

~~SECRET~~
~~CONTROLLED DISSEM~~

SNIE 14.2-67
21 September 1967

Mr. Trench
Cy # 2 sent Jordan
R. Jones

SPECIAL
NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE
NUMBER 14.2-67

00-278
2

North Korean Intentions and Capabilities With Respect to South Korea

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: OCT 2001

Submitted by

Richard Helms

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Concurred in by the
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

As indicated overleaf
21 September 1967

Authenticated:

James A. Lynch
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, USIB

~~SECRET~~
~~CONTROLLED DISSEM~~

Nº 1

~~SECRET~~

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this estimate:

The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Defense, and the NSA.

Concurring:

Vice Adm. Rufus L. Taylor, Deputy Director, Central Intelligence
Mr. George C. Denny, Jr., for the Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State
Vice Adm. Vernon L. Lowrance, for the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency
Lt. Gen. Marshall S. Carter, the Director, National Security Agency

Abstaining:

Dr. Charles H. Reichardt, for the Assistant General Manager, Atomic Energy Commission and Mr. William C. Sullivan, the Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, the subject being outside of their jurisdiction.

WARNING

~~This material contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws, Title 18, USC, Secs. 793 and 794, the transmission or revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited.~~

~~GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
CONCLUSIONS	1
DISCUSSION	2
I. RECENT NORTH KOREAN ACTIVITIES	2
II. NORTH KOREAN MOTIVES	4
A. North versus South	4
B. The Vietnamese War	6
III. CAPABILITIES AND PROSPECTS	7
A. Capabilities	7
B. Prospects	9
ANNEX: North Korean Military Capabilities With Respect To South Korea	

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

NORTH KOREAN INTENTIONS AND CAPABILITIES WITH RESPECT TO SOUTH KOREA

CONCLUSIONS

A. We believe that the recent, more vigorous activities of North Korea against the South have several motivations: to create new pressures on the Pak government; to tie down large ROK forces; to strengthen the Communist clandestine apparatus in the South; and to be in a position to exploit any new and major disruption in the ROK. The timing of these tactics has been strongly influenced by the Vietnamese War, for example by such factors as the absence of 50,000 ROK troops in South Vietnam.

B. The North Koreans will almost certainly continue their campaign of military harassment in the DMZ, at current or even increased levels. We believe that North Korea undertook its program of violence of its own volition, not under pressure from either Moscow or Peking, and that this program does not indicate a present Communist intention to invade South Korea. Pyongyang is conscious of the risks inherent in such an action and would be reluctant to accept them. Similarly, there is probably no intention of escalating the DMZ attacks to a point at which open warfare might result. The North might miscalculate, however, and raise the ante along the DMZ until the ROK resolves to strike back in force. A series of actions and reactions might ensue which could lead to open hostilities.

C. North Korea will also continue attempts to infiltrate guerrilla-type teams into rear areas of South Korea. Communist chances of establishing viable bases for guerrilla operations are probably poor, but some teams will be able to carry out short-term terrorist and sabotage missions.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

DISCUSSION

1. Since October 1966, there has been a marked increase in North Korean violence against ROK and US forces in Korea's Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Since May 1967, larger teams of more heavily-armed North Korean agents have been landed in rear areas of South Korea with orders to test the guerrilla environment. And since early September, there have been two instances of sabotage against South Korean trains. These developments raise important questions: Why has North Korea, after more than a decade of relative quiet, embarked on a program of violent action against the South? What does Pyongyang hope to achieve? And what are its chances?

