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WEEKLY SURVEY
23 MARCH 1950

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KOREA: PYONGYANG APPEALS TO BUDDHISTS IN TERMS OF "OUR BIBLE"

Moscow marks the first anniversary of the Korean-Soviet Economic and Cultural Agreement with several commentaries, including one by Alexandrov in which he contrasts this agreement with Syngman Rhee's agreement which allows the United States to construct a military base in South Korea. There is also an interesting appeal on a religious basis (by Pyongyang, not Moscow) to South Korean Buddhists to join the guerrillas and avenge the "desecration of the sacred temple" by Syngman Rhee's gang. In broadcasts to Korea on non-Korean affairs Moscow continues to give heavy emphasis to the Soviet elections.

a. The Korean-Soviet Cultural and Economic Agreement: TASS, on the occasion of the anniversary of this agreement, reports that Vice Premier Kim Chaek said the USSR extended great economic aid to Korea last year. A commentary by Pietersky on U.S. aid to Korea was heard on several occasions. Pietersky declares that Acheson's demand for dollars for South Korea is actually for arms and construction of military bases because he fears "collapse" of Rhee's regime. TASS comments that discontent with the South Korean regime is so obvious that even the NEW YORK TIMES correspondent from Seoul reports that the guerrilla movement there is strong.

Pyongyang comments extensively on the first anniversary of the Korean-Soviet Economic and Cultural Agreement, stressing the advantages accruing to North Korea from the coking coal, machinery, and technical assistance supplied by the USSR. Pyongyang gives its usual large volume of praise to economic progress in North Korea vs. economic deterioration in South Korea, and of criticism of Syngman Rhee on charges of maladministration, suppression of political opposition, and collaboration with the United States. Coupled with attacks on Rhee are attacks on the United Nations Commission on Korea which, Pyongyang says, resolved to establish a military advisory group to "bolster the provocation of a civil war and massacre of the people." National representatives with whom the Commission has consulted are said to be enemies of the Korean people, pro-Japanese Koreans and traitors.

b. An Appeal to Buddhists as Buddhists: Carrying a step further Moscow's standard policy of not antagonizing religious groups, the North Korean radio this week uses a frankly religious appeal of a sort which Moscow itself has never used. Pyongyang reiterates that guerrilla warfare is increasing and it carries several appeals to South Korean Buddhists to join the guerrillas. An appeal from the North Korean Buddhist League to South Korean Buddhists asks: "How can freedom of religion be guaranteed without the unification and independence of the Fatherland?" It urges: "All young Buddhists must join the partisans at once.... Fight the policies of aggression of the

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American imperialists.... Fight more fervently than ever for the withdrawal of the United Nations Commission on Korea, the tool of the American imperialists."

The following excerpt from an appeal to South Korean Buddhists by the Chairman of the Central Committee of the South Korean Buddhist League justifies the appeal through Buddha's teaching--an unusual if not unique Communist propaganda approach:

"Our people never can forget the brutalities and atrocities perpetrated by the Japanese against our people. Our memory is still fresh, yet Syngman Rhee is once again collaborating with the Japanese. Among others, our patriotic Buddhists are being suppressed and persecuted. On charges that priests and nuns maintained contact with the guerrillas, the gang burned down a temple. Did not the gang desecrate the sacred temple by brutally murdering a patriotic youth at the altar? Did not the gang steal treasures preserved at temples, and hand them over to the Americans?

"Dear Buddhists of the southern half, how could we sit back and be mere onlookers to such atrocities? The time has now come for us to rise, bearing swords and mop up the Syngman gang at a stroke.

"Does not our bible teach us to kill one to save many? This is the time that we exercise this teaching of Buddha...."

c. Courts of Justice: Monitored broadcasts from Pyongyang have made no mention since the approval of the new constitution of the courts of justice of North Korea on 1 March. Vice Premier Hong Myong Hui in presenting the draft had contrasted Korean justice courts with the "undemocratic" nature of the U.S. courts of justice as exemplified in the trial of the U.S. Communist Party leader, Dennis. Monitored broadcasts from Moscow have ignored the subject entirely.

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