



The Crop Fields Tell

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Preface

It was the centuries-old desire of Korean peasants to till their own land.

However, they had long been forced to suffer a miserable fate for they had no land of their own.

In the days when the country was occupied militarily by the Japanese imperialists, they were subjected to double and treble exploitation and oppression.

Their dream came true after Kim Il Sung, eternal President of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, liberated their country and enforced the agrarian reform to provide them with land free of charge.

Even after having fulfilled their centuries-old desire, Kim Il Sung continued to give on-site guidance at the rural areas and discussed farming with the farmers to make them better off.

He gave on-site guidance at some farms even in the last days of his life.

On a spring day he transplanted rice seedlings on Mirim

Plain with the farmers, and one day under the burning sun he told the farmers the ways to overcome the drought at the edge of a dry field; visiting a farm on an autumn day he shared with the farmers the joy of bumper harvest, and on a winter day he discussed with the farmers how to make good preparations for the following year's farming, walking along a snow-covered road by a crop field.

This book tells some of the anecdotes concerning Kim Il Sung's on-site guidance at farms.

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To Turn the Dream into Reality

One day in February 1946, Kim Il Sung, while passing through a village in Sinmi-ri, had his car stopped in front of a house by the road.

He entered the yard of the house and called the householder.

The householder greeted him, thinking that the visitor with a broad smile on his face might be an ordinary cadre.

Guided by him and his wife, Kim Il Sung went into the narrow living room. He looked at the room carefully.

The room was an epitome of the state of poverty of the peasants of those days.

The only piece of furniture in the room was a small chest of drawers with a few quilts on it.

At that moment an official took some farmers into the room.

Kim Il Sung welcomed them.

He asked a peasant in front of him if he had land and how many members he had in his family.

The answer was that he had no land of his own and his family members were five.

Kim Il Sung asked him if he had heard that the landlords' land would be confiscated and distributed to the landless peasants.

The man answered:

I've heard the rumour, but I wonder if it is true.

It seemed the others were of the same opinion.

Kim Il Sung asked them:

Will you take the land if the country deprives the landlords of their land and distribute it to you, landless peasants?

They all answered:

Yes, of course. It has long been our dream. But it would not be so easy as you have said, we think.

After laughing heartily, Kim Il Sung said:

If it is your desire, the landlords should be deprived of their land and the land should be distributed to the tillers of the land free of charge. The land ought to have been owned by the peasants who till it, but as the world has been changed until now, the peasants are not masters of their own land. Now that the country has been liberated, we should change the world and the peasants should live well, tilling their own land.

Surprised, another peasant said:

You have said that the country will give land to us. Then will the land be given to peasants like me who don't own even an inch of land?

Kim Il Sung, holding his hand, said that the country would give land first to the peasants who owned no land.

The peasants cheered at once.

Then another peasant, hesitatingly, asked:

Would the landlords not buy the land again to lease it to peasants?

Kim Il Sung said emphatically:

The tenancy system will disappear for ever in our country. The landlords never revive. The state will carry out the agrarian reform on the principle of free confiscation and free distribution.

The peasants exclaimed:

What a dream-like miracle! We have to live long to see the wonderful world.

Looking at the peasants, Kim Il Sung said:

Our peasants, who had been deprived of their country by the Japanese in the past, lived under sub-human maltreatment and humiliation. But our liberated peasants have to live happily and as masters of the country and the land. You must unite and wage a vigorous struggle against the landlords, believing that such a world is sure to come.

The peasants were overwhelmed by the joy of being able to realize their lifetime desire for their land, but they did not know who the visitor was.

Paying for a Meal

It was at lunch time one February day in 1946.

Some cars, running on the road from Pyongyang to Sinuiju, stopped in front of a noodle house.

A young and finely-built man got off and entered the yard of the house and called the owner, saying:

Excuse me, I have heard this house is good at making noodles.

He entered the room, expressive of poverty, and asked the master with a smile:

How come did you arrange a noodle house here?

The owner answered his life was so poor that he wondered if he could earn some money by making and selling noodles while farming.

The guest asked him whether his life had gotten better.

“There are some guests who are on the way from and to Pyongyang and Sinuiju, but there is little improvement.”

Sitting down on the floor among the peasants, the guest asked them about their farming, telling them that now that the country had been liberated, they should change the world and live well by tilling their own land.

When the peasants were listening to his words that they had never

heard, someone in the kitchen said that the noodles had been prepared.

Thinking that the guest would be an important man, the peasants tried to get out, lest they disturb him.

The guest invited them to the table, saying they had told him good words and they should continue to talk with him, taking noodles together.

As a Korean proverb says that “Drink liquor before eating noodles,” an official took a bottle of liquor into the room.

The young man poured liquor into a glass for the owner first and then for others.

“I have to give treatment to my visitors, but it has become the other way round. I feel embarrassed,” said the owner.

The young man said with a smile as if to relieve the man of his embarrassment:

When the peasants in this village are well-off, I will come again to receive your welcome. Your wife looks skilled in preparing noodles. You should prepare such good noodles in large quantities so that our peasants can eat them with relish. Peasants, who work much for the country, are the most distinguished guests.

After finishing his meal, he spoke highly of the noodles, and told an official accompanying to pay for the meal.

Surprised, the owner refused to receive the payment, saying:

“I am not so greedy. And it is an improper act to receive money from a

man who treasures us peasants.”

The guest took his hand and said:

You have to receive the payment. When the peasants in this village are well-off, I will come and eat noodles without paying. Please take it today. I promise I'll come again.

It was after the cars disappeared in the distance that the owner of the noodle house and peasants came to learn that the young man was General Kim Il Sung, who had liberated their country.

Encouraging a Peasant

The following happened one February day in 1946.

Braving the hard wind, Kim Il Sung visited a village in Taedong County, South Phyongan Province.

He made his steps to a straw-thatched house, which seemed to be poor.

Recognizing him, the householder said:

“You brought liberation to the country, General, and I have to take out a velvet cushion for you. But all we have is a straw mat. I am so sorry.”

Saying it was alright, Kim Il Sung moved into the room.

The room looked so small, and it was dark as the door was thickly papered.

But Kim Il Sung sat on the straw mat unceremoniously.

Looking at the dining table, he said the family seemed to be running short of food grains, and asked the host if he had enough seed potatoes.

He had seen an earthen bowl with a few potatoes, which seemed to have been left over by the children after breakfast.

The man answered:

“We have enough seed potatoes. Before liberation, we were always short of food after paying the rent, so we managed to live by cutting trees and selling them and working for others. But as I think that our world has come, I feel my stomach full even if I may not eat.”

After listening to his words filled with confidence, Kim Il Sung said:

Now you will be able to live well with your own land. The land ought to have been owned by the peasants who till it. In the past the peasants, who worked all season shedding sweat and blood, had no land, whereas the landlords, who never worked, had much land. Let us change the world. By the way, how much land can an able-bodied man till?

And Kim Il Sung asked how much land a young man could till.

He can till about one hectare, answered the man.

Kim Il Sung said that the peasants, who knew more about the land, should be the motive force in the agrarian reform, and continued:

When the agrarian reform is enforced, our peasants will be able to till their own land. When you have your own land, you should work well without leaving even an inch of your land idle.

The man exclaimed, saying:

Will you really give us land, General? Then our cherished desire will be realized.

So excited, he could not say any more.

On the Eve of the Promulgation of the Agrarian Reform Law

One day in March 1946, Kim Il Sung visited the then Sinhung-ri, Kophyong Sub-county, Taedong County, South Phyongan Province.

His car stopped in front of his aunt's house.

On hearing the news of his arrival, the villagers came to the house.

Kim Il Sung sat on the straw mat, and asked the villagers outside to come in.

Kim Il Sung first inquired about the situation in the village.

In those days, the spirit of the local peasants was surging. The landlords were dead set against the 3:7 system, but the peasants, not yielding to their demand, were making preparations for the year's farming by pooling their efforts.

He was very satisfied, and asked his aunt's husband:

Is the land here fertile? And what about the grain yields?

The man answered the land was fairly fertile and the harvest had been good.

Kim Il Sung then asked about the number of landlords there.

The answer was that there were some but the majority of the local people used to tenant the land of landlords in the city of Pyongyang.

Kim Il Sung asked him again if it would be good to confiscate the land and distribute it to the peasants free of charge or to enable them to make it their own after paying yearly instalments for the distributed land.

His aunt's husband said it would be good to confiscate the land and distribute it to the peasants, both free of charge.

After listening to his words, Kim Il Sung said looking at the villagers:

During the Japanese imperialist rule our peasants suffered a great deal of hardship. If they farm well on the distributed land, our peasants will be well-off. The cadres in the people's power organs should work as they should. They should perform their functions and role properly. What about going outside and seeing the fields here now?

He then climbed up the hill behind his aunt's house, and said the fields were fairly good.

After looking around the fields to be distributed to the peasants, he said to the officials accompanying him:

It's high time we went back. Let's go.

As she saw him after a long separation, his aunt asked him to have a rest just for a few minutes, but he declined, saying:

I will come back later.

On March 5 Kim Il Sung promulgated the historic Agrarian Reform Law.

Land to Its Tillers

After the Agrarian Reform Law was promulgated, officials in Taedong County, South Phyongan Province, launched into the agrarian reform.

But the agrarian reform, the first of its kind, was not all plain sailing. Members of the rural committee failed to reach consensus of opinions because of the differences in the number of landlords, whose lands were to be confiscated, and of peasants, to whom land was to be distributed, and in the fertility of the land to be distributed.

To make matters worse, the peasants, who were so misled by the rumours spread by the reactionaries, were dubious of the agrarian reform.

One day in March 1946, Kim Il Sung visited a village in Taedong County.

The chairman of the rural committee frankly said to him that it was too challenging for him as he did not know much enough to be in charge of the difficult and complicated agrarian reform.

After a while even the elders of the village came.

Kim Il Sung ensured that the elderly sat in the front ring of the circle, and asked for their opinions about the agrarian reform.

One of them said:

It has been our life-long wish to till our own land. Now that the wish has been fulfilled, we can die in peace.

As the elderly were trying to bow to him, Kim Il Sung dissuaded them, saying:

As you are so happy, I feel happy too. But it is not me who has given you the land. You have just regained your land. Who will own the land except you, who have ploughed it, sowed seeds and gathered harvests? The land belongs to peasants who till the land.

Suddenly there arose cheers.

Fixing a Nameplate

One March day in 1946 Kim Il Sung visited a village in Taedong County, South Phyongan Province.

There once lived a big landlord around here, said Kim Il Sung, adding that he would like to see the landlord's house.

Being guided to the house, which mirrored the cruel landlord's extravagant lifestyle, he studied its imposing layout for a while.

When he went past the gate of the house, all the former servants of the landlord knelt down to greet him.

Kim Il Sung helped them stand up, and went into the yard.

Then the peasants sat around him in a room, just as a harmonious family would do.

He asked the elders, who were sitting on an earthen verandah, to come in.

Among them there were some who had served the landlord for long years; upon entering the room, they knelt down and put both hands on their knees, the same way that they used to do before the overbearing landlord.

Kim Il Sung told them to sit comfortably, saying that he had a grandfather like them, who was still farming. Seeing their pitifully servile

manner, he was reminded of the poor villagers in Mangyongdae, where there was his native house with a low, thatched roof.

Saying that land would be distributed to the tillers free of charge, he asked their opinions.

Everybody looked overjoyed, unable to find words to express their gratitude.

Kim Il Sung inquired about the shares of land for the peasants, before saying: Before liberation, landlords and capitalists lived in clover by bleeding workers and peasants white. Now that the country was liberated, our workers and peasants should be well-off. I believe they will be so in the future.

