

HEADQUARTERS XXIV CORPS
Office of the G-2
APO 235

SUBJECT: History of Left-Wing Korean Political Parties to 01 June 1947

The following report has been prepared by the Historical Section, A C of S, G-2, XXIV Corps. (NOTE: See attached chart: "History of Korean Political Parties, 1919 - June 1947" for reference:

THE FIRST YEAR

The Korean Communist Movement

The story of the Korean Left Wing begins with the Communists. Information available as to the early days of the Communist movement in KOREA is meagre and confusing to say the least. Apparently the movement had its inception among members of the Korean community in the Russian city of IRKUTSK, located near Lake BAIKAL in south central SIBERIA. Here, early in 1920, a group of Korean Communists assembled. On the pretext that they had a sizable following within KOREA, the leaders of this IRKUTSK group allegedly hoodwinked the Third International out of some 40,000 yen for purposes of organizing a Korean Communist Party, and thereupon fled to SHANGHAI to enjoy their plunder. There, they joined forces with KIM, Chul Soo, CHO, Bong Am, CHOO, Chung, KIM and HAN, Wi Kim. (1)

Meanwhile, in KOREA, then under the relatively liberal rule of Admiral MAKOTO SAITO, a so-called Laborers' Association was formed. Actually, membership was not drawn from the laboring classes, but, rather from communistically inclined professional groups in SEOUL. Membership was probably not more than 300. This was in January, 1920. In November of that same year, the ALL KOREAN YOUNG MEN'S UNION, likewise inspired by communist doctrines was organized by LEE, Yung and CHAWNG, Paik. The organization soon boasted a membership of 30,000, included in which was one PAK, Heun Yung, one day destined to become the leader of the Korean Communist Party. The nucleus of this nation-wide Union was the SEOUL CHUNG NYUN HWEI, or the SEOUL YOUNG MEN'S ASSOCIATION, the only section to survive later police oppression.

In the meantime, the SHANGHAI group which had originally received official encouragement from the Comintern, began infiltrating into KOREA proper in the attempt to build up the popular following which it had previously assured the Comintern was already in existence. Likewise, the disgruntled group which was left in the lurch at IRKUTSK when the SHANGHAI-bound clique absconded with the Comintern funds also began migrating to KOREA. The local Korean Communist movement was soon split in two rival camps, one supporting the SHANGHAI and the other, the IRKUTSK faction. This was the source of much of the early disunity within the Korean Communist movement, which later was reflected in personal squabbles among the leaders.

By 1924, following a new wave of Japanese oppression, PAK, Heun Yung and HONG, Cheung Sik formed the SHIN SA SANG YUN KOO HWEI (Institute for Investigating New Ideas). By this time the original Laborers' and Young Mens' Associations had pretty well disintegrated as a result of action on the part of the Japanese gendarmerie. There were then two chief opponents in Communist circles; PAK's new Institute, and the SEOUL YOUNG MEN'S ASSOCIATION, this last being the only portion of the original all-Korean Association remaining more or less intact. (Later, however, it died a lingering death under the leadership of LEE, Yung and CHAWNG, Paik). Soon thereafter, PAK's new institute changed its name to HWA YO HWEI, or the "Tuesday Meeting" communist group, but still remained under PAK's leadership.

By reason of the malodorous act of the SHANGHAI group in turning to their own private use part of the money donated to it by the Comintern, this faction ultimately fell into official disgrace. By 1924, most of its major

(1) Interview with SUL KOOK WHAN, staff reporter for KOREA PACIFIC PRESS, a leading Korean news agency, 27 January 1947. Mr. SUL has done commendable political research relative to KOREA and is believed to be reliable.

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leaders --- at least KIM, Ghul Soo, CHOO, Chawng Kun, and HAN, Wi Kun --- had fallen in with the PAK's Tuesday group. PAK's leadership was forced on them because of the popular following he had gathered in KOREA. At about the same time, probably November 1924, a group of Korean Communists from JAPAN, known as the PUK PUNG HWEI (North Wind Association) under the leadership of KIM, Yak Soo and MA, Myung, arrived in KOREA. They also joined with PAK's group.

On 17 April 1945 the Korean Communist Party of KOREA was first officially organized. Leadership was divided between KIM, Tch'ei Bong who headed the main body of the organization and PAK, Heun Yung who took over the all-important organizational section of the Party, and, in addition, direction of the YOUNG MEN'S COMMUNIST ASSOCIATION, a Korean counterpart of the Soviet KOMSOBEL. Apparently, sometime before this took place, PAK had received official recognition from MOSCOW through BETCHINSKY, then head of the Far Eastern division of the Comintern. KIM, Tan Ya, a rather shadowy figure, was allegedly dispatched to MOSCOW to represent the party in the Comintern, and supposedly, was still there as late as 1 January 1947, acting as the real power behind the Korean Communist Party. Soon thereafter, another faction of Korean Communists is said to have petitioned BETCHINSKY demanding a change in leadership. The petition, however, was denied. Possibly in contradiction to this, but not necessarily so, is the rumor reported by Eugene V. PROSTOV, political advisor to the American delegation on the Joint Soviet-American Commission, that "in the early 1920's LENIN decided against lending support to the Korean Communists and instead aided Korean nationalists." During the early stages of STALIN's rule, according to the same source, RUSSIA abided by a secret agreement with JAPAN and abstained from encouraging Communists in KOREA. This support of nationalist groups would be well in line with later established Comintern policy. In the program of the Comintern, for example, is found this statement of principle:

The principal task in such countries / those with "feudal medieval relations and Asiatic mode of production relationships" / is, on the one hand, to fight against feudalism and pro-capitalistic forms of exploitation and to develop systematically the peasant agrarian revolution; on the other hand, to fight against foreign imperialism and for national independence.

