

# South Korea Plans For Second Anniversary of Coup

**By CHARLES SMITH**  
United Press International  
Seoul — (UPI) — South Korea's military rulers are preparing to observe the second anniversary of the May 16, 1961, coup that put them in power.

They are far short of the goals they set for themselves on that fateful morning. A few days after the takeover a handful of the nation's 600,000 soldiers, the new military mayor of Seoul set a booted foot on a rough wooden chair in his office, fingered a swagger stick and remarked to a foreign newsmen:

"We may make mistakes in running Korea. But they will be our mistakes."

Later the same day, an American officer at United Nations command headquarters across town leaned back in his leather lounge chair, propped a foot on a low coffee table and commented to the same newsmen:

### Sad Day in Korea

"The day the Korean soldiers started playing politics was a sad day for Korea — and for us."

What the mayor meant was that the military regime would not be so susceptible to American pressures nor so dependent on American assistance as previous regimes.

What the American officer meant was that the Korean army, built almost from scratch into one of the best and most dependable in the world with the help of American blood, sweat and dollars, suddenly was not so dependable.

Two years have passed. The military mayor lost his job long ago. The American officer has returned home, leaving Korea out of sight if not out of mind.

What has happened to the military regime in the light of their remarks?

When the soldiers seized power they immediately pledged to end political confusion, get rid of factionalism, wipe out corruption, end social unrest and civic disorder, bring economic stability and strengthen ties with the United States.

### Transfer Power

A little later, in response to strong American prodding, they promised to transfer power to civilians in the summer of 1963.

As military junta chairman Gen. Park Chung Hee and his colleagues prepare for their second anniversary, the political confusion is as bad as ever. Factionalism still is a serious problem, in the military as well as civilian groups. There is much talk, and some evidence, of large-scale corruption. The military rulers have admitted their economic programs have failed.

Relations with the United States are strained and could get worse.

And Park is trying desperately to hang onto power despite his repeated pledges to give it up by this summer.

The United States was extremely displeased over the coup and even tried to get then-President Posun Yun to give the word to loyal troops to crush it.

### Yun Regrets

Yun refused. He now says he regrets it.

Presented with a fait accompli, the United States swallowed hard and worked to help the military regime achieve its stated goals and try to keep it on a path of moderation while pressing constantly for early restoration of civil rule.

After Park made a public pledge in August, 1961, to restore civil government in the summer of 1963, he was invited to Washington.

While in Washington in November, 1961, he issued a joint statement with President Kennedy reaffirming his "solemn" intention to restore power to civilians.

Park repeated this pledge on many occasions after that. But as he was doing so, his secret police chief, Kim Chong Pil (one of the chief coup plotters and now a retired brigadier general), was working feverishly to build up a vast political organization that was to serve as a vehicle for Park and other officers to run for office in civilian clothes.

### Black List Rivals

Kim was doing this while a tight ban on political activities and a blacklist that included 4,372 names prohibited any rival party from organizing.

A new constitution was drafted and adopted in a national referendum. An election law that contained some strange provisions, including one prohibiting independent candidates in legislative and presidential elections, was decreed.

The way appeared clear at the end of last year for the military men to shed their uniforms and run in spring elections they could hardly lose, enabling them legally to perpetuate their rule.

They eased the ban on political activities and early this year the roof caved in.

The factionalism that had plagued the military rulers since Park ousted original junta chairman Lt. Chang Do Young in the regime's early days erupted into public feeling. Some feared it might cause civil war.

Retired Lt. Gen. Song Yo Chan, a former army chief of staff and the military regime's premier for about a year before he quit in disgust, blasted Kim Chong Pil.

Song accused Kim of underhanded tactics and warned that he was building up a powerful personal machine that was dangerous for Korea — and the United States.

Other soldiers and former soldiers joined in the public attacks against Kim.

One of the junta's key members, former marine corps commandant Lt. Gen. Kim Dong Ha, quit his post as head

of the junta's foreign and defense affairs committee. He accused Park and Kim of betraying the people by trying to hang on to power and said he could not be a party to it.

**Quits Politics**  
In a series of explosive developments, Park publicly renounced all intentions of running for office and vowed to bow out of politics forever. He accepted civilian demands for postponement of elections from the spring until mid-summer to give them time to organize.

Under extreme pressure, Park sent his brother-in-law

Kim Chong Pil into temporary exile abroad, where he is today as a "roving ambassador."

While Korean movie theaters were showing new reels of the weeping strongman making his public pledge to bow out of politics, Park changed his mind again.

He stunned Koreans and the United States by suddenly announcing a plan to hold a national referendum on a four-year extension of military rule.

This announcement came on March 16, shortly after his new secret police chief had

tossed some of the leading opponents of Kim Chong Pil into prison on charges of plotting a new coup.

The United States applied some firm pressure, including a statement by the state department that prolongation of military rule could increase instability.

**Bows to Pressure**  
In early April, Park bowed to this pressure and pressure by civilian politicians and announced a face-saving solution that really solved nothing. He deferred the referendum plan and promised elections next fall if conditions warrant. He

also lifted a new ban he had placed on political activities.

His new plan contained a big if. The way things are going, conditions next fall might not warrant elections in the eyes of Park and his colleagues.

As the military regime prepared to celebrate its second anniversary of its takeover, the talk was that Park once again is thinking of running for president in civilian clothes, as head of a "Pan-Nation" party he would like to see formed.

There were strong expectations that Park might make

some announcement on this at the anniversary ceremonies. If he does, the crisis that has plagued the nation for months, is almost certain to deepen.

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