



NORTH KOREA TODAY



GOODFRIENDS



Weekly Newsletter

No.273 April 2009

["Good Friends" desires to help the North Korean people through humanistic point of view, and publishes "North Korea Today" describing the way the North Korean people live as real as possible. We at Good Friends also hope to be a bridge between the North Korean people and the world.]

[Hot Topics]

How An Ordinary Laborer Turns Into A Criminal

How A Party Leader Turns Into A Criminal

[Food]

Plain Construction Laborers of Goksan Say, "The Biggest New Year's Wish is Unglutinous Rice"

Yangpyeong Farm of *Dancheon* Produced 1,600 Tons of Corn Last Year

In *Jaeryeong* County, Farmers Who Worked Every Day Received Less Than 150 kg of Food

[Economy]

Unpreparedness for Semi-Annual Farming by Collective Rice Farm in *Sariwon*

The Southern *Hwanghae* Province has Begun *Bangshik Sanghak* for Semi-Annual Farming

[Politics]

Hamheung City Strongly Fortified Electricity Inspections

Bochun County, Forty Police Officers Dismissed Before the Election

Hoeryong City Announced "Advance Two Years Earlier to Build a Powerful Nation"

Power Supply Department Assigned Amount of Power Supply to Each City

[Society]

Thieves Discovered to be Taking Advantage of Social Welfare
Even Rotten Pork is Scarce, Leaving Soldiers only Enough to Make Soup

[Women/Children/Education]

The Democratic Women's Union from *Sunggan County* became a Model of the Shock Troop Brigade for *Uhryang River* Power Plant
A Powerful Chairperson of the Democratic Women's Union for Chungjin Pyongsung City also Sent Kkotjebi Children to Farms

[Accidents]

A Criminal of Arson and Murder was Arrested in Three Days of the Crime in *Sinuiju*

[Commentary]

A Society Where Efforts to Find Food Makes One a Criminal

[Investigative Report]

General Manager Of A Light Industry Factory Faces His First General Meeting

[Hot Topics]

How An Ordinary Laborer Turns Into A Criminal

Cho Joong-nam (40s) of *Gilju*, *Gilju County*, North *Hamgyong* Province was an ordinary laborer and the head of a household with a wife and two daughters. He was an employee of a paper factory in *Gilju* and his wife was a domestic laborer. Beginning two years ago, it became difficult to make ends meet, and his absenteeism from factory job began to increase. He spent more time collecting firewood to sell and cultivating a small patch of field to earn a sufficient living. One day, his patch of field was confiscated because he did not have any permits, and he lost his means to make a living. His wife, in the meantime, started peddling in order to help the household. She made little items at home and traveled all over South *Hamgyong* Province to peddle those items. Her peddling business did not bring in much money because all of the other families, themselves struggling in poverty, could not afford to buy her items.

Convinced that they could not make a living from peddling, Mr. *Cho* had to make a decision. "Hardships remain no matter what. Death seems to be our only option." Thus he convinced himself that it would be better to use illegal means to make a living. He started to cut communications lines made out of copper and resold the material. He succeeded twice but he was caught the third time. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in jail.

In the meantime, Mrs. *Cho* returned home after ten days peddling in *Shinuiju*, North *Pyongan* Province and found the house empty. She was in tears, saying she could not find her children. Her children waited for their mother and got so hungry that they went out to get something to eat. So far, they have not returned home. Mrs. *Cho* keeps searching for her children all over. With her husband in jail, she does not have anywhere to turn for help. She wanders around the rail station, market area or streets. Whenever she sees children in dirty clothes, begging for food or getting beaten by someone, she runs to them trying to identify who they are. Mr. *Cho* was in real agony and cried when he heard from his wife that their children became wandering beggars. He said, "It was my mistake that I took the path of a criminal, but at the time, that was my only choice. Why should my children be punished for my faults?"