In any event, at this point in the movement, 1925, the Japanese police stepped into the picture and put a quietus on activities by arresting many of the Communist leaders and effectively breaking up the organization. A later attempt to reorganize the party met the same fate. PAK was imprisoned a short time, but finally regained his freedom and fled to the SOVIET UNION. Apparently he remained there from 1927 until 1930, at the end of which time he returned to SHANGHAI, only to be rejailed by the Japanese for Communist activity. Ultimately, he was escorted back to KOREA under guard and finally released. This time he retired from active participation in politics and concealed his identity until 1945 under the guise of a common laborer and an assumed name, working the while in the Communist underground. //

During the twenty years intervening between the abortive 1925 effort to organize a Communist Party in KOREA and the liberation of KOREA, only one Communist group of significance crept into prominence on the Korean scene. This was known as the "MARX-LENIN", or more simply the "ML" Communist party. Organized in 1935 by TCH'EI, Ik Han and KUN, Chun Yun, this group was but short lived. The leaders were arrested, and the organization broken up by the Japanese police.

On the evening of that August liberation day in 1945, two political groups were meeting in SEUL. One was assisting LYUH, Woon Hyung in establishing his Preparatory Committee and the other was discussing the revival of the Korean Communist Party. The first group consisted of LYUH who himself had visited the SOVIET UNION in 1921-22 with KIM, Kyu Sik, who had held a membership card in a Korean Communist group in SHANGHAI, and who was to become a persona grata in North KOREA during the first year of the occupation. Also

AN, Chai Hong, considered to be a moderate Rightist in political conviction, was invited to participate in the organizational hierarchy.

This organization, first called the Preparatory Committee for Korean Rehabilitation (GHOSUN KEUN KOOK CHUN BI WAI WON HWEL), quickly assumed governmental functions not envisioned by the Japanese offer. In mid-August, this group adopted the following sweeping resolutions as to its objectives:

1. To establish an autonomous and independent state both politically and economically.
2. To demolish imperialism and residuary feudalistic influences in our state and to be faithful to the principles and ideals of democracy which must materialize the basic political, economic, and social needs of our nation.
3. To secure the rapid elevation in the living standards of the laborers, the peasants, and the masses.
4. To establish world peace through our cooperation as a member of the democratic countries of the world.

Meanwhile, the Japanese learned that Southern KOREA would be occupied by the UNITED STATES and not by the SOVIET UNION. As the days went by without the arrival of American forces, the heads of the Japanese Government-General overcame the shock received from the news of the unconditional surrender and realized that LYUH had no intention of following their dictates. They were also under pressure from the Japanese military to disown LYUH's Preparatory Committee. To reduce the power remaining in the Committee, the Japanese Government General took the peculiarly Japanese method of changing its name to the Public Safety Committee (CHIAN DAI). Meanwhile, the Japanese military endeavored to prevent LYUH's committee from exercising even police powers. The Japanese added some three thousand soldiers to the regular police force, transforming them to a civil status overnight, and attempted to discredit the CHIAN DAI.

LYUH was not, however, to be suppressed. The Japanese had created a Frankensteinian monster which they were unable to control. When the American occupation was announced, LYUH grasped the American privilege of free political endeavor, and on 6 September, two days before the American landing at INCHON, did in effect constitute his group not only as a political party but as a government, the "Korean People's Republic". The presidency and vice-presidency were offered to the as yet absent Dr. RHEE Syng Man and KIM, Koo respectively, but neither would accept. Later, on 10 January 1946, both were "expelled" from the offices which they never had accepted. LYUH, Huh, HUN, and LEE, Kang Kook were the predominant figures throughout, although LYUH ceased active participation in the Republic in November 1945 when he commenced organizing his PEOPLE'S PARTY. As to the nature of the Republic, one observer commented, "The People's Republic, on its lower levels of organization, grew in part spontaneously, in part under Japanese direction, in part under frankly Communist control, and in part under Conservative auspices. It must not be forgotten that in many places the new groups moved into a virtual governmental vacuum. Previously-existing social or revolutionary committees, or Farmers' organizations, moved in full into the functions of local government, and became units of the People's Republic." He pointed out that this was all done according to the "transmission belt" principle of Communist operation involving the "infiltration" by trained communist agents into larger groups, whose members do not agree with all the party principles, but who can be induced to go along on a lesser program of common objectives, to be extended when possible." The People's Republic remained, in theory, non-partisan and set itself up as the de facto government, a fact which was soon to bring it into sharp conflict with American Military Government.

The first episode in contact which the American Command had with this erstwhile government, the Korean People's Republic, occurred when its represent-

atives (calling themselves the "Provisional Korean Commission, 1945") presented themselves at XXIV Corps Headquarters aboard the AGC CATOCTIN on 8 September 1945. It was learned by the Americans that the organization was composed of 135 separate committees throughout KOREA and had, as its objective, the organization of a democratic form of government for the Korean people. The representatives were to have been PAIK, Sang Kyu, CHO, Han Yong, and LYUH, Woon Hyung. LYUH, however, was replaced by his younger brother, LYUH, Woon Hong, when the delegation boarded the CATOCTIN.

General HODGE was advised not to see these men himself, both because of the fact that they were allegedly supported by the Japanese, and because it was considered unwise to give even the slightest possible appearance of favoring any political group. These men did talk with members of the Corps staff, however, and gave from memory a list of Koreans who could be depended upon and another list of those who were said to be collaborationists. They asked about the American point of view toward the various exiled governments, assured the staff of their full recognition of the UNITED STATES MILITARY GOVERNMENT, and offered their own services in a liaison capacity between that government and the Korean people. They showed some concern over the division of KOREA at the 38th parallel, about currency and inflation, about the discipline of American troops, and about the food situation, and were also most emphatic in expressing their belief that all Japanese should be evacuated from KOREA.

By the middle of September 1945, the People's Republic had organized many subsidiary groups throughout the provinces. Typical was one called the "Student Public Peace Body" composed of radical students, thugs, and criminals, armed so far as possible. It was believed by the more law abiding Koreans that no permanent peaceful settlement of KOREA's political problems could be effected until these pseudo-political public safety organizations were disbanded. Their fears appear to have been well founded, for when one of the Republic's subsidiary branches in PUCAN, was disbanded on 28 September, some 257 rifles, 14 pistols, and 3 shotguns were found. Many other instances of the assumption of governmental functions by unauthorized groups connected in some way with the People's Republic could be cited, the most flagrant examples of which occurred in the provincial governments.

