

Korean Peninsula: an early trigger point for general war

by Linda de Hoyos

South Korean Defense Minister Lee Ki-Baek went on national television March 20 to warn his countrymen that the Soviet military build-up in the Pacific and North Korea's escalating propaganda and war preparations are bringing the Korean peninsula to the brink of war. "I have reached the conclusion that the nation will face a grave danger of war breaking out at any moment between now and the end of 1988," he said. "It is our judgment that the next two to three years will be a most dangerous period on the Korean peninsula. U.S. military intelligence also agrees with such an assessment."

The specific target of the North Koreans is the Asian Games, to be held in Seoul this year, and the 1988 Olympics, also slated to be held in Seoul. Defense Minister Lee pointed out that North Korean President Kim Il-Sung termed the 1988 Seoul Olympics as "not a simple athletic question, but a serious political issue. Our people cannot sit idle. It is more than natural for us to oppose and reject the Seoul Olympic Games."

This must be taken as a declaration of intent for North Korean military action—with terrorist actions the very least that can be expected. The year 1988 is the year that the Soviets have projected for completing their bid for world domination. Since the rise of Mikhail Gorbachov, Lee said, the Soviet Union has strengthened its policy of "southward advancement," attaching greater strategic importance to North Korea. Moscow now endorses the North Korean demand for the "reunification of the Korean peninsula," a stance from which Moscow had previously distanced itself, given the North Koreans' unpredictability and willingness to act boldly without superpower back-up.

Militarily, Lee stated, the Soviets have been in the process of preparing for a winning confrontation in the Pacific theatre. The Soviets maintain in the Far East 2,000 strategic and tactical aircraft, about a quarter of its total air force, and has emplaced a quarter of its nuclear arsenal in the region, including upwards of 150 SS-20s. The Soviet fleet in the Pacific is now larger than the U.S. Seventh (Pacific) Fleet—with a total of 800 war-fighting ships, with major bases at Vladivostok and Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam. Moscow has built bases on the Kurile Islands, opposite Japan, with the

intent of seizing the northern island of Hokkaido, giving the Soviet fleet a break-out capability from Vladivostok.

As part of this build-up, in the past two years, the Soviets have been cultivating Pyongyang as a hard-core military partner. Not only is North Korea a major component of the terrorist international, along with Syria and Iran. Since the October 1983 North Korean terror-bombing in Rangoon, Burma, which murdered 19 South Korean officials, including four cabinet ministers, the North Koreans have come under Moscow's diplomatic and military sponsorship. That decisively has ended Pyongyang's previous policy of a careful balance between Moscow and Peking. The Soviet Union, in contrast to China, defended the North Korean action at Rangoon, and has since delivered six MiG-23s to Pyongyang, with another 20 to be delivered soon. The North Koreans have also received Scud-B ground to ground missiles and SAM-3 ground to air missiles from Moscow.

North Korea, Minister Kim stated, currently maintains a 2-to-1 advantage over Seoul in military strength, lagging behind only in naval capability. In the last two months, the North Koreans have moved 65% of their 800,000 standing army to the demilitarized zone, where they have an intricate network of underground bunkers, giving them a capability for a hidden war mobilization at the border. The DMZ is 40 miles from Seoul.

A North Korean invasion of South Korea would function for the Soviets as 1) a point for testing U.S. will in a superpower confrontation, given the U.S. nuclear commitment to South Korea and the presence of 40,000 U.S. troops there; or 2) a point of diversion while the Soviets carry out operations elsewhere, as the Soviets attempted in 1962, when they whipped up a crisis in Korea to divert attention from their military build-up in Cuba.

State Department pyromania

This is the military-strategic setting for the current destabilization of the South Korean government being carried out by the U.S. State Department, liberals on Capitol Hill, and the Soviet front organization, the World Council of Churches. In implementing its policy of strategic withdrawal

from Asia, the State Department has targeted first the Philippines, with the objective of creating conditions of destabilization as a cover for the removal of the strategically vital U.S. bases from Luzon. The next target is South Korea, a destabilization that is now fully under way, with the intent of finally executing the stated policy of the Carter administration to withdraw U.S. troops from the Korean peninsula.

In the case of the Korean peninsula, the Soviet appeasers at the State Department are operating on the basis of a grave miscalculation. In this case, they are playing with a tripwire to World War III.

