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KOREA: "IMPOSSIBLE LIES" OF THE SEOUL INFORMATION BUREAU

*Korea*

The defection of the Chunchon and Hongchon battalions of the South Korean Army is exploited by Pyongyang and Moscow. Both radios report events connected with their crossing to North Korea--including the festive reception accorded the troops when they reached Pyongyang. And Radio Pyongyang brings to its microphone members of the defecting units who express their disgust with Syngman Rhee and the United States and their joy at being in "democratic" North Korea.

Moscow's commentator, Pietersky, uses the defections to attack the credibility of the Seoul Information Bureau's 4 May report of a border invasion by North Korean troops--an "impossible lie" designed to conceal the "actual" facts of the troop defection. Quoting the Information Bureau's report that about 500 armed men invaded South Korea on 4 May and engaged South Korean troops in a

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day-long battle as a result of which South Korea lost one man, Pietersky claims to report "what actually took place." His version is that on the morning of 4 May the two battalions rebelled because "they were opposed to Syngman Rhee"; they then "headed for the 38th parallel armed with American weapons."

"Thus, Syngman Rhee's army did not lose just one man as reported by the so-called Seoul Information Bureau, but lost 500 men. These 500 men were not lost in battle but were lost because they went over to the northern part of the Korean Democratic People's Republic, spontaneously." (in Korean, 7 May 1949)

Pietersky concludes: "it is certain that the so-called rulers of South Korea are trying to hide the facts from the people of Korea and the world by the dissemination of impossible lies."

Exploitation of the 4 May events takes precedence over more familiar propaganda topics in monitored broadcasts. The superiority of conditions in the North over those in the South, and the superior nature of the Soviet-Korean agreements and of Soviet-Korean cultural relations are mentioned; but they do not receive the same emphasis often given them in the past.

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