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## A Study on the Actual Condition and Development Plan of Psychological Warfare in NORTH KOREA

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### Abstract

*Psychological Warfare against NORTH KOREA with an absolute advantage from NORTH KOREA was suspended as it was used as a role of political sacrifice for the greater advantage in war. Psychological war was a key tool that was used in order to induce a meeting between mid-ranking North and South Korean military officials, but in response psychological warfare organizations suffered in their existence and led to a decrease in use. Fortunately, after the issue of Cheonan Navy Ship, the North Korean Attack on Yeonpyeong Island, and the August 25 Agreement, the importance of the functions of psychological warfare were confirmed and developmentally reconstructed.*

*Psychological warfare holds a great deal of importance; it can secure national interests as well as victory in war. Moreover, it enables the enemy to conform and contributes to playing a decisive role in victory, with minimal cost and effort. The elements that require institutional development include the establishment of a professional organization as well as the use of professional agents, and so forth.*

*Strategically, the plans for development include the simultaneous harmonization of psychological warfare against NORTH KOREA, with a mission that contributes to the unification-oriented national project. Additionally such strategic plans include: the implementation of psychological warfare by educating the North Korean army and people of unification, the development of argument and persuasion skills in psychological warfare, the development of the method in which psychological warfare is utilized, the development to the strategy for unearned victory of the enlightenment of the North Korean, and the creation of a favorable environment for the performance of psychological warfare*

*There are the issues that should be systematically developed. First, the establishment of professional organizations should be developed. Second, it is the use of specialists. Third, it is the integrated management of psychological warfare operations. Fourth, a system for analyzing the psychological effects should be activated. Fifth, we need to develop equipment that surpasses and overwhelms North Korea's psychological warfare capabilities.*

*In addition, there are challenges to be developed with strategic purposes. First, psychological warfare should act in a way that responds to the current and future changes in the Korean peninsula. Second, the psychological warfare should be transferred into the field of unification education for North Korean and North Korean people. Third, it is the development of psychological warfare techniques. Fourth, it is the victory strategy. Fifth, it is the psychological warfare in proactively reach out to people. Sixth, it is the making of a conducive environment for psychological warfare. For example, it is necessary to create and utilize various psychological warfare environments such as cyber psychological warfare.*

**[Keywords]** *Psychological Warfare, Psychological Warfare against North Korea, Psychological Warfare against South Korea, Military Conference, Psychological Warfare Role and Function*

## 1. Introduction

Psychological warfare is a widely used term in our daily life, but few people know the exact meaning. It is often used in some contexts for instant self-gratification. The term psychological warfare is used as a tool or method for a physical victory in war in a broad term and for a mind activity in interpersonal relationship.

After the Inter-Korean military general talks in 2004, North Korean psychological warfare in the front line was suspended. During the past two decades, the North Korean forces have been waiting for a chance to take revenge on their defeat in the Yeonpyeong Sea Battle. They revealed their malice to the world in an anti-Korean people with a surprise attack on Choenan and Yeonpyeong Island[1]. On August, 4, 2015, during the search operation of the 1st Army in the demilitarized zone, a mine set up by the North Korean army detonated and causing serious injury to our soldiers.

In response to these incidents, the Korean government demanded that North Korea issue an apology and appropriate punishment for these incidents. At 5:00 PM on August 10, they expressed these demands by broadcasting the “Warning Statement to North Korea” through loudspeakers toward North Korea in 2 locations near the DMZ. North Korea failed to cope with this challenging situation and demanded high-level inter-Korean talks that were then negotiated to take place on August 25. The most critical and decisive role in helping us in the Cold War of inter-Korean relations was the psychological war waged toward North Korea. This has since gained importance

The history of psychological warfare started from the Korean War, however no significant progress has been made. This is because most military commanders think the psychological warfare is part of the operation, or that is a part of deception or propaganda. However, psychological warfare plays an important role in creating and conducive environment for victory. Recognizing this fact alone can have a great effect on the operation of a mission[2].

