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March 28, 1972
Conversation with Kim Yeong-ju (1)

Citation:

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Summary:

Jeong Hong-jin meets with Kim Yeong-ju and delivers a message to him from Lee Hu-rak, who expresses that he must meet with Kim as soon as possible in order to bring about peaceful unification and the exchange of material and human resources that will facilitate this. In response, Kim Yeong-ju delivers his own message focusing specifically on mutual distrust, political differences, and the need to pool economic resources.

Original Language:

Korean

Contents:

Translation - English

Date and Time: March 28, 1972 17:00-18:40
Location: Heungbu Reception Area, Pyongyang
Participants:

South

JEONG Hong-jin Director of Conference Management, Conference Office, Korean Red Cross

North

Kim Yeong-ju Director of Organization and Guidance Department, Workers' Party of Korea
KIM Joong-lin Secretary of the Central Committee, Workers' Party of Korea
Kim Deok-hyeon Responsible Leader for the Political Bureau, Central Committee, Workers' Party of Korea

KIM: How is President Park Chung Hee?

Is Director Lee Hu-rak doing well?

It is highly desirable that we exchange conversations and discuss the issue of peaceful reunification. There shouldn't be diplomacy between us fellow countrymen. Whatever the issue is, we should discuss it openly and without hesitation. (He showed a very candid attitude.)

Jeong: I would like to cordially deliver Director Lee Hu-rak's regards.

This is the letter of confidence from Director Lee and his personal letter. (Presented letter of confidence and personal letter.)

KIM: There is no need to read the letter of confidence since we trust each other. I will take a look at his personal letter. (He did not look at the letter of confidence but opened Director Lee's personal letter and read through it.) If you have a message from Director Lee Hu-rak in particular, please deliver it first.

JEONG: I will deliver Director Lee Hu-rak's message.

Director Lee mentioned that the meeting in pursuit of our reunification must begin at some point and it is better when it happens sooner. He mentioned that a break in conversations would not simply be a tragedy between the South and the North, but would also be a display of the backwardness of the Korean people to the international community. Especially, he laments deeply about the current political reality in which the South and the North can't help but to defame each other. As a result of this the Koreans people are giving an impression to the international community that we are underdeveloped people. He believes such a situation must be eradicated as soon as possible.

Director Lee mentioned that our nation's issue of peaceful reunification must be ultimately solved through the in person conversations between Director Lee Hu-rak and Director Kim in consideration of the current position.

He noted the fact that there were a number of suggestions regarding peaceful

reunification until now. However, he pointed out that such one-sided suggestions will not solve the issue. He suggested that Director Lee and Director Kim must sit down together, find commonalities and reach an agreement. As a result, we must accept a method which is suggested by both parties and a one-sided suggestion will not solve the issue of reunification. He mentioned that it is what he intends to speak with Director Kim about at the in person conference.

The basic course Director Lee Hu-rak has in mind is to proceed with conferences for our nation's peaceful reunification, allocating sufficient time and at the same time he observes that we should achieve exchanges in material and human resources as soon as possible.

It is not only the mission for the South and the North but also is a task for us to prove to the world that our people are not brutal and underdeveloped.

Director Lee believes that such tasks are not solved through one-sided suggestions and therefore, he has to meet with Director Kim Yeong-ju to reach an outstanding agreement. Also the agreement must be put into action not with the leadership of one party. Eventually, for domestic and international audiences, it is best to show that we are both taking the lead, not giving an impression of one party being active and the other being submissive.

Therefore, Director Lee hopes to hear about Director Kim Yeong-ju's idea on these issues, and also he believes he will be able to provide his candid opinion when Mr. Kim Deok-hyeon visits Seoul.

In pursuit of such objectives, Director Lee wishes to meet with Director Kim Yeong-ju in Pyongyang or in Wonsan or even in a third country in the nearest future. In advance to the meeting, it is preferable that we mutually exchange opinions through our connection between Mr. Kim and me. This is the purpose of my visit to Pyongyang.

Such issues Director Lee pointed out begin from his sincere will and it will be solved successfully when the two of you meet and discuss them.

As I have spoken before, Director Lee Hu-rak deeply laments about the political reality in which the South and the North can't help but to defame each other and as a result our people giving an impression to the international community that we are underdeveloped people. Whether we achieve it sooner or later, we must initiate conversations in pursuit of our reunification. On the other hand, we should make possible the exchanges in material and human resources. As a result, he wishes to dissolve the isolation between the South and the North and our people to be recognized by the international community as sensible people.

KIM: I greatly appreciate Director Lee delivering his candid and kind message through Mr. Jeong Hong-jin.

