

ANECDOTES OF KIM IL SUNG'S LIFE

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**PYONGYANG, KOREA
JUCHE 102 (2013)**

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**Kim Il Sung arranges a luncheon for Choe Tok Sin,
head of the Paedal National Council**

**Kim Il Sung meets
the Rev. Mun Ik Hwan
from south Korea**



**Kim Il Sung visits the Rev. Mun Ik Hwan
from south Korea in the guest's lodging**



**Kim Il Sung meets a group of journalists from
the Japanese newspaper *Mainichi Shimbun***



**Kim Il Sung poses for a photograph with
Ya. T. Novichenko, an internationalist fighter**

**Kim Il Sung meets
Luise Rinser,
a German writer**





**Kim Il Sung poses for a photograph
with former US President Jimmy Carter**

FOREWORD

In leading the Korean revolution and construction to victory, President Kim Il Sung conducted energetic external activities. He met many south Korean compatriots and overseas Koreans, foreign heads of state and figures in political and public circles, and had conversations with them. In the course of this, many impressive anecdotes arose, which illustrate his outstanding wisdom, profound knowledge, great mental strength, rich emotions, broad magnanimity and boundless love for mankind. This book presents a selection of those anecdotes.

Editorial Board

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1. PRAISE FOR HIS NOBLE VIRTUE

A Talk Concluded after an Interval of 30 Years

On a late autumn day in 1926, when unseasonal snow was falling in large flakes, 14-year-old Kim Il Sung and Choe Tong O, headmaster of Hwasong Uisuk School, had a serious talk in the latter's office.

Having heard of Kim Il Sung's determination to leave the school in Huadian early and attend middle school in Jilin, the headmaster berated him, saying: "Once you, a man, have resolved to do something, you must see it through. It is not right for you to leave the school early. You say you are leaving because you do not like the education here. Where in this uncertain world is there a school that can be to everybody's liking?" Then he turned his back on him and stared out of the window at the sky.

Kim Il Sung was also distressed. However, he could not change his decision, which he had reached after going through mental agony for a long time. With the future of the revolution in mind, he had made the decision to move from Huadian into a wider theatre of activity and wage an all-out struggle to realize the programme of the Down-with-Imperialism Union.

After a while, the headmaster broke the silence. His eyes still fixed on the sky, he said: "If this school is not to the liking of such talented students as you, Song Ju, I, too, will leave." Song Ju was Kim Il Sung's childhood name.

At these unexpected words, Kim Il Sung stood nonplussed, not

knowing what to say. Still, he was convinced that time and events would prove his decision right.

Realizing that he could not make his student change his mind, the headmaster calmed down and said, placing his hand on his shoulder: “I will not oppose any ism, be it nationalism or communism, if it aims at winning the independence of Korea. Anyhow, I wish you success.”

As they went out into the playground together, the headmaster said many fine things to Kim Il Sung, things which would serve as a lesson for him.

Kim Il Sung, too, had many things to say, but he could not speak, such was his mental agony. He was sorry that his headmaster could not understand him.

The conversation between the headmaster and his student stopped unfinished. After he had left the school, Kim Il Sung never regretted his decision. What he did repent of for the rest of his life was his failure to brush the snow off his headmaster’s shoulders.

Having parted from each other in such strained circumstances, their reunion 30 years later was highly emotional.

The headmaster, who had been living in south Korea, came over to the north during the Fatherland Liberation War (June 25, 1950-July 27, 1953) and took up an important position at a state institution. He met Kim Il Sung in the mid-1950s, when the ideals of the Down-with-Imperialism which Kim Il Sung had upheld in Huadian had been put into reality through the defeat of the US and Japanese imperialists.

“So, Premier Song Ju, you were right back then!” the old teacher said to his former student, addressing him by his childhood name.

Thus, with this brief remark, the old teacher concluded the serious conversation that had taken place at Hwasong Uisuk School 30 years previously.

Irrigation Water for South Korea

Nineteen forty-six was the first year after Korea's liberation from the Japanese military occupation. With the arrival of spring, the Yonbaek Plain was turned green with grass on the ridges and at the foot of the hills. However, no peasant was to be seen in the 13 600-hectare part of the Yonbaek Plain to the south of the 38th Parallel. Because the 38th Parallel cut the irrigation waterway from Kuam and Ryeui reservoirs in the north, farming was impossible there.

The peasants on the plain were naive enough to believe the propaganda of the American military government and the Syngman Rhee puppet clique, that the north would never supply them with irrigation water.

Then one day water flowed in torrents to the plain along the irrigation ditches from the north, which was celebrating the agrarian reform.

On receiving the report on the state of farming on the plain, Kim Il Sung had taken steps for the fields to be irrigated with water from the Kuam and Ryeui reservoirs. The water supplied to the plain held 99% of the whole impoundment of the two reservoirs. The supply lasted until the following year, when the north was prevented from continuing it by the obstructive schemes of the American military government and south Korean regime. In the spring of 1948, when the shortage of irrigation water turned the rice seedlings yellow on the southern part of the Yonbaek Plain, the survival of tens of thousands of peasants there hung in the balance.

"We should not hesitate in such a dire situation. We should notify General Kim Il Sung of our situation and petition him to supply water to us." Saying this, in early May 800 representatives risked their lives to cross into the north over the 38th Parallel.

On reading their letter, Kim Il Sung looked southward, lost in thought, before saying to the official who had conveyed the letter

to him: We should supply them with water to irrigate their fields despite the obstructive schemes of the US imperialists.

Soon afterwards, on June 26, 1948, the People's Committee of North Korea adopted Resolution No. 155, titled, Resolution on Supplying Irrigation Water from Kuam and Ryeui reservoirs to the Yonbaek Area of South Korea. The resolution ratified by Kim Il Sung in his capacity as the chairman of the committee stipulated that the irrigation water should be supplied to the Yonbaek area south of the 38th Parallel from June 27, 1948, in response to the request of the south Korean peasants.

The irrigation water was life-giving water not only for the peasants of the Yonbaek Plain but also for all the other south Korean people.

A Change of Life

In March 1948, when the dark clouds of national division were gathering over Korea, Kim Il Sung, in an effort to frustrate the schemes of the United States and its south Korean stooges to divide Korea, proposed holding a conference of political parties and public organizations of north and south Korea. He handed over to the officials concerned a list of prominent people to be invited so that they could write out the invitations. Going over the list, they were surprised to find the name Kim Ku. While working as the president of the Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai before Korea's liberation and as the head of the Independence Party of Korea after the defeat of the Japanese imperialists, Kim Ku had masterminded terrorist acts against many revolutionaries. "Is it necessary to join hands with such a diehard anti-communist?" they wondered.

Reading their thoughts, Kim Il Sung said:

"It is true that Kim Ku is an anti-communist and nationalist. However, he entertained anti-Japanese sentiments and now he hates the United States. Also, he is patriotic-minded and

apprehensive about the future of the country. Viewing him from this perspective, there is no reason why we cannot join hands with him on the road of accomplishing the common cause of national reunification.”

And so, an invitation was conveyed to Kim Ku.

However, on receiving it, he hesitated. He had thought that all communists did was clamour about class struggle without any regard for the nation, and giving the cold shoulder to nationalists for no particular reason. He wondered if the communists were really willing to join hands with him.

He was assailed by doubts and misgivings. Still, he could not remain indifferent to the reality in which the nation was facing division. So he sent his secretary to Pyongyang to ascertain what the communists intended with regard to an alliance with him.

His secretary, when he met Kim Il Sung, said: “Mr. Kim Ku is going to come to Pyongyang to meet you, General. Can you not make an issue of his past?”

Kim Il Sung answered in the affirmative.

And so, Kim Ku came to Pyongyang and attended the conference. During his short stay in Pyongyang he was so fascinated by Kim Il Sung’s great ideology, outstanding leadership and noble virtue that he came to admire him. He made a U-turn from his anti-communist stance to an alliance with communism.

When he met Kim Il Sung prior to his return to Seoul, Kim Ku brought with him a heavy box and said: “I have a favour to ask of you, General. I took the post of president of the Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai, and did nothing worth mentioning while living in a foreign country. Please, keep this seal of the Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai, a humble memento of the history of the nation.”

To Kim Ku, the seal had been as valuable as his own life. Regarding it as the provisional government itself and thinking that the provisional government could be recognized only through it, he

had always cherished it—whether he was working in Shanghai, fleeing to Chongqing or returning home.

His decision to hand the seal over to Kim Il Sung was a manifestation of his determination to change his life and entrust his destiny to the leader of the nation and the peerless great man.

Firewood Sent to Seoul

In early August 1950, Kim Il Sung summoned several officials to his office. Among them was a senior official of the Forestry Bureau under the Cabinet.

Kim Il Sung informed him of the reason he had summoned him, saying: **“As you, vice-director, are present, let us discuss the matter of firewood for the people of Seoul.”**

What he said was so unexpected that the officials looked at one another in disbelief.

It was the height of summer and, moreover, wartime.

He said:

“Now that Seoul has been liberated and is under the jurisdiction of our Republic, we cannot let its citizens live in distress as they did in the past. We should help them in every possible way to lead a stable life as soon as possible; we should show foresight, and solve the problem of firewood for them.”

He pointed out that the on-going war was aimed at ensuring a happy life for the south Korean people, and continued: In general, the cold weather starts in mid-October in Seoul. It would be difficult to supply people there with coal as the enemy destroyed the railways and coal mines when they fled. So, the most rational way is to supply them with logs. In view of the population and number of households in Seoul, 400 000 cubic metres of logs will be needed as winter firewood. Although it would be easy to gather firewood from Mt. Thaebaek which is near to Seoul, this will inevitably mean mobilizing people in the

liberated area who have already suffered a great deal; so I think it would be better to enlist the people in the north to collect the firewood, though it will entail a lot of work. If we fell the pine and oak trees on Mt. Sorak where they grow abundantly and transport the logs along the Han River, it will be easy to send them to Seoul. Also, fire produced from pine and oak has high caloric value and lasts a long time.

Then he explained the detailed measures for felling the timber, before ordering the Forestry Bureau official to the site.

By late September the planned amount of firewood had been secured.

But then the tables were suddenly turned in the war, and the People's Army had to make a temporary strategic retreat.

The logs which had been obtained with such great efforts could not be surrendered to the enemy. Then, how to dispose of them? The official concluded that they would have to be burnt. He reported his decision to Kim Il Sung. On receiving the report, Kim Il Sung said that it would be better to chop the logs into pieces and float them down the Han instead of burning them. Then he ordered that soldiers should be mobilized for several days to chop up the logs.

The campaign to provide firewood for the people of Seoul which had started in the sweltering heat continued into the grimmest days of the war.

Some days later, numerous logs drifted down the Han. The Seoul citizens used the logs as firewood that winter, but they knew nothing of the story behind them.

God of the Korean People

In the autumn of 1964 Kim Il Sung met a Korean businessman who was resident in Japan. It was a moment the businessman had long been waiting for although he felt ashamed for having done nothing great for the good of his motherland. And there was something for which he had decided to apologize to Kim Il Sung. So he told him

somewhat remorsefully that he had been to south Korea on several occasions and promised to build a factory there, adding that he had made such a mistake because he was politically ignorant. He then said that he would cancel his deal with south Korea as it did not accord with his wish to make a contribution to the prosperity of the motherland, and instead conclude a deal with the DPRK.

Kim Il Sung smiled and shook his head.

He advised against his decision, saying that south Korea, too, was a land where Koreans lived and it would benefit the Korean people if he built a factory there as he had planned. He added that if Korea was reunified, the factory would be the property of the Korean people and would help the future development of the country. He advised the guest to carry out his project.

Highly impressed by his noble love for his compatriots and his great generosity, the businessman bowed deeply to Kim Il Sung, and said sincerely: “Your Excellency Kim Il Sung, you are indeed the God of all the Korean people.”

A Weather Forecast Which Caused Worry, Not Joy

It was early July 1965, a time when Korea was suffering the worst drought in living memory.

An official from the Hydro-meteorological Service was collecting data from local observation stations in various parts of the country. To his delight, the results showed that the high atmospheric pressure, which had been lingering over the country for several months, was giving way to low pressure.

Kim Il Sung had phoned him time after time to ask about the weather forecast, as he was so worried over the ongoing damage to farming. So the official decided to stay in his office, and await another call.

The phone rang.

The official picked up the phone and heard Kim Il Sung's voice.

"It's getting cloudy outside. Where is the low atmospheric pressure coming from?"

"From Inner Mongolia."

"Inner Mongolia?"

"Yes, Sir."

"It is regrettable that it is not coming from the south."

In previous years low pressure had come from the south around this time of the year, heralding heavy rains.

