

WORKING PEOPLE OF THE WHOLE WORLD, UNITE!

KIM IL SUNG

ON FURTHER DEVELOPING THE NURSING AND UPBRINGING OF CHILDREN

Speech at the Sixth Session of the Fifth Supreme People's
Assembly of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea
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**Foreign Languages Publishing House
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The Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) is now deliberating the work of nursing and educating children. I should like to take this opportunity to make a few remarks on this subject.

At a session of the SPA last year we reviewed the implementation of the Law on Universal Compulsory 11-Year Education and decided to put it fully into effect from September 1, 1975. The current session of the SPA is discussing the question of further consolidating and developing our advanced system of raising children and will pass a Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children.

Our Party pays particular attention to and makes a great effort in the raising of children not because our country is richer or better-off than others, nor for any information purposes.

We are very concerned about how children are brought up and are making great efforts in this area in order to build socialism and communism successfully.

The most important thing in thoroughly eliminating what remains of the old society since the establishment of the socialist system and in achieving the complete victory of socialism and the bringing about of

communism, is to remould the people's thinking along communist lines. The re-education of people is particularly important in those countries which were once colonies or underdeveloped as ours used to be.

As I have already said in my speech on the subjects of the transition period and the dictatorship of the proletariat, the transition from capitalism to socialism takes a very long time in those countries that were previously backward. The longer the transition period, the greater the importance of educating people. Neither the complete victory of socialism nor the successful building of a communist society will be possible unless people's ideological consciousness is refashioned during the transition period.

In order to build socialism and communism successfully, our Party has set forth the policy of conquering the two fortresses, namely, the ideological and the material.

In capturing the two fortresses for the building of communism it is the ideological one that is of the utmost importance. The reshaping of people's ideological consciousness along communist lines, the conquering of the ideological fortress of communism, is a very difficult task which will take a long time to accomplish. And unless the ideological fortress is

taken, the occupation of the material fortress cannot succeed. Indeed, there may be economic development and an increase in material wealth within a comparatively short period. But if people's awareness fails to keep pace with economic development, the existing economic foundations may be undermined or economic construction may decline. So priority must be given to occupying the ideological fortress through the re-education of people in communism.

For people to become communist they should be brought up correctly from an early age.

There is a saying in our country: "A habit formed at the age of three will persist until eighty." If, due to a lack of proper education, a bad habit is acquired during childhood, it will be hard to get rid of it, even when adult. If a tree is to grow straight and look well, it has to be carefully tended when young. If, as a sapling, it is allowed to grow twisted, it will be very difficult to straighten it when it is fully grown. Similarly, if we are to train people to be communists, we must make sure they are well-educated and looked after from early childhood. If a person picks up a bad habit in childhood, it will be very difficult to correct it when he grows up, no matter how good his education might be. Our society still has some people who cause public

disturbances or commit evil and not one of them was properly educated when young.

In order to bring up all the members of this generation to be good communists, we have already introduced universal compulsory 11-year education and are now going to pass a Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children. If this generation is brought up collectively from early childhood and given compulsory 11-year education, all the children will grow up to be ideologically sound communists.

As I have already said, we are not doing this because our country is rich. In the past few years we have introduced compulsory 11-year education and have sent all the children to nursery schools and kindergartens, and this has proved very expensive for the state.

At the moment 3 500 000 children are in nursery schools and kindergartens here. And the number of pupils and students enrolled in schools at all levels, from primary school through to university, is as high as 5 090 000. In all, nearly 8 600 000 children and students are being trained at state expense in our country. This number constitutes half our population. Taking charge of the raising of children and students, who represent half the population, cannot but be a heavy burden for the state.

There are many other things for which our state bears the expense. In our country military expenditure is fairly high. I think that of all the socialist countries, ours shoulders the heaviest military burden. Because the US imperialists are occupying half the territory of our country and, together with their stooges, are making overt aggressive moves against our Republic, we are compelled to make great efforts to increase our defence capability. Provision for the people's well-being is also a heavy financial burden on the state. We supply cereals to workers and office employees at a minimal price and provide them with coal and all other items that they need daily at very little cost to themselves.

Although it may be very expensive, we place great emphasis on the raising of children for the good of the country and for the successful completion of the transition period. If we think only of the expense and neglect our duty to nurse and educate the children, we shall not be able to fulfil what we must do during the transition period, or conquer the ideological fortress or, ultimately, build a communist society.

We have achieved some notable success in raising and educating children collectively at state and public expense in the past few years. In the firm belief that we

are now in a position to confirm our success in this area by legislation, we have decided to pass a Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children at this session.