I am well aware that Director Lee Hu-rak is someone President Park Chung Hee trusts. Knowing this, I would like to meet with him as soon as possible as Director Lee Hu-rak also mentioned. We can expect all the issues to be solved rapidly when we build on mutual connection and exchange conversations in the near future.

As Director Lee mentioned, it is best that we meet as soon as possible. I believe there are a number of issues to be discussed when we meet. It is never desirable for the people of the same nation to be divided into the South and the North abusing each other. Such circumstances need to be eradicated. Not only eradicating such unfortunate circumstances, we must achieve our long-desired wish for reunification. When we meet, there are a number of issues to be discussed and I believe we will be

able to carry out the discussions with open-minds. While many issues will be discussed when we meet, the ultimate goal is the reunification of our motherland. Many issues will be discussed in order to achieve such a goal. One fact we must keep in mind is that while the two (Director Lee and Mr. Kim) must meet to discuss a number of issues, a final conclusion cannot be reached through the discussions between the two. Final conclusion must be arranged through the discussions between the General Secretary and President Park Chung Hee.

Therefore, the fact that Director Lee Hu-rak and I meet and carry on discussions can be compared to Mr. Jeong Hong-jin and comrade Kim Deok-hyeon meeting to arrange the meeting between Director Lee and I. Ultimately, it is to provide an opportunity for the General Secretary and President Park Chung Hee to exchange conversations.

Since Director Lee Hu-rak is the person President Park Chung Hee trusts most, I believe he must be well acquainted with President Park's thoughts and policies. Kim Yeong-ju is also very familiar with "the General Secretary's" thoughts and his policy line.

It is highly significant that I meet with Director Lee. Therefore, I must meet with him. ([Kim] Offered tea and [the two officials] drank tea together.)

Let us move on to the main agenda.

Ultimately, we must reach reunification through peaceful method without relying on external power. The focus is in the reunification of our motherland.

Mr. Jeong Hong-jin suggested to comrade Kim Deok-hyeon about what we will discuss, in other words, the establishment of agenda. The central goal is to achieve reunification and we must discuss numerous issues in order to achieve this goal. It is difficult to discuss the determination of the agenda here. We must study this a little further. However, I can discuss a few issues even at this moment. What are the issues that we can discuss now? (He glanced over his notes once in a while as he spoke.)

First of all, as Director Lee Hu-rak mentioned, what is the reason that brought us to abuse and defame each other? The reason comes from mutual misunderstanding and distrust, I believe. Is this desirable, in fact? No, it is not. When I meet with Director Lee Hu-rak in the future, the issues to be discussed will include how we will resolve mutual distrust and mutual misunderstanding. Our discussion will start with this issue. Such an issue is not solved with efforts by a third person. This is an issue that is internal to our people, we must be able to find a solution ourselves. We need to discuss what the reason is that made us distrust each other. After discussions, we must trust and understand each other, and eventually, the final conclusion must be made by the highest officials.

I believe the discussions between Director Lee and I will serve as a foundation for the highest officials to reach conclusion. Let's take an example on the issue of distrust, what do we think about President Park Chung Hee? I believe you are interested in this matter. We believe, conversations between the "Korean Worker's Party" and the Republican Party cannot happen without President Park's presence. We need to discuss open-mindedly on misunderstandings and distrust. For the matters that we can forgive, we must forget. For those we can solve at this point, we must find solutions. Also, for the matters that we need to study more, we should study more. Ultimately, we must initiate conversations as soon as possible. There are plenty of issues [to be discussed]. In order to discuss these in detail, I must meet with Director Lee in person as soon as possible.

Second is the difference in political opinions.

We can also discuss this issue. There are differences in political opinions. Nevertheless, I believe we can put aside our differences as much as possible if we sit down and discuss them. For instance, regarding the matter of establishing Juche, we could reach an agreement or draw closer our opinions when we discuss the matter together. No one ever brought about the Juche ideology before. Our "General Secretary" developed the ideology for the first time in the world. The "people in the North of the Republic" are in a process of development based on this Juche ideology. Therefore, the Juche ideology has become the principle for the people in the North. Recently, President Park gave a speech at the Educators' Assembly. He brought up the issue of independence, self-reliance, and self-defense. I read his speech. I believe he brought up a great point. In order to establish Juche, we must be independent in politics. During the [anti-Japanese] army struggles, there was a song called Song of Freedom. In the song, a line goes "without freedom, a person is alive but dead." In the end, it supports the idea of independence. What is required to promote independence in politics? We must strongly object to worshiping the powerful.

