

the world

South Korea . . .

Successor to Park may not last long

United Press International
SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea's new president, Choi Kyu-hah, a former English literature professor and a loyal supporter of the late President Park Chung-hee, never tried to build an independent power base in his four years as Park's prime minister.

Because he has no following either in the army or the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, the country's only two power bases, it is uncertain whether Choi will long remain president.

Under the nation's constitution, Choi's term as acting president can last only three months, during which a new chief executive must be elected by South Korea's electoral college, the 2,583-member body that gave rubber-stamp approval to Park's re-election bids in 1972 and 1978.

Choi, 61, became prime minister — a post with little power in the strong presidential system designed by Park to perpetuate his rule — in 1975.

He had served the previous four years as the special assistant to Park for foreign affairs. Before Park took over in a 1961 coup, Choi was an unknown English literature professor at Seoul National University.

Under Park's leadership, Choi maintained a low profile, always crediting Park with initiatives and deferring to the late president. His strong loyalty to Park, observers believe, insured his long association with Park.

Choi has many American friends and is considered pro-American. Observers, who consider Choi a moderate, say he tried as prime minister to refrain from taking extreme actions that could affect the daily life of the general public. Choi reportedly took a dovish stand on how the government should respond to last week's anti-Park riots in the southern coastal cities of Pusan and Masan.

Choi is from Wonju in eastern South Korea and graduated from Tokyo Teachers' College in 1941. He started his diplomatic career in 1951 when he joined the Foreign Ministry as the chief of the Foreign Trade Bureau, later serving as minister of the Korean Embassy in Tokyo, vice foreign minister and foreign minister.

Park joins shah, Somoza

U.S. loses third ally in year

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Korean President Park Chung-hee is the third foreign leader with longstanding special ties to the United States to be overthrown this year.

The first to be ousted was Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, who left his native Iran in January after ruling as monarch for 37 years. In July, Nicaraguan President Anastasio Somoza resigned and fled to the United States, ending his family's 46-year reign.

Park had been in power 18 years. All three men had received abundant military aid from the United States and had close ties to succeeding administrations. Each ran an openly authoritarian regime and tensions in their countries seethed for years before they were overthrown.

The shah, who left Iran Jan. 16, was deposed by leftist and religious forces, who accused him of torturing political opponents, reigning through force of a secret police cadre and letting economic corruption run rampant. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, a religious authoritarian, now runs the country.

Although the shah had longstanding ties with the United States, he was discouraged from settling in America as an exile because the administration wanted to develop relations with the new government. He now lives in Mexico but currently is being treated for cancer in New York City.

When it became clear that President Carter was not going to back the shah in his final weeks of power, some politicians questioned

whether America's allies could count on U.S. friendship. Others said the United States had ignored the shah's dark side far too long.

The sentiment on Somoza was more one-sided. Although the United States helped his father come to power in 1933, used Nicaragua as a base for staging the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961, and got Nicaraguan backing for intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965, the friendship had cooled.

North Korea cautioned

United Press International
The shooting death of South Korean President Park Chung-hee brought a stern warning of support from the United States and waves of sympathy from the nation's Asian allies, but Park's Asian opponents withheld comment.

The United States, whose commitment to South Korea dates back to 1945 when its first troops landed there after the peninsula was divided, bluntly warned communist North Korea not to "exploit" the tense situation of its southern neighbor.

But American officials — who have criticized Park's suppression of political freedom — did not eulogize the 62-year-old leader.

Park was shot Friday night by the director of South Korea's intelligence agency.

The American response contrasted with that of Taiwan, which today ordered all flags in the nation lowered to half staff for three days to mourn Park — the only Asian leader that recognized the Taipei government.

Taiwan's leaders, including President Chiang Ching-kuo, Premier Sun Yun-sun and Foreign Minister Tsiang Yei-si, sent cables of condolences to the South Korean government and to Park's daughter over the "loss of a great leader."

Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos offered his condolences today, saying "Asia and the world have lost in this tragedy an able leader who did so much to bring stability and progress to this country and worked with other leaders to ease tensions and anxiety in Asia."

In Thailand, a spokesman for Prime Minister Kriangsak Chomanan said Park was "a great man of Asia," and Japan, which once fought for the right to control the entire peninsula, expressed "profound sadness" over his death.

Japanese businessmen reacted calmly to Park's death, but some

predicted the South Korean economy — which Park built up during his 18-year rule — might deteriorate if there is prolonged instability in the country.

Both North Korea and China — which backed the North in the 1950-53 Korean conflict — briefly reported Park's death over official news outlets, but neither made comment on the incident.

Park's death came two days after the 27th anniversary of China's entrance into the conflict — a day marked by official ceremonies and parties in Peking and North Korea's capital Pyongyang.

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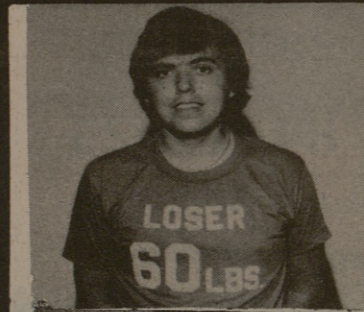
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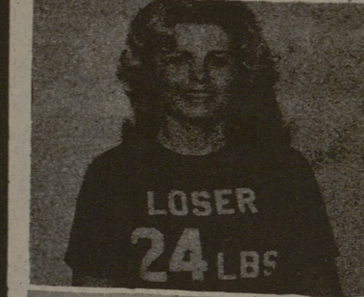
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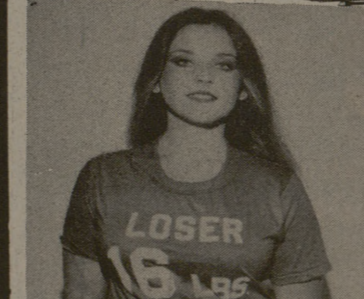
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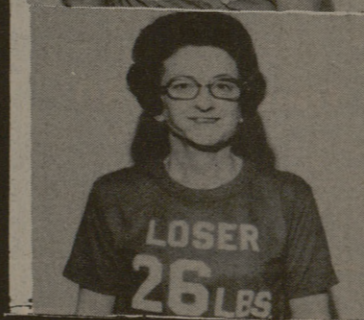
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