

ON IMPROVING GUIDANCE OF CHILDREN'S UNION WORK

A Talk to the Officials of the Central Committee of the League of Socialist Working Youth of Korea
June 6, 1966

The League of Socialist Working Youth has, on this occasion, ensured that the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Children's Union is carried out on a high political and ideological level. The joint national meeting of the Korean Children's Union organizations, held in the presence of the great leader, was a success, and the variety performance by schoolchildren was also a success. The leader said that he had a wonderful day with the children yesterday and was greatly satisfied that the events were grand and colourful.

The anniversary functions fully demonstrated the special features of our Children's Union members who are growing sturdily in the benevolent embrace of the leader as heirs to the revolution; they are knowledgeable, morally sound and strong physically.

The Children's Union of Korea, which has inherited the glorious revolutionary traditions from the anti-Japanese Children's Corps, has traversed a proud road of struggle for the past 20 years. It has fulfilled with credit the honourable task of preparing its members to be true sons and daughters of the revolution who are loyal to the Party and the leader.

Our Children's Union members during the period of peaceful construction of the democratic base (in the period between the liberation and the beginning of the Fatherland Liberation War—August 15, 1945-June 24, 1950-Tr.) gave active assistance to the building of a democratic independent state under the slogan "Let us learn and be prepared at all times for a new democratic Korea!". During the height of the Fatherland Liberation War against the US imperialist aggressors the Children's Union members displayed courage by forming a young guerrilla detachment and fighting bravely in defence of their home towns and villages. In the years of postwar reconstruction they launched a widespread campaign to carry out the children's plan in support of their parents who were rebuilding urban and rural communities, factories and villages which had burnt to ashes. Today, Children's Union members are preparing themselves to always be ready for the building of communism, while being knowledgeable, moral and physically fit. They study hard while at the same time engaging in social and political activities and in a good conduct movement.

A large number of Children's Union members, who have been educated and toughened through the unfathomable trials of the past twenty years, have become heroes, innovators on the labour front, renowned scientists, men of letters. Past Children's Union members are today reliable builders of socialism, pressing ahead with the

revolution and construction. We can be proud of the fact that we have trained the next generation to be future revolutionaries.

Yesterday the leader highly praised the officials of the League of Socialist Working Youth who participated in the functions celebrating the 20th anniversary of the foundation of the Children's Union, saying that they made tremendous progress. He went on to give very important instructions on how to further improve the work of the Children's Union.

You, comrades, must, true to the leader's direction, improve the guidance of the work of the Children's Union and train the schoolchildren to be knowledgeable, moral and physically fit reserves of the building of communism.

To guide the work of the Children's Union is an honourable duty which the Party has entrusted to the LSWY.

The Children's Union is an organization of children who have not experienced political life, so, if it is not given good guidance, it will be unable to work independently. The important responsibility to give political guidance to the children who start their life in an organization is entrusted to the LSWY. But the LSWY is now fully occupied with various new programmes, paying little attention to the work of the Children's Union. The work of the Children's Union must not be overlooked simply because work with little schoolchildren seems less serious to some.

As the leader has indicated, children are the flowerbuds of the country and the future of the revolution. The destiny of the country and the nation together with the future of the revolution depends largely on how the younger generation is trained. Children's Union members grow into LSWY members, and the leading members of the LSWY grow into Party members. Therefore, if work with the Children's Union is ignored, it is impossible to strengthen the LSWY and also the Party, the vanguard of the revolution, successfully.

Intensifying political and ideological education is the cardinal task for preparing the future generation to be intelligent, moral and fit reserves in the revolution.

We are now living in the age of revolution. Schoolchildren during this revolutionary age must learn about their country and their people, their society and revolution before they acquire the knowledge of science and technology. Only then can they acquire practical knowledge capable of contributing to social development and to the revolution, and can they become truly revolutionary workers who are devoted to the service of their country and their fellow people.

Giving precedence to schoolchildren's political and ideological education before their intellectual, cultural and aesthetic education is our Party's consistent principle in young people's education.

Childhood is a very important period when young people's outlook on the world begins to form. As the leader has stated, the minds of the children in this period are as clean as a sheet of blank paper and perceive given phenomena just as a camera does. Therefore, depending on their education in this period, they can become red, yellow or black.

Even after the establishment of the socialist system, the remnants of the exploiting class remain for a long time, the corroding effect of the lingering outmoded ideas continues and, moreover, the imperialists' ideological and cultural infiltration is intensifying continually. In these conditions, if ideological education is lax, schoolchildren may be affected by unsound ideas and become good-for-nothings who dislike struggle, and idle away their time seeking only personal comfort and pleasure. If the younger generation is infiltrated by corrupt ideas and becomes degenerate, there will be no heirs to our revolution. If this were to occur it would be impossible not only to continue with the revolution but to preserve the gains the revolution has achieved.

