

A Letter to the Students of North Korea: Will America Follow Your Country's Lead?

by Peter Falkenberg Brown



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I woke up from a dream this morning that I was in North Korea, standing in the hallway of a university, waiting for you to arrive for a speech that I was to give about freedom.

Yes, it was just a dream, and it was complicated, as dreams are. But in my dream, I was *there*, in North Korea, with *you*. Toward the end of the dream, I was on a balcony overlooking a square filled with students. Your eyes were bright, and you all seemed eager and excited.

Not because it was me, mind you. Who am I, after all? No one famous. No, you were enthusiastic because someone was going to speak to you about freedom.

And then, of course, a university administrator came up to me and said, "You can't use the word 'freedom.'" We talked back and forth, but he was quite insistent, so I agreed and told him that I would not use that



word. As I awoke, I thought, "Well, in that case, I shall use the word 'love.'"

But that word might not work, either.

I recently watched a video interview with someone who escaped from your country. It was with a newspaper called *The Epoch Times*.^[1] You won't know the newspaper or her, but America is becoming familiar with Park Yeon Mi, who wrote the book *In Order to Live: A North Korean Girl's Journey to Freedom*. In her interview, she stated that the North Korean regime has dominated your language: that in North Korea, there's no word for "friend."

She also said, "How do you fight to be free when you don't know you're a slave?"

When I think about all of you, students attending universities where you cannot learn the real truth about the world, I remember the British author George Orwell, who wrote the novel *1984*. I don't think you know about him, but he also talked about the distortion of language and the term *Newspeak*—the dystopian society's redefinition of words. In that novel, the hero, a man named Winston, meets Syme, a specialist who explains the rise of Newspeak. He tells Winston:

"Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thought crime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it. . . .

"The Revolution will be complete when the language is perfect. . . .

"Has it ever occurred to you, Winston, that by the year 2050, at the very latest, not a single human being will be alive who could understand such a conversation as we are having now?"^[2]

Dear students, you are living in a fully-formed, Orwellian society. The tragedy is that many of you don't know what you are missing. You were born into North Korean society and have listened to Kim Jong Un and his father Kim Jong Il before him, explaining to you how wonderful your life is, and how valuable you are to the Great Leader, and how the country of America is dreadful and evil and is your mortal enemy.

Your family members and friends die of starvation or are shipped to prison camps, but life is Good in North Korea because everyone in power tells you so.

When I think about you entering university, perhaps with a tiny glimmer of hope in your eyes, my heart bleeds for you. I've met enough of your relatives from South Korea to know how wonderful the Korean heart can be, how warm and welcoming your people can be.

And yet, there, beyond the DMZ, you struggle through life with no word for friend. You are just comrades, obedient servants to the state, terrorized that at any moment a "comrade" might betray you to the Ministry of State Security.

Some of you—if you've read about America from pamphlets dropped from South Korean balloons—might believe that America is good and brave and free. It will be difficult to imagine what freedom is like, but let's start with language. In America, freedom means that you can run down the street at full tilt and yell, "I'm free!!!" No one will arrest you.

At least . . . not yet.

If you knew about the events of 2020 and 2021, you might wonder if there's anywhere that you'll be able to go, because unless something truly dramatic happens in the free world (that's not North Korea, even if your Supreme Leader says it is), the predictions of Syme in 1984 may come true.

Countries around the world have placed their citizens in

“lockdown” because of a disease called “Covid.” You may have heard of it. Perhaps not. It’s a disease that could have been cured by the judicious use of early treatments with a variety of medicines, but those medicines were blocked by the government. Our Marxist media people, whom your Dear Leader would applaud, infected many of our citizens with an intense fear of death. That might seem strange to you since you’re so familiar with suffering and death, but large numbers of our people have become almost hysterical.

They wear masks that don’t work, even as they’re driving in their cars. Oh, I’m sorry, you don’t have cars. They also wear masks as they ride their bicycles. Or as they walk alone with no one around. But back to the lockdowns. The government has closed businesses because of the “Dangers of Covid” and has fired people from their jobs if they don’t get experimental injections that they call “vaccines.” And Australia! It has become a prison country.

I mentioned language before. I misspoke that you could say whatever you wanted to. If we make a video (yes, we can do that here; sorry that you can’t) and post it on the Internet (another thing that you can’t use) and speak in opposition to the government’s policies about the Covid disease, Bad Things Happen.

That speech isn’t allowed. The videos are immediately removed from the most popular platforms. Many people get fired from their jobs. In some Western countries, the police come.

I know, I know. You’re thinking that it sounds just like North Korea.

We think so too, and we’re wondering: if America and the West follow your country’s lead, then how can we help you escape from the death and destruction wrought by your insane and murderous Supreme Leader?

The answer is that we can’t.

So, dear students, think of us. If you still have words for prayer and God, then pray for the West because if the West falls, there will be no light left anywhere.

We will pray for you as well.

Kamsahamnida.[3]

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Notes:

Image: Composite of two images with words added by Peter Falkenberg Brown.

* Map of United States: Public Domain, by MLeRoy at English Wikipedia. Color modified.

* Photo of Kim Jong Un: March 6, 2018, Cropped from File: [Kim Jong-un meeting with South Korean envoys at the Workers' Party of Korea main building.jpg](#), Blue House (Republic of Korea)

1. [North Korean defector Yeonmi Park on communist tyranny and the suicide of western civilization](#)
2. *1984*, by George Orwell.
<http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks01/0100021h.html>
3. "Kamsahamnida" is Korean for "Thank you."