[Hot Topics]
Arable Lands Increase, but Farms Burdened by Added Costs

[Food]
South Pyongan Province, Increased Grain Yield
South Pyongan Province, Medical and Educational Workers Received Whole Corn
North Hwanghae Province, Some Farms Rationed Food for one year

[Economy]
No Heungnam Fertilizers Available for Other Areas besides Hwanghae Province for the Upcoming Year
Occurrences of Physical Fights Decrease between the Market Patrol Officers and the Merchants
Continuing Shortage of Merchandise in the Distribution Center and the National Store
Bootleg Ryongsung Beer Sells Up To 2,300 NK won
20 NK won Profit Margin on a Bottle of Beer

[Politics]
Soonchun City Warns Against Vending Activities by Family Members of Municipal Party Leaders
Arrested Smugglers in Hyesan City
Censorship on Illicit Video Tapes, “Will be Waved for Ten Cartons of Cigarettes”

[Society]
A Breakout of Livestock Anthrax, Saebulye County
The Fine for Using a Korean Cell Phone is 1.5 – 2 million NK Won

[Women/Children/Education]
“Having the orphans wander around the street is the shame of Jangjin County”

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Middle School Students Choose to Work as Bicycle Cab Drivers Rather than Attend School

In Chungjin, Top 15 Students of a School Can Apply To Universities in a Central Area

Pyongsung Medical School Students Sold Sneakers at a Market to Make Their Field Trip Expenses

[Accidents]
A Woman Kills Her Relative after Many Days of Starvation

[Commentary]
Every Effort Should Be Made to Prevent Famine during the Farm Hardship Period Next Spring

[Planning a Series]
Reading North Korea 2008 Through “North Korea’s Nationwide Report (Public Lecture Materials for Party Leaders and General Public)”

In North Korea 2008, What Was Accomplished and What Was Not?

Part 1 Review of New Year’s Combined Editorial 2008
Part 2 Executive Plan on New Year’s Editorial 2008
Part 3 Making Distinction from Lee Myung-bak Regime
Part 4 Warnings against Moral Hazards by Party Leaders
Part 5 Food Crisis, To Break Through? Or To Persuade?
Part 6 Love and Hate toward United States
Part 7 What North Korea Could Accomplish; What North Korea Could Not Accomplish;

[Hot Topics]
Arable Lands Increase, but Farms Burdened by Added Costs

The Land Readjustment Project that started in 2006 around South Hwanghae Province in its third year is nearing an end. During this period, Yeonahn County, Baechun County, Ongjin County, Haeju City, and a few other regions in South Hwanghae Province have developed their unused lands. The developments have been partly responsible for creating arable land to allow farms from each region to gain up to several acres.

However, farmers remain skeptical about these developments. The Farmlands Research Center asserts that land underneath the topsoil must be flattened prior to replacing the topsoil,
which is a process inhibited by a lack of machineries and fuel. Consequently, the developments lack organic compounds that make for successful harvests.

_**Kim Ok-hwa** (38), a farmer in _Baechun_ County, said, “Additional farmland translates to following a greater yield plan, which only adds to the farmers’ burden.” These sentiments resonated with Kim, another farmer working on the farm, “We have more land, but we are also expected to produce greater yields, which is straining.” The revised yield plan is certainly a main cause for the strain, but more fundamentally, the developed lands are not suitable for farming much less for meeting the new yield requirements. _**Lim Cheol** (41), a farmer in _Yeonahn_ County, said, “I planted rice paddies (on the developed land), but the land basically cracked apart due to inadequate water retention. Furthermore, there are too many rocks and the land is just not suitable for farming.” One official of _Haeju_ City reported, “Many farmers have asked to relax the yield plan due to difficulties of harvesting in the developed lands.”

**[Food]**

**South Pyongan Province, Increased Grain Yield**

One official of _Pyongsung_ announced that all farms in South _Pyongan_ Province harvested more grains than last year. All farms in _Nampo_ City, _Soonchun_ City, _Kangsuh_ County, _Onchun_ County, and _Pyongsung_ City, harvested more grains than last year. As a result, each farmer is expected to receive food distribution to last 6 months, the amount varying depending on the region. Some farmers can even receive food distribution to last 8-9 months. Except for the seed and feed grains, most of the grains harvested would be contributed to provision and the remaining distributed to the farmers so that each farmer is would have food for the next 12 months.

