

Salisbury Meets President Kim Il Sung

In 1972 another remarkable event happened in the East which attracted attention of the world with Nixon's visit to China, the first one ever made by a US president; in May that year US journalists led by Salisbury, deputy editor-in-chief of *The New York Times*, visited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and their visit to the DPRK was the first one in the history of the DPRK-US relations.

Salisbury's entourage, who experienced in person the anti-US sentiment in every place they went in the DPRK, were nervous until the moment they were received by President Kim Il Sung (1912-1994).

Kim Il Sung personally came to the hall in front of the lift and received them with a broad smile on his face. Saying that they might have been very unhappy to see the Korean people cherishing very strong anti-US sentiments, he explained about it logically and cogently.

That day the most important agenda item during the talks between Kim Il Sung and Salisbury's entourage concerned the improvement of the DPRK-US relations.

Kim Il Sung gave an answer to Salisbury's question of what positive measures should be taken in order to put an end to the abnormal state of affairs between the DPRK and the US.

He said that if the US government wanted to improve its relations with the DPRK, it should stop interfering in the internal affairs of the Korean people so that they could settle the question of national reunification by themselves.

Kim Il Sung said: When US President Nixon looked at the Great Wall during his visit to China, he said that the barriers dividing nations should be pulled down; if the US government wants to put these words into practice, it must begin with Korea; nowadays Nixon says that he is going to improve relations with China as well as with the Soviet Union; why, then, should the United States keep its military bases in south Korea?; the United States has argued that it keeps their military bases there to prevent communist expansion; now that it is going to have good relations with large socialist countries, we consider that there is no excuse for keeping military bases in south Korea; so the United States must quit south Korea at once, dismantling all its military bases and withdrawing its army of aggression; in the joint communiqué of the People's Republic of China and

the United States, the latter declared that it supports the relaxation of tension on the Korean peninsula and contact between north and south Korea; if the United States does not support the relaxation of tension in Korea and north-south contact in future, it will mean that it gave empty promises under pressure; if the US government discontinues its hostile acts against our country and stops obstructing our reunification, then there will be no reason why we should be antagonistic to the United States; the relations between our country and the United States depend entirely on the attitude of the US government.

Salisbury was unable to sleep after he came back to the guest house.

He had visited more than 70 countries of the world and had been received by the heads of states. He was renowned for many articles on important international political issues. However, he could not forget the lively character of Kim Il Sung who gave him clear explanations about the way of improving the US-DPRK relations.

He rose from the bed and wrote an article about his meeting with President Kim Il Sung until early next morning, and immediately sent it to the head office.

The New York Times carried on two pages the article about Kim Il Sung's talk with Salisbury's entourage together with the picture and short biography of Kim Il Sung.

After that UPI and AP also reported Kim Il Sung's talks with the US journalists.

After returning to the US, Salisbury presented policy recommendations to the US government on decisively revising its hostile policy towards the DPRK, normalizing the US-DPRK relations and withdrawing US troops from south Korea, and made testimonies on several occasions before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the US House of Representatives.

After Salisbury's visit to the DPRK, members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the US House of Representatives proposed a bill demanding the withdrawal of US troops from south Korea, and congressman Stephen Solars visited the DPRK.

In 1994 former US President Jimmy Carter visited the DPRK to meet President Kim Il Sung, and a new history of talks between the DPRK and the US began with continuous visits to the DPRK by the US politicians, public figures and religious leaders.