

## **INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN EFFORT IN NORTH KOREA**

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### **Oregon State Government**

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### **US Government**

Department of State, EAP/K Agreed Framework Division Jewell Evans

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### **US PVOC**

Robert Barton, Mercy Corps International  
Carl Harris, (Retired Department of State officer)  
Joseph O'Brien,  
Roger Rumpf, National Council of Churches



## A FLIGHT OF MERCY

Tension filled the cockpit of the huge Boeing 747 as it flew due south over Russia. A deep orange glow accented by a soft blue outlined the horizon to our east. We banked sharply right. Ten thousand apple tree seedlings filled the lower cargo bay fifteen feet beneath us. Our intentions were peaceful. But this was only the third commercial cargo flight from the U.S. to North Korea since the Korean War fifty years earlier. The crew of the Evergreen cargo plane had learned their skills in the U.S. Air Force and had served in South Korea. Merely mention North Korea and images of a fearsome, incredibly stealthy, and terribly cruel enemy filled their heads. How would the North Koreans greet us at Pyongyang International Airport, our destination on the morning of March 16? Again, we banked, this time turning sharply to the left to fly due south along North Korea's west coast.

A deep, masculine, heavily accented voice broke the silence with precisely enunciated English, "Echo Zulu107, good morning. This is Pyongyang. Do you read?" Everyone in the cockpit sighed. Peacefully, Evergreen Flight 107 had penetrated North Korean air space. Again the voice of Pyongyang air control spoke, "Echo Zulu 107. Go to 10,000 meters and maintain your course." The American co-pilot responded, "Pyongyang, this is Echo Zulu 107. We read you, roger."

A puffy gray blanket of fog embraced the rugged, snow and pine tree covered mountains 33,000 feet below. The placid scene belied the reality below. One could never have guessed we were flying over one of the most world's most troubled spots, the Korean Peninsula. A 151 mile ribbon of barbed wire, concrete barriers and fortifications, gun emplacements and mine fields slashes across the peninsula from west to east, dividing the long sovereign nation of Korea into two intensely hostile camps. Positioned on either side of this barbed wire curtain are 1.5 million armed soldiers trained to hate and to kill one another. This is the lingering legacy of Japan's colonization of Korea, the decision of the allied victors at the end of World War II, and of the still inconclusive Korean War of 1950-53.

Ten thousand trees could hardly erase the still intense animosity North Koreans harbor for the United States. For them, the United States forcefully occupied the southern half of their homeland, erected a puppet government their, opposed efforts to forcefully reunify the nation, and maintain a military presence in South Korea. But the trees were certainly a much more humane and constructive cargo than the tens of thousands of bombs the U.S. Air Force had dropped on North Korea during the Korean War. Then too, Echo Zulu 107 was neither the beginning nor end of the endeavor. It was but another step in Mercy Corps International's continuing program of humanitarian aid to North Korea that dates from 1996.

The arrival at Pyongyang's International Airport was remarkable for its ease. Only three times in fifty years has an American commercial aircraft landed in the DPRK. Customs officials appeared first. Smartly dressed in blue uniforms trimmed with gold insignia, they quickly sought permission to board the aircraft. Like excited students on a field trip, they bounded up the shaky metal stairs and gathered inside the huge empty airplane. "Where are the trees? Didn't you bring the trees as they looked expectantly at low piles of cargo strapped to the middle deck. "Yes," I responded in Korea, "we brought the trees. They are on the lower deck in boxes. This cargo is for

Taiwan." "Ok," the ranking fellow answered, "open the door so we can see the trees." Within ten minutes, the forward and rear cargo doors had been opened. A huge yellow "Zippo" loader was driven up to the airplane and positioned to off load cargo. Four blue uniformed customs officials jumped on the "Zippo's" platform and ordered the driver to raise them up to the open cargo door. Quickly they disappeared, only to quickly emerge and again ask, "Where are the trees?" "In the boxes," I said. "Oh! We will not open the boxes. We do not want to damage the trees," one of them answered. Within thirty minutes of our arrival, all the trees, grass seed and dehydrated potatoes had been unloaded within a single problem or misunderstanding.

