

North Korea: Between Dogmatism and Revisionism

CHONG-SIK LEE*

One of the toughest problems Premier Kim Il-song of North Korea had to face during his quarter-century-old rule over North Korea has been the cleavage between Peking and Moscow. There is a Korean adage which says "Shrimps get crushed when whales fight." And, indeed, the Red Whales have been locked in battle for quite some time, and the little red shrimp caught in between has had to find ways to fend for himself.

The problem was a tough one, particularly because North Korea needed the friendship of both the Soviet Union and Communist China in order to develop its economy, to maintain its defense forces, and to engage in the violent and non-violent struggles against the Republic of Korea. The experience of the Korean War had clearly shown that the support of both Moscow and Peking was essential for North Korea. At that time, the Soviet Union provided the airplanes, tanks, artillery, and all the modern military hardware to launch the war; but it was Chinese manpower that eventually rescued North Korea from being completely overrun. The situation since then has changed considerably but not as much as the North Korean Communists would have liked.

The problem was very exasperating particularly because the Sino-Soviet rift dealt with many of the key issues. The dis-

*Dr. Lee is associate professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania. Chairman of the Joint Committee on Korean Studies of the Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies, he has also authored several books and numerous articles on Korea.

pute ranged over the ideology, strategy, and tactics of Communist revolution; the nature of leadership; and the relationship among the Communist countries. As points of contention gradually shifted from the more general to the specific, it became increasingly more difficult for North Korea to plaster over the issues. Tremendous pressure was exerted from both sides for North Korea to clarify its views, and therefore it could not muddle through the dispute. The price tag for taking a stand, however, was going to be high regardless of whom the North Koreans sided with.

In many ways, the situation confronting North Korea can be compared to a small ship attempting to navigate through a narrow river. Let us, for a moment, imagine a situation where China is occupying the left bank and Russia the right bank. We may call the river the River of Internationalism. When the relationship of the two countries bordering the river is amicable, the ship can progress rather smoothly, taking advantage of the facilities and supplies from both banks. But the ship cannot but be affected when the winds from both banks whip up storms over the river. And suppose the River of Internationalism begins to freeze?

Indeed, at times the River of Internationalism seems to be frozen over, and the frail ship has to anchor at either of the shores. Finding the atmosphere on the right bank hostile, the ship briefly takes refuge on the left bank. But the left bank cannot provide the needed supplies and parts, and hence the captain has to take his ship across the icy waters to the other shore, inescapably hearing the resentful muttering of his old host. When the ship's equilibrium has been restored, therefore, the captain tries again to steer through the ice to the left bank. Of course, the whole situation stalls the ship's progress, creating numerous problems. Having been promised a land of milk and honey, the crew has labored around the clock for a long period of time. At least some of the crew begin to doubt the captain's way of navigating. They may even attempt a mutiny.

Let us briefly look at the ship itself. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was officially launched in 1948, but its origin must be traced back to 1946 when the North Korean Provisional People's Committee was established. The North Korean regime, whatever its official designation may

be, was a by-product of the cold war, and it came into being under Soviet tutelage. The crew running the ship, the Korean Worker's party, is an outgrowth of the North Korean Bureau of the Korean Communist party established in October 1945. Of course, the history of Korean communism goes back to 1918, but the movement was largely ineffectual before 1945 and the Communists could not have taken over control in North Korea without Soviet support. The captain of the ship, or the leader of the North Korean regime, Kim Il-song, was installed in his office soon after the Soviet army occupied North Korea in October 1945. Although he had led a small band of anti-Japanese guerillas in southeastern Manchuria between 1931 and 1941 when he was still in his twenties, Kim Il-song was much too young to take over the leadership position in North Korea without Soviet blessing.

All this is to say that the ship, the crew, and the captain were made by the Russians, according to Russian designs. Up to 1950, when the Korean War broke out and the Chinese poured massive manpower into Korea, no one had any doubt as to who was in actual control in North Korea. Kim Il-song may have been at the helm, but he was following a course charted by Moscow and under the latter's close supervision.

