

**KIM IL SUNG**

**ON A HISTORIC VICTORY IN  
THE FATHERLAND LIBERATION  
WAR AND THE TASKS OF THE  
PEOPLE'S ARMY**

WORKING PEOPLE OF THE WHOLE WORLD, UNITE!

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Speech before the Officers and Men of Unit  
No. 256 of the Korean People's Army  
*October 23, 1953*

Comrades,

On behalf of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, the Government of the Republic and the Supreme Headquarters, I would like to offer my warm thanks to the officers and men of Unit No. 256 who fought heroically at the front for a long time after the outbreak of the war.

As you know, the Korean war ended in our victory. It is true that we failed to wipe out the enemy and we have not yet reunified the country. However, we defeated the huge armed forces of US imperialism, the ringleader of world imperialism, and its 15 satellite countries, and forced them to sign the Armistice Agreement as we demanded. This is a great victory for us.

What are the victories we achieved in the arduous three-year war?

First, the Korean people and the People's Army, through their heroic struggle, repulsed the enemy's invasion and defended the democratic base in the northern half of Korea with honour.

Taking advantage of the favourable conditions created by the presence of the Soviet army following liberation, we established the democratic base in the north and carried out tremendous work in all spheres—political, economic, cultural and military.

We formed the Workers' Party with 800 000 members, social organizations such as the Democratic Youth League, trade unions, Peasants' Union and Women's Union, which have a membership of several million, drew broad sections of the masses in the Democratic Front for the Reunification of the Fatherland, and rallied them firmly around the Party and

Government. We built the Party strongly and cemented the unity between the Party and the masses, thereby preparing a solid political force.

At the same time, we mobilized the people to carry out democratic reforms such as agrarian reform and nationalization of industries, conducted economic construction vigorously, and took all measures to increase the economic power of the northern half.

From the first days of liberation, we paid deep attention to increasing the nation's defence power in particular. As far back as 1946, we began to train the cadres of the People's Army at the Pyongyang Institute and the Central Security Officers School, and in 1948, we announced the founding of the People's Army and adopted measures to strengthen it in every way.

Because we set up the democratic base in good time and strengthened the People's Army, we could defeat the invaders from the 16 countries headed by US imperialism and secure victory in the war. Had we fought the war only with the Syngman Rhee puppet army, not with the troops of US imperialism and its satellites, we would have vanquished it and achieved the country's reunification.

To repel the invasion of US imperialism and its satellites and defend the democratic base, our people and People's Army fought heroically, never yielding to difficulties and trials.

We have firm belief that as long as there are large numbers of Party members who have a high degree of political awareness and are tempered like steel, and the people who are rallied firmly around the Party, and as long as we have the solid democratic base, we can defeat any enemy invasion in future.

Second, in the Korean war the Korean people and the

People's Army not only inflicted a military defeat upon the enemy but also caused him a severe political setback.

The Korean war laid bare the brutal nature of imperialism to the world, and shattered the myth of the "might" of US imperialism to pieces.

In fact, earlier some people had an illusion about the "might" and "humanitarianism" of US imperialism. Through the Korean war, however, the people of the world not only realized clearly that the US imperialists were the most heinous savages but also came to believe more firmly that if a people fought to the last bravely, arms in hands, they would be able to defeat them.

It was widely known to the world for long that US imperialism was the most vicious aggressor and biggest robber in the world.

In Korea, too, Americans robbed us of much gold at the Kapsan, Holtong, Unsan and other mines for a long time. And they spent a tiny amount of money on building "charity hospitals", "Severance Hospital", churches and schools, pretending to practise "charity". Not only this. They sent a few America-worshipping cat's paws to their country for study in an attempt to win our people's favour and, through these agents, preached to Koreans to adore the United States. Some foolish people were taken in and worshipped the Americans.

Once in Sunan, an American used hydrochloric acid to inscribe the word "thief" on the forehead of a Korean child as the child had passed by his orchard and picked up a fallen apple. This fact alone is enough to show how vicious the Americans are.

The US imperialists resorted to every cunning trick to curry favour with the Korean people, but in fact, they did not give up their ambition to conquer Korea. They actively supported Japanese imperialism in its aggression of Korea.

We could see the craftiness of the US imperialists on the problem of forming the Second Front during the Second World War and the question of Korea's liberation.