I. RECENT NORTH KOREAN ACTIVITIES

2. Captured agents have testified that North Korean plans to subvert South Korea underwent significant changes during the winter of 1965-1966. There was a substantial enlargement of agent training facilities by the ruling Korean Labor Party's *Liaison Bureau*, Pyongyang's primary agency for intelligence and subversive operations in South Korea, and instruction in guerrilla tactics was added to the curriculum. At the same time, the North Korean Army's *Reconnaissance Bureau* set up several new training "bases" and, perhaps more significant, seems to have been assigned at least partial responsibility for covert operations in rear areas of South Korea.¹

3. *The DMZ Area.* From mid-October to early November 1966, there were some 7 small-scale but deliberate North Korean attempts to kill or capture US and ROK personnel in or near the DMZ, including 2 ambushes in which a total of 6 US and 7 ROK soldiers were killed.² Action along the 150-mile-long DMZ subsided as usual over the winter. In mid-March 1967, however, it flared to extraordinary levels. So far this year, some 360 incidents of all types have been reported.³ In comparison: 42 DMZ incidents were reported in 1966, 55 in 1965, and 32 in 1964.

¹ The Reconnaissance Bureau includes a Reconnaissance Brigade, with an estimated strength of about 7,000, containing a 300-man Airborne Reconnaissance Battalion; these elements are trained for behind-the-line operations in the event of war. In addition, there is a Foot Reconnaissance Department, with an estimated strength of 240-320, which has hitherto been concerned only with the acquisition of tactical military information by short-term agents, primarily in the DMZ area.

² Some of these attacks may have been retaliatory. For example, the one in which the US troops were killed occurred one week after ROK forces raided the North Korean sector and killed or wounded about 30 North Koreans.

³ With respect to the DMZ, the word "incident" is used in a broad sense to mean anything from a fire fight between opposing forces to the detonation of a North Korean mine or the discharge of a US or ROK weapon against a presumed intruder. The 1967 incident total includes about 100 fire fights in which 64 US and ROK soldiers have been killed and 190 wounded; known North Korean casualties have been 77 killed and 6 captured.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

4. The increase in DMZ incidents reported this year is comprised of many elements. The increased alertness of US and ROK forces following the attacks in late 1966, improved reporting of DMZ activity by front line units to headquarters, and the availability of new detection equipment probably mean that a greater proportion of infiltrations are being spotted. Nevertheless, infiltration appears to be much higher than in the past. Some 10-20 percent of the incidents appear to be aggressive harassments of the type initiated last fall—e.g., attacks on outposts and ambushes of patrols. Other incidents are attributable to probing and shallow reconnaissance actions by North Korean paramilitary personnel; there is evidence that this has recently become part of their training. As in earlier years, however, many DMZ incidents involve the detection of agents, alone or in small teams, moving in or out of South Korea on intelligence or subversive missions; a difference is that they are evidently better armed and more aggressive than before. The two train sabotage missions of September occurred near the DMZ and may have been the work of agents recently infiltrated from the North.

5. *Rear Areas.* In 1966, the North Koreans may have stepped up sea infiltration of agents into rear areas of South Korea. Since May 1967, there has been a further increase in landings and, more important, the scope of activity has changed. The North Koreans have begun landing larger teams, more heavily armed and including a number of army officers; at least 17 such teams, averaging 7 or 8 men, have landed. Their primary mission has been to see if certain remote highlands could serve as base areas for guerrilla war. They had no orders to initiate violence, other than to engage in small DMZ harassments while exfiltrating. They were to return North before winter.

6. So far in 1967, the teams appear to have had little success in accomplishing their stated mission. ROK security forces—police and military—have reported killing 130 and capturing 43. (ROK losses have been stated as 50 killed and 85 wounded.) South Korean civilians have cooperated by promptly reporting suspicious activities. The Communist agents have proved to be poorly prepared: Almost all were native northerners with speech identifiable as such; many apparently lacked adequate local knowledge; and some teams were so short of supplies that they degenerated into food-gathering expeditions.