Finally the delegation from the Flood Damage Repair Committee (FDRC) appeared. Mr. Jon Sung Myung, deputy director of the American Affairs Section, and his interpreter Li Hak-cho walked up with broad smiles and hands extended in friendship. "The trees have arrived in excellent condition," Mr. Jon said with great excitement, "Can we enter the airplane?" Inside they first exchanged greetings Mercy Corps International Senior Vice President Ellsworth Culver and Apple Project's technical adviser Gary Wells. They the aircraft's crew showed the small delegation the upper deck and cockpit area. Mr. Jon sat in the pilot's seat trembling with joy.

All of us gathered beneath the Evergreen aircraft for pictures. A young, baby faced customs official declined permission for us to take any pictures. His boss quickly over ruled him. Then the pilot asked if he could collect to stones to take with him. Again permission was denied, but quickly the senior official on the spot overruled his subordinate and the pilot and I carefully selected two rocks, one for himself and one for a friend who had fought as a Marine in the famous battle of the Choson Reservoir.

Meanwhile, the aircraft was refueled and the engine oil checked. Even negotiation of the landing, unloading and refueling fees proceeded without difficulty. The \$11, 700 bill, substantially lower than anticipated, was promptly paid in cash. By 9:30 AM, after only ninety minutes on the ground, Evergreen flight 107 was back in the air headed for its next destination - Taiwan.

Meeting with Jon Il-chan, Acting Director-General, International Affairs Division, FDRC  
Greetings at the Koryo Hotel  
Chat with a Soldier

**THE AGRICULTURE SITUATION IN THE  
DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

**MARCH, 2000**

**DR. C. KENNETH QUINONES  
DIRECTOR, NORTHEAST ASIA PROJECT  
MERCY CORPS INTERNATIONAL**

**NOT FOR PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION OR CITATION**

## **AGRICULTURE - GENERAL SITUATION**

The DPRK has 1,071,000 hectares under cultivation for grain, according to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Of this amount, 80% of the farm land is in the southwest (North and South Pyongan, and North and South Hwanghae Provinces). The remaining 20% of farm land is in the northeast, mostly in North and South Hamgyong provinces. The country's farms are divided into 3,000 cooperatives, 300 government or state farms and 240 other farms of various types. The area under cultivation can be increased only by terracing hills and mountain sides, but this would be very expensive and labor intensive. Another 1,000,000 hectares of land is used for orchards and pastures. The DPRK also has 7.5 million hectares of forest, but, according to DPRK official data, 480,000 hectares were deforested in 1998.

The main grain crops are: rice, maize and barley. Barley was re-introduced in 1996. Farmers prefer winter wheat over barley and often use barley to make hay, not to eat the grain. In 2000, the government has directed the planting of 55,000 hectares winter wheat and 65,000 hectares of barley, mostly in the southwest provinces.

## **POTATOES**

Another 200,000 hectares are to be planted with potatoes, an increase from the 40,000 hectares planted in 1999. UN/FAO has started a sweet potato growing pilot project, but at present the DPRK does not grow sweet potatoes. Lentil production is small and consist mostly of soybeans planted on top of dykes between the rice paddies. Total annual production is estimated to be about 150,000 to 200,000 metric tons. Potato planting and harvesting requires the use of tractors with a 70 horse power engine, but tractors in the DPRK have 28 horse power engines. Most of the labor for potato cultivating will have to be done by hand.

Most vegetables are grown on family plots. Each measures between 30 to 90 square meters according to the size of one's family. The most common vegetables are cabbage, spinach, sweet corn, soybeans to make toufu, tomatoes, squash, onions and chili peppers.

## **SHORTAGES**

The main problems for agriculture are water and fuel. The irrigation system is in disrepair. The system was established in the 1960's and 1970's but has not been maintained. Pumps have broken down, there are no spare parts for the Soviet designed machines and water pipes have rusted. Also, the shortage of electricity frequently interrupts the pumping of water.

Fertilizer and pesticides are also in very short supply. The nation needs 750,000 metric tons of fertilizer each year, but now only has 60,000 metric tons available to use during the spring planting season. Only The DPRK has two chemical fertilizer plants, one in Sariwon and a second in Hamhung. Only the Hamhung plant is operating and is producing some ammonium sulphate fertilizer. The Sariwon plant is designed to produce urea, but this requires petroleum which is very scarce. The DPRK is striving to increase organic fertilizer from chickens, cows and goats.

## **AGRICULTURE - UN OFFICIALS VIEW**

The World Food Program (WFP) sees a slight improvement in food security, but a significant gap persists between domestic production and minimal need. Despite the increased harvest of 1999, the shortage of grain amounted to 700,000 to one million metric tons. The WFP and China will have to make up the difference.