The establishment of the Chinese People's Republic and her intervention in the Korean War changed matters considerably. The Russians, for example, had to share control of military strategy with the Chinese and, as the war dragged on, authority had to be shared in broader areas. This situation gave the North Koreans an opportunity to assert themselves more. The reluctance of the Russians to commit themselves deeply to the cause of the Koreans must also have led the Korean Communists to think more for themselves. It is possible that certain undercurrents of thought toward self-determination and independence emerged among the leaders in Pyongyang. Kim Il-song was not strong enough to defy or even disagree with the Soviet "advisers" and leaders, but he could not have been pleased by the lukewarm way in which the Russians handled themselves during the Korean War.

In the postwar years (by war, I mean here the Korean War), when North Korea went about the task of reconstructing its economy, surface relations appeared cordial and friendly. But the North Korean Communists later charged, when

their relations with the Soviet Union were greatly aggravated, that the Russians interfered in economic planning, aspects of education, publications, and other internal matters. The Russians were also accused of buying certain commodities from North Korea at below the international market price and selling things to North Korea at relatively higher prices. North Koreans were tolerating the Russians, but they certainly had no love for the Russians. The Russians, of course, are not the only ones in the world that face this kind of situation. In any event, as the Korean Communists began to lose faith in the Russians, they started to urge the people to think more in Korean terms and learn more about their own country. It was in December 1955 that Kim Il-song introduced the term "*Chu-ch'e*" or self-identity. In fact the most accurate translation of *Chu-ch'e* would be "to do one's own thing." By 1956, with the end of the three-year economic plan, one could detect that Kim Il-song and his crew had come out of the tutelage and were heading toward self-determination, although they still badly needed Russian aid particularly in the economic and military areas. Although the Chinese began then to loom large in Korea, they appear to have been more judicious than the Russians in their behavior toward the Koreans. Despite the fact that Kim Il-song had spent approximately four years between 1941 and 1945 in Soviet territory, the "cultural gap" between the Koreans and the Russians was much wider than that between the Koreans and the Chinese. In addition to historical influences, Kim Il-song and some of his close associates were raised in Manchuria among the Chinese. Indeed, Kim Il-song was a member of the Chinese Communist party in his early days.

In any event, the role of the captain of the ship changed considerably between 1945 and 1956. By the latter date, he was no longer an apprentice taking orders from his tutor-master. The Russian tutor-master then became an adviser and occasional helper who assisted the ship's progress toward its destination. The captain's main concern or the announced destination was to build a "democratic base" in the North which would enable Korea's eventual reunification. Although the captain saw fit to purge some of the top crew members in 1950, 1953, 1956, and again in 1958, the ship was, on the whole, sailing smoothly toward that goal.

But the captain began to feel turbulence in the open channel around 1961 when he had just launched an ambitious seven-year economic plan. Strong winds began to blow from both directions, and eventually the channel began to freeze. The circumstances and the issues involved in the Sino-Soviet dispute are rather well known, and we need not dwell on the details. But we must briefly look into three major issues in the Sino-Soviet dispute that deeply concerned the Korean Communists, i.e., (1) the role of war in the socialist revolution, (2) de-Stalinization, and (3) the nature of international proletarianism.

As is well known, Khrushchev enunciated at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union held in February 1956 the principle of peaceful coexistence. Although Lenin had taught that wars were inevitable so long as "imperialism" existed and that wars would inevitably lead to socialist victory, Khrushchev declared that war in the modern era would be unthinkable because nuclear war would destroy not only the capitalist societies but the socialist societies as well. Therefore, Khruschev called for "an improvement of relations, a strengthening of trust between countries and collaboration." The eventual victory of socialism-communism was predicted, but it would be attained not through wars but through peaceful competition.

The Chinese, of course, objected to this line of policy. The Chinese believed that the development of the sputnik and the ICBM placed the Soviet Union ahead of the West, and hence the Communists should exert more pressure against the United States on such issues as Taiwan. The Chinese obviously did not see the possibility of taking over Taiwan through peaceful means.

If the Chinese objected to the peaceful line because it hindered their aim of bringing Taiwan back into the fold, one can easily imagine the anguish of the Korean Communists. The North Korean Communists had all but "unified" Korea in 1950. Had not the "American imperialists" intervened, the Communists would have attained their dream. For the dream of communizing the entire country, the Communists had committed all their resources, but ended up with a disastrous defeat. It was simply impossible for the Korean Communists to accept Khrushchev's dictum to improve relations, strengthen trust, or collaborate with American "imperialists."