In recent years a dangerous tendency to weaken the ideological education of schoolchildren has appeared in various manifestations. One official said that because Children's Union members are too young and do not have a fully developed consciousness to receive political and ideological education, only intellectual education should be given to them. Another official is said to have complained that schoolchildren cannot acquire the habit of studying because the LSWY organizes various meetings and frequent extracurricular activities. He is said to have requested that they do not do social political activities. This is an ambiguous, heterogeneous voice that cannot be tolerated. They made such statements using the excuse of a need for intellectual education or developing a good studying habit, but their words amount to making an attempt to leave schoolchildren politically blind and disarmed ideologically.

Preaching the superfluousness of ideological education is a manifestation of revisionism. The LSWY must sharpen its vigilance against the revisionist tendency which is contrary to our Party's policy; it must combat the slightest revisionist element without compromise.

Most important of all in the communist education of Children's Union members, is to see that they learn from the childhood of the great leader.

Without teaching youth to learn from the great leader's childhood, it would be impossible to train them to be true patriots and ardent communist revolutionaries.

The leader has loved his country and his nation and hated the Japanese imperialists, landlords and capitalists since his childhood. In his early years he courageously embarked upon the thorny path of revolution. He was fond of reading, had a strong love for his comrades and was very kind to people. At the dawn of the Korean revolution, ardently patriotic young people who did not know which stand to take followed the leader on the path of revolution because they were moved and fascinated by his great thoughts and noble personality.

The LSWY must intensify the education of Children's Union members and encourage them to follow the example of the leader, so that the youth have the revolutionary beliefs of the Party, respect the leader highly and are loyal to him from childhood.

Children's Union members should be taught not to forget the leader's great benevolence that is bestowed on them.

The leader treasures children as if they were the kings of the country and spares nothing in their name. Even in the difficult circumstances of the years of postwar reconstruction, when everything had been destroyed in the war and not a piece of unbroken brick was available, he saw to it that the system of universal, free and compulsory education was established for the children and that all the facilities and conditions needed for their education were arranged throughout the whole country. Today our children enjoy a free education and grow up happily, envying nothing in the world, in the boundlessly wide and warm embrace of the leader.

Yesterday, as I was listening to the song, Marshal Kim Il Sung Is Our Father and the Embrace of the Party Is Our Home, sung with deep emotions by the children of the Pyongyang Moranbong Middle School as a part of the variety performance given by schoolchildren's amateur artist groups, I felt my eyes growing moist with the joy of living in the embrace of the leader. The song, We Are the Happiest in the World, which our people and our children are fond of singing, is a very good song which directly portrays today's happiness of our people under the benevolent care of the leader, as well as their boundless reverence for him and gratitude.

The leader is, indeed, the infinitely benevolent father of our people and our children. We must give schoolchildren a clear understanding that their happiness is entirely due to the leader's love for them and his consideration for them. Only then will the children remember the leader's benevolence, support him from the bottom of their hearts and become revolutionary fighters who are a hundred per cent loyal to him, when they are adults.

We must intensify the education of Children's Union members in the anti-Japanese revolutionary traditions.

In the arduous years of the revolutionary struggle against the Japanese imperialists, the anti-Japanese guerrillas and Children's Corps members gave their youth and lives without hesitation in the fight to liberate the country, and even on the gallows they upheld their revolutionary honour without yielding to the enemy. The anti-Japanese revolutionary fighters were able to fight selflessly against the Japanese imperialists in the years of trial because they were firmly convinced that the Korean revolution under his leadership was destined to emerge victorious and because they had an iron will. As you know, the story of the Children's Corps member Kum Sun, found in the study of the Reminiscences, is still emotionally moving to people. Kum Sun was a member of the Children's Corps who had grown up basking in the leader's love. She was not yet ten years old. She was captured by the Japanese imperialists while she was in the enemy zone; she did not yield to the enemy's temptation or brutal torture, but kept the secret of the organization and ensured the security of the headquarters. When she was executed by the enemy, she shouted, "Long live the Korean revolution!" and died heroically.

Education in the revolutionary traditions must be conducted effectively through the study of the Reminiscences, visits to the revolutionary battlesites, meetings with anti-Japanese revolutionary veterans and in various other means so that all the Children's Union members emulate the intense loyalty to the leader displayed by the anti-Japanese revolutionary fighters and Children's Corps members as well as their noble revolutionary spirit.