The official said confidently, "Sir, it will start raining tomorrow."

Kim Il Sung checked the precipitation data and asked:

"Do you think the low pressure will affect the whole of the country?"

"It seems to me that it is so weak that it will extend only to the central part of the country."

"Only to the central part of the country?"

"Yes, Sir."

After a pause, Kim Il Sung said in a gloomy tone, **"I am so worried..."**

The official could not understand why the news disappointed him.

"It is regrettable that the low pressure will extend only to the middle of Korea. Our compatriots in the southern half should also eat rice, shouldn't they? The drought has lasted there for several months."

Then the official understood what was worrying Kim Il Sung and said: "Sir, low pressure will come from the south in a fortnight."

But he said, still worried: **"In a fortnight? Every day counts."** He hung up the phone.

The following day the long-awaited rain came, bringing joy to the people in the northern half of the country. But Kim Il Sung still cast worried eyes southwards.

“Diagnosis” Made during a Meal

It was late at night, and President Kim Il Sung was going over a document. He stopped reading and considered something. After a while, he read it again and pondered.

After reading the last page, he raised himself from his seat looking very worried, and walked to the window.

His aide was concerned about him, as it was far past his bedtime, and took a few steps closer to him, intending to urge him to call it a night and go to bed. As he was passing the desk, he caught sight of the document on it.

He had presumed that it must be an important paper but, to his surprise, it was a medical report on Han Tok Su, chairman of the Central Standing Committee of Chongryon (the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan).

The Japanese authorities had persisted in forbidding the chairman from visiting his homeland even after they had been forced to accept the demand for the Korean residents in Japan to travel freely there. President Kim Il Sung had been very concerned about the chairman's failing health, and some days previously had instructed the officials concerned to ask Chongryon officials for his medical records. The report, drawn up by some leading doctors, showed that the patient was suffering from serious diseases, some of which he himself was not aware of.

The President ensured that everything possible was done to treat the patient and that valuable tonics were sent to him. Thanks to this warm care, Han Tok Su recovered his health. A few years later, when he visited his homeland, the chairman was full of youthful vigour.

The President was delighted to see him in such good health, and arranged a meal for him.

The guest enjoyed the meal, feeling at home with the benevolent President.

But he was not aware that his host kept watching him throughout the meal, his face clouded with anxiety.

Some days later, an official came to the chairman and asked him to accompany him to a hospital.

“What’s wrong? I’m all right,” the chairman protested.

The official said: “This is an order from the President. He noticed during your meal together that you have a problem with your teeth.”

A Special “Gift”

One day in March 1974, President Kim Il Sung summoned an official to inquire about the gifts to be presented to the home-visiting members of a Korean art troupe from Japan.

The official told him that gifts had been prepared for each member of the art troupe, as had been done in previous years, adding that there were no special gifts for them.

The President advised him: **“You should add to the list cloth of our own making for their parents and other colleagues. And I think there should be something more.”**

He examined the official closely, as if seeking his opinion. The official could say nothing more as he had been thinking that the gifts had been prepared with complete sincerity and would be much better than those that had been given to previous home-visiting groups.

The President gave him a meaningful look and said: **“This time we can give something really special to the members of the Chongryon art troupe and other compatriots in Japan.”**

Looking puzzled, the official tried to guess what it could be, but in vain. The President reminded him of the revolutionary opera *Song of Mt. Kumgang*, which they had seen a few days previously. After enjoying

the opera, the President had said that he wished the compatriots in Japan had been with him to see it, and the official had agreed.

Recalling that day, the President said: **“After much thought I have arrived at the conclusion that the revolutionary opera *Song of Mt. Kumgang* would be an ideal ‘gift’ for them. You should make arrangements so that our compatriots who are yearning for their homeland in an alien land can see the opera.”**

He advised the official to ensure that the art troupe was trained, during its stay in the homeland, to perform the revolutionary opera in Japan. The official understood what he intended and said to him: “I see, Sir. I will do what is necessary.”

Some days later, the Korean art troupe in Japan visited the homeland. During their stay, they changed into the Kumgangsan Opera Troupe, and it was trained to perform the opera.

The special “gift” given to all the Koreans in Japan by President Kim Il Sung, the revolutionary opera *Song of Mt. Kumgang*, proved enormously popular in Japan.

The Older One Gets, the Harder One Should Train

On the evening of June 27, 1974, President Kim Il Sung invited to his house the second daughter of Han Tok Su, chairman of Chongryon, who was staying in the homeland.

Over a meal, he said to her: **“Chairman Han is old now. You should take good care of your father. His good health is critical to the development of Chongryon.”**

After the meal the President told his guest: **“When you return home, tell your father that I want him to remember a phrase, ‘The older one gets, the harder one should train.’ He will understand the meaning of this advice.”**

Then he repeated what he had just said: **“Convey to your**

father my reference to the phrase, ‘The older one gets, the harder one should train.’ ”

In September 1978, a few days before the 30th anniversary of the founding of the DPRK, the President arranged a luncheon for Han Tok Su, his daughter and other Chongryon officials, who were visiting the homeland. He proposed a toast to their health, clinking glasses with them one by one. And then he asked the old chairman if he had received the message from his daughter four years before.

Han stood up and said: “Sir, I will never forget your advice, not even on my deathbed. Whenever I feel tired, I repeat your advice to myself, and it gives me fresh courage.”

That night, when he returned to his hotel, the chairman said remorsefully to his daughter: “Well, I made a big mistake today. I should have thanked the President for his advice before he asked me about it. It was morally wrong of me.”

His daughter consoled him, saying: “Dad, I’m a mother now, but I still cannot fathom how much you love me. Likewise, you cannot fathom how great the President’s love for you is, although you are a grandfather now. Isn’t this a law governing the relationship between parents and children?”

Both the father listening silently to his daughter and the daughter consoling her old father were in tears.

Under the warm care shown him by the President, Chairman Han lived to the age of ninety-four, always remembering his advice.

A Tearful Meeting

One September day in 1974, President Kim Il Sung was receiving several home-visiting delegations from Chongryon including one of young artistes and sportspeople.

Tears welled up in their eyes as they took it in turn to present bouquets to the President, whom they had been longing to see.

He gave each of them a gentle pat on the shoulder, saying that he had invited them all because he wanted to see them, and they should not cry on this happy day. He, too, was almost in tears as he comforted his guests.

But seeing that they could still not keep the tears from their eyes, the President consoled them again, and then changed the subject, asking them in turn about their jobs. He then asked the officials accompanying them whether they had been to Mt. Paektu, whether the young 15-year-olds found it difficult to make such a long journey in company with the older people, whether they might feel seasick on their way back if they took the ship, the *Mangyongbong*, and whether or not they had been seasick on the voyage to the homeland.

He then moved towards a platform where other guests were waiting. He extended a warm welcome to these visitors, too. A shout of joy exploded among the audience.

As the noise subsided, the President said: **“I frequently meet many foreign delegations and Korean officials from different sectors, but I am never more pleased than when I meet home-visiting compatriots from Japan.**

“The sense of kinship between compatriots is deep-seated. My heart throbs with delight each time I am informed that compatriots will visit the homeland from an alien land where they are living a hard life, and even more so when I meet them.”

Many of the guests began to sob again before he concluded his speech.

The President, too, was emotional, and he removed his glasses and dried his tears on a handkerchief. After a while, he resumed his speech, saying he was very happy to see them that day, and he would be happier if he met young students and other people from south Korea after the country was reunified. He added that he was so moved at seeing them all in tears that he was unable to speak properly.

He held his hands out in a gesture to calm the audience, and said that they would meet again on the road of revolution and

should work harder to complete the cause of national reunification. And then he explained the tasks to be tackled by the Korean Youth League in Japan.

Round-the-Clock Operations To Rescue Young Koreans

In late October 1980, a typhoon hit the Asia-Pacific region, leaving the ships at sea in distress. Among them was a Korean ship, the *Samjiyon*, on the East Sea of Korea en route from the port of Niigata in Japan, to Wonsan in Korea. On board the ship were several hundred Korean students resident in Japan. It was fine on the day when the ship left port, but the next day a typhoon began to whip up the sea. Monstrous waves tossed the ship about, and as it grew dark, the cabins began to flood.

It was early in the morning that President Kim Il Sung received the news.

He admonished the officials concerned for not having informed him earlier. He immediately organized a headquarters for rescuing the ship, and issued orders to the Chief of the General Staff of the Korean People's Army and the commanders of the navy and air force.

“Report to me on the rescue operations every hour. I will take personal command.”

He put aside his other work and focused solely on the matter at hand.

“How many miles from land is the *Samjiyon*?”

“Is there any change at sea?”

“How much water is sweeping over the deck?”

“Are the naval vessels on the move? Which aircraft is tracking the ship?”

“Are there any injuries?”

“A ship can be made again, but any loss of life must be prevented.”

The President stayed alert until midnight, commanding the rescue operations.

Concerned about his health, the officials said to him: “Sir, you should go to bed now.”

But the President said: **“I understand how you feel. But how can I sleep peacefully while our compatriots resident in an alien land are caught in a violent storm on their way to the motherland they have been yearning for?”**

At 4 am on October 27, the *Samjiyon* anchored safely at Kim Chaek Port.

On receiving the news, the President relaxed. Then he began to read one of the documents piled on his desk.

“Comrade Choe Tok Sin!”

Choe Tok Sin had formed the Paedal National Council in the United States before obtaining permanent residence in his homeland, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, to crown his twilight years with honour. His father Choe Tong O had been a patriotic figure and the headmaster of Hwasong Uisuk School which Kim Il Sung had attended.

However, the road Choe Tok Sin had taken was totally different from that followed by his father. When his father had been active at Hwasong Uisuk School in working for the independence of the country, he had been in Beijing. When his father had burned with patriotism on hearing the news that the Korean People’s Revolutionary Army had attacked Pochonbo under the command of Kim Il Sung, the son had been serving in a foreign army. When his father had decided to join other patriotic figures in the north and the south in attending the Joint Conference of Representatives of Political Parties and Public

Organizations in North and South Korea to be held in Pyongyang in April 1948, a conference Kim Il Sung had initiated in order to achieve the reunification of the country at a time when liberated Korea was exposed to the threat of being separated in two due to the schemes of the United States and the Syngman Rhee clique, the son had tried to dissuade him from going to the north. When his father had called for a struggle against the United States and other foreign forces, the son had gone to the United States to study. When his father had been working for Kim Il Sung in Pyongyang, the son had been working as a henchman of the United States, serving as a corps commander in the south Korean puppet army. While his father had been devoting his all to the country's reunification, serving on the Consultative Council of Former South Korean Public Figures in the North for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification, the son had been one of the protagonists of the Anti-Communist League of Southeast Asia and served as foreign minister and as a councilor to the Board for National Unification in the south Korean puppet regime, dancing to the tune of the United States of making Korea's division permanent.

Choe had broken with the south Korean puppet government, albeit very late. Better late than never.

President Kim Il Sung forgave him for his sins of the past.

The President met Choe on July 1, 1981, when Choe was on a visit to the north to offer a glass of liquor at his late father's tomb and pray for his soul.

At the meeting Choe hung his head and stammered out his apologies for his sins.

"Mr. President, I can't face people. I am really ashamed of myself to be meeting you, after you took such good care of my father."

The President stopped him and said:

"You did something sinful during Park Jung Hee's rule, but I know you had no other choice under the circumstances.

"Let bygones be bygones. As the country is now at the crossroads of division or reunification, you need to join hands

with us and make a great contribution to reunification.

“I am grateful to you for your renewed determination to atone for your past and work for the reunification of the country.”

After that Choe often visited the DPRK.

He came to have a better understanding of his homeland and worked with devotion for the patriotic cause of national reunification in an alien land where there were many Koreans.

Whenever Choe visited the homeland, the President met him. Choe frequently suffered from age-related illnesses, and so the President ensured that he obtained permanent residence in the homeland. He even appointed him to the important post of Vice-chairman of the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea.

Now that he was enjoying a worthwhile life in his latter years, Choe had one earnest desire; he wanted to be addressed by the vocative “Comrade” in front of his name. “Sir, I have a request to make of you. I want to be your man sharing one heart with you. So, I sincerely wish that you call me ‘comrade,’ not ‘Mr.’ ”

The President willingly granted his request.

With a smile on his face, he said: So, it is your request to become a comrade sharing the same heart; I grant your request. Comrade Choe Tok Sin, let us share life and death in accomplishing the cause of national reunification.

“Comrade Choe Tok Sin!”

Choe Tok Sin was deeply impressed. *Oh, that’s why my father came to the north at the risk of his life.*

Arranging Grace before a Meal

On July 3, 1981, Kim Il Sung met the Rev. Kim Song Rak, a Korean resident in the United States.

