

WORKING PEOPLE OF THE WHOLE WORLD, UNITE!

KIM IL SUNG

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SCIENCE IS PREVENTIVE
MEDICINE**

**Talk to Senior Officials of the Ministry
of Public Health**
October 20, 1966

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Socialist, people-oriented medical science is fundamentally different from bourgeois medicine.

Bourgeois medicine does not pay any attention to prevention. By its very nature bourgeois society cannot make any efforts to prevent people from falling ill. This is because the prevention of diseases is not in the interests of capitalists. They are interested in selling as much medicine as possible and so they would prefer a large number of people to fall ill, and they encourage diseases.

By contrast, the chief factor in socialist medicine is prevention. In other words, it is to take measures to prevent people from contracting diseases. We can therefore say that socialist medicine is preventive medicine.

The Ministry of Public Health must take all the effective measures for the prevention of diseases.

You should not try to do health work with medicine only. You ought to place the main emphasis on effective prevention so that working people do not fall ill.

In the past those who were steeped in bourgeois ideas established a foothold in this sector. They did

not try to prevent people from catching diseases but only thought of administering medicine to them after they had done so.

This runs fundamentally counter to socialist medical science. The aim of socialist medicine is precisely to prevent people from falling ill. You should fully understand this principle of socialist medicine and should work hard for its implementation.

The most important thing in preventing diseases is to give the working people a full knowledge of hygiene—how they should toughen themselves and what they should bear in mind when cooking and eating meals and so on. In many cases the working people contract various diseases because they have highly seasoned food without due consideration and eat vegetables which have not been properly washed. This is because they know little about hygiene.

We should improve information about hygiene decidedly, and the main efforts of public health service must be devoted to this.

In the first place, we have to carry out a publicity campaign amongst the working people so that they will eat clean vegetables. At present information work on hygiene is unsatisfactory, so people are eating unclean vegetables. Ascarid has therefore not yet been destroyed.

Special attention should be devoted to hygiene because Koreans like raw greens. At the moment, when people make kimchi, they preserve the vegetables after putting them into water only once. So the eggs of parasites remain in the pickled vegetables. If people eat these vegetables, worms hatch out of these eggs, and the parasites deprive them of nourishment.

We must campaign effectively amongst the working people so that they eat vegetables which have been properly washed, and also teach them how to dissolve disinfectant in water and sterilize vegetables and fruits with it. If the officials in charge of public health get down to this task, they will be able to destroy the parasites. We must launch a mass movement to eliminate them.

It is important to mobilize large numbers of young students in this information work and in the dissemination of understanding about hygiene. In cooperation with the League of Socialist Working Youth, you must spread knowledge about hygiene widely amongst the people by mobilizing all the members of the LSWY and the Children's Union, as well as students in the medical universities and colleges. In our country there are four medical universities. In addition, there are many colleges which

specialize in this subject. If the students of these schools are mobilized, they can form a large team to propagate the facts about hygiene. This will be useful training for students. You must not make medical students confine themselves to their classrooms, but must get them to give lectures on hygiene to the people. They will then learn a great deal.

Meanwhile, training in hygiene should be improved for the pupils in all schools. If you get the pupils to carry out hygiene information for their mothers and other members of their families at home, the general level of the working people's knowledge of the subject will be improved. And you should not do this work in the manner of a shock campaign, but must continue it until all the working people strictly observe rules of hygiene.

Women's Union organizations should also take an active part in this work. These organizations ought to start extensive information campaigns for women through magazines and other media. They must also begin a campaign to get people to eat properly washed vegetables and drink boiled water. In addition, they should teach women what they need to know in order to bring up their children well.