The monitoring of WFP food aid remains a problem. The WFP is deeply dissatisfied with the restraints on its monitors. Nevertheless, the WFP has access to 163 of 212 counties. There has been great improvement since 1995, but in 1997 the situation stabilized and has not changed significantly since.

Improvement since 1995 has vacillated. When ever the senior officials want to move ahead, the lower echelon of the bureaucracy hesitates and vis versa. The 1999 harvest amounted to 3.5 million tons (DPRK officials had expected 4.2 million metric tons of grain). This means a minimum short fall of 1.5 million metric tons of grain to supply each of the DPRK's 22.5 million people a daily minimum of 1,600 calories per day (in the US, an average size American male office worker requires 1,800 calories per day). Grain production may be higher than 3.5 million because of hoarding by farmers. Also not counted is the amount of food harvested in family plots and the green corn eaten as it is harvested. There is no reason to believe that the 2000 harvest will be greater than 1999. The shortage of food is most likely to persist for at least another two to three years.

Some gradual change of production methods is under way, but systemic wide reform is not likely to happen anytime soon. The official attitude toward change remains mixed.

Double cropping using barley, once a very contentious issue, is now accepted without debate. The DPRK government plans to plant 200,000 hectares of barley and winter wheat in the fall. The program has ample seed but requires 530,000 metric tons of urea fertilizer. Despite the lack of donations, the DPRK has decided to go ahead with the project. OPEC has contributed \$80 million dollars for UNDP designed agricultural programs, but these funds will apparently be invested in the South Pyongan Irrigation Project that was initiated in the fall of 1999.

Supreme Command Kim Jong Il in 1999 accented potato production. This poses some problems. Plowing requires a greater number of tractors that are three times more powerful than those normally available in the DPRK.

Virtually everything essential for food production is scarce except for labor. Energy, particularly disiel fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, machinery, spare parts, irrigation pumps and pipes and plastic sheeting are all in short supply. Deforestation is quickening. According to DPRK sources, some 500,000 hectares of forest were destroyed during the past two years.

## **AGRICULTURAL SITUATION - DPRK OFFICIALS' VIEW**



March 17 - Participants:

Jon In-chan, Flood Damage Recovery Committee (FDRC), Acting Director,  
International Affairs Division (excellent English, fashionably dressed, authoritative,  
urbane demeanor, light smoker, well traveled, knows how to deal with foreigners),  
Jon Song Myong (FDRC US Section Deputy Chief),  
Jong Tae-yang, PVOC coordinator, good English, heavy smoker and drinker, uncomfortable  
with Americans, unpopular with PVOC team.  
Kim Ki-hup, Ministry of Agriculture, Director of Science and Technology Division  
Li Hak-jo, FDRC interpreter

## POLICY PRIORITIES

Jon In-chan offered his overview of DPRK agriculture policy. The DPRK is encouraging the raising of poultry, the development of pasture land and the introduction of advanced agricultural technology from other countries. The FDRC very much appreciates Mercy Corps having arranged the visit of an FDRC delegation to the state of Oregon since with is consistent with the DPRK's priorities.

North Korea limited land, Jon continued, limits its agriculture. Intense farming has damaged the soil. Rather than continue to use chemical fertilizers, a shift is underway to organic fertilizer from poultry. The continuing food shortage has reduce live stock. More cows, pigs and other small animals are needed to produce fertilizer. During the past four to five years, the number of goats and rabbits - large ones weighing 6 to 7 kilograms. Also being encouraged is the raising of geese and fish. Aqua culture is on the rise. The number of fish farms is increasing. But there has been less than normal rain and snow fall during the 1999 winter so water levels in reservoirs are low.

## 1999 HARVEST

The 1999 harvest was good. The DPRK's original projection was 4.2 million metric tons of grain but the actual amount was lower because of energy problems. The mushroom harvest was below normal, (reducing exports to Japan and hard currency earnings). Nevertheless, food production increased slightly in 1999, but it is still short of need. Humanitarian assistance is helpful, and the DPRK attaches importance to it. The Public Distribution System (PDS) is operating again to distribute food.

