

April 20, 1972

Meeting with Director of KCIA Lee Hu-rak (2)

Citation:

"Meeting with Director of KCIA Lee Hu-rak (2)", April 20, 1972, Wilson Center Digital Archive, South Korean Foreign Ministry Archive.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/110777>

Summary:

Lee Hu-rak states that he cannot visit the North during April, but he proposes that when a high level meeting does take place a joint announcement by both sides should be made surrounding the details of said meeting.

Original Language:

Korean

Contents:

Translation - English

Meeting with Director of KCIA Lee Hu-rak (2)

Date and Time: April 20, 1972 17:00-17:35

Location: KCIA Director's Office, 19th Floor, Government Complex, Seoul

Participants:

South

Lee Hu-rak Director of Korean Central Intelligence Agency

LEE [Cheol-hui] Acting Deputy Director of Intelligence Service, Korean Central Intelligence Agency

JEONG Hong-jin Director of Conference Management, Conference Office, Korean Red Cross

North

Kim Deok-hyeon Chief Officer of the Political Bureau, Central Committee, Workers' Party of Korea

South: Does Mr. Kim have anything else to ask?

North: There is nothing more.

South: I would like to clarify one more time. Director Kim Yeong-ju mentioned that he would prefer my visit to occur during April. However, since today is April 20th, it is somewhat too close in hand. Also, there are some personal reasons. Therefore, I'd like to visit during the beginning of May. In such case, I will notify you at least a week ahead. Frankly speaking, I have determined to visit the North solely based on my trust for comrade Director Kim Yeong-ju. Nonetheless, we must study how we can avoid the future historians speaking of my visit as a careless journey. Mr. Jeong should study this matter.

I couldn't care less about such a matter. However, you should examine what [kind of] memorandum I should accept [to make the visit] in regards to the administrative procedure. Comrade Jeong should discuss this with Mr. Kim Deok-hyeon. Mr. Kim might or might not remember this. However, when I suggested that Mr. Kim Yeong-ju and I meet in a third country, Mr. Kim Yeong-ju mentioned it is better that we meet at a domestic location. Afterwards, he added we could meet in the country or also outside the country. When I suggested meeting at a third country, what I had in mind was that we must jointly announce our issue in order to avoid giving the impression that one [actively] proposes and the other [submissively] accepts. The details of our announcement should include who and who met from when to when at where to discuss the South-North issues. As a result, we have agreed to the following in pursuit of our nation's peaceful reunification. We will each make our best effort to utilize our influence in attaining what we have agreed.

1. We will initiate the negotiation for our nation's reunification in the near future,
2. As a part of the negotiation, we should facilitate the exchange in human and material resources and in communication.

Once we present such a joint-statement, the spokesperson for our government officially announces that the government welcomes the agreement. This was my original plan. Now that we are shifting the location to Pyongyang, I am not certain how we should apply this I am speaking without any concealment that it was the main reason I suggested meeting at a third country.

Director Lee Hu-rak in the South and Director Kim Yeong-ju in the North, the two of us endeavor ourselves as the flag-bearers of peace, it will be solved peacefully. If we are unable to provide our influence [in solving the issue], and when we fall to the challenge of those who argue for solving the issue through force, the result can be fatal. Since there are extremists in each society and organization.

North: I greatly appreciate your candid statement. I will accurately report [to Director Kim] without omitting a single word. When Director Lee visits Pyongyang, we will be able to achieve some good results.

South: The issues that we have are tasks that need to be handled. I expect there will be troubles on both sides when handling such tasks. However, regardless of what people say, I believe if we strive with sincere patriotism, the opposing party will eventually understand us. When I visit Pyongyang, you should not consider me as a foreigner and treat me as a foreigner.

North: We will welcome you with our heart. When we return, we will start preparations to greet you as a guest of the state.

South: You shouldn't do that. We should never be involved in a war. In the South, I will be the advocate [for not having a war], and on your side, Director Kim Yeong-ju should take the role. Although there may be some hardship in the peaceful resolution of our issues, we must never hastily engage in a war.

North: Regarding the issue, comrade Director Kim Yeong-ju also clearly mentioned that not engaging in a war is highly desired.

South: During the Korean War, the South was largely destroyed. The North was likewise, correct?

North: In terms of destruction, the North was worse. The population in Pyongyang was about 400 thousand then. There were 500 thousand bombs dropped in Pyongyang city. Only two buildings (one of them was Hwashin Department Store, built by a Japanese) survived the bombing. Not only that, all the factories were destroyed.

South: You don't need to mention about destruction. I have watched a documentary film on the Korean War today. I have not only seen the destruction the war resulted but also the distress people experienced due to the war. We must prevent such an event from happening, and there has to be people working to stop this. The media [in the South] speaks about your intent to invade the South. There are people on our side arguing for a solution using force. I am quite certain there are some people who argue the same on your side. Whoever attempts to make it happen, we must oppose the idea to solve our issue with force and stop such an unfortunate event from happening. I would like to stress one more time. If we experience a war at the current time, it will be not at all like the war we experienced 20 years ago. I am anxious about even having the shape of our land intact.

North: We have repeatedly mentioned that we have no intent to invade the South. While you may be unable to trust it, you will be able to when you meet with comrade Kim Yeong-ju.

South: It is not an issue of trusting or not. Regardless of which society you look at, there are always [a group of] extremists. Especially you should not trust what the military men say. Regardless of whether they are from the South or the North, military men always speak confidently [even when they are unsure].