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7 JANUARY 1949

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KOREA: MOSCOW'S ATTENTION WANDERS

Korea

Currently monitored broadcasts from Radio Moscow to and about Korea appear to be uncharacteristically amorphous. There are the usual generalizations on the "good" nature of Soviet actions and the "evil" nature of American actions; but such current developments as the U.N. Commission, recognition of the Seoul regime, and the two-year plan are ignored. The final withdrawal of all Soviet troops is exploited but not with the intensity that might have been expected on the basis of previous broadcasting patterns.

Radio Pyongyang on the other hand continues to exhort according to pattern. It attacks the U.S., denounces the United Nations and its "illegal" actions, praises the Soviet Union for its many kindnesses to Korea, and congratulates the Korean people on their achievements during 1948. Commencement of the two-year plan is noted, as are progress in 1948 and prospects for similar progress in 1949 and 1950. Kim Il Sung's New Year's speech is repeatedly broadcast; and incorporates all the above themes.

Pyongyang departs from pattern, however, in what appears to be an off-hand reference to recognition of the Seoul Government. The concrete fact of U.N. recognition of the Syngman Rhee Government has not even been mentioned in previous monitored broadcasts. The current reference appears in one of the concluding paragraphs of a moderately lengthy Pyongyang commentary of 3 January.

a. Troop Withdrawal: The TASS announcement of the completion of withdrawals by Soviet troops is included in five Soviet news transmissions this week and is referred to in three Moscow commentaries. A 31 December broadcast in Mandarin stresses the contrast--as brought out by withdrawal of troops--between U.S. and USSR policies, while Aleksandrov in a Korean-language commentary of 1 January plays up the "letters of thanks to Generalissimo Stalin" in which the masses of Korean people are said to be expressing their heartfelt gratitude for the withdrawal. He points out that these letters "indeed... constitute important historical documents." Monin's English-language commentary of 31 December is a rehash of familiar statements regarding "contrasts in policy."

Commentator Dimitrio Momos also employs the familiar contrast in a Greek-language broadcast of 2 January. He claims that Soviet policy, typified by the withdrawal of troops, is "entirely different" from that of the U.S. "which aims to turn various small nations into bridgeheads for its expansionist policy."

Radio Pyongyang reports the progress of the special train bearing headquarters troops away from Pyongyang and describes the withdrawal as one of the greatest gifts of the USSR to Korea.

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b. The USSR Is Good, the United States Is Evil: The contrast between living conditions north and south of the 38th parallel, which for Soviet propagandists reflects the contrast between the "democratic" policies of the USSR and the "imperialistic" policies of the United States, is reiterated endlessly this week. Soviet commentators--and Pyongyang commentators follow their lead--review America's allegedly obstructive activities during the life of the Joint Commission. Vasiliev gives details of the "acute... economic crisis" in South Korea: "frozen corpses are found every morning in the streets." (in Korean, 2 January 1949) Danilov reports "severe suppression." Korean delegates to the conference of the International Federation of Democratic Women, visiting in Moscow en route home, are quoted in praise of the north and in denunciation of the south. And Pietersky, restating familiar generalities, contrasts the land reform programs in the two areas in a Japanese-language broadcast of 28 December.

Radio-Pyongyang's development of the alleged contrast between the north and south follows the same general line as that set by Radio Moscow; but it lacks the tone of detachment which qualifies Soviet commentaries. Pyongyang's commentaries are highly emotional in reporting evidences of the contrast, and are belligerent in asserting that the Korean people "utterly reject" the "puppet" Government of Syngman Rhee and will "crush" the "American imperialists" and their "country-ruining" schemes.

d. Kim Il Sung's New Year Address: Premier Kim Il Sung's extensive New Year's address has been broadcast repeatedly by Radio Pyongyang since it was first delivered on 1 January. The speech is made up of elaborations on Pyongyang's familiar themes concerning northern progress and Soviet morality as opposed to southern distress, American venality, and U.N. furtherance of that venality. To date the speech has received only summary notice from Moscow.