## CURRENT PRIORITIES

Water and energy are key to reinvigorating agriculture. Some local areas are able to produce all their electricity needs. Others are building small and medium scale hydro-electric generating plants. This winter's drought, however, has reduced electricity generated at hydro-electric plants. The nuclear reactor construction at Sinpo, as provided for in the Agreed Framework signed between the DPRK and US in 1994, was to have been built by 2003, but we cannot now see when that project will be completed. Jon expressed personal doubts about his country's ability to maintain the freeze on the nuclear program. He claimed only the DPRK, not the US and Japan, lose because of the Agreed Framework. If the DPRK had continued its own

nuclear power plant construction program, Jon said, the DPRK would now have sufficient electricity from its own nuclear power plants.

Other current priorities include:

- The acquisition of high yield seeds, particular need are high yielding rice and potato seeds. The FDRC is pushing for foreign NGO's to purchase a high technology, Russian developed and manufactured virus free potato planting machine. Good seeds, Jon expressed with a smile, will increase production.
- Fertilizer; the price of one ton of fertilizer equals the cost of 10,000 mt of rice. The DPRK would prefer to receive fertilizer over food aid.
- Mechanization: Farms have five to six tractors each but cannot use them because of the fuel shortage. Soldiers are also restructuring rice paddies in southeast Kangwon and northwest North Pyongan Provinces. This effort will shift to North Hwanghae Province in 2001.
- The irrigation system, built in the 1960's and 1970's, must be renovated. The entire system depends on electricity. The system requires about 60,000 kilowatts per hour. A new irrigation canal is under construction with funds from OPEC. Begun in the fall of 1999, a large canal will carry water from the Taedong River near the port of Nampo toward the northeast through the intensely farmed South Pyongan Province, passing through the counties of: Chungsan, Taedong, Pyongwon, Sukchon, Pyongsang Suchon and Kyechon. The new system will rely on gravity instead of electricity.

Jong Tae Yang, FDRC's coordinator with the PVOC later explained that that the new irrigation canal would extend 160 kilometers northeast from the Taedong River toward the Chongchon River. Water from the Taedong River will irrigate 100,000 hectares of paddy. The project will require the movement of 15 million cubic meters of dirt and stone, the building of tunnels and a system of locks to direct the flow of water. Completion is scheduled for 2002. The FDRC would like to develop Food for Work programs that would support the project. Mercy Corps has promised to promote this idea in Washington, D.C.

## FUTURE PLANS

The DPRK government is working now with United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to formulate a new strategy for agricultural recovery for presentation at the third UNDP round table in Geneva June 20-21, 2000. The program calls for a \$300 million investment to renovate the agricultural sector's infrastructure, or \$100 million per year over a three year period. In Jon's view, successful implementation of such a program would end the need for humanitarian assistance. Priorities under this new program would be improvement of irrigation, rebuilding of dykes, and other major improvements.

## US GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTING OFFICE (GAO):

Jon said he was unaware that the GAO had applied for visas to come to the DPRK. The US GAO may have the authority to investigate the spending of US government funds, but there

is little reason for the DPRK to admit a GAO team to the DPRK. Whether nor not the GAO visits the DPRK will have no impact on its findings, in Jon's view. For him, the GAO has already reached its conclusions. The GAO, Jon continued, only looked at the negative side of things. Despite what the GAO thinks, WFP and PVOC monitoring is going well, Jon believes. Chances are very slim that the GAO will be admitted to the DPRK.

## US-DPRK RELATIONS

The US-DPRK talks are very important, Jon opined. The US, despite the Agreed Framework of 1994, relations remain hostile. Both sides need to do more to normalization the situation.

## EXCHANGES

Jon welcomed the idea of having ten DPRK officials visit Washington, D.C. this spring, but he point out this was not in his area of responsibility.

## **KUMSONG FARM, ONCHON COUNTY, SOUTH PYONGAN PROVINCE**

March 17 - Participants:

Kim Ki Hup, Director, Science and Technology Division (52 years old, two children, no grandsons, lives in Pyongyang, no foreign travel)

Jon Song Myong, Deputy Director, American Affairs Section, Flood Damage Recovery Committee (FDRC), two trips to the US (California, New York, North Carolina), some English, three sons, one to marry in April, second in the Army and youngest is studying Russian at Pyongyang University of Foreign Languages

Kim Chong-nam, Chief Engineer, Kumsong State Farm, Onchon County, South Pyongan Province (young, energetic, eager and very intelligent, some English reading ability)

Li Hak-cho, Interpreter, FDRC, fairly good English but no agricultural background and limited vocabulary regarding agriculture, but a fast and eager learner with a low key, pleasant manner. Married, one small child, graduate of Pyongyang University for Foreign Languages, no foreign travel.

