

## 7. *The 1972 Constitution and Top Communist Leaders*

CHONG-SIK LEE

The first session of the fifth Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) adopted the draft of a new constitution on December 27, 1972. It is an interesting document reaffirming the changes that had taken place in North Korea during the previous two decades. It codified some of the ideological principles and policy lines enunciated by the leadership and introduced some changes in the political structure. New institutions were created and the new offices were filled. This paper will attempt to describe some of the salient features of these changes and examine the new structure of authority in North Korea by analyzing both the functions vested in various offices by the constitution and the nature of the leadership.

### THE 1972 CONSTITUTION

That the DPRK needed a new constitution cannot be disputed. The old constitution, adopted in 1948, was a document designed for the "bourgeois democratic" stage in North Korea, while the North Korean leadership claimed to have entered the "socialist era" in 1958. In this sense, the drafting of a new constitution was long overdue. The ideological assumptions embodied in the old constitution as well as the political structure it had instituted had long been obsolete, and there had been a critical need to bring the constitution up to date. North Korean jurists were reported to have been engaged in the task of drafting a new constitution as early as 1960.<sup>1</sup>

Evidently, the North Korean leaders decided that they could no longer postpone the constitutional revision. Kim Il-sŏng declared at the first session of the fifth SPA on December 25, 1972, that

our realities today urgently demand the establishment of a new socialist constitution legally to consolidate the great achievements of our people in the socialist revolution and building of socialism and lay down principles for the political, economic, and cultural spheres in socialist society.<sup>2</sup>

As to the content of the new constitution, the premier declared:

The new socialist constitution correctly reflects the achievements made in the socialist revolution and building of socialism in our country, defines the principles to govern the activities in the political, economic, and cultural fields in society and the basic rights and duties of the citizens, and stipulates the composition and functions of the state organs and the principles of their activities. It is to protect by law the socialist system and the dictatorship of the proletariat established in the northern half of the republic and to serve the revolutionary cause of the working class.<sup>3</sup>

The principal aim of the new constitution then is to "protect by law" the socialist system and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus, while Article 2 of the old constitution stated simply that "the sovereignty of the DPRK resides in the people" without defining who constituted the people, Article 7 of the new constitution states that the "sovereignty of the DPRK rests with the workers, peasants, soldiers and working intellectuals." The DPRK, according to the new constitution, is a "revolutionary state power which has inherited the brilliant traditions . . .," (Article 3) and that it "exercises the dictatorship of the proletariat and carries through the class and mass lines" (Article 10).<sup>4</sup>

In practical terms, the basic aim of the leaders in drafting the new constitution was to bring the goals and structures of the state into consonance with those of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK). Although the old constitution contained a few provisions that can be identified with socialism, for example, nationalization of major industries, mineral resources, forests, and waters, it was virtually indistinguishable from the constitution of a non-Communist, democratic state. Meanwhile, vigorous efforts have been made in North Korea to build a "socialist" system of economy, including collectivization of the farms and abolition of all private commerce, and an intensive program to insure thorough ideological change has been enforced. The leadership evidently felt that this change should be reflected in the new constitution.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the wording of the constitutional provisions dealing with "politics" is similar to the preamble of the rules of the WPK. Article 5 of the new constitution states, for example, that

the DPRK strives to achieve the complete victory of socialism in the northern half, drive out foreign forces on a nationwide scale, reunify the country peacefully on a democratic basis and attain complete national independence.

This provision can be compared with the following paragraphs from the preamble of the rules of the WPK:<sup>5</sup>

The immediate aim of the WPK lies in guaranteeing the complete victory of socialism in the northern half of the republic. . . .

The WPK struggles for the liberation of the southern half of our country from American imperialist aggressive forces and internal reactionary rule. . . .

The WPK successfully carries out the building of socialism in the northern half of our country by consolidating the socialist system, and by mobilizing the creativity of the people. . . .

With respect to power structure, the anomaly was even greater. Since the conclusion of the war in 1953, the state had effectively been turned into an instrument of the party, or of its supreme, unchallenged leader Kim Il-sŏng, and the entire state mechanism, including the SPA and its Presidium, had been subordinated to the party, which had become a super-state. And yet the old constitution had defined the SPA as the supreme, sovereign organ with the highest authority in the state, empowered to establish basic principles concerning domestic and foreign policies. The premier, being the "principal officer of the DPRK," was required to "obey the SPA in the conduct of its activities" (Article 60). The Presidium of the SPA was charged with supervising the "implementation of the constitution and the laws" under the direction of the premier.

One of the first items the new constitution deals with is the relationship between the party and the state. Article 4 states that "the DPRK is guided in its activity by the *chuch'e* (self-identity) idea of the Workers' Party of Korea, which is a creative application of Marxism-Leninism to our country's reality." The implication here is that the DPRK and the WPK are not only inseparable, but that a hierarchical relationship exists, the party being superior to the state. Premier Kim Il-sŏng confirmed this relationship, as he has done on numerous occasions before, on December 25 by saying, "Under our party's wise guidance, the government of the republic has achieved really great successes . . . in the past years."<sup>6</sup>

With the relationship between party and state redefined, the North Korean leaders overhauled the political structure of the DPRK in order that the structure of authority would conform to the reality of power distribution. In doing so, the myth of legislative supremacy embodied in the old constitution was discarded, the supreme authority of the leader legitimized, and the enormous power of the inner circle of the ruling elite institutionalized. These

purposes were attained by (1) the creation of a presidency, (2) the establishment of the Central People's Committee, and (3) the emasculation of the Supreme People's Assembly and its Presidium.

#### NEW INSTITUTIONS

##### *The Presidency*

According to Article 89 of the new constitution, the president is the head of state and represents the DPRK. Under the old constitution, there was no one designated as the head of state, and following the Soviet practice, the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA, Ch'oe Yong-gŏn) had represented the state. The new presidency will conform to the reality of the supreme power exercised by Kim Il-sŏng. Few states in the world today, if any, can rival North Korea in the extent of adulation, indeed deification, of its leader. Anyone in doubt should read the following announcement of the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) released December 28, 1972, reporting the election of Kim Il-sŏng as the new president:<sup>7</sup>

The first session of the fifth Supreme People's Assembly of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea elected as President of the DPRK Comrade Kim Il-sŏng, the great leader of our party and our people, peerless patriot, national hero, ever-victorious iron-willed brilliant commander and one of the outstanding leaders of the international communist movement and working-class movement, who founded the Workers' Party of Korea, an ever-victorious Marxist-Leninist party, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, a genuine worker-peasant state, and leads our revolution along the one road of victory.