There is a need to reorganize psychological warfare organizations and assets in order to overpower North Korea in relatively unfavorable geographical conditions and weather, to promote favorable conditions for national and defense policies and to lead an effort towards Unification of Korea. Therefore, we will analyze the reality of our military psychological warfare, draw out a development plan, and propose the direction to improve the systematic development and agenda.

Through this process and by establishing the concept of psychological warfare as a tactical dimension, it will be possible to present the direction of a more advanced system and strategy as well as provide the correct understanding of psychological warfare. In addition, by sharing the proper understanding of psychological warfare, it will be possible to apply to all operations and obtain a method of guaranteeing the conditions for victory.

## 2. Theoretical Background

### 2.1. Definition of psychological warfare

The concept of psychological warfare can have different meanings depending on the viewpoint, as in a strategic aspect or an auxiliary means of military purpose. In addition, the meaning of English is similar but only differs in its scope of use. Therefore, it is generally mixed with psychological warfare, psychological strategy, and psychological operation[3].

Psychological warfare is a superior concept represented by the concept of war, Psychological strategy is a policy or strategic concept that is widely used in economics, society, and culture. Psychological operation is a lower concept used as a tactical or operational purpose.

In recent years, the term “psychological war” has been replaced by the term “propaganda” or “aggressive measures” as a means of psychological warfare[4]. It also tends to avoid the terms ‘war’ and ‘warfare’ in time of peace. For example, the manual of the US

Army has been changed to 'Psychological operation' instead of 'Psychological warfare' since 1957[5].

The original concept of psychological warfare had a humanistic intention to minimize casualties in war. Based on humanism, the concept has been used as a means to increase efficiency and contribute to winning a war. Recognizing the importance of psychological warfare and its attempt to do so began with the ancient war. It was during World War I that the term started to be used in a modern sense, but it can be said that it was in World War II when it was used effectively in its true sense[6].

Psychological warfare stimulates the internal division of the enemy by stimulating them with the propaganda in the classical sense. It stimulates by agitation, testimony, and publicity, enlightenment, and objective criticism in the modern sense of meaning. On the domestic side, Psychological warfare promotes the unity of the people through publicity, persuasion, and the use of mass psychology through mass media. In the external aspect, it promotes political and economic benefits through negotiations, competitive conflicts, and high-dimension psychological behavior[7].

## 2.2. Psychological factors

In order for psychological warfare to be established, the following six basic elements should be used[8].

First, the executing entity or subject for psychological warfare is one that plans, executes, and supports the psychological warfare.

Second, the target audience of psychological warfare can be any individual, organization, or country except the executing entity itself.

Third, the Psychological Media effectively communicates the subject and content that the executing entity wants to convey to the target audience. The most commonly used media include radio media (radio, loudspeaker, TV, etc.), print media (newspapers, flyers, publications, etc.), and culture and art media (plays, movies, pictures, etc.).

Fourth, depending on the goal and direction of the psychological warfare aimed toward the target audience, the persuasive content includes the subject, title and persuasive direction.

Fifth, the effect of psychological warfare is the response to the contents of the psychological warfare and sensitivity to the stimulus received by the target audience from the executing entity.

Finally, there is judgment and adjustment. Judgment is the process of connecting the response and effectiveness of the psychological warfare that was conducted with the collected information in order to find the necessary new psychological elements. Through judgment, the direction and content of psychological warfare is revised in a process called "adjustment" to determine the direction and method of the new psychological war to be carried out next

## 2.3. Principles of psychological warfare

The basic principle of psychological warfare is to induce the psychological reaction of expectation by giving attention to the human sensuality which is the organism of psychological war as the principle of response to the stimulus. Therefore, it is necessary to maximize the effect of psychological warfare by applying accurate information about the target object and basic principles of psychological warfare.