In fact, US imperialism played no part whatsoever in the liberation of Korea. The Soviet army, together with the Korean People's Revolutionary Army, vanquished the Japanese imperialist Kwantung Army of one million, and emancipated Korea, while the US imperialists did not do anything. The US imperialists who landed in south Korea without as much as firing a shot, were brazen enough to advertise themselves as the "liberator" of the south Korean people. This deceptive trick could not work long.

The Korean war laid bare the aggressive nature of US imperialism and smashed to pieces the illusion which some people had cherished about it in the past.

Let me take some examples. There was a pastor living near Pyongyang. During the period of peaceful construction he was opposed to our system in secret and did not carry out our Party policy honestly. But he began to take an active part in our work after the enemy who had temporarily occupied north Korea during the war, was driven out. When our Party cadre had a talk with him, he said: "Frankly speaking, I had waited anxiously for you to fall and the Americans to come. So, when you were retreating, I prepared a 'Thaeguk flag' and even got my whole family dressed in their best to welcome US troops. But when I met them, I found them quite different from what I had expected. As soon as they got out of the jeeps they committed all sorts of atrocities, shooting chicken at random with carbines, looting everything, insulting and raping women. I fully realized then that only the Workers' Party of Korea and the Government of the Republic can bring genuine freedom and happiness to the people."

As you know, there are many people like this clergyman.

Once a British Labour Party member came to Korea as representative of the Women's International Democratic Federation. When she was coming to Korea she did not think it likely that the troops of the US and her own country could ever commit such barbarities. While in Korea she looked around Anak, Sinchon and other places in Hwanghae Province, and witnessed with her own eyes the tragic scenes caused by the indiscriminate bombing by the US and British imperialists on our peaceful towns and villages and their massacre of innocent people in cold blood. This changed her views and, on her return home, she exposed their crimes.

By using germ weapons and resorting to all sorts of atrocities in the Korean war, the US imperialists exposed to the people all over the world their viciousness surpassing that of the Hitlerites and the Japanese imperialists.

In the Korean war they fully revealed not only their bestiality and viciousness but also their vulnerability.

Some people used to call the United States a "country of gold" and a "country of science", and feared it.

However, as you experienced and witnessed while fighting with the Americans, they are the greatest cowards in the world. It is Americans who, before fighting battles, turn their cars round first and then make preparations to run away.

The US imperialists looked down upon us as "small country", but they sustained an ignominious defeat in the Korean war.

The heroic struggle of the Korean people against US imperialism has become the banner and model of the oppressed people all over the world in their national-liberation struggle. We proved to the people of the world that if they fight valiantly like Koreans they can beat back the aggression of any

imperialists and free themselves from their yoke.

After the Korean war, the struggle against the colonial rule of the US-led imperialists has gained in scope in many Southeast Asian countries, including Malaya, Indonesia and Viet Nam, and the rest of the world, and the colonial system is crumbling beyond retrieve.

This means that the days are gone when the US-led imperialists could occupy other countries and oppress and plunder their peoples at will.

Third, the Korean people, the People's Army, Party and government bodies, social organizations and their officials were tempered, and they gained rich experience in the three years of the war. This is one of the greatest victories we achieved.

In the midst of the flames of war, our people, Party members and cadres were tempered like steel. If we call the Korean people of yesterday unbeaten "pig iron", we can describe the Korean people of today as "special steel" hardened in an electric furnace.

History has never known such a harsh war as the Korean war. However, the People's Army defeated the Syngman Rhee puppet army at a stroke and drove the US imperialist aggression army down to the Raktong River.

Through battles, our officers came to know how to command modernized units skilfully and accumulated a wealth of experience for organizing and commanding offensive and defensive battles and retreating efficiently.

Our Party and Government gained the priceless experience of working out scientific strategy and tactics for leading the army skilfully in war against a strong enemy, of stabilizing the people's living and meeting the demands of the front satisfactorily even under wartime conditions and of organizing



transport properly at night in spite of difficulties caused by the bombing of enemy planes.

We suffered tremendous losses because of the enemy's bombing, but we gained a rich experience in anti-aircraft actions.

Such is not the case with the enemy, however. They do not know how to fight night battles and cannot drive vehicles without lights. As they are mercenaries, they cannot fight war even for a day in such ordeals and adversities as we overcame.

We are guided by the Workers' Party of Korea; we are not hired for money, but equipped with the indomitable will and all-conquering Marxist-Leninist ideas. Therefore, we are firmly convinced through our own experience that we can surmount any difficulty and secure victory in war.