The president, elected for a four-year term by the SPA, is given all the powers normally held by a strong president. He convenes and presides over meetings of the cabinet (the Administration Council—*Chŏngmu wŏn*), and serves as the supreme commander of the armed forces and as chairman of the National Defense Commission. He promulgates laws and ordinances of the SPA (a function held by the Presidium of the SPA under the old constitution), the decrees of the Central People's Committee, and the decisions of the SPA Presidium. He is also empowered to issue "orders," grant special pardons, ratify or abrogate treaties, and receive the credentials of foreign envoys. Some of these functions had been performed by the SPA Presidium. It should be noted in passing that while the North Korean president is called *chusŏk* and the South Korean counterpart is called *taet'ongyŏng*, both presidents share similar powers.<sup>8</sup>

Some interesting observations can be made about the vice-president, called for by the new constitution of the DPRK as is also true for the secretary and other members of the Central People's Committee, vice-presidents can be recalled by the SPA on the recommendation of the president. The responsibilities of North Korean vice-presidents are also quite different from those of other countries; Article 99 of the constitution states that the vice-president "assist" the president in his work. Unlike in the United States and elsewhere, vice-presidents do not succeed the president in the event of his incapacitation or death.

The intent behind the provisions of the constitution can be clearly seen by the election of Ch'oe Yong-gŏn and Kang Yang-uk as vice-presidents. Although Ch'oe enjoys the number two position in the Central Committee of the WPK and was granted the illustrious title of vice-marshal of the People's Army of Korea in 1953, his role since 1962 has been totally ceremonial as the chairman of the Presidium of the SPA. He was born in 1900, and his age alone makes it rather difficult for him to play an active role. Kang Yang-uk, on the other hand, is not even a member of the WPK, but rather is chairman of the Korean Democratic Party, a paper organization with small membership. He is a Presbyterian minister and has performed useful functions for the DPRK as a front man, particularly in dealing with foreign countries. He has, for example, toured various foreign countries as the head of friendship delegations. It is alleged that he enjoys a high status in North Korea because of his family ties with Kim Il-sŏng, Kang being a maternal granduncle of the supreme leader. The role of the vice-presidents, therefore, is ceremonial, particularly in dealing with foreign countries.

#### *The Central People's Committee*

The Central People's Committee (CPC) is designated the "highest leadership organ of sovereignty of the DPRK."<sup>9</sup> Since the SPA is designated simply as the "highest sovereign organ," presumably the CPC is to exercise leadership over the SPA. The CPC is headed by the president and consists of the two vice-presidents of the DPRK, a secretary, and members of the CPC. At present there is a total of twenty-five persons in the CPC. All these officials are elected by the SPA for a term of four years—all of them except the president are to be elected "on the recommendation of the president" (Article 76). In the CPC are concentrated all the important functions that had been assigned to the SPA and its Presidium

under the old constitution. Articles 103 and 104 succinctly summarize these functions.<sup>10</sup>

Article 103—The Central People's Committee exercises the following functions and powers: (1) to shape the internal and external policies of the state; (2) to direct the work of the Administration Council of the local People's Assemblies and People's Committees; (3) to direct the work of judicial and procuratorial organs; (4) to guide the work of national defense and State security; (5) to supervise the execution of the Constitution, the laws and ordinances of the Supreme People's Assembly, the orders of the President of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the decrees, decisions and directives of state organs which contravene them; (6) to establish or abolish ministries, executive bodies of the Administration Council; (7) to appoint or remove vice-premiers, ministers and other members of the Administration Council; (8) to appoint or recall ambassadors and ministers; (9) to appoint or remove high-ranking officers and confer military titles of general; (10) to institute decorations, titles of honor, military titles and diplomatic grades and confer decorations and titles of honor; (11) to grant general amnesties; (12) to institute or change the administrative division; (13) to declare a state of war and issue mobilization orders in case of emergency.

Article 104—The Central People's Committee adopts decrees and decisions and issues directives.

According to Article 105, the CPC can establish and appoint members of a number of commissions that deal with internal policy, foreign policy, national defense, justice, and security; it can also create other commissions as needed. Presumably, these commissions will be headed by members of the CPC, but the members are not known. It is probably not too farfetched to compare these commissions to the specialized assistants and their staffs in the offices of presidents of the Republic of Korea and the United States.

#### *The Supreme People's Assembly*

The SPA retains only certain nominal powers, almost all important state functions having been taken away from it. It still adopts or amends the constitution, laws, and ordinances; but the likelihood that it would take independent initiative was never present, even under the old constitution. It is also empowered to establish the "basic principles of domestic and foreign policies of the state," but it is for the CPC to "shape" these policies. Otherwise, the SPA is left as a legitimizing organ, "electing" such officers as the president and vice-presidents of the DPRK, the Presidium (or standing committee) of the SPA, and the president of the Central Court and of the Central Procurator's Office. As noted, the SPA elects the mem-

bers and other officers of the CPC "on the recommendation of the president."

## TOP LEADERS

*Members of the Political Elite*

As was amply shown under the old constitution of the DPRK, constitutional provisions alone do not reveal the actual power relationship between one governmental institution and another. Political institutions are, after all, operated by men, and the ultimate power position of a given agency is determined by the power and influence of the occupants of the respective offices. In order to understand properly the significance of the change in the political structure of the DPRK, therefore, one must analyze the relative strength of the occupants of the new and old institutions.

In most non-Communist societies, assessment of the relative power of a given individual would be extremely difficult, particularly if one intended to do so with any precision. Fortunately for students of Communist societies, the task is made considerably easier by the system of rank ordering of the members of the Central Committee of the ruling parties. Each party congress—"the highest organ of the party"—elects members of the Central Committee to direct all party work in the intervals between party congresses, establish party policies, and otherwise keep the party in operation. In the case of the WPK, the Central Committee in turn elects the Political Committee to direct all the activities of the party. A newly elected member of the Central Committee is assigned a rank order that indicates his status within the party hierarchy. This order, of course, is subject to abrupt change. In the WPK, many party leaders with high rank orders have been purged between congresses, and the rank order attained at a given congress does not automatically indicate status during the years before the next congress.

The fifth Congress of the WPK was held in November 1970, only two years before the structural changes in the government were instituted. There had been no indication during the intervening two years that any substantial change had occurred in the power hierarchy of the Central Committee. One can, therefore, use the rank orders given at the fifth Congress to assess the power status of the top elites of North Korea. The fifth Congress elected 117 full members of the Central Committee and 55 candidate members. As can be seen from table 1, the top elite of North Korea are concentrated in the Political Committee (11 full members and 9 alternate

members) and the 13-member Secretariat. Some of the top elite figures serve on both committees.