Until last year, the farmers in this area had received food only to last an average 4-5 months. _**Kim Jin-ok** (42) in _Kangsuh_ County said that “Farming went well this year because there was a decrease in loss of grains resulting from natural disasters - it does not mean the grain crop increased this year. The situation is better because of lower price of corn nowadays, but it seems that the situation would get worse again next year spring.”

In the mean time, all farm managing workers of each city and county are planning to have a meeting on the total grain yields at the end of December. At this meeting the chief of the management committee and party secretary, whose production this year was not good enough, will be dismissed and new members will replace the positions.

**South Pyongan Province, Medical and Educational Workers Received Whole Corn**

In November, each city and county of South _Pyongan_ Province distributed corn to last 15 days to the medical and educational workers. _Pyongsung_ city also provided food to those who have been in distinguished service, to senior beneficiaries, to veterans, and to bereaved families. On the other hand, a lot of factories and public enterprises could not distribute any food to their workers.

**North Hwanghae Province, Some Farms Rationed Food for one year**
Some farms in Hwangju County, Seoheung County, and Bongsan County, North Hwanghae Province rationed food to last 12 months to farmers. One official of Sariwon said, “The amount of food is only for 8-9 months, not for a full year.” Since farms in this area also gave to the provision, they didn’t have enough food to last them a full year. The farmers in this area calculated all crop including farm products from personal backyard lots and small patch lots. One farmer in his forties said in Hwangju County said, "It was suspicious from the moment that they investigated the grain product. They investigated each household's grain product even from backyard lots and small patch lots. Then when they distributed food, they included all the grains from the small patch lot farming. They just tried to emphasize the favor done to people." Han Jeong-ok (47) said that “How could farmers come to work without a year’s worth of food? Farmers are always victims for the food issues."

[Economy]

No Heungnam Fertilizers Available for Other Areas besides Hwanghae Province for the Upcoming Year

On December 2, the Ministry of Agriculture (농업성) issued the code “Preparation for Good Agricultural Practices” to all agricultural cities and counties. The Code described the importance of securing fertilizer for good agricultural preparation and asked for maximum mobilization of Heukbosan farmyard manure and microbial fertilizer. It also warned, “There is not enough Heungnam fertilizer available to other regions besides Hwanghae Province”. They also imposed 2 MT of human excrement from each person in a farming unit and 300 kg from every middle school child. Preparations for fertilizer will be effective in January.

Occurrences of Physical Fights Decrease between the Market Patrol Officers and the Merchants

As of last December, Soonam Market in Chungjin in North Hamgyong Province is being patrolled for prohibited items being sold there. Merchants have been secretly selling prohibited goods causing the authorities to step up their regulatory efforts. Under such strict patrols, it is impossible to avoid conflict between the patrol officers’ and the merchants.

There were already two incidents involving massive merchants protest to which in response the authorities have stepped up their control. However, whenever there is a sign of any physical conflict between a patrol officer and a merchant, neighboring merchants stand with their fellow merchant making it difficult for the patrol officer to aggressively enforce regulations. As a result, there is a significant drop in physical fights but a substantial increase in belligerent altercations.

Continuing Shortage of Merchandise in the Distribution Center and the National Store

Although an increasing number of areas have undergone conversions to farmers’ markets since December 1, they have yet to be enforced rigidly. In order to eliminate all general markets and to operate farmers’ markets, the government must steadily supply the goods as promised, but their troubled circumstances do not allow for this. There are shortages of food
in the distribution center and shortfalls of merchandise in the national store throughout all major cities in the country. Police officers are patrolling the streets to urge merchants to hand over their goods to the National Store, but it is hard to find any merchant following this order. Instead they are blustering, “We’d rather not sell our products. We can never give it to the Government Store.” But a woman merchant in her mid-40’s running a cosmetic shop in Pyongsung commented, “Everyone is claiming that they are not going to give up their products, but at the same time they are running their businesses in fear and anxiety.”