Kim Song Rak was the president of the Society for the Promotion of National Reunification, an advisor to the South Korean Churches

Association and a member of the Corps of Chairmen of the Association of the Overseas South Koreans for Democracy and National Reunification in the United States. He had previously served as president of Sungjon University in south Korea.

He had received religious education in the United States and obtained permanent residence there; he was influential in US religious circles and was widely known among US politicians. He was the only Korean to be receiving an annual salary from the US government. In short, he was deeply immersed in anti-communism.

As soon as he arrived in the north, he asked the relevant officials to make arrangements so that there was no news coverage of his activities there, saying that he wanted to return to the United States soon, after a quiet visit to his home town, Pyongyang.

President Kim Il Sung met him and called him a patriot, praising his national conscience out of which he had made up his mind, though belatedly, to devote himself to the reunification of the country. The President arranged a luncheon in honour of his guest.

Kim Il Sung advised him to say grace before eating.

The Rev. Kim Song Rak was completely taken aback at his host's advice. His face turned red and his heart beat faster.

His face beaming, his host again urged him to say grace, arguing that he should not violate the rules of Christianity he had observed for his whole life.

The guest's deep-seated fear and doubts about communism disappeared in an instant.

In fact, he had decided not to say grace on that particular occasion, even if it meant violating the rules of his faith. Moved by his host's broad-mindedness and magnanimity, he said grace, just as he had done for decades. However, the grace he offered there was totally different from anything he had done before.

He prayed for the good health of President Kim Il Sung, a peerless great man, and for the country's independent reunification and complete sovereignty.

Before his departure, the Rev. Kim Song Rak asked for a press conference to be convened, contrary to his previous request made upon his arrival. He talked about his feelings when he had said grace before the luncheon: “I offered grace because I could not reject the President’s advice. I earnestly prayed for him.”

Wine and Memorial Service Etiquette

One day in September 1983 President Kim Il Sung arranged a luncheon in honour of the Chongryon officials who were on a visit to their homeland.

The host asked his guests to sample the large mouth-watering grapes on the table.

The guests, drawn by the grapes’ fragrant, fresh and unique aroma, took some.

The host asked his guests, where in Japan good grapes grew.

One replied that Yamanashi used to be the main grape-producing region, but now it had given way to Okayama, adding that Japan was producing wine on a large scale.

After hearing them out, Kim Il Sung said:

“Since olden times, Koreans have not been fond of wine. They say they are drinking alcohol when they have drunk *soju* (Korean liquor–Tr.) of more than 30 per cent proof. They do not consider wine as a liquor. They are reluctant to drink wine, as they regard it as a Western drink.”

He continued in the following vein: We do not encourage people to drink strong liquor, but they use relatively strong *soju* at memorial services; if they use wine instead, the elderly would scold them, as undutiful sons or daughters.

At these remarks, the guests burst out laughing and the luncheon proceeded in a more harmonious atmosphere. Kim Il Sung’s remarks carried the message that Chongryon officials and other

overseas Koreans must always remember their national customs and preserve them, even if they were living abroad.

The Legend of Kumdang and Sindok Natural Mineral Water

One day in August 1985 President Kim Il Sung was having a meal with Chongryon officials. During the meal he asked them to drink some Sindok Natural Mineral Water, saying that it was good for the health.

They tried it and found it refreshing.

Looking around at them, Kim Il Sung said: **“There’s a place called Kumdang-ri in Onchon County, South Phyongan Province. ‘Kumdang’ means golden donkey.”**

Then he told them the legend of how Kumdang village had come into being.

Once upon a time, a hunter lived in a village. One day he went hunting. He saw a deer and shot an arrow at it. The arrow lodged in the deer’s leg. The hunter ran after the deer. Suddenly, the deer was engulfed in a ring of haze, and disappeared.

After a moment the haze lifted and revealed a golden donkey. The hunter was so astonished that he gave no thought to shooting the donkey. The golden donkey disappeared and the deer reappeared. It limped towards a spring, drank the water and washed its bleeding leg in it.

Then, to the surprise of the hunter, the deer stretched out and leapt up to the top of a nearby mountain, as if it had never been wounded. The hunter tried the water, and found it refreshing.

Afterwards he built himself a house beside the spring. As time went by he grew stronger and stronger, until he could fire an arrow as far as 40 km.

The story spread rapidly across the country and lots of people

gathered where he lived. Thus a village was created, called Kumdang-ri.

Winding up his story, Kim Il Sung said: **“The water of Kumdang-ri is Sindok Natural Mineral Water. Ten years ago, I visited Kumdang-ri and I saw elderly people over 100 years old making straw ropes, cushions and reed mats.”**

The Chongryon officials, who had been fascinated by his story, fell into deep thought. Although they had heard that Kim Il Sung was very knowledgeable about nature, geography, history and customs, they had never imagined that he would know even the history of the spring water from a small rural village far from the capital city.

Glasses of Liquor Received by Young Korean Businesspeople in Japan

One day in mid-October 1985, President Kim Il Sung hosted a luncheon for a delegation of young Korean businesspeople in Japan.

They were overwhelmed by his kindness.

The President personally filled their glasses with liquor, saying that they did not need to exchange formal speeches as they had already been conversing.

They could not bring themselves to empty their glasses, thinking it would be discourteous of them to drink in front of him.

Looking at them standing up straight and rigid with glasses in their hands, the host put his glass down on the table and said:

“When else should we have an alcoholic drink, other than on such a happy day as today? I will drink after you.”

Still, the guests did not empty their glasses. The host looked at them closely for a while, and then told them an emotional story about what had happened when he had visited Ryuda Island in the middle of the Tuman River during his anti-Japanese armed struggle. He said as follows:

At that time the whole village came out to welcome me and my party. The elders, dressed in *turumagi* (a Korean overcoat for men), bowed low in front of me, calling me “General.” I managed to make them stand up. Then they knelt on the ground, one of them holding up a glass of liquor, saying that they wanted to offer it to me. I declined their offer, and asked them not to behave in such a way in front of a young man. However, they insisted, saying, “It is true that you are young, but how could ordinary people offer wine to a general while standing? It is against Korean courtesy.” I could do nothing but kneel down and empty the glass.

After telling his story, Kim Il Sung said in a soft tone:

“The reason why I have told you this story is because all of you are solemnly standing in total silence, without emptying your glasses. But I want to tell you that circumstances today are not like they were in the past, and this is the era when comradeship prevails.”

The Rev. Mun Ik Hwan Impressed

On March 27, 1989, President Kim Il Sung received the Rev. Mun Ik Hwan, a democratic figure in south Korea.

“Mr. Mun, I welcome you warmly on your visit to Pyongyang. You have really acted courageously in visiting Pyongyang.”

He suggested that they sit close together and talk, rather than keeping a distance as he usually did when he held talks with foreigners. He then asked his aide to bring a chair for his guest and place it beside him. Now they could talk in an amicable atmosphere overflowing with compatriotic feelings.

He highly praised the clergyman for his words that democracy means reunification and vice versa, and then said: I fully support and agree with what you have said. In order to reunify the country, we need to realize the three tasks, namely, anti-fascist democratization, national

independence against foreign forces and aggressors, and peaceful reunification of the nation, and we must subordinate everything to them.

The President denounced the separatists at home and abroad for their schemes to divide the Korean nation, and continued: Korea is a homogeneous nation with one history, the same writing system and the same language; almost 50 years have elapsed since the country was divided, and if the situation lasts for another 50 years, it may lead to differences in the language and customs between north and south and result, in the long run, in Koreans becoming two different nations. Korea is a homogeneous nation and there is no reason why it should be divided in two.

The Rev. Mun replied that the President's words had fully convinced him of what was the key element in the reunification movement in south Korea, and that now all those engaged in the reunification movement could work with conviction and self-confidence.

Kim Il Sung called on the Rev. Mun on April 1 and exchanged candid opinions with the clergyman on the issue of national reunification.

Kim Il Sung said:

“We have no intention of invading the south. We constantly demand that the north and the south sit face to face and agree a declaration on non-aggression, reduce the number of troops on each side and realize cultural and economic exchanges.

“We also intend to hold dialogue with the south on forming a federation.

“If the two sides claim that they cannot understand each other even before they sit face to face, they will never understand each other.”

The President added the following: I approve of anything that contributes to national reunification. I have not one iota of intention to create difficulties in matters related to national reunification. The bottom line is that all matters can be solved only through open-hearted discussion between the north and the south. Just as you and I have

already become close through two meetings and have resolved everything, so it is important for the north and the south to sit together and discuss the matters concerning national reunification.

That day Kim Il Sung said time and again, **“I subordinate myself without reservation to anything that contributes to the country’s reunification.”**

This was his invariable attitude towards the country’s reunification.

A Glass of Liquor Offered to the Deceased

On September 23, 1989, President Kim Il Sung received and hosted a luncheon for the bereaved wife and children of DPRK Hero An Tong Su who, as the deputy division commander in charge of cultural affairs of the 105th Tank Division, had performed heroic exploits in the battles to liberate Seoul and Suwon but had fallen in action during the Fatherland Liberation War.

He gazed at the bereaved family sitting at the table for a while, then asked a waiter to bring one more glass to the table.

Everyone there thought that another guest was expected at the luncheon, and wondered who he or she might be. To their surprise, however, Kim Il Sung told the waiter to fill the glass with wine, saying that it was for An Tong Su.

He then said to his guests, **“I would like to propose a toast first to the memory of Comrade An Tong Su, and to the health of his wife, son, daughter, son-in-law and grandchild.”**

The wife got to her feet, sobbing.

The family had been living abroad, but Kim Il Sung had invited them back to Korea, given the children Korean names and even presented them with gold wristwatches inscribed with his name.

An Tong Su’s wife said to the President in a tearful voice, “Please don’t do this, Sir. I will drink the first glass to your long life in good health.”

“I don’t think I can express my thanks to you enough, Madam, even if I bow before you ten times,” the President replied. And he went on to express his gratitude to her time and again for the fact that she had raised her children so stoutly, while living abroad as a widow without remarriage. He then clinked his glass against An Tong Su’s, saying to the guests, **“Let us drink a glass to the memory of Comrade An Tong Su. I want all of you to clink your glasses against his.”**

The bereaved family clinked their glasses against that of the deceased, weeping as they did so.

They felt as if the deceased had just been revived.

Although An Tong Su had died decades ago, his glass brimming with liquor was lying on the table, just like an indication of his living image.

A Visit to Pyongyang by the President of the Federation for World Peace

One day in December 1991, *Rodong Sinmun* carried a sensational report.

Sun Myung Moon, a Korean resident in the United States and the president of the Federation for World Peace, had arrived in Pyongyang to visit his native home.

The news came as a surprise to the world community, since that Moon, who was born in Jongju County, North Phyongan Province, had gone over to south Korea during the Fatherland Liberation War and founded the so-called Unification Church, gaining “fame” as a dyed-in-the-wool anti-communist. More surprising than his decision to visit Pyongyang, was the fact that his visit had been approved.

It was a dramatic event which was a fruit of the broad magnanimity of President Kim Il Sung.

Moon’s sins against the nation were too great to be forgiven,

but Kim Il Sung set great store by his determination to visit his native home in the twilight of his life and approved his visit; he even sent a special plane for him to make his journey to Pyongyang more comfortable and arranged for high-ranking officials to receive him at the airport.

During several days spent visiting his native home under the warm care of Kim Il Sung, Sun Myung Moon keenly felt to the marrow, though belatedly, that the worth of a genuine life lay in making patriotic efforts to achieve national reunification.

Subsequently, the Unification Church prayer he used to say changed as follows:

“I pray that the seventy million Korean people will become the greatest nation in the world through the concerted efforts of both north and south and live happily, united as one behind their centre, President Kim Il Sung.”

Though undeserving, Moon hoped to meet President Kim Il Sung during his visit. The officials concerned ignored his request, thinking his desire was unrealistic.

Yet, Kim Il Sung met him one day in December 1991.

Sun Myung Moon greeted the President with a deep bow and said:

“I know that Your Excellency Mr. President has made a courageous decision to invite me, a man who has committed great sins and is poles apart from you. I have come to know better on this occasion that your magnanimity is as broad and vast as heaven and your benevolence and virtue are truly great.”

Kim Il Sung thanked him for his words and said, full of confidence, that when both of them were united, they would be stronger than one man; when the entire Korean nation was united as one, the reunification of the country would be realized for sure.

That day he had a photograph taken with Sun Myung Moon and his party, and arranged a luncheon for them.

This was beyond Moon’s wildest dreams.

The next day newspapers carried front-page reports on the

reception together with the photograph, which amazed the world.