How A Party Leader Turns Into A Criminal

Joo Jung-hak (pseudonym), former general manager of the City Construction Division in the City of *Hoeryong*, was reclassified as a common laborer less than a year after he was appointed as the general manager. Before his appointment, he could not even afford solid meals of corn. The problem was how he spent his newfound wealth after his appointment. It was reported that he owned all kinds of electronic devices, which did not seem to match his income level. Some laborers made complaints, which resulted in an investigation. Almost immediately after that, he was relieved of his job. He was reclassified as a laborer in the Rural Construction Section of the City Construction Division, City of *Hoeryong*.

Last February, the head of the Commerce Management Center was demoted to the status of an ordinary laborer in the Building Repair Center. He sold support materials in the market, which were delivered from the province without the city's permission, then used the money to expand the warehouse of the Commerce Management Center. In November 2008, he embezzled some of the children's clothing and food items supplied from a foreign country and used them as bribes to the city party leaders. In addition, he did not provide residents with essential basic food items, such as bean paste and soy sauce, giving the excuse of a lack of transportation equipment and gasoline. Those failings were reason enough for him to be fired from his position.

The general manager of the Basic Food Factory was also demoted to the status of ordinary laborer. Under the pretext of revitalization and modernization, he sold raw material in the market. He claimed that he needed money for construction material, and sold several tons of soybeans and corn that are raw material for bean paste, soy sauce and soy oil in the *Chungjin* market. However, instead of acquiring construction material, he conspired with the factory party secretary to embezzle a substantial amount of money. He was charged with embezzlement, the verdict stating that, "He promised to receive all the necessary raw material for producing basic food items, but failed because of mismanagement that created a huge obstacle to production between last November and this January. He also dared to ignore the party's instructions to make provisions for the occasion of the big New Year's celebration, which is unforgivable." He was removed from his position and placed in the White Apricot Factory as a laborer.

[Food]

Plain Construction Laborers of Goksan Say, “The Biggest New Year’s Wish is Unglutinous Rice”

Laborers of plain construction, located in *Goksan* County of the North *Hwanghae* Province, eke out an existence with porridge from day to day. Therefore, they are on the verge of saying in unison, “Eating unglutinous rice!”, in response to the question, “What is your biggest New Year’s wish?” Laborers complain of food shortage problems by saying that corn porridge and watery cabbage soup are all they have. Naturally, construction should have been finished last year if on schedule, but construction progress didn’t go well because of a food shortage. We are trying to finish before April 15th, but there are still many difficulties. It is unclear whether the working schedule will be enforced as is. The number of laborers has decreased from about 16,000 to 10,000 because of food shortage problems, as well as casualties.

***Yangpyeong* Farm of *Dancheon* Produced 1,600 Tons of Corn Last Year**

Yangpyeong Collective Farm of *Dancheon*, in the South *Hamgyoung* Province, produced a total of 1,600 tons of corn last year. A worker said that the harvest was the result of planting a mixture of ‘*Hamnam 3*’ and ‘*Hwangjoo 1*’ corn species, according to their own conditions. Eight hundred tons of this was sent for army provisions. Farmers are not going to work to perform such tasks as farmyard manure mobilization, because they have not received three months worth of food. *Yangpyeong* Farm was the only place where there was no death from starvation, even during the Arduous March. Although its productivity is not that high, food did not run out easily. However, recent difficulties in obtaining food have affected this area as well.

This farm was directed by the great leader Kim Il-Song himself in the past, so it receives one of the highest levels of attentions in the country. Government officials often visit here, too. The farmers, who take pride in being a member of this farm, now say that they are tired of everything. *Seo Myeong-deok* (alias, age 50s) said, “When officials visit from the Central Party, they do not bring anything helpful, but only lip service. And when they return, they bring food for themselves. With their visits, farm officials only bother us to cook chickens and dogs”. Early this year, with the news of the Central Party Officials’ visit, an old man in his seventies said, in front of farm patrols, “Officials’ visiting does not solve any problem. They repeatedly say the same thing. They only act like they are the district magistrates in ancient times. So, what can be achieved?” He also added, “They’d better distribute foods or chemical fertilizers. Or they should at least bring vinyl-thin film. If the great leader Kim Il-Song looked at this farm turned into this ruin, he would feel sorrow.” The Chief of the Management Committee was not able to respond to this, only returning with a flushed face.

