

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

SOUTH KOREA

The ouster of Lt. Gen. Chang To-yong from the South Korean military junta on 3 July was a major move by Maj. Gen. Pak Chong-hui to establish his undisputed control of the present military regime. Chang, although largely a figurehead, was a potential rallying point for opposition to Pak.

Chang's removal was quickly followed by the arrest of three other members of the ruling Supreme Council for National Reconstruction (SCNR) whose loyalty to Pak was doubtful and the removal from active duty of 40 general officers of the army, navy, air force, and marine corps.

The 40 officers removed were largely rear-echelon deadwood or had undesirable political affiliations. Some had been involved in past corruption, and the regime announced that all had "voluntarily" retired to make way for the promotion of junior officers.

However, there are indications Pak distrusts officers who are known to be pro-American and who he believes have independent channels to American influence. [redacted]

In an obvious attempt to discredit the former civilian government, the regime has publicly accused former Prime Minister Chang Myon, who is South Korea's leading Roman Catholic layman, and 11 of his political associates of being Communist collaborators. A precedent has been established for similar action against intellectuals and students.

There are indications that Pak may next attempt to reduce the influence of the clique of younger field-grade officers in the SCNR who were prominent with him in the planning and execution of the 16 May coup.

Pak's brother-in-law, national security boss Lt. Col. Kim Chong-pil, is a leader of the impatient reform-minded younger element. As the head of the recently formed central intelligence agency, Kim has been moving to consolidate in police-state fashion all security affairs under his and presumably Pak's control. However, his loyalty to Pak is uncertain. Inasmuch as some of Pak's strongest support has come from the younger officer group, an attempt to reduce their power could precipitate a bitter and possibly violent power struggle within the junta. [redacted]