TABLE 1

## SELECT LEADERS OF NORTH KOREA — 1973

Name	WPK CC Rank	WPK Political Comm. Comm.	WPK Secre- tariat	DPRK SPA CPC	SPA Standing Admin. Comm.	DPRK Admin. Council	Parti- san
Kim Il-sŏng	1	x	Gen. Sec.	x		President	P
Ch'oe Yong-gŏn	2	x	x	x		V. President	P
Kim Il	3	x	x	x		Premier	P
Pak Sŏng-ch'ŏl	4	x		x		V. Premier Ch. Comm. of People's Serv.	P
Ch'oe Hyŏn	5	x		x		Defense	P
Kim Yŏng-ju	6	x	x	x			P
O Chin-u	7	x	x	x			P
Kim Tong-gyu	8	x	x	x		V. President	P
Sŏ Ch'ŏl	9	x		x			P
Kim Chung-nin	10	x	x	x			P
Han Ik-su	11	x	x	x			P
Hyŏn Mu-gwang	12	c	x	x		Ch. Trans. Comu. Comm.	
Chŏng Chun-t'aek	13	c		x		V. Premier	Died, 1973
Yang Hyŏng-sŏp	14	c	x	x			
[See note]							
Kim Man-gŭm	15	c		x		V. Premier	
[See note]						Ch. Ag. Comm.	
Nam Il	16			x		V. Premier	
						Ch. Light Ind.	
						Comm.	
Ch'oe Yong-jin	17	c					P
Hong Wŏn-gil	18			x		V. Premier	
						Ch. Machine Bldg. Ind.	
						Comm.	
Chŏng Kyŏng-hŭi	19						
Kim Yŏ-jung	20						P
O Paek-yong	21						P
Chŏn Ch'ang-ch'ŏl	22					Sec.	P
Yu Chang-sik	28			x			
[See note]							
Hŏ Tam	29			x		Foreign Aff.	
Kim Pyŏng-ha	30			x		Pub. Security	
Yim Ch'un'ch'u	34			x (Sec.)			P
Kim Chwa-hyŏk	35		x				P
Yi Kŭn-mo	54	c		x			P
[See note]							
Yun Ki-bok	57			x			

TABLE 1 — Continued

Name	WPK CC Rank	WPK Political Secre- Comm.ariat	WPK	DPRK SPA CPC	DPRK Standing Admin. Comm. Council	Parti- san
Ch'oe Chae-u	58	c		x		V. Premier Ch. State Plan. Comm.
O T'ae-bong	60		x	x		
Ch'ong Chun-gi	62				x	
Y'ŏn Hy'ong-muk	63	c	x	x		
Kang S'ong-san	65				x	
						[See note]
Kim S'ong-ae	67	c		x		
Kye Ŭng-t'ae	73					Foreign Trade
Kim Y'ong-nam	80				x	
Kim I-hun	98				x	
Kim Ky'ong-y'ŏn	100					Finance
Hwang Chang-y'ŏp	102					Ch'rman
Yi My'ŏn-sang	103				x	
Y'ŏm T'ae-jun	105				x	
Ch'ŏn Se-bong	148				x	
Yi Chong-ok	[See note]			x		Ch. Heavy Ind. Comm. Labor Adm.
Ch'ong Tu-hwan	[See note]					
O Hy'ŏn-ju	[See note]				x	
H'ŏ Ch'ong-suk	[See note]					V.Ch'rman
Kang Yang-uk				x		V. President
Hong Ki-mun						V.Ch'rman
Pak Sin-d'ŏk					x	
Yi Y'ong-bok					x	
Yi Tu-ch'an					x	
Han S'ong-yong						Ship Machine Bldg. Industry Chem. Ind.
Kim Hwan						
Kim Yun-sang						Fishery
Mun Py'ong-il						Bldg. Mater- ials Ind.
Kim S'ŏk-ki						Education
Yi Chang-s'ŏn						Culture and Art
Kong Chin-t'ae						External Econ. Aff.
Pak Im-t'ae						Construction
Yi Nak-pin						Pub. Health

NOTE: Between 1973 and 1974, the status of some leaders underwent changes. Yi K'un-mo (54) and Yang Hy'ong-s'ŏp (14) were promoted to full members of the Political Committee; Kang S'ong-san (65) and Yu Chang-sik (28) were appointed candidate members of the Political Committee. Yu was concurrently appointed a member of the Secretariat of the WPK. A person not on the list, Yi Yong-mu (53) was appointed a member of the Political Committee. Yi reportedly replaced Han Ik-su (11) as the director of the General Political Bureau of the Korean People's Army. Kim Man-g'um (15) was replaced by S'ŏ Kwan-h'ui as the chairman of the

Agricultural Commission. So was not a member of the Central Committee of the WPK in 1970; he was last known as the chairman of the Agricultural Management Committee of the City of P'y'ongyang.

In 1961 Yi Chong-ok was number 11, Ch'ong Tu-hwan was number 47, and O Hy'ŏn-ju was number 63. H'ŏ Ch'ong-suk was number 34 in 1956 but not in 1961.

WPK = Workers' Party of Korea; SPA = Supreme People's Assembly; CPC = Central People's Committee.

Table 2 presents the functional or specialty areas of the top leaders. When an individual holds an office in a certain functional area for a long period of time, it can be regarded as his specialty area because he would have acquired knowledge and experience in that area even if his earlier education and training were not in that field. Some individuals have occupied offices in different functional areas and have held these different offices for extended periods. In those cases, they have been assigned more than one area of functional specialty. A few individuals dealing with foreign trade were assigned two functional areas, that is, economy and foreign affairs.

#### The Political Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea

Table 1 reveals some interesting phenomena, some obvious and others not so obvious. For example, those who hold rank orders 1 through 17 (with the exception of number 16, Nam Il) are all on the political committee, which confirms the most important decision-making organ of the North Korean power structure. Nam Il is the only survivor of those who returned from the Soviet Union remaining in the top echelon of North Korean leadership, and he had been tainted by his indirect involvement in the 1956 conspiracy against Kim Il-s'ong. His loyalty and ability, however, had restored the leader's trust in him and he was made a member of the Political Committee after the Fourth Party Congress of October 1961 when he was promoted to rank order number 10 from his previous number 23 position. At the Second Party Conference of October 1966, however, he was not a member of the Political Committee.

Except for Kim Y'ong-ju (number 6) and Kim Chung-nin (number 10), all the members of the Political Committee had been partisans in Manchuria under Kim Il-s'ong, although Ch'oe Yong-g'ŏn, number 2, had led his own unit in Manchuria and joined Kim Il-s'ong much later. These individuals have thus been closely associated with Kim Il-s'ong for nearly four decades, serving as his subordinates in the most trying circumstances. Kim Y'ong-ju is, of course, Kim Il-s'ong's younger brother, and this blood relationship assures his loyalty to the leader.

