

considerably more advanced than those Pyongyang received from the Russians. Although the DPRK has the civilian version, they probably have modified some of them to carry guns and rockets. Because the ROK produces the same model helicopter for its armed forces, the DPRK could modify their Hughes helicopters to resemble the ROK counterparts to confuse CFC air defenses during SOF operations.

The transport fleet has some 1950s- and 1960s-vintage former Soviet transports, including more than 270 An-2/COLT light transports and 10 An-24/COKEs. The COLT's low radar signature and ability to land on short, rough strips, makes it especially suited for the task of transporting SOFs. It can hold 10 combat troops and cruise at 160 kilometers (km) an hour. The NKAF has at least six COLT regiments of and at least six regiments of attack and transport helicopters.

DPRK operational thinking reflects both Russian doctrine and North Korean experiences with heavy UN bombing during the Korean War; it relies heavily on air defense. The DPRK houses a large percentage of its military industries, aircraft hangars, repair facilities, ammunition, fuel stores, and even air defense missiles underground or in hardened shelters.

The DPRK, with over 8,800 anti-aircraft guns, combined with SA-2, SA-3, and SA-5, and handheld SA-7 and SA-16 surface-to-air missiles, has constructed one of the world's most dense air defense networks. In the mid-1980s, the former Soviet Union supplied SA-3/GOA surface-to-air missiles to the DPRK. The SA-3 provides short-range defense against low-flying aircraft. In 1987, the former Soviet Union provided SA-5/GAMMON surface-to-air missiles that gave Pyongyang a long-range, high-altitude, surface-to-air missile capability. The SA-2 GUIDELINE system provides medium-range, medium-altitude point defense for cities and military airfields, as well as a barrier defense along the DMZ.

SA-2 and SA-3 battalions are concentrated along the coastal corridors, while most SA-5 GAMMON battalions are located near the DMZ and are extended north to cover Pyongyang.

## **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Nuclear**

The DPRK has an ongoing nuclear program, which they claim is part of their civilian electric power program. Despite these claims, two reactors are believed to have been built to produce plutonium. There is a possibility that North Korea has produced the materials needed for at least one nuclear weapon.

### **Biological**

Biological warfare has not received the same attention as chemical or nuclear warfare. However, if the DPRK did choose to employ biological weapons, it probably could use infectious agents, such as those causing anthrax or plague, against CFC forces.

### **Chemical**

The DPRK is capable of producing nerve, blood, and blister agents. They have at least eight industrial facilities that could produce these agents. While production rates are

uncertain, large quantities of agents are believed to be available.

Chemical weapons can be delivered by virtually all DPRK fire support systems. This includes most artillery, multiple rocket launchers (including those mounted on CHAHO-type boats), mortars, FROG and SCUD missiles, and some bombs.

The DPRK plans to operate in a chemically contaminated environment. Chemical defense units are organic to combat units down to regiment level. For example, an army corps has a dedicated chemical defense battalion and a regiment has a subordinate chemical defense platoon. These chemical defense units have both detection and decontamination systems. Their missions include reconnaissance and the training of personnel in the use of protective equipment. Chemical training and exercises for both military and civilian personnel have increased consistently over the years.

DPRK chemical weapons would compliment conventional military power. In a surprise attack, DPRK forces are expected to use chemical weapons to demoralize defending forces, reduce their effectiveness, and deny use of mobilization

centers, storage areas, and military bases without physically destroying facilities and equipment. Non-persistent chemical agents could be used to break through CFC defensive lines or to hinder a CFC counterattack. Persistent chemical agents could be used against fixed targets in rear areas, including command and control elements, major LOCs, logistic depots, airbases, and ports.

### **Special Operations Forces**

Nearly 60,000 military personnel assigned to the 22 SOF brigades and light infantry battalions would be available to open a second front in CFC's rear area. These forces have five basic missions: conducting reconnaissance, performing combat operations in concert with conventional operations, establishing a second front in the enemy's rear area, countering the CFC special operations in the North's rear areas, and maintaining internal security. These forces perform operations at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. During offensive operations, corps reconnaissance units would conduct penetration missions to collect military intelligence and launch raids on military and civilian targets. Prior to the main attack, some units would infiltrate behind allied lines by air and sea,

while others would cross into the ROK through tunnels under the DMZ. These units would penetrate at night to locate and destroy command posts, create confusion in rear areas, interdict troop and supply convoys, attack military installations, and gain control of critical terrain.

## **Summary**

Most of the DPRK's military equipment is technologically inferior to CFC equipment. The state of readiness and training for the force will decline due to the age of equipment and lack of repair parts. Therefore, the ability of the DPRK to threaten the South with conventional forces will be reduced by the turn of the century. Because of this, the North may look at its continuing nuclear weapons program as an answer to a growing technology gap between the two forces.