In *Jaeryeong* County, Farmers Who Worked Every Day Received Less Than 150 kg of Food

Each worker of *Samjigang* Collective Farm in *Jaeryeong* County, South *Hwanghae* Province, received 80 kg of food as a result of last year's harvest. Workers who had full attendance at work received about 70 kg of whole corn and 130 kg of unhulled rice, which are quite good values. Many people received less than that, however, because 150 kg of food was taken as an extra duty besides the regular tax and pork meat supply for the People's Military. It is said that some households are already out of food. In the case of *Samjigang* Collective Farm, 24 households are absent from work due to the lack of food. Households that are suffering from food shortage problems are increasing in *Gaeseong* city, *Ryeohyeon* of *Gaepoong* County, *Gyejeong* of *Geumcheon* County, and *Hanpo* of *Pyeongosan* County. The attendance rates of workers on farms and of students in schools are decreasing. Furthermore, the fact that people in this area tend not to register their children in school has become a problem. Workers of the Military Party, as well as teachers, visit house to house and encourage people to send their children to school, but households that are short of food do not listen.

[Economy]

Unpreparedness for Semi-Annual Farming by Collective Rice Farm in *Sariwon*

The Collective Rice Farm in *Sariwon* of the Northern *Hwanghae* Province has decided to attempt a semi-annual farming cycle starting this spring. However, due to the lack of preparation by the 8th Work Unit, which is supposed to demonstrate the farming, the farm hasn't been able to make much progress. Mr. *Jang* (40s), a farm worker, said, "We are supposed to decide a test farming this year and to plant high-yield crops. However, the authorities impelled the workers to carry out the farming under situations in which there are not enough farming tools and the technology is not ready yet. How can they expect the farming to work?" Mr. *Kim* (50s) called the semi-annual farming plan a failure, saying, "The workers are doing as they were told, but the farming is a mess. Advance preparations such as procuring farming materials, seeds, and the deployment of manpower should be well organized to start the semi-annual farming". *Kim* added, "From now on, instead of rushing to try something, a thorough plan is needed first."

The Southern *Hwanghae* Province has Begun *Bangshik Sanghak* for Semi-Annual Farming

The South *Hwanghae* Province will choose exemplary farms from those engaged in semi-annual farming to implement *Bangshik Sanghak*. The wheat and barley (species name: *Haeju* 1) planted last September is expected to be harvested this June at the *Kiam* Collective Farm in *Taetan* County. Because the Farm is estimated to produce a good harvest, *Bangshik Sanghak* will be carried out there. *Bangshik Sanghak* is the process of demonstrating how a farm uses new farming methods to other farms' workers.

[Politics]

***Hamheung* City Strongly Fortified Electricity Inspections**

On March 13th, *Hamheung* City, South *Hamgyong* Province, strengthened cross-inspections on the search of illegal drawing of electricity, which had been conducted along with South

Pyongan Province. As a result of the tightened inspection, most of offenders detected by the authorities consisted of workers, factory or enterprise managers and chief engineers who made personal use of electricity. The seven offenders were prosecuted for a serious crime against national electricity regulation at the Central Party. They were sentenced to re-education centers, expelled from the Party and dismissed from their office. Meanwhile, the authorities, *Heungnam* City, cracked down an electric engineer working in a metal commodities factory. He was charged with his unlawful decision to allow a drug manufacturer to use industrial electricity. He was sentenced 9 years and 6 months and immediately sent to the prison for the charges of aiding the drug manufacture.