TABLE 2

## FUNCTIONAL SPECIALITY OF NORTH KOREAN LEADERS

Name	WPK CC Rank	Ad- min/ Gen.	Eco- no- my	Mili- tary & Secur- ity	Party	For- eign Aff.	Mass Aux. Orgs.	Mass media/ Cul- ture	SPA Standg. Comm.	Edu- ca- tion
Kim Il-sŏng	1	x								
Ch'oe Yong-gŏn	2								x	
Kim Il	3	x	x							
Pak Sŏng-ch'ŏl	4					x				
Ch'oe Hyŏn	5			x						
Kim Yŏng-ju	6				x					
O Chin-u	7			x						
Kim Tong-gyu	8					x				
Sŏ Ch'ŏl	9					x				
Kim Chung-min	10				x				x	
Han Ik-su	11			x						
Hyŏn Mu-gwang	12		x			x				
Chŏng Chun-t'aek	13		x							
Yang Hyŏng-sŏp	14				x					x
Kim Man-gŭm	15		x							
Nam Il	16		x			x				
Ch'oe Yong-jin	17			x						
Hong Wŏn-gil	18		x							
Chŏng-Kyŏng-hŭi	19									
Kim Yŏ-jung	20					x				
O Paek-yong	21			x						
Chŏn Ch'ang-ch'ŏl	22				x					
Yu Chang-sik	28					x		x		
Hŏ Tam	29					x				
Kim Pyŏng-ha	30					x				
Yim Ch'un-ch'u	34									x
Kim Chwa-hyŏk	35			x						

TABLE 2—Continued

Yi Kŭn-mo	54		x							
Yun Ki-bok	57		x							x
Ch'oe Chae-u	58		x							
O T'ae-bong	60	x						x		
Chŏng-Chun-gi	62							x		
Yŏn Hyŏng-muk	63					x				
Kang Sŏng-san	65					x				
Kim Sŏng-ae	67						x			
Kye Ung-t'ae	73		x							
Kim Yŏng-nam	80	x								
Kim I-hun	98		x							
Kim Yŏng-yŏn	100					x				
Hwang Chang-yŏp	102							x		x
Yi Myŏn-sang	103							x		
Yŏm T'ae-jun	105					x				
Ch'ŏn Se-bong	148							x		
Yi Chong-ok			x							
Chŏng Tu-hwan			x							
O Hyŏn-ju						x				
Hŏ Chŏng-suk		x							x	
Kang Yang-uk							x			
Hong Ki-mun										
Pak Sin-dŏk							x			
Yi Yong-bok										
Yi Tu-ch'an										
Han Sŏng-yong			x							
Kim Hwan			x							
Kim Yun-sang			x							
Mun Pyŏng-il			x							
Kim Sŏk-ki										x
Yi Chang-sŏn										x
Kong Chin-t'ae			x							
Pak Im-t'ae			x							
Yi Nak-pin										x

NOTE. WPK CC = Worker's Party of Korea Central Committee; SPA = Supreme People's Assembly.

Table 2 also raises some doubt about the status of Ch'oe Yong-jin. Since being elected to the Central Committee in 1956 as a candidate member (rank order 25), he has ascended the ladder rapidly, rising to full membership (number 23) in 1961 and to number 17 in 1970. He has also occupied the all-important position of vice-chairman of the Military Affairs Committee, been vice-premier, and served as a general of the People's Army of Korea. But he was not given any of his previous positions in 1972 nor was he assigned to the CPC. The only two other high-ranking members of the Central Committee who were not elected to the CPC are Sŏ Ch'ŏl (number 9) and Han Ik-su (number 11), which can be easily explained by their memberships in the Standing Committee of the SPA. Sŏ Ch'ŏl, one of the oldest leaders in North Korea, had been serving as the chairman of the Diplomatic Committee of the SPA since 1967 and as vice-president of the Presidium since 1970. Han had been a member of the SPA since 1962, but why the director of the General Political Bureau of the Defense Ministry was assigned to the new SPA instead of the Central People's Committee is not known.

It is also uncertain why low-ranking members of the Central Committee of the WPK, such as numbers 54, 58, 63, and 67 were chosen as candidate members of the Political Committee, although the case of number 67 is obvious in that she happens to be the wife of the supreme leader. The only plausible explanation that can be afforded for the others is that both Yi Kŭn-mo (number 54) and Ch'oe Chae-u are technocrats with expertise in industrial fields. The case of number 63, Yŏn Hyŏng-muk, is less certain.

On the basis of table 2, we can compile table 3, which gives the distribution of expertise or functional specialty in the Political Committee. Kim Il-sŏng and Kim Il, the president and the premier, were excluded from table 3 on the grounds that they are general overseers with considerable knowledge about most of the functional areas, but without specialization in any specific functional area. President Kim Il-sŏng, the former partisan leader, has headed the North Korean political structure since 1946. Kim Il, the former company commander under Kim Il-sŏng in Manchuria, has served as a party functionary in charge of local organizations and as a political officer in the army with lieutenant general's rank, has headed a provincial party branch, and has served as minister of agriculture; but since 1957, he has been in charge of over-all administration as vice-premier, and since 1959, as the first vice-premier. He was made premier in 1972.

The Political Committee of the WPK has six experts on the

economy, four on the military, four on foreign affairs, and four with experience in the party's leadership organizations, a fairly even distribution of functional expertise in areas of concern to the leadership. Possession of the personal confidence of Kim Il-sŏng is the foremost criterion for membership in this all-important body, but functional expertise is also significant in the choosing of certain individuals, particularly the younger candidate members. It is significant that none of the nine full members of the Political Committee, excluding Kim Il-sŏng and Kim Il, can be called experts on the economy, and that all five experts on the economy hold candidate rank. The full members of the Political Committee, on the other hand, represent the military, the party, and foreign affairs, and the recruitment of the candidate members was proportioned accordingly.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF EXPERTISE IN THE WPK  
POLITICAL COMMITTEE, 1972\*

<i>Functional or Institutional Areas</i>	<i>Full Members</i>	<i>Candidate Members</i>	<i>Total</i>
Party	2	2	4
Economy	1	5	6
Military	3	1	4
Foreign Affairs	4	0	4
SPA Standing Committee	2	0	2
Mass Organizations	0	1	1
Education	0	1	1

\*Some individuals were counted more than once.

Data on the age of the Political Committee members are not complete, but the following should be of interest (table 4):

The top leaders of North Korea are aging and a majority of the members of the Political Committee are over sixty. Although the exact ages of two full members of the Political Committee (Kim Tong-gyu and Kim Chung-nin) are not known, both are in their late fifties or early sixties. Kim Yŏng-ju is probably the youngest of the full members of the committee, and as noted, is the younger brother of President Kim Il-sŏng.

The three oldest members of the Political Committee will probably retire very soon. The oldest, Ch'oe Yong-gŏn, has played no more than a ceremonial role during the last decade or so, and his retire-

ment or death will have little effect on the operation of the top leadership. The second-oldest member of the Political Committee, Sŏ Ch'ŏl, was assigned to the Presidium of the SPA, a position of relative insignificance, in 1972. The other members of the Political Committee still show signs of vitality, and old age is not likely to be a problem for the North Korean leadership for the next several years, although it is questionable whether it could function effectively for another decade. The problem of succession, therefore, is not an immediate problem for the North Korean leadership although it is a potential problem if one looks ten years ahead.