That day he wrote the name of one of them on a nameplate and fixed it on the gate post.

The man could not believe his eyes as he looked at the nameplate, which was proof positive that he became the owner of the big house.

Kim Il Sung took the peasants to the fields, and ensured that they were given the best ones, saying they should till the land for ever.

In a Noodle House

One day in March 1946, on his way back from the then Kangso County, South Phyongan Province, after learning about the result of the agrarian reform there, Kim Il Sung met his old schoolmate in the days of Changdok School.

Saying they could take a meal together, he led him into a noodle house.

Sitting in front of them was an old man.

All the guests in the noodle house were excitedly talking about the agrarian reform.

One said that he was given nearly 4 000 *phyong* (one *phyong* equals 3.24 square metres) of land and danced the whole day. Another one said that a bachelor in his forties changed his fate after receiving land and then got married.

But the old man sitting in front of Kim Il Sung, with a bowl of noodles and a cup of liquor on the table, was only looking out the window with a smile.

There was a fine calf tied to a tree outside.

Kim Il Sung said to him:

Please take the noodles. The strips may get too soft.

“Thank you. But it’s alright. They are all mine.”

You are right, said Kim Il Sung.

He was so pleased that he opened his mind of his own accord:

I was given one hectare of land thanks to the benevolence of General Kim Il Sung. I am determined to work hard. Now I cannot afford to buy an ox, so I've bought a calf, but this autumn I will buy an ox for sure. Wait and see how I farm with an ox.

Kim Il Sung asked where he lived.

“I am living in a village beyond Ot Hill. In the morning, when crossing the hill, it came across my mind that the hill is also ours. By the way, do you know why the hill is called Ot?”

Kim Il Sung already knew why, but listened to him carefully.

In olden times, the noblemen in several regions including Taedong County, on their way to Pyongyang, would change their clothes on a hill where the Walled City of Pyongyang could be seen for they could not go into the city, where the governor was, in dirty clothes. So the hill was covered with white clothes. Hence the name Ot (clothes in English).

The man continued:

“When crossing the hill, I thought that it was our hill, so I hung up my overcoat there.”

Others around him giggled, but his story continued:

“But when I was going down the hill, I thought suddenly that in olden times the noblemen did so as they were afraid of the governor, and I have no one to be afraid of. So I went up the hill and put on the overcoat.”

Kim Il Sung laughed heartily, and others joined in.

He said to his old classmate:

We have done well to have come to this noodle house. Where else can we hear such an excellent story?

He then told the peasant that he was an excellent story-teller, and told him to enjoy the noodles.

After taking the noodles Kim Il Sung also stood up and said:

We are going. Please work hard to obtain enough food and buy an ox.

Leaving the noodle house, the schoolmate realized why Kim Il Sung dropped in at the noodle house.

Talking at the Edge of a Field

One day in April 1946, Kim Il Sung saw some peasants who were ploughing a field and planting foxtail.

He had his car stopped and said hello to them.

Though they greeted him, the peasants did not recognize who he was.

Kim Il Sung sat on the edge of the field, asking them to have a chat.

The peasants gathered around him.

Kim Il Sung asked the peasant, who was ploughing the field, how much land he was given.

The peasant answered it was nearly 5 000 *pyong* including paddy and non-paddy fields.

Then Kim Il Sung asked him about the number of his family members.

Eight, answered the man.

Kim Il Sung asked him what his wish was now that the agrarian reform had been enforced.

The man answered:

I was given land and I can live well from now on. What more can I wish for?

Kim Il Sung asked him if he had seeds, draught ox and implements for the year's farming.

The peasant answered that as they had their own land, they could pool their seeds and share the draught oxen and farm implements with one another.

Kim Il Sung spoke highly of his idea, and said that the state would help them in the future.

He then asked him about the amount of cereals they had paid to the landlord for the lease of land before liberation.

We paid nearly the whole harvest every year, and as we were to farm next year, we had to present pigs or chickens to the landlord to lease the land again, was the answer.

Kim Il Sung asked him how much would be good for the tax in kind as they had become masters of land.

The peasants, failing to understand what he had meant, only looked at one another.

Kim Il Sung proposed 30 %.

All the peasants said it was a good idea.

Kim Il Sung asked them if 25% was alright.

The peasants were again at a loss for words.

One, hesitatingly, said:

Before liberation we paid 70% to the landlord. 25% is so small.

Kim Il Sung took out his handbook and wrote something in it. Standing up, he said to the peasants:

Now you have become masters of the land, so you should farm well. In

this way, you can improve your livelihood and pay sound cereals as tax in kind to the state.

The peasants were so filled with the feeling of happiness that they failed to say goodbye to the visitor properly.

On June 27, two months later, a decision on enforcing the system of the peasants paying 25% of their harvests to the state as agricultural tax in kind was adopted. It was a historic step aimed at improving the peasants' living standards so as to consolidate the success of the agrarian reform.

Who Might the Man Be?

One day in October 1946, on his way for on-site guidance, Kim Il Sung saw a peasant harvesting adzuki beans with his family members.

He approached the man, saying:

How are you? Are you harvesting?

“Yes, I am.”

He went on: I just want to talk with you about your farming. Can you?

The man welcomed him.

Kim Il Sung sat on the leaves under a chestnut tree, and asked him about the land he had been given and the year’s farming.

The man answered he had received 1 500 *pyong* of paddy field and 6 500 *pyong* of non-paddy field and the year’s farming was promising.

Pointing at an ox by a stream, Kim Il Sung asked him if that was his.

The answer was yes.

Kim Il Sung told him:

It means you have no difficulty in improving your livelihood. Time has come for the peasants to improve their livelihood by their own efforts. Only when they farm well can other people become well-off and the country prosperous as much.

And looking at the field, he continued:

It seems the soil is clayey. Which crops do you plant here?

We plant corn, answered the peasant.

Presuming that corn would not grow well in the field, Kim Il Sung asked the reason.

The peasant answered deplorably:

The land here is so clayey that even though it rains a little, the soil becomes muddy and then clayey if it is sunny.

Kim Il Sung smiled and told him:

Try and dig ditches. If deep ditches are dug in several places, the field would not suffer damage from the cold. And if it doesn't rain, please plough the field and weed it several times. Then the soil will become soft. As a saying goes that there is no infertile land for a diligent peasant, crops depend on those who grow them.

The peasant blushed scarlet.

Kim Il Sung continued:

Now peasants have their own land. You should till your land diligently though it is clayey. You have an ox, so you can cut grass and bring night soil from the town to produce manure. If you apply much manure to the field, the soil will become soft and crops will grow well. Weeding is important. When there is no weed in the field, crops grow well. As there is a stream over there, it will be easy to drain water out of the field.

The man promised that he would do so from the following year.

Kim Il Sung asked him if he went to the room for studying nation

building in the evenings.

The man answered he went to the room every evening and listened to the information related with the election.

Kim Il Sung praised him and said:

Our peasants, now masters of the country, should know politics. Then they can learn about the situation in our country and what the country does. Only then can they farm and raise their children well.

After shaking the peasant's chapped hand, Kim Il Sung stood up, saying goodbye to him.

The peasant could not move, thinking, as he looked at the car disappearing.

He might be an official from a central organ, but he is so good at farming. I have never seen a man, who rides in a car, talking with a peasant, haven't I? Then who might the man be?

Impression of Peasant Representatives

In 1946, the year after liberation, the country gathered rich harvest, unprecedented in the past.

Out of their gratitude for the agrarian reform, peasants across the country turned out in the drive for paying agricultural tax in kind.

In November 1946, the then Sinbu Sub-county, Sonchon County, North Phyongan Province, won the first place in the drive in the province, and representatives from the sub-county came to Pyongyang with a letter of thanks and gifts to be presented to Kim Il Sung.

Kim Il Sung welcomed the peasants.

The peasants could not find words for greeting the leader, whom they had respected so ardently.

After a while, a peasant handed the letter of thanks over to Kim Il Sung, saying:

We have come to extend thanks to you on behalf of the peasants in Sinbu Sub-county, Sonchon County, North Phyongan Province. We won the first place in the province in the drive for paying agricultural tax in kind. We worked hard to repay your benevolence as you liberated the country and made us masters of land.

Kim Il Sung asked them about the result of their crop harvest.

We achieved a bountiful harvest, another peasant answered.

Kim Il Sung spoke highly of them, saying:

Now we are building a new democratic country, eliminating the aftereffects of vicious Japanese imperialist colonial rule and the remnants of feudalism. What is most important for us now is to conduct nation building efficiently. In these efforts, peasants should consolidate the people's government and farm well. They should be effective in producing cereals, cultivating cotton plants, producing cocoons and raising domestic animals. On your return you should be exemplary in this regard.

Then stressing that he would also devote all his energy and passion to nation building, he continued:

If you pool your strength, energy and wisdom and unite with one another, you can do everything. Let's build a prosperous and democratic country good to live in.

The peasant representatives were surprised. It was their natural duty to extend thanks to him for giving land to them, but the leader expressed his determination to work harder for the country.

They thought: *Could there be another national leader who is so modest and unreserved as he?*

At Kim Je Won's House

One April day in 1947, Kim Il Sung visited a farm house.

Acquainting himself with the name of the village, number of houses and living situation of the village, he asked the host, Kim Je Won, how he could manage to produce 140 sacks of rice from 3 600 *phyong* of paddy fields.

“I produced a large quantity of manure and spread it on the fields. I also buried reeds to prevent the soil from getting saline,” Kim Je Won answered.

That is right, Kim Il Sung said, before continuing:

A Korean saying goes that there is no bad land for a diligent peasant, and I think this applies to you. You should relate to the peasants in your village and others the good experience you have gained in increasing grain output. Peasants should collect green grass and raise domestic animals to produce manure in a large amount to fertilize their paddy fields.

Then he asked if the peasants were raising livestock in large numbers.

The old man answered that they were raising oxen, pigs and chicken.

Kim Il Sung said:

Farm households should raise livestock. You should set an example in raising livestock so that all the households in this village can raise oxen,

pigs and chicken.

Looking at the village through a window, he continued: You should turn your village into a place good to live in. Today I came to find that the village looks unsightly, with a mess of straw-thatched houses and zigzagging roads. You should make your village look cosy by building tile-roofed houses and straightening the roads.

As you, General, have taught us everything and solved all problems, we will do farming well to repay your benevolence, said the peasant.

Wearing a smile, Kim Il Sung stood up, saying he should go now.

Grasping his hands, the old man said: General, you have come to my house for the first time, and if you leave like this, I would feel regretful for the rest of my life. Though not rich, please take a meal.

Kim Il Sung said:

I am very grateful to you, but I am very busy. So I must go now. Do not feel disappointed about it. I wish you and your family members good health and bumper crop this year.

Transplanting Rice Seedlings with Peasants

On a sunny morning in June 1947 Kim Il Sung went to Mirim Plain. He shook hands with the peasants and walked to a paddy field, saying: Let's start to work joyfully from early morning.

Saying that it was the first time for him to transplant rice seedlings after he returned to the country, Kim Il Sung went into the field ahead of others.

He started working before anyone else and continued to transplant the seedlings with care.

When some peasants asked him to have a rest, he said: We came here to transplant rice seedlings, so we have to fulfil our task. Let's have a rest after transplanting some more seedlings.

Then he stressed that the seedlings should be handled with care as each of them was permeated with the sweat of the peasants.

The peasants, who were transplanting the seedlings, and others carrying and throwing them into the fields, began to handle the seedlings with tender care.

