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WEEKLY SURVEY
31 DECEMBER 1948

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KOREA: FAMILIAR CHARGES, FAMILIAR PRAISE

Korea

Moscow and Pyongyang radios again confine their comment on Korean affairs to stereotyped charges of American-Syngman Rhee perfidy and brutality and to reaffirmations of Korean-USSR solidarity. The Seoul Government is accused of all manner of sins from the "Japanese-style" Peace Preservation Law to the "unfair" land reform program; but assertions of "brutality" and "massacres" are repeated most frequently. Year-end reports of economic progress continue to highlight the advantages of life under the Soviet aegis.

a. Third Anniversary of the Moscow Agreement: Five broadcasts on 27 December--two from Moscow and three from Pyongyang--use the third anniversary of the signing of the Moscow Agreement on Korea as the occasion for a familiar attack on the U.S. and for standard praise of the Soviet Union. America is said to have disrupted the Joint Commission, to have twice illegally presented the Korean issue before the U.N., and to be purposefully disrupting the economy of its zone. This is contrasted with the attitude of the Soviet Union "which has done its best" to realize the objectives of the Agreement.

b. Korean-Soviet Solidarity: Throughout Pyongyang's monitored broadcasts there runs the thread of Korean acknowledgement of the altruism and beneficence of the USSR. This week, the departure of Soviet headquarters troops from Pyongyang accounts for expressions of such sentiments which are augmented by a speech given by a Pyongyang merchant who declares that "we will be grateful forever for the assistance" rendered by the USSR (24 December), and by the remarks of a "student" who, in a 28 December broadcast, is said to have declared that "with Soviet aid" North Korea achieved many democratic reforms.

Korean gratitude for the withdrawal of Soviet troops is noted in reports of the mass meeting held at Pyongyang station on 26 December when the headquarters troops entrained, and in accounts of the "broad signature movement" said to be taking place in South Korea despite official persecution. Residents of South Korea are said to be sending messages of thanks and farewell gifts to the Soviet troops even though the "reactionary" police confiscate such gifts and messages whenever possible. (16 December)

Because of their "outstanding services to the Korean people" the People's Republic has conferred the Order of the State Banner on a group of Soviet generals and officers, Pyongyang reports on 24 December. The announcement was made two days after a similar award for Korean officers was announced. (The awards were also noted by TASS in an English Morse transmission of 26 December.)

* Signatures to letters of gratitude to the Soviet Union for withdrawal of troops.

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c. American Sins Reviewed: Pyongyang devotes primary attention to recording alleged sins of the Americans and of the reportedly American-controlled Syngman Rhee Government. Moscow radio also takes part in this campaign of vilification, but to a lesser degree.

This week Pyongyang cites the aid agreement as an example of the manner in which "country-selling" Syngman Rhee is handing Korean resources over to colonial Americans. (18 December) The Peace Preservation Law is denounced as leading to the "slaughter of the Korean people" and is classed with the sentences passed on Greek "patriots" last April as exemplifying what "always happens when the sinister hands of American imperialists reach out." (23 December) Broadcasts on 20 and 21 December assert that the "South Korea puppet government... is suppressing freedom of speech and of the press" and give details of that alleged suppression. Persecution of students and teachers is charged on 23 December.

Radio Moscow, in a 28 December commentary by Pietersky, challenges the land reform program in South Korea with the charge that it is designed to "plunder" the farmers' livelihood.

Radio Khabarovsk, in a Korean-language broadcast of 29 December, makes familiar assertions concerning alleged American imperialism in South Korea. This commentary also includes stereotyped references to American schemes for remilitarization of Japan.

d. "The Struggle of the Rebels Continues": Both Pyongyang and TASS note the continuing struggle of rebellious Koreans against American oppression this week. A TASS transmission of 26 December (in Russian to the USSR provincial press) recapitulates reports contained in Pyongyang broadcasts of 23 December. These in turn recapitulate events which allegedly took place before 20 December, including the 17 December attack on the governor of South Cholla Province and incidents at Posong and Koksong.

e. Pyongyang Attacks the United Nations: Although Moscow devotes little attention to the subject, Pyongyang continues to denounce the U.N. action on Korea. Two broadcasts give the "truth" of the situation. On 22 December, Pyongyang reveals the "true character" of the Commission in a broadcast that reviews standard Soviet criticism of the U.N. action. This includes the charge that the U.N. has no jurisdiction over the case, that Korea was not properly represented, and that the action resulted from Anglo-American pressure on servile delegates. On 24 December, Pyongyang points out that the U.N. resolution was based on the report of the Temporary Commission and that this report contained "false" information. Neither broadcast acknowledges that the U.N. resolution recognized the Seoul regime.

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f. Progress and Prosperity in the North: Radio Pyongyang continues to report year-end accounts of successes in economic pursuits. This week a group of broadcasts describes the efforts being made to secure a trained labor force and to insure workers' morale.