TABLE 4  
AGE OF THE WPK POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Name	CC Rank	Year of Birth
Ch'oe Yong-gŏn	2	1900
Ch'oe Hyŏn	5	1907
Sŏ Ch'ŏl	9	1907
Kim Il	3	1912
O Chin-u	7	1910
Kim Il-sŏng	1	1912
Pak Sŏng-ch'ŏl	4	1912
Kim Tong-gyu	8	1915
Han Ik-su	11	1918
Kim Yŏng-ju	6	1922
Kim Chung-nin	10	

#### *The Secretariat of the WPK Central Committee*

The Secretariat of the WPK is a very important political organization as it is the body charged with implementing the lines, policies, and resolutions of the party, as well as supervising routine party work. It is also the highest coordinating body in the administrative sphere, handling all personnel and organizational matters. It should be recalled that Joseph Stalin acquired his initial powers within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union under Lenin because he was appointed general secretary. It is only natural in North Korea today that President Kim would concurrently serve as general secretary.

Until 1966, the WPK had operated under the system of chairman and vice-chairmen, but at the fourteenth plenum of the fourth Central Committee held in October 1966, the WPK adopted the system of Secretariat, electing Kim Il-sŏng as general secretary. After the fifth Congress in November 1970, the Central Committee elected nine secretaries to serve under the general secretary.

As can be seen from table 1, there is substantial overlap between the Political Committee and the Secretariat in that only two lower ranking secretaries are not concurrently members of the Political Committee. A certain division of labor exists among the top leaders of the party: those with major administrative or legislative responsibilities in the government are excluded from the Secretariat, including three full members and six candidate members of the Political Committee. Those excluded from the Secretariat include four vice-premiers and vice-chairman of the National Defense Commission. The secretaries implement the policies of the Political Committee within the party organizations; vice-premiers and vice-chairmen implement policies in the respective government branches. This division of labor again accentuates the primacy of the Political Committee in the entire political system of North Korea.

#### *The Central People's Committee*

The powers of the newly created Central People's Committee (CPC) have been noted. The provisions of Articles 103 and 104 support the role defined for the CPC in Article 100, that it is the "highest leadership organ of state power."<sup>11</sup> The powers vested in the CPC are similar to those powers vested by the party rules in the Political Committee and the Secretariat of the WPK.

Having given total powers to the CPC, the North Korean leadership has established a close link between the leading organs of the WPK and the CPC of the DPRK by monopolizing the membership of the latter. Only two full members of the Political Committee are excluded from the CPC and both of them serve on the Standing Committee of the SPA. Only two candidate members of the Political Committee are not on the CPC: Ch'oe Yong-jin, whose case we discussed, and Mrs. Kim Il-sŏng, whose absence probably does not require elaboration.

Out of twenty-five members of the CPC, on the other hand, there are eight who are not members of either the Political Committee or the Secretariat. The names and other positions of these individuals are as follows (rank order is given in parentheses):

Nam Il (16)	Vice-premier and chairman of Light Industry Committee
Hong Wŏn-gil (18)	Vice-premier and chairman of Machine Building Industry Committee
Yu Chang-sik (28)	Former vice-director of International Department of the CC, director of unidentified department as of May 1972



Hồ Tam (29)	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Kim Pyông-ha (30)	Minister of Public Security
Yim Ch'un-ch'u (34)	Secretary of the CPC: former Secretary-General of the SPA Presidium
Ch'oe Chae-u (58)	Vice-premier and chairman of the State Planning Commission
Yi Chong-ok	Chairman, Heavy Industry Committee
Kang Yang-uk	Vice-president, DPRK

It is obvious that these individuals were appointed to the CPC as they are in charge of the specific functional areas: economy (4); foreign affairs (2); public security (1); and one *ex-officio*.<sup>12</sup> Evidently, Yim Ch'un-ch'u was made the secretary of the CPC because of his previous experience as secretary-general of the Standing Committee of the SPA. Yim's experience as President Kim Il-sông's close follower during the partisan days in Manchuria accounts for his selection. It is also extremely interesting that Yi Chong-ok was restored to power not only as the chairman of the Heavy Industry Committee but also as a member of the CPC. An engineer with some underground experience as a Communist before 1945, he had occupied a number of key government and party positions since 1951, including that of minister, chairman of the State Planning Commission, vice-premier, candidate of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee since 1956, and full membership in the Political Committee in 1961. Since 1959, he also served as one of the powerful vice-chairmen of the WPK. His rank order in the Central Committee had climbed rapidly from number 22 in 1956 to number 11 in 1961. For some reason, however, Yi Chong-ok was dropped from the Political Committee at the second party conference of October 1966 but was eighth in the Executive Section along with Nam Il, among others. While Nam Il preserved his Central Committee rank, Yi had been dropped even from the Central Committee at the fifth congress in November 1970.

The party and government positions represented in the membership of the CPC are evidence of the magnitude of power concentrated in the Central People's Committee. The CPC membership includes:

1. The president and all three vice-presidents of the DPRK.
2. Nine of the eleven full members and eight of the nine candidate members of the Political Committee of the WPK.
3. The general secretary and eleven secretaries of the CC.
4. The premier and all six vice-premiers.
5. All six chairmen of state commissions.

6. The chairman and two of the three vice-chairmen of the National Defense Commission.
7. Ministers of defense, foreign affairs, and public security.

The constitutional provisions concerning the Central People's Committee are effectively buttressed by the appointment of key party and government personnel who are actually in a position to know the true state of affairs and who have the means to implement the decisions reached. There is no doubt that the CPC is a super-power agency in which all executive, legislative, and judicial powers are rolled into one.

While the constitution itself says little about the reasons for creating the Central People's Committee, Kim Il-sông offered an explanation in his December 25 speech:

... The new state structure is built in such a way that the activities of administrative bodies are always supervised and controlled by the masses of the people. Under the new state structure, unlike the old one, the People's Committees are separated from Administrative bodies, and the former, which are composed of representatives of the workers, peasants, soldiers and working intellectuals, are to perform the function of exercising day-to-day supervision and control over the latter's activities so that the functionaries of the administrative bodies are able to do away with bureaucracy in their work and serve the people better as their servants.<sup>13</sup>

The above paragraph, which was the only reference to the people's committees, may have been sufficient to justify the separation of the people's committees from the administrative committees at the local level (Articles 124 to 132), but it obviously does not explain the case of the Central People's Committee, which was granted enormous powers aside from simple supervision of the cabinet. I would claim that the CPC was created and power was concentrated in it to dispense with the myth of legislative supremacy as well as the fiction of the separation of power and authority between party and state.

