

BEIJING MEETING - NOVEMBER 3-4, 1998

DPRK Asia/Pacific Peace Committee member Pak Sang-hyok held 14 hours of private discussion one-on-one with IH in Beijing 11/3-4.

Beijing had many NK present before KDJ's mid-November visit. NK's were there to observe the visit, but also to conduct meetings with SK counterparts on the margins. Pak claimed working level talks between SK and NK underway to assess possibility of higher level talks. Chinese Public Security sought out Koreans affiliated with NK and pressed them to remain low key and not become involved with any terrorism related activities.

During a late August meeting, Pak had asked for a visit to Japan arranged by NIRA, which is viewed in Pyongyang as a "neutral" Japanese organization. Pak pressed hard for meetings in Tokyo at the vice minister level with GOJ Foreign Ministry officials. NIRA was prepared to arrange such a visit. Then the DPRK launched its missile on August 30 and the GOJ Foreign Ministry shelved the idea of a visit to Tokyo by a DPRK "unofficial" delegation.

IH, with NIRA's approval, sent a letter to Pak in Pyongyang saying would like to pursue the idea of a visit to Tokyo. After a month, Pak responded by inviting IH to talk in Beijing about a possible visit. GOJ MFA, however, disallowed the visit for the foreseeable future. IH delivered the message to Pak when the two met in Beijing.

Pak reportedly was disappointed, but apparently claimed NK still interested in pursuing a visit to Tokyo. Pak claimed Kim Young Sun had directed staff to formulate a new proposal for the resumption of North/South dialogue with implementation of the Basic Agreement at the top of the agenda.. If Kim Jong Il approves the idea when it is presented to him in December, proposal most likely would be announced early in January, January 3 or 4. Presentation of such a proposal would likely open the way for a late January visit to Tokyo by a three member delegation including Pak, chief delegate who might be Choe U-jin, DPRK MFA VM for Japanese affairs and an interpreter. NIRA is prepared to cover the cost of a seven day visit.

At present, GOJ MFA still opposed to any visit pending DPRK expression of regret for not having given Japan prior notification of missile launch. Pak says such an expression impossible. GOJ MFA main concern is LDP public posture on DPRK which is extremely negative.

SEPTEMBER SPA MEETING

Pak provided his interpretation of events at the SPA in September. (Comment: Pak's predictions about the SPA as conveyed in August proved to be about 80% incorrect, suggesting he is far removed from the center of power.) Pak expressed disappointment about what happened at the SPA in September. Apparently he still did not understand why KJI had not made himself president, but instead named his father perpetual president.

The military has assumed state center for DPRK policy, etc. but Pak said economic issues remain in the hands of civilians, although some major construction projects will continue under military supervision. The national slogan, *kuksajungui kuksa* "the military at the center of national affairs".

KJI employing three principles to improve the efficiency of his government:

1. Change of generations, i.e. father to son (*sedae kyoje*).
2. Emphasize ability (*sillyok ponui*), promote the able, replace the less able.
3. Increase Efficiency (*hyoyuhwa*) Down size the bureaucracy - ministries have been reduced by about ten, and numerous positions have been eliminated to facilitate retirement of aging officials.

MILITARY

Power is shared within the Defense Council by four prominent generals. This is a new arrangement suggesting KJI does not fully trust his generals and has divided power among them and reinstated a previously disgraced general, Li Yong-mu, and promoted him alone among all others at the time of the SPA.

LWR

Pak said he does not expect the LWR project to be completed since so much time has been lost. Since 1997, NK began to focus on small building small and medium power plants to reduce dependence on LWR. NK has decided US will not keep the Agreed Framework.

If the US were to attack the NK, the NK will strike the SK in retaliation. NK would not expect to win the ensuing war but believes it must fight.

1991 - Kim Il Sung had first heart attack - was relatively minor but made him decide to turn power over to his son. In December 1991, Kim Jong Il was named the Supreme Commander

1992 - KIS had his second heart attack and shortly afterward KJI was named chairman of the National Defense Commission.

2002 - DPRK must prepare a special birthday for KJI who will be 60 years old at that time.

(COMMENT: Pak most likely is a middle level cadre with some general knowledge of developments in the DPRK but he has not access to high levels of government and insight into the inner circle of policy makers. Probably his role is to induce IH to keep a channel open and to promote DPRK Peace Committee interests within the GOJ. Beyond that his views must be assessed carefully and should not be taken at face value.)