The US imperialists who are occupying south Korea are now stepping up their manoeuvres to provoke a new war. They are waiting for the chance to invade the northern half of Korea. The story of the children who courageously waged guerrilla warfare in defence of their home town during the Fatherland Liberation War should be given wide publicity among Children's Union members so that they are firmly resolved to fight when the enemy attacks them.

A man who does not love his country cannot become a true revolutionary. Education of schoolchildren in socialist patriotism should be intensified so that they acquire a high sense of national pride and self-respect, love their country and their nation and treasure the socialist system.

It is important in patriotic education to teach schoolchildren the time-honoured history and excellent cultural traditions of our country as well as to inspire them with awe for beautiful native mountains and rivers. But it is still more important to give them a clear understanding of how the socialist system has struck root in this land and how good this system is. As they were born in their own land, in their own country, and have grown up, free from the worries of food, clothing, education and medical care, the younger people do not clearly understand how precious their country is and how they should be grateful to the socialist system.

Schoolchildren must be taught the history of our nation's suffering, how much blood was shed by the revolutionary forerunners and the people in order to win back the usurped country and build the new socialist society we see today. At the same time, the incomparable superiority of the socialist system, in which the working people are the masters of everything, over the capitalist system must be explained to them by citing concrete facts and documents. It is only when they clearly understand that the socialist system is the fountain from which flows people's true happiness and the precious gains of the revolution that the schoolchildren set great store in the socialist system, love it and become resolved to devote themselves to the struggle to bring prosperity to their motherland.

Without hating the class enemy, one cannot love the socialist system ardently. The class struggle is still under way, and the younger generation is growing up without understanding what the words 'straw sandals' and 'coarse hemp clothes' mean. In these circumstances, it is essential to give schoolchildren an understanding of class exploitation as part of their education.

Schoolchildren must be given a clear understanding of the reactionary nature and craftiness of the exploiting class so as to enhance their class consciousness and encourage them to see things

from the working-class point of view at all times while resolutely combatting practices that harm the interests of the working class and the masses.

Noble morality is a quality indispensable to a communist. A faithless and rude man, however strong his revolutionary spirit and how ever knowledgeable, cannot be a true communist revolutionary. A morally unsound man can degenerate ideologically.

An important matter in communist moral education is to teach schoolchildren to acquire the noble quality of placing the interests of their collective above their own personal interests and sacrificing themselves for the sake of their comrades. Love for one's collective and one's comrades is the most beautiful of human qualities; it is the source of strength that unites people and encourages them to make the just struggle and to distinguish themselves in service. Because they were possessing noble mental and moral qualities, the anti-Japanese revolutionary fighters, in their days, regarded it as most worthwhile to devote themselves to the sacred cause of saving the destiny of their suffering nation. They broke through difficulties and trials courageously, remaining loyal to the noble principle of comradeship that required them to share life and death together.

We must step up the communist moral education of schoolchildren and ensure that the youth believe that loving their comrades and fighting devotedly for their society and collective are inviolable principles and the most honourable of missions. In addition, they must be taught to internalize public morals and social order, respect for their elders and the importance of being well-mannered at all times.

There is a saying that a habit acquired at three will remain until you turn eighty. A bad habit that has been formed in childhood is hard to shake off. The LSWY must ensure that children are free from the influence of customs and notions of morality remaining from the outmoded society, particularly of the decadent, bourgeois way of life. In this way our schoolchildren will grow sturdily into revolutionary workers who possess a strong revolutionary spirit and embody noble moral qualities which are required by the revolutionary age.

The next important task in the work of the Children's Union is to make sure that schoolchildren are good at their class work.

LSWY officials consider more often than not that teachers alone are responsible for the children's class work and that all that the Children's Union organizations have to do is to guide its members' social and political activities. That is why the children's class work is overlooked in the work of the Children's Union.

On my recent visit to Onchon County, I met Children's Union members and talked to them. They informed me that in order to win the title of model sub-branch or sub-branch member they needed to have very good conducts by doing such things as raising rabbits and fulfilling the assignments given by the Children's Union. Of course, it is necessary to enlist schoolchildren in social and political activities and in the good conduct movement in order to train them to be revolutionary workers. But by all means, these activities must be

subordinated to encouraging schoolchildren to excel in their class work.

Doing well at school is the duty and the basic revolutionary task of schoolchildren. In a capitalist society people receive education to have a successful career or for money-making, so it is up to them whether they go to school or not. But in our country schoolchildren receive education in order to work for the revolution, and studying is the first and foremost duty of revolutionaries. Only through hard work can schoolchildren acquire the wealth of knowledge needed for the revolution and construction, grow up to be able workers and serve the country and their fellow countrymen with greater success.