The State Department sponsored destabilization of the government of President Chun Doo Hwan began last January, when the State Department sent back exiled Korean opposition leader Kim Dae Jung—the self-annointed Benigno Aquino of South Korea—with the explicit orders that he was not to be arrested or harassed in any way by the South Korean government. Kim was accompanied by a phalanx of human rights crusaders, including Carter administration Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights Pat Derian, the pro-Sandinista former Salvadoran Ambassador Robert White, and Rep. Thomas Foglietta (D-Pa.).

In January of this year, the opposition New Korea Democratic Party led by Kim Young Sam, along with Kim Dae Jung, began a petition campaign for 10 million signatures to force through an amendment to the constitution for direct elections in 1988, when President Chun's term is over at which point Chun has promised to step down. The opposition organizing campaign was flanked by violent brawls, sit-down strikes and boycotts carried out by opposition members of the Korean parliament, where the opposition carries about one-third of the vote. When the Chun government attempted to crack down on the petition campaign, the State Department sent an official note of protest, stating that petitioning is a "right of all citizens."

The opposition makes little of its actual policy differences with the Chun government; its main point is that South Korea must immediately become a "democracy." However, as with his counterpart Mrs. Aquino in the Philippines, Kim Dae Jung is ambivalent about the presence of the U.S. military in South Korea.

As in the Philippines, the churches are playing a major role in the opposition. South Korea is 25% Christian, with 1.8 million members of the Roman Catholic Church. Many of the Christians come from North Korea, a ripe area for Christian missionaries before the communist takeover.

Following the model of the Philippines' Cardinal Jaime Sin, South Korea's Cardinal Kim Sou-Hwan declared March 8 that "democracy is the will of God," and he is leading prayer rallies with opposition leaders. Cardinal Kim was joined March 15 by the Protestant National Council of Churches, speaking for 8 million South Koreans, which declared, "We devoutly believe that it is God's will for democracy to be established at this moment in our nation's history. Time is running out. Now may be the last chance for us. . . ."

The government and the ruling party have . . . permitted the continuation of physical and legal oppression, thus institutionalizing tyranny."

Behind this campaign is a violent student movement on campuses (where Christians are the majority of students), which has launched repeated riots against the government, averaging one a week.

Outside of South Korea, the operation is being directed by the World Council of Churches, based in Geneva. According to one World Council official, "Korea will be the next exercise; the same kind of things will happen here as happened in the Philippines. In the churches, they are well-equipped, they are used to confrontation with the government, they are ready for it. The students, the workers, the farmers, they are all well-concentrated. The South Korean President is a well-known dictator."

The North Koreans have a significant penetration capability into the anti-government Christian layers. Contacts between North Korean and overseas South Korean church-linked dissidents have taken place three times since 1981, in Vienna, Austria, and Helsinki, Finland. The second of these meetings, held in Helsinki Dec. 3-5, 1982, was entitled "Second Dialogue between Northern and Overseas Compatriots and Christians for the Reunification of the Fatherland." The third meeting was held the following December, and called the Dialogue between North and Overseas Compatriots for National Unification, with 39 North Koreans and 50 overseas South Koreans attending. The meeting voted to unanimously support the North Korean proposals at the time for three-way talks among North and South Korea and the United States. The South Korean representatives included U.S.-based support networks for Kim Dae Jung.

It is for reasons such as these, combined with the military build-up in North Korea, that the South Korean military would be forced to draw lines against destabilization which the Philippines military was neither willing nor capable of drawing. The South Korean military further is on a war-footing, but not for defensive war. Any perception of imminent North Korean invasion, sparked by the windows of opportunity offered by destabilization, would likely propel the South Korean military to take decisive action.

In September 1985, Assistant Secretary of State for Far East and Pacific Affairs Paul Wolfowitz traveled to Moscow where he met with Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Kapitsa. The Korean peninsula was on the agenda for their "exchange of views," but Wolfowitz told Seoul leaders on his way back to the States that the discussions in Moscow had been "confidential." Likely, Wolfowitz and his treasonous bosses in Washington believe that they received Soviet guarantees of non-interference from North Korea under circumstances of South Korean destabilization. Such guarantees have as much credibility as the guarantees for peace given to Neville Chamberlain by Adolf Hitler. Such is the level of miscalculation and treasonous stupidity now reigning in Washington.