

November 20, 1971

Preliminary Meeting between North and South Korea

Citation:

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Summary:

North Korean delegate Kim Deok-hyeon and South Korean delegate Jeong Hong-jin discuss family meetings and agree to set up a meeting between higher ranking officials.

Original Language:

Korean

Contents:

Translation - English

Date and Time: November 20, 1971 10:05-12:20

Location: Conference Room, Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, Panmunjeom

Details:

North: Your explanation of family members includes relatives, in fact. [However, your written statement does not include relatives.] What is your intention in not describing relatives [as target participants]?

South: It means the extent of our family members is much larger than what you have in mind. It is likely that some relatives you have in mind are partially included in that extent.

North: In the preliminary meetings, we gave in to the South in determining the location [of the family reunions], the procedure, etc.. It is now your turn to compromise. In international negotiations, in determining the agenda for the main negotiation, the involved parties each introduce an agenda to the main conference and revise as needed through discussions. Nevertheless, you are being very obstinate. Please present an amendment that includes relatives in the scope of the [target] participants.

South: So far, we reached agreements because we have made reasonable suggestions. It can't be argued that it is merely because you have compromised [in reaching agreements]. You suggest that we combine categories that are redundant in concept, such as family members, extended family, and friends, as one category to allow for mutual visitations and uninterrupted exchanges. However, you have not clearly defined this category, and therefore, the agenda is not clearly defined. In order for our discussions to move forward, you should reorganize your agenda as clearly as our agenda and present an amendment.

North: Your agenda is favorable in most parts. The sequence for confirming if family members are alive or dead before the reunion is fine as well. It is simply that we must include all relatives [as target participants]. Family members refer to the people who you live with in a house. How many family members will there be if we were searching for family members who are separated 26 years ago? In such a case, the extent of participants is too narrow. People will not be able to accept that we only target [immediate] family members. Our superiors will also disapprove of this. If you present an amendment which includes extended family, we will be able to reach an agreement soon.

South: You should first present an amendment with clear definitions of family members and extended family in a format that is similar to ours. Then, after looking at your amendment, we should look for commonalities in our opinions.

North: A negotiation is a two-way process. If you have an attitude that you will never compromise, agreements [between us] are unlikely to be reached. If you submit an amendment with extended family included, then we will soon reach an agreement. Please bring an amendment that includes extended family to the 10th preliminary conference.

South: In that case, we should each study [each other's] amendments and present [them during the next meeting].

North: I am aware that Mr. Jeong is an international affairs specialist.....

South: My expertise is only at a stage to roughly predict when "Nixon" will visit

Communist China.

North: Even when we merely look at the Taiwan issue, the great powers make victims of the small countries for their own sake.

South: Communist China used to speak ill of the United States calling them American Imperialists. Now they have reconciled with the U.S. There is no help for the great powers to place their own benefit before everything else, isn't there? Isn't the Soviet Union the same?

North: It is the same [for all the countries] including the Soviet Union. By the way, people call the current day an era of negotiation, isn't that correct?

South: In fact, it is certainly better to use words than to use fists [in resolving conflicts].

North: By the way, I heard that there is a sign on Namdaemun that reads "self-reliance."

South: We must be self-sustained and self-reliant, musn't we?

North: We are trying to be self-reliant as well. By the way, it is highly favorable that just the two of us meet. People who are trusted by their superiors, in other words, what is your opinion on holding secret meetings between people who are trusted by the highest-level officials? The Red Cross Conference is to continue separately but aside from the Red Cross Conference [we could consider having secret meetings between officials].

South: Which level of people do you refer to in general when you mention people who are trusted by their superiors?

North: Whoever is trusted by their superiors.

South: Secret meetings between such people are worth examining. However, I believe it is more important to improve current South-North relations as it could enable such contacts. I will speak candidly as it is between the two of us. If we could improve our relations, for instance, by ceasing the dispatch of spies, the abduction of KAL flights and numerous fishermen, the change in circumstances can serve as a basis for such meetings, couldn't it? Our Red Cross meetings will serve a role in such a change in circumstances as well.....

North: I have much to say about such issues (referring to the spies and abduction issues)..... Such issue of trusted people having meetings is not for us to decide.....

South: It is worth studying and examining.

North: Why are you so strongly opposed to a joint-recess? We could visit the Freedom House and you could visit Panmun-gak. Why are you so worried about it? You have an army of seven hundred thousand and also a much larger population.....

South: What do you mean worry? We take recesses naturally whenever it is appropriate. There is no need to decide when, where and whom with to take recesses as if it is such an important thing. For us, public opinion is important. Taking the Red Cross meetings as an example, many people criticize us, arguing that the delegates

only take rests and eat instead of work. Should I show you a cartoon from our paper which criticizes us for not making any progress in our meetings, and for having luncheons all the time?

North: If we meet more often, talk to each other and share meals, it will be helpful for us to better understand each other. What do you think about our luncheon invitation during the 10th meeting?

South: I've spoken with the delegates, including the chief delegate. They believe it is better that we have luncheons after we achieve something in our meetings.

North: Please clarify whether we should prepare the luncheon at the 10th meeting or not. We will need some [time for] preparation.

South: I suppose it is better that you do not prepare [a luncheon]..

North: In cases which I need to meet with Mr. Jeong, I will contact via "memos" during our meetings from now on.

South: Let's do that.