## KUMSONG FARM

Kumsong Farm, according to Mr. Jon, was selected because it is a state farm that will eventually serve as a model farm for orchards. Also, the climatic conditions are similar to those in Oregon. FDRC looks forward to Mercy Corps' long term support for the farm to refurbish it. Eventually the FDRC wants Mercy Corps to supply 70,000 more apple seedlings to the farm. This is part of the DPRK's program to revitalize its agriculture. Another consideration was the climate which is quite similar to that of eastern Oregon. The coldest winter temperature is zero degrees Celsius with an annual average of 900 millimeters of rain. Also, the soil fertility is Ph 6.52 compared to 6.2 to 7.2 in Oregon.

The farm is under the direct management of the Ministry of Agriculture, Mr. Kim Ki Hup

volunteered.. Until recently, the farm was a cooperative. To reach the the farm, one drives southwest from Pyongyang along the Taedong River for about one hour to Nampo, the main west coast port. After driving through the city, we headed northwest for another hour until we reach Onchon County in South Pyongan Province. Kumsong State Farm is a mere four kilometers from the west coast and about thirty kilometers northwest of Nampo.

Fifteen hundred people live on the farm in 220 houses and apartments. There are four hundred workers, 300 men and 100 women. (Actually we saw far more women than men working in the fields). The workers are organized into functionally specialized work teams which focus on a particular aspect of farming.

Each family has its own small plot of land for growing vegetables. A small clinic provides first aid medical treatment. Seriously ill or injured people are taken to the nearby county hospital. Education from primary to high school is available at the farm, but the school building is being rebuilt.

Orchards cover most of the farms 500 hectares (one hectare equals about 2.47 acres): 300 of apples, 95 of pears and 55 other fruit. The farm also has a small population of geese, rabbits and chickens. Five tractors are allocated for every 20 hectares of land but we saw only three functioning, old tractors.

Each hectare of apple trees should yield about 20 tons of apples per year, but current production is about ten metric tons because of climatic change and the age of the trees. Many of the apple trees are 40 years old, and the pears trees are 27 years old. The 10,000 apple from the US will be planted on 55 hectares of the farm. The farm already has 10 hectares planted with apple seedlings from Japan, but the seedlings (Fuji, Sekai, Buyi and Itaredu - phonetic spellings) are not doing well. The Oregon seedlings (Gala, Granny Smith, red and yellow delicious and Fuji varieties) should yield after about seven to ten years one hundred kilos per tree.

Earnings from the sale of fruit to the county and city (no fruit is exported) are distributed among the farm workers after production costs have been deducted. Each worker receives an amount of the earnings according to the amount of time they invested in work on the farm.

Major shortages on the farm include:

- Fertilizer and chemicals (pesticides). This is the greatest problem.
- Transportation: need trucks and fork lifts to move the fruit from the farm to the city.
- Seedlings: need 50 to 70,000 more trees for planning on 150 hectares of land.

## **HEALTH SITUATION - WHO VIEWS**

Health problems are equal in severity to the food problem. This is not just a matter of increasing the supply of medicine. Water, heating of buildings, sanitation, energy shortage are all sources of the problems. The quality of medicine is very low. For example, hospitals produce their IV fluids, about 30 to 50 litres daily which is put in used beer bottles. WHO could upgrade

the production for only \$80,000 per hospital but the money is not available. The blood supply for transfusions is also a serious problem. There is no refrigeration.

The government needs to prioritize the problems, improve the supply of electricity and upgrade equipment. WHO is willing to provide sterilizers for medical instruments that do not require electricity but the government insists on receiving technically advanced, electricity dependent equipment. The medical system is best in Pyongyang, then deteriorates rapidly the greater the distance from the capital.

The priority needs are:

- medicines and medical equipment,
- training in the Korean language and the translation into the Korean language of medical books and manuals.

Currently, the most prevalent diseases are:

- TB: WHO selects patients who have active TB and provides them medication. WHO is also training DPRK medical professions in the detection and treatment of the disease.
- Malaria has increased rapidly, from 2,000 cases in 1998 to 100,000 in 1999. The disease has increased most likely because of the increasing amount of stagnate water and the shortage of pesticides. The disease is not deadly, but it affects people in the agriculture season.
- Cholera has not been detected, but WHO is prepared to distribute diagnostic kits and to translate a cholera manual into Korean.