How the principle of peaceful coexistence tormented the Korean Communists could be seen from the way Premier Kim Il-song handled the problem. He was forced to declare that the principle of peaceful coexistence was "absolutely correct." But, on the other hand, he declared that "the idea that Korea could be separated into Northern and Southern parts and that the parts should coexist with each other is very dangerous; it is a view obstructing our efforts for unification." On another occasion, Kim Il-song derided those who advocated the toning down of strong anti-American slogans because the Soviet Union was relaxing her stand against the United States. The premier charged that this kind of advocacy not only had no common ground with revolutionary creativity, but also paralyzed "our people's revolutionary awareness." He twisted logic to say that North Korea's struggle against American imperialists was in harmony with Soviet policy of peaceful coexistence. He argued that North Korea's hawkish stand against the United States would soften the American imperialists and hence contribute to peace.

The fact that North Korea agreed with China on the question of war as a means of attaining Communist victory was clearly manifested in the sixties when North Korea threw off the mask and came out into the open. The following quotation taken from a joint statement of Liu Shao-chi and Ch'oe Yong-gon, the two heads of state, in 1963 is typical of North Korea's stand since then:

The modern revisionists emasculate the revolutionary essence of Marxism-Leninism, paralyze the revolutionary will of the working class and working people, meet the needs of imperialism and the reactionaries of various countries, and undermine the unity of the socialist camp and the revolutionary struggles of all peoples. They do not themselves oppose imperialism, and forbid others to oppose imperialism. They do not want revolution themselves and forbid others to make revolution.

The hawkish behavior of the Korean Communists is already widely known, and hence it will not be necessary for me to dwell on this subject. Suffice it to recall the Pueblo affair, the shooting down of an EC 191 U.S. plane, and the numerous incidents near the demarcation line culminating in the daring attack of a band of guerrillas on the presidential residence inside Seoul in January 1968. Since December 1962, when the

Korean Workers' party—which is in fact a Communist party—decided to turn the entire domain into a military fortress, North Korea has devoted a great proportion of its human and material resources to building up its military strength. So far, there is no sign that North Korea intends to relax its militant line of policy. Any attempt on the part of the United States and the Republic of Korea to reduce tension would be interpreted as a sign of weakness. Reduction of tension on the Korean peninsula will require considerable patience and skill on the part of those who desire such an outcome.

Khrushchev's sensational de-Stalinization campaign also affected the Korean Communists in a serious way. The Chinese Communists are alleged to have stated in their secret letter to the Soviet party dated September 10, 1960, that the "real difference" between themselves and Khrushchev began when Khrushchev denied Stalin's positive role without previous discussion with the other Communist parties. It is evident that Khrushchev did not consult the Korean Communists before his famous speech at the Twentieth Congress, and hence it is possible that this lack of prior consultation may have opened a gap between Moscow and Pyongyang. But being a smaller power, North Korea probably did not take as much offence at Khrushchev's manner of handling the affair as the Chinese leaders. The North Korean press did not report on Khrushchev's speech, nor did it comment upon it for some time to come. Only in November 1961 did the premier declare that "the problem of how to evaluate Stalin's activities in the USSR belongs to the category of intra-party problems of the CPSU."

The problem for Premier Kim Il-song, however, was that Khrushchev and many other "revisionists" throughout the world chose to extend the de-Stalinization campaign to other Communist societies and called for changes in the direction of increasing democratization and checks and balances on the exercise of absolute power. To make matters worse, there were elements in the North Korean leadership that echoed these sentiments and called for drastic changes within North Korea. This eventually led to a major, and unprecedented, revolt at a plenum of the Central Committee of the Korean Workers' party in August 1956. And, according to our informants, the Russian ambassador in Pyongyang abetted the rebels!

Denunciation of a dead emperor, of course, is by no means unprecedented in Korean history, but these somewhat disloyal acts were always perpetrated for the benefit of those in power rather than with a view to overthrow the current regime. Obviously the premier could not sit idly by and let his enemies destroy him. He acted resolutely and pinned the sins of individual heroism, the root of the cult of personality, on his opponents disclaiming the fact that the cult of personality had ever existed in North Korea. The premier and his apologists argued that collective leadership had always been practiced in North Korea.

