

Juggling act confronts S. Korea's President

by Lydia Cherry

As a result of South Korean President Noh Tae Woo's adeptness in "keeping the ship afloat" since his election at the beginning of the year, the Republic of Korea is not only still standing, but has moved in the direction of cooling out the time bomb on its northern border—the closed society of Kim Il-Sung. Noh has accomplished this while at the same time dodging the bullets of a Soviet-directed irregular warfare capability on his own soil—groups that are the creation of the day-to-day funding, training, and ideologies of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and allied institutions abroad.

Although he is the hand-picked successor of former President Chun Doo Hwan, Noh, a former army general, had intervened to cool out the summer riots of 1987, prior to coming into office, by calling for "the first democratic elections in 40 years." As 1988 began, Noh won that election, and took office Feb. 25.

In parliamentary elections held April 26, however, the ruling party suffered a surprising setback, failing to win a majority in the National Assembly. The party of radical firebrand Kim Dae-Jung—the front man for the shifting underground groups aligned with the WCC—rose from an underdog position to become the clear leader of the opposition forces. As a result, the clamor in the streets got louder.

As the banner of the 1987 student and dissident riots had been "Democracy," so their banners in 1988 read, "Reunification" and "Get U.S. Troops Off the Peninsula." The pundits of the major press in the United States and elsewhere claimed that the demand for reunification and increasing anti-American sentiment represented a natural deepening of the Korean nationalist movement. Budget-cutting mania in Washington added fuel to the dissidents' calls for U.S. disengagement. Noh Tae Woo was emphatic that the U.S. troops were still needed in Korea, and as Michael Dukakis became the U.S. Democratic presidential nominee, calling for U.S. troop withdrawals, Noh politely attacked him, saying that even Jimmy Carter, once elected and forced to be "responsible," gave up that careless notion.

The United States and Japan shared South Korean concern that North Korea's Kim Il-Sung regime might well follow through in its threats to turn the September Olympics into a bloodbath. What later became known as Noh Tae Woo's "Northern Policy" was only in embryonic form prior to the Olympics. But during the summer, Noh made overtures to the North for economic cooperation, and also made over-

tures to the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union for the successful holding of the games.

Noh then used the international prestige brought to South Korea as a result of the games as a diplomatic springboard to embark on a foreign policy revolution aimed at bringing about the eventual reunification of the divided peninsula—implicitly under the hegemony of the South. Speaking at the United Nations Oct. 4, Noh issued his offer to the impoverished North: "I have taken concrete steps to pave the way for free trade between the northern and southern sides of Korea. We must transform the North-South Korean relationship, so that we can reconnect every roadway, whether a major highway or a little path, linking the two sides which remains disconnected now." It was clear that "reconnecting every roadway" implied a massive effort from the economically successful South to develop the Northern economy, since the paved roads of South Korea abruptly turn into rubble dirt roads, as soon as the border is crossed.

Bhutto hopes to unify Pakistan

by Lydia Cherry

On Dec. 1, Benazir Bhutto Zardari was named Pakistan's new prime minister after national elections Nov. 16 that brought democracy to Pakistan for the first time in 11 years. Bhutto's Pakistani People's Party had polled the largest number of seats in the parliamentary elections, winning nearly double the number taken by her chief opponents organized in the Islamic Democratic Alliance, a party formed mostly of military chiefs organized around the legacy of the late President Mohammed Zia ul-Haq. Zia was killed in a suspicious airplane crash on Aug. 17.

The peaceful conditions in which the elections were held showed the degree to which Pakistan's elites—from Mrs. Bhutto to the military leadership that overthrew and judicially murdered her father—jointly acted to ensure a smooth transition of power. The outcome might have been much different; the near-daily Soviet air attacks on Pakistani villages from Afghanistan and the rise of social chaos and ethnic violence within Pakistani borders, had created the conditions for Pakistan's disintegration.

In her acceptance speech Dec. 8, Mrs. Bhutto saluted "President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and the armed forces chief for doing whatever they could for restoring democracy after the incident Aug. 17." Bhutto said Pakistan has been torn apart by linguistic, ethnic, and sectarian strife, which she said she would do everything in her power to end.

Several weeks later, the acting President Ghulam Ishaq