d. 1948 Ends: In Pyongyang's year-end summaries, "successful" fulfillment of "honorable tasks" is claimed for all economic enterprises of North Korea. A 3 January broadcast credits the patriotic fervor of the workers, stimulated by the successful establishment of the People's Democratic Government, with these successes:

"Coal output reached 3,950,000 tons, iron ore 215,000 tons, chemical fertilizers 332,000 tons, pig iron 90,000 tons. All in all, the 1948 production was increased to 141 percent compared with that of 1947--or 318.7 percent compared with that of 1946. ...during the year... nearly two hundred new items, including... steel pipe, iron wire, antimony, and bismuth, were produced which could not be produced during the Japanese days."

Monitored Soviet broadcasts have contained but sparse references to Korean accomplishments. TASS, in an English Morse transmission of 4 January, noted that coal output reached 3,900,000 tons and that metal output reached 125,000 tons.

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The happy state of northern farmers is described in a 30 December Pyongyang broadcast. The farmers' prosperity is attributed to the "democratic" land reform; and the alleged contrast between conditions in the north and in the south is reiterated. A 4 January broadcast also touches upon the state of affairs of Korean farmers and contrasts the fact that northern farmers completed payment of taxes in kind with the reportedly oppressed state of southern farmers. It calls upon the latter to increase their resistance to Syngman Rhee. The commentary notes that, due to improvements in irrigation facilities, northern farm production increased 150.9 percent over 1945.

e. Tasks for 1949: Commencement of the North Korean two-year plan, signaled by Kim Il Sung in his New Year's address, and noted by Pyongyang, has been overlooked to date in monitored broadcasts from Radio Moscow. Goals for the two-year plan are outlined in the Premier's speech and details for the first quarter of 1949, decided upon at a 16 December Cabinet session, were reported by Radio Pyongyang on 18 December. The purpose of the program, as outlined by Kim Il Sung, is to "improve rapidly the material and cultural living standards of the people... (by) more than doubling production facilities particularly for such branches as the textile industry in order to meet the requirements of the people."

Kim indicates that production of rayon yarns and textiles will be expanded; production of cotton materials will be doubled; and sowing areas will be increased, irrigation projects will expand the arable land, and "in such branches of the people's economy as traffic, transportation, communications, construction and public health we envisage tremendous improvements and developments." Similar expectations are voiced for educational and cultural fields and in the training of technicians.

First quarter standards are outlined in the 18 December broadcast as follows:

"As to industry, the program calls for (an increase) of 57.4 percent in the total production of state-managed industry over the achievements of the first quarter of 1948. As to labor productivity, an increase of from 35 to 50 percent over (the achievements) of 1948. As to production costs, a reduction of from 3 to 10 percent. As to the production of light industry, the program calls for an increase of (71.7) percent compared with... of 1948. As to local industry, the program calls for an increase of 543 percent for state-managed enterprises and 141 percent for private enterprises respectively.

"...capital construction at the Hwanghae iron works, the Chongjin and (Kangso) steel works as well as extension projects at the rolling stock plant... will be expedited.

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"...it has been decided to concentrate on securing superior seeds, purchasing and repairing farm implements, obtaining fertilizers, and popularizing agricultural techniques during the winter. The program calls for (expediting) the progress of the irrigation projects which are already under way while setting forth concrete measures to be taken for making complete preparations for (new irrigation projects)."

Percentage increases for specific industries are also listed. They include:

Lumbering--195.3 percent over 1948 for felling, 69.8 percent for transportation.

Fisheries--23.3 percent in catch; 17 percent for processing.

Transportation--52.4 percent for rail freight compared with the first quarter of 1948.

Commodity distribution--54.4 percent for state managed commerce; 68 percent for consumers unions.

