The Policies of South KOREA's Counter Intelligence Agency on North Korea's ESPIONAGE Activities in South Korea

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Abstract

At the present, South Korea’s security is as urgent as North Korea’s denuclearization because North Korea’s espionage is very active.

The core to espionage in Korea is that, since the Korean War following the invasion of North Korea, most terrorist activities and espionage activities have been executed by North Korea, anti communist investigation has targeted the North Korean regime.

However, while South Korea underwent a democratic regime transfer, some regimes have been friendly to North Korea according, and counter intelligence agency dealing with intelligence on North Korea caused rapid changes to power transfer, reduction of organization, and personnel, so it is not possible to pursue the policy of counter intelligence activities coherently.

Therefore, in this study, I have examined the security strategy of the Korean counter intelligence agency against North Korean espionage activities for college students majoring in security at Korean universities at the present time starting with the incident of a North Korean female spy, who was disguised as an employee for a cafe located in Gyeongsan-shi, Gyeongbuk and who was arrested after handing over the intelligence gathered on North Korean defectors to North Korea in 2014.

First, South Korea’s counter intelligence manpower should be increased.
Second, the legal grounds for South Korea’s counter intelligence activities should be further expanded.
Third, it is necessary to develop various techniques of counter intelligence activities in South Korea.
Fourth, the scope of counter intelligence activities should be expanded in Korea.
Fifth, South Korea’s counter intelligence education should be expanded.
Sixth, South Korea’s counter intelligence agencies should expand investigative cooperation.

As a result of the study, I was able to derive such results and have presented directions for North Korea’s espionage activities based on the political environment in Korea.

[Keywords] Korea’s Counter Intelligence Agency, National Security, North Korean Spy, Anti-Communist Investigation, Terrorism

1. Purpose of Study

Since the beginning of the Cold War after 1991, the concept of security has changed as the global order was formed based on great powers. During the Cold War era, the threat of military confrontation became a key issue of national security, whereas in the post Cold War era, it began to change from military security to comprehensive security.

After the end of the Cold War, the conflicts caused by ideological confrontations among nations have declined, yet strange conflicts have emerged in other forms such as race, ethnicity, religion, and border issues. They have increased since the end of the Cold War relative to the Cold War in its most extreme situations. The reality of security following changes in international relations is increasing the threat of terrorism and security has become an even more important issue.
The key to national security is counter intelligence, which is even more important in such a divided nation as South Korea. This is because the failure of counter intelligence is directly connected to the existence of the state and may not be recoverable[1]. Since the Korean War, North Korea has engaged in espionage activities, including approximately 3,000 terrorist attacks in Korea.

From approximately 15 years ago, North Korea's suppression of human rights and the failure of its economic policies yielded a surge in the number of people leaving North Korea, and the spies who disguised their identity among North Korean defectors are arrested in South Korea.

Then South Korea's counter intelligence agencies should be more active in defense against such issues, however, the current South Korean regime limits the domestic activities and investigative rights of the counter intelligence agencies in South Korea.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the policy of the Korean counter intelligence agency against North Korea's espionage activities in South Korea.

2. Previous Studies

Since the Korean War on the Korean peninsula, innumerable espionage activities have taken place continuously, threatening the national security of South Korea. Therefore, this study has dealt with the policy issues of South Korean counter intelligence agencies as a key topic. The following <Table 1> summarizes the previous studies undertaken.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Key details of previous studies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lee (2017)</td>
<td>Examining the history of intelligence activities, innumerable intelligence agencies have integrated sex into espionage, and in particular, in the case of communist countries such as North Korea, China and Russia, sexpionage combining sex and espionage is in practice. Claimed the need for the accumulation of systematic data on the cases of sexpionage, special control of public officials such as those of the national security</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park (2016)</td>
<td>Claimed that since the development of communication technology in Korea and the emergence of new communication devices influenced to make espionage even more convenient and safe, legal basis for investigations of espionage communication activities by North Korea is necessary[3].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choe (2016)</td>
<td>Claimed that since the 1990s in Korea, sharing of North Korea intelligence by and among counter intelligence agencies has not been active following changes in North Korea policy and issues have arisen in collaborating with the US[4].</td>
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<tr>
<td>Han (2008)</td>
<td>Claimed that the roles of counter intelligence agency are critical since Korean Presidents after the Cold War have based their decisions on the intelligence provided by counter intelligence agencies concerning national security[5].</td>
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<td>Lim (2006)</td>
<td>Analyzed and discussed areas of tasks for Korea's counter intelligence agencies following the diversification of intelligence activities due to internationalization and open door policy while security is an important activity goal for counter intelligence agencies in Korea given its state of division of the peninsula[6].</td>
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3. Research Method

