



From the Korean Central News Agency

This is the official Korean Workers' Party photograph of Jang Song Thaek.

Jang Song Thaek

Current positions:

Member, National Defense Commission, DPRK

Director, Organization and Guidance Department, CCKWP (also identified as Director of the Ministry of Administration, or Director of the Administration, CCKWP)

Member, CCKWP

Deputy, Supreme's People Assembly (Representing Electoral District #31)

Born: 6 February 1946, Kangwon Province

Married: 1972: Kim Kyong Hui (1946--) member, CCKWP and former Director, Department of Light Industry, CCKWP

Two children:

Jang Kim Song (197_--) Organization and Guidance Department, CCKWP

Jang Kum Song (1977--2006) formerly, Director, Workers' Organization and Capital Construction, CCKWP

Education:

Baccalaureate, Political Economy, Kim il Sung University, Class of 1965

Kim il Sung Higher Party School, 1966

Moscow State University, 1969

Positions Held:

1975: Three Revolutions, Organization and Guidance Department, CCKWP

Jang Song Thae's job appointment occurs in the same year as his wife's appointment to the International Affairs Department of the CCKWP. Kim Kyong Hui and Mr. Jang's CCKWP appointments represent two significant appointments of the Second Generation, or Kim Jong il Class, in the higher offices of the Korean Workers' Party. Mr. Jang is said to have been removed on or around 1978 and sent to work in a factory crew in South Hamgyong. It was said that he was caught hosting an alcohol-heavy VIP party, possibly in one of Kim Jong il's suites. However, in 1977, Mr. Jang's uncle Jang Chon Hwon was removed (along with DPRK Vice President Kim Tong Gyu) from his post as Deputy Minister of the People's Armed Forces and imprisoned due to his alleged opposition to Kim Jong il's succession. Mr. Jang may have been removed because of his familial connection to his uncle. The 1977 Purges also caught other current members of the DPRK's elite including current NDC Vice Chair Ri Yong Mu and CCKWP Agitation and Propaganda Director Cho Ik Gyu.

1982: (October) Deputy Director, Youth Labor, CCKWP

1985: (July) Director, Youth Labor, CCKWP

1986: (November) Delegate, 8th SPA

1989: (April) Awarded, People's Hero
(June) Elected, Alternate Member, CCKWP

1990: (April) Delegate, 9th SPA (representing Pyongyang, Mangyongdae-guyok, Kwangbok Street)

1992: (April) Awarded Order of Kim il Sung
(December) Elected, Member, CCKWP

1994: (July) Member, Kim il Sung Funeral Committee (#110)

1995: (November) First Vice Director, Organization and Guidance Department, CCKWP

1998: Delegate, 10th SPA (117th ED)

2003: Delegate, 11th SPA

2004(circa): Removed as First Vice Director, Organization and Guidance, CCKWP

In 2003 or 2004 Mr. Jang is said to have been refused entry to the main Central Committee office complex in the Changgwangsan neighborhood, in Pyongyang's city centre, where his office was located. He did not appear at any public events, and not listed as part of Kim Jong il's entourage. Mr. Jang was said to have been removed from the senior Vice-Directorate of the Organization and Guidance Department. He seems to have been confined to one of his homes in Pyongyang, his offices assumed by Ri Jeh Gang. There are differing accounts of Mr. Jang's removal from office. One account has Mr. Jang facing a formal charge for factionalization, which is to say that his influence (power base) among KWP cadres threatened to eclipse Kim Jong il's influence, thus undermining the power of the Suryong. In this account, Mr. Jang is alleged to have disputed Kim Jong il's dying wife, Ko Yong Hee, over matters of succession with Ms. Ko favoring one of her sons (with the support of OGD Vice Directors Ri Jeh Gang and Ri Ja Il) to succeed General Kim, and Mr. Jang supporting Kim Jong Nam. There is also a story, which seems highly unlikely, that Mr. Jang's wife Kim Kyong Hui was disowned by her brother, and the possible target of an assassination-by-auto-accident. In the second account of Mr. Jang's sabbatical, Mr. Jang was found to be residing in a newly constructed palatial home (on par with those of the Suryongs), and that he was removed from office because the grandiosity of the house made him appear to have equal standing with General Kim. Under either scenario, Mr. Jang seems to have been punished for the North Korean version of the sin of pride.

2006: First Vice Director, Labor Organs [Workers' Organization], CCKWP

In 2006, Mr. Jang was said to have sufficiently atoned and underwent a so-called rehabilitation. He returned to what could be considered old territory—supervision over KWP-based popular organizations that participate in building pieces of the infrastructure in the DPRK, one example being the Youth Labor Teams. In the 1980s Mr. Jang was the CCKWP executive who supervised the construction of Kwangbok and Thongil Streets in Pyongyang, a feat which propaganda claims as one of Kim Jong il's administrative accomplishments. Tragically, Mr. Jang's daughter, Jang Kum Song passed away in the Fall of 2006. In 2007, Mr. Jang returned to his Vice Directorate in the Organization and Guidance Department.

2007: First Vice Director, Organization and Guidance Department, CCKWP

In 2008, Mr. Jang was seemingly promoted or assigned more tasks. DailyNK reported that Mr. Jang had become the head of the KWP's Ministry of Administration. The job title may be slightly inaccurate, as the Ministry of Administration no longer exists due to 1990s restructuring of the KWP. What seems more plausible is that Mr. Jang's Vice Directorate took on additional tasks with complete jurisdiction over the State Security Department, the People's Safety Agency, all other domestic law enforcement and intelligence agencies, the Central Prosecutor's Office and the Central Court of the DPRK.



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Mr. Jang at the far right in Kim Jong il's visit to a mining complex.

Mr. Jang was also reported to have assumed jurisdiction over the Economic Policy Inspection Department, CCKWP, an organ through which he began an inspection regime, on the pre-text of an anti-corruption campaign, in the DPRK's cities that border PR China. This portfolio is akin to the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Administration.



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Mr. Jang, at the right, visits the Pyongyang Central Zoo

2008: (November or December) Director, Organization and Guidance Department, CCKWP

It has been reported in DailyNK, the Times of London and by a few newswire services that Mr. Jang assumed interim control of the DPRK when Kim Jong il had a stroke in August 2008. This could be a facile summarizing of the DPRK's contingency planning that went into effect when General Kim was temporarily incapacitated. DailyNK, as well as several people residing in PR China, report that in late November or early December 2008, General Kim appointed Mr. Jang as the Director of Organization and Guidance of the CCKWP. The KCNA also began to identify Mr. Jang as a "Department Director" rather than "First Vice Director" in news accounts of music performances and On the Spot Guidance appearances by Kim Jong il. In February 2009, Selig Harrison told the International Herald-Tribune and the Washington Post that General Kim had relinquished his day to day management of the KWP and the DPRK Government.



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Mr. Jang is certainly a man apart in this pre-SPA Election appearance with Kim Jong il at Kim il Sung University.

2009: (March) Elected, Deputy Member, SPA (Representing Electoral District #31)
(April) Appointed, Member, National Defense Commission

Mr. Jang's 2009 appointment represents the consummation of his daily operational supervision and direction of the DPRK's Party-Government-Military cabal. Through the centenarian anniversary of the late President, Kim il Sung's birthday, Kim Jong il will use his appearances at work places and military stations to reiterate his Suryong status and vanquish any semi-retirement rumors circulating in the offices of the Changgwang KWP complex. And yet, General Kim seems content to be the face man of the administration of the KWP and the DPRK Government.

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