By passing this law during the present session we aim, to put it briefly, to raise all the children to be good communist people by nurturing them collectively in the communist fashion.

Bringing up children collectively at state and public expense is also of importance for the freeing of women from the heavy burden of housekeeping and for transforming them on the revolutionary and working-class lines.

In our country the women are carrying half the revolutionary burden. Women form 48 per cent of the work force in our national economy. They play an important part in education, the health service, commerce and light industry. In agriculture especially, women form the greater part of the work force and play a decisive role. It is no exaggeration to say that there is no work that is not done by women in rural areas except tractor operations which are performed by men.

Now that women are participating in socialist construction, they should be relieved of housekeeping duties. Only then can they join in public life and work to the best of their ability, allowing a larger number of

them to participate in the socialist construction programme.

In inducing women to take an active part in the building of socialism, the main aim of our Party is to transform them on the revolutionary and working-class lines. Since women constitute half the population, this action goes a long way towards the transformation of the whole of society on the revolutionary and working-class lines.

An effective way of transforming women on the revolutionary and working-class lines is to let them take an active part in socialist construction. If they are confined to their homes and remain away from labour and organizational life, they cannot be transformed on the revolutionary lines. I think it would be very difficult for a husband to educate and transform his wife at home on the revolutionary lines. The written and spoken words alone are not enough to transform people on the revolutionary lines. People can only be transformed on the revolutionary and working-class lines successfully through a socialist working life and organized activities. In the case of women it can only be done if they go out into society and actively participate in mental or physical labour and train themselves through organized community life.

For women to take an active part in the building of socialism, they must be helped by providing care for the children collectively in nursery schools and kindergartens.

As you see, the raising of children together at state and public expense is necessary not only for the formation of truly communist men and women but also for the transformation of women on the revolutionary and working-class lines. We must therefore bring up children along communist lines, regardless of the expense.

The raising of children together at state and public expense in our country is not in any way a charitable exercise. Also it is fundamentally different from nursing children for the rich in a capitalist society. With us, the main point is to bring up the children of working women; we are doing this work for the purpose of breeding a new generation of communists and in order to transform women on the revolutionary and working-class lines. I believe our Party is absolutely correct to undertake this policy.

We must review and legislate on the success and experience gained from the communist way of bringing up children in the past and, on this basis, make improvements in the work of nursing and educating

children. A law is not irreversible. If the Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children adopted now is found to have defects in the course of its execution, it can be amended.

Crucial to promoting the work of raising children is to ensure that nursery-school and kindergarten teachers are well trained.

At present each province has its own college and centres for training nursery-school and kindergarten teachers, and in the future they must be better run so that a large number of nursery-school and kindergarten teachers are produced who are fully qualified politically and professionally to raise children. Only then will it be possible to provide revolutionary education for the children and to bring them up to be communists, who are intellectually, morally and physically healthy.

Furthermore, the management and operation of nursery schools and kindergartens must be improved, so as to demonstrate the advantages of the collective raising of children at these establishments over bringing them up at home under parental care.

Our country now has more than 60 000 nursery schools and kindergartens. They all have good facilities. They are well furnished, well equipped and

are run properly. When I visit cooperative farms or factories, I find that the nurseries are kept clean and that the children are healthy. The women are very happy that nurseries and kindergartens are well equipped and properly managed at the cooperative farms and factories. Generally, the nursery schools and kindergartens are now in good shape.

However, we must not be complacent. Following the passing of the Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children at this session of the SPA, the nurseries and kindergartens have to be better equipped and managed more efficiently.

Now we must equip them better from the point of view of culture and health and give the children a proper diet. All the nursery schools and kindergartens should be fully provided with cultural and health facilities, which they must take good care of. At the same time, the standard of food supplied to the nurseries and kindergartens must be improved so that the children are better fed. Even though we cannot satisfy some other needs, we must feed the children well. And although the adults may experience some shortages, the children must be provided with sufficient of everything they need.

Even after the promulgation of the Law on the

Nursing and Upbringing of Children, you are not obliged to enrol all children in nurseries on the pretext of furthering their upbringing, but those grandmothers or parents who wish to look after the children at home may do so. This is not a law that restricts the freedom of parents to bring up their little ones at home. Those who so wish may do so.

I think many nursery-school and kindergarten teachers have come here with the intention of addressing this SPA meeting. But since this is a busy season for farmers, we cannot afford to take too long over this meeting. We will hear their speeches on some other occasions and wind up the meeting now. I hope you will understand why it is impossible for you all to make your speeches.

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Published by Foreign Languages Publishing House
DPR Korea

Issued in October Juche 112 (2023)