The fact of the matter, of course, is that ever since the Russians installed Kim Il-song at the helm of power in 1945, the North Korean Communists have steadily built a cult of personality around him, systematically destroying all his rivals as spies and running dogs of American imperialists. Mao Tsetung may not have been a Stalinist, but there was no doubt about Kim Il-song.

The revolt of 1956 provided the occasion for Kim Il-song to carry out a massive campaign to purge all his opponents. All the party members, high and low, were rescreened, and any cadre who had had a remote connection with the purged leaders was thoroughly investigated. Massive indoctrination campaigns ensued to insure unmitigated loyalty to the personality of the premier. Histories were rewritten to sanctify his every act—real and imaginary. Every word he had ever uttered became the eternal truth, the mirror of unrivaled wisdom. For more than a decade since then the Korean Communists have continued an endless series of campaigns to adulate and even deify the premier. Close scrutiny leads me to believe that the extent of the cult of personality in North Korea today exceeds that of Communist China. In North Korea today, Kim Il-song is the embodiment of the state, the nation, and the party. Was this heightening of the cult of personality in North Korea a reaction against Khrushchev's attempt to eliminate such a phenomenon? Or was this something the Korean Communists had intended even before the de-Stalinization campaign? Whatever the answers to these questions, we can be sure that Kim Il-song firmly disagreed with Khrushchev and the "revisionists" on the issue of the cult of personality.

One of the themes of the 1957 Moscow Declaration of the

Communist and Socialist parties stressed was the principle of "socialist internationalism." It said:

The socialist countries base their relations on principles of complete equality, respect for territorial integrity, state independence and sovereignty and non-interference in one another's affairs. These are vital principles. However, they do not exhaust the essence of relations between them. Fraternal mutual aid is part and parcel of these relations. This aid is a striking expression of socialist internationalism.

While Stalin was alive, the hierarchical relationship within the Communist camp was never questioned. The Soviet Union was unquestionably regarded as the fatherland of socialism, and the supremacy of Stalin was never in doubt. Questioning these relationships involved great risks. Particularly because the Korean Communists had been placed in power in North Korea by the Soviet occupation forces and because they depended greatly on Soviet support, North Korea's adulation of the Soviet Union was quite extreme.

The Korean Communists did talk of "Proletarian internationalism" before, but the meaning used to be quite different. For example, the May 1954 issue of the party organ, *Kulloja* (The Worker), carried an article "Proletarian Internationalism is the Banner of the Korean People's Life." But the key of the entire article is a quotation from Stalin who said, "Internationalists are those who are prepared to defend the Soviet Union unconditionally, without complaint, and without hesitation." Starting from there, the Korean author argues that true internationalists and true Communists must identify the love they have toward their own people and the fatherland with their love toward the Soviet Union, and that they must be boundlessly faithful to the Soviet Union. In an article published in 1955 entitled "Proletarian Internationalism and the Korean Revolution," however, the author stresses the aid from fraternal countries as the manifestation of internationalism. In 1958, the term internationalism was again redefined to mean the "unity, and strengthening of the socialist camp centered around the Soviet Union." Finally, an article published in the same journal in 1962 was entitled "Self-Reliance is the Basic Principle of Proletarian Internationalism."

Thus the party members and others in North Korea are constantly exhorted to espouse internationalism, but the mean-

ing of the term has changed drastically during the last eight years. At one time, the term was used to hold up "love" of the Soviet Union. After 1962, internationalism became a synonym for nationalism.

There were, of course, good reasons for these changes. Stalin died and was disgraced; China and other Communist countries began to rise and assert themselves. These countries, furthermore, disagreed among themselves on some of the more important issues. To make matters worse, Khrushchev attempted to dictate to his allies in too crude a manner. While preaching the virtue of collective leadership, he tended to brush off the opinions of leaders of other Communist societies. In the eyes of the Chinese, the Koreans, and some other Communists, Khrushchev was a "big-power chauvinist." It was natural for them to demand the recognition of equality, territorial integrity, independence, sovereignty, and noninterference in internal affairs.