The American Command replied to this challenge of the People's Republic through the medium of the press. On 10 October 1945, General ARNOLD issued the following statement:

TO THE PRESS OF KOREA:

What I say and hand you today must be given a prominent place in the front page of every newspaper. This is a request with the force of an order.

The liberation of KOREA from the heel of JAPAN is of course an occasion for celebrations, for demonstrations and speechmaking. Freedom of speech and freedom of press having been given to the Koreans, it is to be expected that many foolish and inconsidered statements will appear in the newspapers under amateur editorship. So long as peace and order are not endangered, and so long as disorder is not fostered and no attempt is made to interfere with the orderly administration of the government, such boyishness even by old men will be allowed to evaporate as smoke in the air.

There is only one Government in KOREA south of 38 degrees north latitude. It is the government created in accordance with the proclamations of General MACARTHUR, the General Orders of Lieutenant General HODGE and the Civil Administration orders of the Military Governor. It is an organization made up

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of carefully selected Koreans working under the Military Governor and his officers. It has exclusive control and authority in every phase of government. Self-appointed "officials", "police" groups, big (or little) conferences "representing all the people", 'the (self-styled) government of the Republic of KOREA', are entirely without any authority, power or reality ...

A fraud on the people of KOREA has been recently publicized in the free press, namely the calling of fictitious' election on the first of March, 1946, at which it is promised "all men and women over the age of eighteen, except for traitors, will have the right to vote'... For any man or group to call an election as proposed is the most serious interference with Military Government, an act of open opposition to Military Government and the lawful authority of the Government of KOREA under Military Government.

By way of an answer, the People's Republic published during the third week in October and distributed in SEOUL a pamphlet entitled "The Traitors and the Patriots." The pamphlet "exposed" the alleged pro-Japanese, anti-Americans Koreans, who were acting as advisors to the Military Government by quoting from statements they may or may not have made against the Americans during the Japanese rule of KOREA. Then again, on 20 October 1945 the People's Republic distributed "A Message to U.S.A. Citizens", which begged the people of the UNITED STATES to understand that those, like themselves, who had remained in KOREA in the underground resistance during the Japanese regime and had organized themselves after the Japanese surrender, represented the real will of the Korean people. It would be the "tragedy of the century" if Military Government should oppose the will of this government of the Korean people, wrote the spokesman for the Republic.

One other event which may have mitigated against smooth relations with the People's Republic was a statement made by two members of the American press. This occurred in an informal talk between Mr. Robert H. MYERS of the Associated Press, Mr. Gordon WALKER of the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, and the Central People's Committee of the Korean People's Republic. These journalists acknowledged that the conservative HANKOOK DEMOCRATIC PARTY had the ear of General ARNOLD, but added, "The Military Government is not all of the U.S.A." This undoubtedly created the feeling that there was more sympathy for the Republic among Americans than was being shown by the Military Government and may have encouraged the Republic in its resistance.

That the People's Republic was a potent force at the time cannot be doubted. After an extensive visit to the rural areas, a Military Advisor and a former resident of KOREA, Dr. H. H. UNDERWOOD, stated that the Republic was the strongest and most active organization throughout the South. By comparison, the HANKOOK DEMOCRATIC PARTY was "poorly organized or unorganized in most places", and seemed to have nothing as attractive to offer as free land to the farmer and management of their own factories to the workers. An observer from Military Government corroborated the views of Dr. UNDERWOOD after a trip through the provinces in December 1945. He reported that the strength of the Republic was growing, that it was organized into a government at all levels, and that no other party was given an opportunity to coexist with it. Without Military Government intervention, it was clear that no other parties would be allowed to flourish.

Although the People's Republic under the leadership of LHM stopped short of open revolt, it continuously tended to be critical and troublesome. It defied Military Government's wishes by insisting that it would hold national elections on 1 March 1946, by devoting itself to self-expression rather than union with other political groups, and finally, by refusing at

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the end of a three-day meeting on 20 - 23 November 1945 to drop the word "KOOK" (republic or government) from its name. This last was an immediate act of defiance difficult to ignore, since Military Government had specifically requested that the name be changed to avoid misunderstandings which had arisen about the Republic's status. The leaders had assured Military Government that the name would be so changed. General ARMYTD himself went to the meeting and delivered a brief speech stressing the need for cooperation and order during the following critical months. He pointed out that any possible material aid from Allied sources depended in a large measure upon how the people of KOREA conducted themselves.

Even though the speech was apparently well received, subsequent events showed that the majority was not convinced. In the resolution of gratitude which was passed by the meeting for transmission to each of the Allies, the offending word "KOOK" was used. Furthermore, on the final day, younger and more radical elements ran away with the meeting and shouted down those who wished to comply with the request that the name be changed. In spite of this independent attitude, the Republic did, at this same meeting, publicly resolve to cooperate fully with the American Command until such time as the government would be turned over to the people. Giving more point to the situation was the fact that, immediately after this defiant meeting of the People's Republic, KIM, Koo returned to KOREA bringing with him several members of the self-styled Provisional Government. This meant for the Republic that the "chips were down". It had no choice but to outdo its rival pseudo-government, amalgamate with it, or disappear into the oblivion of history.

Adding to the complexities of the situation at the time was the fact that just prior to the three-day meeting, LYUH, Woon Hyung, the acting head of the People's Republic and the very man who had carried Military Government's request for a change of name to the central committee, suddenly bolted to form on 12 November 1945 what was thought at first to be a more respectable middle-of-the-road party called the KOREAN PEOPLE'S PARTY. With LYUH went many of the members of the parent organization, leaving HUI, Hun, LYUH's old running mate, and PAK, Heun Yung, the Communist Party leader, as the leading figures connected with the Republic. This was the third blow which presaged the final oblivion of the "Republic". The first two had been the refusal on the part of the American Command to recognize the Republic as a government and General ARMYTD's press attack on the Republic on 10 October. The fourth blow was a hard-hitting statement issued by General HODGE on 12 December specifically denouncing the "Republic" and reviewing a long list of broken promises and obstructionist acts. It appears in part below.

"It is after careful thought and deliberation that I make this announcement to the Korean people. This announcement is necessary to prevent continued misunderstandings and delays in KOREA's progress toward stability and independence....