The 18 December broadcast sums up the purposes to be achieved in the first quarter of 1949 in terms of expansion of capital construction and "large increases" in the "short-term training of engineers."

1949's tasks in the field of education are outlined in a broadcast reporting details of the Cabinet's 16 December session. It is announced that the network of schools is to be expanded and the facilities increased by August 1949. January will see formulation of "state measures" intended to improve the lot of the teachers.

"In order to propel vigorously the various measures necessary for the enforcement of compulsory education and to make them a popular task, it has been decided to form, under the active cooperation of the political parties and social organizations, preparation committees for the enforcement of compulsory elementary education in the capital as well as in provinces, cities, counties, and townships."

Political tasks for 1949 are outlined for all Koreans in a 3 January broadcast. Northern Koreans are asked to put forth the necessary effort for the two-year plan; southerners are asked to "fight fiercely against the reactionaries." Residents of both areas are also asked to "fight" the U.N. Commission, the South Korea "puppet Government," and "to have American troops withdraw from South Korea."

f. New Korean-Language Broadcasts: Radio Khabarovsk has begun Korean-language broadcasts within the past fortnight. The transmissions do not appear to follow any regular pattern as to time but do follow Radio Moscow's patterns in content. They include Soviet and world news and comment which is generally indistinguishable from that emanating from Moscow. A 3 January broadcast closes with the request that listeners send comments on the program to the station.

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g. Progress in the North: Pyongyang's accounts of general accomplishment of quotas are supplemented by reports of achievements in production by specific groups. There is also evidence of the desire to improve working and living conditions.

Agriculture

Yongch'on County, North Pyongan Province, will start an irrigation project on 5 January which is to be completed by the end of March. (Pyongyang, 30 December 1948)

South Pyongan Province completed payment of taxes by 100 percent on 20 December. All citizens of Nampo city completed tax payments by 16 December. (Pyongyang, 29 December 1948)

Industry

(Scho?) fishery cooperative in South Hamgyong Province surpassed the annual quota for catch by 109.8 percent and 134 percent for processing, as of 17 December. (Pyongyang, 29 December 1948)

(Yongchon?) coal mine "finally fulfilled" 100 percent of the quota on 23 December. (Pyongyang, 29 December 1948)

Sinuiju medicine factory fulfilled its production quota by 25 December. (Pyongyang, 29 December 1948)

The quota for Ginseng plantings in Kangwon Province was reached by 105 percent on 21 December. (Pyongyang, 29 December 1948)

Improvements in tobacco-cutting knives are reported from Pyongyang Tobacco Factory. The knives are said to surpass those left behind by the Japanese in durability (they can be used for 20 minutes instead of 10) and in economy of production. (Pyongyang, 22 December 1948)

Sinuiju textile mill added 100 weaving machines and is scheduled to add spinning machines. Construction of the Pyongyang textile mill has been under way since October. The mill will be the largest of its kind in Korea and when completely equipped with modern facilities is expected to increase the production of

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textiles from one linear meter per capita to (five?) meters per capita. Silk-weaving mills are under construction at three places to increase the production of daily necessities. (Pyongyang, 22 December 1948)

Workers' Benefits

Pyongyang radio, commemorating the second anniversary of the Social Insurance Law in a 20 December broadcast, reports figures on numbers of individuals receiving free medical treatment, unemployment payments, maternity benefits, pensions, payments to rest centers, etc.

Rationed goods, including food, will be distributed by state-managed commercial outlets according to decision No. 27 of the Cabinet. Employees of factories or offices whose payroll exceeds 500 persons will receive foods and (incentive?) goods from state-managed commercial stores, while workers in organizations of less than 500 will receive supplies from consumers unions. The move is said to be intended "to raise to a still higher level the livelihood of laborers and clerical workers." (Pyongyang, 18 December 1948)

At the end of the third quarter of 1948, state-managed stores and consumers unions "accomplished" larger sales than during all of 1947. (Pyongyang, 28 December 1948)