***Bochun* County, Forty Police Officers Dismissed Before the Election**

Bochun County, *Ryongyang* Province, forty police officers were dismissed or discharged from the party. It was the first time that such a big number of police officers were discharged at the same time. The incidents happened due to illegal trafficking of scrap metal. Over the past several years, police official's wife and her accomplices have sold scrap metals for 600 NK won. The residents said that "Nobody have tried to report their illegal trade because they are police officers' family." Now they seemed happy that police officers' illegal trades were caught. A factory manager in *Haesan* City (40s) said, "Illegal trade is very common in *Ryongyang* Province. They bought scrap metal 50 NK won per Kg, which became 300 NK won in *Haesan* City. If they sell it directly, they could get 500-600 NK won. People do not care much about illegal trafficking." It was not surprising that police traffickers got caught. They said, "Since even police officers did the wrong things like this, ordinary people would've done it if possible. It is the first time as many as forty officers got caught at the same time."

***Hoeryong* City Announced "Advance Two Years Earlier to Build a Powerful Nation"**

Last March 10th, *Hoeryong* city adopted a resolution in the committee meeting consisted of all party-city council members that "They will build a Powerful Nation two years in advance by 2010." This was followed after Chairman *Kim Jong-IL's* visit to *Hoeryong* city last February. He seemed to be satisfied with city management works, industrial facilities and education system. This inspired a great enthusiasm among city councils. They called a meeting to discuss plans for revitalizing industrial production, factories, and enterprises providing workers with tasks. This meeting continued from 10 in the morning till 11 at night.

Power Supply Department Assigned Amount of Power Supply to Each City

On March 15th, Power Supply Department held a meeting with regional workers. They stressed, "Currently, power supply is the hurdle for industrial development. The industrial power should not be used for any other purposes. Such an action against Power management rule is regarded as crime, which cannot be forgiven. The have made decisions that" Power supply should be guaranteed for the production of munitions. Factories and companies should not produce items that are not necessary for people's everyday life and try all their effort to consume less electricity. The government will require each city and county to use only certain amount of electricity. For example, *Heoryung* in North *Hamgyong*

Province received 576,000 kWh per month and supplied it to each factory and public enterprise according to Power Distribution Station guidelines. *Pyongsung, Chungjin, Nampo*, as well as *Wonsan* Cities are in the same boat. The cities above had a difficult time with shortage of power supply allowed by the Nation. The managers of each factory and public enterprise are visiting Power Distribution department to complain.

[Society]

Thieves discovered to be taking advantage of Social Welfare

On February 18th, two thieves were discovered to have committed robberies after having registered to receive social welfare from the district office in *Wonsan, Kangwon* Province. To date, they have reportedly stolen hundreds of items; including 580 bicycles, 20 refrigerators, 30 washing machines, and 10 used Japanese motorcycles. A woman from *Hae-an* village reported, "With the number of robberies they have committed and the amount they have stolen, I think they must have committed more crimes than any other thieves in the area. I overheard some police officers discussing how these were highly wanted criminals and that they had been keeping the City Court very busy. I wonder what will happen to them."

Even Rotten Pork is Scarce, Leaving Soldiers only Enough to Make Soup

In *Yeomjoo* County, *North Pyongan* Province, almost all the pork stored by the Support Bureau of the 8th Commanding Unit spoiled due to malfunctioning refrigerators. The Bureau had been storing much of this pork for several years after having collected it from residents throughout *North Poyongan* Province to support the Korean People's Army, but two years ago, 'Refrigerator 2' broke down and was not repaired until the following April. During that time, 9,000 kg of pork spoiled. Then, in September of last year, another refrigerator malfunctioned and four months passed before it was repaired, so the meat it contained also began to rot. Of the 5.2 tons of beef and 7,000 tons of pork stored in the refrigerators, more than 80 percent spoiled. Workers at the Support Bureau requested urgent approval to distribute the food that was going bad. Eventually, the spoiled meat was distributed to the various divisions of 8th Military Unit, as well as the military and tuberculosis hospitals. Military doctors provided instructions to the employees of units receiving spoiled meat on 'How to cook rotten meat'. One employee working at Support Bureau said, "Even though it is rotten, the soldiers are happy to be eating meat." At the same time, the employee expressed concern that even the rotten meat isn't being properly distributed to the soldiers. He reported that, "Because a lot of the meat is going to the private homes of military officials, many soldiers only have enough meat to make soup."