Before the arrival of my forces in KOREA there was set up here an organization known as the CHOSEN RA HUN KONG HWA KOOK (Korean People's Republic). The name connoted, and its actions indicated, that this organization was set up to be a government rather than a political party and its leaders spread the word to the Korean people that it was their new government. This has caused many misunderstandings among the people.... However, because of misunderstandings arising from the name and actions of the Korean People's Republic, some groups operating under its banner have defied and opposed both openly and secretly the efforts of the Military Government of KOREA, caused serious delays in establishing economic stability of your country and actually delayed progress toward Korean independence which we all so greatly desire....

At the end of the convention (20 -22 Nov.) I was greatly surprised and disappointed to find that although they agreed in

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words to cooperate with and aid the Military Government of KOREA, the leaders and representatives had in some ways used the convention to aggrandize themselves further as a Korean government, had intimated that the Military Government is aiding and abetting their organization in its attempted activities as a government, and had left considerable confusion in the minds of Koreans everywhere. In other words they failed to keep their promise to me that the situation would be completely clarified.

Because of this failure after my long patience I feel it necessary to the public understanding to announce that, regardless of what it calls itself, the Korean People's Republic is not in any sense a "government", and is not authorized to act in any capacity as such. The only functioning government in Southern KOREA is the Military Government of KOREA....

Therefore, in order to eliminate further misunderstandings and cloaked disorders, I have today directed my occupation forces and the Military Government of KOREA that the activities of any political organization in any attempted operations as a government are to be treated as unlawful activities, and that necessary steps will be taken at once to insure that no political organization operates in any way as a government in any portion of the American occupied area without specific authority of the Allied Powers...."

Although the KOREAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY, the Republic's arch enemy, thought the statement hardly strong enough, the reaction of the People's Republic was immediate and vigorous. An American political observer described it as follows:

The Republic deliberated furiously all night and half the next day and finally released a hard-hitting rebuttal. The main points were: (1) That present confusion and misunderstandings are due to the slanderous advice of pro-Japanese traitors; (2) that the change in name was promised only as an item for discussion at the National Assembly and the body voted against it; (3) that after the meeting, President HUH, Hun agreed to all the points of a letter sent to him by General HODGE except the proposal to refrain from using the word "KOOK"; (4) that the so-called 'Provisional Government' is tacitly permitted to refer to itself as such, and even to hold "cabinet meetings"; (5) that such an attitude by military Government may be subjectively consistent, but that objectively it confuses the public.

However, the influence and prestige of the Republic was already waning. The defection of LYUH and the more moderate Leftists made it impossible for the Republic to maintain its popular appeal. Leadership of the Left shifted temporarily to LYUH and his PEOPLE'S PARTY and to a new Left wing catch-all, the DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S FRONT.

Pak versus Lyuh

On 12 November 1945 the leftist PEOPLE'S PARTY was launched by LYUH, Woon Hyung, a party which, it was hoped, would include within its membership most of the members of the People's Committees which were acting as local governmental units under the "Republic". It has been pointed out as a possibility that the PEOPLE'S PARTY was "designed to provide the intermediate transmission wheel by which the whole machinery of the People's Republic would be controlled, since it was believed that most members of the committees could be induced to join the People's Party, and would thereby be led into a minimum program of Communist collaboration." Whether or not this was the conscious reason for the organization of the "Republic" and the PEOPLE'S PARTY is open to question. However, that the Communists attempted to turn these organiza-

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unification and talking sensibly for the moment. I received what I consider reliable information this morning that the Communists and their Communist-controlled satellites are going to consolidate as the Korean Labor Party, which will eliminate the name Communist and may by this subterfuge attract many Leftists who have been becoming wary of Russian Communist leadership. This will give an outlet for Leftists who do not like the name Communist and may become in influence more powerful than current coalition People's Front. This step has already been taken in North KOREA."

It further came to light that PAK had cautioned LYUH, Woon Hyung not to "play the American game", and had predicted that the Coalition Committee (the American-inspired effort to achieve a working political agreement between moderate Right and Left to replace the Representative Democratic Council) would be another fiasco and that all rightist opposition in KOREA would be eliminated in short order if Southern Leftists stood firmly by their compatriots in the North. PAK's attitude toward the coalition effort before going to PYONGYANG had not been unfriendly, even though non-committal. However, after his return it became clear that a resolute and positive opposition to the coalition effort on his part was the result of instructions received in PYONGYANG. LYUH informed General HODGE that he had told PAK that he (LYUH) was too far committed to Dr. KIM, Kyu Sik and the coalition effort to slacken or discontinue his efforts to effect political unity in the South and, further, that he would stay with the project until some conclusion was reached.

General HODGE, in an August 9, 1946 radio, speculated, "some deep fear or mortal enmity of PAK must have come to the surface in this encounter as LYUH hinted to us that it was essential to the success of the American program that PAK be dealt with drastically at this juncture, perhaps jailed by some juggling at the counterfeit trial due July 29." General HODGE went on to say:

"We asked why he himself (LYUH) did not expose Communist intentions to sabotage unity. His answer was that large labor, farmer, and youth elements in South KOREA divide their allegiance between him and PAK and that if an open break between him and PAK came now it would harm the unity movement. He suggested that if PAK could be made to lose face at this moment LYUH might be able to win a considerable portion of these elements over to his, and therefore, our side. Our view is that LYUH either lacks moral courage or is too far secretly committed to the Communists to have a showdown with PAK and is looking to us to extricate him from his position...."

PAK quickly regained control over the party Councils by reading LEE, Chung Yoon out of the Party and indefinitely suspending KIM, Chul Soo, SOO, Chung Suk, KANG, Chin, KIM, Kun, and MOON, Kap Song for "trying to cooperate with the reactionary Right Wing." All were members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, and had on 5 August issued an anti-PAK statement to the local press.