The Korean Communists, of course, had been accustomed to Soviet control and supervision for quite some time. At the height of the quarrels with Moscow, Kim Il-song himself had revealed the extent of Soviet interference. The Russians, of course, had a hand in North Korean economic planning and allegedly criticized many aspects of the North Korean plans. The Russians also kept an eye on the content and manner of news reporting, insisting on publishing some of the Russian party materials in the North Korean party organs. They also had a hand in the instruction of the Russian language in the North Korean schools.

What angered Kim Il-song the most, however, was Khrushchev's support of some of the anti-Kim elements in 1956. I have already alluded to the 1956 revolt among the leading Communists in Pyongyang. It was true that Kim Il-song survived and that the anti-Kim elements were purged. Kim's opponents faced, of course, very big odds, but nonetheless the threat was real and formidable. The Russian support for these rivals, therefore, could not be easily forgiven or forgotten. But there was no sign that Khrushchev would change his tactics against those who disagreed with him. Although we do not know the details of the pressures exerted on Pyongyang before 1961, we do know that Khrushchev tried to drum out Albania and China from the Socialist camp in 1961. When North

Korean delegates appeared at various east European Communist gatherings, they were openly insulted. It was clear that North Korea would face the fate of Albania and China if she persisted in differing with Khrushchev. The choice given to Pyongyang by 1961 was either to conform or fight back.

Kim Il-song did decide to fight it out. In some respects, there was no choice. Having purged his opponents who took the Khrushchevian line, Kim Il-song could not very well turn around and submit to Khrushchev. Of course, on all three issues that concerned North Korea deeply, the Korean Communists agreed implicitly with the Chinese. So, beginning in 1961, Pyongyang issued statement after statement which did not differ very much from those emanating from Peking. Although Kim Il-song continued to warn against dogmatism as well as revisionism, there was no doubt that Moscow regarded the Korean Communists as the dogmatists.

It may have satisfied Kim Il-song's ego to denounce Khrushchev, assert his independence, and advocate a hawkish line, but the Korean Communists quickly learned that they were pitched against too powerful an opponent. The first element to suffer the consequence of the deteriorating relations with the Soviet Union was the North Korean defense structure. Even though North Korea did develop some defense industries, what they produced was obviously not adequate for modern warfare. North Korea was far from being able to produce MIGs, missiles, and other highly developed military hardware. Communist China, however, was not in a position to supply this badly needed equipment. It is probable that Moscow had been providing this equipment and spare parts to Pyongyang gratis, or at least on highly favorable terms. But when Pyongyang began to act in a recalcitrant manner, Moscow simply told Pyongyang to pay its own way. The cost of maintaining the existing stocks of equipment alone would be staggering for a small society such as North Korea. It is also probable that the Korean Communists' decision of December 1962 to stress military preparedness "even at the expense of sacrificing economic development" was directly related to the Russian decision to halt military aid to North Korea.

We do know that the Korean Communists moved into the program of "turning the whole country into a fortress" at

full steam. Factories went underground, underground air fields were built, a red militia was organized and trained, rice and salt were stored away in the mountains, all to defend the realm against a full scale attack from the South. Beginning in the summer of 1963, more and more agents were dispatched to the South to build a guerrilla base and to organize the "revolutionary masses." Why the sudden militancy? Did the world situation in 1962 and 1963 warrant these actions? What frightened the Korean Communists in the North? We must remember that this was still the era of President Ngo Dinh Diem in Vietnam and the "Americanization" of the Vietnam war had not even started. (Diem was overthrown only in November 1963.)

Quite possibly, the North Koreans were badly frightened by their weakness resulting from the sudden reversal of the Russian policy of supporting North Korean defense systems. Perhaps the Korean Communists did not anticipate that Khrushchev would cut off military aid to North Korea. Caught in a very vulnerable situation, North Korea began to dig in, ordering everyone to prepare for a massive assault from the South. There is no hard evidence to support these theories, however, and it will be some time before they are either proven or disproven.

