

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

11 August 1950

21777
INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM NO. 316

SUBJECT: North Korean Unification Propaganda

The basis for the present North Korean propaganda campaign for the unification of all Korea was established in 1945, following Korea's liberation from Japan, when "Peoples Committees" comprising all shades of political coloration were organized throughout the country. In the Soviet zone of occupation, the Peoples Committees (Soviets) were recognized and utilized by the Russian command as legitimate organs of local government. Anti-Communists were soon removed from Committee membership and Communist-type elections held for permanent Peoples Committees on all levels to replace the temporary organizations. Since that time, the Communist regime has consistently described the "Peoples Committees" as the true democratic organs of government and have always called on the south Koreans to re-establish their peoples committees (outlawed by US Military Government in 1945 after they were brought under Communist control and defied military authority) as the first step in throwing out the "illegitimate" Rhee Government and achieving unification.

In 1948, the "Democratic Peoples Republic" was formed in northern Korea following a "general election." A general election was actually held in North Korea and ballots were distributed clandestinely in South Korea, following which a supreme Peoples Assembly was formed with representatives from both north and south.

The pattern of "elections" followed in North Korea, which culminated in the formation of the Democratic Peoples Republic, is now being followed, although at a much more rapid pace, in "liberated" areas of South Korea. As demanded by Communist propaganda over the past four years, temporary Peoples Committees were "re-established" immediately in areas secured by Communist troops after 25 June. Then on 15 July, Radio Pyongyang announced "rules" for elections for county, township, and village Peoples Committees. On 18 July, Pyongyang announced vigorous preparations underway for the local elections and on 1 August announcements claimed that local elections

F-65
Note: This report concerning current North Korean propaganda on unification was undertaken in response to a specific request by the Inter-departmental Foreign Information Staff of the Department of State.

This memorandum has not been coordinated with the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and the Air Force.

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were completed in all the liberated Provinces. Claims for elections made so far do not go above the county level and no plans for "general" elections to establish a unified government for all Korea have been announced. However, a broadcast of 1 August addressed to South Korean farmers cautioned the farmers to render positive support to the Peoples Army and to prepare themselves for the coming general elections.

A review of the past and present propaganda position of the Democratic Peoples Republic on the subject of unification and general elections is necessary to an evaluation of recent "election" developments.

The "Democratic Peoples Republic" has consistently maintained since its formal establishment in October 1948 that it is the central government of all Korea, formed in accordance with the principle of "self-determination" and representing all democratic elements in both North and South. During the summer of 1949 and again in June of 1950, however, it indorsed the "peaceful unification" proposals of a non-government "Unification Front," which called for general elections in all Korea to select a new supreme legislative assembly for the purpose of forming a new government, and dissolving the existing governments in both North and South Korea. On 19 June 1950, as an alternate method of unification, the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the "Supreme Peoples Assembly" of the "Democratic Peoples Republic" also called for the combining of the Assemblies of North and South to draw up a new constitution, supervise general elections for a supreme Assembly and form a new central government.

Since the outbreak of hostilities, the North Koreans have not mentioned any of the "unification" plans, which include the formation of an entirely new government. Their post-25 June line has consistently been that the ultimate end of the "civil war" (provoked by Rhee's invasion of the North) is the complete "liberation and unification" of Korea under the banner of the Democratic Peoples Republic. On 28 June, Radio Pyongyang announced the "liberation" of Seoul in these terms - "Seoul has become the capital of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea you are now citizens of the Republic you have been united under the banner of the republic of citizens of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea....." Apparently UN intervention changed the North Korean time-table for actual movement of the capital from Pyongyang to Seoul because references to Seoul as the capital were soon dropped; but it may be significant that such reference was made again on 5 August. Meanwhile, however, every action of the North Korean regime in southern Korea is consistent with its long established line that South Korea and its peoples were de jure an integral part of the "Democratic Peoples Republic" merely waiting liberation from "US imperialism" and the "anti-popular, illegal, US puppet Rhee Government."

- 2 -

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On the basis of the recent and long-range propaganda build-up, therefore, several courses of action are open to the North Koreans in reference to a "general election" announcement.

1) They may refer back at any time in the near future to the unification proposals made in 1949 and again in June 1950 and state that in conformance with these proposals, general elections have been completed — or will be held — throughout all Korea for a supreme legislative assembly which will meet in Seoul to form a new government.

2) Again they may announce that a "majority" of the South Korean National Assemblymen are meeting with the North Korean Assembly to draw up a constitution and supervise elections for a new unified supreme assembly.

3) Or, they may simply announce the near completion of the unification and liberation under the Democratic Peoples Republic and claim that recent local elections in South Korea have demonstrated unanimous South Korean support for the "central" government. They might add that national elections for a new Assembly will be held at a later date when liberation is completed and peace restored.

4) A fourth possibility is that a formal announcement on any aspect of unification may be postponed pending clarification of the military situation.

It appears probable that some sort of announcement on the general subject of unification will be made shortly, and this announcement will probably include reference to plans for holding general elections. Although the exact date for such action cannot be predicted with certainty, August 15, the anniversary of "liberation from the Japanese," would be a propitious date from the Korean point of view for a "unification" announcement because of the date's historical association with nationalism and independence. The form and content of the announcement will be dictated by the requirements of the Soviet propaganda position on Korea. If the military situation has not developed decisively for either side by that time and if the Soviet Union foresees the necessity at some future date for suggesting or assenting to return to the pre-hostilities status quo, the announcement probably will not claim the completion of all "unification" procedures and the final intergration of the "liberated" areas into the "Democratic Peoples Republic." Rather, in following the lines of alternative three above, it will reaffirm the de jure authority of the Democratic Peoples Republic over all Korea, and will describe the steps being taken to insure the complete liberation of southern Korea. It will emphasize the line that the fighting

- 3 -

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in Korea is merely a civil war, that the Korean people should be permitted to settle their internal problems on the basis of the principle of self-determination, and that the intervention of the US and UN constitutes aggression and an attempt to suppress the over-whelming desire of the Korean peoples for unity and independence under the "Democratic Peoples Republic."

- 4 -

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