

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Korea/USSR

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DATE DISTR. 8 JUN 50

SUBJECT Repatriation of Koreans from USSR to North Korea  
25X1A6a

NO. OF PAGES 1

PLACE ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF INFO.

25X1X6

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

1. Most of the Koreans who were detained by the Soviet armies with Japanese prisoners of war in Manchuria were repatriated in October 1949. A special group of forty young Koreans, however, was kept in the USSR and received special training before the members returned home. Members of the group were all under 30 years old and were former conscripts of the Japanese army. The manner of selection for their present work was not described.
2. In January 1949 the special group was sent to Vladivostok for steamship crew training. In January 1950 they were sent from Vladivostok to Wonsan (127-26, 39-10) via Chengjin (129-49, 41-43) on a vessel of the Korean-Soviet Trading Company. At Wonsan they were assigned as crew members on North Korean coast guard vessels operating along the coast between Wonsan and Sokcho-ri (Tongch'o-ri, 128-36, 38-12) in Kangwon Province. Some also were assigned as mechanics in the government-controlled Wonsan Shipbuilding Company. They are all quartered in the Wonsan North Harbor (Puk Hang 北港), near the Wonsan Naval Academy for State Security Officers.
3. Since its arrival in Wonsan, the special group has been restricted from contact with the local population. Members have talked, however, to fellow-workers in the dockyards, about their situation as prisoners and the technical training they received in the USSR. Most members praised Soviet politics and commended the hospitable treatment they had received from Soviet authorities during their detention. Group members address one another by Russian names, and as a result their Korean names are not known.
4. Some of the members claim that they are natives of South Korea and wish to return home, but their accents indicate that they are natives of North and South Hamgyong Provinces. Therefore, it was thought by their Wonsan contacts, that these members were planning to go to South Korea not to return home but on some special mission for the USSR.\*

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Comment. Nothing was disclosed by any member of the group about how or when or by what route he was to proceed to South Korea nor about special missions to be carried out there.

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Document No. \_\_\_\_\_  
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 Declassified  
 Class. Change to: TS, S, C  
 Auth: HR 19-2  
 Date: 2 JUN 1978  
 By: 24