

December 17, 1971
**13th Preliminary Conference between Delegates of
North and South Korea at the Neutral Nations
Supervisory Commission**

Citation:

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Summary:

A meeting between delegates of the North and South in which both sides provide detailed responses to questions raised in a previous meeting.

Original Language:

Korean

Contents:

Translation - English

South: Your attitude in today's meeting (13th preliminary conference) seemed as if you are not willing to reach an agreement before the end of this year. How long do you intend to extend the meetings arguing for uninterrupted exchanges?

North: Uninterrupted exchange is a basic principle..... How about we quit discussing the [preliminary] conference and discuss more significant issues?

South: How are we able to discuss significant issues when we haven't developed a mutual understanding and built trust through our conversations through the Red Cross meetings? What is the use of discussing it? (Intentionally expressed an upset attitude.)

North: Don't be impatient. Let's discuss significant issues. First of all, we should identify ourselves clearly before we move on to a discussion. I am a Chief Officer of Organization Tasks at the Central Committee of the Korean Worker's Party. I can deliver your words to the responsible high-level officials and also I am also authorized to speak for my superiors.

South: My current position is the Director of Conference Management. My prior position was the Director of an organization directly under the president.

North: Do you refer to the CIA?

South: That is correct. I am authorized to directly report your words [to my superiors] and to deliver [my superiors'] words to you. Please provide an accurate and detailed answer to the question I asked you when we previously met (how the North would like to change the current South-North status).

North: (Pulled out his notes and read through the notes.)

1. You have announced the State of national emergency considering us [as a threat] as an excuse. Was it intended to threaten us or were there any other purposes?

2. The announcement of State of national emergency and visualizing a peaceful reunification cannot happen together.

3. The issue of reunification is an internal issue within our nation. Therefore, we hope for a peaceful method in achieving the objective instead of pursuing it through armed conflict.

4. The external circumstances also promote an environment of reconciliation.

5. While it is true that we are fully prepared for a war, it is not to invade the South. It is rather to counteract the United States and Japan.

6. We argue for solidarity of our nation and to discuss the measures for the reunification of our motherland.

7. An armed conflict between the South and the North is worthless. We must reach reunification through peace.

8. Your announcement of the State of national emergency promotes internal and external isolation. Therefore, we argue that it should be revoked.

South: What you have stated does not provide a clear answer to my question. How is it different from what you conventionally state through the Rodong Sinmun, the Party-affiliated journals, workers and through broadcasts? I do not need to meet with you to listen to such statements that I am already well aware of. I need more candid opinions. I would like to clearly state several thoughts on what was previously discussed.

1. The announcement of the State of national emergency is intended to restrain your invasion of the South, not to threaten you.

2. Carefully examine the President [Park]'s statement on August 15th. If the North ceases provocation, we could sit together at the UN. Carefully examine statements such as "Step forward for a war of good-intention" especially.

3. After you have developed a good amount of military capability, you argue that it is to be used towards the U.S. and Japan, and not towards the South. Even a mere child would not believe such a statement. In order to make us understand such a statement as it reads, for instance, that you will never invade the South and that we should achieve reunification through peace, shouldn't you prove it through an internal attitude change?

North: If you require a letter of confidence from the high-ranking officials, I can bring one anytime.

South: I can always provide you a letter of confidence as well. Nevertheless, the possibility of generating faith or trust through conversations with you is much more important than a hundred letters.

North: I am willing to meet with you whenever you request.

South: The same is true for me. In addition, how are we going to carry out the [preliminary] meeting? Looking at [your] attitude today, if you are unrelenting in your insistence for uninterrupted exchanges, it is unlikely that we will reach an agreement before the end of this year, and it is unnecessary to hold more discussions until the end of this year, isn't it?

North: We should stop holding more meetings until the end of this year. The issues regarding exchanges of presents can be discussed between the representatives at the Liaison's Office.