7. A relative handful of these men, including some officers, remain at large, and there may be teams which have not been discovered. Any evaluation of the effectiveness of this new North Korean tactic, therefore, must necessarily be tentative. There will be some gains to the Communists in intelligence and operational experience, which can be applied to future training. But it may be that their chief gain from rear-area activity this year will be psychological. The infiltration, coupled with DMZ harassments and bellicose propaganda from Pyongyang, has worried the Pak government and exposed it to domestic criticism. In addition, as many as 15,000 ROK police and military may have become involved to some degree in the detection and pursuit of the infiltration teams.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

II. NORTH KOREAN MOTIVES

8. Pyongyang's recent tactics appear to represent a new style of approach to what we still believe is its long-term objective: the reunification of Korea under Communist rule. The adoption of these tactics seems to be a reaction to two situations: the war in Vietnam and the growing political and economic strength of South Korea vis-a-vis the North. In the course of time, Korean developments alone might have led the frustrated and hard-line Kim Il-song regime to move as it has against the South. But the war in Vietnam probably caused North Korea to act when it did.⁴

A. North versus South

9. *The Economic Situation.* The past few years have not been good ones for North Korea, particularly in the economic sphere. From 1954 to 1960, the regime made excellent progress toward its goals of rapid industrialization and the achievement of a high degree of self-sufficiency. This progress aroused admiration among some South Koreans, particularly students and intellectuals, who were discouraged by their own relatively modest economic advances under Rhee and by the prospect of prolonged dependence on the US. It became a major theme in Communist unification propaganda.

10. In 1961, encouraged by its success and with the promise of substantial Soviet assistance, North Korea launched an ambitious Seven-Year Plan. It was billed as a program to raise living standards while continuing the rapid expansion of heavy industry. Within two or three years, however, it became apparent that the plan had failed, particularly the effort to raise living standards. In part, this was a result of a reduction in Soviet aid when North Korea, in late 1962, aligned itself with Peking in the Sino-Soviet conflict.⁵ The failure was admitted publicly at the Korean Labor Party Conference in early October 1966; fulfillment of the plan was postponed from 1967 to 1970. The major reason adduced for this "readjustment of tempo in the development of the national economy" was the threat of US aggression and the consequent need for strengthening defense capabilities.

11. By contrast, the economy of South Korea began to grow more rapidly in the 1960's and, though its per capita gross national product (GNP) is still lower than that of North Korea, by 1965 the South was surpassing Northern rates of growth in most industrial sectors and probably in agricultural production as well. A sustained rise in living standards was also perceptible. In these circumstances, whatever propaganda appeal North Korean economic achievements once had for the South has been largely dissipated.

⁴ Brig. Gen. Wesley C. Franklin, the Acting Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army, believes that this sentence overemphasizes the war in Vietnam as a motive for North Korea's recent actions. He believes that while the war in Vietnam has probably confirmed and encouraged North Korea's decision to adopt new tactics against the ROK, North Korean motives were essentially nationalistic.

⁵ Soviet aid rose in mid-1965 after Pyongyang reverted to a position of neutrality or "independence," at least in part for economic reasons.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

12. *The Political Scene.* Political developments in the South have been equally frustrating for Pyongyang. The years from 1960 to 1965 were a time of domestic political turmoil in South Korea. Kim Il-song and his associates must have been encouraged as they viewed, in rapid succession: the "student revolution" which toppled Rhee; a year of confused and tolerant parliamentary democracy; the coup by disaffected nationalistic officers; their unpopular repressive measures; and, finally, a bitter military-civilian political struggle for control of the government. Yet today, after two national elections, the firmly anti-Communist General Pak is in a position of unchallenged authority in Seoul and appears to have the support, or at least the acquiescence, of a majority of the population.

13. Certainly, all South Korean political problems have not been solved. The rigging of recent legislative elections has led to considerable dissatisfaction with the regime. And there are other, longer range, problems even more difficult to cope with, including the development of a viable political opposition. Nevertheless, the outlook for political stability in South Korea is good, so long as economic improvement continues and the government exhibits a reasonable degree of sensitivity in handling popular grievances.

14. The apparent inability of North Korea to exploit unrest in the South in 1960-1965 through its usual methods—propaganda and political subversion—has probably been a factor in its decision to adopt violent tactics. Propaganda appeals for unification on Communist terms had some impact in the emotional and permissive atmosphere that accompanied the fall of Rhee, but such proposals were categorically rejected and their advocates suppressed after the military coup of 1961. In any case, pressures for unification seem to have diminished among South Koreans in recent years. Nor has the North Korean campaign of political subversion demonstrated much effectiveness. There are perhaps several hundred clandestine Communist agents in the country (and almost certainly many more Communists and Communist sympathizers), but they seem to have made no significant progress in subverting the population or in penetrating the higher levels of the government and the military.