The Northeast is accessible to WHO and emphasizes North Hamgyong Province. The local manufacturing of IV fluid, drugs to treat TB and malaria are increasing. Data about the public health situation and nutrition is still scarce, but the situation has improved relative to 1997.

An NGO conference on public health issues would be helpful, if only a small number of people were involved and the venue was Beijing to hold down the costs. WHO has had a Chinese doctor working with its Pyongyang office for two years and the Chinese support a training program. The conference would do well to focus on developing long term solutions for key public health problems, and the supply of medicines and medical equipment.

## **IGO/NGO RELATIONS WITH THE DPRK**

NGO relations with the DPRK government are complex and often troubled. The US NGO's seem to have done better in this regard than their European counterparts. The UN agencies, particularly the WFP, have also had continuing difficult relations with the DPRK government. UNHCR and WHO also find it difficult to deal with the host government, but appear to have fewer crises than their UN cousins.

European NGO's are difficult to work with in the DPRK. They are critical of the UN presence. Since January 2000, the atmosphere for European NGO's has become more difficult since ECHO (European Community) funding was delayed for new projects. The storm has subsided somewhat, but some problems remain. But in 1999, two of the nine European NGO's left, the UK's Oxfam and France's Action Against Famine.

Some of the NGO's in the DPRK, other than those represented on the US PVOC are:

- Cesei (Italy)
- GAA German Action (European Union funded)
- Children's Aid Direct (UK, funded by the EU)
- World Vision
- ADRA (Switzerland)
- Capanamur (German PVO, EU funded)
- Concern World Wide (Ireland, EU funded)

The DPRK now requires that any European NGO wishing to work in the DPRK have a minimum of \$700,000 for projects. If not, they are invited to leave or are not admitted.

The EU in January diverted 20,000 metric tons of food aid to Kenya and canceled another 70,000 metric tons because of disputes with the DPRK over monitoring related issues. The EU's nine monitors work separately from the World Food Program (WFP) and concentrated on South Pyongan Province. They insisted on receiving more data about food and related matters.

Some foreign observers in the DPRK believe ECHO and the EU have misplayed their hand. IGO and NGO relations with the DPRK improved significantly in 1997 and 1998, but then leveled off in 1999. Some NGO's pressed for continuing change only to have their rising expectations frustrated. Tensions increased as a consequence.

WFP-DPRK relations remain difficult but steady. The DPRK persists in seeking a reduction of WFP monitors below their present level. The WFP countered with a requires to increase its staff by ten. WFP staff, nevertheless, remain steady at 46 people. Another irritant was the WFP's refusal to give the DPRK a \$400,000 contract for tools. The Chinese bid was better and so the contract went to the Chinese. The DPRK was quite displeased.

The DPRK sees the amount of food aid tied to US diplomacy, not the WFP's recommendations. This reduces the WFP's leverage with the DPRK government, thus the WFP does not press for more in its dealings with the government. The EU, however, sought to use food aid as leverage by diverting 20,000 metric tons to Kenya and holding up another 70,000 metric tons. The DPRK subsequently backpedaled and the EU resumed its 70,000 ton program. In exchange, the DPRK government allowed the EU monitors increased access and data.

DPRK officials firmly believe the US program is clearly tied to its negotiations with the

DPRK. In 1999, the US promised 500,000 metric tons over five years for access to the suspected nuclear site at Kumchangni. The US Private Voluntary Organization Consortium (PVOC) promised it would deliver 85,000 metric tons of Food For Work grain by December 1999. The DPRK arranged its PDS schedule accordingly, but the delivery fell 30,000 mt short of the promise. Then Mercy Corps promised the delivery would arrive by the end of March. Also, the PVOC is behind in its payment for local transportation in the amount of about \$125,000. These problems are a major concern to the FDRC, International Affairs Acting Director Jon Il-chan told us with intensity as he lighted a cigarette. DPRK officials judge everything in terms of trust, he claimed. Jon urged Mercy Corps International to make Americans better understand the DPRK's concerns.

The Eugene Bell Foundation continues to have a major presence in the DPRK. Its small Seoul-based staff keeps to itself and, unfortunately, has estranged itself from the rest of the IGO/NGO community in Pyongyang.