The newspapers of overseas Koreans splashed this news all over their front pages. One of them wrote as follows:

“Blood is thicker than water. The only person who can say this proudly without any compunction or affectation is President Kim Il Sung, who is possessed of broad magnanimity and generosity.”

Another wrote:

“President Kim Il Sung is a man of great calibre who is so magnanimous and generous that he even allows an anti-communist to visit his native home and meets him in person without questioning his guilt-ridden career. Now we have learned that just as iron is drawn to a magnet and the earth is attracted to the sun, people are so captivated by his greatness that they travel to Pyongyang.”

Later President Kim Il Sung looked back with deep emotion on his meeting with Sun Myung Moon, and said:

Now that our nation is suffering the tragedy of division and we are striving to reunify the country by the efforts of our nation, we should not quibble about the crimes committed by some people in the past. We must unite even with those who are guilt-ridden. That’s why I met Sun Myung Moon and his party.

A Great Programme

In April 1993, a Korean resident in the United States, who was working as the chief of the Koryo Research Institute at William Carrie University, visited Pyongyang.

There was a reason for him to come to Korea.

A month before he had heard that the Fifth Session of the Ninth Supreme People’s Assembly of the DPRK would be held, and he had waited to see what would be decided at it with bated breath. Having heard that the Supreme People’s Assembly would convene just a few days after the Order of the Supreme Commander of the

Korean People's Army on declaring a state of semi-war throughout the country was issued, followed by the announcement of the statement of the DPRK Government on its withdrawal from the NPT, he was anticipating that the DPRK would adopt more hardline countermeasures at the session. His expectation was in line with that of the world community.

Around that time, a foreign media organization reported as follows: "Hard hit by the successive strikes from north Korea, the US and other hostile forces, heavily wounded, are fearful like frogs in a thunderstorm, awaiting the result of the session of the Supreme People's Assembly of the DPRK."

However, no one had anticipated what would happen at the session. It published the Ten-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation for the Reunification of the Country, written by President Kim Il Sung.

After hearing the world-startling news which the international community was calling an "event that has brought the falling parts of the globe together," filled with great admiration and excitement, he flew to Pyongyang in the hope of meeting President Kim Il Sung.

President Kim Il Sung granted his ardent desire. At a reception he said to the President that the Ten-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation was an excellent blueprint for national reunification and that Kim Il Sung should take office as the president of a reunified federal republic.

Kim Il Sung, with a smile on his face, told him that he had no desire to become president; all he wanted was to see the country reunified as soon as possible, and he continued:

"To achieve the great unity of the entire nation is the only way to national reunification at present. To reunify the country, there is no other way than to realize the great unity of all Koreans in the north, in the south and abroad. The unity of the entire nation will enable us to solve all the problems which we encounter in reunifying the country."

And he went on to explain the purpose of the recent publication of the Ten-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation, its main idea and its contents, item by item, in the context of its relations with the Ten-Point Programme of the Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland he had published during the anti-Japanese armed struggle, as well as the problems arising in understanding them.

Listening to the President's long explanation, he could clearly comprehend the logic of the President's achievements and his idea on national unity, manifested in the Ten-Point Programme of the Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland, the proposal for founding the Democratic Federal Republic of Koryo, the adoption of north-south agreements and the Ten-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation.

Upon his return home, he expressed his view on the programme:

"The Ten-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation is the fruit of President Kim Il Sung's painstaking efforts, deep thought and study for the reunification of the country."

2. ADMIRATION FOR HIM

An Answer to Every Question

It was a spring day in 1925.

The staff and pupils of Fusong Primary School No. 1 in Fusong County, Jilin Province, China, were having a picnic, chatting and laughing.

However, one pupil was thoughtfully carving letters on a tree.

The headmaster of the school, who was looking round the picnic site with a smile on his face, stopped short at the sight of the boy.

He realized that the boy was Kim Song Ju (Kim Il Sung's original name—Ed.), someone he and the other teachers were particularly concerned about. The pupil was unusually intelligent and had extraordinary zeal for studying, in spite of his young age.

The headmaster quietly approached the boy.

He could see **“Down with Japanese Imperialism, Independence of Korea”** carved on the tree.

These words reflected such a high aim that it was hard to believe they were written by a 13-year-old.

“Kim Song Ju,” said the headmaster.

The boy turned round and saluted him with a deep bow.

“Are you certain it is possible to defeat Japan?”

“Yes.”

“How?”

“When the people are united as a single force, they can surely defeat the Japanese imperialists.”

The headmaster stood, dumbfounded.

Such was his astonishment that his heart began to beat fast.

The people ... When the people are united as a single force, they can surely defeat the Japanese imperialists.

He recited these words to himself, with the sense that he was viewing the world from the perspective of a profound new idea.

Later, Kim Il Sung's motto of **"The people are my God" and the Juche idea originated from this idea about the "people."**

A Fur Scarf for Zhang Weihua

The following happened in January 1931, some days after a meeting at Wujiazi in China. Kim Il Sung was parting from Zhang Weihua, one of his beloved revolutionary comrades-in-arms, as the latter was leaving for Shenyang. After the meeting Kim Il Sung had dispatched some of the members of the Korean Revolutionary Army and political workers to various regions.

Zhang Weihua was the son of a famous Chinese rich man and a young communist who had been under Kim Il Sung's influence since their days in Fusong. On Kim Il Sung's advice, he had moved to Wujiazi and become a teacher at Samsong School, in accordance with the instructions of the revolutionary organization.

It was a very cold day when he was leaving for Shenyang. After sunrise, the high winds that had raged throughout the night subsided, but it was bitterly cold outside.

Kim Il Sung and some of his companions accompanied Zhang for a long way. As they went, Kim Il Sung examined what he was wearing over and over again. Time after time, Zhang urged them to return. But each time Kim Il Sung refused, saying that it was morally unbecoming for a man who was seeing his friend off to return early. He reminded him of the precautions he should observe on his way to Shenyang and the tasks he should perform there.

When they had walked a long way from the village, Zhang stopped, unwilling to go any farther before Kim Il Sung returned.

“Take care. Don’t work too hard and damage your health,” said Kim Il Sung, taking his friend by the shoulder.

Zhang began to move off.

But then Kim Il Sung called to him and rushed towards him. He untied his fur scarf and gave it to his friend. Zhang refused to accept the favour, as he knew that Kim Il Sung’s mother had personally woven it for her son.

“Please take it, Zhang. How can I send you off on such a cold day without giving you anything? My mother will be pleased if she hears that I gave this to you.”

Kim Il Sung tied the fur scarf around Zhang’s neck, and stood for a long time waving to his friend, until Zhang was out of sight over the snow-covered hill. Then his companions insisted that he return.

“I feel worried because I had to send him off on such a cold day,” said Kim Il Sung.

His companions were moved by his words, and looked again in the direction Zhang had gone.

“Heavenly Chicken”

In the early 1940s Kim Il Sung was at a military base in the Far East region of the Soviet Union, guiding the units of the Korean People’s Revolutionary Army which were undergoing military and political training there.

One day the Soviets arranged a party in his honour.

During the party, the head of the reconnaissance department of the Far East Army surreptitiously approached Kim Il Sung.

“Comrade Kim! I beg you, never tell anyone that I ate frog,” he said in a whisper.

Kim Il Sung smiled, and asked him why.

The latter stole a glance at his wife, and then explained in a pleading tone that if she knew, she wouldn’t kiss him.

Some days previously he visited the Korean soldiers during training.

He felt so hungry that he asked for food as soon as he arrived at the unit. The Korean soldiers were short of food, so they were breaking ice to catch frogs to eat. Kim Il Sung explained what they were doing and asked him if he would eat frog.

The guest found himself at a loss, since he had heard that a man who eats frog cannot father a child.

However, he was so hungry that he told Kim Il Sung he would eat frog if he ordered him to. But he was still uneasy, and asked for some alcohol. He wolfed down a bowl of fried frogs with the alcohol. This was how he came to eat frog.

A saying goes that the harder one tries to keep a secret, the easier it will come out. No one knew how the commander of the Far East Army found out, but he said to Kim Il Sung, as he took some chicken from the table, “Comrade Kim, is it true that you served the head of the reconnaissance department with a dish more delicious than this?”

Everyone present became attentive at this question.

Perplexed, Kim Il Sung looked at the head of the reconnaissance department and his wife. Instantly a smile came to his face and he said: There is a dish called “heavenly chicken”; it isn’t for ordinary people but for the elite, so it’s very expensive; the head of the department came to us as a special guest, and I had him served with this dish.

“You know what cry a chicken makes?” he asked, and paused.

There was no one there who knew the answer, as Kim Il Sung called frog so. Everyone grew curious.

Then Kim Il Sung mimicked the cry of the “heavenly chicken.”

They all burst out laughing. The head of the reconnaissance department turned red, but soon joined in the laughter. His wife, too, was laughing, hiding her mouth with one hand. She and everyone else present were charmed by Kim Il Sung’s sense of humour.

After the liberation of Korea, the Russian couple worked in Korea, and their first son was born in Pyongyang.

One day when he met the couple, Kim Il Sung said to the wife: I heard that you were reluctant to talk to your husband and kiss him because he had eaten frog; but you have had a son after kissing the frog-eater.

She blushed scarlet at his joke, and said: “What a wonderful sense of humour you have!”

A Foreign Journalist Leaves Without Asking Any Questions

At a time when the Fatherland Liberation War was at its height, a foreign journalist resident in Korea visited the Supreme Headquarters of the Korean People’s Army.

He asked a Korean officer to arrange an interview with Supreme Commander Kim Il Sung.

His chief concern was the Supreme Commander’s view of the future of the war at the critical juncture when the US army was launching its large-scale “New Offensive.”

After informing the Supreme Commander of this request, the officer returned to the journalist and said: “Sorry, but you must wait a while.”

The foreigner nodded. He could imagine how busy Kim Il Sung must be.

After a while he was led to the Supreme Commander’s office. As he entered, he was surprised by the scene that met his eyes.

Kim Il Sung was looking down at something on a table to one side of the wide room, and standing beside him was a soldier speaking to him. Seeing his epaulettes, the foreigner knew that the soldier was a private first class.

The guide told the foreigner in a whisper that the Supreme Commander was checking the results of the soldier’s studying. He added that Kim Il Sung had given the soldier the assignment of

learning by heart five foreign words each day, and that the soldier was sweating due to his failure to fulfil the assignment.

The journalist was stupefied. *He's checking a soldier's studying now?*

The guide said: "He's helping the soldiers who have been chosen to study abroad for post-war reconstruction."

The journalist was even more surprised at these words.

He said to himself that the Supreme Commander must be certain of victory in the war.

He sneaked out of the room. The Korean officer followed him, and asked him why.

"It's all right. That's all I need to know. 'Korea has won the showdown of belief; Kim Il Sung is working out a design for post-war reconstruction'—this will be the title of my article."

The journalist added that he had left the room without saying goodbye to Kim Il Sung since he was afraid of disturbing him, and he asked the officer to convey his greetings to the Supreme Commander.

Later, when he was informed of the foreign journalist's visit, Kim Il Sung laughed heartily.

A Mysterious Notepad

The following happened in December 1966 when Kim Il Sung was having one-on-one talks with the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

They discussed a wide range of serious issues, including bilateral relations, matters of mutual concern in relation to the international communist movement, economic cooperation and cultural exchange between the two countries, and military affairs.

Having begun in the morning, the talks went on into the afternoon.

As the talks were coming to an end, the General Secretary stood up with his hands on the desk and stooped to look at the

notepad lying in front of Kim Il Sung, an act which was unprecedented in the history of diplomacy.

Everyone there was curious, and gazed at the two leaders.

The General Secretary asked: "I'm sorry, Comrade Kim Il Sung, but what is that notepad? You spoke so fluently about the wide-ranging issues without referring to anything but that mysterious notepad, so what on earth is written in it?"

"Do you mean this?" Kim Il Sung said.

He smiled, opening the blue-covered notepad, and showed it to the General Secretary.

The latter stared hard at the mysterious notepad.

All he saw were a few triangles and a few lines of writing.

Then he looked from Kim Il Sung to his notepad, as if forgetting that he was in diplomatic talks.

Still with a doubtful look, he sat back down again.

He could not believe that Kim Il Sung had not referred to anything except the notepad throughout the talks, while discoursing on such a wide range of issues—political, economic, military, cultural and philosophical.

At a party that evening, the General Secretary said to Kim Il Sung: "You are a great man with wide-ranging knowledge, Comrade Kim Il Sung. I have met many heads of state and other people, but never such a universal genius as you."

The Famous "Speech on August 6"

When the plan of the US president, Richard Nixon, to visit China was announced on July 15, 1971, it caused a worldwide sensation.

