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The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (A Brief Memorandum)

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Summary:

A memorandum reviewing both Koreas' economic conditions and respective political makeups after the Korean War, and reconstruction efforts and agricultural shortages in North Korea.

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THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA
(a brief memorandum)

The total area of Korea is 220,000 [square] km, including North Korea, 122,000 [square] km, and South Korea, 98,000 [square] km.

The population is about 30 million, including about 10 million in North Korea and about 20 million in South Korea.

The highest body of state power in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is the unicameral Supreme People's Assembly. Deputies of the Supreme People's Assembly are elected for three years according to the rule of one deputy per 50,000 population.

In extraordinary circumstances the Supreme People's Assembly can extend its mandate beyond the period established by the Constitution for the period that these circumstances are in effect (Article 46 of the Constitution).

Elections to the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly were first held on 25 August 1948. Elections have not been held since that time. The term of office of the Supreme People's Assembly was extended by four years and expired in the summer of 1952.

In 1943 [SIC] 572 deputies were elected to the Supreme People's Assembly, including 212 deputies from the population of North Korea and 360 deputies from the population of South Korea.

The election of deputies from South Korea was conducted in two stages: first, 1,030 people's representatives of South Korea were elected, who elected 360 deputies to the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly by secret ballot.

During the last seven years the deputies of the Supreme People's Assembly were reduced to 240. Thirty-six deputies were unseated, 124 deputies were killed and died during the war, and 80 deputies who went missing lost [their] seats.

Of the remaining 332 deputies 150 represent North Korea and 182 [represent] South Korea.

By party affiliation 216 deputies are members of the Worker's Party, 13 are in the Chondoist Party of North Korea, and 25 in the Democratic Party of North Korea. The rest were elected from South Korean political parties and public organizations which were banned in South Korea during the war and have actually ended their work.

The Chairman of the Presidium of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly is Kim Du-bong, a member of the Korean Labor Party CC Political Council (a brief description is attached). The Presidium has two deputies, a secretary, and 17 members.

The highest executive body of DPRK government authority is the Cabinet of Ministers, which includes a Chairman, seven deputies, and 19 ministers. Besides the ministries the Cabinet of Ministers has 14 departments, committees, and directorates.

The Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers is Kim Il Sung, and he is Chairman of the Korean Worker's Party CC and Commander-in-Chief of the Korean People's Army.

Of the 27 members of the Cabinet of Ministers 20 are members of the Worker's Party and the remaining seven are in other parties.

The Worker's Party is the leading party of North Korea. This Party brings together 1,175,000 people in its ranks. By social composition the Worker's Party is 23% workers, about 60% peasants, 13% office workers, and 4% others.

Besides the Worker's Party in North Korea there are the Democratic Party and the Chondoist Party. The Democratic Party brings together about 20,000 people, mainly from the urban middle and petit bourgeoisie, prosperous peasants, intellectuals, and some manual laborers and office workers of industrial enterprises. The Cabinet of Ministers includes two representatives of this party.

The Chondoist Party comprises a total of 1,500 members at the present time, chiefly from the remaining peasants, small tradesmen, and craftsmen. This party also has two representatives in the Cabinet of Ministers.

The DPRK economy ended up in ruins as result of the 1950-1953 war. According to incomplete data the losses caused the country by the war were 420 billion won (14 trillion rubles).

The Korean Worker's Party and government have done much work to rebuild the country's economy since the conclusion of the armistice. At the end of 1953 a three-year plan for 1954-1956 was approved to rebuild the DPRK economy.

[In] the 1954 plan, the first year of the three-year plan, was 110.3% fulfilled in terms of the volume of the industrial output of state and cooperative industry. The 1949 prewar level was exceeded by three percent in terms of the volume of industrial production. In 1954 about 120 large and medium-sized enterprises were completely or partially repaired and 40 new factories and plants were built.

The gross output industrial production plan of the state and cooperative sector was 101% fulfilled for the first half of 1955.

In spite of the successes achieved, the situation in the country continues to remain serious. Until recently proper attention was not devoted to restoring and developing agriculture and also to raising the population's standard of living.

Peasant farms are experiencing an acute shortage of draft animals and the simplest agricultural implements. Two-thirds of peasant households do not have draft animals. More than 30% of peasants are not in a position to feed themselves and need constant aid from the state not only in seeds, fertilizers, and implements, but also food.

In 1954 the grain harvest was 2.3 million tons against 2.9 million tons in 1949. More than 170,000 tons of grain were imported from China and 45,000 tons from the Soviet Union to cover the shortfall in food.

In 1955 according to preliminary figures the harvest is determined to be 2.5 million tons of grain. In 1956, the DPRK government intends to import 200,000 tons of grain from the PRC and 50,000 tons of food from the Soviet Union.

In 1954 a food cooperative movement of peasant farms began in the DPRK in which an artificial forcing of a union of peasants and a violation of the principle of voluntary participation occurred.

At the end of August 45.1% of peasant farms with 44.8% of the planted area had been formed into cooperatives. Cooperatives were formed in 3,757 of 3,930 villages, which is 96%. There are an average of 40 households in each cooperative.

At the present time mistakes which have been made are being corrected; the main attention is being paid to the organizational and economic strengthening of the cooperatives.

The Soviet Union, the PRC, and countries of people's democracy are giving much aid in the revival of the DPRK economy. In 1953 the Soviet Union allocated one billion rubles to the DPRK as free aid. Chinese aid is approximately 850 million rubles, and aid from countries of people's democracy is over 200 million rubles.

In South Korea the legislative body is the National Assembly, elected for a term of four years according to the rule of one deputy per 150,000 people. The first National Assembly was elected in May 1948 and retained its authority for two years. The second elections were held in May 1950. The latest elections to the National Assembly were held on 20 May 1954. Two hundred and six deputies were elected to the National Assembly, of which 126 are representatives of Syngman Rhee's Liberal Party and 33 seats belong to the opposition "Democratic" Party. The remaining 47 seats are occupied by various minor parties and also "independent" and unaffiliated deputies.

Taking advantage of the position as the ruling party, Syngman Rhee's [supporters] are suppressing opposition elements in other political parties and in mass worker's organizations - labor unions, peasant, youth, and other organizations - whose activity has been crippled. Activity by Labor Party organizations has been prohibited in the South.

The South Korean economy is recovering slowly. According to a finding of a UN commission a grant of \$1.25 billion of foreign aid and an investment of \$650 million from South Korea's domestic resources will be needed over five years to restore an economy meeting the country's needs.

The American aid being given to South Korea is being directed mainly to military purposes. Of the \$730 million allocated by the United States for the 1954-1955 fiscal year \$450 is directly designated for military purposes.

The government of Syngman Rhee is rejecting all proposals from the government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to convene a joint conference for negotiations to restore economic, cultural, and political ties between the two parts of the country and also to work out mutually acceptable terms for a peaceful reunification of Korea.

The problem of the peaceful reunification of the country remains the most important task facing the Korean people.