Schoolchildren must be given a correct understanding of the goal and significance of their schooling so that they work hard to learn every single piece of knowledge needed for the revolution, observe school discipline and apply themselves to their class work and all become honour pupils.

Children's Union members should launch a campaign to read a lot. A book is a silent teacher and a valuable source of knowledge. By reading incessantly they can acquire the knowledge of politics, science and technology and of many other fields and raise their cultural appreciation level. Without loads of reading it would be impossible for them to acquire knowledge of nature and society or have hopes and ambitions for the future.

A widespread campaign to read must be launched to encourage schoolchildren to get into the habit of reading from their childhood. There are not many books suitable for children's reading, and that is a serious drawback. The circulation of publications for schoolchildren is small, their types are few and their contents lack variety. The newspapers and magazines of the Children's Union, for example, are monotonous to read, and their contents are biased to political and ideological subjects.

Newspapers, magazines and books for the members of the Children's Union must be edited so as to contribute to training children to be revolutionary workers who are knowledgeable, morally sound, physically strong and developed in all aspects of their personality. Publications for schoolchildren must deal with political and ideological matters, natural sciences, history, geography and culture of our country, scientific fictions and works of child literature which are renowned worldwide. These publications should be printed on good paper and should contain many coloured photographs or coloured illustrations to suit their contents. Then, children will read newspapers, magazines and books with great interest, and the printed pages will be their truly loving companions.

When I say that class work is the duty of schoolchildren, I do not mean that pupils should be kept at their desks to recite their books day and night as was a practice of the village school in the old days. If pupils are only loaded with knowledge and not trained to apply their knowledge in the real world, they may become 'locked chests of knowledge' which are of no practical use.

Oratorical contests, film shows, public readings of their own writings

should be organized for schoolchildren, and visits to revolutionary battlesites and scenic spots encouraged. In addition, Party policy propaganda and artistic propaganda activities and various other social and political activities should be undertaken widely by schoolchildren. If these activities are organized in an interesting manner, pupils will be able to consolidate their book knowledge and raise their political and cultural appreciation level.

The good conduct campaign occupies an important place in the extracurricular activities of schoolchildren.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the foundation of the Children's Union, its members presented a locomotive to the country, the 'Children's Locomotive for National Reunification', which they have prepared through the 'Children's Seven-Year Plan'. This is a very laudable step for them to have taken. In the future, too, the good conduct campaign should be widely encouraged so that they contribute to the economic life of the country and to speeding up the building of socialism.

Through the process of the good conduct campaign schoolchildren can become fond of working and take pride and self-respect from doing their bit to make the country prosperous. The good conduct campaign effectively inspires the younger generation with the collectivist spirit and with the idea of socialist patriotism. If the Children's Union organizes greenery guards, hygiene guards and the like and launches a widespread campaign for its members to plant and grow trees and to keep their towns and villages clean and tidy, the children will take good care of the trees which they grow painstakingly and love their towns and villages. If they are accustomed to these activities, they will, after leaving their schools, take good care of state and social property and manage the nation's economic life masterfully.

The good conduct campaign should be given efficient guidance so as to prevent deviations. There should be no practice of choosing to do things in order to win public praise and fame. Likewise forbidden is the practice of collecting money to make up for the failure to carry out the plans, plans such as that of collecting scrap iron or of raising rabbits, to make it look as if these plans have been fulfilled. Such practice of doing the good conduct campaign for form's sake not only runs counter to the purpose and requirement of this campaign, but also has a negative influence on the education of schoolchildren.

Not only the movement for schoolchildren to assist in the construction of the socialist economy, but also the movements to help disabled soldiers and the families of the People's Army soldiers, to observe social order and public morals, and various other good conduct movements should be organized.

Physical training should be intensified so as to toughen schoolchildren physically.

As the leader has instructed, strong physiques are the basis of the revolutionary struggle and of building a prosperous society. A man who is not healthy and strong, no matter how much knowledge he possesses, cannot serve the country and his fellow countrymen, nor

can he realize his hopes and ambitions. Courage and a strong fighting spirit can also be displayed to the full only when they are supported by a strong physique. Without preparing the younger generation to acquire strong physiques, it would be impossible to increase the might of the country.

Koguryo was the strongest of all states that existed in the history of our country. The people of Koguryo were not only patriotic, but also in excellent shape at all times and were skilled militaristically as well. So they were able to repel repeated enemy invasions courageously and attained a worldwide reputation as a strong nation.

