

August 18, 1975

Voluntary Liberal Democratic Party MP North Korea Visit (Part 2)

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Summary:

A report on visits by Japanese parliamentary delegations to North Korea.

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The following is a summary of Member of the House of Representatives, Ito Masayoshi's impressions on North Korea that were told to the Vice-Director of the Asia Bureau, Nakae Yosuke during an interview held on the 18th. Ito was the deputy delegation chief for the Voluntary Liberal Democratic Party Members of Parliament visit to North Korea on the invitation of the North Korean Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries.

1. Important Officials Met in North Korea

We met officials such as, Kim Yeong-nam (Korean Worker's Party Secretary for International Affairs), Yun Gi Bok (KWP Central Committee Member, Director of the KWP Science and Education Department), Kim Gwan Sik (Chairman of the Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries), Kim Gil Hyon (Vice Director KWP Central Committee), however, because I (Ito) shared a car with Yun Gi Bok for the 6-hour car ride to-and-from the Panmunjom, I was able to talk with him the most. During that time, he spoke incessantly, and at times very intensely. However, he later apologized saying, "I am sorry for having dominated the conversation." As listed above, we met many people, but I felt the most sincerity from Yun. Regarding Japan's North Korea policy, Yun had the following to say: 1) He 'demanded' that Japan not interfere with the unification of Korea (he used a very strong tone to convey himself); 2) We want Japan to pursue a homogenous Korea policy, rather than the equidistant policy towards both North and South, but (we) are not too expectant; 3) We will not beg from Japan; 4) (regarding the trade office) Stated that they are not in the mood to establish the office given Japan's current attitude, and 5) named the Minister for Foreign Affairs Miyazawa, who had just returned from South Korea, by the familiar 'Miyazawa' and continued to criticize Japan's North Korea Policy.

2. Regarding Kim Il Sung's Cult of Personality and Kim Jong Il

The Cult of Personality around Kim Il Sung is terrible. Unlike like China, there are no portraits or statues of Marx or Lenin. Everything is colored with Kim Il Sung. It is as if Kim Il Sung is God plus parents. When I asked what they will do if Kim Il Sung becomes unwell, they scowled, turned away, and shut up.

Additionally, implicitly asked Yun Gi Bok and Kim Gil Hyon about Kim Il Sung's [illegible].

3. Policy for Unification, U.N. Membership, proposal to conclude a peace agreement with the U.S.

Although they mentioned 'Peaceful Reunification,' but they devotedly and enthusiastically emphasized 'Independent Unification.' When I asked them about the simultaneous admission of North and South Korea to the U.N., and when MP Ishii asked about the so-called cross-recognition issue, without pounding the table, but with great force they responded that these measures are aimed to maintain two Koreas and that they are 'absolutely opposed.' They added that it is their belief that it is fine for reunification to take time. Regarding admission to the U.N. under the country name, 'The Confederal Republic of Goryeo,' when asked if the North and South would have two rights for representation, they answered that nothing specific has been decided yet. They added that it will probably be decided during talks with the South. I found it most peculiar, that they repeated again and again that there will be no 'Southern Invasion,' even going as far as saying that 'using the word 'never'

would not be objectionable.' On this point, the tone is quite a different to Kim Il Sung's statements made during his visit to China. Furthermore on the 'Southern Invasion,' those who visited the Panmunjom from the South Korean side have said that it is a very tense atmosphere. However, on my part, I did not feel the prickly sense of tension at all during my ride from Pyongyang to the Panmunjon. Furthermore, I barely saw soldiers in Pyongyang.

Regarding the South Korea's U.N. Resolution, they said that this is a deception that simply changes the name of the U.N. military to the U.S. military.

Regarding South Korea's prior admission into specialized U.N. bodies, because the bodies are specialized, technological, or humanitarian organizations, they intend to continue seeking admissions to them. However, in regards to the U.N. itself, they stated that two Koreas should not be admitted, and that it is out of the question for South Korea to join the U.N. on its own.

Regarding the proposal to conclude a peace agreement with the U.S., they stated that a peace agreement with the United States is a prerequisite for peace talks between North and South Korea.

