

[...]

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2. [...] Kim thinks they should not count on substantial help from the partisans, but Pak Heon-yeong has a different opinion. He thinks the help [from partisans] will be significant. At any rate, they hope that the partisans will help in actions against the communications of the enemy and that they will occupy the main ports of South Korea, though they will not be able to do this at the beginning of the campaign, maybe later.

3. With regard to the question of how the population will regard the fact that the northerners will begin a civil war, Kim Il Sung oscillates. During the conversation on September 12 he definitely stated that if the northerners begin military actions, this will produce a negative impression in the people and that it is politically disadvantageous to them to begin it. In connection with this he recollected that during the conversation between Mao Zedong and the Korean representative Kim Il in the spring of this year Mao stated that in his opinion the northerners should not begin military action now, since in the first place, it is politically disadvantageous and in the second place, the Chinese friends are occupied at home and cannot give them serious help. The thinking of Kim Il Sung amounts to waiting until the conclusion of the main [military] operations in China.

In the conversation on September 13 Kim Il Sung, under the clear influence of Heo Gai [Ho Kai] (a Soviet Korean, secretary of the Central Committee of the Labor Party, who participated in the second conversation in order to translate), declared that the people will welcome an armed attack by the northerners and that if they begin military actions they will not lose politically because of this. Later in the course of the conversation Kim Il Sung stated that if a civil war is drawn out, then they will be in a politically disadvantageous position. And since under present conditions it is impossible to count on a rapid victory, he does not propose to begin a civil war, but only to secure the Ongjin peninsula and a portion of the territory of South Korea to the east of this peninsula, for example to Kaidzio [Gaeseong].

They consider that in case of a civil war the population of South Korea will be sympathetic toward the northern army and will help it. In the case of successful military actions they hope to organize a number of uprisings in South Korea.

4. According to official data, there are 500 American military advisers and instructors in South Korea. According to secret service information, which needs confirmation, there are 900 American military advisers and instructors and 1500 soldiers and security officers in South Korea. In case of a civil war in Korea, the Americans, in the opinion of Kim Il Sung and Pak Heon-yeong, can: send Japanese and Chinese [soldiers] to the aid of the southerners; support [the South Koreans] from the sea and air with their own means; American instructors will take immediate part in organizing military actions.

5. The North Korean army numbers 97,500 men (including the air force and coastal defense units). The army has 64 tanks, 59 armored cars, 75 airplanes. The police force in the north numbers 23,200 men. Kim considers that the northern army is superior to the southern army in its technical equipment (tanks, artillery, planes), its discipline, the training of the officers and troops, and also in its moral-political relations.

In the northern army there are a number of insufficiencies: insufficient number and weak preparation of pilots, insufficient number of ships, large caliber arms are unprepared for military operations, insufficient military supplies.

The proposal of Kim Il Sung amounts to the following: at the beginning to strike the South Korean army on the Ongjin peninsula, to destroy the two regiments located there, to occupy the territory of the peninsula and the territory to the east of it, for example to Kaidzio [Gaeseong], and then to see what to do further. After this blow the South Korean army may become demoralized. In this case move further to the south. If the South Korean army is not demoralized as a result of the Ongjin operation, to seal the borders seized, to shorten in that way the line of defense approximately by one third.

It is not possible to hurry with the operation on the Ongjin peninsula. [It is necessary] to wait until additional arms arrive from the Soviet Union. Meanwhile [we must] consolidate the defenses on the remaining portions of the 38th parallel.

Kim Il Sung admits the possibility of the Ongjin operation turning into a civil war, but he hopes that this does not happen, since the southerners, in his opinion, do not dare to attack other portions of the 38th parallel.

Our formulations.

The partial operation outlined by Kim Il Sung can and will probably turn into a civil war between north and south. There are more than a few supporters of civil war in the leading circles of both the north and the south. Therefore, in beginning this partial operation it is necessary to calculate that it might be the beginning of a civil war. Is it advisable to the north to begin a civil war now? We propose that this is not advisable.

The northern army is insufficiently strong to carry out successful and rapid operations against the south. Even taking into account the help which will be rendered to the northern army by the partisans and the population of South Korea it is impossible to count on a rapid victory. Moreover, a drawn out civil war is disadvantageous for the north both militarily and politically. In the first place, a drawn out war gives the possibility to the Americans to render corresponding aid to Syngmann Rhee. After their lack of success in China, the Americans probably will intervene in Korean affairs more decisively than they did in China and, it goes without saying, apply all their strength to save Syngmann Rhee. Further, in case of a drawn out civil war the military casualties, suffering and adversity may elicit in the population a negative mood toward the one who began the war.

Moreover, a drawn out war in Korea could be used by the Americans for purposes of agitation against the Soviet Union and for further inflaming war hysteria. Therefore, it is inadvisable that the north begin a civil war now. Given the present internal and external situation a decision about an attack on the south would be correct only in such case as the northerners could count on ending the war quickly; the preconditions for it are not there.

But if the indicated partial operation were crowned with success and did not lead to civil war, then in this case the northerners, while having won strategically, would lose politically in many regards. Such an operation would be used to accuse the northerners of trying to inflame a fratricidal war. It would also be used for the purpose of further increasing American and international interference in Korean affairs in the interests of the south.

We propose that under the indicated conditions to begin the partial operation conceived by Kim Il Sung is inadvisable.