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FAR EAST SURVEY
17 JANUARY 1952

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NORTH KOREA

Pyongyang conventionally fails to keep pace with Peking's growing belligerency in regard to the truce talks, but aggressive indices are increasingly in evidence. In assailing American intentions in the Far East, the radio attempts to portray the Americans and the Japanese as traditional partners in the repeated attempts to destroy Korean sovereignty. Domestic comment parallels Peking in stressing themes that could be expected to predominate in a peacetime economy, with emphasis on production needs and civilian reform. There has been a general increase in references to international affairs.

Little Belligerence in Truce Comment: Although North Korean comment on the truce negotiations, as is customary, lags behind Peking and fails to reflect the latter's resurgent belligerence, two familiar themes with bellicose components stand out: the claim that the American imperialists are attempting to achieve at the conference what they could not achieve on the battlefield; and the charge that the United States is "using every effort to prolong the negotiations by demanding the right to interfere in the internal affairs of Korea."

American Aggression Condemned: Condemnation of American aggression generally follows the Peking pattern, slightly mitigated as noted, with the Collective Security Act, "a criminal scheme designed to enslave the people of the world"; and "unforgivable atrocities," which clearly reveal the "complete political and moral corruption" of the "American beasts," singled out for primary attention.

U.S. and Japan Korea's Traditional Enemies: There seems to be an increasing tendency to link the Koreans' age-old hatred of the Japanese with the animosity now directed against the Americans and to imply that these two nations, working together, have always been and continue to be the greatest threat to Korean freedom and independence. Japanese remilitarization under American aegis is emphasized in this connection, and a NODONG SINMUN editorial charges that the Americans are planning to conclude a Korean-Japanese alliance based upon utilization of South Korea's resources in preparing Japan for a revival of militaristic aggression. "All the Korean people who have any national consciousness," the daily declares, "will surely find it impossible to refrain from taking arms against the Japanese who have rearmed and are creeping toward our territory,"

Coinciding with Moscow's comment, Stalin's New Year's message to the Japanese, said to have been occasioned by "the sorry plight of the Japanese people," is hailed as a "noble, human wish and hope of Stalin" and given tremendous publicity by Pyongyang. "Every phrase of the message of Stalin," Pyongyang declares, "encourages the Japanese people in their struggle against the American imperialists and the reactionary Yoshida regime." Nowhere is the message interpreted as presaging more than moral aid on the part of the USSR.

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Communist Solidarity Emphasized: Paralleling a trend that has recently characterized Chinese domestic broadcasts, Pyongyang appears to be utilizing themes that could be expected to predominate in circumstances keyed to a peacetime existence. Increased evidence is presented of Korea's solid alignment with the world peace camp and frequent references are made to other countries within the Communist orbit, including Rumania, Albania and Mongolia. The visit of the delegation from the Mongolian People's Republic is widely acclaimed as are the customary exchanges of New Year's messages among dignitaries of the various Communist governments. The New Year's messages addressed to the people by Kim Il Sung and Kim Doo Bong receive voluminous comment and widespread dissemination. Frequent tributes to the continuing "unselfish and brotherly encouragement and support" from China and the people of the "democratic" nations headed by the Soviet Union are also presented.

Emphasis on International Topics Noted: The shift from a concentration on militant themes to topics more in keeping with peacetime propaganda is reflected also in the increased volume of references, couched in stereotyped Communist terms, to a wide variety of current events, including Anglo-American interference in Pakistan, "colonization" in Turkey and "plunder" in the Middle East; the struggle of colonial countries, notably Malaya and Africa, for independence; the "aggressive plots" of the NATO; the French governmental crisis; British rearmament; and the oppression of the capitalistic system.

The Churchill-Truman talks elicit immediate comment from Pyongyang, which charges that the imperialists, "confronted with failure in Korea," are planning "new aggression" in Southeast Asia. "No sensational decision" is said to have been reached during the talks, however, which fact is singled out as proof that the "disagreement between America and Britain has been aggravated." Again echoing Moscow, Pyongyang declares that President Truman's State of the Union message to Congress is a "message of preparations for war, not for the establishment of peace."