Probably because he found himself unable to straddle the ever-widening gap between the two divergent political groups even within his own PEOPLE'S PARTY, LYUH tendered his resignation from leadership of this Party on 13 August and retired to the country. This act threw the PEOPLE'S PARTY into an uproar and forced a decision on the Communist call for a merger of the three principal Left Wing parties along North Korean lines. A few days later, the matter was resolved in the high councils of the PEOPLE'S PARTY by a 48 to 31 vote in favor of the merger, with 53 not voting. It was later suspected that the outcome of this balloting had been effected no little by the payment of over two million yen to those voting in favor of the merger. Obviously, the money came from Communist Party coffers. However, by mid-September 1946, LYUH had withdrawn his resignation as chairman of the

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PEOPLE'S PARTY, and, with the exodus of the more vocal Communist members he had regained control of his party. In fact, on 15 September, LYUH announced that he would make a new start as chairman of the PEOPLE'S PARTY and warned the Communists to keep their hands off. He also declared that he still favored the merger of the three Left Wing parties but only on terms of the PEOPLE'S PARTY.

Meanwhile, on 3 September 1946, the Communist-inspired merger of the Communist Party and the Communist elements of the PEOPLE'S PARTY and the NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY (a less important Left Wing group headed by PAIK, Nam Un and formerly called the YEMAN INDEPENDENCE ALLIANCE) had been effected. The newly-founded South Korean Labor Party (NAM CHOSUN NO DONG DANG) resulted from the merger and immediately fell under complete control of the Communist Party members of the PAK faction. Through the medium of this new Leftist front organization, the PAK group apparently thought it would be able to consolidate more effectively political control of the Left. However, learning of this pending move by the Communist elements and moving rapidly to sabotage the effort and win the day, LYUH, Woon Hyung and two others, PAIK, Nam Un, and KANG, Chin, (anti-PAK Communist), led in the creation of the Socialist Labor Party (SAWAY LODONG DANG) heralded as a party to include all the Left.

Thus it was that the first year of occupation ended with LYUH and PAK squared off against each other for Leftist control. Apparently PAK was officially sanctioned by Soviet-controlled North Korean leaders, but strangely enough, LYUH likewise seemed to bask in the good graces of the Soviet puppets in the North. LYUH's great popular prestige may have been the explanation for this apparent contradiction.

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THE SECOND YEAR

While the Right was consolidating under Dr REEP's leadership and making a strong bid for power, the Left was split wide open. It will be remembered that on 3 September 1946, the move toward the formation of the South Korean Labor Party was launched from the Communist-inspired merger of the Communist Party and the Communist elements of the People's Party and the New Democratic Parties.

Left Wing Schisms

Both groups had their troubles, however. The Communist Party was threatened with a schism between PAK and a good portion of his followers. The most powerful opposition to PAK's leadership was spearheaded by YOON, Il, the PUSAN Communist. He had been ousted from the Communist Party by PAK, Houn Yung during the summer of 1946, because of his rebelliousness, but in late September, YOON Il showed up in SEOUL as the chairman of a meeting of dissident Communist Party members. Apparently the meeting took place on 28 September. On 30 September, YOON, Il told CIC informants that he intended to call a national Communist meeting, a meeting very much opposed by PAK's group who felt that their power would be threatened if party representatives were brought together in a general meeting. Leaders of the anti-PAK faction were YOON, Il; CHANG, Paik; and LEE, Yawag. YOON, Il also told the Americans that he intended to operate in a legal manner. What happened to these plans is not known. The fall strike momentarily eclipsed all else, and it was quite apparent that the anti-PAK group cooperated in the strikes and violence. Moreover, fear of retaliation might well have put the quietus on the anti-PAK faction. In any event, PAK apparently retained firm control of the Party, even though he was forced to operate underground by reason of the American warrant for his arrest.

In the meantime LYUH, Woon Hyung dominated the Left Wing more or less unopposed. With KANG, Jin and his anti-PAK Communists, with PAIK, Nam Un's NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY, and with his own PEOPLE'S PARTY, LYUH organized the SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY. LYUH's support of the coalition movement and of the Interim Legislative Assembly (to which the extreme Leftists were unalterably opposed), plus the Right Wing landslide in the recent election of representatives for the Assembly, caused uneasiness and dissatisfaction in the SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY. It seems that this growing discontent gave heart to the forces of PAK, Houn Yung who went ahead with their long delayed plans to form the South Korean Labor Party.

On 23-24 November the South Korean Labor Party was formally organized under the leadership of HUH, Hun, the same man who had emerged earlier as leader of the People's Republic and of the Democratic People's Front. The new party, a South Korean counterpart of the North Korean Labor Party, marked a resurgence of the extreme Leftist faction whose power in the political field had been on the wane since the time PAK, Houn Yung had gone underground early in September to escape arrest by military authorities. Just prior to the organization of the South Korean Labor Party, LYUH had proposed an unconditional merger of his SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY with the new organization. However, this proposition was apparently ignored, possibly because the extreme Left no longer trusted LYUH by reason of his past defections.

By mid-December, it was apparent that LYUH'S SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY was dying fast. Most of the members were more or less out on a limb by reason of their opposition both to the South Korea Labor Party and to the Right Wing groups. It was again the case of would-be Left Wing Liberals being caught in the cross fire between the Right and Left extremes. The result was a great scurrying for cover. On 7 December the resignation of thirty-one members from the SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY was reported. They had belonged to the former PEOPLE'S PARTY, and their withdrawal was prompted allegedly by a desire to reactivate the old PEOPLE'S PARTY with LYUH as chairman. A new party, the LABOR MASSES PARTY (KEUN HO TAICHUNG DANG) had been organized early in November 1946 under the leadership of KANG, Soon and LEE, Chi Tai. At the time it was placed by Corps G-2 as somewhere between the PEOPLE'S PARTY and the Communist Party. In December, it was considered possible that the new party might be LYUH, Woon Hyung's secret front organization through which he intended to keep in contact with the Coalition Committee and the Legislative Assembly. CIC informants reported that the new party would follow LYUH's instructions.