3.1. Research questions

Currently, the North Korean spies active in Korea were estimated to be 28,000 resident spies in the 1980s, but the number has rather increased after the Cold War, and so the role of the South Korean counter intelligence agencies has become very critical.

Therefore, the background of research questions for this study is the case of a North Korean female spy, who was disguised as an employee for a cafe located in Gyeonghsan-shi, Gyeongbuk and who handed over the intelligence gathered on North Korean defectors to North Korea following North Korea's instructions in 2014, and in this study, I have also explored the tasks of South Korean counter intelligence agencies with college students majoring in security at Korean universities. The following <Figure 1> is a news article which provides the background for the questions of this study[7].
Figure 1. Background of research questions.

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3.2. Research method

The study on the policy of the South Korean counter intelligence agency against North Korea's espionage activities in South Korea, which is the subject of this study, has not been conducted anywhere else yet, so it carries a strong character as an explorative study. In general, however, qualitative research methods are more appropriate for explorative approaches like this. Therefore, in this study, I have conducted a Focus Study Interview which is one of the qualitative research methods appropriate for this explorative study. The data derived from group interviews were terminated when the contents were duplicated and new contents were not found.

The collected data as such was transferred into documents, and the data were categorized by content analysis and were analyzed by the Narrative Analysis. The following <Figure 2> illustrates the group interview at the time it was conducted.

Figure 2. Focus study interview.

3.3. Research participants

Participants in this study were selected by the Purposive Sampling. This is one of the sampling methods of qualitative research and is also known as a method for selecting the subjects which can provide rich and in depth data on the subject which the researcher desires to study.

Therefore, this study was conducted from March 2015 until June 2018 for a total of 200 students, each of which consisted of 50 college students majoring in security at universities in Korea. The group interviews which took 60 minutes on average were conducted 12 times by utilizing their classroom hours. The following <Table 2> illustrates the information of the research group.

Table 2. Focus study interview group's information.
4. Research Result

In order to conduct a study on the policy of the counter intelligence agency against North Korea's espionage activities in South Korea, I have conducted a study on the Focus Study Interview, and as follows, I have analyzed the contents of the interviews and categorized them while providing key details.

4.1. Manpower

In order to find more intelligence and access small intelligence, I also think that we should train secret agents like North Korea for national security and send them to North Korea and China (W_SYS).

Security guard for sea, land and air should be strengthened against North Korean infiltration into South Korea and inspection should be conducted thoroughly by increasing the manpower for the teams in charge of cracking down on the spies in South Korea (M_LGH).

4.2. Laws

To protect national security, sacrifice the people is also needed. When the National Intelligence Service and the investigative agencies are needed, the laws should be amended to expand the scope of duties for counter intelligence agencies and the investigative agencies so that the mobile phone tapping can be legalized (W_BHJ).

It is necessary to have a legal basis to find the routes which the spies use and thoroughly monitoring them, prevent them in advance, and conducted highly sophisticated investigation in the event of North Korean defectors’ entry into South Korea (M_BS).

A revalidation system for detecting spies under disguise should be supported by the legal basis for national security (W_CSJ).

4.3. Technique

Even if it is found according to the basic principle of counter intelligence, arrest is not immediately executed, but only after identifying the organization behind (M_KJS).