Appeals to People Highlighted: These divergent propaganda trends are further emphasized in the variety of Pyongyang's broadcast appeals to the people. They are called upon to increase agricultural output, stimulate the livestock-raising industry, and overcome shortages of chemical fertilizer. To accomplish this the people are told that "we must invite experts from the Soviet Union and other advanced countries" and also "send our own young workers abroad to study advanced methods and techniques." They are also urged to work for the consolidation of the national economy, the attainment of "maximum efficiency with a minimum of personnel," an increase in factory production, and the elimination of "waste of labor and materials," as well as to consolidate and expand the democratic front, one of the "most urgent" tasks ahead. Cadres are also exhorted to make efforts to "combat the deplorable tendency to carry out every activity in the form of a campaign."

Guerrilla Activity Continues: Little attention is given to South Korea, although the NODONG SINMUN editorially lauds the "daily intensifying patriotic struggle" of the South Korean people. The "furious guerrilla struggle" is acknowledged, and the people's guerrillas are said to be "successfully frustrating" and dealing severe blows to the so-called expeditionary operations of the enemy. "The flames of resistance of the people in the southern half," Pyongyang says, "are rising ever higher." As evidence of its "magnanimous attitude," Pyongyang continues to report the surrender of persons who, "duped by the cunning tactics" of the American imperialistic aggressors and the Syngman Rhee traitor gang, have realized the errors of their ways and "repented their shameful crimes."

SOUTH KOREA

Pusan comment on the negotiations stresses the unchanging nature of official opinion concerning the truce talks. A return to Seoul is seen as a possibility in the near future, and there are frequent reports regarding the strengthening of the nation's armed forces. Reports of progress are accompanied by criticism of popular complacency.

Attitude on Truce Talks Unchanged: South Korea reveals more than the usual interest in the outcome of the truce negotiations, but, as President Rhee reiterates, there has been no change in South Korean demands and attitudes concerning an armistice. "Our side will never accept any enemy proposal which may result in interference in our military operations," Pusan emphasizes, quoting the ROK delegate to the talks, who also accuses the Communist delegates of putting obstacles in the course of POW exchange discussions. In connection with the exchange of POW's, more than 5,000 North Koreans now detained in South Korea are alleged to have petitioned the Republic not to return them to the Communists. President Rhee is also said to be receptive to the idea that he visit the United States and confer with President Truman and other American leaders.

Return to Seoul Possible: Reviving a theme which has been absent for some time, Pusan says that the sooner the capital is returned to Seoul, the better conditions will be. Reconstruction in Seoul in anticipation of the return of the Government is alleged to have made "considerable" progress, and it is hoped that the transfer can be completed by March. A return to Seoul, Pusan warns, however, depends on the "progress of military operations."

Expansion of Armed Forces Expected: Although the South Koreans are upbraided by the Defense Minister for an "unsatisfactory" discharge of military service, the Minister emphasizes that agreement has been reached for "considerable expansion" of the nation's armed forces this year. President Rhee also reflects the country's desire for increased armaments in declaring that Korea must have armament to the same extent, or even greater, than that to be given Japan, to avoid "unfavorable effects in the future."

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Complacency Still a Problem: Parallel to reports of progress in economic and political spheres, there are continuing indications that the Government is still dissatisfied with the incidence of complacency among the people. As examples, Pusan decries the fact that there has been insufficient public response in the drive to sell public bonds; the Ministry of Health charges that numerous "unscrupulous pharmaceutical companies" are indulging in unlawful activities for illegal profits; and the Peace Preservation Bureau Chief laments that although it is unnecessary to reiterate that the "entire nation must be united to win the anti-Communist war," too many people are still "indulging in various kinds of gambling and seeking corrupt pleasures."

Pacification Measures Continue: Although Pusan's only mention of the mopping-up operations in the Chiri-san area concerns the distribution of relief articles, a possible indication that resistance is stronger than anticipated may be seen in the dispatch of a new "pacification and relief team" to the area to carry out "rapid pacification and relief measures."

Other Topics: Politically, Pusan is primarily concerned with possible cabinet changes, the formation of a new political party (the Liberal Party), and the by-election for National Assemblymen. Rehabilitation, a nation-wide registration of war victims for relief purposes, increased production of fertilizer, restoration of the railway network and improvement of other types of communications, and production of civilian goods also receive considerable emphasis.

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