The object of psychological war is divided into country, group, individual, etc. The core principle of psychological warfare is in whether effective responses can be induced as intended by the subject, in providing certain psychological stimulus to an individual's identity that comprises a nation or group.

## 2.4. Psychological warfare role and function

The psychological warfare in the military provides unique and powerful assets to military operations during times of war and peace. The purpose of conducting psychological warfare is to change the emotions, behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions of neutral,

friendly or hostile countries, to our intended purposes and intentions.

To this end, psychological warfare not only influences policy and decision-making but also leadership, following members and to systems in general. The psychological media and activities change the inside of the target to conform to the intended goals of our country and military strategy, and operation on a tactical level.

The role and function of psychological warfare are as follows[9].

First, it is to strengthen influence in international relations. In international relations, psychological warfare generally aims to promote a better understanding of its own country, and to promote mutual understanding among its citizens and foreign nationals to gain national interests.

Second, it is to promote of military strategy and operation. It can stimulate the psychological elements of targets and expect responses such as 'war suppression', 'psychological paralysis', deception and surprise, 'shock and fear'.

Third, it is the provision and strengthening of ideology. The psychological war should strive to promote the strengths of its own country and exploit the weaknesses of its counterparts; to mobilize the minds of its own members and to undermine the cohesion of opponents. To this end, psychological warriors lead consciousness and public opinion in order to influence the behavior of the targets and their command, by moving their feelings, motives and attitudes.

Fourth, it is a means of demonstrating leadership and organizational management. It is necessary to accurately grasp and motivate the desires of the members of the organization and use them effectively. It is necessary to heighten aggression, hostility, anger, etc. in order to utilize the condensed psychological energy in the group, and use the symbol to present the vision

Fifth, it is a function of forming public opinion. Public opinion represents a common opinion of the public on social issues or problems, and such public opinion is an important

strategic element. Therefore, the organizers of psychological warfare are in a double-sided situation where they should form and manage public opinion, but they must also conform to public opinion.

Sixth, is the attitude change of the combatant. Psychological warfare is used to secure the mental power of unseen and intangible combat power, this is the morale initiative.

### **3. Actual Condition of Psychological Warfare to North Korea**

#### **3.1. Method and effect of psychological warfare to North Korea**

In the process of verifying the effect of psychological warfare against the people who defected from North Korea to the front line of our military, the defectors made the following statement.

First, the psychological warfare media against North Korea served as a window for comparison between North and South Korea and it was confirmation of the Korea Dream that is widely spread in North Korea.

Second, it was highly regarded that the diversity of media used in North Korean psychological warfare was effective in helping them understand Korea.

Third, by providing a variety of consistent information based on facts and truth, it doubled the persuasiveness of South Korean education for the North Korean Army and North Korean residents in the front area. Moreover it improved persuasiveness by acting as a window to the inter-Korean reconciliation cooperation and building of trust.

In addition, the content of statement per media is as follows[10].

Prior to 1997, the credibility of loud-speaker broadcasting in North Korea was only about 50% in trustworthiness among the North Korean people and the residents. However, in 1999 it was almost 100% in reliability. For example, Hyundai Group's support for North Korea and the developments of Kumgang Mountain are consistent with the loud-

speaker broadcasting in North Korea. As a result the trust and persuasiveness of the North Koreans increased as such claims proved to be true.

North Korean army and residents preferred programs that included news and music that provided information from the outside world. In addition, religious broadcasting began in 1998, and it was effective enough to have North Korean authorities expressing their discomfort eleven times both directly and indirectly. Some North Korean defectors who defected from North Korea in 2003, stated that "If Korean broadcasting was off, I was bored and frustrated."

The leaflet and everyday goods dropping operations were temporarily interrupted in preparation for the inter-Korean summit in 2000, and it proved to show how effective those operations of delivering and spraying products and fliers to North Korea were. They mostly trusted photo fliers, and after enjoyably reading cartoon fliers, when the content of the flyer, broadcast contents, and electric signboards coincide and were consistent with one another, it was more effective.