Regardless of what caused the North Koreans to turn to militancy, the cost of these programs was very heavy both in economic and human terms. In spite of severe labor shortages, the regime allocated a significant portion of available manpower to military programs. Scarce financial resources had to be allocated to intensified military programs. North Korea announced in 1967 that more than a third of its state budget had been allocated to defense. The result of all this, which I believe was caused by Khrushchev's decision to cut off military aid to North Korea, was that the seven-year economic plan launched in 1961 had to be delayed. In 1966, the sixth year of the seven-year plan, North Korea announced that the seven-year plan would be delayed for three years. Even the three-year delay, however, did not permit the North Koreans to attain the ambitious goals set for themselves in 1961. At the Fifth Congress of the Korean Workers' party held in November 1970, the premier released statistics on only six commodi-

ties, but even there we find that all but coal production fell short of the original goals.¹

This situation obviously called for adjustment. The frail ship had to leave the left bank and somehow be steered to the right bank where supply was more abundant. We can easily imagine, therefore, the elation of the Korean Communists at the news of Khrushchev's downfall. The hostility of the Communist party of the Soviet Union may not have been all personal, but Khrushchev's downfall at least provided a face-saving opportunity to accost the Russians again. The opportunity in fact came much sooner than expected. Soon after Kosygin ascended to the seat of power, he paid a personal visit to Pyongyang in February 1965. It should be noted parenthetically that this was Kosygin's second visit to Pyongyang. Although plans had been made for Khrushchev's visit on two occasions, the visit had never materialized,

An immediate product of Kosygin's visit was the signing of the USSR-DPRK military agreement at the end of May 1965. This was followed by the conclusion of an agreement on economic and technical cooperation on June 20, 1966, in pursuance of which an economic and scientific-technical consultative committee was reestablished in October 1967. It is generally believed that the Soviet Union resumed shipping badly needed equipment and supplies to North Korea after these agreements. As of 1970, North Korea is believed to have 412,500 men in the regular armed forces and 1.3 million red militia. It possesses some six hundred airplanes including some MIG-21s and MIG-17s, four submarines, ten destroyers, self-propelled artillery, and T-34 tanks. North Korea probably has a better air force and navy than the Republic of Korea.

The resumption of aid from the Soviet Union was inevitably reflected in North Korea's stand on the Sino-Soviet dispute. Pyongyang, of course, had to move slowly and cautiously. In October 1965, Premier Kim Il-song renewed the old and familiar theme of uniting the international socialist camp and the need for "taking joint steps in the struggle against imperialism." This clearly meant considerable change

¹Coal production in 1970, according to the premier, was 27.5 million tons. The original plan called for 25 million tons. Other statistics were: electric power, 16,500 of the 19,400 million kwh.; crude steel, 2.2 of 2.3 million tons; textiles, 400 of 500 million linear meters; chemical fertilizer, 1.5 of 1.6 million tons; cement, 4 of 4.3 million tons.

from the earlier denunciations of the Soviet Union. But the parting shot against Peking was fired on August 12, 1966, when the party organ, *Nodong Shinmun* (The Labor News) devoted its editorial to the theme of self-identity. While the editorial attacked revisionists as before, it was more emphatic in denouncing dogmatism, which, according to the editorial, emphasized "only the general principles of Marxism-Leninism, ignoring the changed conditions or specific characteristics of a country." A similar theme was again sounded in October 1966 by Kim Il-song who said

... leftist-opportunism (or dogmatism) does not take into consideration the changed realities, and by dogmatically repeating individual tasks [defined] in Marxism-Leninism, it leads the people to extremist actions by taking up super-revolutionary slogans. It also isolates the party from the people, splinters revolutionary strength and makes it impossible to concentrate the attack against the main enemy.

It is safe to assume that Kim Il-song was referring to the Great Cultural Revolution in China when he spoke of the super-revolutionary slogans and the splintering of the revolutionary struggles.

What Kim Il-song wanted was a reconciliation between China and the Soviet Union in order to "bring about joint actions against imperialism." He implored the Chinese to distinguish between the enemy and the "friends who have committed errors." The premier was now against "narrow-mindedness." The whole speech reminds one of Mao Tse-tung's famous speech on "The Correct Handling of Contradictions" delivered at the time of the Hundred Flowers Campaign, but the Chinese were not willing to listen to Kim Il-song. In early 1967, the Red Guards in China attacked Kim Il-song as a "fat revisionist" and a "disciple of Khrushchev" living in luxury while the people suffered and creating economic chaos through his policies. In the spring of 1968, Kim was further attacked as an "out-and-out counter-revolutionary revisionist . . . as well as a millionaire, an aristocrat and a leading bourgeois element in Korea." An official of the Peking government criticized North Korea in January 1968 for "sitting on the fence."