Seeing the fields, Kim Il Sung said:

Peasants should do farming well. In the past, our peasants, because they had no land, were deprived of their crops by the landlords even though they toiled away doing farming, and lived in poverty. However, now that

they have become the masters of the land, they can lead a life free from any worry if they do farming well. If food is abundant by effective farming can the peasants lead a rich life and nation building be plain sailing.

He stressed the need to make Mirim Plain fertile and realign its patches into standardized ones.

He then continued transplanting the rice seedlings with the peasants.

That day he stopped working after finishing the scheduled transplanting.

Taking a Photo of a Woman Holding a Sheaf of Wheat

One July day in 1947 Kim Il Sung was on his way for field guidance when he saw a peasant couple harvesting wheat in a field near the road.

He had his car stopped and asked the man:

What a good crop! How much do you think will the yield be?

The peasant answered it would be a sack per 50 *phyong*.

Kim Il Sung again said the crop looked promising, and asked him how large was the land he had been given during the agrarian reform.

It is 4 500 *phyong* of non-paddy field and 1 500 *phyong* of paddy field, the peasant answered.

Kim Il Sung asked whether that field was one of the fields he had received.

“No, it used to be grassland, and I reclaimed it into paddy and non-paddy fields.”

Kim Il Sung praised him, and said to the officials accompanying him that peasants had now become masters of the land.

Then he asked if there existed other uncultivated land.

The peasant answered there had been a small area of such land, but it had already been reclaimed.

Kim Il Sung said emphatically:

You should not leave even an inch of land idle. Peasants need land, and the country can be prosperous if they do farming well.

Then he asked the man’s wife, who was standing behind him:

How do you feel doing farming with equal rights with men after the liberation of the country?

The woman answered that she did not feel exhausted as she worked after sleeping without any worry.

Kim Il Sung said:

The position and role of women are very important in building a new society. They have to take charge of one of the two wheels of the revolution.

Then he told her to hold a wheat sheaf and pose for the camera.

After that he said to the couple:

Farming well is the duty of the peasants who have become masters of the country, masters of the land, in the liberated country. Always mindful of the benevolence of the country that distributed land to you, you should

do farming well.

A few days later, the photo was carried on the provincial newspaper just before the first anniversary of the Law on Sex Equality.

Promise with a Peasant

One day in August 1947, Kim Il Sung met a woman peasant, named Ri Kye San, from the then Oktong-ri, Phyonggang County, Kangwon Province.

After shaking her chapped hand, he said she must have taken much trouble to come all this way.

As he really met her, an ordinary peasant, the woman got all the more embarrassed.

As if to calm her down, he asked informally for what she came to see him.

The woman answered:

I have come with wheat and potato I produced on the land distributed to me thanks to the benevolence of you, General Kim Il Sung. They are not much, but my sincerity permeates them, so please accept them. Until two years ago I was a servant at other's house, but now I have my house, till my own land and lead an honourable life.

Holding her hand and leading her to sit down, he again asked about the

year's farming.

The woman replied: This year's farming is successful as we have tilled the land with sincerity and worked hard. After becoming masters of their own fields, all are living well without any worry.

Kim Il Sung suddenly asked her:

Is there any school in your village? Is there a middle school?

The woman answered that there was only a primary school.

Kim Il Sung said:

Thank you for coming all the way with the crops, but I think it would have been better if you had donated them to build a school and a meeting hall. Peasants should all do farming well and pool their efforts to build schools for the education of the rising generations. Every rural community should have a middle school so that the children there could become middle-school graduates. It is said that students cannot finish middle school as it is far away. So every ri should have a middle school.

Then he asked the woman if she graduated from a school.

The woman said she had never enrolled at a school.

Kim Il Sung again asked if she was studying or reading newspapers.

“General, I am an illiterate,” said the woman.

Kim Il Sung said emphatically:

You should learn how to read and write as quickly as possible. All the Koreans should be able to read and write Korean letters. To this end, they should study. Our Korean women became illiterate not because they were

not good at learning but because the Japanese imperialists did not allow them to learn. It is not late, so from now on you should study. Can you?

“Yes, I will,” replied the woman.

Kim Il Sung said:

Then promise me that you will learn Korean letters on your return and three months later send me a letter written by yourself.

She promised to do so.

Kim Il Sung stressed:

Become literate and then appeal to all the other illiterates to launch an anti-illiteracy campaign.

The woman accepted his suggestion.

Three months later, Kim Il Sung received a letter from her.

The letter reads:

General, thanks to your guidance, I, who lived under exploitation and oppression and in darkness and poverty, have become a master of the land and the country and is leading a happy life. Today I, for the first time in my life, write a letter and send it to you. Thank you very much for nurturing me like this.

A few days later, Kim Il Sung sent a reply letter to the woman. In the letter, he wrote:

I feel happy that you have sent me a letter after becoming literate as you promised three months before. I hope that you will work and study harder to achieve fresh successes.

This stoked the fire of a mass anti-illiteracy campaign throughout the country.

Price of Irrigation Water Lowered

One August day in 1947, Kim Il Sung called officials of the then Sinanju Sub-county in Anju County.

He asked the chairman of the sub-county Party committee if they had experienced loss of grains from the rains that year.

The chairman answered that some paddy and non-paddy fields were flooded, but now they were alright.

Kim Il Sung pointed at a field that still retained the traces of flooding, and said:

Irrigation system is important, but what is not inferior to it is drainage system. You see how important water management is.

The officials felt remorseful at the thought that they could have prevented damage from flooding if they had established a proper drainage system.

Then Kim Il Sung asked the chairman about farming of the year.

The chairman said it was good.

Kim Il Sung again asked about the dry-field crops and, hearing that they were also good, he said:

To do farming well, manure should be spread from early spring and

diligent work required. By doing so, high yield can be expected.

Then he acquainted himself with the living conditions of the peasants and asked what the opinions of the peasants were.

“The peasants are diligently working with the happiness of receiving land and donating cereals to the state out of patriotism,” said the chairman.

Then Kim Il Sung asked if the price of irrigation water was expensive.

At that time, the peasants were farming with water pumped up from the Chongchon River, free from drought. And they had enough cereals even after paying the water price.

So, the chairman said it was not expensive.

However, Kim Il Sung said to the officials accompanying him that the price seemed a bit expensive, and that it should be lowered so as to improve the living of the peasants as quickly as possible.

Compromise for Two Oxen

One day in August 1947 Kim Il Sung met a peasant from Anbyon County, Kangwon Province.

Kim Il Sung, speaking highly of him for having come all this way, shook hands with him, and offered him a seat.

Seeing the peasant's tanned face for a moment, Kim Il Sung said:

I have heard that you have brought two oxen by train to Pyongyang to donate them to the country, saying you are living well thanks to the agrarian reform. I am very grateful for it. But do you have an ox at your house now?

The peasant answered there was none as he had brought his to Pyongyang.

Kim Il Sung again asked how he could do farming without an ox.

The peasant said his father and uncle living in the same village had an ox each, so there was no problem.

Hearing this, Kim Il Sung said:

You could do farming with an ox from your father or uncle, but I think it is not good to receive help from your relatives after donating your oxen to the country. If all peasants donate their oxen to the country, how can they do farming? I am very thankful for your deeds, but I think you should

consider it again.

However, the peasant dug in his heels, saying he could not take the oxen back as the donation was not only his own initiative but desire of all his family members and relatives.

Kim Il Sung asked if he could make a promise.

The peasant willingly said he would do anything the General wanted.

Kim Il Sung said:

If you promise that you would raise two calves this year, I will ensure that your oxen are received.

The peasant agreed, saying:

Before I left for Pyongyang, I discussed to get a calf from my father's house. Also my uncle's cow will bear a calf in autumn so I can raise two calves.

This time Kim Il Sung agreed to receive the peasant's oxen.

The compromise enabled the two oxen to settle in Pyongyang.

At a Mountain Village

One day in September 1947, Kim Il Sung visited Yangdok County.

After looking round a power plant, he went to a village in Onchon Sub-county in the county when the sun started to set.

The community had nine deep and rugged valleys, and at the ninth valley sat the village, called Kujigol.

After negotiating his way through dense forests, he finally found a cottage in the village.

In the yard he saw an old man of about 70, and said:

I dropped in at this village for some work. You may have much trouble living in such a mountainous village.

We have no trouble, said the old man, adding:

You, who are working for the country, must have taken much trouble to come to this remote area.

Then Kim Il Sung asked if he had lived long in this area.

The old man answered:

As the Japanese exploitation grew harsher, my living conditions became extremely hard. So, thinking that I would not see the Japanese in this remote area and that I may live better if I engage in slash and burn farming, I came here a long time ago.

Kim Il Sung asked him:

Can I stay in your house overnight?

The old man said:

Yes, of course, but my house is too humble. Anyway come in.

Then he talked with the old man for a good while.

He asked the man the area of land that had been distributed to him.

The reply was that he had received 6 000 *phyong* of slash-and-burn field and 600 *phyong* of flat field.

Kim Il Sung asked him how he felt as he tilled his own land.

The peasant answered:

Above all, the Japanese were expelled after liberation, and I feel happy to till my land.

Kim Il Sung asked about the crops cultivated in the area.

The peasant answered:

We mainly plant foxtail millet and potato, but the land in this mountainous area is so barren that their yields are not rich.

Kim Il Sung told him:

Such barren land as that in this mountainous village can become fertile if much manure is spread. There is no fertile land or barren land for a diligent peasant. And I will see to it that more fertilizer was supplied to this area.

Then he asked him what species of wild edible herbs and fruits grew well in the area.

The peasant answered that the fruits were Amur grape, tara vine and sandpear and the herbs were Aralia shoots, anise plant, bracken fern, bellflower, lance asiabell and Korean atractylodes.

After saying that people in the mountainous region should make good use of the mountains and people in the coastal region should exploit the sea, Kim Il Sung continued:

The species of wild fruits are larger in number in this area than in Hyesan or Kangwon Province. And various edible herbs as well as medicinal herbs are abundant. If such wild fruits and medicinal and edible herbs are collected in a planned way and used, you can earn a large income without much principal.

The old man exclaimed and said:

To hear what you have to say, these mountains look as if they were sackfuls of money. By the way, sir, can you tell that to other villagers? If they hear such a wonderful story, they will feel excited. Sir, where are you from? How on earth do you know everything so well?

Wearing a smile, Kim Il Sung answered that he also hailed from Phyongan Province.

The old man said:

I see. So you are familiar with farming. Such persons like you hailing from rural area must work in counties. If not, how can they properly guide farming, the great foundation of the country?

At mealtime in the evening, Kim Il Sung sat with the old man to have

dinner.

Seeing the foods prepared were not from his house, the old man felt sorry and said:

Oh, I am sorry. It is the host's duty to serve food to the guest, but this is opposite.

Kim Il Sung consoled him.

At that time, the chairman of the Onchon Sub-county People's Committee, who heard the news belatedly, came and greeted Kim Il Sung, saying:

How do you do, General? I am chairman of the people's committee of this sub-county.

Seeing Kim Il Sung leading the chairman to the table, the old man felt surprised and said he was quite sorry for failing to recognize him.

Kim Il Sung told him:

Do not say like that. You talked about farming, the main foundation of the country. What is wrong for it? I need to know about the situation in this area.

Shedding tears, the old man took out an old handbook and small pencil and wrote something on it. Then he said:

General, I wrote here that General Kim Il Sung came to my house. I will hand it down to my children.

Kim Il Sung said:

Instead of writing like that, please write that they should pick gold

from all mountains, and hand the writing down to your children.

The old peasant felt so excited that he stood up and danced.

This is the origin of the history of “golden mountains” in the country.

Six Mountain Birds

One morning in January 1948, a car stopped in front of a farm house.

The host had just finished his breakfast at this time, and looked out of the door to see what happened.

