

The KumGangSan International Group

Improving the Prospects for Unification

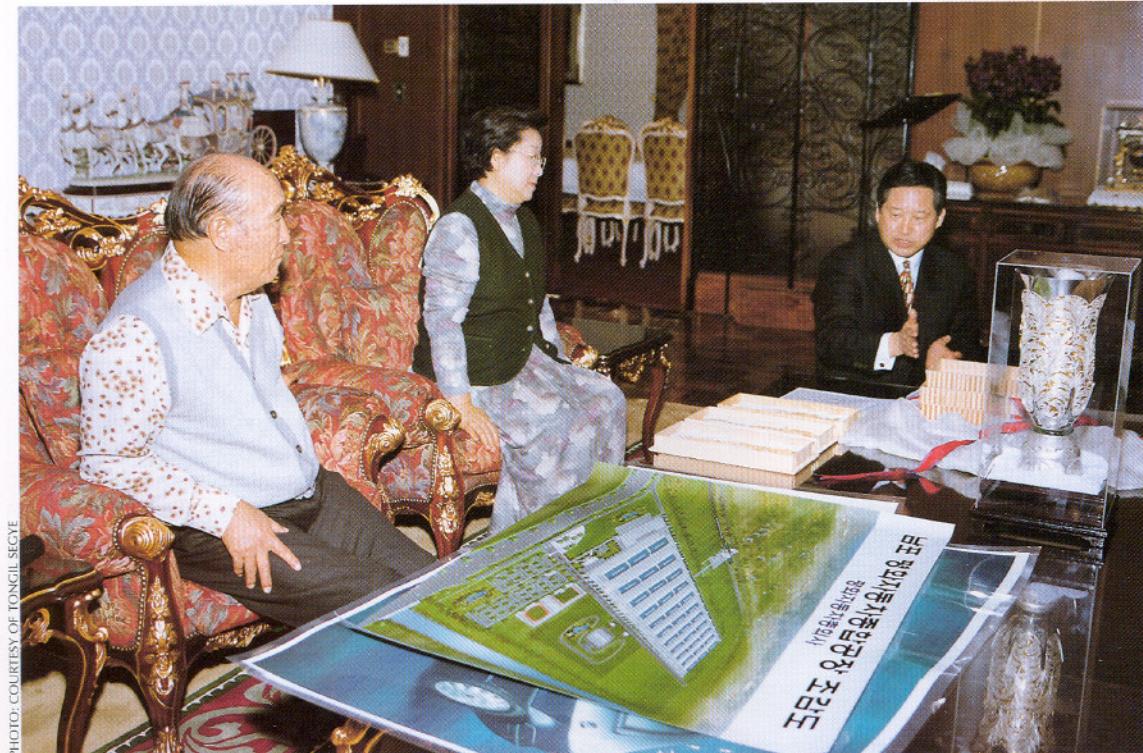


PHOTO: COURTESY OF TONGIL SECYE

True Parents' speaking tour has left little doubt that the issue of Korean unification is central to the providential agenda. In fact, the benevolent influence of True Parents has been reaching across the border from the South, and elsewhere, for most of the past decade. The following report comes from two Korean second generation reporters.

THE KumGangSan International Group is located on the 11th floor of the Press Center Building next to Seoul's City Hall. We went there to meet the managing director, Song Lak Cho. According to his explanation, "All the business ventures with North Korea that the KumGangSan International Group is taking on had their origins in the 1991 meeting between True Parents and Kim Il Sung. What we are doing are things Premier Kim asked of True Father or that they had promised each other. So, North Korea is actively supportive, and trusts our work."

Pyeonghwa (Peace) Motors Automotive Factory

The most prominent of all the projects that the KumGangSan Internation-

al Group is presently undertaking is the Pyeonghwa ("Peace") Motors factory. The establishment of Pyeonghwa Motors has a very special meaning because it is the first cooperative business between South and North in the arena of North Korea's key industries. Cooperative businesses have only been on the level of primary industry so far, but Pyeonghwa Motors is in the manufacturing industry, and totally different from what has been undertaken so far.