In the case of goods dropping around North Korean military units, it was difficult to use, but in residential areas, it is said that the labels on the goods were removed or altered and then traded in the black market.

The electronic signboard was also utilized. This signboard is not a modern electronic signboard that shows the photo and pictures we see, but the six electronic signboards that are large enough to be seen in the text in consideration of the visible distance. The effect of this operation was very high.

The face-to-face operation was held at regular broadcasting hours when the sentry post of the South and the North were communicating in close proximity. Our side consisted of three soldiers, but North Korea consisted of three officers.

The Korean counterparts said that they were able to feel politeness of the South and felt that they were trying hard to provide a lot of information to the North officers.

In conclusion, the loudspeaker broadcasting show-cased to the North about the reality of the South through various information, and although the leaflet and the goods were discontinued since April 2000 this operation still proved to be continuously effective as they were still being discovered, read, and utilized.

The electric signboard was a medium that showed freedom and abundance and served as a guide to help them understand Korea. Furthermore, it is believed that the face-to-face operation played a crucial role in resolving the tensions in the front area as there was a presence of honesty and friendliness of inter-Korean dialogue between the front-line soldiers.

### **3.2. North Korea's response to psychological Warfare**

North Korea has tried hard to neutralize our psychological warfare against them, by agreeing to suspend broadcast and leaflet operations in the 7.4 Joint Statement in 1972, stop the goods and leaflet operations at the June 15, 2000 summit, and stop mutual psychological warfare at ministerial talks(11th and 13th).

However, North Korea has not been able to achieve satisfactory results due to the efforts of our psychological warriors and legitimate persuasion.

Since 2004, a number of working-level talks have been held to prepare for full-scale military talks. Instead of stopping our psychological warfare from the South, North Korea tried to make a concession to us to either retreat their artillery batteries 5km or Gaesung. However, on June 4, 2004, at the military talks between South and North Korea for political reasons, "Stopping of the mutual psychological war and demolishing of its medium" was agreed upon.

With the inter-Korean high-level military talks held on June 4, 2004, North Korea neutralized our North Korean psychological warfare, and in response recovered from the psychological warfare defeats in their region instantly, and violated South Korean society

through cyber psychological warfare. On the other hand, what about our standing?

First, the recognition of the importance and necessity of the psychological war has been dissipated due to the unilateral loss of the superior psychological warfare ability. Therefore, the psychological warfare ability that can be used in times of war is at a crisis of being lost.

Second, the psychological defense and protective devices of our soldiers in the front line have been lost.

Third, today our unilateral concession of the superiority of psychological warfare ability, where the military trust between the South and North Korea does not even amount to a nascent stage, has resulted in a terrible state of losing the psychological war ability.

Fourth, the loss of the only window in which information flows to North Korea has frustrated North Korean soldiers and its residents' desire for a better life. This resulted in the deepened cultural divide between North and South Koreans in times of Korea reunification.

#### **4. Problems and Improvement Plans**

The problems arising from the problems mentioned above of our poor state of psychological warfare are as follows.

First, there is a limitation of the development which is caused by the negative perception of the psychological war and the misunderstanding caused by the psychological war. Negative perceptions of psychological warfare have a great influence on domestic and external psychological warfare that must be operated during war and in times of peace. Such perceptions also greatly influence the development of psychological warfare for peace and stability.

In addition, the confusion over scope and function of psychological warfare is mistaken for the strategic communication, information operations, and public diplomacy and public affairs operations associated with psychological warfare. This causes misunderstanding of the unique function of psychological warfare.

Second, due to these negative perceptions, restrictions on doctrine, education, and professional training development have been stunted. The manuals related to the psychological war were stopped from being developed and related education was abolished.