Then a young man asked the host if his party could warm themselves inside.

The host was sorry that the rooms were not clean, but agreed.

The young man stepped into the room.

He then asked the host how his life was now, compared with that before liberation.

The host said now was a good world for peasants like him.

When the young man asked him what the good points were, he continued:

There are many. First, we do farming on our own land so we do not need to see the landlord. And there are no landlords so we do not get exploited by them. So our living gets richer. We now take meals with no worry and sleep well at night.

The young man asked him if he had enough food grains, clothes and bedding.

The host answered he had plenty of food grains but not enough clothes and bedding.

The young man said to the host that as he had greeted a new world, he could live well if he worked diligently. He then told him what to do and how, so as to live well.

The host was surprised as the young man was so meticulous about the living of the people in a mountainous village.

Looking at the room, the young man saw some birds in a corner of the room, and asked if he could have some of them.

Oh, the host said, adding:

They are wild birds abundant here. Why can't I give you some of them?

Thanking for the warm reception, the young man said that he would take them on his way back after dropping in at a village beyond.

After seeing off the guests, the host felt as if he had seen the young man before. Suddenly, he was reminded of General Kim Il Sung, whose photo he had seen on a newspaper, but immediately he denied, thinking that the General would be so busy administering the country's affairs that he could not come to such a remote village. But he felt something strange, so he went to the village beyond, where he learned that the very young man was General Kim Il Sung, whom he had revered most.

Regretting at his failure to recognize General Kim Il Sung even three

years after liberation, he ran to his house to tell his family about this news. But the news his wife told him was more surprising: the General had taken six birds but left a lot of money with the children.

Now the peasant realized why General Kim Il Sung wanted to take the birds. Rushing outside with the money in an envelope, he expressed thanks to the General in tears.

Lifelong Desire of an Old Man

One day in May 1948, Kim Il Sung arrived at a reservoir in Taedong County, South Phyongan Province.

It was lunchtime, so he had the officials accompanying him prepare lunch.

Then, he met some old men in this area and asked them to have lunch with him. As the old men felt embarrassed, he said eating in company with many others outside would make the foods tastier.

Taking foods with them, Kim Il Sung asked them about the result of agrarian reform and their living conditions.

He asked one of them how many children he had, and the man answered he had two sons and a daughter.

Kim Il Sung asked him why he had a few children.

The man answered he used to be a servant of a rich man, and got married

only when he was 40 years old.

Kim Il Sung asked another old man how many he had.

Two sons, the man answered.

When asked why, he said before liberation his wife had died without having any medicine.

Hearing his answer, Kim Il Sung said:

You all had experienced many sufferings. But now workers and peasants are the masters of the country, masters of the land, and everything belongs to them. So you should send your sons to university so that they can become pillars of the country.

Moved, the man stood up and, bowing, said:

It has been my lifelong desire to send my sons to middle school at least.

Kim Il Sung met his sons, and told the man again that he must send his sons to university.

Wishing him a long life in good health, he stressed once again that he should send his sons to university without fail.

Too moved, the man forgot to say goodbye to him.

Why He Visits a Farm House

One May day in 1948 Kim Il Sung visited a farm house at the entrance to Nam-ri.

After exchanging greetings with the host, Kim Il Sung asked if his living conditions got better after the agrarian reform.

The old man answered:

Of course. There are seven in my family with four working. So we were given a large area of land and have no problem with food grains. Further, we raise ox, pig and other domestic animals. If landlords had come and seen it, they must have felt astonished.

Kim Il Sung went to the pigsty and saw a pig weighing about 70-80kg. He asked how they usually disposed of a pig after it was fully grown.

The host said that they ate the meat and sold the remainder to others or in the market.

Kim Il Sung advised him, saying:

You should sell it to the consumers' cooperative. Then you can buy its meat little by little if needed. If you kill the pig at your house, you can eat at that moment but not at any other time.

Then he went to the kitchen, opened the oven and asked the host

in surprise:

Rice boiled with corn? It seems you are short of rice.

No, answered the host, adding:

Some of my family members say that if they eat rice boiled with corn, they can become as strong as a horse. So, my wife did so this morning once in a long while. There is plenty of rice in the storeroom.

Kim Il Sung asked if he could see rice, and only after seeing a large jar full of rice, he felt relieved.

This time the hostess came and greeted him.

Kim Il Sung said to her:

Sorry, I have seen the jar of rice without your permission. Now I have to leave. Goodbye.

After he left, the couple felt dubious of why he visited their house.

The fact was that Kim Il Sung wanted to understand the food situation of the peasants during their busy season.

Blessing to an Old Man with Over 50 Family Members

One day in June 1948, Kim Il Sung visited a village in Kilju County.

When his car entered a narrow path, it was found to be difficult to run. It had rained all night, so the road had become muddy. At last his car got bogged down.

Kim Il Sung got out of the car and pushed it with the accompanying officials.

One of the officials felt sorry to see that the shoes of Kim Il Sung were covered with mud, but Kim Il Sung said:

It's OK. Peasants work all their life with their hands and feet stained with soil. Now we are in the countryside, and our soil-stained shoes are not a problem. To meet the peasants, this is quite natural.

He went to the first house beside the road and met an old man.

The host was surprised to see General Kim Il Sung.

Kim Il Sung asked him how long he had lived in the village.

The old man answered he had lived there since he was born.

Kim Il Sung asked him if land had been distributed to him, too.

The old man said he now had his own land and was tilling it thanks to the benevolence of the General.

Kim Il Sung then asked him how his life was after liberation.

The old peasant said:

I used to be another man's houseboy before liberation. My children and grandchildren number more than 50. Now those at school age are all enrolled at schools. I have never dreamed that I would see such a good world.

Surprised at the number of the old man's children and grandchildren, Kim Il Sung said:

It is great. Now our peasants are tilling their own land, so their life will become rich. And all the children can study at school. You should ensure that your children and grandchildren study well to become reliable pillars of the country.

The old man said in tears:

Thank you, General. There would be no one in this world, who is blessed like me. No, there isn't.

Personally Drawing the Irrigation Line

One day in September 1948 Kim Il Sung visited a village at the end of Yoltusamcholli Plain after looking round the major sites of the Phyongnam irrigation system before its groundbreaking.

While learning about the situation of the village, he said to an official of the people's committee of the village that he had seen a large area of reed fields, asking him why they had left them idle.

The official answered that it was because there was not enough water to irrigate them.

Kim Il Sung asked the total area of the fields that were not under irrigation.

After hearing that reed fields alone amounted to some 60 hectares, he immediately went to the fields.

While looking round the fields that had turned into boot-deep swamps, he said with regret that the good fields had been left idle, and that, though busy, he would stay overnight in the village to learn about the living of the locals and the farming situation there.

An official told him that it would not be advisable to stay there as drinking water was not available.

Kim Il Sung said he could do with the water the villagers drank.

The villagers were drinking filtered stagnant water or rainwater.

Embarrassed, his aide said that the water was not sterilized.

Kim Il Sung replied that it was alright and he would drink boiled water.

He put up at a peasant's house and had a talk with the villagers.

He told them: You are working hard. Although you had to toil and moil because of the Japanese and landlords before liberation, now you will have no difficulties as you are the masters of the country.

Then he asked the chairman of the people's committee of the village about the year's farming.

The chairman answered that it was not very good as they could not sow the seeds in time in spring because the cold weather lasted long and there was a drought.

Kim Il Sung realized again that the point was water.

After a while, he continued:

It is not accidental that the peasants in this region do farming by relying on the sky. What is most precious for the peasants living on Yoltusamcholli Plain is water. That is why we have decided to carry out the Phyongnam irrigation project in the year after liberation.

Kim Il Sung burned the midnight oil discussing with them problems related to farming and irrigation, and went over the designs of the project under the carbide lamp until dawn.

When an official asked him to take a rest for a while, he said:

I cannot get to sleep at the thought of the local peasants here who have

to dibble young rice seedlings for lack of water. I will take a rest after their centuries-old wish comes true. Don't worry about me.

Then he personally marked the line of waterway, spanning about 2 000km, on the design for the irrigation project in South Phyongan Province.

The Car Returns

One day in January 1949 Kim Il Sung was returning to Pyongyang at midnight after giving on-site guidance at the then Samhwa-ri, Sain Sub-county, Sunchon County, South Phyongan Province.

He was lost in deep thought seeing the darkness through the car window and said: The first house where we dropped in seemed to be the poorest one in the village before liberation. I really regret to have left the house just after meeting the householder in daytime for a while outside.

Kim Il Sung meant the first house he dropped in at when he visited Samhwa-ri.

He said:

The householder would have been disappointed thinking that the Premier of the country did not enter his house but just stood in the yard because his house was not worth seeing. We had better go back to the house and chat with him staying there overnight.

His aide could not say any word.

The car turned back to the village.

When the car was nearing the village, Kim Il Sung said: If the villagers learn that we are here again, they would try to do something to welcome us, failing to sleep properly. Let's go to the village quietly.

He told the driver to stop the car under an ash tree at the entrance to the village, and said:

If we enter the house now, the family would try to prepare food for us. Let's eat something left over from lunch inside the car.

The aide was sorry to offer him only dry foods on that cold January night.

But Kim Il Sung said:

When we were fighting in the mountains, we could not have warm rice with warm soup in a warm room. It's alright.

It was twenty minutes after midnight when he went to the house.

He knocked at the door quietly.

When the householder came out, he said that he came back because he was sorry to have left just after meeting him briefly outside.

The old man was so awestricken, yet grateful.

Then Kim Il Sung began to talk with him.

He asked the man how they were getting on.

The man said he had bought even an ox with the money he had earned by farming the land the Premier had given him.

Kim Il Sung said:

I am glad to hear that you bought an ox after the agrarian reform. In the past our peasants suffered a lot generation after generation because they did not have draught animals.

The man added that he had even bought quilts and kitchenware after the agrarian reform.

Kim Il Sung smiled with satisfaction, saying:

Let's work harder, I trusting you and you helping me.

The man said it was his honour and the people would support the Premier only.

When Kim Il Sung was about to leave at 5:00, the old man said:

We have prepared for you breakfast, though humble. I really hope you will have a meal.

Kim Il Sung thanked him and said:

I think your life is still difficult. You did not have to prepare breakfast for me. It won't take us long to reach Pyongyang.

The old man repeatedly requested him to accept his offer.

Unable to turn down the request, Kim Il Sung had breakfast with them.

Bidding farewell to the family, he said he was sorry to have bothered them and wished them a long life.

Dinner with Peasants

One day in October 1949 Kim Il Sung, who had dropped in at Hungju-dong on his way to Kanggye, asked the driver to stop the car in front of a primary school.

He talked to the villagers in the headmaster's house near the school and saw an artistic performance presented by the pupils of the school.

After the performance was over, it was already dark outside.

When the peasants were trying to say good-bye to him, Kim Il Sung asked an official accompanying him to bring in foods.

The farmers realized that they had made a mistake.

Where are our manners? How dare we have dinner prepared by the Premier and even take it with him when we have to prepare a spread for him?

They were all the more embarrassed when Kim Il Sung personally offered them liquor.

One of them said:

It is very impudent for us to have dinner with you. We should have killed an ox to prepare a spread for you.

Kim Il Sung asked him if he had an ox.

The farmer answered: Yes, I bought an ox with the money I have earned

by tilling the land you gave me.

Kim Il Sung thought for a moment and said with a smile:

Look, it took you four years to buy an ox. It would take you another four years to buy one if you butcher an ox for me.

The peasants could not say any more.

Teaching the Advantages of Mechanization

One day in November 1949 Kim Il Sung, while visiting a village in Jaeryong County, Hwanghae Province, looked for a while at a tractor ploughing a vast paddy field.