This was quite natural, as the president of the United States, who had called "communist China" the sworn enemy of the United States and resorted to a ceaseless anti-China racket, was suddenly announcing his plan to visit Beijing.

The Western media gave wide publicity to Nixon, calling him an “angel of peace,” and launched a large-scale publicity campaign, claiming that his visit to China would herald a switch from the “cold war” to “peace” and from “confrontation” to “cooperation.” At the same time, some claimed that Nixon’s visit would mark the “advent of a thaw” and a “change of the times”; some denounced China bitterly, saying that it was a “China-US conspiracy” against the Soviet Union; some people were very disappointed.

At this juncture, Kim Il Sung said that however unfavourable the situation might be, a revolutionary should turn it into one that’s favourable for the revolution.

On August 6, some days later, a mass rally was held in Pyongyang to welcome a foreign head of state, who was on a visit to Korea.

At the mass rally Kim Il Sung made a speech, in which he explained the real significance of Nixon’s visit to China.

“This means that the hostile policy towards China which the US imperialists have recklessly pursued for more than 20 years in order to check by ‘force’ the great revolutionary changes in China—a country with nearly a quarter of the world’s population—has finally foundered. It means that the US imperialists have at last succumbed to the pressure of the mighty anti-imperialist, revolutionary forces of the world.

“In the last analysis, Nixon will be turning up in Beijing with a white flag, just as the US imperialist aggressors came out to Panmunjom with a white flag after their defeat in the Korean war.

...

“His visit will not be the march of a victor but a journey of the defeated, and it fully reflects the decline of US imperialism. This is a great victory for the Chinese people and a victory for the revolutionary people of the world.”

Hearing his voice which reverberated around the globe with enormous weight and resonance, the world people were struck with wonder. His was an accurate estimation of the rapidly-changing

political situation in the world and of Nixon's cunning tactics to find out a way out of his country's isolation and rejection by the world.

“The Juche Philosophy Is a Philosophy Deserving of Worldwide Applause”

On September 17, 1972, Kim Il Sung received a group of journalists from the Japanese newspaper *Mainichi Shimbun*.

“I warmly welcome your visit to our country.

“I have received your questionnaire through the Central Committee of the Journalists Union of Korea. Now, I should like to give brief answers to your questions.”

The talks began in this way.

On the coffee table in front of Kim Il Sung were only a few sheets of paper, on which the questions were typed.

Looking at the Japanese journalists, he said: You have asked me to tell you how the Juche idea originated. In a nutshell, the Juche idea means that the masses of the people are the masters of the revolution and construction and they are also the driving force of the revolution and construction. In other words, one is responsible for one's own destiny and one also has the capacity for forging one's own destiny.

In this logical and persuasive way he explained to them how the Juche idea originated.

The journalists recorded his speech word by word in their notebooks. A tape-recorder was also running silently.

Time slipped by. He spoke about the education of young people and children based on the Juche idea.

He underlined that the Workers' Party of Korea was greatly concerned with the education of young people, proceeding from the requirements of the Juche idea, because there was no more important task for society to develop than to educate and train people.

Elucidating the position and role of man in the world, he said:

The basis of the Juche idea is that man is the master of everything and decides everything. Man is the most precious treasure in the world, and he is also the most powerful.

The Japanese journalists were so fascinated by the profound principles of the Juche idea that they forgot themselves and clapped their hands.

The philosophical principles of the Juche idea elucidated by Kim Il Sung were something completely new to them.

It was a man-centred philosophy.

The Juche philosophy, a man-centred philosophy, neither ignored the classical philosophies nor copied anything from them. It was a completely new philosophy.

Kim Il Sung's answers that day to the questions raised by the journalists from the Japanese newspaper *Mainichi Shimbun* were carried by publications under the title, ***On Some Problems of Our Party's Juche Idea and the Government of the Republic's Internal and External Policies***, which were published and broadcast by the mass media across the world.

An advocate of the Juche idea in India said:

"It takes a whole lifetime for a man to understand the philosophies of Marx and Lenin, such is their complexity, which I thought was attributable to the profundity of the materialistic philosophy. But I was mistaken. The whole content of President Kim Il Sung's Juche philosophy can be understood simply by reading his answers to the questions raised by the Japanese newspaper *Mainichi Shimbun*. They contain everything that makes a philosophy. President Kim Il Sung has shown, in creating the Juche idea, that there is no limit to man's thinking and exploration. There is no genius in the world who can rival President Kim Il Sung in terms of the depth of his thinking and exploration. In general, no academic discipline can be separated from thinking and exploration. And, while philosophy is the supreme academic discipline demanding a high level of thinking, the Juche philosophy is the philosophy of philosophies, a truly great philosophy. The Juche

philosophy is great, the man who created the Juche philosophy is great, and the wisdom with which he gave such a clear-cut explanation of it is also great. The Juche philosophy is a philosophy deserving of worldwide applause. President Kim Il Sung, who has illuminated the way ahead for mankind with the light of Juche, is indeed the great Sun of mankind. He alone can be praised as the Sun in the world.”

This was a reflection of the admiration of enlightened mankind.

The Title of “True Farmer” Accepted Gratefully

One day in June 1975, President Kim Il Sung, who was on a visit to a country in Eastern Europe, was looking around a farm field, guided by the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the country.

They arrived at the field, where golden waves of wheat were undulating. The First Secretary, saying boastfully that the farm was exemplary in wheat farming, pointed to the field in front of President Kim Il Sung.

Kim Il Sung acknowledged that the crop was rich, and asked:

“Sowing seeds was done properly. How many kilogrammes of seeds did you plant per hectare?”

“Seeds? Just a minute... Let me ask an agricultural official.” The First Secretary looked embarrassed as he said this.

He called an official in his entourage, introduced him to Kim Il Sung, and said: “Comrade Kim Il Sung is asking how many kilogrammes of seeds were planted per hectare. Please answer his question.”

“I don’t know,” the official said, shrugging.

He then motioned to another official in the entourage to come, and introduced him to Kim Il Sung as the farm’s chief engineer.

He said to the official:

“President Kim Il Sung wants to know the amount of seeds you planted per hectare.”

The chief engineer took a notebook out of his pocket and examined it, before answering.

Kim Il Sung picked up an ear of wheat, and peeled away the spikelets so that they rested on his palm, before asking him: **“How much nitrogenous fertilizer do you apply per hectare?”**

“We apply 80 kg in terms of composition.”

“What about phosphatic fertilizer?”

“100 kg.”

Kim Il Sung said: **“The soil is fertile. That wheat has ripened like this after the application of 80 kg of nitrogenous fertilizer per hectare in terms of composition means that the quality of the soil is very good.”**

The First Secretary, who was listening attentively to their dialogue, said it had been hard to do farming properly because of the effects of the abnormal weather.

Kim Il Sung said it was due to a 12% increase in the area of ice in the Arctic Ocean, and explained in detail how Korea became able to gather a stable harvest by transplanting seedlings of corn raised in humus cakes and of rice raised in cold beds to prevent damage from the effects of the abnormal climate, observing the principle of planting the right crop in the right season and the right place, and reclaiming cold and wet land.

The First Secretary was impressed, and said: “How come you, Comrade Kim Il Sung, have learned farming methods when you are busy with the affairs of state? It seems you are a true farmer.”

Thus he explained what was on his mind, but he soon blushed. Presumably thinking that the expression *true farmer* was not suitable for the president of a country, he quickly added that he wondered how Kim Il Sung could become so proficient in agriculture.

With a smile on his face, Kim Il Sung thanked him for calling him a true farmer, and said: **“The leader of a country can**

administer correct politics only when he becomes a smelter when he goes to an iron works, a fisherman when he puts to sea, and a farmer when he visits the countryside.”

The Masses Are My Teacher

On August 31, 1975, President Kim Il Sung met Inomata Hisao, Managing Editor of Japan’s Kyodo News Service who was on a visit to Korea, and arranged a luncheon in his honour.

At the luncheon Inomata inquired about issues concerning Korea’s economic fields—industry, agriculture and mining.

The President gave clear-cut answers to his questions.

Inomata was deeply impressed by Kim Il Sung’s profound knowledge, and said: “Your Excellency Mr. President, you are better informed than the experts on several sectors of the national economy. Your range of knowledge is truly exceptional.”

Saying with a smile on his face that his compliments were quite excessive and that his knowledge was what he had been taught by the masses of the people, he continued: **“I always go among the workers, farmers and scholars to talk to them. People offer me many good opinions. If one mingles with the masses, one will not commit the error of being subjective.”**

He went on to say that, as the farmers had rich experience of agriculture, whereas the agronomists worked mainly with books, he could learn a lot from them.

“The masses, including the farmers, are my teacher.”

Advice to Bachelor Guests

On September 10, 1975, Kim Il Sung met the leading personnel and artistes of a Chinese art troupe.

The first topic of their conversation was the Chinese guests' tour of Mt. Kumgang.

Kim Il Sung asked the head of the art troupe: **“Didn’t you find it difficult to climb the mountains?”**

“The scenery was so beautiful that we never felt tired,” was the answer.

Kim Il Sung said that it isn’t difficult to climb a mountain when one climbs it while hearing interesting legends about it. Then he asked the head: **“Did you go up to the Eight Pools?”**

“No. We were short of time.”

With a look of regret on his face, Kim Il Sung said that they should have been to the pools, and told the guests the origin of the name, which referred to eight pools lying in a line.

He then said: **“In our country there is a tale about eight fairies from Heaven who came to Mt. Kumgang to play in the Eight Pools.”**

After telling the tale, he looked round at the guests, and asked: **“Are there any bachelors among you?”**

The head of the art troupe answered: “There are some.”

With a look of disappointment on his face, Kim Il Sung said that the bachelors in particular should have been to the pools, as they might have met the fairies there.

The guests burst out laughing.

Next day the media reported that the conversation had proceeded “in an amicable atmosphere.” It was just the same with every other conversation Kim Il Sung had with his guests.

A Statue of Zhou Enlai Erected in Hamhung

It was spring 1979.

Kim Il Sung received a report that Deng Yingchao, the widow of former Chinese premier Zhou Enlai, hoped to visit Korea.

Pleased, he said to the officials concerned to convey an invitation to her immediately.

Later, on several occasions he gave instructions on such issues as her reception and welcome. He also said that a statue of Zhou Enlai should be built in Korea.

That year marked the third anniversary of Zhou Enlai's death. In fact, a statue of him was yet to be built even in his motherland.

Busy as he was with the affairs of state, Kim Il Sung showed close concern for the building of the statue of Zhou Enlai.

Where should the statue be erected? How should he be depicted?

He thought it over and over again. Eventually, he said to the officials: In 1958 Zhou Enlai visited Hamhung and made a speech to the workers at the Hungnam Fertilizer Factory; it would be a good idea to erect a statue of him there; the statue should depict him making the speech.

In line with Kim Il Sung's instructions, Kim Jong Il sent a photograph of Zhou Enlai making the speech to the sculptors; he went over the blueprint of the statue and the finished work on several occasions and fixed the heights of the statue itself and the plinth.

Under the direct guidance of the two leaders of the country, the statue and a monument were erected in late May that year.

Kim Il Sung went to Hamhung on May 31 accompanied by Deng Yingchao and attended the unveiling of the statue of Zhou Enlai and the monument.

Deng Yingchao had been delighted to meet Kim Il Sung, and she was all the more moved to see her husband's statue erected in an industrial city in the country neighbouring hers.

"The statue is truly excellent, Comrade Kim Il Sung. I extend my heartfelt thanks to you for having such a fine statue erected."

In the summer of that year a Peking opera troupe visited Korea. In a conversation with Kim Il Sung, the head of the troupe said

that the 970 million Chinese people were very moved by the fact that a statue of Zhou Enlai had been erected in Korea.

Kim Il Sung said: **“In the light of Comrade Zhou Enlai’s achievements and his contribution to the friendship and unity between the peoples of Korea and China, it’s natural for us to erect a statue of him. I always remember him.”**

The Origin of a Dry Cough

Kim Il Sung was well-versed in not only Chondoism—a native religion of Korea—Buddhism, Confucianism and Christianity, but also their origins and spread, their doctrines, the customs of their believers and even the origin of these customs.

On September 25, 1980, Kim Il Sung received a delegation of the Special Committee for Korean Affairs of the Japan Socialist Party, and arranged a luncheon for them.

At the luncheon Shimazaki Yuzuru, a member of Japan’s House of Representatives, said: “In Korea we learned a very interesting fact, Mr. President.”

“What is it?”

“Yesterday we saw the Korean feature film, *The Tale of Chun Hyang*. The characters in the film would make a few dry coughs outside the door of someone’s house before entering. In Japan, bureaucrats make a dry cough when they are wielding their authority or abusing their subordinates. But in Korea it seems one coughs to inform someone of one’s arrival.”