15. *International Relations.* South Korea has also made gains on the international scene in recent years. Most important was the establishment of diplomatic relations with Japan, which opened the way for massive injections of Japanese economic aid. But to the North Korean leadership, the implications of the ROK-Japanese agreement far exceeded the likely economic gains to South Korea. At a minimum, it meant a reduced Japanese interest in mollifying North Korea or assisting its economy.⁶ More important, in the North Korean view, it would lead inevitably to increased Japanese political influence in South Korea

⁶ In 1966, Japan gave notice of its decision not to renew a 1959 agreement with North Korea under which some 86,000 Korean residents of Japan had been helped to migrate to North Korea. During 1966 and 1967, North Korean economic delegations found it increasingly difficult to enter Japan; as a result, at least one important deal, for the sale of an acrylic fiber plant to North Korea, fell through.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

and, possibly, to a ROK-Japanese military alignment.⁷ The North has been less fortunate in its international dealings. While it began to achieve some diplomatic recognition by non-Communist states in 1963 and 1964, recent gains of this sort have been few.

B. The Vietnamese War

16. The war in Vietnam is probably the proximate cause of the North Korean shift to tactics of violence against South Korea.⁸ In early 1965, with the beginning of regular US bombing of North Vietnam and the dispatch of 2,000 non-combatant ROK troops to South Vietnam, the conflict there came to occupy a central place in Pyongyang's thinking. In July, about the time that US ground combat troops began to arrive in South Vietnam in force and Seoul announced that it would dispatch a full combat division, Kim Il-song adopted the line that Vietnam had become "the focal point" in the world struggle. At the party conference of October 1966, Kim went further and called upon Communists everywhere to get tough with the US in order to "disperse" its forces. He urged the necessity of destroying, in Vietnam, "illusions" about American strength and reliability. He stated that if this were accomplished, it would constitute a clear setback for the Pak government and a powerful boost for Communist prospects in the South. (Conversely, in Pyongyang's view, if Hanoi did not succeed in unifying Vietnam on Communist terms, prospects for eventual unification of Korea on South Korean terms might be enhanced.)

17. Pyongyang has also been apprehensive that the conflict in Southeast Asia might spread to China and thence ultimately to Korea. In 1950, the North enjoyed the relatively unstinted support of both Moscow and Peking. In 1967, though it still has security pacts with both, Pyongyang has become less certain what their response would be in the event of a wider war involving Korea. It would count on help from the USSR and China if North Korea were invaded. But it sees Moscow, as in Cuba and Vietnam, unwilling to confront the US directly or, indeed, to sacrifice what Pyongyang considers a policy of Soviet detente with the West. It is concerned over the failure of Communist China and the USSR to close ranks in support of Hanoi. And it must regard China, in the throes of the Cultural Revolution, as something short of a wholly reliable ally. These considerations may underlie North Korea's adoption during 1966 of policies emphasizing self-reliance, including a military strategy of "protracted" guerrilla warfare which requires among other things a buildup in local militia forces.

⁷ Concern on this count is heightened by such political developments as Japan's decision in 1966 to join the South Korean-sponsored, anti-Communist Asian and Pacific Council (ASPAC); and by the talks in Seoul between high-level representatives of the US, Japan, the GRC, and the ROK on the occasion of President Pak's inauguration in July 1967.