**Bootleg Ryongsung Beer Sells Up To 2,300 NK won**
The reason why one can get a Pyongyang Ryongsung beer almost anywhere in North Korea is due to individuals from all over the nation brewing bootleg and selling it under the name ‘Ryongsung beer’. In Ingokdong, Chungjin City of North Hamgyong Province, many families make and sell bootleg Ryongsung beer. The majority of Ingokdong dwellers earn a living by filling Ryongsung beer bottles with Korean rice wine (탁배기) and by selling it in several markets including Soonam Market. Recently, even people from the countryside buy in bulk at wholesale prices from Ingokdong directly. Korean rice wine bottled in Ryongsung beer bottles can be bought for 300 NK won by middlemen. Markets in Hoeryong, Onsung, and Saebyul counties in Hamgyong Province, are selling the bootleg beer for 1,050 NK won; and in Moosan, Yeonsa and like counties, the price jumps to 1,200 NK won. The high profit margin is attributed to the high breakage rate of the the bottles in the course of distribution. Normally, alcohol content is above 5% but some traders sometimes raise the price to 2,300 NK won by increasing the alcohol content to 7-8%.

**20 NK won Profit Margin on a Bottle of Beer**
Kang Myong-hwa (46) sells ‘bootleg Ryongsung beer’ in Ingokdong, Chungjin City, North Hamgyong Province. Kang said, “My husband and two of my daughters are very helpful to me. My husband pulls a wagon and buys bottles, going around several provinces from dawn to late in the evening, and my children go around different markets to buy bottle labels, cardboard boxes and bottle caps all day as well as coal and firewood. My family helps me like this so I can concentrate on making the beer. The whole family contributes to selling beer but earnings are meager. We sell the beer for 300 NK won per bottle but it costs 280 NK won to make it, barely leaving us with 20 NK won. High production costs add to the problem; the low quality of the bottles causes them to break easily. These days, I barely earn 800-1,000 NK won even after working all day. Kang said, “Up until this year we were able to maintain a decent living, but due to the rise in food prices we are barely able to live on corn noodles or corn porridge.”

**[Politics]**

**Soonchun City Warns Against Vending Activities by Family Members of Municipal Party Leaders**
The municipal party of Soonchun city in South Pyongan Province recently warned against vending activities by family members of municipal party leaders after some family members were caught selling prohibited items. Normally, such perpetrations would have been waved owing to acquaintanceship; however, this time, the crackdown was intensive and strict because the region is designated as a showcase for other farmer’s markets. The municipality
Soonchun held a meeting on ideology strife and stated, “It is a shame that family members of municipal party leaders openly conducted commercial activities. It is even worse that they sold prohibited items because it is against the principle of class and revolution.” They also repeatedly warned against this illicit commerce by emphasizing that others who are caught will be harshly punished.

**Arrested Smugglers in Hyesan City**

Hyesan City in Ryanggang Province arrested five women smuggling Yuan (Chinese currency) in the market on November 15 last year. Additionally, on November 18, Hyesan City placed seven women in custody for selling rare national minerals. The municipality sentenced three human traffickers to ten years in discipline and banished their family members to a farm region in Baekarm County.

**Censorship on Illicit Video Tapes, “Will be Waved for Ten Cartons of Cigarettes”**

There has been an increase in censorship of illicit video tapes around the national border. Some regions including Hyesan in Ranggang Province, Moosan, and Hoeryong in North Hamgyong Province are under special oversight because these areas are route for illicit Chinese CDs flowing into the country. Each municipality or county party makes a buyer list of illicit video copies, which the 109th United Inspection Patrol (109호 련합지휘부) uses to conduct the censorship. However, in some municipalities, officials request bribes in compensation for crossing off the names of the illicit users on the list. It takes 10 cartons of cigarettes to bribe committee members of the 109th United Inspection Patrol. Depending on the crime, they can request 20 cartons of cigarettes. It is far from being cheap considering a carton of cigarettes costs 23,000 NK Won, which means 10 cartons cost 230,000 NK Won and 20 cartons cost 460,000 NK Won.