Kim Il Sung, affirming his observation, said, **“We Koreans have had this custom since olden times of coughing three times.”**

He explained that the custom of coughing outside the door of someone’s house had its origins in Confucianism, and he said:

One day Mencius entered his wife’s room. He saw his wife sitting on the floor, not wearing a jacket. He was displeased at this,

and told his mother about it, criticizing his wife for her vulgar behaviour. But the mother scolded her son instead. She said: Your wife did not behave improperly. She may have had good reason for removing her jacket. You should have entered the room after making a cough first so that she could put her jacket on. It was you who were bad-mannered rather than your wife.

Mencius reproached himself after listening to what his mother said. Afterwards, he never failed to cough three times before entering a room. The Confucian custom of coughing when entering a room originated from this tale.

Concluding his story, Kim Il Sung said: **“I am against Confucianism, but I think it is good to be courteous when entering someone’s room.”**

The guests, who had been fascinated by his story, clapped their hands in an expression of their approval.

A New Legend

In mid-March 1981, Asukata Ichio, chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Japan Socialist Party, visited Pyongyang.

President Kim Il Sung held talks with him and arranged a banquet for him.

On March 16, Asukata threw a return banquet, prior to his return home.

During the banquet he told Kim Il Sung of his impressions from his visit to the newly-built Munsu Street, and suggested that apple trees be planted along the roadsides.

Kim Il Sung said that apple trees looked good but were difficult to tend as they were often infested with insects, and he recalled something that had happened soon after the Fatherland Liberation War.

“One day a 70-year-old man sent me a letter. He wrote that

since olden times Pyongyang had been called Ryugyong (Ryu means willow tree and Gyong means capital city–Tr.) and he wondered why other species of trees apart from willows were planted along the roadsides in Pyongyang. After reading the letter I felt I had made a mistake.”

Kim Il Sung continued: Willow trees are not suitable for planting along roadsides because the blossom floats on the wind in spring and they are tall and cast a shadow over buildings. However, I saw to it that willows were planted in several streets in Pyongyang out of respect for the opinions of the people. Thereafter, we planted willows along several streets in Pyongyang, including the street in front of the Kumsusan Assembly Hall and that from Pyongyang Railway Station into the city centre.

He told his guest that after reading the old man’s letter, he could not sleep for several nights on account of his self-reproach for the mistake he had made, and that he had had the matter of planting a large number of willows in Pyongyang discussed at a session of the Central Committee of the Workers’ Party of Korea. Then he had written a reply to the old man in which he gave his word that he would have a willow street laid out in Pyongyang in deference to his opinion.

Asukata said to Kim Il Sung: “There is no record in world history of a head of state replying by letter to an ordinary old man. It is, indeed, a new legend about respect for the people, a legend that can be created only by Your Excellency because you respect the people above all else.”

Li Bai Makes a Fool of Yang Guifei

On July 29, 1982, Kim Il Sung met Luise Rinser, who was on a visit to Korea. During their conversation, he asked her if she liked *lizi*, a tropical species of plum.

She said that she did.

Kim Il Sung said that Yang Guifei, a concubine of the great Tang emperor Xuanzong (reigned 712-756), had been very fond of it, too.

Luise asked him to tell her the story.

“You want to hear the story?” he said.

The story went as follows:

Yang Guifei ate *lizi* every day, because she was so fond of it. The *lizi* had to be brought from Guangdong to Beijing, and this was a great burden for the people.

Li Bai hated her, calling her a wicked woman.

One day the emperor summoned Li Bai.

He issued the poet with an imperial edict that he must write, within two days, a reply to a letter from a neighbouring country. Li Bai made up his mind to use the opportunity to make a fool of the emperor and his concubine, Yang Guifei. He said to the emperor that, while he was writing the letter, one person must rub an Indian ink stick on his inkstone, another must hold his beard so that it didn't interfere with his writing, and yet another must support his legs. The quality of the letter would be decided according to the persons' social positions. He said that his letter would reflect the emperor's status and the country's status, and so Yang Guifei must rub his ink stick, her younger sister must hold his beard, and her younger brother must support his legs.

The emperor was perplexed. It was unimaginable for him to let Yang Guifei and her younger brother and sister perform such an ignoble task; more perplexing was that, if the story became known to the ordinary people, he did not know what would happen. The more he thought, the angrier he grew. However, he had to accept the request as he didn't know how to write a letter.

Thus, the coquettish, haughty Yang Guifei had to rub an ink stick, her sister had to take in her perfumed hand Li's

alcohol-soaked beard, and her brother had to let Li rest his legs on him, all the time while Li was writing the letter.

Luise Rinser burst out laughing. Then she said, “Li Bai is well known in Europe, so I know about him. But I have not heard this tale. I guess you must be reading Chinese history books in the original.”

“I read Chinese and Russian books in their untranslated versions.”

Impressed by Kim Il Sung’s knowledge, she said: “I have met many foreign heads of state, but I have yet to meet anyone who is as conversant with the history of other countries as you are, President Kim Il Sung. As a writer, I can only admire your profound knowledge.”

Something That Cannot Be Bartered for Gold

On July 22, 1983, President Kim Il Sung met the German writer Luise Rinser again.

The guest commented that she felt refreshed whenever she came to Korea, as the air was so clean.

Referring to the fact that environmental protection was being done properly in Korea, Kim Il Sung said:

“We always consider the interests of the masses of the people before anything else in dealing with all affairs.”

He told her that several years previously gold deposits had been discovered in Mt. Myohyang, but he had dissuaded the officials concerned from mining them.

“I told the officials that the scenery of Mt. Myohyang could not be bartered for a few tons of gold, that we could do without gold, and that people would be truly delighted if they could go sightseeing in Mt. Myohyang and enjoy a pleasant rest there.”

Kim Il Sung had severely reproached the officials concerned for developing a gold mine in Mt. Myohyang, explaining that rare and beautiful birds, including bluebirds, would be frightened away by the sound of blasting at the mine and that water from the dressing plant would flow down into the Chongchon River, killing the sweetfish there.

Kim Il Sung said that he could not let the scenery of Mt. Myohyang be spoiled in exchange for a few tons of gold, and that the Korean people were now going to the mountain to rest and for sightseeing.

“The interests of the masses cannot be bartered for gold.”

His guest was very moved by Kim Il Sung’s words, overflowing with ardent love for the people.

The Title of Hero Conferred after 38 Years

A special train carrying President Kim Il Sung, who was on a visit to the Soviet Union, arrived at Novosibirsk station in Siberia on May 21, 1984.

After exchanging greetings with the senior Party and government officials in Novosibirsk who had come to the station to greet him, he had an emotion-filled reunion with Ya. T. Novichenko.

Kim Il Sung had been the first to recognize him. He embraced Novichenko warmly, and then remained silent for a while, as he stroked his shoulder. How long had he tried to discover his whereabouts!

Novichenko, a former second lieutenant in the Soviet army, had lost his arm when he had used his body to smother a hand-grenade thrown by a reactionary at a rally held in the plaza in front of the Pyongyang Railway Station in 1946, a year after Korea’s liberation from the Japanese military occupation, to

commemorate the 27th anniversary of the March First Popular Uprising. He had been seriously wounded, and admitted to hospital in Pyongyang. Kim Il Sung had ensured that everything was done for his medical treatment. After Novichenko returned home, he had not forgotten him, and had spent 38 years trying to trace him. Finally, he had learned that he was living anonymously in a remote village in Siberia, his native place. In spite of how busy he was on his official visit, he had invited him to the railway station to see him.

Kim Il Sung asked after Novichenko's health and living conditions. Apologizing for not being able to talk for long that day because of the lack of time, he asked him to visit Korea, adding that they would have plenty of time to talk when he was there. He warmly embraced Novichenko, before taking leave of him.

The train resumed its journey. Kim Il Sung summoned the officials accompanying him to the conference room on the train, and asked them if they had seen the medal on Novichenko's chest.

They looked at one another without replying, because they had failed to notice anything.

After a while, he said with confidence that the medal on his chest was the Order of the National Flag of the DPRK. It was a rare act of heroism, Kim Il Sung went on, for Novichenko, a Russian and not a Korean, to have displayed such a self-sacrificing spirit, and he should be awarded the title of Labour Hero of the Republic. He stressed that Novichenko's action was so great that it was incomparable, and insisted that he should visit Korea within that year, and that a feature film depicting his exploits be produced.

On May 25 that year, four days later, a decree of the Central People's Committee of the DPRK on conferring the title of Labour Hero on Novichenko was issued.

When Novichenko later visited Korea, Kim Il Sung met him. During their talks, Kim Il Sung said:

“Originally, we should have conferred on you the title of Hero when you performed your heroic feat. But in 1946 we were yet to found the Republic. The Provisional People’s Committee of North Korea existed then. We founded the DPRK in 1948, when you were no longer in Korea.”

A “People-bound Train Ticket”

On September 7, 1989, Kim Il Sung received Piore, chief of the Beijing bureau of Italian Radio and Television.

He informed President Kim Il Sung that his bureau had produced the feature-length documentary *Korea–Mystery and Glory*, and that he was planning to write a novel about the President’s anti-Japanese armed struggle. He asked the President to tell him about his activities among the masses in the early period of his revolutionary career.

Kim Il Sung said that the masses of the people are the motive force of the revolution, and success or failure in the revolution depends on how they are awakened and trained. He paused for a while as he recollected his past with deep emotion, and carried on: I frequently went to the rural areas in those days; as there were many illiterates in the countryside, I made a point of learning how to write a funeral oration and how to write for others.

He said:

“Whenever I was asked by the peasants to write a funeral oration, I would agree. I also knew how to work as scrivener. A scrivener should know how to write a letter of complaint or accusation, or an affidavit to bring a lawsuit against someone. In the olden times such legal documents had their own unique style of writing. Documents not written in the proper style were rejected.”

As far as funeral orations were concerned, the President told the story of something that had happened a long time before. The story went as follows:

Once, while conducting activities in a rural village together with a few young communists including Cha Kwang Su and Kye Yong Chun, he was lodging at a farmhouse.

One day he returned to his lodging from work at around midnight.

As he entered the courtyard, Cha Kwang Su and Kye Yong Chun, who had been sitting under the eaves waiting for him, rushed out to him in delight.

Kim Il Sung asked them why they hadn't gone to bed. Cha Kwang Su told him the reason.

When Cha Kwang Su and Kye Yong Chun had finished dinner, their host had asked them,

"Sirs, tomorrow is the day of the memorial service for my grandparents. We've prepared a ceremonial altar. If you could write the funeral orations, we will perform the ancestral rites at dawn tomorrow."

Cha Kwang Su readily agreed to the request. But, to his regret, Cha knew nothing about writing funeral orations; he supposed that Kye would know, but he, too, was ignorant.

The situation was very awkward.

In the kitchen the ceremonial altar was already arranged; the host's family were eagerly waiting for the funeral orations.

Kye Yong Chun was making things difficult for Cha Kwang Su, complaining that he had told a lie and so threatened to ruin the ancestral rites.

"Oh, my God, I never dreamed that I would get into such trouble on account of my poor knowledge of funeral orations."

Saying this, Cha Kwang Su gave a heavy sigh.

At that moment Kim Il Sung entered.

Kim Il Sung laughed heartily, asking how Cha Kwang Su and

Kye Yong Chun could be confounded by such a trifling matter as funeral orations. He said in a pleasant voice that he would work for them and they should reward him generously in return for his service.

Kim Il Sung wrote the funeral address, and the memorial service proceeded smoothly.

After the ancestral rites, the host brought them a pile of rice-cakes as a token of his gratitude for the funeral address.

Kye Yong Chun was all smiles, saying that he was being treated to the rice-cakes thanks to Kim Il Sung.

But Cha Kwang Su looked at him seriously and said:

“Comrade Kye, both you and I are still little prepared for the revolution. Had we not written a funeral address today, what would have happened? This is not a simple matter for those who have set out on the road of revolution. Let us draw a lesson from this. We should bear in mind that we should have versatile talents, so that we can go among the people.”

Concluding the story, Kim Il Sung said: Cha Kwang Su was right in what he said. Revolutionaries should know everything if they are to go among the people; versatile knowledge is as good as a ticket for a train bound for the people.

A Lot of Money Could Be Earned

On April 30, 1990, the members of an international group for investigating the concrete wall in Korea were received by President Kim Il Sung.

The President asked if they had seen the concrete wall built just to the south of the Military Demarcation Line.

The head of the delegation replied that they had seen it with their own eyes and it was undeniable that there existed a concrete wall.

