

South Korean government weakened by parliamentary elections

by Lydia Cherry

The Noh Tae Woo-led ruling party in South Korea was significantly weakened in parliamentary elections on March 24. The results indicate that the South Korean President, whose five-year term ends in February, will have increased difficulty during his remaining time in office in maintaining tight control over his "Northern Policy," which sought to achieve the peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula.

In the last few months, the Noh government has repeatedly tried to defuse constant provocations from the United States and Great Britain for a military action to "take out" the nuclear weapon capability that North Korea may be in the process of developing. South Korean officials are critical of the strong pressure the United States, in particular, has been exerting on North Korea, according to some South Korean press reports.

British press outlets and Eastern Establishment media in the United States could not hide their glee that the election had dashed President Noh's hopes to create in South Korea a party—similar to Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)—that would have internal factions, but would function as a permanent majority force. London's *Financial Times* titled its March 27 coverage: "Voters Reduce Korean President's Dream to Ashes." A *New York Times* editorial, "Democracy Wins in South Korea," also gloated over the ruling party's loss. The British wire service Reuters predicted that the ruling coalition party that Noh heads, the Democratic Liberal Party (DLP), may split into two or three before the presidential election expected in December.

In addition to the strong showing of the two opposition parties, there is also danger of President Noh losing control of the ruling coalition to Kim Young-Sam. Kim, a former opposition party leader whom Noh wooed into the DLP in 1990, is looked upon favorably by the U.S. State Department, and on occasion has been visited by Henry Kissinger in Seoul.

The vote tallies

In the March 24 elections, the ruling party lost votes from two sides. From the left, the main opposition group, the Democratic Party, increased its representation in parliament by 50% and now has 97 seats in the 299-member National Assembly. The DP, also a recent amalgamation of several

parties, is steered by long-time opposition leader Kim Dae-Jung, who is even more closely tied to circles in the U.S. than Kim Young-Sam is. Kim Dae-Jung returned to Seoul from exile in the United States in 1985, under the sponsorship of the State Department. And, as he wrote to U.S. Ambassador Donald Gregg, when Gregg was being proposed for that position in the spring of 1989: "I still appreciate that you saved my life twice in 1973 and 1980."

Kim Dae-Jung is a great believer of the free market economics that the United States is now pushing on eastern Europe. In early March, he told the newspaper *Izvestia* that Russia must not seek to emulate the Korean economic model, but instead "must create its own model, based on a democratic, free market system in full consideration of the negative aspects of the Korean model."

Over the years, Kim has consistently attempted to thwart Noh's diplomacy with respect to North Korea. Prior to 1988, Kim and other "Made in U.S.A." radical opposition figures demanded appeasement of the North. Once Noh began his rapprochement with North Korea in earnest, however, by the early 1990s, the game changed. Kim and some of his friends had been touting reunification as their number one goal for two decades. But as soon as the two sides began talking, Kim's crowd began functioning as a wrecking operation to block whatever fragile communication had begun. That the two sides kept talking, was largely attributed to South Korean government perseverance.

Election surprise

The real surprise in the vote totals was the strong showing of a "conservative" party that had been formed only two months before the election by Chung Ju Yung, the founder of the Hyundai industrial conglomerate. Chung's Unification National Party won 31 seats, and is expected to play a pivotal role in the new assembly.

A Korean source in the United States told *EIR*: "Hyundai had the ability to mobilize a lot of people; however, I know of no Korean who was not totally shocked by the vote he [Chung] polled. There is no basis of why the Unification National Party would have done so well."

As is made clear by the vote totals, the UNP vote came largely out of the ruling party's base.

On the basis of policy statements issued thus far by Chung and others, the UNP's program is also "Made in the U.S.A." Chung calls for the government to remove itself from "interference" into the country's economy (the Korean "economic miracle" was achieved by strong government direction). Chung says his party believes strongly in the "free market," although the one exception should be protection of the country's rice market.

