of an uprising in South Korea.

There is always a chance for a revolt while U.S. forces are still present. Yet the DPRK recommended to democratic forces in South Korea some advice for their actions. Obviously, Kim said, there is always the option they do not listen to us and rise up.

Geographical and natural conditions in South Korea are very different from Vietnam's. South Korea has no neighboring territories like Vietnam has in Laos and Cambodia, and it is surrounded by sea on three sides. In the case of a move by the Korean army into the South, Northern forces are in great danger of getting trapped and encircled. Also there is no fertile ground for a sustainable guerrilla war. The forces of the adversary are strong and small unit fighting cannot be successful. For all these reasons, the DPRK does not favor a military method to solve the unification problem.

Kim Il Sung concluded, this does not mean the DPRK will be unable to defend its achievements if attacked. To the contrary, it increases its vigilance. The DPRK is ready to fight if attacked. Kim emphasized, its mountain ranges and submerged rice paddies are natural obstacles for any enemy to move forward rapidly in case of aggression. The enemy could only resort to air power but countermeasures are already in place – underground bunkers, factories, power plants and so on. Then Kim stressed there is the huge supportive hinterland of the Soviet and Chinese allies. In essence, Kim stated, the KWP and DPRK

positions are aiming at solving the question of Korean unification peacefully. Yet it will take a lot of time.