At the Fifth Party Congress, the "General Secretary" mentioned in his report that "When a person worships the powerful, the person becomes a fool. When a nation worships the powerful, the nation becomes ruined." The significant part of his statement is that he spoke based on the history of a nation, I believe. Taking an example from recent history, why was our country under the rule of the Japanese? It is also due to the conflict between the feudal ruling group and the people but it is mainly because we worshiped the powerful.

Flunkeyism is a painful lesson in our nation's history. We must put an end to Flunkeyism in our history. We can put an end to Flunkeyism. The reality in the "North of the Republic" expresses this. We conduct and promote everything independently. The South and the North together should put an end to Flunkeyism. We notice that you are promoting a policy to distrust the powerful states. It is a great effort. The strong powers pretend that they support you. However, ultimately they promote their own good. I forgot to mention one thing. (Stressing that he forgot.)

We do not have the Soviet Union or China [backing us]. Even the children know that worshiping the powerful is evil. It is needless to mention Japan's impudence, brutality and guile.

The Korean-American Treaty of Amity and Commerce was agreed in 1882. However, the Taft-Katsura Agreement was secretly reached in 1905 and was finally announced in 1924. Therefore, the Chosun people must reach reunification through self-determination and must stand independently even after the reunification. Our country will fail when we worship the powerful. Therefore, we must promote independence in governance. We did not know that you promote policy to distrust the strong powers. We only learned it recently and we believe it is very much favorable. When we were not aware of the fact, we considered you still had the United States and Japanese influence behind you.

Another issue in political difference is which system we should pick between Communist and Capitalist. I believe we shouldn't be concerned about this issue. Nonetheless, it is the course of natural principle in world history that Communism triumphs in the international sphere. This course is the transition from Democracy to Communism. President Park also stated we should be able to defend ourselves. We can find commonalities in self-defense to draw our ideas closer.

We do not intend to overturn your system with force. Indeed, we do not plan to use force at all. Then, what did we think [about the South] so far? Frankly speaking, we have prepared for a war, thinking that the Americans are inciting the South and the Japanese to have a war with us.

Preparation for war from a Communist standpoint is building a safeguard capacity.

Especially, as Japanese militarism was restored, it is true that they constructed Operation Three Arrows (referring to Mitsuya Kenkyu) targeting the North of the Republic, isn't it? How are we going to settle the issue regarding military conflict? There is going to be no war if you dismiss the American Army from the South and [promise] not [to] conspire with the Japanese. Should the Koreans go through fratricidal war? I believe we are able to find a solution to this matter as well.

This is also one of the issues to be discussed in detail when I meet with Director Lee Hu-rak.

Next is the self-reliance in economy. We can also seek a solution through conversations. We are aware that the South is more developed in light industry. Of course, we are self-reliant in light industry as well. You can't find any product made outside of the country [in the North]. On the other hand, we have a well-developed heavy industry. In mechanical production industry which is the essence of heavy industry, we are capable of everything with the exception of aircraft production. Our electricity production per capita is 1,140 kw/h. Even the most remote area in rural agricultural community is equipped with telephone cable. Per capita production of steel is 158kg. For chemical fertilizer, it is 108kg. Therefore, I believe we will be successful if the South and the North pooled together in the category of a self-reliant economy. In terms of investment, unlike from the large sum of foreign capital in the South, in the North it is strictly domestic capital [investment]. With the South and the North combined, we are fully capable of utilizing domestic capital only. While discussing the establishment of an agenda, we can discuss such issues. Other issues can be discussed in an investigating stage.

To summarize, we are a single nation sharing a history from time immemorial and share same bloodline. [Therefore,] We must achieve peaceful reunification. Anyhow, we must sit together face to face. Exchanging conversations is a great thing. (Extemporaneously looking around the assembly, he spoke as the following in a touched voice.)

It feels as if I am dreaming that I am sitting with Mr. Jeong. I have waited for you for a long time. I have high expectations for your visit to Pyongyang, and also, I've looked forward to it. My heart is filled with deep emotions. This moment feels like a dream. [For] I am speaking with an official representative [from the South] anyhow?... [For] We are able to discuss the possibility of removing the barrier [between our people] in our motherland?... We must sit together as soon as possible for the issues [to be solved]. In the future, I believe the "General Secretary" and President Park Chung Hee must sit together. (Continued jokingly)

You must be doing an excellent job in intelligence. What made you select me?

JEONG: I will deliver Director Kim's messages accurately to Director Lee Hu-rak when I return.

KIM: Thank you. We should take a break and have dinner together.