He approached a peasant working nearby.

Pointing at the field being ploughed, he asked the peasant which was better, deep ploughing or shallow ploughing.

The peasant answered he thought deep ploughing would be good.

Kim Il Sung asked him what would be the yield in 500 square metres if the field was ploughed deep and much fertilizer was applied.

The peasant answered it would be more than six *som* (one *som* equals 0.18 cubic metres).

When Kim Il Sung asked whether it would yield more if the field was ploughed in autumn, the man could not give a ready answer for he lacked experience in farming as he travelled a lot to make money in mines or

construction sites before liberation.

He asked other peasants if there was anyone with rich farming experience among them.

An old man said he had some.

Kim Il Sung asked him what he thought about ploughing the fields with tractors.

The old man replied:

As you sent us tractors, we are living proudly without begging those with oxen and money for the draught animal.

Kim Il Sung asked why then some peasants were not happy with the tractors ploughing the fields.

All of them blushed because as they had felt so attached to their respective fields, they did not like the tractors breaking the ridges and ploughing the fields without considering whose fields they were.

Looking at the wide fields Kim Il Sung said:

Ploughing the fields with tractors is much faster and better. In future the peasants will be able to use machines not only in ploughing but also in other farming processes. Then farming would become easy, the peasants' life rich and our countryside modernized.

The engine sound of the tractor resounded as if it signalled the emergence of the era of agricultural mechanization.

The First Tractor Driver of the Country

One day in November 1949 Kim Il Sung visited an agricultural experimentation station in Sariwon to see the tractors tilling the paddies.

He asked a senior tractor driver when he had learned how to drive a tractor.

The driver said he had learned in 1947 in Pyongyang.

Kim Il Sung told the officials accompanying him that the man was the first tractor driver of the country.

Kim Il Sung asked how many members there were in his family, whether it was not difficult to till the paddies with the tractor and whether the tractor operated as it should.

The driver told him that it had been difficult at first to drive the tractor but not after he had improved his skills and become familiar with the farm vehicle, and that the tractor ran well without breaking down.

Kim Il Sung was satisfied with his answer, and said:

You should improve your skills further by studying assiduously and train many tractor drivers to become a pioneer in the efforts to do farming with machines. As they had worked hard with backward implements under the exploitation by the feudal rulers and then under the harsh oppression by the Japanese imperialists, our peasants think it

mysterious to do farming with machines and hesitate to introduce them. The centuries-old desire of the peasants for land has been realized. We should free the peasants from arduous labour by developing the country's industry to make many farm machines. The agricultural experimentation station in Sariwon should do many experiments to make farm work easy by inventing various farm machines and improving the conventional implements.

Listening to what Kim Il Sung had to say, the tractor driver realized once again the importance of his task in the coming mechanization of farm work.

Talking with Peasants of His Age

It was at dawn in July 1950.

Kim Il Sung, who was returning to Pyongyang from on-site guidance at the Front Command, asked his chauffeur to stop the car when he heard the sound of a cowbell in the darkness.

He learned that the peasants were carrying to the front wheat, which they had as agricultural tax in kind, and, pointing at the sky bright with flares, said:

Although the Americans are running wild, our peasants are supporting the Korean People's Army soldiers even at night. They are laudable. We'd better talk with them.

He got off the car and walked to a big chestnut tree at the foot of a hill.

He sat with the peasants on a rock, offered them cigarettes and asked how old they were.

They said they were of the same age, 38.

Kim Il Sung asked when their birthdays were.

One said the other was born in November and he in December.

Bursting into laughter, Kim Il Sung said that he was as old as they were, but several months older, adding:

As we are of the same age, let's have a talk open-heartedly. This is an area without any paddies and with only a small area of flat land, so your food situation would be difficult. The situation would become more difficult as you have paid the tax first for the soldiers.

One of them said it was alright for them because sooner or later they would harvest green corn.

Kim Il Sung was lost in deep thought.

Another farmer said:

Ours was a very poor village. We had to live only on foxtail or potatoes, but we have become well off after you gave land and supplied fertilizer to us, and this made it possible for us to buy draught animals. It's not right for us to do nothing for the country.

Others joined him:

If we defeat the Americans, we could be well off.

Kim Il Sung said:

We can win victory in the war if the rear is strong. There may be many things to do after the war, but we are going to direct great efforts to making the farmers live well. The state plans to finance housing construction for them, introduce electricity to the countryside and conduct irrigation projects for the paddies. If the people buckle down with determination, they can turn their living places into ones good to live in.

He then instructed them in detail what they should do to this end.

The farmers thanked him for giving them encouragement.

Kim Il Sung was instilling in them the faith in victory and making them picture in their minds the wonderful tomorrow of their village.

Threshing in the Rimsong Valley

On the morning of one November day in 1950 Kim Il Sung visited a peasant's house in the Rimsong Valley.

The peasant was in the middle of threshing sorghum.

Kim Il Sung said hello to him, entering the yard of the house littered with ears of sorghum.

The peasant was surprised to see him.

Kim Il Sung said:

Please go on with threshing.

Looking at the yard, he asked:

Why are you threshing sorghum when it is better to thresh soybeans in this cold weather?

Because I'm going to pay tax in kind by grain, replied the peasant.

Saying he would join him, Kim Il Sung took a flail. Whenever the flail hit the ears of sorghum, the grains kept coming out of the hulls.

Threshing became animated.

Kim Il Sung asked his aide whether he had ever tried threshing before.

The aide said he had done several times when he was living in

Northeast China, and began threshing.

Kim Il Sung encouraged him, saying:

Very good.

The young man got excited, but hit his ears with the flail by mistake.

There was a burst of laughter around.

Kim Il Sung sat down on the earthen porch and asked the old couple to have a break for a while.

Looking at the piles of corn stalks in the field in front of the house, he said the corn was yet to be harvested.

Then he asked the householder what the peasants were doing and whether there were still many corns yet to be harvested.

He ordered his aide to contact the army units in Kosanjin and make them help the peasants in their farm work.

Later, the soldiers, who were supposed to fight do-or-die battles, helped the peasants in the mountain area in their farm work.

His Relatives Do Farming

One day in February 1951 Kim Il Sung called his aide to his office at the Supreme Headquarters in Konji-ri, and ordered him to tell his uncles and other relatives, who were staying in the rear, to return to Mangyongdae to do farming.

The aide was surprised.

When the country was liberated and Kim Il Sung became the head of state, his grandfather, uncle and other relatives did farming, saying that farming is a great foundation of a country.

As he was familiar with his family's tradition, Kim Il Sung said:

Now that they understand that our people overcame the difficulties after the strategic temporary retreat and are working hard for victory in the war, they would come to Pyongyang to do anything they can. If they are told to do farming at Mangyongdae, they would feel happy. This is also good from the point of view of their health and the tradition of my relatives from Mangyongdae and Chilgol, who have been engaged in labour from generation to generation.

So his relatives came to Mangyongdae and somewhere near Pyongyang, and did farming there for the wartime grain production.

Honorary Member of a Farm

One day in May 1952 Kim Il Sung went to Wonhwa-ri.

The peasants were sowing seeds in dry paddies.

Kim Il Sung said hello to them and shook hands with them.

He saw women ploughing the paddies with camouflaged oxen, and spoke highly of them.

While talking to the women, he learned that they were operating ox-sharing teams and labour-exchanging teams.

They said five or six households pooled money to buy an ox and organized an ox-sharing team or labour-exchanging team.

Kim Il Sung said:

It is good that this community organized such teams. It is a tradition of our peasants to do farming together while helping one another.

Then, holding a basket filled with seeds, he began to sow the seeds.

He saw an old man sowing seeds beside him, and said with a smile on his face:

Why don't we mark the ridges we are sowing on to see which ones would produce more in autumn?

He continued sowing the seeds.

What he sowed was the seed of agricultural cooperativization in the

country.

Three years later, he visited Wonhwa-ri again, and was very much pleased to see many able-bodied men working in the fields.

He said:

You look happy to work with many discharged soldiers and youth league members. I am also a member of this agricultural cooperative, but I am afraid if I may be of help to it. Let's work together to develop the cooperative.

From that time on Kim Il Sung visited the farm several times a year, almost every year, to help it complete cooperativization without any deviations.

As an honorary member of the farm, he did his best to the last moment of his life to support the farm.

Talking with a Peasant in His Car

It was late at night in May 1953. After his car crossed a bridge, Kim Il Sung ordered a halt. He got off, and pointing at a woman carrying a bag on her back, instructed his aide to fetch her to the car.

When Kim Il Sung offered her a seat beside him, the woman looked embarrassed, still not recognizing who the man was.

He asked her how many there were in her family and whether she had other relatives.

She replied that she had a family of three: herself, mother-in-law and a son who had volunteered for service in the People's Army. She had no other relatives as her husband was the only son through three generations.

Kim Il Sung was silent for a good while, studying the peasant's wrinkled face. Her hands were rough and calloused from years of hard work and caring for her old mother-in-law. He looked as if picturing in his mind's eye all the other Korean women.

You must have had a hard time of it doing farming alone, he said at long last. He went on to say that it would be good to bring her son back home.

Perplexed by this offer, the woman said: Only when we have a country, we can do farming with ease. I don't want my son to abandon the fight with American invaders and return home. I can do farming by myself.

Kim Il Sung felt thankful for her concerns about the country.

With a smile he resumed: I am sure that your son will come back after winning the fight. Until then, you should take good care of your mother-in-law and do farming well.

Their talking continued until the car arrived at a fork in the road.

Kim Il Sung opened the door and helped the woman get off.

After saying good-bye, she said to herself: Who is the man? He must have a tight schedule, but he was kind enough to take me in the car and have a chat about my family affairs and farming. He doesn't look like an ordinary man.

She stood long as the car moved away into the thickening darkness.

You Would Be Sharing Some

In late March 1957 Kim Il Sung, who was acquainting himself with the farming situation in South Hamgyong Province, was told that the then Ponghwa Agricultural Cooperative in Hongwon County did a good farming in the previous year.

He was so happy that he immediately went to the farm.

He met two men, the oldest ones in the village, and had a talk with them.

He asked them when they had joined the cooperative.

One replied that he had joined it in 1954.

Kim Il Sung again asked him whether someone had asked him to join it.

The man answered he had just volunteered.

Satisfied with his answer, Kim Il Sung asked how much he had earned in the first year and the next year and what the proportion of rice to potato was.

The man said that he had earned 20 *som* of rice and potato respectively in the first year and 41 *som* of rice and 40 *som* of potato the next year.

Kim Il Sung asked how many members in his family worked in the farm and how was their living.

The man said that two were working in the farm and their life was good.

Kim Il Sung asked the other man about the living of his family.

The old man said he had earned 10 *som* of rice and potato respectively in the first year and 20 *som* of rice and potato respectively next year.

Kim Il Sung looked very happy to know about the life of the farmers.

He said that they all earned twice as much as the first year.

The old men smiled happily.

Then Kim Il Sung asked the men whether they shared their earnings with their children.

One of them said:

Young ones should earn their own food. Why should we, the old ones, share our earnings with them?

Kim Il Sung laughed heartily and said:

You would be sharing some, I know.

There was a burst of laughter around him.

It was an expression of happiness of the peasants, whose living was growing richer year after year thanks to the warm care of Kim Il Sung.

Wrong Concept Corrected

One day in June 1957 Kim Il Sung visited the then Paegun Agricultural Cooperative.

At that time the cooperative was experiencing difficulty in farming because of the severe drought that continued since spring. Moreover, even in June rice seedlings had not been transplanted properly as it had a large area of terraced fields and the sources of water had all gone dry.