## **NATIONAL MILITARY POLICY**

DPRK military policy focuses on maintaining and sustaining a military force capable of conducting an offensive

operation into the ROK to attain the national goal of reunifying the peninsula. DPRK military doctrine and policy specify the structure of DPRK armed forces, allocate industrial resources and output, and orient research and development to support the armed forces. This doctrine is the blueprint, drawn up by the highest DPRK political leaders, that describes in detail the shape of the armed forces and the way in which they are to be used. It is based on three fundamental and interconnected concepts shaped by Kim Il-song's vision of the future of the Korean peninsula:

- Eventual reunification
- DPRK regime survival and leadership of a unified Korea
- The application of military force to achieve reunification.

DPRK force development and weapons acquisition strategy focuses on countering the strengths and weaknesses of CFC forces while remaining independent and self-sufficient in maintaining and modernizing their armed forces. The DPRK military is attempting to meet the following force objectives:

- Develop and refine self-sufficiency in armament
- Maintain active force size and rapid force generation capabilities of reserve forces
- Overcome terrain and technological disadvantages
- Ensure sustainability/improve warfighting infrastructure.

A major hurdle faced by the DPRK in attaining its force objectives is the dismal state of its economy. Though the DPRK dedicates critical resources to the military, at the expense of all other sectors of society, the country may be facing economic collapse during this decade. Because of this, the DPRK may be reaching a decision point, either to use its military force or risk losing the military option. Consequently, there is more pressure on the DPRK to complete its force objectives by 1995. Barring economic collapse or military action, DPRK military policies will continue to support the national goal of reunification.

The primary strength that the DPRK can draw upon is the support of the North Korean people. Whether by force of indoctrination or genuine feelings of nationalism, this support constitutes a reservoir of national power. DPRK soldiers are taught that the outcome of a war is not decided by modern



weapons and military technology, but by the "noble mission and revolutionary spirit with which it fights for the liberation of the people." This translates into a military force capable of supporting a wide range of combat options without consideration for danger or moral values.

Vulnerabilities of this military doctrine include the sheer physical exhaustion of the DPRK population. This is perhaps the greatest impediment to the North's attempt to offset the growing economic and military power of the ROK. On the battlefield, perhaps the most decisive shortcoming of the DPRK would be the lack of modern reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition systems. This shortcoming is amplified by the relative inaccurate and cumbersome characteristics of most of the DPRK's major weapon platforms.

## **MILITARY STRATEGY**

The primary objective of North Korea's military strategy is to reunify the Korean peninsula under North Korean control within 30 days of beginning hostilities. A secondary objective is the defense of North Korea. To accomplish these objectives, North Korea envisions fighting a two-front war. The first

front, consisting of conventional forces, is tasked with breaking through defending forces along the DMZ, destroying defending CFC forces, and advancing rapidly down the entire peninsula. This operation will be coordinated closely with the opening of a second front consisting of SOFs conducting raids and disruptive attacks in CFC's rear.

In developing the force to fulfill this two-front strategy, North Korea's leaders realized that they could never reach technological parity with the United States or U.S.-supplied South Korea. Instead, they focused on attaining overall combat superiority through the use of surprise, shock, speed, and overwhelming quantities of troops and firepower coupled with a well-trained SOF.

North Korea, devastated during the Korean War, also places great emphasis on maintaining a strong defense. To achieve the strategic defense mission, North Korea has established defensive belts. They are designed to defeat any attack from ground or amphibious forces. The main strategic belt runs from the DMZ to Pyongyang. This belt contains over two-thirds of the DPRK's active maneuver ground forces. Ground defense along this belt is carried out by MPAF and

Corps level units. Two army-level headquarters may be activated for wartime operations. Coastal defense is provided by the navy, and ground antilanding defense is provided by the army. Defense of DPRK airspace is provided by the air force and anti-air artillery units of the army. At the initiation of a DPRK ground offensive, the North's reserve forces, numbering some 5 million, would man a pre-established, in-depth national defense network.

## MILITARY DOCTRINE

DPRK military doctrine is based on a blend of Russian operational art, Chinese light infantry tactics, and North Korean lessons learned during the Korean War. This doctrine is tempered by Kim Il-song's national goal of "chuche" (self reliance). The impact of chuche is that imported military concepts have been adapted to the unique geography, social conditions, and economic conditions found on the Korean peninsula. The guiding principles within DPRK doctrine are as follows:

1. **Annihilation:** Destroy defending CFC forces in place. Do not allow them to withdraw and regroup.

2. **Surprise Attack:** Achieved by making an unexpected assault in an unexpected manner. Prevent CFC from taking effective countermeasures. Position forces to attack with little preparation. Practice excellent OPSEC and deception. Attacks at night and during adverse weather are the best way to achieve surprise.

3. **Overwhelming Firepower:** Employ continuous massing fires (including chemical) from heavy guns and multiple rocket launchers to create opportunities for maneuver and to pulverize CFC forces.

4. **Mobility:** Employ tanks, armored personnel carriers, self-propelled artillery, vehicle-mounted rocket launchers, and vehicle-mounted anti-aircraft guns to be able to attack/counterattack while moving. Utilize a redundant C2 system while moving.

5. **Impregnable Rear:** Ensure that rear areas are secure from CFC attack to remain fully capable of continuous support to attacking forces.