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At this point, on 22 December, still another organization was conceived. This time, it was the POPULAR ALLIANCE (MIN CHUNG DONG MING) which was destined to bring together in a cohesive group most of the leading moderate Right Wing liberals such as Dr KIM, Kyu Sik; WON, Sei Hoon; LEE, Soon Tak; KIM, Yak Soo; and CHANG, Chay Il. The POPULAR ALLIANCE was organized around the ex-members and more moderate elements of the HANCKOOK DEMOCRATIC PARTY, a good portion of whom were also members of the Interim Legislative Assembly. Hence, the moderate Right and Left by the end of the year were represented by new political nomenclature, but with a possibility that the PEOPLE'S PARTY would make a resurgence.

Dr KIM, Kyu Sik, on 21 December 1946, commented publicly that he would endeavor to extend the organization of the Legislative Assembly into an all Korean Assembly formed by a general election in North and South KOREA. Dr KIM's plan, if successful, would in effect have destroyed the organization of the PEOPLE'S COMMITTEES in South KOREA and the Interim People's Committee of North KOREA. THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S FRONT was quick to denounce the plan. The American Command was not opposed to unification attempts by individual members of the Interim Legislative Body acting in an unofficial capacity. It was sympathetic to all efforts which would aid the reunion of South and North KOREA. As the first step in Dr KIM's strategy, the coalition movement would be accelerated in South KOREA. The seven coalition principles were to be disseminated throughout the southern provinces by propagandists of the Coalition Committee. Another part of the plan called for dispatching emissaries to confer with KIM, Il Sang and KIM, Deo Song in the North. TCH'EI, Dong O, vice-chairman of the Legislative Assembly, was mentioned as a likely member of the diplomatic mission. When queried as to the position and unfavorable attitude the Russians would probably assume in the negotiations, Dr KIM seemed to think that the difficulties would be overcome somehow. G-2 commented at the time, "The implementation of his plan would undoubtedly arouse great interest in political circles, and repercussions from the extreme factions of both wings would likely create new problems."

By January, 1947, the SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY had been deserted by most of its leaders. This loss of leadership, poor finances, and pressure from the Right and Left had made the party a thing of the past. On 25 December, the Central Executive Committee of the party had split over the issue of continued separate existence from the South Korean Labor Party. When the majority of twenty voted for such existence, the minority of sixteen resigned to join the South Korean Labor Party. LYUH retired once more to the country, apparently unable to bridge the gap any longer. Indicative of the cleavage between the two groups was the refusal of the SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY to participate in the South Korean Labor Party's celebration on 29 December of the anniversary of the Moscow Decision on the ground that the celebration was not a spontaneous citizen's affair, but a gesture for political power.

By admission of TCH'EI, Sung Ewan, second-in-command of the SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY, in a 31 January interview, his party had been losing ground with the South Korean Labor Party. He went on to point out that most of the leaders of the so-called "Convention-group" of dissident Communists had stayed on the sidelines under acute pressure from the North. Specific threats against their personal safety had been made to virtually all the prominent Leftists to keep them from affiliating with the SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY. The leader of the party at this juncture was KIM, Dai Hi, a man of high esteem among the Leftists. YOON, Il and KIM, Chul Soo, both anti-PAK Communists, were apparently undecided and neutral during this period, probably awaiting developments. KANG, Chie, who gave support at the early stages of the movement, had been driven back into the Communist lineup. It was of significance to note that KANG's early days had been spent in Russian territory and he still had many relatives there. He was regarded as particularly vulnerable to Soviet threats, and could not be blamed too harshly for this defection from the ranks of the moderate left. LYUH, Moon Hyung, CHANG, Kun Sang, KIM, Sung Sook, LEE, Yuh Sung, and others of the former PEOPLE'S PARTY group were regarded by TCH'EI as belonging neither to the SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY nor the South Korean Labor Party, but as favorable to the cause of the former in the present controversy.

During this period, the extreme Left under HUH, Hun and PAK, Huan Yung was on its best behavior, perhaps content to watch the Right over-reach itself in its attempt to seize power from Military Government and thereby gain the hostility of the Americans. However, to keep the record straight, the Left did make

demands for the withdrawal of the warrant for the arrest of PAK, Heun Yang, for the transfer to the people of the government, and for dissolution of the Interim Legislative Assembly and of the Coalition Committee. Leftist organs also criticized the anti-trusteeship vote in the Legislative Assembly and denied that the Assembly spoke for the Korean people on the issue. On the other hand, this extreme Leftist element made their first conciliatory gesture. On 25 January, the DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S FRONT declared that it was ready to cooperate with Military Government if Military Government would recognize its just demands. But the Front's most arresting action was its public endorsement (although conditioned by eleven demands) of Military Government Ordinance 126 providing for the election of provincial and local officials. The demands made by the Front included the election of provincial, city, county, and township People's Committees, with the principle of obedience of lower committees to higher committees prevailing. The plan would have eliminated the Legislative Assembly and made no provision for a central or local law making bodies, but did call for general suffrage including women and participation of all parties. A further proposal was the creation of an appointed general election commission to insure fairness of the elections.

In mid-January, the explosive trusteeship issue took precedence over all other news in the Korean press and among local political circles. The subject had been aroused by General HODGE's 4 January speech, by the publication of the exchange of letters between Generals HODGE and CRISTIakov relative to reopening the Joint Commission, and by the statement of Mr WILLIAMS of the Korean Desk in the State Department to the effect that the majority of Koreans looked favorably on the idea of trusteeship. The extreme Left seemed to gain at least momentary strength from this turn of events in their favor. The Communist dominated organizations under the banner of the Democratic People's Front praised General CRISTIakov's letter highly and generally endorsed General HODGE's reply, but took issue with the latter over the fact that Right Wing parties which signed the declaration of the Joint Commission's Communique Number 5 would be consulted by the Joint Commission and allowed to participate in the formation of the Korean Government. The less extreme SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY praised the American Command as showing an "inclination to take a sincere attitude in the interpretation of the Moscow Decision toward KOREA."

At this point, a new consolidation of moderate Right and Left took place in the formation of the DEMOCRATIC INDEPENDENCE FRONT in early February. The new organization was the result of a merger of the Coalition Committee and the "Third Front", a group of small neutral parties. Prominent in this latter group was CHO, Bong Am, dissident INCH'ON Communist and author of the famous "INCH'ON letter" criticizing PAK's leadership of the Communist Party. It was believed at this time that Dr KIM, Kyu Sik had approved and encouraged the formation of the new group.