Pyeonghwa Motors made an agreement with the North Korea authorities to build an automobile factory in the

This page top, True Parents and Sang Kwon Park discuss the projects being undertaken in the North; left, an artistic impression of the Unification Temple in Pyongyang; facing page bottom, the KumGangSan Group's nameplate at the entrance to their offices in Seoul

Hangku-dong area of the city of Nampo. The company also received approval from the South Korean government as a south-north cooperative venture. On February 3rd this year, South and North Korean business associates participated in the groundbreaking ceremony at the construction site.

Some people are concerned about the technological aspects of the project. Regarding this, the managing director said, "It is true that presently the North Koreans have less manufacturing, production technology and experience, but all the member companies of the Unification Foundation have become our supporters

and we are planning to work together with those companies. Our partners are Tongil Heavy Industries in Korea, Mekong Auto Corporation in Vietnam and Fiat in Italy, which already has a very good relationship with Mekong Auto. We have already made a contract with Fiat to supply prototypes."

Pyeonghwa Tongil Kyohae

The construction of the Pyeonghwa ("Peace") Unification Church Hall (Temple) is an important project being under-

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PHOTOS: COURTESY OF 2ND GENERATION OFFICE

Father Calls Korean National Messiahs to Korea

PHOTO: COURTESY OF TONGIL SECYE



On approximately March 20, True Father directed all Korean national messiahs to return to Korea for a special workshop, which was held from March 24-26. Korean regional church leaders also attended. Father launched a new initiative for the sake of the reunification of Korea, and asked the national messiahs to remain in Korea to assist the leaders of society to prepare for and welcome a reunified homeland.

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taken in North Korea this year. Mr. Cho emphasized the providential importance of the project, saying, "So far things have only been possible through social and cultural approaches, but amazingly, there will now be a church." It will be built near the Potong River in the central part of Pyongyang. A groundbreaking ceremony was held in 1997.

The building has three floors, representing the three stages of formation, growth and completion, and two pillars in front of the building that represent True Parents. This means that in North Korea, where God has not been able to enter freely, there will now be a holy temple where He can dwell. This church hall will be used for Unification Church members of the world to gather together, to pray, and to hold services when they come on pilgrimages.

Jeongju World Peace Park

The World Peace Park Project was approved by North Korea in 1994. It is located in Father's hometown of Jeongju, and it will expand from there. Mr. Cho said, "It is actually a miracle that the house where Father was born is still standing. When we went there the first time, part of the wall had collapsed and we had to repair it." He emphasized the importance of preserving the house. Presently, the Jeongju City government is maintaining Father's house.

Potong River Hotel

The KumGangSan International Group has been authorized by the North Korean government to build and manage hotels in the Pyongyang and Kumgangsan areas. It is remarkable that, as a single foreign investor, the Kumgangsan Group is running a hotel in Pyongyang. The Potong River Hotel, built in 1974 is being managed by Japanese staff who are trained in the Western style of hotel management.

After about an hour of talking we moved to see photographs and exhibits. As I looked at these materials related with the ventures in the North, I felt that North Korea is not as foreign as I used to suppose. There is an inevitable bond with the North Koreans. In the same way we attend True Parents they serve Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il with even deeper sincerity and heart. It humbled me. It is especially humbling when

I think that the present cooperation is based upon a promise made between Premier Kim Il Sung and True Parents.

At the same time I could feel a sense of hope. It is the hope for North Korea, which is untouched by outside influences, and it is True Parents' homeland.

The projects the KumGangSan International Group is working on seem like the story of a far distant reality to those of us of the young generation. However, when we think about the fact that our generation will likely be the central age group after reunification, we young people should be interested and try to participate. The current era requires that we do.

Through this interview, therefore, we could not only gain information about the KumGangSan International Group projects in North Korea, but also feel the possibility of reunification and hope for our northern brothers and sisters.♦

Hwa-Sul Kim & Dong-Gyu Kim

Translated for Today's World from the Second Generation Newspaper.

"KumGangSan" (literally "Gold River Mountain) is what is known in English as Diamond Mountain. This is the famously beautiful North Korean mountain True Parents visited in 1991. Its name was adopted by the KumGangSan International Group.

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