When faced with the slightest danger, the enemy, however, is out of wits and thrown into confusion beyond retrieve.

Even if Syngman Rhee dares to launch "march north" for which he is clamouring, we have nothing to fear. When our tank unit advanced into Seoul at the time of the first counteroffensive, he howled over the radio that it was impossible to check the advancing "communist" tanks. If the enemy dares to launch the reckless "march north" in the future, we will fight back and our planes will be mobilized in large numbers. Then the enemy will also cry in despair that it is impossible to match the attacking "communist" planes.

Even if the US imperialists ignite another world war, we have nothing to fear. Then, the situation will be more advantageous for us, because the enemy will have to disperse and fight in many parts of the world, not just in Korea.

If war breaks out in the future, our people tempered in the severe three-year war, will dig better air-raid shelters and be more efficient in evacuation, and our drivers will drive their

vehicles without lights at night as far as they want.

That is how we were tempered and we gained rich experience in the war. This experience we gained is priceless; it is valuable wealth and great asset for staunchly defending our country.

Fourth, the justness of our people's fighting aim and their self-sacrificing struggle have greatly raised our country's external position and prestige, and we made a great contribution to the cause of safeguarding universal peace and security.

We won many friends everywhere in the world and enjoyed support and sympathy from the people all over the world. This is a great victory for us.

Never before in our nation's history have we enjoyed such support and sympathy of the people of the whole world nor has our international prestige risen so high as today.

When our Government delegation visited the Soviet Union and other European People's Democracies recently, the peoples of these countries wished us the earliest possible rehabilitation from war wounds and promised to give us selfless aid in the spirit of proletarian internationalism.

We celebrated the conclusion of the Armistice Agreement as a great victory, whereas Syngman Rhee said it was the greatest national humiliation for the 16 countries, unable to defeat a "small communist army", to have signed the Armistice Agreement. Needless to say, the Americans did not regard it as honourable to sign the Armistice Agreement, either. Why? Because agreeing to the ceasefire, instead of defeating what they call "small Korea", would have exposed the American inability to the people of the world and to the people of their satellite countries in particular. In an attempt to escape such a humiliation, the US imperialists delayed the armistice talks for

more than two years and employed every trick to become the “victor”. But, on finding it utterly impossible to achieve victory, they finally signed the Armistice Agreement.

They themselves could not but admit their shameful defeat. In his comment on Truman’s Korean war plan, an American doctor criticized Truman’s miscalculation.

First, he said they had encountered wrong “races”. In other words, he said that they had failed to calculate that the Koreans were tough and the Chinese so numerous.

Second, he said that the terrain was disadvantageous. In fact, there are so many mountains in Korea that the enemy could not freely apply the technique it boasted of. He added that Korea was not an island but a peninsula adjoining the Soviet Union and China so that it was absolutely impossible to conquer it.

Third, he said that the wrong time had been chosen. He pointed out that China had emerged victorious from the revolution, the Soviet Union had restored the war-ravaged economy and, particularly, north Korea had established a powerful democratic base in the five years following its liberation. The US attempt to occupy Korea at such a time was ridiculous.

I do not know what sort of doctor he is, but I think he was right. The United States had never been defeated in aggressive wars throughout its history. But it suffered an ignominious defeat in the Korean war.

What, then, are the factors that enabled us to defeat the US imperialist aggression forces which had boasted of themselves as the “most powerful” in the world, and secure a great victory in the Fatherland Liberation War?

First, our people of today are not the Koreans of yesterday but the awakened people of a new Korea who had regained their country and sovereignty.

Our people of today are not those people who remained unawakened and backward over 500 years under the domination of the corrupt feudal ruling classes of the Ri dynasty.

In the past, the feudal rulers of our country sat arms folded doing nothing when Japan was advancing rapidly after the Meiji Restoration. When the Japanese invaded our country, using five-magazine rifles, they resisted them with firelocks. How could they repulse the invaders that way?

Following liberation we strove not to repeat the sorrow and humiliation we had suffered for half a century as colonial slaves of Japanese imperialism, as a stateless people. We strove to make our country rich and strong. We set up our own people's power and carried out democratic reforms by our own efforts. In five years after liberation, we brought about a great change in the political, economic, cultural and other fields, and established a powerful democratic base.

The Korean people are a new type of people living under a new system.