Shortly thereafter, on 22 February, LYUH, Woon Hyung expressed an intent to emerge from his quasi retirement and journey throughout South KOREA in an effort to reorganize his old PEOPLE'S PARTY. LYUH said that approximately half the former membership had been lost to the South Korean Labor Party, but he indicated a belief that his former leaders would join him and he felt assured of 100,000 loyal followers. LYUH was also reported as having stated that the South Korean Labor Party had instructed its provincial branches to bar him from addressing their meetings. LYUH stated further that the purpose for the trip was not to address political gatherings but, rather, to discuss matters with responsible individuals.

The 24-Hour Strike

The strength of the moderate Right and Left was gaining. The plans of the extreme Right for seizure of governmental power from American Military Government had turned out to be a comedy of errors and poor judgment. Both Dr PEEI and KIM, Koo lost face in the episode, as likewise did their organizations. This was the time for the Left Wing extremists to make another grab at political power. The date chosen was 22 March. South Korean industry, communications, railroads, and some phases of government and maritime operations were disrupted in varying degrees by the general strike called on that date. It was secretly conceived and initiated by the Communist-dominated Council of All Korean Labor Unions. (CHANG PYANGIC) In fifteen hours, the strike spread from its point of origin in FUSAN to six of the leading cities of the Cholla provinces---which were Leftist strongholds---and to SEOUL, TAEGU, INCH'ON, and several smaller communities in Southwestern KOREA. The strike was not without disturbances, but it did not assume large scale proportions. There were eleven reported dead with an unknown number of injured.

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An ultimatum, apparently previously prepared, was reserved until the strike had passed its initial phases, and then served on General HODGE on the morning of 23 March. Signed by HYUN, Hun (not to be confused with HUH Hun), a Left Wing labor organizer and agitator, the ultimatum projected the following demands:

- (a) The reinstatement to their former jobs of all members reduced or discharged in the past; opposition to factory lock-out, unemployment, and the reduction of personnel.
- (b) The increase of wages to meet rising prices. (They demanded a minimum monthly wage of 8,000 yon per worker, a ridiculously high figure).
- (c) Four hops of rice daily to laborers and office workers three hops to "ordinary men."
- (d) The dissolution of the General League for Great Korean Laborers (Right Wing Labor organization), (and Right Wing Youth Groups). These organizations, all Right Wing groups, were charged with terrorism by the Leftists.
- (e) The dismissal and punishment of persons in Military Government and police organizations of bad character. In this category were listed pro-Japanese, profiteers, and oppressors.
- (f) The release and reappointment to their old positions of those imprisoned for striking, demonstrating, displaying posters, and participation in assemblages.
- (g) The release from imprisonment of HUH, Sawng Taik, (chairman of the Left Wing Labor union), PAK, Sei Young (vice-chairman), and LEE, Kyun Po (secretary); the cancellation of the warrant for the arrest of PAK, Heun Yung.
- (h) The security of the perfect freedom of the trade union movement at once.

The ultimatum stated that the laboring people of South KOREA had undertaken a twenty-four hour strike in order to strengthen by action the demands made by this document. The petition concluded with a threat of a violent, long-term strike should suppressive measures be taken or persecutions occur before or after the strike. Its author arrogantly placed the responsibility for the consequences of such action upon the Commanding General and closed with..."and on reading this memorandum we desire that it will not be said again that by the instigation of some part of...or without any leisure to consider...should be charged in an effort to obscure the case as has been done in the past." These vague references were probably directed to press releases by the Commanding General subsequent to the October, 1946, riots. Several releases stated at that time that many honest, patriotic Koreans had been misled by vicious agitators to actions in which they would not have become involved had they given prior sober consideration to the consequences.

CHANG, Taik Sang, Chief of the SEOUL Metropolitan police, issued an order for the wholesale arrest of Leftist leaders, including KIM, Won Bong and other high level leaders of the DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S FRONT, Council of All Korean Labor Unions, South Korea Labor Party, Chosun Democratic Youth Alliance, and the Council of All Korean Farmers' Union. With Leftist leaders in jail or in hiding, Rightist youths moved into Leftist headquarters on 23 March. They were reported to have confiscated documents, taken small useful articles, and to have left the offices in a state of dishonourment on their departure by police order on 25 March. All in all, some 2,718 persons were arrested, many being Left Wing leaders other than those affiliated with the responsible labor unions. Left Wing organs screamed against Military Government and the police, denouncing the "ferocious outrages... wicked heinous, unpardonable savagery perpetrated upon a people plunged into horror by the usdemocratic police who (with others) have stolen into the organs of Military Government". The center of the controversy raged about the figure of KIM, Won Bong. The name of this 50-year old leader was known to every Korean child. In the early 1920's he organized in CHINA a group called IM YUL TAN (a rough translation being Honest Justice Group). Strictly speaking it was an anti-KIM, Koo group, and had something like four or five thousand adherents. First organized in SHANGHAI, it moved later to NANKING and then to CHUNGKING, as did likewise KIM, Koo's Provisional Government. KIM, Won Bong (as well as Dr KIM, Kyu Sik, SONG, Chu Sik, KIK, Sang Duk, and KIM, Sang Sik --all originally anti-KIM, Koo men) joined KIM, Koo's Provisional Government upon the advice of CHIANG Kai-Shok about 1936 or 1937. KIM, Won Bong had under him a military force at that time of about 2,000 Koreans in CHINA. This was united with KIM, Koo's force, and the KWANGSOK ARMY resulted. "General" KIM, Wong Bong was appointed War Minister of the Provisional Government as a reward for his capitulation to KIM, Koo's leadership. The