Kim Il Sung felt painful to see the dried terraced fields.

He said:

Please take measures to overcome the drought. At the time of drought you should look inside the ground, not just look up at the sky. You should dam the streams and dig wells and pools to overcome the drought.

That year the farm watered the terraced fields with water from the wells and pools, overcoming the drought, and gathered an unprecedented bumper harvest.

Kim Il Sung visited the farm again one day in August 1963, and expressed satisfaction at the thickly-wooded mountains and the ears of rice undulating in the terraced fields. He said:

You have done a good job of it. The rice looks promising.

He said, laughing, that praying for rain would not help them.

On the Ridge of a Paddy

On April day in 1958 Kim Il Sung found a broken-down tractor during his trip for field guidance.

He came up to the tractor, seeing its caterpillar track and opening the door of the driver's cab.

Then he called the driver who was working under the tractor.

He asked what went wrong, and the driver answered that a screw was missing.

Not a big trouble, said Kim Il Sung.

The driver stopped working, and still lying on the ground, stuck his head out to see who was there.

Recognizing who was talking to him, the driver was very surprised.

With a smile on his face, Kim Il Sung told him to relax and finish his work.

As the driver was coming out from under the tractor, Kim Il Sung took his arm, saying that he should take care to avoid scraping against the iron pieces.

He asked the driver whether he was not tired from his work, and advised that neglecting a slight problem might cause a big trouble as he could see his tractor not moving because of a screw.

You should keep it in a good state of maintenance, he continued.

Then he made his way across the ploughed furrows towards the middle of the paddy.

Casting his eyes about, he said that he was happy to see the fields ploughed by machines.

He scooped up a handful of earth, still appreciating the advantages of mechanization.

After a good while, he turned back and returned to where the tractor was.

He plucked dry grasses and spread them on the ridge of the paddy. Pulling the driver by the arm, he seated himself on the grasses, shoulder to shoulder with him.

Then he asked the driver where he was born, how his parents were and when he became a tractor driver.

The driver replied: I was born in Yangdok. My mother died in my childhood, and from then on, I lived with my father before being enrolled in a tractor driver training school. It is only a few months after I began driving.

Though inexperienced, you did ploughing quite well, said Kim Il Sung. He adjusted his collar and buttoned up his shirt, before asking whether he was clothed thickly enough to keep out the cold.

He said that he should be careful not to catch cold, adding that washing clothes often and taking frequent baths would be good for health. He

advised that just as a human being needs regular check-up, a machine should be kept in a good state of repair to avoid being broken down.

He got up slowly and said that it was high time to take leave. He held the driver's hand in his, saying goodbye.

The driver began working again, now fully conscious of how great pains Kim Il Sung had been taking to free peasants from backbreaking labour.

This Man Is the Very Doctor

The following happened early in February 1959.

Before dusk fell, a young man, guided by an official, was going upstairs in a building of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea. He came from an agricultural cooperative in the then Kim Chaek County, where his job was to raise rabbits.

Seeing Kim Il Sung in an office, the farmer made a deep bow. Holding both of his hands in his, Kim Il Sung introduced the visitor to the officials standing next to him.

Kim Il Sung offered the young man a seat beside him and asked about his health and living conditions. He then said that the officials were members of the Presidium of the Party Central Committee, adding that they were there to hear what he had learned in the course of raising rabbits.

The farmer rose to his feet, unable to find words to express his mingled feelings .

With a kind smile on his face, Kim Il Sung urged him to calm down and tell them all what he had done.

The young man recounted how he had raised rabbits—selecting ten rabbits of superior breeds and increasing the number to 426 through scientific mating and care of young rabbits, preventing diseases by using medicinal herbs from the mountains, putting rabbits out to pasture in order to raise more with less labour, etc.

While listening to the story, Kim Il Sung nodded and praised alternately, sometimes noting down something.

When the young man told about how he experimented to increase the rate of breeding and transformed a hill into a meadow to resolve the problem of fodder, Kim Il Sung highly praised him for having made painstaking efforts to raise more rabbits.

The young man resumed: Rabbit-raising is not a big challenge. I buckled down to it, bearing in mind your instructions on raising rabbits on a massive scale. I am sure that this is just the way to increase the rate of breeding and exchange grass for meat.

Then Kim Il Sung said:

This man is the very Doctor. There are many such Doctors in the countryside and it would be advisable to have his story carried in newspapers, journals and books.

Later, arrangements were made for the young farmer to go around the country and tell his experiences in rabbit-raising.

Listening to the young man's simple story, Kim Il Sung was convinced that it was reasonable to raise rabbits on a mass basis and conceived a plan for setting an example of rabbit-raising for the whole country to follow.

Clearing a Path across the Reclaimed Tideland

One day in June 1960 Kim Il Sung visited a tideland to learn about the reclamation project.

Surveying the vast expanse of the reclaimed tideland, he stood long on one of its edges.

Then he suggested stepping into the tideland, leading the way.

The officials in his company were very embarrassed as there was no proper pathway across the tideland, the whole of it being covered with mud except for the ten hectares of paddy fields.

Urging his entourage, Kim Il Sung moved ahead in the direction of the paddy fields.

One of the officials blocked his way, saying that there was no path in front.

Kim Il Sung was unwilling to turn back, saying:

We should spare no effort for the sake of the people. We can clear a path

across this tideland.

He then proceeded, pushing his way through the muddy reeds in the direction of the sea.

He covered hundreds of metres until he reached a spot looking out over a broad stretch of land.

He enjoyed the scenery, saying:

This land is good. It has very good prospects. We can build a state-owned farm here. It would be difficult to transplant rice seedlings, and instead seeds can be sown directly. The tideland should be reclaimed by walling off the sea, and modern houses built on the hills by the sea. To this end, an enterprise should be established for the tideland reclamation project so that workers, not farmers, should do the task.

Afterwards, a state-owned farm emerged on this tideland.

Shares for Farmers

One day in September 1960, Kim Il Sung visited Chongsan-ri in which a bumper harvest was in store.

After shaking hands with farmers, he gave a pleasant look around golden fields, admiring the view of paddies and non-paddies having been realigned neatly and the rice ears ripening into maturity.

He asked an official of the farm about the yields for the year.

The latter gave a brief account of how the farm overfulfilled the yearly plan of cereals production and what was the estimated share for each farmer.

Beaming, Kim Il Sung said that their living standards reached those of well-to-do middle farmers.

He then asked how much rice would be enough for each farmer in a year.

The reply was 250 to 300 kilograms.

The amount is not sufficient, Kim Il Sung said.

He was lost in thought for a long while, before resuming:

It will be sufficient to distribute about 400kg to each person. Children eat more rice. And, for example, when meeting his in-laws at noon in the market, a Korean peasant usually buys a meal with the money he got by selling rice,

and shares it with them. To cite other examples, there may come guests, son boarding at factory or serving in the army, children boarding at school or a married daughter from her house far away.

He continued to say that when they saw their parents running short of rice, they would worry for them, unable to focus on their work or studying.

That year the farmers received a larger amount of rice than was expected, in consideration of the sons who would be discharged from the army, the daughters who might come to their maiden homes and even the in-laws who had to be served occasionally.

*It Snows in This County
Every Time I Come Here*

One December day in 1961 it began to snow heavily in the morning.

The snow did not stop in the afternoon, when Kim Il Sung visited a workteam of the then Ripsok Agricultural Cooperative in Mundok County.

Being guided to the yard of the democratic information hall, he praised the cooperative for having built such a nice hall.

He went into the hall and offered seats to the farmers.

Feeling the temperature of the floor, he asked whether the upper part of the floor was warm enough and told them to come nearer him as it would be cold there.

Then he pushed his cushion aside and sat down on the floor.

He asked the farmers details about their work and living conditions—the species of crops planted in the fields, the unit-area yield, the per-household share of distribution, etc.

Listening to what the farmers had to say, he looked out of the windows, saying:

It snows in this county every time I come here. I remember the snowy day when I visited Sangphal-ri last time. And that was a year of good crops. Next year, too, the harvest will be good, I am sure.

Then he asked about the number of tractors working at the farm and their operation, and gave advice on the distribution and operation of the tractors and the organizational life of the drivers.

He inquired about the number of new houses built so far and asked if all farmers were living under tiled roofs. He was very pleased to hear that the houses with thatched roofs, which had been handed down from generation to generation, were replaced by tile-roofed houses.

He stayed there for several hours, giving his opinions as to how to resolve the problems facing the farm.

Dusk fell, when he was taking his leave. The farmers stood long on the snowy road, waving their hands until his car was far out of sight.

Typical Rural Revolutionary

Rim Kun Sang was chairman of the management board of the then Okto Cooperative Farm, a Labour Hero and a Deputy to the Supreme People's Assembly of the DPRK.

During the war, he invented a device of sowing wheat seeds at distant intervals, taking the lead in increasing wartime grain production. After the war he organized before others an agricultural cooperative in his village in support of the Party's policy of agricultural cooperativization.

He also worked heart and soul to build about 20km-long waterway from the Kiyang irrigation system to Okto-ri. After finishing the project in six months, he had the houses scattered in the fields moved to the foot of a mountain. He then had the age-old stony fields reclaimed, thus turning more than 100 hectares of land into paddy fields.

True to the instructions of Kim Il Sung that Okto-ri, being surrounded by mountains, should focus on developing livestock farming, he had pigsties built and hundreds of pigs raised. He also made strenuous efforts to raise sheep by way of letting the animals graze in one field after another on a rotating basis.

He was a genuine model farmer, always with his trousers rolled up and a shovel or hoe on his waist.

Kim Il Sung visited his farm several times every year, discussing farm work with him.

In September 1965, he had his car stopped in front of a corn field in Okto-ri on his way for field guidance.

Seeing Rim Kun Sang standing by the road, he got off and said hello to him. I was told that you were ill, he said, before asking if he was well now.

We should treasure such comrades who are loyal to the Party, he said to the accompanying officials. Then he encouraged Rim Kun Sang to become an activist also in taking care of himself.

One day in December 1967, Kim Il Sung visited Okto-ri again.

He took the hand of Rim Kun Sang, who was greeting him, and asked about his health in a worried tone of voice.

“I am fine, thank you,” Rim answered.

Kim Il Sung asked again:

Why do you fall ill so often?

“I’m alright now,” answered Rim.

Suddenly, Kim Il Sung asked him how old he was.

Rim replied that he was fifty-five.

Looking at his pale face, Kim Il Sung comforted him, saying that he was still alright.

Then he said to the accompanying officials that the chairman had worked hard during the war.

In December 1968, when he visited Okto-ri, Kim Il Sung greeted Rim,

taking his hand for a good while.

He asked Rim how he did good farming that year. He continued to inquire about the crop yields and said with satisfaction that he had the highest record.

Rim Kun Sang was an honest and faithful rural official who devoted his life to carrying out Kim Il Sung's instructions.

He worked day and night and finally was taken to hospital.

Kim Il Sung sent competent doctors and precious medicines to the hospital, saying that they should do their best to recover the patient.

When he was told that Rim died, he said that he had lost one of his excellent comrades.

Years later, Kim Il Sung had his car stopped while passing through Okto-ri. He got off and looked at the panorama of Okto-ri.

Saying that whenever he looked at the panorama of Okto-ri, he was moved to tears by the thought of Rim Kun Sang, Kim Il Sung recalled that he was born into a family who had served landlords for three generations before the country's liberation and he devoted his all to implementing the agricultural policy of the WPK in the post-liberation years.

Kim Il Sung said:

I often talked with him about farming. He was a true son of the Party and a model of a rural revolutionary who had worked hard all his life. I told him to turn Okto-ri into a paradise, and this became his lifelong motto.