Second, the Korean people could secure victory because they had the Workers' Party of Korea, their leading and guiding force, which is equipped firmly with Marxist-Leninist theory.

The Workers' Party of Korea put forward correct strategic policies and mobilized the people to obtain victory in each period and at each stage of the war.

The members of the Workers' Party of Korea advanced in the van when charging, and in retreat they brought up the rear, checking the enemy's pursuit. They also took the lead in performing every difficult task in the factories and in the villages.

We have a million Party members at present. One million

Party members equipped with Marxist-Leninist thought are a very great force.

The peoples of the Soviet Union and other countries say that the Korean People's Army is among the strong armies in the world. Its might is attributable to the fact that it is guided by the Party; our Party members play the vanguard and key role in it.

This was the decisive guarantee that enabled us to defend the Republic from imperialist invasion. Even the enemy had to acknowledge this great might of ours.

When Syngman Rhee clamoured for single-handed "march north" just before the truce, we dealt a concentrated blow to the puppet army. After that the south Korean newspapers carried the gist of a talk between Clark and Syngman Rhee. Clark reproved Syngman Rhee for paying no heed to his advice that he should not clamour for single-handed "march north" but keep quiet. He said: "You are 80 now. If you want to remain in the presidency for a few more years, don't make a vain attempt, but take it easy. As you did not follow my advice and advocated march north, the communists turned their spearhead and made a concentrated attack on the ROK army. The north Korean communist army amounts to hundreds of thousands, and has so many cadres equipped with communist ideas."

While Syngman Rhee was loudly calling for "march north" alone, dozens of the "Taehan Youth Corps members" paraded in Pusan, crying for "march north". Having seen this, the "National Defence Army" soldiers who had returned from the front put off their uniforms and threw them at the paraders, saying: "If you want to march north alone, put on these and try as you please." This proves that these soldiers who had fought at the front had bitter experience and that they themselves realized the impossibility of "march north".

Third, we could obtain victory because we enjoyed the support and encouragement of the international democratic forces. Had we been isolated in the war, we could not have won the war.

Because all these factors favoured us, we could secure victory in the Fatherland Liberation War, and we will do in future as well.

Now that we have emerged victorious from the war, we are confronted with new tremendous tasks. The most important revolutionary task before us is to achieve the peaceful reunification of the country while consolidating our victory.

In order to achieve the peaceful reunification, we should first strengthen the democratic base, which is the fountainhead and stronghold of our revolution.

For strengthening of the democratic base we should, above all, restore the war-ravaged industry and agriculture so that solid foundations can be laid for a self-reliant economy and the people's deteriorated lives be stabilized as soon as possible.

We have favourable conditions for carrying out this difficult yet honourable task and accomplishing the country's industrialization in the future.

First, our people have gained priceless experience during the period of peaceful construction and the severe war, and have been hardened as fighters who can brave any difficulties.

We have great numbers of our own technicians and cadres now and continue to train new ones on a large scale. Even during the arduous war we sent many people abroad for studies.

There is no fortress which cannot be captured by us; we have the Workers' Party of Korea, the Government of the Republic and excellent leading cadres tempered in the war.

Second, we are rich in natural resources.

We have abundant resources—gold, silver, copper, iron, coal, electricity, lumber, fish, etc. We have fertile land and a rich raw-material base which can fully meet the demand for food and clothing. The question is to exploit and utilize the rich natural resources properly.

Third, the peoples of the Soviet Union, China and other fraternal countries who actively supported and encouraged our struggle during the period of peaceful construction and especially during the war, have promised to give quite a lot of aid to us in our effort for postwar reconstruction of the national economy.

Now, matters depend on ourselves. If we make redoubled effort to work in the spirit with which we courageously defeated the enemy in the war, and raise the technical and leadership levels for effective utilization of the aid from the fraternal countries, our natural wealth and internal resources, we shall achieve a really tremendous success in economic construction and in the promotion of the people's welfare.

We shall eliminate the centuries-old backwardness and colonial one-sidedness of our industry and lay the solid basis for an independent national economy. After the Three-Year Plan is carried out, we shall not merely restore industry but build necessary factories on a large scale, undertake the technical modernization of the national economy, and enter the stage of laying the foundation for industrialization.

Then, our national economy will free itself from backward technology and develop on a new technical basis, and we will be able to further raise the people's material and cultural standards of living and, further, solve basically the problems of food, clothing and housing for the people.