**[Society]**

**A Breakout of Livestock Anthrax, Saebyul County**

Since the beginning of December, livestock anthrax has been spreading in Saebyul County in the North Hamgyong Province. Cows salivate and foam from the mouth, and many die. The disease was first discovered in cows, but has now spread to sheep, goats, dogs, and other domestic livestock. At the Seongnaeri Farm, 6 cows were diagnosed with anthrax, and then buried in an underground pit. The Infectious Disease Control Center in North Hamgyong Province restricts the cows from going outside their areas, while the Center in Saebyul County is taking preventive measures against the disease for each farm. A vaccination for livestock not yet infected is being given at a cost of 3,000 NK won for a cow and 200 NK won for a goat. However, since last year, the vaccinations have not been provided, so each county party is purchasing them this year.

**The Fine for Using a Korean Cell Phone is 1.5 – 2 million NK Won**

The arrest of cell phone users has been intensified along the national border area of North Hamgyong Province by the security bureau. Sentencing to Labor Discipline Centers can be made exempt if Chinese cell phone users pay a 500,000 to 1,000,000 NK won* fine, and Korean cell phone users pay a 1.5 to 2 million NK won fine. Those who can afford to pay the
fines are lucky. If a person does not pay the fine within three days, he or she is sent to the security agency. In this case, there is nothing the person can do, because there is a 99% chance that Korean cell phone users will be accused of spying for Korea; therefore, it is impossible to escape from this severe punishment. The residents believe that the best way is not to get caught, but if caught, it is best to use money to avoid the situation.

*US$1.00 is approximately 3,400 NK won

[Women/Children/Education]
**“Having the orphans wander around the street is the shame of Jangjin County”**

Jangjin County of South Hamgyong Province ordered its first-aid station (구호소) to keep orphans at the station, saying, “Having the orphans wander around the street is the shame of Jangjin County.” First-aid officers, in the first place, only pretend to look for the children. An officer, who wished to remain anonymous, said, “We are about to send the children out who are staying at the station because the food from the government has run short. How can we accommodate more orphans when we can barely provide a cup of corn-porridge for a meal to the children who are currently staying here? It is better for them to wander around the street and eat something from begging or stealing.”

**Students Take Even the Roots of Trees from Orchards for School Firewood**

A middle school of Daehyang-ri, Kyongsung County, North Hamgyong Province received a warning from the government, due to its students pulling trees from orchards because of a school mandate to collect firewood. Three students per day must take turn bringing firewood to school, so they steal firewood from home. However, students caught and scolded by their parents come to school with empty hands. They also receive blame from friends and teachers. Students, for lack of any other option, look for any other trees they can find and some of them started taking trees from orchards. Only a few students took trees from orchards before the beginning of the winter. As it gets colder, every student went to the orchard to get firewood; the trees of orchards became a mess. It is often the case that a fruit tree disappears because male students usually cut the trees and female students dig out the roots of the tree. The school, warned by the government, is sending teachers out to prevent further damage on the orchards.

**Middle School Students Choose to Work as Bicycle Cab Drivers Rather than Attend School**

In all the areas of South Pyongan Province, such as Pyongsung City, Soonchun City, Nampo City, and Kangsuh County, middle school students have not attended school, rather they make money by carrying people with their bikes. Since September and October of this year, the number of these students has remarkably increased. It is easy to find the students waiting for a fare with their bikes in crowded places, such as Pyongsung station, bus stops, markets, etc. The Youth Union Committee of each district has organized Youth Union disciplinary Teams (청년동맹규찰대) and inspected students making money by using bikes. When students did not follow the regulation, they beat and dispersed students and took their bikes to the office of the Youth Union. When the students’ parents ask for the bikes to be returned,
they complain a lot because the office took out important parts of the bikes and gave back only frames to the parents. On the other hand, from this April the number of middle school students making money by using bikes has dramatically increased in South Hwanghae Province, so the City Party has made this problem an issue. The meeting of the Youth Union Primary Workers of South Hwanghae Province has discharged and dismissed Youth Union secretaries in charge of schools with the highest absentee rate.

**In Chungjin, Top 15 Students of a School Can Apply To Universities in a Central Area**
The Department of Education of Chungjin City, North Hamgyong Province, has announced that the top 15 students of each middle school can apply to universities in a central area. It was a method to motivate students, because their learning abilities were very low. Students’ grades have decreased a lot and along with their passion for studying, this decision to motivate was made after several meetings. With this news, some students who are not the children of officials, but who have abilities, are working hard.