Discarding the fiction of separation of power and authority between party and state is likely to contribute to improved efficiency simply by eliminating duplication of efforts. In the past, party offices at various levels maintained rather elaborate staff personnel in various functional areas who were charged with responsibility for drawing up plans and supervising actual operations. The government agencies also maintained a corresponding staff, duplicating some of the efforts. The Agricultural Department in the party headquarters, for example, would draw up a guideline for the Agricultural Commission in the cabinet, which in turn would draw up a detailed plan

and return it to the party department for approval. The implementation of the plan would then be subjected to the supervision of the party staff.

While this system guaranteed the implementation of party policies, there is no doubt that it also entailed a considerable waste of manpower. Friction could also develop between staff members of the party and the government. Although no proof has yet been provided by the North Korean authorities, it is quite possible that the special commissions to be established within the CPC will amalgamate some of the functions performed by the party and government staffs in the past. Since most of the important government functionaries are also party members whose loyalty to the leader and the system should be no different from the loyalty of those who staff party departments, the need to maintain duplicate departments at each level may no longer be present. It should be emphasized, however, that this is simply conjecture.

How do the functional specialties represented by members of the Central People's Committee compare with those represented on the Political Committee? Does the composition of the CPC reveal anything noticeable? Table 5 answers these questions.

TABLE 5  
FUNCTIONAL SPECIALITY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL  
PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE AND THE PC OF THE WPK\*

<i>Functional or Institutional Areas</i>	<i>Central People's Committee</i>	<i>Political Committee WPK</i>
Party	4	4
Economy	9	6
Military	3	5
Foreign Affairs	6	4
Education	1	1
SPA Standing Committee	3	2
Mass Organizations	1	1

\*Excludes Kim Il-song and Kim Il. While Nam Il had briefly served as the chief of the General Staff during the Korean War, he was not counted as a military expert because of prolonged absence from military affairs. Chŏng Chun-t'aek, who died in early 1973, was counted both in the PC and the CPC.

The presence in the CPC of three additional economy experts and two additional foreign affairs experts is natural as the CPC has five more members than the Political Committee. What is interesting,

however, is the remarkable absence of military security personnel in the CPC; only two vice-chairmen of the National Defense Commission and the minister of Public Security are present in the CPC in spite of the constitutional provision that the CPC "guide the work of national defense and state security." As previously mentioned, Generals Sŏ Ch'ŏl and Han Ik-su were assigned to the Presidium of the SPA rather than to the CPC. General Ch'oe Yong-jin, the other military leader in the Political Committee, was not assigned to the CPC, as noted earlier. Neither were any of the numerous generals serving in the Central Committee of the WPK appointed to the CPC. It should be pointed out that military leaders are heavily clustered in ranks 30 through 53 in the Central Committee (those holding ranks 31, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 50, 52, and 53 are high-ranking generals), which indicates that the CPC will have rather limited power over military affairs, and that the conduct of defense will be entrusted to the National Defense Commission.

The National Defense Commission (NDC) is a creature of the CPC in that Article 105 of the constitution grants it the authority to establish the NDC as well as the power to appoint and remove members of various commissions including the NDC, but its independence is assured by other constitutional provisions. Article 93 states that the president of the DPRK shall concurrently serve as the supreme commander of the armed forces and as chairman of the NDC. Article 76 states, on the other hand, that the Supreme People's Assembly shall elect and/or recall the vice-chairmen of the NDC at the proposal of the president of the DPRK.

Finally, the CPC membership list released by the North Korean authorities varies somewhat from the rank orders assigned at the Fifth Party Congress. It is customary in all Communist societies for the order in which individuals are listed to signify the rank of the individuals involved. A change in the order in which the individuals are listed, therefore, signifies certain changes in their status. In December 1972, just two years after the fifth congress of the WPK, the North Korean leadership appears to have decided on certain changes.

The following is the order in which the members of the CPC were listed in all official publications. The number designates the rank order assigned to these individuals at the fifth congress.

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 2 Ch'oe Yong-gŏn | 5 Ch'oe Hyŏn   |
| Kang Yang-uk     | 7 O Chin-u     |
| 3 Kim Il         | 8 Kim Tong-gyu |
| 4 Pak Sŏng-ch'ŏl | 6 Kim Yŏng-ju  |

10 Kim Chung-nin	34 Yim Ch'un-ch'u
12 Hyŏn Mu-gwang	63 Yŏn Hyŏng-muk
14 Yang Hyŏng-sŏp	60 O T'ae-bong
13 Chŏng Chun-t'aek	16 Nam Il
15 Kim Man-gŭm	18 Hong Wŏn-gil
54 Yi Kŭn-mo	28 Yu Chang-sik
58 Ch'oe Chae-u	29 Hŏ Tam
Yi Chong-ok	30 Kim Pyŏng-ha

The placement of Kang Yang-uk immediately behind Ch'oe Yong-gŏn is understandable in that Kang was made the second vice-president of the republic. By placing Kim Yŏng-ju, rank 6 in the Central Committee, behind Kim Tong-gyu, the party may be indicating that the current director of Organization and Guidance of the Central Committee of the WPK has encountered some difficulties. Reportedly, Kim has been suffering from "toxic neurasthenia" (mental depression), and has not appeared in public since July 1972, when he was made cochairman of the North-South (Korean) Coordinating Committee. Pak Sŏng-ch'ŏl has been acting for Kim Yŏng-ju since that time. It is also highly significant that six individuals, Yi Kŭn-mo (54), Ch'oe Chae-u (58), Yi Chong-ok (nonmember of the CC), Yim Ch'un-ch'u (34), Yŏn Hyŏn-muk (63), and O T'ae-bong (60) have been placed ahead of those with rank orders between 16 and 30. We alluded to Ch'oe Chae-u earlier. On December 28, 1972, he was concurrently appointed one of the six vice-premiers as well as the chairman of the National Planning Commission. Obviously, Ch'oe is a man on the rise. His status and power is likely to rise faster now that the other technical expert and vice-premier, Chŏng Chun-t'aek, has passed away. It should also be noted that Ch'oe was placed ahead of Nam Il and Hong Wŏn-gil in the list of vice-premiers. Yi Kŭn-mo (54) is also a man on the rise. In October 1973, he was appointed a candidate member of the Political Committee of the WPK.

#### *The State Administrative Council*

The cabinet under the old constitution was redesignated *Chŏngmu wŏn*, officially translated as the Administration Council. The old cabinet was responsible only to the SPA and its Standing Committee, but the new cabinet is responsible to the SPA, the president of the DPRK, and the Central People's Committee.<sup>14</sup> The Administration Council is headed by a premier, and consists of six vice-premiers, commission chairmen, and ministers. The new constitution also provides for a Permanent Commission of the cabinet

appointed by the premier. The new cabinet no longer engages in the "guidance of local sovereign organs" as provided by the old constitution; no change was introduced in cabinet functions.