If we carry out economic construction victoriously as we plan, the north and the south will be poles apart in economic

and cultural development and in people's living conditions. There is no doubt that, then, the Syngman Rhee clique will be in a very precarious position.

In 1948 Kim Gu and Kim Gyu Sik came to north Korea to participate in the Joint Conference of Representatives of Political Parties and Social Organizations in North and South Korea. Even these die-hard nationalists were moved to see our people's democratic system and the development of the northern half where construction had not yet made much progress till then. Before returning home they said, "You are genuine patriots," and pledged that they would no longer work for the Americans.

So it is evident that as the northern half of Korea turns into an earthly paradise while the economy goes bankrupt and the people's life in south Korea becomes more miserable, the people there will not just sit idle; they will join us and fight the US imperialists and the Syngman Rhee clique. Then we may reunify our country peacefully.

We must restore and develop our economy quickly and strengthen the democratic base. Consolidating the rear is vital for strengthening our armed forces and guaranteeing victory in the war. The Syngman Rhee clique prattled all the time that they would plant the "Thaeguk flag" on Mt. Paektu. But they failed and will fail in the future, too. On the contrary, the day will surely come when we shall plant the flag of the Republic on Mt. Halla.

Our People's Army must firmly defend with arms the democratic base of the northern half which grows strong day by day. It must observe the Armistice Agreement and guard the nation's defence line tightly lest the aggressors dare invade our democratic base; in case the enemy ignites another war, it should not only repulse the attack at once but also chase him,



smash his last lair, and complete the task of national reunification. To this end, it should take full advantage of the period of armistice and build its own strength.

The People's Army should not slacken the serious posture maintained in the wartime; it must keep revolutionary vigilance, further fortify the defence work on the east and west coasts and along the demarcation line, and should always be ready for action.

We must strengthen the People's Army qualitatively. Even if we may have a small army, we must arm it firmly with Marxist-Leninist ideology and equip it adequately with up-to-date weapons and powerful fire arms.

We should equip our army with mobile weapons and combat equipment suited to our terrain, and strengthen the artillery.

In the past, there was a very wrong tendency among us. Until the fifth operation of the third stage of the war, fellows such as Kim Ung were so outrageous as to keep the guns in the rear and not use them; they tried to wage hand-to-hand battles with hand grenades and light weapons. Commanders must raise their ability to use the artillery decisively.

What is important in increasing the People's Army qualitatively is to further enhance the role of the staff.

There still remain many defects in the work of our staff. There is a Korean proverb which goes: "A general without an army is no general." Unless we use the staff properly and ensure a scientific combat organization and command we cannot secure victory in battles.

We should strengthen our staff to become capable of organizing modern warfare calmly and precisely on the basis of a correct analysis and scientific judgment of the enemy's situation and our forces.

It is also important to raise the organizational ability and commanding level of our People's Army officers. All the officers should acquire advanced knowledge of military science so as to master the art of leading and commanding a modern army skilfully.

Next, we should have reserve troops. To this end, we must strengthen the work of military academies and raise the level of all cadres and soldiers, so that they can perform the duties of the next higher rank. We must enhance the level of all the servicemen of the People's Army so that, for example, a platoon leader can fulfil the duty of a company commander and a company commander that of a battalion commander. Thus we will develop our People's Army into a cadre army.

While strengthening the People's Army, we should intensify the military training of the entire people.

To proceed. The management of the units should be further improved.

There still are many defects in the management of the units by the battalion and company commanders and platoon leaders. As some commanders fail to get rid of bureaucratic methods of work in the management of the units, accidents have not been eliminated in some units of the People's Army, a revolutionary army. Training in the management of the units should be intensified among sergeant majors and deputy platoon leaders, to say nothing of the officers.

The People's Army must always be in firm unity ideologically. A moral trait of superiors loving their subordinates dearly, and subordinates respecting their superiors, should be established. Otherwise, we cannot obtain victory in war.

At present, our Party is carrying on the work of reviewing Party spirit. In our People's Army, this work must be

conducted in the close context of examining how much each commander has striven as a Party member to run his unit and educate his men and what results he has scored.

The work of reviewing Party spirit should be also conducted in combination with the work of summing up the three-year war correctly and drawing on its rich experience and lessons, to make them the guidelines for work. It should also be combined with radical improvement in reconnaissance, signal and engineer activities and qualitative improvement in the use of the artillery and management of the units.

I firmly believe that you will carry out all your work faithfully as required by the Party and Government.