4. Criticism of [illegible] and Japan's South Korea policy

[illegible]...the interpreters would not say 'America,' but would always translate it into 'those (using a derogatory emphasis) American' or 'American bastards.' If the awful state of North Korea's feelings towards America is at a 9, then their feelings towards Japan is a 1. However, after America, the second place goes to Japan. The focal point of criticism towards Japan is its continued support, together with the United States, of the 'Park Puppet Government.' They compared this relationship to 'to a straw hat that Park slings to, where one drawstring is U.S. military support and the other is Japanese economic support. However, a breeze could carry this hat away.'" MP Shiotani (Miki faction) said, "upon return to Japan, I will talk to PM Miki about Japan's economic assistance to South Korea." To which, MP Tamura (Delegation Chief) stated that it is not possible to halt assistance towards South Korea. The North Koreans responded by saying, "even if the string is not cut, we would like for you to at least loosen it."

5. Economic Situation

Agriculture, especially grain production (Among other things, corn seems to do very well) is mechanized from planting to harvest. Field irrigation is upgraded beyond what has been completed in Japan. I think that in regarding grains, North Korea is not outdone by Japan. Across the country, there are 8 tractors for every 100 hectares, and they stated that they hope to increase that number to 12 tractors.

Regarding crop acreage, they said there are 700 thousand hectares of rice, 700 thousand hectares of corn (within this, 40 thousand hectares are flatlands and is mechanized, while 30 thousand is on sloped terrain and is worked by manual labor from the military among others sources), 300 thousand hectares of fruit orchards (when it was part of Japan, there was only 9 thousands hectares), 300 thousand hectares of miscellaneous land, for a total of 2 million hectares.

Because things such as selective breeding has not advanced, the fruit is still poor.

30% of industrial resources are imported. They said this includes petroleum (from China and the Soviet Union), natural rubber, coking coal, and parts of [illegible].

When asked about nuclear power, they answered that they did not know and

consciously avoided the topic.

When asked about aviation agreements, they said that they have aeronautical beyond rights with Pakistan. The two have agreed that the North Koreans have beyond rights from Karachi to Istanbul and one other country, while Pakistan has beyond rights from Pyongyang to Tokyo. Such relations with Egypt have not been finalized.

6. Japan's North Korea Policy (MP Ito's Comments)

We cannot suddenly change policy that has been followed until now. We informed the North Koreans, but the scale of exchange of people and objects can only be gradually built up. I have not yet seen South Korea, but I believe it is necessary for our country to rethink if our assistance to South Korea is really helping their citizens. The North Koreans were saying that assistance was only fattening up the elites of the Park government. The correct thing may be to weaken aid to South Korea, rather than increase aid.

This may stray into interference of South Korean internal affairs, but Park's oppressive behavior is very unpleasant from a human perspective. I wonder if there is any way to decrease the tension between the North and South and move them towards peaceful dialogue.

(Regarding the above, Vice-Director Nakae expressed that it is desirable for the MPs that visit North Korea to visit South Korea, and for the Japan-Korea Parliamentarians' Union to visit North Korea, so that both parties can understand the realities. Furthermore, he expressed his desire for the North-South divide to not be carried into the Liberal Democratic Party. MP Ito expressed the necessity of reciprocal visits to the North and South.)

7. Miscellaneous

(1) Unlike China, we did not feel that North Korea would become a great country in the future.

(2) North Korea seems to have confidence in itself vis-à-vis South Korea. This is likely confidence that North Korean popular sentiment is more stable.

(3) The following is in regards to MP Ishii's article submission . We were roused in the middle of the night and we tried to deal with the situation, but they asked the three of us, chief of delegation Tanaka, MP Ishii, and myself, to give a press conference. [illegible] we discussed our collective opinion on the 'Southern Invasion' issue, and eventually collectively decided, "let's believe the North's words that there will be no Southern Invasion." For some reason, the press reported this as if the delegation and North Korea had reached an agreement. As if they pardoned us for having to work so late at night, the press conference never occurred. That incident was most annoying for the delegation.