Along with the change in the name of the cabinet, the cabinet of the DPRK underwent some structural changes. The thirty-seven old ministries and committees or commissions were reduced to twenty-two units. The State Planning Commission and Agricultural Commission as well as thirteen old ministries were retained with the same titles, five new commissions were created, and some of the old ministries were abolished.

The intent of the reorganization was to provide tighter control by the elite over important economic affairs and to facilitate better coordination between related sectors of the economy. The first point is evinced by five of the seven commissions being headed by the vice-premiers and the other two being headed by Hyŏn Mu-gwang, rank order number 12 of the Central Committee, concurrently a secretary and candidate member of the Political Committee, and Yi Chong-ok, rank order number 11 in the fourth Central Committee. Instead of the vice-premiers supervising indirectly given sectors of the government as in the past, the vice-premiers are now responsible directly for certain areas of the economy. Whether the new commissions, which are in fact superministries, will function more efficiently than the old structure remains to be seen, but the assignment of top leaders as heads of these commissions, and the regrouping of ministries indicate a wish for better coordination among related ministries. The creation of the Commission of Service for the People may indicate the government's desire to meet consumer demands. The head of that commission, Pak Sŏng-ch'ŏl, has also been serving as the acting cochairman of the North-South Coordinating Committee, which was created to conduct the negotiations between North and South Korea.

Who will be appointed to the Permanent Commission of the new cabinet can be seen from the party ranking of the elite assigned to the cabinet. As shown in table 1, ten of the fifteen ministers are not even members of the fifth Central Committee of the WPK and seven of these attained ministerial posts for the first time in 1972. The ministers of the Ship Machine Building Industry and of Public Health were also in the previous cabinet, but they were not in the Central Committee. The minister of Labor Administration had held rank number 47 in the fourth Central Committee, but was dropped from the fifth Central Committee. The ministers of Culture and Chemical Industry were newly promoted from vice-ministerial positions. Four

ministers are completely new faces, presumably younger, new elite emerging from the rank and file with technical expertise in their respective fields. The contrast between these new individuals and the old elite who hold such important positions as ministers of People's Armed Forces (Ch'oe Hyŏn, number 5) and Foreign Affairs (Hŏ Tam, number 29) is sharp. The wide gap in status and power between the old and the new elites probably necessitated the establishment of the Standing Committee within the cabinet. The system of a two-layer cabinet would permit the advancement of the younger elite to cabinet rank while avoiding the embarrassment of having old and new cabinet members on equal terms.

*The Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly*

Earlier it was noted that the 1972 constitution virtually stripped the Standing Committee of the SPA of any real power. All of its previously important functions were transferred to either the president of the DPRK or the Central People's Committee.

The change in the status of the Standing Committee of the SPA was directly reflected in the personnel assigned to it. The Standing Committee of the fourth SPA, elected in December 1967, contained some of the more important leaders of North Korea; the new Presidium consists of individuals best characterized as peripheral figures. Tables 6 and 7 reveal the marked contrast.

The Standing Committee of the fourth SPA contained a number of important party officials. Not only did they hold high party rank, four of the Presidium members were WPK Political Committee members (three, if Pak Chŏng-ae is excluded) and five others were candidate members of the Political Committee. Three of the nine party officials were concurrently secretaries of the WPK. There were indeed the top level leaders of the party. The Standing Committee of the fifth SPA, by contrast, contains only two Political Committee members and a candidate member of the Political Committee, who happened to be Mrs. Kim Il-sŏng. Only three members of the Central Committee of the party holding ranks above 50 are serving in the Standing Committee of the fifth SPA, while nine out of eleven members of the Central Committee serving in the Standing Committee of the fourth SPA held ranks above 41. The chairman of the Standing Committee of the fourth SPA was Ch'oe Yong-gŏn, the holder of number 2 rank in the WPK; the new chairman in the fifth SPA is Hwang Chang-yŏp, rank 102, the president of Kim Il-sŏng University.

TABLE 6

MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE  
FOURTH SUPREME PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

Name	WPK/CC rank	WPK positions*	Position within the Standing Committee
Ch'oe Yong-gŏn	2	Sec/Pol Com	Chairman
Hong Myŏng-hŭi			Vice-Chairman
Pak Chŏng-ae	7	Pol Com**	Vice-Chairman
Kang Yang-uk			Vice-Chairman
Yi Yŏng-ho	28	Pol Com	Vice-Chairman
Pak Mun-gyu	60		Chief Secretary
Ch'oe Hyŏn	18	Pol Com	
Hŏ Pong-hak	22	Sec/Pol Com (C)	
Kim Yŏng-ju	41	Sec/Pol Com (C)	
Yi Kuk-chin	29		
Ch'oe Kwang	31	Pol Com (C)	
O Chin-u	25	Pol Com (C)	
Kim Tong-gyu	40	Pol Com (C)	
Pak Sin-dŏk			
Kim Yŏ-jung			

\*Party position refers to those elected at the Second Party Conference in October 1966. Sec = Secretary; Pol Com = Political Committee; (C) = nonvoting candidate member.

\*\*Pak Chŏng-ae was elected a member of the Political Committee in September 1961 after the Fourth Party Congress, but she was dropped from the committee at the Second Party Conference in October 1966.

TABLE 7

MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE  
FIFTH SUPREME PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

Name	5th WPK/CC rank	WPK position*	Positions in the Standing Committee of the SP
Hwang Chang-yŏp	102		Chairman
Hong Ki-mun			Vice-Chairman
Hŏ Chŏng-suk			Vice-Chairman
Sŏ Ch'ŏl	9	Pol Com	
Han Ik-su	11	Pol Com/Sec	
Chŏn Ch'ang-ch'ŏl	22		Secretary
Pak Sin-dŏk			
Kim Yŏng-nam	80		
Chŏng Chun-gi	62		
Yŏm T'ae-jun	105		
Kim Sŏng-ae	67	Pol Com (C)	
Kim I-hun	98		

TABLE 7 — Continued

Name	5th WPK/CC rank	WPK position*	Positions in the Standing Committee of the SP
Yi Yŏng-bok			
Yun Ki-bok	57		
Yi Tu-ch'an			
Kang Sŏng-san	65		
O Hyon-ju			
Ch'ŏn Se-bong	31		
Yi Myŏn-sang	103		

\*Party positions as of November 1970. Pol Com = Political Committee.

The Standing Committee of the fifth SPA is noteworthy for the prominence of intellectuals and others who are well known in South Korea. Only one member of the fourth Presidium could be so classified: Hong Myŏng-hŭi, a famous novelist and scholar. In the fifth Presidium, however, are the following:

Hwang Chang-yŏp, the chairman: president of Kim Il-sŏng University.