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other four anti-KIM, Koo's were likewise appointed to cabinet posts within the Provisional Government. After the liberation of KOREA in 1945, most of KIM, Won Bong's followers entered North KOREA and joined KIM, Doo Bong's YEMAN group. KIM, Won Bong and the other four named above entered South KOREA and retained their positions in the Provisional Government until the time of the organization of the EMERGENCY NATIONAL CONGRESS in February 1946. At that time all five walked out in an act of rebellion against KIM, Koo's assumption of authority. KIM, Koo's anti-trusteeship campaign was then at its height, and the old revolutionist was attempting to seize complete control by fair means or foul. KIM, Won Bong, SOUG, Choo Sik, KIM, Sang Sik, and KIM, Sang Duk withdrew and ultimately accepted chairmanships in the DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S FRONT. They headed the KOREAN REVOLUTIONARY PARTY, later to be renamed the KOREAN REPUBLICAN PARTY. Dr KIM, Kyu Sik stayed clear of political groups, first participating in the Representative Democratic Council, then the Coalition Committee, and most recently as chairman of the Interim Legislative Assembly. KIM Won Bong himself was a philosophical communist, but refused to join the Korean Communist Party. Nevertheless, he was controlled by that Party by reason of his position in the DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S FRONT. Perhaps he did not like this control, but could do nothing about it because he lacked a national organization. It was also reliably reported that his wife, a strong influence on him, was more than a little perturbed by the hold the Communists had on her husband. At the time, KIM was even handed speeches prepared by the Communists to read, although generally he blanked out the more radical statements. His arrest in March 1947 following the 24-hour strike made it all the more impossible for him to leave the Communist Party fold.

Dr Arthur C. BUNCE advised the State Department on 24 April 1947 the following comments relative to the labor situation in South KOREA.

"Police activity with regard to disputes between two parties has taken form of assistance to Hai Han (Right Wing labor union) in policy of hands off wherever they have been concerned. On other hand CHANG YUNG'S (Left Wing labor union) has been subject to strict police surveillance accorded towards them and certain punitive measures such as arrest of members for distribution of handbills and roundups following strike activity".

Both the extreme Right and extreme Left were now temporarily out of the picture; both had lost considerable face during the past months through their ill-advised acts. The opportunity for LYUH, Woon Hyung to step forward once again into the political limelight was at hand. On 24 May 1947, LYUH's efforts brought about the formal launching of the LABORING PEOPLE'S PARTY (LEUH RO IN MING DANG). By dropping the name and organization of the old KOREAN PEOPLE'S PARTY and SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY, LYUH, apparently felt that he could escape Communist domination and alliance with the DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S FRONT. He was aspiring to leadership of the moderate Left. The new party was formed initially from LYUH's old followers who were with him in the KOREAN PEOPLE'S PARTY and from former members of the SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY. In spite of LYUH's protests, the latter group (which included a sizeable group of anti-PAK Communists) forced through a series of resolutions a few days after the party's birth which called for alliance with the DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S FRONT, as well as with the Left Wing Women's Association, youth associations, and Farmers Union, however, this alliance with the PEOPLE'S FRONT did not materialize. This group from the SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY was headed by LEE, Yung (former head of the anti-PAK faction of the Communist Party) and, within days, he had wrested control of the new party from LYUH's hands. Once again it was demonstrated that the moderate Left was in an impossible position in the Korean political arena.

In a May interview between LYUH, Woon Hong (the younger brother) and the Deputy Commander, USAFIK, the former pointed out that the LABORING PEOPLE'S PARTY was anti-PAK, Houn Yung, but contained many communistic elements. The elder LYUH apparently felt that he could not bar Communists from his party without inciting a general exodus of his following to the PAK, Houn Yung forces.

At the same time, a bribery scandal broke in which, according to Dr RHEE's papers, Dr KIM, Kyu Sik was involved. This confirmed the final parting of the ways for Dr RHEE and Dr KIM. Dr KIM immediately indicated a desire to resign from further active participation in politics. On 12 May, Dr KIM asked the Legislative Assembly for a ten day leave of absence. Upon his return on 21 May, his resignation was submitted to the Assembly. With the help of careful moves an

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impressive vote of confidence was awarded Dr KIM with the unanimous rejection of his preferred resignation. By this adroit maneuver in forcing a show down, Dr KIM had gained considerable prestige and power. Shortly thereafter he withdrew his resignation.

The reconvention of the US-USSR Joint Commission on 21 May 1947 brought a burst of feverish political activities with the Left Wing parties working in complete unity under the banner of the DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S FRONT, in marked contrast to the wide cleavages in the Right Wing caused by differences on whether or not those parties should consult and cooperate with the Joint Commission. The Left, having the support of the Soviets, and in absolute control in North KOREA, where opposition had been effectively squelched, were busy organizing and grinding out propaganda, hoping to win over the majority of the common people who genuinely desire the establishment of a Korean government, even though this must come through the Joint Commission and carry the tentative "Trusteeship" rider. The advances made came at the expense of Dr REEL and KIM, Koo who were achieving a notable lack of success in rallying the people around their "Anti-Trusteeship" banners. The Left Wing political parties and social organizations (claiming to be about 70 strong, but with much overlapping) were all being kept in line through the PEOPLE'S FRONT and all would approach the Commission with the same platforms: the structure of the new government to be that of the People's Committee; elimination of the reactionaries and pro-Japanese; land reformation and labor laws in conformity with those of North KOREA, etc. While the Joint Commission remains in session, and until such a time as personal ambitions clash over the composition of the government, no split within the ranks of the Left is anticipated.

KIM, Kyu Sik and LYUH, Woon Hyung were attempting to strengthen the Coalition Committee, which they hoped to use in much the same way as the Communists had the DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S FRONT. By 01 June 1947, the success of this move had not been noticed. Even though LYUH reluctantly acquiesced to the inclusion of extreme Right Wing HANKOOK DEMOCRATIC PARTY, he failed to receive the approval of the Communistic (anti-PAK) members of the LABORING PEOPLE'S PARTY and there appeared to be little hope that the other Leftists on the Coalition Committee would join forces with the extreme Right (who had agreed to consultation) even though this union could give to these so-called "Moderates" the lower level party organization, without which they cannot hope for permanent success. By 01 June, the "Moderates" were still hoping to become the compromise leaders in the new government, and to hold the balance of power between the Right and Left Wings. They appeared to be relying more on support from the Americans rather than on energetic political spadework to unearth an organization upon which they could ride to victory in an election, which one day must come to KOREA.

Restricted