Diseases cannot be prevented by the efforts of one

person on his own. This work can be successful only when wide sections of the people are roused to action. There is a saying, "A general without an army is no general." In just the same way, as I always say, one cannot make the revolution on one's own without the masses. Public health service, too, cannot succeed without stimulating the masses to take action. In a socialist society this work should always be carried out in a socialist way. Despite this, senior officials of the Ministry of Public Health have, in the past, neglected to mobilize the masses in this work. The Party has, more than once, stressed the need to carry out the work in a mass movement. But the officials concerned did not do so; instead, they just said that they could not cure patients of their diseases because the state had not provided them with medicine.

Bourgeois ideology has not yet been eradicated in the field of public health. This can be clearly seen in the work of preventing Japanese encephalitis. We told senior officials of the Ministry of Public Health to prepare a large quantity of vaccine against this disease, but they said it was difficult because this would need a large sum of money. If that was the case, they should have ensured that a large number of mosquito nets, which are cheap to make, were manufactured, so that

every family could sleep under them. But they did not even do this. Because they did not make such preparations effectively, Japanese encephalitis has not yet been completely eradicated in our country.

The Ministry of Public Health should rectify these shortcomings and should decisively improve the work of preventing diseases.

In the first instance you have to undertake the effective prevention of diseases through the mobilization of the masses. You must initiate extensive campaigns to get people to drink boiled water, eat properly washed vegetables and kill harmful insects and animals such as flies, mosquitos, lice and rats. Above all, you should offer instruction in hygiene to all the working people by creating good models and organizing demonstration lectures.

In particular, we should concentrate on preventing children from contracting diseases.

Every ri should encourage its people to start a campaign for preventing diseases and should work hard to be free from diseases.

There is no reason why our people should fall ill in this good society today. At the moment, no one in our country goes hungry, freezes to death in rags or sleeps outdoors because he has no house. Why should we

allow people to suffer from diseases under this good social system? We should carry out effective health and sanitation work in a nationwide movement so that not a single person becomes ill.

At the same time, mineral water and hot springs should be more widely used. Our country abounds in good mineral water and spas. But the Ministry of Public Health only thinks of administering medicine instead of making effective use of these things. Since immediately after liberation we have more than once stressed the need to take positive measures to use the mineral water and hot springs which abound in our country. But this has not yet been properly done.

Mineral water is good for everyone—for both those with high and low acidity. Other countries even export bottled mineral water. You should make wide use of our abundant mineral water and hot springs for extensive prevention as well as for medical treatment.

Medicinal herbs should be grown on a large scale.

Since we are unable to meet the people's needs for medicine fully because the pharmaceutical industry has not yet been developed, the cultivation of medicinal plants is of particular importance.

For thousands of years our ancestors managed to cure themselves of diseases by using traditional Korean

medicine alone, and they kept themselves in good health. Herb medicines such as *ryongsinhwan*, *chongsimhwan* and *phaedoksan* are very effective against gastritis and cold. In future, therefore, the production of these drugs should be continuously increased, even after the pharmaceutical industry has been developed. You talk a great deal about the shortage of medicine, but you do not consider planting medicinal herbs yourselves.

Clinics and all other public health institutions should plant medicinal herbs over a wide area to meet their own needs for crude drugs.

Medicinal herbs grow well everywhere in our country. As for liquorice, this herb also thrives here. So I gave instructions a long time ago that it should be planted on Rungna Island. It is advisable that this herb be grown everywhere.

In order to develop the cultivation of medicinal plants, the public health institutions which are successful in this should set an example and spread it. You must set up two or three model establishments in the cultivation of medicinal herbs for each province and organize demonstration lectures, while making each clinic and county hospital grow these herbs.

Medicinal plants should be cultivated by mobilizing

not only public health institutions but also children and young people. Schools should plant medicinal herbs on their hills and sell them to purchasing agencies. If they are successful in this it will increase the money they have for their maintenance.

You should thus plant, on a large scale and by enlisting many people, those medicinal herbs which are beneficial in promoting their health, such as milk-vetch, white broad bellflower and *Rhizoma Atractylodis*.

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