The President said: The Americans are half-witted; a concrete wall cannot be hidden as it is not something like a tiny needle, but they stick to their unreasonable insistence that there is no concrete wall. The concrete wall in the southern area of the MDL is higher and longer than the Berlin Wall; when the Berlin Wall crumbled, US president George Bush rejoiced and the south Korean authorities, too, expressed their satisfaction. There is no reason why there should be a concrete wall in Korea. It is natural that you have visited Korea as a group to investigate the concrete wall.

The head of the delegation said in an unceremonious way that on their way to Korea they had visited Berlin to see the remains of the Berlin Wall, and that he had witnessed people buying fragments of the wall as souvenir; he also had purchased a piece, and in the future when the concrete wall in south Korea collapsed, he would buy a piece of it as well. Kim Il Sung laughed heartily, saying: **“Then, if we sell it, we can earn a lot of money, can’t we?”**

“Of course you can,” the guests said, bursting out laughing.

Kim Il Sung said jokingly with a smiling face that Koreans should reunify the country as soon as possible in order to earn a lot of money, and this gave rise to another outburst of laughter from the guests.

A Stenographer of 26 Years Previously

The following happened on September 11, 1990, when President Kim Il Sung was on a visit to China.

Jiang Zemin, General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, arranged a banquet to welcome Kim Il Sung on his visit.

At the banquet, while looking around at the Chinese officials present, Kim Il Sung set his eyes on one of them, and told Jiang Zemin that he remembered seeing the man once before.

After observing the official, Jiang Zemin said with a smile;

“That is Xu Ruixin, vice-director of the General Office of our Party. He recently visited your country as the head of a delegation of Party officials. You must have met him then.”

Shaking his head, Kim Il Sung said that he had failed to meet the delegation due to a lack of time, and added that even so, the official’s face was familiar to him.

“You must have mistaken him for someone else.”

“No. I’m quite sure.”

Kim Il Sung searched his memory, and then suddenly, he smiled brightly.

“Oh, I remember. He was a stenographer,” he said in a confident tone of voice.

“Is that so?” said Jiang Zemin in surprise. “As far as I know, he has never worked as a stenographer.”

“I’m sure. He was a stenographer,” confirmed Kim Il Sung.

He called Xu and shook him by the hand, saying that it was a long time since he had seen him last.

Xu was so surprised that he didn’t know what to say.

Kim Il Sung asked him if he had ever been present during a conversation between Chairman Mao Zedong and himself as a stenographer.

Xu remembered what had happened 26 years previously, and said: “Yes, I was present at the conversation as a stenographer in 1963 when you visited China.”

But he had failed to remember the exact year.

“It must have been 1964.”

Kim Il Sung corrected him, and said to Jiang Zemin: At that time I met Mao Zedong and held talks with him. I saw the vice-director sitting in a corner of the room, working as a stenographer. They say time flies like an arrow; the man who was a stenographer has grown up to be a cadre now.

Those present at the banquet were struck with wonder at Kim Il Sung’s remarkable memory.

Three Cups of Liquor for the Departed Soul, Four Cups for the Living Soul

On October 9, 1990, Kim Il Sung received a delegation from the Japan Socialist Party headed by its chairwoman Doi Takako, who were visiting Korea to take part in the events celebrating the 45th anniversary of the founding of the Workers' Party of Korea.

At a luncheon, Takako said to the President that he looked much younger than his age.

"What is the secret of your lasting youth?"

"The secret is, before anything else, to live optimistically without any worries, even if the heaven falls apart."

"I propose a toast to your optimism, Mr. President."

"There is no harm in drinking three cups of liquor. Originally, a living soul should drink four cups of liquor because a living soul is cleverer than a departed soul. When performing a memorial service for the dead, three cups of liquor are offered to the departed soul. As a man is cleverer than a departed spirit, living souls should drink four cups of liquor."

The guests burst out laughing at his humorous remark.

Takako said:

"Your remark that a living soul should drink four cups of liquor sounds reasonable."

The President said: **"Then, let's drink a toast together."**

That evening Kim Il Sung talked with several heads of state at a reception prior to a torch parade in celebration of the 45th anniversary of the founding of the WPK. Takako said to Kim Il Sung: "I drank some cups of wine before coming here because I was reminded of your words and the weather was cold."

The President said with a bright smile, **"Let's drink another four cups each tonight."**

100 Won and 10 Jon

In late March 1992, Luise Rinser came to Korea on board an aeroplane sent by President Kim Il Sung.

On April 1, Kim Il Sung met her.

She repeatedly expressed her thanks to the President for having sent her the plane.

The President asked her not to do so, saying:

“Although I sent you a plane, my sincerity is insignificant when compared with yours with which you have covered a long distance from Rome to come to Pyongyang. Your sincerity is greater than mine. If your sincerity is worth 100 won, mine is worth 10 jon.”

“Your Excellency Mr. President, your compliment is more than I deserve. How can my sincerity, with which I have come to meet you, a great leader who enjoys the admiration of the world’s people, be so great as that you even recognize it? The great benevolence you lavish on me whenever I visit Korea is more valuable than any sum of money.”

“No, your sincerity is greater than mine.”

“Your honour, Mr. President!”

Luise’s heart was too full for words.

Twin “Guests”

On April 12, 1992, President Kim Il Sung arranged a luncheon in honour of Norodom Sihanouk, king of Cambodia, and his party who were on a visit to Korea.

Looking around at the guests, Kim Il Sung said to them that he would tell an interesting story.

All eyes were focused on him.

Kim Il Sung started telling his story.

It happened at a bus stop.

An old man was reading a newspaper, sitting on a bench. Another old man sitting next to him asked:

“Any news?”

“The Cambodian King Norodom has arrived in Pyongyang.”

“Then Sihanouk must be accompanying him.”

“What do you mean? ... Sihanouk is accompanying whom?”

“Sihanouk is always with him, which means both of them must have come together.”

“Oh, you’re so ignorant. Norodom and Sihanouk are one and the same person; Norodom is his surname and Sihanouk is his given name.”

“Have I been confused? It’s very kind of you to explain it to me.”

Looking at each other, the two old men laughed.

When Kim Il Sung ended his story, the party burst out laughing.

Both King Sihanouk and Queen Monique split their sides with laughter, drying their tears with handkerchiefs. The President also laughed pleasantly.

Noodles in a Round Brass Bowl

On April 15, 1992, a grand banquet was arranged in the Kumsusan Assembly Hall in honour of President Kim Il Sung on his 80th birthday. Present there were many heads of state and prominent foreign figures. The final course of the banquet was noodles in a round brass bowl. Looking curiously at it, one of the guests asked the President what kind of dish it was. Noodles were something strange to most of them.

“This is noodles, our people’s favourite dish,” said the President with a smile.

He then said that he would tell them an interesting story in relation to its origin. The guests listened attentively.

The President said, **“Noodles are a unique dish for the Korean people that has been handed down for generations. But noodles in a brass bowl were created by bureaucrats at the time of the Ri dynasty in order for them to eat noodles with *kisaeng* girls, by eating with their mouths from the edge.”**

Kisaeng means professional entertainers.

His story continued. Pyongyang noodles in a round brass bowl were originally a dish with a large amount of noodles in a large, round brass vessel and eaten by two or three persons at the same time facing one another. Wealthy men would sit with *kisaeng* girls in a floor-heated room, facing each other round the bowl containing noodles garnished with other delicious dishes, and eat the noodles by pouring hot meat stock over them to stop them going cold. They would also have chicken or beef, mushrooms and mung-bean sprouts put on the noodles as side dishes to eat while drinking wine poured by the *kisaeng* girls. When they were in high spirits with the help of the alcohol, they would sit with the *kisaeng* girls, their foreheads together over the brass bowl, sucking up the noodles. Thus the noodles that had made their way into the mouth of the *ryangban* (nobleman) would slip out and go into the mouth of the *kisaeng* and vice versa. In this way the corrupt feudal bureaucrats regarded it as a pleasure to eat noodles from a round brass bowl.

The story caused the audience to burst out laughing. The heads of state hurried to taste the noodles. But they were at a loss how to eat them. The President explained to them how to eat the noodles, saying that they should be eaten with chopsticks. The sight of the heads of state was enthralling. Some of them were trying the noodles by holding a chopstick in each hand, some were using

forks and turning them round to pick up the noodles, and still others were putting their mouth to the edge of the bowl, taking a noodle and throwing their heads back to swallow it.

They also laughed at one another, looking at the remarkable scene.

President Lansana Conté of the Republic of Guinea was most skilful in eating noodles. A naturally reticent man, he was sitting silently after emptying his portion by using his chopsticks adroitly without paying attention to the others. Kim Il Sung, with a smile on his face, asked him: **“What about the taste of the noodles, Conté?”**

“The noodles taste good, though I have eaten them for the first time,” answered the Guinean president.

With a bright smile on his face, Kim Il Sung said: **“The noodles are flavoured by meat stock. So you should also drink the meat stock after eating the noodles.”**

No sooner had Kim Il Sung finished saying this than the Guinean president took his bowl in both hands and emptied it. Laughter burst out in the hall.

Mindless of the outburst, Lansana Conté said:

“The Korean noodles in the round brass bowl are really delicious. I am very impressed.”

A Monument to Martyr Zhang Weihua

Although very busy after celebrating his 80th birthday in April 1992, Kim Il Sung met Zhang Weihua’s son, Zhang Jinquan, and his party on April 19, during their visit to Korea.

At their talks, Zhang Jinquan said that he planned to have a new tombstone erected at his father’s grave on the 55th anniversary of his death, and he requested that the President write an epitaph for it.

“Is it already 55 years? As far as I remember, your father died in the tenth month by the lunar calendar.”

Zhang replied: “It was the second day of the tenth month by the lunar calendar, and it is October 27 by the solar calendar this year.”

After a while, Kim Il Sung said: **“Well, rather than writing an epitaph for the tombstone you are going to have erected, I will have a monument erected in my own name.”**

Surprised by this unexpected suggestion, Zhang Jinquan quickly said that he could not impose such a burden on him, and that if the President wrote the epitaph, he would take it home and have it inscribed on the tombstone.

Kim Il Sung understood what he meant and said that the idea may be good, but as the saying went, when all things are equal, choosing the best is a good policy. He insisted that he would have a monument prepared inscribed with an epitaph and send it, and that his guest should make preparations to receive and erect it.

Kim Il Sung even set the date of the unveiling ceremony for the monument, saying that it would be advisable to hold it on the anniversary of Zhang’s father’s death.

October 27 that year witnessed the ceremony of unveiling the monument to Zhang Weihua at his grave in Fusong, China.

Officials of the local committee of the Communist Party of China, government organs, the mass media, local Chinese people and Koreans resident in China attended the function.

“The revolutionary exploits of the martyr Zhang Weihua constitute a bright symbol of friendship between the Korean and Chinese peoples. His noble revolutionary spirit and services to the revolution will live on for ever in the peoples’ minds.

**Kim Il Sung
October 27, 1992”**

The epitaph written in Kim Il Sung's handwriting on the monument greatly moved the people attending the ceremony.

Kim Il Sung wrote in his memoirs *With the Century* the following:

“A living man must not forget the dead. Only then can their friendship be lasting, true and immortal. If the former forgets the latter, such friendship will die out there and then. Frequent remembrance of dead friends, wide publicity of their distinguished services, good care of their children and loyalty to their last wishes: these are the moral obligations of living men to their predecessors, martyrs and deceased revolutionary comrades.”

A Guest from Northern Europe Is Struck with Admiration

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, an abnormal event took place in the world: Socialism collapsed and capitalism was restored in a number of countries.

The renegades of socialism, who had destroyed socialism, tried to justify their despicable betrayal, claiming that the ideals of socialism itself were wrong.

On the other hand, the imperialists asserted that the socialist system was in itself problematic, talking about the “bankruptcy of the socialist system,” with regard to the collapse of socialism in these countries.

This caused ideological confusion among many people.

Are the ideals of socialism and the socialist system wrong?

A stream of foreigners came to Pyongyang to find an answer to this question.

Among them was the chairman of the Workers' Communist Party of Sweden.

On June 29, 1992, Kim Il Sung met him, and explained the cause of the collapse of the East European socialist countries.

He said that it could be explained in two ways: The first was that the leaders of those countries took to sycophancy and the worship of great power.

He continued: **“In the past the East European socialist countries used to do everything the way the Soviet Union did; for example, if the Soviet Union uttered ‘A,’ they said ‘A,’ and if the former pronounced ‘B,’ they said ‘B.’”**

He cited an example at this: The people of the former German Democratic Republic were said to have remarked that when it was raining in Moscow Berliners used to take an umbrella with them, although it wasn’t raining in their city. In this way Germans criticized the sycophantic attitude of their Party leadership towards the big power.

