

# 북의 민주주의에 태영호 전 영국 대사의 답변

나니(!)

**누구 문: Each socialist country has had its own way of organising popular democracy and participation, for example the Soviets in the USSR, and the Committees for the Defence of the Revolution in Cuba – structures that allow people to manage the affairs of their workplaces and localities, solving their basic problems and electing people to higher bodies at regional and national levels. Is there something along these lines in North Korea?**

**영호 답:** Of course. We operate democracy at every level of our party and government. As you know, the major party of government is the Workers' Party of Korea. This party is a mass party with a membership of millions, and is organised along democratic centralist lines. If someone in a given party structure (a cell) is not working according to the party line that has been discussed and agreed upon, then there would be a criticism by other party members and that member is given a chance to correct his behaviour. At each level of the party we use this system of criticism, self-criticism and accountability in order to maintain efficient and correct work.

We have a Supreme People's Assembly, which could be considered the equivalent of the British parliament. Under this Supreme People's Assembly, there are assemblies at province, city and county levels. The members are all elected, and these bodies meet frequently. They are responsible for taking important decisions, in a normal democratic way. For example, given a limited budget, they might have to take a vote as to whether to spend money on building a new kindergarten, or improving a hospital, and so on. In this way, broad masses of people are involved in the process of managing society. If the bodies don't function correctly, there are mechanisms for people to criticise them and to appeal against bad decisions and negative work. For example, if water sanitation in a particular village needs to be improved, then local people can go to the council to protest. If their protest is taken into account and the situation is improved, that is good. If not, people can appeal higher up – to the city or province level – to make sure that the council is representing them properly.