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WEEKLY SURVEY
8 APRIL 1949

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KOREA: GLICHES AND CURRENT EVENTS

Korea

Radio Pyongyang appears to be waxing increasingly consciencious in exploiting current events as occasions for reiterating anti-U.S. and pro-USSR propaganda. This week, for example, the elections, the Atlantic Pact, the World Congress for Peace, Truman's Fourth Point, the Haeju incident trial, the Cheju incident anniversary, and the Soviet-Korean agreement all occasion familiar charges that America is attempting to establish a colony in South Korea while the Soviet Union is concerned only with furthering the peaceful development of the North. Radio Moscow reiterates familiar charges in familiar contexts.

a. The Elections Were "A Great National Triumph": Both Moscow and Pyongyang report the unanimous participation of North Koreans in the 30 March elections. Pyongyang claims that "more than 99 percent" of the eligible electorate voted for the People's Front candidates. A Soviet Korean-language commentary of 5 April surveys the background of the elections, the elaborate and enthusiastic preparations of all North Koreans, the democratic nature of the proceedings, and the high percentages of voters participating; at pre-election mass meetings "people were heard saying" that the USSR not only liberated Korea "but helped Korea revive its national economy, culture, and art, and guides it toward the bright path of independent and democratic construction." The spirited account is replete with references to the democratic constitution, the democratic nomination and balloting procedures, and the generally progressive state of affairs in North Korea. The outcome, however, is not mentioned.

Radio Pyongyang's post-election commentaries on the event emphasize the advantages enjoyed by North Koreans over those in the South; but they ignore earlier hints to the effect that voters in the South would also participate in the elections. North Koreans are now said to be increasing their productive efforts to "consolidate the triumph of the local elections."

b. Cheju Anniversary: "The first anniversary of the armed uprising on Cheju Island" is observed by Pyongyang in a 3 April commentary recapitulating American venality on Cheju. The U.S. is said to have suppressed the People's Committees, to have "shut off all communications" with the mainland, and to have robbed the islanders of their already scanty food supply. Harrassed by these measures and inspired by the success of North Korea, residents of Cheju are said to have resorted to the armed resistance that has continued and will continue with even greater "brilliance."

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Although it is not keyed to the Cheju anniversary, Radio Moscow also adds its voice to the reports of southern resistance in a 31 March Korean-language commentary claiming that "terrorism is becoming intensified in South Korea." American control is said to have led to unprecedented mass unemployment and this, coupled with political oppression, has led the people of the South to rise up against the U.S. in increasing numbers. Moscow resorts to familiar stereotypes in claiming that "the life of North Korean youths, however, is altogether different from that in the South." Young people in the North are said to be working enthusiastically in all phases of community life.

c. The Haeju Trial: In a 3 April broadcast, Pyongyang reports the 25 March trial of "incendiarists" charged with responsibility for the Haeju incident. And in a question and answer hour broadcast on the same day, Lee Bum Suk is charged implicitly and explicitly with planning "riots all over North Korea." He is further accused of spreading "false propaganda" in announcing that there were disturbances in the North last fall as well as in reporting the Haeju case as a northern uprising.

d. Atlantic Pact and Congress for Peace: In 2/4 April broadcasts "for the people in the southern half of the Republic," Pyongyang parrots Radio Moscow's charges against the Atlantic Pact and its praise of the World Congress for Peace. The Pact is said to be the crystallization of Anglo-American dreams of world conquest and to be "a war pact." The Paris session, on the other hand, is characterized as "a historical meeting which will... deal a decisive blow to the imperialist war." The 2 April broadcast brings the subject close to home by asserting that the oppression and exploitation so apparent in South Korea are hallmarks of American policies--those same policies that culminated in the Atlantic Pact.

Radio Moscow also takes note of Korean opposition to Anglo-American "war-mongering" and Korean support of the Paris Congress. In a Japanese-language commentary of 1 April, Korean "intelligentsia" in both the North and South, like their counterparts in Japan and China, are said to have expressed enthusiastic support of the "world movement for peace."

Khabarovsk, in a Korean-language broadcast of 6 April, contends that the United States seeks to establish a Pacific pact "on the pattern of the Atlantic Pact" but that this sinister ambition will be defeated by "the people."

e. Korean-Soviet Treaty: Pyongyang respectfully characterizes the Korean-Soviet treaty as "a big driving force of the historical development of the Fatherland" (2 April 1949) and as "collateral security for the economic and cultural development of the Republic." (4 April 1949) Both commentaries remind Korean farmers and "fellow countrymen in the South" that the treaty reflects the USSR's traditional "Lenin-Stalin" foreign policy which is one of "respecting the independence and sovereignty of small nations." It is part of a series of "epoch-making" Soviet contributions to Korea.

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Moscow's commentator Malinsky takes up the treaty in a Mandarin-language broadcast of 4 April; he points to the parity of the two nations under the treaty and contrasts this arrangement with the master-puppet arrangement allegedly involved in American treaties with South Korea.

f. Truman's Fourth Point: Pyongyang examines Truman's proposal in a commentary broadcast serially on 2 and 3 April. The commentary surveys America's alleged monopolization of resources in various "backward nations" (including Indonesia, Turkey, and Iran), with heavy emphasis on the guilt of various oil companies. Pyongyang moralizes over Turkey's purported suffering under the Truman Doctrine and claims this should shed light on the Fourth Point program. The commentary concludes with the claim that the proposal proves that the "crisis of capitalism" has become acute.

g. The U.S. and the USSR: Radio Moscow cites concrete evidence of the vast difference in occupation policies in commentaries concerned with the "bankruptcy" of land reform in the South and the burgeoning state of Northern economy. A 4 April Mandarin-language commentary by Alexandrov asserts that the land reform was "forced" upon the "puppet" Government by the Americans, that it compelled farmers to buy land at exorbitant prices, and that the prescribed crop payments deprive farmers of such a large part of their produce that they will be ruined.

NEW TIMES, in a commentary broadcast in installments on 1 and 2 April, leaves no stone unturned in proving that the Soviet Union is fostering the industrial development of the North--a policy which is said to contrast strikingly with the economic policies of America and of Japan. The article describes the successful implementation of improved techniques at the Najin blast furnace plant and the Hungnam fertilizer factory, for example, and reports the high morale and increased production of the factories--all of which are attributed to Soviet guidance.

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