**Pyongsung Medical School Students Sold Sneakers at a Market to Make Their Field Trip Expenses**
Last November 2, juniors of Pyongsung Medical School in South Pyongan Province sold sneakers to make their field trip expenses. To take a field trip to Hoeryong, North Hamgyong Province, they sold shoes made in Pyongsung at a market around their field trip area. They bought a pair of shoes for 210 NK won and handed it over to merchants by 3,000 NK won. The retail market price was 4,500 NK won.

**[Accidents]**
**A Woman Kills Her Relative after Many Days of Starvation**
On last October 21, a woman from Hoeryong City in North Hamgyong Province killed her relative after seeing her carrying a bag full of money. She and her children had starved for several days when this incident had occurred. She took 260,000 NK won from the dead body, which her husband buried in a ditch in the Obong reservoir. Kim was arrested a day after the police discovered the body. City court sentenced Kim to 13 years in prison for murder. Kim’s husband was also charged as an accomplice, but was released for the sake of their two underaged children. Kim said, “When I see my two little children going to bed on empty stomachs, my mind is filled with so many thoughts. I have thought about committing murder in order to feed my children. Then when I saw the money in my relative’s bag, all I thought about was taking it.” The neighbors sympathized with the crying husband. One 40-year-old neighbor said, “All the housewives hope for the same thing. They want to feed their husbands and children properly. As long as people continue to suffer like this, such crimes will continue to rise.”

**[Commentary]**
Every Effort Should Be Made to Prevent Famine during the Farm Hardship Period Next Spring

This year, it was predicted that crop production would be poor due to lack of fertilizer, vinyl, and agricultural material. However, news regarding better than expected crop conditions, thanks to good weather, are coming in and out of North Korea. Although there are slight differences in the estimates depending on the agency, there is no major difference in opinion that production has increased this year compared to that of last year, when there was low production due to flooding. It is very fortunate that we are no longer hearing the news of the worst food crisis in a situation where the food is already scarce.

Nevertheless, the crop harvest is only relatively better than the past two years. It still fails to reach the average level compared to the previous several years. Considering North Korea’s domestic demand, the food is seriously in shortage with this kind of below average level production. The World Food Program (WFP) is also warning that about 8.7 million people will experience difficulties with the food supply within a few months.

Looking back we have to remember that the vulnerable class in urban areas and farmers suffered from food shortage even before the beginning of the farm hardship period in January and February. In rural areas of Hwanghae Province a significant number of farmers and their family sustain their livelihood with grass porridge in early spring, and finally people began to die before the farm hardship period. It is very likely that the food crisis will reoccur next year unless the North Korean government takes special measures.

Now the harvest is over, and the distribution is also coming to an end. The North Korean government needs to make thorough plans for food supply and distribution. First, they need to grasp the food production. To combat the shortages, the government should take initiatives to increase imports, and they should ask for assistance from the international community for further shortage. They must stop asking people to lead austere lives in order to overcome this obstacle. There is no room for people to endure the hardship anymore.

They encourage ideological armament, but there is a limit to the effort. Ideology takes a backseat when hunger continues. For people who go hungry, what they need is not ideology, but food. If the distribution of food cannot be done due to food shortage, they should allow small patch lots for farming (폐기밭 경작), expansion of the lot attached to home (텃밭 확대), recognition of side jobs for six months (6 개월 부업지 인정), and trading business in the market (장마당 장사) so that people can assure their livelihood at least until they can overcome the food crisis.

They should make efforts in various ways to boost the enthusiasm of farmers to produce more rather than provoke farmers' opposition to the excessive collection of military grain. To this end, they will have to cooperate actively with the international community. It is our best hope that every effort will be made to avoid another death from occurring in the spring of next year.
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Part 6 Love and Hate toward United States

“Let’s everybody work and live with an unshakeable anti-U.S. consciousness.”
- Juche96 (2007).10, lecture notes for officials and general public

“Let’s completely crush the anti-republican machinations of the U.S. and South Joseon’s Puppet Party.”
- Juche96 (2008).06, lecture notes for officials and general public

“America, the great sworn enemy”