Hŏ Chŏng-suk, vice-chairwoman: daughter of Hŏ Hŏn, a famous lawyer of South Korean origin. Hŏ Chŏng-suk earned fame in her own right before 1945 for her socio-political activities and her escape to Yenan, China.

Chŏng Chun-gi: editor-in-chief of *Nodong Sinmun*, the organ of the WPK; chairman of the Korean Reporters' Union.

Ch'ŏn Se-bong: writer; chairman of the Korean Writers' Union.

Yi Myŏn-sang: composer; chairman of the Korean Musicians' Union.

Of particular interest is the election of Hong Ki-mun and Hŏ Chŏng-suk as vice-chairpersons. Hong, son of Hong Myŏng-hŭi referred to above, went to North Korea from Seoul in late 1947; he continued his academic work, became a professor at Kim Il-sŏng University, and was elected to the Academy of Science in 1964. He was elected to the first SPA in 1948 as a representative from South Korea, but since then his only political activity has been confined to membership in the Central Committee of the Committee for the Peaceful Unification of the Fatherland. His only political writings and speeches known to the outside world have been the call for the peaceful unification of Korea supporting, of course, the line of the WPK. Hŏ Chŏng-suk, on the other hand, has served in various ministerial positions since her return from Yenan in 1945, and even after her husband, former vice-premier Ch'oe Ch'ang-ik, was purged in

1956, she continued her political career, being appointed head of the Supreme Court in 1959. But, she was retired from the party's Central Committee in 1961 and no word has been heard about her since. From 1957 until her retirement, she had been prominent in the Democratic Front for the Unification of the Fatherland.

The restoration of Hŏ Chŏng-suk at the age of 70 and her appointment as vice-chairwoman of the Standing Committee of the fifth SPA along with Hong Ki-mun can be interpreted in only one way: the North Korean leadership desired individuals well known in South Korea in officially prominent positions in order that the contacts with South Korean personalities should function more smoothly and the North Korean line of argument should be communicated more effectively. Certainly, South Korean legislators and intellectuals would find it easier to build rapport with old acquaintances than with generals of guerrilla background. While other intellectuals on the Standing Committee are not as well known in the South, they would share more common ground than the other elite of the North, a line of analysis all the more plausible as the election of the members of the Standing Committee occurred only five months after the epochal joint communique of July 4, 1972, that launched the North and South negotiations.

The SPA continues to serve as the legitimizing organ for the DPRK, but the Standing Committee has in effect become an institution concerned with the party's efforts in South Korea.

#### CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Our analysis of the constitutional revision as well as the personnel assigned to various old and new institutions shows that the constitutional structure of the DPRK was altered to conform to the reality that has existed in North Korea during the last two decades; in the process, the monolithic structure around President Kim Il-sŏng has been further consolidated. Kim Il-sŏng is not only the head of the party, he is also the chief of state, and concurrently head of the military establishment. Although he has wielded power in all three spheres for some time, only in 1972 were these facts legally documented.

The assignment of personnel to various institutions also shows that about fifteen of the president's close followers constitute the inner circle of power or the top echelon elite in North Korea. These men hold membership in the party's Political Committee, form the upper crust of the Central People's Committee, and serve as the premier and vice-premiers of the Administration Council. They also

control the army by being vice-chairmen of the National Defense Commission. These men have been with President Kim Il-sŏng for more than four decades, having begun their political careers as guerrillas, and they seem to be implicitly trusted by him, although, if experience of the past several years can serve as a guide, this trust can be abruptly withdrawn. For the moment, however, no doubt can be raised about the power of these men.

The pattern of personnel assignment in the North Korean power structure reveals a trend toward functional specialization among the top elite in North Korea. Until about ten years ago, many of the top elite circulated with relative ease among the military, government, and party posts. But, there now seems to be a trend in North Korea to reduce this movement and to let each individual develop his specialty in a given area. As indicated above, very few professional military men were assigned to party or governmental posts in 1972. Only those with considerable technical expertise become vice-premiers and ministers. Such individuals as Yi Chong-ok were reinstated to important economic posts even after they had been dropped from the Central Committee. We are perhaps witnessing the compartmentalization of the North Korean elite into military, party, and state functionaries. Of course, all components of power revolve around the president and the Political Committee of the WPK, and, as was discussed earlier, the Central People's Committee will serve as another institution where party-state coordination will be realized. But, possibilities always exist for the military to develop into a separate institution with its own special interests. The role of such men as Ch'oe Hyŏn, the minister of defense, O Chin-u, the chief of the General Staff, and Han Ik-su, the director of the General Political Bureau of the Korean People's Army, as a link between the army and the Political Committee is, therefore, important.

Although President Kim Il-sŏng asserted that the new constitution would better reflect the opinion of the masses in the conduct of government business, the power of the Supreme People's Assembly was emasculated. The president's assertion can be accepted only if one pays homage to the idea of democratic centralism, which serves as the guiding organizational principal of all Communist societies. Even so, Kim's interpretation of that concept is far more restrictive than any organizational version hitherto tried in the Soviet Union and other socialist states.

## NOTES

1. See L. M. Gudoshnikov, "Among the Lawyers of the Korean People's Democratic Republic," in *Sovetskoe Gosudarstvo i pravo* [Soviet State and Law], no. 10 (1960), p. 116, cited by George Ginsburgs, "Soviet Sources on the Law of North Korea," *Journal of Korean Affairs*, January 1972, p. 61.
2. *Nodong sinmun*, December 26, 1972. For English version, see *Korea Today*, no. 196 (1973), p. 3.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
4. For an English text of the new constitution, see *ibid.*, pp. 24-30.
5. For the English text of the rules of the WPK as amended on September 16, 1961, see Robert A. Scalapino and Chong-Sik Lee, *Communism in Korea*, 2:1331-49 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).
6. *Korea Today*, no. 196 (1973), p. 11.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
8. Article 43 of the new ROK constitution says: The president shall be the head of the State and represents the State vis-à-vis foreign states.
9. Article 100 of the constitution of the DPRK. See FBIS *Daily Report*, January 17, 1973, no. 12, supplement 3, p. 24.
10. See the new constitution in English in *Korea Today*, no. 196 (1973), pp. 24-30.
11. Article 100. The Central People's Committee is the highest leadership organ of state power in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.
12. *Economy*: Nam Il; Hong Wŏn-gil; Ch'oe Chae-u; Yi Chong-ok. *Foreign Affairs*: Yu Chang-sik; Hŏ Tam. *Public Security*: Kim Pyŏng-ha; *ex-officio*: Kang Yang-uk.
13. *Korea Today*, p. 14.
14. Article 113. The Administration Council bears responsibility for its work before the Supreme People's Assembly, the president of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Central People's Committee.