[Women/Children/Education]

The Democratic Women's Union from *Sunggan* County became a Model of the Shock Troop Brigade for *Uhryang River* Power Plant

The Democratic Women's Union from *Sunggan County, Jakang Province* became a model of the Shock Troop Brigade to support the *Uhryang River Power Plant*. The Central Committee for the Democratic Women's Union ordered, "All cities and counties must adopt the *Sunggan County Democratic Women's Union's* model of organizing and sending members of the Democratic Women's Union to the construction sites of the *Uhryang River Power Plant*. Everyone should concentrate on building a great country by 2012. The details were ratified on March 13 in 'The Central Party's Organization of the Shock Troop Brigade of the Democratic Women's Union.' In response, all cities and counties are busy drafting members of the Democratic Women's Union for the Shock Troop Brigade.

The Committee for the Democratic Women's Union from *Heoryung City, North Hamgyong Province* decided to appoint a person in primary level of the Democratic Women's Union from each Village Office, a total of 230 people, and send them to the *Uhryang River Power Plant Combat Unit*. It is hard to suddenly join the Shock Troop Brigade because these Democratic Women's Union members are family supporters. For this reason, they decided to join and return in order of precedent. For now, they decided that the Shock Troop Brigade members are sent to work for 10 days and return. Women who are sent to the Shock Troop Brigade will receive 1kg of non-glutinous rice. In addition, the primary level group of the Democratic Women's Union promised to provide 4kg of corn to all families of those members. *Heoryung City Authorities* reported to the Central Party that their City Party Secretary and Workers pledged on their will and determination to lead other cities on creating the Shock Troop Brigade of the Democratic Women's Union.

A Powerful Chairperson of the Democratic Women's Union for Chungjin

The Democratic Women's Union members from *Songpyung District's Eunjung Village Office of Chungjin City, North Hamgyong Province* made a remark, "Chairperson of the Democratic Women's Union is very powerful". This remark began when the chairperson severely scolded a member of the Democratic Women's Union who acted insincerely at the 'Qualified Livelihood' event on March 12. *Kim* (40s) who attended this meeting was discomforted about this and commented, "She criticized using vulgar expressions and hurled insults which could easily create an atmosphere for defamation of one's reputation." *Kim* added, "We are immune to insults and criticism but it is still unpleasant. I am still uncomfortable when I get insulted at the general resident's meeting where we conspire against each other- my friends and neighbors criticize me and I condemn them back. However, it is unpleasant when the Chairperson (of the Democratic Women's Union) uses vulgar expressions even if it is none of my business." This time, they strongly criticized members of the Democratic Women's Union who did not attend the Organization Livelihood due to their family problems or divorces. On the other hand, Committee of the Democratic Women's Union from the Village Office and the Vice Chairperson collect fines from members who do not act well in the Organization Livelihood. The chairpersons of the primary level collect 1,000 NK won if one misses the general resident's meeting and 3,000 NK won for missing a group event or operation. They claimed they will collect these fines and spend it on propaganda and purchasing new instruments but this was never carried out. Instead, *Kim* said that the Chairperson of the Democratic Women's Union and the Chief

of village office from the primary group secretary spent money on buying new clothes this winter.