President Noh, Chung says, has tried to push Korean reunification too rapidly. After years of effort, the government's bid to improve relations with the North had been a total failure, the *Korea Herald* quotes Chung. Furthermore, the business tycoon-suddenly-turned-politician proposes that South Korea let the United Nations deal with South Korea; that it get out of the ring. "Chung said the government should hand over the task of implementing nuclear inspections on the North to the United Nations-led international efforts," the *Herald* reported March 4. He insisted that the task of reunification "should have never been monopolized by the government."

Effect of trade war pressures

Both Kim Dae-Jung's party and Chung's Unification National Party are thought to have obtained large blocs of votes because of the fact that Korea's economy in recent years has been going steadily downhill. South Korea is very much tied to the United States economically, and is now being battered by U.S. demands for "free trade." South Korean columnists frequently complain that the country's industry may not survive, because the country seems unable to say "no" to America.

The South Korean daily *Tong-a Ilbo* signaled the problem last August: "After the Persian Gulf War, the world entered an era of a single superpower. The world economic order is being restructured, centered on the United States. Under such circumstances, we are in a difficult position to delay an extensive opening of the domestic distribution market that the United States is demanding. . . . The problem is how much can domestic industries, which are weak in competitiveness compared to giant foreign companies, withstand the shock of opening the market. The government's industrial policy has been to protect domestic industries and to help them grow. How can these small businesses compete—they can't."

Reports the *Korea Herald*: "Signs of development are nowhere to be seen. . . . The country is being cornered by untold economic troubles, with inflation galloping and trade deficits rising. Price rises are hovering at 10 percent, the annual deficit in the balance of international payments is near \$10 billion, and foreign debts are topping a record \$50 billion—enough to make Korea a great debtor power."

In the last year, Korea's trade shortfall with the former Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, and the former communist countries of eastern Europe rose fourfold to \$2 billion in a year's time.

British make it official: Smash Italy!

by Umberto Pascali

Shortly before the March 16, 1978 kidnap of Italian statesman Aldo Moro, the London *Economist* came out with a chilling cover: Moro and the secretary of the Communist Party, Enrico Berlinguer, dressed as puppets in the traditional Commedia dell'Arte. "La Commedia è finita" explained the title in Italian, as if to say: We know your game and now it's over. Moro was under the Damocles' sword of Kissinger, who officially accused him of trying to bring the "Communists" into the government, but who in reality was terrified that the statesman would lead Italy out from under the Yalta yoke. "I have troubles with Washington in the same way Berlinguer has troubles with Moscow," Moro had confided to a friend.

The *Economist's* cover was taken by many as the final warning coming from circles of the British elite. This is why in the last days of March 1992, just before the April 5 elections, many Italians reacted very strongly when, again, the *Economist* transmitted another of its nasty "warnings." A featured editorial was entitled: "Responsible Italians have a duty next month to vote irresponsibly." The magazine of the City of London stopped short of endorsing the assassination on March 12 of Salvo Lima. Lima, the top political ally of Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, was running a part of the electoral machine of the ruling Christian Democracy. His violent death opens the way to an "anti-corruption" campaign able to crush the traditional parties—oriented toward an independent Europe—and replace them with a slew of demagogic and easily controllable localistic parties or "Leagues."

"The Mafia's shooting this month of Salvo Lima, a prominent Sicilian known for his ability to deliver votes by the hundred thousand for the prime minister, Giulio Andreotti, brings new scandal to the Christian Democrats," gloats the *Economist*. Exactly the scenario prepared by the instigators! "Few Italians regard Lima as an innocent victim. Many reckon he was in cahoots with the Mafia. His mistake, probably, was to think he was still free to do as he liked."

The editorial concludes with marching orders for the elections, including the idea of strengthening the International Monetary Fund's man in Italy, Giorgio La Malfa, with the "muscle" of the Leagues. "Any Italian interested in real