⁸ Brig. Gen. Wesley C. Franklin, the Acting Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army, believes that this sentence overemphasizes the war in Vietnam as a cause for increased North Korean violence against the South. He also believes that the sentence is misleading in that it indicates a North Korean *shift* to tactics of violence when in fact they have used violent tactics along the DMZ since 1953.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

18. The North Korean regime is also disturbed at the thought that tens of thousands of ROK troops are gaining combat experience in South Vietnam. It is aware of the increased military aid which the ROK is receiving from the US as a consequence of its service in Vietnam. And it is conscious of the prestige accruing to the Pak government at home and abroad as a result of the good performance of the South Korean expeditionary force. The tone and content of Kim's speech in October 1966, coupled with other official and private North Korean statements in 1966, make it apparent that the leadership of the regime is embarrassed by its failure to forestall the dispatch of ROK troops to South Vietnam and its inability to provide substantial material assistance to Hanoi.⁹

19. We believe that North Korea undertook its program of violence of its own volition, not under pressure from either Moscow or Peking. Whether or not Peking would like to become involved in Korean affairs at this moment, its influence with the Pyongyang regime is severely limited. Moscow is probably content to accept Pyongyang's initiatives, with the understanding that North Korea will move cautiously, avoiding acts likely to trigger major retaliatory attacks. The Soviets probably have no desire to risk a major conflict on their Far Eastern borders.

III. CAPABILITIES AND PROSPECTS

A. Capabilities

20. *For Conventional Operations.* We do not believe that North Korea's new tactics indicate a present intention to invade the South. The North Korean armed forces could not mount a sustained attack against the South without a large volume of material help from outside, including substantial troop reinforcements (presumably from China). Under present circumstances, neither Peking nor Moscow is likely to provide the sort of support which would be required. Moreover, so long as Pyongyang believes that the US will defend South Korea, including retaliatory air attacks on the North, it would be extremely reluctant to attack.¹⁰

21. *For Infiltration.* For the short term, the number of trained North Korean personnel immediately available for infiltration into the South depends principally on two factors: the length of the training cycle at the new bases and camps, and of more immediate significance, the extent to which regular military units, particularly the Reconnaissance Brigade, could be tapped for experienced per-

⁹ Material assistance from North Korea to Hanoi has been modest. There have been some shipments of small arms, transport and construction equipment, and probably some medical supplies, clothing, and rice. Some machinery and tools may also have been provided along with a number of technicians. Without publicity, it has provided about 40 North Korean jet fighter pilots for defensive patrols (and on-the-job training) in the Hanoi area. There are probably also some North Korean military advisers and instructors in North Vietnam, and there may be some in South Vietnam.

¹⁰ Annex A is a brief evaluation of North Korean military capabilities with respect to South Korea.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

sonnel. But regardless of the number of trained personnel available, the primary problem in the conduct of North Korean guerrilla operations in the South would be provision for their sustenance and survival within South Korea.

22. The physical environment in South Korea provides some advantages for guerrillas. One of them is the 1,500-mile-long coastline with its thousands of small islands, many uninhabited. This makes infiltration and supply by sea relatively easy. Another potential guerrilla asset is the predominance of rugged terrain. On the other hand, vegetation in these highlands is generally sparse and concealment difficult in winter when freezing weather makes even survival a problem. During the warmer seasons, vegetation is dense only in the most inaccessible mountains; elsewhere, ground movement is comparatively easy to observe from the air. Such physical factors contributed to the failure of Communist guerrilla movements in South Korea in 1949 and 1951-1952.

23. In its operations against infiltration teams, the South Korean Government has other advantages. The Communists can count on assistance from established agents (including radio communicators), Communist sympathizers, and in some cases, relatives. But the overwhelming majority of South Koreans are unlikely to assist the Communists in any way. There is widespread dislike of communism and Communists, based on bitter memories of the Korean War. In addition, there are broad anti-Communist laws, rigidly enforced; even suspicions must be reported. Another major ROK asset is the long and apparently successful experience of its intelligence and security forces in countering Communist subversion.

24. Government security forces were alerted at least a year ago to the implications of the planned changes in Communist tactics. In late 1966, a Combined Command Center (CCC) was established in Seoul under the leadership of the ROK Central Intelligence Agency to improve coordination between military and police forces in operations against Communist agents in rear areas. Provincial subcenters were established. The CCC also became a clearinghouse for intelligence on all forms of infiltration.