Pyongsung City also Sent Kkotjebi Children to Farms

The *Pyongsung* City Party of South *Pyongan* Province decided to send Kkotjebi children to farms as laborers. Currently they have selected 35 children from travelers' concentration centers and 29 children from Kkotjebi Welfare Institutions. According to the previous process, these kids should be sent to Stepmother's Institutions, but this year they will work for the farms as members of Youth Independent Units. Meanwhile when Kkotjebi children were sent to Stepmother's Institutions, many of them ran away from, so the previous relief project of Kkotjebi received criticism about their effectiveness. However, the farms can secure the needed workers and children can eat some food with this new project, so it seems to be a win-win. In this context, the City Party and the Province Party have prepared for this project and sent Kkotjebi children to secretaries of farms from last March 1. Authorities of *Pyongsung* City stated, "Secretaries of Li Parties must take care of these children especially for their board and lodging to provide them some comfort. Because the farms that received these children did not have enough food, heads of working units, secretaries, and elementary members of Youth Union and Farming Laborer Union had a meeting about this issue. Like *Hoeryong*, *Pyongsung* decided that members of each unit contribute 20kgs of grain. If they do not have any food, they will provide side dishes such as bean paste.

[Accidents]

A Criminal of Arson and Murder was Arrested in Three Days of the Crime in *Sinuiju*

Last February 11 there was a case of arson and murder in an apartment in *Shinwon-dong*, *Sinuiju*, and North *Hamgyong* Province. At that time, *Kim Hyung-cheol*, (alias, a teenager) who was busy preparing for his middle school graduation examination came back to his home to get some things he left behind. His father was on a business trip in Russia, his eldest brother was performing his military service, and therefore his mother was left home alone. His mother traded medication in the market place so she usually stayed at home in the morning when the market was not open. It seemed strange that she did not open the door or respond when he knocked. He thought that his mother went out for a while and waited for her by buying and eating some food at a stand in front of his apartment. When he looked up at his apartment, he saw smoke coming out from the windows of his apartment. He was shocked and cried "Fire!" When he broke into his house with members of the Neighborhood Unit, he found that his house was filled with fire and smoke. When they tried to get water from a water tank in the bathroom to put out the fire, they felt there was something in it. When they took out the object, they realized that it was the dead body of *Hyung-cheol's* mom. After three days, on the 14th of that month, the criminal was arrested. He was Mr. *Jeong* (22) who lived in the same apartment as the victims and was retired from his military service because of family economic problems. *Hyung-cheol* stated, "The guy put out the fire with me and cried when he saw my mother's corpse in the tank." This statement made people scared. Residents said that it was a hideous crime and

consoled *Hyung-cheol* who went through this terrible incident by himself. *Hyung-cheol* was out of his mind halfway, but prepared a funeral for his mother

[Commentary]

A Society Where Efforts to Find Food Makes One a Criminal

A North Korean defector I met one day told me that he escaped by swimming down the river. He became a suspect for cutting the telephone lines and selling them for over a year. He had risked his life by crossing the river with nothing in his possession because if he got caught, he would definitely be executed. With innocent eyes and gentle voice, he told his story. One year before his defection, he saw his brother dead from starvation. To keep his nephews alive, he had to do dangerous works, banned by the government. During the Arduous March those who cut the telephone lines or sell them had often been executed in public. Risking one's life in order to live – they were just ordinary neighbors who eked out a tiresome life day by day, doing illegal activities.

The terrible situation of the food factory worker in *Giljoo* County introduced earlier is no different. His story shows how ordinary North Korean people make living now. The factory was not in operation. There is no food distribution. He climbed the mountain to cut trees and worked on small patch farm. His wife traveled around peddling homemade goods. There were many more people selling than buying. So the peddling business didn't go well. Moreover, the economy was getting more difficult and food shortage was getting worse. He tried many different things without success, and eventually entered the life of crime. The results are already outlined in the article. He was sentenced for life in imprisonment. The children left home while his wife was out peddling because there was nothing to eat. Not knowing that their mother is searching for them desperately, the children would most probably be drifting around as *Kkotjebis*. A family is destroyed and scattered tragically.