Kim Il Sung consolidated the rural position and successfully realized

the far-reaching plan for socialist rural construction, forging deep ties with many peasant heroes of the country like Rim Kun Sang.

I'll Help You Become Rich

One day in October 1971, Kim Il Sung visited Chonsu-ri, Hyangsan County.

This place was full of sloping fields or patches of land, so there was a saying that people could cover three paddy fields with a mat.

He had his car stopped and went into a vegetable field by the road to pick a radish and weighed it.

Then he called the farmer who was working in the field.

Taking the farmer's soil-stained hands in his, Kim Il Sung asked if the radish was the later crop after corn. Then he continued to ask if the crop was good or not.

The farmer said that the crop was good despite the infertility of soil.

He asked him about the per-hectare yield and share of distribution to each household for the previous year.

Neither of them was high.

Kim Il Sung asked: Are farmers hard up?

The farmer answered that the villagers had no cause for envy, being as well-off as the landowner of the mountain area before liberation.

Still worrying about something after hearing the farmer's reply, Kim Il Sung walked towards the village.

After a while, the farmers sat together, with Kim Il Sung in the centre.

Studying the faces around him, Kim Il Sung asked what they thought would be needed to make themselves better off.

No one answered.

With a smile on his face, he suggested that introducing machines in farming would be a solution.

He said that workers in the country produced *Jonjin* tractors and *Kaengsaeng* small lorries. The tractors can be easily used and do ploughing in small fields, so they are more convenient than ox, he noted, adding that the lorries could run on cart-tracks without difficulty.

One workteam leader jumped to his feet and said that if his workteam had a *Jonjin* tractor and a *Kaengsaeng* small lorry, they could do farm work by machine without using any of their 12 carts.

Kim Il Sung said: Then I will have a lorry sent to you first. In the future, if you mechanize farm work and do not use cattle, you can get so much meat. Mechanization will bring benefits.

He inquired about the number of cattle in the village, the proportion of cows to oxen and the price of beef, before continuing:

If you scrap the current way of breeding and adopt crossbreeding through artificial insemination, you will get more beef. In addition to cattle, you should raise more sheep and cultivate more chillies to increase

your cash income. And by creating an orchard and keeping honeybees in the hills, you can get more and become rich.

Looking at the farmers, Kim Il Sung continued that if there were any problems, he would resolve them.

He said: I'll help you become rich.

Encouraged by this, the farmers made a resolve to turn theirs into a thriving village.

Joy Shared with Farmers

In late October 1973, Kim Il Sung visited the then Yongok Cooperative Farm in Taedong County.

It was a bumper year, with all hands busy carrying rice sheaves and threshing.

Seeing Kim Il Sung, all burst into loud cheers. Waving back, he was guided to a threshing ground of a sub-workteam.

Being briefed on the output of cereals by the sub-workteam leader, he was very pleased and spoke highly of him.

He continued to praise the sub-workteam for raising good crops, and went into details about the effects of fertilizer on the growth of rice plants—the amount of fertilizer applied on the fields, the percentage of rice plants blown down, where exactly those plants collapsed, etc.

The sub-workteam leader said about some fields where rice plants collapsed.

Kim Il Sung asked him what he thought would be the reason.

To the hesitating man, Kim Il Sung said that excessive use of nitrogen fertilizer was to blame.

It was getting dark. He stood for a good while, watching farmers in the threshing work.

He urged the sub-workteam leader to summon them for a break.

The farmers gathered, greeting him.

Kim Il Sung asked what kinds of goods they would demand in exchange for rice.

The farmers enumerated the items they needed—big ovens, raincoats, boots, sewing machines, wardrobes, etc.

Kim Il Sung instructed his aide to note down all the items.

He then asked a woman what she needed.

She hesitated for a moment. She blushed, saying she needed nylon clothes and tetron suits.

This is a bumper year and you should have a good dress, said Kim Il Sung with a kind smile.

Pointing at his watch, he asked:

Do you want a watch? Can you buy wallpapers, flooring paper and the like in your county? Are you provided with conditions for keeping your houses clean?

One of the farmers said on behalf of the villagers that they would raise better crops the following year and live up to his benevolence.

A Tractor Pulled by a Car

The following happened in a farm in Kaechon County early in November 1973.

A *Jonjin* tractor with a full load of rice sheaves was edging closer to the farm's main road, when the driver saw several cars rounding a mountain bend from the direction of Anju.

The driver, who was a girl, stopped her tractor by the roadside and waited for the cars to pass by.

To her surprise, one of the cars halted in front of her and Kim Il Sung got off.

She rushed towards the road to greet him.

Kim Il Sung said hello, holding her grease-stained hands in his, and said that he wanted to take a look at her tractor.

With the driver looking on, Kim Il Sung examined the engine, steering wheel, gearbox, etc.

After a while he asked her about the weight of the load.

700kg was the reply. Kim Il Sung continued to ask if 700kg was appropriate, whether one ton would be too much and how many

loads a day.

“15 loads,” said the girl, looking like a daughter talking proudly to her father.

Kim Il Sung paused for a moment, and said the daily total was 10 500kg.

He asked worriedly if her arms were alright.

The girl said yes.

He asked her to show him her arms. Ashamed, she shoved her greasy hands behind her back.

Smiling benignly, Kim Il Sung urged her. He stroked the palm and back of her hand, rolling up her sleeves to see how thick her wrist was.

Then he asked what she had for a meal, saying that she should not overwork and instead have a good rest and regular meals.

He told an official:

It is cold in winter, and you should take steps for supplying padded overcoats, caps, footwear and gloves of good quality.

Pointing his finger in the direction of Anju, he asked her to drive the tractor in that direction. And he told the officials to have their cars moved aside to make way for the tractor.

The latter obeyed, her tractor now standing alone on the broad road.

Kim Il Sung patted her on the back, urging her to move on.

Upon getting into the cab, she gave a silent sigh. She was now reminded of the starting motor she had left for repairs in the morning; she could not

wait for it to be repaired as carrying rice sheaves was a pressing matter.

Without the motor, she could not start the engine again. She regretted being so careless as to make Kim Il Sung worry about her. After moments of anxiety, she decided to tell him what had happened.

After listening to her story, Kim Il Sung instructed officials to have her tractor pulled by one of their cars.

The engine started again, and the girl drove her tractor past the cars.

Seeing the tractor rolling along, Kim Il Sung praised the girl for working hard to carry so many loads a day.

He smiled broadly, thinking of the farmers who had been freed from backbreaking labour.

Taking Charge of a Rural Housing Project

One May day in 1974 Kim Il Sung's car was running across Oguk-ri.

Taking a sad look at the village through the windows, he ordered a halt. He got off and summoned a local official.

He said: Straw-thatched houses are here and there, making it difficult to realign the land under cultivation. I can see no improvements on the road and river.

He asked the official what was lacking—bricks, timber or labour. He went on that it was urgent to build new houses in the village.

The following day he called a consultative meeting of officials in Sinchon County to discuss the construction project.

He said to an official from the village:

You will be supplied with materials, equipment, trucks and whatever is needed for the construction. Your goal is to build 1 000 new houses, and you should work hard to turn yours into a modern village.

Then he took specific steps for the transport of materials by rail and on the Jaeryong River.

When he asked who would be in charge of the construction project, an official of the county said that the construction corps would undertake it.

Kim Il Sung said:

The construction of the county seat should be done later. It is most pressing to remove the remaining thatched houses. First, you should build 1 000 new houses in Oguk-ri. Then the farmers would be very pleased.

He continued that the construction corps should be renamed Oguk-ri Construction Corps and it should complete the housing project in a year, stressing that he would take charge of it.

This initiative for developing the rural village, which was far away from the capital city, showcased how much Kim Il Sung was concerned about the villagers and all other people in the countryside, who had been subjected to abject poverty and humiliation in the bygone days.

A Wish Realized

In May 1974 Kim Il Sung visited the then Songsin Cooperative Farm, in which there would be a trial run for the rice-seedling transplanters of a new model.

Seeing the ten or so machines on the paddy ridges, he asked an engineer of the farm if the transplanters would not get stuck in the paddies during operation.

The engineer said no, pointing at the standardized fields and stressing that it was five days after the harrowing work.

Kim Il Sung said:

To avoid these machines getting stuck halfway during operation, the flooded paddies should be harrowed about five days before transplanting rice seedlings, so that the churned mud can settle. Otherwise, the machines will get stuck and the transplanted seedlings will not be secure.

He went on that as they were moving in the mud, they would be useless, however smart they looked, if they were transplanting rice seedlings improperly or prone to breakdown.

He walked up and down, seeing all the machines in operation and suggesting ways for making them better.

He checked his watch to estimate the machines' speed and gave advice

on how they should move along the edges of the fields. And he calculated the number of the seedlings transplanted by each machine on a certain area to define the appropriate number of seedlings per cluster.

He then summoned the machine operators and others who worked on the machines to ask their opinions, and gave instructions on supplying sunglasses to all of them.

Feasting his eyes on the green fields, Kim Il Sung said:

I have devoted all my life to freeing peasants from hard labour. Today my wish has come true. When I was fighting in the mountains against the Japanese, I could hardly sleep at ease in the open air. Today, with my wish realized, I can have a good sleep.

A Photo

One day in June 1976 on his journey of field guidance, Kim Il Sung saw An Tal Su.

He asked An whether the farming of the year was good.

When An replied that his farm was expecting a good harvest, he asked how much they transplanted rice seedlings with machines.

The reply was that they failed to grow healthy seedlings, so they transplanted only three per cent with machines.

Kim Il Sung said that they should raise healthy rice seedlings. He added that they could produce manure by mixing the cut rice straw with urea, demonstrating how to cut and mix.

After hearing An's reply that lime nitrogen was good for decomposing rice straw, he was very satisfied and said:

You are well versed in farming. What you say is possible, we can say it is done. We've found out a method of producing humus with rice straw discussing like this, haven't we?

Looking at An, he asked how old he was.

The answer was that he was 65.

Kim Il Sung said he should work for another ten years. Then, seeing that he was reluctant to part from him, he proposed posing for a photo with

him as they met again after a long separation. Taking his right arm with his left arm, he told the man to face the sun.

After he had a photo taken with him, Kim Il Sung instructed that he should lay out his farm and do farming well for the coming generations.

Later, concerned about An's health, Kim Il Sung sent a car to him so that he could receive special medical treatment in Pyongyang.

When An was receiving medical treatment, Kim Il Sung called a senior official of the relevant hospital several times to make sure that the hospital offered him sincere medical treatment so that he could recover his health soon.

On receiving the report that An hardly fell asleep for the anxiety about the farming at his farm, he saw to it that an official of the hospital went to An's farm and, on his return, told him about the farming.

After 70-odd days of medical treatment, An returned to his farm in good health.

Tohwa Island Bubbles with Joy

One day in April 1977 news reached Tohwa Island in Kaecheon County that Kim Il Sung was soon to arrive at the cooperative farm there.

Everyone was elated with joy, getting up at dawn and turning out in holiday attire to welcome their benevolent leader.

Greeting this day, they were reminded of the heavy flooding that befell the island two years previously. After long hours of torrential rain the raging river began to overflow its banks into the village, leaving the locals in the jaws of death.

At this critical moment three helicopters appeared overhead and landed on the island. Shortly afterwards came amphibious vehicles. This was part of an emergency measure Kim Il Sung adopted to rescue the islanders.

Later, as instructed by him, a bridge named Undok was built to link the island with the inland area. It was one of the precautions taken against possible floods.

Subsequently, the villagers were unwilling to cross the bridge, and instead they crossed the river by boat as they had done in the past. Yet, they tried their best to keep the bridge in good condition, because they wanted to see their benevolent leader cross it before anybody else.