## **DPRK RELATIONS WITH IGO'S AND NGO'S**

Views of Foreigners as of March 2000

### **WFP -**

Primary responsibility is to monitor food distribution, and has access to 163 counties, seeking to increase resident staff but negotiations are arduous and slow. Relative to 1995, there has been slow, steady progress, but much room for improvement, particularly regarding working and living conditions for monitors. Deeply dissatisfied over restraints on monitoring. Relatively rapid progress between 1995 and 1997 in terms of understanding, travel, opening of provincial level offices, but then reached a plateau in 1997.

### **EUROPEAN UNION**

Organization has a good MOU with DPRK, but DPRK has frustrated its implementation except in two provinces. The EU's nine food monitors work separately from the WFP. Continuing friction with the DPRK government has convinced the EU to withdraw its monitors at the end of March 2000. The EU monitors wanted more data about food distribution and sought to expand beyond South Pyongan Province.

### **CONCERN WORLD WIDE**

This Irish based, global NGO maintains three representatives in the DPRK. Working conditions for European NGO's is difficult. Since the beginning of the year 2000, conditions have become increasingly difficult. ECHO complicated the situation by delaying funding for new projects. ECHO funds: the German PVO's Capanamur and German Agro-Action, Ireland's Concern World Wide and the UK's Children's Aid Direct, Switzerland's ADRA and a portion of World Vision.

The DPRK appears to have become selective regarding which NGO's can remain in the DPRK. Annual assistance worth \$700,000 seems to be a requirement for residence.

### **WORLD VISION (Pyongyang, March 2000)**

Has two resident NGO's who live in Pyongyang's Koryo Hotel. Believes it has established good, but occasionally trying working relationship with the DPRK government. Funding is largely from South Korea - approximately \$1,000,000 annually. Imports wheat for six noodle factories and maintains six cooperative farms, each with 1,500 hectares of cultivated land and 5 to 6,000 residents. Program focuses on improving irrigation, orchards, green house farming for vegetables. An ROK sponsored and funded potato project is underway. A South Korean expert is working at the DPRK Academy of Agricultural Sciences to develop virus free potato seeds. The hydroponic method of cultivation is envisioned for cultivation of the potatoes seed prior to transplantation to fields. Twenty three hectares of green house land is being cultivated for seeds.  
NGO's in DPRK - July 2000



## **KOREA SHARING MOVEMENT - Lee Jong Moo, Tokyo, July 2000**

- 9/95 KSM collected Won 80 Billion sent rice, wheat flour and agricultural inputs to North Korea.
- 1996 Korea Sharing Movement established by coalition of students and workers in Seoul.
- 1998 KSM called for day of fasting in Korea. In Japan, NGO's joined the effort
- 1997 KSM continued to raise funds for North Korea but Asia financial crisis undermined the effort. Eugene Bell Foundation and World Vision joined with ROK NGO's.
- 2000 KSM provided \$20 million in aid to DPRK.

KSM has shifted from emergency aid to more general aid in the areas of health care and agricultural inputs. In 2000, provided Won 17 billion of agricultural inputs like seed, maize, potato seed project with World Vision. KSM also sending some food aid through Najin-Sonbong. ROKG matches KSM private funds. South Korean private donations doubled in 1999. South Korean local governments are striving to develop ties with North Korean provincial counterparts.

## **JAPAN NGO EFFORT**

Tokyo, July, 2000 - Koyomi Yoshida

Japan's aid program for North Korea dates from 1995 when the Japan Association to Send Eggs and Bananas to DPRK made first NGO shipment of food aid. The organization's name was changed from Association for Aid and Relief for Refugees because of DPRK government objections to the word "refugee." The Assn. In December 1995 sent eggs (high protein) and bananas (scarce in the DPRK) for children. Some potatoes were also sent.

Japanese donors want transparency and accountability for their aid. The Assn. visited nurseries in 1997-98 and learned of the shortage of medicine and public health crisis. Medical supplies were subsequently sent. The sending of toys proved problematic. The Chosen soren created preconditions regarding the toys. Neither "character" toys from American cartoons or American made toys could be sent. Wooden blocks were ultimately sent and the North Korean children responded positively to them.

Three major problems for Japan's NGO's:

1. Collecting information on the situation in North Korea which makes it difficult to focus effort.
2. Shortage of funds - in US and ROK private donations abundant, but not in Japan. Also, Japanese government will not release Overseas Development Assistance for North Korea.
3. DPRK - if contact FDRC, then can have good cooperation, but only two or three NGO's have this access. Most NGO's go through the DPRK-Japan Friendship Association which greatly complicates the situation.