The LSWY must give schoolchildren the correct understanding that physical training is not mere amusement but important work for preparing them for labour and national defence. They must be encouraged to participate in physical training willingly. In addition, running races, gymnastic training to increase their stature and various sport events should be encouraged so that physical training becomes a part of their everyday life and is undertaken on a mass basis. This will enable the younger generation to produce many excellent sportsmen capable of bringing honour to their country on the international arena. In order to train members of the Children's Union to become strong future builders of communism who are loyal to the Party and the revolution, knowledgeable, morally sound and physically strong, it is necessary to build up the ranks of the Children's Union instructors and enhance their role.

In a family parents are guardians of their children; at school Children's Union instructors are political guardians, so to speak, who are responsible for the children's organizational and ideological life. These instructors teach the Children's Union members Party policy, guide them to good organizational life, and look after them at all times to prevent them from being affected by bad ideas. Success in the work of the Children's Union depends entirely on the role of Children's Union instructors.

Children's Union instructors must guide the members' life in the organization properly.

Guiding their organizational life well is the cardinal duty of the instructors of the Children's Union. Children start their social and political life by being a member of the Children's Union, and receive revolutionary education and organizational training there. Children cannot grow into revolutionaries without organizational life. Children's Union instructors must teach Children's Union members to regard their participation in the organization as a matter of greatest honour, they must come to love their organization dearly and implement unfailingly the assignments given by it. The Children's Union members should be taught to acquire the habit of setting great store in the organization from the outset and of living by relying on the organization. Only then can they participate in organizational life faithfully when they are grown up.

Work with the members of the Children's Union should be done in a fresh way in keeping with their preparedness and psychology. If this work is done by the same method used by the LSWY organization,

ignoring the characteristics of children, the work will not be successful.

The meetings of sub-branches of the Children's Union are very similar to those of LSWY meetings so that you can hardly distinguish between them. Children who have revealed shortcomings are frequently subjected to public criticism during sub-branch meetings as if they were being examined, on the excuse that the meetings should be conducted at a high political and ideological level. Such is not the correct method. Of course, the sub-branch meeting appointed to review members' life should be conducted in an atmosphere of criticism. Shortcomings in class work and life can be rectified by means of criticism before it is too late, and not only the comrades who have revealed shortcomings, but also other comrades will be stimulated to guard against making the same mistakes. Nevertheless, random public criticism of small children for their failings may overly scare and alienate them, or may drive them into hating their participation in the life of the organization, or may push some of them away from attending the organization at all.

Criticism as a method of ideological struggle must be intensified among people who are at high ideological level, but explanation and persuasion must be the principal way of educating Children's Union members. Children should be awakened to a realization of their shortcomings and the way of remedy by means of explanation and persuasion. Positive examples should be focussed on so that these examples will be emulated. Positive examples have a strong influence on young people and children. In the education of children giving prominence to positive attributes and encouraging them is more effective than exposing shortcomings to criticism.

If they are to work skilfully with Children's Union members, instructors need to be highly qualified.

The attitude that officials do not need special qualifications because Children's Union work is with little schoolchildren of little knowledge, is a mistake. Work with people who have not yet acquired a world outlook and whose intellectual level is low requires all the more a higher level of organizing ability and all the more wide range of knowledge.

Since they are responsible for the guidance of schoolchildren's political life and extracurricular activities, the Children's Union instructors must possess organizing ability, knowledge of works of child literature such as child stories and fairy tales, and know how to sing and dance, and they must be well informed about natural sciences and political and current events. In short, they must know everything.

The LSWY must build up the ranks of Children's Union instructors from the officials who have knowledge of schoolchildren's psychology, are widely informed and skilled, and possess organizing ability. In addition, it must establish a studious atmosphere among Children's Union instructors, organize short courses, model lectures and meetings to regularly share experiences, therefore raising their political and practical levels and improving their work method and

style steadily.

It is important to establish an effective system of training Children's Union instructors. Life in the Children's Union is a transitional organizational life for schoolchildren, so Children's Union instructors, if fixed on this job for a long time, grow too old to work in conformity with the characteristics of children. Therefore, young ones should be trained properly to replace them constantly. At present, Children's Union instructors are trained at the LSWY school, but this school alone cannot produce all the instructors needed for the replacement of their ranks with fresh forces. I consider it necessary to arrange a short training course or something along these lines, and take measures to produce more Children's Union instructors.

The LSWY must establish a proper system of cadre training and replace Children's Union instructors constantly with qualified officials so that the work of the Children's Union makes vigorous progress as intended by the leader.

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