What about those in relatively high-ranking positions? It seems they use their position to make their living easier and more comfortable. Corruption of high-ranking officials is so pervasive that stories of someone being dismissed and demoted to a laborer are no longer news. However, statement such as "Someone who could not afford to have meals of corn suddenly begins to have all kinds of home electrical appliances after becoming a manager" is significant. It paradoxically reveals the harsh reality -- without abusing the position, life is difficult.

These episodes show that the ordinary workers broke the law to eat and live, while officials broke the law to eat better and live better. The numerous crimes often committed by people regardless of the social class, gender, and regions are crimes of "finding food to live." Ultimately, the goal is "eat to survive." The story of "Les miserable" in which a man stole a piece of bread because he was too hungry and ended up serving 19 years in prison is happening everywhere and it breaks our heart. We sincerely hope that there will be people-friendly economic cooperation between North Korea and South Korea so that the residents can make living on their own without breaking the law.

[Investigative Report]

General Manager Of A Light Industry Factory Faces His First General Meeting

Toward the end of March, the true meaning of the word "hostage" became clear to me. I felt so confident about myself when I was appointed as the general manager of the Light Industry Factory, despite the warnings from my family members. Now I am at a loss and do not know what to do. Pretty soon there will be a general meeting with the factory's party members at the end of the first quarter. I am supposed to present my self-criticism and I do not have any clue as to what should be done as a new general manager. Something a young party secretary told me yesterday has stayed in my thoughts. "Comrade General Manager, you should present a good self-criticism at the quarterly party general meeting. (*note 1*) You have not been on the job for a long time, but all the party members have trusted you and cooperated with you. However, the situation at the factory has not improved. Of course, you are not responsible for everything, but our Beloved Leader had trust in you and placed you under special consideration. Aren't you, Comrade, the one who was given special consideration? Please present a balanced assessment of your assignment during the quarter."

"I will give you, then, a direction. Listen carefully. Firstly, you need to self-criticize on the aspect of insufficient loyalty toward our Beloved Leader. Secondly, present a serious self-criticism about your ability to execute the instructions of our Beloved Leader unconditionally, citing specific examples. Thirdly, self-criticize your unsatisfactory relationships with other members of the project organization (*note 2*), such as party leaders and other technicians. Fourthly, you should self-criticize your inability to understand your position as a general manager, that is, you will take overall responsibility, ignoring that the overall responsibility rests with the group decision. You need to provide some specific examples. Lastly, in case you have any suggestions to the party, you should provide them as mutual criticism. Don't make them lengthy, but present them in a constructive manner, in such a way that counsel with the superior party leadership would help us."

"How in the world can I act as a general manager?" I almost shouted, but of course, without uttering any sounds.

Soon I fell deep into worry. Our factory received only 10% the necessary raw materials during the quarter. We have a motto, "All the factory raw materials should be replaced with domestic products." Everyone, including me, memorized the motto. I never realized, though, that I was responsible for the conversion. All the raw materials needed in producing a toothbrush, for example, are imported. The same is true for producing socks. All the resin, nylon, threads, chemicals to soften and harden, etc. are imported. How could I replace them with domestically produced raw materials? All these things in my head literally gave me a headache. Walking into my office and sitting at the table, as soon as I tried to start writing my self-criticism on a sheet of paper, the factory chief engineer came over to see me.

"Comrade General Manager, the direction the party secretary has given you is very general in nature. Here is the self-criticism I have written for myself. Please use it as a reference. A word of advice for you is that self-criticism should be ideologically strong. Specific examples should be directed toward 'superior organizations' and you need to make them accountable

(note 3). Don't do damage to our own party organization. The reasons for failure to make quarterly production quotas should be shifted toward the superior organizations. Make it consistent in this manner. Here are some specific materials. Do not shrink from standing tall. Please present fair and just self-criticism. The quarterly general meeting is nothing. You are new here. The first, the second and the third need to present strong ideological criticism and precise examples. All of your predecessors have done that. When you do that, this factory will survive and our party organization will survive. And that is what the counsel from the superior organization wants."

