

## True Parents Meet North Korean President Kim Il Sung on December 6, 1991

Sun Myung Moon  
December 6, 1991



*True Parents successful meeting with Kim Il Sung*

True Parents met North Korean President Kim Il Sung on December 6, 1991. Their meeting was the high point of a week-long visit to North Korea that had begun on November 30. It also culminated more than four decades of True Father's public work as he returned to the land of his birth, upbringing and call to ministry. More than that, it encapsulated and vindicated True Parents' life course as they turned a former enemy into a friend. True Father stated on his return:

"No one can claim more justification than I for harboring feelings of ill will against North Korea. I received severe persecution from the current government of North Korea because of my position as a religious leader and my unswerving anticommunist principles. I was tortured harshly and then imprisoned for nearly three years in a labor camp. There I witnessed the deaths of many who also had been imprisoned without cause. ...

Now I have visited North Korea in the spirit of true love. True love is love that loves even that which cannot be loved. ...

As I set foot in Pyongyang, my heart was as clear as the autumn sky. I did not feel that I was entering the house of my enemy, but rather that I was returning to my hometown to visit the house of my brother. I carried with me to North Korea the principle that I have always lived by: that is, to forgive, love and unite."

Still, it wasn't easy. North Koreans were shocked by the manner and extent to which True Father criticized their ideology. Besides saying, "Juche ideology is not going to work. ... The world is not this small. ... You people are in ... [a] cave," True Father made several staggering proposals. In one meeting

he asked the government officials in the audience to persuade Kim Il Sung to place a large announcement in the North Korean newspaper instructing that the 30,000 to 40,000 spies and agents in the South surrender to Rev. Moon and be instructed in his Headwing ideology. In another session, True Father stated that he had to be the initiator and leader of reunification efforts, with Kim Il Sung and South Korean President Roh Tae-woo working as deputies under him.

North Korean officials who had dealt with True Father were fearful of a disastrous encounter with their leader. However, their fears were misplaced. Kim Il Sung directed that True Father's speech at an opening banquet be published in North Korea's only newspaper, Rodong Shinmun, and it was, word for word, including all references to God. He also overruled his subordinates and insisted that he wanted not only to meet Rev. Moon but also "to have lunch with him as well." According to Dr. Bo Hi Pak, "The big man recognized the big man."

Significantly Kim Il Sung chose to meet True Parents at his Hamhung palace, about one hundred and fifty miles from Pyongyang, near Hungnam. In fact, the route from the state guesthouse to Kim Il Sung's residence passed right by the Hungnam prison and fertilizer plant where True Father had been imprisoned for two years and eight months from 1948 to 1950. Dr. Pak speculated that this was a symbolic apology for earlier mistreatment.

On meeting, True Father and Kim Il Sung gave one another "a big bear hug." Their private 90-minute conference went exceedingly well, with True Father cordially presenting his ideas for Korean reunification and Kim Il Sung reportedly initiating applause and saying "thank you" three times. They exchanged hunting and fishing stories during the two-and-a-half-hour luncheon and afterward strolled hand in hand down a long hallway for official pictures.

The Pyongyang newspaper carried a large front-page photo of them holding hands with big smiles on their faces, something that North Korea experts regarded as extraordinary. Later, the Segye Ilbo carried the same photograph. Kim Il Sung reportedly requested True Father to arrange a meeting with U.S. President George H. W. Bush. He also offered True Father first rights to develop North Korea's Diamond Mountains as a tourist area. They both agreed to cooperate in establishing a place where members of separated families could meet and in facilitating the exchange of mail. Kim Il Sung told True Father that he would preserve his birthplace as a shrine and that he was welcome to return any time.