25. In 1966, too, the Korean National Police (KNP) force was increased in size to about 40,000, and counter guerrilla training was instituted in certain areas. Special nine-man police "sweep teams" were created, trained, and equipped to cover potential guerrilla areas in their home districts. ROK Army Special Forces units were designated to back up the police effort. Additional boats were assigned to the KNP's coastal patrol force, and a few new coastal radars were provided. Several new patrol craft were added to the ROK Navy. The ability of military aircraft to detect infiltration by sea was enhanced. Along the DMZ there was a higher state of alert, and detection was improved by various new warning and surveillance devices, and by the construction of a complex barrier system in some sectors.

26. Despite these and other improvements, there are still important deficiencies in ROK counter guerrilla capabilities. In recent operations, the police required heavy support from the army for manpower, weapons, and transport and communication facilities. This has caused serious government concern, not only

~~SECRET~~

about the consequences of diverting a substantial portion of its conventional military strength to internal security operations, but with the problem of coordinating these forces. There is a history of police-army rivalry to overcome, and it is by no means clear that the newly established CCC mechanism is doing the job. Infiltration by sea continues, in part because available patrol craft are generally not as fast nor as well armed as the boats North Korea has assigned to its sea infiltration units. There are also deficiencies, particularly among the police, in several types of communications equipment, ground and air transport, and automatic weapons.

B. Prospects

27. North Korea will almost certainly continue its campaign of military harassment in the DMZ area at current or even increased levels. The costs of these operations, both in lives and materiel, are small. Whether the actions are successful or not, they engender fear and apprehension among the South Korean people, and thus put certain pressures on the ROK Government, particularly in connection with its participation in the Vietnamese war.

28. Communist losses along the DMZ will probably increase as US and ROK training is improved and new detection and other protective devices are installed. Nonetheless, it will probably not be possible to prevent substantial casualties on the US/ROK side if the Communists remain willing to accept their losses, however high.

29. This is not to say that the Communist commitment to DMZ harassment tactics is open-ended. Just as we consider it unlikely that North Korea intends to start another Korean War, we believe it unlikely that it plans at present to escalate its DMZ attacks to a point at which open warfare might result. The North might miscalculate, however, and raise the ante along the DMZ until the ROK resolves to strike back in force. A series of actions and reactions might ensue which could lead to open hostilities.

30. Rear area infiltration of guerrilla-type teams could become a more serious problem in 1968, almost regardless of the outcome of this year's reconnaissance effort. The most vigilant naval patrol and the most efficient radar network would probably not be able to eliminate a determined effort to infiltrate teams by sea.

31. Even so, Communist prospects for establishing a base of operations for guerrilla activity are probably poor. Under present circumstances, prospects for recruitment inside South Korea are also poor. At best, the teams may survive by carrying adequate food and other supplies, and moving quickly from one temporary haven to another through remote and sparsely settled districts. While doing so, some teams will be able to carry out acts of terror and sabotage. Soon afterward, however, they could expect to become the object of intensive security operations. We do not believe, therefore, that in 1967 or 1968 North Korean teams will be able to organize guerrilla operations on a scale sufficient to undermine existing local authority.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

32. Moreover, even if the North Korean effort were to cause some local disruption, the current alternative at the national level is an opposition party whose leaders are even more vocally anti-Communist than the present government. Hence, successful political manipulation by the North of any unrest which might be generated by their activities in the South seems unlikely at this time.

33. It may be that Pyongyang itself has little expectation of achieving much success in this rear area effort. The North Koreans are aware of the odds against them in the South, the heavy investment in manpower and materiel required to initiate a "peoples' war," and the risk to their own territory should Communist guerrillas show evidence of success. It seems likely, therefore, that Pyongyang envisages rear area operations as yet another method of upsetting the political equilibrium in the South, with the added virtue of tying down large ROK forces. The North Koreans probably hope that, in time, rear area operations will yield additional dividends in the form of increased support and recruits for their existing clandestine apparatus. By thus increasing subversive capabilities, they would hope to be in a better position to exploit any new and major upset in South Korean political life.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

ANNEX

NORTH KOREAN MILITARY CAPABILITIES WITH RESPECT TO SOUTH KOREA

1. The North Korean Army, with a strength of about 344,000, is much smaller than that of South Korea. The North Korean Navy is essentially a coastal patrol and inshore defense force. Its main offensive strength includes at least 2 "W" class submarines, 4 "KOMAR" class guided missile boats, and 39 other motor torpedo boats. There are also at least 2 cruise missile coastal defense complexes. The 4 "KOMARs" were probably provided by the USSR during 1966 under the terms of an arms pact negotiated in mid-1965.