Therefore, in the absence of expertise in psychological warfare, staff have been assigned to psychological warfare department and is currently in charge of operations for both times of war and peace.

The security environment on the Korean peninsula has been changing rapidly as demonstrated by attacks on Cheonan, the Yeonpyeong island shelling, the 8.25 North Korean mine incident and recent North Korean nuclear tests. In this situation, the most important weapon and necessary strategy is psychological warfare.

This is because the changes in the security environment on the Korean peninsula are due primarily to changes in awareness and perception, rather than in changes of physical or military nature.

In fact, South Korea has a disadvantage in psychological warfare compared to North in terms of relative geographical conditions and institution. However, we will need to develop the psychological warfare systematically and strategically in order to overwhelm North Korea and ultimately lead the unification by creating favorable conditions in national policy and defense policy. The following issues should be systematically developed.

First, the establishment of professional organizations should be developed. If psychological warfare specialists are fully staffed and operated with the training of specialized abilities, a great effect in psychological warfare can be achieved.

Second, it is the use of specialists. Psychological warfare cannot exclude the possibility of being used politically, therefore long-term training of personnel is needed to recruit and train talent in policies and specialty fields.

Third, it is the integrated management of psychological warfare operations. The psychological media has characteristics with its own unique advantage in each form of media,

so it can maximize the effect when it is integrated.

Fourth, a system for analyzing the psychological effects should be activated.

Fifth, we need to develop equipment that surpasses and overwhelms North Korea's psychological warfare capabilities.

The following are challenges to be developed with strategic purposes.

First, psychological warfare should act in a way that responds to the current and future changes in the Korean peninsula.

Second, the psychological warfare should be transferred into the field of unification education for North Korean and North Korean people.

Third, it is the development of psychological warfare techniques. The psychological warfare environment, which can utilize the modern information communication devices such as the unmanned airplane, the Internet, and the smartphone and related measures, needs to be developed.

Fourth, it is the victory strategy. Even if economic and human exchanges for reconciliation are facilitated, people in both South and North Korea will still perceive each other as the main adversary. This perception will not disappear easily.

Fifth, it is the psychological warfare in proactively reach out to people. It is necessary to consider an idea of establishing a psychological warfare radio and TV station that can share its purpose with people and broadcasting the content to North

Sixth, it is the making of a conducive environment for psychological warfare. One of the factors that psychological warfare could not have continuously developed is lack of efforts to support psychological warfare academically and scientifically. Therefore, it is necessary to continue researching and training professionals, by entrusting the educational center associated with reputable universities or research institutes. In addition, it is necessary to create and utilize various psychological warfare environments such as cyber psychological warfare[11].

## 5. Discussion and Suggestions

Most wars were premised on destruction and killing for victory. Thus a victory obtained is a seed of another destruction and killing; bringing about scientific means to the development of an asymmetric weapon to gain a relative superiority. Recently, North Korea's method of persecuting the South with its nuclear weapons, the attack on Cheonan, Yeonpyeong island shelling, and the mine incident all demonstrate to the stupidity of bringing about both Koreas to a total destruction.

It should not be forgotten that psychological warfare in the true sense does not intend to blur the judgment of the opponent for victory. It places the importance of human life and the nobility and dignity of culture in the first place. In other words, psychological warfare is to help ones who are in the dark to correctly judge the situation they are in so that it can eventually lead them to make reasonable judgments[12].

It is the psychological warfare that is the best and most effective asymmetric weapon that can be deployed against North Korea, who tries to break our psychological warfare whenever there is an opportunity and in reality, it is the weapon which they are most afraid of. It is also the psychological warfare that restrains war on the Korean Peninsula. It also is the best investment we can make to induce them to our system in terms of psychological and cultural unification.

It is urgent to institute a system that can rebuild a psychological warfare that can form a sound public opinion and lead the efforts of unification. Also it is important to supplement the system with regulations as required. It is time to seek the expansion of psychological warfare awareness in our people and the military.

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