To perform counter intelligence tasks, North Korea's policy information must be obtained and used as a technique for counter intelligence (M_CHJ).

4.4. Scope

I think that we should strengthen the security work and strengthen security guard for important national facilities (W_LSR).

A thorough investigation of North Korean defectors and long term observation and monitoring are necessary (M_AYJ).

4.5. Education

Education of the risk of espionage activities should be conducted at elementary schools, junior high schools, high schools, and universities regularly, and the importance of national security and the types of activities that are specific to spies should be informed (W_CSH).

Regularly educate the staff of the counter intelligence agencies on the changing situation of the North Korean spies and strengthen the on the job test and evaluate the personnel based on it (M_LJH).

4.6. Collaboration

Build a network system to oversees all investigative agencies in Korea with the aim of investigating North Korea's spies and share counter intelligence strategies (M_LJH).

The key to the espionage investigation depends on the foreign intelligence network, so build a collaborative investigative system...
with the allied countries such as the United States and Japan (W-JBA).

5. Discussion

As for espionage activities in North Korea since the Korean War, most terrorist activities and espionage activities have been carried out by North Korea, so the anti communist investigation is focused on the North Korean regime.

In South Korea, however, it seems that a proper investigation has not been conducted on the basis of the atmosphere of reconciliation with North Korea in the political realm, even after identifying North Korea’s espionage activities in South Korea. The following <Figure 3> illustrates Seoul in violation of the National Security Act of South Korea [8].

In addition, some media have advocated such illegal activities.

In particular, the present Korean regime proposed the suspension of the counter intelligence activities for transferring the right of investigation from the National Intelligence Service, which is South Korea’s intelligence agency, to the police as a promise for the presidential election.

However, the issue with this policy lies with the question of how can the police, which operates within the boundaries of the law, arrest North Korean spies operating outside the law? And the anti communist investigation needs to have an overseas intelligence network, yet how can the police constrained within South Korea track down the North Korean spies?

The following <Figure 4> is a press release in Korea on the closing on domestic part of the National Intelligence Service, South Korea’s intelligence agency, and the transfer of the anti communist investigation right to the police [9].

Figure 3. Appearances of Seoul Violating South Korea’s National Security Law.

In addition, while Korea is currently in a state of truce, the political realm and the media are reporting as if reunification with North Korea will soon take place, and they are voicing opposite to the United States, an ally of South Korea, in the international community.

In addition, despite the current conflict between the United States and North Korea owing to North Korea’s development of nuclear weapons, there are forces in South Korea which insist on the withdrawal of the US
armed forces in South Korea, abolition of the National Security Act, and the dismantling of the National Intelligence Service.

Therefore, we must know how broadly the North Korean followers in Korea are located, among which the key is to preserve the South Korean counter intelligence agencies which fight against the North Korean communist regime.

Lastly, South Korea needs to reconsider Vietnam’s unification under communism in history.

6. References

6.1 Journal articles


6.2. Thesis degree


6.3. Additional references


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1 The United States Forces Korea, or the USFK, is a US force located in the Republic of Korea. It has a legal status within Korea by the ROK-US Mutual Defense Treaty and the U.S.-South Korea Status of Forces Agreement. Korea was freed from Japan after Japan collapsed by the US use of nuclear weapons in mainland Japan in 1945, but the North and South Koreas were divided by Yalta Conference. However, in 1948, as the requirement for the establishment of a democratic government by the Republic of Korea were made available, the US military withdrew, and on June 25, 1950, at 4:00AM, North Korea invaded to trigger the Korean War, and ever since, North Korea was taken to be South Korea’s enemy. And to prepare for such an invasion of North Korea and to maintain peace, the US armed forces began its stay.

2 The National Security Act was enacted on December 1, 1948, with the aim of regulating the activities of anti-state organizations that jeopardize the free and democratic basic order in the Republic of Korea based on Japan’s the Maintenance of the Public Order Act.

3 The National Intelligence Service is the central administrative agency of the Republic of Korea, responsible for intelligence, security and criminal investigations related to national security.