On the surface, it seems that North Korea hates the U.S. with an undeniable passion. Anti-Americanism is the favorite subject of the countless lecture material that is released through the year. Conversely, however, all of North Korea’s foreign policy revolves around drawing the U.S.’s attention. For example, when the Bush administration began to actively ignore North Korea during the first term, North Korea did every extreme thing it could to draw attention back to itself. If North Korea truly wanted non-interference in its affairs, then it would be easy not to engage in anything to attract attention to itself. North Korea may say that it will go on its own way and ignore everyone else, but the fact that it continues engaging in those activities specifically designed to grate on the U.S.’s nerves – from long-range missile firings to nuclear tests - shows that North Korea’s foreign policy is, in effect, centered on the U.S.

Their collective mouth continues spewing hate-filled invectives against the U.S., but it also shows that North Korea realizes that its survival depends on its dealings with the U.S. Internally, it’s creating a content fearful atmosphere of imminent enemy invasion in order to control the people, while externally, it seems to engage in actions specifically designed to keep the U.S.’s eyes upon it and almost “begging” to obtain a deal with the U.S. to guarantee the survival of its regime.
Internal control is relatively simple. All it has to do is to make the U.S. the ultimate enemy. As we can see from the quotes below, taken from official lecture notes, the U.S. is the beginning and end of all suffering and abuse borne by North Korea.

“We now have to understand clearly that the U.S. is an enemy with whom we cannot live underneath same sky. All the difficulties and afflictions that we are suffering are due to the U.S.’s anti-North Korean policies.” (10/2007)

The U.S. “has been abusing us for about 100 years, especially ever since the founding of our republic.” In the preface of a booklet published this past June and titled, “Let’s completely crush the anti-republican machinations of the U.S. and South Joseon’s Puppet Party,” North Korea steadfastly concludes that the U.S. began the Korea War.

“The U.S. tried to destroy the republic in its infancy during the first two years of its existence by pushing through countless violent invasions but they had no choice but to kowtow to the defiance of the united People held together by the embrace of the Great Leader, Comrade Kim Il-sung, who is renowned for his prowess as an invincible general.”

Although there is no specific mention of the U.S. as the instigator of the Korea War, the emphasis on the violent invasions make it clear who’s really responsible (U.S.) for starting the war. It goes on further to describe the U.S. as “…still not letting go of their dreams to invade and conquer our republic.” Throughout the booklet, the U.S. is described as an opportunistic coyote looking to attack a kind and nice lamb. “Despite the flow of time, our enemy’s dark ambitions have not lessened and their methods and machinations have become even worse.” This is how the U.S. is viewed consistently through the official literature.

The only survival is through improvement of relations with the U.S.

However, it is necessary to understand that all this rhetoric is propaganda for domestic audience only. North Korean government believes that it’s only survival lies in improving relationship with the U.S. One high-ranking NK official says, “nuclear weapon is the last stronghold to keep this regime intact. The U.S. only deals with the strong. If it thinks that we are weak, then it won’t deal with us at all. In that sense, nuclear weapon is important to show the U.S. that we have to be reckoned with.” As such, once the relationship with the U.S. improves, there is no more need to hold on to nuclear weapons. Of course, there are opinions in parts of South Korea that say that North Korea will never give up nuclear weapons no matter what. But the important thing is that North Korea does want to attain a friendly relationship with the U.S., which, according to North Korea, Americans are overlooking or ignoring altogether. Therefore, all the missteps and delays in U.S. – North Korea talks are the fault of the U.S. The strongly worded lecture notes above were released in June when there was a delay in delisting North Korea from the list of state sponsors of terrorism.

North Korea sounded off through Voice of Russia: “The U.S. promised to rescind the sanctions aimed at Pyongyang once the nuclear issue with North Joseon was resolved. But they went back on their word and re-included Pyongyang in the terrorism sponsoring states
list. This only goes to show that the U.S. has no intention of seeing a nuclear-free Korean peninsula and peace in Northeast Asia.” He refers to what one commenter on current affairs has said: “The neocons in the U.S. say that North Korea should be dealt with like Iraq by including it on the lists called, ‘Axis of Evil’ and ‘List of Terrorism Sponsoring States’. This shows that the instability in Northeast Asia is due to the U.S.’s ambition to rule over this region.”

