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USSR SURVEY
6 AUGUST 1953

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Korea

GLOBAL TOPICS

KOREAN TRUCE: Moscow Claims Major Role in Success of Korean Armistice

The volume of Moscow broadcasts on Korea during the week 27 July-2 August is much greater than at any time during the war including the periods of the BW and POW campaigns. However, after 3 August attention declines sharply. The Korean armistice is identified with the Soviet policy of settling international disputes by negotiations and is cited as a victory for the camp of peace. The Moscow radio, which since mid-April has devoted little attention to Korean developments and which generally has avoided independent comment, gives the 28 July PRAVDA editorial very wide publicity and utilizes its leading commentators--including Ehrenburg, Korionov, Rudryavtsev, and Tolchenov. However, the Malenkov and Molotov messages along with the North Korean and Chinese replies comprise the bulk of the attention quantitatively. Particular attention is paid to the Soviet and Satellite audiences, with European audiences receiving less than normal attention. The comment contains the following major themes:

1. The war is a victory for the peace camp and advances the principle of peaceful settlement of international problems.
2. The aggressive policy of the American imperialists has been proved a failure, although the threat remains.
3. Soviet aid for Korean unification and rehabilitation will be forthcoming.

This hearty endorsement of the Korean victory, both on the battlefield and at the peace table, stands in marked contrast to Soviet failure to identify itself with the recent progress made in the Panmunjom negotiations. Similarly, in contrast to Asian transmitters, Moscow did not treat the war as virtually ended on the third anniversary. These contrasts seem to point up the possibility that Moscow perhaps doubted that even major Communist concessions on the repatriation of prisoners and ultimately on the South Korean release of prisoners, could bring about a successful truce. There is no doubt, however, concerning Moscow's desire to capitalize on the success of the truce negotiations.

Moscow broadcasts likewise foreshadow continued Soviet participation in and guidance of North Korean efforts at unification and rehabilitation. Peking, although reporting fully its generous assistance to North Korea during the war, has been silent concerning any pledge of aid, either economic or military, to post-war Korea. These differences in treatment of the post-war conditions in North Korea are apparent also in the widely-broadcast exchange of messages between the elites of the Soviet Union, Communist China and North Korea. Those from the North Koreans document Soviet support during the war and the future assistance to follow, while the Chinese-Soviet exchange delimits the Soviet role during the war and avoids entirely any reference to Chinese participation in the rehabilitation of North Korea.

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Kim Advocates Unification under North Korean Direction: There has been little discussion of the problems of a post-truce settlement, although both Moscow and Peking reiterate their general support for unification through both the political conference and the efforts of the Koreans themselves. Present comment does however appear to fill in some of the outline of Communist orientation toward unification and support the contention that the Communist approach--at least initially--will be identical with their position prior to the war. The Peking PEOPLE'S DAILY editorial of 28 July, speaking of the circumstances giving rise to the north-south split, explicitly praises the Moscow Foreign Ministers' agreement of December 1945 as one which could have led to Korean unification had the United States "scrupulously observed it" as did the Soviet Union. While no explicit comparison is made between the 1945 decision on Korea and the decision which will have to be made by the approaching political talks, the appearance of such comment at this time seems designed to imply just such a comparison. Likewise Kim Il Sung, in a major address on 28 July, establishes the framework for an all-Korean effort at unification by appealing for the support of "all patriotic political parties and social organizations...regardless of their past activities or the differences in their political and religious beliefs" to join the unification struggle under the banner of the Communist Democratic Front for the Attainment of Unification. However, Moscow has not broadcast Kim's speech and Peking has given it publicity only in English Morse and English voice transmissions to date. No propaganda references have been observed concerning the composition of the political talks, nor have there been references to any proposed agenda change to include other Far Eastern problems in the political talks. (See Far East section, pp. Peking continues to avoid comment on the problems of withdrawal of U.S. forces from Taiwan and of U.N. membership, both of which were presented as prerequisites to a Korean truce by Peking in 1950.

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