

Kim Il-sung's 60th Birthday Passes

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The fact that Kim Il-sung's 60th birthday (April 15) passed without the Communist victory, which the North Korean dictator allegedly had prophesied, should be viewed in the Free World as a triumph for our side. (Kim was alleged to have proclaimed his intention to celebrate his "han kap" (60th birthday) in Seoul... ed.) Kim's word is officially infallible to the enslaved North Korean masses, whose school-children are forced to bow down to statues of Kim, to call him "father" and even to pray to him and give absolute allegiance to his supreme power. Thus the unfulfillment of Kim's prediction may serve to undermine his authority as perfect "great Leader" of the Korean people. However, while proclaiming this victory for the Free World, we should be careful not to relax -our guard. Over the last three years it was becoming obvious even to Kim that his desire to complete the Communization of Korea by 1972 would not be fulfilled. Thus the new North Korean line began to proclaim that the overthrow of the Republic of Korea and victory for Kim Il-sung would not take place until near the end of the current 6-year economic plan in 1976.

North Korean rhetoric recently has softened even more, due to the constraints of the international situation. However, even a superficial reading of North Korean newspapers reveals the Communists' motivation. They intend, first of all, to force the complete withdrawal of all U.S. and U.N. troops from South Korea. Withdrawal of U.N. forces ("driving out the U.S. imperialist aggressors") was called "the basic condition for averting a new war" by the official North Korean English language news magazine Korea Today.

Secondly, the North Koreans will attempt to undermine the Republic of Korea through "cultural" exchanges with the goal of creating a revolutionary situation in the South. This is where the real victory will be won or lost. At present the North Korean population makes up probably the most well-trained and highly indoctrinated society in the world, while in South Korea ideological training is given much less emphasis. Totalitarianism, coupled with intense Communist ideological indoctrination, is an effective tool for exerting power over a population. The Communists will send only those people whom they choose-including trained infiltrators-to the South. Moreover, Northerners coming South face the threat of their families' liquidation if they do not return.

On the other hand, well-trained People from the South could shake the enforced faith of the North Koreans in their "Great Leader" and Northerners who journey South are bound to encounter a much greater degree of freedom and prosperity than North Korean officials have led them to expect. Thus the question is, can the South. Korean -people be prepared ideologically and politically for the North Korean "people to people" offensive and can North Korean social controls stop the spread of truth from the South. The battle is ideological, and military or economic strength alone will not produce the ultimate victory. Only the truth can do that.

Thus the deciding factor in the struggle between North Korean Communism and South Korean freedom-indeed the deciding factor in the worldwide struggle between Communism and freedom -- Will be the war of ideas.

If the North Korean strategy progresses according to Kim's plan, the Communists will create a revolutionary situation in the South, fighting at first through guerrilla warfare and then through conventional warfare, much as in Vietnam. However, if the South Koreans can win in the battle of ideas,

the tables may be turned on the Communists and North Korea could be transformed without firing a shot. Here, for a change, the situation is hopeful. For once North Korean society opened to new ideas from the South, the "Big Lie" strategy of Kim Il-sung is doomed.

With regard to the material situation and the United States, let us not forget the historical lesson which we should have- learned from our encounters with divided nations in our divided world. Unless our commitment to defend the free sector is made absolutely clear, the Communists are liable to attack, whether through miscalculation or accurate perception of the willingness and ability of the U.S. to respond to their aggression. Moreover, while North Korea, at the cost of great sacrifice placed upon its people, has created perhaps the most militarized society in the world, the South Korean military industry is only just beginning, largely due to American constraint.

And at the same time, the growing mood of accommodation and selfish isolationism among the U.S. political leadership is dangerously close to placing the South Koreans-not to mention our numerous other Asian allies-in a seriously compromising position. In the long run, the battle of ideas will decide who wins the Cold War. But in the meantime, decreasing our military, economic and diplomatic support for free nations unacceptably weakens our position in the worldwide politico-ideological war, regardless of domestic political war, regardless of domestic political "realities." If our government had fulfilled its responsibility of explaining to the American people why we have to fight Communism, those "realities" would be very different. Our responsibility to the world is too great to ignore, election year or no election year. In this context, the Administration's strong response to the current Communist Offensive in Vietnam is a hopeful sign.

Korea, the first country in which the United States engaged in a hot war against Communism, could be the country to act as a model for the unification of divided nations. If Korea is unified under freedom, it may be the harbinger of real peace for mankind. The Korean people -- and the people of the whole world -- deserve our material and spiritual support, for if the U.S. is unwilling to continue sacrificing itself for the cause of world freedom, how long can we expect our own freedom to endure?