

# No tunnel of brotherly love

**D**ig, dig, dig. Those troublesome North Koreans are at it again, but this time with a lot more than just nasty words for their "brothers" in South Korea. In fact, the North Koreans have been busy as moles literally undermining their enemies to the south.

In March, South Koreans discovered the fourth of what they estimate to be 20 tunnels dug by the North Koreans under the hilly, 150-mile long Demilitarized Zone that separates the two nations. This latest one is about 1.2 miles in length, six feet wide and six feet high and has been bored through solid granite at a depth of 435 feet.

Three other tunnels, discovered in 1974, 1975 and 1978, are similarly proportioned. One contains a narrow-gauge rail line and all four have electric lighting.

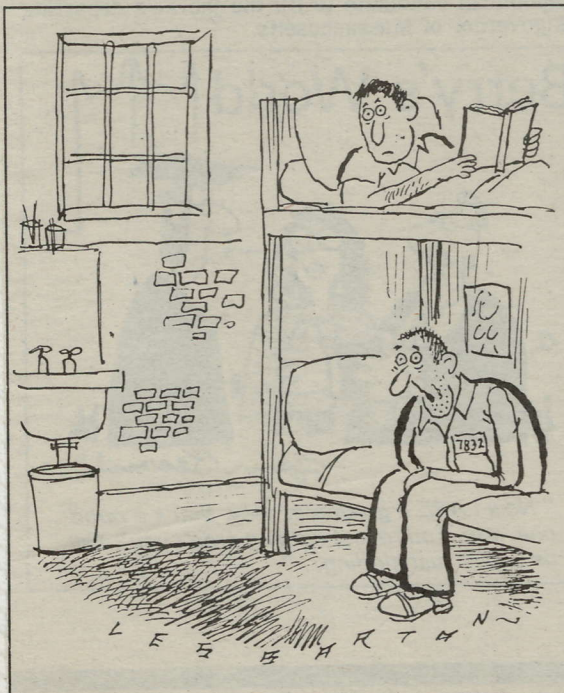
The South Koreans claim each tunnel can handle the passage of 30,000 North Korean troops, plus guns and vehicles, per hour. My own estimate is lower, about a 12,000-man division per hour. Whatever the actual number, it's clear that the tunnels represent a major threat to South Korea.

On the surface, along the DMZ, the South Koreans have created thick, deeply echeloned defensive positions designed to block any surprise attack by the North Koreans and their powerful armored corps. North Korea has concentrated much of its huge, tough 750,000-man army and 3,300 tanks just north of the DMZ.

Seoul, South Korea's capital, is only 26 miles south of the DMZ at the closest point. If a massive surprise attack by the north could break through the south's border defences along the DMZ, it might reach the outskirts of Seoul within hours.

This is just what happened during the Korean War when Seoul was quickly overrun by communist forces.

## Punch



"I hope they beat inflation. I've got \$2,000 stashed away."

**ERIC MARGOLIS**



The North Koreans, while preaching "peaceful reunification," have been burrowing under the deep South Korean defences on the surface. In a co-ordinated surprise assault, the southern exits of the secret tunnels would be blown open and North Korean troops would spill onto the plains leading to Seoul — behind the South Korean defence lines.

Whether any tunnels are high enough to accommodate tanks remains unknown. But such an attack could quickly tear open South Korean anti-tank defences and open the routes to Seoul to North Korean armor.

All of this sounds pretty bizarre in our modern age. Boring tunnels through miles of solid granite shows just how determined the North Koreans are to overwhelm the South.

It reminds me of medieval siege warfare when driving saps under a city's walls was a favorite tactic. Defenders of besieged cities would drive countermines against the invading tunnels. Feroocious battles would then be fought in the dimly lit tunnels.

This is precisely what the South Koreans are doing. They are making seismic soundings all along the DMZ, followed by test borings. The fourth tunnel was discovered in this manner. But many more remain undetected.

Even more worrying, above ground the North Koreans appear to be hard at work developing nuclear weapons capability. According to the latest intelligence reports, North Korea appears to have developed a primitive method for the production of enriched uranium. Some estimates say the north is only a year or two away from fielding a small number of nuclear warheads. These would be delivered by MiG-23 strike aircraft or ground-to-ground Scud-B missiles the north now manufactures in quantity.

Anyone who doubts North Korea would use nuclear weapons has only to look at the murderous record of the Kim Il Sung regime. A North Korean commando attack designed to kill South Korea's leader was launched against the presidential residence in Seoul. North Korean agents tried to assassinate the visiting South Korean leadership in a bombing attack in Rangoon, Burma. And, most recently, North Korean agents blew up a South Korean airliner in an effort to terrorize the south.

Then there is the odd story of a large dam the North Koreans have built in the mountains north of Seoul. The dam in question doesn't seem to serve any useful purpose and many South Koreans fret that it has been designed solely to be blown up, thus producing a huge tidal wave that will sweep down and engulf Seoul.

On top of all this, North Korea has the world's largest commando force — 80,000 crack troops whose mission is to infiltrate the south by boat, foot and light aircraft.

Message from North to South Korea: "Peacefully reunify, dear little brothers, or we'll bomb, nuke, shoot, flood, undermine and bury you."