The feud between Pyongyang and Peking, however, did not last long. Perhaps Peking was convinced that the Korean Communists were not revisionists after all. The Koreans could not

have been more daring and hence more "revolutionary" when they seized the Pueblo (on January 23, 1968) and shot down a U.S. reconnaissance plane (EC 191). Revisionists simply could not perpetrate such acts. Furthermore, the Koreans had not retaliated against the Chinese in kind when the latter had slung mud at the Koreans. In any event, both Pyongyang and Peking were ready to reconcile their differences. In October 1969, when the Chinese celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Republic, Ch'oe Yong-gon, the number two man in North Korea and the head of the presidium of the Supreme Assembly of the DPRK, led the attending Korean delegation. In April 1970, Chou En-lai paid a return visit to Pyongyang signaling the restoration of friendly relations between the two Communist powers. Chou's April 5 speech delivered upon his arrival at the Pynogyang airport could very well have been delivered a few years ago when Pyongyang was closely standing by the Chinese. I shall quote two paragraphs from the short speech to convey Chou's sentiments:

China and Korea are neighbors as closely related as lips and teeth, and our two peoples are intimate brothers. Both in the long struggle against Japanese imperialism and in the war of resistance against U.S. imperialist aggression, our two peoples stood together and fought shoulder to shoulder. Common struggles have bound our two peoples in a profound militant friendship. Our friendship is cemented with blood; it has been long tested and will stand up to future tests.

At present, U.S. imperialism is advocating in Asia a policy of war expansion of making 'Asians fight Asians.' Fostered energetically by U.S. imperialism, the Japanese reactionaries are stepping up the revival of militarism, willingly serving as the former's shock troops. Colluding with each other, the U.S. and Japanese reactionaries are directing the spearhead of their aggression squarely against the peoples of China, Korea, the three countries of Indio-China and other Asian countries. Under such circumstances, the further strengthening of the militant unity between the Chinese and Korean peoples is of great significance. The Chinese people will forever stand by the fraternal Korean people in their struggle to defend the security of their Fatherland.

Kim Il-song replied in kind: "Should U.S. imperialism and Japanese imperialism forget the historical lesson and dare to launch a new adventuresome war of aggression again, then the Korean people will again, as in the past, together with

the Chinese people, fight against the enemy to the end." The common enemies of the Chinese and Korean Communists are the so-called American imperialists and Japanese reactionaries. The attitude toward "imperialism" still brings Peking and Pyongyang together. North Korea still finds it impossible to follow the Russian policy of "strengthening the trust" or "collaborating" with the West.

North Korea's switch toward Peking was again confirmed at the Fifth Congress of the Korean Workers' party held in November 1970. This was the first party congress held since 1961, and, like party congresses of all other Communist parties, this was the time to review past accomplishments and set forth the new direction.

This, of course, does not mean that North Korea is going to attack the Russian "revisionists" with the same intensity as during the 1963-64 period. The Korean Communists are not likely to forget the bitter and harsh experience of those years. Principles are very important for the Communists, but survival is essential.

How should we then evaluate the Korean Communists in North Korea? Are they the dogmatists as some of the "revisionists" charged? Or are they the "revisionists" as the Chinese labeled them some time ago? Or are they simply "opportunist" sitting between two stools?

The facts of the last decade I have presented to you should speak for themselves. My conclusion, however, is that they are deeply committed to orthodox (or traditional) versions of Marxism-Leninism which called for war as a means of attaining Communist victory. They are the Stalinists who believe in the role of the hero in history and believe in compulsive and coercive control of the masses to attain the established goals. They are also the nationalists who wish to elevate their status not only within the Communist camp but also in the world arena. But they are deeply frustrated simply because they are trying to fight against the historical current. Their frustration is likely to mount within the foreseeable future rather than recede. We must keep a sharp eye on the frail ship lest it explode in frustration and take the rest of us with it.