Secondly, the ruin of the East European socialist countries was due to the fact that the leaders of those countries were grossly bureaucratic.

He said: In capitalist society, where state officials and economic officials are separated from each other, even if the ruling officials act bureaucratically and administer state affairs unskilfully, businessmen can still make money without much interference. In socialist society, however, the situation is different; in socialist society the masses of the people are the masters of state power and the means of production. Leading officials must therefore always go among the masses to learn about their demands and manage the state and economy to meet their will and demands; however, the leaders of the East European socialist countries failed to mix intimately with the masses; instead, they administered state affairs by looking up at the ceiling of their office or asking Moscow what to do. When their subjective opinion that was not in accordance with the will of the masses or the reality was not accepted readily by people,

they would enforce it in a bureaucratic manner. Consequently, they became alienated from the people and ultimately produced the serious outcome of destroying socialism.

He continued: **“It was because of such mistakes as the sycophantic attitude to the great power and a bureaucratic manner that socialism has collapsed in the former East European socialist countries; it was never because the socialist system is in itself problematic.”**

After listening to this explanation, the guest from Northern Europe said confidently: “It was indeed the right option for me to travel a long way to see you.”

Philosophy of a Great Man

The following happened on December 21, 1992, when President Kim Il Sung was having talks with President Conare of Mali.

The Malian president frankly expressed his concern over whether Korea could hold out in the showdown with the allied imperialist forces, as it was taking them on single-handedly after the collapse of socialism in the Soviet Union and East European countries.

His concern was not ill-founded, for many other people in the world were watching Korea with great apprehension.

President Kim Il Sung said to his counterpart: **“There is a Korean saying that even though the sky may fall, there is always a way out. During the whole course of leading the revolution and construction, I haven’t been worried about any problem, however difficult and serious it may be.”**

He continued: I did not sleep in an air-raid shelter, not even for a night, during the Fatherland Liberation War, when we were fighting the US imperialists; at nights, I used to inspect the front

line and other parts of the country, travelling in a car with the headlights on, but I was safe. I fought the Japanese imperialists for 20 years, and I was never wounded even though a bullet once passed through my rucksack. So, some people said that I was a heaven-sent man.

Saying that he was afraid of nothing, Kim Il Sung laughed heartily.

Conare, too, laughed, his shoulders squared.

Looking at him with a smile, Kim Il Sung resumed: It is true that we are now faced with a difficult situation. The United States is resorting to every conceivable scheme to stamp out the Korean-style socialist system. But you do not need to worry about us. We have enough food to eat, clothes to wear and houses to live in, and we have our own armed forces. If the US imperialists dare invade our country, we are determined to fight them. They have already tasted bitter defeat in the 3-year Korean war, so they dare not attack us. My philosophy is that there is always a way out even though the sky may fall. I believe in this age-old saying; this is the reason why I never get pessimistic in the face of trials.

Much impressed, Conare said: “Your unique philosophy gives me great courage. Whenever I meet you, I feel all the more attracted to you, like iron drawn to a great magnet. Now I’m reluctant to leave Pyongyang.”

Peach and Mango

A delegation of the Guinean United Progressive Party visited Pyongyang in May 1993 to learn about Korea’s experience in party building.

On May 18, Kim Il Sung met the delegation.

During talks the head of the delegation asked Kim Il Sung:

“These days the West is trying to force a multiparty system on us. How have you built the Workers’ Party of Korea? What is the ideal way to build a ruling party?”

Kim Il Sung looked around the room, and picked up a peach from the table.

Then he answered, **“A party should be built like a peach.”**

“Like a peach?”

The guests looked at the peach.

Pointing at the peach in his hand, Kim Il Sung said: Success can be achieved in the revolution and construction only when the single-hearted unity of the leader, the party and the masses is achieved; compared with this peach, the masses are the flesh, the party is the stone, and the leader is the core in the stone.

Impressed by this remarkable comparison, the head of the delegation said: “I understand, Mr. President.”

He picked up a peach, and nodded over and over again in meditation.

Kim Il Sung, guessing that his guest was thinking about the mango, an African fruit which resembles a peach but has no core in the stone, said: **“But the unity should not be devoid of its core, like an African mango.”**

Realizing that Kim Il Sung had read his mind, the Guinean guest was so surprised that he rose to his feet. Still holding the peach in his hand, he said to himself: “The Korean peach with its core and the African mango without its core...”

Through this persuasive comparison of a few words, he came to realize the profound essence of the theory of party building.

Delighted, he said: “Your theory of party building is an original and great one which all the parties of the world should learn. After I return home, I will build my party like the Korean peach.”

The Instinct of Bees and the Fundamental Principle of Party Building

The following happened when President Kim Il Sung was having talks with a delegation of a political party of a country.

The head of the delegation said: “We are making proactive efforts to learn from the experience of the Workers’ Party of Korea. I would be grateful if you could teach us the most important task in successfully carrying out the revolution and construction.”

Kim Il Sung answered: **“It is important, above all else, to build up the party in order to carry out the revolution and construction successfully.”**

He continued that only then was it possible to rally the masses of the people around the party and achieve success in the struggle for realizing their independence.

The head of the delegation said that he understood, and added that he had another question to ask.

“Please,” said Kim Il Sung.

“What should we do to build up our party?” asked the foreign guest.

Kim Il Sung repeated this question to himself, picking up a pencil and tapping it lightly on the table. After a while, he asked the foreign guest: **“Do you know how bees live?”**

“What do you mean?” asked the latter.

With a meaningful smile on his face, Kim Il Sung resumed: Bees are united around the queen bee. Of course, this mode of existence is a natural phenomenon based on their instinct, but it may provide an answer to the question of how to build up a party.

He went on: **“Just as bees live in an orderly fashion united around the queen bee, there must be a centre and discipline within a collective.”**

He said that what was essential in building up a party was to unite all its members firmly around the leader, concluding that a party, which achieved the unity of all its members in ideology and will with the leader at the centre, would be ever-victorious.

The head of the delegation smiled brightly. Resolved to do as Kim Il Sung had explained, he said: "You explained the fundamental principle of party building with a simple comparison. Your explanation is profound and yet straightforward. Only a great person, who sees through the universe, could do this."

Calculation at Talks with a Guinean Delegation

On October 5, 1993, President Kim Il Sung held talks with a delegation from Kim Il Sung Agricultural Institute in Guinea, concerning the issue of food.

Noting that independence depends on food, Kim Il Sung asked the head of the delegation how many tons of grain Guinea was importing every year.

The latter answered, "400 000 tons."

Kim Il Sung said: **"The current price of rice is 250 dollars per ton, so 400 000 tons cost one hundred million dollars. If Guinea stops buying grain from other countries and solves the food problem by itself, it will be tantamount to earning one hundred million dollars."**

He asked the Guinean guest about the area of arable land and the population of Guinea.

The latter answered that the area of arable land was 500 000 hectares, including 50 000 hectares under irrigation, and the population was 6 500 000.

Kim Il Sung said that if the per-capita consumption of food was 300 kilogrammes a year, the amount of food needed for the

total population was 2 million tons, and if the per-hectare yield of grain was increased to 10 tons by extending the area of land under cultivation and introducing double-cropping, the annual yield would reach 5 million tons.

He paused for a while calculating, and then said that 5 million tons of grain were worth 1 250 million dollars, and if the annual yield of grain reached that level, Guinea could become a rich country.

The members of the delegation were delighted to hear this.

Kim Il Sung continued: **“If you have enough food, you will have nothing to be afraid of. The weather is hot in your country, so clothing is no problem for you. Six metres of cloth will be enough for each person in your country a year. So, the annual consumption of cloth will be 40 million metres for the total population numbering 6 500 000. This is not a large amount.”**

He asked the Korean officials present if they knew how much cotton was needed to make a metre of cloth.

No one knew.

Noting that he was sorry that they didn't know, Kim Il Sung said that it was 200 grammes.

He then asked the Guinean guest if cotton was cultivated in his country, and said that 50 000 hectares of land would be enough to meet the demand for cotton, and if the per-hectare yield of cotton was estimated at 600 kilogrammes and double-cropping was introduced in the 50 000 hectares, the total yield would reach 60 000 tons.

“You can produce 300 million metres of cloth with 60 000 tons of cotton,” said Kim Il Sung, adding that the amount of cloth would be more than enough for the total Guinean population.

The head of the Guinean delegation said: “This is truly amazing. You know my country's situation very well, and you have offered good solutions to the food and clothing problems for our people. It is a mystery how you do the sums so well in spite of being in your 80s.”

Kim Il Sung said that there was nothing mysterious about it, and that he was accustomed to such a way of calculating as he had

used his brains all his life to provide the people with better eating and clothing conditions.

He stressed: **“One must be good at calculating if he wants to serve the people.”**

An Answer for American Guests

In April 1994, President Kim Il Sung held talks with a large delegation composed of former heads of state and government and other politicians. Among them were some from the United States.

At the talks the American guests invited Kim Il Sung to their country.

One of them said: “If you visit the United States, you will be given a warm welcome.”

Kim Il Sung replied that if the bilateral relations between the two countries were improved, he might visit the United States.

They were glad to hear his reply, and then asked him: “What will you do if you visit our country?”

It was a tricky question.

But Kim Il Sung gave them an immediate answer, saying that he would make friends and go fishing and hunting during his stay in the United States.

His answer astonished the Americans as it meant that he thought he would have nothing special to do in their country but fishing and hunting. In fact, Kim Il Sung seemed to regard the United States as a tourist resort. His simple answer carried great meaning.

A Bull That Can Gore and a Bull That Can't

On May 28, 1994, President Kim Il Sung arranged a party in honour of the participants in the Roundtable Conference for Peace and National Reconciliation of Cambodia.

King Norodom Sihanouk told the President that he greatly admired his optimistic way of living in the face of the reckless schemes of the US to suffocate Korea.

Kim Il Sung laughed heartily, and said: **“I have no worries. The US imperialists have said time and again that they will drop bombs on our country. Each time they do so Supreme Commander Kim Jong Il telephones me. We agree that if they drop a bomb on our country, we will do the same.”**

Looking around at his guests, he asked them if they knew what a bull that can gore does before charging.

They couldn't answer, because they didn't understand what he meant.

“A bull that can gore doesn't bellow before charging. But a bull that can't bellows but does not charge,” said Kim Il Sung.

He continued in a convincing voice: We never say empty words. If anyone dares attack us, we will counterattack without any hesitation.

The Cambodian guests applauded.

Sihanouk told President Kim Il Sung: “The Americans are afraid of you, Generalissimo. They describe you as formidable. No one in the world is your equal in courage.”

All the guests applauded again as an expression of their boundless respect for the President.

A “Great Woman”

One day in June 1994 Kim Il Sung received some guests from China.

He asked them their names one by one.

One of them, a woman, answered that her name was Liu Lei.

“Liu Lei...”

He fell into deep thought for a while, repeating her name over and over again.

The guests could only look at him, confused.

Kim Il Sung glanced in her direction, before saying: **“You are a great woman.”**

“Oh, why?” asked Liu Lei blinking.

Kim Il Sung asked her if the character for her name *lei* was made up of three elements meaning “stone.”

Yes, she said.

He laughed heartily, saying: A blow from a stone can hurt an opponent, and a blow from three stones can knock him out. So, you are a “great woman.”

The guests burst out at his remark. Thus Liu Lei became a “great woman” in an instant.

Conversation on a Ship

On June 17, 1994, President Kim Il Sung arranged a lunch for former US President Jimmy Carter, who was visiting Korea, on board a ship travelling to the West Sea Barrage.

He led the American guest to the table and, plying him with dishes, said that he had had no bean dishes prepared, as he knew his guest was allergic to beans.

Carter asked his host how he knew about his eating habits.

Kim Il Sung said laughing that there was nothing in the world which he didn’t know.

His guest smiled at this unceremonious joke.

As the ship was making its way out of Pyongyang, President Kim Il Sung called one of his entourage and asked him to get the ship to slow down.

The ship began to lose speed, which made the American guest wonder, as he did not understand Korean.

He asked his host why the ship was moving slowly. The latter, pointing to some anglers on one side of the river, said that if their ship disturbed the water by travelling at high speed, it may bother

the anglers. He added that they should sail a bit slower for the anglers' convenience.

The two men had a friendly conversation on the ship.

Time passed, and the ship arrived near Nampho Port. Carter enjoyed a panoramic view of the port, and noticed two small silos.

Curious about them, he asked Kim Il Sung whether he would tell him what was inside the silos.

Kim Il Sung said such-and-such a thing was in one silo and such-and-such a thing in the other.

Impressed, Carter said in the following vein: It is really surprising. True, there is nothing in the world that you don't know.

ANECDOTES OF KIM IL SUNG'S LIFE 2

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