2. The North Korean Air Force is superior to that of South Korea. It has 80 jet light bombers—IL-28/Beagles—and some 483 jet fighters—80 Mig-15/Fagots, 375 Mig-17/Frescos, and a modern aircraft inventory which probably includes 7 Mig-19/Farmers and 21 Mig-21/Fishbeds. About half of the Mig-19s and Mig-21s have probably been delivered during the past year. Since mid-1965, the number of surface-to-air missile (SA-2) sites has increased from 2 to 11, of which about half are occupied.

3. North Korea will probably continue to receive limited amounts of modern air and sea defense equipment from the USSR so long as Pyongyang remains reasonably neutral in the Sino-Soviet conflict. We do not know to what extent the Soviets are replacing or augmenting North Korean heavy ground equipment—e.g., artillery and armored vehicles. It is unlikely, however, that Soviet military shipments will be large enough over the next few years to permit a significant shift in the current balance of military forces in the Korean peninsula.

4. ROK ground forces in Korea now number some 535,000; in addition, there are 2 army divisions, a marine brigade, and supporting elements—a total of almost 50,000 men—in South Vietnam. Despite the numerical advantage of the ROK ground forces, we do not believe that they or the North Koreans would enjoy superiority in the unlikely contingency of a war fought without external support for either side. The ROK Army is well trained, but much of its equipment is old and its purely indigenous logistic back-up is probably less well developed than that in the North. US logistic support would be essential to sustain ROK combat capabilities in any situation in which North Korean forces were receiving supplies from external sources.

5. The effectiveness of the ROK Air Force is limited; there is a predominance of F-86 fighters, and aircraft control and warning systems are inadequate and obsolescent. F-5 supersonic fighters are being introduced, but in the event of

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

hostilities, ROK air defense would probably require augmentation by US Air Force units. The ROK Navy is primarily a coastal patrol force of about 60 ships, including 4 destroyer types, 6 fast attack transports, 10 minesweepers, 20 patrol ships, and 20 amphibious ships. There is also a marine force of about 25,000. The capabilities and confidence of ROK forces are bolstered by the presence of approximately 48,000 US military personnel, including 2 US infantry divisions.

~~SECRET~~

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

DISSEMINATION NOTICE

1. This document was disseminated by the Central Intelligence Agency. This copy is for the information and use of the recipient and of persons under his jurisdiction on a need-to-know basis. Additional essential dissemination may be authorized by the following officials within their respective departments:

- a. Director of Intelligence and Research, for the Department of State
- b. Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, for the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
- c. Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army, for the Department of the Army
- d. Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (Intelligence), for the Department of the Navy
- e. Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, for the Department of the Air Force
- f. Director of Intelligence, AEC, for the Atomic Energy Commission
- g. Assistant Director, FBI, for the Federal Bureau of Investigation
- h. Director of NSA, for the National Security Agency
- i. Director of Central Reference, CIA, for any other Department or Agency

2. This document may be retained, or destroyed by burning in accordance with applicable security regulations, or returned to the Central Intelligence Agency by arrangement with the Office of Central Reference, CIA.

3. When this document is disseminated overseas, the overseas recipients may retain it for a period not in excess of one year. At the end of this period, the document should either be destroyed, returned to the forwarding agency, or permission should be requested of the forwarding agency to retain it in accordance with IAC-D-69/2, 22 June 1953.

4. The title of this document when used separately from the text should be classified: ~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

DISTRIBUTION:

White House
National Security Council
Department of State
Department of Defense
Atomic Energy Commission
Federal Bureau of Investigation