He left the original of his self-criticism. I feel grateful that he realized that I was tense as I faced the first quarterly general meeting and that he tried to be of help. I felt much more confident and calm having been given something I could reference.

Notes:

(1) Organizational general meeting

(a) Weekly Meeting: Party cell (The lowest organization) holds the meeting Monday mornings usually.

(b) Monthly Meeting: At the end of every month, the party cell secretary summarizes the accomplishments on all the assignments. Solutions for failures are presented.

(c) Quarterly Meeting: Local party organization holds it. All the cells of the local party hold a meeting. Factory party leaders present self-criticisms. Examinations of the factory party leaders are conducted.

(d) Bi-annual (upper-half and lower-half) Meeting: Local party holds it. Upper-half (or lower-half) of the year is assessed.

(e) Annual Meeting: Local party holds it. Accomplishments of whole year are assessed.

(2) Economic management system of North Korea. It is not centered around the General Manager, but rather the Party committee consisting of a General Manager, Chief Engineer, and other Party leaders is responsible for running the factory. An economic management system with group decision-making.

(3) Raw material should be provided, and yet it does not appear. Therefore, the responsibility should be shifted to 'higher ups' 🌸



Good Friends: Center for Peace, Human Rights and Refugees



Good Friends USA

(DC) 734 15th Street N.W. Suite # 500B, Washington, DC 20005

(MD) 4605 Powder Mill Rd., Beltsville, MD 20705

Phone: 202-824-0788(DC); 301-455-9196(Cell)

FAX: 301-937-0748

E-mail: goodfriendsusa@yahoo.co.kr

<http://www.goodfriendsusa.blogspot.com>

Good Friends Korea

E-mail: intnetwork@jungto.org

Tel: 82-2-587-8996; Fax: 82-2-587-8998

<http://www.goodfriends.or.kr>

Please become a good friend of the Good Friends

Good Friends– An International NGO for Peace, Human Rights and Refugees

Good Friends provides relief works for international refugees to become all lives' friend, peace movement to fundamentally resolve disputes and conflicts that human beings face, and human rights movement to protect human rights

Good Friends has been providing information on food shortages in North Korea, raising funds for humanitarian assistance, dispatching activists to national border areas between China and DPRK and having them investigate local situations, and publishing reports on food shortages in North Korea.

Now Good Friends USA intends to improve humanitarian and human rights situation of North Korean residents and to inform this situation to the international community by

- 1) collecting information on severe food shortages and bad situations in health, education, and transportation and providing them to other humanitarian aids organizations so that they can support North Korean people effectively.
- 2) investigating current situations of North Korean refugees in China, and providing protections and aids for them.
- 3) assessing human rights violations occurring in North Korea, informing them to the international societies, and requesting the North Korean government for improvement on human rights and living conditions.

Also, Good Friends USA publishes the newsletter North Korea Today (English edition) to inform the international public.

You can make a difference by donating to Good Friends USA, Inc. Contributions to the Good Friends USA, Inc. (a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code) are tax deductible.

Individuals wishing to make a financial donation to Good Friends USA may send a check to the following address.

For more information, please contact us.

Good Friends USA

(DC) 734 15th Street N.W. Suite # 500B, Washington, DC 20005

(MD) 4605 Powder Mill Rd., Beltsville, MD 20705

Phone: 202-824-0788(DC); 301-455-9196(Cell)

FAX: 301-937-0748

E-mail: goodfriendsusa@yahoo.co.kr

<http://www.goodfriendsusa.blogspot.com>

<http://www.goodfriends.or.kr>



GOODFRIENDS