Labor

Provincial "labor collection chiefs" and employment agency chiefs met in Pyongyang on 17 December. Employment agencies at Pyongyang, Sinuiju, Hae, and Wonsan, which supplied large numbers of farmers and industrial workers will be augmented next year by employment agencies at Hamhung and Chongjin. The agencies are asked "to launch a vigorous campaign to locate labor sources" for coal and other mines and factories. (Pyongyang, 20 December 1948)

MINCHU CHOSUN reports that the Ministry of City Planning is taking advantage of the winter months to organize and supervise a program for training technicians and civil engineers. The present three-months program is directed at training bricklayers, plasterers, and carpenters. The workmen are first given "elementary technical instruction in writing" and are then sent to actual jobs for training. (Pyongyang, 21 December 1948)

Workers, office employees, students, and peasants are now organized into a mass sports program, SOVIET SPORT reports. The program "utilizes the experience of the Soviet Union in organizing the physical culture movement" and is directed by the Committee for Physical Culture under the Department of Education. (TASS, English Morse to Europe, 21 December 1948)

MINCHU CHOSUN reports perceptible increases in the material and cultural living conditions of workers at the Hungnam fertilizer factory. The factory is now enforcing a system of paying wages in daily necessities "as well as the contract bonus system" which has brought about an increase in the workers' wages. The number of workers participating in the contract bonus system increased from 58% in April to 72% in October. The increase in wages paid has brought about an increase in productivity and as a consequence "the workers are receiving an additional 100 to 200 grams of food per day." (Pyongyang, 18 December 1948)

Workers' benefits at the Pyongyang electric "factory" are described by "an electrician":

"I can read and write and have a comfortable place to live. We read newspapers or magazines for 30 minutes before going to work. At noon we are entertained with recreational programs. We study for one hour after work and then go home. Once a week we can enjoy movies and attend concerts. Once a year we are given a vacation." (Pyongyang, 25 December 1948)

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Agriculture

Planted areas were increased this year by 105.5% over 1947. Rice, beans, and grains are expected to be increased by 115.3% this year. Sheep increased by 183% and goats by 180% this year. Arable land in North Korea reached 110.6% "if we take 1945 as 100." (Pyongyang, 25 December 1948)

"There were 49 irrigation projects" during the third quarter of this year. (Pyongyang, 25 December 1948) The irrigation project of Changyon, Hwanghae Province will be completed by the end of 1950. (Pyongyang, 26 December 1948)

The short training course for agricultural technicians closed in counties on 10 December and opened in the villages on 20 December. (Pyongyang, 26 December 1948)

Farmers of North Hamgyong Province completed their tax payments in superior crops by 15 December. Farmers of the Province are contributing "patriotic rice"; the contributions reached 124,917 bags by the end of October. (Pyongyang, 18 December 1948)

Industry

The Manpo shipbuilding yard reached 102% of its annual quota by 2 December. (Pyongyang, 26 December 1948)

The Onsong coal mine in North Hamgyong Province accomplished the annual quota on 19 December. (Pyongyang, 26 December 1948)

The Nampo oil factory completed the quota of production by (17?) December. (Pyongyang, 26 December 1948)

Provincial chiefs of commerce and industry, chiefs of commercial and industrial control bureaus, municipal and county chiefs of commerce and industry, and managers of state-managed department stores attended a meeting called by the Ministry of Commerce in Pyongyang on 18 December. The session discussed a report on "the purchase business of state-managed shops" in North Hamgyong Province, Pyongyang, and Hwanghae Province. It was pointed out that "new excellent leaders" must be trained extensively and "democratic commerce established on a higher level." Increased inspection was called for. (Pyongyang, 18 December 1948)

Forestry

Cutting and planting increased by 232% and lumbering by 168% compared with last year. (Pyongyang, 25 December 1948)

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Transportation

The electrification project on the Manpo line between Kaego and Koin progressed ahead of schedule "under popular cooperation." The (transformer?) station was completed 15 December; an electric locomotive made a successful trial run on 20 December; and ceremonies marking the opening of service will be held "in a few days." (Pyongyang, 23 December 1948)

Fishing

Both private and state-managed fishing has conquered shortages of materials. The cooperatives achieved good results. (Pyongyang, 25 December 1948)

It is reported from Hamhung that the State-controlled Sinpo fishery station which is playing a major role in the winter catch of "Myongtae" surpassed its annual production quotas. Workers of the three fishing units and 11 processing shops of the fishery station had previously resolved to surpass their annual quotas by 25 December and made all the necessary preparations for the catch of "Myongtae." As of 13 December, 12 days ahead of schedule, they fulfilled 100.5% of the quota for the catch of "Myongtae" and 117.3% of the quota for processing. (Pyongyang, 15 December 1948)

New Calculation Formula

MINCHU CHOSUN reports completion of a "new calculation formula for progress on projects" by Paek Nam Sik, chief of the Civil Engineering Division of the City Planning Section of the Pyongyang Special City People's Committee.

"The new formula makes it possible to work out at any given time the percentage of progress made in any of the branches of a project, and to obtain an estimate on the remainder of the entire project. Furthermore, the new calculation formula makes it possible to work out the percentage of costs of branches of a project against the total cost of the entire project."

Application of the formula to civil engineering projects within the city resulted in the transfer of technicians and clerical workers "to augment labor" and also resulted in an application to "higher authorities" for removal of electric poles so that a sewer project could proceed. (Pyongyang, 21 December 1948)

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