The contradiction in improving relationship with the U.S. while safeguarding the survival of the regime.

It’s easy to see the contradiction that North Korea finds itself in when you see how it’s painting the U.S. as the inexorable enemy while trying to improve relationship with the U.S. at the same time. North Korea, as it fears its people’s attention refocusing on South Korea as the North-South relationship improves, likewise worries that it will be forced to open up to reforms as its relationship with the U.S. improves. The North Korean regime has to be worried over the eventual possibility that seepage of foreign cultures into the country will change the collective consciousness of the people and lead to regime instability from the inside out. This is the dilemma. If North Korea receives security guarantees from the U.S., there is a heightened expectation that it will consequently solve their food shortages and economic hardship. But there is also worry that it will push the regime down the slippery slope to its own instability.

Even during the lean months when people dying from hunger were appearing, South Korea did not provide any food aid to the North. In contrast, the U.S. provided 500,000 MT of food, beginning in June. As such, the “great, sworn enemy” is being considered by the people with much more gratitude than South Korea, the nation connected by ethnic bond.

“Some among us has the fantasy that the fundamental invasion-seeking nature of the U.S. has somehow changed and will give us something.” (June, 2008)

As you can see from the above quotation, there is some “fantasy” among the people about the U.S. Therefore, in order for the authorities to reengineer how people regard the U.S., they have announced, “Yes, it is true that the U.S. has announced that it will provide us with 500,000 MT of food. However, we have never asked for this. They are doing this on their own.” The authorities go on further to conclude, “The fact that the U.S. is providing us with food does not mean that they have changed their intent to destroy us. The U.S. has been and will be our 100-year mortal enemy.” Such reactions by the North Korea authorities are interesting in that they imply the fairly significant reactions that the news of the U.S. providing 500,000 MT of food had on the thoughts of the people, especially during these difficult times.

The only way to resolve the dilemma is through ideology.

The road to improving relationship with the U.S. is long. Fortunately, with the new Obama administration declaring that they will actively pursue dialogue, there is a window of possibility that the pace of improving relationship might speed up. However, in a state of
mutual distrust, no one can say how long it will take for the “action for action” pace will take till the destination is reached. Further, there is no telling how the continuing tensions in North-South Korea and Japan-North Korea relationships will affect U.S. – North Korea dialogue. In midst of such international uncertainly about the future, North Korea is consistently showering its people with anti-U.S. rhetoric. It’s trying to impose proactive control over any possible regime instability that could be brought about by its pursuit to improve relationship with the U.S. It’s using such “ideological discipline” to overcome this inherent dilemma:

One, don’t have any iota of illusions about the enemies. Never forget that we will have to eventually engage in an all-ending conflict against the U.S. and its lackey (South Korea).

Two, we have to strengthen our own internal unity.

Three, we have to have a revolutionary effort to construct our economy.

If we are to summarize these three demands into one slogan, it’s “Arming with Ideology.” The North Korean authorities are recommending that people re-arm themselves with anti-American spirit by visiting Shinchun Museum and other similar “museums” where newly discovered remains of people massacred during the Korean War are displayed. “Anti-imperialism, anti-U.S. cannot be considered apart from the barrels of guns. We have only to strengthen the guns of our military,” they continue. “Fighting against the U.S. is a fight between ideologies and spirit. That’s why we have to totally cruch those enemies who seek to distribute strange publications and bad CD’s.”

As we can see from above, North Korea is caught in a contradiction of its own making in trying to become friendlier with the U.S. externally while invoking strong anti-American rhetoric internally. Wanting to engage in a dialogue with a former enemy is a sign of wanting peace and reconciliation. But North Korea is, at the same time, promoting anti-U.S. spirit among its own people. It’s like walking on a tight rope between the U.S, the Eternal Enemy, and the U.S., only hope for regime survival. We are curious how aware the North Korean authorities are of this contradiction of their own making. North Korea must realize that improving relationship with the U.S. is not the be all and end all of its future. North Korea must also examine itself to see if its stated policy of “Together with our people” (meaning the whole Korean people) is not being shunted aside too precipitously.
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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.

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