Informed of this fact, Kim Il Sung said that as the farmers in

Tohwa-ri wished, he would go there even though the journey might involve traversing a rough road.

Upon seeing his car pulling up at the edge of the bridge, the villagers burst into loud cheers.

Standing on the bridge, Kim Il Sung had a panoramic view of the island, saying:

The new Undok bridge will be a great convenience to the people in Tohwa-ri. It would be better to set up another bridge connecting Tohwa-ri with Nyongbyon County in North Phyongan Province.

He went on that Kaechon County had a large area of reclaimable land, adding that on his way there, he had seen a number of water pools along the river bank and they should all be filled in for arable farming.

After shooting a glance at the surroundings, he asked how much the village would be submerged in case of heavy rain.

An official answered that flooding would do little harm because the island was encircled by reinforced banks and there was the new bridge for evacuation.

Kim Il Sung surveyed the areas nearby, saying:

Tohwa-ri is very appropriate for vegetable farming, I think. The Tohwa Cooperative Farm should raise vegetables on a large scale to provide them to the workers and office employees in Kaechon on a regular basis and boost its farmers' cash income. The workers and office employees in the county should render support to the project for irrigating the vegetable

fields. Then the project can be completed in a short period. There is no need for this farm to dig wells for the irrigation project, because water can be pumped up from the Chongchon River.

This was how vegetable cultivation began on the island, which had long been known as a barren place.

Family Devoted to Mechanized Farming

In January 1978 there was held in Pyongyang a national meeting of agriculture presided over by Kim Il Sung.

Among those attending were a couple of tractor drivers, and the wife was honoured to make a speech during the meeting.

As her speech began in a somewhat excited voice, Kim Il Sung said to the participants:

Her husband is a tractor driver. So are her two brothers-in-law and their wives, her sister-in-law and her husband, and another brother-in-law. Altogether, nine of her family members are tractor drivers.

He praised the family, calling it a family devoted to mechanized farming, a model for all rural workers to follow.

Then he told the speaker to proceed with her speech.

The latter recounted how the sub-workteam, to which she and her family belonged, raised good crops and surpassed the peak-year level, adding that

in preparing for the new year's farming, the nine members of her family overfulfilled their respective ploughing quotas while saving a large amount of oil and tractor parts.

Kim Il Sung interrupted again, asking if her husband was on the platform.

Silence reigned for a moment, no reply coming from anywhere.

The husband was so embarrassed to respond; being called by Kim Il Sung in the middle of his wife's speech was something he never dreamed of.

Prompted by a man beside him, the husband jumped to his feet. That man is the husband and here is his wife, said Kim Il Sung, by way of an introduction.

All broke into loud applause.

Kim Il Sung motioned the wife to go on with her speech.

She now began to tell how the family members decided to become tractor drivers with a high sense of responsibility for the mechanization of the rural economy.

When she said that she and her husband had shared a tractor over the past 13 years, keeping it in a good state of maintenance and causing not a single breakdown, Kim Il Sung applauded before anybody else.

He spoke highly of the couple for having worked for those years without allowing their tractor to run into trouble. Being supported by such heroic people, our country grows powerful and prosperous with mechanization

gathering pace in its rural areas, said Kim Il Sung.

After the meeting was over, he had new tractors sent to the wife and her husband, her two brothers-in-law and their wives, her sister-in-law and her husband.

To Free Farmers from the Burden of Manual Sowing

One day in October 1987 Kim Il Sung visited a farm to see a new model of direct sowing machine.

He gave a long look at the harrowed experimental paddies and other rice fields where harvesting was underway. Pointing at one of the paddies, he asked how much water should be supplied to them.

Then he said to the officials: Before using the direct sowing machine, it would be better to supply a little water to the paddies. They need to be filled with water after the mud settles down following the harrowing work. Then the sowing machine will move smoothly without its plank underneath being muddied.

He then walked towards the ridges where the machine was. After examining it, he said he wanted to see how it worked.

The machine rumbled along, sowing seeds on the field. After a while he pointed at the machine, saying that when making a direct sowing machine,

it would be good to use the plank of a rice-seedling transplanter.

He continued: I have been told that when sowing seeds with the machine, the edges of the field are left intact for the machine to make the last round, just the same way as the rice-seedling transplanter works. You should take care to leave no patch of land lying fallow.

And pointing at a section where seeds were sown and another where the machine was moving, he pointed out that the seeds were sown densely in the former section and sparsely in the latter. Additional planting is possible where rice seedlings have been transplanted but this is not the case with the direct sowing, he added. He continued that even though the direct sowing machine failed to sow seeds evenly, the cooperative farms should use the machine while the finishing touches were added to the research.

He stood long there as the machine kept rolling along. Quite a success, he said, praising that the machine was good. What pleased him most was that with the introduction of the machine, farmers could be freed from the burden of manual sowing.

Test Run

One day in early September 1988, Kim Il Sung visited a tractor factory to see a new model.

He stroked the tractor's engine cover and asked about its performance and advantages.

Then he opened the door of the driver's cab and examined whether the driver's seat and steering wheel were convenient for driving.

Praising that the tractor was good, he instructed the driver to switch it on. As the tractor was rumbling, he told him to open its top and back doors.

He then motioned him to drive the tractor around the yard several times.

The latter was pleased to show him the factory's new model.

When the tractor made the second round, Kim Il Sung gave a signal to halt.

When the driver switched off the engine, Kim Il Sung told him to restart it.

The yard was again filled with the sound of the engine.

Saying that he had long stressed the need to make tractor drivers start or stop the engine in the cabs, Kim Il Sung continued:

It is good that the driver's cab was made to be covered or uncovered. The driver would not feel cold in winter and hot in summer in the cab,

and can start or stop the engine in it.

After a while, the driver drove the tractor away. Sorry to take leave of Kim Il Sung, he looked back over his shoulder at the spot where he was.

The moment, he was surprised to see that Kim Il Sung in his car behind was looking at him.

How can I dare ...

Noticing that the driver was going to slow down, Kim Il Sung held his hand out of the car window and motioned him to drive forward.

The tractor and the car ran a distance of some four kilometres, and arrived by a field with undulating ears of rice.

Kim Il Sung told the tractor driver to stop and, waving his hand warmly to the driver with a bright smile on his face, he went on his way for field guidance.

The roaring sound of the tractor still tells of the devoted efforts Kim Il Sung made to free the farmers from backbreaking labour.

Why He Is Reluctant to Leave

The following happened one August day in 1991.

Early in the morning Kim Il Sung's car arrived at the then Wangjaesan Cooperative Farm in Onsong County at the northern tip of the country.

He got off and feasted his eyes on the good crops in the fields.

Looking at the paddies, he said that rice plants were growing well.

Then he moved on to the corn fields, where the rolling rows of stalks seemed to be greeting him.

Gazing at the fields with a big smile, he observed that corn was thriving there.

He asked an official to go and bring some ears of corn.

The latter returned with two ears, which he shucked and handed over to Kim Il Sung.

Kim Il Sung examined the ears, before commenting that all the grains were fully ripe.

And he said that if all the farms raised as good crops as this farm, the farmers would live on rice and meat.

Then he asked about the number of corn plants per unit area.

Being told about the number, he said: The number is appropriate, up

to standard. Not too small or too many. I am very happy here. I don't like to leave it.

Noting that this farm would be the country's best in terms of corn cultivation, he commented: Corn plants are very good at the Wangjaesan Cooperative Farm. Of all the corn fields I have seen up to now, these are the best, except for those at Farm No. 7. The corn ears are fully ripe.

After making the rounds of the bean and sorghum fields for a long time, he turned his eyes towards the corn fields and praised the bumper crops.

He said that he would visit this farm again to learn about crop cultivation in North Hamgyong Province.

It was high time for his departure, yet he was reluctant to leave, still smiling as if happy farmers were before his eyes.

Agricultural Adviser

It was late in August 1993.

At dawn Kim Il Sung visited the Suwon Farm in Paechon County to see the bumper crops on the Yonbaek Plain.

Both the road and rice ears on the nearby fields were wet with morning dew.

Kim Il Sung came up to one of the paddies and studied the rice ears.

Then he praised the farmers for growing excellent crops, saying that he was very satisfied.

Holding in his hand an ear of corn that had been plucked from the fields, he commented that the grains were fully ripe to the edges of the ear and the farm was successful in cultivating both rice and corn.

He asked about the maximum temperature of water at the height of the hot season.

Then he said to a local official: In summer you should often replace water on the paddies in such areas as Paechon County, where the water temperature is high. Because of its biological characteristics, rice thrives from tillering freely when it is hot in the daytime and cool at night. So, water should be replaced regularly on the paddies. If not, rice plants cannot grow properly because it is like a man sleeping under a thick

cotton-wool quilt on a midsummer night.

The next leg of his journey was the then Kumsong Cooperative Farm in the same county.

Rice plants are thriving, said Kim Il Sung, looking at the paddies for a good while.

He then said to an official of the farm: Today I have come here after being told that a bumper harvest is expected from the Yonbaek Plain. I am happy to see excellent crops here.

He went into details about the estimated rice yields per hectare, the strains of rice planted and the amount of fertilizer applied on the paddies.

Then he asked the official how his farm could raise such good crops for the year.

In his reply the latter thanked Kim Il Sung for supplying fertilizer, agrochemicals, water and electricity on a preferential basis.

Kim Il Sung moved on to the then Ohyon Cooperative Farm and the then Chonthae Cooperative Farm in Yonan County.

Wherever he went on the Yonbaek Plain, fully ripe ears of rice greeted him.

When Kim Il Sung got off the car near a paddy field at the then Chonthae Cooperative Farm, a local official, who happened to be there, greeted him.

The official said: We, farmers on the Yonbaek Plain, will work hard to reap a good harvest. Our earnest wish is that you no longer travel along

rough roads to visit farms in the countryside.

Beaming, Kim Il Sung said that such travelling was good for effective guidance and also for his health. He paused for a while to look at the paddies, and resumed that he really liked the Yonbaek Plain.

Hours passed, and it was nearly at dusk when his trip around the then Chongjong Cooperative Farm in Chongdan County, which was the last leg of his journey, was wound up.

Kim Il Sung told his entourage that he wished he could live in South Hwanghae Province serving as an agricultural adviser.

He took leave, promising the local officials that he would come again if they could gather another good harvest the following year.

* * *

One day in June 1994 Kim Il Sung's car arrived at a farm in Pyongyang. He got off and feasted his eyes on the vegetable fields nearby.

He stepped into one of the fields, in which water was being sprayed on the green leaves.

A broad smile spreading over his face, he stood there motionless with his hands folded behind his back.

After a long while came an official who had been working in an adjoining orchard.

Kim Il Sung held his hands in his, saying hello and praising that vegetables were growing well in his farm.

He continued: I like this style of irrigation you have invented. It is an ingenious scheme to have vinyl pipes supported by the Y-shaped wooden sticks that have been fixed at regular intervals in the fields.

This scheme will help irrigating all the corn fields with less expenditure of materials and labour by making effective use of the existing irrigation facilities, he stressed.

As he was looking at the surroundings, an aromatic smell drifted from the orchard on a hill, which was on the opposite side of the vegetable fields.

He reiterated the need to set up the above sticks in other fields,

emphasizing that all the farms should adopt this irrigation scheme.

He stood by the roadside for a long while, enjoying the scenery of green vegetation on a long stretch of land.

Walking back towards the car, he halted time and again as he was reluctant to leave the farm.

At last he said goodbye to the local officials in a voice that was warm and resonant.

No one could imagine that this was the last of Kim Il Sung's trips for field guidance, which had continued throughout his career.

The Crop Fields Tell

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